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Authentic Employee Engagement: How Emotions Support Engagement

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This study adds to the research on how emotional intelligence affects employee engagement through an examination of the mediating effect of emotional labor. Emotional intelligence is examined as an antecedent to engagement, mediated by emotional labor which has two dimensions, surface acting and deep acting. Analysis of data from 243 working adults shows negative relationships between emotional intelligence and surface acting and between surface acting and engagement. Authentic employee engagement, defined as engagement supported by deep acting revealed a positive relationship with emotional intelligence. The mediating effect of emotional labor is shown as individuals operating under deep acting report stronger engagement. Data indicate that individuals operating under surface acting experience lower levels of engagement. These findings help clarify inconclusive evidence linking emotional intelligence with engagement.

Employee engagement has been called a critical driver of organizational performance with outcomes ranging from individual productivity, increased organizational citizenship behaviors and increased customer satisfaction (Blomme, et al., 2015). Employee engagement, as reported by Gallup has dropped from a decade high of 40% in 2020 to 33% in 2023 (Harter, 2023). The percentage of employees who reported being actively disengaged from work rose to 16%. It is estimated that the loss of productivity resulting from employees who are not engaged is $1.9 trillion (Harter, 2023). In Gallup's annual survey, the effect of COVID is evident with healthcare workers reporting the steepest decline of 9% in engagement (Harter, 2022). Beyond healthcare, most employees reported that they did not believe their organizations cared about their well-being. With employee engagement levels dropping, understanding how an employee becomes engaged in the workplace is warranted. Antecedents that have been found to have a direct effect on engagement include value congruence between the employee and the organization, perceived organizational support, and core-self evaluation (Mahon, et al., 2014). However, additional understanding of the set of potential antecendents and consequences would provide productive insights to organizations. Specifically, Mahon et al. (2014) state that the "exploration of antecedents that measure the degree to which the person can implement his or her preferred self would be a critical antecedent of employee engagement" (p.2). Therefore, this study extends the investigation of employee engagement by examining the role of emotional intelligence and emotional labor as antecedent factors.

Authentic employee engagement can be defined as the degree to which an employee acts in agreement with his or her true self (Harter, et al., 2002). Being authentic has been deemed a good indicator of effective human functioning, as employees who are true to their selves are more comfortable on the job and do not lose energy pretending to be someone else (van den Bosch & Taris, 2014). Authenticity has been conceptualized as a trait, a temporally stable personality dimension associated with healthy, effective functioning within a work environment. Positive relationships between authenticity and autonomy, environmental mastery, personal growth, positive relationships with others, and a sense of purpose in life were supported by Toor and Ofori (2009). Representing employee well being, authenticity allows congruence between the employee as a person and the specific environment and role in which they operate (van den Bosch & Taris, 2014). This congruence aligns directly with the concept of deep acting, a dimension of emotional labor. Emotional labor has been examined by categorizing employee regulation strategies as with surface acting or deep acting. Surface acting is defined as faking the required emotions for job performance and supressing authentic emotions (Gabriel & Diefendorff, 2015). Deep acting is viewed as reaching into personal emotions to feel and express required emotions on the job (Grandey, et al., 2013).

Authenticity has been positively associated with work engagement (van den Bosch & Taris, 2014) with engaged employees reporting feeling more vital, dedicated and absorbed at work. Defined as a persistent and pervasive cognitive state, engagement is not focused on any particular behavior, event or person (Ouweneel, et al., 2012), but is rather a relatively stable individual dispositional state. Schaufeli, Taris and Van Rhenen (2008) state that managers who report higher levels of engagement are characterized by good mental health, smooth social functioning, long work hours, and having a high level of resources to perform their jobs. Engagement propels the individual to contribute and provides necessary psychological support to deal with job demands.

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Personality traits should be directly related to engagment with engagment being positively related to work performance (Macey & Schneider, 2008). A fundamental personality trait that has been accredited with success in life (Goleman, 1995) and performance (Wong & Law, 2002) is emotional intelligence. As a personal resource, emotional intelligence should support positive attitudes, performance on the job, and engagement (Akhar, et al., 2015). Linking emotional intelligence with employee perceptions of well-being and job satisfaction extends to engagement on the job (Brunetto, et al., 2012). However, emotional intelligence has demonstrated a weak, positive relationship with engagement (Ravichandran, et al., 2011). Emotional intelligence did not have a direct effect on engagement, though when emotional intelligence was combined with positive social mood and shared personal vision, Ravichandran et al. (2011) found a significant and positive association with engagement. This indicates that emotional intelligence will not influence engagement alone, but the identification of additional variables is needed.

The current study links emotional intelligence with engagement mediated by emotional labor. Two forms of emotional labor, deep acting and surface acting differentially affect engagment. Emotional labor is examined as mediating construct based the the strong relationship between the predictor variable of emotional intelligence and emotional labor and likewise between emotional labor and engagement (Baron & Kenny, 1986). Emotional labor represents individual characteristics that transform engagement in significant and different ways. The conditions that are necessary for a valid mediating construct include the existence of variations in levels of the independent variable, emotional intelligence, that account for a significant amount of variation in emotional labor, and the existence of variations in emotional labor that account for variances in engagement.

Literature Review

Emotional Intelliegence

Emotional Intelligence (EI), a term coined by Salovey and Mayer (1990) has been claimed to be a powerful predictor of success in life (Goleman, 1995), the performance of organizational members (Caruso & Salovey, 2004), ethical behavior (Deshpande & Joseph, 2009), and organizational climate (Momeni, 2009). Mayer and Salovey (1997) define EI as a set of abilities that enable an individual to perceive emotion in themselves and others, to use emotions to facilitate performance, to emotion in others, and to regulate emotion in themselves. In some conceptualizations, EI is identified as trait EI, which is emotional style and ability EI, which is emotional skill. Both aspects of EI are needed to support adaptive behavior in the workplace (Swancott & Davis, 2022). The construct has seen great interest in the popular press and in management development. Organizations have integrated emotional intelligence development and educational institutions have incorporated the concept in curriculum based on the linkage between EI and performance (Ciarrochi & Mayer, 2013; Druskat, et al., 2013).

Empirical research demonstrating the relationship between EI and organizational performance has been mixed. Positive relationships between EI and specific undergraduate tasks (Lam & Kirby, 2002), sales performance (Wong, et al., 2004), and supervisory rating of job performance (Law, et al., 2004; Slaski & Cartwright, 2002) have been identified. However, conflicting research results show no significant relationship between EI and performance (Austin, 2004; Day & Carroll, 2004), between EI and academic performance (Petrides, et al., 2004), or between EI and supervisory ratings of employee performance (Janovics & Christiansen, 2001). Evidence supporting the relationship between EI and success is largely anecdotal with some researchers calling the claimed relationships as "ill-defined, unsupported, and implausible" (Cote & Miners, 2006, p.15). In a meta-analytic investigation, O'Boyle, Humphrey, Pollack, Hawver and Story (2011) found the relationship between emotional intelligence and job performance had an effect size of .07 when controlling for additional individual difference factors in a multiple regression. These results provide cause to critically evaluate the effect of EI on how an employee responds in the work environment.

Theoretical models linking EI to behavioral outcomes in a linear fashion have produced mixed results. Cote and Miners (2006) suggest that linear models linking EI directly to performance are "overly simplistic and incomplete" (p.2). The addition of mediator variables may be productive in identifying a more holistic model that links EI traits and abilities to behavioral manifestations and organizational outcomes. EI may exert an indirect effect on performance on the job through other key performance indicators such as engagement (Wen et al., 2019). High levels of EI should regulate individual emotions and serve to maintain optimal outcomes during stressful situations (Lea et al., 2019). It has been suggested that more complete theoretical models are needed to understand this construct and its relationship to behavior and organizational outcomes (Walter, et al., 2011). Indeed, Johnson and Spector (2007) state that the relational position for the construct(s) is "largely under researched…especially with regard to the relationship between emotional labor, efforts, and outcomes" (p.369). EI is viewed as a powerful trait supporting individual performance, yet data supporting this claim is inconclusive. Addressing the suggestion that the relationship between emotional labor and outcomes related to EI is under-researched, the current study examines EI as being associated with emotional labor and engagement. EI as personality trait is hypothesized to affect engagement through the mediating effects of two types of emotional labor employed by the individual in the workplace.

Emotional Labor

Emotional labor is defined as the performance of various forms of emotional regulation in the context of paid employment (Hochschild, 1983). The process of regulat-

ing feelings and expressions in response to organizational goals is both a social aspect of the work environment and an individual interaction with internal and external resources. Emotional labor is considered to have two dimensions; surface acting and deep acting (Kim, 2008). Surface acting is defined as how an employee manages their observable expressions. These observable behaviors tend to supress core emotions and can be called 'acting in bad faith' (Chau, et al., 2009). Surface acting purports personal inauthenticity, depersonalization leading to emotional exhausion, dissatisfaction and burnout. This emotional dissonance leads to an uncomfortable psychological state from which individuals are motivated to remove through efforts such as exhausion and turnover (Chau et al., 2009). Deep acting is defined as how employees manages their feelings (Ang Chooi Hwa, 2012). Management of feelings may include actually changing feelings, thus 'acting in good faith' (Chau et al., 2009). Deep acting outcomes include feelings of authenticity, accomplishment, enhanced job satisfaction and performance (Brotheridge & Grandey, 2002; Brotheridge & Lee, 2002). Both dimensions of emotional labor are needed to deal with the regulation of rising emotions, the suppression of emotions, and the transformation of thoughts and feelings in the employement setting (Bond & Flaxman, 2006). In both surface acting and deep acting employees call upon their resources to exert emotional control and stabilization at work.

The dimensions of emotional labor have been associated with different organizational outcomes. Surface acting appears to be positively related to emotional exhausion and negatively related to job satisfaction (Bono & Vey, 2005). Significant and negative consequences that have been associated with surface acting include low levels of work engagement, job satisfaction and work performance (Huyghebaert et al., 2018). The consequences of surface acting appear to be more severe than deep acting (van Gelderen et al., 2017). Deep acting is related to an increase in personal accomplishment (Brotheridge & Grandey, 2002), and to lower levels of emotional exhaustion (Ang Chooi Hwa, 2012). Research has shown that employees with greater negative affectivity use more surface acting (Brotheridge & Lee, 2002), and employees reporting higher level of emotional intelligence will tend to use more deep acting than employees reporting lower levels of emotional intelligence (Cheung & Tang, 2009). Biron and van Veldhoven (2012) call for the examination of emotional labor as an element in a more systemic view of cognitive-behavioral patterns. Individuals who report high levels of emotional intelligence may have a larger array of coping strategies or resources with which to deal with job demands and thus enable the employee to become engaged at work. This larger array of coping strategies in the form of deep acting, or authentic behavior would support the core individual in terms of beliefs about self and identification of self-supporting performance mechanisms. Individuals with a supportive core belief system would therefore be able to call upon personal resources to contribute to the organization at an engaged level of performance. EI as a trait would support the development of healthy emotional labor strategies and patterns of reference geared to engagement in the workplace.

Engagement

Employee engagement is defined as a state in which employees bring in their personal selves during their work role performance, investing personal energy and experiencing an emotional connection with their work (Kahn, 1990). Building engagement on the job has been equated with that of flow, which is the state of optimal experience the allows for focused attention, effortless concentration, control, a distortion of time and intrinsic enjoyment (Schaufeli et al., 2008). Flow is supported within the field of positive psychology which looks at human strength and optimal functioning (Schaufeli, et al., 2006). The field of positive psychology has reported engagement as involving positive feelings towards work and an individual's job, work satisfaction, vigor, dedication and job involvement (Macey & Schneider, 2008). Engagement is reported to facilitate the focus on positive aspects of work, shifting away from negative states such as burnout and stress (Schaufeli et al., 2006; Schaufeli, et al., 2002).

Seen as an individual variable, engagement can vary between persons (Schaufeli et al., 2002) and can be subject to moderate day-level fluctuations (Sonnentag, 2003). As a motivational variable in an individual's performance at work, engagement should lead to higher levels of performance on the job (Kahn, 1990; Rich, et al., 2010; Schaufeli et al., 2002). With increased levels of engagement, a stronger relationship between positive psychological climate and individual emotional resources is noted by Shuck and Reio (2014) who found that increased engagement is associated with lower levels of exhaustion and depersonalization in the workplace. Supporting mechanisms of engagement in the workplace include employee resources (Hobfoll & Shirom, 2000) and job demands (Schaufeli, et al., 2009). Employee resources can include material objects, social connections, personal characteristics, and energy. When these resources are plentiful, an employee is able to generate positive energy and reduce the perceived level of stress. Job demands include things that need to be accomplished on the job that take cognitive and emotional effort (Schaufeli et al., 2006). Increased job demands without a commensurate increase in resources have been associated with negative psychological effects such as burnout and stress (Schaufeli et al., 2009). However, it appears that the relationship between resources and engagement is more complex than a sequential association. Schaufeli et al. (2009) found that as resources on the job increased, so did employee engagement. However, when engagement increases, so do the resources that the employee perceives to be available. Resources and engagement reinforce each other reciprocally. Positive emotions, a key personal variable resource, supports building additional resources such as social connections, increased creativity, and openness to new ideas (Ouweneel et al., 2012).

The recursive relationship between emotions and engagement may indicate the need for additional explanatory variables. Engagement was found to be a marginal mediator between personality factors and the work outcome of knowledge sharing with engagement heavily dependent on personality factors, not EI (Ansari & Talan, 2017). Swancott and Davis (2022) reported that engagement is a better predictor of job satisfaction in hospital employees when compared with EI and emotional labor strategies. Indeed, Ravichandran et al. (2011) found a weak positive direct relationship between emotional intelligence and engagement, but state that emotional intelligence alone will not influence engagement. As such, our research model links emotional intelligence and engagement through emotional labor.

Model development and hypotheses

Emotional intelliegence is presented as the core individual characteristic that is manifest directly in engagement in the workplace and is mediated by emotional labor as represented by surface acting and deep acting. Thus the model identifying the process of authentic employee engagement utilizing emotional intelligence and the forms of deep and surface acting emotional labor is shown in Figure 1. The following hypotheses are examined:

Hypothesis 1: Emotional intelligence is positively associated with engagement.

Hypothesis 2: Emotional intelligence is postitively associated with deep acting.

Hypothesis 3: Emotional intelligence is negatively associated with surface acting.

Hypothesis 4: Emotional labor mediates the relationship between emotional intelligence and engagement.

Method

Procedure

Data were collected as part of a graduate program at a Midwest university. The instrument and research process was approved by the institution's Office of Responsible Research. Disclosure about the process and data aggregation was made clear in an introductory written statement (which served as informed consent) that also contained the researchers' contact information. Students were invited to voluntarily participate in the research by faculty. Out of approximately 530 total students, 243 useable surveys were collected. The survey utilized accepted scales that were not altered for this study. Table 1 shows the coefficient alpha of each scale along the diagonal.

Participants

The data were collected from working middle-management professionals enrolled in graduate programs at a Midwest university. The sample population was 44.5% male, 55.5% female with an average age of 35.6 years. Individuals had on average approximately 16 years of work experience and had been at their current employer for 6 years. Seventy-eight percent had supervisory responsibilites. The 243 respondents represented a wide range of industries including manufacturing (23.5%), health care (11.9%), retail (7.8%), banking (6.6%), education (6.2%), insurance (4.1%) and others.

Measures

Emotional intelligence. Emotional intelligence was measured by the Self-Report Emotional Intelligence Test (Schutte et al., 1998). Reponses to this instrument were rated on a five-point Likert-type scale with 1 indicating strong disagreement to 5 indicating strong agreement. Previous research suggested that the scale should be used unidimensionally (Schutte & Malouff, 1999). Sample items include "I am aware of my emotions as I experience them" and "I can tell how people are feeling by listening to the tone of their voice." The psychometric properties of this measure were assessed (Schutte et al., 1998) with internal consistency estimates in the acceptable range (α = .87 to .90) and demonstrated construct and predictive validity.

Figure 1

Surface Acting and Deep Acting as Mediators in the Relationship Between Emotional Intelligence and Engagement

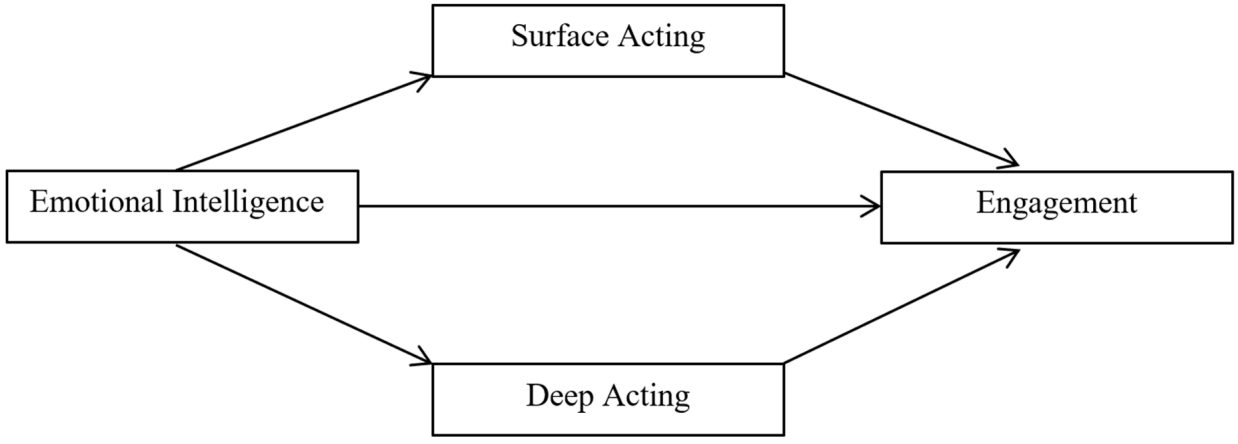

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics, Correlations, and Internal Consistency of Measures

Variable	Mean	SD	Employee Engagement	Emotional Intelligence	Surface Acting	Deep Acting
Employee Engagement	4.72	1.14	.940			
Emotional Intelligence	3.78	.44	.247**	.836		
Surface Acting	2.43	.93	-.465**	-.173**	.922	
Deep Acting	2.95	.93	.218**	.176**	-.084	.845

Note. SD = standard deviation; Cronbach's alpha shown along the diagonal; N = 241.
** $p < .01$

Engagement. Engagement was measured by the nine-item Utrecht Work Engagement scale (Schaufeli et al., 2006). This scale uses a seven-point response format that ranges from 1 indicating never to 7 indicating always/ every day when the respondent is queried about attitudinal states on the job. Sample items include "At my work, I feel bursting with energy" and "I feel happy when I am working intensely." The psychometric properties of this measure were assessed (Schaufeli et al., 2006) with internal consistency estimates in the acceptable range ($\alpha = .85$ to .92) across 10 countries and with demonstrated construct validity.

Emotional labor. Emotional labor was assessed using an eight-item scale (Grandey, 2003) that asks respondents to rate how often they behave at the jobs as described with 1 indicating never to 5 indicating always. Surface acting is measured with five items. A sample of the surface acting scale is "I put on an act in order to deal with customers in an appropriate way." Deep acting is represented by three items such as "I try to actually experience the emotions that I must show." An internal consistency analysis was conducted on the eight items, and acceptable reliability was shown for both surface acting ($\alpha = .88$) and deep acting ($\alpha = .79$) (Grandey, 2003). Acceptable validity was also shown.

Data Analysis

To test the hypotheses, several types of data analysis were conducted. Bivariate product-moment correlation coefficients correlations were assessed on all study variables to gain an understanding of the relationships between each variable. Cronbach's alpha coefficients were calculated for each scale to determine internal consistency between the items measuring each construct and to evaluate the reliability of the scales. The Simple Mediation Model (Hayes, 2013) with Macro Process was used to test both types of emotional labor as mediators of the emotional intelligence-engagement relationship. A regression analysis based on the bootstrapping method was performed by running the process macro model. The sample was randomly reproduced 5000 times using the bootstrapping method, and the Model 4 template was identified.

Results

Bivariate Associations

Table 1 presents descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, and internal consistency measures on all scale variables in this study. Five of the six correlations are statistically significant and are greater than or equal in magnitude to .21. The correlation between deep acting and surface acting is not significant, indicating that separate aspects of emotional labor are being tested. Hypothesis 1 states that Emotional Intelligence will be positively associated with Engagement. This is supported by the significant correlation of .247 ($p < .010$). Hypotheses 2 and 3 are also supported by the correlations with Emotional Intelligence demonstrating a positive correlation of .176 ($p < .010$) with Deep Acting and a negative correlation of -.173 ($p < .010$) with Surface Acting. Engagement is positively related to deep acting with a significant correlation of .21 ($p < .010$) and negatively related to surface acting with a significant correlation of -.46 ($p < .010$). All measures demonstrate acceptable levels of internal consistency with Emotional Intelligence = .90, Engagement = .95, Deep Acting = .84, and Surface Acting = .92 (Nunnally, 1978) (see Table 1).

Mediation Model

To test the mediation effects of Deep Acting and Surface Acting to determine how these variables affect the relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Engagement the Simple Mediation Model (Hayes, 2013) was used. Table 2 shows the results of the two-stage analysis using the Process Macro. It can be seen that the positive and significant effect of Emotional Intelligence on Engagement from the value of $p = .011 < \alpha = 0.05$. With the inclusion of Deep Acting and Surface Acting in the model simultaneously there was an increase in the effect of Emotional Intelligence on Engagement ($p = .000 < \alpha = 0.05$, $\beta = .367$, $R2 = .263$). It was determined that the level of Emotional Intelligence had an indirect effect on Deep Acting ($\beta = .073$) and Surface Acting ($\beta = .183$). Examination of the confidence intervals resulting from the bootstrapping method shows that zero was not included with Deep Acting having a confidence interval of .012 - .162 and Surface Acting having a confidence interval of .041 - .336. This indicates that the mediating role of both variables is statistically significant. Thus, Hypothesis 4 is accepted.

Discussion

The present study focused on the relationship of emotional intelligence and engagement mediated by emotional labor. Drawing on data from 243 participants a set of models were evaluated, testing for the significance of the

Table 2

Mediator Role of Emotional Intelligence in the Effect of Surface Acting and Deep Acting on Engagement

Model Dependent	M1	B	S.E.	T	*P*	LLCI	ULCI	*p*	R^2	*F*
Independent	Constant	3.77	.523	7.20	.000	2.74	4.81	.011	.027	6.55
	Emotional Intelligence	-.352	.137	-2.56	.011	-.622	-.081			
Dependent	Engagement							.000	.263	28.19
Independent	Constant	4.02	.630	6.37	.000	2.77	5.26			
	Emotional Intelligence	.367	.151	2.43	.015	.069	.665			
	Surface Acting	-.521	.069	-7.50	.000	-.657	-.384			
	Deep Acting	.192	.069	2.77	.006	.055	.329			
Effect Values										
Direct Effect	Indirect Effect					LLCI	ULCI			
.367	.256					.069	.665			
Surface Acting	.183					.041	.336			
Deep Acting	.073					.012	.162			

Note. LLCI = lower limit confidence interval; ULCI = upper limit confidence interval.

direct and indirect effects of emotional intelligence and emotional labor as antecedents of engagement. Whereas earlier research found weak relationships between emotional intelligence and outcomes (Austin, 2004; Day & Carroll, 2004; O'Boyle et al., 2011), the current study extended the model of emotional intelligence and engagement to include emotional labor as a mediating factor. Our findings suggest that the inclusion of emotional labor adds substantial value and accounts for a substantial amount of variance in predicting engagement (23.6% on average).

This study contributes to the emotional intelligence and engagement literature by addressing the following underresearched issues. First, the study uses a more holistic evaluation of the complex process of employee engagement by incorporating emotional intelligence as an antecedent working through a critical attitudinal state of emotional labor. Second, emotional intelligence has demonstrated a weak, positive relationship with engagement and researchers have stated that emotional intelligence will not influence engagement alone; the identification of additional variables is needed (Ravichandran et al., 2011). The inclusion of emotional labor in the model helps explain the process of engagement more fully. The detrimental effect of surface acting on engagement is an important finding of the study. As a performance enhancing state of being, engagement facilitates personal and organizational outcomes. An examination of the two forms of emotional labor may point to important differential linkages. Surface acting represents the superficial masking of emotions for public display. This masking takes a physical and emotional toll on an individual rendering fewer psychological resources with which to cope. Deep acting, on the other hand represents authenticity of feelings. Individuals reporting deep acting have congruence between beliefs and actions, thus reducing cognitive dissonance. This congruence enables the individual to build emotional resources and reinforce emotional states leading to a greater willingness to engage in actions that support the organization.

The proposed model seeks to address calls for clarification of the relationship among key individual variables. There is limited research on the relationship between emotional intelligence and emotional labor (Grandey, 2000; Wong & Law, 2002). The model identifies the differential effect that emotional intelligence may have on how an individual deals with emotional labor. Engagement has been identified as an important pathway for the development of positive organizational outcomes, yet Lapointe, Vandenberghe and Panaccio (2011) call for further research to understand how the different emotional labor strategies impact relevant organizational outcomes and individual behavior. With the focus on individual emotional intelligence and strategies, the model hypothesizes how psychological climate may facilitate employee discretionary effort.

Limitations

Four main limitations of the present study need to be recognized. The first limitation is the cross-sectional design of the current study. Based on the cross-sectional design, the study is unable to project long-term or causal effects of emotional intelligence and emotional labor on engagement. The purpose of the study was to expand understanding of how emotional intelligence affects engagement. Despite the lack of causal inference, the results provide support for a more robust model of engagement. As a result, further research on emotional labor as an important antecedent to engagement is warranted.

Second, the current study is based on a convenience sample of current and past MBA students. This sample may represent a biased sample of mainly middle management employees and may not be appropriate in explaining generalizable work attitudes in front line employees or top management. The external validity is limited to employees in middle management.

Third, data in the current study were obtained using self -reports, which means that common method variance may have influenced the findings. Common method variance may overestimate the associations among variables (Spector, 2006). However, the correlation of deep acting with surface acting is not significant at (r = -.08) which does not appear to be an inflated correlation. Thus, the influence of common method variance may be limited in this study.

Fourth, as in previous studies the measure of emotional intelligence may be considered to be less than robust. The reliability of the emotional intelligence measure is acceptable in this study with a coefficient alpha of .90, but it has been noted that the self-report measures tend to overlap with personality factors (Davies, et al., 1998). In addition, serious concerns about discriminant validity also exist for emotional intelligence measures. Despite these concerns, the multiple measures of emotional intelligence may be an indication of interest and vitality of the construct in understanding the individual at work.

Future directions for research should include other contextual factors that support engagement, identification of individual personality factors that support deep acting, and a refinement of the measures of emotional intelligence that are organizationally grounded. Understanding supporting personal and organizational mechanisms that enable employees to fully engage in the workplace would provide a useful managerial approach to reducing the probability of surface acting and enhancing the likelihood of deep acting. Such measures may include supervisor selection and training that highlight supportive interpersonal relationships. Identification of individual personality factors that support deep acting may facilitate more effective selection processes that can recognize key traits that enable employees to express facets of deep acting and authenticity that reinforce individuality and thus a grounded connection with the organization. The measure of emotional intelligence has been controversial and allowing for refinement of the measure in an organizational setting may isolate the key links between this psychological phenomenon and important employee connections with the organization.

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