

## INTRODUCTION

Emotions play a crucial role in service workers. The primary mission of many service organizations is to provide positive customer service to their patrons. An employee's performance is evaluated by how well they perform the task. Therefore, an employee's emotions play a crucial role in the level of service they provide. If an employee is stressed about professional or personal experiences then they must set those emotions aside and focus on the needs of the guest. If the service is inconsistent, this may decrease customer satisfaction. Therefore, employees must be able to manage themselves during each service encounter.

However, employees may find an inconsistency between what they are feeling at that time and what emotions they desire to show which is called emotive dissonance. Hochschild's (1983) found that workers dealt with this dissonance either by simply altering their displayed feelings (surface acting) or by 'conjuring up' the appropriate feelings within themselves (deep acting). Therefore, emotional labor is not "faking" an emotion however finding the appropriate emotions for their given situation.

Therefore, showing guests a smile and having a customer oriented mindset is something that must happen even if the employee is not in the mood to do so. How can managers keep the service level of staff consistent? Would training staff to be aware of their emotions provide better customer satisfaction? Would training employees in emotional management have a positive effect on employee performance from management's perspective?

### *Purpose*

The purpose of the current study is to: (a) experimentally manipulate emotion management strategies used during customer service task, (b) test the effects of emotional management training on job performance, and (c) investigate possible underlying mechanisms explaining this process.

### *Hypothesis*

H1: Negative mood will be negatively related to job performance.

H2: Emotional Labor (EL) will be negatively related to job performance.

H3: EL will be negatively related to negative mood.

H4: Service culture will mediate the effect of EL on the HRM component of training.

H5: EMT will be negatively related to negative mood so that individuals receiving deep acting training will experience less negative mood than individuals receiving surface acting training.

H6: EMT will be negatively related to EL so that individuals receiving deep acting training will experience lower EL than individuals receiving surface acting training.

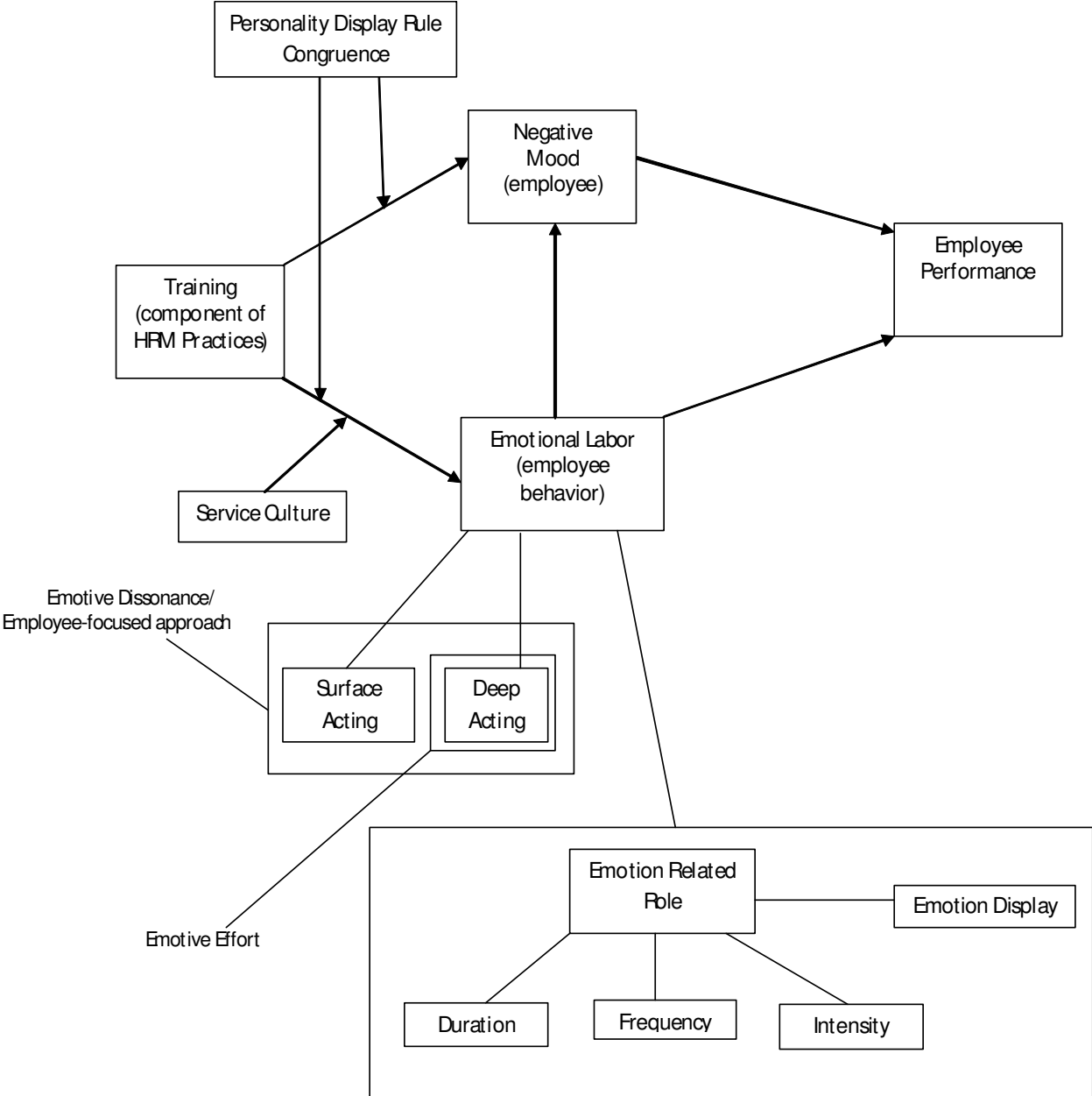
H7: Personality-display rule congruence will moderate the effect of EMT on negative mood.

H8: Personality-display rule congruence will moderate the effect of EMT on EL.

### *Hypothesized Conceptual Model*

The conceptual model in Figure 1 identifies the three variable dimensions that measure emotional labor: surface acting, deep acting and emotion related role. Based on the theoretical framework, these emotional labor attributes are measured to determine relationship with employee performance with service culture as a moderating variable. In addition personal display rules serves as the mediating variable for negative mood and training and EL and training, while service culture serves as the mediating variable for training on EL.

**Figure 1. Hypothesized Conceptual Model**



### *Significance of Study*

The unique contribution of this study is twofold. First, it examines the affect emotional management training will have on the emotional labor of employees which has been suggested in reviewed literature however lacking in implementation. Second, the study shall provide significant quantitative results to determine the changes these implements have on employee performance. The results can form a basis for training programs structured specifically for emotional labor. Thus, this impact will address the importance of emotional labor in training employees and further its impact for management to identify real concerns of their employees and issues for appropriate actions to take place, optimizing the benefits and minimizing the problems.

## **METHODOLOGY**

To address the need for an emotional labor scale that is tailored to measure hospitality employees' emotional labor presentation, Chu and Murrmann (2005) developed a 19-item instrument called the hospitality emotional labor scale (HELs).

An experimental design shall be used to test the hypotheses. Employees will be surveyed to identify their current level of emotional labor. These employees should have received training in their respective jobs, which is imperative for measuring retraining effectiveness. Employees shall be divided into control group who will receive training however not given the treatment (emotional management training) and the experimental group who will receive training with the treatment. Both sets of employees shall be survey to determine if an increase of emotional labor on employee performance is stronger when training is high than when training is low.

### *Focus Group*

A needs assessment must be conducted to include focus groups.

### *Questionnaire*

The self-administered questionnaire will be given to all frontline employees in both control and experimental groups prior to the beginning of the training. A convenience sample of employees at three event venues will be asked to participate. Chu and Murrmann (2005) developed a 19-item instrument called the hospitality emotional labor scale (HELs). A seven point Likert-type scale will be used.

### *Training*

The entire experiment shall be embedded within a computer simulated task environment that is designed to look like a customer service counter located in a venue. The emotion management training shall be manipulated on two levels: (a) surface acting and (b) deep acting. Both training conditions shall include the same rules, regulations, display rules, and will take approximately one hour to complete. The only difference between the surface acting and deep acting training conditions shall be the content describing how to adhere to display rules for surface and deep acting respectively.

The experimental task bed shall be comprised of four (4) main components occurring in the following order: storyline, training, simulation and problem solving event.

#### *Post Questionnaire*

After the training is completed, the respondent will be debriefed on the study.

#### **References**

- Chu, K. H.-L. and S. K. Murrmann (2006). "Development and validation of the hospitality emotional labor scale." Tourism Management **27**(6): 1181-1191.
- Hochschild, A. R., Ed. (1983). *The managed heart: Commercialization of human feeling*. Berkeley: University of California Press.