



## Mediating role of deep and surface acting between display rules and job satisfaction among customer services representatives

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**Abstract.** *Purpose.* The purpose of the present research was to investigate the mediating role of emotional labor strategies between display rule demands and job satisfaction among customer services employees. *Methodology.* The present study used a cross-sectional survey research design. Self-report measures in English language including Emotion Work Requirement Scale (Best et al., 1997); Emotional Labor Scale (Brotheridge, Lee, 2003); and job satisfaction subscale of Michigan Organizational Assessment Questionnaire (Camman et al., 1979) were used to operationalize the focal constructs of the present study in a purposive sample ( $N = 232$ ) of customer services employees of banking and telecommunication sectors from Islamabad, Rawalpindi, and Sargodha cities of Pakistan. *Findings.* Path analysis through Amos revealed that integrative display rules had a positive direct influence on deep acting and job satisfaction, whereas emotional masking had a positive direct influence on surface acting. Surface acting not only demonstrated the negative direct effect on job satisfaction but also fully mediated between emotional masking and job satisfaction. *Research limitations.* Owing to the self-report data and survey research design, the findings of the present study did not delineate the causal effects. However, our results do suggest that integrative display rules should be made explicit in customer services so that customer services employee regulate their emotions through deep acting. Emotional masking, on the other hand, should be discouraged as it may lead the employees to surface act, which in turn may reduce their job satisfaction. *Value of the results.* The present research empirically demonstrated that customer services employees following emotional masking display rules were more likely to engage in surface acting, which in turn may jeopardize their job satisfaction. Therefore, service organizations must promote integrative display rules and deep acting for the emotional regulation of customer services employees.

**Keywords:** surface acting; deep acting; integrative display rules; emotional masking; emotional labor; job satisfaction.

### Introduction

During the past couple of decades, customer services jobs have been considerably increased in Pakistan due to expansion in the telecommunication and banking sector. In Pakistan, the share of the

services sector in all economic spheres is consistently rising. According to A. Ahmad and H. Ahsan, the service sector accounts for more than 50% of the national GDP and provides more than one-third of the total jobs in the country (Ahmad, Ahsan, 2011). It is the fastest-growing sector in the Pakistani economy. Emotion work is a vital constituent of services jobs, which require either voice-to-voice or face-to-face interactions with the clients (Zapf, 2002). A. Hochschild labeled this emotional work as emotional labor and believed that emotional labor involved the emotional regulation for creating an overt facial and bodily display for earning a wage and it had the exchange value (Hochschild, 1983). Despite the significance of the service sector in the Pakistani economy and the prevailing phenomenon of emotional labor in our service organizations, the empirical literature on emotional labor, acting mechanisms of emotional labor, and its organizational outcomes is quite scarce. The present research is an empirical endeavor for understanding the dynamic relationships among display rule demands, emotional labor, and job satisfaction among employees of customer services in an indigenous context.

We indulge in emotional labor when we undertake emotional management to meet our job requirements of displaying certain emotions and suppressing others. A. A. Grandey conceived emotional labor as an emotional regulation process that may involve augmenting, feigning, or withholding emotions whereby employees manage their feeling and expressions to comply with organizational demands (Grandey, 2000; 2003). Emotional labor involves the process of emotional regulation to comply with display rules for the achievement of organizational goals (Diefendorf, Gosserand, 2003). Numerous researchers believe that regulation and management of emotional expressions is essential for effective performance in customer services jobs because these jobs may treat affective management as a marketplace product or service (Ashforth, Humphrey, 1993; Brotheridge, Grandey 2002; Grandey, 2000; Morris, Feldman, 1996). The employees may perceive emotional labor as part of their job (Diefendorff, Richard, Croyle, 2006).

## **Theoretical background**

### **Display rule demands**

Most of the research on emotional labor posits display rules as standards for suitable emotional expressions. Display rules are the behavioral standards that dictate which emotion is appropriate in which situation and how various emotions should be expressed to different people (Brotheridge, Grandey, 2002; Cropanzano, Weiss, Elias, 2004; Grandey, 2000; 2003). These display rules can be explicit in selection manuals or organizational policies, or they may be implicit in terms of organizational culture and norms. Expression of emotions in accordance with these display rule demands irrespective of actually felt emotions constitutes emotional labor and it may involve forging an unfeared emotion, exaggerating an emotion that is being experienced, or withholding the overt expression of an emotional experience (Grandey, 2003). Alternatively, we may say that perceived display rules refer to the degree to which employees conceive certain emotional expressions as part of their jobs.

Literature suggests three different types of emotional display rules (Becker, Cropanzano, 2011). First, differentiating emotional displays that involve the expression of negative emotions, such as anger or fear. Sometimes, bill collectors must comply with this type of display rule. Second, integrative emotional displays, which involve the expression of positive emotions, such as joyfulness, which many customer service representatives must display. Third, displaying the neutral emotions or emotional masking, which therapists and judges usually must portray. Since the present research was conducted in a sample of customer services employees, therefore it only focused on integrative display rules and differentiating display rules because few customer services jobs require emotional masking.

### **Acting mechanisms of emotional labor**

A. A. Grandey conceived two important acting mechanisms of emotional labor namely surface acting and deep acting. In surface acting, employees simulate emotions they have not felt, by modifying their overt looks (i.e., voice tone, facial expression, body gestures) (Grandey, 2000). Thus, in surface acting, people only change their emotional expressions without changing the real feeling component of the emotion. By modifying facial expressions or bodily gestures such as drooping shoulders, slumped head, or limping mouth, feelings may be changed to a corresponding state (Hochschild, 1993). B. E. Ashforth and R. H. Humphrey (1993) concluded that surface acting may refer to the disparity between displayed and felt emotion (Ashforth, Humphrey, 1993).

In contrast with surface acting, employees may change their feelings when they indulge in deep acting. A. Hochschild identified deep acting as (1) pressing feeling, whereby one deliberately endeavors to arouse or withhold an emotion, and (2) trained imagination, through which one intentionally evokes images, thoughts, and memories to arouse the associated emotion (Hochschild, 1983). In deep acting, employees may invoke appropriate emotions according to the display rule demands by using their past experiences or training (Kruml, Geddes, 2000). This means that in deep acting, emotions along with the feeling component are deliberately aroused, withheld, or formed.

### **Display rules and acting mechanisms of emotional labor**

A. A. Grandey with colleagues studied the dynamic interplay between display rules and acting mechanisms of emotional labor. They observed positive associations of both types of display rule demands with the surface as well as deep acting (Brotheridge, Grandey, 2002; Grandey, 2002). Thus, it may be inferred that perceiving high display rule demands of expressing or suppressing emotions may lead to increased emotional labor. Remarkably, in Brotheridge and Grandey's study, deep acting was more strongly correlated with the display rule of expressing positive emotions and surface acting had a stronger association with display rules of suppressing negative emotions. This means that indulging in surface or deep acting is contingent upon employees' perception of the relative importance of the display rule of expressing positive emotions (integrative display rule) or hiding negative emotions (emotional masking). Employees perceiving the display rule of hiding negative emotions as more important may prefer surface acting while employees who believe in the display rule of expressing positive emotions are more likely to deep act. Since deep acting involves cognitively restructuring the situation or deliberately inducing the positive thoughts to bring about the real feeling, it deems appropriate to conceive that deep acting should be more closely aligned with the expression of emotions than with their suppression. Moreover, since surface acting usually entails faking or hiding actually felt emotions, therefore, emotional masking may lead to surface acting.

### **Emotional labor and job satisfaction**

Being the core component of many service jobs requiring interpersonal interaction, emotional labor influences many organizational and individual outcomes (Gosserand, 2003). Emotional management in compliance with display rule demands may lead to more effective interpersonal functioning and better performance (Adelmann, 1995; Arvey et al., 1998). On the other hand, emotional labor may also lead to certain negative employees' outcomes, such as job dissatisfaction, burnout, and occupational stress (Grandey, 2000; Morris, Feldman, 1996).

Job satisfaction is one of the most studied outcomes in relation to emotional labor and it refers to an assessment of how one feels about one's job (Weiss, 2002). Research evidence generally suggests that employees with high levels of emotional management are less likely to be satisfied with their jobs. Nevertheless, counter-evidence is also available in the relevant literature. For example, P. K. Adelmann observed that waiters with high levels of emotional regulation who expressed their genuine emotions were more satisfied with their job as compared to their counterparts who

displayed fake emotions (Adelmann, 1995). P. K. Adelmann's research is one of the few investigations that reported a positive association between job satisfaction and emotional labor. Usually, studies demonstrate a negative association between emotional labor and job satisfaction for employees who engage in surface acting (Abraham, 1998; Morris, Feldman, 1997). For instance, D. R. Rutter and P. J. Fielding reported that prison officers who concealed their emotions in the workplace were more likely to experience stress and job dissatisfaction (Rutter, Fielding, 1988). Nevertheless, some research evidence also suggested the positive consequences of emotional labor on both individual and organizational levels.

B. E. Ashforth and R. H. Humphrey, for example, observed that strong adherence to explicit display rule demands may lead to task efficiency and improved service quality on an organizational level and might boost employees' well-being and self-efficacy on an individual level (Ashforth, Humphrey, 1993). In the same vein, W. Strickland, M. B. Tolich, and A. Wharton reported the positive influence of emotional labor on job security, satisfaction, and self-esteem (Strickland, 1992; Tolich, 1993; Wharton, 1993) whereas C. Conrad and K. Witte observed that emotional labor might serve to lessen occupational stress (Conrad, Witte, 1994). This signifies that emotional labor may be conceived as a double-edged sword and additional research is needed to disentangle the emotional labor processes that may lead to positive or negative outcomes. One plausible explanation for the differential influences of emotional labor on job satisfaction may lie in the acting mechanisms (deep and surface acting) of emotional labor.

### **Acting mechanisms of emotional labor and job satisfaction**

It is evident from the aforementioned literature review that research on job satisfaction as a corollary to emotional labor has not reached some definite conclusion as it has found both negative (Abraham, 1998; Morris, Feldman, 1997) and positive relationships (Adelmann, 1995). The acting mechanism employees choose in performing emotional labor may offer a pertinent explanation for these contradictory findings. Surface acting, for example, may foster a sense of inauthenticity among employees, which may culminate in job dissatisfaction. On the other hand, employees undertaking the deep acting path to the emotional labor may experience personal accomplishment, which in turn may make them more satisfied with their (Kruml, Geddes, 2000). N. Nguyen and F. Stinglhamber found that surface acting negatively predicted job satisfaction of service employees (Nguyen, Stinglhamber, 2018). Recently, it was found that deep acting is a positive and surface acting is a negative correlate of job satisfaction in a sample of Chinese hotel employees (Wen et al., 2019).

### **Display rules and job satisfaction**

The individuals conform to display rules by feeling more positively (i.e., deep acting), they may receive benefits directly from their own positive emotions as well as indirectly through the positive interactions they have with others (Humphrey et al., 2015). The potential harm of display rules is that these external demands may be experienced as controlling and infringe upon the private internal experiences of employees.

In their meta-analysis, J. D. Kammeyer-Mueller with colleagues reported that positive display rules were significantly correlated with job satisfaction ( $\rho = .12$ ) and performance ( $\rho = .16$ ), but uncorrelated with stress / exhaustion ( $\rho = .00$ ). They further found that negative display rules were significantly correlated with job satisfaction ( $\rho = -.16$ ) and stress / exhaustion ( $\rho = .27$ ), but non-significantly correlated with performance ( $\rho = .08$ ) (Kammeyer-Mueller et al., 2013). In contrast to positive display rules, negative display rules do not appear to have many benefits for workers (Humphrey et al., 2015).

A. Adil with colleagues cogently explained the differential influence of display rule demands on the job satisfaction of employees in terms of emotional dissonance. They argued that when an

employee actually felt positive emotions and expressed them in compliance with the integrative display rule towards the clients, she or he was unlikely to experience any sort of emotional dissonance (Adil et al., 2012). Such an employee should have a positive evaluation of her or his job resulting in higher levels of job satisfaction. Conversely, while confronting an obstinate and demanding client, a customer services employee might actually experience insult, anger, frustration, or any other negative emotion, but she or he had to suppress it and fake positive emotions in compliance with the emotional masking rule. This discrepancy between the felt and expressed emotion might lead to emotional dissonance, which in turn, may reduce employee's job satisfaction. Furthermore, by displaying positive emotions may result in physiological changes that may enhance well-being, therefore, positive display rules may spawn positive affect in employees leading to improved levels of job satisfaction (Anafarta, 2015). In accordance with the aforementioned literature, the present study hypothesized:

*Hypothesis 1: Integrative display rule will lead to deep acting whereas emotional masking will lead to surface acting.*

*Hypothesis 2: Deep acting will be positive whereas surface acting will be a negative predictor of job satisfaction.*

*Hypothesis 3: Integrative display rule will be positive whereas emotional masking will be negatively related to job satisfaction.*

*Hypothesis 4a: Surface acting will mediate between emotional masking and job satisfaction.*

*Hypothesis 4b: Deep acting will mediate between integrative display rules and job satisfaction.*

## Method

### Sample

The present study was conducted in a purposive sample of 232 customer services representatives from the banking and cellular service sectors of Rawalpindi, Islamabad, and Sargodha cities. The sample comprised an equal number of customer services representatives from both sectors. Moreover, gender was equally represented in the sample (i.e., 58 men and 58 women from each sector). The baseline education of the participants was 14 years of education. 69.39% of the participants had graduation degrees whereas 30.61% had post-graduate degrees. The mean age of the sample was 25.96 years with a standard deviation 6.02 years (age range was 20-58 years). Participants had 1.5 to 13 years of job experience ( $M = 5.03$ ,  $SD = 3.97$ ) and it was divided into two categories in terms of job experience. 41.81% of the sample (97 individuals) had more than three years of job experience, whereas employees with a job experience of fewer than three years constituted 58.19% of the sample (135 individuals). Participants were approached in their offices after getting official permission from their managers. In sum, 350 questionnaires were distributed among the CSRs, and 232 completed questionnaires were received back with a response rate of 66.29%.

The inclusion criteria for the participants were limited to the full-time CSRs of cellular services and banks with a minimum education of 14 years and minimum job experience of one year. These criteria were justified as the current study aimed at exploring various aspects of emotional labor, which could best be done in customer services jobs. Considering the time constraints of the current study, cellular service providers, and banks constituted the best occupational categories for the customer services jobs, which could be accessed within the given period. The baseline of graduation was necessary as all the instruments of the current study were in the English language and it appeared that individuals with an educational level less than graduation might encounter serious limitations about the comprehension of the scales.

## Instruments

### *Emotional Labor Scale*

The emotional labor was measured using Emotional Labor Scale with a five-point Likert type response format (1 = “never”, 5 = “always”) (Brotheridge, Lee, 2003). Deep Acting subscale comprised of three items with a score range of 3 to 15 and assessed the degree to which a CSR altered his (her) feelings to abide by the display rules. High scores on this subscale suggested that the respondent was more likely to engage in deep acting as a mechanism of performing emotional labor. Surface Acting subscale comprising of three items measured the degree of expression of those emotions that were actually not experienced. The range of the score on this subscale was 3 to 15 and high scores indicated greater indulgence in surface acting. None of the items was reverse scored. Satisfactory levels of internal consistency for the deep acting and surface acting have been reported by the authors ( $\alpha = 0.89$ ,  $\alpha = .86$ ).

### *Emotion Work Requirements Scale*

Display rule demands were measured by the seven-item Emotion Work Requirements Scale (Best et al., 1997) on a five-point Likert response format (1 = “never required”, 5 = “always required”). It assessed the degree to which CSRs perceived that their emotional display was being shaped by the display rule demands. None of the items was reverse scored and the score ranged from 7 to 35 where high scores indicated more stringent display rules and vice versa. The Emotion Work Requirements Scale (EWRS) is comprised of two subscales. Integrative display rules subscale consisted of the first four items of the scale and measured the extent to which the employees were required to display positive emotions. The score ranged from 4 to 20 where high scores represented a more stringent display rule of exhibiting positive emotions and vice versa ( $\alpha = .78$ , Brotheridge, Grandey, 2002). Emotional masking subscale measured the extent to which the employees were required to hide or suppress the negative emotions on their jobs. It consisted of the last three items of the scale with a score range of 3 to 15. High scores represented a more stringent display rule of hiding/suppressing negative emotions and vice versa ( $\alpha = .77$ , Brotheridge, Grandey, 2002).

### *Job Satisfaction Subscale of Michigan Organizational Assessment Questionnaire*

The three-item job satisfaction subscale of the Michigan Organizational Assessment Questionnaire (Camman et al., 1979) was used to assess global job satisfaction of the CSRs on a six-point Likert scale of agreement (“6”) and disagreement (“1”). A high score indicated high levels of job satisfaction and vice versa. The subscale had demonstrated excellent coefficients of internal consistency in various studies ( $\alpha = .77$ , Camman et al., 1979;  $\alpha = .93$ , Grandey, 2003). The first item of the scale was reversed scored.

## Results

The obtained data were analyzed through SPSS and Amos. Descriptive statistics, Pearson correlations, and internal consistency coefficients of various measurement devices have been reported in Table 1. As evident in Table 1, all scales constituted internally consistent measurements of their corresponding constructs as Cronbach's alphas of all the scales were greater than .70. The correlation matrix depicted that all variables of the present study were correlated in the expected direction.

Path analysis was undertaken through Amos and the structural model based on the sample was tested for invariance in separate samples of men and women. The proposed path model demonstrated a very good fit to the data ( $\chi^2 = .19$ ,  $df = 2$ ,  $p = .91$ , CFI = .99, GFI = .98, RMSEA = .001). The path diagram for the whole sample along with standardized path coefficients of direct effects is presented in Figure 1.

Table 1. Descriptive statistics and interscale correlations ( $N = 232$ )

Variables	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	$\alpha$	2	3	4	5
1. Integrative display rules	14.51	3.06	.72	.41***	.27**	.10	.19**
2. Emotional masking	9.66	2.87	.75	-	.11	.31***	.04
3. Deep Acting	9.40	2.71	.73	-	-	.24**	.07
4. Surface Acting	9.03	2.83	.71	-	-	-	-.16*
5. Job Satisfaction	13.28	3.39	.76	-	-	-	-

Note: \* –  $p < .05$ , \*\* –  $p < .01$ , \*\*\* $p < .001$

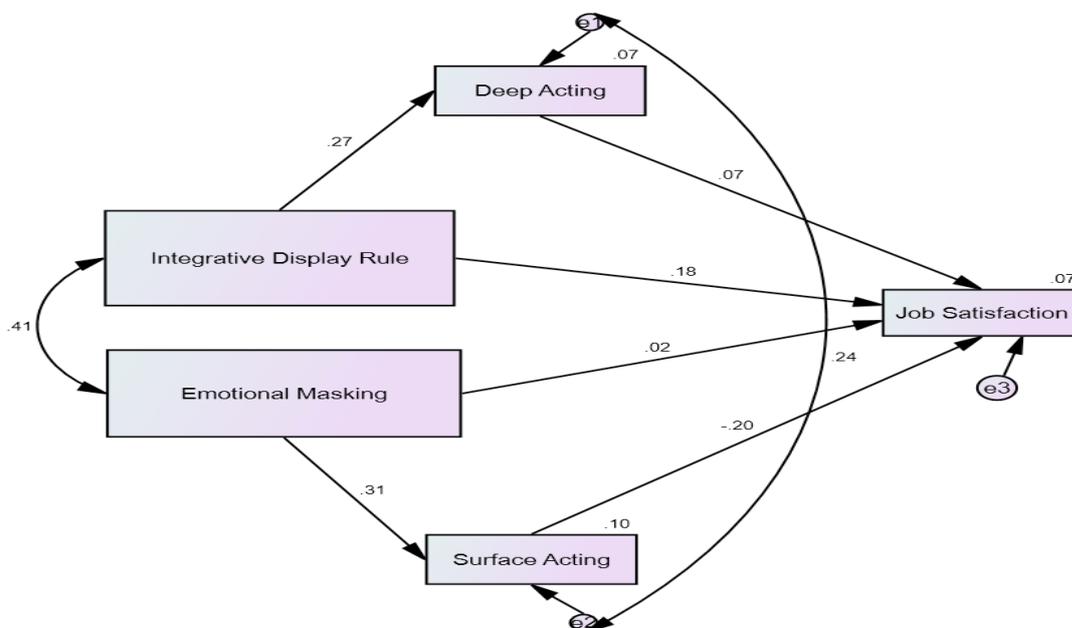


Figure 1. Path diagram of the proposed model of the present study (whole sample)

Findings of the path analysis are reported in Table 2. As hypothesized, integrative display rules positively predicted deep acting whereas emotional masking had a positive direct effect on surface acting. Integrative display rules had a significant positive direct effect on job satisfaction whereas emotional masking failed to demonstrate any direct effect on job satisfaction. Surface acting had an inverse direct effect on job satisfaction whereas deep acting had no direct effect on job satisfaction. Finally, emotional masking or the display rule of suppressing negative emotions had a significant indirect effect on job satisfaction through surface acting. Deep acting did not mediate between display rule and job satisfaction. The structural model was tested across genders by comparing unconstrained and fully constrained models. Results revealed that the model remained invariant in samples of men and women ( $\Delta\chi^2 = 8.35, df = 6, p = .21$ ).

Table 2. Standardized Direct and Indirect Effects of Focal Constructs on Job Satisfaction ( $N = 232$ )

Paths	Whole Sample				Men				Women			
	$\beta$	<i>SE</i>	95% CI		$\beta$	<i>SE</i>	95% CI		$\beta$	<i>SE</i>	95% CI	
			<i>LL</i>	<i>UL</i>			<i>LL</i>	<i>UL</i>			<i>LL</i>	<i>UL</i>
+ DR → DA	.27***	.06	.16	.38	.22*	.09	.02	.41	.32***	.07	.19	.45
- DR → SA	.31***	.06	.19	.43	.21*	.09	.03	.37	.40***	.09	.22	.56
+ DR → JS	.18*	.08	.02	.35	.13	.12	-.09	.38	.25*	.11	.04	.48
- DR → JS	.03	.08	-.12	.17	.10	.09	-.11	.28	-.05	.11	-.29	.17
DA → JS	.07	.07	-.07	.20	.19*	.08	.03	.34	-.05	.10	-.27	.15
SA → JS	-.21**	.08	-.35	-.05	-.25*	.10	-.43	-.04	-.13	.12	-.36	.11
+ DR → DA → JS	.02	.02	-.03	.06	.04	.03	.000	.11	-.02	.04	-.11	.04
- DR → SA → JS	-.06**	.03	-.12	-.02	-.05*	.03	-.11	-.001	-.05	.05	-.16	.04

Note: + DR = integrative display rules; - DR = emotional masking; DA = deep acting; SA = surface acting; JS = job satisfaction; \* –  $p < .05$ , \*\* –  $p < .01$ , \*\*\* –  $p < .001$ .

## Discussion

The findings of the present study supported our first hypothesis as integrative display rules predicted deep acting and emotional masking predicted surface acting. In surface acting, the employee is supposed to suppress his (her) real feelings, he (she) fakes i.e., hide the true emotions and that is exactly what display rule demands of hiding negative emotions dictate. It was found that emotional masking was more strongly associated with surface acting (Brotheridge, Grandey, 2002). Since surface acting involves feigning the unexperienced emotions or suppressing the actual feelings, therefore it may relate more strongly with emotional masking rather than the integrative display rule of expressing positive emotions. Display rule demand of hiding negative emotions was the only type of display rule demands which significantly predicted surface acting (Gosserand, 2003).

The finding, therefore, implies that employees who perceive emotional masking as the dominant organizational display rule are more likely to indulge in faking and (or) suppressing emotions. Conversely, in deep acting, employees may cognitively restructure the appraisal of the situation or intentionally induce positive cognitions to feel the real positive emotions they need to express to their customers. Thus, they are naturally aligned with the integrative rule of displaying positive emotions rather than suppressing or hiding negative emotions. This finding of the present study is also in line with pertinent literature as J. M. Diefendorff and G. J. Greguras found that display rules were positively related to surface acting across a variety of occupations and organizations (Diefendorff, Greguras, 2009). Integrative rules were positively associated with deep acting and emotional masking was positively associated with surface acting (Diefendorf, et al., 2005). Meta-analysis of research on emotional labor demonstrated that display rules were differentially associated with deep as well as surface acting (Bono, Vey, 2005).

The second hypothesis of the present study postulated deep acting as positive and surface acting as a negative predictor of job satisfaction. Results of the present study yielded partial support to this hypothesis as surface acting indeed turned out as a negative predictor of job satisfaction, however, deep acting was nonsignificant in relation to job satisfaction. The hypothesis was formulated in accordance with A. A. Grandey's finding who reported a negative relationship of both the mechanisms with job satisfaction (Grandey, 1999). Deep acting may lead to a sense of accomplishment as the emotional expressions exhibited through deep acting seem to be more original, therefore the non-significant and positive relationship of deep acting and job satisfaction is quite justified.

The direction of the relationship between surface acting and job satisfaction aligned with previous studies indicating that employees who perform emotional labor through surface acting would be more likely to be dissatisfied with their jobs. Our results suggest that job satisfaction is influenced by the choice of emotional labor strategies, for example, inauthenticity may develop a corollary to being engaged in surface acting, which may lead to job dissatisfaction. On the other hand, employees who engage in deep acting may experience a sense of personal achievement resulting in higher levels of job satisfaction (Kruml, Geddes, 2000). This was exactly what the current study did find i.e., employees engaged in surface acting were actually found to be less satisfied with their jobs. T. A. Judge with colleagues reported similar findings in a sample of customer services representatives (CSRs) as they observed that deep acting was not related to job satisfaction, however, surface acting had a significant negative influence on job satisfaction of CSRs (Judge et al., 2009). Similarly, another study on a sample of service sector employees found deep acting was unrelated to the employees' job satisfaction, nevertheless, superficial acting resulted in lowered levels of job satisfaction (Walsh, Bartikowski, 2013). Surface acting may lead to the accumulation of occupational stress in employees that may hamper their satisfaction with the jobs (Nixon et al., 2010).

The third hypothesis of this study postulated that integrative display rules would have a positive relationship and emotional masking would have a negative relationship with job satisfaction. Data of the present study yielded partial support for this hypothesis as only integrative display rules were significantly related to job satisfaction. Research evidence on the association between display rules and job satisfaction is far from being conclusive. A negative relation between emotional masking and job satisfaction was found by some researchers reported a negative association between integrative display rule and job satisfaction (Abraham, 1998; Zapf et al., 1999; 2001). While complying with the integrative display rules, employees are more likely to be authentic and positive which may foster a sense of personal efficacy and accomplishment that may enhance their job satisfaction level. Conversely, in their effort to abide by emotional masking, employees are likely to experience the aversive state of emotional dissonance by noticing a breach between their felt and expressed emotions that may culminate in inauthenticity and frustration. Such aversive states of mind may lower employees' job satisfaction.

The final hypothesis of the present study posited mediating role of emotional labor strategies between display rule demands and job satisfaction. The result of the present research provided partial support to this hypothesis. Emotional masking demonstrated a significant negative indirect effect on job satisfaction via surface acting, however, deep acting did not mediate between integrative display rules and job satisfaction. Our findings suggest that complying with the emotional masking does not result in lowered job satisfaction (since the direct effect of emotional masking on job satisfaction was not significant), rather it is the acting mechanism of emotional labor i.e., the surface acting (which employees choose to abide by the display rule of suppression of negative emotions) that leads to lowered job satisfaction.

### **Limitations and suggestions**

The cross-sectional nature of the present study precludes the causal interpretation of the findings. Future research should take a longitudinal approach or experience sampling methodology

To overcome the shortcomings of cross-sectional design. Furthermore, the use of self-report measures for all the focal constructs might have led to mono-method bias resulting in inflated relationships among the constructs. However, an inspection of the correlation matrix revealed that none of the correlations were aberrantly high.

The present research focused on two emotional labor strategies i.e., deep acting and surface acting in accordance with A. A. Grandey's conception of emotional labor (Grandey, 2000). B. E. Ashforth and R. H. Humphrey also conceived genuine acting as the third type of acting mechanism of emotional labor (Ashforth, Humphrey, 1993). Future research may also focus on genuine acting and should explore if it is conceptually different and may explain something beyond the deep acting in the outcome measures. Other relevant outcome measures in relation to emotional labor may include burnout, emotional exhaustion, occupational stress, and job-related well-being.

The present research did not focus on the dispositional variables that could have been relevant to emotional labor and job satisfaction. Affectivity seems to be an essential disposition in this context as previous research demonstrates its empirical relationship with job satisfaction (Chu et al., 2003) as well as emotional labor (Brotheridge, Grandey, 2002; Schaubroek, Jones, 2000). Therefore, exploring the role of affectivity in relation to display rule demands, emotional labor, and its outcomes is a worthwhile research pursuit.

The scale for operationalizing job satisfaction in the present study was a three-item subscale that tapped global job satisfaction. It might not be sensitive enough to assess the complexity of job satisfaction construct in terms of its various facets such as pay and promotions, nature of work,

etc. Further research should operationalize job satisfaction at the facet level so that the differential influences of emotional labor strategies may be assessed on various domains of job satisfaction. Overall, the current study justified job satisfaction as a consequence of emotional labor and lent support to A. A. Grandey's model of emotional labor (Grandey, 2000).

## Conclusion

Overall, our findings indicated not only the protective role of integrative display rules in improving the job satisfaction of employees in customer services but also its positive influence on employees' engagement in deep acting. The mediating role of surface acting between emotional masking and job dissatisfaction reveals the mechanism through which emotional masking jeopardizes the job satisfaction of employees in customer services. Employees who perceive high degree of emotional masking as the organizational display rule demands are more likely to employ surface acting as their predominant mode of emotional regulation, which may reduce their job satisfaction. Therefore, service industry must incorporate integrative display rule demands in their service structure if they want to have satisfied employees. At the same time, the emotional masking must be discouraged so that employees may not feel forced to surface act and remain satisfied with their jobs.

## Disclosure of conflict of interest

The authors declare there are no conflicts of interest.

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# Глубинные и поверхностные действия как медиатор связи между правилами демонстрации эмоций и удовлетворённостью трудом у сотрудников службы поддержки клиентов

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**Аннотация.** Цель. Цель настоящего исследования заключалась в изучении опосредующей роли стратегий эмоционального труда<sup>1</sup> между требованиями правил демонстрации эмоций и удовлетворённостью работой среди сотрудников службы поддержки клиентов. **Методология.** В настоящем исследовании использовался дизайн поперечного среза с помощью опроса. Измерения осуществлялись на основе самоотчётов на английском языке и включали Шкалу требований к эмоциональной работе (Best et al., 1997), Шкалу эмоционального труда (Brotheridge, Lee, 2003) и субшкалу удовлетворённости трудом Мичиганского опросника организационной оценки (Camman et al., 1979). Показатели этих шкал использовались для операционализации основных конструкторов настоящего исследования на целевой выборке ( $N = 232$ ) сотрудников службы поддержки клиентов банковского и телекоммуникационного секторов в городах Исламабад, Равалпинди и Саргодха в Пакистане. **Результаты.** Путевой анализ, проведённый с помощью пакета AMOS, показал, что правила интегративного отображения эмоций оказывали прямой положительный эффект на глубинные действия и удовлетворённость трудом, в то время как маскировка эмоций оказывала прямой положительный эффект на поверхностные действия. Поверхностные действия не только обнаружили негативный прямой эффект на удовлетворённость трудом, но и полностью опосредовали эмоциональную маскировку и удовлетворённость трудом. **Ограничения исследования.** Из-за самоотчётного характера данных и опросного дизайна результаты настоящего исследования не позволили выявить причинно-следственные связи. Тем не менее, наши результаты показывают, что правила интегративного отображения должны быть чётко сформулированы в сфере обслуживания клиентов, чтобы сотрудники службы поддержки регулировали свои эмоции с помощью глубинных действий. Эмоциональную маскировку, с другой стороны, не следует поощрять, так как это может привести к поверхностным действиям сотрудников, что, в свою очередь, может снизить их удовлетворённость работой. **Ценность результатов.** Настоящее исследование эмпирически продемонстрировало, что сотрудники службы поддержки клиентов, соблюдающие правила демонстрации эмоций, маскируя их, с большей вероятностью будут вовлечены в поверхностные действия, что, в свою очередь, может поставить под угрозу их удовлетворённость работой. Поэтому обслуживающие организации должны продвигать интегративные правила отображения и глубинные действия для эмоциональной регуляции сотрудников службы поддержки клиентов.

**Ключевые слова:** эмоциональный труд; поверхностные действия; глубинные действия; интегративные правила демонстрации эмоций; эмоциональная маскировка; удовлетворённость трудом.

<sup>1</sup> Эмоциональный труд» определяется как действия, направленные на изменение интенсивности или других качественных характеристик эмоций (Hochschild, 1979). При этом описываются два типа норм эмоциональной культуры поведения сотрудников организации: 1) правила чувствования (*feeling rules*), которые предписывают, какие эмоции и какой интенсивности или длительности нужно переживать в данной ситуации; 2) правила выражения чувств (*display rules*), диктующие, когда и как нужно выражать эмоции. Кроме того, можно говорить о том, что сотрудники вовлечены в поверхностное исполнение (*surface acting*) эмоций или, другими словами, инициируют изменение внешнего выражения и поведения в тех случаях, когда действуют в соответствии с нормативными ожиданиями организации. Например, сотрудники часто «надевают счастливое лицо» в процессе взаимодействия с клиентом или в те моменты, когда их профессиональные задачи требуют соответствующего эмоционального выражения. О глубоком исполнении (*deep acting*) следует говорить в ситуациях, когда сотрудник проявляет усилия для того, чтобы реально испытывать ожидаемые организацией эмоции (Hochschild, 1979, с. 560–563). *Прим. ред.*