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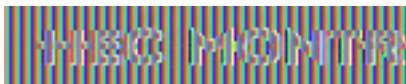
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CHAPTER 12

EMOTION REGULATION STRATEGIES AMONG CUSTOMER SERVICE EMPLOYEES: A MOTIVATIONAL APPROACH

Michel Cossette and Ursula Hess

ABSTRACT

In this study, we proposed and tested a motivational framework of emotional labor. This model incorporates positive and negative affect, motivation to express positive emotions, emotion regulation strategies (emotion suppression, reappraisal, and naturally felt emotions), and job satisfaction. Based on a sample of 147 employees, results generally supported our hypotheses and indicated that employees' motivation to express positive emotions leads to the expression of the naturally felt emotions and the use of reappraisal. In contrast, motivated employees used less emotion suppression in their work. Hence, employees' motivation seems to facilitate the adoption of a more authentic stance toward customers. Moreover, employees' affectivity impacted emotional labor strategies. Finally, replicating past findings, job satisfaction was associated with a more authentic demeanor. This chapter contributes to emotional labor theory by extending our comprehension of emotional labor antecedents, which have been relatively under-investigated by

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emotion researchers. Moreover, this study demonstrated that self-determination theory is a relevant framework to better understand the emotional labor process. Overall, this motivational approach to the study of emotional labor can lead to more extensive research on emotional labor antecedents.

Emotional labor is the requirement to regulate emotions as part of one's job (Hochschild, 1983). In customer service jobs, employees are usually expected to express positive emotions and suppress negative emotions (Adelmann, 1995; Brotheridge & Grandey, 2002; Sutton & Rafaeli, 1988). Such emotional demands have been called display rules (Diefendorff & Gosserand, 2003; Gosserand & Diefendorff, 2005). Employees may adopt different strategies to regulate their emotions in order to comply with display rules (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993; Brotheridge & Grandey, 2002; Brotheridge & Lee, 2003; Grandey, 2000, 2003; Hochschild, 1983; Totterdell & Holman, 2003). Two main emotion regulation strategies have been described in the emotional labor literature, namely surface acting and deep acting (Brotheridge & Lee, 2002, 2003; Diefendorff, Croyle, & Gosserand, 2005; Grandey, 2003). However, employees may also simply express what they feel (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993; Diefendorff et al., 2005), although less attention has been devoted to the expression of naturally felt emotions.

So far prior research has focused on emotional labor consequences and less attention has been devoted to its antecedents. Researchers investigated dispositional antecedents and found that personality traits impact the surface acting strategy but not deep acting (Brotheridge & Lee, 2002, 2003; Diefendorff et al., 2005). Moreover, Diefendorff and Gosserand (2003) developed a model of emotional labor that considers display rules to be a type of work goal that individuals strive to attain. They showed that employees who were more committed to display rules were more likely to regulate their affect either by deep acting or surface acting, and displayed effective and positive emotions at work (Gosserand & Diefendorff, 2005). Hence, it seems that emotion regulation may be considered as motivated acts (Rubin, Tardino, Daus, & Munz, 2005). Thus, the first purpose of this study was to examine the role of motivation in predicting emotional labor strategies. The second purpose was to build upon previous efforts by elaborating and testing a motivational framework of the emotional labor process that incorporates employees' affectivity.

EMOTION REGULATION AT WORK

Research on the regulation of emotions has focused on two main strategies: surface acting and deep acting (Brotheridge & Lee, 2002, 2003; Diefendorff et al., 2005; Grandey, 2003). When surface acting, an employee modifies the observable aspects of the unsuitable, typically negative, emotion by suppressing its expression or by faking positive affect (PA). In contrast, deep acting involves the management of inner feelings in order to feel and express the required emotion. In order to guide emotional labor research, Grandey (2000, 2003) proposed the use of Emotion Regulation Theory (Gross, 1998; Gross & Thompson, 2007). Grandey (2000) argued that some emotional labor strategies can be understood as antecedent-focused emotion regulation strategies, whereas others represent response-focused emotion regulation. Deep acting is a strategy that aims to change the employees' perception of the situation. This can be achieved through reappraising the situation by taking another's point of view. Reappraisal (Gross, 1998; Lazarus, 1974) is an antecedent-focused emotion regulation strategy that takes the form of construing a potentially emotional situation in a way that decreases its emotional relevance (Lazarus, 1991). Because reappraisal is antecedent to a potentially upsetting event, if effective, it actually preempts full-blown emotional responses. In contrast, surface acting is a form of response-focused emotion regulation because the employee manipulates only the expressive aspect the emotion (Gross, 1998). That is, emotion suppression can only be applied once the emotion is experienced.

A third way for employees to "regulate" emotions is to express spontaneously their felt emotions (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993; Cossette, 2008; Cossette & Hess, 2009; Diefendorff et al., 2005). In that case, employees do not change their expressed affect and the display is congruent with inner feelings. In other words, employees do not feel emotional dissonance, defined as a gap between employees' felt emotion and expressed emotion (Abraham, 1998, 1999a; Morris & Feldman, 1996a, 1997; Zapf, 2002; Zapf, Vogt, Seifert, Mertini, & Isic, 1999), and also called fake emotion display (Hülshager & Schewe, 2011). It is important to include this third strategy because emotional dissonance is damaging for employee well-being (for a review see Hülshager & Schewe, 2011; Zapf, 2002) and has negative impact on job attitudes (Abraham, 1998, 1999a, 1999b; Bono & Vey, 2005; Hülshager & Schewe, 2011).

EMPLOYEES' MOTIVATION TO REGULATE EMOTIONS

As mentioned above, emotional labor strategies can be considered as motivated acts (Cossette, 2008; Cossette & Hess, 2009, 2010; Rubin et al., 2005). From this perspective, the motivation to regulate one's emotions becomes an important concept for the understanding of how emotional labor is performed and its consequences on employees' outcomes. Hence, in our conception, we consider motivation to perform emotional labor as a task motivation (Fernet, Senécal, Guay, Marsh, & Dowson, 2008). With the few exceptions mentioned above, the effect of motivation on emotional labor has not been investigated nor discussed.

There are various theories that deal with motivation at work (Latham, 2007; Steers, Porter, & Bigley, 1996). In line with an expectancy and valence approach to motivation (Gagné & Deci, 2005), Gosserand and Diefendorff's (2005) adopted a motivational framework to investigate how emotional labor is performed. Based on their theoretical framework (Diefendorff & Gosserand, 2003), they explicitly incorporated motivation as a mechanism to explain why some individuals follow display rules and others do not. The key concept is commitment to display rules, defined as "a person's intention to extend effort toward displaying organizationally desired emotions, persist in displaying these emotions over time, and not abandon the display rules under difficult conditions" (Gosserand & Diefendorff, 2005, p. 1257). Their approach is an important step toward better comprehension of how and why employees perform emotional labor. They argued that in order to follow the display rules and regulate their emotions employees must value the display rule. Empirical findings support these authors' reasoning. That is, employees who were more committed to display rules were more likely to regulate their emotion either by surface acting or by deep acting (Gosserand & Diefendorff, 2005).

Gosserand and Diefendorff (2005) theoretical framework is based on expectancy – valence theory. Although this approach has been widely used in research on work motivation, Gagné and Deci (2005) mentioned that the central issue in this approach is the "amount of total motivation a person has for a task, so the type of motivation is not considered in making predictions" (p. 340). These authors argued that it is important to distinguish between different forms of motivation because they have differential consequences on employees and organizations (Gagné & Deci, 2005). Hence, in an emotional labor context, one should ask the

following question: are employees committed to display rules because they “have to” or because it is part of who they are? More specifically, it seems the more employees identify with their job role, the more willing they are to regulate their emotions (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993). In order to consider simultaneously the type of motivation and the notion of identification, the present research employs the Self-Determination Theory (SDT) framework (Deci & Ryan, 1985, 2000; Ryan & Deci, 2001).

SELF-DETERMINATION THEORY AND EMOTION REGULATION

SDT may help to better understand how and why emotional labor is performed, since SDT especially distinguishes between two general types of motivation: self-determined motivations and non-self-determined motivations. The most self-determined form of motivation is intrinsic motivation. Intrinsically motivated behavior occurs when a person actively performs a task for the pleasure of doing it and for personal growth (Deci & Ryan, 1985, 2000; Gagné & Deci, 2005). Intrinsically motivated activities are performed in the absence of a contingency.

SDT further posits different types of extrinsic motivations, which vary in their degree of self-determination. The least self-determined form of extrinsic motivation is external regulation, where behavior depends directly on the contingency between the behavior and a desired consequence (approval, rewards, punishment, etc.). Other types of extrinsic motivations occur when a person internalizes the value of a behavior (Deci & Ryan, 1985, 2000; Gagné & Deci, 2005). Internalization is “an active, natural process in which individuals attempt to transform socially sanctioned mores or requests into personally endorsed values and self-regulations” (Deci & Ryan, 2000). In order to describe the degree to which an external motivation has been internalized, three different processes are described: introjection, identification, and integration (Deci & Ryan, 1985, 2000; Gagné & Deci, 2005). *Introjected motivation* occurs when a person’s behavior “is taken in by the person but has not been accepted as his or her own” (Gagné & Deci, 2005, p. 334). A person may identify with the value of a behavior. When a behavior or an activity corresponds to a self-selected goal, then this person has an *identified motivation*. Lastly, a behavior completely internalized with other aspects of oneself corresponds to the *integrated motivation*. A person behaving along an *integrated form of motivation* feels that the behavior is an

integral part of who s/he is. Therefore, the behavior is more central to the identity and the person is more likely to act in ways that are consistent with one's self (Deci & Ryan, 1985, 2000; Gagné & Deci, 2005). The *identified* and *integrated* motivations are considered self-determined forms of extrinsic motivation (Gagné & Deci, 2005).

In regard to emotional labor, intrinsic motivation seems not theoretically relevant since an employee engages in emotional labor to satisfy an organizational demand, which by definition gives an external focus to the motivation to regulate emotions. Lépine and Cossette (2010) gave empirical support to this assertion by testing the factorial validity of all forms of motivation to perform emotional labor. When intrinsic motivation was dropped, confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) supported the existence of the extrinsic forms of motivation (for a discussion on self-determined motivation to withhold negative emotions, see also Kim, Deci, & Zuckerman, 2002).

In the context of emotional labor, emotional demands not only reflect organizational expectations but also reflect an organizational value, which is serving the customer with positive emotions and without negative emotions. If employees' values also focus on serving the customer with the prescribed emotions, then organizational demands become congruent with the employees' self. Hence to the degree that employees endorse the organizational demands imposed on them, their motivation can be self-determined. Specifically, when employees endorse the importance of regulating their emotions toward the customers, it should become easier for them to be more authentic in their interactions and to spontaneously regulate emotions in line with job demands. In cases where emotional labor is required, the adoption of an empathic stance toward the customer (reappraisal and expressing naturally positive emotions), or the focus on positive aspects of the situation, is easier as well. Hence, we posit that self-determined motivation will lead to the adoption of antecedent-focused emotion regulation strategies (reappraisal) and the expression of an authentic smile (naturally felt emotions). In contrast, less self-determined motivation should lead to the adoption of response-focused strategy such as emotion suppression and emotion faking.

The notion of endorsement has already been discussed in the emotional labor literature. Specifically, Ashforth and Humphrey (1993) argued that employees who are strongly identified with their role are more easily convinced of the importance of regulating emotions toward the customers. In that case, expressing the prescribed emotions becomes congruent with the employee's self. By contrast, another employee may fake an emotion so as to

not be criticized by a superior. These situations have been referred to as regulating one's emotions in good faith when employees accept the underlying display rule or regulating emotions in bad faith in cases where the display rule is not accepted (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993; Hochschild, 1983; Rafaeli & Sutton, 1987; Zapf, 2002). In other words, these two situations reflect emotion regulation in a self-determined way (regulating in good faith) or in non-self-determined way (regulating in bad faith).

It is important to note that most human behavior is determined by more than one underlying motive. For example, serving a customer with a smile may be congruent with one's values but also because not doing so would result in a poor performance appraisal. Hence, when assessing the different forms of motivation, participants rate the degree to which different reasons to behave in a certain way are true for them. The motivations form a quasi-simplex pattern, that is, each subscale correlates most positively with the subscale closest to it and less positively or negatively with subscales farther from it (Gagné & Deci, 2005). Subscales can then be combined algebraically to form a relative autonomy index (Grolnick & Ryan, 1987; Ryan & Connell, 1989). This index reflects the relative contributions of employees' motivations. Thus, an employee who smiles at the customer mainly because of fear of negative consequences and who cares little for the customer will have a score closer to the non-self-determined end of the continuum, whereas an employee who smiles because s/he shares the organizations values will have a score closer to the self-determined end of the continuum. Since the emotional labor literature applied in the customer service contexts emphasizes the importance of serving customers with a smile, the present study focused on self-determined motivation to express positive emotions to customers. Many studies demonstrate that self-determined motivation enhances job attitudes or well-being (Blais & Brière, 2002; Blais, Hess, Bourbonnais, Saintonge, & Riddle, 1995; Deci & Ryan, 1985; Gagné, Ryan, & Bargmann, 2003; Grouzet, Vallerand, Thill, & Provencher, 2004; Kim et al., 2002; Ryan & Connell, 1989; Ryan & Deci, 2001; Vallerand, Fortier, & Guay, 1997), outcomes that are also investigated in emotional labor research (Hülshager & Schewe, 2011).

There is indirect evidence for the usefulness of the SDT framework in explaining motivation to regulate emotions at work. Sutton (2004) found that 20% of teachers indicated that they regulate their emotions because it is part of them. In SDT terms, it can be said that these teachers *fully endorsed* emotion regulation. By contrast, other teachers reported that they feel ashamed of showing their anger in front of their students (introjected

motivation), that they want to serve as a role model for students (external motivation), or that they do not know why they are regulating their emotions (amotivation – lack of motivation and intention). Hence, these reasons reflect the different types of motivation detailed in SDT.

A study in every-day life provides support for the usefulness of the SDT framework for understanding emotion regulation. Specifically, it was found that self-determined motivation to regulate negative emotions was positively associated with psychological well-being (Kim et al., 2002). Although this study demonstrated the usefulness of an SDT framework to understand the reasons why individuals regulate their emotions, the authors did not investigate how the different forms of motivation impact emotion regulation strategies. However, based on Gosserand and Diefendorff's (2005) findings that commitment to display rules is associated with higher levels of emotion regulation, we can formulate the following hypotheses with regard to reappraisal (deep acting) and naturally felt emotions.

Hypothesis 1. *Self-determined motivation to express positive emotions is positively related to reappraisal (deep acting).*

Hypothesis 2. *Self-determined motivation to express positive emotions is positively related to naturally felt emotions.*

As for surface acting, this strategy has been considered as “faking in bad faith” (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993; Hochschild, 1983; Rafaeli & Sutton, 1987; Zapf, 2002). In other words, employees who surface act do not endorse the display rules. Consequently, they may regulate their emotions exclusively for external reasons. As a consequence, the following hypothesis is made.

Hypothesis 3. *Self-determined motivation to express positive emotions is negatively related to emotion suppression (surface acting).*

ANTECEDENTS OF EMOTIONAL LABOR – POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE AFFECT

Emotions at work depend partly on employees' affective predispositions (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996). Indeed, employees' affectivity has a particular importance on how they regulate their emotions (Bono & Vey, 2005;

Brotheridge & Grandey, 2002; Brotheridge & Lee, 2003). PA reflects the extent to which a person feels enthusiastic, is active, and alert. High PA reflects a state of high energy, full concentration, and pleasurable engagement. In contrast, negative affect (NA) is a general dimension characterized by a variety of aversive mood states such as anger, contempt, disgust, guilt, fear, and nervousness (Watson, Clark, & Tellegen, 1988). It is important to note that in some research, authors operationalized PA as extraversion, because individuals high on extraversion (E) tend to experience more positive emotions, whereas NA has been operationalized as neuroticism (N), a predisposition to experience negative emotions (Diefendorff et al., 2005; Tellegen, 1985a; Watson & Clark, 1984). Both, PA (or E) and NA (or N) were generally significantly related with surface acting but not deep acting (Brotheridge & Grandey, 2002; Brotheridge & Lee, 2003; Dahling & Perez, 2010; Diefendorff et al., 2005), although a recent study found a significant impact of affectivity on deep acting (Allen, Pugh, Grandey, & Groth, 2010). More specifically, PA (or E) is associated with less surface acting, whereas NA (or N) is associated with more surface acting. PA is further associated with naturally felt emotions (Dahling & Perez, 2010). Overall, affectivity impacts how people manage their emotional responses but not their inner feelings. Although the associations were found to be significant, the effect sizes were not very large (around 4% of explained variance).

In order to explain more variance, there is another way to address individual affectivity. Positive and negative affectivity have been treated both as traits and states in research (Tellegen, 1985b; Watson & Clark, 1984; Watson, Clark, & Tellegen, 1984; Watson et al., 1988). However, previous emotional labor studies focused mainly on the affective traits and tested whether they can predict emotional labor strategies. As emotion regulation deals with the emotional process and not individual predispositions per se, it is possible that measuring affectivity in terms of states instead of predispositions would give stronger associations with emotional labor strategies and a better understanding of why employees regulate their emotion. Considering the fact that affectivity traits and states are closely linked, we postulated similar relationships between employees' affectivity and emotional labor strategies. More specifically, the following hypotheses are made.

Hypothesis 4. (a) *Positive affect is negatively related to emotion suppression whereas (b) negative affect is positively related to emotion suppression.*

Hypothesis 5. *(a) Positive affect is positively related to naturally felt emotions whereas (b) negative affect is negatively related to naturally felt emotions.*

Hypothesis 6. *Positive affect and negative affect are not related to reappraisal.*

MOTIVATION AND AFFECTIVITY

SDT main interest focuses on healthy human functioning. To ensure optimal functioning, people must satisfy three basic psychological needs – need for autonomy (having the experience of choice and acting with a sense of volition), need for competence (sensing that one's has the abilities and skills to perform an activity), and need for relatedness (feeling connected to others; Deci & Ryan, 2000; Gagné & Deci, 2005). Satisfaction of these psychological needs drives the adoption of the self-determined forms of motivation (Deci & Ryan, 2000; Gagné & Deci, 2005) mentioned above, and leads to enhanced well-being such as more life satisfaction, job satisfaction, vigor, vitality, and less exhaustion (Van den Broeck, Vansteenkiste, De Witte, & Lens, 2008; Van den Broeck, Vansteenkiste, De Witte, Soenens, & Lens, 2010; Vansteenkiste et al., 2007). In other words, self-determined employees are likely to feel more positive and less NA. Although self-determined motivation to express positive emotions was never tested in past research, this task motivation should be related to employees affects. More specifically, we predict the following associations.

Hypothesis 7. *Self-determined motivation to express positive emotions is (a) positively related to positive affect and (b) negatively related to negative affect.*

JOB SATISFACTION: AN OUTCOME OF EMOTIONAL LABOR

Job satisfaction reflects employees' appreciation of their job and, as Grandey (2000) mentioned, has often been used as a proxy for well-being at work (e.g., Holman, Chissick, & Totterdell, 2002). Expressing positive emotions at work might be perceived as a way to make the job more

enjoyable (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993). Still others have argued that since emotional labor stifles personal expression, employees are more likely to be less satisfied in their job (Hochschild, 1983). Evidence concerning the impact of emotional labor on job satisfaction is somewhat mixed. On one hand, emotional dissonance (i.e., the opposite of naturally felt emotions) decreased job satisfaction (Abraham, 1998, 1999a) and so did surface acting (Holman et al., 2002). However, although deep acting was not associated with job satisfaction (Bono & Vey, 2005; Holman et al., 2002; Hülshager & Schewe, 2011), reappraisal increased well-being (John & Gross, 2004). Based on these considerations, we can make the following hypotheses.

Hypothesis 8. (a) *Naturally felt emotions and (b) reappraisal are positively related to job satisfaction.*

Hypothesis 9. *Emotion suppression is negatively related to job satisfaction.*

In sum, we propose a motivational framework based on SDT to better understand how emotional labor is performed by customer service employees. Essentially, we posit that self-determined motivation to express positive emotions impact employees' affective states, which in turn predict emotional labor strategies and job satisfaction.

METHOD

Participants

A total of 147 participants (82 women) with a mean age of 25.6 years ($SD = 5.9$) who were currently holding a job with frequent customer contacts were recruited from a list of individuals who had previously indicated their willingness to participate in research and received \$5. The majority of participants were university students (86.4%). Mean organizational tenure and mean job tenure were 1.70 years ($SD = 1.60$) and 1.56 ($SD = 1.49$), respectively.

Procedure

Participants were invited to complete a questionnaire on their customer service experience. To participate, participants came to the research center and completed the questionnaire in groups up to 19. Participants responded

Table 1. Correlations Among Variables.

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. CSR	5.71	0.76	(.83)							
2. Positive affect	3.31	0.77	.34**	(.87)						
3. Negative affect	1.94	0.81	-.26**	-.36**	(.91)					
4. Motivation	7.71	3.55	.62**	.38**	-.24**	(na)				
5. Authenticity	4.82	1.36	.42**	.24**	-.24**	.28**	(.77)			
6. Reappraisal	4.77	1.29	.24**	.13	-.06	.12	.22**	(.87)		
7. Suppression	4.54	1.34	-.07	-.08	.00	-.12	-.32**	.11	(.71)	
8. Job satisfaction	4.43	1.58	.35**	.48**	-.29**	.35**	.26**	.18*	-.14 [†]	(.89)

Note: $N = 147$. Internal reliabilities are in parentheses; [†] $p \leq .10$, * $p \leq .05$, ** $p \leq .01$.

to all items on a 7-point scale anchored by 1 – strongly disagree and 7 – strongly agree. Table 1 presents the correlation matrix and Cronbach's alpha coefficients.

Measures

PANAS

The positive affectivity (10 items) and negative affectivity (10 items) subscales of Watson et al. (1988) PANAS inventory were used in this study. Respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which they have felt certain emotions in the past week. Thus, as applied in this study, positive and negative affectivity refer to mood states characterized by high levels of energy and enthusiasm (positive affectivity) or sadness and lack of energy (negative affectivity). CFA indicated a poor fit ($\chi^2_{(169)} = 417.3$, $p < .001$; comparative fit index (CFI) = .84, $C_{\min}/df = 2.47$; root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) = .100). Items were dropped based on their cross-loadings. The resulting scales fit the data well ($\chi^2_{(64)} = 89.4$, $p < .001$; CFI = .97, $C_{\min}/df = 1.40$; RMSEA = .052) and included the following items: interested, strong, enthusiastic, proud, inspired, determined, and attentive for positive affectivity, and distressed, upset, guilty, irritable, jittery, and afraid for negative affectivity. Alpha coefficients were acceptable (see Table 1).

Based on the results of this CFA, we created four parcels of this construct (see below for the analytic strategy). We assigned items to indicators based on the modification indices. Items that tended to covary were grouped. Two parcels were created for positive affectivity (coefficient alphas: PA1-.79 and

PA2–.81) and two for negative affectivity (coefficient alphas: NA1–.79 and PA2–.72).

Motivation to Express Positive Emotions

Based on Kim et al. (2002), subscales were created to measure integrated, identified, introjected, and external motivation to express positive emotions toward customers. Additional items were created to measure amotivation. Similar items were used in another study and showed adequate psychometric properties (Cossette, 2008; Cossette, Blais, & Hess, 2006). Examples of items are “I value the necessity to smile at my customers” (integrated), “To remain efficient, I express positive feelings toward the customers” (identified), “I would blame myself if I do not smile to the customers” (introjected), “Managers expect that I show a smile when I interact with the clients” (external), and “I am frequently too overwhelmed to smile at customers” (amotivation). CFA was used to assess the independence of the subscales. Minor adjustments were made to optimize fit ($\chi^2_{(339)} = 537.6$, $p < .001$; CFI = .91, $C_{\min}/df = 1.59$; RMSEA = .063). Items were dropped because of cross-loadings. The resulting subscales had good reliability (integrated regulation: $\alpha = .85$; identified regulation: $\alpha = .83$; introjected regulation: $\alpha = .91$; external regulation: $\alpha = .78$; amotivation: $\alpha = .79$).

As mentioned above, research on self-determined motivation typically employs the relative autonomy index (Gagné & Deci, 2005; Ryan & Connell, 1989; Vallerand, 1997), which reflects the participant’s position on the motivation continuum. The index is calculated based on subscales that assess the different forms of motivation described above and based on the notion of quasi-simplex pattern of correlations (results are available from the first author on request). In the present study, we assigned a weight of +2, +1, –.5, –.5, and –2 to integrated, identified, introjected, external motivations, and amotivation, respectively.

Emotion Regulation Measures

To measure emotional labor strategies, the present study used existing measures of reappraisal (deep acting) and emotion suppression (surface acting) (John & Gross, 2004). Emotion suppression and reappraisal were assessed using the *Emotional Regulation Questionnaire* (John & Gross, 2004). This measure has good psychometric properties and reflects the concepts of emotion suppression (surface acting) and reappraisal (deep acting). Four items measure emotion suppression and six items measure reappraisal. Examples of items are “When I am feeling negative emotions, I make sure not to express them” (emotion suppression) and “When I want to

feel less negative emotion, I change the way I'm thinking about the situation" (reappraisal). Naturally felt emotion was measured using items from Diefendorff et al. (2005). An example is "The emotions I show customers come naturally." The scales were translated into French using parallel back translation. The French translations had acceptable psychometric properties, but two reappraisal items with similar wording were allowed to covary ($\chi^2_{(61)} = 112.4$, $p < .001$; CFI = .93, $C_{\min/df} = 1.84$; RMSEA = .076). In order to improve the fit, an item from the reappraisal scale was dropped as it correlated with the emotion suppression scale. The fit improved and the scales fit the data very well ($\chi^2_{(50)} = 86.5$, $p = .001$; CFI = .95, $C_{\min/df} = 1.73$; RMSEA = .071) (see Table 1 for alpha coefficients).

Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction is an important outcome in the emotional labor literature. The following four items were used to measure employees' satisfaction level: (1) I like my present job, (2) I am generally enthusiastic about my current job, (3) I consider my actual job as unpleasant (reverse scored), and (4) I am very satisfied in my current job. Alpha coefficient was adequate (see Table 1).

Analytic Strategy

In the present study, we tested whether employees' motivation to express positive emotions when interacting with customers impact positive and negative affectivity and if this motivation affects how employees perform emotional labor and their job satisfaction. Structural Equation Modeling using maximum likelihood estimation method was performed. Prior to the analysis data screening was performed to identify potentials outliers. Data were tested for deviation from normality. Univariate normality was assumed but not multivariate normality. Consequently, we formed item parcels (as mentioned above) to control for inflated measurement errors and improve the psychometric properties of the variables. An item parceling strategy addresses problem of normality and is effective for small sample size (Hall, Snell, & Foust, 1999). We used a two-stage analytic procedure: in stage 1 a six-factor model was fitted to data and was compared to a one-factor model (we excluded motivation from this analysis as this variable represents an index, that is, an agglomeration of variables. This last model provides a test for common method bias (see Kafetsios & Zampetakis, 2008). We report the chi-square statistic, the CFI,

the incremental fit index (IFI), the minimum discrepancy divided by the degree of freedom ($C_{\min/dL}$), and the RMSEA, and the Akaike information criterion (AIC).

RESULTS

Descriptive statistics, zero-order correlations, and reliability indices are reported in Table 1. All correlations were in the expected directions. Before testing our hypotheses, we assessed both a six-factor model and a one-factor model using confirmatory factor analyses. The one-factor CFA did not fit the data well ($\chi^2_{(151)} = 879.804, p < .001; CFI = .46; IFI = .47; C_{\min/dL} = 5.83; RMSEA = .182; AIC: 957.8$), whereas the six-factor model did ($\chi^2_{(167)} = 216.6, p = .006; CFI = .97; IFI = .97; C_{\min/dL} = 1.30; RMSEA = .045; AIC: 344.6$). The six-factor model had significantly better fit ($\Delta\chi^2_{(16)} = 363.2, p < .001$). Overall, these results suggest that common method variance bias is not a concern and that the measurement model is adequate.

Hypotheses were tested in different path models. In the first model, we tested Hypotheses 1–3, which posited that motivation predicts emotional labor strategies (Fig. 1). The model obtained a good fit, $\chi^2_{(51)} = 110.1, p < .001; CFI = .91; IFI = .92; C_{\min/dL} = 2.16; RMSEA = .089; AIC: 164.1$ (see Fig. 1). The beta weights were all in the expected direction. Two links were significant at $p \leq .09$ (paths from motivation to reappraisal and from

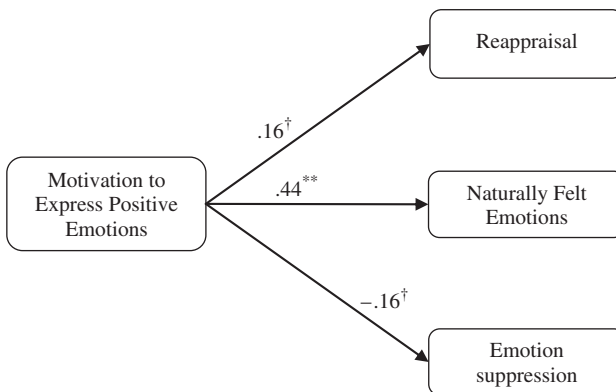


Fig. 1. Impact of Motivation to Express Positive Emotions on Emotion Regulation Strategies. Note: † $p \leq .09$, * $p \leq .05$, ** $p \leq .01$.

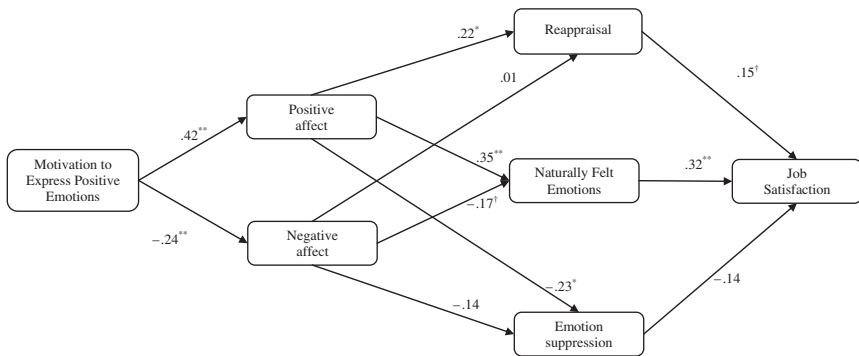


Fig. 2. Motivational Process of Emotional Labor. Note: † $p \leq .10$, * $p \leq .05$, ** $p \leq .01$.

motivation to emotion suppression) and one at $p < .001$ (path from motivation to naturally felt emotions). Hence, we found support for Hypotheses 1, 2, and 3.

All other hypotheses were tested in a second path model in which motivation, employees' affectivity, emotional labor strategies, and job satisfaction were linked following the predictions detailed above (Hypotheses 4–7). This second model showed good fit, $\chi^2_{(160)} = 283.3$, $p < .001$; CFI = .91; IFI = .91; $C_{\min/dL} = 1.77$; RMSEA = .073; AIC: 383.3 (see Fig. 2). This model confirms almost all hypotheses. More specifically, self-determined motivation to express positive emotion led to more positive and less NA (Hypothesis 7 confirmed). Although PA led to more naturally felt emotions, NA was not significantly related to this strategy (partial support for Hypothesis 4). Confirming Hypothesis 5, PA was negatively related to emotion suppression, whereas NA was positively related. Partial support was received for Hypothesis 6 predicting an absence of association between employees' affectivity and reappraisal. Results suggested that PA was positively related to reappraisal but NA was not. Lastly, job satisfaction was explained by naturally felt emotions and reappraisal as predicted by Hypothesis 8, but emotion suppression did not reach statistical significance (Hypothesis 9 not supported).

DISCUSSION

The present study proposed and tested a motivational model of emotional labor. The major research questions driving our exploration were as follows:

how are self-determined motivation to express positive emotion and emotional labor strategies related? How are employees' affective states associated with motivation to perform emotional labor and emotion regulation strategies? The final question addressed the impact of these variables on an important outcome in organizational psychology – job satisfaction.

Theoretical Implications

Emotional Labor Strategies as Motivated Acts

Rubin et al. (2005) described emotional labor strategies (i.e., emotion regulation) as motivated acts. Using SDT as our theoretical framework, the present study provides empirical support for this assertion. First, this study generalized the application of SDT to emotional labor domain. Indeed, items developed for the purpose of this study were found to measure the different forms of motivation prescribed by SDT.

Second, employees' self-determined motivation to express positive emotions was positively related to reappraisal and to naturally felt emotions (i.e., absence of emotional dissonance) (Hypotheses 1 and 2), and negatively related to emotion suppression (Hypothesis 3). Hence, employees' endorsement of the organizational demands to express positive emotions seems to facilitate the adoption of a more authentic stance toward their customers and increased the use of reappraisal while decreasing the use of emotion suppression. These results extended the notion that employees who are more identified with their role are less likely to experience emotional dissonance (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993; Brotheridge & Lee, 2002; Gosserand & Diefendorff, 2005; Morris & Feldman, 1996b).

How Employees Perform Emotional Labor Impacts Job Outcomes

The present study replicated Diefendorff et al. (2005) findings concerning the independence of naturally felt emotions as a third emotion regulation strategy that merits consideration with other strategies. Our research extended this research by investigating the impact of this strategy on employees' job satisfaction, which has been often used as a proxy of employees' well-being (Grandey, 2000).

Naturally felt emotions have the strongest association with job satisfaction compared with reappraisal and emotion suppression. This result is consistent with past findings concerning the negative impact of emotional dissonance on job satisfaction (Bono & Vey, 2005; Hülsheger &

Schewe, 2011). The significant and positive impact of reappraisal on a positive indicator of well-being, that is job satisfaction, also extended emotion regulation research (John & Gross, 2004) by applying this emotion regulation strategy to an organizational context. This effect might be attributable to the fact that this strategy helps employees to develop a good evaluation of their performance (Brotheridge & Grandey, 2002; Brotheridge & Lee, 2002). In return, this might increase employees' job satisfaction.

Lastly, contrary to past research (Bono & Vey, 2005; Hülshager & Schewe, 2011), emotion suppression did not significantly explain variation in job satisfaction, although the coefficient was in the expected direction. This finding contradicts the general notion that emotion suppression results in psychological costs (John & Gross, 2004). Yet these authors focused on emotional reactions to specific one-time events in every-day life. The absence of a relation in the present context might be explained by how employees used this strategy. Specifically, for certain brief interactions, this strategy may be completely adequate (Morris & Feldman, 1996a). Furthermore, employees may use this strategy in specific stressful situations (Grandey, Dickter, & Sin, 2004). In these circumstances, the sporadic use of emotion suppression might not decrease job satisfaction.

To our knowledge, this is the first study to test simultaneously whether surface acting, deep acting, and naturally felt emotions explain job outcomes. Indeed, past research focused on the impact of surface acting and deep acting. Considering all three strategies simultaneously might explain the discrepant results with past research. If this is true, then it suggests that it is not necessarily surface acting that has detrimental effects on employees but rather the lack of naturally felt emotions and the nonuse of reappraisal. An alternative explanation of these results is that reappraisal and emotion suppression cannot be equated with deep acting and surface acting. Although reappraisal and deep acting might be considered as antecedents-focused strategies on the one hand, and surface acting and emotion suppression as response-focused strategies on the other hand (Grandey, 2000; Gross, 1998), their differential associations with job satisfaction can also suggest that we deal with different emotion regulation strategies. Hence, future research should investigate more thoroughly the relationship between "classical" emotional labor strategies (surface acting and deep acting) and other emotion regulation strategies such as reappraisal, emotion suppression, and naturally felt emotions. It seems that employees use a wider range of strategies that have differential impact on their well-being. Enlarging the number of strategies investigated

simultaneously should help understand better how employees regulate their emotions.

Why Employees Regulate Their Emotions

Self-determined motivation to express positive emotions positively impacted PA and diminished NA as expected. These links are consistent with SDT that indicates that persons who experienced self-determination are more likely to experience more PA and less NA (Deci & Ryan, 2000; Gagné & Deci, 2005; Ryan & Deci, 2001). In turn, PA showed the expected associations with naturally felt emotions and emotion suppression; whereas NA was negatively related to naturally felt emotion. PA was significantly and positively related to reappraisal contrary to Hypothesis 4, which predicted a nonsignificant association. A possible explanation for these results can be found in Gross's (1998) emotion regulation model. Employees' positive affectivity might serve as emotional cue that helps appraise the customer interactions more favorably. In this case, there is no need to surface act since employees feel those positive emotions that are generally prescribed in organizations and it becomes easier to express naturally felt emotion and to reappraise a difficult situation.

The absence of an association between NA and emotion suppression was surprising considering the fact that past research shown a positive association (Brotheridge & Grandey, 2002; Brotheridge & Lee, 2003; Diefendorff et al., 2005). A possible explanation of this discrepancy is that these studies used bivariate correlations, whereas we tested simultaneously both type of affect in a path model. In our study, positive affectivity significantly and negatively predicted the use of surface acting as mentioned above. Again, it is possible that the context in which emotion suppression is used explain this result, that is, employees might use emotion suppression in certain type of interactions, which are independent of how they feel.

Overall, it seems that employees' motivations explain why they use some strategies instead of others. Self-determined employees may enjoy interacting with customers to a larger degree and expressed a stronger desire to regulate their emotions authentically.

Practical Implications

The results suggest that it is important for managers to help employees develop a self-determined motivation to express positive emotions in order

to increase their PA and decrease their NA. SDT posits three psychological needs that must be satisfied to foster self-determination. Hence, offering some latitude to employees in how they structure their work, how they organize it, and offering them a voice to performance goal (Breugh, 1985, 1989) are different means to enhance satisfaction of the autonomy need. Offering constructive feedback on how employees interact with customer is also a mean to satisfy the need for competence. Offering employees organizational support and a good work climate can help satisfy the need for relatedness.

Limitations

Several limitations must be addressed by future research. First, this study is based on a small sample from customer service contexts. The results cannot be generalized to other work contexts where the display rules may be different. For example, bill collectors must express a hint of irritation to debtors in order to achieve organizational goals (Sutton, 1991). Second, common method variance might have an influence on the results of the SEM by leading to an overestimation of the link between variables. However, we tested a measurement model that include a single factor and found a very poor fit (see results section), which makes this a less likely problem. Third, causality cannot be inferred; even though results are well grounded in theory, the present research used a correlations design. Other variables are likely to affect the variables included in the present study. For example, psychological needs are likely to influence motivation to perform emotional labor and so is the organizational context.

CONCLUSION

The present research improves our understanding of the emotional labor process by identifying motivation to regulate emotions as an antecedent of employees' affective states, emotional labor strategies, and job satisfaction. Employees' self-determined motivation had important consequences on how employees feel and regulate their emotions while interacting with customers. How employees performed emotional labor had important consequences on their job satisfaction. We believe that SDT can guide future research on emotional labor antecedents.

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