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Emotional labor and leadership: A threat to authenticity? ☆, ☆, ☆

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ABSTRACT

Building on the emotional labor and authentic leadership literatures, we advance a conceptual model of leader emotional displays. Three categories of leader emotional displays are identified: surface acting, deep acting and genuine emotions. The consistency of expressed leader emotions with affective display rules, together with the type of display chosen, combines to impact the leader's felt authenticity, the favorability of follower impressions, and the perceived authenticity of the leader by the followers. Emotional intelligence, self-monitoring ability, and political skill are proposed as individual differences that moderate leader emotional display responses to affective events. We also look at followers' trust in the leader and leader well-being as key outcomes. Finally, we explore the influence on leader emotional labor of contextual dimensions of the environment, including the omnibus (national and organizational culture, industry and occupation, organizational structure, time) and discrete (situational) context. Directions for future research are discussed.

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I try, to the extent possible, to maintain a level of calmness in the face of frantic issues. I try to be as objective as possible in discussions, and if I'm in a face-to-face meeting with someone who has a short fuse, I'll sit right next to that person to make sure the fuse is never lit. I do that by being calm, even overly calm. When things get heated, I even change my voice. I will consciously take a deep breath, or two deep breaths, in front of everybody to get them to calm down a little bit and talk about the specifics, about solutions (Frost, 2004, p. 121).

The above quotation from David Marsing, a senior manager at Intel, illustrates well the challenges leaders may face in handling "toxic" emotions in organizations (Frost, 2004). Clearly, Mr. Marsing's effort to appear calm in the face of emotionally charged situations reflects the importance of emotional labor to leadership roles. Sociologist Arlie Hochschild first included emotional labor in the mix of physical and mental labor to describe work that goes beyond common expressions of experienced emotions to exhibiting emotional displays called for by the job. Hence, emotional labor requires one to induce or suppress feelings to sustain an outward expression that produces the proper state of mind in others and calls for a coordination of mind and feelings (Hochschild, 1983). In our opening example, Mr. Marsing is laboring hard to suppress his emotions and thereby model a calm demeanor for others as an appropriate strategy for managing a volatile emotional episode.

Despite the obvious demands for emotional labor that are inherent to the leadership role, scholarly attention to this topic has been sparse (Humphrey, Pollack, & Hawver, 2008) and indirect (Ashkanasy & Tse, 2000; George, 2000; Pescosolido, 2002, 2005;

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☆☆ This article is dedicated to the memory of our colleague, co-author, and friend, Jerry Hunt, who passed away prior to the publication of this article.

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Pirola-Merlo, Hartel, Mann, & Hirst, 2002). However, spurred on by recent practitioner (George, 2003; George & Sims, 2007) and scholarly (Avolio & Gardner, 2005; Avolio, Gardner, Walumbwa, Luthans, & May, 2004; Gardner, Avolio, Luthans, May, & Walumbwa, 2005; Gardner, Avolio, & Walumbwa, 2005; Ilies, Morgeson, & Nahrgang, 2005; Shamir & Eilam, 2005; Walumbwa, Avolio, Gardner, Wernsing, & Peterson, 2008) writings on authentic leadership, a basic research question has emerged: Can leaders manage their emotional displays to foster favorable follower impressions without violating their authenticity?³ For instance, a leader announcing employee layoffs would be expected to express empathy and concern for the affected employees, and would most likely elicit anger and resentment from employees if he or she failed to display such emotions. If such emotions are not heartfelt, however, expressing them would be inauthentic. If the audience detects a lack of sincerity on the part of the leader, he or she may be viewed as hypocritical and disingenuous, thereby undermining his or her credibility with followers. To date, the degree to which leaders are required to engage in emotional labor, and the implications for authenticity, have not been adequately explored.

In this paper, we take an initial step towards filling this void by presenting a conceptual model of leader emotional displays that recognizes the interactive effects of the emotional context (the environment, situation, and associated display rules), leader behavior (surface acting, deep acting, and genuine emotional displays), leader felt authenticity, followers' impressions, and followers' perceived authenticity of the leader. We explore the interrelationships between micro-level (e.g., leader emotional displays and followers' impressions) and macro-level (e.g., cultural, occupational, structural, and temporal contextual factors) organizational phenomena. We also present propositions and consider promising directions for future research.

1. Emotional labor and leadership

As originally conceptualized, Hochschild (1983) described jobs that require emotional labor as having three things in common: (1) they require face-to-face or voice-to-voice contact with the public; (2) they require the worker to produce an emotional state in the customer; and (3) they allow the employer, through training and supervision, to exercise some control over the emotional life of employees. In Hochschild's view, organizations are increasingly willing to direct and control how employees present themselves to others. To manage the demands of emotional labor, workers may adopt one of three stances (Hochschild, 1983). Some workers identify too closely with the work, and are therefore unable to separate themselves from their work, which can lead to burnout. Others distinguish themselves from their work and use surface or deep acting when appropriate, but run the risk of feeling phony. In the third stance, the workers distinguish themselves from their role and recognize that acting is part of the job, but run the risk of becoming cynical.

Ashforth & Humphrey (1993) advanced Hochschild's (1983) conception of emotional labor in several ways. First, they broadened the scope of the construct by defining it as "the act of displaying the appropriate emotion (conforming with a display rule) as emotional labor" (p. 90). Note that this definition focuses on behavior and not the presumed emotions underlying behavior. Second, they add the genuine experience and expression of expected emotions as a third approach to emotional labor. Third, they examine the functions (task effectiveness and self-expression) and dysfunctions (poor service, dissonance, and impairment of one's sense of authentic self) of emotional labor. Finally, they consider social identity theory and argue that some of the effects of emotional labor on workers are moderated by identifying with the role.

Ashforth & Humphrey's (1993) broader conceptualization of emotional labor is most applicable to our work, given our focus on organizational leaders, who may or may not work in service professions and often attempt to regulate emotions with audiences other than the public. Moreover, subsequent empirical evidence (Grandey, Kern, & Frone, 2007) indicates that emotional labor may be directed toward both organizational outsiders (e.g., customers, clients, patients) and insiders (e.g., supervisors, co-workers). Hence, we view leaders as directing their emotional displays toward both internal (e.g., subordinates, peers, superiors) and external (e.g., customers, the press, competitors) audiences (Gardner & Avolio, 1998), albeit for the purpose of influencing such audiences to follow them in pursuit of desired goals.

The potential beneficial consequences of leader positive mood have been studied by George & Bettenhausen (1990) and George (1995). George & Bettenhausen (1990) found that the extent to which leaders of existing work groups experienced positive moods was positively related to levels of pro-social behavior performed by group members and negatively related to group turnover rates. George (1995) found that work groups led by sales managers who tended to experience positive moods at work provided relatively high levels of customer service. In contrast, Lewis (2000) found that leader displays of negative emotions produced more negative affective states among followers and less favorable assessments of leader effectiveness.

Consistent with these studies, Gaddis, Connelly, & Mumford (2004) demonstrated that the provision of positive as opposed to negative leader affective displays during failure feedback produced higher perceptions of leader effectiveness and higher quality performance on a group task. In a test of a mood contagion model, Sy, Cote, & Saavedra (2005) showed that leader mood can be contagious, with positive (negative) leader moods inducing group members to experience more positive (negative) moods, as well as a more positive (negative) group affective tone. Finally, research by Kellett, Humphrey, & Sleeth (2002, 2006) and Pescosolido (2002) indicated that perceptions of members' emotional abilities (i.e., empathy, the ability to identify others' emotions, and the ability to express one's own emotions) among work groups were related to leader emergence. Together, these studies demonstrate that leader and follower emotions and emotional displays are important factors to consider in the leadership process (George, 2000; Humphrey, 2002; Humphrey et al., 2008).

³ We do not assume managers become leaders by a stroke of the pen or personal computer. Rather, we label these "managerial leaders" as "leaders" throughout this paper and for simplicity assume that they either perform both functions or delegate those functions with which they do not feel comfortable (may we say "authentic") handling.

2. Authentic leadership

“Measure success based on your inner score card. If you base success and/or your actions on an outer scorecard, that is, what others think, your life will be hollow” (Warren Buffett, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, September 30, 2005).

Warren Buffett has been described as a genuine leader of high moral character (Avolio & Luthans, 2006). His advice to other leaders for what constitutes success reflects the notion of authenticity captured by the timeless advice of the ancient Greeks to “be true to oneself.” For these reasons, he has been singled out as an “authentic leader” by Avolio & Luthans (2006). Yet, as the preceding discussion of emotional labor and leadership suggests, affective events may contain display rules that make it difficult for leaders to convey emotions that are both “appropriate” and authentic.

Drawing on social psychological conceptions of authenticity (Kernis, 2003; Ryan & Deci, 2003), Avolio, Gardner and colleagues (Avolio & Gardner, 2005; Gardner, Avolio, Luthans et al., 2005) posited and obtained empirical support (Walumbwa et al., 2008) for four core components of authentic leadership: self-awareness, relational transparency, balanced processing, and an internalized moral perspective. Self-awareness is a process of reflecting on “one’s unique values, identity, emotions, goals, knowledge, talents and/or capabilities” to develop an enhanced understanding of the self (Gardner, Avolio, Luthans et al., 2005, p. 349). Thus, authentic leaders are persons who work to understand their strengths and weaknesses and their leadership should reflect an awareness of their inner motives, emotions, values, and goals. Relational transparency involves presenting one’s true self as opposed to a fake or distorted self to others as the “leader displays high levels of openness, self-disclosure and trust in close relationships” (Gardner, Avolio, Luthans et al., 2005, p. 347). Balanced processing involves making accurate and balanced self-assessments and social comparisons (Swann, Rentfrow, & Guinn, 2003) in a fashion that is relatively free from ego-biased defense mechanisms. Finally, an internalized moral perspective refers to an internalized and integrated form of self-regulation (Ryan & Deci, 2003) that is guided by internal moral values and standards as opposed to external social norms or pressures.

Our brief review of authentic leadership theory indicates that authentic leaders are expected to be relatively immune to situational pressures that call for conformance to emotional display rules, choosing instead to present their true inner emotions in a transparent and balanced fashion. However, given the rather extensive set of emotional display rules that are associated with the leadership role (George, 2000; Humphrey, 2002; Humphrey et al., 2008), we question whether it is realistic to assume that leaders can consistently violate such display rules in their quest for authenticity and remain effective. Below we present a model of leader emotional labor that explicitly recognizes the dilemma leaders experience when they encounter situational pressures to regulate their emotions while simultaneously striving to achieve authenticity.

3. A model of leader emotional labor: an authenticity perspective

The proposed model (see Fig. 1) focuses on: (1) organizational situations that are loaded with emotional display rules; (2) leader emotional display responses to such situations; (3) follower impressions and perceptions of authenticity; (4) follower trust in the leader; (5) the leader’s felt authenticity; (6) leader well-being; and (7) individual differences among leaders that moderate their emotional display responses to affective events. The model is conceived as operating within a broad environmental context which is composed of many factors, including the omnibus context (national and organizational culture, industry and occupation, organizational structure, and time) and discrete (situational) context (Hunt, 2004; Johns, 2006).

The emotional labor process is initiated by an affective event, embedded within the larger organizational context which communicates display rules (Grandey, 2000) for appropriate emotional conduct to the leader. This stimulus requires the attention of the leader who has several choices of emotional responses. The model posits three basic types of leader emotional displays: (1) surface acting, which involves simulating emotions appropriate for the situation that are not actually felt; (2) deep acting, which involves attempts to actually experience the emotions that are called for by the situation; and (3) displays of genuine emotions (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993). Leader emotional displays are moderated by individual differences among leaders, such as emotional intelligence (George, 2000), self-monitoring (Day & Schleicher, 2006) and political skill (Ferris et al., 2005, 2007).

Leader emotional displays can have important effects on both leaders and followers. Note that while audiences other than followers may observe the leader’s emotional display and form impressions of the leader, we focus on the impressions and subsequent reactions of followers, since followers represent the key audience for leaders. Indeed, without followers, leaders do not exist (Yukl, 2006). It should also be noted, however, that persons who choose to follow the leader may or may not be members of a leader’s formal organization. Hence, while a leader’s emotional labor may be directed toward both internal and external organizational audiences, we presume that the intention of such behavior is to influence the audience to pursue desired goals.

Depending on the perceived sincerity and appropriateness of the leader’s emotional displays, followers may form either favorable or unfavorable impressions of the leader, which will, in turn, impact the extent of follower trust in the leader. We focus on three specific bases for trust that have been identified in the extant literature (Mayer, Davis, & Shoorman, 1995): ability, integrity, and benevolence. We posit that the perceived authenticity of the leader impacts the favorability of followers’ impressions and subsequent trust in the leader. Furthermore, leaders experience feelings of relative authenticity, which, in turn, relate to their overall sense of well-being. We focus on two consequences of emotional labor that have been shown to detract from psychological well-being: emotional dissonance and job burnout (Brotheridge & Grandey, 2002; Erickson & Ritter, 2001; Pugliesi, 1999; Rubin, Tardino, Daus, & Munz, 2005).

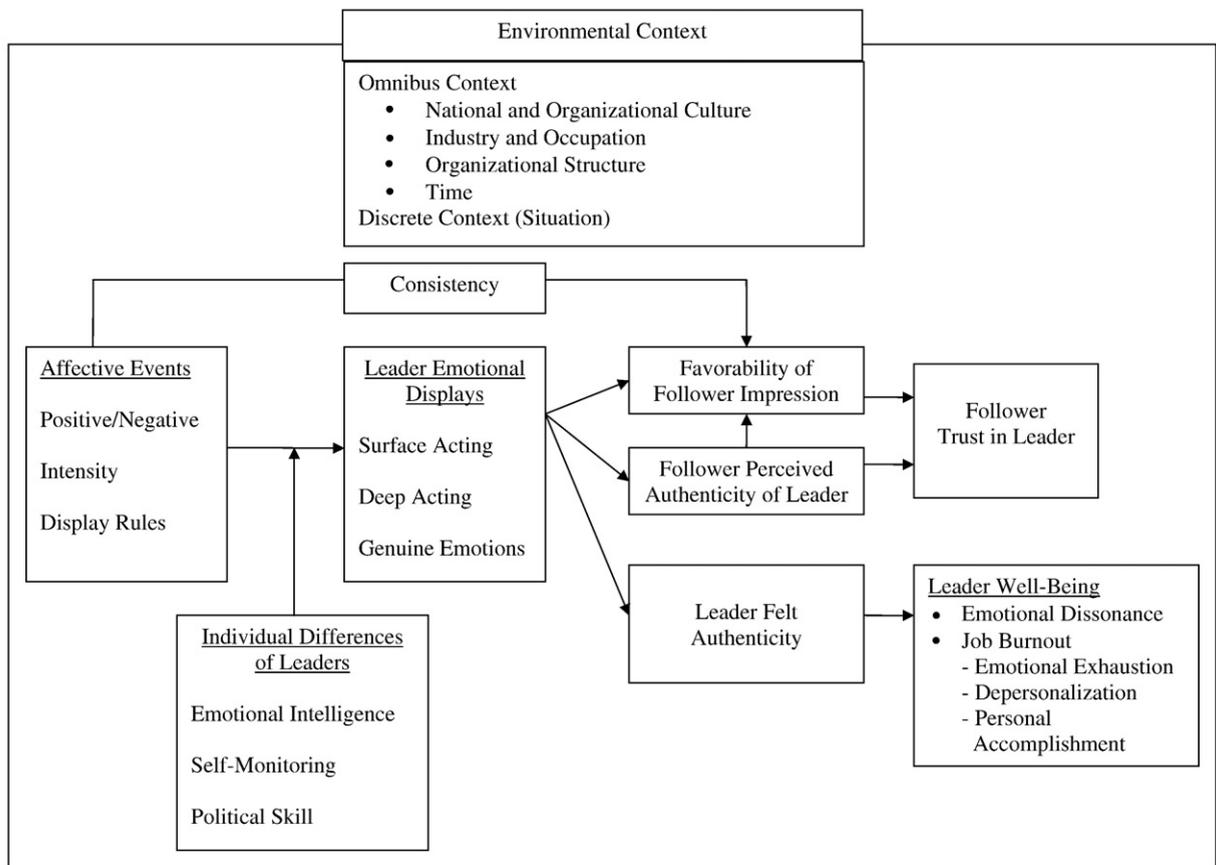


Fig. 1. A model of leader emotional labor and authenticity.

In the sections that follow we provide a more detailed discussion of the key components of the proposed model and advance preliminary propositions regarding the posited relationships.

4. Affective events

Although a grand theory of emotions in the workplace has yet to be developed, affective events theory (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996) comes closest. Consistent with the preceding discussion, affective events theory posits that aspects of the work environment (e.g., environmental conditions, roles, job design) initiate emotions in organizational settings. Together, these components of work combine to create the “affective events” that are colloquially known as “hassles and uplifts” (Basch & Fisher, 2000). Within the emotional labor literature, the daily “uplifts” and “hassles” identified by affective events theory (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996) are more generically described as positive and negative affective events (Grandey, 2000).

4.1. Positive and negative affective events

Although role demands of the leadership position and situational factors may create chronic needs for leaders to regulate emotions, acute events at work have the most immediate impact on a leader's emotions. As Grandey (2000) notes in her model of emotional regulation in the workplace, emotional events are most likely to lead to emotional regulation when they produce emotions that are discrepant from display rules. For instance, if an event elicits negative emotions from the leader, such as anger, this event may interfere with the leader's goal to comply with display rules by remaining positive and upbeat when interacting with followers, thereby creating a need for emotional labor. In contrast, if an event elicits a positive emotion (e.g., learning that a challenging sales goal has been met), the event may help the leader to comply with display rules that call for positive emotions, thereby reducing requirements for emotional regulation. Hence, emotional labor theory suggests that negative affective events will elicit higher levels of surface and deep acting, whereas positive events are more likely to generate genuine emotional displays.

The extent to which positive and negative emotional displays are deemed to be appropriate by leaders and followers will depend on the specific display rules that are operative in the situation (Glomb & Tews, 2004). In general, however, we expect negative affective events to produce higher requirements for emotional labor (surface and deep acting) from leaders because a

wider array of organizational situations and settings call for positive emotional displays from leaders (George, 2000). In contrast, we expect genuine displays of leader emotions to be more likely following positive affective events. This reasoning suggests:

Proposition 1. *Negative affective events are positively related to leader emotional labor in the form of surface and deep acting, whereas positive affective events are positively related to genuine emotional displays by leaders.*

4.2. Emotional intensity

Affective events vary with regard to the intensity of emotional arousal they generate within individuals (Grandey, 2000; Morris & Feldman, 1996). While some situations (e.g., routine, script-driven, and habitual communications: Gioia & Poole, 1984; Jones & Pittman, 1982) may arouse few emotions from participants, other work events (e.g., physical and verbal abuse; organizational crises: Bligh, Kohles, & Meindl, 2004a; Bligh, Kohles, & Meindl, 2004b; Grandey et al., 2007) are emotionally charged. Grandey (2000) asserts that interaction episodes reflect expectations regarding the frequency, duration, and variety of emotions to be displayed by participants. Hence, we posit that the intensity of affective events increases as the frequency, duration, and/or variety of emotions aroused within the leader and followers grow.

As an example, the catastrophic and horrific events of 9/11 elicited a wide array of intense emotions across the globe that ranged from extreme sorrow, to intense anger, and even joy within some nations hostile to the United States. While George Bush was criticized for his slow initial response to the crisis, he quickly remedied the situation by displaying empathy for the victims, anger at the perpetrators, and a resolve to regroup as a nation and bring those responsible to justice (Bligh et al., 2004a,b). Importantly, his emotions and rhetoric were judged by the media and public as being appropriate for the situation, and his perceived charisma and approval ratings rose dramatically as a result. The preceding discussion implies that as emotional events grow more intense, emotional displays (either genuine or manufactured) by persons in leadership positions will increase.

Proposition 2. *The intensity of affective events is positively related to leader emotional displays.*

4.3. Display rules

In addition to eliciting emotional reactions from organizational members, we assert that affective events determine audience expectations for appropriate emotional responses or the “display rules” associated with the event (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993; Diefendorff & Gosserand, 2003; Gosserand & Diefendorff, 2005; Grandey, 2000; Morris & Feldman, 1996). As Ashforth & Humphrey (1993, p. 91) note, “[d]isplay rules are generally a function of societal norms, occupational norms, and organizational norms.” An important consideration in this regard is *norm strength* or *norm intensity*, which is determined by the extent to which a norm is widely shared (consensus) and deeply internalized (potency) among the referent group (Jackson, 1965). For example, the strength of display rules that dictate warm and friendly emotional displays (i.e., service with a smile) are greater in service as opposed to non-service occupations. In advancing a control theory perspective of the emotional labor process, Diefendorff & Gosserand (2003, p. 945) describe emotional labor as “a discrepancy monitoring and reduction process, whereby perceptions of emotional displays and emotional display rules are continuously compared.” When a discrepancy is detected, actors use emotional regulation strategies to reduce it. Hence, display rules specify the standards for emotional conduct of individuals occupying specific roles in given situations which serve as guidelines for emotional displays.

While display norms for particular occupations and organizations are generally consistent with societal norms, they may nevertheless differ in *degree* and in *kind* (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993). Whereas clients may expect accountants to exhibit personal concern and solicitude for their financial difficulties, occupational norms dictate a higher degree of detachment. In general, the greater the status and power of the focal actor, the greater latitude he or she is afforded to deviate from societal norms (Hollander, 1958). Hence, we expect higher level leaders, leaders within more prestigious occupations, and those who control key resources and hence wield greater power, will have greater freedom to deviate from operative display rules. Differences in kind often include a coercive element, where the target may be present on an involuntary basis, and the agent (e.g., bill collectors, police interrogators, trial lawyers) commands greater power than the target and may exercise greater control over the encounter (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993; Rafaeli & Sutton, 1987).

Because the occupants of formal leadership positions typically have more power and control over resources than followers, they are likewise likely to have greater latitude in deviating from societal display rules (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993; Hollander, 1958). Importantly, research by Gosserand & Diefendorff (2005) indicates that the extent to which perceptions of emotional display rules result in emotional labor depends on the actor’s commitment to display rules, with actors exhibiting less conformity when commitment is low. Nevertheless, there are also limits to leader discretion regarding emotional displays, as some behaviors will be deemed “out-of-bounds” and foster negative impressions and emotional reactions among followers (Dasborough, 2006; Dasborough & Ashkanasy, 2002; Simons, 2002). The above discussion suggests the following proposition:

Proposition 3. *The extent to which leader emotional displays are consistent with emotional display rules is positively related to the favorability of follower impressions.*

5. Leader emotional displays

As noted above, our model depicts three basic categories of leader emotional displays that are available to leaders. First, the leader may engage in surface acting which involves simulating emotions appropriate for the situation that are not actually felt

(Grandey, 2000, 2003; Hochschild, 1983). Second, the leader may engage in deep acting by attempting to actually experience the emotions that the situation dictates as important (Grandey, 2000, 2003; Hochschild, 1983). Finally, the leader may exhibit genuine emotions (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993; Diefendorff, Croyle, & Gosserand, 2005; Diefendorff & Gosserand, 2003). Each type of emotional display is posited to have different effects on the favorability of followers' impressions, perceived authenticity of the leader, follower trust in the leader, and leader felt authenticity and well-being.

5.1. Surface acting

Surface acting involves deliberate emotional displays that are intended to deceive other persons about what the actor actually feels (Grandey, 2000, 2003; Hochschild, 1983). As Ashforth & Humphrey (1993, p. 92) describe, surface acting “involves simulating emotions that are not actually felt, which is accomplished by careful presentation of verbal and nonverbal cues, such as facial expression, gestures, and voice tone.” When leaders engage in surface acting, followers are more likely to view them as “acting,” resulting in unfavorable impressions. If a leader “acts out” emotions in the event of a job layoff announcement, for example, the audience may feel the leader is cold and heartless and form an unfavorable impression. In such situations, we propose leader felt authenticity will be low because the leader is portraying an emotion rather than exhibiting true feelings.

Note that surface acting by a leader does not necessarily imply that he or she experiences no emotion; instead, it may mean that the displayed emotion differs from the felt emotion the leader experiences. Also note that a discrepancy between felt and expressed emotions may arise even though the leader is deeply concerned about the welfare of followers. Such discrepancies may arise because various situational factors (e.g., stressful situations that foster high levels of anxiety) impede the leader's ability to experience the emotions that he or she wishes to convey (e.g., confidence, enthusiasm, empathy). Thus, a useful distinction can be made between “faking in good faith” (e.g., displaying positive but unfeared emotions toward followers out of a genuine concern for their welfare) and “faking in bad faith” (e.g., mechanically expressing concern for an employee's health as a result of overlearned and scripted behavior) (Rafaeli & Sutton, 1989).

Research on surface acting confirms that it is generally ineffective in generating desired audience impressions (Beal, Trougakos, Weiss, & Green, 2006; Bono & Vey, 2007; Shulei & Miner, 2006). For example, Grandey (2003) found that surface acting by front line service workers was negatively related to co-worker ratings of affective delivery. Similarly, an experiment by Bono & Vey (2007) revealed that surface acting was negatively related to effective emotional performance. Such findings suggest that leaders who respond to emotional display rules with surface acting are unlikely to garner favorable follower impressions. In addition, surface acting may be accompanied by unwanted secondary impressions that the leader is insincere and manipulative (Gardner & Martinko, 1988).

Negative impressions are likely to be particularly pronounced when followers conclude that the leader is “faking in bad faith.” In contrast, followers are generally more forgiving when they conclude that the leader's intentions are good (Dasborough & Ashkanasy, 2002), although they are likely to fall short of forming the kinds of favorable impressions that arise when the leader's emotional displays are deemed to be genuine (as discussed below). Moreover, studies by Brotheridge & Lee (2002) and Shulei & Miner (2006) confirmed that surface acting is negatively related to one's sense of authenticity. Hence, leaders who use surface acting (especially “acting in bad faith”) are likely to accrue the worst possible combination of follower and personal outcomes: unfavorable follower impressions and low levels of perceived and felt authenticity.

Proposition 4. *Surface acting by a leader is negatively related to: a) the favorability of follower impressions; b) follower perceptions of leader authenticity; and c) leader felt authenticity.*

5.2. Deep acting

In contrast to surface acting, which involves deceiving others, deep acting reflects actors' efforts to modify inner feelings to match emotional display rules and thereby deceive themselves (Grandey, 2000, 2003; Hochschild, 1983). Research on deep acting confirms that it is more effective than surface acting in fostering favorable audience impressions (Beal et al., 2006; Bono & Vey, 2007; Shulei & Miner, 2006). For example, Grandey (2003) found that deep acting among service providers was positively related to co-worker ratings of affective delivery. This finding suggests that leaders who engage in deep acting are more likely to garner favorable impressions from followers and higher levels of perceived authenticity.

In contrast to the negative relationship identified between surface acting and felt authenticity, Brotheridge & Lee (2002) found that deep acting was significantly (albeit weakly) and positively related to actor feelings of authenticity. Similarly, an experiment by Shulei & Miner (2006) revealed that individuals who engaged in deep as opposed to surface acting experienced higher levels of authenticity. Nonetheless, because leaders who engage in deep acting are still acting, felt authenticity is posited to fall below the levels achieved following genuine emotional displays (but above that experienced following surface acting). Thus, deep acting represents an imperfect solution to the dilemma that leaders encounter when their emotions conflict with display rules. If they can convince themselves that they feel the required emotions, the dilemma disappears. Nonetheless, because deep acting requires the manipulation of inner feelings in violation of naturally emerging emotions, leader authenticity may still be compromised (even if the leader does not recognize this to be the case).

Proposition 5. *Deep acting by a leader is positively related to: a) the favorability of audience impressions; b) follower perceptions of leader authenticity; and c) leader felt authenticity.*

5.3. Genuine emotions

As noted above, Ashforth & Humphrey (1993) identified expressions of genuine emotions as a third category of emotional display responses that individuals may exhibit following an affective event. Subsequent empirical research by Diefendorff et al. (2005, p. 339) confirmed that “the display or naturally felt emotions is distinct from surface acting and deep acting as a method of displaying organizationally desired emotions.” “Genuine” (Glomb & Tews, 2004) and “automatic” (Martinez-Inigo, Totterdell, Alcover, & Holman, 2007) emotional responses have likewise been identified as alternative forms of emotional regulation. Moreover, Hennig-Thurau et al. (2006) demonstrated that the authenticity of employees’ emotional displays produced higher levels of positive affect among customers.

Together, the above findings suggest that when leaders experience and express genuine emotions that correspond to those dictated by display rules, such emotions are likely to be viewed by followers as genuine and appropriate, resulting in favorable follower impressions along with high feelings of authenticity by the leader. Additionally, Kellett et al. (2002, 2006) found that leader emergence within small workgroups was positively related to peer perceptions of emotional abilities (i.e., empathy, the ability to identify others’ emotions, and the ability to express one’s own emotions). This finding attests to the importance of leader emotional displays that are in sync with audience expectations. To the extent that such emotions come naturally to the leader, felt authenticity will also be high. Based on the preceding discussion, we advance:

Proposition 6. *Genuine emotional displays by a leader are positively related to: a) the favorability of follower impressions; b) follower perceptions of leader authenticity; and c) leader felt authenticity.*

Proposition 7. *Leader emotional displays produce more favorable follower impressions when they reflect genuine emotions as opposed to deep acting, which in turn yields more favorable follower impressions than surface acting.*

Proposition 8. *Leader emotional displays produce higher levels of perceived leader authenticity by followers when they reflect genuine emotions as opposed to deep acting, which in turn produces higher follower perceptions of leader authenticity than surface acting.*

Proposition 9. *Leader emotional displays produce higher levels of felt authenticity when they reflect genuine emotions as opposed to deep acting, which in turn yields higher levels of felt leader authenticity than surface acting.*

6. Follower trust in the leader

As Fig. 1 indicates, the key follower outcome arising from leader emotional labor is the level of trust followers place in the leader (Burke, Sims, Lazzaro, & Salas, 2007). Trust is defined as “a psychological state comprising the intention to accept vulnerability based upon positive expectations of the intentions or behavior of another” (Rousseau, Sitkin, Burt, & Camerer, 1998, p. 395). Two theoretical perspectives of trust in the leader are available from the literature (Dirks & Ferrin, 2002). The character-based perspective focuses on how perceptions of the leader’s character affect a followers’ willingness to make themselves vulnerable, given that the leader has the authority to make decisions that impact them. The relationship-based perspective is founded on principles of social exchange and deals with followers’ willingness to reciprocate the care and consideration that a leader may express in a relationship.

Prior conceptual and empirical work indicates that the immediate antecedents of trust are three factors of perceived trustworthiness: ability, benevolence, and integrity (Burke et al., 2007; Dirks & Ferrin, 2002; Mayer et al., 1995). Ability is defined as the “group of skills, competencies, and characteristics that enable a party to have influence within some specific domain” (Mayer et al., 1995, p. 717). Thus, trust as described in this context is domain specific. In our model, we posit that the perceived ability of the leader to accurately gauge the emotional norms of the situation and display appropriate emotions will serve as a partial determinant of follower trust. The next factor, benevolence, is the extent to which the trustee (e.g., leader) is seen as intending to do good for the trustor (e.g., follower). Benevolence implies some form of attachment by the trustee to the trustor that is similar to the relationship between a mentor and a protégé. We expect perceptions of benevolence to be reflected in the favorability of follower impressions of the leader. Finally, integrity refers to the extent to which the trustee is perceived to adhere to principles that are acceptable to the trustor, including “the extent to which the party’s actions are congruent with his or her words” (Mayer et al., 1995, p. 719).

Clearly, there is some conceptual overlap and a close relationship between the constructs of perceived authenticity and integrity. The implication for our model is that perceived leader authenticity, like perceived leader integrity (Simons, 2002), will have a direct and positive relationship with follower trust. In both cases, leaders who are seen as keeping their word and displaying actions that are consistent with their values and beliefs engender higher levels of trust among followers. Indeed, Gardner et al. (2005) argued that authentic leaders will elicit high levels of trust as followers come to see the leader as a genuine and reliable person who can be counted on to keep promises and display a high level of integrity.

Proposition 10. *The favorability of follower impressions of a leader is positively related to follower trust in the leader.*

Proposition 11. *Follower perceptions of leader authenticity are positively related to follower trust in the leader.*

7. Leader well-being

Authentic leadership theory identifies elevated levels of leader well-being as a key outcome for leaders who achieve authenticity (Gardner, Avolio, Luthans et al., 2005; Ilies et al., 2005). Well-being is concerned with optimal experiences and functioning and includes two general perspectives: the hedonic and eudaimonic.

The hedonic approach focuses on happiness and defines well-being in terms of pleasure attainment and pain avoidance. The eudaimonic approach focuses on meaning and self-realization and defines well-being in terms of the degree to which a person is fully functioning (Ryan & Deci, 2001). Authentic leadership theory is concerned with the second approach, arguing that the extent to which leaders and followers succeed in achieving authenticity will free them from the anxieties and emotional strains that arise from inauthentic behavior (i.e., discrepancies between one's values, emotions, and conduct), and thereby contribute to their well-being (Ilies et al., 2005; Kernis, 2003).

The literature on emotional labor likewise identifies well-being as an outcome that is impacted by the actor's emotional regulation strategies (Grandey, 2000). Ashforth & Humphrey (1993) proposed that the more strongly one identifies with a work role, the greater the impact of fulfilling emotional role expectations has on one's psychological well-being. However, if role demands are inconsistent with one's normative expectations, emotional labor is posited to have a negative impact on well-being. Empirical research confirms that emotional labor can have negative consequences for the psychological well-being of employees (Johnson & Spector, 2007; Little, Simmons, & Nelson, 2007; Morris & Feldman, 1996; Pugliesi, 1999). Together, the literatures on emotional labor and authentic leadership suggest two components of leader well-being that merit attention: emotional dissonance and job burnout.

7.1. Emotional dissonance

Emotional dissonance is defined as the conflict between genuinely felt emotions and organizationally required emotions (Middleton, 1989). Workers experience emotional dissonance when the emotional displays required by their job do not match their real feelings (Morris & Feldman, 1996). In developing and validating the Discrete Emotions Emotional Labor Scale (DEELS), Glomb & Tews (2004) found that emotional displays that involved genuine negative, faked positive, faked negative, suppressing positive, and suppressing negative emotions were positively associated with elevated levels of emotional dissonance. In a more recent study, Van Dijk & Kirk Brown (2006) found that emotional dissonance plays a partial mediating role between emotional labor and emotional exhaustion.

Together, the above findings suggest that when leaders employ emotional display strategies (e.g., surface acting) that contribute to feelings of inauthenticity, they are more likely to experience feelings of emotional dissonance that detract from their psychological well-being. In other words, felt leader authenticity is posited to mediate the relationship between leader emotional displays and emotional dissonance. Thus, we advance:

Proposition 12. *The relationship between leader emotional displays and emotional dissonance is mediated by felt leader authenticity such that displays that produce higher levels of authenticity (e.g., genuine displays, and to a lesser extent, deep acting), yield lower levels of leader emotional dissonance than displays that produce lower levels of leader felt authenticity (e.g., surface acting).*

7.2. Job burnout

Another well documented negative consequence of emotional labor is job burnout (Brotheridge & Grandey, 2002; Erickson & Ritter, 2001; Grandey, 2000). Maslach and associates have advanced a three component model of job burnout (Maslach, 1982; Maslach & Jackson, 1981; Maslach, Schaufeli, & Leiter, 2001; Pines & Maslach, 1980) which obtained support from a meta-analysis by Lee & Ashforth (1996). The three components of job burnout are emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and personal accomplishment.

7.2.1. Emotional exhaustion

The first component, emotional exhaustion, is characterized by a lack of energy and a feeling that one's emotional resources are used up. Insight into the relationship between emotional regulation strategies and emotional exhaustion is provided by Martinez-Inigo et al. (2007), who found that emotional regulation was negatively associated with emotional exhaustion when it was performed automatically (i.e., genuine emotion), whereas surface and deep acting strategies were positively related to emotional exhaustion. Similarly, recent empirical studies (Glomb & Tews, 2004; Grandey, 2003; Grandey et al., 2007; Johnson & Spector, 2007) confirm that requirements for emotional labor across a broad spectrum of occupations contribute to the emotional exhaustion of employees.

In a test of a conservation of resources model of emotional labor, Brotheridge & Lee (2002) found that the relationships between both surface and deep acting were mediated by feelings of authenticity. Deep acting showed a small but significant positive relationship with authenticity, and surface acting demonstrated a moderate and significant negative relationship. Authenticity, in turn, was strongly and negatively related to emotional exhaustion. The implication for our model is that when leaders feel inauthentic due to extensive reliance on emotional labor, they are likely to feel fatigue, frustration, and tension because they simply do not want to give, and potentially misrepresent their emotions, as they have in the past.

7.2.2. Depersonalization

The second component of burnout is depersonalization or dehumanization, which involves workers treating clients as objects rather than people. In a study of emotional labor for jobs involving "people work" (e.g., nurses, service workers), Brotheridge & Grandey (2002) found that surface (but not deep) acting predicted depersonalization above and beyond work demands. Given

that the essence of leadership involves “people work”, these findings suggest that surface acting by leaders is likely to contribute to feelings of depersonalization. Moreover, we expect leaders who experience depersonalization to display emotional detachment and become cynical toward followers, clients, and the organization. Once again, however, [Brotheridge & Lee's \(2002\)](#) study suggests that these relationships will be mediated by felt leader authenticity. Specifically, they found that while a small but significant negative relationship existed between deep acting and depersonalization, felt authenticity mediated the relationships of both surface and deep acting with depersonalization, such that higher levels of authenticity produced lower levels of depersonalization.

7.2.3. Personal accomplishment

The final component of burnout involves a diminished sense of personal accomplishment which is characterized by a tendency to evaluate one's achievements negatively. [Brotheridge & Grandey \(2002\)](#) found that while surface acting by employees engaged in “people work” leads to reductions in feelings of personal accomplishment, deep acting produced significant enhancements in personal accomplishment. Similarly, [Brotheridge & Lee \(2002\)](#) found that while deep acting was positively related to personal accomplishment, the relationship between surface acting and personal accomplishment was again mediated by felt authenticity. Specifically, surface acting was negatively related to authenticity, which in turn was positively related to feelings of personal accomplishment. Together, these findings suggest that whereas leaders who engage in deep acting may actually experience an enhanced sense of personal accomplishment, leaders who engage in surface acting may come to see themselves as less competent and form diminished expectations for achievement at work.

Overall, the literature relating emotional labor and burnout suggests that while leaders who engage in emotional labor run the risk of burnout and reductions in well-being, the risks are much more pronounced for surface acting. Although deep acting can contribute to emotional exhaustion among leaders, it may also produce beneficial consequences, such as an enhanced sense of personal accomplishment. For example, a leader who successfully engages in deep acting to improve the confidence and faith of followers during a time of crisis is likely to experience emotional exhaustion accompanied by a sense of personal achievement. In contrast, we expect genuine emotional displays to be negatively related to all three dimensions of job burnout, since the leader experiences the benefits to well-being that accrue from felt authenticity.

Note that this expectation is consistent with authentic leadership theory, which posits that leader authenticity contributes to leader engagement as a component of well-being ([Gardner, Avolio, Luthans et al., 2005](#)). Similar to the construct of personal accomplishment, engagement is described as the expression and employment of the self physically, emotionally, and cognitively through role performances ([May, Gilson, & Harter, 2004](#)). Thus, consistent with [Brotheridge & Lee's \(2002\)](#) findings and authentic leadership theory, we expect the relationship between emotional labor displays and job burnout to be mediated by felt leader authenticity.

Proposition 13. *The relationship between leader emotional displays and job burnout is mediated by leader felt authenticity such that displays that produce higher levels of leader felt authenticity (e.g., genuine displays, and to a lesser extent, deep acting), yield lower levels of leader emotional dissonance and depersonalization and higher levels of personal accomplishment than displays that produce lower levels of felt leader authenticity (e.g., surface acting).*

7.3. Summary: leader emotional displays and follower and leader outcomes

[Table 1](#) provides a tabular summary of the emotional labor approaches available to leaders and the posited effects on followers and leaders associated with each approach. In general, we expect deep acting to produce more favorable follower and leader outcomes than surface acting, and genuine emotional displays to produce more favorable outcomes than deep acting, as specified by [Propositions 7–9](#). However, we also expect the favorability of follower impressions, and subsequent trust in the leader, to vary depending on the extent to which the emotion displayed is consistent with display rules ([Proposition 3](#)).

We propose that surface, deep, and genuine emotional displays will tend to yield more favorable follower impressions when they are aligned with display rules because the leader will be judged to be more attuned to the emotional tenor of the situation. For example, a leader who engages in surface acting that is not consistent with display rules may be seen as both insincere and incompetent, since he or she appears to have misread the situation in choosing a fake emotional response. In contrast, a leader who engages in surface acting to conform to emotional display rules may be viewed more favorably since he or she is at least aware of

Table 1
Leader emotional displays and outcomes.

Emotional display	Consistent with display rules?	Favorability of follower impression	Perceived authenticity	Leader felt authenticity	Trust in leader	Leader well-being
Surface acting	Yes	Low/moderate	Low	Low	Low/moderate	Low
	No	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low
Deep acting	Yes	Moderate/high	Moderate/high	Moderate	Moderate/high	Moderate
	No	Low/moderate	Moderate/high	Moderate	Low/moderate	Moderate
Genuine display of emotions	Yes	High	High	High	High	High
	No	Low/moderate	High	High	Low/moderate	High

and attempting to meet the emotional display expectations associated with the leader role in the situation, even though the resultant display appears to be insincere. We expect leaders who display deep or genuine emotional displays will likewise be viewed more favorably when such emotions are consistent with display rules because they appear to be more attuned to the situation.

Note that we expect the levels of perceived and felt leader authenticity to be a function of the type of emotional display exhibited (Propositions 4b, 5b, and 6b), and not the extent to which such emotions are consistent with display rules. That is, we expect leaders who engage in surface, deep, and genuine displays will elicit low, moderate to high (depending on the leader's acting skills), and high levels of perceived authenticity among followers, even if such displays are not aligned with display rules. Thus, the perceived authenticity of the leader is conceptualized as an independent assessment which combines with the judged appropriateness of the emotion to determine the favorability of follower impressions and subsequent trust in the leader (Propositions 10 and 11). Leader felt authenticity is likewise determined by the type of emotional display (Propositions 4c, 5c, and 6c), with surface, deep, and genuine displays producing low, moderate, and high levels of felt leader authenticity and subsequent well-being (Propositions 12 and 13), respectively.

Below we consider the role that individual difference and contextual variables play in moderating the leader emotional labor process.

8. Individual differences as moderators of leader emotional displays

There are a number of individual difference variables that are likely to account for variance in the extent to which leaders' emotions are aligned with display rules, as well as their ability to manufacture emotional displays that conform to audience expectations. In our model we consider three individual difference variables that are particularly relevant to leaders' emotional displays: emotional intelligence, self-monitoring, and political skill.

8.1. Emotional intelligence

Emotional intelligence involves “the ability to perceive emotions, to access and generate emotions so as to assist thought, to understand emotions and emotional knowledge, and to reflectively regulate emotions so as to promote emotional and intellectual growth” (Mayer & Salovey, 1997). George (2000) summarizes four major components of emotional intelligence: (1) the appraisal and expression of emotions; (2) the use of emotion to enhance cognitive processes and decision making; (3) knowledge about emotions; and (4) the management of emotions.

The appraisal and expression of emotions refers to the degree to which people are aware of the emotions they experience and the degree to which they can verbally and non-verbally express these emotions. The use of emotions to enhance cognitive processes and decision making refers to using emotions in functional ways. Emotions can be used to facilitate cognitive processes including: (1) positive moods that foster creativity, integrative thinking and inductive reasoning; and (2) negative moods that promote attention to detail, detection of errors and problems, and careful information processing (Isen, Daubman, & Nowicki, 1987; Isen, Johnson, Mertz, & Robinson, 1985; Salovey, Hsee, & Mayer, 1993; Sinclair & Mark, 1992). Knowledge about emotions is concerned with understanding both the determinants and consequences of moods and emotions and how they evolve and change over time. A leader in a negative mood who decides to delay a meeting with followers has a rudimentary understanding of how he or she is influenced by feelings and uses this knowledge in functional ways (George, 2000). Finally, the management of emotions refers to the management of one's own and other people's moods and emotions. It encompasses individual differences in the ability to accurately reflect on one's moods and manage them (Salovey, Mayer, Goldman, Turvey, & Palfai, 1995).

In her model of emotional regulation in the workplace, Grandey (2000) identified emotional intelligence as a key individual difference variable that impacts the levels and types of emotional labor strategies actors employ at work. Subsequent research indicates that individuals with high as opposed to low emotional intelligence are less likely to use surface acting (Austin, Dore, & O'Donovan, 2008; Mikolajczak, Menil, & Luminet, 2007), and less likely to expend emotional effort, experience emotional dissonance, and encounter job burnout (Mikolajczak et al., 2007). Finally, Totterdell & Holman (2003) found that emotional intelligence was positively related to positive refocus, a form of attentional deployment which they conceptualized and measured as a component of deep acting.

Emotional intelligence has also been studied within the organizational context (Ashkanasy & Daus, 2002, 2005; Ashkanasy, Hartel, & Daus, 2002; Daus & Ashkanasy, 2005; Rubin et al., 2005) and research illustrates the importance of emotional intelligence to leadership (Prati, Douglas, Ferris, Ammeter, & Buckley, 2003; Walter & Bruch, 2007; Wolff, Pescosolido, & Druskat, 2002). George (2000), for example, proposes that emotional intelligence contributes to effective leadership as leaders must be able to anticipate how followers will react to different circumstances and effectively manage these reactions.

Empirical support for George's assertions is provided by several studies (Kellett et al., 2002, 2006; Walter & Bruch, 2007) that identified empathy, a key component of emotional intelligence, as a significant predictor of leadership emergence. Moreover, Kellett et al. (2006) found that empathy mediated the effects of two other dimensions of emotional intelligence – the ability to identify others' emotions and the ability to express one's own emotions – on the emergence of task- and relations-oriented leadership. Finally, Walter & Bruch (2007) showed that both leaders' emotional intelligence and positive mood were positively related to follower ratings of charismatic leadership behaviors. Interestingly, emotionally intelligent leaders were shown to more consistently exhibit charismatic leadership behaviors, regardless of the extent to which they experienced a positive mood. In contrast, leaders with low emotional intelligence were much more likely to behave charismatically when experiencing positive as

opposed to negative moods. Apparently, emotionally intelligent leaders are especially skilled at regulating their emotions to generate perceptions of charisma.

Based on the literature reviewed above, we propose that emotional intelligence will serve as a moderator of a leader's emotional responses to affective events. Specifically, we assert that leaders with high emotional intelligence will be able to: (1) understand the emotional requirements of the situation; (2) empathize with followers and other participants in the affective event; and (3) successfully manage their emotional displays to conform to situational requirements and follower expectations, thereby fostering positive impressions. Note that this reasoning implies that the ability of emotionally intelligent leaders to empathize with followers predisposes them to experience genuine emotions that are in sync with situational requirements and follower expectations. Moreover, in cases where such leaders experience emotions that are out of sync with display rules, we anticipate they will be more likely to engage in deep as opposed to surface acting to produce emotional displays that garner favorable emotional reactions. Thus, we posit that emotional intelligence will influence both the emotions experienced by leaders and their effectiveness in selecting and executing emotional displays that promote positive follower impressions.

Proposition 14. *Emotional intelligence moderates the relationship between affective events and leader emotional displays such that high as opposed to low emotionally intelligent leaders are more likely to display genuine emotions and deep acting, and less likely to engage in surface acting.*

8.2. Self-monitoring ability

Self-monitoring involves the extent to which individuals “strategically cultivate public appearances” (Gangestad & Snyder, 2000, p. 530). Moreover, it represents the degree to which actors are attuned to audience and situational demands for emotional and expressive behavior, and possess the ability to adjust their behavior to meet situational requirements (Snyder, 1974, 1979). High self-monitors tend to be social pragmatists who are chameleon-like in adjusting the public expressions of their attitudes and behavior to fit the expectations of others (Day & Schleicher, 2006). Low self-monitors, however, care about their impressions, but only to the extent that their impression is a genuine reflection of self (Gangestad & Snyder, 2000). Low self-monitors may use impression management strategies to represent their “true self” to others (Day & Schleicher, 2006). Research has shown that high versus low self-monitors tend to: (1) be more involved in their job; (2) have higher cognitive ability; (3) perform at a higher level; (4) be rated as better managers; and (5) emerge more often as leaders (Day, Shleicher, Unckless, & Hiller, 2002).

Because high versus low self-monitors are especially attuned to situational cues, Grandey (2000) posited that they would be more skilled at reading emotional display rules and more willing and able to change their emotional displays to conform to these rules. In addition, because high self-monitors are particularly attuned to their audience, one might also expect them to be more sensitive to follower emotions, and hence more likely to display empathy. Moreover, given the superior acting abilities of high versus low self-monitors (Snyder, 1974, 1979), one might predict that they will be more likely to effectively employ deep acting to secure favorable follower reactions. Finally, the concern of low self-monitors with the expression of genuine emotions (Snyder, 1974, 1979), suggests that a negative relationship will exist between self-monitoring and the frequency of genuine emotional displays.

The available empirical evidence provides only mixed support for these assertions. Evidence that high self-monitors are more likely to engage in deep acting is provided by Bono & Vey (2007), who found that self-monitoring was positively related to deep acting and subsequent emotional performance, but unrelated to surface acting. In contrast, other authors have shown that self-monitoring is positively related to surface acting (Brotheridge & Lee, 2003; Diefendorff et al., 2005), and unrelated to both deep acting (Brotheridge & Lee, 2003; Diefendorff et al., 2005) and genuine emotions (Diefendorff et al., 2005). In positing and interpreting the positive relationship between surface acting and self-monitoring, Brotheridge & Lee (2002, 2003) note that Snyder's research indicates that high as opposed to low self-monitors are more adept at expressing emotions they do not feel, which is the essence of surface acting.

Based on the extant theory and limited (albeit somewhat ambiguous) empirical support, we advance the following proposition.

Proposition 15. *Self-monitoring will moderate the relationship between affective events and leader emotional displays such that high as opposed to low self-monitors will be more likely to engage in surface and deep acting, and less likely to exhibit genuine emotions.*

8.3. Political skill

Political skill has been defined as “the ability to effectively understand others at work, and to use such knowledge to influence others to act in ways that enhance one's personal and/or organizational objectives” (Ferris et al., 2005, p. 127). “As such, politically skilled individuals combine social astuteness with the capacity to adjust their behavior to different and changing situational demands in a manner that appears sincere, inspires support and trust, and effectively influences and controls the responses of others” (Liu et al., 2007, p. 147). Politically skilled leaders can readily comprehend social cues and attribute the behavioral motivation of others, influence and control people and situations with ease, and effectively build the networks and social capital necessary to both elevate their reputational status and provide scarce resources to followers (Ferris et al., 2005; Hall, Blass, Ferris, & Massengale, 2004), thereby enhancing their job performance (Liu et al., 2007).

Political skill represents a valuable interpersonal style (Treadway et al., 2004) that is often discussed in connection with emotional intelligence and self-monitoring (Ferris, Perrew, Anthony, & Gilmore, 2000); it has been shown to be positively

correlated with, but empirically distinct from, both constructs (Ferris et al., 2005). Politically skilled leaders are able to better understand the audience as they pick up on social cues and look at the situation from an audience perspective. Importantly, the specific inclusion of “apparent sincerity” (i.e., perceived authenticity) as a dimension of political skill suggests that such leaders will be more likely to exhibit deep acting and genuine emotional displays than surface acting. Hence, as was the case for emotional labor, we expect politically skilled leaders to be especially attuned to emotional display rules, and particularly effective at selecting emotional displays that involve deep as opposed to surface acting and, in turn, foster positive audience impressions.

Proposition 16. *Political skill moderates the relationship between affective events and leader emotional displays such that leaders with high as opposed to low political skill are more likely to display genuine emotions and deep acting and less likely to engage in surface acting.*

9. Environmental context

As Fig. 1 indicates, the nature and interpretation of affective events, including the operative display rules, will depend on the environmental context within which they take place. To organize our discussion of context, we draw from several recent taxonomies of contextual variables (Johns, 2006; Porter & McLaughlin, 2006; Rousseau & Fried, 2001). Building on the work of Johns (2006) we distinguish between the omnibus context, which “refers to the context broadly considered” and the discrete context, which “refers to the particular contextual variables or levers that shape behavior or attitudes” (p. 391, italics in original). Specific components of the omnibus context we identify as being particularly relevant to leader emotional labor include national and organizational culture, industry and occupation, organizational structure, and time. Note that the discrete context is nested within the omnibus context, such that the effects of the former are mediated by discrete contextual variables and/or interactions among them.

9.1. Omnibus context

9.1.1. National culture

As the rich insights into national culture provided by the GLOBE study (Den Hartog, House, Hanges, Ruiz-Quintanilla, & Dorfman, 1999; Javidan & House, 2001) make clear, considerable variance in leader prototypes exists across cultures. Moreover, Ekman's (1973) cross cultural research on facial expressions illuminates the range of emotional meaning attached to alternative facial expressions across cultures. Hence, we expect national culture to play a primary role in determining the types of emotional displays that followers expect from their leaders. For example, we posit that leaders from cultures that score high (e.g., Indonesia, Ireland) versus low (e.g., Germany, France) on the humane orientation dimension of culture will be expected to display greater concern for the well-being of employees (Javidan & House, 2001). Similarly, leaders from cultures that rank high (e.g., United States, Austria) on assertiveness will be expected to be forceful and competitive during negotiations, whereas cultures that rank low on assertiveness (e.g., Sweden, Japan) would expect leaders to show a higher propensity to cooperate.

9.1.2. Organizational culture

As Gordon (1991) astutely observes, industry-level variables including the competitive environment, customer requirements, and societal expectations serve as important determinants of organizational culture, including the emotional display rules associated with certain occupations and roles (for related work see Hunt, Boal, & Sorenson, 1990). Nevertheless, there is also ample variance in organizational cultures within industries, as unique values, stories, myths, rituals, symbols, rules, and roles emerge and become dominant (Martin, 2002; Schein, 1991). The influence of organizational culture on the emotional norms and expectations associated with assorted roles is likely to be particularly strong (Hartel, Hsu, & Boyle, 2002; Van Maanen, 1991). Indeed, Mumby & Putnam (1992) asserts that culture influences the ways in which members perform emotional labor, and emotional labor in turn contributes to the development of the organizational culture.

The influence of organizational culture on requirements for emotional labor is illustrated well by Martin, Knopoff, & Beckman's (1998) qualitative study of The Body Shop International. Feminist norms embodied by the culture of The Body Shop lead to the emergence “of an alternative emotion management approach, “bounded rationality,” which encourages the constrained expressions of emotions at work in order to encourage community building and personal well-being in the workplace” (p. 429). However, rather than displacing emotional labor, bounded emotionality was found to co-exist with emotional labor as employees still employed smile to increase productivity or tear to gain assistance on a difficult task. Nevertheless, the organizational culture clearly served as a powerful normative determinant of the types of emotional displays that were deemed to be appropriate, as well as their effectiveness in eliciting desired impressions and responses.

Hartel et al. (2002) assert that organizational cultures vary in the extent to which they are oriented toward emotion. Those that are high in concern for the emotional well-being of employees exhibit a high level of recognition for emotional labor, which is manifested by acknowledging, addressing, legitimizing, rewarding and/or compensating for the existence and demands of emotional labor (Rafaeli & Sutton, 1987). Other cultures may marginalize the importance of emotionality and hence overlook the emotional needs of employees at work (Fineman, 1993). We propose that when cultures explicitly recognize the importance of emotions in the workplace, leaders are expected to display high levels of emotional sensitivity. That is, stronger display rules will be operative for leaders in such cultures, and leaders will be expected to exhibit a wider range of emotions. In contrast, leaders from

cultures that tend to marginalize the role of emotion at work will be expected to “control” their emotions and refrain from dramatic emotional displays.

9.1.3. Industry and occupation

Service industries provided the original context for the construct of emotional labor, beginning with Hochschild's (1983) qualitative study of flight attendants and followed by subsequent studies of nurses (Timmons & Tanner, 2005), supermarket and fast food clerks (Leidner, 1991; Rafaeli, 1989a,b; Sutton & Rafaeli, 1988), waiters and waitresses (Hall, 1993; Paules, 1991), amusement park employees (Van Maanen, 1991), and service “professionals” such as banking employees (Wharton, 1993) and insurance agents (Leidner, 1991). Indeed, there is ample evidence that emotional labor is especially high in professions and institutions that involve “people work” (Brotheridge & Grandey, 2002), including those mentioned above, as well as trade unions (Franzway, 2000) and university lecturers (Ogbonna & Harris, 2004).

As Humphrey et al. (2008) point out, the role of leader carries with it expectations regarding appropriate emotions that transcend service occupations. For example, while leaders in the service as opposed to manufacturing industries may be expected to exhibit empathy and caring emotions across a wider variety of settings and audiences, all leaders are typically expected to express sympathy when they learn that a follower has lost a loved one. Thus, we expect the role of leaders to interact with industry, occupational, organizational, and societal norms and expectations, among other factors, to determine the types of emotional displays that are expected and considered appropriate in a particular context (Rafaeli & Sutton, 1987).

9.1.4. Organizational structure

For many of the service industries that have supplied the primary backdrop for emotional labor research, bureaucracy is the predominant organizational structure (Martin et al., 1998). As such, the bureaucratic quest for standardization elicits norms for standard emotional displays (e.g., smiles and courteous treatment) to be provided by service workers (Hall, 1993; Hennig-Thurau, Groth, Paul, & Gremler, 2006; Johnson & Spector, 2007; Pugh, 2001; Van Maanen, 1991). However, as the previously discussed qualitative study of The Body Shop indicated, organizations with less bureaucratic and more flexible structures may create norms for alternative forms of emotion management, such as “bounded emotionality” (Martin et al., 1998). Thus we expect the rigidity of an organization's structure to be a key determinant of the degree of latitude employees, and their leaders, are allowed in managing their emotions at work. Indeed, leaders of organizations with organic structures may find that they are both afforded greater latitude and required to display a wider range of emotions as they seek to effectively respond to dynamic environmental challenges.

9.1.5. Time

Until recently, scholars devoted relatively little attention to the role that temporality plays in influencing leader and follower cognitions, affect, motivation, and behavior. However, accompanying an increased recognition of the importance of temporality within the field of management in general (Balkundi & Harrison, 2006; Goodman, Ancona, Lawrence, & Tushman, 2001; Mitchell & James, 2001) has been a growing realization among leadership scholars that time and “timing” represent key determinants of leader behavior and effectiveness (Dansereau, Yammarino, & Kohles, 1999; Hunt, 2004; Osborn, Hunt, & Jauch, 2002; Porter & McLaughlin, 2006; Ropo & Hunt, 1999).

We agree that temporality represents an important contextual component for leadership, including leaders' emotional displays and authenticity. For instance, a leader's emotional response to a poor performing employee, as well as audience expectations (including those of the employee), is likely to vary depending on the timing of performance problems and the number of prior incidents of such performance. Indeed, research on leader attributions, at least in the United States, confirms that leaders are more likely to attribute poor employee performance to internal causes and respond with anger and punitive actions as incidents of deficient performance increase in frequency (Mitchell & Wood, 1980). Moreover, research on workplace (Romero & Cruthirds, 2006) and leader (Avolio, Howell, & Sosik, 1999) humor demonstrates the importance of timing and context to perceptions of what is funny and appropriate. Thus, we view temporality to be another critical element of the context that will impact affective events and the range of viable emotional display strategies that are available to leaders.

9.2. Discrete context (situation)

“The discrete situation refers to the specific situational variables that influence behavior directly or moderate the relationships between variables” (Johns, 2006, p. 393). Key elements of the discrete context that help to define the situation and the leader's role within it include: the leader's position (e.g., CEO, supervisor), communication media (e.g., face-to-face, written, electronic), audience attributes (e.g., number of people, status, insider versus outsider), and the nature of the event (e.g., recruitment and selection, socialization, rewards and punishments) (Gardner & Martinko, 1988; Rafaeli & Sutton, 1987). Sample situations that communicate vastly different expectations for leader emotions include: job layoff announcements (empathy, sincerity), new product promotions (enthusiasm, optimism), employee recognitions at annual award banquets (pride, humor, excitement), interpersonal exchanges at outdoor team building exercises (warmth, humor), negotiations with customers, suppliers or rivals (confidence, sincerity), and hospital visits to console ill employees or their family members (empathy, hope).

Another key element of the composition of the situation is the extent to which it involves “front stage” as opposed to “back stage” performances (Goffman, 1959). “Front stage” activities involve public displays that are “on the record” and may require intensive emotional labor (Callahan & McCollum, 2002). In contrast, “back stage” areas may be considered any space where actors'

roles are relaxed along with the requirements for emotional labor (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993). Indeed, it is not unusual for leaders to exhibit very different emotions in private behind closed doors with trusted followers than they do with the general public.

The preceding discussion suggests the following global proposition regarding the influence of environmental context on leader emotional labor.

Proposition 17. *Components of the omnibus (national and organizational culture, industry and occupation, organizational structure, time) and discrete (situational) environmental context combine to determine emotional display rules that delineate appropriate emotional displays for persons occupying leadership positions.*

10. Discussion and conclusion

The model of leader emotional labor depicted in Fig. 1 and the predictions summarized in Table 1 suggest a number of avenues for future research. Beyond the propositions advanced, the proposed model has several implications for the research on emotional labor and authentic leadership. First, the model and associated discussion suggest that emotional labor is not confined to service providers or lower level employees. To the contrary, the model indicates that leaders are likely to encounter a wide array of situations that elicit display rules for expected leader emotions, ranging from ceremonial awards banquets to crisis management in the face of disasters. By taking into account both omnibus macro-environmental factors and the more discrete (situational) micro-level factors that dictate display rules, the meso-level approach (House, Rousseau, & Thomas-Hunt, 1995; Rousseau & House, 1994) adopted in this paper highlights productive avenues for enhancing our understanding of leader emotional labor.

The proposed model also highlights a basic dilemma faced by leaders who strive for authenticity: Can leaders exhibit the emotional displays that contextual factors dictate as appropriate for effective leadership while remaining true to their experienced emotions? That is, is it possible for leaders to exhibit flexible emotional reactions across a wide variety of contexts without violating their sense of self? Attention to this issue by proponents of authentic leadership (Avolio & Gardner, 2005; Gardner, Avolio, Luthans et al., 2005; Gardner, Avolio, & Walumbwa, 2005; Ilies et al., 2005; Shamir & Eilam, 2005; Walumbwa et al., 2008) is required to reconcile the purported benefits of leader authenticity with available evidence that leaders who are not necessarily fully authentic (e.g., leaders high in emotional intelligence, self-monitoring ability, and political skill) tend to be perceived as highly effective. One possible avenue for reconciling the available research findings would be empirical evidence that such leaders genuinely experience the emotions they display, making it possible for them to comply with operative display rules without experiencing feelings of inauthenticity. Research along these lines would help to clarify if authentic leadership represents an ideal that is difficult to attain in practice due to the complex emotional requirements imposed on leaders by contextual factors, or a realistic approach to addressing the competing emotional demands that confront organizational leaders. Support for the latter view would suggest that rather than involving labor, emotional displays by authentic leaders are relatively effortless because they reflect true expressions of the self.

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