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The Mediating Role of Emotional Dissonance in the Relationship of Teacher's Emotional Labor Strategies with Occupational Well-Being

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Emotional dissonance resulting from an employee's emotional labor strategies is usually considered to lead to negative employee's outcomes such as reduced occupational well-being. The purpose of this research was to test the effects of emotional labor strategies (surface acting, deep acting and expression of naturally felt emotions) on occupational well-being considering the mediating role of emotional dissonance. The sample of this research consisted of 150 high school teachers in Isfahan who were selected by the stratified random sampling method. The instruments which used in this study were Teacher Emotional Labor Strategy Scale (TELSS), emotional exhaustion subscale in Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) and occupational well-being scale. Structural equation modeling (SEM) through AMOS-22 was used for data analysis. The results indicated that, emotional labor strategies relate significantly to emotional dissonance, and emotional dissonance relates negatively to occupational well-being. In addition, emotional dissonance mediated the effect of all emotional labor strategies on occupational well-being. These findings could be explained by differences in the nature of various emotional labor strategies. Implications for teaching and teacher education are put forward.

***Keywords*:** emotional labor strategies, emotional dissonance, occupational well-being

Recently, emotions in teacher's work have turned into a topic of much curiosity about educational research. Emotion plays a significant role in teacher's development (Yin & Lee, 2011),

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teacher's satisfaction, and the formation and transformation of teachers' identity or self-understanding (Yin, Lee, Zhang & Jin, 2013). Sutton & Rafaeli (1988) argued that emotions are generally viewed as intra-psychic states due to factors such as job characteristics, stress, and relationships with supervisors, or compensation. According to Martínez-Iñigo, Totterdell, Alcover & Holman (2007) these intra-psychic states of emotions are an important requirement in a number of jobs and play a role in influencing work-related outcomes. Results of several research endevours have indicated that the ways teachers emotionally feel the context of teaching significantly connect with the ways they approach their teaching. Positive emotions associated with a student-focused teaching approach and negative emotions will lead to transmission approaches (Trigwell, 2012). Hosotani & Imai-Matsumura (2011) stated that teachers consider emotional expression in front of students as a skill, and high quality teachers can effectively use emotional competence on teaching.

Emotional labor, namely employees' emotional performance, is a moderately new subject of request examined following the late 70s, began by Hochschild (1979, 1983). Diversified research attempted to set up in any conceptual clarity to the idea of emotional labor by simply defining its process, antecedents and organizational implications. Hochschild' (1983) stated that there are three criteria for work that require emotional labor strategies, (1) teaching requires face-to-face contact between teachers and others, especially students; (2) teaching requires teachers to produce some emotional state (e.g., joy, fear, excitement or anxiety) to students or other people around them; and (3) there is a degree of external control over teachers' emotional labor, which usually comes in the form of cultural expectations or professional norms (Winograd, 2003). In other words, emotional labor process involves a consistent

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comparison between the emotional displays of oneself and the institutionalized display rules. If an inconsistency between emotion's display and display rules is detected, emotion-regulation strategies in the form of surface acting and deep acting are adopted (Pugh, Groth & Hennig-Thurau, 2010). So, emotional labor as an important element of teachers' work in a school or classroom isn't easily identified because emotional rules in many cases are disguised as ethical codes or professional norms (Fried, 2011).

Hochschild's primary conceptualization, focused on the unfavorable effects of *emotional dissonance*, has dominated the literature on emotional labor. Emotional dissonance is a wide discrepancy between felt and expressed emotion "analogous to the concept of cognitive dissonance" (Hochschild, 1983, p. 90). This discrepancy arises when the people's emotion display as part of their job performance do not match the emotions they feel (Pugh, et al., 2010). Emotional dissonance may cause faked emotional responses, cause internal tension, and thereby creating job dissatisfaction (Brotherigde & Grandey, 2002).

According to Morris & Feldman (1996), emotional labor is defined as the effort, planning, and control required for the organization's desired emotions to be reflected in the interpersonal process (Bayram, Aytac & Dursun, 2012). Emotional labor has been traditionally viewed as a supply of negative psychological outcomes such as for instance low job satisfaction, job stress, emotional exhaustion, depression, and self-alienation (Constanti & Gibbsm, 2005). Some specific strategies are required for teachers to regulate their emotions and feelings when working. According to the emotional labor theory, emotional labor is just a big element of employee's performance because certain jobs require employees to show certain emotional strategies (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993).

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The most commonly used terms of emotional labor are surface acting, deep acting, and genuine acting (Hochschild, 1983). In the context of teaching, emotional labor is primarily perceived as the process by which teachers make an effort to inhibit, generate, and manage their feelings and expression of emotions according to the normative beliefs and expectations held about the teaching profession (Yin et al., 2013, p.138). Surface acting and deep acting are two classical strategies which are most frequently discussed in emotional labor literature. Both surface and deep acting are strategies that help individuals express emotions that do not come naturally. Surface acting means that employees try to manage the visible aspects of emotions that appear on the ‘‘surface’’ and which can be noticed in the interactions in line with the organizational display rules while the inner feelings remain unchanged. The expectation of certain emotions by the employees is defined as “feeling rules” (Hochschild,1983) or “display rules” (Morris & Feldman, 1996), which are postulated to truly have a potential to cause emotional conflict or dissonance for employees if these emotional expectations will vary from an employees' actual emotional inclinations (Hochschild, 1983). Surface acting may sometimes be a problematic strategy because often more is expected than ‘superficial’ emotions. Another concept of Hochschild (1983) is ‘‘active deep acting’’ when individuals try to influence what they feel in order to ‘become’ the role they are asked to display. In this case, not only the expressive behavior but also the inner feelings are regulated. Active deep acting refers to the case where an employee has to spend effort to regulate emotions. This is so because there is a need to actively strive to invoke thoughts, images, and memories to induce a certain emotion (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993). Moreover, According to Yin et al., (2013) in addition to surface acting and deep acting, some

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researchers (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993) suggested that expression of naturally felt emotions is a third type of emotional labor strategy because although the display of naturally felt emotions at work may be fairly common, individuals may still have to make a conscious effort to ensure that their display is consistent with the organization's requirements.

A controversial question still exists regarding the potency of emotional labor. Morris & Feldman's (1997) proposed that frequency and duration of emotional labor do not directly impact on the employee's well-being, but may do so through emotional dissonance. Zapf et al., (1999) argued that the requirement to display positive emotions, negative emotions, and sensitivity requirements are not necessarily stressful but may become so through emotional dissonance (Lewig & Dollard, 2003). However, by the way of a prior study, these researchers supposed that the emotional labor's negative influence upon someone isn't emotional labor itself, nevertheless, the incongruous state of emotional dissonance, can be associated with emotional labor.

Emotional labor, "the management of emotions as part of the work role" (Diefendorff & Richard, 2003, p. 284), is believed to influence *occupational well-being* (Kim, 2008). This is exactly why the measurement of emotional labor strategies, coping strategies in the event of conflict, along with influential factors have received increasing attention from researchers, causing many various ways of measurement and several emotional labor terms. In this Vein, if you find incompatibility involving the emotions actually felt by the employee and the emotions displayed, various negative results ensure and will cause mental and physical dysfunctions in employees such as job burnout and perceived role stress (Bayrama et al., 2012).

This study aims to show that how variables like emotional

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labor strategies (surface acting, deep acting and expression of naturally felt emotions) and emotional dissonance influence occupational well-being. While the role of emotional labor strategies in occupational well-being is well documented, the mechanism through which emotional labor strategies predict occupational well-being is little researched. This study investigates the mechanism of emotional dissonance, through which emotional labor strategies lead to occupational well-being. Figure 1 shows the proposed model.

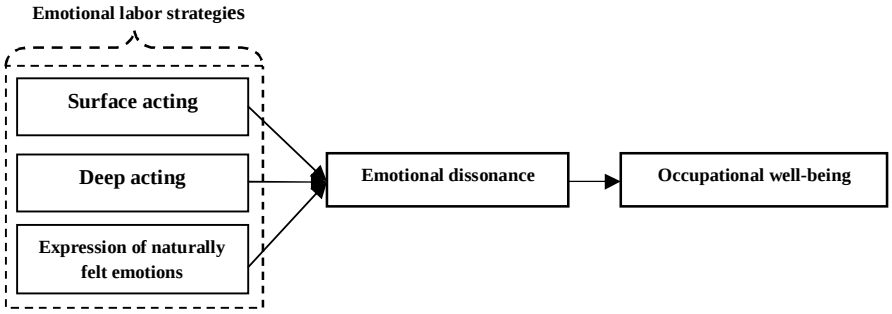


Figure1. The Proposed Model of Current Research

Participants

Respondents for this research were 150 high school teachers (120 female and 30 male) that were selected by stratified random sampling method from public high-school teachers in Isfahan. Anonymous questionnaires were distributed and altogether, 124 questionnaires were returned, yielding a response rate of 80%. Of the 150 respondents, 80% were female, and average age was 36 years (SD=6.45). In addition, .08% of the participants possessed a high school diploma, 82.7% had a bachelor degree, and 15.83% had a master degree.

Measures

Teacher Emotional Labor Strategy Scale (TELSS). The 7-item scale was developed by Yin (2012) was used to assess teacher's emotional labor strategies. The scale comprises three

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subscales, surface acting (SA, 6 items), deep acting (DA, 4 items), and expression of naturally felt emotions (ENFE, 3 items).Participants responded on a 5-point Likert-type scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). According to Yin et al., (2013) the Cronbach's alpha of the three types of emotional labor strategies ranging from .74 to .85. In the present study Cronbach's alpha ranging from.79 to .84. Results of the confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) provided evidence for construct validity of this scale.

Maslach Burnout Inventory-General Scale (MBI–GS). Emotional dissonance was measured using emotional exhaustion–energy subscale of MBI–GS (Schaufeli, Leiter, Maslach, & Jackson, 1996). This scale measures three dimensions of the burnout–engagement continuum: emotional exhaustion–energy (5 items; e.g., I feel used up at the end of the workday), cynicism–involvement (5 items; e.g., I have become less enthusiastic about my work), and inefficacy– efficacy (6 items; e.g., in my opinion, I am good at my job). All items are scored on a 7-point Likert-type scale ranging from 0 (never) to 6 (daily). In the present study, Cronbach's alpha ranging from .72 to .81. We conducted a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) which provided evidence for the construct validity of this scale.

Occupational well-being scale. The occupational well-being scale that was developed by Hinkin (1998) was used to assess the occupational well-being. This scale composed of 54 items and 6 subscales includes positive occupational relationships (9 Items), professional self-acceptance (9 Items), job autonomy (9 Items), job purpose (9 Items), environmental mastery (9 Items), and job growth (9 Items). Occupational well-being is measured on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Shultz (2008) reported the Cronbach's alpha of this scale and its sub-scales ranging from .71 to .82. Also, the

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results of CFA through AMOS-7 software in previous research indicated that the total scale and the all of the 6 sub-scales are valid (Shultz, 2008). Naami & Piryaei (2014) investigated the construct validity indices of this scale using AMOS-18 software in an Iranian context (CFI= .85, GFI=.86, RMSEA=.01) and reported Cronbach's alpha of this scale being equal to.85. In the current research Cronbach's alpha ranging from .75 to .84. We conducted a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) which provided evidence for construct validity of this scale.

Results

Descriptive Statistics and Correlations

The descriptive statistics (means and standard deviations) and the correlations among research variables are reported in Table1.

Table 1
Descriptive Statistics and Inter-Correlations for Research Variables

	Variables	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5
1	**Surface acting**	18.18	3.77	__				
2	**Deep acting**	14.24	2.66	.90*	__			
3	**Expression of naturally felt emotions**	6.89	3.42	.80*	.92*	__		
4	**Emotional dissonance**	30.39	8.72	.93*	.83*	-.83*	__	
5	**Occupational well-being**	105.85	35.77	-.92*	-.91	.82*	-.97*	_

** $p<.05$*

Results of Pearson correlation analysis indicated that all three emotional labor strategies had significant relationships with occupational well-being (-.92, -.091, .82). Also, emotional dissonance negatively related to occupational well-being (-.97) and significantly correlates with surface acting (.93), deep acting (.83) and expression of naturally felt emotions (-.83) (*$p<.0001$*).

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Structural Model

The structural equation modeling (SEM) results indicated that the hypothesized model was fit the data properly: (CMIN = 9.368, DF = 3, CMIN/df = 3.123 (p<.02), NFI =.99, IFI =.998, TLI=.989, CFI=.998, RMSEA=.08). The standardized regression weights for the paths are shown in Figure 2.

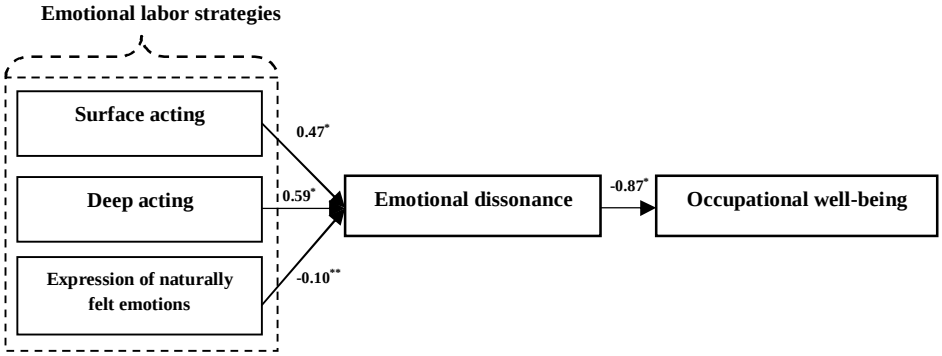


Figure2. The standardized parameters of structural model, **p< 0.0001, **p< 0.01*

As shown in Figure 2, all paths in this model were statistically significant (p<.01). To determine the significance of the mediating effects, bootstrapping procedure was used. Bootstrapping procedure (using 5000 re-samples) was used to determine the 95% bias-corrected confidence intervals around these effects. A confidence interval that did not span zero indicated a statistically significant effect (see Table 2).

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Table 2
Results for Bootstrapping Analysis with One Mediator: Effects on Occupational well-being

	Data	Boot	Bias	SE	95% Confidence interval	
					Lower	Upper
SA → emotional dissonance → occupational well-being	-1.3069	-1.3069	.0009	.0451	-1.3970	-1.2172
DA → emotional dissonance → occupational well-being	-1.0473	-1.0511	-.0038	.0350	-1.1134	-.9778
ENFE → emotional dissonance → occupational well-being	-1.1301	-1.1325	-.0024	.0483	-1.2371	-1.0436

SA: surface acting., DA: deep acting., ENFE: expression of naturally felt emotions

As illustrated in Table 2 the confidence interval, with one mediator (emotional dissonance) did not span zero which indicates statistically significant mediating effect. So, the emerged pattern suggests a mediating role of perceived emotional dissonance in these relationships.

Discussion

The purpose of the current research was to determine the mediating role of emotional dissonance in the relationship between emotional labor strategies and teacher's occupational well-being. Specifically, we found that teacher's perceived emotional dissonance mediated significantly the relationship between teacher's emotional labor strategies (surface acting, deep acting and expression of naturally felt emotions) with occupational well-being. The findings of this study are consistent with Jung & Yoon (2014), Karim & Weisz (2011), and Yin et al., (2013) findings. This study is a venture to a superior seeing about the role of emotional labor in teachers' work. The results of this study contribute to the existing knowledge in the accompanying perspectives: the factor structure of teachers' emotional labor strategies, the important role of emotional dissonance in teachers' well-being, and the

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practice of teacher training and teacher education.

Dissonance is conceptualized as a negative affective state, and motivated by the desire to decrease this negative affect or arousal (Carrasco, Martínez-Tur, Moliner, María Peiró & Ramis, 2014). Hochschild (1983) in emotion dissonance theory, asserted that when felt emotions differ from expressed emotions, tension results. Expressing emotions that a different from the emotions that are felt, "poses a challenge to a person's sense of self" (p. 136). Indeed, Erickson and Ritter (2001) noted that because of Hochschild's influence, "most studies of emotion management processes begin with the assumption that performing emotional labor is associated with negative mental health outcomes" (p. 148). Erickson and Ritter (2001) asserted that hiding feelings of anger harms employee well-being because it reminds employees of their lack of control over their own emotions. Moreover, Based on Festinger's (1957) cognitive dissonance theory, pairs of cognitions that are relevant to one another can be either consonant (i.e., one naturally follows from the other) or dissonant (i.e., one is in conflict with the other). Dissonant cognitions imply the psychologically uncomfortable state of cognitive dissonance, which then leads a person to take steps to reduce this dissonance, such as avoiding information that would increase dissonance.

Goffman (1959) suggested that in every social interaction people follow some rules. There is sufficient evidence that emotional work in organizations is an essential issue and negatively impacts on psychological well-being cannot be ignored (Zapf, 2002). Also, teaching is a form of emotional practice and emotional labor (Hargreaves, 2001) and this "people-work" or "heart-consuming job", as described by teachers, requires strong emotional commitment and intensive interpersonal interaction (Yin & Lee, 2012). Similar to Pugliesi

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(1999) and Holman, Chissick & Totterdell1 (2002) as a laborious rather than pleasant work, teachers are obliged to closely monitor their inner feelings and to modify their emotional expressions by means of various cognitive techniques. According to Kim & Lee (2011) emotional labor had significant positive effects on employee job stress and this new stress can lead to negative psychological conditions, such as greater emotional exhaustion (Morris and Feldman, 1996). Whereas emotional dissonance is a psychological feeling momentarily perceived in work situations.

Surface acting as "faking in bad faith" (Grandey, 2003, p. 87) often found to be associated with negative outcomes in previous researches (e.g., Cheung, Tang & Tang, 2011; Karim & Weisz, 2011). So, it is a positive significant predictor of emotional dissonance and indirectly impacts on teacher's occupational well-being. Moreover, consistent with Zhang & Zhu's (2008) study, deep acting found to significantly influence the employee's outcomes. Deep acting can be seen as "faking in good faith" (Grandey, 2003) and it may lead to an increase of emotional dissonance between real emotions and rules. So, as a laborious rather than pleasant work, teachers should make great efforts to closely monitor their inner feelings and to modify their emotional expressions by means of various cognitive techniques (Yin et al., 2013) and this association indirectly lead to lower occupational well-being. Indeed, emotional labor can become dysfunctional for the worker when dissonance between felt emotions and displayed emotions is experienced. This incongruence between feelings and actions (termed emotional dissonance) may ultimately lead to lowered self-esteem, depression, cynicism, and alienation from work (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993).

However, Teachers using surface and deep acting strategies

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display emotions that do not come naturally, but expression of naturally felt emotion means authenticity of emotional expression and a consistency between emotional experience and its display (Yin et al., 2013. p.143). In the present study, expression of naturally felt emotion had a significant negative effect on the perceived emotional dissonance and indirectly led to increasing teacher's well-being at work. So, consistent with Yin et al., (2013) showing real feelings and emotions in school teachers can influence the better emotion-regulation and lower level of perceived emotional dissonance and this indirectly effects the teacher's occupational well-being or satisfaction. Therefore, teachers who would prefer to express their genuine feelings, have high occupational well-being.

Also, our findings are congruent with the arguments underlying emotional self-regulation approaches (Babakus et al., 2009) and conservation of resources theory (COR) (Hobfoll, 1989). Emotional dissonance involves an effort by teachers encounters that is very difficult to restore (Grandey, 2003), producing a loss of resources that can lead to burnout (Wright & Cropanzano, 1998).

Thus, diagnosis of the emotional rules for teachers' work and assisting them to internalize these professional demands on their emotions has great importance for teaching effectiveness and psychological well-being (Yin et al., 2013, p: 143). However, the emotional job demands of teaching, or emotional rules for teachers, are often neglected because of the tacit nature of them. Therefore, it is advisable for a teacher training program to make in-service as well as pre-service teachers clear about the job demands of teaching on teachers' emotions.

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Implications and future research

In spite of its limitations, this study represents a further step in the consideration of variables pertaining to different traditions and levels of construct in understanding the well-being of teachers. The present study confirmed that emotional dissonance and emotional labor strategies are additive significant predictors of occupational well-being.

Future research would clearly benefit from the longitudinal and multi-method designs. Equally important is the need to ground future research in this area in theories of emotional regulation (e.g., Gross, 1998), theories that specify the structure, causes and consequences of affective experiences at work (Weiss & Cropanzano,1996) and in theories that posit alternative mechanisms (Karasek & Theorell, 1990). Thus, emotional labor is only one way that emotions might be regulated at work.

Clearly, emotional labor is a significant aspect of work experiences for incumbents of a broad range of jobs. Studies of the impact of work conditions, including the psychosocial environment, have demonstrated causal impacts on psychological and health outcomes with longitudinal data.

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