



A conceptual framework of leaders' emotional labor:  
The role of authentic leadership and procedural justice.

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## Summary / Zusammenfassung

### General summary

In this thesis a conceptual framework of leaders' emotional labor is explored; therein it is specifically focused on the role of authentic leadership and procedural justice as linking variables between leaders' emotional labor and follower outcomes.

In order to keep their employees motivated and to foster organizational goal achievement (cf. Humphrey, Pollack, & Hawver, 2008), leaders have to regulate their emotional expressions in interactions with their followers (cf. Gardner, Fischer, & Hunt, 2009). This regulation of emotions is referred to as emotional labor (Hochschild, 1983). Surface acting (superficially changing the tone of the voice or the facial display) and deep acting (changing the felt emotions by cognitive strategies; Hochschild, 1983; Grandey, 2000) are the two main regulation strategies which can be used; they have differential impact for those applying it (Hülshager & Schewe, 2011). Actually, surface acting negatively relates to health outcomes, while deep acting positively relates to performance measures, for example (Hülshager & Schewe, 2011).

To date, research on leaders' emotional labor is scarce and insufficient. There is a lack of studies focusing on how leaders' emotional labor relates to follower outcomes (cf. Li & Liang, 2016). Although Gardner et al. (2009) suggested that leaders' emotional labor relates to follower perceptions of authentic leadership (a leadership style which is characterized by a high consistency of thoughts, feelings and behaviors; Kernis & Goldman, 2006; Walumbwa, Avolio, Gardner, Wernsing, & Peterson, 2008) which drives for specific outcomes; this has hardly been tested yet.

Actually, procedural justice theories (e.g., Cropanzano, Byrne, Bobocel, & Rupp, 2001) have a great potential to explain relationships between leaders' behavior and follower outcomes. However, this individual judgment on the fairness of a decision making process (Thibaut & Walker, 1975) has been neglected in the context of leadership so far (van Knippenberg, De Cremer, & van Knippenberg, 2007). The question is, if procedural justice further contributes to explaining how leaders' emotional labor relates to follower outcomes.

Moreover, the research stream focusing on followers' emotional labor and the research stream focusing on leaders' emotional labor (cf. Li & Liang, 2016) have not been integrated to date. It would be interesting to explore how leaders' emotional labor relates to followers' emotional labor and if procedural justice triggers followers' emotional labor.

In order to investigate whether leaders' emotional labor is related to follower outcomes through followers' perceptions of authentic leadership and followers' perceptions of procedural justice, the following research questions are addressed in three studies.

RQ1: How does leaders' emotion management impact followers' perceptions of authenticity?

RQ2: How is authentic leadership related to employee impairment in the context of emotional demands?

RQ3: How does procedural injustice impact the use of emotional labor strategies and (service) performance?

### **Study 1: Antecedents and consequences of leaders' emotional labor**

Study 1 focuses on the question of how leaders use emotional labor and what are the consequences for follower perceptions of their authentic leadership. In line with the work from Gardner et al. (2009) it was hypothesized that leaders' use of surface acting was negatively related to followers' perceptions of authentic leadership; deep acting was assumed to be positively related to the authenticity perception. In Study 1, the role of leaders' gender was explored additionally; however, this research question is not in the focus of this dissertation and therefore, it is not further discussed here.

Hypotheses were tested in a clustered sample of Chinese leaders ( $N_2 = 30$  leaders) and their immediate followers ( $N_1 = 73$  followers) using hierarchical linear regression analyses. As we knew that female and male followers react differently to leadership behaviors (e.g., Haggard, Robert, & Rose, 2011), we further controlled for followers' gender.

As predicted, results revealed that leaders who frequently engaged in superficial emotion regulation were perceived as being less authentic. Deep acting did not directly impact the

authenticity perception. Hence, there was an interaction effect, in that among male followers, leaders using much deep acting were perceived as more authentic.

The study contributes to the knowledge on leaders' emotional labor and provides support to the assumptions of Gardner et al. (2009). That the hypotheses regarding deep acting could only be confirmed among male followers raises interesting questions for future research. In particular, it is assumed that women are able to detect deep acting as a kind of inauthentic display. In general, leaders should be trained regarding the use of different emotional labor strategies and should be reminded on the different needs of female and male followers.

### **Study 2: Mechanisms linking authentic leadership to emotional exhaustion**

Study 2 focused on the question of how authentic leadership (Walumbwa et al., 2008) is related to followers' emotional exhaustion (cf. Maslach, Jackson, & Leiter, 1996) and what role followers' emotional demands (cf. Hochschild, 1983; Zapf, 2002) play in this context. The relationship between authentic leadership and employees' emotional exhaustion has been widely neglected so far, although the construct has been considered to be the "root concept" of any positive form of leadership (Černe, Dimovski, Marič, Penger, & Škerlavaj, 2014, p. 3). As the core of leader-follower relationships is the social exchange between the two parties (e.g., Blau, 1964), social psychological theories of procedural justice (e.g., group value model; Tyler, 1989) were focused on as underlying mechanism.

In addition, the tertiarization of the occupational world and the fact that employees in such professions are at high risk of being emotionally exhausted (cf. Zapf, 2002) fosters the specific need to consider the role of emotional demands in this leader-employee health mechanism. Procedural justice was hypothesized to mediate the relationship between authentic leadership and employees' emotional exhaustion. We assumed, moreover, the relationship between procedural justice and emotional exhaustion to be moderated by emotional demands, and in consequence, the indirect effect of authentic leadership on employee's emotional exhaustion to be conditional on emotional demands, in that the indirect would be stronger when the emotional demands were high.



Hypotheses were tested in a multinational sample (Finland, Germany) of  $N_2 = 628$  employees nested in  $N_2 = 168$  teams using data from a lagged questionnaire study with three waves. Multilevel structural equation modelling provided strong support to the moderated mediation model, as all hypotheses were confirmed. Authentic leadership prevented subordinates from being exhausted through procedural justice perceptions, this positive effect being especially beneficial to employees with high emotional demands.

Results of Study 2 contribute to the assumption that authentic leadership is a positive essence of leadership and underline the importance of procedural justice in the occupational world, as it was proven to be the underlying mechanism which explains how authentic leadership protects employees from being impaired.

As a consequence, leaders should be trained to lead authentically in order to foster perceptions of procedural justice. Organizational guidelines should support just procedural treatment and enable authentic leadership in terms of occupational health management. In terms of research, the role of procedural justice in the context of high emotional demands, such as in emotional labor jobs, should be further explored.

### **Study 3: Does procedural justice matter?**

Study 3 focused on the research question of how procedural justice impacts employees' emotional labor and service performance. Starting with the assumption that procedural injustice is a negative affective event (cf. Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996), we hypothesized that procedural injustice would be positively related to surface acting; but not deep acting.

In addition, we aimed at replicating previous findings on emotional labor and performance (such as Barger & Grandey, 2006), in that we hypothesized deep acting to be positively and surface acting negatively related to other-rated service performance. It was tested whether procedural justice negatively related to service performance; wherein this relationship would be mediated by surface acting.

We conducted an experimental study with  $N = 87$  undergraduates. We manipulated procedural justice (vs. neutral condition) and simulated a call center afterwards. Prior to the justice manipulation, participants were instructed always to be friendly to the customers. During

the call center task each participant had to handle one neutral and one demanding (“unfriendly”) customer (randomized call order).

Unfortunately, analyses of self-rated emotional labor and other-rated service performance did not provide support to our hypotheses. Contrary to predictions, procedural injustice decreased surface acting. We found unexpected effects stemming from the additional factor of the call order. Between procedural injustice and deep acting, no relationship was found. Participants reported more deep acting when the first customer was the demanding one. Deep and surface acting were unrelated to service performance. Among those participants who interacted with the neutral customer first, we found a positive relationship between procedural injustice and performance. This clearly contradicted our assumptions. No mediation was found.

We discussed different explanation mechanisms for the unexpected findings. For example, we assumed that people who had been treated unfairly refused to act in accordance with display requirements and therefore did not regulate their emotions at all (cf. emotional deviance; Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993; Hochschild, 1983). Nevertheless, findings contribute to the literature on emotional labor as they underline that it is essential to consider procedural justice as an antecedent in research. In future work, the role of emotional deviance should be explored.

### **General conclusion**

In conclusion, the proposed conceptual framework of leaders’ emotional labor was supported by the empirical studies. In line with Study 1 leaders’ emotional labor was related to followers’ perceptions of their authenticity. However, therein followers’ gender has to be taken in account. In line with Study 2, authentic leadership was related to followers’ impairment through procedural justice, whereby this further depended on the emotional demands the employee was confronted with. In line with Study 3, and in terms of the framework, there is evidence that procedural justice links leaders’ emotional labor to followers’ emotional labor, as procedural injustice impacts the use of surface acting and service performance; although differently than expected. Therefore, the model offers a good starting point for future research and highlights open research questions which should be addressed.

### **Allgemeine Zusammenfassung**

In dieser Dissertation wurde ein konzeptuelles Rahmenmodell der Emotionsarbeit von Führungskräften untersucht. Dabei wurde insbesondere die Rolle von authentischem Führungsverhalten und die Rolle von prozeduraler Gerechtigkeit als verbindende Variablen zwischen der Emotionsarbeit der Führungskraft und den Folgen für Mitarbeiter/innen untersucht.

Um Mitarbeiter/innen zu motivieren und zur Zielerreichung des Unternehmens beizutragen (vgl. Humphrey, Pollack, & Hawyer, 2008) müssen Führungskräfte ihre Emotionen in Interaktionen mit ihren Mitarbeiter/inne/n regulieren und entsprechend anpassen (vgl. Gardner, Fischer, & Hunt, 2009). Diese Regulation von Emotionen wird als Emotionsarbeit bezeichnet (Hochschild, 1983). Surface Acting (oberflächliche Regulation von Emotionen durch Veränderung von Mimik und Stimme) und Tiefenhandeln (Veränderung der empfundenen Emotionen durch kognitive Strategien; Grandey, 2000; Hochschild, 1983) sind die zwei Hauptstrategien, die hierfür verwendet werden können. Für denjenigen, der sie anwendet, sind die Strategien mit unterschiedlichen Folgen verbunden (Hülshager & Schewe, 2011). Surface Acting korreliert negativ mit Gesundheitsindikatoren, während Deep Acting beispielsweise positiv mit Leistung zusammenhängt (Hülshager & Schewe, 2011).

Bis heute gibt es nur wenig Forschung zur Emotionsarbeit von Führungskräften, welche insgesamt auch nicht zufriedenstellend ist. Studien, die versuchen zu erklären wie die Emotionsarbeit von Führungskräften mit Konsequenzen für die Mitarbeiter/innen verbunden ist, fehlen (vgl. Li & Liang, 2016). Obwohl Gardner et al. (2009) postulierten, dass die Emotionsarbeit von Führungskräften damit zusammenhängt, wie authentisch diese von dem Mitarbeiter/innen wahrgenommen werden (authentisches Führungsverhalten; ist charakterisiert durch eine hohe Konsistenz zwischen Gedanken, Gefühlen und Verhalten; Kernis & Goldmann, 2006; Walumbwa, Avolio, Gardner, Wernsing, & Peterson, 2008) und das dies dann spezifische Folgen erklären könnte, wurden die Annahmen bislang praktisch nicht getestet.

Tatsächlich bieten prozedurale Gerechtigkeitstheorien (e.g., Cropanzano, Byrne, Bobocel, & Rupp, 2001) ein großes Potential Zusammenhänge zwischen Führungsverhalten und Mitarbeiterfolgen zu erklären. Nichtsdestotrotz blieb prozedurale Gerechtigkeit (individuelle

Beurteilung der Fairness von Entscheidungsprozessen; Thibaut & Walker, 1975) bislang weitgehend unberücksichtigt im Führungskontext (van Knippenberg, De Cremer, & van Knippenberg, 2007). Die Frage ist, ob prozedurale Gerechtigkeit zumindest teilweise erklären kann, wie die Emotionsarbeit der Führungskraft mit Mitarbeiterfolgen verknüpft ist.

Bislang wurde noch kein Versuch unternommen, die Forschung, die sich auf die Emotionsarbeit von Führungskräften fokussiert, mit der Forschung, die sich auf die Emotionsarbeit von Mitarbeiter/innen fokussiert, zu verknüpfen (vgl. Li & Liang, 2016). Es wäre interessant zu untersuchen, wie die Emotionsarbeit von Führungskräften mit der Emotionsarbeit von Mitarbeiter/innen zusammenhängt und ob prozedurale Gerechtigkeit dabei die Emotionsregulation der Mitarbeiter/innen beeinflusst.

Um zu untersuchen, ob die Emotionsarbeit von Führungskräften durch die vom Mitarbeiter/ der Mitarbeiterin wahrgenommene Authentizität und die wahrgenommene prozedurale Gerechtigkeit mit den Mitarbeiter-Outcomes verbunden sind, werden in drei empirischen Untersuchungen die folgenden Forschungsfragen beleuchtet.

RQ1: Wie beeinflusst die Emotionsarbeit von Führungskräften die durch die Mitarbeiter/innen wahrgenommene Authentizität?

RQ2: Wie hängt authentisches Führungsverhalten im Kontext von emotionalen Anforderungen mit der Gesundheit der Mitarbeiter/innen zusammen?

RQ3: Wie beeinflusst prozedurale Gerechtigkeit die Nutzung von Emotionsarbeitsstrategien und (Service-)Leistung?

### **Studie 1: Antezedenzen und Folgen von Emotionsarbeit bei Führungskräften**

Studie 1 zielte auf die Frage ab wie Führungskräfte Emotionsarbeit leisten und wie die Emotionsarbeit von Führungskräften mit dem durch die Mitarbeiter/innen wahrgenommenen authentischen Führungsverhalten zusammenhängt. Wie von Gardner et al. (2009) vorgeschlagen, nahmen wir an, dass Surface Acting negativ und Deep Acting positiv mit authentischem Führungsverhalten korreliert ist. Darüber hinaus wurde in Studie 1 die Rolle des Geschlechts der Führungskraft auf Emotionsarbeit untersucht. Dies ist jedoch nicht im Fokus dieser Dissertation und wird daher nicht weiter thematisiert.

Die Hypothesen wurden in einer Stichprobe chinesischer Führungskräfte ( $N_2 = 30$ ) und ihrer Mitarbeiter/innen ( $N_1 = 73$ ) unter Anwendung hierarchischer Regressionsanalysen untersucht. Da aus der Forschung bekannt ist, dass Frauen und Männer unterschiedlich auf Führungsverhaltensweisen reagieren (z.B. Haggard, Robert, & Rose, 2011) kontrollierten wir bei den Analysen auch für das Geschlecht der Geführten.

Wie vorhergesagt wurden Führungskräften, die viel Surface Acting verwendeten, als weniger authentisch wahrgenommen. Das Geschlecht der Geführten moderierte den Zusammenhang von Deep Acting und dem authentischem Führungsverhalten. Nur von männlichen Mitarbeitern wurden Führungskräfte, die viel Deep Acting nutzten, als authentischer wahrgenommen. Bei Frauen, war der Effekt genau umgekehrt.

Studie 1 liefert Erkenntnisse über die Emotionsarbeit von Führungskräften und stützt die Annahmen von Gardner et al. (2009). Dass die Hypothese bezüglich des Deep Actings nur bei männlichen Mitarbeitern gestützt werden konnte, wirft einige interessante Fragen für zukünftige Forschung auf. Wir vermuten insbesondere, dass Frauen dazu in der Lage sind, Deep Acting als eine Form des regulierten (und somit „inauthentischen“) Emotionsausdrucks zu erkennen. Grundsätzlich sollten Führungskräfte in der Nutzung von Emotionsarbeitsstrategien geschult werden und darauf hingewiesen werden, die unterschiedlichen Bedürfnisse weiblicher und männlicher Mitarbeiter zu berücksichtigen.

### **Studie 2: Mechanismen, die authentisches Führungsverhalten mit emotionaler Erschöpfung verbinden**

Studie 2 zielte auf die Frage ab, wie authentisches Führungsverhalten (Walumbwa et al., 2008) mit der emotionalen Erschöpfung der Mitarbeiter/innen (vgl. Maslach, Jackson, & Leiter, 1996) verknüpft ist und welche Rolle die emotionalen Anforderungen (vgl. Hochschild, 1983; Zapf, 2002) dabei spielen. Der Zusammenhang von authentischem Führungsverhalten und emotionaler Erschöpfung der Mitarbeiter/innen wurde in der Forschung bislang weitgehend außer Acht gelassen, obwohl angenommen wird, dass authentisches Führungsverhalten, die Grundlage allen positiven Führungsverhaltens ist (Černe, Dimovski, Marič, Penger, & Škerlavaj, 2014).

Da der Kern von Führungskraft-Mitarbeiter-Beziehungen der soziale Austausch zwischen den beiden Parteien ist (vgl. Blau, 1964), fokussierten wir uns auf sozialpsychologische Theorien der prozeduralen Gerechtigkeit (z.B. Tyler, 1989), um die zugrunde liegenden Mechanismen zu erklären.

Die Tertiärisierung der Arbeitswelt und die Tatsache, dass Mitarbeiter/innen in solchen Berufen ein hohes Risiko haben, emotional erschöpft zu werden (vgl. Zapf, 2002), verdeutlicht die Notwendigkeit, die Rolle der emotionalen Anforderungen bei der Betrachtung von Führungskraft-Mitarbeitergesundheits-Zusammenhängen zu berücksichtigen. Wir nahmen an, dass prozedurale Gerechtigkeit den Zusammenhang zwischen authentischem Führungsverhalten und der emotionalen Erschöpfung der Mitarbeiter mediiert. Wir nahmen außerdem an, dass der Zusammenhang zwischen prozeduraler Gerechtigkeit und emotionaler Erschöpfung durch die emotionalen Anforderungen moderiert wird und folglich, dass der indirekte Effekt von authentischem Führungsverhalten ebenfalls von den emotionalen Anforderungen abhängt. Dabei vermuteten wir, dass der indirekte negative Zusammenhang stärker ist, wenn die emotionalen Anforderungen hoch sind.

In einer Fragebogenstudie mit drei Messzeitpunkten wurden die Hypothesen an einer multinationalen Stichprobe (Finnland, Deutschland) aus  $N_2 = 628$  Mitarbeiter/innen, geschachtelt in  $N_2 = 168$  Teams, getestet. Multilevel-Strukturgleichungsmodelle stützten alle Hypothesen. Authentisches Führungsverhalten bewahrte Mitarbeiter/innen dadurch vor emotionaler Erschöpfung, dass diese prozedurale Gerechtigkeit wahrnahmen. Dieser positive Effekt war insbesondere vorteilhaft für Mitarbeiter/innen mit hohen emotionalen Anforderungen.

Die Ergebnisse von Studie 2 stützen die Annahme, dass authentisches Führungsverhalten eine positive Essenz von Führungsverhalten ist, und betonen zudem die Bedeutung von prozeduraler Gerechtigkeit in der Arbeitswelt, da gezeigt werden konnte, dass prozedurale Gerechtigkeit erklären kann, wie authentische Führungskräfte ihre Mitarbeiter/innen vor gesundheitlichen Beeinträchtigungen bewahren.

Führungskräfte sollten darin trainiert werden authentisch zu führen, um bei ihren Mitarbeiter/innen die Wahrnehmung von prozeduraler Gerechtigkeit zu fördern. Unternehmen

sollten gleichermaßen Richtlinien bereitstellen, welche faire Prozesse unterstützen und authentisches Führungsverhalten, z.B. im Zuge von betrieblicher Gesundheitsförderung, ermöglichen.

In der Forschung sollte zukünftig die Rolle von prozeduraler Gerechtigkeit im Kontext von hohen emotionalen Anforderungen (beispielsweise in Berufen, die Emotionsarbeit erfordern) weiter untersucht werden.

### **Studie 3: Spielt prozedurale Gerechtigkeit eine Rolle?**

Studie 3 zielte auf die Frage ab, wie prozedurale Gerechtigkeit die Emotionsarbeit von Mitarbeiter/innen in Serviceberufen beeinflusst. Ausgehend von der Annahme, dass prozedurale Gerechtigkeit ein affektives Ereignis ist (vgl. Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996), nahmen wir an, dass prozedurale Ungerechtigkeit positiv mit Surface Acting, nicht jedoch mit Deep Acting, zusammenhängt.

Darüber hinaus zielten wir darauf ab, frühere Befunde über den Zusammenhang von Emotionsarbeit und Leistung (z.B. Barger & Grandey, 2006) zu replizieren. Dabei nahmen wir an, dass Deep Acting positiv und Surface Acting negativ mit der fremdeingeschätzten Serviceleistung zusammenhängt. Es wurde außerdem geprüft, ob prozedurale Gerechtigkeit mit der Serviceleistung korreliert und ob der Zusammenhang durch Surface Acting vermittelt wird.

Wir führten eine experimentelle Studie mit  $N = 87$  Student/innen durch. Dabei manipulierten wir die prozedurale Gerechtigkeit (neutral vs. prozedural ungerecht) und simulierten anschließend ein Call Center, wobei die Teilnehmer/innen instruiert wurden, immer freundlich zu sein. Während der Call Center Simulation musste jede/r Teilnehmer/in mit einem neutralen und einem anstrengendem („unfreundlichen“) Kunden interagieren, wobei die Reihenfolge zufällig variierte.

Bedauerlicherweise konnte weder die selbsteingeschätzte Emotionsarbeit, noch die fremdeingeschätzte Leistung hypothesenkonform durch die prozedurale Ungerechtigkeit vorhergesagt werden. Entgegen unserer Annahme verringerte prozedurale Ungerechtigkeit die Nutzung von Surface Acting. Tatsächlich zeigten sich unerwartete Effekte, die durch die Reihenfolge der Anrufer bedingt waren. Zwischen prozeduraler Gerechtigkeit und Deep Acting

wurde kein Zusammenhang gefunden. Teilnehmer/innen, die zuerst mit dem anstrengenden Kunden telefonierten, berichteten mehr Deep Acting genutzt zu haben. Deep Acting korrelierte nicht mit der Serviceleistung. Bei den Teilnehmer/inne/n, die zuerst mit dem neutralen Kunden telefonierten, zeigte sich wider Erwarten, dass prozedurale Ungerechtigkeit mit einer besseren Serviceperformanz einherging, was unseren ursprünglichen Annahmen völlig widerspricht. Eine Mediation wurde ebenfalls nicht gefunden.

In Studie 3 wurden verschiedene Erklärungsmechanismen diskutiert. Beispielsweise vermuteten wir, dass die Personen, denen prozedurale Ungerechtigkeit widerfahren war, sich weigerten den Anforderungen gemäß zu agieren (freundlich zu sein) und daher ihre Emotionen nicht mehr regulierten (vgl. emotionale Devianz; Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993; Hochschild, 1983). Trotz der unerwarteten Befunde liefern die Ergebnisse neue Erkenntnisse für die Emotionsarbeitsforschung, da sie aufzeigen, dass es wichtig ist, prozedurale Gerechtigkeit als Antezedens zu berücksichtigen. In zukünftiger Forschung sollte die Rolle der emotionalen Devianz untersucht werden.

### **Allgemeine Schlussfolgerung**

Zusammenfassend betrachtete wurde das vorgeschlagene Rahmenmodell der Emotionsarbeit von Führungskräften durch die empirischen Befunde gestützt. Gemäß Studie 1 korreliert die Emotionsarbeit von Führungskräften mit der durch die Mitarbeiter/innen wahrgenommen Authentizität, wobei dabei das Geschlecht der Geführten berücksichtigt werden muss. Gemäß den Ergebnissen von Studie 2 ist authentisches Führungsverhalten durch die wahrgenommene prozedurale Gerechtigkeit mit der Mitarbeitererschöpfung verbunden, wobei dies weiterhin von der Höhe der emotionalen Anforderungen des Mitarbeiters/ der Mitarbeiterin abhängt. Gemäß Studie 3 zeigten sich im Hinblick auf das Rahmenmodell, Hinweise dafür, dass prozedurale Gerechtigkeit die Emotionsarbeit der Führungskraft mit der Emotionsarbeit von Mitarbeitern verknüpfen kann, da prozedurale Gerechtigkeit die Nutzung von Surface Acting als auch die Serviceleistung beeinflusst; wenn auch anders als erwartet. Insgesamt bietet das vorgeschlagene Rahmenmodell einen guten Ausgangspunkt für weitere Forschung. Es zeigt offene Forschungsfragen auf, denen in der Zukunft nachgegangen werden sollte.



**References (Summary / Zusammenfassung)**

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## Chapter 1: Introduction

This dissertation seeks to investigate the role of *authentic leadership* (e.g., Walumbwa, Avolio, Gardner, Wernsing, & Peterson, 2008) and *procedural justice* (Thibaut & Walker, 1975) in the context of *emotional labor* (Hochschild, 1983). In fact, a conceptual framework of leaders' emotional labor and its consequences on follower outcomes, such as emotional exhaustion and emotional labor, is explored. Thereby, employees' authentic leadership perception and their procedural justice perception are suggested as crucial linking variables.

In the last decades, understanding of emotions in occupational interactions has changed dramatically (cf. Brief & Weiss, 2002). Whereas in the 1980s emotions had been stigmatized as something that did, and, more importantly, should not matter in the job (cf. "myth of rationality"; Putnam & Mumby, 1993, p. 36), through the continuous enlargement of the service industry (e.g., Eurofound, 2012; Paoli, 1997) researchers and even practitioners have now recognized the meaning of emotion and its management in the occupational context ("affective revolution"; Barsade, Brief, Spataro, & Greenberg, 2003, p. 3; cf. George, 2000).

When people have to handle their own or other people's emotions at work, the regulation of emotions becomes necessary (Hochschild, 1983; Zapf, 2002). This regulation is usually referred to as emotional labor (Hochschild, 1983). Although the construct was originally studied in service professions, it was identified as an important aspect of leadership as well (e.g., Gardner, Fischer, & Hunt, 2009; Humphrey, 2012; Humphrey, Pollack, & Hawyer, 2008; Li, & Liang, 2016).

In fact, there are some interesting theoretical works on leaders using emotional labor (e.g., Gardner et al., 2009; Humphrey, 2012) and early empirical studies exploring the consequences of leaders' emotion regulation underline the need to integrate emotional labor and leadership research (e.g., Fisk & Friesen, 2012; Wang, 2011). Notwithstanding, the data situation is still insufficient (cf. Humphrey, 2012; Li & Liang, 2016). For example, quite unexplored is the question about its particular impact on employee perceptions, employees' emotional labor and, most importantly, by which *mechanisms* it is related to such work outcomes. Gardner et al.

(2009) suggested that the emotional display of the leader is meaningful to the development of good leader-member-relationships (see also Fisk & Friesen, 2012; Wang, 2011), in that the kind of emotional labor strategy used is related to the perceived authenticity. Results from Fisk and Friesen (2012) and others (e.g., Ilies, Curşeu, Dimotakis, & Spitzmuller, 2013) even imply that the role of perceived authenticity needs to be addressed further in this context.

Procedural justice is a main driver of organizational processes, for example in regard to performance and health (e.g., Colquitt et al., 2013), and over and above this it is a common antecedent of employee emotions (Folger & Cropanzano, 1998; Mikula, Scherer, & Athenstaedt, 1998). Hence, it could be seen as an affective event triggering specific reactions in the occupational context (cf. Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996; Weiss, Suckow, & Cropanzano, 1999), probably even (followers') emotional labor (cf. Rupp & Spencer, 2006). In fact, there are calls for integrating research on procedural justice in leadership research (van Knippenberg, De Cremer, & van Knippenberg, 2007) and in line with justice literature leaders could be a source of procedural justice (cf. Colquitt et al., 2013; Rupp, Shao, Jones, & Liao, 2014).

In the current work, I want to pick up these theoretical considerations and enlarge the existing empirical findings on leaders' emotion regulation (e.g., Fisk & Friesen, 2012; Wang, 2011) by focusing on top-down processes impacting followers. Specifically, I suggest that leaders' emotional labor is related to followers' perceptions of their leader's authenticity in a first step, and that this perception of the leader results in the perception of procedural justice in a second step. Finally, this justice perception drives specific employee outcomes. Through this link, short-term (employees' emotional labor, service performance) and long-term work outcomes (emotional exhaustion) should be affected by leaders' emotion management.

In doing so, I integrate the different research areas of emotional labor, leadership and procedural justice in a very promising way. In fact, this dissertation contributes to the limited knowledge on leaders' emotional labor (cf. Li & Liang, 2016), offers further insights into its consequences on follower outcomes by suggesting a conceptual framework to explain the mechanisms behind it, and finally raises a couple of fruitful questions for further research.

The dissertation is structured in three parts. Firstly, the key concepts are briefly introduced (emotional labor, authentic leadership, and procedural justice) and, by reviewing the literature, the conceptual framework is proposed in which the main research questions are embedded. Secondly, in part two (Chapter 2 to Chapter 4), results from three empirical studies are presented. Finally, in part three, the major findings are integrated and a discussion ensues as to if and how the research questions could be answered. Moreover, implications and strengths of the thesis are highlighted and limitations are pointed out.

### **Emotional labor**

No matter whether in private life or at work, we are continually confronted with events that trigger specific emotions in us (cf. *affective events theory*; Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996). Those emotions are especially critical to the interaction with others (cf. van Kleef, van Doorn, Heerndink, & Koning, 2011), as they might contradict the occupational display requirements (display rules; Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993; Rafaeli & Sutton, 1989) we are confronted with. Service employees, for example, are usually required to be kind and friendly to the customers with whom they interact (Hochschild, 1983). If the emotions awakened by affective events do not correspond to those that are required, the management of one's own emotions becomes necessary in order to benefit organizational goals (Grandey, 2000; Hochschild, 1983). This regulation of emotions in occupational interactions has been termed emotional labor (Hochschild, 1983).

In order to achieve the display of an appropriate emotion, two major strategies can be employed: *surface acting* and *deep acting* (Hochschild, 1983; see also: Grandey, 2000). Surface acting is characterized by prototypical "acting", in that the emotions shown are faked by the outer expression (i.e., facial display and voice) without really feeling the required emotion (Grandey, 2000; Hochschild, 1983). In contrast, deep acting stems from the induction of the required emotion in the self—e.g., by a cognitive change in terms of taking the customer's perspective (Grandey, 2000; Hochschild, 1983; cf. Gross, 1998).

The two strategies are differently related to individual and organizational outcomes: while deep acting is supposed to be beneficial for (service) performance, surface acting has been shown

to threaten the actor's health (Hülshager & Schewe, 2011; Zapf & Holz, 2006). The two mechanisms have been explained through the authenticity of the emotional display (Brotheridge & Lee, 2002; Grandey, Fisk, Mattila, Jansen, & Sideman, 2005; Hochschild, 1983). In fact, surface acting is characterized by a dissonance between felt and expressed emotions, resulting in a feeling of being inauthentic (Brotheridge & Lee, 2002; Hochschild, 1983). This *emotional dissonance* (Rafaeli & Sutton, 1987) is supposed to be a stressor which impairs the actor's health (Zapf, Vogt, Seifert, Mertini, & Isic, 1999; cf. Zapf, 2002). In contrast, when deep acting is used, felt and expressed emotions are finally concordant (Grandey, 2000; Hochschild, 1983), resulting in an authentic emotional expression which is honored by others (e.g., in terms of a higher encounter satisfaction; Grandey et al., 2005).

### **Emotional leadership**

Emotional labor has been extensively researched in the context of service workers (e.g., Hülshager & Schewe, 2011; Zapf & Holz, 2006). However, it is not limited to this field (Gardner et al., 2009; Humphrey et al. 2008). It always matters when the interaction with others—and therefore the handling of one's own or other people's emotions—in occupational interactions is frequently needed (cf. Hochschild, 1983; Zapf, 2002; Zapf & Holz, 2006), as is the case in leader-follower interactions (Gardner et al., 2009; Humphrey, 2008).

In fact, a couple of papers reviewing findings on affect and emotion emphasize that leaders' emotional expressions play a central role in leadership processes and need to be addressed in research (e.g., Gooty, Connelly, Griffith & Gupta, 2010; van Knippenberg & van Kleef, 2016; cf. Humphrey, Burch, & Adams, 2016), which is further underlined by empirical findings (e.g., Ilies et al., 2013; Newcombe & Ashkanasy, 2002; Wang & Seibert, 2015). For example, Newcombe and Ashkanasy (2002) revealed in an experimental study that leaders' emotional displays are even more important than the actual content of their verbal messages. Moreover, there are studies relating leaders' emotional displays to follower performance (Wang & Seibert, 2015). Just recently, van Knippenberg and van Kleef (2016) concluded in their review of previous research that leader's emotional display is essential to leadership effectiveness.

While service employees use emotional labor to ensure customer satisfaction and to make them request the organizational service again in the future (e.g., Grandey et al., 2005; see also: Grandey, 2000), leaders regulate their emotional expressions (cf. Brotheridge & Grandey, 2002) to treat their followers with respect and keep them motivated to sustain a good work performance (cf. Humphrey et al., 2008; Pirola-Merlo, Härtel, Mann, & Hirst, 2002; see also van Knippenberg & van Kleef, 2016). In light of this, leaders' emotional labor could be understood as a strategic instrument to exert influence on followers in order to evoke specific emotional (i.e. emotional contagion; Hatfield, Cacioppo, & Rapson, 1994; see also: Barger & Grandey, 2006) and behavioral reactions (cf. Glasø & Einarsen, 2008). Some authors even argue that leaders lead by *doing* emotional labor<sup>1</sup> (Humphrey, 2008; 2012; Humphrey et al., 2008).

In comparison to emotional labor in service occupations, of course, it becomes obvious that the display requirements for leaders strongly differ. They are allowed to show negative emotions, such as anger, and sometimes are rather expected to do so when this is in line with organizational goals (cf. Humphrey, 2012; see also: Wang & Seibert, 2015). To give an example, they are sometimes asked to clamp down rigorously by showing negative emotions to foster goal achievement, even if they feel understanding and empathy for their followers.

### **Authentic leadership**

In line with historical definitions of authenticity (for a historical review, see: Kernis & Goldman, 2006) authentic leadership generally describes a leader's behavior which is characterized by a high consistency of thoughts, feelings and behaviors (Kernis & Goldman, 2006). The construct consists out of four dimensions (Neider & Schriesheim, 2011; Walumbwa, Avolio, Gardner, Wernsing, & Peterson, 2008). In line with Neider and Schriesheim (2011) and Walumbwa and colleagues (2008) the first dimension, high *self-awareness*, underlines that the

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<sup>1</sup>Please note that, although the role of emotional intelligence (e.g., Mayer, Salovey, & Caruso, 2006) as an important prerequisite of leadership has been intensively discussed (Antonakis, Ashkanasy & Dasborough, 2009) it is out of scope here to explore this *general ability* to perceive and to regulate emotions (e.g., Mayer et al., 2006). The current thesis will focus on the actual behavior of a leader in terms of emotions displayed and regulated, as this seems to be closer to practice needs (cf. e.g., Webb, 2016).

precondition for high consistency between thoughts, feelings and behaviors is consciousness of one's own strengths and weaknesses, such as elaborated knowledge on the status quo of the self. The second dimension, *relational transparency*, reflects the interpersonal component of authenticity, in that it can only be reached when relationships with others are free of the ambition to hide something. The third dimension of authentic leadership is called *balanced processing*. It describes a conscious handling of information, meaning that different sources of information are considered well-balanced. Finally, the fourth dimension is the *internal moral perspective*. This refers to the consistency between one's own moral beliefs and one's acting, in that one's behavior is in line with inner attitudes (Neider & Schriesheim, 2011; Walumbwa et al., 2008).

During the last fifteen years, the construct of authentic leadership has gained a lot of attention (Avolio, Gardner, Walumbwa, Luthans, & May, 2004; Gardner, Cogliser, Davis, & Dickens, 2011; George, 2003; Luthans & Avolio, 2003). The reason for this is surely twofold: on the one hand, authentic leadership was supposed to be the positive essence of any form of leadership (Avolio & Gardner, 2005; Černe, Dimovski, Marič, Penger, & Škerlavaj, 2014), and on the other hand, many political and economic scandals, such as corruption in world football and the Olympic committee, questioned the integrity of specific managers and underlined the need for highly authentic and therefore, trustworthy leaders (cf. George, 2003).

Research on the consequences of authentic leadership draws a very positive picture as it relates the construct to several outcomes that are beneficial to both the organization *and* the employee (e.g., Černe et al., 2014; Clapp-Smith, Vogelsang, & Avey, 2009; Giallonardo, Wong & Iwasiw, 2010; Peus, Wesche, Streicher, Braun, & Frey, 2012; Rahimnia & Sharifirad, 2014; Walumbwa et al., 2008; Wang & Hsieh, 2013; Wong & Giallonardo, 2013). For example, job engagement and job satisfaction are common positive consequences (Černe et al., 2014; Clapp-Smith et al., 2009; Giallonardo et al., 2010; Peus et al., 2012; Rahimnia & Sharifirad, 2014; Walumbwa et al., 2008; Wang & Hsieh, 2013; Wong & Giallonardo, 2013). Moreover, there are first evidences that authentic leadership is meaningful to employees' health (Laschinger & Fida, 2014; Laschinger, Wong, & Grau, 2012, 2013; Rahimnia & Sharifirad, 2014).



In previous work on leaders' emotional labor, it has been discussed that the authenticity of the leader might be essential for linking it to positive organizational outcomes (e.g., Fisk & Friesen, 2012; Ilies et al., 2013). Considering this and in line with the number of positive findings (e.g., Černe et al., 2014; Clapp-Smith et al., 2009; Giallonardo, et al., 2010), it is quite obvious to explore authentic leadership as one important aspect in emotional labor processes. Especially in regard to the call for the development of authentic leaders in practice (e.g., George, 2003), there is a need to know *how* authentic leadership can be achieved and which specific (emotional) behaviors pay into it.

Notwithstanding, up until today, there is still a lack of knowledge about how authentic leadership itself works and by what mechanism it drives those positive follower outcomes. Therefore, even the immediate consequences of authentic leadership on organizational aspects need to be addressed further.

### **Procedural justice**

Procedural justice is an organizational justice dimension (Colquitt, 2001; Colquitt et al. 2001; 2013). It refers to an individual's judgment on how procedures in organizations, such as decision making processes, are conducted (Thibaut & Walker, 1975). Originally it stemmed from a social psychological approach to describe legal phenomena (cf. Thibaut & Walker, 1975; Thibaut, Walker, La Tour, & Houlden, 1974).

Research findings underline the importance of this specific justice dimension (e.g., Folger, 1977). In fact, people are more willing to accept unfavorable outcomes of decision making processes when the procedures by which the distribution of the outcome (e.g., compensation) has been procedurally just, and they were able to participate in the process (e.g., Folger, 1977).

A large number of studies on procedural justice have related the construct positively to positive work outcomes, such as organizational citizenship behavior (e.g., Cohen-Carash, & Spector, 2001; Colquitt, Conlon, Wesson, Porter, & Ng, 2001), trust (e.g., Colquitt et al., 2013), health (e.g., Francis & Barling, 2005; Robbins, Ford, & Tetrick, 2012) and even performance (Cohen-Carash & Spector, 2001; Colquitt et al., 2013). Several authors assume it to be an

organizational resource, a work aspect which contributes to a higher motivation of the employee on the one hand, and, on the other hand, buffers the impairing effects of job demands (cf. Demerouti, Bakker, Nachreiner, & Schaufeli, 2001; Boudrias et al., 2011).

An often discussed mediation mechanism by which the experience of injustice relates it to specific outcomes is the induction of negative emotions by unjust incidents (cf. Folger & Cropanzano, 1998; Mikula et al., 1998; Weiss et al., 1999). In line with this, the experience of (procedural) injustice serves as a negative affective event (cf. Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996) in the work context (see also: Rupp & Spencer, 2006).

Although procedural justice at least *traditionally* refers to the organization (cf. Rupp & Cropanzano, 2002), there are calls for its integration into the field of leadership (van Knippenberg et al., 2007; see also: Rupp & Cropanzano, 2002). One reason for this is that leaders are necessarily involved in decision making processes in organizations as they are the persons who execute organizational guidelines; hence, they represent the organization (cf. Levinson, 1965) in decision making processes. Therefore, a leader's behavior might contribute to how the organization—or, more specifically, organizational aspects—are perceived (cf. Colquitt et al., 2013; Rupp et al., 2014). This is even in line with the concept of *multifoci justice* (Rupp & Cropanzano, 2002; Rupp et al., 2014), which assumes that organizations and supervisors, for example, could be a source of procedural justice.

Hence, up until today, procedural justice has been widely neglected in the context of leadership (van Knippenberg et al., 2007).

### **Empirical results on leaders' emotion regulation**

Brotheridge and Grandey (2002) were probably the first authors to provide empirical evidence that managers engage in emotional labor as well as service employees. However, to date, most papers addressing leaders' emotional labor are still conceptual in nature (Ashkanasy & Humphrey, 2011; Haver, Akerjordet, & Furunes, 2013; Rajah, Song, & Arvey, 2011) and empirical research is scarce (cf. Li & Liang, 2016), even if considering work under the more general term of emotion regulation of Gross (1998), who differentiates several emotion regulation

strategies according to the point of time when they are used in emotional processes (response- vs. antecedent-focused strategies), such as reappraisal and suppression (cf. Gross, 1998). In fact, some authors started to explore the topic with a qualitative approach, such as Burch, Humphrey, and Batchelor (2013) as well as Clarke, Hope-Hailey, and Kelliher (2007), and there are only a handful of studies that used a quantitative design (Fisk & Friesen, 2012; Glasø & Einarsen, 2008; Kafetsios, Nezlek & Vassilakou, 2012; Wang, 2011). Those I want to review here briefly.

In 2008, Glasø and Einarsen provided evidence for that leaders express, fake and suppress (i.e. regulate; see Grandey, 2000; Gross, 1998) more emotions than their followers. Their results emphasize how important the strategic use of emotions in leadership roles is. Moreover, they showed that a high quality of LMX (Liden, Sparrowe, & Wayne 1997) was related to less faking and less suppressing of emotions. Both faking and suppressing are highly comparable to surface acting (Grandey, 2000). Over and above this, they found that high levels of emotion regulation (faking and suppressing) were related to reduced job satisfaction and bad health across both focus groups (leaders and followers).

Fisk & Friesen (2012) then started to investigate the direct relationship between leaders' emotional labor and follower outcomes (i.e. job satisfaction and organizational citizenship behavior; OCB; e.g., Podsakoff, Mackenzie, Moorman, & Fetter, 1990) and considered the quality of the *leader member exchange* relationship (LMX; see: Liden et al., 1997) as a moderator. Deep acting was unrelated to OCB. Surface acting predicted OCB negatively, but only among those with a high quality LMX relationship; in low quality relationships surface acting did not predict OCB. Moreover, surface acting was negatively related to job satisfaction. Deep acting predicted job satisfaction positively only among those in low quality relationships. As deep acting was not a stable predictor of positive outcomes, Fisk and Friesen (2012) encouraged further research on the role of leaders' emotion regulation and authenticity, as they assumed that deep acting is not truly authentic (based on their measures), hence it is well-intentioned. In sum, their findings are highly relevant to research on leader's emotional labor. Notwithstanding, that their analyses are based solely on follower ratings has to be criticized, even

in regard to the leaders' use of emotional labor strategies. This is quite problematic and might have biased their results.

In his dissertation, Wang (2011) addressed the question of what role leaders' emotional labor plays in effective leadership. He found evidence for that leaders' surface acting is negatively and leaders' deep acting is positively related to follower perceptions of *transformational leadership* (Bass, 1991). Contrary to previous findings on the individual outcomes of emotional labor (e.g., Glasø & Einarsen, 2008; see also: Hülshager & Schewe, 2011) in his work surface acting was negatively related to leaders' exhaustion and unrelated to their job satisfaction. Wang's results provide support for the notion that leaders' emotional labor relates to follower performance (i.e., emotional engagement) and job satisfaction, and that the emotional labor strategy used by a leader impacts how his/her leadership style is perceived by followers (Wang, 2011).

Kafetsios and colleagues (2012) focused on the impact of leaders' emotion regulation (according to Gross' 1998 model) on followers' job satisfaction. Contrary to findings of Glasø and Einarsen (2008) they found that reappraisal—which is comparable to deep acting (Grandey, 2000)—was negatively related to employee satisfaction. Similar to Fisk and Friesen (2012) the authors assumed that this is probably due to the fact that reappraisal is perceived as inauthentic. Suppression was positively related to followers' positive affect. In sum, those findings strongly contradict previous work (e.g., Glasø & Einarsen, 2008). It has to be acknowledged that the found coefficients were very small.

In conclusion, the existing studies provide support for the notion that leaders manage their emotions in interactions with followers and that leaders' emotion regulation has a particular impact on follower outcomes—for example, regarding job satisfaction and performance (Glasø & Einarsen, 2008; Wang, 2011). Nevertheless, the current research basis is still insufficient as it contains contradictions and a lot of questions remain unanswered. In fact, it is unclear by which mechanism leaders' emotional labor contributes to follower outcomes. How does leaders' surface and deep acting relate to such outcomes? Does leaders' emotional labor induce a top-down cascade, impacting follower outcomes through follower perceptions?

### **A conceptual framework of leaders' emotional labor**

As already mentioned, the role of the authenticity of leaders' emotional display has specifically been repeatedly discussed (Fisk & Friesen, 2012; Ilies et al., 2013; see also: Caza, Zhang, Wang, & Bai, 2015). Actually, there are very interesting theoretical publications dealing with this topic. Gardner et al. (2009) and Humphrey (2008, 2012) argued that the kind of emotion regulation a leader uses when interacting with followers raises specific follower impressions and thereby has a particular impact on follower outcomes, which is in line with the findings just presented (e.g., Fisk & Friesen, 2012; Glasø & Einarsen, 2008; Wang, 2011). Gardner et al. (2009) went one step further and combined results from the service context (e.g., Grandey et al., 2005) with the concept of authentic leadership (e.g., Walumbwa et al., 2008). They suggested that leaders' surface acting should lead to a reduction in the authenticity perception, while deep acting should foster higher perceived authenticity in followers (Gardner et al., 2009).

However, regardless of those stimulating theoretical discussions, to the very best of my knowledge these assumptions have only been tested once in an unpublished dissertation by Buckner (2013). According to the abstract, Buckner's laboratory study failed to provide support for the suggested relationships. Therefore, if and how Gardner et al.'s (2009) as well as Humphrey et al.'s (2008) assumptions are relevant to real work settings remains unclear.

On top of this, there is another interesting research gap concerning emotional labor. Hence, as Li and Liang (2016) in their review correctly summarize, searching for empirical research on leadership and emotional labor leads to two groups of results: firstly, those studies addressing the impact of leaders' emotional labor on follower outcomes which have just been discussed (e.g., Fisk & Friesen, 2012; Glasø & Einarsen, 2008); and, secondly, those studies addressing the impact of leadership styles on followers' emotional labor (e.g., Bono, Foldes, Vinson & Muros, 2007; Chi & Liang, 2013; Wu & Hu, 2013). However, to date I am not aware of an attempt to combine both research streams to gain a more complete picture of what emotional labor in the leadership context means. I am convinced that it would be very advantageous to consider *how* leaders' emotional labor might impact followers' emotional labor.

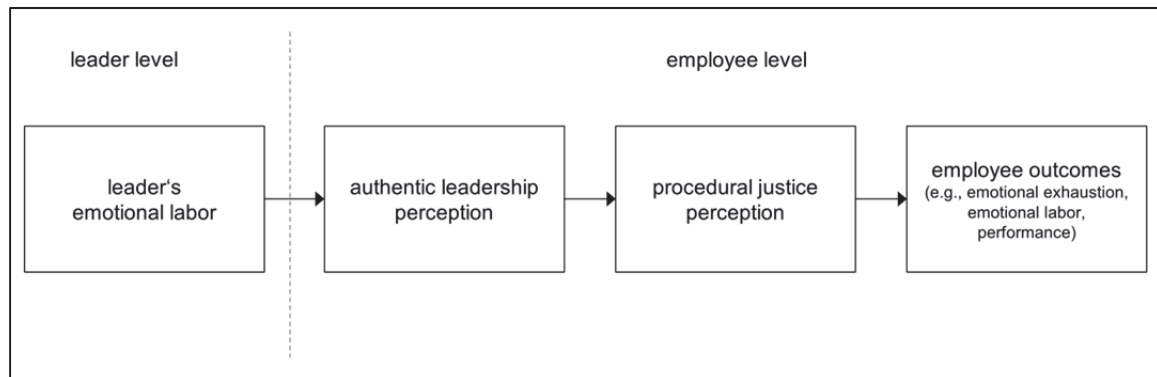
In addition, in this context, the role of procedural justice should be addressed. Actually, most issues in organizational practice deal with decision making processes, as making decisions is essential to keep organizational business running. Leaders are those persons who execute these decisions; therefore, a leader's behavior should strongly contribute to followers' perceptions of procedural justice (cf. Colquitt et al., 2013; Rupp et al., 2014). Furthermore, in terms of *social exchange theory* (Blau, 1964; Wayne, Shore, & Liden, 1997), procedural justice serves as an exchange good between an employee and his/her leader and/ or the organization. Actually, there is evidence that followers adjust their attitudes and behaviors towards their leaders (and/ or their organization) to the support they perceive by their leader and/ or their organization, which is known as reciprocity in this long-term exchange relationship (cf. Blau, 1964; Wayne et al., 1997; see also Adams, 1965). Hence, procedural justice should further link leaders' emotional labor to follower outcomes and might probably explain how authentic leadership drives its positive effects.

In order to gain more knowledge on how leaders can actively contribute to positive work outcomes and how they can work on preventing their followers from impairment, the current dissertation will address the research gaps sketched out above by focusing on the following questions.

- RQ1: How does leaders' emotion management impact followers' perceptions of authenticity?
- RQ2: How is authentic leadership related to employee impairment in the context of emotional demands?
- RQ3: How does procedural injustice impact the use of emotional labor strategies and (service) performance?

The explored conceptual framework is summarized in Figure 1-1. In detail, it is assumed that leaders' emotional labor could be related to employees' emotional exhaustion and employees' use of emotional labor strategies and performance through perceptions of authentic leadership and procedural justice. Thereby the following mechanism is proposed: leaders'

behavior affects, in a first step, how the leader is perceived (as authentic) and, in a second step, how the organization is perceived (as procedurally just). Therefore, leaders' emotional labor could be related to employee outcomes.



*Figure 1-1.* Conceptual framework linking leaders' emotional labor to employee outcomes.

### **Introducing the empirical studies**

In order to explore the proposed conceptual framework empirically, I will now present three studies addressing the main research questions of the thesis discussed. Therefore, I will give first evidence on how the framework can be transferred into practice and, parallel to this, highlight which questions remain open for future research.

In the first study presented in Chapter 2, we address the question of how leaders use emotional labor strategies in their interactions with followers and what are the consequences on followers' perception of their authenticity. Drawing on the theoretical work of Humphrey (2008, 2012), Humphrey et al. (2008) and Gardner et al. (2009), we specifically assumed that leaders' surface acting will be negatively related to employees' perceptions of leaders' authentic leadership, while deep acting should be positively related to the authentic leadership rating. Thereby, we controlled for follower's gender. Over and above this, we tested whether leader's gender impacts the use of surface and deep acting. Nevertheless, the aspect of leader's gender is not in the focus of this dissertation. Consequently, I desist from discussing this point further.

Hypotheses were tested in a sample of matched leader-follower data from  $N_2 = 30$  leaders and their  $N_1 = 73$  subordinates collected in China.

In Study 2 (Chapter 3), we try to uncover how leaders' authenticity contributes to employees' health by fostering perceptions of procedural justice, and how this indirect effect is affected by the emotional demands with which the employee him-/herself is confronted. In this, we used procedural justice theories, such as *fairness heuristic theory* (e.g., Cropanzano, Byrne, Bobocel, & Rupp, 2001; Lind, 2001), *uncertainty management theory* (e.g., Lind and van den Boos, 2002; van den Boos, 2001) and the *group value model* (Tyler, 1989) to explain the complex framework of how leaders' behavior might protect employees from being exhausted. We tested our assumptions on a large multinational sample with  $N_1 = 628$  employees from  $N_2 = 168$  German and Finnish teams with a lagged-panel design with three measurement points (T1–T2: 12–14 months, T2–T3: 8 months).

Finally, Study 3 (Chapter 4) focuses on the relationship between procedural justice and employee outcomes, such as employees' emotional labor and service performance in customer interactions. Referring to affective events theory (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996), we assumed that procedural injustice influences the use of surface and deep acting, and thereby employees' service performance. Moreover, we aimed at replicating findings on the relationship between surface and deep acting and (service) performance (cf. Hülshager & Schewe, 2011). In order to test our assumptions, we conducted a complex behavioral experiment with  $N = 87$  German undergraduates. We manipulated procedural justice through investigator's decision making and simulated two call-center calls afterwards (one demanding and one neutral customer; randomized call order).

An overview of the three studies summarizing the main research questions, hypotheses, and design, as well as sample characteristics and the major variables assessed, is presented in Table 1-1.



Table 1-1. Overview of the empirical studies included in this thesis.

Study	Authors	Journal (year) of latest submission	Research question	Hypotheses	Sample	Method	Independent variable(s)	Intervening variable(s) & controls	Dependent variable(s)
<b>Study 1:</b> <i>Antecedents and consequences of leaders' emotional labor: The role of gender and authentic leadership.</i>	Wojtas, Kampa & Otto	Gender, Work & Organization (2016)	<u>RQ1</u> : How does leaders' emotion management impact followers' perceptions of authenticity?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <u>H1a</u>: Leaders' SA is negatively related to followers' perceptions of AL.</li> <li>- <u>H1b</u>: Leaders' DA is positively related to followers' perceptions of AL.</li> <li>- <u>H2a*</u>: Female leaders show less SA than male leaders.</li> <li>- <u>H2b*</u>: Female leaders show more DA than male leaders.</li> </ul>	$N_2 = 30$ leaders and $N_1 = 73$ employees from China	ad hoc, cross-sectional design, clustered leader-follower-data, leader and follower self-ratings	leader's emotional labor (DA, SA), (leader's gender*)	controls: follower's gender	authentic leadership
<b>Study 2:</b> <i>Mechanisms linking authentic leadership to emotional exhaustion: The role of procedural justice and emotional demands in a moderated mediation approach.</i>	Kampa, Rigotti & Otto	Industrial Health (2016)	<u>RQ2</u> : How is authentic leadership related to employee impairment in the context of emotional demands?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <u>H1</u>: PJ will mediate the relationship between authentic leadership and EE.</li> <li>- <u>H2</u>: The negative relationship between PJ and EE (controlling for AL) is moderated by the ED, in that the relationship should be stronger when the ED are high.</li> <li>- <u>H3</u>: The indirect effect from AL on EE through PJ is conditional on the ED, in that the indirect effect should be stronger when the ED are high.</li> </ul>	$N_1 = 628$ employees, $N_2 = 168$ teams, from different organizations in Germany and Finland	lagged design with three measurement points (T1-T2: 12-14 months, T2-T3: 8 months), clustered data, employees' self-ratings	authentic leadership (T1)	procedural justice (T2), emotional demands (T2); controls: EE (T1), neuroticism (T3)	employee's EE (T3)

Notes. Abbreviations are used as follows: SA = surface acting, DA = deep acting, PJ = procedural justice, PIJ = procedural injustice, AL = authentic leadership, EE = emotional exhaustion, ED = emotional demands, SP = service performance, T = measurement point, RQ = research question. \*Hypotheses and variables are not in the focus of this dissertation. Hence, they are listed here for the sake of completeness.

Table 1-1 (continued)

Study	Authors	Journal (year) of latest submission	Research question	Hypotheses	Sample	Method	Independent variable(s)	Intervening variable(s) & controls	Dependent variable(s)
<b>Study 3:</b> <i>Does procedural justice matter? An experimental study on the influence of procedural injustice on emotional labor and service performance.</i>	Kampa, Böttcher & Otto	Basic and Applied Social Psychology (2016)	<b>RQ3:</b> How does procedural injustice impact the use of emotional labor strategies and (service) performance?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>H1:</b> PIJ will have a main effect on self-reported SA. This means that individuals exposed to a PIJ treatment will report higher levels of SA than those exposed to a neutral treatment.</li> <li>- <b>H2a:</b> Self-reported SA is negatively related to other-rated SP.</li> <li>- <b>H2b:</b> Self-reported DA is positively related to other-rated SP.</li> <li>- <b>H3:</b> PIJ will have a main effect on SP. This means that individuals exposed to a PIJ will perform worse in the service interaction than those exposed to a neutral treatment.</li> <li>- <b>H4:</b> The negative effect from PIJ on SP will be mediated by the amount of SA.</li> </ul>	<i>N</i> = 87 under-graduates from Germany	experimental call center simulation with two customer calls (1x neutral, 1x demanding, randomized order) after a procedural justice manipulation, self-rated emotional labor and other-rated service performance	procedural injustice, (customer call order)	employee's emotional labor (DA, SA); controls: number of collaborators, duration of prior customer experience (for DA), seriousness in task execution (for SA)	employee's service performance

*Notes.* Abbreviations are used as follows: SA = surface acting, DA = deep acting, PJ = procedural justice, PIJ = procedural injustice, AL = authentic leadership, EE = emotional exhaustion, ED = emotional demands, SP = service performance, T = measurement point, RQ = research question. \*Hypotheses and variables are not in the focus of this dissertation. Hence, they are listed here for the sake of completeness.

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## Chapter 2: Study 1 - Antecedents and consequences of leaders' emotional labor: The role of gender and authentic leadership.

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**Abstract:** Emotional labor has become more and more the focus of leadership research, suggesting that leaders manage their emotions or its expressions in interactions with followers. This study seeks to examine the role of leaders' emotional labor on followers' perception of authentic leadership. Moreover, it takes into account gender as an antecedent of emotional labor in the special context of leadership. Using a sample of matched leader-follower data ( $N_2 = 30$  leaders;  $N_1 = 73$  followers) from China, we expected leaders' surface acting to be negatively related to followers' authentic leadership perception, while deep acting would be positively related to it. Moreover, we assumed female leaders to engage less strongly in surface acting and more strongly in deep acting. Results of HLM analysis indicate that leaders who frequently use surface acting are perceived as less authentic. The hypothesis on deep acting was confirmed for only male followers. Data revealed an interaction between leaders' deep acting and followers' gender in that male followers' perceived their leaders as more authentic when they engaged in much deep acting. Regarding the use of the different emotional labor strategies, however, no differences were found with respect to leaders' gender. We suggest implications for leadership practices.

**Keywords:** emotional labor, authentic leadership, gender, leader-follower interaction

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## Introduction

First examined among service workers, emotional labor (the regulation of emotions in occupational interactions; Hochschild, 1983) has increasingly become the focus of leadership research in the last few years, suggesting that leaders manage their emotions and their emotional expressions in interactions with subordinates (Humphrey, 2008). As research indicates that leaders' emotions substantially impact subordinates' attitudes and performance, emotional labor provides a challenging set of ideas concerning leadership and its research (Humphrey, 2012). Nevertheless, studies are still lacking on the impact of leaders' emotional labor on followers (Humphrey, 2012).

Depicting basically economic relationships in which money changes hands, service encounters are different from leader-follower interactions (Parasuraman, Zeithaml, & Berry, 1985; Schneider, White, & Paul, 1998). From a leader-based perspective, the performance of emotional labor is more than just reaching acceptable levels of pleasantness or agreeableness during interactions with subordinates. As a result, the display rule "service with a smile" becomes likewise improper (Grandey, Fisk, Mattila, Jansen, & Sideman, 2005, p. 38; Humphrey, 2012).

In contrast to service workers, leaders engage in a great variety of situations with complex emotional demands (Newman, Guy, & Mastracci, 2012). For example, should supervisors show empathy to employees who show up late or rather irritation or even anger (cf. Humphrey, 2008)? Leaders must deal with different stakeholders, analyze each social occupational interaction, and find an appropriate emotional response (Newman et al., 2012). Concurrently they are placed in many situations in which they may not feel the emotions they want to display (Burch, Humphrey, & Batchelor, 2013).

An important qualitative distinction to service workers, for example, is that leaders are allowed to display anger (Mann, 2007). Notwithstanding, leaders seem to be more restricted to fake emotions as their subordinates may impose sanctions on such behavior with leaders losing their credibility (Burch et al., 2013). Indeed, there is evidence that employees expect the emotional displays from people they do know well, like their supervisors, to be more genuine (Mann, 2007).

This raises the question of whether leaders still are perceived as authentic when they engage in fake emotions, and it demonstrates the need to distinguish between different emotional labor strategies. In fact, Gardner, Fischer, and Hunt (2009) already introduced authentic leadership to the field of emotional labor in their theoretical article by integrating it as a specific behavioral set of authentic leaders.

On top of this, gender has been linked to the engagement in emotional labor. Research suggests distinct preferences for men and women to behave toward others (Bulan, Erickson, & Wharton, 1997). These findings, however, were generated mainly among service workers. Up until today it is unclear if this applies for individuals in leadership positions as well.

To fill these critical gaps, the aim of the current study is to identify antecedences and consequences of leaders' emotional labor that have been neglected so far (cf. Gardner et al., 2009). To the very best of our knowledge, no other study has empirically examined the emotional labor-authentic leadership relationship. We address this question to provide a better understanding of emotional labor and authentic leadership, and to offer a potential foundation and jumping-off-point for authentic leadership development. Moreover, we contribute to the understanding of gender issues in leadership and organizations.

In the following, we first will introduce emotional labor and its role in the service sector before unfolding our hypotheses on leaders' emotional labor and authentic leadership. Afterward, we will discuss the meaning of gender in this context and deduce related hypotheses.

#### *Emotional labor in the service encounter*

Emotional labor is primarily a marketable component of the service industry whereby friendly and positive emotional displays are job requirements for customer service employees—no matter whether authentically felt or not. Thereby employees should engender customer satisfaction and bind them to the organization. These policy statements regarding the service clerk's emotional expression also are known as display rules (Rafaeli & Sutton, 1987).

Hochschild (1983) was the first to describe different emotional labor strategies. She determined that, during the process of so-called surface acting, employees adjust their emotional expression by suppressing, amplifying, or faking emotions in occupational interactions (see also

Grandey, 2000). Or, in other words, employees put on a mask, meaning that the emotional expression and the experience of it remain discordant (Gross, 1998). In contrast, employees also can alter their actual inner emotional status, which is known as deep acting (Hochschild, 1983). When doing this, employees actually try to feel the emotions they need to display (Hochschild, 1983), often by recalling past events that are associated with the experience of the required emotion (Grandey, 2000).

Besides deep and surface acting, employees also may genuinely feel the emotions they express (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993; Morris & Feldman, 1997); this has been referred to as genuinely felt emotions (Diefendorff et al., 2005), automatic emotion regulation (Zapf, 2002), or passive deep acting (Hochschild, 1983).

In the current work, however, we focus on surface acting and deep acting as both strategies require an active regulation and therefore bear the opportunity to be trained. Although research on authentic emotional displays has been limited (Pugh, 2001), there are a few interesting results to share. Reactions toward inauthentic smiles, for example, differ from those to authentic smiles, and moreover, those reactions are less positive (Grandey et al., 2005; cf. Hennig-Thurau, Groth, Paul, & Gremler, 2006). Authentic smiles (so-called Duchenne smiles) result in higher attribution of positive characteristics (Ekman, 1992; Ekman & Friesen, 1982). In field research, service providers who reported being authentically positive in interactions with their clients earned higher ratings on their interpersonal demeanor (i.e., friendliness) than their colleagues who were less authentic (Grandey, 2003). Additional support was provided by Grandey and colleagues (2005), who showed that an authentic emotional display improved customer reactions toward the service encounter.

Nevertheless, as this was only the case when the core task performance was high, authenticity seems to be an enhancement factor rather than an additive one. These findings also suggest that positive displays are insufficient for desired service outcomes. It is the authentic display that results in the perception of high quality performance (Grandey et al., 2005). This raises the question of whether leaders' authentic behavior is also assessed upon the perception of



an (in)authentic emotional display. Therefore, the concept of authentic leadership has to be addressed at first.

### *Authentic leadership*

In times when one public corporation scandal runs into the next, revealing egoistic and corruptive leadership practices, it is not surprising that the topic of authenticity in leadership is steadily becoming of greater interest. Both practitioner (George, 2003) and academic literature (Avolio, Gardner, Walumbwa, Luthans, & May, 2004) refer to authentic leaders as being guided by internal moral standards with high interests in matters related to followers, organizations, and society. In that way, their actions promote goals that benefit the larger community.

It has been theorized that such leaders preserve a sense of consistency in their actions and finally perform well beyond minimum acceptable or average success (George, 2003). Responding to calls for a more positive and integral perspective on leadership, Avolio et al. (2004) and Ilies, Morgeson, and Nahrgang (2005) introduced the concept of authentic leadership.

Overall, authentic leadership has been described as a process in which positive leader capacities and a highly developed organizational context are combined to positively influence self-awareness and personal development for both parties, namely leaders and followers (Luthans & Avolio, 2003). Similarly, Avolio et al. (2004) described high degrees of self-awareness, optimism, and self-efficacy as integral components of authentic leadership.

In addition, newer conceptualizations extended old ones by stressing the facet of high morality in authentic leadership. This led to the idea that authentic leaders generally are perceived as being true to themselves in their values, strengths, social interactions, and relationships. Authentic leaders therefore manage to build a culture of credibility, respect, and trust by growing collaborative networks with their followers (Avolio et al., 2004).

In an effort to unite these definitions, Cooper, Scandura, and Schriesheim (2005) viewed the concept of authentic leadership as multifaceted, containing elements from diverse domains: traits, states, behaviors, contexts, or attributions. Authentic leadership has been conceptualized as a root concept that underlies the positive aspects of charismatic, transformational, spiritual, and ethical leadership theories (Černe et al., 2014; Ilies et al., 2005).

This concept consists of four dimensions: (a) self-awareness (process of reflecting on one's unique values, identity, goals, knowledge, talents and/or capabilities, and emotions to develop an enhanced understanding of the self), (b) relational transparency (presenting one's true self to others), (c) balanced processing (analyzing relevant information objectively before making a decision), and (d) internalized moral perspective (self-regulation that is guided by internal moral standards and values) (Neider & Schriesheim, 2011; Walumbwa et al., 2008).

#### *Leaders' authentic behavior and emotional labor*

Despite the emphasis on leaders' own values, it is clear that the values promoted by authentic leaders cannot be merely self-oriented. Theorists of authentic leadership therefore noted that authentic leaders are true to themselves and to others (Bass & Steidlmeier, 1999). Authentic leaders with a relational transparency orientation will seek open and truthful relationships with their followers (Ilies et al., 2005). They will fully disclose and not conceal information about themselves (even if negative); be transparent in processes of decision making; and clearly specify relevant information, their ideas, and thoughts (Neider & Schriesheim, 2011).

Additionally, displayed emotions will provide followers with invaluable information about their leaders and the numerous dynamic transactions they share inside their organizational environments (Lazarus, 1991). Within this context it was theorized that emotional labor, as a specific set of behaviors, could help leaders establish better leader-member relationships (Humphrey, 2012).

Parallel to this, it was considered that high degrees of consistency between values and behaviors would enable leaders to be more genuine in their emotional expressions and therefore able to build close and authentic relationships with their followers (Ilies et al., 2005). According to Humphrey (2012) and Gardner et al. (2009), authentic leadership and a better leader-follower exchange happens when leaders use higher rates of deep acting rather than concealing their emotions in a masquerade of surface acting.

Moreover, surface acting should hinder leaders in feeling close to their followers, and they should feel detached. Inconsistency between one's emotional display, one's inner status, and one's identity should lead to a higher experience of emotional dissonance, a state in which felt

emotions do not correspond to those that are expressed (Hochschild, 1983). Emotional dissonance has been described as a stressor (Zapf, Vogt, Seifert, Mertini, & Isic, 1999), and it is assumed to lead to the loss of one's sense of authentic self (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993; cf. Hochschild, 1983). In consequence, surface acting seems to be a threat to positive leader-follower relationships and leaders' well-being.

As mentioned before, research on emotional labor strategies in the service industry confirms that surface acting generally is ineffective in generating positive impressions in others (Grandey et al., 2005), and that it is negatively related to effective emotional performance (Bono and Vey, 2005). Customers respond more positively to employees who engage in an authentic emotional display (Grandey et al., 2005). Therefore, one might assume that employees also will respond better to leaders who use the emotional labor strategy of deep acting. They will perceive such leaders as more authentic and having a more honest overall character (Gardner et al., 2009; Humphrey, 2012).

Such findings suggest that leaders who respond to emotional display rules with surface acting are unlikely to garner favorable follower impressions (Gardner et al., 2009). In addition, surface acting may be accompanied by unwanted secondary impressions in that the leader seems to be insincere and manipulative (Gardner & Martinko, 1988). In line with the framework propositions of Gardner and colleagues (2009), we hypothesize the following:

H1a: *Leaders' surface acting is negatively related to followers' perceptions of authentic leadership.*

H1b: *Leaders' deep acting is positively related to followers' perceptions of authentic leadership.*

#### *Gender aspects of emotional labor*

More than three decades after Hochschild's seminal work on emotional labor (1983), gender-based segregation in occupations with high demands of emotional labor persists. Fifty-three percent of female workers and 32% of male workers are in jobs defined as having high emotional labor demands, such as sales, managerial, healthcare, and other service occupations (Bhave & Glomb, 2009). But why is this so?

Gender differences in occupations reflect existing assumptions about men's and women's emotionality. Men are more motivated to stay in control, repress emotional responses (Matud, 2004), and express powerful emotions such as anger or pride. In contrast, women are concerned more with getting along (Timmers, Fischer, & Manstead, 1998) and emphasizing benevolent and universal values (Ryckman & Houston, 2003). It has been argued that people-oriented work is related more closely to women's traditional caretaking role, encapsulating a higher suitability for service jobs (cf. Bulan et al., 1997; Hochschild, 1983).

Indeed research has shown that effectiveness in working with people is more important to job success and satisfaction for female workers than their male counterparts (Bulan et al., 1997). This is in line with Hall's (1995) idea of women's job success more likely being evaluated on the basis of their effectiveness in working with people—as a traditional feminine skill—than men's. As a result, occupations with those kinds of experiences may be perceived as more rewarding to women than those that do not (Bulan et al., 1997).

Gender has become an integral part in research on emotion management in work settings (Grandey, 2000) and in leadership (Eagly & Johnson, 1990), providing theoretical and empirical evidence for gender-specific patterns in leaders' behavior. Thus, differences between men and women exist in all aspects of work, regarding their leadership style (Eagly & Johnson, 1990) and their communication style (Furumo & Pearson, 2007) as far as regarding their potential to earn benefits (Haar & O'Driscoll, 2005).

Various theories have been applied to explain gender differences in leadership, such as Bowlby's attachment theory (1951) or the relational theory (Boatwright & Forrest, 2000). It has been argued, however, that gender-related differences also could be due to factors such as personality and ability differences (Eagly & Wood, 1991), learning different styles of influence in gender-segregated play groups (Maccoby, 1990) or biologically grounded differences (Kenrick & Trost, 1993). According to social role theory (Eagly, 1987) gender differences can be accounted for by one's own set of expectations as well as those of others, depending on gender roles.

Carless (1998) described female leadership development with respect to the socialization process of women. Principally, workplace roles are defined solely in terms of genderless and

formal role structures of individuals, groups, and organizations. It is more probable, however, that female leaders respond—at least partially—to expectations concerning appropriate “female” behavior, the same applying to male leaders (Eagly & Carli, 2003).

In general, women are expected to display relatively feminine values, often termed “communal”, through affectionate, helpful, kind, sympathetic, and interpersonally sensitive behaviors. Typically masculine behaviors, often termed “agentic”, encompass attributions such as assertive, ambitious, dominant, forceful, self-sufficient, and self-confident (Newport, 2001). These gender-based expectations influence workplace roles, and thus leadership behaviors were described as gender-role spillover effects (Eagly & Carli, 2003).

Eagly (2005) theorized that female leaders might be seen as part of an outsider group, and thus face a key challenge to combine their followers' trust and acceptance within their persons. Within this context, Eagly and Karau (2002) developed the role incongruity theory of prejudice to elucidate prejudices that might confront women in leadership positions. This phenomenon rests in the idea of inconsistency between the demands of leadership roles that are construed generically in masculine terms. Therefore, female leaders become subjects to adverse preconceptions about future work performance and suffer diminished outcomes (Bass, 1990). It further was argued that, in such cases, the more women epitomize their male counterparts' behavior, the more they may compromise their chances to gain followers' identification and to be perceived without devaluations.

As a result of their meta-analytic findings, however, Eagly and Johnson (1990) also indicated that competent women might be able to alleviate role conflict and minimize gender-role violations by shaping their behavior and acting stereotypically feminine. Indeed, a great body of evidence shows that leadership styles tend to be gender stereotypic (e.g., Eagly, Karau, & Makhijani, 1995). Female leaders tend to show a more people-oriented and democratic style in comparison to male leaders (Eagly et al., 1995). But what does that mean with regard to emotional labor?

*Emotional labor of female and male leaders*

Hochschild's qualitative research (1983) suggests the idea that even within the same occupation, emotional expression differs among male and female workers with women showing more positive emotions (Rafaeli, 1989) and higher rates of emotional expressivity (Deaux, 1985). Moreover, a great body of studies has shown that men and women differ in terms of the experience of emotions (Geer & Shields, 1996). Women generally tend to experience more intense and frequent emotions, and are more likely to report the experience of fear, sadness, shame, and guilt than men (Brody & Hall, 2000). In contrast, men are more likely to report the experience of anger and pride (Fischer & Jansz, 1995). On top of that, women are more likely to manage emotions at work and to be subject to the expectation to do so (Wharton & Erickson, 1993).

Eagly and Johnson (1990) reckoned that women's human skills may account for such differences as they are associated with a better understanding of others' emotions and intentions, and therefore, facilitate leadership behavior that is more democratic and participative. In this context, gender role socialization (Rafaeli, 1989) was stressed to have a marked influence on women's ability to handle the demands of emotion management in interactions with others. Being more skilled at emotion management contributes to the idea that women experience more positive emotions with occupations requiring emotional labor, such as service work (Johnson & Spector, 2007).

Leadership often is seen as the focus of group processes (Northouse, 2007) as it encompasses key traits such as connectivity and relationship building (Goleman, 2006). Human skills help leaders work effectively with subordinates and others to successfully accomplish organizational goals (Northouse, 2007). Such skills enable leaders to develop rapport and emotional engagement with followers (Goleman, 2006). Those people-oriented facets of work have been considered to be closely related to women's traditional caretaking role.

As already mentioned, Bulan et al. (1997) showed in the service context that effectiveness in working with people is more important to job success and satisfaction for women than it is for men. This means that a higher degree of role authenticity felt by women, compared to men,

finally will contribute to a greater engagement in emotional labor with special regard to deep acting. According to Johnson and Spector (2007) female leaders should try to feel the emotions required in a certain situation. To give an example, they should feel empathetic toward an employee who shows up late, imagining personal problems, instead of showing irritation or anger. In contrast, as discussed before, Bulan et al.'s (1997) research indicates male workers attach less value to people-work in order to feel authentic within their job roles. In other words, as long as men are engaged in their work performance, interactions with others are less important.

Consequently, it can be assumed that male leaders might lack motivation to engage in deep acting when their feelings are incongruent with the required emotions, resulting in lower levels of deep acting than their female counterparts. Additionally, women should be more successful in expressing genuine emotions because of their superior ability to express emotions in general (Rafaeli, 1989). Therefore, when they engage in deep acting to generate the display of genuine emotions, they are more likely to experience positive outcomes due to felt role congruency. In turn, surface acting causes emotional dissonance and contributes to feelings of role inauthenticity (Hochschild, 1983). For male leaders this might be less of a concern (Johnson & Spector, 2007). In line with this argumentation, we hypothesize the following:

H2a: *Female leaders show less surface acting than male leaders.*

H2b: *Female leaders show more deep acting than male leaders.*

## **Method**

### *Sample and procedure*

Hypotheses were tested in a convenience sample with clustered data from Shanghai, China. The sample was collected using snowballing technique with an English online questionnaire distributed via email links. Anonymity was assured to all participants. After leaders completed a password-protected, web-based survey, they were instructed to forward the related employee survey link to some of their followers to rate their leadership behavior. Prior to data assessment, subordinates were told that their supervisors would receive aggregated feedback only and that it would not be possible to identify specific ratings on an individual level.

We collected data from  $N_2 = 30$  leaders and their subordinates ( $N_1 = 73$ ), with a mean of 2.52 subordinate ratings per leader ( $range = 0-4$ ). The majority of the sample (63.3%) was employed in chemical industry; other sectors represented were high tech/IT/telecommunication, 13.2%; fast-moving consumer goods, 10%; automotive, 3.3%; finance 3.3%; and food 3.3%.

Managers made up the majority of the sample at 76.7%, supervisors, 10.0%, and directors or chief executive officers, 6.6%. Leaders' age ranged from 27 to 47 with a mean of 36.53 ( $SD = 4.80$ ). In terms of gender, 63.3% of participants ( $n = 19$ ) were male and 36.7% ( $n = 11$ ) were female. Regarding their highest education level, 3.3% of the leaders had received vocational training only, while 56.7% had an undergraduate degree, 33.3% a graduate-level degree, and 6.7% a doctorate. On average, leaders worked for 5.87 years ( $SD = 5.13$ ) for their current organization ( $range = 1-24$ ) and had 4.38 years of leadership experience in their organization ( $SD = 3.18$ ,  $range = 1-12$ ).

Subordinates' were about five years younger than their leaders with a mean age of 31.58 ( $SD = 6.11$ ,  $range = 24-57$ ). In contrast to the leader sample, the majority of the followers was female (58.9%,  $n = 43$ ), only 38.4% ( $n = 28$ ) were male, and they had worked for a shorter period of time for their current organization ( $M = 4.59$ ,  $SD = 4.03$ ,  $range = 0.5-21$  years). Subordinates' educational background was comparable to the leader sample: 1.4% of the followers had received vocational training only, 60.3% had an undergraduate degree, 32.9% a graduate-level degree, and 2.7% had a doctorate. Regarding prior leadership responsibility, 45.2% of the followers said already some and 52.1% said they did not have prior leadership responsibility, and 16.4% said they currently work as a leader, while 80.8% said they do not. Note that all sociodemographic data were missing for two of the followers.

### *Measures*

***Leaders' self-rated emotional labor.*** Leaders' deep and surface acting was assessed with three items each from the Emotional Labor Scale (ELS; Brotheridge & Lee, 2003). Items were linguistically adapted, when necessary, according to leader-follower interactions. A sample item for surface acting is "I resist expressing my true feelings," and for deep acting "I try to actually experience the emotions that I must show". The reliability of both parts of the ELS was



acceptable with a Cronbach's alpha of .72 for surface and .70 for deep acting. All emotional labor items were rated on a visually anchored 5-point frequency scale ranging from 1 to 5 (1 = *never*, 2 = *rarely*, 3 = *sometimes*, 4 = *often*, 5 = *always*).

***Follower-rated authentic leadership.*** Subordinates were asked to rate their leaders' prototypical behavior using the 14-item Authentic Leadership Inventory (ALI; Neider & Schriesheim, 2011), on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 to 5 (1 = *disagree strongly*, 2 = *disagree*, 3 = *neither agree nor disagree*, 4 = *agree*, 5 = *agree strongly*). The scale showed a good reliability (Cronbach's  $\alpha = .90$ ). A sample item is "My leader shows consistency between her/his beliefs and actions".

### *Analyses*

We applied multiple t-test procedures and hierarchical linear regression modelling (HLM) to test our hypotheses using SPSS (Version 17.0) and MPlus (Version 7.31). As followers were nested within leaders, we estimated a mean-as-outcome model to test the role of the leader's emotional labor in followers' perception of authentic leadership (cf. Hofmann, Griffin, & Gavin, 2000).

## **Results**

Means, standard deviations and correlations of the study's level 2 variables are summarized in Table 2-1.

### *HLM hypotheses testing*

The intraclass correlation coefficient (ICC) value of 0.30 provided justification for the use of HLM regression analyses to test hypotheses group 1. Results are summarized in Table 2-3. We examined the cross-level relationship between the main effect of leaders' emotional labor (level 2 variable) and followers' rating of authentic leadership (level 1 variable). As research underlined that female and male followers react differently to the same leadership behavior (e.g., Haggard, Robert, & Rose, 2011), we further controlled for the role of the follower's gender and tested a possible interaction effect when testing H1a and H1b. To do so, we stepwise included the controls in our regression model.

Data revealed a significant negative relationship between surface acting and authentic leadership, supporting H1a ( $B = -0.24, p = .012$ ). Followers' gender was unrelated to the authenticity perception.

Regarding deep acting, analyses revealed a marginal significant main effect of followers' gender ( $B = -0.96, p = .062$ ) and a significant effect of leader's deep acting ( $B = -0.68, p = .018$ ) as far as a significant interaction effect between followers' gender and leader's use of this strategy ( $B = 1.32, p = .033$ ). The interaction effect was disordinal (see Figure 2-1), so the main effects should not be interpreted globally. In addition, in step 2 of our analyses, no significant main effects were found either.

Therefore, data provide support at least for the assumption that male followers perceive their leaders being more authentic when they use deep acting (H1b). This relationship was not supported for female followers, however. The interaction rather implies that female followers perceive their leaders to be more authentic when they use less deep acting. Nevertheless, among male and female followers, leaders were perceived as equally authentic for high deep-acting values.

#### *Mean differences*

Thirty leaders (11 female, 19 male) were used for the difference of mean testing. Table 2-2 presents the test results for independent samples. No significant differences were found between gender groups, thus failing to support hypotheses 2a and 2b. Female leaders did not engage significantly less in surface acting than male leaders,  $t(28) = 1.04, p = .307$ , nor did they engage more in deep acting,  $t(28) = -0.84, p = .407$ .

Regarding the second set of hypotheses, we conducted post-hoc power calculations. Assuming a small effect size of  $d = 0.2$ , statistical power was very low with  $1-\beta = .13$  regarding the  $t$ -tests.

#### **Discussion**

The aim of the current study was twofold. First, we aimed to explore the role of leaders' emotional labor on followers' perception of authentic leadership to gain more knowledge on

Table 2-1. Means, standard deviations, and correlations of level 1 and level 2 variables.

Variables	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Leader's age	36.53	4.80								
2. Leader's gender <sup>1</sup>			.04							
3. Leader's leadership experience	4.38	3.18	.55**	.10						
4. Leader's tenure	5.87	5.13	.69**	.14	.78**					
5. Surface acting	2.76	0.60	-.05	.19	.02	.16				
6. Deep acting	3.31	0.64	-.02	.16	.07	.15	.28			
7. Follower's authentic leadership perception	3.92	0.50	.07°	-.17°	.03°	-.11°	-.76**°	.00°		
8. Follower's age	31.58	6.11	.40 <sup>+</sup> °	0.17°	.00°	.37*°	-.19°	.18°	.10	
9. Follower's gender <sup>1</sup>			-.46*°	.39*°	-.39 <sup>+</sup> °	-.54**°	-.33°	-.04°	.07	.07

Notes.  $N_1 = 73$ ,  $N_2 = 30$ . <sup>1</sup>Variable was dummy coded prior to analyses (0 = female, 1 = male). °Correlations were estimated by the simple multilevel regression coefficient as suggested by Hox (2010, p. 22) when predicting follower variables by leader variables. Displayed coefficients are z-standardized.

<sup>+</sup> $p < .10$ , \* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .01$ , two-tailed.

Table 2-2. Mean differences between male and female leaders.

Variables	<i>Male</i>		<i>Female</i>		<i>t</i>
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	
Surface acting	2.84	0.70	2.61	0.36	-1.04
Deep acting	3.39	0.71	3.18	0.50	-0.84

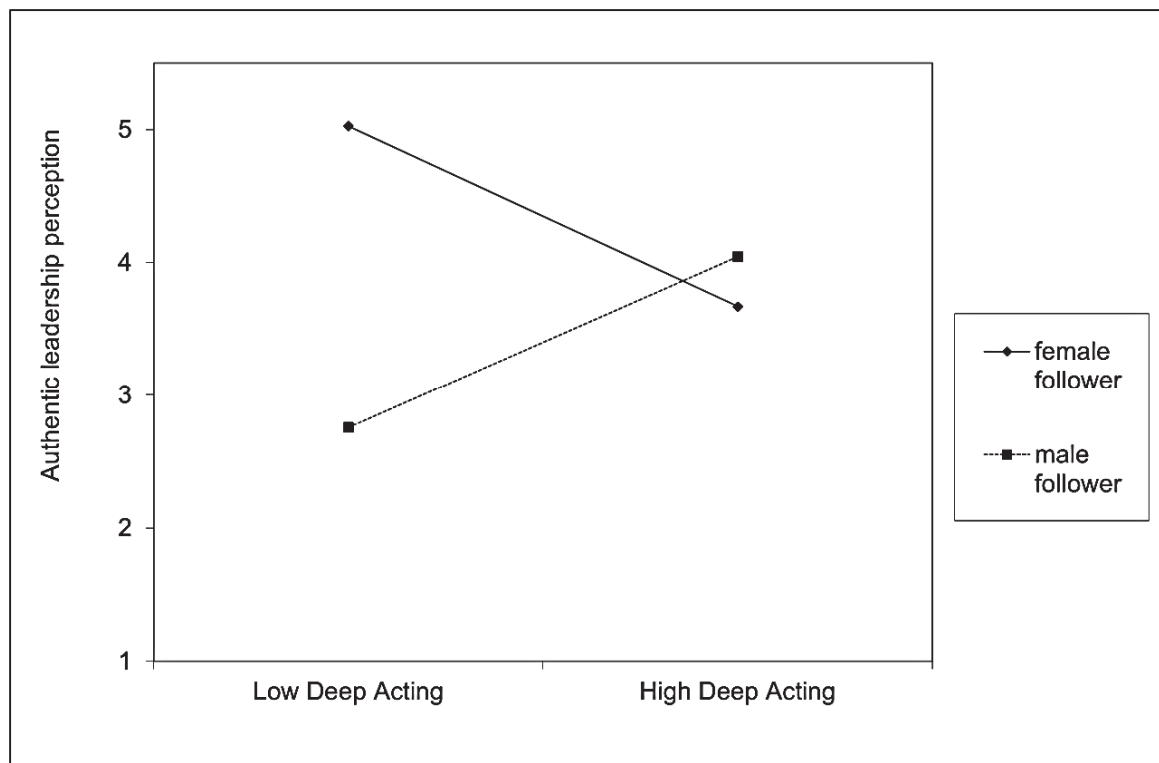
Note.  $df = 28$ ,  $n_{\text{male}} = 19$ ,  $n_{\text{female}} = 11$ .

Table 2-3. *Estimated HLM regression coefficients to predict authentic leadership by emotional labor strategies and follower's gender.*

Outcome: Authentic leadership perception			
<b>Step 1</b>	<i>B</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>p</i>
<i>Intercept</i>	3.99**	0.17	.000
Follower's gender <sup>1</sup>	-0.16	0.37	.662
<b>Step 2</b>	<i>B</i>	<i>S.E.</i>	<i>p</i>
<i>Intercept</i>	4.11**	0.14	.000
Follower's gender <sup>1</sup>	-0.46	0.31	.138
Leader's surface acting	-0.25**	0.07	.000
<b>Step 3</b>			
<i>Intercept</i>	4.11**	0.17	.000
Follower's gender <sup>1</sup>	-0.48	0.33	.144
Leader's surface acting	-0.24*	0.10	.012
Follower's gender <sup>1</sup> x leader's surface acting	-0.07	0.35	.836
<b>Step 2</b>	<i>B</i>	<i>S.E.</i>	<i>p</i>
<i>Intercept</i>	4.00**	0.16	.000
Follower's gender <sup>1</sup>	-0.18	0.38	.640
Leader's deep acting	-0.02	0.10	.850
<b>Step 3</b>			
<i>Intercept</i>	4.35**	0.22	.000
Follower's gender <sup>1</sup>	-0.95 <sup>+</sup>	0.51	.061
Leader's deep acting	-0.68*	0.29	.018
Follower's gender <sup>1</sup> x leader's deep acting	1.32*	0.62	.033

Notes.  $N_1 = 73$ ,  $N_2 = 29$ . All predictors have been *z*-standardized prior to data-analyses. <sup>1</sup>Variable was dummy coded prior to analyses (0 = female, 1 = male).

<sup>+</sup> $p < .10$ , \* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .01$ , two-tailed.



*Figure 2-1.* Interaction between leader's amount of deep acting and follower's gender when predicting authentic leadership.

emotional labor in leadership and its consequences, whereby we further controlled for follower's gender. Second, we tried to identify leader gender as an important antecedent of leaders' emotional labor as gender is always critically discussed in leadership.

Focusing on the leader-follower relationship, we hypothesized that leaders' authentic display of emotions (deep acting) results in higher perceptions of authentic leadership behavior. Correspondingly, inauthentic displays of emotions (surface acting) should lower leaders' authenticity. Further, we assumed that female and male leaders would differ regarding the use of different emotional labor strategies.

Our hypotheses were partially confirmed. Surface acting was negatively correlated with authentic leadership. Unexpectedly, we found deep acting to interact with followers' gender regarding perception of leadership authenticity in that our hypotheses was supported only for male followers. In contrast, female followers rated their leaders being much more authentic when

they used less deep acting. Contrary to expectations, a leader's gender had no effect on the use of the different emotional labor strategies.

*Emotional labor and the perception of (authentic) leadership*

With the current work we were able to show that emotional labor is not limited to service encounters but is meaningful to leader-follower interactions as well. This is in line with work from Humphrey (2008, 2012), suggesting that the psychological process by which leaders regulate their emotional expression plays an important role in followers' leadership perceptions (Gardner et al., 2009; Humphrey, 2008). Moreover, this enlarges evidence from Brotheridge and Grandey (2002) that leaders do engage in emotional labor. Emotional labor can be seen as a skill set that is subject to inter-individual differences in leaders, accounting for good and bad leadership practice (Newman et al., 2012). As already indicated, emotional labor has been identified to be directly linked to audience perceptions (Grandey et al., 2005).

We only succeeded, however, in relating surface acting to followers' perception of authentic leadership, irrespective of follower's gender. Deep acting was related to it only among male followers. Those results underline that followers detect when leaders show inconsistencies between their behavior and their actual self, which is primarily the case when surface acting. That leaders are being perceived as less authentic, should hinder them in building close and authentic relationships with their followers (Ilies et al., 2005; cf. Humphrey, 2012).

That we found a significant interaction between leaders' deep acting and followers' gender raises some interesting new aspects in this context. In consideration of our results, it is impossible to make general predictions on the impact of leaders' deep acting on followers' perceptions. In fact, our findings deliver some evidence that follower characteristics, such as gender, must be taken into account when choosing the "right" regulation strategy. Although male followers honor it when deep acting is employed, women seem to be able to recognize if a leader engages in emotion regulation, even when deep acting. In consequence, this poses higher demands on leaders in regulating their own emotions when interacting with female followers. Male followers seem to be much easier to satisfy in this regard. As a result, women perceive their leaders to be most authentic when they use less of this regulation strategy.

Leaders need to differentiate with whom they interact (male or female follower) and adapt their strategy accordingly. This should not be seen as an obligation, however, as leaders who engage in much deep acting are not perceived differently among male and female followers. In other words, it is not “problematic” for a leader to engage in deep acting (remember the positive health outcomes of this strategy), but it seems to be much better to engage in less (deep) acting when addressing a female follower.

Besides transferring those results back to the service context, it would be an interesting question for future research to see if customer gender affects how service employees are perceived in a similar way. It is possible that female customers are even more sensitive in detecting any emotion regulation (deep and surface acting) strategy used, while male customers are aware only of obvious faking (surface acting). Further research on this gender topic is welcomed.

Nevertheless, former research on service dis-/confirmation suggests that a service is evaluated on the basis of customer expectations (Oliver, 1980). Service receivers may focus (only) on levels of authenticity when they feel that appropriate standards for emotional display have not been met within the service interaction (Ennew, Reed, & Binks, 1993). Therefore, it is necessary to ask whether faking emotions (as is the case with surface acting) always is detrimental for leader practice.

In their framework of authentic leadership, Gardner and colleagues (2009) discussed that a fake display may arise although the leader is deeply involved in the situation and the follower's well-being. Such discrepancies may be due to situational factors that hinder leaders in making an appropriate effort to display the emotion that they wish to feel. To give an example, leaders may find themselves in a stressful situation that leaves no space to engage in proper emotion management. Taking this into account, a useful distinction could be made between “faking in good faith” (e.g., displaying positive but faked emotions toward somebody based on a genuine concern for his or her well-being, which is in line with one's own convictions) and “faking in bad faith” (e.g., mechanically expressing appropriate emotions without being convinced of its meaning; Rafaeli & Sutton, 1987). In the current study we did not distinguish between both

surface acting strategies. This might be a valuable addendum in the future. On one hand, negative impressions may be particularly pronounced when followers perceive their leader to fake in bad faith. On the other hand, followers may be more forgiving when they believe that their leader's intentions are good, although they fall short of forming authentic emotional expressions (Dasborough & Ashkanasy, 2002).

All in all, our findings raise important questions about the underlying mechanisms by which the two concepts of authentic leadership and emotional labor are related. Hypotheses were developed based on findings in the service sector, according to which service workers' performance is rated more favorably when the shown emotions are authentic and when they conform to display rules (Grandey et al., 2005). But why is this so?

Newcombe and Ashkanasy (2002) showed that the congruency between a leader's verbal message and the emotional display influences how followers evaluate their leader. If the expressed emotion is congruent with the verbal message, leaders are evaluated positively. Conversely, if the expressed emotion is incongruent with the verbal message, leaders are evaluated negatively. This is in line with Gardner and colleagues' (2009) model of authentic leadership mirroring a cognitive aspect of leadership perception. Over and above this, it already has been argued that genuine smiles are likely to induce pleasure and emotional empathy (Surakka & Hietanen, 1998; see also Hareli & Rafaeli, 2008; Pugh, 2001), and therefore, may lead to further positive leadership and performance appraisals (Newcombe & Ashkanasy, 2002).

Consequently, not only the distinction between authentic and inauthentic emotional expressions implies important interpersonal consequences for followers' leadership perceptions but also the quality of the emotions displayed by the leader. In the current study, we focused on emotional labor as an underlying process of emotion expression, but we did not control for qualitative aspects. It should be noted, however, that positive emotions also can lead to supervisor devaluations when the authentic display fails. Therefore, only authenticity of emotional expressions was addressed within this research.



*Gender issues in leader's emotional labor*

The insights on emotional labor in leadership from the current study raise some interesting questions on the existence of gender differences in this context. In detail, our study provides evidence for equal patterns of emotional labor in male and female leaders. Although the study's group mean differences and directions were in favor of hypotheses 2a, results were not significant. Notwithstanding, it has to be acknowledged that the statistical power was very low. A larger gender group size of at least 310 participants (*t*-test) would have been necessary to reveal small differences, if present. As a result, emotional labor tendencies of female and male leaders remain unclear.

At this point it is useful to shed light on gender roles a second time. Eagly and Johnson's (1990) meta-analytical research on female and male leadership styles stems from data collected between 1967 and 1987. Although many scholars (e.g., Eagly & Carli, 2003) argued, that, to succeed in today's frequently changing organizations, leaders must engage in collaborative and democratic relationships, they should show interpersonal sensitivity and be open and empathetic (Avolio, 1999).

Effective and influential leadership may not be driven by mainly stereotypic masculine characteristics; it may rather call for androgyny, a professional blend of culturally feminine and masculine behavioral tendencies that are advantageous to managers and that offer more flexibility for leadership (Koenig, Eagly, Mitchell, & Ristikari, 2011). Indeed, women approximated men with respect to their career aspirations (Astin, Parrott, Korn, & Sax, 1997) and their self-report of dominance and masculinity (Twenge, 2001). A recent meta-analytical study brought evidence for an increasing androgyny in leader stereotypes in the last four decades (Koenig et al., 2011). Nevertheless, descriptive gender stereotypes (pertaining to the typical attributes of women and men) still exist in people's beliefs of stereotypically feminine and masculine qualities. Accordingly, Vinkenburg, van Engen, Eagly, and Johannesen-Schmidt (2011) showed that individuals are aware of small differences between male and female leaders.

In summary, until today there has been little evidence that differences between male and female leaders exist (e.g., Johnson & Spector, 2007). In the current study, we failed to enlarge

this empirical foundation. Possibly men and women in leadership roles do not differ (anymore) regarding the use of emotional labor strategies.

Notwithstanding, as already mentioned, the current work revealed that gender at least matters in regard to the detection of emotions in others (e.g., leaders) as female followers reacted differently to leaders engaging in deep acting. In several ways this is in line with Eagly's work (Eagly, 1987; Eagly & Johnson, 1990) on gender roles, indicating that women and men act differently due to a gender specific skill set, resulting in women being much more concerned with interpersonal relationships.

Transferring this to the leadership context means that female leaders might be much more sensitive regarding the perception of emotions in others, although they do not regulate their emotions differently. Of course, this superior ability in detecting emotions might be an important advantage, for example, in negotiations. Besides, the question arises of whether female leaders' emotional response is more precisely adjusted to the specific interaction partner in regard to emotional quality, which in turn, might be more beneficial to the leader-follower-relationship in the long term.

All in all, more research is needed on this interesting topic. Moreover, there are several explanations for why we failed to reveal gender differences in leader's emotion regulation. First, it must be noted that, besides a general small sample size, the gender distribution in our leader sample was unbalanced, meaning that more leaders were male, possibly hindering us in revealing the hypothesized effects.

A second reason could be the cultural background of our participants as we collected all of our data in China. Chinese culture is described as more collectivistic than many Western cultures, like those in most European countries (Hofstede, 1980). In collectivistic cultures, men and women both tend to highly value maintaining harmonious interpersonal relationships and are socialized equally in developing skills to maintain those relationships (Triandis, McCusker, & Hui, 1990). Such cultural characteristics may have accounted for the non-significance of gender groups regarding the use of different emotional labor strategies. As a consequence, the current study contributes primarily to research on collectivistic cultures.

Moreover, it is assumed that the use of the emotional labor strategies by female and male leaders depends on the kind of emotions that need to be displayed. In contrast to service professions, the display rules are different in leadership positions; they require and allow a larger range of emotions (cf. Humphrey, 2008; Mann, 2007). Possibly, women use more deep acting only when the display of warmth emotions, such as understanding and sympathy, is required, which is easier for them. In contrast, it is more difficult for them to induce emotions such as anger or irritation, resulting in female leaders using more surface acting when such emotions are required. We did not differentiate between the qualities of the required emotions, however, which is why we are unable to test this assumption. Further research on this point is needed in the future.

#### *Strengths and further implications*

There are some further interesting implications for research and practice. To the very best of our knowledge this is the first empirical study to examine how the concept of emotional labor relates to authentic leadership. With our results we further expand the knowledge on emotional labor by integrating it into the field of leadership. Moreover, we contribute to the research on gender differences in leadership that stem from one of the most discussed differences between men and women: emotionality. In times when gender issues in leadership keep politics and organizations busy (e.g., equal gender compensation, the number of female managing board members), our work provides a further basis for fruitful debates.

Shamir and Eilam (2005) particularly highlighted that authentic leadership is something one can develop in leaders. Although initial evidence for the effectiveness of self-regulation techniques to improve mood and emotional expression exists, emotional labor has not been addressed in this context (Totterdell & Parkinson, 1999). For this reason, it has been recommended (e.g., in the hospitality industry) to have training courses that teach deep acting skills when the performance of emotional labor is necessary in daily work (Johanson & Woods, 2008). According to our results, it might be promising for leaders to add emotional labor as a key element to their behavioral set. We therefore encourage future research to investigate the

effectiveness of emotional labor training programs as a potential jumping-off point to developing authentic leadership behavior.

Over and above this, leaders should be sensitized to take followers' gender into account before deciding on the use of a specific emotion regulation strategy; it is promising to integrate this in leadership training programs. This, however, raises further critical questions about leaders' emotional labor because leaders, of course, are not limited to four-eye-interactions but very often interact with (mixed gender) groups of followers. More research on such questions is recommended.

### *Limitations*

Despite the several strengths of our study, there are a few limitations that need to be addressed when interpreting our results.

First, the cultural background of our participants raises an important critical point: trust. It has to be acknowledged that the communication of the study's intentions was not set up satisfactorily. The literature indicates that social interaction is imperative for the development of business relationships in China (Davies, 1995) and results in cooperative behavior (Mavondo & Rodrigo, 2001). We used snowballing technique via e-mail only. Therefore, communication of the study's aims may have been insufficient to gain the participants' trust, which is why it cannot be precluded that our results are biased due to social desirability.

The question that must be posed is whether the association of the variables is attributable to an actually existing negative relationship between authentic leadership and surface acting or whether it is attributable to a response bias. A personal meeting for an initial familiarization and for information exchange in order to build trust would have constituted a better starting point for data collection and might have ensured higher quality of study results.

Furthermore, the cross-sectional design limits the interpretation of results. Based on correlational data, we could not draw any conclusions regarding the causal nature of the found relationship. A longitudinal approach assessing all variables at different points in time would help examine whether emotional labor has an impact on authentic leadership or if the perception of authentic leadership has an impact on the use of different emotional labor strategies. This study

was the first attempt to empirically relate emotional labor to authentic leadership, however, and therefore legitimates the use of a cross-sectional approach.

Critical to mention is that we included only leaders and followers who were competent in the English language as all questionnaires were administered in English. Therefore, we might assume that only highly qualified employees took part in our study. This also is reflected in the demographic structure of our sample as an overwhelmingly majority had at least a bachelor's degree. Before conclusions can be drawn regarding subpopulations with a lower academic background, future studies with samples of blue-collar workers, for example, are required to replicate our findings.

Finally, the current study was carried out with employees from different organizations. Thus, organizational characteristics, such as organizational culture, were not controlled. On one hand, the inclusion of different organizations enlarges the generalizability of results, but on the other hand, this might have biased them. Eagly and Johnson (1990), for example, stated that environmental influences can contribute to subtle differences as environments affect behavioral outcomes and result, for example, in counter-stereotypical behavior. Hence, if women in managerial positions face a less supportive surrounding, they may adapt their behavior to a more male-orientated behavior to overcome anti-female prejudices (Eagly & Johnson, 1990).

### *Conclusion*

In this study authentic leadership (Avolio & Gardner, 2005) and emotional labor research (Grandey et al., 2005; Hochschild, 1983), as far as gender in leadership (Eagly & Johnson, 1990), were integrated to examine the role of leaders' emotional labor on followers' perception of authentic leadership, with a further focus on leader's gender. Our results complement research on leaders' emotion management and extend emotional labor theory (Hochschild, 1983) by transferring it from prototypical customer service interactions to leader-follower interactions, thereby illustrating its meaning in leadership development. We certainly hope that the study will stimulate interesting and valuable research on this important topic in the future.

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## **Chapter 3: Study 2 - Mechanisms linking authentic leadership to emotional exhaustion: The role of procedural justice and emotional demands in a moderated mediation approach.**

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**Abstract:** In order to gain more knowledge on how the positive leadership concept of authentic leadership impacts follower strain, this study tries to uncover procedural justice as an underlying mechanism. In contrast to previous work, we exclusively base our theoretical model on justice theories. Specifically, we hypothesize that authentic leadership negatively predicts emotional exhaustion through perceptions of procedural justice. We assume that this indirect effect is conditional on followers' amount of emotional demands, and that the procedural justice-emotional exhaustion relationship is stronger when emotional demands are high. This finally results in a stronger exhaustion-reducing effect of authentic leadership. The proposed moderated mediation model was tested in a sample of  $N = 628$  employees nested in 168 teams using lagged data from three waves. Results provide support for all hypotheses. Authentic leadership is critical to employees' well-being as it contributes to an elevated perception of positive work conditions (procedural justice), especially in contexts with high emotional demands. Limitations and practical implications on leadership development are discussed.

**Keywords:** Authentic leadership, procedural justice, emotional exhaustion, emotional demands, follower strain.

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## Introduction

Imagine having a leader who behaves in accordance with his or her own convictions, who engages in transparent relationships and whom you could trust his/her word counts. In other words your leader could be described as an authentic person. Would this lower your risk of getting burned out because it makes you feel certain and justly treated at work? And moreover, what would happen, for example, if you are confronted with tasks that are emotionally demanding, and therefore, bear an extremely high risk to take away all your energy? Could your leader's authenticity prevent you from being strained? In the current work, we try to provide some answers to those critical questions looking at the role of authentic leadership for emotional exhaustion in employees.

Studies investigating the impact of authentic leadership on employees' strain are scarce, and have been restricted to specific occupational groups (e.g., nurses)<sup>1,2)</sup>. This is quite astonishing as authentic leadership has been promised to be the essence of any positive form of leadership<sup>3,4)</sup>. Gaining insights into how authentic leadership unfolds its positive energy in the workplace means to gain new insights into other leadership styles as well. We therefore want to study how authentic leadership can contribute to a health-promoting work environment. Specifically, we suggest authentic leaders<sup>3)</sup> to heighten the perception of procedural justice, and thereby, to prevent employees from becoming emotionally exhausted.

When it comes to explaining the relationship of leadership and health, stress theories are predominately considered<sup>5)</sup>. We think, however, that justice theories explain the health impact of leadership more comprehensively as they refer to the underlying social exchange process between a leader and his/her followers. Procedural justice theories, in particular the *group value model*<sup>6)</sup>, the *fairness heuristic theory*<sup>7,8)</sup> and the *uncertainty management theory*<sup>9,10)</sup>, offer great potential to explain such intra-organizational processes. In fact, there are explicit calls for an integration of procedural justice into the field of leadership<sup>11)</sup>. Nevertheless, studies investigating these theories in an applied context are scarce. We now make an attempt to explain the complex relationship of leadership and employee strain by referring to procedural justice theories as our conceptual framework.

Along with the tertiarization of the occupational world, emotional demands, which refer to the requirement to handle one's own or customers' emotions during daily work<sup>12-14)</sup>, are getting more and more important. Especially because they are at a high risk to be emotionally exhausted by their work<sup>13)</sup>, it is essential to identify beneficial work settings for such employees. Therefore, we additionally want to research if and how such demands (organizational setting) further impact the proposed strain reducing effect of authentic leadership.

To sum up, with the current study, we contribute to leadership and strain research in several ways: (a) *We provide support* to those very few studies that have already addressed the authentic leadership-employee strain relationship, (b) building on procedural justice theories, we further *extend* this knowledge by offering a *new explanation* as to how, and under which conditions, authentic leadership behavior relates to employees' strain, (c) we ensure a high generalizability of the results by testing our hypotheses in a large multinational sample, including different branches and occupations, and, finally (d), we employ an appropriate methodological approach by using a lagged *design with three measurement* points reducing common method bias, while additionally controlling for team structure.

In the following, we first introduce the construct of authentic leadership, and give a short empirical review of its relationship with employee strain and other work outcomes before developing our research model based on procedural justice theories.

#### *Authentic leadership*

In the last few years, authentic leadership has gained more and more attention in leadership research<sup>15-17)</sup> and practice<sup>18)</sup>. As it has been mainly derived from the historical definition of authenticity (for an historical review see:<sup>19)</sup>, it could be seen as a description of how a leader's "thoughts, feelings, and behaviors reflect one's [his/her] true- or core-self"<sup>19), p. 294)</sup> implying the need for a multidimensional conceptualization of the construct. Accordingly, different researchers agree in defining authentic leadership as four dimensional<sup>3, 17, 20-22; see also: 23, 24)</sup>. Walumbwa et al.<sup>3, a)</sup> and others<sup>24)</sup> termed those components (a) self-awareness, (b) balanced processing, (c) relational transparency, and (d) internal moral perspective. Accordingly, leaders' behavior becomes authentic when they are aware of their own qualities and weaknesses and they do not



mind showing them to others, when they have moral standards that guide their actions, when they process information about themselves and about others objectively, and when they openly share their knowledge with their followers.

There is large consensus, that authentic leadership is an essence of positive leadership aspects which is beneficial in several ways<sup>25)</sup>. According to Walumbwa et al.<sup>3)</sup> the four dimensions form a higher order construct<sup>8)</sup> which might be seen as “the root concept and a theoretical foundation for any positive form of leadership”<sup>4, p. 3)</sup>. In line with this thinking, the concept of authentic leadership does not challenge other leadership concepts<sup>26)</sup>; it rather supplements them instead.

Nevertheless, in the conceptualization of the construct, slight differences exist. While some authors primarily refer to the leader level<sup>3)</sup>, others emphasize the multi-level character of authentic leadership as well, as they include the organizational<sup>17)</sup> or the employee level in their considerations (e.g., in terms of authentic followership<sup>19, 20)</sup>). In the current research, we chose to use the definition from Walumbwa and colleagues<sup>3)</sup> which is widely common.

#### *Authentic leadership and emotional exhaustion*

In the literature, there are several studies focusing on positive follower outcomes of authentic leadership. Most consistently, relationships with followers’ trust, engagement and satisfaction measures were found<sup>3, 4, 27–30)</sup>. Research focusing on negative follower outcomes is still in its infancy. To the best of our knowledge, there are very few studies that test the relationship between authentic leadership and strain indicators. Laschinger et al.<sup>1, 2)</sup> and Laschinger and Fida<sup>31)</sup> succeeded in connecting authentic leadership negatively to emotional exhaustion in structural equation models. In those cross-sectional studies from Laschinger et al.<sup>1, 2)</sup>, the effect was mediated by structural empowerment, i.e. workplace bullying, while Laschinger and Fida<sup>31)</sup> revealed a direct effect with a time lag of one year in their sample of nurses.

In the current study, we use emotional exhaustion as an indicator for work-related strain, which is the core dimension of job burnout<sup>32)</sup>. It is assumed to occur first in the burnout

process<sup>33)</sup>, and “refers to feelings of being overextended and depleted of one’s emotional and physical resources”<sup>34, p. 498)</sup>.

The relationship of authentic leadership to followers’ strain still needs further investigation. In the following sections, we show that procedural justice might be one additional link explaining the negative relationship between authentic leadership and employees’ emotional exhaustion.

#### *Procedural justice as a mediator*

Procedural justice is an important organizational justice dimension. It refers to the procedures on how decisions are made<sup>35)</sup>. In organizations, the people who make decisions are usually the leaders. Nevertheless, as van Knippenberg et al.<sup>11)</sup> declare, procedural justice has long been excluded in leadership literature, although procedural justice has been proven to be important for the leader-employee relationship<sup>36)</sup>. In particular, procedural justice has been treated as a “more systemic part of fairness” rather than as “an aspect of leadership”<sup>11, p. 118)</sup>. In the current research, we want to fill this gap. We assume that procedural justice plays an important role in enlightening the mechanism of how authentic leadership reduces employees’ strain. In detail, we hypothesize that authentic leaders indirectly prevent employees from getting strained by contributing to the perception of procedural justice.

The fairness heuristic theory<sup>7, 8)</sup> states that people are often in a situation, especially at work, where they are at risk of being exploited by someone in authority. Therefore, they need to know whether their supervisor is trustworthy or not. Actually, we usually lack the information that is needed to make such a decision. To solve this problem, people use cognitive shortcuts, so called heuristics, to decide on their supervisor’s trustworthiness using the information available, for example, by using information about procedural justice. Authentic leaders provide information that could be used by their employees to make perceptions of procedural justice. The information that a leader in one’s organization is aware of his or her own strengths and weaknesses and that he/she does not mind showing them to others, should serve as positive evidence of their organization’s procedural justice in this heuristic process.

Moreover, leaders who lead authentically contribute to meeting that at least some of the procedural justice criteria introduced by Leventhal<sup>37)</sup>. According to Leventhal<sup>37)</sup>, a decision process that is recognized as fair should (a) be used consistently, (b) be free of bias, (c) be based on accurate information, (d) include a mechanism to correct made decisions if they have been biased, (e) be guided by ethical and moral standards, and finally (f) be based on different opinions. Having a closer look at the four sub-dimensions of authentic leadership, it becomes quite obvious why a leader's behavior results in a more positive perception of the organization. First, authentic leaders act in accordance with their internal moral standards (internal moral perspective); consequently, the procedures they employ to make decisions are perceived to conform to ethical standards. Secondly, they are transparent in their relationships with others (relational transparency), which is why the employees' feeling of *being heard* in decision processes is induced and they feel being able to voice their opinion<sup>38)</sup>. Thirdly, authentic leaders are highly self-aware (self-awareness) and process information about themselves and others objectively (balanced processing), which is why followers should assume them to receive more accurate information. As a result, authentic leaders are recognized as making decisions free of bias. Thereby, all four sub-dimensions of authentic leadership contribute to employees' perception of procedural justice. Leaders, in turn, represent the organization towards their employees. Therefore, their behavior is critical to deciding on how procedurally just the organization is.

In a large amount of empirical studies, organizational justice has been positively related to employee well-being (e.g.,<sup>39-42)</sup>; see also<sup>34, 43)</sup>. In a recent study, Tayfur et al.<sup>44)</sup> found a negative relationship between both procedural and distributive justice and emotional exhaustion. Furthermore, emotional exhaustion mediated the relationship between organizational injustice and turnover intention. But also, other authors succeeded in connecting low procedural justice to high emotional exhaustion<sup>40)</sup>. It has already been shown that a lack of control in organizational decision making processes is perceived as stressful and may threaten employee well-being<sup>45)</sup>. The group value model<sup>6)</sup> states that people care about their status in social groups. Procedural justice provides information about the status of a person within such a group and about the outcome that

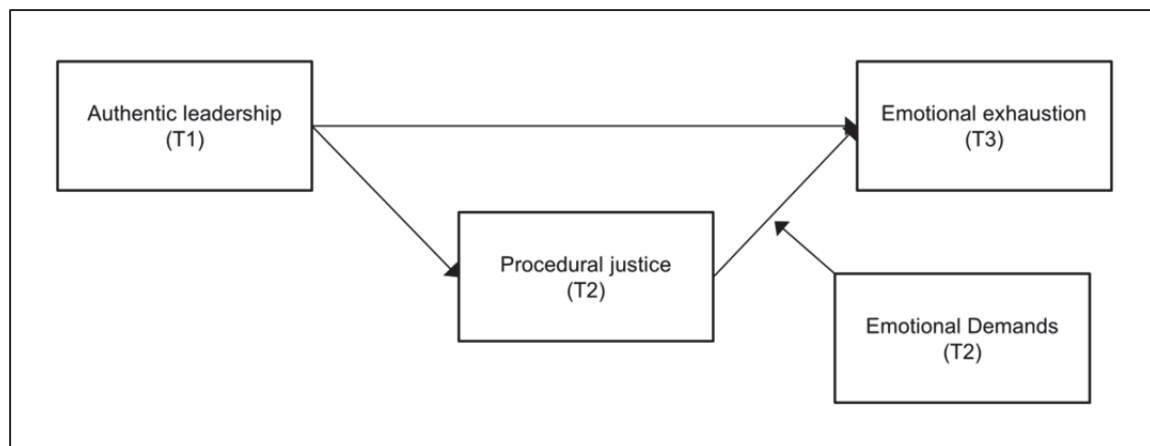


Figure 3-1. Theoretical research model.

could be expected. The identification with social groups is an important aspect for individual self-validation and individual self-esteem<sup>46</sup>). If people perceive they are being treated in an unfair manner, they conclude that their status in the social group they belong to is low. This is a potential threat for the individual which is perceived as stressful<sup>6, 47</sup>). Therefore, procedural justice should be negatively related to emotional exhaustion.

To summarize, by leading authentically supervisors contribute to employees' perceptions of procedural justice, which might reduce emotional exhaustion. Consequently, we hypothesize the following:

H1: *Procedural justice will mediate the relationship between authentic leadership and emotional exhaustion.*

#### *The role of emotional demands*

The majority of employees work in the tertiary sector—the so called service sector<sup>48, 49</sup>). Work in this sector is characterized by the interaction with other people, such as customers, clients or patients. In these service professions, emotional demands are one of the main work demands. For example, bank employees who are advising customers regarding financial products in their daily work have to recognize how their customers feel and, if necessary, they are asked to show specific emotions to induce required emotions in customers (e.g., positive emotions) to achieve organizational goals (e.g., selling a financial product). The fact that most employees are confronted with emotional demands in their daily work life illustrates the importance of this

special work demand. Moreover, people working in such professions are at high risk to be exhausted<sup>12, 13)</sup>. Nevertheless, emotional demands could hardly be eliminated or reduced by the organization—especially in such service jobs in which they are the core of the occupation. In a previous study, Grandey et al.<sup>50)</sup> showed that a climate of authenticity might alleviate burnout in service professions, implying that authenticity is essential when emotional demands are high. In the current work, we aim at identifying whether the strain reducing effect of authentic leadership via procedural justice differs regarding the amount of emotional demands employees have to cope with.

In fact, the uncertainty management theory<sup>9, 10)</sup> offers an explanation framework on how procedural justice is related to such demands. The theory highlights the meaning of (procedural) justice when the individual feels uncertain about the situation. In jobs where the emotional demands are high, the employees are at risk of being put in emotionally demanding situations or of having to relate to other individuals' problems at work. As George<sup>51)</sup> already assumed, this should make interactions with customers, clients or colleagues less predictable. If there are high emotional demands, it is no longer sufficient for the employees to be just a professional referring to the work content; for example, they also have to handle the emotional aspects of the social interaction when selling a product. Not knowing which emotional problems they might be confronted with next gives rise to much uncertainty about the “right” way to execute their job. Consequently, in order to gain more control about the situation<sup>45)</sup> there is an elevated need for justice in order to feel more certain again, which aligns with propositions made in the uncertainty management theory<sup>9, 10)</sup>. They search for justice information to better cope with the uncertainty. In contrast, if the emotional demands are low, the job is more predictable and there is less uncertainty or need to obtain and consider justice information. This corresponds to studies which have shown that injustice has more negative effects on employee strain when the work conditions are uncertain<sup>52, 53)</sup>. Drawing on this theoretical and empirical line of argumentation, we expect the emotional demands to moderate the relationship between procedural justice and emotional exhaustion.

H2: *The negative relationship between procedural justice and emotional exhaustion (controlling for authentic leadership) is moderated by the emotional demands, in that the relationship should be stronger when the emotional demands are high.*

We further assume that the interaction effect between procedural justice and emotional demands impacts the indirect effect of authentic leadership on emotional exhaustion. Therefore, we hypothesize the following:

H3: *The indirect effect from authentic leadership on emotional exhaustion through procedural justice is conditional on the emotional demands, in that the indirect effect should be stronger when the emotional demands are high.*

The hypothesized moderated mediation which we tested in a structural equation approach is summarized in Figure 3-1.

## **Subjects and method**

### *Procedures*

The data were collected in Germany and Finland, in a three wave study from 2011 to 2013. To heighten the generalizability of our results, we recruited organizations from different countries and different sectors (public and private), most of them were service organizations, such as financial service organizations or public administration. One important selection criterion in our sampling strategy was the proximity between leaders and followers, both in terms of location and hierarchy, as we deemed regular social interactions between leaders and followers a necessary precondition of effects of leadership on follower wellbeing. Therefore, the leaders in our sample always directly supervised their teams, and team members did not report (directly) to any other leader. The time lag between Time 1 (T1) and Time 2 (T2) was 12 to 14 months and between Time 2 (T2) and Time 3 (T3) was 8 months. The employees of the organizations were invited via an e-mail link. For those employees who had no computer access, paper-pencil questionnaires were employed. Anonymity was assured prior to data collection. The participation in the study was voluntary; no compensation was offered. Nevertheless, the employees were allowed to

participate during their working time. The organizations themselves were provided with benchmark feedback concerning working conditions and several other organizational indicators.

### *Sample*

For our current study, we included only those 628 participants from the project (a) who did not hold a leader position at T1, (b) who did not change their role during the whole time of the data collection (which means that they did not become a leader at T2 or T3), (c) who took part at all three measurement points, and (d) of course, whose leader did not change in course of the data collection. Response rates across countries and across measurement points ranged from 39.3% to 74%, with a mean response rate of 69.1% at T1.

The final sample consisted of  $N_2 = 628$  employees (57.2% private sector, 42.8% public sector) from 168 different teams from 12 organizations (eight organizations in Germany, and four in Finland). The team size ranged from 1 to 14 ( $M = 4.0$ ). Most participants were German ( $n = 479$ , 76.3%), 23.7% ( $n = 49$ ) came from Finland. Their age at T1 ranged from 20 to 62 years; the average age was 43.05 ( $SD = 9.85$ ). 518 participants were female (82.5%) and only 17.5% were male. The mean length of time employees worked in their current organization was 15.74 years ( $SD = 9.05$ ); however, 24 persons made no specification. According to their education levels classified by ISCED-97<sup>54</sup>) 21 (3.3%) persons stated having a lower secondary level of education, while 172 persons (27.4%) stated having an upper secondary level of education and 67 employees declared a post-secondary, non-tertiary level of education. The majority of the sample (55.6%,  $n = 349$ ) had a first stage of tertiary education level and only two persons stated having a second stage of tertiary education level; 17 values were missing (2.7%). The majority of the participants took part via the e-mail link (82.0%,  $n = 515$ ).

### *Dropout analyses*

In order to test whether there had been a systematic dropout between T1, T2 and T3, we compared the demographic variables and the scales assessed (at T1) of those participants included in our sample (longitudinal data) with the participants who only took part at T1. Analyses show that the participants with longitudinal data differed slightly from the participants who only took part at T1, as they worked 1.15 years longer for their current organization

$t_{(1,317,20)} = 2.43, p = .015$  and they reported being more emotionally exhausted  $t_{(1,702)} = -2.70, p = .007$ . There were also differences depending on gender and the country: Pearson Chi-Square-Tests revealed that male employees ( $X^2_{(1)} = 12.32, p < .001$ ), as well as employees from Finland ( $X^2_{(1)} = 27.70, p < .001$ ) more likely dropped out. Regarding age, authentic leadership and the organizational sector (public/ private) no differences were found.

### *Ethics*

Our study was performed in consensus with all requirements defined by the German/Finnish Society of Psychology including participants' information about their rights and guarantee of anonymity. The participation of each employee in our questionnaire study was voluntarily. Nevertheless, a written informed consent was not obtained explicitly from participants due to the online-assessment technique employed, and as this approach would have endangered participant's anonymity.

### *Measures*

***Authentic leadership.*** For assessing authentic leadership perceived by the employees at T1, the 16-item scale of Walumbwa and colleagues<sup>3)</sup> with the sub-dimensions *self-awareness*, *relational transparency*, *internalized moral perspective* and *balanced processing* was employed. A sample item is "My immediate supervisor says exactly what he or she means". The items had to be rated on a five-point frequency-scale ranging from 0 (*not at all*) to 4 (*frequently, if not always*). The reliability of the complete scale was very good,  $\alpha = .94$ .

***Procedural justice.*** Employee's perceived procedural justice was measured at T2 with three items based on a scale of Elovainio et al.<sup>55)</sup> who developed a short measure for procedural justice according to the work of Colquitt<sup>56)</sup>. Items had to be rated on a five-point Likert-scale, ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*). A sample item is "The procedures in decision making are free of bias in our work place". Reliability of the scale was satisfactory with a Cronbach's alpha of  $\alpha = .79$ .

***Emotional demands.*** Emotional demands were assessed at T2 with four items from COPSOQ II<sup>57)</sup>. A sample item is "Does your work put you in emotionally disturbing situations?". The response format changed over the four items. Two items had to be answered on a five-point



frequency-scale ranging from 1 (*very seldom or never*) to 5 (*very often or always*) and two items had to be rated on a five-point scale ranging from 1 (*to a very small extent*) to 5 (*to a very large extent*). The reliability of the scale was good,  $\alpha = .86$ .

**Emotional exhaustion.** Emotional exhaustion was measured with three items from the Maslach Burnout Inventory General Survey (MBI-GS)<sup>32)</sup> at T1 and T3. These three items can be seen as the most prototypical ones for the burnout dimension emotional exhaustion<sup>58)</sup>. A sample item is “I feel burned out from my work”. The items had to be rated on a seven-point frequency-scale (0 *never*, 1 *a few times a year or less*, 2 *once a month or less*, 3 *a few times a month*, 4 *once a week*, 5 *a few times a week*, 6 *every day*). The reliability of the scale measured with Cronbach’s alpha was  $\alpha = .88$  at T1 and  $\alpha = .87$  at T3.

**Neuroticism.** The big five personality dimension neuroticism describes a personality trait which is characterized by a high emotional instability meaning that people who score high on neuroticism are distracted easily in stressing situations, they are highly irritable and they have a pessimistic tenor. As this personality trait is known to predict emotional exhaustion<sup>59)</sup> we assessed it as a control with three items from the Big Five short measure (BFI-S)<sup>60)</sup>. The scale ranged from 1 (*does not apply to me at all*) to 7 (*applies to me perfectly*). A sample item is “I see myself as someone who worries a lot”. Cronbach’s alpha of the scale was acceptable,  $\alpha = .73$ .

### *Analyses*

Data analyses were made using SPSS 22 and Mplus 7.31. To test our hypotheses, we estimated a moderated mediation structural equation model (SEM) with specifications on level 1 only, using analysis type “two-level random” with restricted maximum likelihood estimates (MLR). For authentic leadership, item-parcels were inserted. The model is summarized in Figure 3-1. We further calculated the indirect effect for specific values of the moderator emotional demands (mean, one and two standard deviations under and above).

As the amount of emotional exhaustion could have an impact on the perception of procedural justice, for example, we always controlled for the dependent variable measured at T1. In addition, we always controlled for neuroticism as this personality trait is well known to be

characterized by a pessimistic tenor which might reflect in more negative ratings of daily events<sup>61, 62</sup>), and work aspects<sup>63</sup>), and therefore might bias our results.

## Results

### *Preliminary analyses*

In order to show empirically that authentic leadership and procedural justice are two distinct constructs we performed an exploratory factor analysis (PCA) as well as a set of confirmatory factor analyses using Mplus 7.31. In a PCA on all 16 items of the authentic leadership scale and the three items to measure procedural justice three Eigenvalues  $> 1$  were extracted ( $\lambda_1 = 8.94, 47.1\%$ ,  $\lambda_2 = 1.74, 9.2\%$ ,  $\lambda_3 = 1.39, 7.3\%$ ). A promax rotated factor matrix showed that the first two factors comprised items from the authentic leadership scale, and on the third factor only the three items from procedural justice had loadings  $> .80$ . The two factors that emerged within the authentic leadership scale were not clearly separated by the theorized content dimensions, and showed to have substantial cross-loadings. We therefore decided to use authentic leadership as a one-dimensional construct. Furthermore, we compared a one factor model (with all items loading on one factor) with a two factor model (with a common second order factor loading on the four sub-dimensions of authentic leadership; the second factor representing procedural justice) by means of a CFA. Results showed that the two factor model had a clearly better fit to the data,  $X^2_{(147)} = 820.929$ , CFI = .906, RMSEA = .085, than the one factor model,  $X^2_{(152)} = 1594.964$ , CFI = .799, RMSEA = .123. Albeit the fit of the two factor model is not perfect, CFI values  $> .90$ , and RMSEA values  $< .10$  are discussed to be still acceptable.

Furthermore, to justify that our measures are metric invariant across country samples<sup>64</sup>) we ran a multiple group CFA with Amos Graphics 22 for authentic leadership and for emotional demands, comparing the unconstrained model with a model constraining the factor loadings to be equal across groups. The model assuming equal factor loadings ( $X^2_{(208)} = 891.994$ , CFI = .892, RMSEA = .075) did not fit significantly better as compared to the unconstrained model ( $X^2_{(196)} = 851.425$ , CFI = .896, RMSEA = .075) when using the  $\Delta$ CFI of .005 as a reference (see Cheung and Rensvold<sup>65</sup>), who criticized the  $X^2$ -difference-test, and suggested that  $\Delta$ CFI values

Table 3-1. *Descriptive statistics, correlations, and reliabilities of level 1 variables.*

Variable	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. authentic leadership (T1)	2.38	0.72	(.94)					
2. procedural justice (T2)	3.25	0.94	.39**	(.79)				
3. emotional demands (T2)	3.08	0.89	.00	-.13**	(.86)			
4. emotional exhaustion (T3)	2.41	1.43	-.20**	-.28**	.37**	(.87)		
5. emotional exhaustion (T1)	2.40	1.43	-.19**	-.22**	.36**	.62**	(.88)	
6. neuroticism (T3)	3.69	1.27	-.06	-.13**	.22**	.48**	.39**	(.73)

*Notes.* Reliability estimates (coefficient alpha) appear in parentheses on the diagonal.

\*\* $p \leq .01$ , two-tailed.

higher than .01 to be indicative of a significant decrease in fit). Likewise we could confirm metric invariance between the German and the Finnish sample for the 4-item measure of emotional demands (unconstrained model:  $X^2_{(4)} = 36.988$ , CFI = .975, RMSEA = .115, equal measurement weights:  $X^2_{(7)} = 39.487$ , CFI = .975, RMSEA = .087). As procedural justice, emotional exhaustion and neuroticism were measured with only three items each, no CFAs on the single factors could be performed.

### *Hypotheses testing*

Means, standard deviations, reliabilities, and correlations of level 1 variables are presented in Table 3-1.

As can be seen from correlation analysis (see Table 3-1), authentic leadership was negatively related to emotional exhaustion at T1,  $r = -.19$ ,  $p \leq .01$ , and T3,  $r = -.20$ ,  $p \leq .01$ , providing first evidence for a direct effect of authentic leadership on emotional exhaustion.

The results<sup>b)</sup> for the test of H1 are presented in Table 3-2. The indirect effect from authentic leadership on emotional exhaustion was negative and significant,  $B = -0.18$ ,  $SE = .05$ ,  $p < .001$ , supporting hypothesis 1. This indicates that procedural justice mediates the relationship between authentic leadership and emotional exhaustion.

In H2, we assumed that the relationship between procedural justice and emotional exhaustion is moderated by the emotional demands. In fact, data revealed a significant interaction effect with  $B = -0.14$ ,  $SE = 0.07$ ,  $p = .044$ , displayed in Table 3-2, thus supporting hypothesis 2.

In detail, this means that the strength of the relationship between procedural justice and emotional exhaustion depends on the amount of emotional demands.

To test H3, we further examined whether the indirect path from authentic leadership on emotional exhaustion through procedural justice was conditional on special values of emotional demands. Table 3-3 and Figure 3-2 show that the indirect effect was significant for higher values of emotional demands. In fact, at one standard deviation under the mean of emotional demands the conditional indirect effect was  $B = -0.11, p = .028$ , for the mean the conditional indirect was  $B = -0.18, p < .001$ , and for one standard deviation above the mean it was  $B = -0.24, p < .001$ . For low emotional demands ( $-2 SD$ ) the effect failed to reach significance. In sum, our results support H3. Moreover, estimations show that the effect increases with larger values of emotional demands, which is in line with our specific predictions made in H2 and H3. The negative relationship between procedural justice and emotional exhaustion, and moreover, the negative indirect effect of authentic leadership on employee's emotional exhaustion via procedural justice are stronger when emotional demands are high.

Table 3-2. *Estimated structural equation paths, and covariances.*

Estimated path	<i>B</i>	( <i>SE</i> )	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
AL (T1) → PJ	0.55**	(0.08)	7.24	.000
AL (T1) → EE	0.00	(0.08)	0.04	.969
PJ (T2) → EE	-0.32**	(0.07)	-4.38	.000
ED (T2) → EE	0.27**	(0.07)	3.96	.000
PJ x ED → EE	-0.14*	(0.07)	-2.01	.044
EE (T1) → EE	0.44**	(0.05)	8.40	.000
N (T3) → EE	0.35**	(0.07)	5.12	.000
AL → PJ → EE	-0.18**	(0.05)	-3.90	.000
Covariances	<i>B</i>	( <i>SE</i> )	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
ED (T2) ↔ AL (T1)	-0.02	(0.03)	-0.738	.467
EE (T1) ↔ AL (T1)	-0.18**	(0.05)	-4.01	.000
EE (T1) ↔ ED (T2)	0.47**	(0.07)	7.16	.000
N (T3) ↔ AL (T1)	-0.07°	(0.04)	-1.79	.073
N (T3) ↔ ED (T2)	0.28**	(0.06)	4.57	.000
N (T3) ↔ EE (T1)	0.75**	(0.09)	8.09	.000

*Notes.*  $N = 628$ , number of teams = 168, missing data patterns = 34. ° $p \leq .10$ , \* $p \leq .05$ , \*\* $p \leq .01$ , two-tailed. AL = authentic leadership, EE = emotional exhaustion, PJ = procedural justice, ED = emotional demands, N = Neuroticism. Model fit indices:  $H_0$  LogLL: -16617.315,  $H_0$  Scaling correction factor for MLR: 1.338,  $H_1$  LogLL: -16346.053, Information criteria: AIC: 33380.629, BIC: 33704.935, Adjusted-BIC: 33473.169,  $df = 73$ .

Table 3-3. *Estimated conditional indirect effect of authentic leadership on emotional exhaustion through procedural justice at specific values of emotional demands (mean, one and two standard deviations under and above).*

Values of emotional demands	<i>B</i>	( <i>SE</i> )	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
-2 <i>SD</i>	-0.05	(0.07)	-0.65	.515
-1 <i>SD</i>	-0.11*	(0.05)	-2.20	.028
<i>M</i> (0.00)	-0.18**	(0.05)	-3.90	.000
+1 <i>SD</i>	-0.24**	(0.06)	-3.99	.000
+2 <i>SD</i>	-0.30**	(0.09)	-3.56	.000

Notes. *N* = 628, number of groups = 168.

\*  $p \leq .05$ , \*\*  $p \leq .01$ , two-tailed.

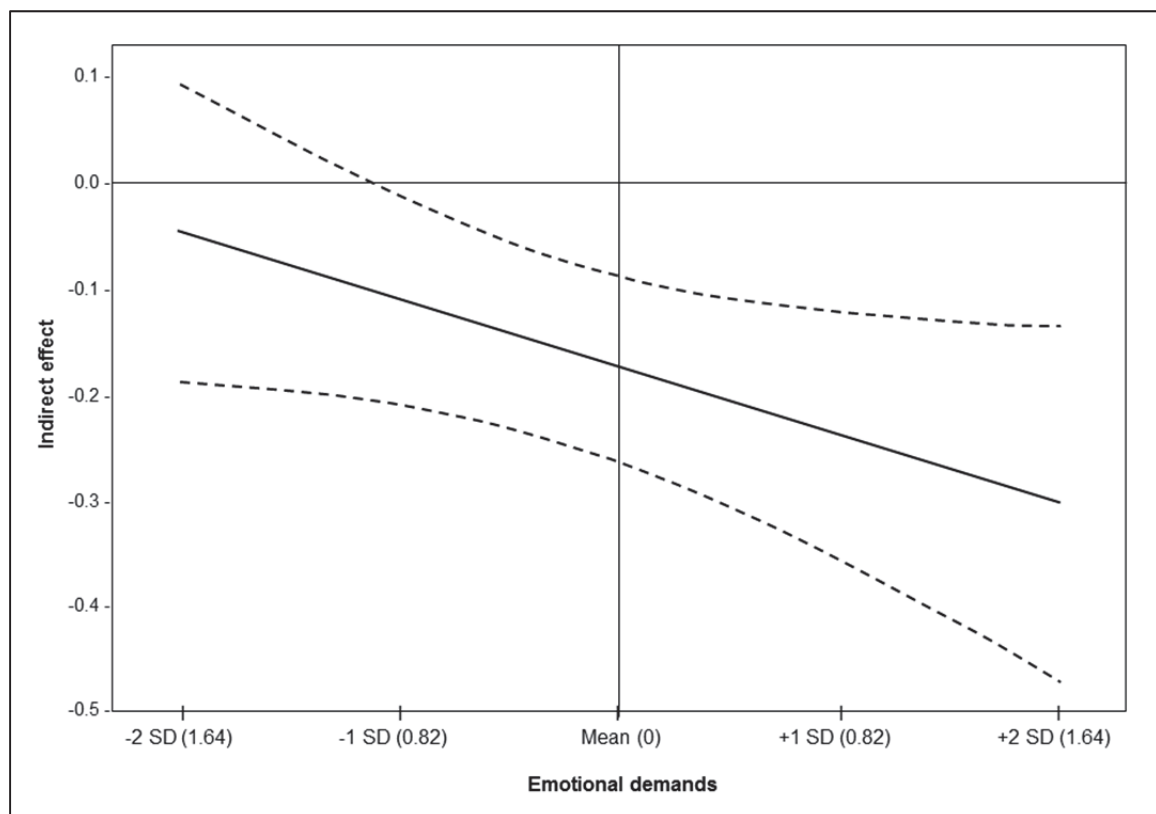
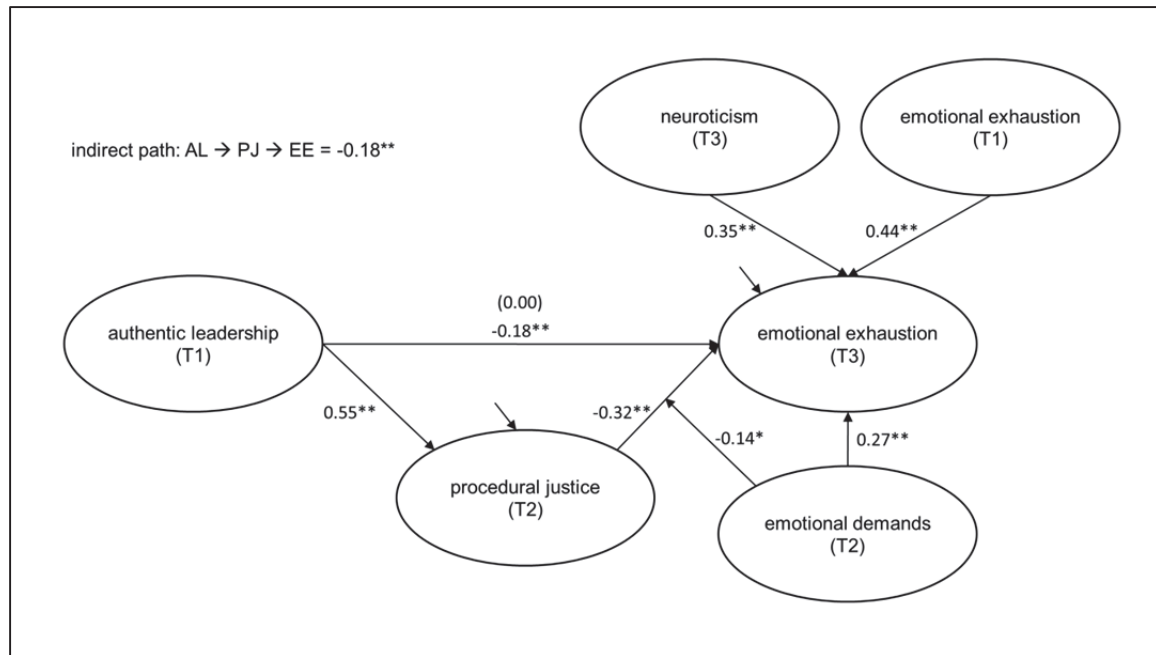


Figure 3-2. Plotted indirect effect for specific values of emotional demands (bold line). Dotted lines represent confidence bands.



*Figure 3-3.* Estimated structural equation model. Please note, that the model depicted does not perfectly fit the estimated structural equation model, especially regarding the interaction effect. In fact, this effect was estimated as a latent interaction effect. \*\* $p < .01$ , \* $p < .05$ .

## Discussion

Referring to the procedural justice literature<sup>6, 8, 10</sup>, the aim of our study was to investigate the relationship between authentic leadership behavior and employees' emotional exhaustion in a time-lagged design, and to identify the processes in-between. In fact, we assumed procedural justice to explain the relationship between authentic leadership and employees' exhaustion, whereby this should further depend on the emotional demands.

The empirical results supported all hypotheses. Prior correlation analysis revealed a negative relationship between authentic leadership and employees' emotional exhaustion. When testing hypotheses, we succeeded in identifying procedural justice as a mediator since we found a negative indirect effect from authentic leadership on emotional exhaustion through procedural justice. This negative indirect effect was also influenced by the emotional demands, as the data revealed a significant interaction effect: the relationship between procedural justice and emotional exhaustion. Moreover, the whole indirect effect between authentic leadership and

emotional exhaustion was conditional on special values of emotional demands, in that the effect increased with larger values of emotional demands (see Table 3-3, and Figure 3-2).

In line with previous empirical findings, authentic leadership turns out lessen employee's strain<sup>1, 2)</sup> through impacting employee's perception of procedural justice. Authentic leaders contribute to an increased justice perception in two ways. First, by acting in accordance with the Leventhal criteria<sup>37)</sup> and second, by providing information that is needed by the employee to appreciate the trustworthiness of their leader to prevent being exploited by him or her as described in the fairness heuristic theory<sup>7, 8)</sup>. If justice—and, therefore control—is lacking, this should be recognized as threatening and might be stressful<sup>45)</sup> because it could be interpreted as a low within-group status (group value model)<sup>6)</sup> that is essential for social identity<sup>46)</sup>.

Thereby, our results also underline the importance of procedural justice at work. They further support the literature that considers justice as a job resource<sup>43)</sup>. If employees feel they are being treated in a procedural just manner by their leader (and therefore by their organization), this may reduce stress outcomes. Consequently, justice is essential for a healthy work environment, and most importantly, leaders may actively influence this justice perception. Up till today, leadership has been largely excluded in the procedural justice research<sup>11)</sup>. Now empirical evidence is given that leader's behavior impacts if organizations are perceived as procedurally fair by the employees. Therefore, both research areas should be more integrated in the future.

Our results also conform to the justice research that found a negative relationship between organizational justice and emotional exhaustion<sup>40, 41, 44)</sup>. In fact, Holstad et al.<sup>66)</sup> using a cross-sectional design, already identified procedural justice as a mediator in a similar model where they researched the relationship between transformational leadership and emotional exhaustion.

As we assessed the constructs time-lagged to test our hypotheses, this makes clear how long-lasting the effects of leadership behavior are. The behavior of a leader may still be related to employee strain about one and a half years later.

We hypothesized that emotional demands moderate the effect from procedural justice on emotional exhaustion, and we further assumed the indirect effect of authentic leadership to be conditional on special values of emotional demands. We did so, because employees in

unpredictable work environments usually use the fairness information to cope better with the uncertainty (uncertainty management theory)<sup>9,10</sup>). Especially in customer-focused jobs, where the majority of employees in European countries (similar to our sample) work<sup>48</sup>) the interactions with customers are hardly predictable. Employees usually do not know what kind of customer they are going to meet next and what problems they might have to handle; therefore, they might feel insecure. To manage this uncertainty, the fairness information is used<sup>9</sup>). In consequence, procedural justice becomes most salient in high emotionally demanding work environments. The empirical data supported this interaction effect. Procedural justice seems to be more salient and therefore has a larger exhaustion-reducing effect when the emotional demands are high. Accordingly, the exhaustion-reducing effect of authentic leadership increases when the emotional demands are high as well. Especially in emotionally demanding jobs, authentic leadership might be beneficial to employee strain reduction by enhancing procedural justice at hand.

Although we succeeded in explaining the second part of the indirect effect of authentic leadership (the path from procedural justice on emotional exhaustion), it remains unclear which aspects influence the first path of our model (effect from authentic leadership on procedural justice). According to Schmitt et al.<sup>67</sup>), people generally differ in how sensitive they are regarding to the perception of injustice which is usually termed *victim sensitivity*<sup>68</sup>). People who score high on this personality trait are more likely to interpret neutral cues as a threat<sup>67</sup>). Thus, it could be possible that those employees high in victim sensitivity recognize leader's behaviors more likely as unjust. In consequence, the relationship between authentic leadership and procedural justice should be smaller, further resulting in a decrease of the indirect effect of authentic leadership on employee's exhaustion. We encourage future studies to investigate this matter.

To the best of our knowledge, this study is among the very first to connect authentic leadership to procedural justice empirically. We provide new insights into how and under which conditions authentic leadership positively contributes to employee well-being. Additionally, our results enlarge the generalizability, and thereby the impact, of the results of those very few studies that have already linked authentic leadership to employees' emotional exhaustion in health care workers<sup>1,2,31</sup>) as we tested the relationship in a large sample from different branches



and countries. By employing a design with three measurement points to assess the relevant variables at different points in time and by controlling for the dependent variable measured at T1, our study additionally gains methodological quality and enables first-hand evidence of a potential causal link of the found relationships. Moreover, our results seem to exist independently of negative personality characteristics as we included employee's neuroticism at T3 in our research model.

### *Limitations*

Besides the strengths of our study, of course, there are several constraints that may limit the interpretation of our results.

First, although we employed a longitudinal approach, we did only control for the dependent variable at T1. In a future study, it would be recommended to control for procedural justice and for emotional demands at T1 as well, as far as for authentic leadership at T3. By doing so, it would be possible to fully test for reversed causation. Actually, procedural justice at T1 might influence the perception of emotional demands at T2 or the perception of authentic leadership at T1. Therefore, causal interpretations of our results should be drawn only very carefully.

Second, we used self-report measures only. From a methodological point of view, this is quite problematic because the results may be biased by a common method variance<sup>69</sup>. Nevertheless, we assessed the different constructs at different points in time, which is how this bias may be reduced<sup>69</sup>. Over and above this, self-report measures are the most appropriate for measuring strain outcomes (such as emotional exhaustion) as well as for the perception of procedural justice. Regarding authentic leadership, it would be possible to combine the self-report measures with expert ratings of leader's behavior in interactions with his/her followers to further minimize the common method bias. However, in real world work settings, this kind of operationalization is nearly impossible for such a large sample. Moreover, it could be questioned whether (authentic) leaders still behave genuinely during observation.

Third, dropout analyses revealed that the original sample at T1 differed significantly from the final sample that we used for hypotheses testing concerning a few demographic variables and

emotional exhaustion. Therefore, we cannot preclude that there was a systematic bias based on self-selection. It might be possible that the people who completed our study had a special interest in the topic as they have a very high or low quality relationship with their leader or as they are very strained by their work, which is especially indicated by the drop-out analyses. Those aspects limit the generalizability of our results to men, to employees that have worked for less time for their current employer, to employees who are generally less exhausted and to those working in Finland. In future studies, the relationships should be tested in a sample that fulfills those criteria. Nevertheless, due to the very large sample size at T1, it is not astonishing that the differences between the compared samples were significant. Thereby, even very small differences became noticeable.

Fourth, our final sample was unbalanced regarding gender because the majority of our participants were female. As there are empirical evidences for general gender differences regarding the amount of reported strain and the perception of job demands<sup>70, 71)</sup>, this limits the generalizability of our results for men. Nevertheless, we included several organizations from the service sector, for which the unbalanced gender distribution is representative as most employees in this sector are female. In consequence, our results are at least transferable to this specific subpopulation.

Fifth, as we conducted our study in countries from the western world which are characterized by an individualistic culture, our results cannot be applied to countries that are more collectivistic<sup>72)</sup>, such as China. It would be very interesting to know whether authentic leadership has the same positive effects on employee strain and if the mechanisms are comparable. Especially as the appreciation of what inauthenticity is seems to differ across cultures<sup>73)</sup>.

#### *Practical implications*

Despite the limitations of our study, there are several implications we want to illustrate. First, our results offer a great opportunity for organizations' personnel development. As we could show that authentic leadership behavior has an exhaustion-reducing effect on subordinates by "providing" a procedural fair treatment, leader development should focus on enhancing authentic

leadership behaviors. Employees already holding a leader function and those who are going to become a leader in the future should be encouraged to share their knowledge with their followers, to obtain their employees' views and opinions, to admit making mistakes, and to act according to their own moral standards. Those of course, should not contradict organizational aims.

Furthermore, leaders should be given detailed feedback concerning their own strengths and weaknesses, e.g., by implementing multisource feedback<sup>74</sup>), so that they know what their abilities are and where they could improve. At the organizational level, procedures should be implemented to establish authentic leadership models and to foster a failure-friendly organizational culture where mistakes are communicated openly. Especially in service organizations, where emotional demands are high, those interventions should ensure success.

Second, in this study, we were able to show that procedural justice does matter in the organizational context; especially in work environments which are hardly predictable. Therefore, organizations should provide guidelines for decision making processes which are in line with Leventhal's justice criteria<sup>37</sup>). If it is clearly regulated how decisions should be made and what rules should be followed, the risk of leaders acting in a procedurally unjust manner should be reduced and employees' well-being should be supported.

Third, in our research, we identified emotional demands as a moderator of the relationship between justice and emotional exhaustion with regards to authentic leadership's indirect effect on emotional exhaustion through procedural justice. On the one hand, this means that procedural justice and authentic leadership are much more important in those professions where the emotional demands are high. For example, in jobs where employees have to handle customers, it is not possible to change the customer's behavior or to reduce the emotional demands in general. However, by leading authentically and by actively providing fair procedures in leader-employee interactions, the demand-related stress outcomes could be buffered effectively. For those jobs in particular, procedural justice has a strain-reductive function as it seems to be very salient. On the other hand, we identified the need to make the available resource of procedural justice more salient to those who work in professions where the demands are low or average-sized. Thereby, positive outcomes of procedural justice might be heightened further. In such organizations, the

existence of procedural fair decision making processes should be accentuated, particularly, for example, by implementing corresponding vision statements, core values or testimonials in their employer branding.

### *Conclusion*

This article highlights that authentic leadership is a very promising construct in leadership research and practice. It has been demonstrated that there is still a large amount of work to do in researching the relationship between authentic leadership and employees' strain, on the one hand, to gain further information and, on the other hand, to provide support to our new results. In practice, organizations may actively contribute to the well-being of their employees by promoting authentic leadership and by establishing rules for and models of procedural fair decision making processes. This is especially necessary for people working in emotionally demanding jobs where the risk of burnout is quite high—as they may profit the most from authentic leader behavior-focused and justice-focused interventions.

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### Footnotes (Chapter 3)

- a) During the last few years a couple of papers from Walumbwa and colleagues have been retracted. To the very best of our knowledge none of such articles is cited in the work at hand (02 /2016).
- b) Please note, that we did additionally estimate the multilevel model for every dimension of authentic leadership separately to explore possible differences between the four facets

(relational transparency, internal moral perspective, balanced processing and self-awareness). Actually, all four dimensions showed the same pattern of results as compared to our current model.

**Chapter 4: Study 3 - Does procedural justice matter? An experimental study  
on the influence of procedural injustice on emotional labor and service  
performance.**

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**Abstract:** We tested in a call-center simulation with 87 German undergraduates whether a procedurally unjust (vs. neutral) treatment increased the amount of surface acting. We further aimed at replicating findings on emotion regulation and performance and sought to investigate a link to service performance in order to discern whether this effect is mediated. After manipulation of organizational injustice, participants had to deal with two customers (neutral, demanding; randomized call order). Procedural injustice decreased surface acting. Deep acting was unrelated to procedural injustice; hence, more deep acting was reported when the first customer was demanding. Service performance was unrelated to deep and surface acting. Procedural injustice and its interaction with the call order influenced performance differently than expected. No mediation was found.

**Keywords:** emotional labor, procedural justice, service performance, call center simulation

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## Introduction

By simulating call center interactions immediately after a procedurally unjust (vs. neutral) treatment, the current study contributes to the research field of emotional labor (emotion regulation in occupational interactions, Hochschild, 1983). It added procedural (in)justice as an important organizational antecedent for determining which regulation strategies are employed in customer interactions and for clarifying its influence on service performance.

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics and other sources (Eurofound, 2012; Paoli, 1997), the majority of employees currently work in the continuously growing tertiary sector, the so-called service sector. This sector is characterized by a different type of added value, as no goods are being produced in the common sense. Employees in this occupational sector either render services concerning the customers themselves (e.g., hair-dressers) or concerning the customers' goods. Besides fulfilling the main service aim (for example, selling a blazer in a clothing store), service agents are asked to show specific emotions in order to satisfy the customer's needs.

Some initial studies connected the field of emotional labor to organizational justice research (Rupp, McCance, Spencer, & Sonntag, 2008; Rupp & Spencer, 2006). They all have in common that they only consider the dimension of interactional (in)justice as an antecedent of emotional labor and that they solely focus on customers as a source of (in)justice (cf. Rupp et al., 2008; Rupp & Spencer, 2006; Spencer & Rupp, 2009). Studies including the organizational context, such as decision-making processes, are still lacking. This is surprising, as organizational justice research provides detailed empirical evidence for the importance of procedural justice for employee behavior and performance (cf. Colquitt, Conlon, Wesson, Porter, & Ng, 2001). From a practitioner's perspective, moreover, it might be considered fruitless to (only) concentrate on the customer as a source of employee stress, as this factor is difficult to influence. On the contrary, we think it is more promising to identify such aspects belonging to the organization's sphere of influence. In this way, employers could actively work towards a reduction of the negative effects of service work on employee health and performance.

To summarize, this study adds knowledge to the emotional labor literature (a) by considering procedural (in)justice as an antecedent of employees' behavior in customer interactions, an aspect that has been neglected so far, while (b) shifting from the impact of the customer to that of the organization. This is done (c) by using a complex experimental lab study combining self-rated (emotional labor) measures with other-rated (performance) measures.

In the following, we will first introduce our two main constructs: emotional labor and procedural justice before briefly reviewing general empirical results and clarifying their impact on performance. On the basis of the *affective events theory* (AET; Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996), the *ego depletion theory* (Baumeister, Bratslavsky, Muraven, & Tice, 1998; Muraven, Tice, & Baumeister, 1998) and the *social exchange theory* (e.g., Blau, 1964), we will integrate both areas and draw our hypotheses.

### *Emotional labor*

For the management of one's own emotions in occupational interactions, Hochschild (1983) coined the term emotional labor. *Display rules* define which emotions should be shown in customer interactions and which emotions are inappropriate (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993; Grandey, Tam, & Brauburger, 2002; Rafaeli & Sutton, 1989). In most service organizations, positive emotions are required<sup>2</sup> for making the customers feel good and valued. As we all know, service employees do not always actually feel the positive emotions which they are required to express. Even if customers are rude and impolite or if employees are in a general bad mood, positive emotions have still to be shown. Employees therefore need to regulate their emotions in order to fulfil organizational and customer expectations. The literature distinguishes two main strategies for regulating emotions: *surface acting* and *deep acting*.

Surface acting refers to the regulation on a surface level, solely focusing on a change of emotional expression, such as changing tone of voice or facial display (Grandey, 2000;

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<sup>2</sup>We do not deny that different display rules—prescribing which emotions should be expressed—exist, e.g., for police officers, who sometimes need to show anger and hardness or judges, who should be emotionally neutral. In the current research, however, we are focusing on service interactions with positive display demands, as this is required in the majority of service encounters.

Hochschild, 1983). Through the use of surface acting a state of *emotional dissonance* arises wherein expressed emotions clash with felt ones (e.g., Rafaeli & Sutton, 1987). Deep acting, on the contrary, aims at the alteration of felt emotions (Hochschild, 1983), for example, through cognitive strategies such as adopting the customer's perspective in order to enhance appreciation (Grandey, 2000; cf. Gross, 1998b). Thus, when deep acting is being successful, no dissonant states remain (cf. Grandey, 2003; also see Côté, 2005; Holman, Martínez-Íñigo, & Totterdell, 2008), and emotional harmony arises (Rafaeli & Sutton, 1987).

The two regulation strategies are repeatedly found in empirical studies on the structure of emotional labor (e.g., Brotheridge & Lee, 2003; Diefendorff, Croyle, & Gosserand, 2005) and have different consequences: while the regulation on a surface level impairs performance and health, deep acting is overall more beneficial (e.g., Hülshager & Schewe, 2011), especially through performance uplifts. Surface acting is also negatively associated with performance-related outcomes such as organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) and job satisfaction (Hülshager & Schewe, 2011), while deep acting shows positive relationships to both constructs (Hülshager & Schewe, 2011; Kiffin-Petersen, Jordan, & Soutar 2011).

#### *Emotional labor and performance*

The main reason why the management of emotions is important for customer interactions is *emotional contagion* (Hatfield, Cacioppo, & Rapson, 1994; also see Barger & Grandey, 2006). Emotional contagion means that the customer is “infected” by the emotions displayed by the service agent and therefore experiences those emotions her-/himself (Barger & Grandey, 2006; also see Hareli & Rafaeli, 2008; Pugh, 2001). This reflects in better ratings of the service quality (e.g., Barger & Grandey, 2006), and therefore, in the organization's success. Customers are more satisfied with the delivered service when an authentic positive emotional display is being perceived (cf. Hennig-Thurau, Groth, Paul, & Gremler, 2006). This is the case when deep acting is used, as the emotions shown are authentically felt. In line with this, Hülshager, and Schewe (2011) were able to predict customer satisfaction positively through deep acting and negatively through surface acting in their meta-analysis.



Similarly, Chi, Grandey, Diamond, and Krimmel (2011) and others (e.g., Grandey, 2003; Totterdell & Holman, 2003; Grandey, Fisk, Mattila, Jansen, & Sideman, 2005; Hülshager, Lang, & Maier, 2010) found a positive relationship between deep acting and service performance in field and experimental studies. Hülshager and Schewe (2011) produced important evidence showing that this is only true for emotional performance. No relationship with task performance was found, which they operationalized as primary job task performance and cognitive performance. Though, deep acting does not enhance cognitive problem-solving competencies.

On the opposite, surface acting usually has negative effects on performance. In their meta-analysis, Hülshager and Schewe (2011) found a small negative relationship between surface acting and emotional performance *and* a small negative relationship between task performance and customer satisfaction. Nevertheless, their estimated effect sizes were small. Surface acting might potentially result in performance decreases in several ways. As already mentioned, surface acting can be perceived as inauthentic, which plays a large role in this respect. Additionally, the necessity for self-monitoring and self-instructing while acting results in cognitive impairment (Richards & Gross, 1998). Gross (2002) argues that as a consequence, less resources are available for processing external stimuli. This is in line with the ego depletion theory (Baumeister et al., 1998; Muraven et al., 1998) that claims that any self-regulatory behavior stems from one part of the self. The self being a limited resource, it depletes when tasks involving volition are repeatedly performed.

Different empirical studies on emotional suppression, which is necessary for superficial acting, support these assumptions (cf. Grandey, 2000). For example, Rohrman, Bechtoldt, Hopp, Hodapp, and Zapf (2010) found a decrease in participants' word fluency in (simulated) customer interactions while suppressing inappropriate emotions. Negative effects on (vocal) memory performance are also quite common for emotional suppression (Gross, 2002; Richards & Gross, 1999a; see also Perbandt, 2007) and even the performance in anagram tasks is impaired (Baumeister et al., 1998; experiment 3). Goldberg and Grandey (2007) explicitly tested the ego depletion theory in the emotional labor context. In a call center simulation, they found that

participants who had to follow display rules by showing positive emotions made more mistakes during the calls than those with display autonomy.

Taken together, the previous results imply that it does matter which emotional labor strategy is being used. Surface acting might be negatively related to several performance outcomes (even if effect sizes have been shown to be small), whereas deep acting is beneficial for emotional performance and customer satisfaction.

#### *Procedural justice and performance*

In the literature on organizational justice which deals with people's judgement of decisions (cf. Colquitt, 2001), three main justice dimensions are usually being distinguished (cf. Colquitt et al., 2001). *Distributive justice* refers to the distribution of valued limited resources by focusing on the input-outcome ratio (Adams, 1965). *Interactional justice* refers to the interpersonal interaction between people (Bies, 2005; Bies & Moag, 1986) while *procedural justice* is essential to the processes within organizations. It concerns decision-making procedures (Thibaut & Walker, 1975). If procedures are (a) used consistently, (b) free of bias, (c) based on accurate information, (d) include a correction mechanism for biased decisions, are (e) guided by ethical and moral standards and finally, (f) based on different opinions, they are more likely to be perceived as procedurally just (Leventhal, 1980). According to Leventhal (1980), not all criteria have to be fulfilled—but the more criteria are being met, the more the procedures should be recognized as just (cf. Gollwitzer, Lotz, Schlösser, & Streicher, 2013). Experimental studies have further clearly shown that having the opportunity to voice one's opinion during a decision process (comparably to Leventhal's criteria f) crucially influences the acceptance of the decision, even if the result is unfavorable (e.g., Folger, 1977).

From different meta-analyses, we already know that the experience of procedural justice is positively related to several beneficial outcomes. Besides positive relationships with OCB (e.g., Cohen-Carash, & Spector, 2001; Colquitt et al., 2001), commitment, trust (e.g., Colquitt et al., 2013) and health, (e.g., Francis & Barling, 2005; Robbins, Ford, & Tetrick, 2012; Tepper, 2001; also see Maslach & Leiter, 2008), procedural justice has been identified as an important antecedent of performance, although effect sizes vary (e.g., Cohen-Carash & Spector, 2001;

Colquitt et al., 2013). In addition, justice is usually negatively related to counterproductive work behaviors (e.g., meta-analysis from Colquitt et al., 2013).

Several authors, ourselves included, argue that the influence of justice on performance is based on the social exchange theory (e.g., Masterson, Lewis, Goldman, & Taylor, 2000). This theory considers that organizations are places where long-term social exchanges occur (e.g., Blau, 1964; Wayne, Shore, & Liden, 1997). In those reciprocal relationships, procedural justice could be seen as the organization's input, while the employees' "investment" is their performance. If the organization's input is lacking due to (repeatedly) breaking justice rules, this should have negative consequences on the employee's investment behavior, causing the employee to reduce his/her own input and to engage in negative reciprocation (see also: Adams, 1965).

#### *Integrating emotional labor and procedural justice*

As previously mentioned, some first studies started to integrate *interactional justice* research into the field of emotional labor, focusing on the amount of emotional labor and surface acting (Rupp et al., 2008; Rupp & Spencer, 2006; Spencer & Rupp, 2009). Rupp, McCance, and Grandey (2007) developed a cognitive-emotional theory of customer injustice and emotional labor. They assert that up till then, only customers had been taken into account as a source of injustice in the emotional labor context. They encourage the completion of more studies on the relationship between injustice and emotional labor by using different sources of (in)justice. Following this invitation, we want to have a closer look at the organizational processes that may influence emotion regulation in customer interactions by focusing on *procedural (in)justice*. We do so, because, as previously stated, customers are an inevitable component of service interactions. As the organization cannot change the way in which customers behave, it is necessary to identify job aspects which can be influenced by the organization. This aims at protecting their service employees from health impairments due to disadvantageous regulation strategies (surface acting) and at ensuring a good quality of service.

According to the AET (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996), events at work trigger certain emotions (positive and negative) depending on the nature of the event. Such affective events are further assumed to be an important antecedent in the emotional labor process (Grandey, 2000).

Being (procedurally) treated unjustly (by one's organization or one's supervisor) should be a negative event triggering negative emotions. This is verified by several studies on (in)justice which identified negative emotions such as anger as a common consequence of the experience of injustice (Folger & Cropanzano, 1998; Mikula, Scherer, & Athenstaedt, 1998; Weiss, Suckow, & Cropanzano, 1999). In their recent meta-analysis, Colquitt et al. (2013) further identified a moderate negative relationship between procedural injustice and negative affect.

As service employees are asked to show positive emotions, any negative affective events should increase the gap between felt and required emotions, thereby creating a state of emotional dissonance (cf. Rupp & Spencer, 2006). In consequence, the regulatory effort to display the "right" emotions should be much larger than when no negative emotions are being felt. The more such negative events are being experienced, the higher the probability that emotion regulation becomes necessary for fulfilling the organization's display expectations. Previous findings accordingly imply that people use more surface acting when they feel negative emotions—especially when feeling anger (Gross, 1998a; Grandey et al., 2002).

To conclude, we developed a theoretical framework (affective event-negative emotion-emotional regulation) on how procedural (in)justice impacts emotional labor, suggesting that people experiencing procedural injustice tend to use more surface acting in the customer interactions following this unjust incident. We therefore hypothesize that:

H1: *Procedural injustice will have a main effect on self-reported surface acting. This means that individuals exposed to a procedurally unjust treatment will report higher levels of surface acting than those exposed to a neutral treatment.*

The relationship between injustice and deep acting has not been tested yet. One could assume that people who experience injustice have a larger need to regulate their emotions in general (cf. Rupp & Spencer, 2006; Spencer & Rupp, 2009), which should therefore reflect in an increase of deep acting as well. But, according to Grandey (2000), deep acting can be categorized as an antecedent-focused emotion regulation strategy in the model of Gross (1998b). Those kind of regulation strategies are usually used *before* an emotion arises. On the contrary, response-focused emotion regulation strategies such as surface acting (Grandey, 2000; cf. Gross, 1998b)

are usually applied when the emotion is already present. Therefore, we don't expect an effect from the experience of procedural injustice on deep acting, but we will exploratory test a possible relationship with deep acting.

*Procedural justice' and emotional labor's impact on performance*

In our current study, we further seek to replicate previous findings on emotional labor's performance outcomes. Those findings show different effects for deep and surface acting, suggesting that surface acting is associated with worse general and emotional performance due to resource depletion through self-monitoring and a lack of authenticity, while deep acting is positively influencing service performance due to higher authenticity (cf. Hülshager & Schewe, 2011). By using other-rated service ratings of videotaped simulated customer calls, we want to test those effects for which we expect the following:

H2a: *Self-reported surface acting is negatively related to other-rated service performance.*

H2b: *Self-reported deep acting is positively related to other-rated service performance.*

To our knowledge, there are no studies that have explicitly tested the influence of procedural injustice perceived by the service agent on his/her *service* performance. The majority of studies that found negative relationships, focused on general or task performance, which primarily involves cognitive tasks (for meta-analyses see: Colquitt et al., 2001, 2013). We want to expand those findings now by testing whether procedural injustice also affects service performance negatively. As injustice induces negative emotions such as anger, which increases the probability of using surface acting, we further assume that this negative relationship is mediated by surface acting.

H3: *Procedural injustice will have a main effect on service performance. This means that individuals exposed to a procedurally unjust treatment will perform worse in the service interaction than those exposed to a neutral treatment.*

H4: *The negative effect from procedural injustice on service performance will be mediated by the amount of surface acting.*

Figure 4-1 summarizes our theoretical considerations.

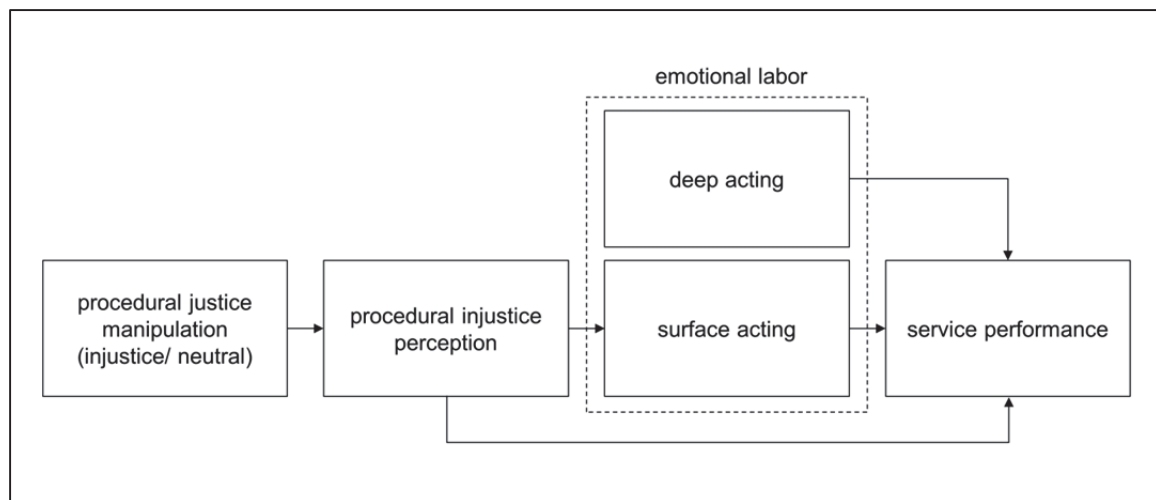


Figure 4-1. Theoretical Model.

## Method

### Procedure

Based on previous call center simulations such as Rupp and Spencer's (2006), we conducted a behavioral experiment. We employed a two-group design comparing a "neutral" condition with a "procedurally unjust" condition. The experiment consisted out of three steps: an introductory and training part, a call center simulation and a data collection with debriefing.

In the *first step*, participants were told that they are taking part in a study about call centers' efficiency. They were instructed in groups. Each group consisted of one "real" participant and by chance one to three collaborators. The collaborators were needed in order to substantiate the cover story: the investigator pretended to select the only "real" target person among several people who were all preparing for the call-center task. Participants were instructed to work for a large electricity supplier ("Blue Energy"). They were told that they were the first contact person for customer concerns and that their main task was to record the customer's problem and personal data (e.g., electric meter number or the number of people living in their apartment) in order to efficiently prepare further customer handling. For doing so, they were given a protocol sheet serving as a guideline for conversation in each call and shown how to use it. They were instructed to forward customers to the appropriate organizational division, which would then handle each specific request after data collection (e.g., forwarding to the financial

division for a change of paying method or forwarding to the sales division for contract alterations). In this instruction and training part, they were repeatedly told to always be friendly to the customers in order to ensure positive display demands. Besides the general procedure, they were also explained how to use the telephone. In order to increase their engagement, participants were promised 30 €-vouchers from a prominent online-shopping-platform for the five best rated participants (based on video-ratings). Participants were then given a handbook with information about general service interactions, in which only the first two pages contained relevant information.

In a *second step*, we simulated a call center with incoming calls in which each participant worked in a separate office. Participants had to handle two male customers on the phone. One customer behaved neutrally and one customer was very demanding. The demanding customer was characterized by non-compliant behavior, meaning that he did not give the necessary information (immediately) and that he was impolite (questioning the participant's competence). Customers were constant across groups and participants. By this, we further indirectly controlled for customer's injustice, as the non-compliant behavior of the demanding customer could be seen as interactional unjust (cf. customer's interactional injustice manipulation by Rupp & Spencer, 2006). Customers had detailed role instructions in order to ensure that they always behaved in the same manner and used very similar sentences. Each call lasted around seven minutes ( $M = 6.72$ ;  $SD = 1.61$ ). The order of the customer calls randomly varied among all participants, resulting in an additional factor which we had to control for in our analyses (call order). During the calls, participants had to fill out the protocol sheets. In line with the participant's express consent, the calls were videotaped. Due to technical problems in three cases, audiotapes were chosen instead.

After the simulation, in the *third step*, participants were given a questionnaire about the calls, with which we assessed the use of different emotional labor strategies across both customer interactions and demographic variables. Finally, participants were debriefed.

#### *Pretest*

In a pretest with  $N = 76$  German undergraduates (65.8% female; 55.3% medical students, 36.8% psychology students, 7.9% students of other subjects (biology, human biology,

geography)) we tested vignettes describing our experimental setting (see *Procedure*) to check whether the manipulation of procedural injustice worked.

We further explored whether the variation of different incentives might strengthen the experienced injustice. We therefore tested three procedurally unjust conditions in which we only varied the promised compensation (voucher lottery, performance-related compensation, no compensation) and one neutral condition, where justice was not manipulated.

Following an introductory description of our experimental setting, the “neutral” condition read: *“After the introduction described above, you are ensured to have about 30 minutes time to individually prepare for the task and there will be additional time for training in small groups afterwards. The investigator hands you the preparation documents and leaves the room. After seven minutes s/he returns and tells you that a person from the earlier group dropped out and has to be immediately replaced. S/he asks if anybody wants to stand in for this person. As nobody voluntarily agrees, the investigator decides not to replace the missing person. After 30 minutes preparation time, the call center simulation starts.”*

In the “procedurally unjust” conditions the last three sentences were replaced by: *“S/he asks you to follow him/her. In the same breath, s/he promises the other participants that they have enough preparation time left, as one run takes about 30 minutes.”*

Procedural justice was assessed with seven items which we adapted from the German version of Colquitt’s justice scale (2001) from Maier, Streicher, Jonas, and Woschée (2007) to fit our experimental setting. Items had to be rated on a six-point Likert scale ranging from 1 *do not agree at all* to 6 *totally agree*. A sample item is “All participants were treated equally”. Due to a small discriminatory power, one item was eliminated (“On the decision of who had to replace the person who dropped out, I did not have any influence”). Cronbach’s  $\alpha$  of the final scale was good ( $\alpha = .83$ ). An ANOVA revealed a significant difference between the four vignettes  $F(3, 72) = 21.60, p < .001$ . According to a post hoc Scheffé multigroup comparison, the neutral condition significantly differed from all three unjust conditions ( $\Delta M_{neutral - nocompensation} = 2.00, p < .001$ ;  $\Delta M_{neutral - voucherlottery} = 2.02, p < .001$ ;  $\Delta M_{neutral - performancebasedcompensation} = 1.79, p < .001$ ). Between the three procedurally unjust vignettes which only differed in regard to the offered incentive, no



differences were found. To summarize, we were able to show in the pretest that there was a significant difference according to the perception of procedural injustice between the neutral and the procedurally unjust condition.

#### *Experimental manipulation*

In line with the pretest, we used both conditions in our experimental design with slight variations due to a better operational handling.

First, in the “neutral” condition, participants were given a small handbook (containing only two pages), and they were told that they would have about five minutes to prepare. After five minutes, they were fetched to start with the simulation.

In contrast to that, in the “procedurally unjust” condition, procedural injustice was manipulated through the investigator’s decision-making. In fact, participants in this condition were given a larger handbook consisting out of 18 pages (only the first two pages, which were identical with those in the neutral condition, contained relevant information), they were told that they had about 30 minutes to prepare for the calls and that there would be enough time for training in small groups. However, the investigator returned only five minutes later to fetch the experimental target person. Without being given the opportunity to voice her/his opinion, the “real” participant was selected to start with the call center simulation at once. In the same breath, the investigator promised the other participants that they would have enough time to prepare.

As this decision was made without collecting sufficient information, e.g., concerning the ability of all participants (experimental target person and collaborators) to start without further preparation or without asking whether anybody was willing to start sooner, (a) participants were not involved in the decision-process (lack of voice), (b) there was no opportunity to correct this decision afterwards and (c) rules were inconsistently applied (the rules communicated by the investigator were broken; the experimental target person and the collaborators were treated differently). This should have induced procedural injustice (cf. Leventhal, 1977).

#### *Sample*

The sample consisted out of  $N = 87$  German undergraduate students from different disciplines, none of them having their major in psychology. Participation was compensated with

credit points. Age ranged from 19 to 33 years ( $M = 23.06$ ;  $SD = 2.68$ ); most of the participants were female (70.1%;  $n = 61$ ). About 46% ( $n = 40$ ) already had experience in service occupations and these participants had an average work experience of 2.02 years ( $SD = 1.51$ ); 20.7% currently worked as service employees ( $n = 18$ ).

Overall, we had  $n = 42$  participants in the “procedurally unjust” condition and  $n = 45$  in the “neutral” condition. Chi-Square tests revealed that gender was equally distributed amongst the two groups, Pearson- $\chi^2(1) = 0.04$ ,  $p = .834$ .

### Measures

**Self-rated emotional labor.** In order to assess emotional labor strategies, we used 10 items from Diefendorff et al. (2005, translated into German according to the method suggested by Brislin, 1980). Items had to be rated on a 5-point Likert scale (1 *strongly disagree* to 5 *strongly agree*) measuring surface acting (SA; 6 items<sup>3</sup>) and deep acting (DA; 4 items). A sample item is: “I just pretend to have the emotions I need to display for my job” (SA). The reliability of the surface acting scale was good (Cronbach’s  $\alpha = .84$ ), the deep acting scale showed an acceptable reliability (Cronbach’s  $\alpha = .75$ ).

**Other-rated service performance.** For the assessment of participant’s performance during the customer interactions, the recorded calls were analyzed by two independent raters. With the exception of two cases in which the experimental condition was by accident obvious to the first rater, the ratings were carried out blindly to justice condition. The coding scheme was developed by the first independent rater in cooperation with the first author by screening about ten recorded calls. During the coding process, the coding rules were further refined. After the first rater finished coding, a second rater was trained in the use of the coding scheme. Based on this training, he then also coded all calls independently. All in all, we used nine performance indicators from which a sum score per call was calculated; a higher score indicated a better overall service performance. For most indicators, the frequency of a specific behavior was coded

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<sup>3</sup>The original surface acting scale consisted out of seven items in the way it has been developed and used in the pretest. Due to a very low discriminatory power ( $r_{i(t-i)} = .15$ ), the item “I faked a good mood when interacting with customers” was eliminated prior to further analyses. The reliability of the scale including this poor item was  $\alpha = .81$ .

by counting its amount, such as: the participant (1) “listens actively”, (2) “repeats information to avoid mistakes”, (3) “apologizes for the inconvenience”, (4) “uses verbal affirmations”, (5) “addresses the customer by name” and (6) “uses words of courtesy”. The other performance indicators, such as: the participant (7) “uses the required welcome set phrase”, (8) “uses the required discharge set phrase” and (9) “asks for permission to collect customer’s data” where coded in categories at once, whereby for (7) and (8) three categories (0 = not used at all, 1 = used in own words, 2 = used literally) and for (9) two categories were used (0 = does not ask for permission, 1 = asks for customer’s permission). The interrater reliability for the nine indicators ranged from .74 to .99 for each call. For each participant, a mean performance score across both customer calls was calculated. The interrater reliability was very good with ICC (2,2) = .96. Our hypotheses’ tests were finally conducted with rater’s mean score.

**Seriousness in task execution.** Additionally, we let participants rate in one item how seriously they took the experimental task on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 *I did not take the task seriously* to 5 *I did take the task very seriously*. We did so in order to control during our analyses for participant’s involvement in the experimental task.

#### *Manipulation Checks*

**Procedural justice manipulation check.** Procedural justice was assessed with the six items from the pretest, whereby a five-point instead of a six-point response format was used (1 *do not agree at all* to 5 *totally agree*). Reliability of the scale was very good (Cronbach’s  $\alpha = .90$ ). A one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) revealed that the participants in the unjust condition perceived more procedural injustice than those in the neutral condition  $F(1, 85) = 70.17, p < .001$  ( $M_{\text{injustice}} = 3.28, SD_{\text{injustice}} = 1.01; M_{\text{neutral}} = 4.64, SD_{\text{neutral}} = 0.38$ ).

**Display rules recognition check.** To check whether the display rules’ instruction (“always be friendly”) was correctly understood, participants were asked to shortly describe in their own words how they should behave towards the customers in the call center simulation. As intended, all participants recognized that they had to display positive emotions by all using the word “friendly” in their descriptions of the requested behavior.

***Friendliness perception check.*** On a continuous bipolar scale ranging from 1 *unfriendly* over 4 *neutral* to 7 *friendly*, participants had to rate each customer by means of one item concerning the perceived friendliness in order to check whether customers were perceived as intended. The demanding customer was rated in mean with  $M = 2.14$  ( $SD = 0.75$ ), supporting that he was perceived as being unfriendly. In contrast, the neutral customer was rated with  $M = 6.30$  ( $SD = 0.66$ ), indicating that he was perceived as being even friendlier than expected. This might have influenced the final results. We will come back to this point in our discussion.

## Results

Means, standard deviations and bivariate correlations of the study's variables are presented in Table 4-1.

Spike analysis revealed three extreme values for the service performance rating. As the number of such cases was less than five percent (4.6%), we decided to declare those values as missing ( $x \geq 37$ ) prior to further analysis.

Hypotheses' tests were conducted with linear regressions using SPSS 22 and the PROCESS macro Version 2.13 (Hayes, 2012) with two-tailed significance tests. Besides the justice manipulation, we controlled for the number of collaborators, the order of customers calls (additional factor) and the interaction of call order x justice manipulation. Both experimental factors were dummy-coded. Results are summarized in Table 4-2.

Moreover, when testing effects associated with surface acting, we controlled for the seriousness in task execution and when testing effects associated with deep acting, we further controlled for the prior customer experience, as we found marginally significant correlations (see Table 4-1).

Contrary to our assumption that procedural injustice will increase the amount of surface acting (H1), we found a negative relationship between injustice and surface acting,  $B = -0.57$ ,  $SD = 0.24$ ,  $t = -2.36$ ,  $p = .021$ . The participants who were treated procedurally unjustly used *less* surface acting than those who had not experienced injustice (see Model 2). No effects were found for the seriousness in task execution, the call order or its interaction with the justice condition.

Regarding deep acting, we did not have a specific hypothesis. However, we tested the procedural injustice-deep acting relationship exploratory. In fact, procedural injustice was unrelated to deep acting,  $B = 0.23$ ,  $SD = 0.21$ ,  $t = 1.02$ ,  $p = .310$ . But, as depicted in Table 4-3 (Model 4), we found an effect for the call order,  $B = 0.54$ ,  $SD = 0.21$ ,  $t = 2.53$ ,  $p = .014$ , meaning that participants used less deep acting in both calls when the first customer was the neutral customer. No interaction effect was found,  $B = -0.31$ ,  $SD = 0.31$ ,  $t = -0.99$ ,  $p = .332$ . The duration of prior customer experience had a marginal significant effect on deep acting in that those who had more prior experience with customer interactions, tended to use more deep acting,  $B = 0.10$ ,  $SD = 0.06$ ,  $t = 1.75$ ,  $p = .084$ . Additionally, the more collaborators participated in the introductory and training part of the experiment the more deep acting tends to be reported,  $B = 0.19$ ,  $SD = 0.10$ ,  $t = 1.90$ ,  $p = .062$ .

In respect to H2a and H2b, surface acting could not predict service performance when controlling for seriousness in task execution and the number of collaborators,  $t < 1$ ; nor did deep acting predict service performance positively when controlling for prior customer experience and the number of collaborators,  $B = 0.98$ ,  $SD = 0.65$ ,  $t = 1.52$ ,  $p = .134$ . Therefore, hypothesis H2a and H2b have to be rejected.

Hypothesis H3 was *not* supported by our data. In a linear regression using PROCESS (Hayes, 2012), we found a significant effect for the justice condition,  $B = 5.41$ ,  $SD = 1.82$ ,  $t = 2.96$ ,  $p = .004$  in that the participants in the unjust condition performed better (see Table 4-2, Model 9). This totally contradicts our assumptions. However, the interaction between call order and justice condition was negatively related to service performance,  $B = -5.91$ ,  $SD = 2.44$ ,  $t = -2.42$ ,  $p = .018$ . As this was a disordinal interaction effect, main effects should not be interpreted globally. The interaction plot (see Figure 4-2) with a simple slope analysis revealed that the main effect of the justice condition was *no more* significant when the first customer was the demanding customer,  $B = -0.50$ ,  $t = -0.29$ ,  $p = .770$ .

The assumption that surface acting mediates the effect of procedural injustice on service performance was not supported, as we did not find an indirect effect,  $B = -0.33$ ,  $SD = 0.53$ , 90% bootstrap<sub>5000</sub>-CI [-1.76, 0.29]. Therefore, hypothesis H4 has to be rejected.

Table 4-1. Means, standard deviations, bivariate correlations and reliability coefficients.

Variable	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Procedural justice	3.98	1.01	(.90)							
2. Surface acting	2.84	0.79	.11	(.84)						
3. Deep acting	3.11	0.74	.09	-.01	(.75)					
4. Service performance	21.63	5.68	-.07	-0.03	.17	(.96) <sup>^</sup>				
5. Justice condition (neutral/ unjust) <sup>a</sup>			-.67**	-.23*	.08	.27*				
6. Call order (neutral first/ demanding first) <sup>a</sup>			.03	.02	.25*	-.05	.01			
7. Duration of prior customer experiences	0.92	1.43	.06	-.08	.18 <sup>°</sup>	.00	.00	-.06		
8. Seriousness in task execution	4.20	0.83	.05	-.20 <sup>°</sup>	.08	.12	-.08	-.05	-.02	
9. Number of collaborates	1.78	0.77	-.04	-.14	.19 <sup>°</sup>	.05	.13	-.04	-.05	.10

Notes. Reliability coefficients (Cronbach's  $\alpha$ ) appear in parentheses on the diagonal.

<sup>^</sup>Interrater-reliability ICC(2,2); <sup>a</sup>binary dummy coded predictors: justice condition (0 = neutral, 1 = unjust); call order (0 = neutral-first, 1 = demanding-first).

<sup>°</sup> $p < .10$ , \* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .01$ , two-tailed.

Table 4-2. Results of linear regression analyses for hypotheses tests.

Model	Predictor	Outcome: Surface acting			
		<i>B</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Model 1 <sup>c</sup>	Step 1				
	Constant	3.82**	0.45	8.41	.000
	Seriousness in task execution	-0.18 <sup>o</sup>	0.10	-1.80	.076
	Number of collaborators	-0.13	0.11	-1.16	.250
Model 2 <sup>c</sup>	Step 2				
	Constant	3.73**	0.47	8.01	.000
	Seriousness in task execution	-0.13	0.10	-1.35	.182
	Number of collaborators	-0.05	0.11	-0.47	.640
	Justice condition	-0.57*	0.24	-2.36	.021
	Call order	-0.07	0.23	-0.31	.755
	Justice condition x call order	0.31	0.33	0.92	.360
		Outcome: Deep acting			
		<i>B</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Model 3 <sup>c</sup>	Step 1				
	Constant	2.69**	0.21	12.99	.000
	Duration of prior customer experience	0.10 <sup>o</sup>	0.06	1.77	.080
	Number of collaborators	0.19 <sup>o</sup>	0.10	1.81	.074
Model 4 <sup>c</sup>	Step 2				
	Constant	2.37**	0.23	10.11	.000
	Number of collaborators	0.19 <sup>o</sup>	0.10	1.90	.062
	Duration of prior customer experience	0.10 <sup>o</sup>	0.06	1.75	.084
	Justice condition	0.23	0.22	1.02	.310
	Call order	0.54*	0.21	2.53	.014
	Justice condition x call order	-0.31	0.31	-0.99	.332
		Outcome: Service performance			
		<i>B</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Model 5 <sup>c</sup>	Step 1				
	Constant	21.01**	1.68	12.54	.000
	Duration of prior customer experience	-0.01	0.46	-0.02	.987
	Number of collaborators	0.40	0.83	0.48	.633
Model 6 <sup>c</sup>	Step 2				
	Constant	21.17**	1.68	12.60	.000
	Duration of prior customer experience	-0.19	0.45	-0.43	.670
	Number of collaborators	0.34	0.82	0.41	.685
	Deep acting <sup>a</sup>	0.98	0.65	1.52	.134
		Outcome: Service performance			
		<i>B</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Model 7 <sup>c</sup>	Step 1				
	Constant	17.06**	3.38	5.05	.000
	Seriousness in task execution	0.99	0.75	1.31	.194
	Number of collaborators	0.27	0.82	0.32	.747
Model 8 <sup>c</sup>	Step 2				
	Constant	17.08**	3.47	4.92	.000
	Seriousness in task execution	0.98	0.77	1.28	.205
	Number of collaborators	0.26	0.83	0.32	.751
	Surface acting <sup>a</sup>	-0.02	0.65	-0.03	.979

Table 4-2 (continued).

Model	Predictor	Outcome: Service performance			
		<i>B</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Model 9 <sup>c</sup>	Step 3				
	Constant	13.75**	4.63	2.97	.004
	Seriousness in task execution	0.83	0.74	1.12	.266
	Number of collaborators	0.17	0.81	0.21	.831
	Surface acting <sup>b</sup>	0.59	0.84	0.70	.485
	Justice condition	5.41**	1.82	2.96	.004
	Call order	2.55	1.69	1.51	.134
	Justice condition x call order	-5.91*	2.44	-2.42	.018
				Outcome: Service performance	
				90% Bootstrap-CI	
Model indirect (via surface acting)		<i>B</i>	<i>SD</i>	LL	UL
		-0.33	0.60	-1.81	0.30

*Notes.* CI = confidence interval; LL = lower limit; UL = upper limit; bootstrap interval for the indirect effect was calculated with 5000 resamples; binary dummy coded predictors: justice condition (0 = neutral, 1 = unjust), call order (0 = neutral-first, 1 = demanding-first). <sup>a</sup>Variable has been standardized; <sup>b</sup>Variable has been centered around its mean. <sup>c</sup>Explained variance in the models: Model 1:  $R = .24$ ,  $R^2 = 0.06$ ; Model 2:  $R = .35$ ,  $R^2 = 0.12$ ; Model 3:  $R = .27$ ,  $R^2 = 0.07$ ; Model 4:  $R = .39$ ,  $R^2 = 0.15$ ; Model 5:  $R = .05$ ,  $R^2 = 0.00$ ; Model 6:  $R = .19$ ,  $R^2 = 0.04$ ; Model 7:  $R = .15$ ,  $R^2 = 0.02$ ; Model 8:  $R = .15$ ,  $R^2 = 0.02$ ; Model 9:  $R = .36$ ,  $R^2 = 0.13$ .

<sup>°</sup> $p < .10$ , \* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .01$ , two-tailed.

## Discussion

The current study's primary aim was to introduce procedural justice into the field of emotional labor. Drawing on previous research on interactional (in)justice, we expected procedural injustice to influence the amount of surface acting. We also intended to replicate previous findings on the impact of emotional labor on performance which have indicated that surface acting is negatively and deep acting is positively associated with performance outcomes.

We further sought to clarify whether the influence of procedural (in)justice on service performance in customer interactions shows the same pattern when using other performance measures. In order to do so, we tested how procedural injustice is related to service performance and whether this effect is mediated by surface acting. We tested our assumptions by simulating customer calls following a manipulation of procedural justice in an experimental setting. Our hypotheses were not confirmed. However, there are several unexpected results, raising a couple of very interesting questions for future research.



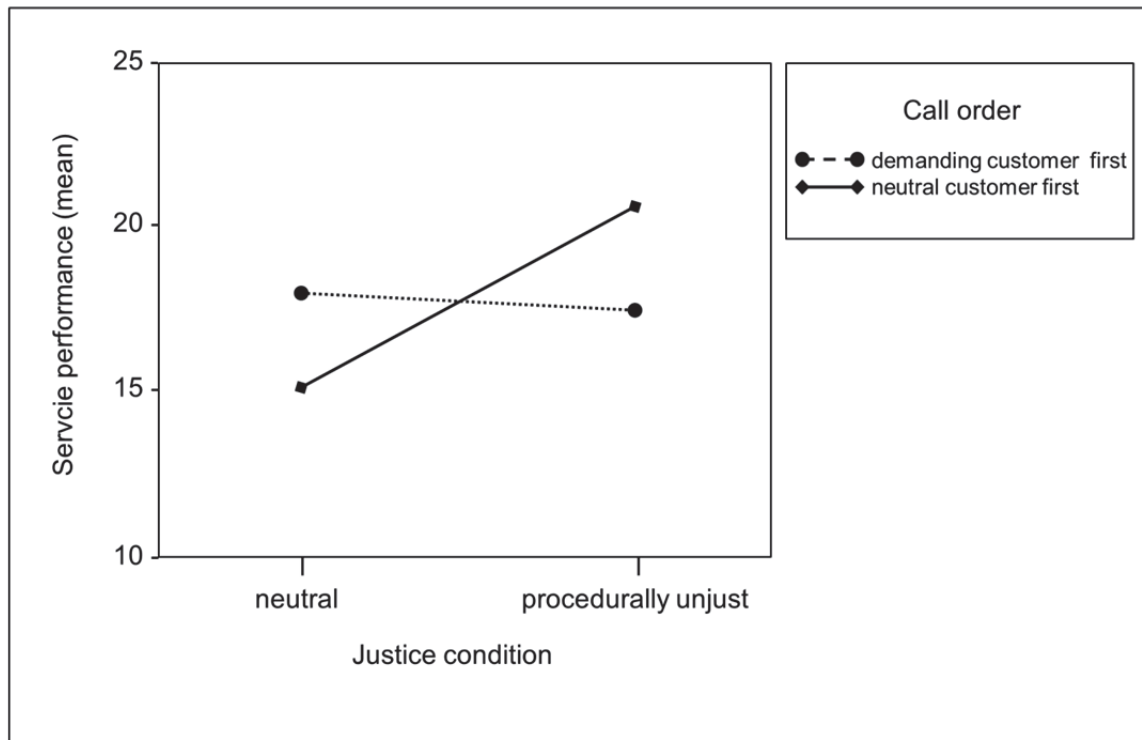


Figure 4-2. Main and interaction effect on service performance rating.

#### *Procedural injustice affects surface acting*

Contrary to our predictions, we found a main effect for procedural injustice on surface acting, in that people reported *less* surface acting when they experienced procedural injustice—no matter how friendly or unfriendly the first caller was. Our findings indicate that the experience of procedural injustice impacts the amount of surface acting in a different way. It is possible that people who experienced procedural injustice reacted counterproductively by refusing to follow display rules or at least by reducing their effort to regulate their emotions, resulting in (emotionally) deviant behavior. *Emotional deviance* means that employees show emotions that do not fit with display expectations (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993; Hochschild, 1983). Although it might be beneficial in the short term (by preventing emotional dissonance), most authors agree that it threatens the individual's health in the long term (e.g., through organizational consequences such as layoff or through a feeling of inadequacy on the part of the employee; e.g., Rafaeli & Sutton, 1987).

As described in the introduction, surface acting also requires continuous self-monitoring of one's own behavior in order to ensure an appropriate emotional display. This effort requires volitional control, which bears the risk of being exhausting (cf. Baumeister et al., 1998; Richards & Gross, 1998). Individuals can deliberately decide whether they exert this volitional control and thus comply with display rules through surface acting, or whether they want to harm the organization's success in a kind of negative reciprocation (cf. social exchange theory; Blau, 1964; Wayne et al., 1997).

Unfortunately, we did not control for emotional deviance, but previous studies that found procedural injustice to be positively related to CWB help to support our assumptions (for an overview see Fodchuck, 2007). We strongly encourage testing the role of emotional deviance in future research.

#### *The call order affects deep acting*

Our exploratory analysis revealed that the experience of procedural injustice was unrelated to the amount of deep acting reported after the simulation, but, we did find an effect stemming from the order of customer calls. When the demanding customer was the first caller, participants reported more deep acting, irrespective of the experimental justice condition.

The fact that we did not find an overall effect of injustice on deep acting despite an impact on surface acting, supports our assumption that both strategies follow different mechanisms and are employed at different points in time (cf. Grandey, 2000; Gross, 1998b). Surface acting is mainly used when negative emotions are already present (e.g., anger in reaction to the unjust event) and focuses upon a change of the emotional *response*. On the contrary, deep acting is an *antecedent*-focused strategy that is mainly employed when emotional cues are given that might elicit inappropriate emotions in the future (Grandey, 2000; Gross, 1998b). Additionally, deep acting is a more competence-based strategy. This means that if a person knows how to deep act, this strategy can be applied with less effort: the longer a person works in a service occupation, the more trained he or she would become. As it has already been argued and in contrast to surface acting, deep acting only requires an initial act for starting a specific cognitive strategy. This is underlined by the finding that prior customer work experience is positively associated with deep

acting. Therefore, deep acting appears to be a strategy which is applied more or less irrespectively of previous intra-organizational events (it is comparable to an individual's resource to cope with work demands). It rather appears to be influenced by happenings that *might* elicit negative emotions in the future, such as customers who are less cooperative or are questioning the service agent's competence.

The fact that our research revealed an order effect for deep acting emphasizes that a demanding (here: unfriendly) customer is more suitable to trigger emotional labor (cf. Grandey et al., 2003). Furthermore, the call order might be essential for challenging the participants' engagement. When a compliant customer calls first, the participant does not recognize the need to engage in the experimental task (which should be different from how seriously he/she took the task). Participants additionally rated the neutral customer as being much more positive than intended. Interacting with a friendly customer could be very resourceful and elicit positive emotions, making it much easier to handle demanding customers afterwards.

#### *Service performance as an outcome of emotion regulation*

When testing the effect of emotional labor on service performance, we failed to replicate previous findings. Unfortunately, deep acting and surface acting did not predict service performance as expected. This is, however, not particularly surprising, as previous results indicate that the effects are quite low (cf. Hülshager & Schewe, 2011). As our sample size was very small, we did not reach a large statistical power, hindering us in detecting small effects in linear regressions.

Both our hypotheses that procedural injustice should be negatively related to other-rated service performance and that this effect should be mediated by surface acting were *not* supported. On the contrary, we found significant main effects for procedural injustice and, more importantly, a significant disordinal interaction effect of both (see Figure 4-2). Performance in the unjust condition was better than in the neutral condition, but only when the first customer was the neutral customer. Between the two conditions, performance no longer differed when the first customer was the demanding customer. This finding is quite surprising, as it contradicts our assumption of an overall performance decrease in the unjust condition. This result clearly

underlines the importance of the customer call order. We believe that there are two possible explanations. On the one hand, it is possible that participants who were first confronted with the neutral (and therefore friendly) customer did not recognize a need to engage in the task execution at all. The participants may not have fully identified with the service agent's role. The task may further have given the impression of being quite easy, reinforced by the fact that they had been allocated a very short time of only five minutes in which to prepare for the task at hand.

On the other hand, a contrast effect could be responsible for the positive impact of experienced injustice on performance. Participants in the unjust condition did perceive it as extremely positive to interact with a neutral (or rather, friendly) customer in contrast to the prior unjust event. This is supported by findings on psychological effects in perception and social evaluations (e.g., Taub, & Hovland, 1958; cf. also Anderson, 1973). In consequence, perception and reappraisal mechanisms were positively biased—the participants were relieved, even enthusiastic and, therefore engaged themselves more in the experimental task.

Procedural injustice might additionally have different effects depending on its frequency as well as on its meaning for the individual. In an experimental setting involving a task with which participants only partially identify and which does not affect their future work relationship, it should certainly be easier to cope with one single incident of injustice. The situation might be completely different when such unjust events repeatedly occur and when they are critical to the future work relationship.

In other studies, such as Rupp and Spencer's (2006), customer's interactional (in)justice was manipulated by behaviors that the demanding (interactional unjust) and the neutral customer (interactional just) demonstrated in the current study. As all our participants had to deal with both customers, it could be said that we further controlled for customer's (in)justice. From this point of view, the customers immediately following upon an unjust organizational event might sometimes heal those wounds. Interactionally just (or friendly) customers might enhance the service agent's self-accomplishment in the service interaction. Positive service agent-customer relationships could, in this way, be seen as a source of social support, as a kind of positive feedback resulting from one's own performance.

We were unable to identify a mediation effect, which is not surprising as the participants in the unjust condition used *less* surface acting. This could be due to the fact that we used voice-to-voice interactions. Interacting with customers face-to-face raises the need for regulation of facial expressions much more than voice-to-voice interactions do. However, our performance indicators only included verbal cues as, unfortunately, the position of the camera in most videos made it impossible to rate facial expressions.

#### *Strength and practical implications*

To the best of our knowledge, the current study is among the very first to empirically investigate the causal consequences of injustice on the use of emotional labor strategies. Amongst those, it is the first to focus on procedural (in)justice as an antecedent. We adopted an experimental approach which has already been successfully used in a large number of studies in the field of emotional labor (e.g., Rohrmann et al., 2011; Rupp & Spencer, 2006; Rupp & Spencer, 2009). We designed a setting that was appropriate for inducing a difference in the procedural justice perception, which is congruent with real world call center jobs and in which we further controlled for different customer behaviors (demanding vs. neutral).

Our results give first evidence that it certainly matters whether service employees are procedurally treated unjustly by their organization and its representatives. The study went in this respect beyond prior research that primarily focused on the role of customers and their impact on (interactional) justice perceptions. By looking for organizational antecedents of service performance, the opportunities for interventions on a practical level rise. Although one unjust incident (e.g., lack of voice) conducted by an experimenter might not at all be comparable to frequently perceiving injustice in real-life situations (e.g., not participating in organizational decisions), it still had an effect on the service quality.

We found service performance to be influenced by the order in which participants were confronted with negative and positive customers. This indicates that service organizations should attempt to distribute positive and negative customers to their employees according to their current emotional state. This could be done by giving them more autonomy to reject difficult customers or forward them to a colleague when they are in a bad mood and the exchange is difficult.

Likewise, organizations could encourage good-humored employees to take on those demanding customers or encourage employees to alternate between positive and negative customer experiences. This can be expected to have long-lasting positive effects on the service performance of employees during a work day. From the individual perspective, our research findings also mirror assumptions from positive psychology in perceiving employees as active job crafters (e.g., Wrzesniewski, & Dutton, 2001). The idea of job crafting is that employees customize their jobs by actively changing their tasks and interactions with others at work. Service agents, especially, could use the option to change their relational boundaries at work by altering the nature or the extent of the social interactions they might have with their customers.

*Limitations and further implications for future research*

While our study revealed many interesting results, there are some limitations which need to be discussed.

A major point impairing the generalizability of our results is that we employed a laboratory setting with university students, which questions the external validity of the findings. Especially when studying procedural injustice, it is difficult to transfer our results to working populations. The perception of procedural injustice in an experiment might have a different quality than it would have in organizational settings. As already discussed, people spend more time in a single organization and therefore engage in long-lasting social exchange relationships that influence their attitudes and behaviors. Repeated unjust events could have other or even stronger effects than when only one single unjust event happens. Even if other researchers encouraged more experimental testing of research questions on justice (e.g., van den Bos, 2001), our results need to be additionally tested in a field study with real service workers in order to yield deep insights.

Furthermore, there are several points associated with the specific experimental design which raise a few problems. First, we only used two customer calls which only lasted approximately 15 minutes in total. In customer professions, however, the number of customer interactions that have to be handled during a working day can be much higher and the interaction duration is often longer. According to Rafaeli and Sutton (1987), the frequency and duration of those emotional interactions determine whether emotional labor is resource-depleting and

stressful. It is therefore possible that we would have elicited different results if we had used six or ten customer calls instead of two or if the calls had lasted longer.

Second, as previously mentioned, we relied on voice-to-voice interactions only. It could be assumed that it is insufficient to use phone-based customer interactions, as this removes the facial feedback from the interaction. This might make it easier for participants to act in conformance with the display rules, the more so in an experimental setting. In further experimental studies, it is advised to use face-to-face interactions in order to increase task complexity and, therefore, to trigger an even higher engagement. Empirical results do however show that experimental participants find it more difficult to express positive emotions (to present themselves positively) than to be themselves in a setting where they are audiotaped (Vohs, Baumeister, & Ciarocco, 2005; study 3). But as a large amount of people working in the service sector solely interact with customers by phone we can confidently transfer our results to this subgroup.

A third limitation linked with our experimental design is the fact that we used an unfriendly customer who questioned the participant's competence in the simulation. As already said, this disrespectful behavior is comparable to customer's interactional injustice (cf. Rupp & Spencer, 2006). It cannot be excluded that the effects that we found are mixed with those of the interactional injustice induced by the unfriendly customer. Considering this point in our experimental planning, we tried to keep the amount of hostile behaviors at a minimum and concentrated on demanding behaviors that might be interpreted as negative but which are still liable to trigger the use of emotional regulation strategies.

Fourth, our results might have been biased by memory effects and by the participants' current emotional state, as we assessed the use of emotional labor strategies after both calls without differentiating between them. This might be problematic, as the calls clearly differed in the way they were conducted. The interaction with a friendly or unfriendly customer possibly elicits specific emotions. This might have hindered and biased an appropriate recall of prior behaviors and the use of prior specific regulation strategies. Participants who interacted with the friendly customer in the second call might have reported less overall surface acting than they actually used. In order to minimize this problem in future research, it would be advisable to

assess the emotional regulation strategies used in each call separately at the end or immediately after each call.

Fifth, the number of collaborators present in the preparation phase of our experiment differed amongst participants. This might have biased the justice manipulation. Results do, however, give a clue to confirm this point: on the contrary, the number of collaborators was unrelated to the perception of injustice.

A further limitation existing irrespective of the design is that we did not control for felt emotions. Previous findings indicate that evoked negative emotions are able to mediate the relationship between injustice and emotion regulation (Rupp & Spencer, 2006). For this reason, further studies should additionally assess participants' current emotional state, at least at the end of the call center simulation.

### *Conclusion*

The results of this study imply that procedural justice differently impacts the use of fundamental strategies of emotional labor. Moreover, the order of qualitative differential customer calls seems to influence the service agents' behavior. Both aspects have to be taken into account when designing call center work environments in the future. It is important to note that our study raises a few questions that have to be answered first, before reasonable conclusions on the "how" can be drawn. We therefore encourage and look forward to further studies testing the relationship between procedural injustice and surface acting. In particular, it should be tested whether unjustly treated people engage in emotional deviant behaviors, as this could be a menace to them in the long term.



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## **Chapter 5: General discussion and conclusion**

The aim of the current dissertation was to explore a conceptual framework on how leaders' emotional labor could be related to employee outcomes, such as employees' emotional labor and exhaustion. In fact, authentic leadership and procedural justice were suggested to be a fundamental linking mechanism in the supposed top-down process. In three empirical studies parts of this framework were tested stepwise. Study 1 and Study 2 focused on the link between leaders' emotional labor and employees' emotional exhaustion, whereas Study 3 focused more closely on the specific consequences of perceived procedural injustice for (followers') emotional labor and service performance. Most empirical hypotheses were supported. Results provide support to the proposed framework.

In the following section, I discuss how the research questions outlined in the introduction could be answered by the empirical results presented in the studies (Chapters 2 to 4). Finally, strengths and weaknesses of the dissertation and implications for research and practice are highlighted.

### **The impact of leaders' emotion management on follower perceptions**

In Study 1 (Chapter 2), we aimed at answering the question of how leaders' emotion management impacts followers' perceptions auf authenticity. The hierarchical linear regression analyses of Study 1's data revealed that leaders' surface acting was negatively related to followers' perceptions of leaders' authenticity, whereas deep acting was not generally related to authentic leadership. Notwithstanding, there was a disordinal interaction effect. Among male followers, leaders using much deep acting were perceived as more authentic, while among women the relationship was reversed, in that female followers perceived their leaders to be most authentic when they used less deep acting. Thereby, research question 1 (RQ1) could be answered as follows: if and how a leader engages in emotional labor is essential to the perception of his/her followers, in that a leader who engages much in superficial regulation strategies is recognized as being less authentic, whereas deep acting has differential effects on authentic leadership depending on the gender of the follower.

Generally, those findings are in line with research from Ilies et al. (2013), who found that the relationship between leaders' emotional expressiveness and their followers' perceptions of their leadership style as well as their leadership effectiveness depend on the authenticity of the emotional expression. Hence, the authenticity of an emotional display by the leader seems to be crucially important to how the leader is perceived by his/her followers (cf. Gardner et al., 2009; Humphrey et al., 2008).

Therefore, the theoretical assumptions of Gardner et al. (2009) and Humphrey et al. (2008; Humphrey, 2008, 2012) were only partially supported. Deep acting did not contribute to the perception of authentic leadership as predicted. Interestingly, Fisk and Friesen (2012) assumed that deep acting (due to its measure) was not recognized as truly authentic (even if it was well-intentioned) and therefore, failed to predict positive follower outcomes as expected (see also Kafetsios, Nezlek, & Vassilakou, 2012). Probably, their finding could also have been explained by followers' gender. In consequence, the conceptual framework presented here needs to be extended in future work; at least, the gender of the follower has to be integrated as a moderating mechanism regarding deep acting.

These findings especially contribute to the research on emotional labor as leaders' emotional labor and its impact on follower perceptions have hardly been tested yet (Li & Liang, 2016). Specifically, evidence is provided to *how* a top-down cascade induced by leaders' emotion management could work. In line with the framework proposed leaders' emotion management seems to impact how followers perceive their leader. This further highlights the importance of leaders' behavior in the organizational context, in general.

### **Procedural justice links authentic leadership to employee exhaustion**

Besides the direct impact of specific emotional labor strategies of the leader, the conceptual framework presented in the introduction suggests that authentic leadership and procedural justice are the mechanism linking leaders' emotional labor to follower outcomes which is line with the findings of Study 1. To further strengthen the proposed mechanism Study 2

then explored how authentic leadership is related to followers' impairments in the context of emotional demands.

Results from a multilevel structural equations model revealed that authentic leadership was related to employees' emotional exhaustion, while this relationship was mediated by perceived procedural justice. Moreover, this indirect effect was found to be conditional on the degree of emotional demands. Authentic leadership and followers' emotional exhaustion were negatively linked via procedural justice whereby the impairment-reducing effect was much stronger when the emotional demands on the employee were high. Hence, procedural justice seems to be especially critical to followers' impairment in the context of high emotional demands. As employees with high emotional demands need to regulate their emotions in their daily work (e.g., Hochschild, 1983; Zapf, 2002), this led us to the question of whether procedural justice is also linked to followers' emotional labor (see Chapter 4).

In line with the findings of Study 2, the second research question (RQ2) of this dissertation could be answered as follows: authentic leadership is related to employees' emotional exhaustion through their perception of procedural justice, wherein this mediation is stronger in the context of high emotional demands.

With regard to the conceptual framework on leaders' emotional labor this provides further support for the notion that leaders' emotion management could be related to employee outcomes via authentic leadership and procedural justice. An employee who perceives that his/her leader is authentic, more likely perceives his/her organization to be procedurally just as well and, finally, tends to be less emotionally exhausted: this is especially true for employees with high emotional demands. In consequence, it could be very cautiously assumed that there is also an indirect effect between leaders' surface acting and followers' emotional exhaustion, in that surface acting might foster a perception of the leader as less authentic, which in turn might be transferred to the perception of procedural justice and thereby impacts followers' exhaustion. In line with our findings this implies that the use of surface acting as a regulation strategy in occupational interactions not only threatens the health of the actor (cf. Glasø & Einarsen, 2008; Hülshager &

Schewe, 2011) but even the health of the receiver in leader-follower interactions. However, until this assumption has been tested in future research, this remains speculative.

In sum, the results of Study 2 (see Chapter 3) further contribute to strengthening the proposed linking mechanism between leaders' emotion management and follower outcomes. They specifically offer new insights into how leadership behavior relates to follower impairments by using procedural justice theories as the theoretical basis exclusively. The current findings on employees' emotional demands in this context emphasize that it would be quite promising to integrate research on the consequences of leaders' emotional labor (e.g., Fisk & Friesen, 2012) and research on followers' emotional labor (e.g., Wu & Hu, 2013; cf. Li & Liang, 2016).

### **Procedural injustice as an antecedent of emotional labor (and performance)**

In order to investigate the role of emotional demands in the context of employees' procedural justice perception more closely, and in order strengthen the role of procedural justice as a linking variable in the conceptual framework of leaders' emotional labor, Study 3 aimed at answering the question of how procedural injustice impacts the use of different emotional labor strategies and (service) performance.

Results from the conducted call center simulation following a manipulation of procedural justice by investigators decision making show that perceived procedural injustice was related to employees' emotional labor in interactions with customers and employees' service performance. Nevertheless, the found relationships were different than expected. Procedural injustice was related to a reduced use of surface acting when interacting with customers afterwards. Deep acting was unrelated to the justice perception. Between both emotional labor strategies and service performance no relationship was found. Moreover, a further experimental factor, the order of the neutral (rather, "friendly"; cf. Chapter 4) and the unfriendly customer, interacted with procedural injustice when predicting service performance in that the performance in the unjust condition was better than in the neutral condition, when the first customer was "friendly" (cf. Chapter 4). This totally contradicts our hypotheses and is in fact, difficult to explain.

However, as already discussed in Chapter 4, it is to assume that employees experiencing procedural injustice no longer act in accordance with display requirements (i.e., regulating emotions), and that they engage in counterproductive work behavior instead (such as *emotional deviance*; Hochschild, 1983; cf. Colquitt et al., 2013), which would explain why we failed to find the hypothesized *increase* in surface acting.

Regarding the findings on service performance, the disordinal interaction effect with the call order led us to the assumption that one negative event of injustice is not sufficient to induce general negative performance rates and moreover, that customers might heal the “wounds” of employees being treated procedurally unjustly by the organization.

In conclusion, the third research question (RQ3) of this thesis could be answered as follows: there is evidence that procedural justice impacts the use of surface acting but not deep acting or performance. In fact, procedural injustice seems to lead to a reduction of the use of surface acting. Generally, this supports the conceptual framework presented here and is in line with previous findings, relating leaders’ behaviors to employees’ emotional labor (e.g., Wu & Hu, 2013). Hence, the current empirical data are not sufficient to deduce clear statements and should not be interpreted rashly as they contradict our original assumptions. Furthermore, the unexpected findings regarding the customer call order raise questions about the role of the behavior of the interaction partner in emotional interactions (e.g., customers, colleagues).

In sum, Study 3 contributes to the research on emotional labor and procedural justice as it firstly integrates the two research areas and provides evidence that procedural injustice matters in regard to the emotional labor of the perceiver. The specific direction of the effect needs to be investigated in future research.

### **Implications and strengths**

The results of the empirical research presented in this dissertation are fruitful for future research and practice. In the following, the major implications and strengths over and above those discussed in the studies are outlined.

Firstly, from a theoretical point of view, this thesis is unique in several ways. To the very best of my knowledge, leaders' emotional labor and its implications for authentic leadership has hardly been tested yet; nor has there been a sophisticated attempt to explain the mechanism relating it to follower outcomes, such as employees emotional exhaustion. Through these studies, we provide first empirical support to integrate research on emotional labor, procedural justice and authentic leadership in order to explain possible top-down processes. The proposed framework, which was widely supported by the data, is a good starting point for further research on leaders' emotional labor. It bears the opportunity to combine research on leaders' emotional labor and research on followers' emotional labor within one framework (cf. Li & Liang, 2016). As a next step, future research should test the direct relationships between leaders' emotional labor and followers' emotional exhaustion, for example. Moreover, all variables of the model should be assessed within one study; by estimating a structural equations model, it should be tested as a whole.

Secondly, the current thesis is characterized by a large variety of methodological approaches and sophisticated statistical analyses. This way, high quality and large reliability of the results is ensured. In Study 1, we conducted a cross-sectional questionnaire field study. We assessed matched data from leaders and their employees in China, which we analyzed by hierarchical linear regressions using Mplus. In Study 2, we investigated employees from different teams from Germany and Finland in a lagged questionnaire study with three measurement points. To analyze those complex data we estimated a multilevel structural equation model also using Mplus. Study 3 then moved from field studies to a laboratory setting, in that a complex behavioral experiment with German undergraduates was set up. In this case, statistical analyses were done by multiple regression analyses via SPSS. Again, different data sources were combined, as self-rated emotional labor values and other-rated performance measures were employed.

Thirdly, the thesis also profits from its cross-cultural approach and the diversity of the samples. We collected data in China, in Germany and in Finland, wherein we included employees

from different organizations and sectors as well as students in the experimental study. By these means, high generalizability of the findings is further supported.

An interesting direction for future research stems from the fact that we focused solely on emotional labor in dyadic interactions. In the organizational context, most leader-follower-interactions occur in a group setting. We focused solely on emotional labor in dyadic interactions setting. It would be very interesting to explore if emotional labor in dyadic interactions differs from emotional labor in interactions with groups of followers. For example, the question arises of how followers react to superficial emotion regulation of their leader targeted at a colleague that they just observe. Does this *observed* surface acting of the leader induce a similar negative top-down cascade? And does this have a similar effect on a group level—i.e., in terms of a climate of authenticity or justice?

Moreover, in Study 3, procedural injustice was identified as an important antecedent of emotional labor. However, on the basis of the current data, the results are incomplete, as they lead to the assumption that injustice might enhance emotional deviant behavior in receivers of injustice (cf. Chapter 4). Hence, this has not been tested in this dissertation. Therefore, the results in their current form are insufficient to deduce specific implications for practice regarding this specific point. More research is needed in the future to explore whether injustice fosters emotional deviant behaviors, which would be in line with findings on the relationship between procedural injustice and counterproductive work behavior (e.g., Colquitt et al., 2013; Fodchuck, 2007).

Related to this point is the question of whether procedural justice's impact on emotional labor can be transferred back to leaders' emotional labor. Independently of the specific direction of the found effects, it should be explored whether procedural injustice experienced by a leader might trickle down to employees' perceptions of procedural injustice via surface acting and followers' perceived authenticity. Probably the framework presented here could be extended further.

In the empirical studies presented here, we concentrated on employee ratings of authentic leadership. Hence, we know from the service context that the use of surface acting and deep

acting is relevant to the individual's well-being (e.g., Glasø & Einarsen, 2008; Hülshager & Schewe, 2011), which has been explained by the lack of authenticity (cf. Brotheridge & Lee, 2000; Hochschild, 1983). Actually, Hochschild (1983) assumed that emotional labor is associated with an alienation of one's own feelings. Accordingly, Brotheridge and Lee (2002) found surface acting to be negatively related to the feeling of authenticity of the regulator (i.e., employee). Therefore, it would be a valuable addendum to include self-ratings of authentic leadership in future work.

Furthermore, in this thesis it was not differentiated between procedural justice and procedural injustice which is in line with most conducted research so far (Colquitt et al., 2013). However, it would be interesting to explore whether procedural justice and procedural injustice relate similarly to emotional labor.

As we were unable to find a general positive relationship between deep acting (across both follower gender groups) and the perception of leaders' authenticity it would be promising to distinguish between different "types" of deep acting (cf. Grandey, 2000) in future research. In his work on emotion regulation Gross (1998) differentiates cognitive change (i.e., reappraise of a situation) and attentional deployment (i.e., change the focus of attention), which have been summarized as deep acting strategies by Grandey (2000). Probably both types of deep acting have differential impact on the authenticity perception.

Finally, of course, there are implications for practice. As our findings underline that leaders' emotional labor matters in regard to employee perceptions, which might result in a positive or negative top-down cascade affecting further outcomes, it is necessary to consider emotional labor strategies when conducting leadership development training (cf. Edelman & van Knippenberg, 2016). Leaders should at least be informed about the negative impact of using surface acting when interacting with their followers, as it might be critical to their own health (Glasø, & Einarsen, 2008; see also Hülshager & Schewe, 2011) and to the health of their followers (through authentic leadership and procedural justice perceptions). Moreover, they should be encouraged and trained to use deep acting regulation instead (cf. Edelman & van Knippenberg, 2016). By this, they would avoid fostering perceptions of being inauthentic, and



simultaneously, they would contribute to perceptions of procedural justice which prevents employees from being exhausted.

Hence, parallel to this, as results of Study 1 revealed that female and male followers react differently to leaders' deep acting, it is also necessary to consider this further. In training, leaders should be sensitized to those pitfalls so that they are better able to align their use of deep acting to their specific interaction partner. When they interact with female followers it is recommended to use deep acting to a minimum level. Probably, automatic emotion "regulation" (Zapf, 2002) would be most effective in this case.

### **Limitations**

Of course, besides the several strengths of this dissertation, there are limitations which need to be addressed. Hence, in order to avoid repetition, limitations that are specific to each conducted study are excluded in the following. They have already been presented in Chapters 2 to 5.

The first and most critical point is that the current dissertation did not test the direct relationship between leaders' emotional labor and employee outcomes (here: emotional exhaustion, employees' emotional labor, and service performance). Consequently, it is not yet possible to make clear deductions on this relationship. However, as already indicated in the introduction, this work aims at an initial investigation of the proposed framework to highlight how a possible top-down cascade driven by authentic leadership and procedural justice could work; in addition, there are already some empirical studies supporting that these relationships exist, such as with employees' performance (i.e., emotional engagement; Wang, 2011). To provide further and more sophisticated support to the framework it needs to be tested whether leaders' emotional labor is directly linked to follower outcomes and if this relationship is mediated by authentic leadership and procedural justice.

Secondly, due to the design of Study 1 and Study 2, it is not possible to deduce causal conclusions about the found relationships or therefore, about the conceptual framework as well. Study 1 is based on cross-sectional data. Though, it could also be possible that leaders who are

perceived as authentic by their followers tend to use less surface acting. In terms of this, the increased use of superficial regulation strategies could be understood as an expression of mistrust by the followers and a general bad leader-follower-relationship. Therefore, the relationship between leaders' emotional labor and followers' perceptions of authenticity needs to be tested in a longitudinal design to explore a possible reverse causation. Moreover, although we went one step further in Study 2 by choosing a lagged design with different measurement points, we did not assess all variables at each point in time. Therefore, again, we were not able to test for reverse causation. In consequence, procedural justice might also impact the perception of authentic leadership, for example. Longitudinal research is needed to address these issues.

Thirdly, it might be seen as a limitation of the dissertation that we focused solely on surface and deep acting. Hence, in the emotional labor literature, a third strategy is often distinguished, which is referred to as automatic emotion regulation (Zapf, 2002), naturally felt emotions (Diefendorff, Croyle & Gosserand, 2005), or passive deep-acting (Hochschild, 1983). As the first term already implies it is characterized by a spontaneous emotional change which is in line with the display requirements (cf. Diefendorff et al., 2005). For example, a leader might automatically feel positive emotions when an employee whom he knows well arrives at his/her office. Nevertheless, whether this type of emotion regulation is a kind of strategy is critically discussed, as it seems to occur without volitional control (cf. Mauss, Bunge, & Gross, 2007; see also: Gross, 1998). Therefore, it would be quite impossible to transfer results concerning this "strategy" to practice, which is why we declined to include this strategy in our analysis.

Finally it might be criticized, that the main constructs were assessed with different measures across all studies. However, regarding authentic leadership the ALQ (Walumbwa et al., 2008) and the ALI (Neider & Schriesheim, 2011) differ only slightly. Items are highly comparable and both measures assess the four sub-dimensions of authentic leadership (relational transparency, balanced processing, internal moral perspective, and self-awareness; cf. Neider & Schriesheim, 2011).

To assess procedural justice in Study 1 and Study 3, we used Colquitt's (2001) justice scale, although we had to adapt this for our experimental design in Study 3. In Study 2, it was

necessary to reduce the number of items to assess procedural justice because the data collection was conducted in terms of a large multinational study. Therefore, we decided to use a short measure from Elovainio et al. (2010) which is, however, based on Colquitt's (2001) justice scale.

Regarding the assessment of emotional labor, the ELS (Brotheridge & Lee, 2003) and Diefendorff et al.'s (2005) emotional labor scale also differ only slightly—in fact, the items of surface and deep acting are highly equivalent in the wording.

Nevertheless, it is important to note that all measures used in the studies are established in the specific research area and all reliabilities were at least acceptable. Actually, basing the results on different measures contributes to a broader applicability of the findings and makes them independent of the specific characteristics of one measure.

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## **Appendix A: Curriculum vitae**

## Appendix B: List of publications

### Conference contributions

**Kampa, J.,** Böttcher, A., & Otto, K. (2015, May). The influence of procedural injustice on emotional labor in call-center interactions: An experimental study. Interactive poster presented at the 17th congress of the European Association of Work and Organizational Psychology, Oslo, Norway.

**Kampa, J.,** Rigotti, T., & Otto, K. (2014, September). Authentische Führung, prozedurale Gerechtigkeit und Mitarbeitergesundheit: Eine moderierte Mediation [Authentic leadership, procedural justice and employee health: A moderated mediation]. Oral presentation at the 49th congress of the German Psychological Society (DGPs), Bochum, Germany.

### Publications

**Kampa, J.,** Rigotti, T., & Otto, K. (2016, advance online publication). Mechanisms linking authentic leadership to emotional exhaustion: The role of procedural justice and emotional demands in a moderated mediation approach. *Industrial Health*, 2016-0046.

### Manuscripts submitted for peer-review

Wojtas, L. D., **Kampa, J.,** & Otto, K. (submitted). Antecedents and consequences of leaders' emotional labor: The role of gender and authentic leadership. *Gender, Work & Organization*.

**Kampa, J.,** Böttcher, A., & Otto, K. (submitted). Does procedural justice matter? An experimental study on the influence of procedural injustice on emotional labor and service performance. *Basic and Applied Social Psychology*.

### Appendix C: Ko-Autoren-Beitrag

In der nachfolgenden Tabelle ist für jedes Manuskript, das dieser kumulativen Dissertationsschrift zugrunde liegt, der prozentuale Anteil aller beteiligten Ko-Autoren aufgeführt. Die Angaben wurden im Vorfeld mit allen Ko-Autoren abgestimmt.

	<b>Manuskript 1</b>	<b>Manuskript 2</b>	<b>Manuskript 3</b>
<b>Titel</b>	<i>Antecedents and consequences of leaders' emotional labor: The role of gender and authentic leadership.</i>	<i>Mechanisms linking authentic leadership to emotional exhaustion: The role of procedural justice and emotional demands in a moderated mediation approach.</i>	<i>Does procedural justice matter? An experimental study on the influence of procedural injustice on emotional labor and service performance.</i>
<b>Journal</b>	Gender, Work & Organization	Industrial Health	Basic and Applied Social Psychology
<b>Datum der Einreichung/ Annahme</b>	August 2016 (submitted)	October 2016 (accepted)	November 2016 (submitted)
<b>Anteil der beitragenden Ko-Autoren (%)</b>	Laura Diana Wojtas (50%)	<b>Judith Kampa (70%)</b>	<b>Judith Kampa (70%)</b>
	<b>Judith Kampa (40%)</b>	Thomas Rigotti (15%)	Annegret Böttcher (20%)
	Kathleen Otto (10%)	Kathleen Otto (15%)	Kathleen Otto (10%)

Hiermit bestätige ich im Namen aller Ko-Autoren die Richtigkeit der gemachten Angaben.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Ort, Datum

\_\_\_\_\_  
Dipl.-Psych. Judith Kampa

### **Appendix D: Eigenständigkeitserklärung**

Hiermit versichere ich, dass ich die vorliegende Dissertation mit dem Titel „*A conceptual framework of leaders' emotional labor: The role of authentic leadership and procedural justice.*“ selbstständig und ohne fremde Hilfe verfasst und keine anderen als die angegebenen Hilfsmittel verwendet habe. Alle vollständig oder sinngemäß übernommene Zitate sind als solche im Text gekennzeichnet. Die vorliegende Dissertation hat weder im In- noch im Ausland in gleicher oder ähnlicher Form einer Prüfungsbehörde anlässlich eines Promotionsgesuchs oder eines anderen Prüfungszweckes zur Beurteilung vorgelegen.

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