



## Reducing burnout and enhancing job satisfaction: Critical role of hotel employees' emotional intelligence and emotional labor

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### ABSTRACT

Despite its strong theoretical relevance with emotional labor, employees' ability to understand and regulate emotions (i.e., emotional intelligence, EI) has seldom been studied, especially how it affects hotel employees responding to the firm's display rules (i.e., emotional labor) and experiencing burnout and job satisfaction. Thus, this study investigated direct and indirect effects of employees' EI on two different forms of emotional labor (i.e., emotional effort: EE; emotional dissonance: ED): burnout and job satisfaction. Data were collected from 309 customer-contact hotel employees and managers in the United States. Results of structural equation modeling showed that EI had a direct, positive effect on EE and personal accomplishment and a direct, negative effect on ED and depersonalization. EI was also found to indirectly affect job satisfaction and emotional exhaustion through the mediating roles of personal accomplishment and ED, respectively. Additionally, ED was found to directly affect depersonalization and indirectly affect job satisfaction through emotional exhaustion while EE directly affects personal accomplishment and indirectly affects job satisfaction through personal accomplishment. Finally, personal accomplishment was found to mediate the depersonalization–job satisfaction relationship. Managerial implications for human resource practices are provided.

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### 1. Introduction

The quality of the interpersonal interaction between customers and service employees is critical in satisfying customers, ultimately influencing the bottom line of the company (Ashkanasy et al., 2002; Bitner, 1990). Positive attitudes and emotions in service employees during service encounters can create a favorable impression on customers. They are then more likely to purchase a product, do return business with the company, and speak well of the company (Parasuraman et al., 1985).

Because of this, most companies in today's highly competitive business environment have begun to focus heavily on managing their employees' emotional behavior (Diefendorff and Richard, 2003), prescribing implicit and explicit display rules for the appropriate emotional expressions that their employees should use during customer encounters (Ashforth and Humphrey, 1993). In hospitality, employees perform two types of emotional labor; some employees may choose outward displays consistent with display rules but hide or mask felt emotions. In contrast, others may

attempt to modify internal feelings about display rules or customer contact situations (Hochschild, 1983).

Employees who repeatedly suppress their true emotions or fake them to follow the display rules suffer a continuing discrepancy between inner feelings and outward expressions (Grandey, 2000). This emotional discrepancy leads to emotional discomfort and job stress that in turn causes burnout and job dissatisfaction (Zapf, 2002). On the other hand, when employees make an effort to feel the required emotions, they feel emotional congruence between true feelings and emotional display, increasing their personal accomplishment and job satisfaction (Adelmann, 1995).

The ability of an individual to recognize his/her own feelings and those of others and to motivate and manage his/her own emotions well in relationship with others (i.e., emotional intelligence – EI) is critical in performing emotional labor (Goleman, 2000). Research has shown that EI can influence how people control their emotions and handle frustration. Emotionally intelligent people are sensitive and empathetic to the feeling and emotion of others (Cheung and Tang, 2009). The positive attributes of EI may change employees' emotional labor behaviors and, thus, may contribute to reducing burnout and increasing job satisfaction.

Recently, during the global economic downturn, customers have become value-seekers, and service providers strive to provide quality service at reduced cost. Accordingly, the concept of emotions

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at work has attracted the interest of researchers and practitioners alike (Cartwright and Pappas, 2007). However, research has focused more on showing direct associations of emotional labor with antecedents such as personal/job characteristics or consequences such as job related attitudes and behaviors (e.g., Abraham, 1999; Bakker and Heuven, 2006; Brotheridge and Lee, 2002, 2003; Chau et al., 2009; Côté and Morgan, 2002; Diefendorff et al., 2005; Kim, 2008; Zhang and Zhu, 2008). Little empirical research has been devoted to an integrated view, examining antecedents of emotional labor that may further influence the outcomes of emotional labor (Allen et al., 2010; Austin et al., 2008; Giardini and Frese, 2006). Therefore, this study investigated the antecedent role of employees' EI on the links between emotional labor, burnout, and job satisfaction. Specifically, this study examined how employees' EI directly influences emotional effort (EE) and emotional dissonance (ED) and indirectly affects the three burnout dimensions and job satisfaction through emotional labor in the hotel setting.

In the hospitality industry, where face-to-face and voice-to-voice interactions between service providers and customers continually occur, employees are particularly vulnerable to the demands of emotional labor (Pizam, 2004). However, although current hotel human resources managers are aware of the concept of emotional labor, not many hotel organizations effectively implement strategies to control emotional labor and prevent burnout (Johanson and Woods, 2008). Thus, a deeper and clearer understanding of the EI-emotional labor process and its positive or negative consequences for employees is critical in attempting to create strategies for controlling emotional labor and its outcomes (Johnson and Spector, 2007). Thus, the comprehensive view of the interactions among EI, emotional labor, burnout, and job satisfaction in this study will provide hospitality practitioners and researchers with insights into the process of EI and how emotional labor affects hospitality employees' job attitudes and behaviors. With these insights, they may also develop and implement effective employee support programs and policies associated with EI, emotional labor, burnout, and job satisfaction.

## 2. Conceptual background and hypotheses

### 2.1. Emotional intelligence

Salovey and Mayer (1990) first introduced the concept of EI, as separate from general intelligence, and their later definition (Mayer and Salovey, 1997) is the most widely accepted one in research on emotional labor (Carmeli and Josman, 2006):

“... the ability to perceive emotions, to access and generate emotions so as to assist thoughts, to understand emotions and emotional knowledge, and to reflectively regulate emotions so as to promote emotional and intellectual growth” (Mayer and Salovey, 1997, p. 5).

Mayer and Salovey (1997) conceptualized EI in four dimensions: (1) appraisal of emotion in self, (2) appraisal and recognition of emotion in others, (3) regulation of emotion in self, and (4) use of emotion to facilitate performance. Self-emotion appraisal reflects the ability to accurately perceive and appraise one's own deep emotions and to express these emotions naturally. Appraisal of others' emotions is the ability to accurately perceive and understand the internal and external emotions of others. Regulation of emotion involves managing, controlling, or altering emotions in specific directions to facilitate pleasant feelings, to enhance positive affective states during psychological distress. Use of emotion reflects the ability to make use of emotion for constructive activities and for personal performance (Mayer and Salovey, 1997).

### 2.2. Display rule and emotional labor

Display rules refer to organizational standards prescribing the feelings and emotions displayed by an employee when providing service to customers (Diefendorff and Richard, 2003). Employees should thus choose either to modify outward displays to be consistent with display rules or attempt to modify internal emotions to be consistent with display rules (Hochschild, 1983). As such, emotional labor is defined as the labor to enhance, fake, or suppress emotions to comply with an organization's display rules (Grandey, 2000).

Grandey (2000) and Kruml and Geddes (2000) translated these responses into two related dimensions of emotional labor: emotional dissonance (ED) and emotional effort (EE). ED is the discrepancy between genuinely felt and feigned emotion (Hochschild, 1983; Kruml and Geddes, 2000). ED occurs when employees fake, suppress, or amplify emotional expressions that differ from their true feelings. Hochschild's (1983) concept of surface acting, changing the emotional display but not the inner feelings, is conceptually interrelated with ED, and the two have been used interchangeably (Morris and Feldman, 1997; Zapf, 2002). According to Giardini and Frese (2006) and Zapf (2002), surface acting implies a state of ED because almost any employee in a job involving manipulating emotions will experience ED to some extent.

EE is an employee's attempt to actively change their internal thoughts and feelings to match the feelings they are expected or required to show (Grandey, 2000; Kruml and Geddes, 2000). While ED is simple regulation of outward expressions of emotion, EE is an employee's endeavor to regulate his/her inner thoughts and feelings to produce genuine positive expressions in line with organizational requirements (Kruml and Geddes, 2000). EE is identical to Hochschild's emotional labor concept of deep acting: an attempt to invoke and actually feel the displayed emotions (Brotheridge and Lee, 2002). In both cases, employees actively try to internalize emotions required by display rules (Kruml and Geddes, 2000).

### 2.3. Effect of emotional intelligence on emotional labor

Previous research has found that the functional attributes of EI are associated with emotional labor. According to Mayer and Salovey (1995), emotionally intelligent people tend to be more adaptive and flexible in regulating their emotions to be consistent to situational demands than those who are not. Fabian (1999) also argued that an employee who has the EI ability to monitor his or her emotional expression is aware of what emotions are expected and (un)acceptable in a given interpersonal interaction. An empirical study by Modassir and Singh (2008) revealed that those with high levels of EI tend to behave in ways that encourage positive emotional experiences, so they attempt to present emotions that please others (i.e., EE). Another study by Lopes et al. (2005) suggested that people with higher levels of emotional labor have more positive social interactions with others; they tend to show concern for others, voluntarily help others, and be perceived as good peers or friends by others because they can comprehend social cues (i.e., emotional expression and behavior) in communication. Lopes et al. (2005) also found that people who could regulate their emotions well can modulate emotions to affective states, use emotional strategies effectively, make good decisions in stressful situations, and use various skills necessary for effective social behavior. Such findings imply that those with high EI can more successfully align actual feelings to positive emotional display because they can quickly solve the conflict between felt and expressed emotions (Carmeli, 2003).

Previous research has also considered EI as an individual's capacity for emotional control and emotional labor as an expression of that capacity (e.g., Mastracci et al., 2010; Mikolajczak et al.,

2007b). Like a physical laborer needing physical fitness to engage in physical labor, service employees need EI to perform their jobs (Mastracci et al., 2010). Thus, employees who can manage their own emotions and sense the emotions of others think in ways that encourage positive and discourage negative emotional experiences and know how to appropriately govern their actions on the job (Cherniss and Goleman, 2001; Mikolajczak et al., 2007a). Accordingly, employees with high EI feel able to exhibit the required emotions and are more likely to respond better to customers in service encounters than employees without those characteristics (Mikolajczak et al., 2007a).

Mikolajczak et al. (2007b) also suggested that because EI involves elements of empathy and ability to manage the emotions of others, employees with higher EI find it less challenging to induce a desired state in customers than employees with lower EI. The high EI employees may therefore find themselves less often in emotionally demanding situations and thus experience less ED (Mikolajczak et al., 2007b). Accordingly, this study proposes the following hypotheses.

**Hypothesis 1a.** Emotional intelligence has a positive influence on emotional effort.

**Hypothesis 1b.** Emotional intelligence has a negative influence on emotional dissonance.

#### 2.4. Burnout and job satisfaction

Burnout refers to a severe psychological and physical response syndrome resulting, in this context, from prolonged stress and frustration at work (Maslach and Jackson, 1986). It is a multidimensional concept with three components: emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment (Maslach et al., 2001). Emotional exhaustion involves constant emotional overextension, being drained through contact with other people. With depersonalization, employees take a dehumanizing and impersonal view of others, treating them callously. Reduced personal accomplishment refers to a loss of or a decline in feeling competent and successful at work (Maslach and Jackson, 1986).

Job satisfaction is a positive emotional state coming from an individual's subjective experience with his/her job (Locke, 1976). It reflects the degree to which a person's wants, needs, or expectations are met at work (Cranny et al., 1992). Spector (1996) simply defined job satisfaction as "the extent to which people like their jobs" (p. 214).

#### 2.5. Effect of emotional intelligence on burnout and job satisfaction

Burnout occurs more commonly among hospitality employees who serve customers but cannot cope with excessive emotional demands because of limited emotional resources (Wright and Cropanzano, 1998). Prolonged frustration and stress, especially among those who lack sufficient emotional resources, may lead to burnout at work (Jackson et al., 1986). Thus, given that EI provides a wide range of abilities to regulate emotions and quickly and accurately process emotional information (Mayer and Salovey, 1997), emotionally intelligent employees may choose more appropriate strategies to cope with frustration and respond more efficiently to emotional demands in service situations. EI, as a major source of emotional resources, also helps employees effectively cope with emotional stress and frustration. Thus, emotionally intelligent employees avoid dysfunctional emotions and use them adaptively to reduce feelings of frustration which otherwise produce burnout (Carmeli, 2003).

Empirical evidence for this theory comes from Brackett's (2010) study of teachers' EI. According to Brackett et al. (2010), teachers with higher emotion-regulation ability (ERA), a main component of EI, regulate their own emotions effectively, help others regulate their emotions successfully, and evoke positive responses from those with whom they interact. Thus, along with the ability to handle student problems effectively, teachers with high ERA feel more personal accomplishment by creating warm, caring relationships and a peaceful classroom atmosphere with reduced conflict and tension (Brackett et al., 2010).

Another empirical study by Goldman et al. (1996) revealed that people who can appraise their moods or emotions are less likely report negative psychological or somatic symptom and illness, both of which are associated with feelings of distress and burnout. Therefore, the following hypotheses are proposed.

**Hypothesis 2a.** Emotional intelligence has a negative effect on emotional exhaustion.

**Hypothesis 2b.** Emotional intelligence has a negative effect on depersonalization.

**Hypothesis 2c.** Emotional intelligence has a negative effect on a reduced personal accomplishment.

Little research has explored any direct relationship between EI and job satisfaction. However, the social or industrial psychology literature has established that EI may enhance job satisfaction because it increases feelings of emotional well-being, higher self-esteem, and positive mood, decreasing negative affective emotions (e.g., Goleman, 1995; Mayer and Salovey, 1995; Saarni, 1999; Salovey and Mayer, 1990; Salovey et al., 1995; Schutte et al., 2002).

According to Mayer and Salovey (1995), the ability to self-regulate, actually enables service employees to more effectively control adverse emotions and, therefore, prevent the negative affect that would otherwise reduce satisfaction at work. Brackett et al.'s (2010) empirical study also reported that EI is associated with job satisfaction. Teachers with higher ERA easily generate positive moods and emotions through many strategies for regulating their emotions, including self-talk and cognitive reappraisal, to mitigate negative emotional arousal as well as manage stress. Positive moods and emotions, functioning as a buffer against stress, enable teachers to replenish the necessary intellectual and social resources to not only prevent burnout, but also promote job satisfaction (Brackett et al., 2010; Tugade and Fredrickson, 2004).

Similarly, Schutte et al. (2002) suggested that because emotionally intelligent individuals can perceive, understand, regulate, and harness emotions, they not only maintain or maximize positive moods and higher self-esteem, but also resist the influence of negative situations that could adversely affect their positive mood and self-esteem. Therefore, given that job satisfaction is defined as feeling or affective responses resulting from an evaluation of the work situation (Mottaz, 1988; Smith et al., 1969) and is often considered as a proxy for an employee's well-being at work (Grandey, 2000), emotionally intelligent employees who experience continuous positive moods or well-being at work may reach a higher level of fulfillment and job satisfaction. Thus, the following hypothesis is derived.

**Hypothesis 2d.** Emotional intelligence has a positive effect on job satisfaction.

#### 2.6. Effect of emotional dissonance on burnout and job satisfaction

Prior research reports that emotional labor is both detrimental and functional in employees' well-being and organizational success (Kim, 2008). The multidimensional nature of emotional labor

may explain the bidirectional consequences of emotional labor (Hochschild, 1983). Generally, research indicates that ED has negative consequences, such as burnout and job dissatisfaction, for employees while EE leads to a sense of accomplishment and job satisfaction (Zapf, 2002).

According to earlier research, ED relates positively to all three components of burnout. Zapf (2002) argued that ED could be considered as the failure to adequately handle a social interaction that produces stress and, thus, contributes to heightened emotional exhaustion and depersonalization and lowered personal accomplishment. Ashforth and Humphrey (1993) further argued that employees' ED leads them to feel fraudulent and hypocritical, ultimately triggering "personal and work-related maladjustment including poor self-esteem, depression, cynicism, and alienation from work" (pp. 96–97). The feeling of reduced personal accomplishment also may occur when an employee judges that his or her emotional displays were not effective or were met with annoyance by customers (Ashforth and Humphrey, 1993). Brotheridge and Grandey (2002) also revealed that ED may cause employees to distance themselves from customers, feeling a reduced sense of personal accomplishment; faked emotional responses cause internal tension, suppressing true feelings, and thereby creating guilt and dissatisfaction with work.

Taken together, the relationships between ED and burnout components can be explained by the "alienation hypothesis" (Hochschild, 1983) and the "depletion of cognitive resources theory" (Cordes and Dougherty, 1993). When employees feel repetitive mismatches between felt and expressed emotions during interaction with customers, they lose emotional control and display inappropriate reactions, becoming alienated from their genuine emotions. Employees then feel depleted of psychological energy and may have few ways to replenish their emotional resources. This may lead to psychological strain and emotional distress, both of which are major sources of burnout (Schaufeli and Enzmann, 1998). Thus, the following hypotheses are proposed.

**Hypothesis 3a.** Emotional dissonance is positively associated with emotional exhaustion.

**Hypothesis 3b.** Emotional dissonance is positively associated with depersonalization.

**Hypothesis 3c.** Emotional dissonance is positively associated with reduced personal accomplishment.

Previous studies reveal that repeated contact with people expressing fake emotions could increase feelings of inauthenticity, stress, frustration, or conflict in human services professions and can be an important element in an employee's dissatisfaction with the job (Hochschild, 1983). For example, Rutter and Fielding (1988), Parkinson (1991), and Pugliesi (1999) found that the need to suppress genuinely felt emotions, or impression management of masking genuine feelings, correlates negatively with job satisfaction. A longitudinal study of service workers by Côté and Morgan (2002) also revealed that ED induced by suppression of unpleasant emotion is psychologically taxing and therefore lowers job satisfaction. Bakker and Heuven (2006) found that when employees choose to feign emotion, it is more likely that the employees experience ED, which in turn triggers lowered job satisfaction. Thus, the following hypothesis is proposed.

**Hypothesis 3d.** Emotional dissonance is negatively associated with job satisfaction.

### 2.7. Effect of emotional effort on burnout and job satisfaction

In contrast to ED, research on EE consistently shows that EE generates benefits. Hochschild (1983) argued that EE results

in a personal accomplishment and job satisfaction because the alignment between inner feelings and displayed emotions yields an authentic expression of self and, thus, minimizes ED. Zapf (2002) also suggested that when employees try to display positive emotions, their personal accomplishment increases. Employees may consider their ability to exhibit the desired emotion to demanding customers as a sign of professionalism and, further, experience a feeling of pride when they manage difficult social interactions successfully. Brotheridge and Lee (2002) found that employees who treat the customers with authentic expression experience less emotional exhaustion and depersonalization; they feel, instead, a heightened sense of self-efficacy and personal accomplishment due to the positive feedback from the customers and colleagues. Brotheridge and Grandey (2002) reported similar findings, namely that employees' EE contributes to an increased feeling of personal accomplishment because of the positive feedback from the customers who are satisfied with authentic emotional expression during a successful service interaction. Additionally, Goldman et al. (1996) suggested that individuals who work to maintain a positive outlook tend to report less distress and illness under stressful interpersonal situations because those individuals can clearly identify their moods and beliefs about their ability to properly regulate emotions. Thus, the following hypotheses are proposed.

**Hypothesis 4a.** Emotional effort is negatively associated with emotional exhaustion.

**Hypothesis 4b.** Emotional effort is negatively associated with depersonalization.

**Hypothesis 4c.** Emotional effort is negatively associated with reduced personal accomplishment (i.e., Emotional effort is positively associated with personal accomplishment).

Less empirical research has sought information about the relationship of deep acting to job satisfaction. However, Adelman and Zajonc's (1989) facial feedback hypothesis may explain the positive effects of EE on job satisfaction. According to the hypothesis, facial expressions "provide feedback to the expresser that is either necessary or sufficient to affect emotional experience" (Matsumoto, 1987, p. 769). This hypothesis implies that positive emotions displayed by service employees may cause the customers to experience a positive emotion that, in turn, causes positive physical and psychological reactions in employees (Adelman and Zajonc, 1989), subsequently generating higher levels of job satisfaction. When employees exert themselves to understand and interpret customers' feelings and moods correctly, the customers' reaction may be favorable to the employees (Law et al., 2004). Thus, EI not only precludes uncertainty or embarrassment that might otherwise disrupt interactions but also makes employee–customer interactions smoother and more predictable (Ashforth and Humphrey, 1993). Thus, employees come to believe they can successfully fulfill task requirements, improving employee attitudes, which then may develop into job satisfaction. Adelman's (1995) empirical study of restaurant servers found a relationship between EE and job satisfaction. He used facial feedback theory to explain the beneficial effects of EE on job satisfaction. When employees perform EE, customers see positive emotions in employees. Employees may then receive positive emotional responses from customers and accordingly experience frequent good moods at work (Adelman, 1995). Zajonc (1985) also suggested that continuing congruence between inner feelings and outward expressions, as well as reduced negative emotions, may lead to improved affective well-being, including job satisfaction. Thus, both theory and previous empirical research suggest a link between EE and job satisfaction.

**Hypothesis 4d.** Emotional effort is positively associated with job satisfaction.

## 2.8. Inter-relationships among burnout dimensions

According to Maslach and Jackson (1986), the three states of burnout are distinct but work correlatively. When excessive emotional demands are frequently imposed upon employees, emotional and physical depletion follows, along with a lack of energy, and feeling drained of the emotional resources to cope with the demands. In an attempt to cope with this emotional exhaustion, employees may reduce their emotional and cognitive involvement with work by detaching themselves from customers and developing a depersonalized response. As this depersonalization continues, employees begin to feel less competent and less successful on the job and evaluate themselves negatively for personal accomplishment and productivity. Thus, we hypothesized as follows.

**Hypothesis 5a.** Emotional exhaustion is positively associated with depersonalization.

**Hypothesis 5b.** Depersonalization is positively associated with reduced personal accomplishment.

## 2.9. Effect of burnout on job satisfaction

The literature recognizes dissatisfaction with the job as an important consequence of burnout. A feeling that the job is not meeting employees' expectations and needs may lead to dissatisfaction. According to Singh et al. (1994), employees appraise job demands and compare them to personal coping resources. If an employee sees an imbalance in that relationship (i.e., high demand but low levels of resources), job satisfaction may be lower. Burnout results from depleted emotional resources in emotionally demanding situations, so burnout syndromes should relate negatively to job satisfaction.

Herzberg's (1959) two-factor theory provides another plausible explanation for the relationship between burnout and job satisfaction. According to his theory, motivators like achievement, recognition, and responsibility are the primary causes of job satisfaction. Emotionally exhausted employees who detach themselves from customers to avoid emotional involvement may lose their sense of job responsibility. They cannot gain recognition from customers and coworkers and, thus, may see themselves negatively. Thus, when employees are burned out, they may manifest lower job satisfaction. Therefore, the following hypotheses are derived.

**Hypothesis 6a.** Emotional exhaustion is negatively associated with job satisfaction.

**Hypothesis 6b.** Depersonalization is negatively associated with job satisfaction.

**Hypothesis 6c.** Reduced personal accomplishment is negatively associated with job satisfaction.

## 3. Methodology

### 3.1. Measures and instrument development

Various measures validated in previous research were adopted and anchored from *strongly disagree* (1) to *strongly agree* (7). The response format for emotional exhaustion and depersonalization was a 7-point frequency scale, where 1 = *never* and 7 = *daily*. Measurement items and sources are reported in Table 1.

Before collecting data, a pre-test assessed content adequacy using 10 graduate students and faculty in a hospitality program. Based on the feedback, several items were reworded, and some measures were reorganized. A pilot-test with 40 undergraduate students working at lodging operations followed. In the main survey, the authors added a specific notification of participation

eligibility in the cover letter and screening questions to strictly control the participants' eligibility and, thus, increase the validity of responses. Respondents had to be at least 18 years of age, employed by a hotel in the United States, and communicate routinely with customers at work.

### 3.2. Sample and data collection procedure

This study used convenience sampling to select and recruit respondents. To collect data from employees working at hotels, the authors approached approximately 1200 hotel managers, human resources directors, general managers, or owners through various hospitality-business social networking sites. The authors invited them to distribute the online survey questionnaire along with the URL link to the university survey site. Of 356 surveys collected, 47 responses were deleted; either those participants were disqualified ( $n = 15$ ) or respondents did not complete the survey ( $n = 32$ ). For further data analysis, 309 responses were used.

## 4. Data analysis and results

### 4.1. Characteristics of respondents

Of all respondents, 57.6% ( $n = 178$ ) were female. Approximately 35% of respondents ( $n = 109$ ) were between 20 and 29 years old, and 27.2% were between 30 and 39. Slightly over half of the respondents had completed a 4-year college ( $n = 156$ ) degree, followed by 2-year college graduates (25.9%). In terms of industry tenure, 68% ( $n = 210$ ) of the respondents had been working in the hospitality industry more than 5 years whereas only 6.1% had been employed less than 1 year. Most respondents (93.2%,  $n = 288$ ) were full time employees.

### 4.2. Harman's single-factor test

Harman's single-factor test was conducted to determine the presence of common method effect. Because this test is the most widely used technique for detecting common method variance (Podsakoff et al., 2003), we applied it to the generated data before the main analyses. For this test, exploratory factor analysis was performed to evaluate the amount of variance in our observed variables that can be explained by a single factor. If a single factor emerges or one general factor accounts for most of the covariance in the independent and dependent variables, a significant common method variance is present (Podsakoff et al., 2003).

To determine the number of factors that accounted for variance in the variables, all seven variables were entered in an exploratory factor analysis, using unrotated principal components factor analysis. The results of the factor analysis revealed not a single factor, but two distinct factors with eigenvalues greater than 1.0. The two factors together accounted for 66.5% of the total variance; the first factor did not account for most of the variance (43.7%). Thus, no general factor was apparent, and accordingly, we determined that no common method variance was present.

### 4.3. Measurement model and confirmatory factor analysis

Confirmatory factor analysis, using AMOS 17, was performed first to evaluate the adequacy of measurement items that connect to corresponding latent variables simultaneously (Anderson and Gerbing, 1988; Bollen, 1989). The measurement model consisted of 11 constructs (including first-order factors) and 54 measurement items. Because of relatively weak factor loadings (below .50) and evidence of cross-loadings, three measurement items were dropped. The factor loadings of manifest variables on their respective latent variables were all significant at  $p < .001$  (Table 1),

**Table 1**  
Confirmatory factor analysis: items and standardized loadings.

Construct and scale items	Standardized loadings
<b>Emotional intelligence</b> (Wong and Law, 2002)	
<i>SEA</i>	<b>.886</b>
I have a good sense of why I have certain feelings most of the time.	.880
I have a good understanding of my own emotions.	.916
I really understand what I feel.	.836
I always know whether or not I am happy.	.787
<i>OEA</i>	<b>.817</b>
I always know my friends' emotions from their behavior.	.789
I am a good observer of others' emotions.	.896
I am sensitive to the feelings and emotions of others.	.744
I have a good understanding of the emotions of people around me.	.889
<i>UOE</i>	<b>.899</b>
I always set goals for myself and then try my best to achieve them.	.801
I always tell myself that I am a competent person.	.828
I am a self-motivated person.	.870
I always encourage myself to try my best.	.895
<i>ROE</i>	<b>.834</b>
I am able to control my temper and handle difficulties rationally.	.842
I am quite capable of controlling my own emotions.	.930
I can always calm down quickly when I am very angry.	.790
I have good control of my own emotions.	.899
<b>Emotional dissonance</b> (Chu and Murrmann, 2006)	
I put on a "mask" in order to express the right emotions for my job.	.614
I have to cover up my true feelings when dealing with customers.	.670
When dealing with customers, I display emotions that I am not actually feeling.	.715
I fake the emotions I show when dealing with customers.	.686
My smile to customers is often not sincere.	.683
My interactions with customers are very robotic.	.633
I put on an act in order to deal with customers in an appropriate way.	.874
When dealing with customers, I behave in a way that differs from how I really feel.	.899
I fake a good mood when interacting with customers.	.884
<b>Emotional effort</b> (Chu and Murrmann, 2006)	
I try to talk myself out of feeling what I really feel when helping customers.	.643
I have to concentrate more on my behavior when I display an emotion that I don't actually feel.	.620
I try to actually experience the emotions that I must show when interacting with customers.	.662
I try to change my actual feelings to match those that I must express to customers.	.776
I work at calling up the feelings I need to show to customers.	.768
When dealing with customers, I attempt to create certain emotions in myself that present the image my company desires.	.814
<b>Emotional exhaustion</b> (Maslach and Jackson, 1986)	
I feel emotionally drained from my work.	.816
I feel used up at the end of the workday.	.800
I feel fatigued when I get up in the morning and have to face another day on the job.	.885
I feel burned out from my work.	.931
I feel I'm working too hard on my job.	.773
I feel frustrated by my job.	.802
I feel like I'm at the end of my rope.	.786
<b>Depersonalization</b> (Maslach and Jackson, 1986)	
I feel that I treat some customers as if they were impersonal objects.	.773
I've become more callous toward people since I took this job.	.876
I worry that this job is hardening me emotionally.	.830
I don't really care what happens to some customers.	.713
<b>Personal accomplishment</b> (Maslach and Jackson, 1986)	
I can easily understand how my customers feel about things.	.689
I deal very effectively with the problems of my customers.	.838
I feel I'm positively influencing the lives of others through my work.	.693
I can easily create a relaxed atmosphere with my customers.	.843
I have accomplished many worthwhile things in my job.	.687
In my work, I deal with emotional problems very calmly.	.773
<b>Job satisfaction</b> (Cammann et al., 1979)	
All in all, I am satisfied with my job.	.917
In general, I like working at my organization.	.832
In general, I do NOT like my job (R <sup>a</sup> ).	.856

Note: All factor loadings were significant at  $p < .001$ . Figures in bold represent loadings of the first-order factors.

<sup>a</sup> Reverse coded.

satisfying the convergent validity criteria (Anderson and Gerbing, 1988). Table 1 reports the standardized loadings.

Composite reliabilities of constructs ranged from .86 to .95, exceeding the conventional cut-off value of .70 (Bagozzi and Yi, 1988; Fornell and Larcker, 1981). The average variance extracted (AVE) of constructs were more than the suggested value of .50, demonstrating more than half of variances in constructs are explained by their corresponding measures (Fornell and Larcker,

1981; Hair et al., 1998). Discriminant validity was assessed by comparing the squared correlation of the paired constructs with the AVEs of each construct (Fornell and Larcker, 1981). Except PA (see Table 2), the condition was met, demonstrating each construct shares more variance with its measures than it shares with other constructs. Table 2 presents the descriptive statistics, composite reliabilities, correlations, and squared correlations of the variables analyzed in the study. The final measurement model test

**Table 2**  
Descriptive statistics, composite reliabilities, correlations, and squared correlations.

	Mean (SD)	AVE	EI	ED	EE	EX	DP	PA	JS
EI	5.89 (.92)	.89	<b>.95<sup>a</sup></b>	-.22 <sup>b</sup>	.31	-.18	-.34	.79	.48
ED	3.32 (1.42)	.56	.05 <sup>c</sup>	<b>.92</b>	.17	.46	.63	-.34	-.35
EE	4.88 (1.31)	.51	.10	.03	<b>.86</b>	.10	.01	.37	.20
EX	3.42 (1.64)	.69	.03	.22	.01	<b>.94</b>	.63	-.18	-.50
DP	2.11 (1.29)	.64	.09	.39	.01 <sup>d</sup>	.39	<b>.88</b>	-.36	-.46
PA	5.96 (.96)	.57	.62 <sup>e</sup>	.11	.14	.03	.13	<b>.89</b>	.61
JS	5.75 (1.10)	.76	.23	.12	.04	.25	.21	.38	<b>.90</b>

Note: AVE = average variance extracted; EI = emotional intelligence; ED = emotional dissonance; EE = emotional effort; EX = emotional exhaustion; DP = depersonalization; PA = personal accomplishment; JS = job satisfaction.

<sup>a</sup> Composite reliabilities are along the diagonal in bold.

<sup>b</sup> Correlations are above the diagonal.

<sup>c</sup> Squared correlations are below the diagonal.

<sup>d</sup> Less than .01.

<sup>e</sup> The square of the correlation between PA and EI was slightly higher than AVE of PA. A further analysis assessed discriminant validity by constraining the correlation between the pair of factors to unity. A significantly lower chi-square value for the unconstrained model (42 less for a degree freedom) indicates that the two are not perfectly correlated, demonstrating discriminant validity (Anderson and Gerbing, 1988; Bagozzi and Phillips, 1982).

presented a very good fit with the data (RMSEA = .047; CFI = .94; IFI = .94; TLI = .93;  $\chi^2(1183) = 1977.81, p < .001$ ), except chi-square, which is often reported as significant because of sample size and strict assumptions (Bagozzi and Yi, 1988; Bentler and Bonett, 1980).

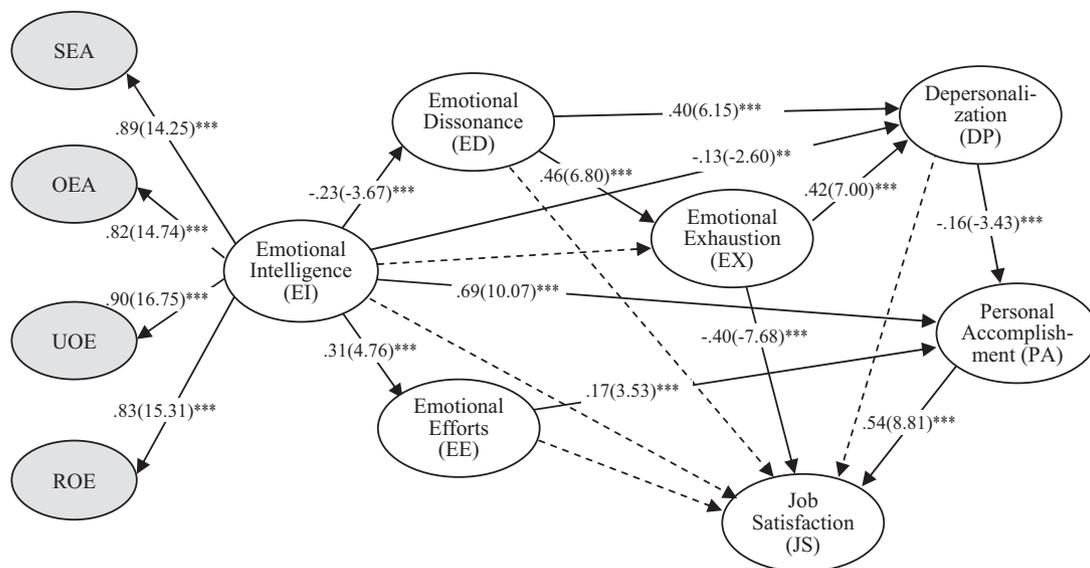
4.4. Structural model and relationship test

For parsimony in the final model, non-significant structural paths were deleted in sequence (Byrne, 2001). Overall fit indices supported the fit of the proposed structural model. The values of fit indices were as follows: RMSEA = .048; CFI = .94; IFI = .94; TLI = .93;  $\chi^2(1194) = 2026.77; p < .001$ . The parameter estimates were assessed by the maximum likelihood. The results of the second-order factor analysis demonstrate significant relationships (at  $p < .001$ ) between the first-order latent factors (i.e., SEA, OEA, UOE, and ROE) and the second-order factors (i.e., EI). The path coefficients between EI and EE ( $\beta = .31, t = 4.76$ ) and EI and ED ( $\beta = -.23, t = -3.67$ ) were significant, supporting hypotheses 1a and 1b. EI explained approximately 9.4% of the total variance in EE and 5.5% in ED. In turn, ED accounted for 21.5% of variation in EX with path coefficient of .46 ( $t = 6.80$ ), supporting Hypothesis 3a. EI, along with ED and EX, predicted more than half of variation (54.5%) in DP

( $\beta = -.13, t = -2.60$  for Hypothesis 2b;  $\beta = .40, t = 6.15$  for Hypothesis 3b; and  $\beta = .42, t = 7.00$  for Hypothesis 5a). EI ( $\beta = .69, t = 10.07$ ), EE ( $\beta = .17, t = 3.53$ ), and DP ( $\beta = -.16, t = -3.43$ ) altogether explained 66.5% of total variance in PA, supporting hypotheses 2c, 4c, and 5b. Finally, a total of 52.6% of variance in JS was explained by EX ( $\beta = -.40, t = -7.68$ ) and PA ( $\beta = .54, t = 8.81$ ), supporting hypotheses 6a and 6c. Fig. 1 represents path coefficients and  $t$ -values. Rejected hypotheses are further discussed in the following section.

4.5. Test of mediating effects

To examine mediation roles of ED, EX, and PA, the authors further estimated five separate models. To examine mediating effects, this study followed Baron and Kenny's (1986) suggestions and performed chi-square difference tests. Researchers argue that it is not enough to report whether the size of the relation between the predictor and the outcome variable becomes smaller (partial mediation) or insignificant (full mediation) when the mediator is added to the equation (Frazier et al., 2004). Instead, they suggest testing the significance of the mediated effect. Of the various methods, the Sobel (1982) tests were applied to test significance of the mediated effects.



**Fig. 1.** Structural model and path coefficients ( $t$ -values). Note: \*\* $p < .01$ ; \*\*\* $p < .001$ . SEA = self-emotion appraisal; OEA = others-emotional appraisal; UOE = use of emotion; ROE = regulation of emotion. Shaded circles indicate first-order factors. Dotted lines indicate non-significant paths ( $p > .05$ ). However, the individual direct paths specified in dotted lines (e.g., from EI to EX) became significant when the intervening variables (e.g., ED) were constrained (i.e., fixing the path from ED to EX at zero), which present possible mediating effects.

**Table 3**  
Testing mediating effects of ED, EX, and PA.

Mediating role of	Between	Statistics of $P^a \rightarrow O^b$ , when $M^c \rightarrow O$ is set at 0.				Statistics of $P \rightarrow O$ , when $M \rightarrow O$ allowed.				Decrease <sup>d</sup> in $\chi^2$	Sobel test (Z)
		B	SE	$\beta^e$	t	B	SE	$\beta$	t		
ED	EI and EX (H2a)	-.27	.09	-.19	-3.00**	-.10	.08	-.07	-1.25 <sup>ns</sup>	56.8	-3.17***
EX	ED and JS (H3d)	-.21	.06	-.19	-3.48***	-.01	.06	-.01	-.02 <sup>ns</sup>	52.12	-4.83***
PA	EI and JS (H2d)	.56	.07	.44	8.04***	-.08	.12	-.07	-.72 <sup>ns</sup>	39.76	5.06***
PA	EE and JS (H4d)	.25	.05	.28	5.00***	-.04	.05	.05	-.05 <sup>ns</sup>	92.68	3.20***
PA	DP and JS (H6b)	-.38	.10	-.28	-3.67***	-.03	.09	-.02	-.30 <sup>ns</sup>	81.32	-3.16***

ED = emotional dissonance; EX = emotional exhaustion; PA = personal accomplishment; EI = emotional intelligence; EE = emotional effort; DP = depersonalization; JS = job satisfaction.

<sup>a</sup> Predictor variable.

<sup>b</sup> Outcome variable.

<sup>c</sup> Mediator.

<sup>d</sup> Decrease in  $\chi^2$  for the decrease of one degree of freedom.

<sup>e</sup> Size of direct effect when the direct effect of the mediator on the dependent variable is controlled.

\*\*  $p < .01$ .

\*\*\*  $p < .001$ .

<sup>ns</sup> Not significant.

As presented in Fig. 1, the first (a significant direct effect of the predictor variable to the mediator) and second (a significant direct effect of the mediator to the outcome variable) conditions were met. The third condition was checked by individually constraining the direct path from the mediator to the outcome variable. All individual direct paths from the predictor variable to its corresponding outcome variable were significant at least at  $p < .01$  when the direct effect of each mediator on the outcome variables was set at zero (see Table 3). Finally, when the direct path from the mediator to the outcome variable was freely estimated, the direct path from the predictor variable to outcome variable became insignificant, demonstrating full mediation. For example, when the direct path from ED to EX is controlled (set at zero), the estimated path from EI to EX was significant at  $p < .01$  ( $\beta = -.19$ ,  $t = -3.00$ ). However, when the direct effect of EI on EX was estimated along with ED (the mediator), the path from EI to EX became non-significant ( $\beta = -.07$ ,  $t = -1.25$ ,  $p = .21$ ). Although the authors hypothesized a direct effect of EI on EX in H2a, this study found no direct effect, finding instead that ED mediates between EI and EX. Further, the overall fit of the five mediating models provided better estimation than non-mediating models. The chi-square changes were large (the decrease ranged from 39.76 to 92.68) for a decrease of one degree of freedom (see Table 3). Finally, the mediated effect was tested for statistical significance by dividing the estimate of the mediating variable effect by its standard error and comparing this value to a standard normal distribution (MacKinnon et al., 2002; Sobel, 1982). In the summary, we discuss how mediation enriches our understanding of indirect relationships among variables.

## 5. Discussion

### 5.1. Effect of emotional intelligence on emotional labor

In determining the antecedent role of EI on emotional labor, the results show that EI is positively associated with EE and that EI is negatively associated with ED. That is, emotionally intelligent employees are more likely to try to make their true emotions congruent to the emotions required by display rules. On the other hand, employees with high EI are less likely to merely manage observable expressions in performing their jobs and thus suffer less ED. Study findings by Carmeli (2003) and Mikolajczak et al. (2007b) may help explain these findings. People with high EI can empathize and recognize and manage their own emotions, so they have a repertoire of strategies to regulate emotion that may serve as

emotional resources. They therefore feel comfortable and confident in emotional labor situations.

### 5.2. Effect of emotional intelligence on burnout and job satisfaction

The results of this study further revealed that EI had a direct, negative relationship with depersonalization and reduced personal accomplishment. When employees have high levels of EI, they have enough emotional resources that they do not feel emotionally depleted in challenging situations. Thus, employees with high EI are less likely to reduce or avoid emotional involvement with the service work by treating customers impersonally (i.e., depersonalization) or to evaluate themselves negatively in their accomplishments (i.e., reduced personal accomplishment). This result, when conversely interpreted, suggests that EI positively affects personal accomplishment. That is, because employees with high levels of EI spontaneously show positive genuine emotions to customers with little prompting, they are more likely to have satisfied customers. Through seeing customers satisfied with their service, employees may experience a feeling of enjoyment and excitement that may in turn bring about personal accomplishment.

Unlike depersonalization and reduced personal accomplishment, EI did not have a direct link to emotional exhaustion; instead, EI is negatively associated with emotional exhaustion through the mediating effect of ED. This result is consistent with the conservation of resources (COR) theory (Hobfoll, 1989) that previous studies cited to explain burnout consequences (Lee and Ashforth, 1990; Wright and Cropanzano, 1998). According to COR theory, people strive to obtain, maintain, and protect resources, and emotional exhaustion (i.e., burnout) occurs when these resources are lost or individuals cannot replenish resources after significant investment. Therefore, employees with higher EI need not fake genuine emotions or even feel ED because they have abundant emotional resources and abilities. Because they do not consume excessive emotional resources for emotional labor, they may not experience emotional exhaustion.

The results of this study did not find a direct relationship between EI and job satisfaction. However, the positive direct relationship between EI and personal accomplishment extends to the positive effect of EI on job satisfaction. In other words, the relationship between EI and job satisfaction is mediated by employees' personal accomplishment. As previous research suggests (e.g., Carmeli, 2003; Law et al., 2004), when employees use

their EI in satisfying customers, they may feel more competent and successful. The accumulation of such positive self-evaluation will develop job satisfaction.

### 5.3. *Effect of emotional dissonance on burnout and job satisfaction*

Consistent with previous studies (e.g., Cordes and Dougherty, 1993; Hochschild, 1983), ED had positive associations with emotional exhaustion and depersonalization. When employees feign feelings, displaying outward expressions not congruent with their genuine feelings, they may feel emotionally and physically depleted, extremely fatigued, and unable to cope with continuing demands. Employees who experience repeated ED may detach themselves from the customers by treating them like objects, not people.

This study found no significant direct relationship between ED and job satisfaction. Instead, ED indirectly influenced job satisfaction through emotional exhaustion. That is, repetitive ED may cause employees to experience feelings of psychological depletion, lack of energy, and fatigue. Thus emotional exhaustion, as a source of demotivation, makes employees feel less satisfied with their job.

### 5.4. *Effect of emotional effort on burnout and job satisfaction*

As hypothesized, our results show that EE is positively related to personal accomplishment. Our study further demonstrates that EI is positively associated with job satisfaction through increased personal accomplishment. Taken together, when employees try to understand customers' emotions and express themselves sincerely, customers may react favorably in return; employees thus may feel that they have successfully fulfilled their task. They also may feel a heightened sense of self-efficacy, professionalism, and personal accomplishment. This frequent experience of positive feelings should make them more satisfied with their jobs.

### 5.5. *Inter-relationship among dimensions of burnout*

The results of this study confirmed the expected sequential burnout process postulated by Maslach and Jackson (1986): high levels of emotional exhaustion induced by stressful working conditions predict depersonalization, subsequently leading to decreases in personal accomplishment. Interestingly, in addition to this process, the results of this study found that unpleasant or stressful interactions (i.e., ED) alternatively may lead directly to depersonalization. Therefore, even though they are not psychologically exhausted, employees become less responsive to the needs of their customers and treat them impersonally and callously when they experience repeated ED.

### 5.6. *Relationship between burnout and job satisfaction*

Our results further confirmed previous perspectives on the relationship between burnout and job satisfaction in two ways. First, the data analysis showed that emotional exhaustion has a direct, negative association with job satisfaction. When employees experience psychological strain and depletion of psychological energy, they may become dissatisfied with their jobs. Second, depersonalization had an indirect, negative association with job satisfaction through a reduced personal accomplishment. If employees treat customers in a depersonalized and callous manner, they may find themselves unable to sustain high levels of expressed positive emotion; they, therefore, feel negatively about their competence and achievements in customer service. Their inability to properly

perform their work and the loss of a sense of achievement may undermine their satisfaction with the job.

## 6. Conclusions

### 6.1. *Theoretical implications*

Despite the volume of literature on EI and emotional labor, very little research has integrated EI and its impact on emotional labor and the major outcomes of emotional labor such as burnout and job satisfaction (e.g., Allen et al., 2010; Austin et al., 2008; Bakker and Heuven, 2006; Brackett et al., 2010; Cheung and Tang, 2009; Gardini and Frese, 2006). By filling this gap, this study provides a valuable contribution to the literature on emotions in the hospitality workplace.

First, this study considered outcomes of emotional labor (i.e., burnout and job satisfaction), as well as emotional labor, to more comprehensively and integratively evaluate the impact of EI. This allowed us to empirically examine the different effects that EI has on the two dimensions of emotional labor, job satisfaction, and three burnout dimensions in a hotel setting. Thus, the present study builds an extensive and integrative EI-emotional labor-burnout/job satisfaction path model, clarifying the beneficial role of EI.

Second, our findings showed that these two different and complicated forms of emotional labor have bi-directional effects on burnout and job satisfaction. This finding is in line with the Job Demands Resources (JD-R) model that posits high job demands or negative aspects of work may deplete employees' physiological and/or psychological resources and lead to burnout, whereas the availability of resources encourages motivation and leads to positive attitudes, behavior, and well-being while reducing the impact of job demands and the associated physiological and psychological strain like burnout (Bakker and Demerouti, 2007; Demerouti et al., 2001). ED, in emotionally demanding situations where EI is low, leads to feelings of emotional depletion and burnout. On the other hand, high EI in emotionally demanding situations increases engagement in EE, which is, in turn, positively associated with job satisfaction. Concurrently, high EI also reduces burnout by decreasing emotional demands and dissonance. Given that the JD-R model was only recently introduced to the academic community as part of an emerging research trend called positive psychology (a branch of psychology that emphasizes human strengths and optimal functioning; Bakker and Demerouti, 2007; Luthans, 2002; Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi, 2000), our conceptual model provides empirical evidence of positive organizational behavior concepts and positive emotions.

Third, this study adopted Maslach and Jackson's (1981) multidimensional conceptualization of burnout and thus included the three dimensions of burnout as separate but interrelated constructs. Our results show that the burnout process involves emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and a reduced sense of accomplishment occurring in sequence, as postulated in Maslach and Jackson's model, and therefore our results clearly support the generalizability of Maslach and Jackson's model to the hotel setting.

Fourth, examining the individual effects of EI and emotional labor on separate burnout dimensions produced interesting results on the predictors of the dimensions, which has further theoretical implications. According to conventional burnout research (e.g., Maslach and Jackson, 1981, 1982; Maslach and Leiter, 1997), depersonalization occurs as a coping response to emotional exhaustion; emotional exhaustion predicts depersonalization. However, our study suggested that depersonalization may also be triggered by ED even when emotional exhaustion is not present. Additionally, our results showed that personal accomplishment, when affected by EI, EE, and depersonalization, predicts job satisfaction. This

result underscores the importance of personal accomplishment in employee job satisfaction. Therefore, this empirical evidence establishes meaningful links for future emotional labor research on burnout and job satisfaction.

## 6.2. Managerial implications

Our findings underscore the importance of EI as a predictor of emotional labor, burnout, and job satisfaction. More specifically, we found that, if employees are emotionally intelligent, they actively try to feel the emotions required by display rules, feel personal accomplishment, and are satisfied with their jobs. Further, employees who have lower levels of EI tend to regulate their emotional expression superficially by hiding felt emotions or faking unfelt emotions; as a result, they become emotionally exhausted and treat others impersonally. These findings thus have implications for human resources practices.

Hospitality organizations may want to use a measure of EI in recruiting and selecting employees to maintain high quality human resources. Hospitality involves high levels of emotional challenges, so should hiring take that into account to avoid reduced productivity, lowered service quality, and service disruption. In fact, empirical research has demonstrated the importance of screening for EI. According to *Spencer et al. (1997)*, L'Oreal's sales associates hired after screening for EI sold about \$90,000 more and had 63% less turnover during the first year than associates who were not screened.

Hospitality organizations may also consider implementing EI training or development programs to foster employees' emotional competence. An individual's EI level is not static; it can be enhanced through training (*Slaski and Cartwright, 2003; Taylor, 2002*). *Pesuric and Byham (1996)* revealed that, after a company implemented training in emotional competencies, the formal grievance rate decreased from 15% per year to 3%. Thus, our research suggests that, by developing EI training programs, hospitality organizations can increase EI skills like empathy, self-awareness, self-control, and self-motivation, which helps employees withstand ED more effectively and also engage in EE, as well as reduce personnel problems.

Our study further confirmed the consensus of previous studies on the double-edged effect of emotional labor: the functional consequence of EE and dysfunctional effects of ED on job satisfaction and burnout. Given that poor customer service can be due to employee burnout and job dissatisfaction (*Rucci et al., 1998*), hospitality organizations should therefore focus on helping employees make EE in service encounters. To do this, training should make employees aware of the importance of EE in customer interaction and teach employees appropriate emotional display techniques or necessary skills. Of the suggested skills, cognitive reappraisal and attention deployment are meaningful in the hotel industry (*Grandey, 2000; Mikolajczak et al., 2007b; Totterdell and Holman, 2003*). Cognitive reappraisal requires employees to view or appraise situations more positively to modify the emotions that the situations induce. An example of this technique would be attempting to evaluate a situation from the customer's perspective. On the other hand, attention deployment involves focusing attention on the positive aspects of a situation or changing focus to things that induce the required emotions (*Totterdell and Holman, 2003*). An employee could focus on pleasant memories to repair unpleasant moods. Using these skills and techniques, hospitality companies would be strategic, not reactive and prescriptive, in their approach to employee emotional labor (*Budhwar, 2000*).

Our results also echoed the conclusion that ED leads to emotional exhaustion and depersonalization. Research has demonstrated that this relationship occurs because employees who

suppress their emotions consume resources needed for regulating their own emotions without a way to replenish those mental resources (*Jackson et al., 1986*). Therefore, hospitality organizations should help employees recharge valuable emotional resources and provide information useful in performing effective EE in emotionally challenging service encounters. For employees to keep their emotional resources charged, management should listen to their employees, particularly when they have concerns about work, and encourage employees and managers to share experiences and skills with each other.

Finally, our results show that a sense of personal accomplishment is important to employee job satisfaction. Personal accomplishment mediated the relationship between EI and job satisfaction and between EE and job satisfaction. These mediating effects of personal accomplishment explain how service employees become satisfied with their jobs when they experience a feeling of achievement or increased efficacy from successfully engaging EE and exhibiting EI in emotionally demanding service interactions. Therefore, hospitality organizations must make their service employees feel a sense of accomplishment and emotional efficacy when they perform successful EE behavior or exert EI in service encounters. For example, hospitality organizations may give formal and/or informal compliments to their service employees whenever the employees cope well with customer complaints or requests with both sincerity and good faith. Hospitality organizations could also implement formal or informal reward programs to recognize employees who successfully use EE and EI, thus encouraging them.

## 6.3. Suggestions for future research

Previous research has recognized that individual differences like personality also influence emotional labor. For example, an individual with positive affectivity, such as enthusiasm, optimism, and positive evaluations of social environments, may respond to negative events more strongly and therefore may need to adopt a higher level of emotional labor at work (*Grandey, 2000*). Also, people who monitor and control their publicly observable behavior (i.e., high self-monitors) tend to be more willing/able to modify their own emotional display to accommodate a situation and thus, are less susceptible to ED than low self-monitors (*Grandey, 2000*). Therefore, future research may include other personality variables to examine the aggregate or interaction effects of individual differences.

In addition to employees' individual personal traits, specific job characteristics like autonomy and frequency of service interaction may also influence emotional labor, burnout, and job satisfaction (*Erickson and Wharton, 1997; Greengrass et al., 1998; Kruml and Geddes, 2000; Ma et al., 2003; Morris and Feldman, 1996; Parker and Axtell, 2001*). Those with more autonomy or more authority on the job are less likely to experience ED than lower level employees because the former have more control over challenging service encounters than the latter. Also, individuals involved in service interaction are more likely to experience burnout than those who are not because the latter are less likely to deplete their psychological/emotional resources (*Kim, 2008*). Thus, future study may want to consider using two separate group samples: managers and line-employees. Given that managers typically have more autonomy and interact less frequently with customers, our results may differ for employees in different positions. The differences in autonomy or authority between line-employees and managers may void the mediating effect of ED on the link between EI and emotional exhaustion or EI and depersonalization for managers because managers have more freedom and choices in making decisions in service situations and thus feel less ED than line-employees.

#### 6.4. Limitations

The primary limitation involved in this study is the use of self-report questionnaires. In spite of its usefulness in measuring emotion (Wallbott and Scherer, 1989), self-report methodology may lead to inflated relationships among variables, and thus the data in this study would be biased by common method variance (CMV) in statistical analysis (Podsakoff et al., 2003). If the data on EI and EE were collected from different sources such as supervisors or co-workers of the respondents, the findings might differ from the ones reported in this research. However, while this limitation is the case in present study, we took steps during data collection to attenuate the effect of CMV by guaranteeing the anonymity and confidentiality of individual responses. We further conducted Harman's single-factor test (Podsakoff et al., 2003) and found that CMV did not significantly affect our findings.

Another limitation of our study concerns the cross-sectional design of the study. Data were collected at one point in time, so inferences about the causal nature of the relationship examined in this study are difficult (Bobko and Stone-Romero, 1998). Also, given the cross-sectional data in our study, alternative causal paths or changes in causal directions and sequential orders may exist (Giardini and Frese, 2006). Therefore, future research may use longitudinal design to allow researchers to examine in more depth the causal associations between EI, emotional labor, and other job-related attitudinal outcomes.

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