



Full Length Research Paper

Personality factors and emotional intelligence as predictors of frontline hotel employees' emotional labour

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The paper examined the influence of emotional intelligence and the big-five personality attributes on the performance of emotional labour of hotel frontline employees. A correlation design was adopted. Emotional labour was viewed as both multidimensional (deep acting and surface acting) and one-dimensional. A total of 145 frontline hotel workers, randomly selected from ten hotels within Ibadan, Nigeria, participated in the study. It was found out that hierarchical multiple regression analysis revealed that extraversion, neuroticism, and conscientiousness negatively predicted deep acting, extraversion positively predicted surface acting, while extraversion and neuroticism negatively predicted overall emotional labour. Emotional intelligence predicted deep acting and overall emotional labour. The research limitation was the fact that the study did not cover all possible personality attributes; also the dispositions needed for efficiency in other units of a hotel need to be investigated. This implies that hotel management should consider for employment into hotel frontline positions, applicants who have requisite dispositions on extraversion, neuroticism, and conscientiousness, and emotional intelligence. In addition, the training of frontline hotel workers should be tailored towards the behavioural dimensions of these personnel attributes. The study ventured into an uncommon area of human capital management in the hotel setting in Nigeria.

Keywords: Big-Five Personality Factors; Emotional Intelligence; Emotional Labour; Frontline Employee; Hotel service; Nigeria

INTRODUCTION

Entertaining visitors is almost an everyday activity among Africans. Being a host involves welcoming guests into the home, and offering a place to sit, rest, and at times a bed for the night. This is classified as private hospitality.

Hospitality may be defined as a simultaneous, shared, positive emotional experience that is dependent on mutually enhancing social interaction involving the provision of one or more of the following; food, drink, entertainment and accommodation (Brotherton & Wood, 2000).

Commercial hospitality has many similarities with private hospitality; being an activity where customers

need to sense the constant presence of the host. However, in commercial hospitality the guest becomes a customer due to the exchange of money for services, and the host is represented by an employee who is paid to be friendly and to take care of the customers' needs (Telfer, 2000). As commercial organisations are business enterprises, the responsibilities of the host include, not only caring for and meeting customer needs, but also generating a profit for the owners and managing employees to carry out organisational goals (Medlik & Ingram, 2000). Hotel employees would invariably require certain features that would enable them execute these functions effectively.

Hospitality industry is a service industry characterised by frequent interaction between employees and customers. This interaction is a central aspect of the hotel product and the hospitality it seeks to provide (Nickson, et al., 2005), and the experiences that customers remember best. Employees are expected to express emotions in line with organisational rules, so that customers can perceive the quality of the services the way the organisations want it portrayed. Hotel is an institution of commercial hospitality that offers its facilities and services for sale. These include rooms and beds, food and beverage, meeting rooms, function rooms, and entertainment facilities (Medlik & Ingram, 2000). Employees, who are uncomfortable in dealing with customers or lack the expertise to meet customer expectations, can cause customers to retain unpleasant memories of service experience.

Workers in hotel can be classified into frontline and backline employees. Frontline employees are those who have one-on-one contact with customers while the backline employees seldom have contact with customers. Frontline employees are the interface between customers and the organization, and thus represent the organization. Frontline employees are the primary resource through which service businesses can gain a competitive advantage (Schneider & Bowen, 1993). For this reason, they are forced to manipulate their inner feelings to produce appropriate outward behaviour or emotions. Thus, requiring the employees to deliberately provide hospitality to customers in the manner that reflects the character the organisation wants to portray.

The characteristics of the frontline job make the occurrence of certain types of work events more likely than others. According to the Affective Events Theory (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996), these discrete events, called affective events, are thought to lead to particular affective reactions (i.e., emotions) at work. Affective reactions, in turn, lead to immediate, affect-driven behaviours (e.g., smiling, frowning, and yelling). Every company in the hospitality industry requires that employees, while interacting with customers, display certain types of emotions such as friendliness, cheerfulness, warmth, enthusiasm, or confidence. He/she may not particularly feel like being cordial to a customer

but because that is what they are paid to do such employees must manage his/her emotions and emotional display to create a favourable atmosphere in which interpersonal transaction takes place. This act of managing emotions for a wage is termed, emotional labour (Hochschild, 1983).

Emotional labour is a form of emotional regulation in which workers display certain emotions as part of their job, to promote organisational goals. The intended effects of these emotional displays are on other targeted people, who can be clients, customers, subordinates or co-workers. It involves manipulation of one's inner feelings or outward behaviour to display the appropriate emotion in response to display rules or occupational norms. Emotional labour is the attempt by individuals to reduce the discrepancy between felt and displayed emotions (Liu, et al., 2004), by engaging in effort, planning, and control needed to express organisationally desired emotion during interpersonal transactions (Morris & Feldman, 1996). A dramaturgical emotion management perspective of emotional labour theorised that service is a "show" where the service employee is an "actor," the customer is the "audience," and the work setting is the stage (Grandey, 1999).

Employees perform emotional labour through three types of acting mechanism: surface acting, deep acting, and genuine acting (Ashforth and Humphrey, 1993). When engaged in deep acting, an actor attempts to modify feelings to match the required display rules whereas in surface acting employees modify their displays without shaping inner feelings (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993; Hochschild, 2003). Genuine acting emotions are displayed with very little effortful prompting. As different types of acting require exerting different degrees of effort, surface acting is predicted to require the least effort, whereas deep acting requires the most effort. Genuine acting is when employees spontaneously feel what they are required to feel (Morris & Feldman, 1996).

Frontline employees perform emotional labour when they experience certain emotional feelings, but are expected to express an opposite feeling that would be congruent with the organisational demand. Research on emotional labour is more common in other service industry, compared to that in the hospitality industry. Much work has been done on service organisations that have authority over clients such as nurses, doctors and school administrators; but not so much has been done on frontline employees in hotel industry where customers are 'always right' (Chu, 2002). In Nigeria in particular, there is dearth of literature in this perspective.

Jobs involving emotional labour possess three characteristics: they require the workers to make facial or voice contact with the public, produce an emotional state in the client or customer, and exert some control over the emotional activities of workers (Hochschild, 1983). Thus, the hospitality industry implements display rules to

regulate employees' behaviour. The employees and customers share a set of expectations about the nature of emotions that should be displayed during service encounter (Hochschild, 1983). These expectations are a function of societal norms, occupational norms, and organisational norms (Rafaeli & Sutton, 1989). Ekman (1973) referred to such norms as display rules, which are shared expectations about which emotions ought to be expressed and which ought to be disguised. Some people, by their dispositions, find it easy to express emotional labour while others struggle.

When emotional labour is practised for long, it could be detrimental to the health and psychological well-being of frontline employees in the hotel industry, making them highly susceptible to emotional dissonance; incongruence between felt and displayed emotions (Heuven & Bakker, 2003). Such employees may be confronted with emotional exhaustion, which is a form of work related strain; the lack of energy and depletion of emotional resources due to excessive psychological demand (Karatepe & Aleshinloye, 2009). There are ample costs associated with emotional exhaustion, hence, it becomes imperative for management of hotels to employ those who will struggle less on emotional labour.

The way individuals perform emotional labour is influenced by various individual and situational characteristics (Hochschild, 1983). In recent years, most of the research on emotional labour has been situation based. Situational variables such as frequency, duration, variety of emotional labour (Grandey, 1999), presence of display rules (Morris & Feldman, 1996), or other job variables such as display training, quality orientation (Kruml & Geddes, 2000), and job autonomy (Kruml & Geddes, 2000) are frequently treated as antecedents of emotional labour. Rarely, however, is emotional labour formulated as having an endogenous source of variance. The present study argues that it is individual dispositional factors that determine what acting mechanism (surface acting, deep acting, and genuine acting) individuals adopt during service transactions.

Individual's ability not to express their true feelings differs. Some people can easily pretend without any stress while others cannot. Thus, employees' personality will have impact on how they perform emotional labour. Skills, like emotional intelligence, may also be needed by frontline employees to perform successful interpersonal relationship with customers. Thus, personality and emotional intelligence are two variables being studied as predictors of emotional labour in the present study.

Personality is the unique patterning of behaviour and mental processes that characterise an individual. It is a characteristic way of thinking, feeling, and behaving (Phares, 1991). After 50 years of personality research, there is a common agreement that there are five basic dimensions that can be used to describe differences in cognitive, affective and social behaviour (Revelle & Loftus, 1992). This is the bases for the five-

factor model of personality. The five dimensions are extraversion, neuroticism, openness to experience, agreeableness and conscientiousness (Costa & McCrae, 1992), and almost all of the personality tests existing today measure one or more of the five factors.

Extraversion-introversion is a measure of the degree to which a person is outgoing or shy (Lin, et al., 2001). Extraverts tend to be more physically and verbally active whereas introverts are independent, reserved, steady and like being alone. The person in the middle of the dimension likes a mix between social situations and solitude (Howard & Howard, 1995). Extraverts are adventurous, assertive, frank, sociable and talkative. Introverts may be described as quiet, reserved, shy and unsociable (Costa & McCrae, 1992). Extraversion (outgoing) offers a positive effect on customer service, while introversion (shyness) has a negative effect. Introverted employees may, therefore, not enjoy customers or want to work with them long enough to identify and satisfy their needs (Brown, et al., 2002).

Neuroticism (emotional instability) is a measure of affect and emotional control. Low levels of neuroticism indicate emotional stability whereas high levels of neuroticism increase the likelihood of experiencing negative emotions. Persons with high levels of neuroticism are reactive and more easily bothered by stimuli in their environment. They more frequently become unstable, worried, temperamental and sad. Resistant persons, on the other hand, need strong stimuli to be provoked (Howard & Howard, 1995). The term neuroticism does not necessarily refer to any psychiatric defect. A more proper term could be negative affectivity or nervousness (McCrae & John, 1992). If there is emotional instability, the employee may have a fluctuating desire to serve customers and be less likely to meet the customer's needs (Brown et al., 2002).

Kokkonen and Pulkkinen (2001) found that neuroticism is related to reduction in attempts to repair or maintain emotions. Several studies have shown that extraversion is related to positive affectivity and that neuroticism is related to negative affectivity (Diefendorff et al., 2005). Research has also shown that negative affectivity is positively related to emotional labour (Liu et al., 2004). Particularly, negative affectivity is positively related to surface acting (Brotheridge & Grandey, 2002; Diefendorff et al., 2005). According to Diefendorff and Gosserand ((2003), individuals high in extraversion will have little need to perform surface acting and will express the emotions that they spontaneously feel (genuine acting), while the opposite will be true of individuals high in Neuroticism. Tan et al. (2003) found that service employees with high extraversion traits are characterized by the display of more positive emotions than service employees with low extraversion traits.

Morris and Feldman (1996) predicted that when the emotional response desired is positive, positive affectivity (extraversion) would reduce the amount of emotional

dissonance present, whereas negative affectivity (neuroticism) would increase the amount of emotional dissonance (Abraham, 1998). Given that emotional dissonance is a direct result of surface acting, these predictions essentially inform that positive affectivity will reduce the occurrence of surface acting, while negative affectivity will increase it. However, Abraham (1999) failed to find a significant antecedent relationship between negative affectivity and emotional dissonance, suggesting that negative affectivity did not impact the frequency of performing emotional labour. Jones (1998) found that positive affectivity reduced the amount of dissonance experienced when the display of positive emotions was required, indicating that positive affectivity was negatively related to the frequency of using surface acting; people who are naturally positive need to fake positive emotions less often.

The Affective Events Theory (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996) also lends insight into how affectivity could impact emotional labour. According to the theory, trait dispositions can influence the intensity of affective reactions to events that occur at work. Grandey (2000) noted that persons who are high on negative affectivity may be more reactive to negative events that may occur at workplace. In support, Grandey et al. (2002) found that in a diary study over two weeks, those who were high on negative affectivity (neuroticism) reported having more negative events happen to them at work than those low on negative affectivity (emotional stability). Experiencing more negative events results in a need for more frequent regulatory efforts to manage negative emotions that results; implying that negative affectivity should be positively related to both surface and deep acting.

Openness to experience is a measure of depth, breadth and variability in a person's imagination and urge for experiences. The factor relates to intellect, openness to new ideas, cultural interests, educational aptitude and creativity as well as an interest in varied sensory and cognitive experiences. People with a high openness to experience have broad interests, are liberal and like novelty. The preservers with low openness to experience are conventional, conservative and prefer familiarity (Howard & Howard, 1995).

Agreeableness assesses the quality of an individual's interpersonal orientation to be compassionate toward others and not antagonistic in thoughts, feelings and action. It is a bipolar factor which at the positive end is described by variables including; being good-natured, not jealous, emotionally mature, sympathetic, meekness, cooperativeness, trustfulness, adaptability, kindness, attentiveness to people, and self-sufficiency. On the negative end, it is described by characteristics such as: attention-seeking, low assertiveness, low talkativeness, and low orderliness. Agreeableness may have a positive influence, resulting from the ability to empathize with the customer and a desire to help them solve their problems. This type of personality causes the person to take

personal satisfaction in helping customers (Brown et al., 2002).

Conscientiousness is a measure of goal-directed behaviour and amount of control over impulses. Conscientious individuals are hard working and desire to do their job well. Conscientiousness has been linked to educational achievement and particularly to the will to achieve. The more conscientious a person, the more competent, dutiful, orderly, responsible and thorough he or she is (Costa & McCrae, 1992). In the context of work place, this often implies being friendly and sincere to customers. Service employee with positive orientation will work hard to correct any problem and satisfy customers' needs (Brown et al., 2002). It is anticipated that conscientious individuals would follow emotional display rules by working to be genuine in their expressions, rather than just going through the surface acting. Consistent with this argument, Diefendorff et al. (2005) found that conscientiousness is negatively correlated with surface acting and positively with deep acting and the expression of naturally felt emotions.

Agreeableness reflects stable individual differences in the need to develop and maintain positive relationships through social behaviours. Agreeable person is compliant, cooperative, getting along with others, kind, considerate, and empathetic (Tobin et al., 2000). Their concern to get along with others and to keep positive interpersonal relationship makes them adapt emotional responses to fit any situation. Agreeable individuals are expected to put more effort into emotion regulation so that they have positive social interactions. Realising the negative effects of insincere emotional displays, agreeable individuals may try to display genuine emotions by deep acting rather than surface acting. Diefendorff et al. (2005) found negative relationship between the rate of performing surface acting and agreeableness, but a positive relationship between the rate at which deep acting and agreeableness occur.

In a study by Tobin et al. (2000), as cited in Monaghan (2006), undergraduate students were asked to read interpersonal scenarios that contained potentially emotional content, and then rated how much effort would be involved in controlling their emotions if they had to describe this event to another person. Outcome of the study showed support for the idea that persons high on agreeableness use emotional regulatory strategies more often. Their measure of effort closely links to the frequency of performing emotional regulation. Participants who were high on agreeableness indicated that they feel the need to regulate their emotions more often than those low on agreeableness. A regression analysis confirmed the relationship between agreeableness and the emotional labour strategies (Diefendorff et al., 2005).

The second predictor variable in the present study is emotional intelligence. It is the skill of understanding and managing other people (Bar-On, 2006). Salovey and

Mayer (1990) define emotional intelligence as the ability to monitor one's own and other's feelings and emotions, to discriminate among them and to use this information to guide one's thinking and actions. Employees who are skilled at reading their own feelings and emotional displays easily recognise situations in which they are not displaying appropriate emotions for their jobs and they adjust by regulating their emotions and discourage themselves from expressing the emotions they really felt. Emotional intelligence consists of two components: emotion and intelligence (Mayer, et al., 2004). Emotions refer to the feelings a person experiences in a relationship, intelligence refers to the ability to reason with or about something while comparing and contrasting different ideas. The notions about emotional intelligence were influenced by the works of some researchers, which called for the broadening of the study of intelligence by directing attention to multiple intelligences (Mayer, et al., 2004).

Goleman and Cherniss presented a model (1998) that examines emotional intelligence as a theory of performance, adapting it to predict personal effectiveness at work. Emotional intelligence has as much to do with knowing when and how to express emotion, as it does with controlling it (Cherniss, 2000). The ability model of emotional intelligence argues for emotional intelligence as one that involves perceiving and reasoning abstractly with information that emerges from feelings (Mayer and Cobb, 2000). Bar-On (2002) postulated the Mixed Model of Emotional Intelligence and also developed one of the first measures of emotional intelligence that used the term "Emotional Quotient". In the mixed model, emotional intelligence is considered as a mix of skills, such as awareness of emotions; traits, such as persistence and zeal; and good behaviour. Bar-On's (2002) model of emotional intelligence relates to the potential for performance and success, rather than performance or success itself, and is considered process-oriented rather than outcome-oriented. It focuses on an array of emotional and social abilities, including the ability to be aware of, understand, and express oneself, the ability to be aware of, understand, and relate to others, the ability to deal with strong emotions, and the ability to adapt to change and solve problems of a social or personal nature (Bar-On, 1997). In this model, Bar-On outlines five components of emotional intelligence: intrapersonal, interpersonal, adaptability, stress management and general mood. Bar-On (2002) posits that emotional intelligence develops over time and that it can be improved through training. Goleman believes that emotional intelligence is "twice as powerful" as IQ (Goleman, 1998) and may predict success in life. This shift has led emotional intelligence to become a catchphrase for anything that involved motivation, emotion, or good character (Mayer & Cobb, 2000).

Many researchers maintain that aspects of emotional intelligence, rather than traditional IQ, make the biggest

difference in a person's success in life (Cherniss, 2000; Cherniss & Goleman, 2001). Cherniss (2000) provided multiple examples of a longitudinal study indicating that social and emotional abilities were four times more important than IQ in determining professional success. The reason is that individuals would tend to use emotional regulation strategies more often for the purpose of an organization (Monaghan, 2006). Emotional regulation is a major construct of emotional intelligence.

Francis (1999) explains that one reason that emotional intelligence may reduce the need to regulate emotions is because individuals who are high in emotional intelligence spontaneously feel more positive emotions. Happiness is an aspect of emotional intelligence, and research has shown that happy individuals feel more of positive affect and less of negative affect (Francis, 1999). Moreover, measures of emotional intelligence and happiness are positively correlated (Furnham & Petrides, 2003). Another aspect of emotional intelligence is optimism; research has also shown that optimists feel more of positive affect and less of negative affect than others (Bood, et al., 2004).

Wong and Law (2002) found that emotional intelligence may reduce the need for surface acting because it enables people to manage customer interactions more effectively. This reduces the occurrence of customer interactions that cause them to feel negative emotions. As a result, there is less need for them to use surface acting to hide negative emotions. However, it may be assisted by a disposition called 'emotional contagion;' a tendency to feel the emotions that others are experiencing (Kruml & Geddes, 2000) and to transmit felt emotions to others (Pugh, 2001). The empathy and emotional perception provided by emotional intelligence mean that individuals who are high in emotional intelligence are also likely to be high in emotional contagion. Employees who experience 'emotional contagion' have less need to perform surface acting because their ability to relate to the emotions that customers are feeling reduces the likelihood of conflict. Consistent with this theory, Kruml and Geddes (2000) found that emotional contagion is negatively related to surface acting.

Emotional intelligence may make people more willing to perform emotional labour by making them more aware of the need to perform emotional labour. Individuals who are high in emotional labour are skilled at reading their own feelings and emotional displays as well as the emotional displays of others (Petrides & Furnham, 2001). This ability enables them to recognise situations in which they are not displaying appropriate emotions for their jobs, thus providing them with a motivation to regulate their emotions, and discouraging them from expressing the emotions that they spontaneously feel. Matthews (2002) has suggested that this increased emotional awareness is the foundational ability underlying the influence of emotional intelligence in the workplace.

In view of what have been discussed so far, the present research seeks to answer questions related to:

1. What is the impact of personality on performance of emotional labour of frontline service employees?
2. Will emotional intelligence influence the way employees perform emotional labour?

METHOD

Research Design

The design is correlation. The predictor variables are emotional intelligence (EI) and, the Big-Five Personality Factor subdivided into extraversion, agreeableness, neuroticism, conscientiousness, and openness to experience. The criterion variable is emotional labour which was measured both as a single or composite construct, and multiple construct (deep acting and surface acting).

Research Setting

The study was conducted at some popular hotels within Ibadan metropolis in Nigeria. Ibadan is the largest city in West Africa, with high commercial activities. The opinions of hotel users were sought to identify the popular hotels, because there are no official records of hotels within the state.

Participants

The target population was frontline employees working in hotels; those who have one-on-one contact with guests, which could be either through face-to-face or voice-to-voice contact. This comprised desk officers/receptionists, waiters/waitresses, housekeepers, and porters. Their ages ranged from 18 and above, with 85 (58.6%) males and 60 (41.4%) females. Respondents varied on their educational qualifications and marital status.

Instrument

A questionnaire was used, comprising four sections. The first section measured the demographic characteristics like age, sex, marital status, job position, level of education, and job tenure. The second section contained 14 items extracted from a 19-item Hospitality Emotional Labour scale developed by Chu (2002). These items were extracted through content validation exercise of experts; items not relevant to the Nigerian culture were eliminated. Item-total correlation analysis yielded 10 items, using .30 as the criterion selection. Factor analysis yielded two factors; deep acting with seven items, and surface acting with three items. Items were scored on a 5-point Likert format ranging from 5-strongly agree to 1-strongly disagree. For this study, the emotional Labour

scale was used both as a univariate construct by using the composite score to assess the overall level of employee's emotional labour, as well as a multidimensional construct because of its subscales i.e. deep acting and surface acting. The respective coefficient alpha value of overall emotional labour, deep acting and surface acting are .53, .72 and .59.

The third section measured emotional intelligence, using the Self-Report Emotional Intelligence Test (SREIT) (Schutte, et al., 1998). The SREIT is a 33-item self-report measure developed, based on Mayor and Salovey's (1997) conceptualization of the construct. The measure generally incorporates social skills, emotional regulation, and utilization of emotions (Petrides & Furnham, 2000), with item responses ranging from 5-strongly agree to 1-strongly disagree. The composite score was used to assess the overall level of emotional intelligence. Item-total correlation analysis led to dropping of 8 items that did not meet the criterion value of .30. Therefore, twenty-five (25) items were retained, with an internal consistency coefficient of .84.

The fourth section contained 44 items that measured the Big Five Personality factors (John and Scrivastava, 1999). The subscales: extraversion, agreeableness, openness to experience, neuroticism, and conscientiousness have 8, 9, 10, 8 and 9 items respectively. Coefficient alpha reliability reported in the test manual for the subscales are .88, .86, .82, .84, and .83 respectively. For the present population, the 44-items were subjected to reliability analysis using the corrected item-total correlation with .30 as the criterion for retention. Four (4) items were dropped, leaving the scale with 40-items; which are 6, 8, 9, 8, and 9 for extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, neuroticism, and openness to experience respectively. The coefficient alpha reliability are .67, .74, .73, .74, .72 respectively. Items were scored on a 5-point Likert format ranging from 1-Strongly Disagree to 5-Strongly Agree.

Procedure

In a pilot study designed to standardize the instrument for use in the Nigerian hospitality industry, 36 frontline employees of a hotel participated. Items were retained only if their corrected item-total correlation is at least .30 and above for all the scales. For the main study, 200 questionnaires were distributed but 160 were returned; 5 were not filled, and 10 others eliminated because they were incompletely filled. Consequently, 145 questionnaires were used for the final analysis; yielding a response rate of 72.5%.

From the list of hotels sourced for the study, 10 were randomly selected and the consent of the respective management was sought for participation in the study. Managers in-charge of frontline employees (Food and Beverage Manager, Front Office Manager, House Keeping Manager and the Hotel Accountant) in each

hotel assisted in providing information on their staff lists, which were used to conduct random selection of 20 (5 from each unit) employees from each hotel. The selected participants were informed of the objective of the study, and confidentiality assured, after their individual consent had been sought. The managers did the administration of the questionnaires, as the researcher was not permitted to have direct contact with the frontline employees. This was consistent with prior research (Karatepe & Aleshinloye, 2009). The questionnaires were directly returned in a sealed envelope. Such an approach is consistent with prior research (Hartline, et al., 2000).

RESULTS

In answering the research questions raised in the present study, hierarchical multiple regression and bivariate correlation analyses were used. Emotional labour and its two facets; deep acting and surface acting, were regressed on the predictor variables (personality factors and emotional intelligence), while the demographic variables of age, education, and job tenure were the control variables. The results of the three separate analyses are presented on Table 1, while that of the bivariate correlations are on Table 2.

Age, education, and job tenure had no significant joint influence on deep acting ($R^2 = .049$, $F = 2.432$, p ns) but age had significant independent positive influence ($\beta = .210$, $p < .05$), while job tenure showed a significant negative independent influence ($\beta = -.215$, $p < .05$). This means that as employee's age increases, the tendency to deep act increases, and as they gain more experience on the job their tendency to perform deep acting decreases. However, the bivariate correlation coefficient (see Table 2) for both age ($r = .11$, p ns) and job tenure ($r = -.040$, p ns) were not significant when the other demographic variables were not controlled.

In step two, the personality variables were entered along with the demographic variables and all had significant joint influence on deep acting ($R^2 = .501$, $F = 17.09$, $p < .001$), accounting for 50% variance in deep acting. The inclusion of the personality variables resulted in 45.2% variance change ($\Delta R^2 = .45.2$) from what was in place when only the demographic variables were introduced. It is observed that age ($\beta = .176$, $p = .05$), job tenure ($\beta = -.163$, $p = .05$), and education ($\beta = .140$, $p = .05$) contributed independently in predicting deep acting. In addition extraversion ($\beta = -.526$, $p < .001$), conscientiousness ($\beta = -.167$, $p < .001$), and neuroticism ($\beta = -.215$, $p < .001$) contributed independently, in negative directions, in the joint prediction of deep acting. The bivariate correlation coefficient for extraversion ($r = -.645$, $p < .01$), conscientiousness ($r = -.255$, $p < .01$), and neuroticism ($r = -.398$, $p < .01$) also indicated negative relationship. This means that employees of low levels of

extraversion, conscientiousness, or neuroticism tend more to perform deep acting, and vice versa.

When emotional intelligence was introduced in step 3, there was significant joint prediction of deep acting ($R^2 = .531$, $F = 16.99$, $p < .001$), with all the variables accounting for 53.1% variance. But emotional intelligence accounted for only 3% variance change ($\Delta R^2 = .03$). Independently, emotional intelligence ($\beta = .189$, $p < .001$) positively predicted deep acting. However, the bivariate correlation ($r = .059$, p ns) showed no significant relationship between deep acting and emotional intelligence, suggesting that the other variables could be suppressors, hence when they were controlled in the regression analysis its contribution became significant. By inference, the more emotionally intelligent an employee is the more such employee deep act.

In the hierarchical regression involving surface acting form of emotional labour, the demographic variables had no significant joint and independent influence. When the personality variables were introduced (in step 2), there was significant joint prediction accounting for 11.7% variance ($R^2 = .117$, $F = 2.260$, $p < .05$). However, only extraversion had independent positive prediction of surface acting ($\beta = .194$, $p < .05$); meaning that the more extraverted an employee is the higher the tendency to surface act. The bivariate correlation ($r = .24$; $p < .01$) also showed a positive relationship between the two variables. The inclusion of emotional intelligence resulted in significant joint prediction ($R^2 = .120$, $F = 2.052$, $p < .001$), accounting for 12% variance in surface acting, but its inclusion did not yield significant variance change nor was the independent contribution significant.

On overall emotional labour, the demographic variables of job tenure, education and age jointly predicted emotional labour ($R^2 = .065$, $F = 3.274$, $p < .05$), accounting for 6.5% variation of the criterion variable. Age had a significant independent prediction ($\beta = .262$, $p < .05$) with bivariate correlation coefficient of $r = .17$, $p < .05$, indicating a positive relationship. It means that as employees grow older, their tendency to perform emotional labour increases. Job tenure showed a significant negative independent prediction of emotional labour ($\beta = -.215$, $p < .05$), that is, experience reduces performance of emotional labour, but the bivariate correlation coefficient was not significant.

In step two, the inclusion of the personality variables produced a joint prediction of 32.6% variance in emotional labour ($R^2 = .326$, $F = 8.22$, $p < .001$), which is 26.1% variance change in emotional labour ($\Delta R^2 = .261$). The contributions of the personality variables revealed that extraversion ($\beta = -.405$, $p < .001$) and neuroticism ($\beta = -.204$, $p < .05$) independently predicted emotional labour in negative direction. It means that as the level of extraversion and neuroticism increases, emotional labour decreases. Bivariate correlation coefficient of extraversion ($r = -.496$, $p < .01$) and neuroticism ($r = -$

Table 1 Hierarchical Regression of Deep Acting, Surface Acting, and Emotional Labour on the Big-Five Personality Factors and Emotional Intelligence Controlling for Demographic Variables.

Independent Variable	Dependent Measure								
	Deep Acting			Surface Acting			Emotional Labour		
	Step1 (β)	Step2 (β)	Step3 (β)	Step1 (β)	Step2 (β)	Step3 (β)	Step1 (β)	Step2 (β)	Step3 (β)
Age	.210*	.176*	.204*	0.116	0.158	0.149	.262*	.252**	.274*
Education	0.136	.140*	.126*	0.019	0.001	0.005	0.14	0.135	0.124
Tenure	-.215*	-.163*	-0.154	-0.016	0.074	-0.077	-0.215	-0.195*	-0.188
Extraversion		-.526**	-.543*		.194*	.199*		-0.405	-.418**
Agreeableness		0.015	0.023		0.069	0.066		0.05	0.057
Openness		0.025	0.014		0.058	0.061		0.054	0.045
Neuroticism		-.215**	-.186**		0.005	-0.004		-.204*	-.181*
Conscientious		-.167**	-.230**		0.134	0.154		-0.09	-0.141
Emot. Intellig.			.189**			-0.06			0.150*
R ²	0.049	0.501	0.531	0.013	0.117	0.12	0.065	0.326	0.345
Adj. R ²	0.029	0.472	0.5	0.008	0.065	0.062	0.045	0.286	0.301
ΔR^2	0.049	0.452	0.03	0.013	0.105	0.003	0.065	0.261	0.019
F- ratio	2.43	17.09**	16.99**	0.6	2.26*	2.05**	3.27*	8.22**	7.90**
Δ F-ratio	2.43	24.66**	8.59**	0.6	3.23**	0.46	3.27*	10.53**	3.90*

* $p < .05$ ** $p < .001$ **Table 2** Bivariate Correlation showing the Relationship Between Demographic Variables, Emotional Intelligence, Personality and Deep Acting, Surface Acting and Emotional Labour

	Age	Sex	Edu.	Job Tenure	EI	E	A	O	N	C	DA	SA	EL
Age	1	-.18*	.28**	-.03	-.14	-.04	-.02	-.03	.03	.07	.11	.11	.17*
Sex		1	-.02	-.07	-.09	-.23**	.09	-.08	.02	-.13	.03	-.12	-.03
Education			1	.06	.06	-.03	.12	.02	.01	.15	.13	.05	.15
Job Tenure				1	-.06	.06	.07	.08	-.08	.13	-.04	.06	-.01
Emot. Intell					1	.11	.18*	.15	-.07	.33**	.06	.02	.07
Extraversion						1	.11	.36**	.37**	.18*	-.65**	.24**	-.50**
Agreeableness							1	.62**	.12	.57**	-.15	.20*	-.04
Openness								1	.37**	.43**	-.32**	.22**	-.19*
Neuroticism									1	.11	-.40**	.13	-.31**
Conscientious										1	-.26**	.24**	-.12
Deep Acting											1	-.20*	.86**
Surf. Act.												1	.33**
Emot.Labour													1

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

314, $p < .01$) also showed negative relationship between the variables and emotional labour. The introduction of emotional intelligence in step 3 produced a joint prediction which accounted for 34.5% variation in overall emotional labour ($R^2 = .345$, $F = 7.90$, $p < .001$), resulting in 1.9% variance change ($\Delta R^2 = .019$). Emotional intelligence also independently predicted emotional labour in a positive direction ($\beta = .150$, $p < .05$); the more emotionally intelligent an employee is, the more emotional labour such an employee performs, but the

bivariate correlation coefficient was not significant ($r = -.07$, p ns).

DISCUSSION

Researchers (e.g. Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993; Hochschild, 1983) hypothesized that employees perform three types of emotional labour, which are deep, surface, and genuine actings. In the present study only two of

these were confirmed; deep and surface acting, in a confirmatory factor analysis that was conducted. These two facets of emotional labour, and the composite score of emotional labour were regressed on the five personality factors and emotional intelligence, controlling for the demographic factors. The hierarchical multiple regression analysis conducted revealed that all the predictor variables jointly predicted deep acting, surface acting, and overall emotional labour. However, only extraversion, neuroticism and conscientiousness, as well as emotional intelligence contributed significantly in predicting deep acting. In surface acting, only the contribution of extraversion is significant while the addition of emotional intelligence did not make any impact. For the overall emotional labour, extraversion, emotional instability, emotional intelligence contributed significantly.

The three personality variables that significantly predicted deep acting and the two that predicted overall emotional labour correlated negatively with the respective dependent measures, while extraversion, the only variable that independently predicted surface acting correlated positively. These results are supported by the bivariate correlations that show that the relationship between deep acting and overall emotional labour is higher ($r = 0.86$; $p < .01$) than that between surface acting and overall emotional labour ($r = .33$; $p < .01$). This means that overall emotional labour share more features with deep acting than with surface acting. Also the correlation between deep acting and surface acting is negative ($r = -.20$; $p < .05$), meaning that deep acting is an obverse of surface acting, hence the difference in the direction of relationship between extraversion and, deep acting and surface acting.

Contrary to the literature, extraversion negatively predicted deep acting and overall emotional labour, but it positively predicted surface acting. The results partially supported the findings of Dore and Austin (2006) that extraversion was a negative predictor of deep acting and surface acting. However, Diefendorff et al., (2005), Brotheridge and Grandey (2002), and Jones (1998) found that extraversion negatively correlated with surface acting but not related to deep acting. In deep acting, an actor attempts to modify feelings to match the required display rules (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993; Hochschild, 2003). Thus, hotel frontline employees who are low on extraversion, conscientiousness, and are less emotionally unstable would modify their feelings to match required displays on the job, like making facial or voice contact to customers that are positive (Hochschild, 1983). In other words, they change their inner feelings to commensurate with outward behaviour. Deep acting requires the most effort (Morris & Feldman, 1996).

Introverts are independent, reserved, steady and like being alone. They are also quiet, reserved, shy and unsociable (Costa & McCrae, 1992). Thus, low extraversion has negative effect on the behaviours

expected of frontline employees in the hotel. They may not enjoy customers or want to work with them long enough to identify and satisfy their needs (Brown, et al., 2002). However, in attempts at fulfilling job demands and meeting expectations, such frontline employees are forced to manipulate their inner feelings to produce the appropriate outward emotions. The same is applicable in acting overall emotional labour.

The results of the bivariate and hierarchical multiple regression show that extraversion predicts surface acting positively. However, this does not support Diefendorff and Gosserand's ((2003) view that individuals high in extraversion will have little need to perform surface acting. But the present findings support that of Tan, et al. (2003), who found service employees with high extraversion traits as characterized by the display of more positive emotions than service employees with low extraversion traits. The finding also support Tan et al.'s (2003) discovery that individuals high on extraversion trait display more positive emotions than those low on extraversion trait.

In surface acting, employees modify their displays without shaping inner feelings (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993; Hochschild, 2003). Surface acting is predicted to require the least effort (Morris & Feldman, 1996) in frontline hotel workers making facial or voice contact with customers that are favourable. Extraverts tend to be more physically and verbally active (Howard & Howard, 1995). This likely enhances their being able to modify their displays without shaping inner feelings. Extraverts are adventurous, assertive, frank, sociable and talkative (Costa & McCrae, 1992); all these are overt behaviors that complement surface acting. Thus, extraversion (outgoing) offers a positive effect on customer service. Morris and Feldman (1996) predicted that when the emotional response desired is positive, positive affectivity (extraversion) would reduce the amount of emotional dissonance present. Therefore, employees of high extraversion would experience reduced emotional dissonance when they perform surface acting.

Neuroticism predicted deep acting negatively.. This is contrary to the findings of Chu (2002) and, Dore and Austin (2006) who found that neuroticism or negative affectivity positively predicted deep acting. It also failed to support Diefendorff et al's (2005) finding that neuroticism was unrelated to deep acting. Emotionally unstable employees have fluctuating desire to serve customers and are less likely to meet customer's needs (Brown et al., 2002), hence, those high on neuroticism are low in expressing deep acting and overall emotional labour. Persons with high levels of neuroticism are reactive and more easily bothered by stimuli in their environment, including negative displays by customers. They more frequently become unstable, worried, temperamental and sad. Emotionally stable employees, on the other hand, need strong stimuli to be provoked (Howard & Howard, 1995). This is because they can modify their feelings to

match with behavior expectations at work. Neuroticism is reported as related to negative affectivity (Diefendorff et al., 2005), and negative affectivity is positively related to emotional labour (Liu et al., 2004). The findings of the bivariate correlation confirms this, but that of the hierarchical regression did not, as the results showed negative prediction of deep acting and overall emotional labour. This means that other variables play some roles in enabling neuroticism to correlate positively with the dependent measures. Using the affective events theory, Grandey (2000) noted that persons who are high on negative affectivity may be more reactive to negative events that may occur during the work day. Thus, they may not be able to perform deep acting nor overall emotional labour in handling customers' negative behaviours. Although negative affectivity is reported as positively related to surface acting (Brotheridge & Grandey, 2002; Diefendorff et al., 2005), in the present study this was not confirmed, both in the bivariate and multivariate regression analyses.

Conscientiousness is the third personality variable that significantly predicted deep acting, only. Its independent prediction in the multiple regression is negative, while its bivariate correlation is positive. The multiple regression finding fails to support Diefendorff et al's (2005) report that conscientiousness is positively related with deep acting, but the bivariate supports the finding. The present findings also fail to support Dore and Austin's (2006) report that conscientiousness neither predicted nor correlated with deep acting. Conscientious individuals are hard working and would desire to do their jobs well. The more conscientious a person, the more competent, dutiful, orderly, responsible and thorough he or she is (Costa & McCrae, 1992). This explains why employees high in conscientiousness would perform deep acting, and not surface acting. Alos Mishra (2006) opined that conscientious individuals would follow emotional display rules; this would include the rule to treat customers as "kings".

The second predictor variable in this study, emotional intelligence, predicted deep acting and overall emotional labour positively. It implies that hotel employees who are high on emotional intelligence would show favourable behavior towards customers and would also alter their feelings towards that direction. This is possible because they have the skill of understanding and managing other people (Bar-On, 2006). High emotional intelligence individuals also have the ability to monitor their own and customers' feelings and emotions, to discriminate among them and to use this information to guide their thinking and actions towards the customers (Salovey & Mayer, 1990). Because high emotional intelligent employees know when and how to express emotion, as it does with controlling it (Cherniss, 2000) they are able to deep act and express overall emotional labour.

The ability model of emotional intelligence explains that emotional intelligence involves perceiving and reasoning

abstractly with information that emerges from feelings (Mayer and Cobb, 2000); it is possible that this why they can perform deep acting. They have the ability to be aware of, understand, and express themselves, and have the ability to be aware of, understand, and relate to others, the ability to deal with strong emotions, and the ability to adopt to change and solve problems of a social or personal nature (Bar-On, 1997). With these dispositions, high emotional intelligent frontline employees are able to understand their customers' state and relate with them in ways that would enhance their satisfaction. Emotionally intelligent employees are able to positively influence their customers possibly because of feelings of happiness they experience; happiness is an aspect of emotional intelligence (Furnham & Petrides, 2003). Francis (1999) has shown that happy individuals feel more of positive affect and less of negative affect.

The greater ability to manage customer interactions, possessed by high emotional intelligent employees is likely to be predominantly caused by the social skills possessed by high emotional intelligence individuals. Emotionally intelligent person engages in efficient emotion regulation in both self and others. This monitoring makes it possible for the individual to strategically manage emotion in self and others to produce the desired outcome in a given situation. The persons who can differentiate emotions can cope with them more effectively. This is consistent with the findings of Totterdell and Holman (2003) and Dore et al. (2006). They found that emotional intelligence positively predicted deep acting, suggesting that emotional intelligence enhances the performance of deep acting.

The present study has made valuable contributions to the emotional labour literature by viewing emotional labour as a uni-dimensional and multi-dimensional construct. This study revealed that big-five personality factors and emotional intelligence greatly influenced employees' tendency to perform emotional labour making use of either deep acting or surface acting. The results of this study suggest important practical implications for human capital management especially in the area of recruitment and selection of frontline employees in hotel organisations. The human resource management or personnel managers are advised to use effective recruitment and selection tools in filling vacant positions in their organisations; they should select individual whose personality fit the job. In selection, candidates' individual dispositions or personality traits in terms of extraversion, neuroticism, and conscientiousness should be considered, as well as emotional intelligence. Thus, employ people of high or low extraversion, low neuroticism (emotionally stable), low conscientiousness, and high emotional intelligence.

Given that individuals differed from one another in their tendency to engage in emotional labour, this study revealed the influence of personality and its dimensions by finding that extraversion is the only personality

variable that predicts deep acting and surface acting as well as overall emotional labour. While low extraversion employees would adopt deep acting, high extraversion would adopt surface acting. It is encouraged, therefore for hotel management to train her employees on those emotional labours acting that may be lacking in them, due to the type of personality they have. Thus, train high extraversion, neuroticism, and conscientious employees on how to perform deep acting, low extraversion employees on how to perform surface acting, and high extraversion and neuroticism employees on how to perform overall emotional labour. Bar-On (2002) posits that emotional intelligence develops over time and that it can be improved through training. It is implied that frontline hotel employees need to be trained on emotional intelligence so as to encourage the expression of deep action and overall emotional labour. This is because individuals who are high in emotional intelligence spontaneously feel more positive emotions. Employees therefore should be trained to learn how to cope with situations or problems that could emerge from performing their daily duty, and how to develop appropriate skill to deal or cope with customers' complaint or unruly behaviour

Finally, organisations aiming to improve employee and customer satisfaction should focus on hiring the right kinds of people, training them on effective emotional regulation techniques, and creating a climate in which employees understand the display rule requirements and feel supported by their organisations.

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