

# EMPLOYEE EMOTIONAL EMPOWERMENT: A NEW WAY TO MANAGE EMOTIONS IN THE WORKPLACE

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## ABSTRACT

*Employees normally feel a discrepancy between their inner emotions and the emotions that they are expected to display. But they also can express their true emotions when, for example, they identify with their work or when they just prefer to work authentically with their customers. We propose that the concept of employee emotional empowerment is a more complete and realistic practice of managing emotions that benefits both the organization and the employee, compared to the emotional labor theory. This paper reviews the growing body of literature regarding emotional labor. We, then, articulate how employees can manage their emotions without having the sense of burnout and dissatisfaction. We conclude showing how employee emotional empowerment can be a better alternative to emotional labor. The concept of employee emotional empowerment is based on two crucial research streams: empowerment and authenticity. When employees are empowered to manage their emotions, as they may perceive more appropriate, they may easily adapt their behavior and performance to customers. A shared vision of the goals of the organization, organizational support, improvement of employees' skills, and the recognition and appreciation of employees' performance is crucial for an effective implementation of employee emotional empowerment. This study adds to the body of literature on emotional labor by exploring a new strategy of managing emotions in the workplace.*

**Keywords:** Employee Emotional Empowerment, Emotional Labor, Empowerment, Authenticity, Healthcare

## INTRODUCTION

Lately has been a growing interest in the role of emotions in organizational contexts, in which social interactions are a significant part of the work. Given that people and emotions are inseparable, and employees take their emotions to work, employees' emotions need to be considered an integral part of organizational life (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1995). Emotions influence many organizational dimensions such as decision making, creativity, teamwork, negotiation, leadership, and job performance (Barsade & Gibson, 2007). Accordingly, emotions have become part of the job requirements and employees are expected to engage in emotional labor.

Employees normally feel a discrepancy between their inner emotions and the emotions that they are expected to display (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993; Brotheridge & Grandey, 2002) and the only way to manage this problem is doing emotional labor, through surface acting - faking their emotions - or deep acting - trying to match their emotions to what is expected of them - (Hochschild, 1983). However, we consider that employees may also have the alternative of expressing their true emotions - when, for example, they identify with their work or when they just prefer to work authentically with their customers -, and this behavior may have a positive impact for the organization and the customer and for the employee himself. Therefore, it is important to explore this issue as it can project a different perspective on how to manage emotions in the workplace.

We address this conceptual void by exploring and proposing the construct employee emotional empowerment and answering the question how employee emotional empowerment

can stand as an alternative to emotional labor? This review demonstrates the conceptual gap and further advances the emotional labor literature, through the presentation of a new practice to develop an efficient and positive management of emotions. As such, the value of this conceptual paper is twofold: 1) complements the theory of emotional labor, helping to better understand how employees manage their emotions at work; and 2) it introduces the concept of employee emotional empowerment and proposes as a construct to be empirically studied in future research.

In this article, we proceed in three theoretical steps. First, we provide a literature review regarding the emotional labor process and present the boundary conditions of this construct. Second, we explore in detail the emotional labor strategies of surface and deep acting. Third, based on review of the emotional labor process literature we propose the new construct employee emotional empowerment and its potential association with customer's satisfaction and employees' well-being, as well as the advantages it brings to the field of service and organization.

### **EMOTIONAL LABOR: A LIMITED CONCEPT**

Emotional labor is the management of emotions required by the organization. Employees, especially those with boundary spanning roles, are expected to suppress negative emotions and express positive emotions in order to meet what the organization expects from them (Hochschild, 1983). Emotional labor implicitly presumes that the true feelings of employees are not in line with the emotions that the organization requires them to express. This is called emotional dissonance, that means when there is a discrepancy between what employees feel and what they should express, they must engage in emotional labor (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993; Brotheridge & Grandey, 2002).

The definition of emotional labor has undergone several evolutions. Initially, Hochschild (1983, p. 7), the mentor of this theory, defined emotional labor as the "management of feelings to create a publicly observable facial and bodily display; emotional labor is sold for a wage and therefore has exchange value". This definition clearly refers to the fact that employees are required to regulate their own emotions and express them for a commercial purpose. Hochschild based her theory of emotional labor in the dramaturgical perspective of Goffman (1959), where the efforts made by the employees to regulate their emotions according to what the organization requires are performances.

To manage the discrepancy between the emotions felt and the emotions that need to be expressed, Hochschild proposed two strategies that require some effort, namely surface acting and deep acting. Surface acting strategies occur when one performs an emotional display to meet certain rules and expectations. Such display of emotions has been considered inauthentic since the expressed emotions do not match the internal experience of the employee (Grandey, 2000; Coté, 2005). In turn, deep acting occurs when a person consciously attempts to feel a specific emotion that matches the expected emotional displays (Grandey, 2003). Service providers might try to change what they feel to experience the emotions that they are expected to display (Groth et al., 2009). Hochschild (1983) suggested that it is because of employees' efforts to express a positive emotion, while dealing with particularly difficult customers, that emotional work is usually related to burnout and occupational stress.

Unlike Hochschild, Ashforth and Humphrey (1993) based their definition of emotional labor on the behavior of employees as the act of displaying the appropriate emotion. In addition, the authors devalued the surface and deep acting dimensions by stating that it can become routine for employees and therefore are not sources of stress. To these dimensions was also added the possibility for employees to express genuine emotions, which constitutes a flaw in the concept of emotional labor in their perspectives (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993). A service provider can naturally feel what (s)he is expected to feel and express without having to adopt one of the strategies presented by Hochschild (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993). According to the

authors, this can be considered a third strategy to conduct emotional labor. Regarding the consequences of emotional labor, Ashforth and Humphrey (1993) focused primarily on the impact of emotional labor on work performance or effectiveness, rather than on its impact on the individual's health. The authors proposed that emotional labor can positively contribute to work effectiveness when customers perceive the emotions as being sincere and genuine.

Morris and Feldman (1996, p. 987) also contributed to the progression of emotional labor literature by refining its definition as "the effort, planning, and control needed to express organizationally desired emotion during interpersonal transactions". According to the authors, emotional labor consists in four dimensions: (a) frequency of interactions, (b) attentiveness (intensity of emotions, duration of interaction), (c) variety of emotions required, and (d) emotional dissonance. From these dimensions, the frequency with which emotions have to be expressed has been the most studied. The authors assumed that when individuals have to express desirable emotions with high frequency in their work, they can become overloaded and may eventually lead to alienation and emotional exhaustion (Hochschild, 1983).

The concept of emotional labor advanced by Zapf and colleagues (1999) is based on action theory. Accordingly, emotional labor is understood as part of an intentional and goal-oriented behavior. Employees are required to perform certain tasks in a certain way. These requirements are redefined by employees, which include rules to determine how these tasks should be carried out. In service-related professions, these rules may refer to the emotions expressed to customers (Zapf et al., 1999). One of the goals is precisely to perform emotional labor, that is, to behave accordingly to the organizational display rules. Zapf et al. (1999) focused mainly on the situational requirements of the job, rather on the strategies for regulating emotions. The authors distinguished between: 1) the requirement to express positive emotions, 2) the requirement to express and deal with negative emotions, 3) the requirement to be sensitive to the emotions of others, and 4) emotional dissonance.

In order to clarify the contradictions that have emerged in the literature, Grandey (2000) also defined emotional labor. Thus, she considered that emotional labor is "the process of regulating both feelings and expressions for organizational goals" (Grandey, 2000, p. 97). Grandey (2000) developed a theoretical model based on Gross's theory of emotional regulation (1998). According to Gross (1998) there are two types of emotional regulation: the regulation focused on the antecedents and the regulation focused on the answers. Grandey (2000) sought to match these types of emotional regulation with the Hochschild's concepts (1983) of surface acting and deep acting, respectively. Thus, when individuals adopt a deep acting strategy, they are regulating the precursors of emotion (i.e. emotional regulation focused on the antecedents), modifying the situation or the perception of the situation. On the other hand, when individuals engage in surface acting, they are regulating their emotional responses (i.e. emotional regulation focused on responses), modeling their emotional expressions according to the situations. Grandey (2000) considered that emotional labor can have negative consequences for individuals such as burnout and job dissatisfaction.

In the table below we can follow the evolution of the construct emotional labor, as well as the main characteristics pointed out by each researcher.

<b>Authors</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Key Characteristics</b>
Hochschild, 1983	The management of feelings to create a publicly observable facial and bodily display.	It does not allow employees to spontaneously and genuinely experience and express the expected emotion.
Ashforth and Humphrey, 1993	The act of displaying the appropriate emotion.	Genuine emotions are considered a third strategy to regulate emotions at work.
Morris and Feldman, 1996	The effort, planning, and control needed to express organizationally	Emotional labor consists of four dimensions: 1) frequency of

	desired emotion during interpersonal transactions.	interactions, 2) attentiveness (intensity of emotions, duration of interaction), 3) variety of emotions required, and 4) emotional dissonance.
Grandey, 2000	The process of regulating both feelings and expressions for organizational goals.	There are two types of emotional regulation: the regulation focused on the antecedents and the regulation focused on the answers.
Zapf and Holz, 2006	Emotional regulation to display organisationally desired emotions by the employer.	Emotional labor is divided into: 1) the requirement to express positive emotions, 2) the requirement to express and deal with negative emotions, 3) the requirement to be sensitive to the emotions of others, and 4) emotional dissonance.

In the following section we will analyze in detail the strategies of emotional labor, to which service employees are restricted, namely surface acting and deep acting.

### Surface and Deep Acting Strategies

To regulate emotions and expressions to achieve organizational goals, two strategies of emotional regulation can be used: surface acting and deep acting, each with different psychological effort requirements (Martinez-Iñigo et al., 2007).

The surface acting strategy is a way of trying to manage the visible aspects of emotions, so as to fit the display rules, while the feelings remain unchanged. Therefore, this is a form of pretending to feel the expected emotion that leads to the existence of an emotional dissonance between feelings and expression (Zapf, 2002). It is considered a response-focused emotional regulation strategy since it focuses on the regulation of expressions and is used after the emotion has already developed. In this sense, the feelings are not adjusted, but only a management of emotional expression is made, appearing as a kind of a mask. This is achieved through careful verbal and non-verbal presentation, considering facial expression, gestures and tone of voice (Mann & Cowburn, 2005). The emotional response is adjusted and seeks to modify the behavior by suppressing, amplifying or pretending emotions (Grandey, 2000).

Hence, the use of this strategy is especially critical in understanding the potential consequent stress of emotional labor (Grandey et al., 2005). Surface acting has been related to individual states of distress, loss of sense of authenticity, and dissatisfaction at work (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993; Brotheridge & Grandey, 2002; Grandey, 2000, 2003; Hochschild, 1983; Hülshager & Schewe, 2011; Kammeyer-Mueller et al., 2013). Grandey (2003) related the surface acting strategy to emotional exhaustion based on two arguments: first, the tension felt because of emotional dissonance and, second, the energy expenditure due to the effort made. Also, Brotheridge and Grandey (2002) demonstrated a positive relationship between surface acting and depersonalization and a negative relation to personal fulfillment. The meta-analysis conducted by Hülshager and Schewe (2011) demonstrated the negative repercussions of surface acting on individual well-being and its influence on burnout. Also, the meta-analysis of Kammeyer-Mueller et al. (2013) evidenced the negative effects of surface acting on employees' health despite their affective traits and the demands of the job.

About the effects of surface acting on customer service quality, the literature has associated this strategy with less effective performance, distorted service provision and negative perceptions of service quality (Hülshager & Schewe, 2011; Kammeyer-Mueller et al., 2013).

On the other hand, the deep acting strategy focuses on the self-regulation of feelings and arises when individuals try to influence what they feel to truly feel and perform the role that is expected. In this case, not only expressive behavior but also feelings are regulated, and there is a need to direct attention to pleasant things to invoke thoughts, images and memories to induce a

certain emotion (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993; Zapf, 2002) or to reassess the situation to induce the required emotion (Grandey, 2000). It is considered a strategy of antecedent-focused emotional regulation since it occurs before the development of emotion, affecting the perception and processing of emotional stimuli. Therefore, it helps to modify the situation or the cognitions of the situation at the beginning of an emotion, before provoking behavioral or physiological response (Grandey, 2000). Thus, the deep acting strategy results in an emotional state in which the emotions felt and expressed by the individuals are congruent (Mesmer-Magnus et al., 2012), and, therefore, it is often confused with a genuine emotional demonstration of the required emotions (Hulsheger & Schewe, 2011).

The deep acting strategy has been related to feelings of self-fulfillment, lower levels of negative emotions, and greater job satisfaction (Brotheridge & Lee, 2002; Grandey, 2003; Groth et al., 2009; Hülshager & Schewe, 2011). Grandey (2003) related deep acting with emotional exhaustion, based on the arguments of the tension felt because of emotional dissonance and the expenditure of energy because of the effort made. According to the author, the modification of one's feelings by the adoption of deep acting requires attention and effort. However, the study did not reveal a significant relationship between these dimensions. On the other hand, Brotheridge and Lee (2002) demonstrated a positive relationship between deep acting and the sense of authenticity which, in turn, was negatively related to emotional exhaustion. According to Hülshager and Schewe (2011), deep acting provokes a tendency for employees to feel more satisfied with their work and more competent in the performance of their duties.

As for the effects of deep acting on customer service quality, the literature has associated this strategy with more effective performances, more authentic services and positive perceptions of service quality (Grandey, 2000, 2003; Groth et al. 2009; Hülshager & Schewe, 2011; Kammeyer-Mueller et al., 2013). For instance, Sandström et al. (2008) concluded that employees who use deep acting are more likely to understand customers and respond well to their needs.

Although deep acting and surface acting strategies are considered ways to help individuals express emotions, they do not arise naturally (Diefendorff et al., 2005). Ashforth and Humphrey (1995) argued that an exclusive focus on the strategies of deep and surface acting ignored the fact that individuals could spontaneously experience and demonstrate the appropriate emotions. According to the authors, emotional labor presupposes a performance of functions in accordance with the rules of the organization, so that an employee who genuinely expresses the appropriate emotions does not stop performing emotional labor.

Zapf (2002) proposed automatic regulation as an automatic way of demonstrating the emotions desired organizationally through spontaneously felt emotions. Diefendorff et al. (2005) confirmed the existence of a third distinct process from the strategies of deep acting and surface acting of emotional regulation in which individuals naturally express the emotion felt. Expressing genuine emotions is not just a proxy for low levels of surface acting or not redundant with deep acting; expressing genuine emotions is a separate construct. This strategy requires a much lower level of psychological effort when compared to surface and deep acting (Martinez-Iñigo et al., 2007).

This leads us to conclude that there should be other alternatives that avoid or minimize the negative effects of emotional labor. Therefore, we propose to replace the strict emotion display strategies of surface acting and deep acting with practices that support and value employees. Empowering employees allows them to manage their emotions appropriately by generating authentic positive emotions and helping to overcome dissonance (Lashley, 2001). This, in turn, makes emotional management less costly to employees and more beneficial to organizations and customers.

## **An Alternative: Employee Emotional Empowerment (EEE)**

Based on emotional labor literature, we suggest the construct of employee emotional empowerment as a practice that organizations should embrace and pass on to their employees to effectively perform a service encounter. We define employee emotional empowerment as the degree of discretion allowing employees to display emotions (authentic emotions or emotional labor) that they believe are most appropriate following both their own and the organization interest. The essence of this construct is based on the empowerment and authenticity of service employees that we will explain next.

### **Empowerment**

Empowerment is a way for employees to take responsibility for the service encounter, that allows them to adapt to customers' behaviour and to respond more quickly and effectively to their needs and complaints (Grönroos, 2001). Empowerment practices allow the individualized rather than the standardized service delivery, so that responses and solutions can be tailored to each customer (Rafiq & Ahmed, 1998).

The concept of empowerment underlies the principle that employees are a resource with knowledge and experience and have an interest in being involved. This can be achieved through opportunities and structures created by managers, thus reaching gains for organizations (increased efficiency and effectiveness) and for employees (job satisfaction) (Wilkinson, 1998). The core element of empowerment involves giving employees discretion over certain task related activities (Chan & Lam, 2011). Many service managers agree that frontline employees should be allowed a degree of discretion when dealing with customers, due to the special nature of services, particularly the simultaneity of production and consumption (Rafiq & Ahmed, 1998).

Empowering employees allows to improve their motivation and productivity and in turn to improve service for the customer and market the service products more effectively (Rafiq & Ahmed, 1998). For instance, Grönroos (1990) argued that the empowered employees have the capability to rectify mistakes and an opportunity to increase sales. Empowerment can increase employees' self-efficacy as discretion allows them to decide the best way to perform a given task (Gist & Mitchell, 1992).

According to Aziz (2008), employees' empowerment is an important tool to manage their emotions and to reduce the emotional dissonance, as such it is a way of managing emotions. The author states that the empowerment will guarantee the employee satisfaction at work, which, in turn, will lead to performing a high service quality and contributing to customer satisfaction. Fineman (1993) argued that allowing employees to feel their own power and the importance of their role may help them to manage their emotions appropriately.

Empowerment also has its risks. The main consequences of empowerment are increase the scope of the employees' jobs, slowing down the service delivery process as the empowered employee attempts to individualize the service for customers (Bowen & Lawler, 1992). In situations where employees are empowered to rectify service failures by giveaways there is a risk that employees give too much away, and employees consciously or unconsciously use their discretion disproportionately to bestow better service on customers who are like them (Martin, 1996). However, these risks can be minimized through recruitment as it is necessary to ensure that employees recruited have the requisite attitudinal characteristics and skills to cope with empowerment, training and rewards. Nevertheless, the benefits of employee empowerment are greater and, in the particular case of emotion management, empowerment is needed (Rafiq & Ahmed, 1998).

## Authenticity

Employees are required to manage their emotions in a way that matches organizational displays. Usually, this means that employees should suppress their genuine emotions and put on a smile, whether it is authentically felt or not (Rafaeli & Sutton, 1987). However, several studies concluded that customers' reactions to an inauthentic display are less positive than to an authentic (Ekman, 1992; Ekman & Friesen, 1982; Frank et al., 1993). In this sense, several authors have pointed out the importance of authenticity in service encounters (Ashforth & Tomiuk, 2000; Coté & Morgan, 2002; Mattila & Enz, 2002; Pugh, 2001; Tsai & Huang, 2002). First, service encounters are characterized by a dynamic and complex social interaction (Grandey et al., 2005), and second, authentic positive displays are important for both social reasons and financial and long-term benefits.

Several definitions have been advanced to capture the meaning of authenticity (Cranton & Carusetta, 2004; Thompson, 2005; Cranton, 2001) and, as Starr (2008) summarized, authenticity includes a set of attributes: a process of self-discovery where the individual realizes their personal potential and acts on that potential; and the individual demonstrates congruence in ideals, values, and actions in relation to self and others. According to Harter (2002), authenticity involves one's personal experiences - be they thoughts, emotions, needs, wants, preferences, or beliefs. Authenticity was defined as the extent to which one behaves according to what (s)he considers to be her/his true or genuine self (Ashforth & Tomiuk, 2000). Salmela (2005) argued that authenticity refers to the alignment of individuals' actions and behaviors with their internal values and beliefs.

Emotional labor is one of the demands of service roles that describes organizational variables to promote inauthentic emotional displays (Diefendorff & Gosserand, 2003; Rafaeli, 1989; Rafaeli & Sutton, 1987). Hochschild (1983) argued that when employees are required to manage their emotions in return for a wage, they become alienated from their authentic selves. Therefore, the author devalued the possibility of employees having pleasure to work authentically with their customers. Researchers argue that focusing only on surface acting and deep acting as strategies to regulate emotions ignores the possibility of congruence between employees' experience and expression of emotions during customer interactions (Diefendorff & Gosserand, 2003). Diefendorff et al. (2005) confirmed the existence of naturally felt emotion which is distinct from surface and deep acting. The emotional harmony and feeling of authenticity are possible when employees actually experience the emotions that they are required to express as part of their work (Rafaeli & Sutton, 1987; Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993).

Employees can also behave authentically when they strongly identify with their organizational roles (Ashforth & Humphrey 1993; Diefendorff et al., 2005; Ashforth & Tomiuk, 2000) and with the service task (Yagil & Medler-Liraz, 2013). Knoll and Dick (2013) stated that employees identify themselves with the organization when they perceive the organization as successfully representing them as a person, which enacts their personal engagement at work. Furthermore, Sheldon et al. (1997) added that the service environment might take individuals to behave authentically, that people tend to feel more authentic in closer interpersonal relationships. Mayer et al. (1995) concluded that employees' trust on their supervisor makes them feel safer and more comfortable in displaying authentic emotions to customers.

Other components that can boost an authentic behavior are indicated by Yagil and Medler-Liraz (2013). In a study on transient authenticity, the authors concluded that customer non-service identity characteristics and employees' awareness of customer attributes drives employees to engage in an authentic behavior. Yagil and Medler-Liraz (2013) claimed that authenticity is a state of temporary psychological autonomy that reflects internal control over emotions, motivation and behavior.

Being authentic can bring benefits to the organization, both for employees and for customers. Ménard and Brunet (2011) and Toor and Ofori (2009) stated that genuine self-expression improves psychological well-being and social functioning, and triggers employees'

job satisfaction. In-role performance, or employees' introspection about their performance is also identified as being positively associated to authenticity at work (Bosch & Taris, 2014). Wood et al. (2008) claim that the high levels of authenticity result in high levels of satisfaction with life, positive affect, self-esteem, happiness, personal growth, self-acceptance and gratitude. Customers' also benefit from this type of behavior, since employees' efforts to be authentic influence customers' emotions and perceptions (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2006). In contrast, expressing inauthentic emotions creates difficulty in reducing customers' service-related ambiguity (Barsade, 2002). Hence, ensuring authenticity of emotional expression is as important for the organizations as preventing the inauthenticity during customer interactions.

Unlike emotional labor, which limits employee emotional performance, employee emotional empowerment allows employees to manage their own emotions as they see fit with the needs of their customers. This allows employees to adopt a tailored and individualized behavior for each customer and each service context. In addition, the risk of burnout and job stress is mitigated, as employees are not required to act in a way that goes against what they really feel. With this new concept employees can also act more authentically in their work which leads to job satisfaction on the one hand, and customer service quality on the other. More important than a positive display or a service with a smile is to display an authentic behavior, because when they are perceived as inauthentic can lead to low service quality, customer dissatisfaction and job stress and burnout (Grandey, 2005).

Ideally, employees should be given decision power over the emotions they should or should not express and how to manage those emotions. Because different types of emotion management will be necessary, considering the service context, the type of customer, the type of service situation, and the type of customer-employee relationship, no one better than the employee himself to decide the best emotional strategy to adopt. The next table summarizes the main differences between the constructs emotional labor and employee emotional empowerment.

	<b>Emotional Labor</b>	<b>Employee Emotional Empowerment</b>
Definition	The management of feelings to create a publicly observable facial and bodily display (Hochschild, 1983).	The degree of discretion allowing employees to display emotions that an employee believes are most appropriate following both their own and the organization interest.
Strategies	Surface acting and deep acting (suppress and fake emotions, change inner emotions).	Whatever employees feel appropriate to display according to the service situation and the customer.
Negative impact	Burnout, job stress, employee turnover (Schaufeli et al., 1996).	-
Positive impact	Job satisfaction, self-efficacy, personal fulfillment (Côté & Morgan, 2002; Pugh, 2001).	Job satisfaction, self-efficacy, personal fulfillment, performing high service quality, customer satisfaction.

## CONCLUSIONS

The topic of emotional labor has been much debated in the literature, especially the strategies that employees should use to manage their emotions in accordance to what the organization expects from them. To summarize, employees cannot be restricted to suppress or fake their emotions because, first, this behavior has a negative impact on their well-being, and second, authenticity must be allowed to adapt each service performance to different customers. Thus, we argue that employees must be empowered, that is, they must be given a degree of discretion to be able to manage their emotions in a way they think is more appropriate, what we call employee emotional empowerment.



There are several studies that refute the emotional labor theory, more precisely the strategies of managing emotions, namely surface and deep acting. However, there is no theory to date that proposes an alternative for the emotional labor theory. In this study, we have made a theoretical contribution by highlighting the importance of empowering employees when it comes to manage their emotions. This research also contributes to the ongoing debate and discussion about the management of emotions at work, which just focus on the negative impact that the strategies of surface and deep acting may have on employees well being.

Some managerial implications that derive from the employee emotional empowerment consist in recruiting employees who know how to manage their emotions in the context of customer service and train employees to know how to deal with their own empowerment. Also, for an effective implementation of employee empowerment there should be a shared vision of the goals of the organization between employees and managers, employees should have organizational support, namely from their supervisors, there should be an improvement of employees' skills through continuous learning, and the recognition and appreciation of employees' performance is crucial for their motivation.

More research is necessary to explore the relevance and to characterize this new construct and about the conditions and success factors of employee emotional empowerment. Therefore, the usefulness of this construct should be empirically studied in the services setting. In regard to the relationship between the employee emotional empowerment and organizational positive outcomes, longitudinal studies may help determine whether this is a causal relationship. Multiple types of qualitative data may also be helpful to see if there is a difference between attitudes as gathered by interviews, and actions as seen through observation. Furthermore, the usefulness of the employee emotional empowerment could also be tested in several service contexts, especially in healthcare, hospitality and education, where the management of emotions takes greater proportions due the proximity, frequency and intensity of relationships between employees and customers.

The inclusion of this construct in future research seems promising, as it might offer researchers a more comprehensive view of the process of managing emotions in the workplace. This will help to minimize employees' burnout, job stress and job turnover.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to express our gratitude to the Editor and the Referees. They offered extremely valuable suggestions or improvements. The authors were supported by the GOVCOPP Research Center of Universidade de Aveiro, and UNIDCOM, IADE - Universidade Europeia. Joana Carmo Dias has financial support from Fundação para a Ciência e Tecnologia (through project UIDB/00711/2020).

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**Received:** 27-Dec-2021, Manuscript No. JMIDS-22-10736; **Editor assigned:** 29-Dec-2021, PreQC No. JMIDS-22-10736(PQ); **Reviewed:** 10-Jan-2022, QC No. JMIDS-22-10736; **Revised:** 20-Jan-2022, Manuscript No. JMIDS-22-10736(R); **Published:** 27-Jan-2022