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## Emotional Labor and Job Satisfaction: Does Social Support Matter?

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### ABSTRACT

For the purpose of withstanding the fierce competition in the banking sector, various banks in Ghana requires employees to display emotions whenever dealing with customers. However, these emotions come with their own consequences. The question is could social support provided by these banks serve as a way to mitigate the negative outcomes of such behaviors and increase employee job satisfaction? This paper, therefore, examined the moderating role of social support in the effect of emotional labor on employee job satisfaction in the banking sector. Data were collected from 140 bank employees. The analytical tool used was Structural Equation Modeling.

### KEYWORDS

Bank employees; deep acting; emotional labor; job satisfaction; surface acting; social support

## Introduction

According to a Bank of Ghana Report (2009 as cited in Owusu, 2012), since the introduction of the Banking Act, 2002 (Act 612); and the Universal Banking Act, 2007 (Act 673) with its amendments, the banking sector of Ghana has been transformed from an indolent and slow moving sector to an active, competitive and productive industry. In order to withstand the fierce competition in the sector, various banks in Ghana require employees to display emotions whenever dealing with customers. However, these banks do not pay attention to the emotional challenges and the psychological problems (stress, strain, and anxiety) of the employees. Asumeng, Acquah-Coleman, and Dadzie (2015) posits that employees in the Ghanaian banking sector are working in deleterious psychosocial conditions and continue to complain about their health.

Kruml and Geddes (2000b) asserted that too much of emotional exhaustion can reduce employee job satisfaction and decrease the organizational performance. Emotional labor can become dysfunctional for the employee when dissonance between felt emotions and displayed emotions are experienced. In order to display appropriate emotions, employees sometimes must hide or fake felt emotions, or try to practice the expected emotion, which may cause emotional strain. Studies (Grandey, Foo, Groth, &

Goodwin, 2012; Hwa, 2012; Mesmer-Magnus, DeChurch, & Wax, 2012; Philipp & Schupbach, 2010; Scott & Barnes, 2011; Shuck, Shuck, & Reio, 2013) have proven that emotional labor has both personal and professional cost for employees: stress, psychological distress, fatigue, sleep impairment, burnout, emotional exhaustion, emotional exhaustion, emotional detriment, physical complaints, job dissatisfaction, and an intention to turnover.

Grandey et al. (2012) emphasized that emotional labor demands an intense focus and attention to how an individual is emotionally showing up. This strict focus can deplete energy resources, heighten physiological arousal, lower glucose and reduce motivation (Grandey et al., 2012). These outcomes can become problematic both within the organization, and within personal activities and relationships. According to Lee, Lovell, and Brotheridge (2010a), when an employee engages in emotions frequently and intensively, it can result in negative outcomes like emotional exhaustion. Participating in a form of emotional labor called surface acting can result in the following issues: stress, burnout, emotional depletion, emotional detachment, absenteeism, high turnover, and lower-job performance (Bechtoldt, Rohrmann, De Pater, & Beersma, 2011; Grandey et al., 2012; Henderson, 2001; Kammeyer-Mueller et al., 2013; Scott & Barnes, 2011). Also, in their meta-analysis, Hülshager and Schewe (2011) opined that when employees engage in surface acting, they are more likely to experience emotional dissonance (i.e., discrepancy between a felt emotion and the expressed emotion), resulting in a psychological strain that leads to emotional exhaustion.

However, some researchers have argued that participating in emotional labor (particularly, deep acting) actually has positive outcomes such as high satisfaction (Kammeyer-Mueller et al., 2013; Kim, 2008; Mann, 2005; Mann & Cowburn, 2005; Pugh, Groth, & Henning-Thurau, 2011; Wang, Seibert, & Boles, 2011). Even though clients are major stress generating figures for employees, they also provide employees with many pleasurable and satisfying moments in the work day (Tolich, 1993). One reason for this satisfaction is that customers liven up otherwise monotonous tasks. Shuler and Sypher (2000) have also provided support that performing emotional labor is not always psychologically damaging. The interaction with the customers, being at the center of attention or a sense of joy when knowing one's work is humane in nature all bring some intrinsic rewards to one's work when performing emotional labor.

These findings imply that there are contradictory results so long as the outcomes of emotional labor are concerned. However, none of the above studies tested if the presence of social support could change the outcomes of their results. That is, the moderating role of social support on the consequences of emotional labor has not been extensively explored. The few studies (Hur, Han, Yoo, & Moon, 2015; Hwa, 2012; İplik, Topsakal, & İplik, 2014) which claimed that one of the best ways to buffer the negative outcomes of emotional labor is by providing employees with social support were conducted outside the banking sector.

Meanwhile, the banking sector is one of the few sectors where there is a dominant human-oriented approach and the mutual relations are more intense. As result of globalization, more multi-national banks are opening branches in other countries (Owusu, 2012). According to Bank of Ghana Report (2010), the banking sector of Ghana for instance, has been transformed from an indolent and slow moving sector to an active, competitive and productive industry. In order to withstand the fierce competition in the sector, various banks in Ghana require employees to display emotional

labor whenever dealing with customers. Hence, in line with these expectations, it is required of employees to put their emotional labor as well as the mental and physical labor into the work yet in terms of moderating role of social support, no studies have been done in the sector. This study, therefore, seeks to fill these gaps in literature. Specifically the study will examine: (a) the moderating role of social support on the effect of surface acting on employee job satisfaction, (b) the moderating role of social support on the effect of deep acting on employee job satisfaction.

## Literature

### *Emotional labor*

Hochschild (1983) who is regarded as the originator of the term emotional labor defined it as “the management of feeling to create a publically observable facial and bodily display” (p.7). Morris and Feldman (1996, 1997) regarded it as the effort, planning and control needed to express organizationally desired emotion during interpersonal transactions. It is the effort made by employees to regulate their emotional display in an attempt to meet organizationally based expectations specific to their roles (Brotheridge & Lee, 2003). One question which arises and is a key point of difference in the definition of emotional labor is whether it is primarily the management of emotion or the management of one’s communication of the emotion through voice, facial expression and other forms of body language? In either case, Sisley and Smollan (2012) asserted that what are of prime concern to the organizations particularly those in the service sector are that the outward display of emotion is appropriate and consequently the deleterious effects such as exhaustion and lack of authenticity have often gone unnoticed.

Any job that involves emotional labor possesses three characteristics which include: it requires the worker to make facial or voice contact with the public, it requires the employee to produce an emotional state in the client or customer, and it provides the manager with an opportunity to exert some control over the emotional activities of employees through training and supervision (Hochschild, 1983).

In interacting with the public under guidance of organizations, service providers manage a publicly displayed emotion that is not necessarily privately felt. According to Hochschild (1983), managing emotions then become public acts when they are sold as products which need to be monitored by the organization. The service industry in general and the banking sector in particular, implements display rules to regulate employees’ behavior. These displayed rules are mostly found in the employee handbooks. Organizations could also use policies, symbols, myths, and stories to teach, demonstrate, and reinforce these display rules (Chu, 2002). In light of these display rules, service providers are expected to act friendly and upbeat, and to disguise anger and disgust even toward irritating clients. The rationale for this is to ensure that service providers will project the desired image of the organization to the public, and that this image will create desired satisfaction, commitment and continue patronage from customers.

## *Dimensions of emotional labor*

For the purpose of this paper and in keeping with study conducted by Van Dijk, Smith, and Cooper (2011), Torland (2013), Mann (1999) and Brotheridge and Lee (1998, 2003), the dimensions of emotional labor are defined to be surface acting and deep acting. This is because surface acting and deep-acting involve “acting” which, in turn, represents the core of the emotional labor construct as it is defined in this study. Emotional labor has been defined in this research as the management of feelings that workers carry out in order to display the appropriate emotions to their clients. Hence, genuine emotion display is not considered to be a dimension of emotional labor in this study because showing one’s genuine emotions to clients does not contain an “acting” element and thus does not require any management of employees’ emotions. Another reason why surface acting and deep acting are taken as the dimensions of emotional labor in this study, unlike genuine emotion display, is because genuine emotion does not involve emotional dissonance. Bank employees who feel enthusiastic and display this feeling to clients, for example, do not experience a state of emotional discomfort as a result of emotional dissonance since their genuine emotions are congruent with the displayed emotions.

In addition to the discussion about display of genuine emotions, a number of researchers have proposed emotional labor dimensions to include; frequency of interactions between service workers and clients; attentiveness (involving intensity and duration of interactions); variety of emotions required; and emotional dissonance (Abraham, 1998; Kruml & Geddes, 1998; Morris & Feldman, 1996; Zerbe, 1998). However, in an attempt to reconceptualize emotional labor in a new way, Grandey (2000, p. 97) and Torland (2013) pointed out that emotional dissonance is a “state of being, rather than an effortful process” and, as such, emotional dissonance is an affective state of tension between felt and required emotions rather than a dimension of emotional labor. Regarding the other three emotional labor dimensions (frequency, attentiveness, and variety); Grandey (2000) suggested that these represent situational antecedents rather than dimensions of emotional labor since they may increase the likelihood of workers to perform surface or deep acting.

### *Surface acting*

Surface acting is where employees simulate emotions that are not actually felt by changing their outward appearance when exhibiting required emotions (Chu, 2002). For example, a bank front desk employee may put on a smile and cheerfully greet a customer even when she/he is in a bad mood. In this case, the employee counterfeits emotions that are not experienced.

Employees accomplish this by careful presentation of verbal cues, such as facial expression, gestures or voice tone. For instance, a flight attendant stated that she would prevent panic during crisis in spite of her own anxiety (Hochschild, 1983). The flight attendant therefore uses surface acting to display emotion calmness that she does not actually feel.

### *Deep acting*

Deep acting is the process of controlling intrinsic thought and feeling to meet the mandated display rules (Brotheridge, 2006a). It occurs when employees try to harmonize their actual emotions with emotions that are expected from them. In deep acting, individuals try to feel emotions that they have to display when working (Ashforth &

Humphrey, 1993). With deep acting, employees use their training or past experience to help generate appropriate emotions like empathy or cheerfulness for a given situation.

Unlike surface acting, deep acting involves changing inner feeling by changing something more than outward appearance. Deep acting was explained by Hochschild (1983) by classifying it into two; (1) as exhorting feeling, whereby one actively attempts to evoke or suppress an emotion; (2) as trained imagination, whereby one actively invokes thoughts, images and memories to induce the associated emotion. For instance, thinking of birthday party to feel happy or death to feel sad.

From a study conducted by Hochschild on Airline Company, it was revealed that the company employs deep acting technique to help flight attendants produce appropriate emotions or suppress inappropriate emotional responses toward guests. In a training session, flight attendants are taught to image the cabin as a living room and passengers as their guests, and to regard difficult passengers as children who need attention (Hochschild, 1983). Employees therefore use deep acting to change their feelings by deliberately visualizing a substantial portion of reality in different way.

### **Job satisfaction**

According to Ghazzawi (2008), job satisfaction is one of the most researched topics within organizational behavior. Most studies have classified job satisfaction as falling into the overarching category of job attitudes which also embraces concepts such as cynicism, turnover intention and organizational commitment (Torland, 2013). According to Chu (2002), job satisfaction refers to the pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of the job. Employee that is happy contented and fulfilling his/her desires and needs at work is labeled in terminology as employee job satisfaction. Employee satisfaction is considered within the empirical studies as either complete feeling about the job or related to set of attitudes about various aspect of job (Spector, 1997). Job satisfaction is also affected by the employee state of emotion. This forces managers to create and sustain positive working environment in the organization. It is asserted that employee job satisfaction is important to organization because it enhances employee performance; increase customer satisfaction; reduce turnover, recruiting and training cost (Jamal, 1997; Moser, 1997).

In the literature on job satisfaction, there has been some discussion among researchers regarding what constitutes the dimensions of job satisfaction. There are generally two main approaches. On the one standpoint, some researchers have applied a one-dimensional approach by measuring overall, or so-called “global” job satisfaction (as cited in Chu, 2002). In the case of measuring global job satisfaction, researchers aim to examine general overall satisfaction with the “total package” which is the job (Furnham, 2005). On the other standpoint, some researchers have applied a multi-dimensional approach to job satisfaction by measuring several different dimensions or factors of the construct (as cited in Torland, 2013). Some examples of such factors include the work itself, promotion opportunities, supervision, co-workers, pay level, benefits, and pay raises (De Cieri, Holmes, Abbott, & Pettit, 2005). For the purpose of this study, an overall measure of job satisfaction will be used in order to reduce the number of variables to a manageable level in regards to statistical analyzes.

Thus, the paper is interested in examining the potential effect of emotional labor on bank employees’ overall job satisfaction rather than on specific factors of their job satisfaction. Studies on emotional labor do not have definitive conclusion about

whether performing emotional labor increases or decreases job satisfaction. While some researchers historically assume that emotional labor leads to job dissatisfaction (Hochschild, 1983; Rafaeli & Sutton, 1987; Morris & Feldman, 1996), empirical studies on the subject have not provided support for that wrangling (Wharton, 1993). One possible reason for the contradictory conclusion about this could be due to the fact that most researchers have failed to take into account some of the antecedents of emotional labor, the mediating and the moderating variables between emotional labor and job satisfaction.

### **Social support**

According to İplik et al. (2014), social support is defined as feedback focusing on action, guidance, and identity, as a supporter tries to help an employee (stress receiver) determines ways to deal with a stressor. For instance, Hochschild (1983) discovered that flight attendants make use of informal meetings with other flight attendants to release the negative emotions they have about irritating and difficult passengers. In general, Wills and Shinar (2000) grouped social support into four typologies, namely, emotional support, informational support, social companionship and instrumental support. Emotional support throws light on empathic messages showing understanding of an employee's stress situation and serves as an outlet to release stress. Informational support concentrates on help in defining understanding and coping with problematic situations. Social companionship involves spending time with others in leisure and recreational activities as a means of distracting individuals from worrying about problems. Finally, instrumental support focuses on providing financial aid and material resources (Wills & Shinar, 2000). Burleson (2003) asserted that those four functions are not usually independent in natural setting, even though they are conceptually independent from each other.

It is argued that social support has a beneficial effect on employee well-being through two mechanisms (as cited in Chu, 2002). Firstly, it has direct effect on employees' well-being irrespective of the presence of stress. Employees who receive higher levels of social support are expected to experience more job satisfaction. Thus, higher levels of social support may have a direct effect on perceived stress so that when social support is present, the level of perceived stress is reduced or eradicated. Secondly, social support is a moderating or an interactive mechanism (Burleson, 2003). The key idea of this buffering effect of social support is that it interacts with stress so that the negative outcomes of stress become less pronounced when employees receive more support from their supervisors or co-workers (Chu, 2002). Few studies have documented theoretical arguments further to provide empirical evidence that social support helps to buffer the negative outcomes of EL.

For instance, İplik et al. (2014) found that social support has a moderating role between relationships of surface acting (emotive dissonance) and job satisfaction, and also between the relationships of deep acting (emotive effort) and job satisfaction. Hur et al. (2015) also revealed that previewed organizational support significantly moderated the relationship between deep acting and job outcomes. All these findings point out that social support serves to buffer employees from the negative consequences of emotional labor. However, in terms of bank employees there is not enough research about the moderator role of social support. Thus, in this study, the following hypotheses are proposed:



**H1:** Social support moderates the effects of surface acting on employee job satisfaction

**H2:** Social support moderates the effect of deep acting on employee job satisfaction

## Study methods

The data for this study were obtained from 140 employees from 10 branches of universal banks in the Cape Coast Metropolis. Simple random sampling technique was employed to select the sample from the chosen banks. Before embarking on the data collection, a day was set to visit first and hold discussions with the branch managers of the banks that took part in the study for them to understand the purpose of the study. A total of 165 questionnaires were distributed to the 10 banks. At the end of the data collection period, a total of 140 questionnaires were obtained, giving a response rate of 87.87%.

## Research instrument

Based on literature, the questionnaire was designed using scales that were already validated in previous studies. Section B measured the emotional labor (surface acting and deep acting) with established scales adapted from Brotheridge and Lee (1998), and Grandey (1999). Section C which examined the employee job satisfaction level at work consisted of established scales from Hackman and Oldham (1975). Section D which is the final section assessed the social support received by respondents from their supervisors and co-workers comprised established scale adapted from Caplan, Cobb, French, Harrison, and Pinneau (1980). However, some of the items were modified and additions were made to them to suit the banking sector since the other studies looked at different sectors. The respondents' degree of agreement with each question about the various variables were rated on a five point likert-scale with the end points being; 1 (*lower*) and 5 (*higher*).

## Data analysis

Data were processed using software SPSS version 22 and Smart PLS, and the analytical tool used was Structural Equation Modelling. Before proceeding to perform the analysis of data, a shared common variance (SCV) test was carried out. Most of the research that uses self-reporting method of data collection is influenced by shared common variance that has the tendency to inflate the correlation among the variables. To assess whether the study is influenced by SCV, Harman's Single Factor Test was conducted. The test involved entering all substantive variables into an explanatory factor analysis (EFA) to see if only a single factor emerges from unrotated factor solution. As suggested by Podsakoff and Organ (1986) and Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Jeong-Yeon, and Podsakoff (2003), if a single factor I emerged then SCV is present. Our results from this test showed the absence of SCV as nine factors emerged with the first factor showing percentage of variance of 20%.



**Structural equation modelling**

The structural equation modelling (SEM) is a comprehensive statistical approach to testing hypotheses about relations among observed and unobserved variables. According to Hair, Hult, Ringle, and Sarstedt (2016), it is a blend of two statistical methods of factor analysis and path analysis into one broad statistical method. That is, there are two parts in a PLS Structural Equation Modelling, first, a measurement model relating the observable variables to their own latent variables and second, a structural model relating some endogenous latent variables like emotional labor (surface acting and deep acting) to other latent variables like employee job satisfaction.

**Results and discussion**

The hypotheses were tested by assessing the direction, strength and level of significance of the path coefficient (gammas) estimated by PLS as shown in Figure 1.

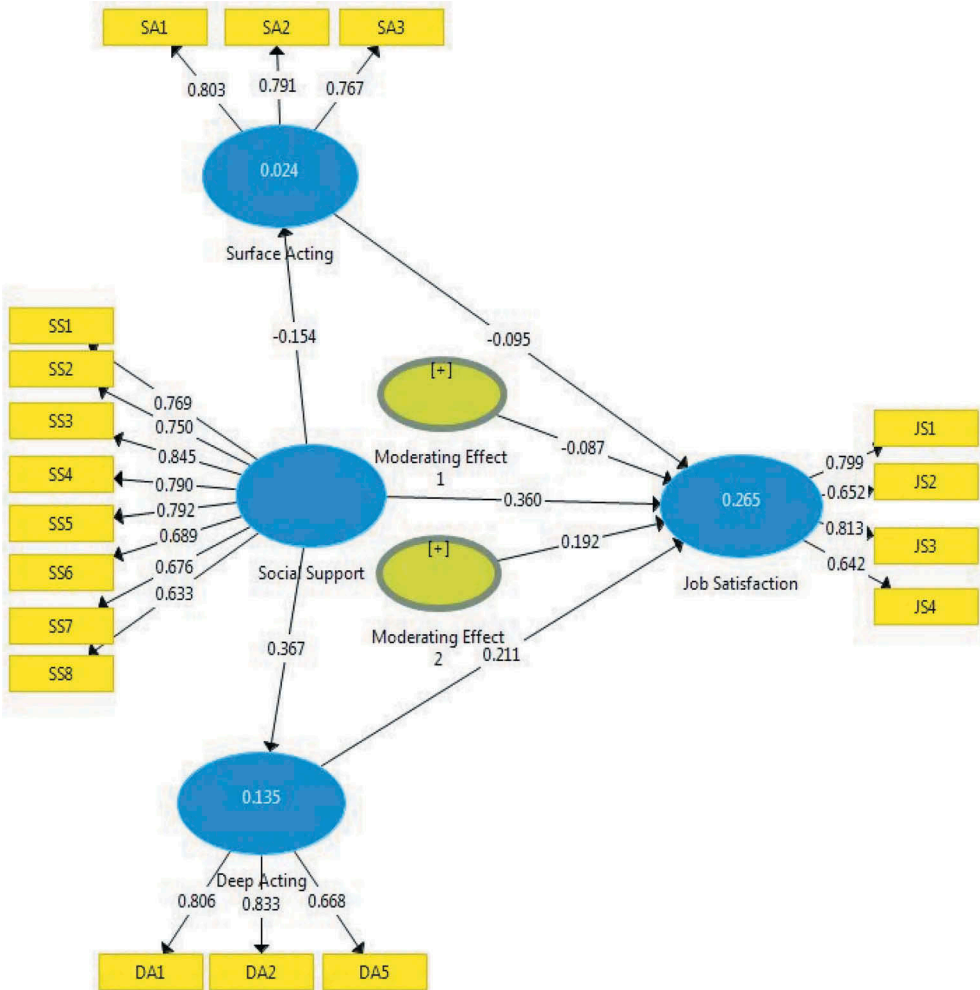


Figure 1. Test of the Research Model (PLS, n = 140).

## Measurement model

Before the results from the Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) can be relied on, it is necessary to consider its conformance to various reliability and validity checks. Construct validity was assessed using the convergent and discriminant validity tests.

## Reliability

When the factor loadings were closely examined, three factors of surface acting (SA4 = 0.085, SA5 = 0.094 and SA6 = 0.594), six factors of deep acting (DA3 = 0.547, DA4 = 0.221, DA 6 = 0.567, DA7 = 0.479, DA8 = 0.435 and DA9 = 0.514), and one factor of employee job satisfaction (JS5 = 0.491) were reported with substandard factor loadings (<0.6) as suggested by Hair et al. (2016). These substandard factor loadings were dropped out from the further investigations. The composite factor reliability coefficients of the constructs (surface acting, deep acting, social support and employee job performance) ranged from 0.815 to 0.909, which meets the suggested benchmark by Hair et al. (2016).

## Convergent validity

Results indicated that the variance extracted ranged from 0.534 to 0.620 from which meets the convergent validity criteria. The results show that the scale used possessed convergent validity. The factor loadings, composite reliability and Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values as computed by PLS algorithms are presented in Table 1.

**Table 1.** Factor Loadings, Constructs Reliability and AVE.

Variables	Factor loadings	Composite reliability	AVE
<i>Surface Acting</i>		0.830	0.620
SA1	0.803		
SA2	0.791		
SA3	0.767		
<i>Deep Acting</i>		0.815	0.596
DA1	0.806		
DA2	0.833		
DA5	0.668		
<i>Social Support</i>		0.909	0.557
SS1	0.769		
SS2	0.750		
SS3	0.845		
SS4	0.790		
SS5	0.792		
SS6	0.689		
SS7	0.676		
SS8	0.633		
<i>Job Satisfaction</i>		0.819	0.534
JS1	0.799		
JS2	0.652		
JS3	0.813		
JS4	0.642		

### Discriminant validity

The Fornell-Larcker criterion was used in assessing the discriminant validity. It compares the square root of the AVE values with the latent variable correlations. According to Hair et al. (2016, p. 105), “the square root of each construct’s AVE should be greater than its highest correlation with any other construct.” For all constructs, the square root of the AVEs is more than the squared correlations indicating discriminant validity. The results presented in Table 2 clearly shows adequate discriminant validity since the items load strongly on their own than others.

**Table 2.** Results Summary for Reflective Outer Models.

	Deep Act	Job Satis.	Mod Effect 1	Mod Effect 2	Social Support	Surface Acting
Deep Acting	<b>0.772</b>					
Job Satisfaction	0.258	<b>0.731</b>				
Mod Effect 1	-0.379	0.140	<b>1.00</b>			
Mod Effect 2	0.046	-0.140	-0.297	<b>1.00</b>		
Social Support	0.367	0.394	-0.200	0.064	<b>0.746</b>	
Surface Acting	-0.234	-0.205	0.028	0.170	-0.154	<b>0.787</b>

### Structural model analysis

The various hypothesized path coefficients along with their bootstrap values; “T” values are presented below according the various hypotheses. In this procedure, a large number of subsamples (e.g., 5000) are taken from the original sample with replacement to give bootstrap standard error, which in turn gives approximate T-values for significance tasting of the structural path.

#### H1: Moderating role of social support on the effect of surface acting on employee job satisfaction

Research hypothesis one set out to determine the moderating role of social support on the effect of surface acting on employee job satisfaction. An examination of the nature of the interaction effect of social support on the effect of surface acting on employee job satisfaction showed that surface acting had an insignificant negative effect ( $t = 1.694, p = 0.091$ ) on job satisfaction (Table 3). On the other hand, as shown in Table 3, social support had a significant positive effect on job satisfaction ( $t = 5.452, p = 0.000$ ), which reveals that the more social support employees get, the more job satisfaction they experience. However, the moderating role of social support on the effect of surface acting on employee job satisfaction was not significant with ( $t = 1.279, p = 0.201$ ). This implies that social support did not reduce the negative effect of surface acting on employee job satisfaction. Therefore, hypothesis one was not supported.

**Table 3.** Path Coefficients along with their Bootstrap Values, “T” values for H1

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics ( O/STDEV )	P Values
Moderating Effect 1 -> Job Satisfaction	-0.145	-0.113	0.113	1.279	0.201
Social Support -> Job Satisfaction	0.397	0.415	0.073	5.452	0.000**
Surface Acting -> Job Satisfaction	-0.129	-0.160	0.076	1.694	0.091

\*\*Significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

## H2: Moderating role of social support on the effect of deep acting on employee job satisfaction

Research hypothesis two sought to ascertain the moderating role of social support on the effect of deep acting on employee job satisfaction. An examination of the nature of the interaction effects of social support on the effects of deep acting on employee job satisfaction revealed that deep acting had a significant positive effect ( $t = 2.879$ ,  $p = 0.004$ ) on job satisfaction (Table 4). As shown in Table 4, social support had a significant positive effect on job satisfaction ( $t = 5.314$ ,  $p = .000$ ), which indicated that the more social support employees receive, the more job satisfaction they experience. The moderating role of social support on the effect of deep acting on employee job satisfaction was significant with ( $t = 2.815$ ,  $p = .005$ ). This implies that, social support intensifies the positive effect of deep acting on employee job satisfaction. Therefore, hypothesis two was supported.

**Table 4.** Path Coefficients along with their Bootstrap Values, “T” values for H2.

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics ( O /STDEV)	P Values
Deep Acting -> Job Satisfaction	0.233	0.250	0.081	2.879	0.004**
Moderating Effect 2 -> Job Satisfaction	0.214	0.188	0.076	2.815	0.005**
Social Support -> Job Satisfaction	0.381	0.400	0.072	5.314	0.000**

\*\*Significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

## Discussion of the research findings

The research findings of this study are presented and discussed in this section. It is presented in accordance with the various hypotheses.

### H1: Social support moderates the effect of surface acting on employee job satisfaction

This study proposed that social support would moderate the effect of surface acting on employee job satisfaction. However, the empirical testing as shown in Table 4 of this study did not find this buffering effect ( $t = 1.279$ ,  $p = 0.201$ ). That is, opposite to the proposed hypothesis, this study did not support the moderating role for social support on the effect of surface acting on employee job satisfaction. This implies that, social support cannot act to diminish the negative effect of surface acting on employee job satisfaction.

This finding did not support previous studies like Abraham (1998), Grandey (1999), Hur et al. (2015), and İplik et al. (2014) who all found a moderating role for social support on the influence of surface acting on job satisfaction. However, it is consistent with empirical evidence of Chu (2002) who found no moderating role for social support on the relationship between surface acting and job satisfaction. Construing from the person–environment fit theory, it could be said that a possible cause of this finding is due to the fact that most of the bank employees in performing surface acting, do not receive social support or they might expect more about social support from the organization. The theory predicts that if an employee is supplied with all that he/she needs for a particular job; such an employee will be able to perform satisfactory. For

instance, an employee at bank sector might just need social support from co-worker or supervisor in order to deal with irritating clients.

### ***H2: Social support moderates the effect of deep acting on employee job satisfaction***

In terms of moderating role on the effect of deep acting on employee job satisfaction, the study found positive significant moderating role for social support ( $t = 2.815, p = .005$ ). That is, the empirical testing of this study found this buffering effect. Hence, the moderating effect hypothesis of social support on the effect of deep acting on employee job satisfaction was supported. As shown in Table 4, social support had a significant positive effect on job satisfaction, which indicates that the more social support employees receive, the more job satisfaction they experience. Its moderating role on the effect of deep acting on employee job satisfaction too was significant. This implies that, social support amplifies the positive effect of deep acting on employee job satisfaction.

This result is consistent with the finding of İplik et al. (2014). Other previous studies that have documented theoretical arguments, as well as providing empirical evidence that social support helps to augment the positive effects of surface acting include Abraham (1998) and Grandey (1999). Again, gathering from the person–environment fit theory, it could be said that a possible cause of this finding is due to the fact that most of the bank employees in performing deep acting, they receive and are contented with the level of social support from their co-workers and supervisors. The theory predicts that if an employee is supplied with all that he/she needs for a particular job; such an employee will be able to perform satisfactory.

## **Conclusion and recommendation**

With regard to research hypothesis one, it is concluded that the presence of social support does not bring any satisfaction to employees who exhibit surface acting. This is due to the fact that most of the bank employees in performing surface acting, do not receive social support or they might expect more social support from their supervisors or managers, and co-workers.

In terms of research hypothesis two, it is concluded that the presence of social support increases the satisfaction of employees who exert deep acting. This is because it was found that most of the bank employees in performing deep acting; receive, and are contented with the level of social support from their co-workers and supervisors.

Considering the findings and conclusions of the study, the following recommendations are made:

- (1) Based on the finding that the presence of social support increases the satisfaction of employees who exert deep acting, it is recommended that the banking industry should strengthen team solidarity to enhance social support among employees, and between employees and their managers or supervisors. Building a sense of teamwork helps nurtures a positive mood among team players. Managers and supervisors need to educate employees on how to help each other especially when someone is having a bad day on the job. A pat on the back, a warm eye contact, or teasing back and forth all help to release frustration on the job. Knowing how a colleague employee feel and learning to provide emotional

support can foster team solidarity in a positive way and further assure positive emotional management. Supervisors should be dependable especially when things get tough at work and every supervisor or manager should be willing to listen to employee's problems.

- (2) Based on the finding that the presence of social support does not bring any satisfaction to an employee who exhibits surface acting, it is recommended that, managers and supervisors should be more open, be willing to listen to personal problems of their employees, and employees should feel at ease taking to their supervisor or manager. Supervisors should go out of their way to make life easy for the employees and employees should always be able to rely on their supervisor. Likewise, employees are also to provide such supports among themselves. This is because construing from the person–environment fit theory, it was concluded that social support did not buffer the effect of surface acting on employee job satisfaction because employees who exert that EL do not either receive social support or they might expect more about social support from their supervisors or managers, and co-workers.

All things considered, this research has revealed new insights into emotional labor research in several ways. The study has contributed to a deeper understanding of the relationship between emotional labor, employee job satisfaction, and the role of social support in the Ghanaian banking industry. The results of the study may contribute to the generalization of previous emotional labor research. Again, this study extends the conceptual work and laboratory studies on emotional labor by examining the role of social support on emotional in relation to job satisfaction. Although the majority of previous studies have identified social support as a moderator on the relationship between emotional and emotional exhaustion (e.g., Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993; Grandey, 2000; Morris & Feldman, 1996), this study considered social support as a moderator on the effect of emotional labor strategies (surface acting and deep acting) on employee job satisfaction. In short, this study has highlighted the importance of employees' perceptions about their social support in determining their reactions to the strain of emotional labor.

## Disclosure statement

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