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# Authentic leadership, gender, and emotional labour: a study

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**Abstract:** Authentic leaders are transparent with others regarding their strengths and weaknesses. This communication orientation allows authentic leaders to appear to connect interpersonally with their followers. Male leaders, who are stereotypically less concerned with the interpersonal aspect of leadership than female leaders, can develop as authentic leaders in order to appear to be more emotionally connected with followers. This study used cross-sectional data and multi-variable regression analysis in order to show that male leaders who are authentic will be more likely to engage in the emotion labour strategy of deep acting and less likely to engage in surface acting. This study reveals how male leaders can use authentic leadership to challenge stereotypes and access a more socially aware style of leadership.

**Keywords:** emotional labour; authentic leadership; gender stereotypes; leadership; social role theory.

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**Biographical notes:** Devin Hargrove is an organisational behaviour scholar who focuses on leadership, personality and diversity. He received his PhD from Duke University in Organisational Behaviour, his BA from Morehouse College, his MBA from Dartmouth College and his MS in Sociology/Demography from the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

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## 1 Introduction

For decades, researchers have tried to gain a deeper understanding of the interpersonal strategies authentic leaders are likely to use when interacting with others. Emotional labour is one strategy that leaders use to manage communication in their relationships with their peers, colleagues, and subordinates (Ashforth and Humphrey, 1993; Gardner et al., 2009; Humphrey et al., 2008). Emotional labour describes how people use emotions in the interpersonal aspects of their work, underscoring the need for individuals to control their emotions to effectively do their jobs (Hochschild, 1983) and is defined as the effort, planning, and control needed to manifest an appropriate emotional display as defined by the organisation and required by the situation (Hochschild, 1983; Morris and Feldman, 1996). There are two types of emotional labour: Surface acting, which is defined as changing your emotional exhibition to match the expected display rules of the

given situation, while not necessarily feeling the emotions you are showing, and deep acting, which is defined as changing your emotional display to match the display rules of the given situation while working to actually feel the displayed emotions (Hochschild, 1983). Since authentic leaders act in ways that align their behaviour with their values, attitudes, and beliefs (Harter, 2002) it follows that authentic leaders should engage in emotional labour, especially deep acting, to align their emotions with their actual feelings in their interactions with others. Moreover, authentic leaders, regardless of background, including gender, should connect emotionally with subordinates since the construct suggests emotional maturity in its' practitioners (Walumbwa et al., 2008): This research utilises social role theory (Koenig and Eagly, 2014) to show how this process can work.

Authentic leadership, which researchers conceptualise as being true to ones' own attitudes, values, and beliefs (Harter, 2008), and emotional labour, which refers to manipulating ones' own emotions to fit a certain social situation would seem to be antithetical constructs (Hochschild, 1983). However, authentic leadership may be consistent with deep acting, where leaders attempt to actually experience their displayed emotions (Hochschild, 1983). On the other hand, although one may expect that authentic leaders will engage in deep acting, it is not as clear that authentic leaders should engage in surface acting, which requires the leader to engage in emotional displays they are not truly experiencing. Authentic leaders use different strategies to influence others (Somech and Drach-Zahavy, 2002). Their emotional intelligence (Mayer et al., 2008) influences their ability to connect with others by helping them understand how their interactions affect their own emotions and the emotions of others (Rafaeli and Sutton, 1987). For example, in a study designed to assess the effects of leader sincerity on follower cognitive reactions, (Caza et al., 2015) analysed 111 subjects and found that follower trust increased because of perceived leader emotional sincerity. The authors also studied 211 leader-follower dyads and found that authentic leadership was positively related to relationship quality. While it is necessary for the receiver to understand the emotional display to get complete understanding (Goffman, 1969), emotional intelligence helps the authentic leader, the sender, to recognise the receiver experience (Mayer et al., 2008; Miao et al., 2018) and relate to all involved.

Although authentic leaders may have an appreciation of the importance of using emotions in communications with their followers, do they use surface acting (Hochschild, 1983) in their interactions? Initially, surface acting appears to be inconsistent with the application of authentic leadership. Authentic leaders exhibit behaviour consistent with their values, attitudes, and emotions, indeed they 'own' them (Harter, 2002). Therefore, as a leader becomes more authentic the leader should be less likely to engage in surface acting as the authentic leader develops a stronger connection with his or her own values, attitudes, and beliefs.

Authentic leadership is a self-referential construct that requires individuals to manage and control their own internal realities by being true to themselves so that they can honestly communicate and interact with others, leading to positive outcomes for the supervisor, subordinate, team, and, ultimately, the organisation. While authentic leadership is inward-facing, communication by its' nature is outward-facing, a condition in which the authentic leader must focus on another person. This research is designed to address this apparent contradiction, study it, and understand how it is reconciled by authentic leaders.

Also, this research has been conducted to contribute to the authentic leadership literature by showing that leaders, in addition to service workers, engage in emotional

labour (Ashforth and Humphrey, 1993), and male leaders can be as emotionally connected to others as compared to female leaders if they are authentic leaders. This research will also contribute to the emotional labour literature by showing that there is a negative relationship between deep acting and surface acting: authentic leaders who engage in one form of emotional labour are not necessarily as likely to use the other form.

Finally, in organisations, leadership continues to be primarily conceptualised in a masculine (agentic) context: although females have come to occupy an increasing percentage of leadership positions, especially relative to previous decades, perceptions of leadership tend to be attached to masculine characteristics (Koenig et al., 2011). Indeed, there is no guarantee that an increasing number of women in leadership positions will necessarily reduce stereotypes as to leader attributes (Koenig and Eagly, 2014). Thus, in order to reduce stereotypes, not only is it advisable to increase awareness that female leaders can be agentic, but also to increase awareness that male leaders can exhibit stereotypically feminine, or communal, characteristics. This research meets this task by adding to the literature that shows the results of male leaders as more empathetic and communal.

## **2 Literature review**

### *2.1 Social role theory*

Perceptions of the emotions of others have the ability to influence and change observer behaviour, observer cognitions, and observer emotions (van Kleef and Côté, 2022). For example, Sy et al. (2005) show that leader positive affect can lead to positive affect in followers. Indeed, regarding the process of opinion formation and attitude change, researchers have found that individuals use a variety of interpretations of emotions in order to adapt their perceptions of the intended emotion, the objective of the person delivering the emotion and, even, how they themselves should feel about and react to the information gleaned from the exchange (Lange et al., 2022). Researchers have used social role theory to study stereotypes of men and women in organisations and showed that stereotypes are dynamic: as the roles of men and women converge, stereotypes of role, personality, cognitions, and physical attributes stereotypes may change, evolve, and even disappear (Diekmann and Eagly, 2000; Eagly and Wood, 2012; Koenig and Eagly, 2014). For context, roles have also been used to study stereotype change in the areas of age: Kite (1996) conducted 2 studies examining gender, age, and occupation and found that stereotypes connected to age and agency diminished when targets were assumed to occupy the same role; race and gender of entrepreneurs: Anglin et al. (2022) examined differences in the roles of social entrepreneurs and commercial entrepreneurs and, using a matched-pair design in the context of crowdfunding (social entrepreneurs vs. commercial entrepreneurs) showed that women, particularly black women, raised a disproportionately large amount of money when inhabiting the social entrepreneur role, a role consistent with current stereotypes; and, finally, occupation: Koenig and Eagly (2014) found in a series of studies analysing different occupational roles including lawyers, teachers, fast food employees, store managers, and CEO's that people were generally accurate in their assessment of the characteristics of the different occupations but that the stereotypes tended to reduce when changes to their future roles were made

salient, supporting social role theory expectations that stereotypes decrease when roles change.

“Social role theory argues that differential role occupancy in the family and occupations fosters gender stereotypes by which each sex is expected to have characteristics that equip it to function adequately in its typical roles [Dickman and Eagly, (2000), p.1172]”.

Although there is research that shows that stereotypes can be persistent (Haines et al., 2016), the findings of these analysts support this research by suggesting that stereotypes of emotional sensitivity in men may also disappear when male leaders empathise with colleagues and subordinates and show authentic leadership in the workplace in order to appear to exhibit deep acting.

## *2.2 Authentic leadership*

Authentic leadership, a leading leadership construct, affects organisations at multiple levels. Authentic leadership influences leaders at the individual level by affecting their psychological well-being (Toor and Ofari, 2009); it influences the organisation at the group level by increasing job satisfaction (Jensen and Luthans, 2006) and it influences the organisation at the organisation level by encouraging a more open organisation climate (Hoy and Henderson, 1983).

A widely accepted definition of authentic leadership (Miao et. al., 2018) was created by Walumbwa et al., 2008) in which the authors assert that authentic leadership promotes positive psychological capacities and a positive ethical climate among followers. This framework proposes a construct composed of a multi-dimensional set of determinants that consists of balanced processing, internalised morality, relational transparency, and self-awareness. However, in organisational research, authentic leadership is most effectively used as a higher-order construct (Walumbwa et al., 2008).

Finally, Walumbwa et al. (2008) help researchers understand that self-awareness refers to demonstrating comprehension of how one develops and makes meaning of the world and how that meaning-making process impacts the way one views himself or herself over time. It also refers to showing an understanding of one's own strengths and weaknesses and an understanding of the impact that he or she has on the worldview of others (Kernis, 2003). A leader who is self-aware is concerned with how he or she appears to others since he or she grasps that the leader influences the environment in which everyone works. Furthermore, an authentic leader has evolved a level of maturity (Walumbwa et. al., 2008) that should lead to an attempt to feel what the follower feels which will further lead to a deeper experience of felt authenticity (Gardner et al., 2009) and follower perceptions of authenticity (Gardner et. al., 2009).

## *2.3 Emotional labour*

Typically, when people describe the requirements of their jobs, they refer to their tasks and responsibilities. Those that are more insightful might even discuss who they work with, the goals of the organisation, and the norms of the workplace. They often do not understand that emotional labour is a part of their job. However, people regularly engage in emotional labour to satisfy job requirements. For example, Hochschild (1983) studied the work of airline stewardesses and bill collectors and found that airline stewardesses

had to put on a happy and upbeat persona because that is what the employer required and what the customer expected. It did not matter whether the airline stewardesses felt the emotions they displayed (often they felt negative emotions toward the customer despite a positive appearance). The point is that emotion management is a part of the job. Furthermore, bill collectors also had to manage their emotions. However, instead of working to depict a positive demeanour, bill collectors, in their attempts to intimidate debtors into paying past due bills, were tasked with portraying angry and aggressive workers despite often feeling sympathy for the customer situations. It is important to note that, while bill collectors engage in emotional labour, on average the emotional labour of an airline stewardess will be more taxing since the work of an airline stewardess is face-to-face and demands facial adaptation as well as verbal adaptation (Morris and Feldman, 1996). Thus, emotional labour is just that, challenging work: projecting emotions in verbal and non-verbal ways to meet the communication expectations of the situation and moment.

### *2.3.1 Feeling rules*

Hochschild (1983) defined feeling rules as social rules that dictate what people should feel in certain situations. Think of a funeral. Appropriate feeling rules would be sadness or regret. Appropriate display rules would be crying. Think of a child's birthday party. Appropriate feeling rules would be happiness or joy. Appropriate display rules would be laughter.

### *2.3.2 Emotion work*

The attempt to change the intensity, quality, and/or expression of emotions to bring them in line with the feeling rules of a given situation (Hochschild, 1983). Display rules correspond to emotion work. From a young age, we are socialised to learn display rules, appropriate demonstrations of emotions for a given situational context.

### *2.3.3 Surface acting*

Hochschild (1983) described two types of emotion work: surface acting and deep acting. Surface acting refers to people changing their outward appearance to make it consistent with feeling rules. People may feel one way but then present an emotional display appropriate for the situation, which may be at odds with their internal feelings. They may still feel a different way inside, so to speak, but you would not know it from their appearance. One of the serious implications of engaging in too much surface acting is alienation from the self, which occurs because the emotional labourer, as he or she continually uses emotion work to display appropriate emotions, eventually becomes divorced from the true self (Hochschild, 1983). Research is not settled on this point as other researchers have found that emotional labour does not necessarily lead to negative outcomes for the individual (Erickson, 1991).

Because surface acting is effortful (Hochschild, 1983) individuals can experience negative personal outcomes (Grandey and Sayre, 2019), however, those effects can be mitigated (Uy et al., 2017).

### 2.3.4 *Deep acting*

Deep acting refers to people adapting their feelings for a given situation to make them consistent with feeling rules. In other words, people actively try to get their true feelings to align with the feeling rules and emotional display for a given situation. Research shows that deep acting necessitates more focus and energy than surface acting because of the physical and psychological effort required of people to actually change their emotions to feel the appropriate emotion (Ashforth and Humphrey, 1993). Finally, deep acting can have positive outcomes in organisations. For example, Huang et al. (2015) showed in a study of 84 call centre agents in a telecommunications company in China that deep acting by the agents lead to lower emotional exhaustion when their tasks were perceived as challenging.

The fact that leaders have different styles of leadership (Hamlin et al., 2006; Poulston-Murdoch, 2013) and different styles of interpersonal communication within organisations (Madlock, 2008; Martin et al., 2004) suggests that they also have different emotional labour strategies when dealing with others. Furthermore, emotional variability research shows that people employ different interpersonal emotional labour strategies when communicating with others, based on dispositional and situational factors (Scott et al., 2012). So, some leaders will likely use deep acting while others will use surface acting. Authentic leaders should be more likely to use a deep acting strategy as they become mature, evolved, and self-knowledgeable (Walumbwa et al., 2008) since the process of deep acting is consistent with self-awareness and balanced processing. Furthermore, authentic leaders should be less likely to engage in surface acting since it suggests an insincerity that is at odds with authentic leadership.

Hypothesis 1a As leaders become more authentic, they will be more likely to engage in deep acting.

Hypothesis 1b As leaders become more authentic, they will be less likely to engage in surface acting.

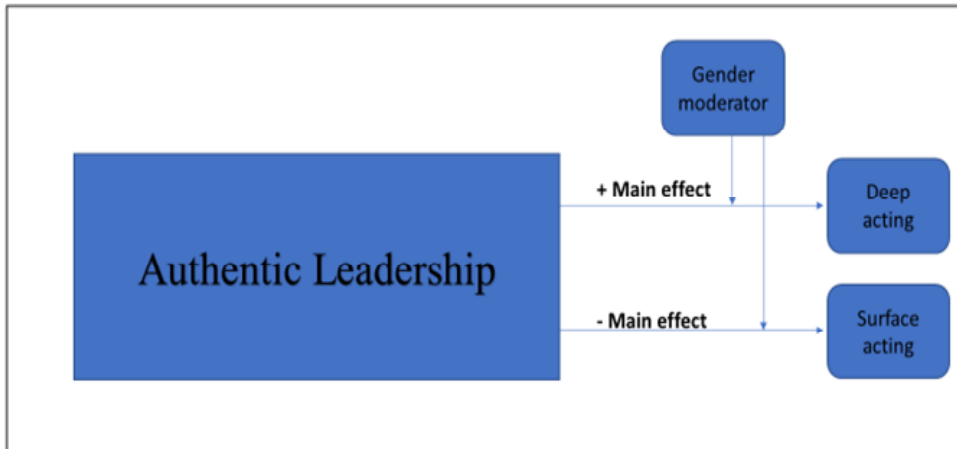
## 2.4 *Gender*

Gender is one of the most studied concepts in organisational behaviour. Leadership is a major focus of organisational behaviour studies since women are becoming increasingly central to the success of organisations (Eagly and Carli, 2003). Research shows that people tend to stereotype female leaders. Sometimes, the stereotype is benign, for example, when others perceive female leaders as communal, a desirable leadership style (Koenig et al., 2011) because communal leadership leads to positive outcomes for leader, follower, and organisation (Eagly and Carli, 2003; Eagly et al., 2003). Sometimes, however, the stereotype can be harmful, such as when others do not perceive a woman as a leader because her leadership style is not prototypical (Eagly, 2007) which can damage career prospects (Eagly et al., 2003). Male leaders also tend to be stereotyped since others are more likely to perceive them as agentic (Eagly, 2007) which researchers do not see as effective a leadership style as communal leadership (Eagly et al., 2003) and, taken to its' extreme, can even lead to the male leader being perceived as toxic (Berdahl et al., 2018). Men should get beyond negative stereotypes of male leadership since communal leadership, a typically 'feminine' style, is leadership of the enlightened and of the future (Eagly and Carli, 2003) and benefit from the leadership advantages of communality for

leaders, followers, and organisations (Eagly and Carli, 2003; Eagly et al., 2003). While research shows that authentic leadership is genderless (Caza et al., 2010), male leaders, through the process of authentic leadership, can be as emotionally connected to followers as female leaders, defying stereotypes of gender and leadership. This ability to connect emotionally should reveal itself in a significant finding for deep acting.

**Hypothesis 1c** As male leaders become more authentic, they will be more likely to engage in deep acting.

**Figure 1** Study 1: authentic leadership, gender, and emotional labour (see online version for colours)



### 3 Methodology

This study was designed to test whether authentic leadership predicted emotional labour, deep acting and surface acting. The sample consisted of MBA students from a Southeastern university and used cross-sectional data. The study was concerned with main effects, the effect of the higher-order construct authentic leadership on the dependent variables, deep acting and surface acting. Again, it is hypothesised that authentic leadership predicts deep acting.

#### 3.1 Research design and sample

This Study asked supervisors of others to rate themselves on authentic leadership and emotional labour. Correlations between perceived authentic leadership, and perceived emotional labour across different supervisors were examined using multiple regression. Linear regression was used because it is a widely accepted method for predicting a quantitative relationship between predictor variables and outcomes (James et al., 2013). It is an appropriate and effective technique for exploring and explaining how changes in an independent variable and/or interaction corresponds to changes in a dependent variable, suggesting a causal relationship.



It was expected that authentic leadership would predict deep acting and surface acting. It is believed that these empirical findings will add to the literature of authentic leadership, gender, and emotional labour.

Executive MBA students at a Southeastern University participated in this online study. I selected student subjects because they were available, willing to participate, and understood the research process. I made sure to use a random selection process by making the experiment easy to complete and easy to access. I also offered a small payment to compensate subjects for their time. These characteristics were applied in order to ensure the results would not be biased. Although there is criticism connected to using student subjects (Peterson, 2001), I used student subjects because Druckman and Cam (2010) have asserted that using student subjects is not necessarily a statistical problem and the onus lies on the critic rather than the experimenter for explaining why students should not be used as subjects.

The sample consisted of 158 subjects. Subjects worked in organisations ranging from 1 to 250 people and most subjects interacted with 6 to 10 people each day. This study asked the participants to rate themselves on authentic leadership and emotional labour. Participants were asked the extent to which they agree with the assessments of their own leadership behaviour. Participants then answered questions from the emotional labour scales. Finally, participants answered demographic questions including questions about gender, age, education, and whether the respondent works outside of the home.

### 3.2 *Measures*

- Authentic leadership. The ALI (Neider and Schreisheim, 2011) was used to measure authentic leadership. The ALI has 4 subscales with 4 items each. Examples of adapted items on each subscale include balanced processing (e.g., 'I encourage others to voice opposing points of view.'), internalised morality ('I am guided in my actions by internal moral standards.'), relational transparency ('I clearly state what I mean.') and self-awareness ('I solicit feedback for improving my dealings with others.'). The items in the ALI tend to be behavioural, making it easier for followers to observe the leader and evaluate actions.

Each item was measured on a 7-point scale with 1 representing 'strongly disagree' and 7 representing 'strongly agree' that the leader (the self) exhibits that particular characteristic. The 4 items for each scale were added together and divided by 4 to come up with a composite score. Authentic leadership was mean-centred in order to facilitate the interpretation of results.

The 16 items measuring authentic leadership had reliability of  $\alpha = .954$  (Cronbach's alpha).

- Gender. Dummy coding was used to identify male authentic leaders (coded '1') and female authentic leaders (coded '0').
- Emotional labour – deep acting/surface acting. Brotheridge and Lee (2003) created the emotional labour scale to measure emotional labour. There are 2 scales, deep acting and surface acting, that each includes 3 items (e.g., 'he/she makes an effort to actually feel the emotions that he/she must display to others'). Each item was measured on a 7-point scale with 1 representing 'strongly disagree' and 7 representing 'strongly agree' that the leader exhibits that specific characteristic. The

3 items for each scale were added together and divided by 3 to create a composite score. The 3 items measuring emotional labour – deep acting had reliability of  $\alpha = 0.899$  (Cronbach's alpha) and the 3 items for emotional labour – surface acting had reliability of  $\alpha = 0.823$  (Cronbach's alpha).

### 3.3 Results

Linear regression analysis was used to develop a model for predicting emotional labour (deep acting and surface acting) via authentic leadership. This model was concerned with the main effects of authentic leadership. Both models using authentic leadership as an individual variable had significant ( $p < 0.000$ ) partial effects in the model. The model with authentic leadership predicting deep acting was able to account for 36% of the variance in emotional labour (deep acting),  $F(3, 154) = 30.263$ ,  $p < 0.000$ ,  $R^2 = 0.371$ , adjusted  $R^2 = 0.359$ . In order to ensure that the assumption of heteroskedasticity (Astivia and Zumbo, 2019) has not been violated, several tests were conducted using SPSS software. The following tests tested the null hypothesis that the variance of the errors did not depend on the values of the independent variables (Astivia and Zumbo, 2019). For each of these tests, the desired outcome of no heteroskedasticity – no rejection of the null hypothesis – is a p-value greater than 0.05. The p-values were: modified Breusch-Pagan test (0.857), Breusch-Pagan test (0.843), the White test (0.634), and the F test for heteroskedasticity (0.858), suggesting that the data were indeed homoscedastic. I also tested the assumption of autocorrelation. Typically, researchers use the Durbin-Watson test (Aker, 2014) in order to assess autocorrelation: a reading of 2.0 indicates no autocorrelation and, although a researcher would normally only test for autocorrelation when using time-series data, panel data, or spatial data (Kumar, 2023), I tested this data. The Durbin-Watson statistic of 2.221 indicated mild autocorrelation.

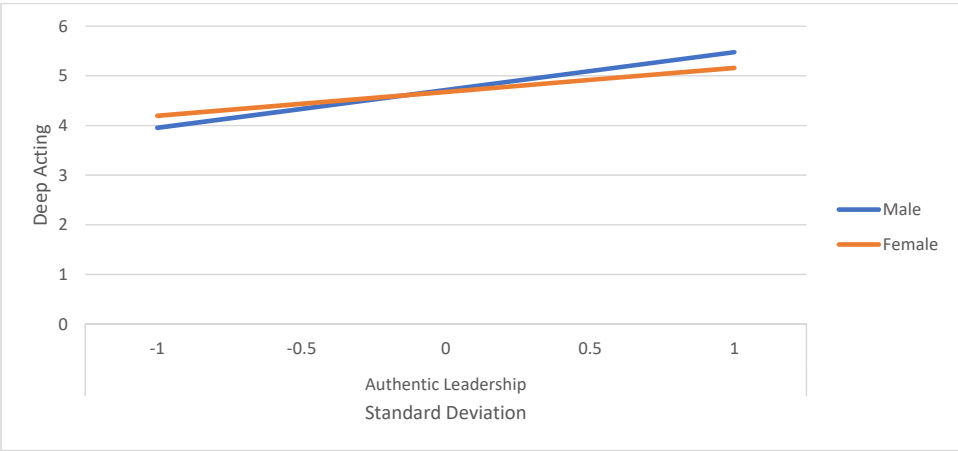
Results support the hypothesis that authentic leadership predicts deep acting. The main effect of authentic leadership was significant (0.482,  $p < 0.000$ ) which suggests that, all else equal, the more authentic a supervisor is, the more likely he or she will engage in deep acting. A 1-unit increase in authentic leadership will result in an increase in deep acting of 0.482 units. More importantly, the interaction was significant (0.280,  $p < 0.043$ ) which suggests that as male leaders become more authentic by 1 unit, they will increase their deep acting by 0.280 units. See Figure 2. It should be noted that there was a dummy variable for gender (male was coded 1, woman was coded 0) which signifies that, although the male increasingly engaged in deep acting as he became more authentic (even more than the female), the female started off engaging more in deep acting.

**Table 1** Study 1: Means, ranges, standard deviations and correlations

| Variables            | N   | Min  | Max  | Mean   | SD    | 1        | 2        | 3     | 4 |
|----------------------|-----|------|------|--------|-------|----------|----------|-------|---|
| Authentic leadership | 158 | 1.92 | 7.00 | 5.2016 | 1.149 | 1        |          |       |   |
| Deep acting          | 158 | 1.00 | 7.00 | 4.7046 | 1.228 | 0.595**  | 1        |       |   |
| Surface acting       | 158 | 1.00 | 6.67 | 2.8439 | 1.425 | -0.540** | -0.322** | 1     |   |
| Gender               | 158 | 0.00 | 1.00 | 0.6329 | 0.483 | 0.016    | 0.024    | 0.040 | 1 |

Note: \* $p < 0.05$ , \*\* $p < 0.01$ , \*\*\* $p < 0.001$ .

**Figure 2** Study 1: male authentic leaders use deep acting (see online version for colours)



Linear regression analysis was also used to analyse the predictive effect of authentic leadership on surface acting. The model with authentic leadership predicting surface acting was able to account for 29% of the variance in emotional labour (surface acting),  $F(3, 154) = 21.369, p < 0.000, R^2 = 0.294$ , adjusted  $R^2 = 0.280$ .

**Table 2** Study 1: multiple regression coefficients predicting deep acting and surface acting (dummy variable for gender: male coded 1)

| Variables                     | Dependent variable | Study | $\beta$   |
|-------------------------------|--------------------|-------|-----------|
| Authentic leadership          | Deep acting        | 1     | 0.482 *** |
| Gender                        | Deep acting        | 1     | 0.038     |
| Authentic leadership X gender | Deep acting        | 1     | 0.280*    |
| Authentic leadership          | Surface acting     | 1     | -0.676*** |
| Gender                        | Surface Acting     | 1     | 0.085     |
| Authentic leadership X gender | Surface Acting     | 1     | .011      |

Note: \* $p < 0.05$ , \*\* $p < 0.01$ , \*\*\* $p < 0.001$ .

Results support the hypothesis that authentic leadership predicts surface acting. The main effect of authentic leadership was significant ( $-0.676, p < 0.000$ ) which suggests that, all else equal, the more authentic a supervisor is, the less likely he or she will engage in surface acting. A 1-unit increase in authentic leadership will result in a decrease in surface acting of  $-0.676$  units. However, the interaction was not significant ( $0.011, p < 0.948$ ). See Table 2.

All hypotheses, hypotheses 1a – 1c were supported.

#### 4 Discussion

I used linear regression to analyse how gender and authentic leadership make a leader seem to be more or less engaged in emotional labour. With this study, I have revealed that authentic leaders, particularly male authentic leaders, will be perceived as engaging

in deep acting when interacting with others. Deep acting suggests that the subject is empathising with the target on a serious, emotionally connected level. This current research adds to literatures in authentic leadership, emotional labour, and social role theory, particularly, by adding context and showing how stereotypes can evolve in an organisational context, particularly specifying how male leaders can alter perceptions of themselves and appear to be more empathetic. This research also illustrates specifically not only the process by which stereotype change happens but also the exact stereotype that can change: male leaders appear to be more authentic by exhibiting deep emotional acting.

Social role theory helps us to understand first, how stereotypes develop – by the tendency of groups of people with specific characteristics to predominate in certain roles – and can be reduced within organisations (Koenig and Eagly, 2014). As increasingly diverse populations attempt to occupy roles that were previously not as available to them, assumptions should not be made regarding their behaviour or performance: They should be given every chance to succeed. This research focused on gender and leadership, which is a necessary function within organisations. Other research that highlights the effect that stereotypes have on leaders in relation to gender is that males are appreciated for their potential while females have their past performance scrutinised (Player et al., 2019). This difference has the possibility of providing different outcomes for the same input, an unequal result (Eagly and Sczesny, 2019).

If organisations want to remove stereotypes in the workplace, research shows that expected future roles are responsive to future role occupancy (Koenig and Eagly, 2014). For example, appointing women to leadership roles may confer an expectation of higher competence (Koenig and Eagly, 2014).

Up to now, the discussion has focused on stereotypes observed by others. However, there are self-stereotypes that affect outcomes for individuals in organisations. Social identity theory reveals how membership in certain groups and the importance attached to that membership, based on associated values, leads to self-stereotypes (Tajfel and Turner, 1979). For example, some who identify with a certain identity or group may tend to act in ways that are consistent with their conception of what that group represents or, even, ultimately choose occupations that members of that group are likely to choose. Thus, there would seem to be a tension between social identity theory and social role theory as self-stereotypes are contrasted with observer stereotypes. Biased conceptions can be reduced for self and other stereotypes by setting and managing expectations of self and others (Sinclair et al., 2006; Tajfel and Turner, 1979).

Practical implications include the fact that male leaders who are rated high on transformational leadership and communality are more likely to be promoted (Hentschel et al., 2018) and can help to reduce stereotypes regarding male and female leaders (Koenig and Eagly, 2014): This study adds to the literature by showing how male leaders can display characteristics that lead to perceptions of communality.

## **5 Limitations and future research**

Limitations of this research include the fact that since one group of subjects completed all the survey materials that common method variance could bias results (Podsakoff et al., 2003). However, since there was empirical support for all the hypotheses then future research is warranted. Future research should focus on analysing authentic leaders and

their subordinates in an actual work environment which would help the generalisability of the research. A real work environment would also allow researchers to analyse the intensity of the emotional display and whether it depends on the type of leadership and/or different types of work settings. Also, future work should focus on moderators other than gender that facilitate emotional labour. For example, tenure in the leadership role or length of time with the organisation might be fruitful areas of research. Or, research might focus on the quality of the relationship between leader and follower: is LMX (leader-member exchange) a moderator of authentic leadership and the use of emotional labour? This research contributes to the literature on leaders applying emotional labour with their subordinates and indicates that there is a further need to understand communication strategies among authentic leaders and their followers. Additionally, the paper could have benefited from methodological refinement, for example, testing to ensure that OLS assumptions were met. Also, a reviewer noted:

“While I appreciate the authors' efforts, I remain concerned about certain methodological aspects of the study. As an economist with a background in econometrics, I believe that the current approach still falls short of the standards required for publication. In my view, further methodological refinement is necessary before the paper can be considered for publication”.

Finally, other demographic variables should be studied in the context of stereotype reduction within the organisation. Variables like education level, years of experience, type of occupation, job title, and educational institution are possible candidates for analysis. Additionally, future research should include subjects from other countries in order to ensure external validity (Peterson, 2001) and mediating variables to get a more complete understanding of the process at work. For example, emotional intelligence, emotional expressiveness, or amount and type of non-verbal communication might mediate the relationship between authentic leadership and deep acting.

## 6 Conclusions

Authentic leaders use various strategies to influence those around them. The goals of this study were to understand the communication strategies of authentic leaders. This research was designed to explore how authentic leaders use emotional labour to communicate with others. I collected an online sample and employed linear regression to test whether and how authentic leaders used emotional labour, deep acting, and surface acting, in their interpersonal interactions. As predicted, the main effects of each model showed that as leaders become more authentic, they are more likely to engage in deep acting and, as they become more authentic, they are less likely to engage in surface acting suggesting that leaders find a style and stick to it (Scott et al., 2012). This research also explored gender differences among authentic leaders in the application of emotional labour. The finding that as male authentic leaders become more authentic, they will engage in more deep acting than will female authentic leaders provides evidence that male leaders can be communal and just as emotionally connected to their subordinates as female leaders, which defies prototypical leader stereotypes.

This research adds to an understanding of emotional labour by showing that authentic leaders engage in emotional labour. Emotional labour is a pattern of behaviour that many associate with service workers (Hochschild, 1979, 1983) but this research helps expand

the conception of emotional labour by establishing that leaders engage in emotional labour too (Ashforth and Humphreys, 1993).

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