Department of Service Management and Service Studies

Emotional Labor in the Workplace

Sustaining smile vs. sustainable smile: a case study from Denmark

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Abstract

Title	Emotional Labor in the Workplace Sustaining smiles vs. sustainable smile: a case study from Denmark
Author	Lisa Heim
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Aim of the study	The aim of this study is to enhance the existing scope of emotional labor (EL) literature and broaden its reach to discussing the role of emotional labor in the workplace from a social sustainability perspective, exemplified within the context of hotel service work. It tries to identify how EL is experienced by hotel service employees and to understand how service employees perceive their contribution towards a hotel's service delivery in order to draw a link to hotel service work as being socially sustainable.
Methodology	This research project is carried out as a qualitative case study drawing on data derived from 13 semi-structured interviews with hotel service employees working at Marienlyst Strandhotel in Helsingør, Denmark.
Results	Hotel service employees regard EL and the display of appropriate emotions as an essential part of their jobs. The enactment of EL implies a triple-sided interaction between an employee, the hotel guests, and the employee's coworkers. Consequently, the display, the understanding, and the exchange of emotions determines both the service and work environment in which encounters between guests and employees take place. As a result of this study, EL is introduced as a tool that enables employees to stimulate positive work- and service environments through social interaction.
Keywords	Tourism and hospitality, emotional labor, hotel service employees, hotel, service environment, work environment, social sustainability

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List of Abbreviations

AL: Aesthetic Labor
DA: Deep Acting
EL: Emotional Labor
F&B: Food and Beverage
RQ: Research Question
SA: Surface Acting
SDG: Sustainable Development Goal

1. Introduction

1.1. Background: Social Sustainability within Tourism and Hospitality Services

In 2015, all United Nation Member States agreed to the implementation of 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) aiming to "end poverty, protect the planet and ensure that all people enjoy peace and prosperity by 2030" (United Nations Development Programme, 2020). While addressing social, economic, and environmental sustainability alike, an integral aspect of the SDG's is to acknowledge that an action in one area implicates outcomes in other areas (ibid.). Therefore, to put each SDG into effect, it requires society to balance all three dimensions of sustainability. Following the call for sustainable practices, science shows an increase in sustainability research (Elsevier.com, 2015). Within the field of tourism and hospitality research, publications range from identifying the concept of sustainability (McCool et al., 2013), over a destination's resilience and growth (e.g. Beirman, 2018; Espiner et al., 2017; Hall et al., 2017; Saarinen, 2014), environmental concerns and over-tourism (e.g. Russo, 2002), to its effect on local communities at the destinations (Okazaki, 2008).

On a micro-level, considering a hotel as the supplier of tourism, research focuses on the identification of environmental-friendly practices and development in connection to economic growth (Goldstein and Primlani, 2012). In practice, by aiming to realise sustainability, hotels tend to focus on improving the efficiency of their facilities, enforcing the resource-saving use of water and energy, and implementing sustainable waste management (Green Ideas for Tourism, n.d.). However, sustainability within tourism goes beyond the implementation of environmental and economic aspects, but must just alike include social issues (Swarbrooke, 1999). Yet, social sustainability is often downplayed and regarded as an add-on rather than an important dimension in itself that implies to specify and manage "both positive and negative impacts of systems, processes, organizations, and activities on people and social life" (Balaman, 2019, p.86). Indeed, Baum et al. (2016) argue that the tourism industry fails to implement social sustainability in the form of, for instance, *good health and well-being* (SDG 3), *life-long learning* (SDG 4), and *decent work* (SDG 8). However, especially within an industry in which the bottom line of hotels is based on the exchange of services that consist of "individual [...] service encounters [...] through social

interaction" (Hall, 2005, p.174; Kim, 2008) to achieve customer satisfaction and retention (Ashkanasy et al., 2002), it appears crucial to specify and manage positive and negative impacts on social actors such as the hotels' employees to realise the SDGs.

In order to create satisfactory encounters for customers, service employees are not only required to perform according to organisational standards. Especially, the employees' behavior and the way they speak and act towards customers (Diefendorff and Richard, 2003) and the way employees share and display emotions is claimed to affect the quality of a service encounter, the service quality, and emotional bonds with customers (Ashforth and Humphrey, 1993; Lam and Chen, 2012). Therefore, it requires them to manage and adjust their own emotions as well as possibly putting their own feelings in the background. Within scholarly works, this process is referred to as emotional labor (EL) (Hochschild, 1983). As multidisciplinary concept it is, for instance, applied in psychology (e.g. Grandey, 2000), management (e.g. Kruml and Geddes, 2000), teaching (e.g. Zhang and Zhu, 2008), and hospitality research (e.g. Shani et al., 2014).

1.2. Research Problematization

With Hochschild (1983) being the first to introduce the term emotional labor (EL), this Master thesis follows the definition of EL as "the management of feelings to create a publicly observable facial and bodily display" which is "sold for wage and therefore has exchange value" (ibid., p. 7).

As it entails the management of emotions in relation to a work-related role, existing EL literature uncovered its outcomes and how it is experienced by employees (Ashforth and Humphrey, 1993; Parkinson, 1991; Rafaeli and Sutton, 1987). Employees' strategies to enact EL and potential outcomes have been in the focus of emotion research (Ashforth and Humphrey, 1993; Hochschild, 1983; Kim, 2008; Lee and Ok, 2012). Especially the complexity of service encounters and conveying a positive charisma in all situations, in encounters with demanding customers, and in hectic and stressful working environments bears challenges for employees who are required to perform EL (Pizam, 2004).

Within the field of tourism and hospitality emotional social interactions are at the heart of the service encounter (Lam and Chen, 2012). Scholars have been identifying that hotel employees play

a crucial role in creating value for the guests and eventually forming the guests' perception of a hotel's general performance (e.g. Sørensen and Jensen, 2015). While it is argued that the service employees' positive perception of service encounters can have positive effects on their performance and job satisfaction (ibid.), research concerning service encounters, its experience, and outcomes, predominantly identifies these topics from the guests' perspective or from a managerial standpoint to enable employers to recruit the 'right' employees. However, further research is needed to uncover the employees' actual experience of service encounters in connection to the enactment of EL.

To close both research gaps, this thesis explores the concepts of service encounters and EL within the tourism and hospitality context from an employee perspective. It aims to broaden the scope of EL research and contribute to the existing body of EL literature from a social science perspective. By uncovering emotions experienced by hotel staff in relation to the emotional demands they are confronted with in the workplace and identifying the employees' perception of their contribution to a hotel's service delivery, the research opens the discussion of whether service jobs that require the enactment of EL can be regarded as socially sustainable with regards to the SDGs. The research is guided by the following research questions:

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1) How is emotional labor experienced by service employees during service encounters within a hotel?
2) How do service employees perceive their contribution to the hotel's service delivery?

1.3. Research Context and Limitations of the Study

This Master thesis is designed as a case study at Marienlyst Strandhotel, a 4-star hotel in Helsingør, Denmark. The research was conducted in accordance with the hotel's F&B management. However, it stands in no relation to the organisation itself and results are only used for the purpose of this study. Data was collected by interviewing full-time service employees working as receptionists, waiters, restaurant managers, and chefs. The unit of analysis is their experience of EL.

This Master thesis however goes with three limitations concerning the object of the study, the method, and the theory. First, it must be noted that I, as the research, am employed at the hotel as a reserve-waitress which entails that I had personal relations to some interviewees before conducting the research which could influence the way in which interviewees answer. It could be argued that another method, such as an anonymous survey approach would have confined that risk. However, interviews seemed like a more suitable approach in order to gain a rich dataset. Furthermore, I assumed that the chosen method did not impede on the process of data collection as I made clear that the individuals and their participation was made anonymous as well as data would only be used for the purpose of this Master thesis. A more detailed description of ethical consideration arising from my employment at the case-hotel can be found in section 3.4.

Second, this research included the view of service employees who have been working in their professions for at least 2 years. I assume that the experience of EL would differ for job beginners as a result of lacking experience and lacking confidence in enacting their jobs. Identifying the different experiences of job beginners in comparison to experienced service employees in another study could add up to evaluating the variable of job experience and its effect on the employees' EL experience.

Third, existing literature on EL within the field of psychology argues that an individual's personal traits determine one's experience of EL. However, as this Master thesis is classified into the field of service studies, including psychology literature and analysing the interviewees' personal traits in relation to their EL experience went beyond the scope of this research.

Despite these limitations, carrying out the research in the present manner was reasonable in order to understand the topic from an employees' perspective and to gain in-depth insights into the employees' perceptions.

1.4. Thesis Outline

The following outline presents an overview over the structure of the Master thesis and its chapters and content.

Chapter 2 | Theoretical Background and Framework

Chapter 2 provides an overview over the existing body of literature on EL. It introduces the concept of EL as well as antecedents and outcomes that have been identified in previous academic works. The second part of this chapter introduces the theoretical framework developed for this case study.

Chapter 3 | Methodology

Chapter 3 discusses the characteristics of the present qualitative research design and the research guiding metaphysics. It explains the choice for conducting a case study and introduces the methods applied for the collection and analysis of data.

Chapter 4 | Presentation and Analysis of Research Findings

Chapter 4 illustrates the present case by presenting empirical data and outlining and discussing new themes emerging during the processing of qualitative data.

Chapter 5 | Discussion

Chapter 5 presents the discussion of case study findings interrelated with previous research.

Chapter 6 | Conclusion

Chapter 6 answers the research questions and outlines theoretical contributions of the study to the existing body of literature.

2. Theoretical Background and Conceptual Framework

A description of the method to obtain previous literature can be found in Appendix 1.

2.1. The Service Context: Service Encounters in a Hotel Service Environment

Within the service industries, the hotel sector developed to one of the most competitive branches amongst the service industries (Hartline and Jones, 1996). In Denmark, where the hotel service employees under study are employed, tourism spending engendered approximately 118 000 full time jobs by the year 2018, representing 4.2% of total employment (OECD, 2018). With an increase of 15% between 2008 to 2016, the growth is below average in Northern Europe (ibid.). Therefore, the shared vision of Danish tourism is to "to be an engaging tourist destination where we – together with our guests – create a variety of quality experiences – always with a human touch and never far away" (OECD, 2018, p.154). A tourist destination is defined as "the sum of all experiences at the destination, including those supplied by firms and those provided through social interaction with communities, people, and places" (Hall, 2005, p.174).

When considering a hotel firm as the service provider, the service consists of "individual moments of truth or service encounters and experiences [...] through social interaction" (ibid., p.174). In the service context, front-line service personnel are responsible for face-to-face interactions with the guest while representing the organisation (Ashforth and Humphrey, 1993). It is argued that the high level of uncertainty due to the customers' participation creates a dynamic and intangible interaction which adds to the complexity of its quality assessment (ibid.). Therefore, customers evaluate the quality of a service according to the quality of its delivery (Parasuraman et al., 1988) and the quality of encounters between customers and employees (Bitner et al., 1990). While there is no tangible measurement to assess the quality of an interaction, customers evaluate it according to the attitudes, behaviour, and expertise provided by the counterpart (Brady and Cronin, as cited in Alshaibani and Bakir, 2017) where the crucial role of the employees' behavior is argued to influence the guests' perception of other services and products offered by an organisation (Bowen et al., 1989; Diefendorff and Richard, 2003).

One approach for hotels to both retain existing customers and gain new clients are service quality improvements by developing the employees' performances (Hartline and Jones, 1996). It is argued

that the emotions expressed by service agents during the service delivery bear positive impacts on customer satisfaction and their retention (Ashkanasy et al., 2002). As a result of service improvements, positive service encounters ultimately increase a hotel's overall performance (Lillo-Bañuls et al., 2018). Therefore, it requires service employees to manage their emotional displays in their jobs to fulfil organisational-based role expectations and ultimately meet organisational goals (Brotheridge and Lee, 2003).

2.2. Emotional Work

With Hochschild's publication "Emotion Work, Feeling Rules, and Social Structure" (Hochschild, 1979), EL and emotion management emerged as a research topic within the field of sociology. Ever since, Hochschild's works are considered as most relevant within the field of emotion research (Lively, 2006). Hochschild (1979, 1983) argues that certain rules determine individuals' feelings and the display of emotions. This implies two perspectives: first, there seem to be social factors that lead individuals to feel in certain ways while these feelings emerge naturally, non-reflective but still consciously. Second, there are "secondary acts" (Hochschild, 1979, p. 552) that form the individuals' display of emotions according to what they think is appropriate in a certain situation. This can be based both on social norms and individuals' previous experiences of feelings and the evaluation of these experiences. For instance, individuals would regard feeling sad at a funeral as the right emotion to show and feel, just as being happy would be appropriate for a birthday. Both perspectives draw on the classification of emotion and feeling based on the "interactive account" (ibid., p.555). Contrary to the organismic account that describes emotions as impulsive and automatic reflexes (just like a sneeze would be an automatic bodily reflex), the interactive account suggests that individuals' consciousness leads them to the attentive experience of emotions and the consideration of certain feeling rules (Hochschild, 1979).

While emotions are linked to an individual's self, they are simultaneously considered as a subject of societal rules (Lively, 2006) that determine the "range, intensity, duration, and object of emotions" experienced in a specific situation (Ashforth and Humphrey, 1993). In certain situations, an individual might be aware of his/her real feelings and experiences a discrepancy between these and those to be displayed. The act of therefore actively altering an emotion to the aspired is referred to as "emotion work" (Hochschild, 1979, p. 561). Hence, emotion work implies

an individual's inherent desire and effort to adjust an emotion caused by external factors. It can result in cognitive, bodily and expressive emotion work (ibid., p. 562). Cognitive emotion work is concerned with altering an image or thought about something that connects an individual's feelings about it. Bodily emotion work requires an individual to manage corporal expressions of feelings, such as trying to not be shaking in uncomfortable situations. Last, expressive emotion work would imply an individual to act out certain gestures with the goal to change one's mindset. For example, smiling could be regarded as an attempt to achieve a positive attitude (Hochschild, 1979).

2.3. Emotional Labor: Emotion Management in Professional Contexts

In professional contexts, changing one's feelings might go beyond one's own desire of altering an emotion and the act of managing one's emotions turns into EL (Lively, 2006; Wharton, 2009). Especially service environments determined by interactions between employees and customers require employees to present emotions in a specific manner (Seymour, 2000). By shaping own feelings to display a certain attitude, employees try to affect a counterpart's mindset in direct interactions which can be referred to as "impression management" (Ashforth and Humphrey, 1993). It requires individuals to follow certain "display rules" (ibid., p.91) which amplifies the concept of feeling rules in a professional context. These display rules combine societal, occupational, and organizational norms that evolve from customer expectations (Rafaeli and Sutton, 1989).

EL is regarded as a two-sided phenomenon as the employees' emotional display aims to create an emotional response for the addressee (Steinberg and Figart, 1999). As the final evaluation of and satisfaction with a service remains subject to the customer and is "in the eye of the beholder" (Ashforth and Humphrey, 1993, p. 96), displaying appropriate emotions to satisfy customers implies a challenge for service employees. While individuals are expected to display specific emotions, service employees are exposed to mismatches between one's expressed emotions and (1) one's actual feelings, (2) external, societal feelings rules, or (3) internalised organisational rules. While aspiring a harmony between felt, required, and displayed emotions, employees might experience "emotional dissonance, or emotional deviance" (Rafaeli and Sutton, 1987, p. 32). Dissonance implies the "incongruence between two or more thoughts and between thought and behaviour" (Van Dijk and Kirk, 2007) and results from a discrepancy of emotions felt in a moment

and the ones that are required to be displayed (Ashforth and Humphrey, 1993; Hochschild, 1983). Emotional deviance implies the employee's active display of his or her own emotions while those differ from organisational guidelines (Rafaeli and Sutton, 1987). To cope with emotional demands, individuals apply certain strategies, introduced in the following as EL strategies.

2.3.1. Emotional Labor Strategies

To identify employees' strategies for performing EL, scholars differ between "surface acting" (SA) and "deep acting" (DA) (Hochschild, 1983). The first denotes the act of displaying emotions by adjusting "facial expressions, gestures, and voice tone" (Wong and Wang, 2009, p.7). When performing SA, service employees are modifying their emotional display by bearing down own emotions and instead expressing the required emotions (Lam and Chen, 2012). For instance, service employees might smile simply because they are expected to instead of smiling to express happiness. Additionally, research shows that employees execute SA as an attempt to emotionally detach themselves from unpleasant service encounters to avoid the experience of, for instance, anger or sadness (Rafaeli and Sutton, 1987).

A second strategy, deep acting implies an employee's attempt to feel emotions that ought to be displayed in a certain situation instead of solely displaying those (Ashforth and Humphrey, 1993; Diefendorff et al., 2005). Individuals therefore try to evoke the required emotion by either imagining him- or herself being in the counterpart's situation (Hochschild, 1983; Shani et al., 2014) or by imagining other situations in which he/she personally experienced this emotion (Ashforth and Humphrey, 1993).

As another stance of DA, literature introduces "passive deep acting" (Hochschild, 1983) as the display of "spontaneous and genuine emotion" (Ashforth and Humphrey, 1993, p.94) which implies the act of displaying emotions that correspond to the individual's feelings experienced in the specific situation (Shani et al., 2014). While Hochschild (1983) regards this type of EL as one kind of DA, Ashforth and Humphrey (1993) evaluate this expression of "spontaneous and genuine emotion" (p.94) as a more liberated way of EL. Even though the individuals' feelings are consistent with the emotion required to be displayed in an interaction, its display is still regarded as EL since it requires employees to consider specific display rules (Ashforth and Humphrey, 1993; Wong and

Wang, 2009). Yet, Diefendorff et al. (2005) describe the display of "naturally felt emotions" (p.339) as distinct from SA and DA. They claim it should be considered as a third, independent strategy in comparison to SA and DA as they declare those as "compensatory strategies that individuals use when they cannot spontaneously display the appropriate emotions" (ibid., p.340).

2.3.2. Display Rules and Organisational Antecedents

To be able to interact in service encounters, understanding and managing one's emotions is viewed as a soft skill required from service employees while these skills are argued to be developed during training or with the help of guidelines to ensure, what the specific organisation regards as, the 'right' customer interaction (Warhurst and Nickson, 2007). To ensure the employees' display of positive emotions, organisations therefore implement display rules (Diefendorff et al., 2005). They are considered as job-based antecedents of EL aiming to increase the service quality and customer satisfaction (Lam and Chen, 2012; Lee and Madera, 2018). Research shows that more display rules are framed by companies that demand emotional performances of employees more frequently (Morris and Feldman, 1996).

It can be differentiated between positive and negative display rules, where positive display rules regulate which positive emotions employees are required or allowed to enact (e.g. do smile) and negative display rules formulate which emotions must be suppressed (e.g. do not show anger) (Kim, 2008). On the part of service employees, the wording and formulation of an organisation's display rules seem to impact the choice of EL strategy (Diefendorff et al., 2005). While some scholars argue that both types of display rules lead to the enactment of both SA and DA, Diefendorff et al. (2005) suggest that positive display rules imply DA while negative display rules lead employees to perform SA. They argue that individuals want to experience positive emotions required in service interactions while negative rules such as having to suppress anger (Kim, 2008) leads individuals to feign their emotions on the outside.

As Hochschild (1983) defines EL as "the management of feelings to create a publicly observable facial and bodily display" (p. 7) it appears that EL is connected to an employee's appearance observed by the counterpart to which emotional displays are directed. Within research, scholars

introduce the term "aesthetic labor" (Warhurst et al., 2000, p. 1). Existing literature on this topic is presented in the following paragraph.

2.3.3. Aesthetic Labor

In comparison to EL, aesthetic labor (AL) is "broader and includes things like body language, dress sense, grooming, deportment, voice/accent, body shape, demeanour and general stylishness" (Payne, 2004, p.4). It is defined as the "embodied capacities and attributes possessed by workers" that are already apparent prior to the actual employment (Warhurst et al., 2000, p.4).

While, what really 'attracts' the customer is not measurable as it is subjectively perceived and evaluated by the counterpart in a service interaction (Quinn, 2008), employers demand certain aesthetic attributes in the recruitment of service employees to utilise and shape embodied capacities to represent a company's image towards the customer (Warhurst et al., 2000). As an attempt to grasp the components of AL, Quinn (2008) introduces the determinants "pose, poise, polish, performance, and prettiness" (p. 81). Those allude to the employees' ability to make use of corporal attributes (pose, poise), how they groom themselves above the standards of simple cleanliness (polish), their efforts in a service encounter to touch the customer emotionally (performance) and their sophisticated looks (prettiness). Quinn (2008) argues that hospitality firms utilise these attributes to generate service encounters that portray the company's image while stimulating the customers' senses (Warhurst and Nickson, 2007). Aesthetic skills are therefore regarded as "a premium within 'up-market' segments of the service economy" (Payne, 2004, p.4) that support employees in delivering an appealing service. The service staff's aesthetic attributes are thus perceived as a competitive advantage within the service industry (Warhurst et al., 2000).

2.4. Individual Antecedents of EL: Employee Behavior and Performance

Within the service industry, employees are furthermore required to display high levels of positive emotions (Diefendorff and Richard, 2003). This stems especially from the customers' tendency to assess the overall service quality by evaluating the interaction with front-line employees (e.g. Kaminakis et al., 2019; Kim, 2008; Wong and Wang, 2009). As service employees function as the mediator between guests and the company by embodying the company's image for the guest (Diefendorff and Richard, 2003), service employees therefore often take on a polite, cheerful, and

supportive role to fulfil their job requirements (Kim, 2008). In doing so, employees are required to align to specific organisational display rules (Rafaeli and Sutton, 1987).

An employee's willingness to behave according to organisational guidelines without critically reflecting those is argued to be higher for service employees who identify themselves with their job-related role and those who feel comfortable acting it out (Ashforth and Humphrey, 1993). Concerning the employees' role enactment, previous research distinguished between in-role and extra-role behaviors (Kaminakis et al., 2019). In-role behavior consists of role-prescribed behaviors that are rooted in the norms grounded in a workplace as well as an employees' specific obligations (Eren et al., 2014). It includes the employees' knowledge of the services and products offered by the company and basic behavioral guidelines such as being polite, greeting, and thanking guests. Extra-role behavior refers to those actions an employee takes additionally to what he/she is expected to do while aiming to improve the service encounter (Kaminaiks et al., 2019). The employees' willingness to "go extra mile" (Eren et al., 2014) aims to surprise and delight the guest (Bitner et al., 1990). As an extreme, Sundbo (2011) identifies the hyper-professionality that alludes to the service employees' tendency to carry out tasks in an exaggerated professional manner while unintentionally ignoring prevalent external inputs. As a consequence, instead of contributing to the service, service encounters are ultimately degraded.

An individual's identification with a role further impacts their choice of EL strategy and its outcomes. It is argued that employees who have an easier time to identify with their role, display emotions that they are able to feel themselves (DA) and vice versa (Ashforth and Humphrey, 1993). An employees' effort to enact his/her expected role might lead the person to identify with the role to a degree where the enacted role creates a new identity and distorts one's original identity (ibid.). While Ashforth and Humphrey's argument (1993) implies the belief that an individual possesses one identity that determines an individual's consistent behavior regardless of the specific situation, Goffman (1978) argues that performing differently and taking on different roles according to certain situations is a part of today's social life. Goffman (1978) introduced impression management as a tool to help human beings to interact appropriately in social interactions. He shares the metaphor that the world is a stage where everybody is a performer while a person can perform many different roles depending on the "stage" he/she is at. Furthermore,

Goffman states that individuals aspire to gain support and legitimacy of the performance ought in a situation by the audience the performance is directed to (as cited in Lambert, 2017). Individuals therefore seek support to experience self-esteem and validity in the role they are performing, often referred to as role-support (ibid.).

The employees' role enactment and the underlying execution of EL is furthermore influenced by by evaluating the role fulfilment and emotional displays of others as reflecting on the emotions displayed by colleagues fosters the employees' belief in the importance of their own emotional displays and performance (Diefendorff and Richard, 2003). Furthermore, supervisory support and guidance has been argued to assist service employees to cope with difficulties resulting from their job (Lam and Chen, 2012). Thus, experiencing a feeling of being cared for by one's supervisor helps employees to deal with emotional demands (ibid.). An individual's identification, commitment, and loyalty to an organisation is further argued to stimulate the internalisation of group values, norms, and "homogeneity in attitudes and behaviour" (Ashforth and Mael, 1989, p.26) which eventually contributes to the service quality within an organisation (Wong and Wang, 2009). An individual's "perception of belonging to a group" (Ashforth and Humphrey, 1993, p.98) does however not only contribute to a person's commitment to and enactment of a specific role that he/she carries. Instead of identifying with an organization as a whole, "oneness" (Ashforth and Mael, 1989, p.21) can just alike be experienced with a specific department, work group, or a group consisting of individuals sharing the same characteristics such as age or gender. Therefore, individuals might eventually identify themselves with more than one group which is argued to lead to role conflicts (Ashforth and Mael, 1989). In this case, the belonging to several groups and various role demands emerging from these group memberships might lead to a divergence of demands that an individual cannot fulfil (Ashforth and Mael, 1989).

Ultimately, managing impressions, emotions, and performing a specific role can lead to several positive as well as negative outcomes for employees. Ashforth and Humphrey (1993) allude to the prevalence of defense mechanisms that individuals use to prevent themselves from problems resulting from EL. These mechanisms could be proactive when the employee tries "to remove the causes of emotional discrepancies" (ibid., 104) or reactive when seeking "to buffer the psychological impact of discrepancies" (ibid., p.104). In practice, service employees tend to back

out from service environments and withdraw to back-regions to recharge from job-related challenges (Bærenholdt and Jensen, 2009; Seymour, 2000). The following section addresses outcomes that result from challenges related to the performance of EL.

2.5. Outcomes of Emotional Labor

In general, the outcomes of EL experienced by employees are dependent on one's personality and therefore differ among individuals (Diefendorff et al., 2005; Kim, 2008). This section presents potential functions and dysfunction identified as outcomes of EL.

Potential functions (positive outcomes) include job satisfaction (e.g. Lillo-Bañuls et al., 2018), efficacy (e.g. Alshaibani and Bakir, 2017; Ashforth and Humphrey, 1993), personal accomplishment, organisational commitment (e.g. Coughlan et al., 2014), and well-being (e.g. Lee and Madera, 2018) on the employees' side while a company could benefit from its employees' task performance. Dysfunctions of EL are emotional dissonance, an individual's discrepancy of identity and role conflict, job dissatisfaction, and burnout (e.g. Ashforth and Humphrey, 1993; Kim, 2008). However, the individuals' different personalities make it difficult to generalise the effects and outcomes of EL (Rafaeli and Sutton, 1987). Additionally, as a "double-edged sword" (Ashforth and Humphrey, 1993, p.107), EL does not necessarily imply either positive or negative outcomes. Rather, individuals are assumed to possibly undergo both outcomes. Furthermore, job characteristics such as the duration, frequency, and variety of EL influence its outcomes for the employees (Diefendorff et al., 2005; Hochschild, 1983). The following paragraph presents potential positive outcomes of EL.

2.5.1. Functions

Within service environments, a firm's implementation of display rules aims to increase the employees' "task effectiveness" (Ashforth and Humphrey, 1993, p.94) while ensuring valuable relationships between customers and employees (Wong and Wang, 2009). From an individual's viewpoint, this generates a feeling of self-efficacy which can be defined as one's belief in his or her own ability to fulfil a task (Ashforth and Humphrey, 1993). This self-efficacy can be shown in personal accomplishments and foster general job satisfaction while the latter denotes that employees enjoy executing their jobs (Lam and Chen, 2012; p.5). For instance, while trying to

uncover EL among tour-guides, Wong and Wang (2009) identified that those would experience "a sense of achievement" (p.8) as a result of their service performance when enacting their role of being "cheerful, pleasant, earnest, energetic" (ibid., p.7). Consequently, the employee's job satisfaction reflects in his/her performance and commitment to a job and can eventually have positive impacts on their performance quality and productivity (Lillo-Bañuls et al., 2018). This is consistent with Lam and Chen's (2012) research that further shows that job satisfaction and the employees' enjoyment of doing their job, next to increasing service quality, increases their retention and lowers employee turnover.

Job satisfaction might result from receiving rewards from customers in the form of a simple smile, a thank-you, or tips as a result of their empathy and sincere emotions (Bærenholdt and Jensen, 2009). In delivering a service that delights the guests, their satisfaction and appreciation fosters the employee's self-affirmation (ibid.). These rewards stimulate a service worker's "sense of self-efficacy, professionalism, and personal accomplishment" (Lee and Ok, 2012) and can lead to an increase in his/her job satisfaction after a repeated experience of such situations. Alshaibani and Bakir (2017) show that this feeling of efficacy positively affects the proactive behavior of employees in carrying out a service performance.

Furthermore, an employee's identification with a role can contribute to the experience of well-being when fulfilling job-related requirements (Ashforth and Humphrey, 1993; Wong and Wang, 2009) while service employees seem to recognise the effect of their efforts on their workplace. Thus, their interaction with customers or guests is considered as an opportunity to gain economic benefits for the company (Wong and Wang, 2009). Such commitment to an organisation is however not only economically beneficial for the company but might in turn increase an individual's job satisfaction (Coughlan et al., 2014). Considering oneApart from that, fulfilling display rules is becoming a part of service employees' role requirements implying the display of "friendliness and good cheer in an array of service occupations" (Rafaeli and Sutton, 1987, p.23) in order to please others while these rules often provide individuals a certain degree of freedom to interpret and enact those. With regards to an employee's role, this degree of tolerance allows individuals to bring in their own identity and express him-/herself which eventually promotes the employee's satisfaction and well-being (Ashforth and Humphrey, 1993).

Despite these potential positive outcomes, research recognises the predominance of negative outcomes resulting from EL (e.g. Brotheridge and Lee, 2003; Morris and Feldman, 1996) which are presented in the following.

2.5.2. Dysfunctions

In service environments, especially stressful and unpleasant working situations require high emotional efforts that lead to emotional exhaustion on the part of service employees (Lee and Ok, 2012). Especially the absence of congruence between personal emotions and emotions ought to be displayed requires individuals to spend high emotional resources when performing EL (Lee and Ok, 2014). Considering an individual's emotional resources, the conservation of resources theory argues that individuals aspire to protect those (Lee and Ok, 2014), especially when being confronted with work demands such as "work overload, role conflict, and stressful work interactions" (Lee and Madera, 2018). As a consequence, an overconsumption of one's resources can lead individuals to the experience of burnout (Research Medical Library, 2018) in the form of "emotional and physical depletion, a lack of energy and extreme tiredness" (Lee and Ok, 2014). While burnout is experienced individually, it is caused by a "stress response to stressors in the environment" (Research Medical Library, 2018). Burnout is further described to consist of three aspects which are emotional exhaustion, a feeling of depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishments (Kim, 2008). Emotional exhaustion is experienced by feeling "drained through contact with other people" (Lee and Ok, 2012, p.1103) as a result of "emotional overextension" (ibid., p.1103). Depersonalisation implies the employees' tendency to interact less personally and emotionally distant with others. Last, reduced personal accomplishments imply the decline of an employee's feeling of being competent and doing a good job (Maslach and Jackson as cited in Lee and Ok, 2012). These three aspects consequently serve as three clues to explain a connection between EL and burnout in the service sector.

Research tries to link burnout to the EL strategy applied by an employee. While there is no universal explanation to evaluate which strategy would be best in order to prevent employees from burnout, research uncovered the following connections. Those employees who are very committed and involved in their jobs and therefore rather perform DA, might suffer from burnout as a consequence of emotional exhaustion (Maslach, as cited in Ashforth and Humphrey, 1993). On

the other hand, it has been argued that individuals who possess more emotional resources and are able to maintain DA are less vulnerable to experiencing emotional dissonances, less vulnerable to experiencing reduced personal accomplishments, and ultimately less vulnerable to burnout (Lee and Ok, 2012). Considering SA, it has been argued that feigning one's emotions leads to an increase in emotional exhaustion, fosters depersonalization as well as it lowers personal accomplishments (Kim, 2008; Wharton, 2009).

Next to the employees' choice of EL strategy, the frequency of EL influences its outcomes. Frequent performances and repetitions of the same lead to deaden the experienced emotion putting the employee into a state of trance while enacting a service performance (Ashforth and Humphrey, 1993). Furthermore, stressful and unpleasant encounters and the frequent experience of emotional dissonances lead employees to perform less personally and to carry out the interactions with their customers in a less responsive way (Lee and Ok, 2012).

Additionally, internal and external pressures and the guests' reaction can cause stress for the employee. Those pressures can either be the result of organisational guidelines, the guests' expectations or the employees' high demands on themselves. Not achieving the guest's reward for the employee's effort that he or she put into a service encounter can therefore lead to him or her to experience stress (Bærenholdt and Jensen, 2009) which is further evoked by service failures and not fulfilling a performance in the way it is expected (Ashforth and Humphrey, 1993).

Last, dysfunctions of EL are argued to emerge as a consequence of an individual's level of identification with the designated work role and one's own evaluation of the quality of his or her role performance. The higher one's identification and the dependency on that role is, the greater is the individual's vulnerability to emotional aspects related to it (Ashforth and Humphrey, 1993). Thus, an individual's well-being might become a subject to the "perceived successes and failures in the role" (Ashforth and Humphrey, 1993, p.107) which exposes an employee to the risk of being too emotionally bound to one's job-related role. Furthermore, it is argued that an employee's identification with a role might lead to an individual's distancing and loss of sense for his or her true self (Hochschild, 1983). Consequently, the loss of the emotional connection to one's identity may hinder one's ability to feel genuine emotions (Ashforth, 1989). Apart from that, a discrepancy

between an individual's own identity and the customer-contact role is argued to be "identity-threatening" (Ashforth and Humphrey, 1993, p.100) which eventually affects his or her well-being. Hence, one's inability to fulfil required role obligations further leads to lowering an individual's feeling of self-efficacy (Ashforth and Mael, 1989).

2.6. Conceptual Framework

This Master thesis aims to contribute to the existing scope of EL literature and broaden its reach to discussing the topic from a social sustainability perspective within the context of hotel service work. Therefore, it tries to answer how (1) hotel service employees experience EL and (2) how service employees perceive their contribution to a hotel's service delivery. By answering both research questions, the research sheds light on how the employees' experiences and perceptions justify hotel service work that includes the enactment of EL as being socially sustainable. To answer both research questions, a framework is conceptualised (see Figure 1), which is developed based on existing literature. General job characteristics (e.g. receptionist, waiter, manager) and an employee's identification with his or her job are considered as antecedents of EL. The service encounter itself, one's role performance as well as an individual's EL strategy are assumed to define one's experience. Last, outcomes of EL enactment are assumed to be of direct and long-term nature. Direct outcomes are those immediately experienced during the encounter such as personal accomplishments, while long-term outcomes are regarded as those that further affect an individual's private life.

Antecedents	EL Experience	Outcomes
Job Characteristics Individual Antecedents	The Service Encounter EL Strategy Role Performance	Direct Outcomes Long-Term Outcomes

Figure 1: Conceptual Model of EL

The conceptual model will be used to discuss empirical data alongside existing literature by covering aspects considered relevant for this study that were presented as the theoretical background.

3. Methodology

3.1. Research Approach

This study focuses on the study of social actors, namely service employees, and their personal perceptions of EL. The reality they are part of is assumed to be continuously constructed, built, and revised by social actors rather than being determined and produced by external factors (Bryman, 2012). Hence, reality is looked upon by taking a constructivist ontological position with ontology being the way we understand reality (ibid.). When considering epistemology, the way knowledge is created, a social interpretivist epistemology is followed. This implies that the understanding of the research topic is built on the employees' experiences with EL and the analysis of their subjective perceptions. Knowledge presented and created in this study is thus based on the interpretive analysis of the employees' subjective perceptions and their meanings.

In order to answer the research questions and uncover the individual's perceptions of EL, a qualitative research approach is followed for four reasons. First, it is argued that qualitative research allows to understand a society (Silverman, 2017), in this context, the employees and their perceptions and experiences of EL. Second, knowledge presented in this study is based on a reality that is assumed to be created by its social actors rather than being regarded as definite which would be the case in quantitative research. Third, to evaluate the topic within the context of tourism and hospitality, the research is designed as a case study as it allows the intensive study of individuals experiencing EL in a real-life setting which, in the present study, is Marienlyst Strandhotel. Important to mention is that the researcher herself is employed as a service employee at the hotel. This eased the access to interviewees as well as own experiences were used a priori in order to frame the research. Fourth, the aim of this thesis is to develop a broad understanding of the case by gaining deep insights and "highly informative" (Warhurst et al., 2000, p.9) data rather than collecting particular quantitative data (Bryman, 2012).

Finally, the findings of this Master thesis are analysed and presented by following an abductive research approach. Compared to induction or deduction, abduction is understood as a combination of both. When following an abductive approach empirical data is examined in combination with the existing theory. Abductive reasoning implies "that the theoretical account is grounded in the

worldview of those one researches" (Bryman, 2012, p.401) with the "empirical point of departure" (ibid., p.401) being the interviewees' perceptions and perspectives. Findings are therefore grounded on the participants' worldview and analysed and interpreted by me. Previous research is included in order to build a theoretical understanding of the research topic. By combining previous research with empirical data gained from this study, existing literature is potentially modified, elaborated and compiled in order to understand and explain the data (Kennedy and Thornburg, 2018).

3.2. Research Design: Single-Case Study

In order to identify the experience of EL during service encounters, a case study approach was chosen as an appropriate research design for this Master thesis as it allows to understand a contemporary phenomenon by gaining evidence from "its real-world context" (Yin, 2014, p.16). Data in the form of the employees' experiences and perceptions are collected in the service environment in which they operate which is Marienlyst Strandhotel.

3.2.1. Semi-Structured Interview Approach

To gain insightful data on the individuals' personal perceptions and views (Yin, 2014), semi-structured interviews were chosen as the method to collect data as it allowed flexibility for both the researcher to ask and for the interviewees to answer questions. To ensure the collection of data relevant for the study, an interview guide was developed beforehand.

To develop an interview guide, relevant topics of interest appeared by considering the conceptual model introduced in section 2.6 and conceiving personal topics of interest. However, since this study follows an abductive approach, the conceptual model was primarily used to ensure that the interview guide would grasp the areas considered relevant for the study in the questions instead of directly including certain concepts. For instance, the question "Do you prepare yourself in a certain way for your shift?" could potentially allude to the concept of AL where *preparing* means dressing, or certain routines such as drinking a coffee to *mentally prepare* for a shift. The questions addressed job and personal characteristics, an employee's role performance, the EL strategies executed, the concept of AL, and potential outcomes of EL. An instrumental illustration of how

the questions have been constructed alongside the literature connected to the conceptual framework can be found in Appendix 3.

To phrase the questions and finalise the guide, Bryman's (2012) suggestions on the development of an interview guide were followed. First, basic information such as the interviewees' name, age, gender, and profession were asked in order to grasp each individual context. Second, questions were formulated by using easy and understandable language to ensure the interviewees' understanding. This point was of special relevance as the interviews were carried out in English which differed from the interviewees' native language in all but one case. The decision to conduct interviews in English was made since the researcher was not Danish-speaking. Third, questions were formulated in a way to gain deep insights into the topic under study. Attention was paid on not asking questions that lead the interviewee in a certain direction to fulfill the criteria of a semi-structured interview and staying open for the interviewees' answers and different perspectives on the topic. By the use of "how"-questions, the interviewees' were invited to freely share their perceptions without limiting the latitude to answer those. Furthermore, a critical incident method was included as follows. By asking interviewees to describe their experiences and invite them to imagine certain situations to happen during their work, it was assumed to gain valuable insights on their behavior during events that were assumed to require the performance of EL (Bitner et al., 1990; Callan, 1998; MBASkool.com, n.d.). Thus, it was tried to stimulate the interviewees' experiences during service interactions and with EL. To ensure that the interviewees' statements were understood correctly, probing questions were asked. Last, while the specific order of question could vary among interviews, the interviewees were held by keeping a reasonable flow of the conversation (Bryman, 2012). For instance, interviewees were asked to introduce themselves, their job position and evaluate their reasons for choosing their profession before moving on to specific work situations and concluding the interviews with elaborating on future outlook on their professional life. The final interview guide can be obtained from Appendix 2.

While there exist weaknesses in the interview approach, those were acknowledged in advance and tried to avoid during the actual process of data collection. In the following, potential weaknesses and the ways to avoid those are pointed out. To avoid "bias due to poorly articulated questions" (Yin, 2014, p.106) and to ensure that interviewees could understand those, a pilot interview was

conducted. Questions that were complicated to understand were rephrased. Further, the researcher's ability to listen and be flexible and open-minded could be practised. By conducting a pilot interview, the interview guide was furthermore tested in terms of its length, language, and clarity.

During the actual process of data collection, questions were asked by using simple language. While the interview questions were formulated in advance, the questions and their order could be modified to provide a reasonable flow during the interviews and additional questions could be added as those are fundamental characteristics of a semi-structured interview approach (Bryman, 2012). It was made sure to pose the questions in a way that would not lead interviewees to give a certain answer. To allow interviewees to think and speak freely, it was concentrated on not interrupting them. Additionally, follow-up questions were asked and the interviewees' statements were repeated in order to avoid misunderstandings and possibly go further into their thoughts. While existing theories were familiar to the researcher in advance, it was made sure that this knowledge did not impede her from staying open to empirical input. To avoid inaccuracies in the data, interviews were audio-recorded, notes were taken during the interviews as well as it was reflected on each interview immediately after. Recordings were transcribed on the same day on which they took place.

3.2.2. Interview Setting and Participants

Research participants were selected using purposive sampling. This is a common feature of qualitative research since it ensures to answer the research question by focusing on the selection of certain units of analysis according to predefined criteria (Bryman, 2012, p.418). The criteria that had been met were that the interviewee 1) carries out a service-oriented position (e.g. waiter, receptionist) at Marienlyst Strandhotel, is 2) has a profound experience of at least two years in the profession and 3) is available for an individual interview in March 2020. It was decided to focus on individuals with a minimum working experience of two years for the following reason: it was assumed that those participants can fulfil the 'functional' part of their jobs such as delivering the food in the restaurants or checking-in guests at the reception without facing challenges regarding their task fulfilment. Instead of identifying task-related challenges that are assumed to be rather independent from the personal interaction with others, it was therefore assumed to gain results

regarding the interviewees' experiences of EL during the actual service encounters with hotel guests. The invitation to participate in the study was shared with the hotel's staff in a digital workplace App used by the hotel. Furthermore, potential interviewees were contacted via email and the hotel's shift worker app in order to share information about the research project and arrange the interviews.

In order to provide a private setting that respects the interviewees' intimacy (Bryman, 2012), interviews were conducted in a meeting room at Marienlyst Strandhotel. The situation in 2020 and the prevalence of COVID-19 led to four interviews being held via Skype since it was neither recommended nor responsible to leave the house during the time of data collection as well as the hotel was temporarily locked down. After the first interview via Skype, it could be seen that the change of interview setting did not have an influence on the volume of results as well as it did not negatively impact the quality of audio recordings nor my ability to conduct the interview.

For the purpose of this thesis, 13 individual interviews were carried out with a duration between 33 and 60 minutes. While there is no clear number prescribing the amount of interviews to be conducted in qualitative research, it is suggested to collect just as much data that serves as sufficient evidence for answering the research questions (Yin, 2014). The aim of this thesis was to achieve deep and comprehensive insights into hotel employees' perceptions and experiences of EL. As data saturation in the form of recurring answers and the interviewees' similar perceptions occurred, 13 interviews appeared as a reasonable amount. Information about the interviews can be obtained from the following table:

Interview Number	Date	Duration	Age of Interviewee	Gender	Position	Pseudonym
1	01/03/2020	55:54	43	Male	Waiter	Steven
2	03/03/2020	37:58	30	Male	Waiter	Lukas
3	10/03/2020	36:35	22	Male	Bartender and waiter	Daniel
4	10/03/2020	35:09	46	Male	Banquet chef	Martin
5	10/03/2020	45:23	52	Male	Waiter	Josef
6	11/03/2020	51:52	60	Male	F&B supervisor, waiter	Benjamin
7	11/03/2020	60:00	40	Female	Receptionist	Amanda
8	12/03/2020	40:00	39	Male	Restaurant manager	Johan
9	20/03/2020	51:01	21	Female	Waitress	Teresa
10	21/03/2020	49:02	53	Male	Waiter	Alex
11	23/03/2020	33:36	21	Female	Waitress	Helena
12	25/03/2020	34:57	24	Male	Chef	Felix
13	27/03/2020	60:10	46	Female	F&B supervisor, waitress	Louise

Table 1: Interview Settings and Participants

3.3. Data Analysis

Following an abductive reasoning approach, data is explained while considering what is already known from previous research. This thesis thus adds to the literature by eventually confirming or refining the current state of research. After all interviews have been conducted, data was analysed by following a thematic analysis which implies the identification of themes that are relevant for the issue under study. In lieu of solely summarising the data, emerging themes were interpreted and made sense of (Maguire and Delahunt, 2017). By conducting a thematic analysis, it was possible to uncover and interpret meaning derived from a textual data set which were the interview transcripts (Guest et al., 2012).

After the interviews had been transcribed, the first step was to read through all transcripts multiple times in order to grasp the content comprehensively. While reading the transcripts, notes were taken in order to identify themes emerging from the data. To carry out this research as an abductive study, it was focused on staying open for new aspects and being conscious of not letting the knowledge of existing literature impede the analysis while going through the data. After themes had been identified, data and statements that were considered relevant were sorted in an Excel sheet according to the theme. Themes were for instance the interviewees' experience of emotional effort and feelings experienced in their jobs, their understanding of their role and job responsibilities, strategies applied to cope with emotionally demanding situations, and potential outcomes.

The second step of data analysis entailed to find categories from the themes identified in the first step which facilitates an ongoing thematic analysis of the data (Bryman, 2012). Therefore, the interviewees' statements were coded leading to the development of categories for each theme. Just like before, the categorisation of findings was carried out by solely focusing on the data derived from the interviews without reference to the theory.

In the third step, themes and categories were refined to avoid repetitions. An overview of the developed themes and categories can be found in Appendix 4. Finally, the themes emerging from the data were sorted alongside the framework starting with antecedents, continuing with the actual experience of EL, and ending with potential outcomes of EL in order to present empirical data in a coherent manner. Findings from the interviews are presented and interpreted in chapter 4. In chapter 5, research findings are discussed alongside previous research. As a last step, findings from previous research were complemented, elaborated, and refined.

3.4. Research Ethics and Critical Evaluation of Research Approach

Since this case study involves the opinions and statements of individuals and since I, as the researcher, am employed at the hotel myself, it is crucial to consider ethical principles in all processes before, during, and after the study. Those involve avoiding any harm to interviewees, ensuring the participants' approval to informed consent, maintaining their privacy, and avoiding "deception" (Bryman, 2012, p.135) in the research process. Before going into the principles

suggested by Bryman (2012), the further paragraph outlines ethical aspects arising due to my employment at the hotel.

In general, qualitative research obtains a risk of being biased due to the researcher's own experiences and perceptions (Bryman, 2012). Particularly therefore, I tried to exclude my own work-experiences during the whole data collection and analysis. Though, my employment brings three considerations: first, the interviewees and I knew each other as colleagues before conducting the research. Therefore, there was a risk that the interviewees would answer in a way that would not be sufficient for this research as they might assume that they did not need to evaluate answers in detail. To gain a rich data set, I therefore emphasised that interviewees should answer as comprehensively and freely as possible before starting the interviews. Second, I assumed that interviewees could fear that their answers would affect their employment at the hotel in case I would share their information. For this reason, I made clear that their participation is anonymous and that information shared during the interviews will only be used for the purpose of this study. Third, I assumed that interviewees might not want others to know about their participation. Therefore, I did not talk about the interviews in front of other colleagues unless the participants themselves initiated a conversation about it before or afterwards.

To furthermore prevent participants from any harm, two documents were formulated: an information sheet including all details about the study and a consent form recording the interviewees' permission to conduct the research, use their statements, and handing over copyright to me (Bryman, 2012). Both documents can be found in Appendix 5. The signed documents are kept privately. The interviewees' privacy which is further ensured by replacing names by pseudonyms. Last, in order to avoid deception, the whole research project was carried out transparently and in accordance with my thesis supervisor who represents an independent third party.

4. Presentation and Analysis of Research Findings

In this chapter, empirical findings are presented and analysed. It starts with antecedents of EL, the actual experience of it, and potential outcomes reported by the interviewees.

4.1. Antecedents

This section presents the employees' understanding of their specific jobs and role requirements and their awareness of behavioral rules and guidelines within the hotel.

4.1.1. Requirements and Responsibilities in Service Encounters

To open up the interviews, participants were asked to elaborate on their specific job within the hotel, their role, and what they see as their responsibility. To begin with, interviewees were asked to share their initial motivation to start a job within the service industry. Some interviewees started working as a service employee to gain knowledge within the sector to eventually start their own business afterwards. For others, however, working as a waiter appeared as a profession that could be funny and easy to handle due to the requirement of soft skills rather than specific technical skills. Simultaneously, the low requirement of technical skills added to the attractiveness of the job to make money. However, while the main requirements were interpreted as soft skills, the possession of those must not be underestimated. The interviewees explained as follows:

> You're trying to treat people and make them feel happy, give them a service that they don't get at home, I guess. I need to be polite, and if I cannot be polite at my work, I should not work here. (Daniel, waiter)

While Daniel emphasises that one must be able to be polite, Benjamin (F&B supervisor, waiter) further states that "you have to be happy about your job" to interact with guests in a good way. Being able to approach and interact with people was identified as one crucial part of it. One interviewee pointed out that "if you don't like to interact with people, it's not a waiter you should be" (Josef, waiter).

While some of the interviewees were both theoretically and practically educated at their profession, others gained their experience solely through practise. The interviewees agreed that an education as, for instance, being a waiter, provides one with valuable knowledge that can be used

for starting off a conversation with a guest. However, being able and comfortable in approaching guests was described as something that must be practised over time. The interviewees stated that experience and continuous learning is crucial as being a service employee implies continuous development over time as a result of the interplay between the changing hotel industry and the confrontation with different people. Concerning the latter, one interviewee stated that service interactions differ from interaction to interaction. One interviewee explained that "being a waiter, over the years, it's not science to being it, but it's half science to do it right every time" (Benjamin, F&B supervisor, waiter). By acknowledging experience as a resource that forms each employee's work, there seemed to be an analogy between an employee's experience and one's capacity and efficacy to execute service work. Apart from one's personality and professional experience, interviewees were asked to elaborate on the prevalence of any prescribed behavioral guidelines and display rules that were perceived as being part of their job.

4.1.2. Behavioral Guidelines and Display Rules

When asking interviewees how service employees know to behave in their jobs, interviewees stated that being a service employee implies to act service-minded, smiling and happy while those requirements were explained as unsaid rules that are expected and part of the job rather than constituent guidelines. Furthermore, interviewees mentioned to never answer a customer's request with a 'no', to display pleasure, and always aiming to deliver a surprising moment for the guest such as an upgrade to a nicer room, or a free drink. One interviewee interpreted a conversation with the hotel's CEO's as the main rule perceived by hotel employees as "he [the hotel's CEO] said he'd rather that we find a solution here and now, don't let a guest leave without having found a solution" (Amanda, receptionist).

All interviewees emphasised their responsibility in satisfying guests due to their own perceived contribution to the hotel's reputation. According to Lukas, "if they [the guests] complain about you, that means they complain about the service and it automatically goes to the reputation of the hotel" (Lukas, waiter). The interviewees highlighted that instead of following strict guidelines, they were required to continuously adapt their actions and behavior to each specific guest. One interviewee elaborates:

> Our highest responsibility is to always satisfy our guests. All actions you take will be right if you can explain why you did what you did. (Amanda, receptionist)

The intangibility of specific guidelines was hence explained as "a gray area because the right thing is the right thing with that particular guest in that particular moment at that time" (Benjamin, F&B supervisor, waiter). In line with Benjamin, other interviewees described to perceive a certain latitude enabling them to act in a way that they perceive reasonable. While one service employee holding a managerial role described the freedom given to service employees as one approach to give them safety in their job without being monitored by the management, service employees pointed out that they enjoyed the freedom given to them since it makes the workplace their "free space" (Martin, F&B manager) where they have a "free mind to do what I do here" (Daniel, waiter). The latitude given to them is thus identified to influence their behavior to serve the hotel guests while ultimately striving for both customer and job satisfaction. Their empowerment hence contributes to the employees' awareness of their role while simultaneously evoking a feeling of self-efficacy on the part of the interviewees. While display rules seem to be rather unsaid and freely interpreted, Felix emphasises that it would still be relevant to administrate a shared understanding of how to behave:

> I would love if everyone had the same passion or stuff like that. And it annoys me
> when people don't have the same passion like we do. [...] If it goes too long on the not passion
> side of course I would tell them not to change but maybe considering the job, if that's the right
> place to be for them because if you're in the right place then you would give all the passion for
> your work. (Felix, chef)

That said, Felix's commitment to the job simultaneously evokes certain expectations of his co-workers. The perception of his own performance thus leads him to individually formulate display rules and expect colleagues to follow those. Organisational display rules thus seem to be a subject to the workforce's understanding of their job-related responsibilities as well as determined by one's own commitment to the job.

4.2. The Experience of Emotional Labor

This section presents findings concerning the interviewees' specific experience of EL in service encounters. It is divided in (1) the service encounter itself and how its characteristics influence the service employee, (2) felt emotions and the employees' strategies to cope with emotional demands, (3) the interviewees' standpoint on the interpretation of service work as an act, and (4) the work environment as an important driver, stimulator, and receiver of EL.

4.2.1. Characteristics of the Service Encounter

To begin with, interviewees pointed out that their responsibility is that their "face should explain people the first moment they meet you they should feel they are welcome" (Alex, waiter). Thus, EL is not only required when delivering a service in direct interactions with hotel guests but just alike in all encounters such as simply walking past them which requires employees to constantly be aware of their emotional displays.

During the actual service encounter, service employees perceive variations in their work due to the characteristics of guests they interacted with. Among those, the guests' age, cultural background, and size of a group seemed to impact the encounter. Additionally, service employees mentioned that their job performance differs depending on the guests' occasion for staying at the hotel which were described as being either of private nature in the form of a pleasure trip or corporate nature in the form of a business stay. The interaction appeared less personal when being confronted with corporate guests. Interactions with companies were described to require professionality and task-efficiency while being aware of the correct timing due to groups being tied to certain schedules rather than focusing on personal interactions with each of the group's members. On the other hand, when serving private guests, service employees explained to interact more closely with them to create memorable and extraordinary experiences.

The characteristics of guests were explained to imply different ways of approaching them emotionally. When focusing on those interactions that require more EL, namely the ones with private hotel guests, the level of EL further seems to differ depending on the signals sent by the guests which leads service employees to "pay more attention to some of the guests, more than others, because of the reaction to you" as elaborated by Lukas. In this context, one interviewee

described that approaching guests was experienced as the most difficult part of being a waiter when he started his job due to the unforeseeable emotional reaction one might return from a guest. Another interviewee described approaching guests gets easier and better over time while experience helps in figuring out the right ways to approach different kinds of people. One interviewee connected the act of approaching different people with EL in a way that one has to feel the counterpart's feelings in order to approach them appropriately:

> To be able to approach [...] guests who are totally different, who come with a totally different background, a totally different perspective of view of things and totally different knowledge, all of them. You have to be able to go underneath the surface to sort out what kind of guest are they? And that's what you analyze when you go to the guest instantly. You have to feel the feelings. [...] I think that's what I like the most, is that I get to talk with different people with different backgrounds every day. And of course, it takes energy, but it gives you energy. (Louise, F&B supervisor, waitress)

Interestingly, Louise states that she would have to "go underneath the surface [...] to feel the feelings". Thus, it seems that she assumes that guests' emotional display differs from their actual feelings. In that case, the enactment of EL not only requires service employees to show certain emotions themselves. Rather, it requires them to be able to understand and detect the guests' emotions that go beyond their emotional display in order to figure out the right way of delivering a service. In this context, interviewees mention that the level of, for instance, openness shown by a guest is not to be taken personally in a way that they would feel rejected. Instead, service employees interpret it as the guests' wish to interact less while delivering a good service still remains their premise:

> I don't feel any bad [if guests won't interact much with him]. I know that happens. That also happens very, not very often. But that happens. But that's, you know, the people have chosen to come. So it's not because of me it's not clicking. It's just a professional job and, you know, serving and being nice to them. (Josef, waiter)

Nonetheless, all interviewees stated to prefer close interactions where guests are open for a more personal approach in which they tell the guests about the hotel, the products, and the food to create

memorable experiences for the guests. The employees' main motivation in doing so derives from being proud of what the hotel offers and their identification with the hotel itself which is illustrated by the following statement:

> And when you tell the guest about that as well, it's storytelling and it shows you care and that permeates into other things because it just feels like you're not just another number, but you're an actual person who's receiving something we care about. (Johan, restaurant manager)

Johan's view not only denotes a feeling of belongingness by referring to the hotel as 'we'. Furthermore, his personal attachment leads him to deliver a special service and experience for the hotel's guests. In that case, the congruence between his own values and the hotel's service delivery fosters the enactment of his role responsibilities and EL.

4.2.2. Coping Strategies

To evaluate the employees' experience of EL, the interviewees were asked if it was always easy to be smiling and be positive towards the guests. They explained that guests are mostly happy as they made an active choice to visit the hotel and since pleasure trips commonly evoke happiness. Therefore, being happy and smiling towards them did not appear challenging. However, on some occasions interacting with hotel guests was more difficult for them. The following paragraph outlines EL strategies that service employees executed to cope with those situations.

To gain a contextual understanding of challenging situations, the interviewees were asked to imagine a personal worst-case scenario. Interviewees emphasised that the worst would be if guests "leave unhappy with something maybe I did" (Helena, waitress). Thus, job-related challenges appeared most critical if the situation stems from one's own failure. Some interviewees reported to feel embarrassed, awkward, or nervous when realising that they were not able to satisfy a guest. Additionally, when not being able to satisfy several demands of the same guest, the employees reported that it would be more challenging to continue the interaction. One interviewee described being more hesitant to go to their table while another interviewee mentioned having a hard time looking guests in the eyes.

However, negative emotions and the feeling of having to push oneself were explained to only last for a few minutes while interviewees perceived it as their duty to change negative encounters in order to satisfy the guests in the end. To do so, all interviewees mentioned that they would try to forget about negative experiences immediately, keep up a positive mindset, and focus on other positive situations as explained by Lukas who claims that he "try to put it [unpleasant encounters] aside and just focus on another guest instead of focusing on the grumpy one". Teresa further explained that it "is all about your mindset. [...] I try to think of something very positive" in order to cope with emotionally demanding situations. In encounters with very demanding guests, service employees explained to put oneself in the guests' mind in order to come up with an appropriate solution. Teresa however explained that it required her "to concentrate to do the best job you can. That can be uncomfortable." If it was not possible to adjust their mindset, interviewees reported to take a 5-minutes break in a back-area to recharge as it is sometimes hard to maintain a good atmosphere and suppress own emotions to not spoil the encounter by showing emotions like anger. Suppressing negative emotions was explained as a short-term strategy to be able to continue their jobs as Felix acknowledged that "if you can manage to suppress without boiling over. Then I think it's a nice quality to have, to put your emotions aside and handle them afterwards".

As another strategy to cope with challenging situations, putting on a professional mask was explained as one strategy implying smiling towards a guest while not being truly happy when serving unsatisfied guests, as explained by interviewees. Additionally, instead of taking unpleasant encounters personally, keep a professional distance was mentioned to support them to cope with unpleasant experiences. In doing so, professionalism would further benefit the service encounter as described by Johan:

> Sometimes less is more in the sense that instead of overcomplicating or over apologizing or overexplaining, just keep it simple, keep it polite [...]. So the funny thing I realized over the years is most guests prefer to have a little bit of a cheeky waiter instead of someone who's very apologetic and humble and almost look like an excuse to be there. They want somebody who's in control. (Johan, restaurant manager)

Johan's statement not only shows his perception of the guests' preferences. Simultaneously, it indicates that the act of performing EL is a way to compose control on the part of service

employees. Thus, while somebody might in fact feel apologetic, he states that keeping it simple would transmit a certain control over the service encounter which is favored by hotel guests. In unpleasant encounters, the genuine emotion of, for instance, feeling apologetic is transferred in a way that benefits both the guests but also the employee: while the guests encounter and perceive a competent service employee, experiencing control empowers employees and avoids negative emotions that might result from service failures.

It further became evident that the nature of a complaint influenced the employees' reaction to it. One interviewee stated that "some guests [...] say things just to say things, they complain because they complain, would like to complain" (Alex, waiter). He elaborated on a situation in which guests complained about the long walking distance from the train station to the hotel and accused the service employee. As finding a solution would go beyond his responsibility and reach, the customer's complaint would not affect him personally. In these situations, it is assumed that the customers' complaints stem from their own interpretation of their payment as a tool that entitles them to declare their utmost demands and concerns regardless of their logic. In the context of monetary tools, interviewees mentioned offering financial compensation in the form of a free cup of coffee to customers that were not satisfied which can be seen as a service recovery that goes beyond the simple exchange of emotions. Thus, the employees' permission to hand out additional products becomes a tool to avoid emotional discrepancies in service encounters. As a result, it seems like both guests and employees perceive the exchange of money as superior from the simple exchange of emotions.

Additional to personal coping strategies, the support and collaboration within the workforce appeared as an approach to cope with EL. While asking interviewees about their experiences of unpleasant service encounters and emotions, interviewees tended to sum up their statements with reference to the guests' service experience. In order to maintain guests' satisfaction in unpleasant encounters, few employees therefore mentioned asking colleagues for help when feeling like they are not able to satisfy a guest's expectations as explained by Johan:

> Using the knowledge and experience that is already here in the restaurant because there is a lot of really good people that know a lot of stuff. So I'm never afraid to ask people what they think. I think, you know, nobody can know everything and everybody knows a little bit. And then together we find something very good. (Johan, restaurant manager)

This approach was described to be utilized for two reasons: first, to make sure that the guests would leave the hotel satisfied and second, to avoid service worsening and failures as a result of an employee's emotional discrepancies. Thus, the employees would already sense a mismatch between oneself and the guest prior to the encounter and preventative swap with a colleague to avoid emotional discrepancies as well as service worsening. In this regard, the employees' focus on maintaining guest satisfaction relates to their own attempts to maintain a feeling of self-efficacy as a result of fulfilling their job requirements. Communicating with colleagues is further mentioned as an approach to come to terms after experiencing negative service encounters:

> Before I leave work, if I have any small feelings, that is a little bit different, when we finish work, when everyone is finished, I always talk with my colleagues about it. Like we all want to talk. And I never go home with a bad feeling in the stomach or anything. I always feel happy when I go home. (Teresa, waitress)

The collaboration with colleagues therefore seemed to support employees in coping with challenges resulting from their job enactment. Apart from that, interviewees elaborated that service work can be regarded as a give and take: while serving guests appropriately, those are expected to show appropriate behavior just like the staff themselves. In this context, appropriate behavior is explained to be respectful towards each other and maintain dignified terms as the guests' behavior is argued to influence the way service employees experience an encounter. One interviewee reported that guests tend to lose their manners, for instance, when they are drunk leading to an inappropriate way of talking to the employees: "When people get drunk [...] it's like it says click. And all like their manners and everything has gone. So people talk to you like you're nothing" (Daniel, waiter). He further argued that the employees' age influences the guests' behavior in a way that, "especially when you are young they don't have any manners to you" which "makes it difficult working sometimes" (ibid.). As he retraces the guests' behavior back to his own (younger) age, Lukas explains that the profession of being a waiter evokes inappropriate behavior on the part

of customers. He explains that "some guests feel better than waiters because they've been educated and they have better job for example an office job or work in the bank [...]. So they treat the waiter as like nothing. Because he's a waiter" (Lukas, waiter). Daniel and Lukas explained that they would get angry about that but still try to display positive emotions (SA). At the same time, interviewees reported to only serve guests as long as they perceive their behavior appropriate. Amanda clarifies that "one thing is we speak nicely to our guests, but we also expect our guests behave properly towards the employees". As soon as the guests would cross a specific line and the guests would get too personal or offend her as a person, she would not continue a service encounter. Instead, a manager would step in to solve the problem. Thus, the support given by the hotel seems to give employees a feeling of safety in situations that they perceived as exceeding certain (behavioral) boundaries.

Next to the experience of emotions in direct interactions with the guests and their strategies to execute EL, the following chapter focuses on the interviewees' perception of their performance and their evaluation of displaying true and fake emotions.

4.2.3. Service Work as an Act

This paragraph focuses on the interviewees' standpoint towards service work being regarded as a performance or an act. It is divided into two parts: The first part evaluates the employees' understanding of their role and mindset when going to work. The second part presents a discussion about the employees' viewpoint towards the display of fake versus true emotions, more specifically, a fake and a real smile.

One issue that arose during the interviews was the question if employees take on a role while executing their jobs. First of all, all interviewees described themselves as being positive and happy by nature and enjoying the interaction with people. Thus, fulfilling the job requirements they described before was pointed out as a responsibility that they enjoy while being polite was explained as "a role that I like. It's not artificial. It comes natural when I'm here. [...] it goes with the job and I like that" (Benjamin, F&B supervisor, waiter). While Benjamin elaborates on his personal preferences, Felix emphasises the effect that his own performance has on the guests. He

concludes that "the more natural you are, the more natural the experience for the guests will be. And I think it's way easier to interact with the guests if it's that form and not a facade" (Felix, chef).

When comparing their own private behavior with the one on-the-job, the interviewees stated that they would keep their own personality instead of taking on a different identity. However, they explained to act more professionally while being at work. In the course of conducting the interviews, acting professional was mentioned several times which led to interpreting it as a part of the employees' understanding of their job requirements. In order to understand its meaning, interviewees were asked to define what it entails to be professional. Thus, employees perceive being competent, being able to approach different kinds of guests, be open-minded, communicative, and smiling as being professional. However, the following two statements illustrate the two main contrasting views on being professional:

> I would define professional as being [...] in good behavior for your colleagues and have a good behavior on the guests and always be positive, be happy, do your job the best you can. [...]
> And don't try to be something that you're not. (Helena, waitress)

While Helena emphasizes staying true to one's personality, Alex calls himself an actor since "you have to be in a good mood every time. And that's why I call that we are the actors. And the private person stops right there" (Alex, waiter). While this claim appears rather radical in terms of disguising one's "private person" (Alex, waiter), the act of stepping into a professional role is not regarded as being negative. Rather, the interviewees interpreted their own approach as a necessity and requirement to enact a job that they chose themselves and that they like. Louise further exemplifies service jobs as "a nicer way of [...] prostitution." in which you "have to be able to push yourself, even if you're not in a good mood or whatever. You have to put a mask on. You have to keep on smiling". However, while prostitution stricly speaking implies to be degraded or debased (OED, n.d.) she personally states that this is "brings people into working with that business" as she gets energy from interactions with happy guests (Louise, F&B supervisor, waitress). Next to enjoying the act of performing their job-related role, the interviewees explained that they would take on a (professional) role in order to sustain a good service environment as well as maintaining a good working environment for themselves and the colleagues. One interviewee explained:

> I mean when you are not in a good mood [...] I have to take that mask when I'm going directly to the guests and also to my colleagues sometimes. So you have to have it. Otherwise, it's going to be bad atmosphere you are going to give to your colleagues, to your workplace, everyone. (Alex, waiter)

That aligns with one interviewee who explained taking on a second role additional to her own personality in order to act within the interest of the company:

> When I put on my waitress uniform, I put also the, maybe I don't put the face, but I put the feeling about, like I remember myself that now you're a waitress. [...] Now I get to work with that thoughts no matter who I talk to, no matter what is going on. [...] I would say I still have my own opinions, I still have my own thoughts. I'm still Teresa. But I try to be more professional. I will try to, I have to remember that right now, I'm not just Teresa, right now I'm a waitress who is a part of a big hotel. (Teresa, waitress)

Even though Teresa states that taking on an additional role (as a waitress) is easy for her since she has "this love for the hotel" (Teresa, waitress) and loves her job, it appears that she sidelines herself in order to primarily act in the interest of the hotel "no matter what is going on" (Teresa, waitress). While she says "I am still Teresa", she has to remember that she is "a waitress who is a part of a big hotel" (ibid.). Thus, while keeping her own personality, her behavior seems to be determined by the role and responsibilities related to her job. It shows that employees, as soon as they are at work, tend to prioritise one role over another. Regardless of the employees' feeling of taking their private person with them (e.g. Helena, Teresa) or leaving it outside (e.g. Alex), personal needs seem to be put aside while prioritising the job-related role. It shows the employees' interpretation as well as awareness of their responsibility within the organisation where negative feelings were described as spoiling both the work environment for the staff as well as the service environment for the hotel guests. Affiliated with that, the interviews allowed to evaluate the employees' approach and view on displaying fake versus real emotions. One interviewee elaborated that one's personal mood would not hinder him in delivering the service required. Yet, it would only affect the motivation to go the so-called extra mile as explained by Alex:

> They still get good service. They still get a service-minded waiter and that smiley face. Maybe I don't do a lot of things extra, only a few things extra. That's enough, that's why it is called extra. They still got what they want, they got what they would like to experience, that they are happy. And they have a sweet waiter doing things for them. (Alex, waiter)

On the other hand, some interviewees clarified that it was hard to deliver the best service when not being in a good mindset. They explained that one must be happy inside in order to be able to pass on positive emotions to others as elaborated by Benjamin:

> You have to be happy about your job. [...] I think some customers will see it [a fake smile]. We will see it, the colleagues will see it. And yet you can only go as far with a fake smile. If you want to go beyond that point, you have to be more sincere. [...] You cannot fake all the time. Not in that business. (Benjamin, F&B supervisor, waiter)

That implies that he would display genuine emotions rather than feigning those. Additionally, some interviewees elaborated that a guest would feel fake emotions which is regarded as spoiling the service delivery. Thus, interviewees explained that faking emotions and getting caught on its display serves as a sign for an employees' uncertainty and non-professionalism. Vice versa, experiencing a congruence between one's felt and displayed emotion was not only pointed out as a facilitator of one's job but also as an approach to lead to better service interactions with the guests:

> The more natural you are, the more natural the experience for the guests will be. [...] When you feel like, when you're out having an experience, you feel like home, you feel cozy, you feel down to earth. I think that's the natural experience. (Felix, chef)

While pointing out that guests would feel the employees' fake emotions, interviewees further elaborated that they would sense faked emotions displayed by a guest which they interpret as a sign for leaving the guest alone or a clue that something is wrong. Simultaneously, interviewees admitted that faking one's emotions is exhausting and takes a lot of energy. For instance, Lukas ponders that constantly being happy is "not exhausting as much as like fake it" (Lukas, waiter). In line with that, another interviewee advised employees who are constantly faking his or her emotions while working in the hotel should rather change their profession:

> If you have to put on an act all the time then it's not... then you're doing something wrong. [...] I guess if you stay in the business long enough, you might experience that maybe it's time for me to step out of it. (Martin, F&B manager)

This statement illustrates the way service employees think about their job requirements of which one is the ability to deal with emotionally demanding situations as well as performing the emotions required in service jobs. Thus, if one is not able to cope with the emotional effort one has to put into the interaction with guests, working as a service employee is not perceived as a suitable job for one to execute. The discussion about the display of fake versus real emotions alludes to the importance of the workplace in connection to EL.

4.2.4. The Work Environment as a Stimulator and Receiver of Emotional Labor

Interviewees stated that their emotions are not only directed to and resulting from interactions with guests but simultaneously from interactions with their colleagues. This chapter thus elaborates on the working environment as a cure for and stimulator of EL. Next to elaborating that their service interaction depends on their own mood, the interviewees explained that their mindset further affects their colleagues as well as they are affected by their colleagues' emotions. One interviewee pointed out that it is crucial to maintain a good relationship with the colleagues in order to talk to them if oneself is not feeling well as well as vice versa cheering up colleagues who are not feeling well:

> Awareness about one another is for certain one of the important things. [...] The more positive we approach one another, the more caring we are, the more loving we are. The vibration goes out to the guests. They see it. They approach it. (Louise, F&B supervisor, waitress)

In that regard, the workforce helps each other to cope with EL as well as stimulating its enactment. Referring to that, EL not only requires service employees to display the appropriate emotions towards hotel guests. It further involves the display of suitable emotions towards colleagues to foster their ability to perform EL by, for instance, giving them an encouraging smile. One interviewee experienced that he had to change his own emotional displays since he could sense that colleagues would feel uncomfortable and nervous around him when he seemed stressed or annoyed of his colleagues' actions, for example. In certain situations, it thus requires employees

to suppress their own feelings for the sake their colleagues and maintaining a good work and service environment. One interviewee explained as follows:

> That's how we get passion. We push each other every day.[...] If you can feel that they are not having a good day then you can put on the mask to try to keep up the atmosphere instead of having a bad work environment. And another day you can take it or maybe after service so the thing does not get taken on. (Felix, chef)

While all interviewees showed that it was important to keep up a positive working environment, some admitted that the interaction with colleagues is not always easy. The interviewees mentioned feeling frustrated about differing work morals such as lacking motivation in late hours or deficient support in stressful situations. For instance, two interviewees evaluated situations in which they were busy while other employees seemed to only be standing around without anything to do which made them feel provoked and left alone. However, they admitted that it must be the lack of understanding of each other's tasks. That said, both concluded that developing knowledge about everybody's roles and jobs could contribute to lowering momentary discrepancies among departments. Predominantly, the interviewees explained that the hotel and the staff for them is like a family or a second home. Interviewees who mentioned to identify with the hotel further stated the importance of the workforce sharing the same vision. It shows their strong identification with the hotel as well as their interpretation of how service employees should feel when carrying out a job in the hotel:

> A place is no more than the people there. [...] If you replace everybody else, it's not that it's not a great place. It's just a different place. So I think the people are the key here to how it feels and how it works and everything. It's the people who makes it. It's not the floor, the ceiling or the ocean outside. It's the people. (Johan, restaurant manager)

While Johan romanticises the way service employees work together, it shows that his bond with his colleagues ultimately affects his commitment to the workplace which was also clarified by other interviewees. This chapter has focused on the emotions felt and strategies taken by service employees during their shifts. The following chapter focuses on the outcomes of EL in order to identify how service work influences staff outside their jobs.

4.3. Outcomes of Emotional Labor

This section identifies perceived outcomes of the employees' performance of EL. The first paragraph elaborates short-term outcomes that are presented as those that evolve directly and immediately from a service encounter and only last for a short amount of time. The second paragraph presents long-term outcomes that interviewees mentioned to experience in their private lives. The third paragraph outlines learning outcomes that are denoted as those that the employees purposely take from their professional lives as they perceive those as being beneficial for themselves.

4.3.1. Short-Term Outcomes

This paragraph presents short-term outcomes reported by interviewees. Those are argued to emerge directly from the interaction with guests while not having remarkable long-term effect on employees. First, interviewees mentioned the positive effects of receiving feedback as follows:

> We live for the feedback from giving the service. That's the motivation in a way I think. (Steve, F&B supervisor, waiter)

Next to feeling motivated as stated by Steve, interviewees explained to feel happy, proud, and rewarded after receiving feedback. At the same time, the guests' feedback was explained to motivate them to improve as service employees. Additionally, interviewees mentioned that regardless of if the feedback is personally addressed to them or the workforce as a whole, they feel pride in the hotel as a whole and the fact that they are part of it.

At the same time, feedback and the guests' recognition can be regarded as a mediator in order to cope with the stressful working environment. Teresa explained that feedback would not only make her happy but also "make all the hard work worth". Simultaneously, receiving positive feedback can further be interpreted as a motivator to continue one's job as explained by Louise:

> Having happy guests and walking out there and like they are taking your hand and they say thank you so much, it just gives you everything. [...] It keeps storing my energy to keep on going. I think that's mainly what brings people into working with that business. (Louise, F&B supervisor, waitress)

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However, she continued that there are factors that influence the amount and type of feedback:

> The older you get, the less comments you get back, the less feedback you get. And also, depending on you if you're good looking or if you are not that good looking. A good looking person gets more positive responses than a non good looking. [...] but just as a waiter and if you approach and being smiley and nice, it just gives everything. (Louise, F&B supervisor, waitress)

While first differentiating between one's appearance, age and the feedback received, she explained that service employees could earn the guests' recognition by simply smiling which is why she enjoys the job. The statement however leaves a bitter connotation as it seems that not receiving as much feedback as, for instance, a colleague, could lead individuals to experience extenuated self-confidence while technically putting the same emotional efforts in one's job. However, this thesis could not identify this correlation.

Apart from feedback, social interactions with different people was pointed out as one part of the job that employees especially valued. Meeting new people every day contributed to their motivation and created an exciting atmosphere making employees want to break the walls between the guests and oneself. Felix explained:

> People are moving as well. None of the days are the same. You need to adapt every day. And I think that's one of the things I like about it. [...] You feel like you get to know each other a little bit without really doing it. I think that's the main part. (Felix, chef)

Seeing a smile on the counterpart's face and feeling like one's work was appreciated by the guests were further mentioned as positive outcomes. One interviewee explained that his motivation was to make a difference for people who would not appear happy in the first place but leave the hotel happy after their interaction. On the other hand, interviewees reported to feel sad or disappointed when they could not satisfy a guest as solving problems and changing unpleasant situations was taken as a praise and satisfactory experience since interviewees seem to experience "some gratification in solving problems" (Johan, restaurant manager). Furthermore, interviewees mentioned challenges and stress as being positive, motivating, and even required to execute their jobs as explained by Steve:

> I also think that people who are working has to have a little bit busy that they get happy, you know, to make that job. If they've got nothing to do, then it will be pointless I think. (Steve, F&B manager, waiter)

Nonetheless, while short-term stress supports employees in order to experience efficiency in their jobs, experiencing stress in the long-term is regarded as being critical. The following chapter thus evalues long-term outcomes including possible problems that the interviewees reported as a result of their enactment of EL.

4.3.2. Long-Term Outcomes

> When you're working in such restaurants, in such a stressful environment. It's difficult to leave it all at work. You think about it when you're like at home. And if you're off from the shift it will take couple of hours before you fall down to rest again. (Felix, chef)

As pointed out by Felix, the nature of service environments creates a difficulty in ending a working day since one's dedication to the workplace and the passion to always deliver better experiences for the guests would hinder one in leaving work behind. Still, it was pointed out that it was important to leave work behind by executing another hobby, for example. Otherwise, there would be a chance that the professional lives would overlap and ultimately expulse their private lives, as explained by some interviewees. At the same time, interviewees admitted that interacting with people can get exhausting over time which requires them to be alone for a while in their spare time as explained by Josef:

> Over the years, many people have known me for all my life and they always know me as the most funniest, the best funny guy [...]. But over the years, it also turned me into being more privately more quiet person, sitting home, relaxing at home with a book or just relaxing. Because when you are at work or when you perform, you have to be on. (Josef, waiter)

Next to calming down after work, the quietness and calmness of the private life was outlined as a way to prepare one for the job. Thus, working within service environments of a hotel and being responsible to interact with guests on a daily basis seems to require employees to have personal approaches to both cope and prepare for emotional demands as elaborated by Louise:

> People should just wake up very early and go out and feel the sun shining in their face and just close their eyes and just take deep breaths and just clear their mind. That's what I do. That makes me survive. (Louise, F&B manager, waitress)

While evaluating the interviewees' perception of emotional demands and their approach to balance their emotional state of mind, it could be identified that the interviewees were not only aware of possible negative emotional outcomes. Rather, they agreed that people who were not able to cope with emotional requirements should not take on a job within the service industry, as elaborated by Martin:

> If you can't change this [feeling exhausted after service interactions that require EL], then you have to do something else. Because it's such a big part of being in this business. If you can't do it, stop. For the guests' sake and for your own. (Martin, F&B manager, waiter)

Furthermore, all interviewees mentioned that they would not carry out their jobs in case the positive outcomes would not exceed the negative ones. The following paragraph presents positive outcomes resulting from the interviewees enactment of EL.

4.3.3. Learning Outcomes

> I learn as a chef and as a person every day because you interact with people. So you learn new stuff every day. These experiences you can talk home and take to your everyday life also. (Felix, chef)

As a result of interacting with both hotel guests and colleagues, the interviewees described social encounters as valuable sources for developing both in their professional as well as private lives as explained by Felix. Additionally, what was earlier mentioned as a coping strategy in unpleasant encounters, being able to manage emotions seemed to influence the interviewees' awareness of themselves as well as their way of approaching people generally outside the hotel. The job requirements of being polite and showing good manners were explained as contributing to being positive and behaving better in their private lives as explained by Johan:

> You cannot read people always. You cannot judge them like a book on the cover. [...] I mean, we grow as human beings and we learn. So there's a lot to take away. For sure. You can take it into your private life or with your friends. (Johan, restaurant manager)

Next to having positive influences on the employees' mindset, learning about food, beverages, hearing stories of various people, and being confronted with different cultures were regarded as valuable assets earned from social interactions within the hotel:

> I learn a lot about talking with people. I learn a lot about behavior. [...] I just learned that if you speak polite to people, it's a very good way of starting a conversation, even if you're not a waitress at the job. [...] I learn a lot about myself. But also I learn a lot about wine and food and tastes and people who work in the kitchen as a chef, I learn a lot about how it is to be like that. Or people who work as housekeeping or something else. I learn a lot. (Teresa, waitress)

Several interviewees reported to make valuable experiences in their job. That said, it is assumed that it requires an individual's willingness to learn and the recognition of new learning outcomes to benefit from professional experiences in their private lives.

This chapter outlined and analysed the results gained from the semi-structured interview approach. As interviewees seemed to accept the enactment of EL as a general job requirement and did not report any grave outcomes resulting from its enactment, empirical results are critically discussed in the next chapter.

5. Discussion

This chapter presents a critical discussion of the empirical results gained from the interview approach alongside the conceptual model developed for this study.

Figure 1: Conceptual Model of EL

The discussion starts with discussing organisational (job-based) and individual antecedents leading to the performance of EL, continues with topics related to the experience and performance of EL, and ends with potential outcomes deriving from its enactment.

5.1. Antecedents of Emotional Labor

Within the conceptual model, job characteristics including behavioral guidelines and display rules and the employees' personality are considered as antecedents of EL. Existing literature pointed out that service jobs demand high levels of emotional displays that requires employees to be able to manage their emotions, thus, perform EL (Diefendorff and Richard, 2003). Results from this study showed that employees themselves regard what is scientifically termed as EL as a requirement of their jobs as suggested by Warhust and Nickson (2007). However, as service jobs are characterised to require more EL than other professions (Rafaeli and Sutton, 1987), the question remains to what extent organisations are justified to demand and exploit emotional resources of their employees as well as for how long it is sustainable to spend emotional resources as an employee since exceeding one's own emotional resources is argued to bear the risk of burnout (Lee and Ok, 2014). To cope with emotional demands, it could be shown that individuals utilise defense mechanisms as suggested by Ashforth and Humphrey (1993). To "buffer the impact of emotional labor" (ibid., p.108) they would execute hobbies in their spare time or 'warm-up' for a shift by talking to colleagues before. This research nonetheless showed that the understanding of the service industry as an environment that consists of social interactions and the requirement of

these emotional soft skills contributed to the interviewees' occupational decision to begin with. Thus, job-related antecedents of EL seem to be considered as deciding factors by employees before starting a career as a service employee.

Previous research identified an individual's physical appearance as a deciding factor for recruitment in the service industry (Warhurst and Nickson, 2007). However, the notion of AL that implies that service firms demand a specific appearance and choose employees based on looks (e.g. Payne, 2004; Quinn, 2008; Warhurst et al., 2000) leaves a bitter aftertaste. Especially Quinn's (2008) list of favorable attributes regarding one's "pose, poise, polish, performance, and prettiness" (p.81) strikes as a rather politically incorrect formulation. By objectifying employees, individuals with less suitable attributes might be rejected and discriminated against which emphasises the critical notion of service jobs in relation to AL and EL. Additionally, AL not only comes into play as a deciding factor for the employees' employment, but is just alike experienced during actual service encounters. Indeed, one interviewee pointed out that attractive service-employees receive more frequent and more positive feedback from guests and acknowledged the relevance of an employee's appearance in connection to his or her job. Existing research identified that receiving recognition and reward from guests stimulates the employees' self-affirmation, self-efficacy, and personal accomplishments (Lee and Ok, 2012). The question remains, how AL would diminish such positive effects as employees might experience a lack of recognition as a result of being compared based on looks rather than their actual job performance.

5.2. Emotional Labor Experience

In service encounters, the interplay of EL and AL further leaves the question to which extent EL is ethically justifiable. To give an empirical example, four interviewees explained that the payment made by guests would legitimate their demands where two different dimensions were notable. Teresa explains that "they [the guests] can get upset if they pay a lot and they don't feel like they got what they pay for." (Teresa, waitress). In order to then evoke the guests' feeling of getting what they paid for she would "give them something extra and make them feel like they came and paid for what they got" (Teresa waitress). Contrary to offering monetary compensation, Alex elaborates the following:

> People are expecting you to be very gentle and kind, it's because they pay for that. Actually still if they did not pay for that, we would have to be like that as a human being. But well sometimes you can say also that I am not in a mood today, I am sorry. But when you are a professional in this work, you can not say that. (Alex, waiter).

Thus, while he could walk away from emotional demands in his private life, spending his emotional capacities is part of his job where the management of feelings is sold for money and "has exchange value" (Hochschild, 1983, p. 7) regardless of his own emotional state of mind. It leaves the question if these emotional requirements can really be part of the job. From a Kantian perspective (Hill, 1980), human beings are an end in itself meaning that the employment itself would give value for the company. Considering the notion of AL with the "body as the manifestation of feelings" (Warhurst and Nickson, 2007, p.106), exploiting bodily, aesthetic, or emotional capacities of a person in order to gain economic benefits, is strictly speaking not justified as the inherent value of employees would be neglected and reduced to one's emotional capacities that are used as a means to satisfy customers. From an EL perspective, Rafaeli and Sutton (1987) discuss that those employees who regard the performance of organisationally prescribed display rules as not being part of their job, fake in "bad faith" (p.32). According to that, Alex who seems to agree that EL is in fact part of his job, would on the other hand fake in good faith, thus agree to the organisational rules while in reality not feeling the displayed emotions. This emotional dissonance was previously argued to threaten an individual's well-being (Hochschild, 1983). Combining the Kantian perspective with Hochschild (1983), it thus seems that the interpretation of EL as part of service-jobs is unethical. However, as interviewees appeared to accept emotional demands and thus did not perceive it as unethical, this discussion is asked to be taken up in future research.

Continuing with organisational rules, empirical findings identified positive aspects emerging from the absence of strictly prescribed display rules. As previously suggested by Ashforth and Humphrey (1993), the latitude given to employees when enacting their jobs is argued to foster job satisfaction and well-being. Indeed, while not perceiving prescribed display rules, the interviewees' understanding of their responsibility in satisfying customers seemed to replace the significance of display rules. They explained that the variety of service encounters requires a certain latitude to be able to deal with unique situations and specifically handle each hotel guest which contradicts

previous research stating that guidelines would ensure 'right' customer interactions (Warhurst and Nickson, 2007). Furthermore, display rules seemed to result from the interviewees' own understanding of their jobs as well as their own interpretation of organisational cues such as the CEO's focus on receiving positive feedback from the guests. In that sense, display rules seemed to be individually constructed by employees and subject to the workforce just like societal norms determine feelings rules as suggested by Hochschild (1979). Thus, it appeared that a workforce's shared vision of satisfying customers could ultimately replace the need for organisational display rules and just alike ensure beneficial customer interactions while simultaneously contributing to the empowerment and well-being of employees. In that sense, it is argued that EL becomes a tool for service employees to impose control as it might help employees to express competence as suggested by Wharton (2009). However, the question remains if and how displaying competence would lead to emotional dissonances (eg. an employee shows competence but does internally not feel competent) which would eventually overshadow positive effects of EL as a tool to impose control.

Considering the EL strategy, it appeared that interviewees aspire to display emotions they feel and vice versa rather than feigning emotional displays. Previous research identified this process as one type of DA, namely "passive deep acting" (Hochschild, 1983) while Diefendorff et al. (2005) point out that this type of EL is distinct from both SA and DA. As a result of my research, I confirm the statement made by Diefendorff et al. (2005). While the interviewees could not describe a specific EL strategy, their main intention was to deliver natural experiences, genuine emotions, and real smiles. Contrary, faking emotions was explained to spoil the encounter with the hotel guests implying a more inferior experience. To cope with and compensate unpleasant experiences, moving to back-regions, taking a break, or talking to a colleague or supervisor were explained as reasonable strategies to recharge a genuine positive attitude as suggested by Bærenholdt and Jensen (2009) while faking emotions was only mentioned as a last resort.

In connection to the display of genuine versus feigned emotions, the employees' attempt to take on a role while performing in their jobs arose as a topic of interest. Most employees stated to be themselves while others acknowledged leaving their personal identity behind when entering the hotel. However, it was found that even if employees claimed to be themselves at work, their own

needs and feelings were put into second place. Therefore, even though taking on the role as a happy, service-minded, and professional employee was explained to be a role that is enjoyed to be taken on, EL seems to lead individuals to prioritise a certain role over another. Considering Goffman's (1978) theory of impression management, it is concluded that EL entails an extreme form of impression management that requires individuals to prioritise their job-related role over their own personality. However, it leaves the question to what extent this could lead to role conflicts in general and especially in case of very problematic service encounters as prioritising one's work-related role as top priority was previously identified as being "identity-threatening" (Ashforth and Humphrey, 1993, p.100) and lowering one's well-being. Considering role enactment, interviewees mentioned that service employees must maintain a professional distance to not interact too loosely with guests while simultaneously performing naturally and not too stiff. While previous research introduced "hyper-professionality" (Sundbo, 2011) as the service employees' tendency to carrying out tasks in an exaggerated professional manner while, at the same time, unintentionally ignoring prevalent external inputs, this Master thesis suggests that service employees are further challenged by not performing too loosely what could be termed as hypo-professionalism. EL therefore seemed to require employees to not only manage the display of *positive or negative emotions* but further the *level and magnitude of positiveness* which is assumed to require high levels of constant self-awareness during their jobs.

In this regard, interviewees further explained that EL requires being aware of others. The mutual awareness and emotional support among the workforce were emphasised as facilitator for performing positive service interactions. Thus, collaboration and the exchange of positive emotions was argued to transmit positive energies to guests. This Master thesis therefore extends the concept of EL to not only being directed towards the guests or customers of a service organisation. Rather, EL is simultaneously experienced in direct encounters with and directed towards colleagues and the staff as the emotions displayed to colleagues are argued to influence their enactment of EL. Employees therefore seem to manage their own emotions aiming to enhance positive emotions displayed by colleagues while colleagues serve as attachment figures for each other to stimulate a positive work-environment. Ultimately, a positive work-environment was argued to benefit the service environment in which emotional displays are transmitted to guests. While Steinberg and Figart (1999) point out that EL is a two-sided phenomenon, this Master thesis

argues that EL is a triple-sided phenomenon taking place in two environments, the service- and work-environment where emotional exchanges in one environment have spillover effects on the other. In service environments, EL thus implies a triple-sided interaction characterised by the simultaneous exchange of emotions on the part of the employee, his or her colleagues, and the customer. In the following, potential outcomes arising from the enactment of EL are discussed.

5.3. Outcomes of Emotional Labor

While previous EL research identified positive and negative outcomes in terms of well-being and job satisfaction, results from this thesis reveal a third stance which is learning outcomes derived from the enactment of EL.

Considering direct interactions with encounters, Ashforth and Humphrey (1993) argue that the frequency of emotional encounters leads employees to perform less personalised as a result of becoming numb to emotions. Results from this thesis however indicated that frequent and variable encounters led to personalised performances that ultimately led employees to experience job satisfaction resulting from self-efficacy and enhanced creativity in their jobs. As previous research indicated a relation between an employee's experience of self-efficacy, personal accomplishments, and job satisfaction (Ashforth and Humphrey, 1993; Lam and Chen, 2012) resulting from their job fulfillment and receiving reward from satisfied customers, this study interpreted the employees' attempt to satisfy guests as a necessity for themselves to reach self-efficacy, personal accomplishments, and ultimately job satisfaction. Following, Hochschild's (1983) definition of EL as "the management of feelings" that is "sold for wage and therefore has exchange value" (p. 7) is argued to lead service employees performing EL to earn exchange value not only in the form of monetary wage but just alike in the form of nonmonetary outcomes such as job satisfaction.

With EL being a triple-sided interaction, the interviewees further reported to experience a greater awareness of their own as well as others' emotions. Contrary to previous research that introduced the term "self-alienation" (Ashforth and Humphrey, 1993, p.107) and the risk of losing one's ability to feel genuine emotions separate from their jobs, this thesis argues that EL supports service employees to experience and understand their own and other's emotions more consciously. Considering long-term outcomes that would affect employees in their private lives, results from

this study indicated that service employees develop interpersonal skills by the enactment of EL that furthermore help them in their private lives as a result of having to stay polite and being confronted by a variety of different people in their professional lives. However, that leaves the question if the enactment of EL in one's professional life does lead individuals to unintentionally enact EL in their private lives as indicated by Ashforth and Humphrey's (1993) notion of "self-alienation" (p.107). Without labelling that outcome as being either positive or negative, it can concluding be related to Goffman's (1978) theory of the self in which he points out that social individuals are indeed actors performing different roles in their lives in general while this thesis points out that the individuals' behavior seemed to be determined by rules that apply in both their private and professional lives.

6. Conclusion

By conducting semi-structured interviews with hotel service employees, this Master thesis identifies how EL is experienced by service employees within the tourism and hospitality industry. In light of the growing interest in sustainability, it appeals to the importance of realising social sustainability in the form of well-being, life-long-learning, and decent work within a sector where social interactions are at the heart of the service exchange. The research questions guiding this Master thesis are presented and answered in the following.

6.1. Research Questions

RQ I: How is emotional labor experienced by service employees
during service encounters within a hotel?

Results show that service employees, regardless of their specific occupation, consider the management of their own feelings as well as the display of appropriate emotions as part of their job. While being aware of certain behavioral guidelines, even though those were not formally constituted, most interviewees were however not able to specifically describe their personal strategies for coping with emotional demands leading to the assumption that potential coping strategies evolve rather subconsciously while evaluating each specific service encounter individually. Thus, an employee's reaction to emotional demands is constantly changing and contextually adapted according to the counterpart one is confronted with. Notwithstanding, the

interviewees showed a high understanding of the influence of their displayed emotions on the hotel guests as well as on their colleagues. Showing emotions and especially true emotions (those that are felt and consciously meant to be displayed by the individual) is delineated as a necessity to maintain a good working and service environment.

Furthermore, the interviewees' intrinsic service-orientation and the organisational support received facilitated their enactment of appropriate emotions towards all individuals they encounter. For some interviewees, performing in their job therefore required them to step into a role. However, taking on this role did not bring any negative side-effects. Rather, stepping into the role of a humble, polite, and professional character was declared to be a role that is enjoyed to be taken on. Still, *stepping into a role* implies the act of performing while the performance is related to one's work role. Thus, it is finally regarded as executing EL since it needs an employee's awareness of his or her responsibility that is grounded in and based on one's work-related role.

In terms of potential outcomes, interviewees narrated the short-term experience of exhaustion and a need for quietness and relaxation in their private lives. However, long-term negative outcomes could not be identified. Rather, the interviewees depicted that enacting EL, in the form of having to manage one's own emotional displays to contribute to a positive work environment and create positive service encounters for the guests, helped them to overcome emotional challenges in their private lives and equipped them with valuable soft skills that contribute to their interpersonal behavior outside of their jobs. In the context of this research, EL is thus regarded as a fundamental part of service jobs while soft skills and the ability to interact in social encounters become a crucial and required factor that furthermore benefits the individuals in their private lives.

<div align="center">RQ II: How do service employees perceive their contribution
to the hotel's service delivery?</div>

In connection to an employee's role, the interviewees stated to embody the hotel by interacting with the guests as the face of the company. They described to be responsible for delivering the service promise as well as to ensure the retention of existing and the acquisition of new regular customers. As one part of delivering the (according to them) best service possible, the interviewees named the exchange of work experiences and the communication between the departments as crucial factors. While understanding the hotel service environment as continuously changing due

to new services, the variety of guests, and the guests' changing needs and demands, interviewees pointed out the importance of team-briefings before, the staff's communication during, and the evaluation of their shifts afterwards in order to recap their experiences and assessing their performances to eventually enable future improvements. Thus, instead of solely being focused on executing their tasks in the simplest way, it appears that employees perceive a certain responsibility for the organisation as a whole. Exchanging experiences is thus interpreted as the employees' approach to maintain a good work environment by eliminating potential discrepancies within the team as well as to increase the service performance. In describing themselves as the face of the company for the guests, it appeared that employees are aware of the effect of their individual performance on the final service quality perceived by hotel guests.

Finally, this Master thesis introduces the 'Emotional Labor Tripartite' which interprets EL as a triple-sided phenomenon in which emotions are exchanged in order to maintain and contribute to a positive work- and service-environment by managing one's own emotions and its display, incorporating and interpreting the colleagues' emotional display, and simultaneously considering the effect of displays on guests and monitoring their displays. This thesis thus enhances existing EL literature by extending the phenomenon of EL. Additionally, this Master thesis sheds light on the relation between EL and social sustainability. Considering the SDGs, specifically *good health and well-being, life-long learning,* and *decent work,* this Master thesis revealed that, based on the interviewees' perceptions and experiences, EL within a hotel service environment did not bear any negative concerns in the long-term. Rather, the collaboration within the workforce and the variety of service encounters seemed to enhance the employees' *well-being* in the form of personal achievements and job satisfaction and stimulates *life-long learning* in the form of the employees' willingness to continuously improve which is interpreted as a function of EL. In this sense, despite regarding EL as the act of managing one's emotions, this thesis introduces EL a tool for the workforce to regulate positive work-environments and stimulate positive service-environments.

However, due to the prevalence of COVID-19, the current situation brought a major downfall for the tourism industry as a whole. For both managers and employees, this situation diminished the potential of the hotel and hospitality industry in providing *decent work* in the form of steady employment while that must be regarded as an act of nature beyond (full) control. Still, it led

multiple employees to be (temporary) laid off and harmed the businesses of many. This Master thesis therefore ends with implications for future research in order to enhance research on tourism and, especially, sustainable forms of tourism.

6.2. Future Research

While both RQs could be answered, conducting this research led to the rise of additional questions that should be taken into consideration for future research. First, this Master thesis introduced the Emotional Labor Tripartite and identified that the enactment of EL equipped individuals with beneficial soft-skills that help them to cope with emotionally demanding interactions in their private lives. Thus, while Hochschild (1979) stated that feeling rules in our private lives are socially constructed, emotion-work in one's private life seems to be stimulated by the enactment of EL in professional contexts. As a result of this result, the question remains to what extent socially constructed feeling rules are consequently determined by display and behavioral rules deriving from organisational contexts.

Second, the research alludes to the aspect of AL in connection to an employee's appearance and its effect on the type and amount of feedback one receives. It has been stated that the amount of feedback depends on an employee's perceived attractiveness. While attractiveness is argued to lie in the eye of the beholder, it is assumed that a potential correlation might diminish the well-being of service employees who are not receiving recognition and, themselves, trace it back to their own appearance, perceived by themselves. Thus, the question arises if service environments in which feedback is a subject to one's appearance are a source for disturbed self-esteems on the part of employees.

Third, the interviewees pointed out to strive for delivering natural experiences characterised by being professional, not *performing* too loosely, but also not *performing* too stiff in encounters with hotel guests. While this goes beyond the scope of this Master thesis, the question arose to what extent a performance can be natural anyway since *performing* strictly speaking implies intentionally fulfilling a task while *natural* denotes something that evolves by nature or instinct. Yet, is a "natural performance" not a contradiction in itself? This discussion is suggested to be taken on in future research.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Strategy for Obtaining Previous Literature

In order to frame the topic, course material dealing with EL were read and additionally screened for additional sources in their reference lists. As a next step, the following keywords were chosen for this study in line with the research question and topics of interest from previous literature: emotional labor, aesthetic labor, job satisfaction, tourism hospitality, employees or staff or workers, service encounter, hotel, hotel employees, and role performance. The keywords were used for retrieving literature from the online databases Google Scholar and LUBsearch, the online database offered by Lund University. Keywords were searched for in both title and abstract while I chose to focus on peer-reviewed articles written in English language. This decision was made in order to guarantee the presentation of trustworthy literature and to avoid misunderstandings as a consequence of incorrect translations of original works. In the process of writing this Master thesis, I regularly continued checking for new publications with the purpose to include recently published, relevant research in the field.

Appendix 2: Interview Guide

1. Can you briefly introduce yourself, Name, Age, your job position at Marienlyst Strandhotel?
2. Can you tell me about your professional background? For how many years have you been a waiter?
3. Working hours: How does a normal working week look for you?
4. Would you say that the working hours and changing shifts influence your work? Are there any shifts you prefer before others?
5. Why did you decide to become a waiter? What is it that you like about your job?
6. When thinking of a waiter, what are the characteristics and qualities that someone needs to have?
7. What would you say are your personal qualities that help you in your job?
8. Imagine you get a new colleague. How would you brief him or her, how would you train him or her?
9. Do you find it easy to be polite and keep smiling when serving the guest?
10. Interpreting: Would you say that it is easy to be friendly to guests most of the time but that it changes and becomes more difficult when your guests are unpleasant towards you?
11. Imagine yourself in your everyday working situations: would you say that you "go the extra mile" to please the customers?
12. Do you identify yourself with the role as a waiter?
13. How would you describe a role model in your job?
14. Would you say that you are a role model yourself?
15. How would you describe your job responsibility? What are you responsible for?
16. Do you find it exhausting to always maintain a "happy face"?
17. Would you say that you always feel the emotions that you give to customers?
18. Imagine a situation in which a guest is not satisfied with your colleagues' service. How do you react?
19. When you compare your own performance now with your performance when you started your job, would you say that you improved?
20. Imagine a situation in which a guest is insulting you in any way. How do you manage a situation like this?
21. Have you ever experienced such a situation?
22. Is there anything else that you would describe as part of your job besides delivering a service (e.g. appearance)?
23. Do you prepare yourself in a certain way for your shift (e.g. good luck emblems)?

24. Imagine a customer who has a lot of special wishes or challenges you by asking many questions about your products. How do you experience these kinds of situations?

25. Imagine your personal worst-case scenario. What would that be and how do you cope with uncomfortable situations of that kind?

26. Imagine you made a joke and your guest does not laugh about it/find it funny. How do you react in situations like this?

27. How do you find out which behavior fits in a certain interaction with a guest?

28. How do you see that a guest is satisfied?

29. How does that make you feel?

30. Contrary, did you ever experience that you could not help a guest?

31. How does that make you feel?

32. What do most employees here think about the way waiters work together with each other?

33. Is that also the way you feel?

34. Would you say that there is a common understanding of the way a waiter at Marienlyst should perform?

35. If I was starting as a waiter, how should I know how to behave?

36. Do you identify yourself with the hotel?

37. Imagine a situation in which you hear a guest talking about the service at Marienlyst in a bad way. How does that make you feel? How do you react?

38. Are you happy within your current position? Are you aspiring to get another role?

Appendix 3: Conceptual Framework and Interview Guide

	Concept	Interview Questions
Antecedents	Job Characteristics	3,4,6,8,35
	Personal Antecedents	1,2,5,7
EL Experience	The Service Encounter	9,15,18,24,25,26,27,28,30,37
	EL Strategy	10,16,17,20,21,22,23
	Role Performance	11,12,13,14,19,32,34,36
	AL*	23
Outcomes	Personal Achievements (Self-Efficacy, Accomplishments)	29,31,33,38
	Job-Related (Job Satisfaction)	29,31,33,36,37,38
	Dimensions	*Unscripted follow-up questions on personal experiences in which EL was required, appeared in all interviews* *(e.g. When ending your shift, are you taking these emotions home with you? / How do you feel when ending your shift? / Do you think that you get anything back from your interactions with guests or your colleagues?)*

*In this Master thesis, AL is not considered as an individual concept within the framework but rather as one part of EL. However, question 23 specifically alludes to the concept of AL in connection to EL.

Appendix 4: Themes and Categories within Empirical Data

Theme	Category 1	Category 2	Category 3	Category 4	Category 5
Drivers for initial Job decision	(Financial) Necessity	Personal Interactions	Financial Independency	Accessibility	
Job responsibility and service delivery	What does service mean/imply	Who can work in service jobs	Rules and guidelines	Education and previous experiences	Exchange of experiences
Service and guest encounter	How to approach a guest	Characteristics of guests	Service delivery in demanding situations	Guest education	
Experience of emotions and coping strategies	Service encounter	Personal coping strategies	Organisational support	General mindset	Acting: fake vs. real smile
Work environment	Support and motivation for service and work atmosphere	Negative experiences with colleagues	Different departments		
Outcomes	Direct/ short-term outcomes	Long-term outcomes	Learning Outcomes		

Appendix 5: Information Sheet and Consent Form

Thank you very much for agreeing to participate in this study. This Information Sheet explains what the research project is about and what your participation entails.

The purpose of the study is to uncover how hotel employees experience service encounters with hotel guests. It is part of a Master thesis conducted at Lund University and carried out on the example of Marienlyst Strandhotel in Helsingør, Denmark. To identify your views and perceptions, you are invited to partake in the study by participating in an individual interview as well as in a focus group interview. The interviewer Lisa Heim is a student at Lund University in Sweden currently pursuing her Master's in Service Management with a specialisation on tourism.

If you agree, both interviews will be audio recorded. The interviews will last approximately 30-45 minutes for each interview. The answers given will only be used for the purpose of this study. Furthermore, interviews will be made anonymous in order to not allow third parties to identify participants based on your individual responses. You will be asked to sign an interview consent form to ensure that the interviews are carried out in a correct ethical manner.

Thank you for your time and for agreeing to participate in this study.
If you have any questions about the project at any point, feel free to contact me.

Interview Consent Form
Identifying the role of service encounters in hotels - a case study at Marienlyst Strandhotel

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I, _____, have read and understand the Information Sheet provided.

The researcher gave opportunities to ask questions about the process of the study.

I agree that the interviews will be audio recorded.

I give permission that my answers are used for the purpose of this research project.

My answers may be used and quoted in publications, reports, web pages, and other research outputs.

However, I understand that my personal details are made anonymous and will not be revealed to third parties.

I agree that the copyright of any material related to this study is assigned to Lisa Heim.

Participant Signature: _____   Date:

Researcher Signature: _____   Date: