



An investigation into the influences of emotional labour of holiday representatives

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**An investigation into the influences of emotional labour of holiday
representatives**

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of
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Abstract

Emotional labour occurs when employees manage their emotions during service interactions in line with particular organisational display rules. 'Service with a smile' is an example of such a role requirement which can lead to the overall organisational success as showing positive emotions influence customers' intention to return and positive reviews. This makes emotional labour a crucial element in the service sector including in the context of tour operators. The focus of this thesis is the UK tour operating industry and specifically, the package holiday market where research and the understanding of emotional labour is still limited. This study thus addresses this gap by researching the holiday representatives. At the same time, the way in which employees engage in emotional labour is influenced by various factors, which however, are still poorly understood. Therefore, this gap is also addressed through the aim of this study by expanding the knowledge on how various workplace factors influence holiday representatives' emotional labour.

The empirical data was collected using semi-structured interviews with participants working as overseas holiday representatives for British tour operators. Rich data was obtained regarding their emotional labour experiences and their opinions on how various influences had a role in shaping these. Snowball sampling, snowball sampling using social networking sites such as LinkedIn, and self-selection sampling were used to recruit the participants. Data was further analysed by adopting a thematic analysis using MAXQDA.

The findings revealed that emotional labour in this role is multi-faceted which occurs not only with customers, but also with other parties in the workplace such as colleagues, managers and suppliers. Also, the workplace and its various components are the most influential factors for the holiday representatives' emotional labour. These influences are often overlooked by organisations, but are crucially important for holiday representatives and their behaviour. A new framework for the influences in this context has been developed which divided these in work-environment influences with context-specific factors, customer related influences, and individual influences.

This research contributes towards a more holistic view of emotional labour by providing a stakeholder approach towards its understanding, by considering all emotion regulation strategies such as surface acting, deep acting, natural felt emotions and emotional deviance and by considering both positive and negative workplace events as influences. It also introduces the concepts of 'concomitant emotional labour' and 'variable emotional labour' in the context of holiday representatives. This study also has implications to methodology by adopting a qualitative approach. Future research should focus on a more holistic approach in understanding emotional labour and build on the framework of influences developed in this thesis.

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Glossary

ABTA	Association of British Travel Agents
AET	Affective Events Theory
CAQDAS	Computer Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis Software
CSQ	Customer Service Questionnaire
EL	Emotional Labour
ONS	Office for National Statistics
UNWTO	United Nations World Tourism Organisation
ILO	International Labour Organisation
POS	Perceived Organisational Support

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Chapter 1 Introduction

'You need to be upbeat and in a good mood regardless of your personal feelings or however many times you may have heard a certain issue' (R15).

1.1 Introduction

This thesis aims to achieve a comprehensive understanding of emotional labour (EL) in the work context of overseas holiday representatives. These customer-facing workers are employed by tour operators who are responsible for looking after clients on package holidays at resorts (Holloway and Humphreys 2016). The quote above shows how one respondent who participated in this study was required to behave and manage his emotions during a customer interaction as part of the job. Similar to other service sector roles, holiday representatives are required to show particular organisationally desired emotions to the holidaymakers (Constanti and Gibbs 2005, Hochschild 1983). In this leisure work environment, representatives are required to display emotions and behaviours such as cheerfulness, friendliness, empathy, to be upbeat and fun and deliver service with a smile whether they are authentically felt or not. This aspect of their behaviour is called EL.

Firstly, this chapter gives an overview of the research problem and the rationale behind researching this particular work context. Further, it will present an initial description of the research approach undertaken for this study. The final part will introduce the contribution to knowledge, the research aim and the objectives, and the structure of this thesis.

1.2 The research problem

Emotional labour is a concept initially introduced by Arlie Russell Hochschild in 1983 in her seminal book titled 'The Managed Heart'. Hochschild (1983, p.7) defined EL as:

The management of feelings to create a publicly observable facial and bodily display [which] is sold for a wage and therefore has an exchange value.

Emotional labour assumes that organisations implement *feeling rules* or *display rules* as standards for the appropriate expression of emotions in the workplace (Ashforth and Humphrey 1993, Hochschild 1983). For example, flight attendants are required to express friendliness to their customers, police officers have to be able to show severity to suspects, and bank employees need to portray trustworthiness to their clients (Zapf 2002). Therefore, display rules become work goals that should be met by employees (Ekman 1973, Gosserand and Diefendorff 2005). For this reason, EL is of particular importance in the service sector where employees have a pivotal role in terms of how the customers perceive the quality of the service provided (Grandey and Gabriel 2015). Most service organisations have the rule that positive emotions such as friendliness, cheerfulness or smiling should be displayed whereas negative ones such as anger or frustration, should be suppressed in order to enhance customer satisfaction and consequently organisational success (Diefendorff and Gosserand 2003, Goodwin, Groth and Frenkel 2011).

However, the service providers might not always be able to portray these positive affective displays during customer interactions because they experience what is called emotional dissonance or their inner emotions do not match the display rules (Grandey 2003). Therefore, they need to put on an act in order to meet the organisational behavioural requirements (Grandey, Diefendorff and Rupp 2013, Hochschild 1983). Acting as part of the role is therefore achieved through particular EL strategies (Grandey 2000) which have been identified in the literature as: *surface acting*, *deep acting* and *naturally felt emotions or automatic emotion regulation* (Ashforth and Humphrey 1993, Diefendorff, Croyle and Gosserand 2005). Nevertheless, there are also situations when employees may not express the desired emotions situation which has been identified as *emotional deviance* (Grandey 2003, Zapf 2002).

The way in which EL is performed and the strategies adopted are determined by different influences (Grandey 2000, Hochschild 1983). There are numerous influences of EL which have been divided into *contextual or work environment factors*, job based/job demands characteristics which have also been separated

into situational and organisational influences of EL, and *individual* factors which are related to personal characteristics of employees such as socio-demographics or personality (Morris and Feldman 1996, Shani et al. 2012).

1.3 Research contribution, aim and objectives

The main contribution of this thesis is to the EL literature by expanding the existing knowledge on the influences. There has been extensive research into the influences of EL (Diefendorff, Croyle et al. 2005, Kim 2008, Shani et al. 2014, Wong and Wang 2009). However, the focus of this has been on the personal-level traits or the individual factors and customer-related emotional events and more specifically mistreatment from the customers and thus more studies are needed on these factors (Grandey, Gabriel 2015, Lam and Chen 2012). Researching the influences of EL is very important because they affect the strategies used by employees during service interactions and consequently they have an impact on employee well-being.

This study takes into consideration the major categories of influences, the situational, organisational and individual predictors of EL in contrast to research published by Brotheridge and Grandey (2002), Chu, Baker and Murrmann (2012), Diefendorff, Croyle and Gosserand (2005), Gabriel et al. (2016), Hochschild (1983), Johnson and Spector (2007), Kim (2008), Morris and Feldman (1996), Schaubroek and Jones (2000), Lam and Chen (2012), who examined specific determinants of EL. In addition, the focus will not be only on the negative workplace events as most literature (Grandey, Dickter and Sin 2004, Grandey, Kern and Frone 2007, Hur, Moon and Han 2015, Zhang, Wang and Shi 2015), but also the positive workplace events. Therefore, investigating both contextual, and individual factors will provide a more holistic and nuanced understanding of this highly crucial area of interest for the EL theory. Investigating how EL is performed and specifically the strategies used by employees to portray organisationally desired emotions has been a central tenet in this field of research (Grandey and Gabriel 2015). Whilst some EL strategies were extensively investigated such as deep and surface acting, naturally felt emotions have not (Diefendorff, Croyle and Gosserand 2005). As a result, the examination of EL

strategies collectively will provide a more detailed picture of how employees experience EL.

Another important contribution is adding to the understanding of the under-researched role of overseas holiday representatives. EL is a very important work requirement in the service sector, particularly the tourism industry, where the front-line workers are a crucial element in influencing the service quality perception by customers (Sohn and Lee 2012). This is also the case for the roles in the tour operating sector, where employees have to embody positive emotions such as friendliness when dealing with their customers. However, EL in the complex role of holiday representatives is unique because of the work-leisure nexus or the blurring boundaries between work and leisure, the large variety of emotions they need to display and the long duration of customer contact, which makes these employees worthy of study (Guerrier and Adib 2003).

Therefore, the aim and objectives of this thesis are as follows:

Aim: To investigate influences of emotional labour of holiday representatives employed by British tour operators.

Objectives:

1. To analyse the importance of performing emotional labour in the tour operating industry;
2. To discuss the nature of emotional labour and assess how it is performed by the holiday representatives;
3. To examine the contextual influences of emotional labour of holiday representatives;
4. To examine the individual influences of emotional labour of holiday representatives;
5. To develop a theoretical framework for the influences of emotional labour in the tour operating context.

1.4 Research approach

The concept of EL is associated with emotions, opinions and attitudes. Most research on EL has been quantitative in nature which has limited the understanding of such a complex theory. Thus, the best way to obtain an in-depth

picture of the influences of EL and meet the aim and the objectives of this research was to adopt an inductive, qualitative approach. This helped gain a more comprehensive insight into the topic under investigation and the under-researched context of UK overseas holiday representatives.

Following a constructionist ontology and an interpretivist epistemology, the researcher managed to obtain a more comprehensive understanding of holiday representatives' emotional experiences from their own perspectives. For this reason, the primary data was collected using in-depth interviews which offered the participants the opportunity to share their feelings, perceptions and attitudes regarding their job in more detail, thus enhancing the richness of the data collected and meeting the research objectives. The interviews were conducted face-to-face, over the telephone, via Skype and email. In total, 21 interviews with respondents who were employed as overseas holiday representatives were conducted.

In order to recruit the respondents, the researcher chose snowball sampling through personal networks for this hard-to-reach population. Due to the bias associated with this sampling technique, snowball sampling using social media was also undertaken. Using LinkedIn was successful and helped increase the number of participants for the study and minimise bias. The interviews were transcribed using a speech recognition software, and an inductive thematic analysis was used to analyse the qualitative data. The research design and justifications behind the choices made in this thesis are presented in more detail in Chapter 3.

1.5 Structure of the thesis

Chapter 1 presented an overview of the rationale behind choosing the research field and the context of the tour operators. The aim and objectives of this study, the contributions, and a brief explanation of the research design are also presented in this part.

Chapter 2 discusses the concept of EL in more detail, it introduces the various influences of EL, and how this occurs specifically within the tour operating sector and for the overseas holiday representatives.

Chapter 3 explains in detail the research design undertaken for this study, the justification for adopting an inductive qualitative approach and in-depth interviews. The rationale behind the purposive sampling technique undertaken and the thematic inductive analysis are also discussed. This chapter ends with the evaluations of the research design and ethical considerations.

Chapter 4 is the first of the three findings chapters and presents the work context influences of EL. **Chapter 5** focusses on the findings in relation to the customer facing role and determinants of EL and it will also present emotional labour release strategies and long-term consequences of EL. **Chapter 6** shows the findings in relation to individual influences such as age, gender or experience.

Chapter 7 presents the discussion of the key findings in Chapters 4 to 6 which are contrasted with existing literature and introduces the conceptual framework for the influences of EL of overseas holiday representatives.

Chapter 8 concludes this study by presenting the research findings, its contribution to knowledge, limitations, and in the final part gives recommendations both to practice and areas of future research.

Chapter 2

Emotional labour and the holiday representative

2.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a review of the literature on emotional labour (EL). Firstly, it will provide an overview of tourism and tour operating industry followed by a presentation on the importance of the EL concept for the service sector and finally the tourism industry. This field has been a research interest for many decades now and it is based on several seminal pieces of work. Thus, section 2.4 will introduce some of this seminal work on EL and its conceptualisation. Section 2.5 provides an in-depth explanation of how EL is performed by giving an insight into surface acting, deep acting, naturally felt emotions and emotional deviance. The focus of this research is the influences of EL also known as predictors or determinants of EL. These induce certain emotional responses of employees which consequently determine the way in which EL is performed and the outcomes for these individuals (Grandey 2000, Schaubroeck and Jones 2000). Understanding how these factors affect individuals' emotions and their EL is essential in making sure that appropriate measures are taken by organisations to avoid potential negative outcomes of EL on both the individuals and the companies (Kim 2008). Although understanding these influences is crucial, more research is needed to enhance this (Grandey and Gabriel 2015). Section 2.6 will provide an overview of these influences. Also, a framework for these influences has been created which forms the basis of this study. The final part of this chapter focuses on EL in tourism, and more specifically in relation to the role of holiday representatives as emotional labourers.

2.2 Tourism industry overview

Tourism is a major force in the economy of the world accounting in 2016 for 3.1 % of the world's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) or US\$2,306.0 billion estimated to reach US\$3,537.1 billion by 2027 (WTTC 2017). In 2012 international tourist arrivals worldwide surpassed 1 billion tourists for the first time in history from 530 million in 1995 and in 2016 despite the various challenging events such as natural disasters, tourist arrivals reached 1,235 million worldwide (UNWTO 2013, UNWTO 2017).

British package holidays are still very important for tourism although the demand has not always been steady and has seen many fluctuations. The 1960s saw a high increase in the sales of package holidays because of big new tour operators having enough money to provide a variety of overseas low-priced services to holidaymakers which influenced the middle class to take holidays abroad especially to sunny destinations such as Spain (Lyth 2009). At the beginning of the 1970s the package holidays market continued to increase such that in 1986 more than 16 million Brits were having a holiday abroad, 2.6 million more than in 1985 (Cormack 2000). Package tours continued to be a major choice for British tourists until the beginning of 2000s when their popularity plunged drastically which happened due to the rise of independent holidays and tour operators' inability innovate and invest in technology and new products (Holloway and Humphreys 2012).

The world recession of 2008 also saw a further decrease in the popularity of British package holidays, but this was followed by a steady increase and is still predicted to continue to rise and reach 17.978 million by 2020 (Keynote 2013, Mintel 2016). The reasons behind this growth are: (a) the fact that they are cost effective in the current economic climate and they also offer holidaymakers financial security by the Air Travel Organisers' Licensing (ATOL) protection and travel insurance, and (b) the fact that they offer hassle free booking, increased security in an unfamiliar destination, more guarantees, and more added value in comparison with individually booked holidays because of the bundling of various components such as flights, large variety of accommodation or help in the resorts at affordable prices (ABTA 2013, Keynote 2012, McNeil 2012). Although independent holidays are a strong competitor, the package holiday will still have an important share in the market, but future customers are likely to be more

sophisticated and will need more personalised services which means that in order to succeed, the tour operators need to keep up with the changes to avoid a decline as before (Buhalis and Ujma 2006). Therefore, the package holiday still remains an important type of holidaying for British overseas tourists and which, due to the continuous product innovations, will increase in popularity (Holloway and Humphreys 2016, Lusher 2015, Mintel 2016).

Tourism is comprised of several sectors such as transportation, accommodation, restaurants, bars, tourist attractions or entertainment (Butler 2009, Page 2011). The tourist products are sold to the tourists directly, through travel agents who are the main retailers in the industry, or through tour operators, also known as brokers (Holloway and Humphreys 2016). Tour operators are facilitators of tourism and have been an essential link between the customers and the tourism suppliers (Budeanu 2005, Holloway and Humphreys 2012, 2016). They are the ones who 'basically control the supply chain' (Christian 2012, p.3) a role which has always been central ever since the development of the ever so popular package holidays. Tour operators, therefore, still remain relevant in the tourism industry (Holloway and Humphreys 2016).

Moreover, the tourism industry is the world's largest employer with one in every eleven jobs worldwide being generated directly or indirectly by this industry (International Labour Organisation: ILO 2010, UNWTO 2016). While the bulk of employment brought by tourism is in the destination country, jobs are also created in travel agencies, tour operators or other intermediaries that supply tourist services (Holloway and Humphreys 2009). According to the Office for National Statistics (ONS 2016) employment in the UK tourism industry has increased from 2.66 million in 2009 to 2.97million in 2014. The tourism labour market is, however, facing many challenges such as the 'volatile demand cycle' or seasonality, high level of labour turnover, low wages, low productivity, demanding work conditions or limited opportunities for further personal development (Galbraith and Bankhead 2012). These are the reasons why in many cases the work is part-time, casual and seasonal, which mainly attracts young people as they see it as a 'stop-gap' rather than a career choice, something temporary whilst looking for a better job, or people who see it as a start or reintroduction into the world of employment (Baum 2006, 2008, Duncan, Scott and Baum 2013). Some examples of these jobs are of ski instructors or holiday representatives.

Employees who are in contact with customers are highly important in the tourism sector as the quality of the service encounter will influence customers' level of satisfaction and also the organisational well-being (Chu, Baker and Murrmann 2012). Tourism is an industry where work blends with fun (Koikkalainen, Valkonen and Huilaja 2016). This means that some tourism employees are hired to 'co-construct the fundamental 'playfulness' that tourists expect (and are expected to feel) and experience while on holiday' (Pagliarin 2016, p.1). This is also the case of the tour operators and the holiday representatives who form the subject of this research. These employees look after the holidaymakers during their stay in a resort and need to make sure that they provide exemplary customer service as they are the public 'face' of tour operators and the first point of contact for holidaymakers in a new destination (Guerrier and Adib 2003, Raikkonen and Honkanen 2013).

Holiday representatives are the most engaged staff in the tourism industry in relation to service delivery as they are in constant contact with guests and always have to have to put on a 'mask' of emotions when interacting with them (Guerrier and Adib 2003). They need to show particular emotions and behaviours to their holidaymakers such as cheerfulness. In other words, their complex job role involves a high level of emotional labour (Wong and Wang 2009) which will be discussed in more detail in Section 2.7.

2.3 The importance of emotional labour

Service sector employees have to deliver a high quality of service to their customers through the display of particular emotions during the interactions and the suppression of others (Hülshager and Schewe 2011). Social interaction with customers is, therefore, a crucial element of service delivery because, as Hochschild (1983) argues, employees are paid to show particular emotions to their clients. Therefore, EL refers to employees' emotional performance in the workplace or managing emotions as part of their work role when interacting with customers (Diefendorff and Gosserand 2003, Hochschild 1983).

Emotional labour is a highly important concept which occurs in a wide range of industries (Humphrey, Ashforth and Diefendorff 2015). There are *customer service jobs* such as tour guides, hotel receptionists, salespeople, real estate

agents, hair stylists or bank tellers who need to be friendly to their customers. *Caring professions* such as nurses, doctors, social workers or funeral directors who need to be sympathetic and show concern, and *social control jobs* such as police, bouncers or bill collectors who need to show anger, irritation, or other aggressive emotions (Humphrey, Ashforth and Diefendorff 2015). These particular feelings which need to be publicly displayed are also called 'display rules' for customer interactions which employees need to meet as part of their work (Hochschild 1983, von Gilsa et al. 2013).

'Service employees working in the front lines act as boundary-spanners - they link the company and the public it serves' and for this reason they are expected to express positive feelings despite their true inner feelings (Grandey and Fisk 2004, p.1). They are in direct contact with the customers and represent their company and as Hochschild (1983) argues, their EL leads to numerous organisational benefits. Individuals have to manage their emotions as part of their role to achieve high levels of customer satisfaction and consequently organisational success (Grandey 2015). This is achieved through the display of positive emotions such as friendliness, cheerfulness or smiling, and suppression of negative emotions such as anger, irritability or sadness. Appropriate EL or the display of these positive emotions leads to customers' positive affect, then positive service evaluations, intention to return, positive corporate evaluations, and consequently organisational well-being (Grandey 2003, Kim 2008, Pugh 2001).

Emotional labour is in particular relevant to the service industry as it is the foundation of the service interactions and an inherent part of front-line employees' job where 'service with a smile' or 'customer is king' are universal mottos that employees have to keep in mind whenever they deal with their clients (Jung and Yoon 2014). For this reason, EL research has received much attention in the service sector which makes this an important area of study (Grandey, Diefendorff and Rupp 2013, Glomb and Tews 2004, Zapf 2002). Despite its key role in service delivery and extensive research there is still no consensus on the conceptualisation of EL (Grandey, Diefendorff and Rupp 2013). The following section addresses this matter by introducing some of the most influential studies which focused on and contributed to the conceptualisation of EL.

2.4 The conceptualisation of emotional labour

Most research in the EL field has focused on the conceptualisation of EL (Grandey 2000, Hochschild 1983, Morris and Feldman 1996), the measurement of EL (Brotheridge and Lee 2003, Chu and Murrmann 2006, Diefendorff, Croyle and Gosserand 2005, Glomb and Tews 2004), and the determinants and the outcomes, most focusing in the negative outcomes (Gursoy, Boylu and Avci 2011, Van Dijk, Smith and Cooper 2011, Zapf 2002).

However, there has always been a debate regarding the conceptualisation of EL (Brotheridge and Grandey 2002, Chu and Murrmann 2006). Academics have been trying to conceptualise EL in two main ways: job focused which is focusing on the presence of EL in a particular job and employee-focused which focuses on the employees' internal-emotion management process of emotions to meet work requirements (Brotheridge and Lee 2002, Glomb and Tews 2004, Morris and Feldman 1996). Despite the persistence of the conceptualisation in the EL research, all of the attempts have in common the assumption that EL involves emotion regulation and emotional expression consistent with the organisational display rules (Glomb and Tews 2004, Grandey 2000).

In the last three decades, approximately 10,000 articles have approached EL, with over half of these being published after 2006. This shows the fact that great attention has been given to this concept, and also highlights its importance in the workplace (Grandey, Diefendorff and Rupp 2013). Despite the large number of studies, there have been a few that deserve special attention as they have greatly influenced, and continue to influence, numerous other researches in this field which are presented in section 2.4.1. Section 2.4.7 provides further justification of the conceptualisation used for the purpose this study.

2.4.1 Hochschild (1983)

Arlie Russell Hochschild was the scholar who coined the term EL in her seminal work *'The Managed Heart: The Commercialisation of Feeling'* which was published in 1983. The work on EL is one of the main theoretical approaches to understanding emotions in the workplace and is still very relevant nowadays. She

argues that many jobs, especially the ones in the service sector, consist of strong rules regarding the display of emotions, where the employees need to have necessary skills for the emotional expression and management. These employees need to be skilled in projecting one's emotion while feeling another. Hochschild based her work on Ervin Goffman's (1959) research which stated that in order to adhere to social rules individuals always control their outward behaviour. Goffman (1959) argued that in all social interactions, in their everyday life, people try to create certain impressions and thus play certain roles comparing this behaviour with a theatrical performance. Individuals engage in impression management when they leave their backstage area, or their homes, and move to front stage area which is the public life and social interactions where they control their outward behaviours in order to adhere to the societal rules, and embody certain standards on how they should appear to others (Goffman 1959). In the backstage the behaviour is not suppressed and individuals can be themselves and not worry about the societal demands (Goffman 1959). He also highlighted that impression management also occurs in many service jobs where staff 'offer their clients a performance that is illuminated with dramatic expressions of cleanliness, modernity, competence, integrity, etc.' (p.16). However, Hochschild (1983, p. xviii) mentions in her book that 'something was missing' regarding Goffman's (1959) view, who only focused on the outward expression of feelings and did not explain how individuals act on feelings. Therefore, Hochschild (1983) decided to:

Explore the idea that emotion functions as a messenger from the self, an agent that gives us an instant report on the connection between what we are seeing and what we had expected to see, and tells us what we feel ready to do about it (p. xviii)

Therefore, based on Goffman's work (1959), Hochschild (1983) presents a dramaturgical perspective of EL comparing the service interaction with a play where the work setting is the stage, the employee is the actor and the customer is the audience. She adds that EL is the creation of feelings and the expression of emotions expected from work roles and that all these types of jobs have three main characteristics in common: (a) require face-to-face or voice-to-voice contact with the public (b) they require the worker to produce an emotional state in another person and (c) they allow the employer to have control over employees'

emotional activities through training and supervision (Hochschild 1983). She further commented that:

It is hard to use Goffman's focus to explain why companies train flight attendants in smiling or how emotional tone is supervised or what profit is ultimately tied to emotional labour (p. 10).

Thus, Hochschild (1983) further built her arguments on Marx's alienation theory to explain EL in organisations. Likewise Marx (1976), Hochschild (1983) smiles, mood and feelings and the interpersonal contact is the actual product which belongs in one way or another to the organisation rather than to the emotional labourers themselves. Marx (1975) pointed out that estranged labour ruins the mind of the labourer, which Hochschild (1983) identifies as emotional dissonance among flight attendants that can lead to burnout or even emotional deadness and argues that in the case of emotional labourers, the alienation is more profound. Also in line with Marxist view that the values, skills and the creativity of workers are overlooked by capitalists for the benefit of achieving greater economies of scale, Hochschild (1983) states that service jobs are organised and planned by the organisations who have control over how the employees behave and their emotional displays such as asking employees to hide negative emotions such as anger when dealing with rude customers. Drawing from her interviews and observations with flight attendants and bill collectors, she argues that EL typically leads to negative consequences for the individuals such as burnout, because of emotional dissonance which is a state of tension. Emotional dissonance, therefore occurs when the true feelings of an individual are not consistent with the emotions that they need to display. This leads to the need to act in order to meet the requirements through surface acting or deep acting, which are key aspects of one's work (Hochschild 1983). Therefore, Hochschild (1983) was the first researcher who identified that EL involves certain emotional requirements and effort. In addition, although Hochschild's (1983) work has changed the view on emotions in the workplace, she mainly focused on differentiating jobs which entail EL and those which do not and she did not explain in more detail the way in which individuals engage in EL and use surface or deep acting.

2.4.2 Rafaeli and Sutton (1987)

Rafaeli and Sutton (1987) have contributed to the EL literature in the service setting by expanding Hochschild's (1983) work. Rafaeli and Sutton's (1987) main contribution was the introduction of the concepts of emotional harmony, emotional dissonance and emotional deviance. They agree with Hochschild's (1983) definition of emotional dissonance which 'occurs when expressed emotions satisfy feeling rules, but clash with inner feelings' (Rafaeli and Sutton 1987, p.32). When there is this discrepancy between the feelings and the display rules, workers will display 'fake' emotions thinking that such acting should *not* be a part of the role. This is 'faking in bad faith' with these employees being more likely to be poor employees as they comply with the 'feeling rules' only when monitored or there is a person-role conflict. On the other hand, when workers believe these feelings should be a part of their job they are 'faking in good faith'.

Emotional harmony occurs when expressed feelings are congruent with experienced emotions which means that emotions are authentic because there is a good fit between the person and the job (Rafaeli and Sutton 1987). On the other hand, Rafaeli and Sutton (1987) explain that emotional deviance occurs when the behaviour does not match the feeling rules such as a flight attendant might deliberately be rude to a passenger although the feeling rule is 'service with a smile'. Emotional harmony, dissonance and deviance influence the behaviour in all work roles, but are specifically important to the ones that have strong external demands for emotional display such as flight attendants, bill collectors or Disney World employees (Rafaeli and Sutton, 1987).

Rafaeli and Sutton (1987) state that EL should be conceptualised as organisationally desired emotional displays regardless of whether they require effort or not on the employees' part where organisations manage employee emotional displays through formal or informal practices such as recruitment and selection or rewards and punishments. Rafaeli and Sutton's (1987) work also followed the research developed by Goffman (1959) highlighting that employees engage in particular display not only for their own interest, but also for the interest of others such as clients. These scholars also contradicted Hochschild's (1983) adamant position that EL can only be detrimental to workers, and added that the display of expected emotions can also bring positive outcomes such as financial

gains or feeling proud such as Hochschild's (1983) flight attendants when dealing with emergencies by hiding fear and showing calm faced to passengers.

2.4.3 Ashforth and Humphrey (1993)

Ashforth and Humphrey (1993) presented a contrasting perspective to Hochschild's (1983) dramaturgical perspective. They were more concerned with EL being a part of an observable behaviour than as the management of feelings. 'Emotional labour [is the] act of displaying socially desirable emotions during service transactions' (Ashforth and Humphrey 1993, p.89). Unlike Hochschild (1983) who refers to EL as the management of feelings, Ashforth and Humphrey (1993, p.90) argue that EL is 'conforming with a display rule'. In line with Hochschild's (1983) view, Ashforth and Humphrey (1993) state that the employees who perform EL are trying to portray a different image of themselves to customers. The way in which emotions are displayed has a major impact on customers' perceptions of the attractiveness of the inter-personal climate or the quality of the service transactions. Ashforth and Humphrey (1983, p.94) refer to a third emotion regulation strategy besides surface acting and deep acting called 'the expression of genuine emotion'. Unlike Hochschild (1983) who mentions that surface and deep acting must be performed in order for the compliance with the display rules to occur, Ashforth and Humphrey (1983) similar to Rafaeli and Sutton (1987) argue that Hochschild's (1983) view dismisses the possibility that an individual would genuinely feel and express the required emotions.

These authors also focussed on the outcomes of EL, arguing that it is actually the observable behaviour and not the internal emotions that influence the customers, hence the importance of this perspective. They also agreed with Hochschild's (1983) opinion that EL could undermine the individual's well-being and lead to self-alienation and emotional dissonance. EL can make service interactions more predictable which will facilitate task effectiveness and therefore job satisfaction where the acting strategy may help employees psychologically distance themselves from unpleasant situations (Ashforth and Humphrey 1993). Another key contribution of these authors was the fact that they also included the concept of identity and its relationship with the EL performance stating that 'the negative effects of emotional labour on the well-being of the service provider are

moderated by identification with the role (or the values and norms of the role) in question [...] identification may render emotional labour enjoyable and enhance well-being' (Ashforth and Humphrey 1993, p.107). These researchers are credited with linking the Rafaeli and Sutton's (1987) concepts of 'faking in good faith' and 'faking in bad faith' with Hochschild's (1983) concepts of deep acting and surface acting.

2.4.4 Morris and Feldman (1996)

Whilst Hochschild (1983) and Ashforth and Humphrey (1993) have presented EL as a part of one's work and that displays of emotions are required in all work situations, Morris and Feldman (1996, p.987) have defined EL as the 'effort, planning, and control needed to express organisationally desired emotions during interpersonal transactions' (p.987). Thus, these authors also include the argument that EL involves emotional effort and theorise EL by taking an interactionist approach stating that:

This perspective suggests that individuals make sense of emotions through their understanding of the social environment in which the emotions are experienced [and] this approach, then, suggests that emotion is at least partly socially constructed.

Similar to Hochschild (1983) and Ashforth and Humphrey (1993), these researchers highlight the importance of various individual and environmental characteristics which determine individuals' emotional management and identified various work-related factors such as job autonomy or supervisory monitoring. Overall, Morris and Feldman's (1996, p.988) definition of EL proposes that 'the expression of emotions, which was once privately determined, has now become a market-place commodity'. The emotional expression of service employees has become part of the service delivery, and is valuable for the organisational success.

The first objective of Morris and Feldman's (1996) study was to offer a more complex conceptualization of EL. Thus, their article conceptualised EL in four dimensions: frequency of emotional display, attentiveness to required display rules which consists of duration and intensity of the emotion display, variety of emotions expressed and finally emotional dissonance. However, later, Morris and

Feldman (1997) reduced the dimensions of EL to only three, specifically frequency, duration and emotional dissonance.

Another objective of their study was to examine the 'antecedents that are expected to have the greatest impact on each dimension [of EL previously discussed]' (p. 994). Predictors are factors which influence the way in which employees engage in EL or the emotion regulation strategies. They identified several organisational characteristics such as closeness of employee monitoring and explicitness of display rules, job characteristics including form of interaction and task routineness, and individual characteristics such as affectivity and gender, as predictors of EL. In addition to the conceptualisation of EL and the identification of determinants, Morris and Feldman's (1996) third objective of the article was to explore the consequences of performing EL on individual well-being. Some examples of consequences they identified are emotional exhaustion, job satisfaction, and job-related anxiety and self-esteem.

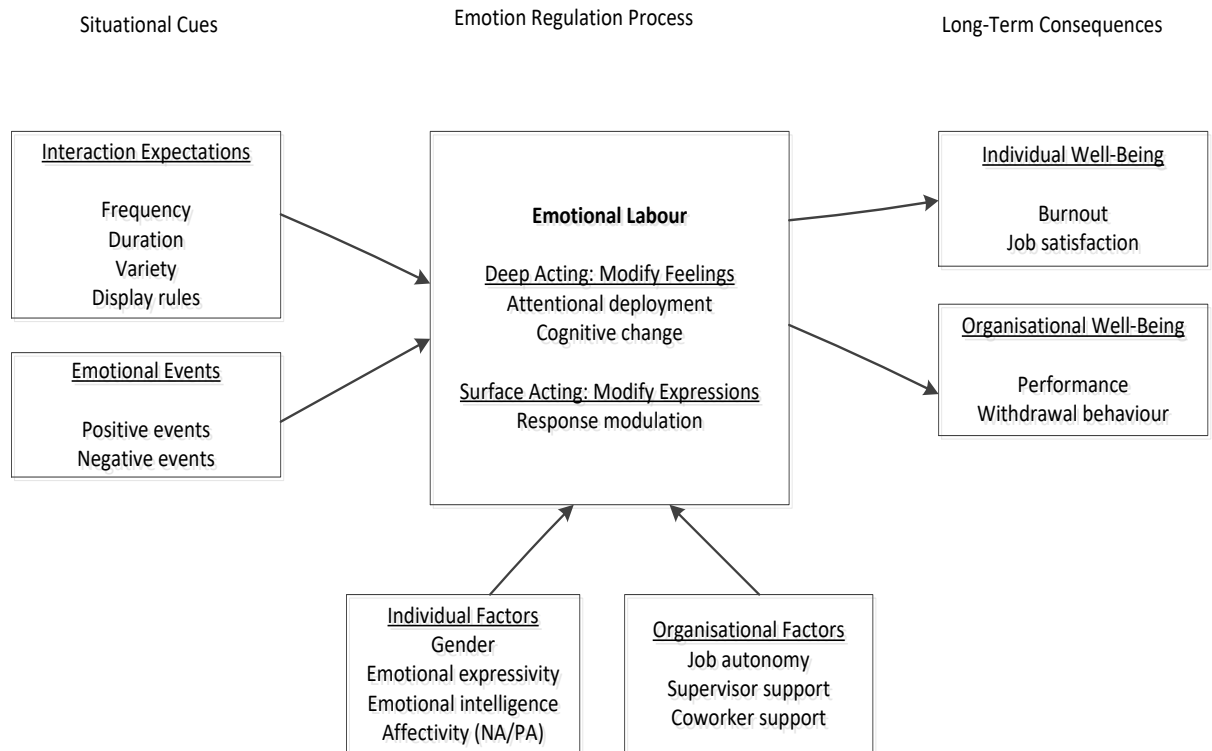
2.4.5 Grandey (2000)

Grandey (2000) brings together different theoretical views in her widely used framework of EL presented in Figure 1. She focused on an internal emotional regulation approach defining EL as 'the process of regulating both feelings and expressions for organisational goals' (p.97). Grandey (2000) argues that the EL dimensions identified by Morris and Feldman (1996) should be considered as predictors of EL and not EL itself as they increase the likelihood of engaging in surface acting and deep acting. Therefore, in line with Hochschild's (1983) view, Grandey (2000) states that surface and deep acting should be considered as conceptualising EL as an emotion regulation process and should be regarded as the true components of EL. She mentions in her work that focusing on EL as surface acting and deep acting has several benefits. Firstly, 'surface acting and deep acting are not inherently value laden' (Grandey 2000, p.97).

Therefore, she argues that although dissonance is a negative state, surface acting and deep acting are processes which can have both positive outcomes, such as better customer service, and negative outcomes such as employees' stress and health issues. Secondly, she argues that if there are different outcomes in relation to these two processes then it would be possible to make

suggestions for training. Thirdly, 'seeing emotional labour as surface and deep acting ties directly into an established theoretical model' (Grandey 2000, p.97).

Figure 1: Grandey's (2000) model for emotional labour



Source: Grandey (2000, p. 101)

She disputes that previous models do not explain why managing emotions relate to the proposed outcomes and further understanding is needed on this aspect. Thus, she mentions that EL as surface and deep acting has its roots in Gross's (1998, p.275) more developed emotion regulation theory who defined it as 'the processes by which individuals influence which emotions they have, when they have them and how they experience and express these emotions'. This is an input-output model where individuals respond with emotions to stimulations from a situation; the emotional response tendencies (behavioural, experiential and physiological) may then be modified which determines the final emotional expressions and responses (Gross 1998). Gross (1998) differentiated between *antecedent-focused emotion regulation* or altering the stimulus or perception of the stimulus, and *response-focused emotion regulation*, altering the response to the stimulus. The antecedent-focused emotion regulation occurs before the

emotion which has to be displayed is generated. This was further divided by Gross (1998) into four categories: situation selection, situational modification, attentional deployment and cognitive change. These are further explained in Appendix 7.

The *response-focused* strategy occurs after the emotion is generated. This is concomitant with *response modulation* or the attempt to change the emotional displays after the experience of an emotion. This in its turn comprised of two separate strategies: faking unfelt emotions, for example an employee who is neutral would smile in order to appear enthusiastic, or concealing felt emotions, for example an employee who is angry at a client may decide not to express any emotion in order to conceal the anger (Diefendorff, Richard and Yang 2008, Gross 1998, 2013). However, an individual might use both strategies concomitantly. For example, an employee might feel depressed and would conceal this from customers by faking a smile/ faking an unfelt emotion. Grandey (2000) argues that these two classifications correspond to deep acting (antecedent focused) and surface acting (response focused).

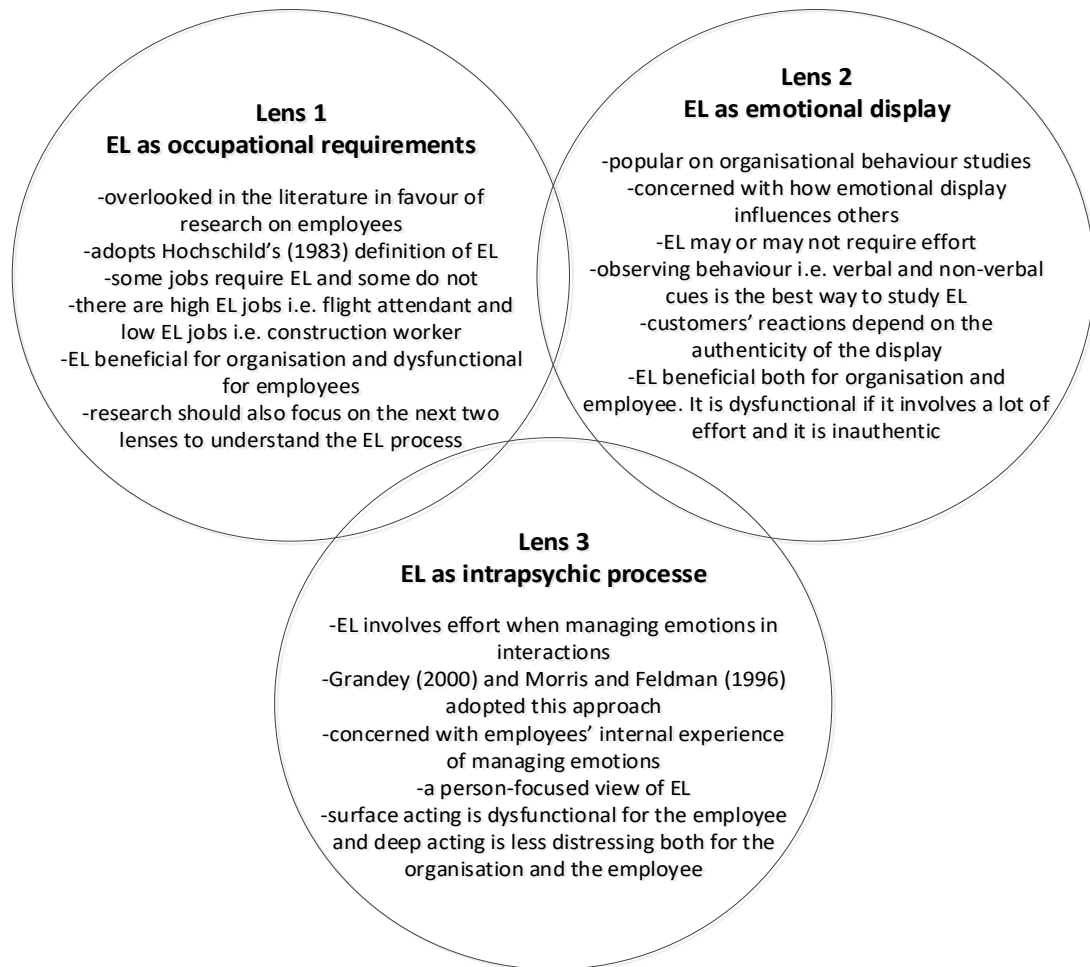
Grandey (2000) proposes a linear model of EL where various factors influence the emotion regulation process, or strategies, which consequently lead to different consequences or outcomes. As seen in Figure 1, the model presents several situational cues, such as customer interaction expectations and emotional events. However, Grandey (2000, p.105) also argued that 'there are many other variables that may impact customer service besides the employees' emotional labour process' and proposed that organisational and individual factors should also be taken into account as influences. Further, Grandey (2000) presents consequences of EL both on the individuals well-being such as employee burnout and job satisfaction, and organisations well-being such as employee performance and withdrawal behaviour. Therefore, as presented in Figure 1, Grandey (2000) offered an integrated model of EL from the works of Hochschild (1983), Ashforth and Humphrey (1993), Morris and Feldman (1996) and Gross (1998). She developed this model, by reorganising and integrating these authors' conceptualisations of EL. However, although this framework is more comprehensive, Grandey (2000) does not take into consideration Ashforth

and Humphrey's (1993) genuine acting strategy.

2.4.6 Grandey, Diefendorff and Rupp (2013)

The lack of consensus about a theoretical framework is due to the fact that EL is related to numerous areas such as psychology, sociology and organisational behaviour, the last two being closely linked to the growth of the service sector which is often the focus of EL research (Grandey, Diefendorff and Rupp 2013). The inconsistency of the research findings, which have indicated both positive and negative associations between EL and well-being, and attempts to conceptualise it are a result of the different views used to approach EL. Based on this, Grandey, Diefendorff and Rupp (2013) have proposed that in the field of EL there are three 'lenses': (a) EL as Occupational Requirements, (b) EL as Emotional Displays, and (c) EL as Intrapsychic Processes. All three have emerged from Hochschild's (1983) conceptualisation, but each has been used in different disciplines. 'EL as occupational requirements' has been a focus of sociology, the second has been the focus in organisational behaviour (OB) and the last in psychology. Grandey, Diefendorff and Rupp (2013, p.7) state that the 'disciplinary roots explain why the lenses are often used separately rather than in combination, and contribute to the blurring of the EL concept'. Therefore, researchers should take a more holistic approach in the research and conceptualisation of EL, and not focus only on one lens without considering the others as most of the research in this field has done to date (Bhave and Glomb 2013). In other words, '[a] view [on EL] using all three lenses [...] 'trifocals'- will sharpen the focus of emotional labour research in years to come' (Grandey, Diefendorff and Rupp 2013, p.21). A description of Grandey, Diefendorff and Rupp's (2013) lenses is presented in Figure 2.

Figure 2: The three lenses of EL



Source: Adapted from Grandey, Diefendorff and Rupp (2013)

2.4.7 Conceptualisation in the current study

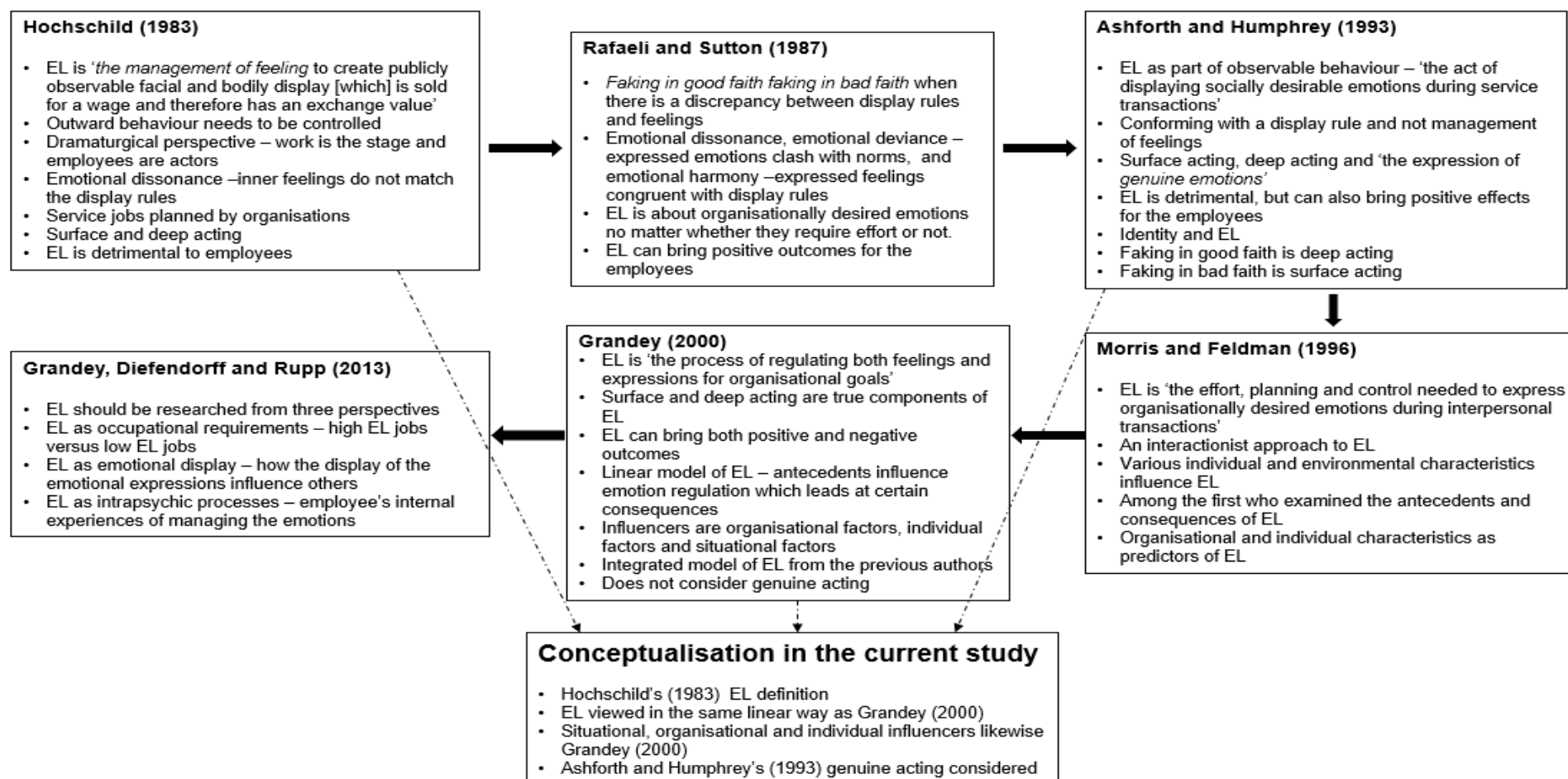
As Grandey, Diefendorff and Rupp (2013) argue, the conceptualisation of EL is still ongoing. As presented in sections 2.4.1 to 2.4.6, there has been extensive research on EL. The works presented above show how complex the process of conceptualising EL has been and how there are still opportunities for research to try and achieve consensus on the definition of this concept. Figure 3 shows the key points made in these sections in relation to EL and its conceptualisation.

This research will attempt to contribute to this conceptualisation. Hochschild's (1983) seminal work is still relevant to date as many scholars have and are still incorporating elements of her theory in their work. More specifically, Hochschild's (1983) definition of EL serves as a basis for numerous studies as shown in section 2.4 and it is adopted in this study as well. Just as the flight attendants of

her study, holiday representatives also need to manage their feelings to put across certain emotions to holidaymakers as part of their job such as friendliness or cheerfulness.

Grandey's (2000) integrated model shows how EL, which consists of surface and deep acting, is influenced by certain factors and leads to various consequences for the individuals and the organisations. As the aim of this research is to investigate the influences of EL of holiday representatives, Grandey's (2000) framework serves as an appropriate foundation for understanding these in the under-researched context of overseas representatives where EL is viewed in the same linear way. The same categorisation of influences is used in the current study. This research will expand on Grandey's (2000) non-exhaustive list of influences in the chosen context. A more detailed discussion of the influences of EL identified in the literature is presented in section 2.6. Also, consistent with Grandey (2000), this research acknowledges that holiday representatives' EL consists of surface acting and deep acting and will try to examine how these are influenced by certain factors. However, unlike Grandey (2000), the present study also takes into account Ashforth and Humphrey's (1993) genuine acting. The following section discusses EL strategies in more detail.

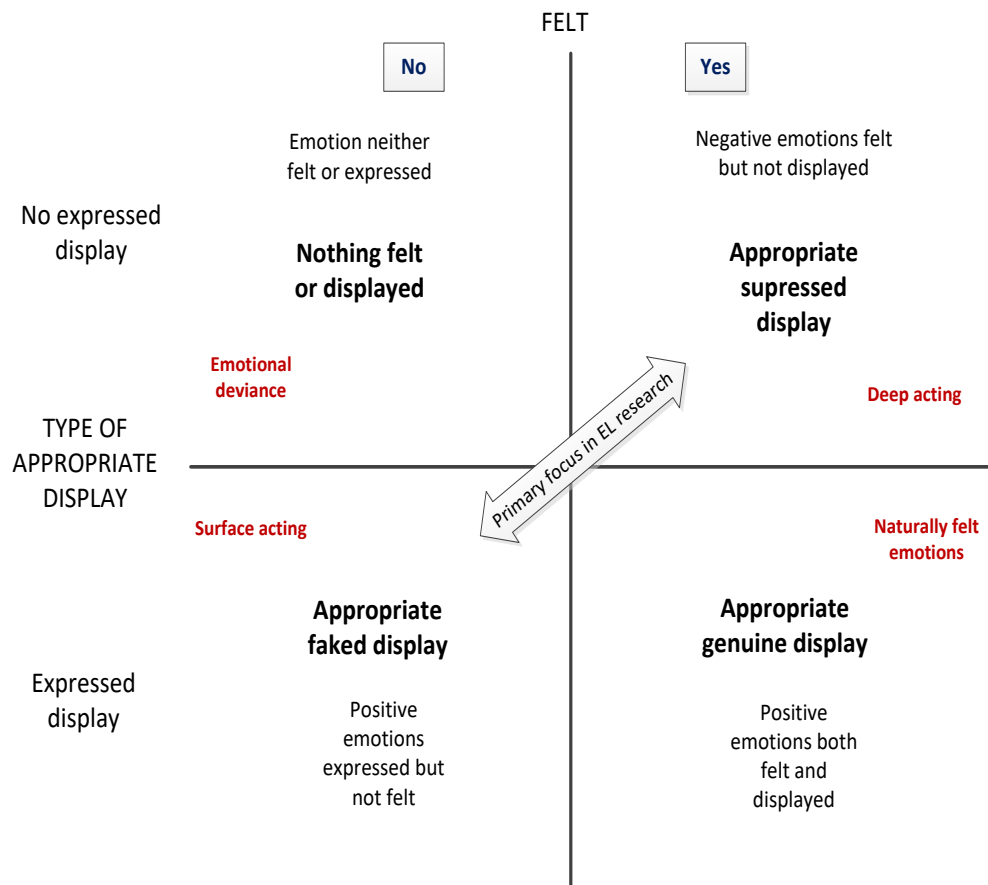
Figure 3: Seminal work on emotional labour



2.5 The performance of emotional labour

'A central focus of emotional labour research is on how individuals achieve the desired emotional displays' (Diefendorff, Croyle and Gosserand 2005, p.340). Most research has focused on the performance of EL and what strategies employees engage in to meet the organisationally desired emotions. Hochschild (1983) initially discussed three EL strategies: surface acting, deep acting, described as active deep acting, and passive deep acting. Passive deep acting occurs when one's emotions are consistent with the feeling rules. However, she mainly focused on the first two as she was of the opinion that the third one does not involve emotional effort. Ashforth and Humphrey (1993) continued their discussion on the strategies and suggested that passive deep acting is also an act of EL and it also involves effort. Figure 4 is a model developed by Glomb and Tews (2004) who propose that EL is the expression and non-expression of emotions. The first component classifies the display in an appropriate expression of emotion and an appropriate non-expression of emotion. The second component refers to whether the expression or non-expression is consistent with the internal state. As Figure 4 shows, these dimensions correspond with the EL strategies. Glomb and Tews (2004) also argue that it is possible that emotion is neither felt nor expressed as per display rules. They acknowledge that in this case 'not expressing an unfelt emotion in accordance with display rule is [still] conceptually labour' (p.5).

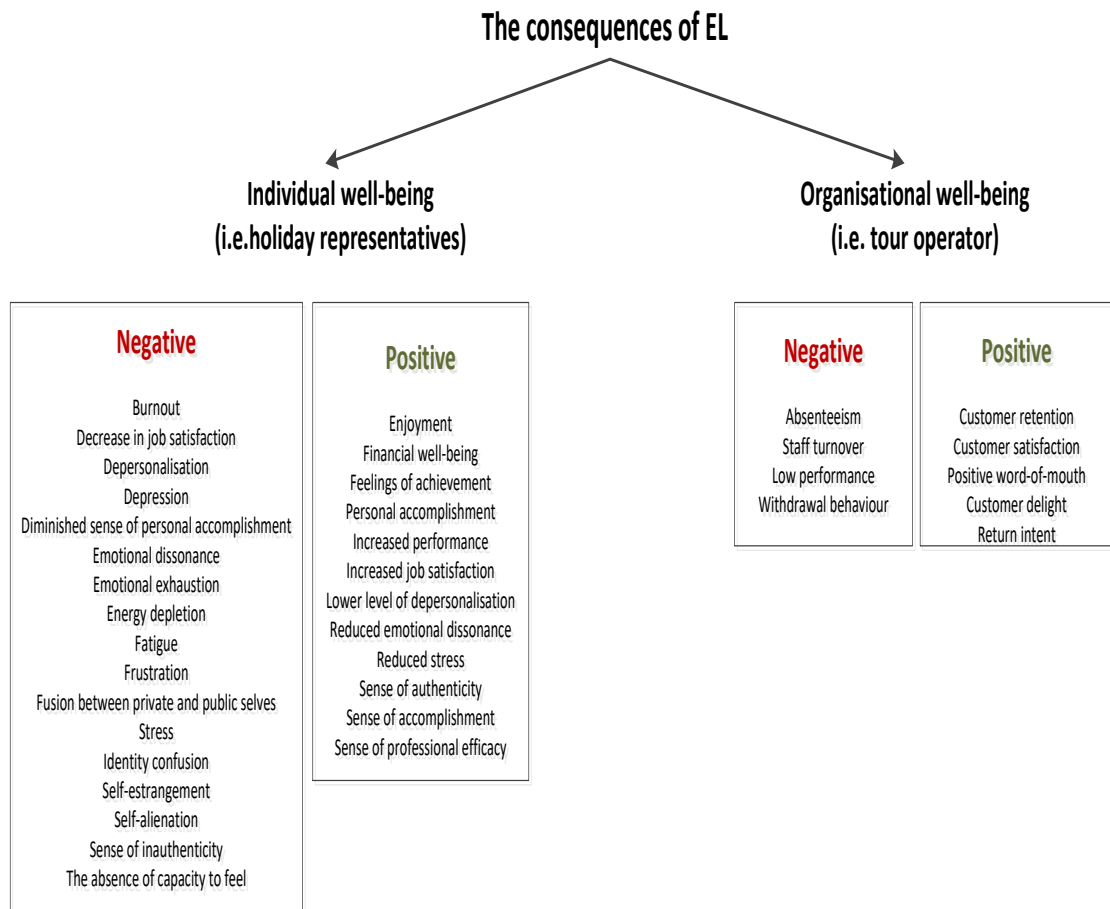
Figure 4: Types of emotion displays



Source: Adapted from Glomb and Tews (2004)

The occurrence of the EL strategies leads to various outcomes both for the organisation and the individual well-being (Dahling and Johnson 2013, Grandey and Gabriel 2015). Rafaeli and Sutton (1987) developed one of the first models for the predictors and the consequences of emotional expression which is how it is referred to in their work. In their initial framework, they present organisationally salient outcomes and individually salient outcomes such as financial well-being and mental and physical well-being. This was further supported and incorporated by Grandey (2000) in her model. Therefore, as shown in Figure 5, the consequences both for the organisation and the individual are positive and negative (Grandey 2000).

Figure 5: Consequences of emotional labour



Source: Adapted from Grandey (2000), Goodwin, Groth and Frenkel (2011), Hochschild (1983), Moon et al. (2013), Morris and Feldman (1996), Rafaeli and Sutton (1987), Shani et al. (2014), Zapf (2002)

Emotional labour has been presented as an aspect that is mostly a source of negative consequences such as stress, low job satisfaction or burnout (Shani et al. 2014). Regarding this dominant perspective on EL as being harmful to an individuals' well-being, most studies have researched job satisfaction and burnout as the main indicators (Grandey, Rupp and Brice 2015). The first scholar who maintained that expressing emotions which are not authentically felt could lead to ill-health, self-alienation and in the long term to excessive drinking, drug use, absenteeism, or headaches, was Hochschild (1983). At the same time, Ashforth and Humphrey (1993) mentioned that the *dysfunctions* of performing EL can be *immediate*, and *cumulative/long-term* such as self-alienation or emotive

dissonance. They also emphasised that the negative consequences are more likely to surface in the long-term (Ashforth and Humphrey 1993). Hochschild (1983) also argues that in the short-term EL can lead to a loss of emotional control, and also in the long-term have negative consequences such as excessive drinking, drug use, absenteeism, headaches. Scholars argue that these consequences are fundamentally related to the strategies that the employees adopt and more specifically the particular distinction between surface and deep acting which shows how EL leads to both positive and negative outcomes (Chau et al. 2009). The following sections present the EL strategies in more detail.

2.5.1 Surface acting

Surface acting refers to the act of displaying an emotion that is not felt by faking the unfelt emotions and suppressing the felt ones (Henning-Thurau et al. 2006). This strategy occurs when emotional dissonance between the inner feelings and outward expression is present (Ashforth and Humphrey 1993, Hochschild 1983). Therefore, an individual will change their outward behaviour, facial expressions, gestures and voice or tone in accordance with the required emotions without shaping their inner feelings (Chu, Baker and Murrmann 2012). Employees do not try to actually feel the emotions they try to portray but instead they put on fake smiles or a mask (Hochschild 1983). Typically, employees engage in surface acting during negative events with customers when they suppress their negative emotions and the positive display rules or emotions are shown (Cossette 2012). For example, a waiter who is irritated with a customer would smile in the hopes of getting a tip, but he/she would still remain irritated intrinsically. A hotel clerk would put on a sympathetic face but still feel angry inside because of an unreasonable customer (Grandey 2003). For this reason, Rafaeli and Sutton (1987, p.32) refer to surface acting as 'faking in bad faith' and explain that employees conform to the display rules only in order to keep their jobs and not to help the customer or the organisation. Or as Ozcelik (2013), argues this strategy occurs when employees' individual goals are not congruent with the organisational goals such as making customers happy or satisfying their needs.

Because surface acting involves expressing emotions which are not genuine it creates a sense of inauthenticity both from an employee and a customer

perspective (Hülshager and Schewe 2011). Firstly, as Hochschild (1983) argues, faking emotions leads to a sense of depersonalisation and self-alienation for the employees which happens because they feel like they are lying which makes them feel hypocritical and false. From a customer perspective, surface acting is associated with inauthentic emotional expressions which lead to lower customer satisfaction as their expectation of receiving a genuine service is not met (Grandey 2003). Consequently, this will have negative consequences on customer retention or loyalty (Grandey, Rupp and Brice 2015).

More effort is needed to meet the display rules when surface acting is used (Brotheridge and Lee 2002). Faking emotions requires more self-monitoring as employees need to be aware of the facial expressions, the words which they use and the tone of the voice during service interactions to ensure that their behaviour matches the display rules (Cote 2005, Humphrey, Ashforth and Diefendorff 2015). For this reason, most scholars including Hochschild (1983), argue that surface acting mainly has negative consequences for an employees' well-being which happens primarily because of the high level of psychological effort, discomfort or dissonance (Brotheridge and Lee 2003). Overall, surface acting is related to impaired well-being, stress, depression, turnover, burnout, over time a feeling of detachment from one's true feelings and from others and even physical illness (Brotheridge and Grandey 2002, Hülshager and Schewe 2011, Schaubroeck and Jones 2000). However, surface acting can also have beneficial impacts as the display of positive emotional expressions leads to customer satisfaction. For example, delivering 'service with a smile' will evoke reciprocal emotions in customers which could help employees solve conflicts more efficiently (Grandey, Diefendorff and Rupp 2013). Therefore, surface acting is useful during negative situations when an individual experiences such strong negative emotions that make them incapable of engaging in deep acting. This strategy would help them express the desired emotions and avoid emotional deviance or showing their anger to their customers (Diefendorff, Croyle and Gosserand 2005). Grandey's (2000) research, for example, showed that the customer representatives who faked a smile when they were yelled at by the customers experienced minimised negative consequences such as less anger.

2.5.2 Deep acting

Deep acting is related to controlling the internal thoughts and inner feelings in line with the display rules (Hochschild 1983). In contrast to surface acting, the feelings are changed from the 'inside out' (Shani et al. 2014, p.151). For example, the same hotel clerk or waiter who is dealing with a customer complaint would try to feel empathetic towards the customer's problem by putting himself/herself in customer's shoes. Therefore, the feelings are genuine and shown through empathy (Brotheridge and Lee 2003). Rafaeli and Sutton (1987) call this 'faking in good faith' because by doing so the employee shows goodwill towards the organisation and the customer. Individuals who engage in deep acting try to experience the actual emotions required by engaging in certain activities and thoughts which would bring about these emotions (Humphrey, Ashforth and Diefendorff 2015).

As mentioned in Section 2.4.5, unlike surface acting, there are various methods of performing deep acting which are presented in more detail in Appendix 7. In addition, Humphrey, Ashforth and Diefendorff (2015) explain that employees would engage in certain behaviours in order to stimulate the necessary emotions and suggest an example of sales associates at an upscale clothing store. They argue that these employees would engage in deep acting by listening to pleasant music whilst driving to work, chatting with colleagues when they arrive at work and get excited about the latest clothing line they have; doing these activities would evoke the right mood to chat with customers about the products they are selling. Humphrey, Ashforth and Diefendorff (2015) also add that these employees will engage in deep acting with customers by laughing and joking and acting as if they are shopping with friends.

Hochschild (1983, pp. 38-42) described two methods for deep acting: exhorting feelings and trained imagination. However, Grandey (2000) argues that the best way to explain this is by considering Gross's (1998) classification of emotion regulation (see Appendix 7). Situation selection and situational modification relate to changes made in the emotion-inducing situations (Grandey 2000, Gross 1998). Grandey (2000) argues that in the context of the service industry, an employee who would not be able to use these as for example leaving the shop floor to avoid a customer would have negative consequences on the service quality and

themselves. She then continues to mention that with 'the lack of options to choose or modify the situation, emotion regulation may take the form of the employee leaving the organisation' (p. 98). Therefore, attentional deployment and cognitive change are the ones which service employees can change in order to alter their emotional responses (Grandey 2000).

Moreover, in relation to authenticity, when employees engage in deep acting, authenticity is not compromised and therefore their well-being is not affected as it would be in the case of surface acting (Hülshager and Schewe 2011). At the same time, customers are more satisfied when they experience employees' deep acting (Humphrey, Ashforth and Diefendorff 2015). Customer satisfaction is improved as they perceive the employees as being intrinsically motivated to help them and cater to their needs (Grandey 2015). As Zapf (2002, p.244) states, 'deep acting may be required when surface acting appears too mechanical to satisfy customers' expectation of genuine interpersonal relationships'.

Overall, it has been recognised that deep acting is a 'good' strategy as it leads mostly to positive consequences for individuals' well-being such as personal accomplishment, job satisfaction, organisational commitment, increased performance and reduced emotional exhaustion (Brotheridge and Grandey 2002, Grandey 2003, Morris and Feldman 1996, Adams and Webster 2012, Kim 2008). Positive feedback from customers will make the employees feel intrinsically rewarded by their performance and will lead to a lower level of depersonalisation, but can also lead to financial rewards in the form of tips (Chu, Baker and Murrmann 2012, Grandey 2015). At the same time, organisations might benefit from deep acting in comparison as it reduces turnover among service employees (Chau et al. 2009).

The results on the effects of deep acting are mixed (Gabriel et al. 2016). For instance, Hochschild (1983) argues that these effects can also be harmful as it involves laborious effort. Deep acting requires more cognitive effort than surface acting (Wu and Hu 2013). One would change both outward behaviour and inner feelings by actively trying to bring up images, thoughts or memories that would evoke the necessary emotions (Ashforth and Humphrey 1993). Other scholars support Hochschild's (1983) view and state that it is also a form of deception linked with emotional exhaustion, stress, physical symptoms such as fatigue, and

long-term influences on one's well-being such as burnout (Goodwin, Groth and Frenkel 2011, Grandey 2003, Hülshager and Schewe 2011).

2.5.3 Naturally felt emotions

In addition, when one's affective state is congruent with the desired emotional display rules emotion regulation does not occur (Beal and Trougakos 2013). There are situations when an employee's natural emotions comply with the display rules of the organisation and therefore there is no need for them to work on their emotions (Ashforth and Humphrey 1993). Individuals experience emotional harmony (Rafaeli and Sutton 1987). For example, a nurse feels sympathetic when seeing an injured child and does not need to act, or a service employee might find it easier to smile with a customer when he/she is in a positive mood (Ashforth and Humphrey 1993, Humphrey, Rupp and Diefendorff 2015). This is called *passive deep acting*, *automatic emotion regulation*, *genuine display* or *emotional harmony* (Ashforth and Humphrey 1993, Hochschild 1983, Rafaeli and Sutton 1987).

However, research has given little attention to this strategy also referred to as *naturally felt emotions* although, researchers such as Diefendorff, Croyle and Gosserand (2005) found in their study that this can occur more often than surface and deep acting and therefore has an important role in expressing the expected emotions at work. They started to research naturally felt emotions as an individual strategy that involves the expression of genuine emotions therefore without needing to go through surface acting and deep acting. Some scholars such as Van Dijk, Smith and Cooper (2011) argue that naturally felt emotions should not be considered a strategy as it does not involve effort and does not require employees to manage their feelings or expressions during customer interactions and therefore, it is not acting. However, Morris and Feldman (1996) and Wong and Wang (2009) argue that even in situations when an individuals' felt emotions match the organisationally desired emotions, there is still a degree of effort involved. Although this is not as intense, individuals would still have to try and make sure that what is felt will be displayed according to the organisational norms (Ashforth and Humphrey 1993).

According to Zapf (2002), if naturally felt emotions occur on a regular basis, the employees will most likely experience positive consequences such as personal accomplishment unlike the emotional exhaustion and depersonalisation from surface acting and deep acting. Therefore, it is less emotionally taxing for the employees. Most researchers argue that naturally felt emotions have more positive outcomes than deep acting both for the organisations and individuals. It increases task performance, and service delivery is perceived as being very sincere, and it also leads to a higher level of job satisfaction and personal accomplishment (Cossette and Hess 2012, Glomb and Tews 2004, Zapf 2002). However, as Hülshager and Schewe (2011) argue, the consequences of this strategy in the work context are still poorly understood. There is a gap in the literature in relation to the understanding of this strategy and more research is needed (Humphrey, Ashforth and Diefendorff 2015). Therefore, the 'consideration of automatic regulation [or naturally felt emotions] in addition to surface and deep acting will advance our knowledge of the role of emotion regulation at work' (Hülshager and Schewe 2011, p.383). The present study will attempt to address this gap by examining naturally felt emotions in the context of holiday representatives.

2.5.4 Emotional deviance

Emotional deviance occurs when employees do not express the required emotion (Rafaeli and Sutton 1987). This can be intentional, when the employees do not agree with the organisational display rules, or unintentional, when the employee tries but is not able to show the desired emotions because of various reasons (Rafaeli and Sutton 1987, Rafaeli et al. 2012). If the employees try other strategies such as deep acting or surface acting and are not successful, then emotional deviance is the last possible strategy which they can use (von Gilsa et al. 2013). When employees deliberately ignore the display rules and express their real feeling this is known as 'negative consonance' (Mikolajczak, Menil and Luminet 2007, p. 1109). According to von Gilsa et al. (2013), emotional deviance usually occurs when the employees are faced with rude and impolite customers where they cannot fake or suppress their feelings. Grandey, Dickter and Sin (2004) refer to this as 'venting emotions'. For example, a call centre employee would deal with an aggressive caller and would eventually vent anger during the

call especially when they find the situation extremely stressful. Venting occurs when people face strong negative service interactions when they are more likely to express their anger or frustration (Grandey, Dickter and Sin 2004).

Most scholars argue that emotional deviance is linked with negative consequences. If emotional deviance occurs because an individual does not intend to portray a particular emotion or is not able to, he/she is likely to experience emotional exhaustion, depersonalisation, reduced personal accomplishment, reduced job satisfaction, poor mental health and involuntary turnover/ getting fired (Rafaeli and Sutton 1987, Zapf 2002). However, there are positive aspects of emotional deviance. Von Gilsa et al. (2013) for example, emphasise that this strategy can be used in this situation to prevent a conflict from escalating. It is the only way to resolve a dispute in a genuine manner when deep acting is not possible and not effective because the conflict arises suddenly and the negative emotions are too intense. Therefore, in these type of situations, faking emotions would offend customers as the service is not genuine, and thus emotional deviance is the right choice even if the display rules are not met, but problems are solved (von Gilsa et al. 2013).

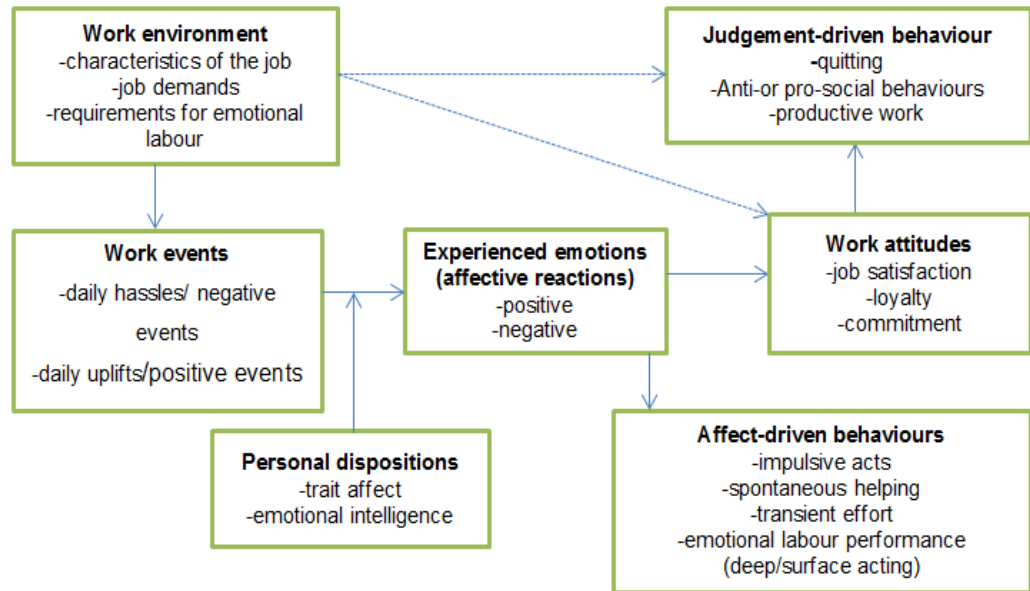
Section 2.5 presented surface acting, deep acting and naturally felt emotions as strategies of EL, but also introduced emotional deviance which occurs when the first three are not successful for the employees. In line with Grandey's (2000) model, the way in which individuals perform EL is influenced by certain factors. The influences of EL identified in the literature are discussed in more detail in the following section.

2.6 Influences of emotional labour

Emotional labour has its roots in the Affective Events Theory (AET) (Moon, Hur and Jun 2013). AET is of particular importance for EL as it helps researchers get a better insight into how the organisational environment influences the 'emotional climate and where that climate can lead' (Ashkanasy and Daus 2002, p. 78). Weiss and Cropanzano (1996) highlight the importance of events in the workplace which influence employees' affective reactions. As seen in Figure 6, people react emotionally to various workplace events which are determined by various

elements such as work features, and these affective/emotional reactions will affect attitudes and behaviours including how EL is performed.

Figure 6: Affective Events Theory

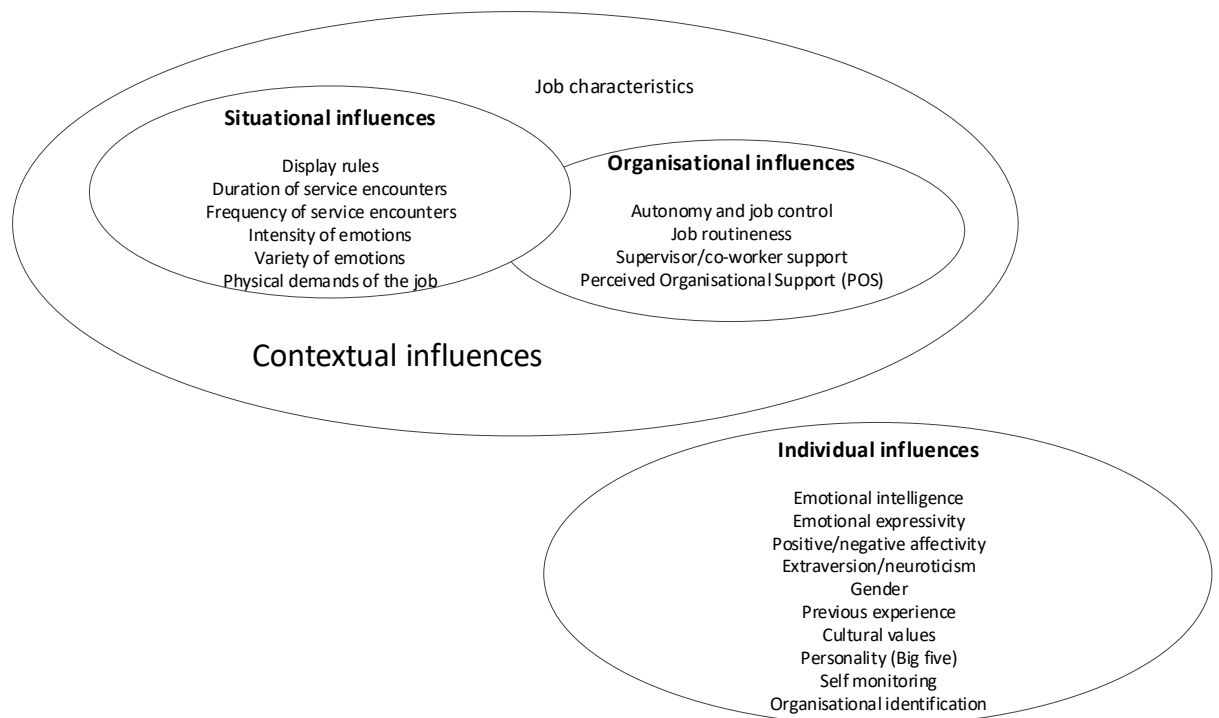


Source: Adapted from Ashkanasy and Daus (2002), Moon, Hur and Jun (2013), Weiss and Cropanzano (1996)

Therefore, EL is an affect-driven behaviour, where strategies are determined by various work environment factors or influences (Moon, Hur and Jun 2013). Researchers have identified numerous influences of EL which have been divided either into organisational related or individual related (Grandey 2000, Hochschild 1983, Morris and Feldman 1996). As seen in Figure 7, these can be organisational influences such as job autonomy or organisational support, situational influences, such as display rules or intensity of emotions, and individual influences, for instance, emotional intelligence, gender or personality. The organisational and situational together are known as contextual influences (Shani et al. 2014). Also, whilst Hochschild (1983) did not consider the contextual aspects concerning the understanding of EL, other scholars (Ashforth and Humphrey 1993, Grandey 2000, Morris and Feldman 1996) acknowledge that the work environment is an important element in understanding emotion regulation. The type of situation in which the employees might find themselves in will influence the EL strategy used. Also, understanding the determinants and how

they influence the performance of EL is crucial to decide what measures can be implemented in order to improve the negative outcomes for the individual (Hülsheger, Lang and Maier 2010).

Figure 7: Influences of emotional labour



Source: Adapted from Diefendorff, Croyle and Gosserand (2005), Brotheridge and Grandey (2002), Grandey (2000), Gursoy et al. (2011), Hochschild (1989), Kim (2008), Lam and Chen (2012), Moon et al. (2013), Morris and Feldman (1996), Rafaeli and Sutton (1987), Schaubroeck and Jones (2000), Shani et al. (2014)

As shown above, the literature has identified numerous factors which could be considered influences of EL. However, the researcher accepts that this list is not exhaustive, and others may exist. Grandey and Gabriel (2015) mention that there are opportunities for further research on this important area of EL. They argue that there is limited understanding of influences as those researched so far have been the individual traits and customer mistreatment or the negative workplace events. As, Grandey and Gabriel (2015, p.333) state:

Attention should be paid to positive events and moods at work and how they motivate—or reduce the need for—emotion regulation. Positive events, such as customers' prosocial behaviours toward employees, are rarely studied.

Humphrey, Ashforth and Diefendorff (2015) also highlight the importance of researching positive affective events and how organisations use these to motivate employees in routinised jobs. At the same time, Hülshager and Schewe (2011) call for more attention from research on the determinants of surface acting and deep acting and learning what makes individuals engage in these strategies. Lam and Chen (2012) argue that in the hospitality and tourism fields there is little research which considers the influences of EL. Therefore, this study aims to further the knowledge on the influences of EL and to narrow this gap in the literature by investigating a variety of factors including both positive and negative workplace events in the context of holiday representatives. The following sections will discuss, in turn, customer-related, organisational and individual influences of EL identified by the literature.

2.6.1 Customer-related influences

As shown in Figure 1, situational 'variables' are the ones which describe the nature of the interaction with the customers, where the 'situation acts as a cue from which emotions may result' (p. 102). In the service sector, the most significant variables are interaction with the customers and the organisational requirements for emotions which shows the chronic need to engage in emotion regulation (Grandey 2000). Grandey (2000) also identified a second group of situational cues, positive or negative emotional events, or 'acute' events that have an instant influence on an individual's emotions. Therefore, the situational influences are the ones specifically related to customer service and are of particular importance as they increase the likelihood that an employee may need to modify feelings or fake emotions during customer interactions (Diefendorff, Croyle and Gosserand 2005, Grandey 2000).

Initially, the customer interaction characteristics/ expectations such as frequency and duration of service interactions, the intensity and variety of emotions, routineness of task and the display rules, were presented as dimensions of EL by Morris and Feldman (1996). However, many authors have agreed that these represent important job characteristic influences of EL (Brotheridge and Lee 2003, Grandey 2000, Schaubroeck and Jones 2000). Frequency and duration of service interactions and intensity and variety of emotions which need to be

expressed during the service interactions have received much attention as influences of EL (Shani et al. 2014). The framework developed by Morris and Feldman (1996) has been the source of extensive research on the relationship between the customer contact variables and the EL strategies. Grandey (2000) in particular argues that the frequency and the duration are the situational influences that increase the likelihood of engaging in both surface acting and deep acting.

2.6.1.1 Frequency of interactions

The frequency of interactions refers to how often the employees are in contact with the customers (Diefendorff, Croyle and Gosserand 2005). Job roles are different depending on the frequency of customer interactions (Hochschild 1983). For example, a receptionist at a small firm might greet customers several times an hour, whereas a cashier at a supermarket might meet tens of customers an hour (Grandey 2000). Increased frequency entails a greater level of EL and workload as it involves more planning and anticipation (Morris and Feldman 1996). Thus, more frequent EL displays lead to emotional alienation, exhaustion and burnout, and lower job satisfaction (Gursoy, Boylu and Avci 2011).

The frequency influences the EL strategies that the employees engage in, but the findings are mixed. For example, Brotheridge and Grandey (2002) found that frequency of interactions positively influences surface acting and deep acting, but that there is a stronger relationship with surface acting which shows that as the frequency of customer interaction increases, the employees find it easier to fake their emotions. In line with this, Kruml and Geddes (2000) and Van Dijk and Kirk (2008) also showed that an employee would fake his/her emotions when more frequent display of emotions are present. On the other hand, Diefendorff, Croyle and Gosserand (2005) and Kim (2008) found that frequency does not influence surface acting, but only deep acting. At the same time, counter to their initial expectations Diefendorff, Croyle and Gosserand's (2005) findings showed, that frequency influences the expression of naturally felt emotions.

2.6.1.2 *Duration of interactions*

The duration of interactions refers to the amount of time which the employees spend with the customers (Morris and Feldman 1996). For example, a sales clerk in a convenience store would interact with their clients for about five minutes, whereas a salesperson in a clothing store might spend several hours with a customer (Grandey 2000). Also, an adventure tour leader interacts 24/7 with the clients and must develop a very close relationship with them which is different and more challenging than a restaurant chef who would only communicate with the customers perhaps once a week (Torland 2013). Thus, longer interactions with customers involve more effort and therefore more EL, mainly because they become less scripted and require more attention from the employees (Morris and Feldman 1996). Longer interactions lead to deep acting as it is harder for individuals to fake their emotions and are also a source of burnout for the employees (Diefendorff, Croyle and Gosserand 2005, Kim 2008). On the other hand, shorter and more frequent displays will influence more surface acting (Morris and Feldman 1996).

2.6.1.3 *Intensity of emotions which need to be expressed*

Emotional intensity 'refers to how strongly or with what magnitude an emotion is experienced or expressed' (Morris and Feldman 1996, p.990). Morris and Feldman (1996) argue that it is important to look at the differences in the emotions that various employees need to display to understand the variances in the effort used such as debt collectors who need to emphasise urgency and sales clerks who need to say thank you and smile. At the same time, the intensity is closely linked with the duration of service encounters. Short displays of telemarketers are more likely to be scripted, require less effort and the clients do not expect such intensity. Whereas longer ones are more likely to be unscripted, the display of emotions is more intense, and the customers expect this intensity (Morris and Feldman 1996). Happiness and anger, for example, are more intense emotions than job satisfaction, and therefore they require more effort (Morris and Feldman 1996). Thus, as Brotheridge and Grandey (2002) argue, the more intense the display, the lower the likelihood of engaging in surface acting and more likely to engage in deep acting.

2.6.1.4 Variety of emotions which need to be expressed

Variety is another aspect which is classed as an influence of EL (Grandey, 2000). Whilst some service employees are required to express particular emotions, such as supermarket cashiers who need to show friendliness, others must show a larger variety of emotions (Zapf 2002). For example, kindergarten teachers will be cheerful when dealing with a child who is crying. When a child is hurt the teacher might portray sympathy, and the next moment she might share happiness or pride when another child who achieves something, but also will act serious when trying to separate a fight between two kids (Zapf 2002). Similarly, Morris and Feldman (1996) also as an example talk about professors who have to show positive emotions to create enthusiasm, negative emotions to back discipline and neutrality to show professionalism and fairness. Thus, roles which involve a high variety of emotions experience a greater level of EL (Morris and Feldman, 1996).

2.6.1.5 Task routineness

Routineness was identified as an influence by Morris and Feldman (1996), and it refers to the extent to which customer interactions are repetitive, and it is associated with the frequency of customer interactions. Fast food workers are an example of a routine service role where customer service is quick and uniform. Jobs which require frequent and scripted interactions involve task routineness (Morris and Feldman, 1996). Hochschild (1983) argues that employees who must work fast are more likely to engage in surface acting with the customers because they experience emotional dissonance. In contrast, Zapf (2002) found routineness to be a significant predictor of deep acting and argued that having less routine leads to more attempts to experience the required emotions.

2.6.1.6 Negative customer interactions

As Grandey (2000) states, the more an employee encounters negative events in the workplace, the more EL is required. Negative emotions and events are more likely to lead to emotion regulation than positive emotions or situations. Also, a higher frequency of negative events will increase the likelihood to engage in emotion regulation (Grandey 2000). Service employees are the ones who deal

with demanding and challenging customers on a regular basis so would need to perform EL to meet customer expectations and the display rules of their organisations (Kim 2008).

The way in which emotional events have been studied concerning EL was by looking at the interaction with rude customers as these were more likely to lead to a discrepancy between the felt emotions and the display rules (Grandey, Rupp and Brice 2015). Customer mistreatment can elicit emotional dissonance and consequently the need to change the moods and the attitudes of employees to be consistent with the organisational display rules (Grandey and Gabriel 2015). Thus, service employees in particular show more emotional labour when faced with unfair and disrespectful customer treatment as they often feel angered, distressed or hurt (Rupp and Spencer 2006). Verbal abuse in particular, such as an employee being yelled at by a customer, sworn at, threatened or treated in a rude manner, is very common in a service delivery role (Grandey, Kern and Frone 2007).

According to Grandey, Dickter and Sin's (2004) research on call centre employees, individuals who interact with aggressive customers and feel threatened by them are more likely to engage in surface acting or emotional deviance, whereas the ones who feel less threatened in the same situation use more deep acting. Surface acting occurs as the employees experience high levels of stress which they hide either by faking the positive emotions, or by venting their anger at the customers. Consequently, individuals who engage in surface acting when receiving negative treatment from clients experience increased levels of emotional exhaustion and burnout (Zhan, Wang and Shi 2015). Most researchers argue that mistreatment from customers is related to surface acting (Grandey, Kern and Frone 2007, Hochschild 1983).

2.6.2 Organisational influences

In line with the AET the work environment includes numerous factors which shape the emotional events in the workplace (Weiss and Cropanzano 1996). Ashforth and Humphrey (1993) and Rafaeli and Sutton (1987) were among the first scholars who highlighted the importance of researching organisational

aspects/job characteristics and their role as influences of EL. Rafaeli and Sutton (1987) refer to 'the organisational context' and describe the organisational influences as formal and informal practices, or structural tools used by companies to influence their employees' behaviour and the adequate emotional expressions during interactions with customers. Some organisational factors that have been explored as influences of EL are job autonomy/job control, organisational support, recruitment and selection, rewards and punishments or supervisory and co-worker support (Grandey 2000, Morris and Feldman 1996, Rafaeli and Sutton 1987). These are discussed in turn below.

2.6.2.1 Job autonomy

Autonomy has been defined by Mullins and Christy (2016, p.252) as:

The extent to which a job provides freedom, independence and discretion in planning the work and determining how to undertake it.

Rhoades and Eisenberger (2002, p.700) refer to autonomy as 'employees' perceived control over how they carry out their job, including scheduling, work procedures, and task variety'. Also, Morris and Feldman (1996, p.999) mention that in the service sector context 'job autonomy specifically refers to the extent to which role occupants have the ability to adapt display rules to fit their own interpersonal styles'. Grandey (2004) states that in general, front-line service work is scripted and therefore, employees have little autonomy.

According to Gabriel et al. (2016), employees who are allowed to have autonomy concerning the emotional displays, for example by encouraging them to develop service relationships or allowing the employees to express naturally felt emotions increases their motivation to show appropriate emotions. Thus, for employees who have a greater job autonomy EL is less taxing as they experience less emotional dissonance and less stress (Johnson and Spector 2007). Wharton (1993) also concluded that EL roles with greater autonomy experience less adverse consequences than low autonomy jobs which reduces emotional exhaustion. At the same time, Morris and Feldman (1996) argue that less autonomy increases dissonance and thus the need to surface act while more

autonomy leads to less dissonance and individuals are more likely to show their genuine emotions.

Johnson and Spector (2007) found that employees who engage in deep acting and have little autonomy would experience a lower level of affective well-being and job satisfaction whereas, employees with high autonomy would experience high levels of affective well-being and increased job satisfaction. Regarding surface acting, Johnson and Spector's (2007) findings showed that employees with low autonomy experienced low levels of job satisfaction and well-being and increased emotional exhaustion. On the other hand, individuals with high autonomy experienced high levels of job satisfaction and increased affective well-being findings explained by the fact that in this situation, surface acting would influence individuals to view this as a challenge rather than a strain.

Therefore, empowering employees to deal with customer related problems on their own would lead to a more efficient settlement of customer complaints and increased customer and employee satisfaction (Johanson and Woods 2008). On the other hand, Morris and Feldman (1996) also suggest that employees who have this great level of autonomy are also more likely to violate the organisationally desired display rules when they experience emotional dissonance and are more likely to experience emotional deviance.

2.6.2.2 Training

In relation to EL, training is an important stage for the service sector employees as it is when the organisation would communicate the expected emotional expressions (Wijeratne et al. 2014). Hochschild's (1983) findings showed that flight attendants from Delta Airlines were informed during training that it is important to smile at customers no matter what the situation they are dealing with is, as in this way the airline will achieve organisational success through increased profits. 'Really work on your smiles', 'Your smile is your biggest asset - use it' or 'Relax and smile' were some of the phrases used by trainers at Delta Airlines (Hochschild 1983, p. 105). Providing training on how the emotional labourers need to manage their emotions is helpful concerning the adoption of deep acting as a strategy. By recalling training when interacting with a customer, an individual performs deep acting (Gabriel et al. 2016). Thus, training is considered an

important influence for EL which can improve personal well-being, improve mood and interpersonal outcomes (Grandey 2015, Torland 2013).

Many scholars argue that employees in the workplace should be discouraged from using surface acting and use more deep acting or naturally felt emotions as this will minimise the frequency of emotional exhaustion (Diefendorff and Richard 2003, Lv, Xu and Ji 2012). For example, Goodwin, Groth and Frenkel (2011) argue that training programmes should focus on differentiating between surface and deep acting through role playing in everyday customer interactions which would help the employees in avoiding the use of surface acting in such situations. The presence of emotion-management programmes would, therefore, help individuals know how to engage in EL, but also minimise the likelihood of negative emotions (Chu, Baker and Murrmann 2012). Table 1 presents a few considerations which organisations should implement to facilitate an effective and less strenuous delivery of EL. The technique which is frequently referred to by researchers and one they also consider as most efficient is 'role-playing'.

Table 1: Training considerations on emotional labour

Training on EL
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training should focus on emotion management and encourage deep or naturally felt emotions acting techniques • Training should emphasise the negative effects of surface acting • Trainers should use customer letters, phone calls, previous stories about customer interaction • Training should focus on role play in particular about negative customer interactions i.e. customer mistreatment, abuse, aggressiveness • Organisations should present the employees with a clear description of their clients • Standardised manual for performing EL • Training should emphasise behaviour i.e. smiles, gestures, greetings or display rule training • Training should enable employees to perceive customers' emotions (through role-playing) • Use scripts as a framework for behaviour such as how employees should be friendly, show empathy and be responsive to customers' needs • Provide skills training to enhance the guest service experience such as training on listening skills which would help employees understand customers' comments and requests, problem-solving training in particular in jobs which do not have scripts • Goal specific training programmes i.e. achieve a sale or address a customer complaint

Source: Adapted from Grandey, Rupp and Brice (2015), Hochschild (1983), Hur, Moon and Han (2015), Johanson and Woods (2008), Jung and Yoon (2014), Kruml and Geddes 2000, Liu et al. (2016), Sohn and Lee (2012), Wijeratne et al. (2014)

Moreover, Kruml and Geddes (2000) argue that training is particularly needed for individuals who have to deal with negative customer interactions, where knowledge on how to alter feelings is necessary to make sure that the right emotions are portrayed. Teaching employees various strategies for calming irate customers would make it easier to handle them and thus avoid negative consequences on their well-being such as negative moods (Hur, Moon and Han 2015).

Although training is highlighted by research as an important approach for effectively managing EL, in some sectors such as in hospitality, training on emotion management is not prevalent in particularly dealing with challenging situations (Shani et al. 2014). In such industries, most training is done on the job, in an informal, non-sequential manner which usually is linked to poor service delivery, job dissatisfaction and high turnover (Shani et al. 2014).

2.6.2.3 Supervisory and co-worker support

Experiencing positive, rewarding social relationships at work leads to positive job attitudes and is a defence for stress (Hobfoll 1989). Therefore, in line with the AET, supervisory and co-worker support, are environmental features which influence employees' emotions at work (Weiss and Cropanzano 1996). With respect to EL, Grandey (2000) also highlights the fact that working in a supportive environment is linked with job satisfaction, lower turnover intention and stress. Feeling positive in such a context because of the supportive environment means that less EL is needed as the employee would already feel happy because of the fulfilling interpersonal relationships (Grandey 2000).

Brotheridge and Grandey (2002) also, argue that positive relationships with supervisors or co-workers can substitute for the negative and unsatisfactory relationships which employees may have with their customers. For example, employees who experience a high level of burnout while at work might look for support from their colleagues by trying to find out how their peers deal with similar consequences, which helps minimise negative emotions. Also, venting at them about the difficult customer interactions and rude customers helps achieve the same outcome (Ward and McMurray 2016).

However, some employees do not make proper use of these relationships which can lead to withdrawal from the organisation and the job itself (Brotheridge and Grandey 2002). Therefore, when these rewarding relationships are not present in the work environment, an employee is more likely to experience emotional exhaustion and depersonalisation as a consequence of EL (Brotheridge and Grandey 2002).

The empirical findings of Shani et al. (2014) show that in the service sector, manager's attitudes towards employees influence their willingness and ability to adopt either of the EL strategies. Shani et al. (2014) also highlight that most findings on manager-employee relationships focused on the negative aspect of unsupportive managers. Most of their findings showed that these negative management approaches lead to employees' surface acting with the customers. For example, an individual could have a rude unsupportive manager who always gives negative reinforcement. This will influence him/her to provide minimal service to a customer and fake the smiles as he/she would feel it is not worth the effort (Shani et al. 2014).

Moreover, Lam and Chen (2012) also showed in their quantitative study on hotel managers, that the presence of supervisory support increases employees' perception of interactional justice, decreases the negative emotions and consequently leads to lower levels of surface acting and higher levels of deep acting. These authors argue that managers should provide support by treating them fairly and ethically, showing comfort and concern during stressful situations and overall demonstrating that they understand their needs as this will have a significant influence in shaping their deep acting (Lam and Chen 2012). However, although the supervisory and co-worker support have been researched as organisational influences of EL, research is still needed on the impact this support has on EL (Torland 2013).

The lack of emotional support from the managers means that the formal organisational system of debriefing the manager is ineffective and as a consequence, it can lead to employees' turnover. If an employee perceives that she/he cannot discuss the emotional pain and the support is not there, then the employee would leave the organisation (Ward and McMurray 2016).

2.6.2.4 Perceived organisational support

According to Weiss and Cropanzano (1996), organisational support is one of the proximal causes of affective reactions. Presented in the literature as Perceived Organisational Support (POS), this is a strong influence on employees' affective states. This enhances the affective commitment of the employees and how they behave in the workplace (Rhoades and Eisenberger, 2002).

Perceived organisational support refers to the level to which employees believe their employer cares about their well-being and values their contribution (Baran, Shanock and Miller 2012). This is the central construct of the Organisational Support Theory (OST) which maintains that employees develop POS in response to the socio-economic needs and organisation's readiness to reward increased efforts (Baran, Shanock and Miller 2012,). According to Eisenberger et al. (1986), there would be an agreement between the employee and the organisation regarding the degree of support he/she would expect from their employer in a different situation. For example, a company's reaction to an employee's potential illness, a mistake, increased performance, as well as a fair pay and the interest of the organisation in making an employee's job meaningful and enjoyable. At the same time, if an employee would perceive an increase in material or symbolic rewards, praise and approval, and favourable employment conditions such as pay or promotion, it will increase the perceived organisational support and consequently employees' performance and willingness to perform (Eisenberger et al. 1986).

According to Rhoades and Eisenberger (2002), the most important aspects which contribute to POS have been categorised as: fairness, supervisor support, and favourableness of rewards and job conditions. These are presented in Appendix 8. Firstly, fair treatment of the employees or procedural justice influences their perceptions of POS. Procedural justice refers to the fairness of processes which leads to organisations' decision outcomes. There are two aspects of procedural justice: structural determinants, concerned with formal rules and policies which influence employees, and social aspects, which refers to the quality of interpersonal treatment of employees by organisational representatives. Secondly, the supervisory support and how they are valued by their supervisors influences their perceptions of POS because the supervisors represent their

organisation. The last category refers to rewards and job conditions such as job security, role stressors, organisational size, training or autonomy. All these factors, presented in more detail in Appendix 8, influence employees' perceptions of how supportive their organisation is and values them, which consequently influences their behaviour in the workplace.

Research in the EL literature has presented POS as a strong predictor which influences employees' need to act and consequently their choice of the emotion regulation strategy (Moon, Hur and Jun 2013). If employees perceive that their needs are met, they will feel more valued and will be more likely to engage in naturally felt emotions with customers (Lv, Xu and Ji 2012). Besides, Moon, Hur and Jun's (2013) findings also showed that the more organisational support employees perceive from their employer, the higher the probability of engaging in deep acting because they would feel strongly obliged to reciprocate and show that they care about the organisation's well-being. Also, EL may be perceived as more stressful by employees who expect high levels of organisational support as they are more likely to expect more rewards in return for their EL performance, in comparison with workers with lower levels of organisational support (Won-Moo Hur et al. 2015). Wong and Wang (2009) give some examples of what companies should do to enhance emotional labourers' well-being. For example, they state that in the case of tour guides a tour operator can diminish the emotional burden of their employees/tour guides, by introducing a strong salary structure which would minimise these employees' reliance on tips and commissions. At the same time, a well-defined career path and job rotation will diminish the mental and physical demands of the job and will help retain the employees as it minimises burnout and job dissatisfaction (Wong and Wang 2009).

2.6.3 Individual influences

In addition, to the contextual factors, there are also many individual factors which had been identified as influences of EL (Sohn and Lee 2012). There is a variation regarding the consequences of EL because the individual characteristics and jobs that require emotional expression will not have the same effects on all the people (Chu, Baker and Murrmann 2012). This section introduces the role of

personality, experience, gender and age in the performance of EL. The idea that individuals have different reasons for engaging in EL is presented first.

2.6.3.1 Individual motives for engaging in EL

Research showed that these EL strategies are influenced by various individual reasons/motives. Von Gilsa et al. (2013) identified three main reasons/motivations for engaging in EL: (a) instrumental motives, when employees just want to meet the display rules of the organisation by obeying the display rules, (b) pleasure motives, when employees want to increase satisfaction and establish and maintain good personal relationships with the customers, and (c) prevention motives, when the employees want to prevent a situation, such as dealing with a difficult client, from escalating. These authors found that instrumental motives are related to surface acting, pleasure motives are related to deep acting and naturally felt emotions, and that prevention motives are related to all the strategies besides naturally felt emotions. Concerning the pleasure reasons, von Gilsa et al. (2013) argue that the negative relationship that was found between them and surface and deep acting shows that these strategies are not useful for the development of a healthy and a positive social relationship with the customers.

Allen et al. (2010) found in their study that employees with a high customer orientation, genuinely enjoy the customer interactions and want to nurture these. For this reason, they are more likely to engage in more authentic forms of emotion regulation such as deep acting. Maneotis, Grandey and Krauss's (2014) findings also support this argument that pro-socially motivated employees would use deep acting with their customers.

2.6.3.2 Personality

Numerous scholars agree on the fact that personality has a substantial effect on EL (Brotheridge and Grandey 2002, Hochschild 1983, Judge, Woolf and Hurst 2009, Kim 2008, Schaubroeck and Jones 2000, Sohn and Lee 2012). Scholars argue that personality is one of the reasons why it is not possible to precisely determine what the consequences of expressing a particular emotion for an

employee are (Rafaeli and Sutton 1987). However, the main academic argument is that introverts experience stronger negative emotions when performing EL (Bono and Vey 2010).

However, the focus was on the influences of extraversion and neuroticism on the strategies of surface acting and deep acting (Humphrey, Ashforth and Diefendorff 2015). According to Humphrey, Ashforth and Diefendorff (2015), employees that are high in extraversion are better suited for jobs that entail EL. Kim (2008) found in their study on hotel employees' EL that the employees that are high in extraversion are more likely to try and work on modifying their feelings to match the emotional requirements and engage in deep acting. On the other hand, employees who are high in neuroticism are more likely to fake their emotions and engage in surface acting. Thus, EL with either surface or deep acting has more positive effects on extroverts rather than introverts (Judge, Woolf and Hurst 2009).

Bono and Vey (2010) mention that employees who are asked to portray emotions which are congruent with their personality will be more efficient in their performance. Most service jobs focus on the display of positive emotions. For this reason, extroverts are more suitable for these particular roles as they will find it easier and are also more willing to engage in emotion regulation (Bono and Vey 2010). They have a better ability to use deep acting than the introverts and will experience less distress when asked to express enthusiasm. On the other hand, Sohn and Lee (2012) did not find any relationship between neuroticism and surface acting in their study arguing that even these employees can perform their job well especially when companies offer them education opportunities.

In addition, Gursoy, Boylu and Avci (2011) found that extroverted employees seem to have more control over their job conditions because they are friendly and therefore can discuss things with their supervisors and gain more say in their role. On the other hand, they did not find any relationship between job autonomy and neuroticism and claim that this may be the case because these individuals are too timid and passive to attempt to gain job autonomy.

Furthermore, scholars have highlighted the importance of the employee personality-job fit in relation to EL. For example, Ashforth and Humphrey (1993) discuss the Social Identity Theory (SIT) and mention that individuals who identify

with their organisational roles are capable of feeling more authentic when they are trying to conform to the organisational expectations including the display rules. In jobs which involve customer contact, if an individual has a strong identification with the role, he or she will experience strong positive consequences for their well-being from fulfilling the work expectations and meeting the display rules (Ashforth and Humphrey 1993). On the other hand, EL will have negative impacts on one's well-being where this role identification does not exist and can lead to loss of sense of the authentic self.

Therefore, employees will experience more emotional harmony and less emotional dissonance if there is a personality-job characteristics fit (Chu, Baker and Murrmann 2012). Hiring the right people with the right personality for the role, will therefore be beneficial both for the organisation, but also for the individual as they will experience lower levels of job stress (Johanson and Woods 2008). Lam and Chen (2012) also state that, high person-job fit will determine more deep acting and less surface acting and consequently lower burnout, turnover, higher levels of service quality and higher levels of job satisfaction. When there is a strong identification with the role, the instrumental motives meet the display rules and become pleasure reasons for the employee in question by wanting to increase customers' pleasure (von Gilsa et al. 2013).

2.6.3.3 Job experience

Experience and more specifically expertise in the role is an influence of EL (Torland 2011). Employees who are new to a role seem to experience EL more than experienced employees in the same position who are better prepared and more experienced in managing emotion regulation or controlling their emotions in line with the display rules (Sohn and Lee 2012). The individuals with less expertise in the role, experience a higher level of emotional dissonance as they require more effort when displaying the expected emotions (Hochschild 1983). Kruml and Geddes (2010) also found that employees experience more emotional effort when they do not have enough experience with the public. Other scholars such as Hochschild (1983) or Grandey (2003) state that these less experienced employees use surface acting during their customer interactions.

2.6.3.4 Gender

Many studies have identified gender as an important and influential determinant of EL (Kruml and Geddes 2000, Torland 2011). The seminal work of Hochschild (1983) argues that positive emotional requirements are more suitable and congruent with social norms for women. This means that women are better or more skilful in emotion management. Women engage in EL more than men (Morris and Feldman 1996, Schaubroeck and Jones 2000). Due to the societal expectations, and the fact that they participate in emotional performance both at work and at home they suppress their emotions more often and thus use surface acting more. As a consequence they thus experience a higher level of stress (Grandey 2000). This made Hochschild (1983, p.20) conclude that 'women are better at performing emotional labour'.

The literature on differences between male and female showed that indeed women are better at managing the emotions as they are more emotionally intelligent and more empathetic than men (Torland 2011). Women are therefore better at dealing with anger and aggression in their jobs (Hochschild 1983). According to, Kruml and Geddes (2000) emotional dissonance is more likely experienced by men. For this reason, Grandey (2000) argues that in service roles men need more training on how to manage emotions during customer interactions. However, the findings of Wong and Wang (2009) are not consistent with the above statements. In their exploratory study of tour leaders, a role that involves long interactions and high-level of customer contact, they did not find differences between men and women or any disparity between genders. Both of them 'can make things right in their own ways' (Wong and Wang 2009, p.6) and perform EL in their ways. Likewise, Sohn and Lee (2012) did not find gender to be a demographic variable or an influence of the EL of employees in the tourism industry.

Guerrier and Adib (2004) highlight the fact that in relation to the role of the holiday representatives, there are differences regarding the way in which men and women are doing their job and how they construct different roles for themselves although they are doing the same job. For example, while the male representatives are 'laddish' drinking and partying with guests, the female

representatives know about the importance they have as providers of EL and focus more on that, thus refraining from behaving in such ways.

2.6.3.5 Age

'With age, then, individuals report greater emotional control and lesser negative emotional experience' (Gross et al. 1997, p. 597). Older employees have greater control over their emotions and can be selective regarding enhancing positive emotions and reducing the intensity of the negative emotions that they might experience such as sadness, fear or anger. Gross et al. (1997) argue that older individuals are better at certain emotion regulation strategies, more specifically at matching their emotional efforts to external demands. When people age they seem to be increasingly using more effective means of antecedent-focused emotion regulation or deep acting. Older workers are therefore skilful in controlling and working on their feelings, creating new ones to display the appropriate ones (Kruml and Geddes 2000).

Older adults approach customer service different than younger adults where they can manage to be more efficient in more tensed interactions (Dahling and Johnson 2013). Dahling and Johnson's (2013) findings showed that mature employees are more motivated to feel more positive throughout the work day, and therefore they find it easier to express naturally felt emotions. These researchers, however, did not find any relationship between age and surface acting and the fact that the older adults use this strategy. For this reason, they argue that older adults are better in jobs which involve customer interactions and EL. These individuals will experience less adverse consequences because they are more likely to engage in deep acting which consequently reduces turnover, benefiting organisations at the same time.

Therefore, in line with AET, there can be numerous factors in the work environment which influence the way in which EL is performed by employees. Literature has identified many aspects which can be considered as influences of EL. These have been classified into customer-related influences, organisational influences, and individual influences, as per Grandey's (2000) model. The situational and organisational categories together are known as contextual

influences, term which will be used in the present study. Section 2.6, introduced various predictors of EL which have received much attention in research. However, there are many other factors which can be considered as influences and should be investigated further including in the tourism sector. The following section, discusses EL in the tourism industry and in the context of holiday representatives.

2.7 Emotional labour in tourism

Ever since EL has started to be researched, academics have acknowledged its importance for the service sector (Grandey and Gabriel 2015). In the service industry, there are common expectations from people on how the individuals who are involved in the service transactions should react (Hochschild 1983). For example, flight attendants are required to express friendliness or cheerfulness, nurses need to express empathy to patients, police officers have to show severity and anger when dealing with suspects, or bank employees have to display trustworthiness (Grandey 2003, Zapf 2002). These display rules have been classified as positive, negative or neutral in nature (Wharton and Erickson 1993). Smiling, showing friendliness or cheerfulness are positive emotions portrayed by customer service employees. Having an angry demeanour are negative emotions often shown by bill collectors or police, and neutrality portrayed by judges, therapists, referees or bureaucrats (Grandey 2000, Hochschild 1983, Rafaeli and Sutton 1987, Saxena 2016). Showing negative emotions is also known as antipathetic labour (Ward and McMurray 2016).

These rules are influenced by societal expectations from customers regarding how service should be provided, occupational expectations within a role about what is the appropriate display during customer interactions, and organisational norms and expectations within an organisation about the display of particular emotions in front of customers (Ashforth and Humphrey 1993). Display rules may be informal/implicit such as 'over the coffee machine', or formal/explicit, stated in organisations' training manuals, company slogans, and employee handbooks (Hochschild 1983). These can be indicated in the selection and training stages, or can also be learnt from other members of the organisation such as co-workers, by watching and observing more experienced employees (Grandey 2000). Their presence increases the likelihood of employees regulating their emotions by

using EL strategies, and thus researchers categorise them as important influences of EL (Gosserand and Diefendorff 2005, Kim 2008).

The service sector organisations, in particular, often have a rule that positive emotions should be displayed whereas negative ones should be suppressed to achieve organisational success (Diefendorff and Richard 2003, Rafaeli and Sutton 1987). As more and more industries are moving towards a service-dominant logic where service becomes a paramount component of the transactions, EL is becoming more important (Hülshager and Schewe 2011). Service organisations rely on front-line employees as the face of the company in delivering 'service with a smile' to influence positive customer outcomes (Gabriel et al. 2016). Therefore, 'the discipline of 'customer is always right' is pervasive in service roles' including the tourism industry (Wong and Wang 2009).

2.7.1 Research on emotional labour in tourism

Furthermore, in the tourism industry there is a high involvement of EL as organisations require their employees to constantly manage their emotions whilst at work (Hochschild 1983, Sohn and Lee 2012). As shown in Appendix 9, many studies researched EL in the hospitality context (Kim 2008, Shani et al. 2014), airline industry (Moon, Hur and Jun 2013) or amusement parks (Reyes and Matusitz 2012). The tourism industry overall, has received attention in relation to EL (Torland 2011, Van Dijk and Kirk 2008). The studies presented in Appendix 9 have contributed towards the understanding of EL in tourism and they show that EL is an important job requirement for many employees within the tourism industry. Although it is such an important aspect of service delivery, there is little theoretical discussion and research about EL in tourism (Gursoy, Boylu, Avci 2011, Van Dijk and Kirk 2008). There still seems to be no consensus about the way in which EL is performed or what its benefits and consequences are to the tourism and leisure industries (Carnicelli-Filho 2011, Sohn and Lee 2012, Van Dijk, Smith and Cooper 2011).

The tourism industry is of particular interest concerning research on EL as it includes jobs where the demands of emotional expressions are high (Van Dijk, Smith and Cooper 2011). They are required to portray positive emotions and

suppress negative emotions. Adventure tour guides are expected to suppress fear and anxiety and show enjoyment, care or concern (Sharpe 2005, Wong and Wang 2009). However, the tour operating sector is a new field of interest where the concept of EL is still poorly understood (Houge Mackenzie and Kerr 2013). Tour operating is an industry where businesses find it hard to create product differentiation as they often offer similar products (Chiang and Chen 2014). Thus, the service capability of tour leaders/front-line staff is essential for achieving a competitive advantage. Their performance during service interactions will influence the level of satisfaction of tourists (Holloway and Humphreys 2016).

Although there is research which focuses on tour guides (Chiang and Chen 2014, Sharpe 2005, Torland 2011, Wijeratne et al. 2014, Wong and Wang 2009) studies specifically on holiday representatives are scarce. As seen in Appendix 9, Guerrier and Adib (2003) and Constanti and Gibbs (2005) are authors who focused on this particular type of tourism worker. Guerrier and Adib (2003) researched the holiday representative of a small British budget tour operator offering package holidays to couples and families in Mallorca, Spain. Likewise, Wong and Wang (2009) found that this job entails delivering fun in an environment where the boundaries between leisure and work are blurred, but it also involves dealing with customers' excesses which they manage through EL. Constanti and Gibbs (2009) conducted interviews with holiday representatives employed for a British tour operator operating in Cyprus. They concluded that the job of a holiday 'rep' involves a high degree of EL which is necessary for the delivery of exemplary customer service.

The present study will address this gap in the literature by expanding the understanding of EL in the context of holiday representatives. As Wharton (2013, p.300) argues the research context is also very important in expanding the knowledge of EL:

Greater attention to context – in all its specificity and across all of its dimensions – would enhance our ability to understand the varieties of emotional labor, their expression, and consequences.

Therefore, focusing on the context of holiday representatives will also contribute to the enhancement of EL theory. The following section provides an overview of the EL of these employees.

2.7.1.1 *The emotional labour of holiday representatives*

The role of the overseas holiday representatives has been an under-researched area despite the fact that their work involves lots of customer interaction and a high involvement of EL (Constanti and Gibbs 2005). As a result of numerous TV documentaries, this role has been regarded as glamorous, but it is much more than that. EL of holiday representatives is unique because the boundaries between work and leisure are blurred and 'as such challenges traditional notions of the nature of the work' (Guerrier and Adib 2004, p.335). Leisure activities and delivering fun such as going out with their customers, partying, walking around the resorts, engaging in daytime or evening entertainment activities or enacting leisure such as eating in hotels' restaurants are integral parts of their job (Haynes 2009). On the other hand, it is not only leisure which spills over into work but work also spills over into leisure time which leads to this blurring as they are spending their leisure time in places which were recommended to their customers meaning that they are at work even when they are just relaxing in the resort out of their uniform (Guerrier and Adib 2003).

These employees are 'ambassadors' (Holloway 1981), 'intermediaries' between the holidaymakers and the resort (Ryan and Dewar 1995) or the 'psychological link' between home and the culture of the new destination (Bastakis, Buhalis and Butler 2004). They are 'coordinators' of holidaymakers' whole experience (Zhang and Chow 2004) and 'entertainers' (Guerrier and Adib 2003). The work-leisure nexus means that their engagement in leisure activities with the holidaymakers and the entertainment that they provide is part of their job, where they also must suppress their negative feelings to make sure everybody is having fun (Guerrier and Adib, 2004). Personality, is therefore, important for this role where the tour operators expect representatives to be enthusiastic and positive persons with good communication skills and a developed sense of humour, determined, talkative, 'thick-skinned' and patient (Constanti and Gibbs 2005, Guerrier and Adib 2003).

Guerrier and Adib (2003, p.1400) refer to the holiday representatives as leisure workers and thus are 'engaged in the business of having fun'. It is a job where employees have to mix leisure and work which involves the display of a large variety of emotions. The holiday representatives always have to look lively, happy and full of fun in order to provide the best service (Adib and Guerrier 2001).

Regardless of the difficult situations that they might encounter, such as dealing with complaints, or with unreasonable, difficult, drunk guests, they should also keep calm and be professional, cover up anger or distress and act in a friendly manner in order to help them control the situations. (Guerrier and Adib 2003, 2004, Dale 2010). Therefore, the demanding role of the holiday representatives does not only involve providing EL to the customers but also to facilitate and control the holiday experience especially in the case of all-inclusive package holidays (Adib and Guerrier 2001). They are always on the job which means that they have a high level of EL, similar to the adventure tour leaders researched by Sharpe (2005). This aspect is different than hotel workers, or flight attendants whose customer interactions are transient, and thus EL occurs less (Hochschild 1983, Kim 2008).

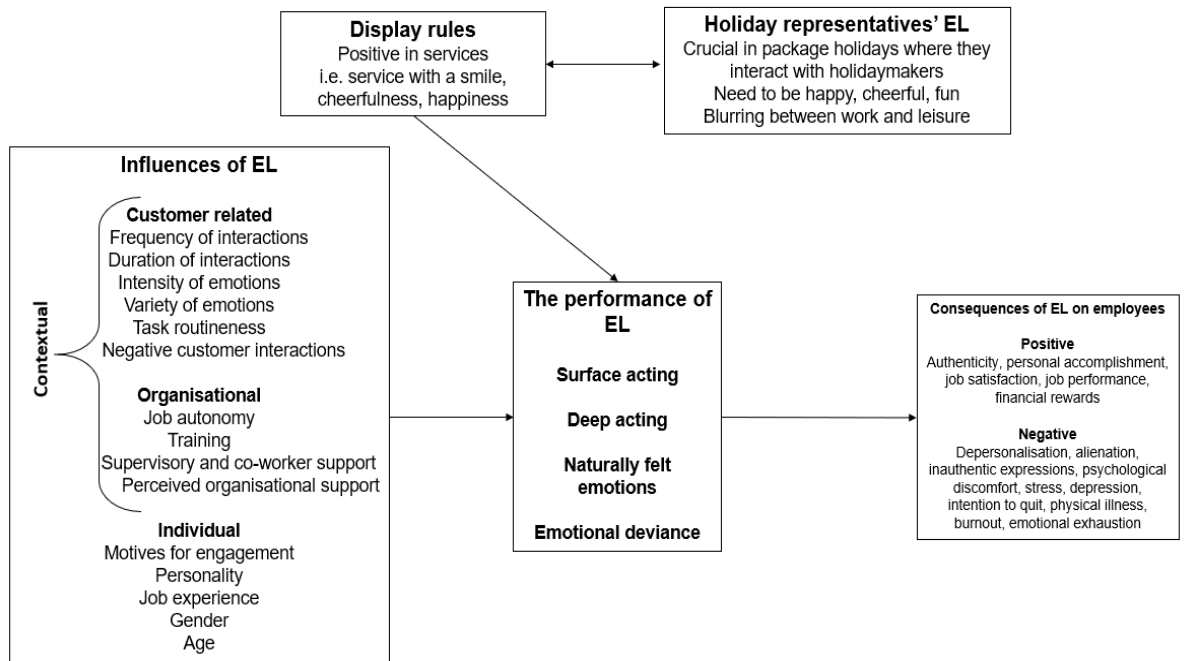
Moreover, these employees are not only required to perform EL, but they also have to deliver 'aesthetic labour' which means that they need to look appropriate while working to portray the right and correct image of the company that they represent (Guerrier and Adib 2003). This is related to the way they need to dress but also age and attractiveness. Likewise, Wong and Wang (2009, p.9) also mention that the tour guides in their study also perform aesthetic labour where they felt that physical attractiveness was the most important factor/requirement:

In the absence of hardware in the physical environment conveying the company image, it is the tour leader who must embody the desired iconography for the company.

2.8 The emotional labour process

Figure 9 represents a summary of key points made in the literature review in relation to the process of EL. As shown, EL implies different display rules required by organisations rules. In the service sector, including the role of the holiday representative, employees need to portray positive display rules such as cheerfulness. These rules are met by individuals through different strategies which as seen in Figure 9 in their turn lead to certain consequences for the individuals, either positive or negative. However, they are determined by various influences which have been divided into contextual and individual and which are the focus of this study.

Figure 9: The emotional labour process



2.9 Conclusion

This chapter has explored the literature on EL by firstly looking at the seminal work in this field. It has been emphasised that there is no consensus as to how EL is defined which has been presented in section 2.4. As shown in Figure 9, the chapter discussed the EL strategies highlighting that more research is needed on genuine acting. The influences of EL which have been divided into contextual and individual were covered in section 2.6. The chapter also discussed EL in tourism and presented how more investigation is needed into the context of the holiday representatives who although have an interesting job where leisure and work are blurred, have not been researched in detail in relation to EL. The following chapter will present the methodology undertaken for this thesis.

Chapter 3 Methodology

3.1 Introduction

The aim of this thesis is to provide an in-depth understanding of the influences of EL in the under-researched context of overseas holiday representatives. The focus of this study is British holiday representatives, specifically, holiday representatives who have been employed overseas by UK-based tour operators. Chapter 2 discussed how important the British overseas package holiday market has been for British holidaymakers. Although there have been occasional declines due to fluctuations in the economy, package holidays have managed to remain an important aspect of holidaying, and they are predicted to grow in the future. The overseas representatives are an important part of the product. They are the employees who have to take care of the tour operators' customers at the destination. Their role has been continuously changing, but the tour operators still regard them as crucial aspects of service delivery and will continue to do so in the future. Further, Chapter 2 introduced theory on EL and showed the ways in which employees perform EL can be influenced by a large variety of factors. The overseas representatives have one of the highest levels of EL as they are in constant contact with their customers and their job is unique because of the leisure-work nexus. Despite this and the importance of their role, there is limited research on their EL and even more so on the influences of EL which makes them worthy of study. This study is therefore trying to investigate the influences of emotional labour of holiday representatives employed by British tour operators. As a reminder, the objectives are as follows:

1. To analyse the importance for performing emotional labour in the tour operating industry;
2. To discuss the nature of emotional labour and assess how it is performed by the holiday representatives;
3. To examine the contextual influences of emotional labour of holiday representatives;
4. To examine the individual influences of emotional labour of holiday representatives;

5. To develop a theoretical framework for the influences of emotional labour in the tour operating context.

This chapter provides justification for the procedures and the methods used in this thesis to meet the objectives presented above. Firstly, it will discuss the underlying philosophical commitment. Next, a detailed discussion of the research design will be introduced and will show how adopting a qualitative approach for this thesis is a contribution to methodology in relation to EL theory. Further, the data collection method, the sampling techniques and the data analysis using MAXQDA are presented. In the final part, the chapter will discuss the evaluation criteria for assessing the quality of the research design and the ethical considerations of anonymity, confidentiality and data storage applicable to this study.

3.2 Philosophical assumption

As presented above the aim of this research was *to investigate the influences of EL of holiday representatives*. The researcher should take into consideration and examine how these holiday representatives 'make sense of the world around them' (Bryman and Bell 2011, p.20). Investigating their experiences as holiday representatives would give the researcher a more in-depth understanding of how EL occurs in this role and what emotions are involved for these employees. Therefore, a phenomenological research was considered appropriate for this thesis as its purpose is to illuminate the specific and to identify phenomena through how they are perceived by the actors in a situation (Lester 1999). More specifically, it is concerned with the study of lived experience from the participants' perspectives as this is what helps shape reality (Malterud 2016). Phenomenological studies are powerful in understanding subjective experiences and gaining insights into peoples' motivations and actions through 'thick descriptions' of their perspectives and experiences in their natural settings (Gray 2014). Phenomenological research focuses on inductive collection of large amounts of data and 'it is more likely to pick up factors not part of the original research focus' (Gray 2014, p.30). Creswell (2007, p.57) states that:

A phenomenological study describes the meaning for several individuals of their lived experiences of a concept or a phenomenon.

Phenomenologists focus on describing what all participants have in common as they experience a phenomenon [...] a phenomenon is an object of human experience [...] The inquirer then collects data from persons who have experienced the phenomenon, and develops a composite description of the essence of the experience for all of the individuals [...] This description consists of "what" they experienced and "how" they experienced it.

The focus of enquiry of this research/the phenomenon under investigation is EL and the researcher aims at getting a better understanding of this from the perspective of the holiday representatives. The investigator will obtain information about their lived experiences, or their experiences when employed in this role to understand *how* they engage in EL whilst at work and identify *what* are the most influential factors. Participants' recollections of their experiences will help the researcher gain meaning of EL in the context of holiday representatives (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill 2016). Therefore, this approach was deemed suitable for the study of this under-researched context and to identify the motivations of the holiday representatives for engaging in EL and the adoption of different EL strategies.

Creswell (2007, p.15) states that:

The research design in qualitative research begins with philosophical assumptions that the inquirers make in deciding to undertake a qualitative research.

These philosophical assumptions are referred to as 'paradigms' which influence the data collection methods adopted as well as the interpretation of the data (Blaikie 2007). A research paradigm has three fundamental elements ontology, epistemology and methodology. Ontology refers to the nature of 'reality' that is assumed by the researcher and epistemology explores the nature of the relationship between the researcher and what is being studied, and methodology is concerned with how the researcher goes about generating knowledge (Bryman and Bell 2011, Easterby-Smith, Thorpe and Jackson 2008, Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill 2012).

Ontology is concerned with what there is to know and a key question is whether or not there is a social reality that exists independently of human conceptions or

closely related to this (Ormston et al. 2014). For this reason, social science has been shaped by two ontological positions *objectivism* and *constructionism* (Bryman and Bell 2011). *Objectivism* supports the idea that there is an external reality which exists independently from people's belief about it; that social phenomena and their meanings exist independent of social actors (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill 2012). The key idea is that the properties of the social world can be measured through objective measures and the adoption of standardised procedures (Bryman and Bell 2011).

On the other hand, *constructionism*, which is also referred to as *constructivism*, supports the idea that no external reality exists independent from individuals' understandings or beliefs (Ormston et al. 2014). Social phenomena are produced through social interactions and are continuously revised by social actors (Bryman and Bell 2011, Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill 2012). Therefore, social scientists should not gather facts or measure patterns, but the focus should be on what people are thinking and feeling, and should attempt to explain and understand the experiences of people rather than searching for external causes or laws to explain behaviour (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe and Jackson 2008).

This thesis looks at investigating EL in the context of holiday representatives. It will examine the influences, and evaluate how these influence the performance of EL. Therefore, in order to meet the aim and the objectives of this study the researcher has to understand the context of EL from holiday representatives' perspective. The researcher believes that their feelings, opinions and beliefs in relation to the different aspects of their job and different social interactions could not exist separately from these social actors. Likewise, Morris and Feldman (1996, p.988) state that 'individuals make sense of emotions through their understanding of the social environment in which the emotions are experienced'. More specifically, the reality of EL is constructed from the holiday representatives' perceptions, attitudes, interactions and interpretations. The individuals create subjective meanings towards certain aspects because they try to understand the social world which they live in, but these meanings are multiple and varied, which would prompt the researcher to investigate the complexity of these rather than narrowing them down in several categories (Creswell 2007). The focus is on individuals, and researchers should explain and understand why people have

different experiences (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe and Jackson 2008). Therefore, the researcher is trying to look at the holiday representatives' subjective meanings about their work environment, emotions experienced and the way in which they manage their emotions in the workplace. When collecting data, the questions that researchers ask should be broad and general 'so that the participants can construct the meaning of a situation, a meaning typically forged in discussions or interactions with other persons' (Creswell 2007, p. 21). The researcher disregards the objectivist position that emotions, beliefs or attitudes can be measured. This position ignores 'the subjective dimensions of human action' (Gill and Johnson 2010, p.190) and thus would not help obtain insight into the complex, multiple subjective meanings of participants' experiences of EL. Therefore, a *constructionist* ontology was deemed appropriate for exploring the emotion-based concept of EL.

Epistemology is concerned with the nature of knowledge, what constitutes acceptable knowledge, and addresses the relationship between the researcher and the reality that is being studied (Blaikie 2007, Creswell 2007, Malterud 2016, Punch 2014, Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill 2012). In social sciences, the main paradigm positions that researchers adopt are *positivism* and *interpretivism* (Punch 2014). *Positivism* sees knowledge as being independent of the researcher and that it can be acquired in an objective manner through 'scientific methods' which discards the bias of the researcher (Bryman and Bell 2011). *Quantitative research* is situated in the positivist paradigm and it is usually associated with the deductive approach where knowledge is acquired through developing a theory from which hypotheses are developed and then tested (Ormston et al. 2014). *Interpretivism* on the other hand, adopts a constructionist approach and sees knowledge as being produced by understanding or interpreting and observing the social world of those that are being studied (Blaikie 2007, Gray 2014). Humans are different from the physical phenomena because they create meanings and thus their social worlds should be studied differently than the physical phenomena (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill 2016). The interpretivist position critiques the positivist stance which aims at discovering a universal set of laws that apply to every individual and loses the rich insights into humanity. As Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2016, p.140) state:

As different people of different cultural backgrounds, under different circumstances and at different times, make different meanings and so create and experience different social realities.

It is the most appropriate one to use when researching business and management areas where EL stands as well, as it helps create new and rich understandings of the organisational realities (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill 2012, 2016). Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2016) state that this is the case because business situations are complex, unique in terms of contexts and they 'reflect a particular set of circumstances and interactions involving individuals coming together at a specific time' (p. 141). In addition, *qualitative research* is situated in the interpretative paradigm because the researchers need to make sense of the subjective meanings expressed by the research participants (Bryman and Bell 2011). It is more often associated with an inductive approach than quantitative research, or theory building through observations of the world (Bryman and Bell 2011, Snape and Spencer 2003). The present study is investigating EL in the under-researched area of the holiday representatives. It aims to get a more in-depth understanding of this concept in a context which has not received much theoretical attention in the literature. At the same time, one of the objectives is to develop a conceptual framework for the influences of EL of holiday representatives. An inductive approach allows the researcher to explain why something is happening such as the reason why the holiday representatives engage in certain emotion regulation strategies because of various influences. Therefore, an inductive approach was deemed appropriate to develop new theory in this context.

Through *verstehen* researchers can present how people make sense of their worlds (Gill and Johnson 2010). The researcher has to adopt an empathetic stance or it 'requires the social scientist to grasp the subjective meaning of social action' (Bryman and Bell 2011, p.17). The researchers should work closely with the researched in order to create mutual understanding of the phenomena under investigation. The reality is therefore affected by the research process. At the same time, the researchers bring to the research situation their particular paradigms including perspectives, values, training, knowledge, and biases so objectivity cannot be achieved (Creswell 2007, Corbin and Strauss 2008). The

researcher and the social world influence each other and findings are influenced by values and perspectives 'thus making it impossible to conduct objective, value free research although the researcher can declare and be transparent about his or her assumptions' (Snape and Spencer 2003, p. 17). For this thesis, the researcher's previous experiences of working in a role which involved EL, allowed her to get closer to the participants and create a rapport with them such that they were encouraged to give a richer description of their experiences as holiday representatives' and of the emotions they experienced. Working in hospitality and tourism meant that the researcher of this current study was already aware of how EL occurs from the perspective of the employees and what does its performance entail. This was perhaps one of the reasons why she decided to extend the focus on this research area. She understood what EL meant for the employees and how organisations view this only as a customer service tool. At the same time, the researcher always believed in the crucial importance of employees in the service sector. She has always been an advocate for employees' rights. These values and the understanding of EL played an important role in the current research as the investigator wanted to get a bigger and a more accurate picture of what it really means in the context of the holiday representatives. In line with the interpretivist epistemology 'interpretivists recognise that their interpretations of research materials and data, and thus their own values and beliefs, play an important role in the research process' (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill 2016, p.141). Therefore, researchers' personal values are believed to have influenced the data collection/interviewing process only and taken an empathetic approach to interviewing because of the understanding of the researched topic.

However, though 'bracketing' a concept linked to phenomenology, the investigator managed to minimise researcher bias (Cassell and Symon 2004). This is a process of data analysis where the researchers 'set aside their experiences, as much as possible, to take a fresh perspective toward the phenomenon under investigation' and understand participants' experiences (Creswell 2007, p.60). For example, the researcher tried to suspend all her previous experiences with EL when starting the data analysis process. Doing this was indeed difficult (Creswell 2007), but she was aware of this throughout the data analysis process/ coding process. In line with the philosophical position she wanted to understand participants' views and beliefs about their experiences as

overseas holiday representatives. The inductive data analysis contributed to a minimisation of the researcher's biases. This process ensured that the findings would be an accurate description of the opinions of the participants; from their perspective and not the researcher's. Therefore, she believes that through this process her subjective views were minimised. Another way in which she managed to minimise this was through taking notes on participants' opinions during the transcription process which ensured that the initial coding was accurately addressing their views. In-vivo coding which will be presented in section 3.7 also aided this; using respondent's views as codes minimised my influence over this stage. Overall, the researcher believes that the measures taken as described above, helped minimise her input and influence over the data, and obtain accurate and non-biased opinions, beliefs and emotions from the participants' point of view.

Gill and Johnson (2010, p.149) argue that 'all human action, or behaviour, has an internal logic of its own which must be understood and described for researchers to be able to explain that behaviour'. This study aimed to examine how the holiday representatives perceive and make sense of their social world, their relationships with different stakeholders and how these affect their EL performance and their well-being. In other words, the social world that people have created and which people reproduce through their continuing activities has to be firstly understood (Blaikie 2007). The interpretivist approach focuses on understanding what is happening in a specific context (Creswell 2013). In line with the interpretivist approach, this study focuses on understanding how these holiday representatives make sense of their working environment, the emotions they experience and how these in turn affect the way in which they engage in EL. Therefore, in line with the interpretivist approach the researcher will examine participants' opinions in relation to these aspects. EL involves the display of feeling rules or display rules, whether these are authentically felt or not by the employees, and the adoption of emotion regulation strategies in order to put across organisationally desired emotions. 'The researchers' intent [...] is to make sense (or interpret) the meanings others have about the world' (Creswell 2013, p.25). According to Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2016) interpretivists focus on participants' lived experiences and include their interpretations in the research. The best way to examine how EL is performed by the holiday representatives,

which is an internal process, is through their views/interpretations on this matter. Their workplace behaviour is therefore explained from the participants' point of view. Adopting the interpretivist approach allowed the researcher to ask the holiday representatives how they manage their emotions in the workplace and thus interpret what emotional labour strategies they engage in and how and why certain factors influence their emotion management whilst at work. The narratives of the respondents/the holiday representatives, their subjective experiences, meanings and reasons helped the researcher interpret their emotions and the EL strategies in relation to various influences.

Interpretivism is 'concerned with the empathetic understanding of human action rather than with the forces which act on it' (Bryman and Bell 2015, p.28). For this reason, adopting a positivist approach would be too restrictive for this research as it would not give an in-depth explanation or understanding of why the holiday representatives use these strategies and how they work or modify their emotions. In other words, as Snape and Spencer (2003, p.7) suggest:

The methods of the natural sciences are not appropriate because the social world is not governed by law-like regularities but is mediated through meaning and human agency.

Therefore, for this phenomenological study the researcher has adopted a constructionist ontology and an interpretivist epistemology and will therefore interpret their recollections of their lived experiences.

3.3 Qualitative research approach

The two main methodologies for conducting research are quantitative and qualitative which can be used for any ontological positions (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe and Jackson 2008). Both qualitative and quantitative research focus on gathering data regarding individuals' point of views (Denzin and Lincoln 2008). However, quantitative research has been described as 'entailing the collection of numerical data and as exhibiting a view of the relationship between theory and research as deductive, a predilection for a natural science approach (and positivism in particular) and as having an objectivist conception of social reality' (Bryman and Bell 2011, p150). This deductive research strategy seeks to test theory by deducing hypotheses from it, and to obtain knowledge of the social

world through means of trial and error, making it inappropriate for seeking explanations and for answering 'why' questions (Blaikie 2007). In line with the interpretivist approach, the social world should be explored by the researcher through the perspective of the participants which would not be possible through natural science methods as 'the social world is not governed by regularities that hold law-like properties' (Snape and Spencer 2003, p. 23).

On the other hand, qualitative research which is largely associated with interpretivism, allows the researcher to discover rather than test any variables, and determine how meanings are formed by getting to the inner experience of participants (Corbin and Strauss 2008, Snape and Spencer 2003). The most important reason for choosing qualitative research is:

The desire to step beyond the known and enter into the world of participants, to see the world from their perspective and in doing so make discoveries that will contribute to the development of empirical knowledge (Corbin and Strauss 2008, p.16)

The researcher adopted an interpretivist epistemology where knowledge is obtained through the perspectives of the individuals. The concept of EL is related to emotions, perceptions, opinions, or attitudes and rich descriptions of participant's lived experiences. These would help the researcher meet the aim of this study. Therefore, this research followed a qualitative approach which is a 'naturalistic, interpretivist approach concerned with understanding the meanings which people attach to phenomena (actions, decisions, beliefs, values etc.) within their social worlds' (Snape and Spencer 2007, p. 2). More specifically, in line with the interpretivist position a qualitative research is better to understand how holiday representatives manage their emotions in the workplace as it allows them to put across their opinions in their own words.

Qualitative research is not only conducted when an issue or problem needs to be explored, but also when there is the need for a more complex understanding of a particular issue (Creswell 2007). It helps to 'develop theories when partial or inadequate theories exist for certain populations and samples or existing theories do not adequately capture the complexity of the problem' examined (p. 40). This is the case of this research which aims to further explore EL in an under-

researched area of the tour operating sector, in particular the context of the holiday representatives (Houge Mackenzie and Kerr 2013).

In addition, early studies on EL were qualitative and exploratory in nature as they looked at understanding a new concept, and they managed to provide a rich description and a better understanding on EL. However, later researchers shifted their interest towards the measurement of EL which influenced the increase of quantitative studies using positivist approaches in the field (Grandey, Diefendorff and Rupp 2013, Wharton 2013). As seen in Table 2, quantitative studies on EL outnumber qualitative studies. The qualitative studies are highlighted in blue. There is a research gap in terms of the methodology adopted when researching EL. As Shani et al. (2014) argue, the use of in-depth interviews and interpretive analysis is a contribution to the EL literature, since the majority of previous studies rely heavily on quantitative analysis and surveys.

Table 2: Methodology and methods of emotional labour studies

Author(s)	Methodology and Methods
Brotheridge and Grandey (2002)	Quantitative approach Survey
Dieffendorf, Croyle and Gosserand (2005)	Quantitative approach Questionnaire
Brotheridge and Lee (2003)	Quantitative approach Scale development
Glomb and Tews (2004)	Quantitative approach
Goodwin, Groth, Frenkel (2011)	Quantitative approach Online survey
Grandey (2003)	Quantitative approach Survey
Grandey, Kern and Frone (2007)	Quantitative approach Survey
Hochschild (1983)	Qualitative approach Interviews Participant observation Interviews
Hoffmann (2016)	Qualitative approach Interviews Participant observation
Hülsheger et al. (2015)	Quantitative approach Diary study- survey based
Hu and Shi (2015)	Quantitative approach Survey
Schaubroeck and Jones (2000)	Quantitative approach Questionnaires
von Gilsa et al. (2013)	Quantitative approach Diary study- survey based
Tourism studies	

Carnicelli-Filho (2013)	Qualitative study In-depth interviews Participant observation.
Chiang and Chen (2014)	Quantitative approach Self-administered questionnaires
Chu and Murrmann (2006)	Quantitative approach Survey -Scale development
Chu and Murrmann (2012)	Quantitative approach Survey
Constanti and Gibbs (2005)	Qualitative approach Interviews
Guerrier and Adib (2003)	Qualitative approach Semi-structured interviews with tour representatives Non-participant observation Formal and informal discussions with supervisors
Guerrier and Adib (2004)	Qualitative research Semi-structured interviews Observation
Gursoy, Boylu, Avci (2011)	Quantitative approach Survey
Houge Mackenzie and Kerr (2013)	Qualitative approach Autoethnography
Jung and Yoon (2014)	Quantitative approach Questionnaire
Kim (2008)	Quantitative approach Questionnaire
Lam and Chen (2012)	Quantitative approach Questionnaires
Moon, Hur and Jun (2013)	Quantitative approach Survey
Shani et al. (2014)	Qualitative approach In-depth face-to-face interviews
Sohn and Lee (2012)	Quantitative approach Questionnaire
Lv, Xu and Ji (2012)	Quantitative approach Questionnaires
Van Dijk 2011	Quantitative approach Survey - Scale
Wijeratne et al. (2014)	Qualitative research Semi-structured interviews
Wong and Wang (2009)	Qualitative approach Semi-structured interviews Participant observation Formal and informal discussions with senior managers

Table 2 shows that although both quantitative and qualitative approaches are used, quantitative studies are in abundance. A greater level of depth and more detailed perceptions of participants' views regarding their role as emotional labourers were needed for this study. Therefore, this research adopted an

inductive qualitative approach in order to expand the understanding of EL in the context of the holiday representatives and develop a theoretical model for the influences of EL. This investigative study contributes to the research gap by adopting a qualitative approach in order to further the understanding of this concept in an under-researched context.

3.4 Research method

As mentioned in the previous section, a qualitative approach was adopted for this thesis. Qualitative research generates rich and holistic data which makes it a well-suited approach for 'locating the meanings that people place on events, processes, and structure of their lives and for connecting these meanings to the social world around them' (Miles, Huberman and Saldana 2014, p.11). One of the main advantages of qualitative research is the fact that there are numerous sources of data collection methods available such as interviews, observation, videos, documents, drawings or diaries (Corbin and Strauss 2008). These have been categorised into four major types: audio/visual documents, qualitative documents, qualitative observation and interviews (Creswell 2014). All these methods have their own strengths and limitations as presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Data collection methods in qualitative research

Method	Advantages/Strengths	Disadvantages/Limitations
Audio-visual materials -photographs -videotapes -film -computer messages -art objects -sounds -social media text -emails	-unobtrusive method -opportunity for the respondents to directly share their reality -created as it captures attention visually	-difficult to interpret -not accessible publicly or privately -the presence of an observer might affect responses because it may be disruptive
Documents -public documents (meeting minutes or newspapers) -private documents (journals, diaries, letters)	-the researcher obtains the language and words of participants -an unobtrusive source of information -represents data to which participants have given attention	-not all respondents are articulate and perceptive -the information may be protected and unavailable publicly or privately -the researcher has to search for the information in hard-to-find places -transcribing is required

	-saves the researcher the time and the expense of transcribing	-materials might be incomplete -the documents might not be authentic or accurate
Observations -complete participant where the researchers conceals the role -observer as participant/ the role of the researcher is known -participant as observer-observation role secondary to participant role -complete observer/ researcher observes without participating	-researcher has experience with the participant -information is recorded as it occurs -unusual aspects can be noticed -useful for exploring topics otherwise uncomfortable for the respondents	-researcher may be seen as intrusive -private information may be observed which the researcher cannot report -researcher may not have good attending and observing skills -certain participants may present special problems in getting rapport
Interviews -face-to-face-one-to-one -telephone -focus group -E-mail Internet	-useful when the participants cannot be directly observed -participants can provide historical information -allows researcher control over the line of questioning	-provides indirect information filtered through the views of interviewees -provides information in a designated place rather than in the natural field setting -researcher's presence may bias responses -not all people are articulate and perceptive

Source: Creswell (2014, p.191)

The main purpose of this study is to investigate how and when the holiday representatives engage in EL in their job when interacting with their customers, how various work-related factors might influence these interactions, and how their work impacts their emotions during customer interactions. Therefore, the researcher needed greater depth and detail in order to be able to meet the objectives of this study and to understand the lived experiences of holiday representatives. The investigator could have asked respondents to keep journals/diaries whilst at work which then would have been analysed. However, it is time consuming, expensive, and it is difficult to make sure that participants are on board and feel comfortable doing this on a regular basis (Creswell 2013). The respondents could fail to record data on time which would lead to difficulties recalling information and would provide incomplete information (Bryman and Bell 2015, Creswell 2014). Also, audio/visual materials would not have given the researcher information in relation to participants' feelings and cognitive processes related to EL.

Although the researcher obtained enough information regarding these employees through secondary data, it was not enough to acquire an in-depth understanding of this role. Guerrier and Adib (2003) and Constanti and Gibbs (2005) were the few authors who conducted studies in this area. Taking into consideration the changing nature of the package holiday industry and the scarce academic information related to this role, the researcher decided to participate in a package tour and conduct a direct observation to get more up-to-date information on the package holiday market and the role of the overseas holiday representative. This was not something which was initially considered by the researcher of this study as it was believed to be intrusive (Creswell 2014). It was also believed that it could not produce the right information to meet the objectives of this study and understand the emotions of the respondents. However, the researcher conducted the observation mainly to expand on knowledge on the context. This is presented in more detail in section 3.5.

According to Bryman and Bell (2015), surveys can also be used to collect qualitative data. Questionnaires which include open-ended questions are also called qualitative questionnaires (Jansen 2010). Surveys using open questions, give the respondents a voice and generates in-depth responses and they reveal their experiences, understandings and interpretations written in their styles (McGuirk and O'Neill 2016). A survey can be a cheaper and quicker way of collecting data, but also a way of avoiding interviewer effects of interviews as he/she may influence the answers that the respondents give (Bryman and Bell 2015). However, questionnaires have several disadvantages. The researchers have no opportunity to probe the respondents which is crucial especially when open-ended questions are used (Bryman and Bell 2015). Bryman and Bell (2015) also argue that if there is no-one present to prompt questions when respondents may have difficulty in understanding the questions which they find hard to answer, data can be missed. At the same time, when using questionnaires, the researcher might not be able to collect additional data which will help get a better picture of the phenomena under investigation as it would be difficult to ask a lot of questions. Thus, survey research was deemed inappropriate for this study which aimed at getting a better understanding of the poorly understood context of the holiday representatives and their EL. The researcher felt that this method would indeed limit the investigative nature of this study if this method was used.

A qualitative interview is the most popular data collection method in qualitative research as it is a good way to collect people's perceptions, definitions of situations, constructions of reality and meanings (Bryman and Bell 2011, Punch 2014). According to Kvale and Brinkman (2009, p.1)

[A qualitative interview] attempts to understand the world from the subjects' point of view, to unfold the meaning of their experiences, to uncover their lived world prior to scientific explanations.

Therefore, the researcher considered the multitude of methods previously mentioned, but decided to use in-depth interviews as the aim of the study was to understand the holiday representatives' perceptions of the phenomenon of EL. This approach was in the researchers' opinion best suited for doing this study. As Gray (2014, p.382) puts it:

If the objective of the research, for example, is largely exploratory, involving say, the examination of feelings or attitudes, then interviews may be the best approach.

Furthermore, interviews can be highly formalised or informal and they can be structured, semi-structured and unstructured (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill 2012). The structured interview is similar to a self-completed questionnaire as it contains a defined schedule of questions from which the researchers and interviewees cannot deviate (Bryman and Bell 2015, Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill 2016). Structured interviews are usually used in quantitative studies as the purpose is to generate answers which can be coded and processed fast to answer specific research questions (Bryman and Bell 2015). Structured interviews can be used in qualitative research but they are standardised/inflexible and the same questions are posed to all respondents which limits the investigation of a phenomena in terms of breadth and depth (Gray 2014). On the other hand, the qualitative interviews focus on the interviewees' point of view. Interviewers can deviate from the schedules, and they are flexible and produce rich, detailed responses (Bryman and Bell 2015). Therefore, qualitative interviews were deemed appropriate for the purpose of this research.

Qualitative interviews also vary and there are two main approaches or types of interviews which are unstructured and semi-structured interviews. Unstructured interviews are in-depth, informal, they have no pre-determined questions to go through although the researcher should be clear on what needs to be explored and must be clear of the objectives of the research. The interviewer does not ask too many questions, but intervenes if there are any doubtful points the respondents make and follows up on other important points (Bryman and Bell 2015, Gray 2014). The interviewee is allowed to talk freely about the beliefs, opinions or events related to the topic area. Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2012) describe this as an *informant interview* as it is the interviewee who guides the interview and the topics discussed.

On the other hand, semi-structured interviews are also in-depth interviews, but have a list of a few key themes and key questions, where additional questions can be used to explore the research question and the objectives of the research (Punch 2014, Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill 2012). Asking the questions may vary from interview to interview, some questions might be omitted, the order may also change depending on the direction the interview is taking and some unanticipated questions might be asked as a new topic arises (Bryman and Bell 2014). In an in-depth interview, the researcher encourages the participants to talk, asks them to explain their answers, asks supplementary questions and seeks to probe more deeply (Veal 2006). Probing of views is of particular importance in phenomenological studies where the aim is to investigate the subjective meanings the respondents give to various concepts (Gray 2014). As Barriball and While (1994) state, semi-structured interviews are well suited for exploring more sensitive information such as the emotions experienced by the holiday representatives. These interviews allow the researcher to explore into personal matters. In this way, the researcher encouraged the participants to give full descriptions of their experiences and their thoughts and feelings in relation to certain situations. Wong and Wang (2009), Guerrier and Adib (2003) and Wijeratne et al. (2014) successfully used semi-structured interviews when they investigated EL in their exploratory studies and managed to obtain rich data in relation to their aims. Therefore, the researcher deemed the semi-structured interview to be the most appropriate tool for this phenomenological study which had clear pre-determined objectives as it allowed the researcher to access

participants' perspectives. They were well suited for encouraging holiday representatives to talk about opinions, beliefs and perceptions about their work, the emotions they experienced in the workplace, their customer interactions and how they managed their emotions in these interactions to meet the display rules of the tour operator.

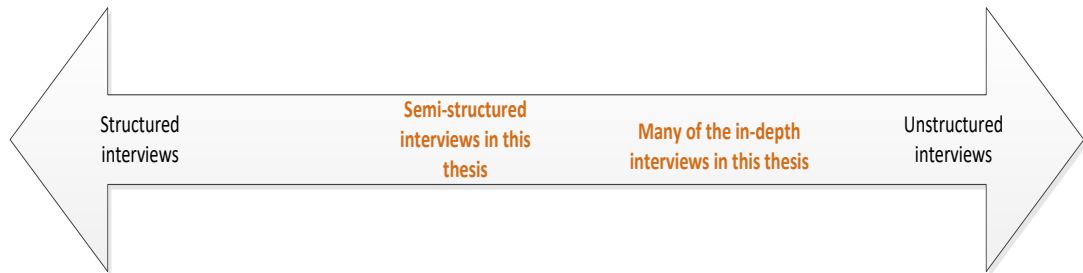
3.4.1 Semi-structured interviews

As mentioned, semi-structured interviews were the chosen data collection method for this thesis. Semi-structured interviews offer flexibility to the research process meaning that it allows the researcher to depart from the guide or research protocol and ask the participants new questions to follow up on their replies, so the order of the questions can vary as well as the wording of the questions (Bryman and Bell 2011, Yeo, et al. 2014). At the same time, it allows the interviewees to include and discuss other aspects important for their experience which may not be considered by the researcher prior to the interview (Bryman and Bell 2011).

Using this interview technique for this research not only allowed the researcher to ask follow-up questions, but also gave the interviewees the opportunity to discuss issues that the researcher had not included in the interview schedule which added to the richness of the data especially for the under-researched context of the holiday representatives. Although the research protocol, presented in Appendix 1, was developed the interviews differed in terms of the order in which the questions were asked. Some interviews followed an even less structured approach where only the themes and a few questions were asked. To some extent the researcher feels that the majority of the interviews were more open, somewhere between the semi-structured and unstructured interviews continuum as seen in Figure 10. This happened because some participants were very keen to share their experiences as holiday representatives with the researcher. The researcher took the role of a confidante for these participants which led to a more informal conversation most of the time. Therefore, the researcher kept the structured aspect of the interview to a minimum as this 'is supposed to enhance the opportunity of genuinely revealing the perspectives of the people you are studying' (Bryman and Bell 2011, p. 406). This was the case in some of the interviews conducted for this thesis. The investigator feels that the

validity/trustworthiness was increased by this rich data about individual experiences and opinions from an employee perspective.

Figure 10: The interview continuum for this study



The semi-structured interviews were conducted by telephone, Skype, email and face-to-face. When sending the participant information sheet, the respondents were given the choice of all these four possible ways of conducting the interviews. The researcher anticipated that it might be difficult to conduct face-to-face interviews due to time constraints and the fact that the respondents might not be in the United Kingdom. For that reason, the respondents were given a choice in terms of the type of the interview that they would prefer to participate in. It is important to mention that the investigator did not necessarily need to see the respondents face-to-face as the focus was not in their body language. The data required for this study could be gathered only from discussing their thoughts, beliefs and opinions of their experiences as holiday representatives. As seen in Table 4, only three interviews were conducted face-to-face due to proximity. The majority were over the telephone and Skype.

Table 4: Interview types

Type of interview	Number
Phone	8
Skype	6
Email	4
Face-to-face	3
Total	21

According to Bryman and Bell (2015) telephone interviews have not been widely used in qualitative research. However, these interviews were appropriate for this study because of the geographical location of the interviewer and the fact that

they were quicker and cheaper to carry out (Bryman and Bell 2011, Berg 2009). The interviews were conducted at the participants' convenience, who wanted to have a conversation when they were travelling from work or on their day off as some interviews were even conducted during the weekend. Researchers argue that some limitations of telephone interviews are that respondents tend to talk for shorter periods of time and not elaborate on their answer and that they do not work well for long interviews (Gray 2014). Therefore, it can be difficult to create rapport with the respondents. This can lead to their lack of engagement which consequently influences reduced reliability (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill 2012). Also, researchers cannot observe the body language of the participants and see how the respondents react which is important for the interviewer to determine discomfort or confusion (Bryman and Bell 2015). However, for this study, the researcher managed to overcome these limitations as observing the body language was not a focus of the study. The interviews produced a rich set of qualitative data as the interviews lasted for an hour on average. Rapport was created, and the researcher felt that on many occasions the respondents felt even more comfortable discussing their experiences. The participants were open in discussing more sensitive aspects of their job without being asked directly, and the researcher also adopted an empathetic stance during the interviews. These aspects indeed can lead to success in getting rich qualitative data through telephone interviews. Perhaps, as Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2012) argue, the respondents of this study enjoyed the anonymity of this interviewing technique which helped reduce their inhibitions and they were more open. Therefore, the researcher feels this technique was acceptable in getting the data.

In addition, the investigator had the role of the empathetic researcher during data collection where the researcher and researched interaction contribute towards knowledge creation (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill 2016). The researcher would be naïve not to mention that biases might have influenced the responses. However, she believes that this was kept to a minimum as much as possible. Indeed, there were times during the interviews when empathising with her interviewees occurred when they shared their experiences of dealing with abusive customers because the researcher herself experienced such emotions and faced similar situations when employed in the hotel industry. This information was shared with the participants and they were told the researcher understood how they felt

which they resonated with. This helped create rapport and the participants started to share even more of their experiences with. However, although empathetic and sympathetic, the researcher was always aware of the fact that leading questions should not be asked in order to minimise bias of the data. Therefore, many open questions were used which helped the participants share their lived experiences.

Skype was also considered because of it being cost effective, its flexibility and its capability of generating better inter-personal communication, increased trust and consequently more in-depth answers to questions because of the video option (Bryman and Bell 2015, Gray 2014). Skype proved to be useful especially for those participants who were abroad at the time of data collection and wanted to take part in the research. Telephone interviewing would not have been financially feasible for the investigator in this case. However, there were some problems in terms of the internet connection as Skype was interrupted frequently during some interviews because of a bad data connection. Despite this, the researcher decided just to conduct an audio session to improve the quality of the session. Although the video element was not present it proved to be successful and the respondents were just as engaged in the conversation. It made the online interview similar to a telephone interview (Bryman and Bell 2015, Deakin and Wakefield 2014). The researcher-respondent rapport was very good when conducting the Skype interviews even without video which lasted on average for approximately 60 minutes and were respondent-led. Thus, Skype helped the researcher obtain rich, in-depth data, similar to Deakin and Wakefield (2014), who consider this interviewing technique as a viable research method.

The researcher also used email interviews, although this was not the preferred method. The email interviews were suitable for some respondents who wanted to respond to the questions in their own time. They were sent the interview protocol presented in Appendix 1. According to Punch (2014, p.288), if using the internet for interviewing it can be difficult to determine how participants feel and think as it is an 'emotionally barren environment'. Also, with an email interview, the researcher is not able to probe and explore further interesting points made by the respondents, and the interviewee may lose focus and not answer all questions (Ritchie et al. 2014, Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill 2012). The researcher acknowledges these limitations of email interviews as indeed in some

cases it was not possible to probe participants' answers and it was not possible to determine how the respondents' felt because of the short answers. Also, in some instances, some questions were not answered by participants. On the other hand, an advantage of this technique was the fact that there was no need for transcription (Bryman and Bell 2015). At the same time, the researcher believes that this was an unobtrusive method of interviewing which allowed the respondents to be more comfortable and reflect more on their answers. Overall, the interviews produced valid data which helped meet the objectives of the research.

3.5 Data collection

Data was gathered in three phases, as seen in Figure 11. As mentioned before, semi-structured interviews were used in order to get a better understanding of holiday representatives' experiences, opinions and feelings. The researcher also conducted a direct observation beforehand which is presented as Phase 1. The phases of the data collection are discussed in more detail in the following sections.

3.5.1 Phase 1 - Direct observation

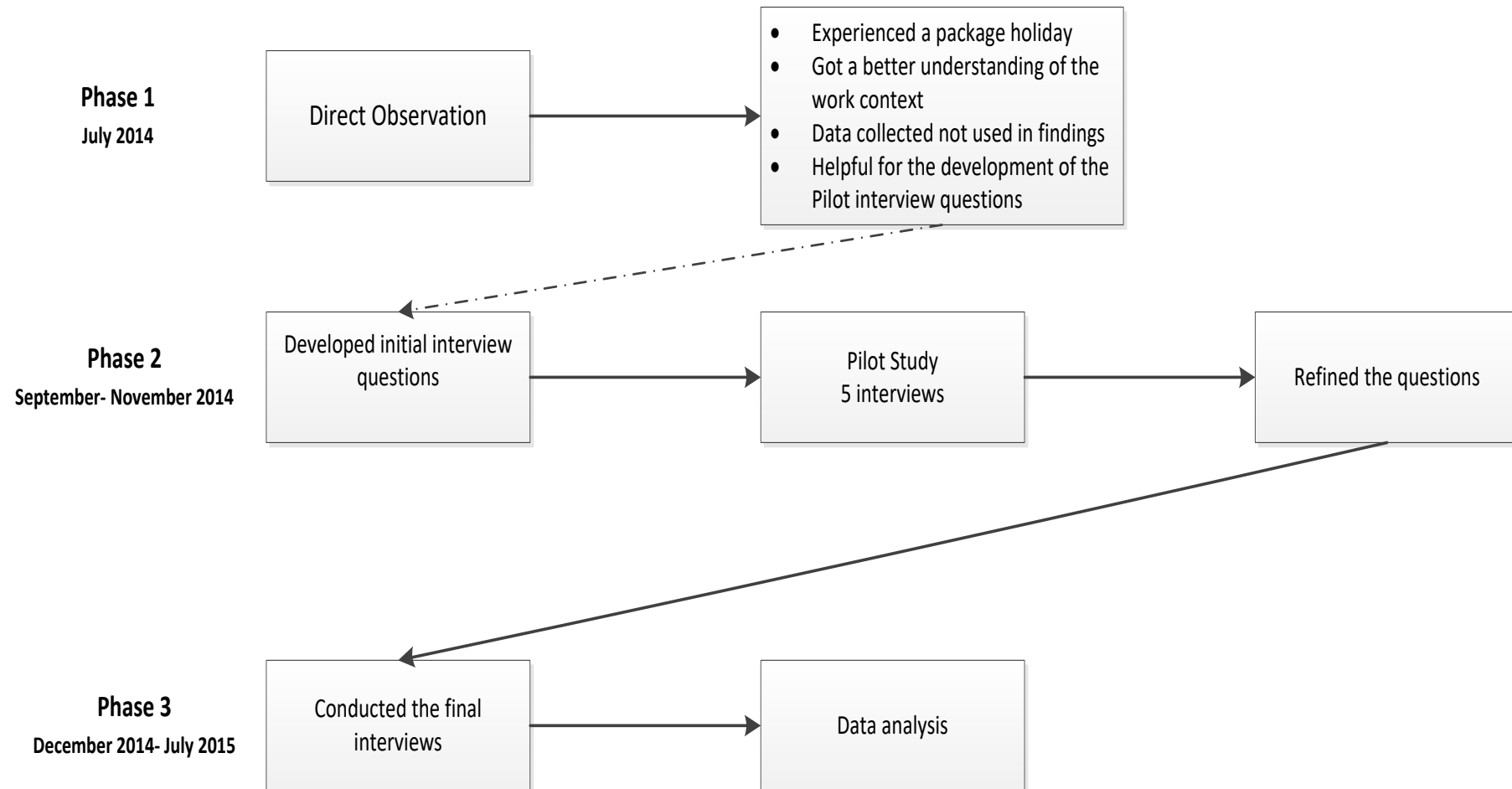
Direct observation is an unobtrusive method through which the researcher can study human activities in the environment where they occur (Veal 2006). This Phase was not initially considered for this study. However, it was helpful in getting a better understanding of the British package holiday product as the researcher had not experienced this before. It also gave new insights into the research context chosen for this thesis, more specifically the work environment of the holiday representatives and the nature of their work which has received limited attention in the literature. The researcher booked a package holiday with a British tour operator. Similar to Guerrier and Adib's (2003) study, the observation took place in the hotel lobby of a hotel where the representatives were working. For ethical reasons, the holiday representatives were informed that the investigator would be observing their actions and they all accepted this and even engaged in informal chats. Therefore, an unstructured naturalistic observation was conducted. The researcher did not have a schedule or a formalised recording for

behaviour, and tried to record as much detail as possible in relation to the holiday representatives (Bryman and Bell 2015). The main purpose of this was to gain an insight into the work context of the holiday representatives. The researcher took notes of all the things that were observed in relation to the representatives and tried to be as comprehensive as possible in the notes. Video logs were also conducted at the end of the day in order to expand as much as possible on what was observed. Therefore, the researcher took notes on:

- the holiday representatives' activities in the hotel,
- their job requirements,
- their customer interactions,
- what customer service situations they were faced with,
- how long and how often they dealt with customers,
- issues that they were dealing with in terms of customer service.

This information was helpful in terms of developing the Phase 2 interview questions as the researcher had a better understanding of the role of the holiday representative. The main purpose of this thesis was therefore to investigate the employees' beliefs and perceptions in relation to their work experiences. Although the observation revealed some useful information/knowledge it did not contribute towards meeting the aim of this study. Therefore, data obtained from the observation was not used in the analysis process as it did not reveal what the respondents thought about their role and how they managed their emotions during service interactions. In other words, how they performed EL, what strategies they were using, and how different factors influenced their emotions and their behaviour. The knowledge which the researcher gained from Phase 1 helped to create rapport with the participants during the interviews in Phase 2 and Phase 3.

Figure 11: Data collection phases



3.5.2 Phase 2 - Pilot study

After Phase 1, the researcher also conducted some initial interviews/ Phase 2. The purpose of the pilot was to determine whether the questions that had been developed would generate substantial data necessary to meet the aim and the objectives of the thesis as doing this increases the reliability of the data collected (Silverman 2010). A pilot study helps the researcher refine the interview questions but also make sure that the research instrument as a whole works well (Bryman and Bell 2011, Creswell 2007). These initial five interviews were conducted with participants who had experience working as holiday representatives and were members of the researchers' personal network. The pilot indeed showed that the in-depth interview method is the appropriate method for exploring the work context of the holiday representatives as it produced rich, in-depth and relevant data. It gave insight into the fact that the interviews would differ from one interviewee to another. The researcher was aware that in-depth/ semi-structured interviews would be conducted. However, some would take a more open approach which was the case, as presented in section 3.4.1.

There were some aspects which were changed after the pilot in preparation for Phase 3 and more precise refinement of the questions was done. The researcher decided not to use terms that were 'too academic' such as 'surface acting', 'deep acting' or 'emotional labour' and, instead used simpler language which would be easy to understand. It helped determine the right sequence of the research themes and questions. The pilot revealed that the discussions with the respondents were revolving around certain themes which the researcher had not considered initially. Therefore, the questions were grouped in a more logical sequence when interviewing which would allow the researcher to take a more open approach when necessary. The same order of questions was also required for the email interviews which also had to have a logical structure to facilitate an easier completion of the questions for the interviewee. The final interview protocol with the refined questions is presented in Appendix 1. The pilot also confirmed that on an average an interview would last around one hour which was what the researcher had aimed to do in the first instance. Also, researchers' was that EL

is something that is related to the negative well-being of the employees and negative situations in the workplace because of the literature which mostly addressed this part of the theory. However, the pilot interviews made her change this opinion and decided to also include positive situations/customer interactions where EL occurs in the interview questions. The researcher believes that this process of the data collection, helped minimise researcher bias and obtain a more comprehensive data on the EL of holiday representatives.

With Phase 2 the sample for Phase 3 was clarified. More specifically, the researcher realised that it would be better to include participants whose experience as holiday representatives was more recent at the time of the interview, as they would find it easier to recall important events from their job, an aspect that would increase the validity and the reliability of the data collected. The sample will be discussed in more detail in section 3.6. For this reason, three of the five pilot interviews were included in the sample because they generated crucial data for the study. Also, all the ethical issues were taken into consideration and applied to this pilot study, and will be discussed later in section 3.9.

Besides helping the researcher in determining the correct interview protocol, the pilot study also gave the researcher experience in how to conduct the interviews. As Bryman and Bell (2011) mention, it indeed increased her confidence and improved her interviewing skills for continuing with Phase 3.

3.5.3 Phase 3 - Final interviews

The final interviews, were conducted between December 2014 and July 2015. The respondents were contacted via email or social media after the referrals. The researcher would explain where their contact information was obtained and then the email/ message would refer to the participant information sheet present at the end of the email. This is presented in Appendix 2. This contained many details such as the purpose of the thesis, how the interviews could be conducted, time needed to complete the interview, the fact that they would be recorded, ethical considerations and the fact that they could contact an independent person, the researchers' supervisor, should they wish to discuss this research. Some participants declined to take part due to various reasons and some did not reply

to the email or the message. However, for some respondents an email interview was deemed to be suitable, but there were also cases when this was sent but the researcher did not get it back.

The researcher also sent follow-up emails/messages to the first participants in order to recruit more participants because sometimes emails are not received as a result of firewalls. Some respondents did mention that indeed they had not received the first emails due to IT issues and decided to take part in the study. In other cases, the researcher still did not get a reply or the respondent declined to take part. It was clear that these respondents should not be contacted further.

After the respondents agreed to participate, the date and the time of the interview was arranged at their convenience. In total, 18 more interviews were conducted in Phase 3. In the case of the email interviews the respondents were required to complete and send it back within two weeks. If it was not received the researcher contacted the respondents to make sure that they were still keen to take part in the research. In total, 21 interviews were conducted. The researcher stopped the data collection process when saturation was reached. It is worth mentioning, that the delay in respondents' replies and agreement to take part were causes of concern for the researcher and she was determined to look for further ways of reaching potential respondents. The researcher decided to use Sheffield Hallam University's Shuspace announcement page for potential participants which proved to be successful to some extent as some participants responded as it is presented in Table 5. Shuspace is Sheffield Hallam University's online announcement portal where PhD students can advertise their studies to obtain participants. Sampling is discussed in more detail in the following section.

3.6 Purposive sampling

Qualitative research involves a deliberate or purposive sampling which means sampling with some purpose or focus in mind, or in a deliberate way (Punch 2014, Miles, Huberman and Saldana 2014). The researcher 'selects individuals and sites for study because they can purposefully inform an understanding of the research problem and central phenomenon in the study' (Creswell 2007, p. 125). In addition, the researcher is required to make a decision on who the sample

should be, what form of sampling will be used and the sample size (Creswell 2007).

Therefore, purposive sampling was the sampling procedure followed for this research which looks at exploring the EL of holiday representatives. More specifically, a sample of holiday representatives who worked for UK based tour operators, as the focus of this thesis was on the British holiday market. The researcher included both holiday representatives who were employed at the time of the interviews, and also participants who had worked in the industry before and were in different employment when the interviews took place. This was the case due to the nature of the snowball sampling technique which was adopted for reaching the participants. In addition, the participants were both male and female. Some participants had had many years of experience in the industry and had worked for years in the same role, but others were only employed as holiday representatives for just one season. Gender and experience in the role were not specifically a selection criteria, and they were dictated by the sampling technique. Appendix 4 shows the profile of the respondents who took part in this study. The researcher cannot give more specific information such as destination where employed or the type of tour operator, due to anonymity considerations. The only criteria which the investigator considered was to recruit participants who had experience as holiday representatives after 2009-2010, a maximum five years prior to the data collection. This was decided after the pilot. The main reasons behind this decision was that the respondents would be able to recall experiences easily if they were more recent and that the researcher would get a more up-to-date view of the industry. However, the researcher recruited participants who had experience prior to this because of the nature of the sampling technique which the investigator did not have much control over. They did not find it hard to recall their experiences and the data collected was deemed appropriate for meeting the aim and the objectives of this thesis. As shown in Appendix 4, the experiences of the participants took place between 2008-2014/15.

In qualitative research, there are no rules in terms of the sample size (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill 2012, Veal 2006). The purpose of qualitative research is not to generalise and quantify, but to unravel, to explain and make sense of the world (Gill and Johnson 2010). For this reason, Miles, Huberman and Saldana (2014)

mention that qualitative researchers usually work with a small sample of people who they study in-depth. Creswell (2007) argues that for a general study based on interviews, a sample of between 25 and 30 and even more is the most appropriate to develop an appropriate theory. However, the qualitative research sample size is determined by the data saturation (Ritchie et al. 2013, Tsaur and Lin 2014). Saturation occurs when additional data collected does not reveal any new insights into the theory under investigation, and does not suggest new themes (Bryman and Bell 2015, Creswell 2014, Marshall 1996). In total, 21 interviews were conducted. However, data saturation was at the 16th interview. The data analysis process revealed that this was indeed the case and no more interviews were needed as the data was rich and helped answer the research questions and the objectives.

3.6.1 Snowball sampling

Snowball sampling is perhaps the most used method of sampling in qualitative research and may be the best sampling technique to use in order to locate participants with certain specific attributes necessary for the study (Berg 2009, Noy 2008). It is of particular interest in exploratory research where there is an unrepresented, inaccessible, hard-to-reach or hard to involve population, or groups located outside mainstream social research such as the holiday representatives (Atkinson and Flint 2001, Baltar and Brunet 2012, Browne 2005).

The researcher makes contact with a small group of people relevant to the research who will be asked for referrals from other people who have the same characteristics and can take part in the study (Bryman and Bell 2011). It allows respondents to be recruited from information provided by initial respondents (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill 2012). Referrals made by acquaintances will increase trust in the researcher and it will influence the respondents to discuss the subject matter more openly and provide rich in-depth data (Atkinson and Flint 2001). The researcher could have asked for the assistance of the tour operators to get access to participants. However, it was decided not to. Wong and Wang (2009) had a similar approach in their study of EL, to reassure their respondents that their comments are confidential. For this study, the researcher also believed that contacting the respondents directly would encourage confidentiality and

consequently increase the trustworthiness of the data. The investigator knew that the participants would be more open in their interviews. If the tour operators would have been involved, then the participants would have worried that the employers would know what they said and would conceal certain information. Therefore, the interviewees did feel that they could discuss freely about the issues and the more negative aspects of their job as they trusted the researcher and did not feel constrained to talk about their true feelings or opinions. Thus, this snowball sampling was successful in getting respondents who helped produce very rich data. Shani et al. (2014, p.153) state in relation to their study on EL, that this technique 'can [...] be used to provide a researcher with respondents who are willing to elaborate on personal feelings and behaviours at their workplace'.

One issue with this sampling strategy is making initial contact (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill 2012). For this thesis, the initial participants were recruited through the researchers' personal networks. As Table 5 shows, by asking friends and acquaintances the researcher managed to conduct 8 interviews. The researcher encountered problems in terms of initial trust as many other potential participants who were referred, declined to take part in the research.

Table 5: Participant numbers sampling

Channel	Contacts/ Participants
Personal Networks	8 Participants
LinkedIn	4 Initial contacts then 7 referrals= 11 Participants
Facebook	0 Participants
Shuspace	1 initial contact then 1 referral= 2 Participants

Another limitation of this sampling technique is the collection of biased data as the respondents were more likely to identify further potential respondents who are similar to themselves and who would give similar answers (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill 2012, Bhutta 2012). According to Atkinson and Flint (2001) larger sample sizes may reduce bias. Therefore, the researcher felt that conducting 21 interviews helped achieve this aspect. However, the researcher had difficulty in getting enough participants through personal networks so used snowball sampling through social networking sites as seen in Table 5. This sampling technique was not initially considered for this study.

3.6.1.1 Snowball sampling using social networking sites

Snowball sampling using social networking sites was also used to recruit participants for this study. Social networking sites 'offer new ways for researchers to conduct studies quickly, cheaply, and single-handedly—especially when seeking to construct “snowball” samples for exploratory work' (Bhutta 2012, p. 1). Social networking sites such as Facebook or LinkedIn can therefore be effective tools, for reaching some hidden populations/initial targeting of subjects, to recruit a larger number of potential research respondents/participants and thus improve the response rate (Baltar and Brunet 2012, Bhutta 2012). Therefore, it is a very useful recruitment method which, although has been largely used in quantitative research for distributing surveys, can also benefit qualitative research (Baltar and Brunet 2012, Bhutta 2012, Baker 2013). Another advantage of using social media for snowballing, also known as *virtual snowball sampling*, is the fact that it minimises the bias of the data. As Baltar and Brunet state (2012, p.69):

Traditional snowball sampling, as it was previously presented, can be seen as a biased sampling technique because it is not random. However, virtual networks incorporate random elements (the random selection of the virtual groups, the contact to every member inside them, etc.) to be considered in the analysis of representation bias.

This present study is exploratory in nature. The researcher decided not to recruit participants through the tour operators which made the holiday representatives a hard-to-reach population. Therefore, the researcher used social networks 'as channels for recruitment which can be an advantage to study topics with barriers of access' (Baltar and Brunet 2012, p. 71) such as the holiday representatives' work experiences. As seen in Table 5, both Facebook and LinkedIn were considered for recruiting respondents in this way.

Bhutta (2012) argues that Facebook can be of very good use in sampling because of its size, features and continuing growth which is linked with cost and time savings in relation to research. However, using Facebook did not prove to be successful for this study. Bhutta (2012, p.7) states that:

Another Facebook feature that is relevant to constructing snowball samples is the Facebook group. Users can create new

groups or join existing groups based on anything, ranging from specific interests to special events or shared workplaces [...]. There is no monetary cost to joining a group or creating a group [...]. Group administrators control the content and the membership of the group. Among other things they decide whether a group is “open” (anyone can join and invite anyone else to join), “closed” (administrators must approve requests of non-members who desire to join the group), or “secret” (membership is by invitation only). Administrators also have the ability to send mass messages to all group members in groups that do not exceed 5,000 members.

Therefore, for this study the researcher looked for different groups of holiday representatives on Facebook. Baltar and Brunet (2012) mention that when trying to contact groups the best person to email is the administrator of the group. Indeed, the researcher emailed the gatekeepers of these ‘closed groups’, but did not receive a response. Therefore, the researcher did not manage to arrange any interviews using Facebook. This might have been the case due to the more informal nature of this social network site and the inability to establish trust between the researcher and the respondents. Perhaps this happened because the message was seen as spam by the group administrators which reduced the level of participation (Baltar and Brunet 2012). Also in community settings such as the closed group on Facebook, the researcher would be seen as an intruder (Gray 2014). Thus, the administrators might have found the emails sent over Facebook as intrusive and thus decided not to respond.

LinkedIn is a platform which connects professionals and can be used for research purposes (Gray 2014). LinkedIn proved to be successful in reaching potential participants through snowball sampling. When searching people on LinkedIn it shows different levels of connections, 1st, 2nd, 3rd + *everyone else* that a member can use to refine the search. The researcher searched for potential respondents in this way. More specifically connections at different levels that had previous experience as holiday representatives using specific search terms which will not be mentioned for ethical considerations. The researcher allowed the profile to be public in order to increase trust for potential participants who could see that it was a doctoral researcher studying the EL of holiday representatives. Responses were received from persons that were contacted and the investigator felt that this was because they could see the profile unlike Facebook and the fact that LinkedIn

is for professionals. The participants were approached in a friendly manner and personalised messages were sent which consisted of the participant information sheet which is presented in Appendix 3. Some declined to take part whilst others did not reply to the messages. However, overall snowball sampling through LinkedIn was successful as 4 respondents referred others. In total 11 interviews were arranged and as a result, this sampling strategy was successful.

3.6.2 Sampling through Shuspace

Because of the difficulty of getting more respondents and the fact that data saturation was not reached, the researcher decided to advertise for participants through Shuspace. Shuspace is Sheffield Hallam University's portal which university PhD students can use for these purposes. This was not initially something that the researcher had in mind, but it was used to increase the number of the participants and minimise bias. According to Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2016) this technique is called self-selection sampling. It occurs when '[the researcher] allows each case, usually individuals, to identify their desire to take part in the research' (Saunders, Lewis, Thornhill 2016, p. 303). The need for respondents is advertised asking people to take part and the data is collected from those who respond.

Therefore, the announcement was posted on Shuspace by one of the administrators between March 2015 and July 2015. It explained what the research was about, who was eligible to take part and asked people to contact the researcher if they were interested in participating. This announcement is presented in Appendix 6. As shown in Table 5, the researcher was contacted by potential respondents and one participated in the study. The researcher then used the snowballing technique and managed to get a referral and conduct two interviews in total.

Overall, this study involved sampling using multi purposive techniques which is an appropriate approach often used in qualitative research (Bryman and Bell 2015, Creswell 2013, Gray 2014).

3.7 Data analysis using computer assistance

Data analysis in qualitative research consists of preparing and organising the data (i.e., text data as in transcripts, or image data as in photographs) for analysis, then reducing the data into themes through a process of coding and condensing the codes, and finally representing the data in figures, tables or a discussion (Creswell 2007, p. 148).

The interviews were analysed using MAXQDA, a computer assisted qualitative data analysis software (CAQDAS) that helps the researcher to evaluate and interpret qualitative texts in a systematic manner especially when dealing with large databases (Creswell 2007, Silverman 2010). This software works on a code and retrieve basis, meaning that it allows the researcher to code text and retrieve the coded text (Bryman and Bell 2011). Using CAQDAS can encourage the researcher to look at the data more closely, even line by line, which might be overlooked were it to be done manually (Creswell 2007). Therefore, as Flick (2014) states, this will increase the validity of analysis in qualitative research. However, one potential disadvantage is that the researcher needs time to learn how the software works (Creswell 2007). However, this was not the case in this instance as the investigator was already aware of how to use it.

Miles, Huberman and Saldana (2014) argue that transcription can be done in different ways which will produce different data. The interviews were transcribed verbatim when the data collection was complete in order to obtain a detailed description of the phenomenon investigated which was the EL of the holiday representatives. This process can be very time consuming, where even a simple transcription can take five times longer than the interview itself, or where each hour of speech requires five to six hours of transcription (Kuckartz 2014). However, for this process the researcher used Dragon Naturally Speaking, a speech recognition software which helped her speed up this process and managed to approximately halve the transcription time of each interview.

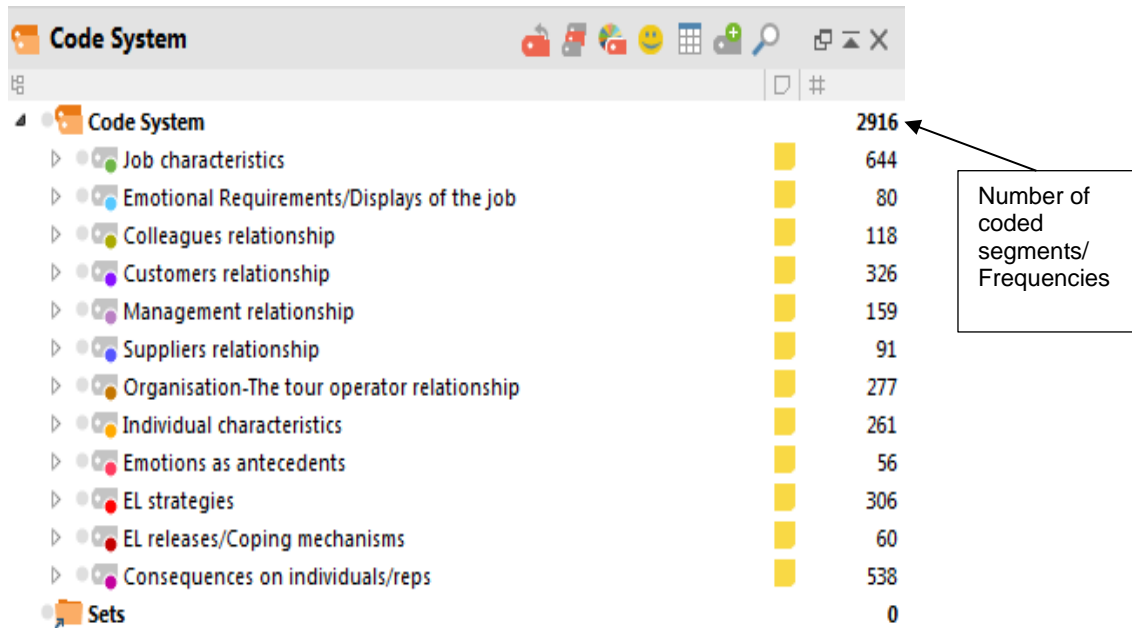
Data analysis does not start only when the researcher has finished data collection. It involves the whole process of qualitative research (Braun and Clarke 2006, Spencer et al. 2014). Kuckartz (2014) however, argues that the analysis of the interview starts with transcription when the researcher may develop ideas when listening to the audio recording. Therefore, during the transcription process the

researcher took notes on key ideas/points made by the interviewees which were later used in the data analysis.

An inductive thematic data analysis approach was adopted for this thesis to gain insight into the topic under investigation. Thematic analysis is a method that involves identifying, interpreting and reporting patterns within the data, which fits both objectivist and constructionist paradigms (Braun and Clarke 2006, Spencer, et al. 2014). For this study which follows a constructionist paradigm, thematic analysis is a suitable method for understanding the holiday representatives' experiences of EL and discovering new insights in this context. This is one of the most common approaches in qualitative research which unlike other strategies 'is not an approach that has an identifiable heritage or that has been outlined in terms of a distinctive cluster of techniques' (Bryman and Bell 2011, p. 571). In other words, although it is a popular data analysis method in qualitative research, there is no consensus among scholars on how it should be conducted and what the techniques are (Bryman and Bell 2015). This method does not require detailed theoretical knowledge as other approaches such as grounded theory and this makes it more accessible for early career researchers (Braun and Clarke 2006). It is a flexible approach that can be used across different research questions and epistemologies (Braun and Clarke 2006).

The transcripts of the interview were coded and then organised into themes. An inductive thematic analysis is data-driven where the themes identified are related to the data itself and there is little or no predetermined theory used to analyse the data (Braun and Clarke 2006). An example from a coded transcript is presented in Appendix 5. Braun and Clarke (2006, p.10) do accept that 'data is not coded in an epistemological vacuum'. For this reason, the researcher knew what to look for by using some initial themes based on data collection and the transcription of the interviews as mentioned before. However, they were refined further until the final themes were established, as seen in Figure 12, and when the researcher felt that they were appropriate for answering the objectives of the research. This method allowed the researcher to obtain a rich and detailed description of the data as it will be presented in the findings chapter.

Figure 12: Data analysis themes



Probably one of the most popular techniques for conducting thematic analysis was developed by Braun and Clarke (2006) who argue that there are six phases for conducting thematic analysis:

1. **Familiarising yourself with the data:** Transcribing data, reading and re-reading, noting down initial ideas;
2. **Generating initial codes:** Coding interesting features of the data in a systematic manner across the entire data set, collating data relevant to each code;
3. **Searching for themes:** Collating codes into potential themes, gathering all data relevant to each potential theme.
4. **Reviewing themes:** Checking if the themes work in relation to the coded extracts and the entire data set, generating a thematic 'map' of the analysis;
5. **Defining and naming themes:** Ongoing analysis to refine the specifics of each theme, and the overall story the analysis tells, generating clear definitions and names for each theme;
6. **Producing the report:** The final opportunity for analysis. Selection of vivid, compelling extract examples, final analysis of selected extracts, relating back to the analysis of the research question and literature, producing a scholarly report of the analysis.

However, the same authors argue that 'analysis is not a linear process of simply moving from one phase to next. Instead, it is more a recursive process, where movement is back and forth as needed throughout the phases' (p. 86). The process of analysis can blur the boundaries between these phases. The procedures for the analysis were largely in line with Braun and Clarke's (2006) approach. However, the researcher used CAQDAS for the process which made

the process faster and led to a less linear data analysis. Therefore, the researcher familiarised herself with the data in the transcription and then uploaded them in MAXQDA where the transcripts were coded one by one generating several codes and sub-codes. The researcher read the interview and coded accordingly. However, as the researcher progressed with each transcript these were continuously refined by changing their order or by generating new codes. Therefore, the investigator believes that this process was a movement between Phase 2, Phase 3 and Phase 4 with each interview. When all transcripts were analysed the researcher decided on the final names for the themes, or Phase 5 as seen in Figure 12. Chapters 4-7 of this thesis are the equivalent of Braun and Clarkes' (2006) Phase 6.

Using CAQDAS was an advantage for the researcher in terms of refining the codes as it allowed her to stay connected to the data which would have been more difficult if this had been a manual process (Kuckartz 2014). It also allowed the researcher to use participants' original wording by using the 'in-vivo' coding option in which respondents' statements are coded and are simultaneously used as codes in the code system (Kuckartz 2014). In other words, using the terms and language of the individuals being studied (Spencer et al. 2014). One problem with coding in qualitative research is that the context of what is being said is lost (Bryman and Bell 2011). Therefore, 'in-vivo' coding proved to be useful for parts of the analysis where the researcher believed that particular statements gave a more accurate description of holiday representatives' feelings and opinions. Some of these 'in-vivo' codes were renamed as the data analysis progressed and the themes were refined. Some examples of in-vivo codes are 'I'm more thick skinned', 'You have to change your person', 'It's relaxing working in a 5 star hotel', 'I felt I'm deceiving people' or 'They're selling it to you quite well'.

The software helped speed up the interpretation of data and presentation of the results. MAXQDA compiles all the text passages that had been assigned to one code or sub code (Kuckartz 2014). These were then exported into an excel table for further interpretation of the data. In addition, with the help of MAXQDA the researcher also managed to identify and analyse any overlaps between different categories and subcategories. What is called as 'Code-Relation Browser' visualises the intersection of codes which then can be exported in an Excel matrix

which contains all the text segments assigned to the intersected codes (Flick 2014). The researcher feels this has helped her produce a more accurate description or interpretation of the results.

3.8 Evaluation of the quality of the research design

According to Creswell (2007), in order to make sure that the research gives an accurate reflection of what the participants say, the researcher had to engage in certain validation strategies. 'Quality criteria are ways to ensure and demonstrate that your qualitative work is of high quality and therefore has validity' (Frost and Kinmond 2012, p.155). There are numerous standards of evaluating qualitative research using a wide array of complicated criteria which can be confusing for novice researchers (Creswell and Miller 2000).

Many authors support the idea that qualitative research cannot be evaluated using the same criteria as quantitative research (Golafshani 2003). Others mention that quality can be assessed using the same broad concepts of reliability and validity, but they need to be presented differently as the distinctive goals of qualitative research have to be taken into account (Bryman and Bell 2011, Mays and Pope 2000, Morse et al. 2002). Furthermore, other interpretivist researchers mention that it is not possible at all to establish specific criteria for good qualitative work (Miles, Huberman and Saldana 2014). However, the consensus is that qualitative researchers need to prove the credibility of their study (Creswell and Miller 2000).

Perhaps the most influential criteria were developed by Lincoln and Guba (1985) who highlighted the importance of developing alternative criteria to reliability and validity for qualitative research. Researchers should achieve trustworthiness criteria, which is the equivalent of validity in quantitative research. Credibility, dependability, transferability, and confirmability are the criteria for trustworthiness. According to Flick (2014), credibility is considered to be the most important one although overall the researcher should attain trustworthiness.

Dependability parallels reliability in quantitative research (Bryman and Bell 2011). When conducting interviews, this can be increased by interview training and pilot interviews (Flick 2014). As mentioned before, the researcher piloted the interview

before the main interviews which showed that it was the right choice of method that could help answer the research objectives. According to Flick (2014) reliability can also be increased in the interpretation stage through training and checking whether coding is done correctly by comparing it with different texts.

Furthermore, another way to enhance and evaluate *credibility* is through *peer debriefing* (Lincoln and Guba 1985). Therefore, this was an ongoing process in the form of oral and written feedback obtained from the PhD supervisors. The researcher feels that seeking the assistance of supervisors, added credibility to the study as they challenged the assumptions, methods and interpretations. *Confirmability* is concerned with ensuring that the researcher has acted in good faith in order to obtain objectivity (Bryman and Bell 2011). Therefore, for this study the PhD supervisors, and feedback obtained from academics in conferences attended by the researcher played this role.

The researcher made sure to include *thick descriptions* of the findings which would help the readers assess the potential *transferability* for other settings (Miles, Huberman and Saldana 2014). This thesis contributed to the context of the holiday representatives, but findings on EL can be applicable to other service sector jobs.

A procedure commonly used to establish the credibility of the research is to provide a rich description of the setting, the participants and the themes (Creswell and Miller 2000). Therefore, in this study the *credibility* was also increased by the use of CAQDAS as it allowed the researcher to be close to the data and not lose sense of it. It helped enhance the understanding of the data and also conduct a very detailed analysis and gave an in-depth reporting on participants' opinions, belief or feelings. *Credibility* was enhanced by the verbatim transcription of the interviews and by using participants' voices in the analysis and the interpretation of the data. In addition, according to Fossey et al. (2002) the use of quotations in supporting the researchers' interpretations will help the reader evaluate the *authenticity* of researcher's claims about the findings

Trustworthiness of qualitative research is also influenced by the choice between sampling techniques (Fossey et al. 2002). Using snowball sampling is a good strategy for identifying the right sample and for assuring the *adequacy* of

information gathered. Therefore, in order to increase the trustworthiness of this research, the researcher used snowball sampling in order to gather information about holiday representatives.

Bryman and Bell (2011) discuss *transparency* and refer to how clearly the researcher presents and explains the stages of the study. Transparency was applied by carefully explaining the stages of the research in detail. Transparency is a way of showing the coherence, credibility and the rigour of the research by communicating all the processes involved in the project (Frost and Kinmond 2012). Another criterion, *applicability*, refers to the usefulness of the findings (Corbin and Strauss 2008). Indeed, the findings of this research have brought new insights into the role of the holiday representatives and the influences of EL for these employees which will be presented in the findings chapter.

Overall the researcher has presented a few quality criteria which were deemed appropriate for evaluating the qualitative approach of this thesis. However, Corbin and Strauss (2008, p.305) argue that eventually 'it is the quality of the findings that matter and it is this quality that will be judged by others'. The following section will address the ethical considerations for this thesis.

3.9 Ethical considerations

Ethical issues were taken into consideration for this thesis. These should be considered throughout the whole research process: before data collection, during data collection and after the interview (Webster, Lewis and Brown 2014). A good ethical practice requires that the researcher follows ethical codes when conducting the research and that the research proposal is reviewed by an ethics committee for ethical soundness (Punch 2014). Therefore, before the data collection was started the research was approved by Sheffield Hallam University's Ethics Committee (SHUREC).

In addition, when the participants were contacted regarding participation in the study they were sent the participant information sheet (see Appendix 2). This contained details of the purpose of the research. It explained what EL of holiday representatives is, and also what was expected from them as potential

participants. They were also informed that the interviews would be recorded and they were assured confidentiality of the interviews as well as anonymity.

According to Webster, Lewis and Brown (2014), informed consent should be obtained from the participants. Therefore, when the interviews were conducted, the participants were given the consent form (see Appendix 3). For the interviews conducted in person, a hard copy was provided which the respondents signed and this was then filed and kept in a secure lockable cabinet at the university's premises. When the email interview was conducted, the consent form was at the top of the document sent and the respondents were also informed about it in the body of the email sent. For the Skype and telephone interview, the researcher obtained a verbal consent which was recorded with the participants' prior consent.

The issue of confidentiality and anonymity should be taken into consideration when the findings are being published and the researchers should do everything possible to make sure this ethical code is not breached (Bryman and Bell 2011, Webster, Lewis and Brown 2014). Anonymisation is a challenge in data collection and it means that the researcher should not include any information about participants that could lead to their identification (Punch 2014, Walford 2005). For this thesis, the researcher ensured aliases were used for respondents' names such as R1 - R21. Names of other individuals mentioned by respondents and names of companies were also anonymised. Names of destinations and hotels where holiday representatives worked were anonymised to protect the identity of the interviewees. The anonymisation process was done during the transcription of the interview. In order to make sure that nothing was missed in this process, the researcher checked this further during the coding process and when writing the findings. Also, regarding correspondence with the respondents, the university's email address was strictly used always as this is more secure than a personal email address. In addition, the conversations that the researcher had with participants on LinkedIn and Facebook were also deleted in order to protect the identity of the people contacted and assure confidentiality.

The researcher also took into consideration data protection (Webster, Lewis and Brown 2014). The transcription documents and any other documents that contained data about the participants were encrypted with passwords. In this way, it was ensured that nobody else would have access to these files. In addition, as

mentioned before, all paper documents were stored in a locked cabinet at the university's premises whilst the audio recordings of the interviews will be discarded when the PhD is finished. Finally, all devices that were used for accessing and storing research data were password protected.

3.10 Conclusion

This chapter has discussed the research design adopted for this thesis. This study aimed at investigating the EL of holiday representatives and its influences in the context of holiday representatives. Therefore, based on a constructionist ontology and interpretivist epistemology the researcher presented the justification for undertaking an inductive qualitative research. The use of in-depth interviews were deemed the most appropriate tool for exploring attitudes, opinions and feelings of these holiday representatives. This was followed by a discussion on the data collection phases, the rationale behind using purposive sampling and the data analysis technique using CAQDAS. The evaluation criteria of trustworthiness and more specifically credibility, dependability, transferability, confirmability as well as transparency and applicability were presented. This was followed by the discussion of ethical considerations of informed consent, anonymity and confidentiality including data protection. The next chapters will present the findings of this research.

Chapter 4 The work context of holiday representatives

4.1 Introduction

This chapter demonstrates the importance of the work context for the emotional labour (EL) of holiday representatives. They not only perform EL with the customers who influence the way in which they engage with them, presented in Chapter 5 but also perform EL with other stakeholders. In addition, many job characteristics and workplace interactions influence their emotions in different ways such as their capability to engage in EL and with various consequences for their well-being. The extensive discussion of the work context shows that in the case of EL of holiday representatives, job characteristics are a strong influence, perhaps the most important. This is a key finding, as the work environment is comprised of numerous elements which act as predictors of EL. This chapter firstly looks at the job role as an influence. It refers to certain characteristics of the job which are influences of holiday representatives' EL such as the complexity and intensity of the role, the uniqueness of the work environment and the relationships with suppliers. Further, section 4.2.3 discusses the role of the tour operator as an influence and will specifically focus on salary, training and autonomy. The relationship with the management and colleagues are presented next, in order to show how they act as influences of EL. The final part of this chapter introduces the context specific influences which are work environment factors, specific to the role of the holiday representative.

4.2 Job role

As presented in Figure 12 there were numerous findings on the job characteristics. These show that the role of a holiday representative is both complex and unique. In terms of the role requirements, face-to-face customer interaction is just a small

part as there are many other aspects that these employees have to take care of in order to ensure a hassle-free holiday for their customers. Therefore, the job role has an impact on holiday representatives and thus on how they behave. This section will present different job characteristics which most of the respondents mentioned as being very important influences of their behaviour in the workplace.

4.2.1 Complexity and intensity of the work role

Many respondents (R1, R2, R4, R5, R11, R12, R16, R20) discussed the fact that the role of the holiday representative is complex. Besides being customer facing, there are many other job requirements which are back office related or related to facilitating the holiday experience. This role is quite diverse, from dealing with customer complaints or enquiries and meeting sales targets, to administrative work or managing relationships with suppliers in the resort (R1, R5, R8, R14, R17).

We do airport transfers... we do pretty much anything here: paperwork, admin, airport transfers, welcome meetings, complaints, departure meetings [everything] (R1).

According to R15, there are different types of holiday representatives who have different responsibilities in the resort.

Transfer rep: *Airport transfers, guiding, helping airport manager in office to prep airport paperwork, meet and greet at airport;*

Kids rep: *Running and planning kids club sessions;*

Resort rep [or mainstream representative]: *Guiding, welcome meetings, selling excursions, dealing with customers' issues, airport transfers, airport meet and greet, health and safety paperwork for hotels/restaurant reviews, resort emergency 24hr phone, in winter running activities and days/nights out for long stay guests;*

Team leader: *Running a small resort team to ensure paperwork completed on time, giving authorisation for compensation, ensuring reps completed targets in sales and service, that reps kept to budgets i.e. petrol, weekly resort managers meetings;*

Airport rep: *Prep of all airport paperwork (transfer sheets, meet and greet sheets, ticket sales), ensuring a smooth operation for arrivals and departures of all customers, dealing with any airport issues, working with local handling agent for delays (R15).*

Furthermore, another aspect that makes the holiday representatives' role complex is their **high level of responsibility** such as health and safety or food and hotel checks. Some of them could oversee health and safety in the hotels where they are placed. This makes some of the representatives feel under a lot of pressure as R11 commented:

You've got to go in the hotels and you've got to make sure that [for example] all the balconies have got railings [or] you've got to make sure there are stickers on the windows. We've [the representatives] got to go and check that and do that, and it's on us. It's a lot of pressure (R11).

The representatives also have to keep what is called an '**emergency phone**' on which the holidaymakers can contact them on when something serious happens. This was described as a '**massive responsibility**' as it can be daunting or stressful for some representatives. It can make them feel on edge when it is their turn to keep this phone, which can even be their day off (R12).

You are asleep but you have to wake up and answer the phone. If it's your day off you know you can't go swimming or anything like that because you must be able to answer the phone [...] It was quite scary because you never knew what the call was [going to] come through (R12).

One of the most important roles that the holiday representatives have is representing their organisation as they are **the face of the tour operator**. They are the ones that customers go to with any queries or problems that they might have as they can be the only visible of their chosen tour operator (R19).

You're the tangible bit that they [the holidaymakers] can have a go at [if something is not going right] (R19).

The general opinion was that being a holiday representative involved working very hard constantly because of the numerous job requirements, as R11 commented.

I think it was the workload [the hardest thing that R11 had to do in the job]. The customers are part of it, aren't they? You are never [going to] get away from that are you (R11).

It is an intensive working environment especially when things are getting very busy such as when faced with holidaymakers' resort arrivals and departures, and having to deal with a large number of people (R13).

The minute I stepped out of the room there were 140 – 150 customers. As soon as you walked out the door [of] the hotel you're staying in, you're there [back on call]. It can be very intense (R13).

R4 even described holiday representatives as being like '*slaves running around [the hotels]*'.

Moreover, most respondents highlighted the fact that **selling** and **meeting targets** was a very important part of their job. They had to sell excursions and other extras to their customers, which was not something that they particularly enjoyed doing (R4, R11). The motivation behind this was to get their commission to compensate for the low wage. For example, one would earn an average £400 a month in commission from selling trips/excursions and other extras.

You could see other people getting really stressed out about selling [...] I didn't like that bit (R4).

There is a lot of pressure to make money [...] that's for you as well [because] you want to make money; you want to sell your trips so that you can get your commission (R11).

The sales pressure can make some representatives feel uncomfortable, especially as they described themselves as not being good salespeople (R7, R11).

I'm not very salesy anyway. I can't be like, very pushy with people to try and make them buy something. That's not me. But I think that it [selling] did make it [the job] harder (R7).

I don't like selling. I'm not a very pushy salesperson. I'll tell you [as a customer] if you need something 'I think you should go on this trip', but in the end, you feel like you have to do it because you need the money (R11).

One respondent even commented that the only purpose of welcome meetings was to sell tour operator's products to holidaymakers (R4).

That's the reason why we've got welcome meetings. It's not to welcome you to the island and be like [happy, but] it's to sell. That's the purpose of welcome meetings, to sell excursions (R4).

In addition, one respondent mentioned the fact that the management was too insistent regarding meeting targets which created an even more tense and unproductive working environment for the representatives (R21). R4 added that they could even get fired if they did not meet their targets.

Yes, some managers were focussed on sales and this could create a much more stressful environment (R21).

At every end of the week they'd have meetings and if you don't sell you literally get sacked. You could be the best holiday rep in the world, good with the customers and everything, but if you [are] not selling [and] you are not making the company any money... Yes, I didn't realise that, but that's how it goes (R4).

Overall, sales was a source of frustration. As R13 indicated, if the pressure to sell would not be so high then holiday representatives, would be utilised better in terms of providing an improved customer service. It would allow them to help the customers in a more efficient way and thus increase job performance.

I think you should always have [a] human in the resort because you always have someone [a customer] who doesn't understand something or have left their brain at the airports. So, the human touches can be utilised better if the pressure [to sell so much] wasn't on the reps (R13).

Some representatives might not feel comfortable selling, but they have to do it because they either need the money or they need to meet targets which are on their mind. R3 mentioned that doing this can make the representatives feel that disappointed in themselves and having to hide their true emotions when selling in order to meet the requirements imposed by the tour operators.

So, I felt in a way [that] I'm deceiving people if I'm trying to convince them to go for these excursions. And even though I had to sell, I didn't do a good job convincing people because I wasn't convinced myself that this is actually a good thing that they should go for. This is why I wasn't good in the sales part and I had to always put on the mask to try to be enthusiastic about the things that [tour operator name] wanted me to sell (R3).

Likewise, R13 commented on feeling 'guilty' when selling because the customers could buy the excursion at a better price.

Sometimes they could have got it [an excursion] cheaper from other places. So, you feel a bit guilty, but you need [your wages] (R16).

The pressure to sell can be intense and can even become the only thing the representatives are thinking about when dealing with customers (R2).

When you're talking to someone [a customer] all that is going around in your head it's 'I need to mention the sales, make them buy something. Hopefully [they'll] buy something' (R2).

However, when there is a clash between representatives' values and opinions and the things that they should sell, they might go against the rules of the

employer. For example, R11 commented on being **truthful** with her customers when having to upsell various trips/products that she believed were unnecessary for them.

Because I got morals I would be very honest about it. [...] [she would tell the customers about the food not being good]. The company wants you to sell, to upsell sides [and tell customers] 'you really need these you really need the extra legroom [on the plane]' and you don't even need it... 'you really need to pre-book your seats now'... why? For no reason, just so I can get an extra tenner. But I'd say to people in work now ' [...] you'd be able to share one [side/food] between you. And then if you want an extra one when it comes out it only takes a couple minutes to get an extra portion, I can get you a portion then'. It's better to order less and add to it than order too much and leave it and you waste money'. That's the way that I see it. So, I would be quite honest with them (R11).

Likewise, R16 mentioned.

I was always honest with people [who] I was selling to so I wasn't worried that that's going to come back to me (R16).

4.2.1.1 Physically and mentally demanding job

This job was described as very demanding and tiring both at a physical and an emotional level (R12):

I mean I would say that it's a hard job. It is emotionally demanding [and] it's physically demanding (R12).

All respondents discussed the fact that there are many physical demands in the work context of the holiday representatives. Most respondents have identified **working long hours** as being one of the most intense physical demands of the job. They were expected to work as many hours as the job required, and could even end up having to work around 50 or 60 hours a week often at the expense of their sleep. The representatives worked late because of excursions that they needed to guide, going in night clubs with the guests, dealing with airport transfer and delays, or even because of administrative work that they had to do (R4). Another reason for working long hours was because they needed to be on call at night including for non-emergency enquiries (R9).

So, night excursions [I had] like club nights. When I worked in [destination name]...oh God, [we had to] drop people off at the hotel at [midnight] and then we had to take them, [at] half one in the morning, to all the clubs, [and] finish that at 3 o'clock. So, you would get to bed at 4 o'clock and you'd have to be up for 6 o'clock just another day (R4).

If the guests needed, they would just call me up and I would just go and meet them at their hotels, discuss any queries or any issues that they were having

which sometimes was at 1 o'clock in the morning. So, you're always constantly working (R9).

The working hours were described as difficult (R3) and they made them feel very tired (R7), emotionally exhausted (R12). Despite all of this, they still needed to be smiling, and be jolly and happy (R7).

To be honest it was exhausting, the whole [plan] was really exhausting. The working hours were really rough (R3).

I guess it's quite tiring because we'd have a day and a half off in the week [...] they were long days and to stay happy and positive all that time it can be quite draining. Yes, you are tired but you can't sit down and have a nap somewhere in front of the guests or something like that. You have to be up and walking around and smiling (R7).

So [...] the hours might be very, very long and you're tired as well as emotionally drained (R12).

As one respondent mentioned:

The amount of hours worked directly affects the way you work and [your] emotions (R12).

Furthermore, the findings revealed that **weather** was another physical demand of high importance for the respondents and affected their ability to perform their job. Weather was a problem usually when the representatives were based in a hot destination/country. Hot weather put a strain on their bodies which made them feel tired and made it more difficult for them to keep the appropriate professional demeanour (R5).

The heat is difficult. We were working in [destination name] and there were like 35 – 40° [...] It's quite hard to maintain that professional standards when you're sort of really hot and sweaty and tired (R5).

Therefore, the respondents mentioned that having to wear their uniform when it was so hot did not help them cope with this physical demand as it made things even worse for them (R1).

The weather is a big thing. You have to be in uniform. Standard for a guy is shirt [...] belt, trousers and professional work shoes. For women it's shirt, skirt, dolly shoes and a [scarf], which is a fold up handkerchief so it's a lot easier for the women because you have a little more flesh on show. For guys, it can be a little bit hard when you're walking around in trousers and socks and shoes. It can get hot (R1).

In addition, the respondents also commented that **walking between hotels** was another physical aspect that affected their job performance. It became more difficult especially in hot weather for those who did not have a car as, on occasion they needed to carry heavy materials with them (R4).

Some places it was just really hot. So, if you didn't drive you had to walk. After you got dropped off at your first hotel you had to walk to all your other hotels. I used to have to walk for like half an hour from one place to another place, to another place dragging along this suitcase full of stuff to sell (R4).

On the other hand, R7 mentioned that weather did not have a negative effect and that it was an enjoyable aspect of the job which helped create a good mood.

I think when you are working somewhere nice and it's sunny it does make you feel better. I think that definitely affects your mood. If you just stood in England in the rain for that many hours during the summer you probably wouldn't be quite as happy (R7).

Therefore, they still needed to smile and provide a good customer service although they might have felt tired, physically drained or flustered. The physical demands such as long hours, dealing with high temperatures and walking in hot weather affected their motivation and the way in which they interacted with the customers and that made it more difficult for the representatives to provide a friendly service (R2, R21).

Obviously in [destination name] the highest temperature was 55°. We had to walk everywhere or get the bus everywhere [...] It drained you and you felt really tired and when you felt tired and sweating you had to slap a smile on your face (R2).

Long days in the heat as well as 12+ hour days at busy airports could make you physically tired and would make it harder to give 100% in terms of friendly service with a smile (R21).

4.2.2 Uniqueness of the work environment

The findings also show that the work environment of holiday representatives is also different or unique for various reasons. Firstly, the respondents commented the fact that this job can be unpredictable in nature. This means that anything could happen at any time without any previous signs/warnings. The representatives mentioned that unpredictability in terms of facing bad/extreme situations such as holidaymakers' deaths, losing belongings, getting arrested or having medical emergencies made this job even more challenging (R10).

It's quite hard really because loads of things can happen that you don't expect and that can be the demanding point of it (R10).

These unpredictable challenging situations described by R12 as the 'dark side' of the job which can make them feel down.

It does make you feel sad that you know there is a darker side to the holiday making that no-one would tell you about (R12).

Unpredictability also applies to **customer interaction**, customers' moods and behaviours, as R16 commented.

I had a horrible couple [unhappy about an excursion that they purchased from R16] and they were threatening me outside the hotel [...] they were really horrible; they were really drunk and vile. With people like that you are really nervous of. You never know who's going to come to your desk (R16).

This work environment is unique because of the very '**quick turnaround**' in terms of the type of customer interaction. More specifically, the representatives could be dealing with a large variety of customers over a short period of time (R13).

You can literally go from one client whose member of family has died in the UK and you are dealing with that [having to] get them back to the UK, or their husband or wife has died while they're overseas on their holidays and you're dealing with that, and the next person you're dealing with is Mr. and Mrs. Smith [who] are there [on holiday] with their seven-year-old twins and you've got to be up and jolly for those two twins. It's a very strange industry and I don't think there's any industry where you deal with this face-to-face [situations] and in such a quick turnaround as well (R13).

The fact that each work day can be different in relation to this job, can make some employees feel depressed. R4 mentioned that this happened because some representatives could not cope with this as they found it difficult and challenging to change between so many emotions.

That's why [never having the same day] some people get depressed. They don't like that kind of stuff. They just prefer to have nine to five and know what they're doing and that's it. But then when you have a job like this [where] one minute everything is fine, one minute someone is dying [or] one minute something is happening here, you have to change, change, change, change, change. Some people just can't handle that (R4).

However, some respondents saw the unpredictability of the job as a challenge, a positive and an enjoyable experience. More specifically, not knowing what complaints, problems or enquiries customers might have can make these representatives feel excited and content (R1).

That's the fun part, working with people. You never [know] when somebody comes up to you, you never know what they're going to say, and that's why I like it [...] I sort of enjoy customer complaints because they are different. It's a little bit of a problem solving. It's a challenge. Don't get me wrong, if I've got complaint after complaint, after complaint it can get a little bit crazy, but all in all it's a challenge. It makes you really happy, it makes you enthusiastic. There's always something new (R1).

In addition, some respondents felt that this job involved living in an enclosed environment. It was the same place where they worked, lived and relaxed and it was difficult to separate these aspects. It was not possible for the holiday representatives to entirely break away from their work environment (R5, R12).

[Repping] is like a bubble. You're living in a bubble because you're living with colleagues. You've always got friends around you, [and] you're in bars at night time doing exciting things (R5).

The rep world is like you're living in a goldfish bowl. I found this quite difficult... it's the best way to describe it because everybody knows who you are. It's like you're a mini celebrity [in the destination/ resort] so whatever you get up to everyone would know about it, really. It's very hard to keep secrets, if you can keep something quiet for two days that's a great [unclear word] because everybody is looking at you. The guests are looking at you, you got to remember that you've got guests roaming around the resort and they need to see you behaving [appropriately] (R12).

4.2.2.1 Lifestyle and blurring between work and 'fun'

Many respondents discussed how lifestyle was one benefit of the job. Being in a nice place, a new destination with nice weather, are perks of the job or enjoyable aspects of their role which would be luxuries in their normal life (R19, R20).

I was living there I was waking up in the morning and looking at the [mountains] [and] the snow and I had so many good days because I was constantly there (R19).

It [the job] allows you certain luxuries that you wouldn't get in your normal life. In a normal day to day job you don't get to go skiing most days. You don't get to spend [six months] living in a ski resort. It just doesn't happen (R20).

The personal social life was also described as an enjoyable aspect of their job (R2).

It's the social side really, that's the only good side [meaning the reps who you are with] (R2).

However, some respondents mentioned that work and lifestyle needs to be balanced. Meaning that representatives should go out and have fun with their personal friends during their free time, but at the same time they should

remember that they still have to work and that rest is very important (R3). If not, this lifestyle and in particular partying too much with their friends can even lead to problems with the job and management (R19).

They [my colleagues] seem to want to party all the time and as much as I like partying and drinking once in a while I don't like it to be very regular and I just need rest as well. They were very party people, party crazy (R3).

If you turn up to a shift and you're [still] a bit hangover, you're not as effective and other people have to do your work [...] If you're with your friends then that's fine, but if you're there with people who you don't trust [or] you don't like [they] might sort of pass that message up further up the chain [the fact that] you [are] drunk again or you're hungover again [and that] you are not pulling your weight. Then you can get in trouble for that and especially [if] the person that grasses on you is pally with management. Then, yes, it's going to be a lot worse for you (R19).

Also, the findings show that the lines between work and fun are blurred in this role. Work-life balance might not be easily achieved as the tour operators require them to go out with the customers and engage in leisurely activities (R19).

You are encouraged to get involved with the antics of the students, to have fun and be fun and look like you're having fun and all that. It's quite easy to get that wrong, it's quite easy to accidentally have too much fun and be a bit of a mess (R19).

Respondents mentioned that in this job they had to engage in entertainment activities such as cabaret nights, or hosting different events which were not something that they liked. Some started to feel bored as the novelty aspect of these activities disappeared and became too repetitive after a while, but they still had to do it in order to achieve high customer service questionnaire (CSQ) scores (R2, R16).

Like I said, I went to [event name] night [which] was every Wednesday in the hotel [...] The first one it was dead fun [...] but after few times I went out, it was really boring. I really didn't want to be there but obviously it was nice for the people to see that I was there. I had to pretend that I was having fun and get involved because if I was having fun then they [would] feel like they were having fun as well, but it was really boring. It was quite repetitive but it was one of them things that it [did boost] the CSQ [customer service questionnaire](R2).

I think [when] doing the mini disco with the children you just have to smile all the time and as soon as you go in the back [back stage] you [just get to] sit down and let your face relax (R16).

Moreover, another negative of the job, related to lifestyle, was that it had a bad influence on the love life and representatives' personal relationships which made some of them feel annoyed with their job (R15).

For several years I was always late to my boyfriend's birthday meal as the job would demand for me to stay. In these personal situations, you could feel a bit resentful about not having a 9-5 job (R15).

The respondents emphasised that this job did not allow them to settle and have a normal life. From a personal point of view, it can make it impossible for them to be in stable relationships mainly because they need to move around resorts and change the destination where they work on a regular basis which can make them feel lonely (R1). R18 commented on getting irritated by this and decided to leave the job.

With this job, it's hard to settle because you're constantly on the move [and] you meet new people all the time. So, it does have its negatives as well [...] it's hard to get in relationships when you are overseas. It can be a bit lonely in that sense (R1).

[Decided to quit] I kind of got a bit annoyed and frustrated and I had enough of the repping system and the repping life [...] you're here there and everywhere. I wanted to try staying somewhere [unclear word] rather than moving around (R18).

For some representatives, the attractions of the lifestyle can make them get stuck doing this job until it is too late to make a change, as R4 commented.

I know this lady, she [...] was about 54, and she's been doing that job since she's been 18. When I told her I was leaving she [said] 'you know what? I wish I would have done that'. She was 'you'd better go now because you'll get stuck, you get stuck doing this'. She said [that when] she gets back to England on her break, she'd have no home, she'd have no family [...] She [said] 'you'd have nothing, you're a holiday rep you live in apartments, hotels whatever but then when you go back home it's like...you don't have anything to show for' [...] She's still there, moving around doing all sort of stuff and just nothing stable. That's it stable, you're not [going to be able to do anything] (R4).

However, R18 mentioned how this type of lifestyle was good for some individuals who enjoyed this type of 'nomadic life'.

A lady that I worked with in [destination name] was 40 when we were in [destination name]. She's still doing it now and she's probably done it for 10 years now. She literally [works] summer and winter so she's in different places constantly and she's enjoying it and she's happy doing that (R18).

4.2.3 Managing relationships with suppliers

In addition, as presented in Figure 12, the findings show that another important role that the representatives have is to manage the relationships with suppliers in the resort such as hotels, excursion providers, coach drivers or bar and restaurant owners. This relationship is important for these holiday representatives as it can have an influence on their customer service and their emotional well-being as well.

Therefore, some respondents discussed that having good relationships with the suppliers helped them when they had to deal with customer-related issues. It increased the job performance as it assisted them solve these problems in a more efficient and an effective way (R15).

I always had very good relationships with hoteliers, agents, handling agents etc. as I knew the importance of them when I needed help and vice versa. At [airport name] airport I had a very good relationship with my handling agent and would often have coffee with them and brought in cake for the team. On occasions when we had delays I always got completely updated with events and if I needed help with seating or to organise priority queues for check in, they would be more than happy to oblige [...] These relationships [with the suppliers] influenced me a lot as it meant I was able to perform my job to the best I could (R15).

According to the respondents, the relationship with the hoteliers was one of the most important to manage because most of the customer-related problems could be solved only with their help. Getting these resolved quickly meant that the customers would not complain after their holiday (R12).

For you to be able to resolve things for your guests, you need to have good relationship with your hotels because maybe the guest is unhappy with their room and if you have a good relationship with your hotel then you know you might be able to get the room changed [...] is very important for keeping the guests happy (R12).

Some respondents mentioned how these good relationships were financially rewarding for the holiday representatives as it helped them save money and get different things such as food or drinks for free, thus compensating for when they could not sell and get their commission (R9).

If you are not selling enough car hires or excursions and your commission rates are really low, you would need to have a good relationship with the suppliers because a lot of the time they would offer you discounts in their restaurants or give you a free meal. So, you kind of sometimes do it for your own benefit as well [in order] just to survive (R9).

Suppliers were described also as sources of emotional support meaning that they can help the representative in terms of dealing with more negative customer interactions (R11). As R18 mentioned, the reception staff warned them about possible complaints from customers which made the representatives better prepared when facing them.

So, you are all working together and we all put faces the same when people [customers] are annoying and stuff like that (R11).

A lot of people complained to reception there so the hotel staff would give me a heads up so I would know who was coming and what their complaint was before they came which helped (R18).

R4 discussed how, the suppliers would make some representatives' jobs more difficult when they did not try to manage these relationships which then led to bad reviews and complaints from customers.

A lot of reps they get off on the wrong foot with the managers [of the hotels] I mean if you go in there and you'd be like 'oh yeah I'm [tour operator]' [then] they would be like 'yeah and?' and they would just make your life a living hell. They wouldn't give you anything; they wouldn't do anything for you [...] All summer they're just getting bad reviews [because] the management [of the hotel] can't be [asked] (R4).

The findings also show that there were other challenges in terms of the relationship with the suppliers. Some suppliers did not want to help the representatives, they might have been too relaxed or they just did not care. This could make the representatives frustrated especially when they needed to arrange various things for their customers (R6, R18).

If you tried and booked transport, if you were trying to book coaches or boats for evening cruises or venues or [type of entertainment] nights, in a way they [the suppliers] were very relaxed, very laid back. They were like 'it will happen tomorrow or three days later' and your event is happening tomorrow night (R6).

If [there were] only a few guests going [to stay in their hotel] from [tour operator name] then they weren't so bothered about the complaints (R18).

Other times, the representatives were finding it tough to have and manage a relationship with their supplier because of the language barrier, as commented by R16.

The language barrier was sometimes a bit hard [unclear word] the staff sometimes they couldn't understand what you were saying. It could be quite difficult (R16).

Overall, R21 commented that these bad relationships with suppliers increased the job pressure. In relation to this, there is evidence which shows that the holiday representatives had to hide their true feeling when dealing with challenging supplier situations or relationships. They did this in order to maintain a professional working relationship (R19).

If you had a bad relationship with suppliers it would make your job a lot harder and a lot more stressful (R21).

You just need to try and keep them [the suppliers] sweet [...] You see them every week and you sort of smile and are nice (R19).

On the other hand, R19 also pointed out a situation when he showed anger and frustration towards his suppliers, a few ski instructors who did not perform well for his clients. However, R19 mentioned that he only did this out of frustration with the customer and 'for show' in front of his client to ensure that he was satisfied with the fact that his grievance was being dealt with.

There was one [school] group I had where the [school] teacher in charge of the group was really upset. He was not happy with the standards of the [ski] lessons. The first day [when] something was wrong I spoke with the ski school and tried sort it. Then he [the school teacher] still wasn't happy [and] I couldn't make him stop being annoyed with the standards of the ski school. So, I got the guy from the ski school and all the ski teachers around me and I was telling them off, telling them that they needed to do better [...] so I did it so the teacher would see that I was doing something [...]. He [the ski instructor] [...] had lots of experience as a [ski instructor] and I was doing that mainly for show, just to sort of make it look like I was trying to get rid of this problem [the school teacher's grievance] (R19).

4.3 The influence of the tour operator

As shown in Figure 12, the findings reveal that the organisation / the tour operator can have an important impact on how the holiday representatives behave during customer interaction and how they engage in EL. More specifically, the respondents discussed about the different organisational support systems in relation to their employers. For example, some respondents felt that they were supported by the organisation in terms of their job and were satisfied with this level of support. As R3 commented:

The main influencers [in the job] [is] the fact that if you know that you are treated fairly and you have the support that you need to [do] the job; that's something that influences you [answer to question looking at how different aspects in the workplace influenced R3's behaviour in the job] (R3).

However, the findings also show respondents' dissatisfaction with the tour operator in terms of their **job conditions** and particularly the living conditions (R9). Although the representatives receive free accommodation from the tour operator, not having proper living conditions can make some representatives feel taken for granted, very upset and unhappy. This consequently can make them not be able to manage their emotions efficiently during customer interactions (R3).

The apartments weren't sort of decorated [meaning] that you could do your own home cooking in the apartment. Because the cooking facilities were rubbish we would have to eat out. You had to wash your own uniform, but there was no washing facility (R9).

So, this place it was a lovely hotel, but the room I was in had no windows, it was not a proper room for a person to live in. It had no windows, the air conditioning wasn't working [and] I felt that I can't breathe in this room and I had cockroaches [...] I felt I [was] suffocating in the room being so hot [...] So that made me really unhappy, just the fact that I had a lot of cockroaches [...] On the way back from an excursion I was asking my manager if I could change the room and they could put me in another room and they told me 'No it's not possible because all the rooms are like this and we cannot move you'. So that made me really unhappy and I was even on the point of crying. That was happening on the way back from an excursion with the guests in the coach. So, of course, this thing affected the way I interacted with the customers because that time I was so unhappy and so sad that I could not have a proper interaction with the customers. I wouldn't care what they would say or think because I was so badly affected. It's my life, it's where I sleep and it affected me so much (R3).

In addition, R5 also raised the concern about safety of the reps in the resort. Sometimes they might live very far from where they need to work which could increase the risk of getting hurt whilst travelling home at the end of the workday. For example:

It's quite a lot of crime problems in that resort [...] staff was taking maybe unnecessary risks because the company were putting them in places that maybe [weren't] suitable. If you are a young person and you work in the resort then you probably should be living where you're working so you'd walk safely between the places, but I guess where we were put, with both companies [tour operators' names- this representative worked for], we were put on the outskirts of the resort where it's obviously a lot cheaper [for the tour operators] (R5).

The respondents also discussed the organisational support in terms of dealing with **difficult personal issues**. Some representatives can feel at ease when they know that the tour operator has policies in place to help them avoid potential negative feelings experienced when a customer might be very rude or even to the point of personally attacking the representative (R1).

Customer complaints, they can get bad. If it gets over that mark and it gets personal [...] we can withdraw our rep service [...] So that was good for me to find out just in case in the future it happens again [personal attacks from customers] (R1).

If the company does not support the representatives in relation to **personal issues** such as illness and medical emergencies, it can make them very upset which can even lead to the intention to quit and in some cases actually quitting their job (R5).

I think a lot of the time there was no real strategy there to look after people [the representatives] if they got home sick or if they were having problems. It was quite easy just to brush it under the carpet. That happened a few times with both companies [...] I think they left the job afterwards because they didn't feel that they were really supported through it (R5).

However, some representatives commented that they felt supported by the company in terms of their promotion and career development (R1).

In terms of whether the company support you, they do. If you want to strive and if you want to go higher in the company and if you tell them and really push and try hard then they will support you every single way to get there (R1).

In addition, at times the company might not be supportive in terms of the career development which could make some representatives feel unappreciated (R15).

I felt more like just a number with [tour operator name] as they were less personal. For example, when it came to placements I had to go work in [destination name] for the winter even though there was a role I wanted to work in [destination name] where I had started to settle. They would not let me change roles from airport to resort rep. Then when I returned between the winter and summer season (when it was convenient for the company) I was employed as the resort rep as the rep they had did not like the position (R15).

Moreover, according to a few respondents, the tour operators did not support the representatives **when they did not work hard enough and were not performing to their standards** (R1).

The only time when they don't support you is when you don't try hard enough, or when you don't work hard enough [and] you don't hit any targets or you are just down [on] things (R1).

R5 also commented on the fact that the representatives **can feel insecure** in terms of their job and the destinations which the tour operators might ask them to move to. This aspect was a reason to quit the job for R5.

From a personal perspective, I think they like to keep their staff unsettled and they could move you at any moment. So yes, there is no real stability there [...] I think [in terms of] job security they kept you on your toes. There's always that fear...because [you] never knew where you're going to be next month because they could move you so easily. And that's one of the reasons I left the job because I only [wanted to do it] for two three years, but every time that you start in a new resort and a new season and you're having to start again it's quite a tiring process (R5).

Furthermore, some representatives mentioned about the organisation **treating them unfairly** in particular relation to job insecurity when they were not meeting the performance standards (R5). It seems that if the representatives feel they are

treated unfairly, they are unhappy and unsatisfied with their job and not able to perform at their best as they feel the tour operator does not 'care' about their personal/individual well-being (R3).

If you didn't reach your target's they were quite open that you might not get a job next year working for them which is not fair (R5).

If I would feel that there is support and that I'm treated fairly, then I would definitely sell more excursions because I would be happy, I would love the job and everything else. So, they made it clear that they don't care about the individual but they just want the job to be done (R3).

Unfair treatment from the tour operators can occur under the form of representatives' employment contracts. For example, R13 mentioned that unfair contract terms can make some representatives feel upset and unappreciated.

[Tour operating is] an industry that falls between so many other areas and needs to be improved [the] contract, the way we are employed [...] a good example is: I'm UK employed I don't get UK bank holiday but I also don't get [destination- nationalities mentioned]; I don't get their bank holidays [...] If I'm UK employed you should be honoured UK bank holidays or whatever [...] If I was in the UK, if I lived in the UK or I was working in the UK and they didn't give me a holiday, double pay, overtime and a half on my day off and so on, you'd get upset, wouldn't you? It's not right and that's just a small example (R13).

The respondents also mentioned other **organisational policies and procedures** that the representatives could show their disagreement with. For example, when the representatives got uncensored customer reviews it upset them and made it more difficult for them to interact with their customers (R1).

It's just ridiculous, I think they [customer reviews] should be censored or should be taken out [...] because that's not fair on us. To be able to go out and work with the next amount of people who'd just started the holiday, that's not fair (R1).

R2 for example, showed disagreement in terms of the fact that the representatives were not given a cash float to work with when selling which was inconvenient when dealing with customer complaints and had to use their own money to reimburse them and resolve the complaint.

It was a bit strange. If you had a complaint and you didn't have any money on you [to reimburse customers] you'd have to use your own money. But if you had the float from selling trips and things like that you'd use that [to reimburse] (R2).

Also, in some resorts the tour operators did not seem to have enough representatives which put even more pressure on the existing ones (R12):

I'd spoken to another rep just recently [and] she said that there are actually less people working in the resorts. I think their job role has slightly changed because [obviously they can't as much] I'm guessing [there is a lot of pressure] (R12).

R4 felt that the more talented the representatives were the more the organisations took advantage of this and exploited them.

So, if you're really good at a lot of stuff don't let them [the employers] know because they would overwork you (R4).

Related to this, R8 commented that the reason why some representatives left this intensive job was because the company did not explain properly what the job entailed, in particular in the recruitment process. The tour operators 'sold' the job very well and consequently the holiday representatives had a different initial perception. R4 mentioned that when she saw how the job really was she felt deceived by the tour operator (R4).

The reasons they [colleagues of R8 employed as representatives] went home was because the job wasn't explained clearly enough to them in the application and the recruitment process (R8).

When they [the tour operators] came to college everyone applied for it because this was [the] job from heaven; travelling, they're doing this, they're paying for this and they're paying for that, you're doing all this fun stuff overseas [...] but then the reality is that all that fun that they mentioned to you it is like one day a month [...] and for the rest of the month you are working [...] They make it sound really good; probably if they didn't sell it to me I wouldn't have applied for it (R4).

Moreover, the respondents also discussed the influence of rewards and recognition in relation to the organisational support. Some respondents commented on the fact that receiving customer service awards made them feel appreciated, more confident in terms of their role performance and thus increased their motivation (R15). Others discussed how office parties or 'season jollies' were very rewarding to them (R10).

I received awards for service, for raising customer service results for the airport along with recognition of thanks from management in response to customer letters. Having a physical award makes you feel motivated as you have proof that you are doing your job well (R15).

It's very rewarding [when] you'd have the end of season jollies. You'd have your social element to it as well (R10).

As R21 commented, the awards and this type of recognition were more important than the monetary rewards as it made them feel appreciated for their effort.

Customer service awards made you feel noticed more than just the monetary rewards (R21).

R5 also added the need for other non-monetary rewards such as extra free time when the representatives experience burnout.

They [the tour operator] could have rewarded people [the representatives] working night-time shifts by maybe working less during the day. So, you're less tired (R5).

On the other hand, not receiving any recognition from the company either monetary or non-monetary can make the representatives feel discouraged, taken for granted and less motivated in particular when they would go the extra mile for their customers (R20).

There are certain times when it makes you feel taken for granted I'd say. You sat there doing a job but you know it doesn't matter how well [you] do this [you are thinking] 'I'm not going to get praise for it' [...] you don't get any praise for going that extra mile or for looking after the guests [...] if somebody [a customer] had written that they've had a really bad transfer they [the managers] would be on the phone asking you why the transfer hasn't gone well. If somebody had written that the quality of evening activities wasn't up to standard you'd hear about it, but if someone had written that they had a great week [and] that the reps had gone the extra mile, it was very rare that you would get a phone call praising you for what you've done which it can be quite disheartening at times. (R20).

4.3.1 Holiday representatives are not paid well

Many respondents expressed their frustration in relation to the salary they got when employed. The salary of the holiday representatives is very low for the number of hours that they work, the numerous job requirements, and for the amount of pressure involved (R11).

The wages for what you have to do isn't enough; for the hours that you are working, for the amount of stress that you are put on there (R11).

Although the representatives get free accommodation and other incentives that come with the job, the salary is still very low especially when working in a destination where it is expensive to live in (R9) which seemingly is not something that is taken into consideration by the tour operators (R20).

I used to get paid €400 a month for the time that I was there [...] and they'd pay for my apartment which [was] very small and very old [...] You get used to it, but it was such an expensive island that €400 wasn't enough to survive (R9).

As a rep, you earn about £300 a month. It's peanuts [comparing to] what you're earning in real life terms because you take your salary, but then they [the tour operator] take off money for your accommodation, they'd take off money for your food and ski hire and all the perks that come with the job until you're earning peanuts (R20).

R5 commented that because of the low salary the tour operators would take advantage of the representatives and make them work more.

From a personal point of view, the reps spend too much time in each hotel [working]. I guess it's because we're cheap; if you're earning £450 – £500 a month, that's a euro an hour. I guess staff is so cheap [that] I guess they can afford to put staff in hotels for longer in the hope that they manage to sell something. Because I think one trip a day would pay for that staff (R5).

R3 commented that *this* 'was **exploitation**, to work that much for that [pay]'.

Therefore, some respondents mentioned that they decided to quit the job because they were not paid enough for the amount of work that was involved (R11).

I think that if I had more wage and I was getting paid better and I felt that my living conditions were better, then I probably would have done it again but it wasn't working (R11).

4.3.2 Training

All respondents talked about their opinions and attitudes in relation to training which shows this is an important organisational factor for how they perform their job and more specifically EL. Whilst some interviewees commented on their satisfaction with the training received, others showed their dissatisfaction and discussed how this could have been better.

The representatives are trained both in the UK and when they go off to the resorts. The intensive overseas training, in particular, can make the representatives feel prepared (R4, R16). They are more confident in terms of selling. They go on the excursions that they need to sell can make it easier for them to pitch it to the holidaymakers.

[There is] intense training I would say, not the UK one, but the one overseas. We went overseas for a week's training and that's where they'd [the organisation] really test you. In my training week, we went to [destination name] and they really put you through Sodom and Gomorrah and they tempt with everything because it was so busy in [destination name] there were flights in and out every day. Every single day there were people [holidaymakers] going on the flight going home [it was 'go, go, go'] and it was horrible. And I was thinking 'this week I am not going to go [for training], I'm not going to do anything' because every morning we had exams (R4).

We were always given a lot of training, a lot of training. We used to have a week before the summer started in the UK, and then there would be more training in the resorts as well. So, you were quite well prepared (R16).

R3 also commented on the fact that training was helpful in terms of dealing with the demands of the job and performing well.

Yes, I think it prepared you for that [the demands of the job]. I think the training was good enough to help you do the job properly (R3).

Although the representatives mentioned that training made them feel prepared and confident with the job, it was sometimes not enough because of the unpredictable nature of the situations that could occur (R17).

It [the training] involved every possible scenario, complaints mainly, but also assault, delays, handling stress. I don't think any amount of training can fully prepare anyone for this job [because] you never know what you will face. Every day is different and so is every customer (R17).

The findings also reveal that there is a lot of learning on the job such as asking colleagues questions or managers. For example, some representatives might not receive the pre-resort training, which can make their job more difficult as they might feel less confident that they are doing their job well when interacting with customers (R9).

I think had I had some pre-resort training, training from before I arrived into resort. [...] that would probably have benefited me more. Because I just did on the job training it was slightly different, I didn't have as much training. So, I never had the handbook to look back into or any notes that I [would have taken]. I just had to do it from what I could remember or I'd have to ask lots of questions. Yes, it was a lot more difficult to know whether what I was doing was the right process or [whether] am I allowed to say this [when interacting with customers]. I [shouldn't] have to go check and ring the manager or ask one of the other reps [...] and have to go back to the guests later, say the next day, with the information because I just [don't] know the answer (R9).

R8 also mentioned that having more initial pre-resort training would have also increased the job enjoyment:

If I would have known I had to deal with these situations and I was trained properly before I went out to the resort, I would have thoroughly enjoyed the job (R8).

However, the intensive training can be too much for the representatives. It was described as an 'emotional roller coaster' especially when the worst-case scenarios or extreme situations that they might encounter have to be covered (R13):

You try and [think] that these things [extreme situations] do happen. How you deal with it, it's down to the individual. Hopefully [the training] it's giving that person an

understanding of the worst-case scenario [...] training is quite intense. They're quite long days for the guys [representatives]. It's an emotional roller coaster at the end of the day (R13).

The representatives also receive training on customer interaction. They are told they need to provide 'service with a smile' to their customers. Some respondents mentioned that the training on dealing with difficult customer interaction helped in coping with these situations in a more effective manner. They were told to be calm and at ease when facing a difficult customer interaction. Recalling what they were told about how to deal with these customers helped them avoid negative emotional consequences (R10).

What you get told [during training is] 'you need to be calm; if someone [a customer] is really angry just sit them down, offer them a glass of water, get to their level and unroll the problem so they could calm down [whilst] they are talking about it'. Because you do have a lot of people who shout at you, [this will ease in] the situation, calming everyone down [...] Just start being calm [...] you had training before [...] So you don't really panic that much (R10).

R15 commented that some tour operators can provide in-depth customer interaction training on how to deal with different situations that they might find themselves in.

Only with [tour operator name] have I received in-depth customer orientated training with full sessions of 8 hours looking at the customer journey, what to say, not to say, how to listen and what to listen for when dealing with issues (R15).

Many respondents mentioned that role-playing was an important part of their training especially on the negative customer situations. Yet, interviewees emphasised that the real-life situations might not match what they have been taught and it can be more difficult to deal with from what they learnt in role-play training sessions (R16).

You [are] doing the role-play because you know it's not real but then when you actually got that difficult customer in front of you you're just thinking 'oh my God, I really don't know what else to say that's going to make you happy' (R16).

On the other hand, the findings show that there are inconsistencies regarding the training provided. For example, some respondents mentioned that in their case they were not provided with enough training on customer service although they felt it was necessary (R21). R15 pointed out that more service oriented training

would help the whole team be more consistent in relation to the service provided to their customers.

I think the training was mainly [on] how correctly we [do] the paperwork [or] if there were any problems or complaints. I didn't think that they'd trained us for the customer service aspect. I think they expected you to know what was right and what was wrong already (R21).

More service training rather than results training would have been nice [in order] to ensure that everyone worked to the same ideas regardless of level or role (R15).

It seems that in some cases the training that the tour operators provided was too focused on selling which made the representatives feel even more tired especially when this took place after a long day (R8).

Some days when you're trying to finish at seven you were [there] until [late]. [The training] lasted from 8:30 until 11:30, the sales training to try to improve sales. So, after you've been in your hotels from 7 o'clock in the morning till 7 o'clock at night you are asked to go out and stand into a three-hour meeting (R8).

One respondent did not feel that training was necessary at all in this role. R1 stated that the personality is more important in terms of providing a genuine service, whereas the training could influence holidaymakers to perceive a '**robotic**' or inauthentic behaviour.

Personally, I don't agree with any courses or anything [any type of training to be] in customer service. I don't agree with it because you either have it or you don't. You're either a people person or you're not [...] You can't be taught it and you just have to have a natural instinct for it otherwise it would turn out quite robotic. If you teach it it'd come quite [procedural] rather than natural (R1).

Some respondents mentioned that they did not get the chance to receive the full training because they started their role or might start during the peak season. Being 'thrown into the deep end' was difficult and intense when they started the job because they did not know how to perform their job. However, it seems that this was perceived as being something beneficial for them in the end as it increased the confidence in making customer-related decisions and made them feel proud about their job performance (R10).

I think that at the beginning I did I felt a bit sorry for myself because I was thrown into the deep end and that's because I started in the peak season. So, if you started in April you would be very well-prepared for it [...] When you start in July as well you shadow someone just for a week and then [they tell you] 'here's your hotel you're on your own'. You don't actually expect [that] [and] you think that someone is going to be there [maybe stay with you] for a little bit [and] help, but you don't. But at the same time, that worked out so well. Before stuff like that, I was not this confident as I am, I was petrified and thought 'oh my God I'm going to have these two hotels'. But then, a week in I was like 'this is what I needed because otherwise I would have kept just holding myself back while I was getting told what to do'. So,

I think it's better to throw you in the deep end almost because then you just go for it you've got to make a choice (R10).

4.3.3 Autonomy

The findings show that some representatives feel empowered in their job and that they have autonomy to make their own decisions without going through their line manager or supervisor. Having this responsibility can make some representatives feel more supported by the company (R15). When they are confident to make decisions, the fact that they are backed up by their organisation can make them feel appreciated and better prepared in future situations (R10).

I felt more supported within the company with [tour operator name] as they gave reps more responsibility (R15).

If you didn't feel confident [making decisions] you knew you had to contact your manager, but if you do feel confident it's great to know the company would back you anyway [...] [If I say to the company] 'they [the customers] weren't happy with the room [so] I've moved them [and] I gave them €50 [and] I think that was the correct thing to do at the time' they'd [the company] say 'okay that's fine' . [This] is a great thing because then you really do feel like you are in charge of what you're doing, you do have this big responsibility and you can live up to what you want to do there (R10).

Respondents discussed that some tour operators empowered their staff to make decisions 'on the spot'. They could decide on customer matters as soon as these occurred which increased their job performance because it allowed them to solve problems more efficiently (R21). As R16 commented, being allowed to make their own decisions would make them feel trusted by their companies.

At [tour operator name] they empower their staff to make decisions on the spot, which enabled you to solve issues quickly and without too much hassle. This was a real positive compared to other tour operator [where the representatives] could not make decisions themselves (R21).

It's nice that they trusted us [...] it didn't feel like someone was over your shoulder all the time. [It is better when they tell you] you're doing a good job rather than when someone else got to come and tell you all the time that you are doing it wrong or that you need to do this (R16).

One respondent also highlighted the fact that being empowered on how to interact with customers can make representatives feel joyful and can increase their confidence during service provision (R1).

[This job] did [influence me] actually because it's [a lot about] self-confidence. Now, [with this job] you actually get quite a lot of power as to what you can do and everything on those lines. In terms of feelings, that's good for me because I like being in control of what I'm doing and I enjoy that side of things. It does make me

really happy that I can go in [and] I can walk up and down and start chatting with people because I have every right to (R1).

However, some respondents mentioned although the autonomy was present in their job, this was limited at times. As R2 commented, the representatives were allowed to make decisions but reasonable ones, more specifically they could be limited in terms of giving financial incentives to customers.

We were empowered to make our own decisions within reason. Like I've said you were empowered to do whatever you want, but if you're giving away free trips or loads of money then obviously that's not allowed (R2).

Having this limited autonomy in terms of making decisions can affect the job performance. As R8 commented, when decisions had to be passed on to the management it could take days which affected their customer interaction, because it was them who had to interact with the holidaymakers who complained and needed to please them. Not being able to solve problems 'on the spot' made the process of dealing with these issues even more difficult and added more pressure to their role (R18).

You could make decisions but if the guests came [and] complained about something and [if] they wanted compensation you couldn't do anything, you had to go to your supervisor for that. At times, your supervisor would take three days to come back to you which meant every day it's you there in the hotel. If your supervisor hasn't come back, it's you that has to please the guest (R8).

If the customers came to see you in the morning, you'd have to go to your manager in the afternoon and then get the guest to come back to you in the evening to give them an answer. So, it kind of just made their complaints or their problems longer to be resolved (R18).

Moreover, R6 mentioned that sometimes the representatives might take risks and make their own decisions even if they are limited by procedures. Taking the risk is seen as necessary in order to avoid negative consequences and make things better for the customers.

With some things, you have to make decisions by yourself because either the next level managers are not available or the decision needs to be made quickly [...]. In my opinion, whatever change I made was always good for the visitor [...] There's sort of a risk sometimes [...] There is a line down the middle, sometimes you have to make a quick decision and [deal with] whatever consequences might happen. It is risky (R6).

4.4 Relationship with management

As shown in Figure 12, many respondents discussed their relationship with management and how this influenced them in the workplace, more specifically how they felt and how they behaved. There is evidence of how both positive and negative managers can influence the holiday representatives in the workplace. However, the discussion was more extensive in relation to the negatives of this relationship. In addition, supervisory/managerial support seems to be the most important influence of their EL and how they experience this. At the same time, the findings also show that EL occurs in the interactions with their managers as well.

Many respondents discussed having 'positive' managers whilst employed as holiday representatives. It seems that when having **positive managers**, the holiday representatives experience a higher level of supervisory support (R13). Many respondents acknowledged the presence of the managerial support when they were unsure on how to deal with various customer-related issues or complaints (R17).

I think a good manager is someone who recognises every individual and what every individual needs (R13).

You ring your line manager and if they can get to you, they will. If they can't get to you they will coach you over the phone. They give excellent support (R17).

As R18 commented, the holiday representatives can feel at ease when they know that if they find themselves out of their depth the managers are there to help.

In [destination name] I knew that I was supported and they [the managers] would come quite often and just check you were okay really. They didn't interfere in what you were doing [they were] just checking you were okay just talking to you really and that was really nice to know that they were there (R18)

Some respondents also mentioned that managers were supportive in terms of improving some skills such as welcome meetings or sales skills which made them feel more confident in the job (R17). Management who are relaxed and calm about meeting targets can have a stronger influence on the motivation of the holiday representatives.

Management overseas is much more relaxed and understanding, if you aren't hitting targets you might get called into the office, but only to be asked if you have tried another technique, what your sales spiels are like, or if you think you are PR-ing enough (R17).

In addition, the respondents also discussed empowerment from their managers. R15 commented on how being trusted by her manager who gave her autonomy led to a sense of achievement and job satisfaction.

In the airport role, I had to make decisions with my head office directly as my manager trusted me in the position [...]. Being given responsibility made it easier to do my job without having to constantly check with management and I felt this made me be more competent in my role in front of the customer (R15).

Managerial empowerment on making decisions makes the representatives feel proud. However, R13 commented on how the managers might be inconsistent with this which can leave employees confused about what they are allowed to do and what they are not allowed to do.

You go from one management [who] for example empowers their staff to make decisions themselves and be proud of doing something, to another manager who doesn't do that. At the end of today is inconsistent and obviously it's not good for the staff members because they don't know what they're allowed to do and why they're not allowed to do (R13).

Furthermore, a supportive manager who can explain clearly the reasons why the representatives should do their job in a particular way and is honest about it can reduce the dissatisfaction with the role. R11 commented on how her manager helped her put things into perspective and accept the role requirements after communicating her dissatisfaction.

When you're seeing your managers, you've got to be able to tell them [R11 comment refers to disagreeing with being jolly all the time whilst at work] and if you can tell them honestly then that's fine [...] I could tell them [the managers] honestly, I don't like this. They would say 'that's the way it is and you've got to do it that way [once you understand you have to stay inside the rules]. They were quite good or they'd explain to you why is it like this, why do you have to do that [...] I can't say anything wrong about X (R11).

R4 also discussed confronting her manager for something that she did incorrectly. However, being honest with her manager led to the manager not reciprocating and portraying a deviant behaviour towards R4.

So [...] I went up to her [the manager] and I [said] 'look I apologise, you're my manager whatever, but you shouldn't have talked to me like that, I wanted to be in the [activity name] and she was like 'oh let's not talk about this right now' and I was 'no, I am going to talk about this right now, apologise right now as you're the manager' [...] And after [...] she didn't expect me to be the big person and come and apologise and say that's it [...] she didn't want me to apologise, she wanted it to last all summer, me being horrible [continuing to be disrespectful] (R4).

R5 also gave an example of being honest and open to the managers in terms of giving them feedback to improve the representatives' well-being. Likewise, in this

situation the manager did not reciprocate and this action made the relationship more tense with the manager starting to treat R5 unfairly.

I'm more mature than these young people [other representatives] and I [would] speak [up] my mind [...] the tensions with my manager in the first year got [worse] as I started giving feedback [to her] or if I was making points I noticed that our relationship went downhill and it got to the stage where she wasn't being that fair to me [...] other colleagues [friends with this manager] were getting hotels that were making a lot of money (R5).

Overall, some respondents mentioned, positive managers can increase representatives' confidence in their job performance as they make them feel more supported especially through positive reinforcement (R15, R9).

Having positive managers who were there for me made me feel good about myself and I could turn to them without hesitation for advice or just to bounce ideas off giving me more confidence in my role (R15).

[The managers] would complement you on things that you did well and they would [use] what people call a 'compliment sandwich'. They would tell you the negative [but] they would also give you feedback on things that you have done well [...] and then they'd give you tips on how to improve. They were a bit more supportive. [They would] push you and try to shape you into a good rep rather than try to knock you down all the time (R9).

Moreover, the relationship with management is different in each destination. In some destinations, the managers are supportive towards the representatives, they show an interest in their well-being and trust them more to make decisions, but in other destinations they do not, which sometimes can affect them (R18).

In [destination name] the managers would come and watch your welcome meetings every so often to help you improve them whereas in [destination name] one manager came at the end of one welcome meeting in the whole time. Very, very different [although] that was the same company (R18).

As R2 commented, some managers were too pushy:

The managers were there to do their job; they were there to push through to make sales, get the complaints down, but other than that... Some can be supportive but mine wasn't. She was just there just to push and push and push (R2).

Most of the respondents discussed and emphasized their experiences with **negative managers**. For example, some managers talked down on reps, they used negative reinforcement, they did not give them autonomy and were too controlling (R8, R14, R15).

If you were a minute late going to your hotel they'd [the managers] come down on you (R8).

They [the managers] tend to talk down to reps (R14).

In [destination name] my manager from [tour operator name] was very controlling and wouldn't give any responsibility to the reps (R15).

R3 discussed about being hurt by her manager whose feedback on her performance was strongly negative. The negative manager in question did not show support on her need to improve her sales and made her feel she was not capable of doing this job and was unconfident. This feeling led to her resigning in the end.

When the destination manager approached me [...] he had a very unprofessional attitude. He was very rude to me and very aggressive and he said that 'because as you know you are at the bottom of the sale chart and you haven't achieved the sales target, so if you continue this way we're going to send you to destinations where trust me you don't want to go' [...] of course I almost cried at that time when he told me this because I was shocked by this attitude. I was feeling like 'Oh I'm not capable of doing this' and I felt really bad about myself and [that I'm not] able to do this. But then after I thought about it I realised that 'this is something that [my manager] should never have said it. And that was another thing that led to my resignation (R3).

Another respondent discussed that the decision to quit was influenced by her unsupportive manager, who created a bad image about the company overall (R18).

In [destination name] it was very much if you had to go into the boss's office but you didn't speak to him kind of thing. It was so much [stand-off] relationship. And then when issues would occur they weren't as supportive. That was obviously my last year repping [...] I just kind of had enough with the way it was and I suppose I interpreted that as [tour operator name] as a whole (R18).

Some managers might not be supportive of the holiday representatives when they are dealing with an angry customer or when they are out of their depth (R15) or having a very busy day. This consequently can affect the customer interaction as it can make it more difficult.

You never receive training for this kind of experience [extreme situations] and my manager was "too busy" to come and help me [...] I had a couple of situations where I felt out of my depth. For example, the situation I mentioned before regarding an overbooking of [...] customers [...] The customers did not want to see a rep which is something I had said to the manager in the beginning but then only once they kicked off at hotel did my manager decide to come down causing unnecessary hassle to customers. If he [only] had just come in the beginning (R15).

The representatives commented on the need for more emotional support from the managers. R5 said for example that the managers could show their employees that they care about their well-being.

Rather than being the manager [...] they could be more human [...] so maybe they could look after staff maybe once a month they would have a 10 minutes meeting with people like 'how are you? Is there anything that you need' (R5).

R15 discussed about how her unsupportive manager made her feel bullied, less confident and less motivated after she was trying her best to prove herself. The negative manager in this role can influence the level of enthusiasm for the job itself (R5).

The manager [...] made me feel bullied and as I seemed to not be able to do anything right. I would work even longer hours and go a long time between meals to try and prove that I was putting my all into the job. This left me feeling very upset and trapped and that I couldn't approach him when I needed help (R15).

I managed it [the relationship with the negative manager] through maturity, but probably [...] it did have an effect on my morale and maybe my enthusiasm for the job [at the end of the day] (R5).

Therefore, negative/ unsupportive management can affect job satisfaction which then could influence the motivation level and result in demotivation. It makes the job more difficult for the representatives especially in the busy part of the season (R9).

We all found that she [the manager] was quite negative towards us and I think that kind of deflated us sometimes. And when the work got difficult because it was the peak season having that type of manager was quite difficult to kind of get through those harder times (R9).

The findings also show that some managers tend to work on the premise of favouritism which becomes frustrating for some representatives as it makes their job more difficult. For example, R5 mentioned that he was allocated hotels where it was harder to sell because he was not his managers' 'favourite'.

Sometimes I had hotels where you could make the money. You could hit the targets because they were busy and they had a lot of people there. Other hotels were very quiet and you would never hit your targets. It was quite obvious that if you were more in favour with your manager you would get the better hotels which would give you more chance to hit your targets (R5).

Another respondent discussed disagreeing with managers' decisions, but without speaking her mind and having to keep this to herself (R19).

I just felt that if I wanted to apologise I would have apologised, I didn't take kindly to being told to apologise [by the manager]. I was thinking in my head 'well you tell me to apologise to someone [when] we don't know the facts of what happened. You want me to apologise because it makes your job easier in the office with the supplier' and I was just thinking 'I don't care' (R19).

Also, R5 commented on how it was good for him to keep his distance from the managers who were acting in an unprofessional manner in their job.

I tried not to be too close to my managers because the way that I [was] brought up and from an educational professional background. You do need the gaps between yourself and your managers (R5).

Likewise, R4 decided to ignore her manager who was being 'horrible' to her:

She [the manager] was horrible to me all summer, but I just ignored her [...] She would spy on me; she'd follow me in her car. I'd be walking with my rep suitcase to the hotel and she would be driving along making sure I'm going to the hotel. That's how horrible she was (R4).

As R15 stated, dealing with negative managers and remaining positive in these situations can become a challenge in itself.

My biggest challenge in [destination name] with my manager was trying to remain positive (R15).

However, sometimes representative would make their dissatisfaction with their managers known. For example, R9 made her negative emotions and frustration known to her manager regarding the fact that she was required to solve a customer-related issue although it was not an emergency.

It was difficult because every time they [the managers] asked you to do something it made you think 'I don't want to do this I don't want to help you out. I just want to go home'. But you do it because it is your job and you wouldn't want to get told off. But you wouldn't do it in the sense of you'd be happy to do it; you'd make it known that you weren't happy having to pedal to the other side of the resort at 10 o'clock in the dark to go and deliver some transfer times that weren't needed. But she'd [the manager] just like to [have] the authority the power (R9).

4.5 Relationship with colleagues

Regarding the relationships with colleagues, the findings show that there are more positive aspects than negative ones. Most of the respondents discussed how important **colleagues' support** can be. This is of particular interest to new representatives who do not have experience in the role and are overwhelmed with the amount of work and the difficult situations they might encounter. Having this support increases their confidence in the role, they become more positive and more motivated (R3, R1, R7).

At first, I was practicing [the welcome meeting presentation] a lot before [the welcome meetings] so that I become more confident. Practice in front of my colleagues before, getting some advice on what works for them when they're delivering the presentation and these sorts of things (R3).

You always have to have a strong relationship with your colleagues, and that's just a working relationship. And that's because then your work is a lot easier, it's smoother (R1).

Like I said, the people that I was working with were the best thing. I got on really well with everyone. I was really good friends [...] I think that definitely affects your mood (R7).

There is also evidence on the fact that these good relationships can lead to 'extra-role behaviour' between the colleagues. As R20 commented:

[The company] said that if I and the other rep wanted we could have gone to another resort for a week [whilst solving the pandemic in the hotel] [...] But leaving people who'd become friends to sort of fend for themselves it didn't seem fair [...] we felt like we should be there to help them. That's when we decided that we would stay [and] we would get involved with the cleaning and we knew it wasn't sort of our daily responsibilities or anything like that but it felt that it was the right thing to do (R20).

In some cases, it is the colleagues that provide the training for the new holiday representatives. 'Shadowing' their colleagues is very helpful, but also makes them feel welcomed and better prepared for when they are on their own (R9).

I arrived [in the resort] a little bit late into the season. There were two girls who I worked with who have been there [in the destination] for I think a month or so. So, they were already quite established on the island, they knew a lot of the hotelier and they knew their way around. They took me under their wing and showed me around [...] they'd teach me. As part of my training, I went around with the two girls for the first week on their visits. So, I was sort of shadowing them to see what they did so that next week when I went on my own I'd know what I needed to do. It was very accommodating and helpful (R9).

Some respondents referred to their colleagues as their overseas 'family' as a form of support. This happens because they are always together, they are facing the same problems at work, and they live and socialise together (R11).

You almost have a little family going on because you see each other every day; you are all in the same situation you all want to be around another (R11).

Therefore, an important role that the colleagues have is **that of emotional support** which can be essential especially when there might not be enough support from management (R17).

Talk about it [emotional hardships] with colleagues, they all have similar experiences and feelings. The team are your best friends and family when overseas [...] as I said earlier, your colleagues are everything to you, you need them to cheer you up, to entertain you, to advise you, and just to be your mates (R17).

There can be differences between the personalities of the colleagues. It can make some representatives less positive and feeling down because they are misunderstood by their peers. As R15 commented, sometimes she had to socialise with her colleagues just to be accepted by them.

Relationships with colleagues could sometimes be hard for me. Especially as I generally lived my own life outside of work. I used to try and socialise with the rest of the team every so often. Otherwise, they could see me as all work and no play [...] Sometimes, I felt down when colleagues misunderstood how I am as I felt they would focus on one thing and not the whole picture (R15).

Although these strong relationships are formed **it can get too intense too quickly** and differences can occur (R12). For example, it can be hard for the representatives to **remain professional** when the relationships are so close because of working and living close to one another. Some representatives simply do not get along and they end up fighting with each other which can affect the dynamic of the whole team and others can even get withdrawn from their colleagues (R2, R5).

They are quite strange relationships [with colleagues] because it's very full on very quickly (R12).

Obviously, you have personality clashes. You have people who are having relationships with their colleagues and then the relationships break down and causes divisions in the workplace as well (R5).

Although the representatives have their own differences they need to leave these aside as the holidaymakers do not need to know about this. Therefore, as R16 commented, they need to keep smiling to their customers although they are angry with their colleague next to them.

There were some [holiday representatives] that I didn't get on with. It's hard when you have to be with someone every day [and] you don't get on with, but you just make the best of it [and] keep smiling. Yes, always keep smiling. Obviously, you can't let the customers know that you're not getting on because then you give them a bad impression (R16).

These differences can occur between colleagues because it is a **competitive environment** where they all have to meet the same targets. This competition is enforced by management and it can lead to a **lack of trust** between the representatives (R5).

These [people] were your colleagues, [they] were your friends [and] they were your enemies; all at the same time (R5).

When there is lack of trust between colleagues and jealousy involved, some representatives must refrain from discussing about certain things in order to avoid being hurt. As R2 commented they cannot be entirely themselves because they are in a competition:

It makes your life easier if you refrain from talking about certain things and doing certain things [...] You can't really be 100% yourself cause at the end of the day they're doing the same job as you [...] It's still [a] competition with everyone. You can be friends, but you have to be careful that they don't stab you in the back either (R2).

Some representatives might experience issues with colleagues, but they understand the situation by putting themselves in their shoes. For example, R15 commented on her problems with her colleagues who were undermining her authority:

I found it difficult if we had team members who would turn up without the correct uniform, paperwork, not well from a late night out etc. This would cause a knock-on effect to the airport operation. But [because] I was considered a non-management member of the team I had to report this to the relevant manager to deal with and could have repetitive situations occurring weekly. My colleagues were my equal, but then I was the one in charge, so it could be difficult to have them separate the personal and work (R15).

On the other hand, R20 mentioned confronting his colleague when having a problem with their working relationship which lead to a positive outcome in relation to their job performance as a team.

In the end, I spoke with him [colleague] and I told him I didn't think it was fair. He was perfectly honest he held his hands up and he admitted that yes, he probably wasn't pulling his weight he was probably leaving things to the last minute (R20).

Some respondents who were in a **position of power/ having more responsibility** in their job recalled differences with some of their colleagues who had authority issues. Having to deal with these situations can lower the motivation levels and the customer interaction as although they might be frustrated, angry or in a negative mood, they still need to show happiness to their customers. As R16 mentioned, for her, this made customer interaction harder.

My last season I did find it really hard. Actually, I didn't get on with [colleagues]. I've been promoted to children's rep in charge in my last season and one of the girls in the kids' club would not do anything that I asked [...] If I said we should start a session at a certain time she'd say, 'no we should have it another time'. It might be down to my management skills. I don't know, but that was horrible. I used to dread going into work because then I would [see the children coming in] [you had to be] smiling and be friendly, and you have to be bouncy, and you have to be happy (R16).

In addition, the respondents also discussed about the importance of the **size of the team** for their role and the level of job support. According to some respondents there seemed to be more support in a larger team where the tasks were divided between different members. For example, having more than one representative working and being responsible with one hotel made the job easier (R10). Whereas working in a smaller team was harder as there was more pressure in terms of performing well (R7).

As much as you are individually at your hotel you're in a massive team, like when you're in the airport you are in a team. Some people work together. If you have a massive hotel there would be two of you representing because you [can't] do it all single headedly (R10).

If you are in a small team it might be harder. I think [this will] always to be that sort of job where it is...pressure, a lot of focus on you and your performance (R7).

One respondent highlighted the influence that a '**bad team**' can have on some representatives. A bad team, more specifically a bad team dynamic, can make people depressed. Being in a team where a representative cannot bond with his/her colleagues can lead to loneliness, feeling isolated and even deciding to quit the job (R4).

[It's] horrible if the reps don't like you. You just feel isolated you'd probably end up going home. If you don't have many friends and you're not outgoing [you] end up going home in a week [...] If you're not working with a good team you end up in a really bad place. You'd be depressed. They're a lot of reps getting depressed (R4).

4.6 Context specific influences

The interviews revealed that there are certain contextual specific factors in the work environment of the holiday representatives that influence their emotions, how they perform their job, and consequently the way in which they engage in EL. Most findings were found in relation to the influence of the hotel/ the hotel star rating, followed by the destination where these representatives are placed in, and lastly the differences between low season and peak season.

4.6.1 Hotels as influences

Most respondents mentioned the hotels that they worked in and how this specific element affected various aspects of their job. There are different types of hotels

that holiday representatives should deal with such as self-catering, all-inclusive, two stars, three stars, four stars or five stars. However, no matter what the type of the hotel, the representatives still need to provide the same quality of service.

Some representatives are usually in charge of a few hotels. However, other representatives have quite a large number of hotels that they need to look after which adds to their workload and as mentioned in section 4.2.1, to the physical demands. The fact that they oversee so many hotels involves dealing with a large number of guests which can be intense. Too many hotels can make it almost impossible for these representatives to provide the best service to their holidaymakers (R9).

You're expected to make an interaction with every guest if they were at the hotel. If they were at the pool or at the reception you'd have to acknowledge that you know that they were your guests, which is hard because when you're looking after 20 hotels you can't always remember every single face (R9).

In addition, moving from one type of hotel to another requires them to change the way in which they interact with customers frequently because of the different clientele and show different behaviours and emotions (R4).

My first hotel in the morning would be a five-star hotel and then my second hotel would be like a two-star accommodation [...] so you literally have to change your person (R4).

However, R17 mentioned that in his case, dealing with a large variety of hotels was not a negative aspect and did not affect his capability to interact with the holidaymakers.

[I was dealing with] all kinds... All stars from 2 to 5. I'm always relaxed within the hotels; always try to learn customers' first names (R17).

Moreover, the representatives might enjoy some hotels, but they might dread going to others as their job there is very difficult not only from the customer's point of view, but also from the hotels' management perspective. Therefore, this can decrease their motivation to do their job (R4).

If you are in a nice hotel [where] your guests are nice [and] your management is nice [then] you really enjoy it. Some of the hotels I absolutely love going to; you just have some really nice people there. But some hotels it's like hell, it's like just hell, you just don't want to go (R4).

Therefore, some respondents mentioned that working in five-star hotels was easier because the hotels would work harder on keeping the holidaymakers happy (R1). Whereas working in a lower star hotel was more difficult as they were not interested in providing a good service (R4).

The 5 star is a lot easier in terms of if they haven't got anything the hotel pretty much bend over backwards (R1).

The thing with the hotels you need to get along with management else you don't get anything done. Especially the ones with the lower ratings, they don't really bother if a rep is there, they really don't care. I mean they say you pay for what you get. That manager told me 'don't stress about it, they've paid that price [the customers] and that's what they get for that price' (R4).

Some respondents discussed about preferring to work in five-star hotels because they like that work environment which makes them feel more comfortable and more appreciated and puts them in a more positive mood (R4). At the same time, the customer interaction in these hotels can be more relaxing (R16).

I found it really, really easy [working in 5-star hotels] because every time I go there I just turn into this person [...] I love it I feel really good especially when you're going in a nice hotel you have a nice little section [...] and people [hotel staff] would come and bring me coffee and stuff (R4).

The hotels that I was in when I was a mainline rep were posher and quieter, old couples coming around and they just wanted to know where to go for a nice walk or something (R16).

On the other hand, some respondents described the guests in five-star hotels as being 'posh', 'pretentious' or 'snobby'. According to the respondents, they have higher expectations and are more demanding (R15) and for this reason the holiday representatives need to be more professional when interacting with these customers (R2).

5-star customers could be more demanding as they paid premium and expected a premium, more one to one service (R15).

You have to be more professional in the five-star, more reserved (R2).

R4 also added that it was far more difficult to deal with complaints in these luxury hotels and that he was always aware of them.

People who stay at five-star hotels they are the worst with complaints, especially when they're very intellectual and they think they know it all. The worst people to deal with. They would just complain about everything; they'd complain about the view, they'd complain about the towels; just complain about everything. And then they'd go home and they'd write a big customer service review about 10 pages

long complaining about everything you didn't do. So those [were] the ones that every time they would say one negative thing. I would watch them (R4).

Although the five-star hotel guests are described as 'snobby' the respondent commented that they found it easier to sell excursions to these people in comparison to low star hotel customers (R1, R15). For example, R7 commented on the fact that it was more difficult to sell in lower-star hotels because the customers could not afford expensive holiday add-ons.

I would easily prefer the snobby guests. I love them; they've got more money so it's easier to sell to them. Yes, they are more demanding, because they are paying 5-star standards, they're paying for 5-star prices, but I would rather have that than someone [...] wanting everything for nothing (R1).

My first season [destination name] was still an unusual place to visit and the 5-star all-inclusive hotels meant that we had customers with money who came to [destination name] to see the ancient history. My love for [destination name] meant that I was able to advise trips to suit what they were looking for (R15).

People weren't buying the [swimming] lessons and it was quite expensive. I was more in a budget hotel so people didn't want them. So, I was being set targets but not being able to meet them. I think that was a challenge that I faced. I didn't realise it would be quite so hard sell as it was (R7).

In relation to the lower star hotels, some respondents mentioned that they enjoyed these more because they felt that they could be themselves around the guests and they were more relaxed as the guests were more sensible than the five-star hotels (R17).

I'm always relaxed within the hotels, always try to learn customers' first names, in 2-4 stars you can jump in the pool with customers and play volleyball and have some fun (R17).

The respondents also commented that although it may be easier to deal with the guests in lower star hotels they are also demanding but in a more negative manner. These customers usually demand more (R1), they complain about insignificant things and their expectations are too high for the price of the holiday (R9).

To get a low star rating, they can be a little bit easier, but at the same time quite troubling in terms of they demand more for less (R1).

The people that travel every year on holiday that are staying at the three-star hotels [that could afford it anyway] they would be the ones that they tend to moan 'this isn't right that isn't right, the beach is too far, the sun lounges are uncomfortable' (R9).

Another difference between the different types of hotels is related to the frequency of customer interactions. For example, the representatives have to be

more visible to their holidaymakers in the low star rated hotels than in the five-star ones (R21).

Lower rated stars needed more interaction and being more visible. In five-star hotels, guests generally wanted less involvement (R21).

4.6.2 Destination as an influence

As it was briefly presented in the previous section, the destination or the resort is also an influence for the role of the holiday representative. Most interviews revealed this as one of the major findings in terms of job characteristics influences:

It does depend to what destination you get because some places can be harder than others (R1).

The job becomes more demanding as some destinations are busier than others which increase the number of customers they need to interact with (R11).

I think [destination name] is not a busy resort. Quite a lot of people coming in, but I think there are places like [destination name] is very busy (R11).

However, even a smaller destination can be difficult as the role of the representative can involve more responsibility such as becoming more of a tour guide than being a holiday representative (R10).

Let's say in a really quiet island [...] somewhere where you only get one flight in a week you become much more of a tour guide instead of the tour [representatives]. You go on excursions with them. You do less [...] you don't have to do all these welcome meetings so [you start going on] trips with them; you start doing more excursions with them. It just depends where you are (R10).

Therefore, the respondents mentioned that it was better and easier to work in bigger destinations where there were bigger teams and there was more support in terms of splitting the job requirements rather than in a smaller destination (R11).

My friend who's working in [destination name] at the moment he's very busy [and] they don't ever leave resort. So, they have transfer reps, they have different types of reps doing different things and they are just doing the hotels. With us because it wasn't such a big resort we did like all the jobs (R11).

It is also better to work in destinations with bigger teams because representatives can have more fun rather than in a smaller resort such as a ski resort where there is not much to do (R20).

If you worked as a holiday rep in a summer resort it might be different where things are a bit bigger; there are more restaurants there are more bars; there is

more to choose from, but when you've got four bars [and a] club then you've got to do something to make it interesting (R20).

The ability to escape the work life depends on the destination. If the representatives are working in a small destination/resort they might not be able to escape in terms of customers (R9).

Had I been in a different one [resort] maybe one of the larger resorts I'd probably would have been able to escape the work life a bit more. But because of it being so small [wide for 2 miles] you can't exactly hide from the customers because they're everywhere (R9).

Also, different destinations have different types of customers and consequently the representatives have different requirements and the interaction varies. It can be the case that they work in different locations with different clientele just in one season (R13).

You go for example in [destination name resort] and it's very older mature people but if you go down to [destination name resort] it's 18 – 30s and the representative could end up doing both types of work within one summer season (R13).

Some destinations can involve more stress as there is a bigger chance for the representatives to deal with extreme situations because of customers' behaviours (R11).

She [another representative] said that it was just horrendous. She said that people were falling off balconies, getting drunk and you've got to deal with that. I don't know how they do it when they're in a resort like that (R11).

Therefore, destination determines the type of interactions the representatives have with customers and the frequency of these also varies depending on the destination (R18).

[Destination name] is different resort and it was [...] different clientele as well which then obviously affected how you did your job because in [destination name] it was very much families and friendly people wanting to have a good time coming to tell you what they've been up to and things. Where in [destination name] the guests were quite a lot more private and only came to you if they need something so if you would have gone and speak to them or around the pool they wouldn't as necessarily wanted you to (R18).

Furthermore, in some destinations it can be easier to sell because of the number of customers. It is easier to sell in a bigger destination where there are more excursions and places to recommend to holidaymakers. The holiday representatives who are placed in this type of resort do not have to worry as much

about the targets unlike other destinations where it might be more difficult to sell although the targets might be lower (R10).

I was very, very lucky to have that [destination] because there's so many different things to do and see and recommend your guests [...] Having somewhere like [destination name] it's great because there's so much to sell; you didn't really have to worry about hitting your targets really [...] I think it would be much harder if you were a rep in somewhere not as big [somewhere] like a little Greek town they [the company] would lower your targets but it would be very hard because the type of people that go there they just probably go there just to chill (R10).

Moreover, R19 mentioned that even the relationship with the suppliers was different in relation to the destination which can influence their job performance.

The suppliers are different in different countries. I found because in [destination name] for example they were less helpful all the time (R19).

Also, R6 emphasised how important it is to be placed in a destination which suits a representatives' personal interests.

I think the nicer location the more I enjoyed it to be honest. [Personally] because I was one of those people that would take the guidebooks out I would research the locations and I really enjoyed meeting guests. I really wanted to know about the country and about the location that they were in not just 'where's the nearest bar' (R6).

Some respondents also commented on the fact that they were satisfied with the tour operators in relation to the places/ the destinations where they were placed. Their employing organisations were good at matching the personality and the age of employees with the resort and the hotels where they were working as this also matched the customers and made it easier for them to perform their job (R11, R5).

So, I think they [the tour operators] did well like placing people where they're fit, where they're good, where they work. I wanted [to go] somewhere like Ibiza or Barbados. [...] But then they were like 'you're going to [destination name]' and I was like 'oh I don't really want to go to [destination name]'. [...] they were quite good at matching your personality with the resort you're going to (R11).

They [the tour operators] used age for differentiation between destinations in hotels so it's easier. [They were saying] 'You're in your 20s' we'll put them in [destination name] which is a party resort or if you're a bit older you put them on a Greek island [where the customers are] older people (R5).

4.6.3 Season as an influence

The respondents also discussed about the importance of the time of the season for their job. More specifically how peak season and low season influence various aspects of their work context and how they perform. For example, peak season involves a larger number of holidaymakers and consequently a busier time and longer hours worked (R2, R8).

[In the] peak season the hotels were full, very full [...] obviously people [customers] would come to you with complaints, you just had to make sure that everyone is okay (R2).

When you get into peak season late July, August first week of September, there [were] the best part of 400 guests in my hotel and it was just me responsible for them (R8).

Peak season which starts in July and finishes in September is very fast-paced. It can be very intense and some representatives can feel exhausted because the work is so demanding (R6).

I enjoyed working that job because you didn't get really exhausted [off season]. When you work during the season it builds up and in the middle of the summer season or the winter season, you get absolutely exhausted because it's so busy and you've been going for 2 ½ months or 3 ½ months beforehand (R6).

Another reason why the job is more demanding during the peak season is because, as R10 mentioned, the sales targets are also higher during this time which can be demoralising for some representatives.

You got given what you had to sell per head and you would work out your weekly target which in peak season it was very high. So, it could be a bit unnerving (R10).

Overall, R5 described the job as a treadmill where peak season is the most intense part:

The way that the job is it is like a treadmill that gets faster and faster and faster and faster. So, at the beginning of the season it's a bit quieter so you're getting used to it and then obviously you've got the peak season when you're busy every day of the week (R5).

For this reason, every representative seems to go through a period when he/she wants to go home. Usually this happens mid-season during the most intensive part when the representatives are very tired and get homesick. However, as R4 commented, after getting rest most representatives overcome this stage and do not leave the job.

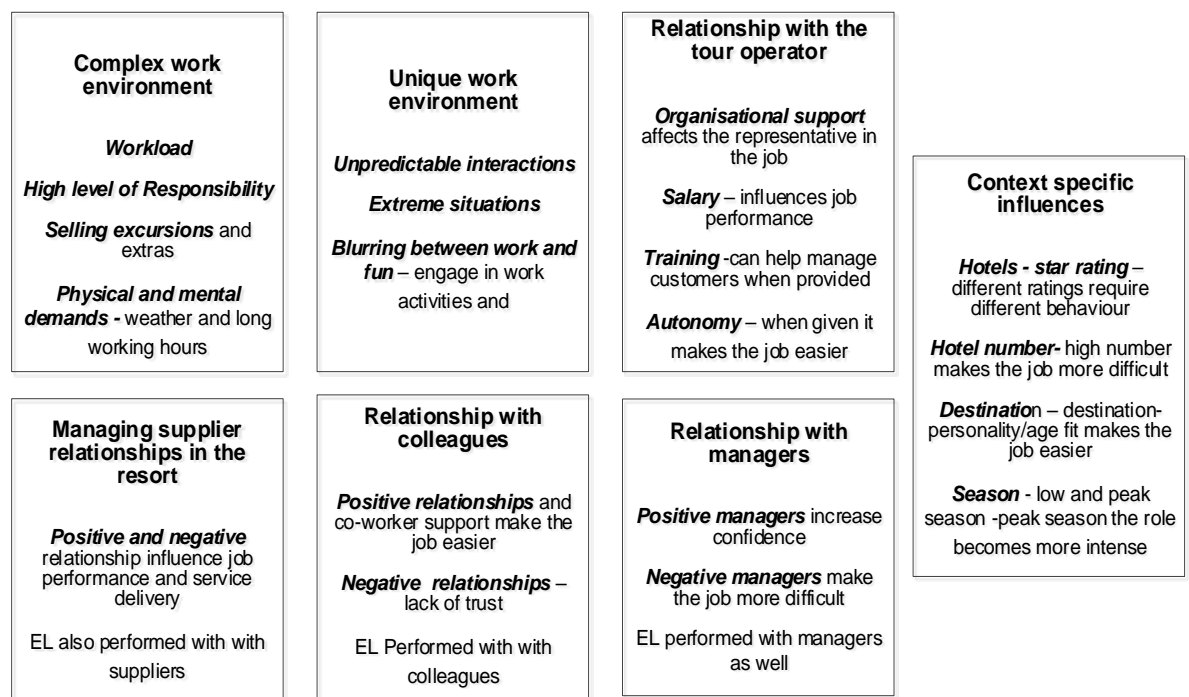
It's mid-season, you're there half there through the season, and you are just knackered, you're just tired and probably homesick and everything. You think about your family, you think about everything and you just want to leave. But after

that you just get over it and get back to work [...] I haven't met anyone [any rep] up to this day who hadn't had that week [...] you just need sleep or something (R4).

4.7 Work context influences summary of findings

From the discussion above, the following diagram is showing the findings in relation to the work context influences of EL. As shown in Figure 13, there are numerous contextual influences for holiday representatives. These have been divided into seven main categories which involve specific factors. These are: complexity of the work environment, uniqueness of the work environment, the relationship with the tour operator, managing supplier relationship, relationship with colleagues and managers, and context-specific or job role specific influences. In addition, as it can be seen in Figure 13, holiday representatives also engage in EL with suppliers, managers and colleagues.

Figure 13: Work context influences



4.8 Conclusion

This chapter has brought to light the influences and the nature of the role of the holiday representative as evidenced in Figure 13. The work environment itself is therefore crucial for the EL of these employees due to the large number influences which affect these employees' moods and behaviour and which will be

discussed in further detail in Chapter 7. The following chapter is going to discuss the customer facing factors which act as influences of EL.

Chapter 5 The customer facing role

5.1 Introduction

The findings of this research show extensive evidence on the service facing role of the holiday representatives as it can be seen from Figure 12. More specifically, an important part of this job is the face-to-face interaction with the holidaymakers. These representatives have various emotional requirements that they need to follow to make sure that they are providing a high quality service to their customers. They are expected to behave and portray certain emotions whilst at work. Thus, this chapter will firstly present the emotional requirements expected of the holiday representatives. Secondly, section 5.3 will present the findings in relation to how different customer interaction situations and customer behaviours and profile, influence the way in which these employees behave or engage in EL. The overseas representatives find themselves in various customer interaction situations dealing with various types of customers. These situations determine how they deliver the service but also have different consequences in their well-being. Section 5.4 presents the findings on the importance of emotional release in this role for coping with the hardships of EL. Lastly, section 5.5 introduces the findings regarding long-term consequences that EL has on the holiday representatives.

5.2 Emotional requirements

The findings reveal that the holiday representatives have strict frameworks of behaviour from the tour operators with regards to customer interaction. They need to put across certain emotions to their customers, and more specifically portray positive emotions and suppress the negative emotions. The representatives need to always be nice to people, be upbeat, in a good mood,

friendly, enthusiastic, positive about everything and empathetic (R3, R15). The same positivity should be shown even when they find themselves in challenging and difficult interactions with customers (R21).

You need to be upbeat and in a good mood regardless of your personal feelings or however many times you may have heard a certain issue (R15).

I was required to be very enthusiastic and positive about everything and also to mirror their [customers'] emotions (R3).

Some holidaymakers could be very angry about things, although not your fault. Their [customers'] anger was quite often aimed at you [for example] getting to a hotel at 2am and not having the room type that you would have liked. It was still important to try and be understanding and friendly even when being shouted at (R21).

The main role for them is to make their customers happy even when they are not in that particular state of mind or in a positive mood (R1, R2).

If you're sad a lot it doesn't work because you have to show energy to people [to holidaymakers], you have to get people excited they're on holiday (R1).

Well they [the tour operator] didn't tell you to do that [be happy all the time], but that's basically your job. You're there to make people happy. We're like the added extra in their hotel you know...their experience to give them (R2).

According to R8, the representatives **must put across a manufactured** personality and are not allowed to act differently than what is required from them by the tour operators.

You don't have a chance to put yourself across, your own personality. You're putting this manufactured brand across. It's what the company wants; it's not what you want (R8).

One respondent compared the way in which the representatives need to behave in their job with how Disney employees must behave having to entertain their customers on a constant basis (R7).

You always have to be happy and positive around guests. It was like Disney as well. It's a bit like that where you're in front of the guests [and] you have to act in a certain way. You might be having a bad day [...] but you have to be there happy and positive and entertaining the guests all the time. That's why they're there; they expect you to entertain them (R7).

R8 mentioned that most of the time this customer-facing role is all about faking and putting across a certain act as a holiday representative which many find difficult and decide to quit their job.

You had to be this fake [all singing] and all dancing rep all the time [...] As I said you need to put on a certain act. You got so many people [holiday representatives] crumble within

six days [or] a week. They've gone there they just thought 'that wasn't for me' and they just left home. They couldn't do it and they just went home (R8).

Demonstrating these positive emotions, being happy and positive all the time, seems to have negative consequences for the representatives. This was described by some respondents as being quite draining and very tiring (R19). For some representatives, this can be too much and they can feel unhappy and want to quit, especially because of the unpleasant and difficult customers which can intensify these negative feelings (R4).

Sometimes you just knackered especially near the end of the week. You've got to try and get up for it and go be friendly, be happy. It can be tough (R19).

When you have people complaining to you, be horrible to you all day and you have to be nice to them all day...It does get to you sometimes and other people get really depressed and want to leave (R4).

'The rep smile' should be put across always no matter what situation they might find themselves in, such as dealing with various customer problems. They are 'the face of the company' and no rep smile will reflect badly on company's image (R5).

We always used to call it like 'the rep smile' because even if you're feeling tired or whatever you still need to put that smile on and you still need to be approachable ... you're still the face of the company at the end of the day (R5).

This constant smile, as well as the other positive emotions, can be mentally tiring and hard to show all the time (R1). R5 commented on the necessity to recover from this (R5).

So, in terms of the emotions it can be tough. It can be tough to always have that smile going (R1).

It is tiring you know. You come home at the end of the day [and] you just need to sort of sit alone for maybe half an hour just to, sort of eventually recover from [that] smile (R5).

R3 further highlighted that it is important to be able to portray a different emotion from the one that is felt.

It's very good to have these skills, to be able to, not fake your emotions, but to be able to portray a different emotion than you actually feel. In a lot of work situations when you have to deal with difficult customers or you have any problems in your personal life it's good not to [let that] come to surface (R3).

Therefore, dealing with one's **own personal problems** should not stop them from showing their happy personality. They cannot be sad at work, but feeling this way can make it more difficult for the representatives to focus on their job (R16, R20).

Your personal life, you can't bring to work...all the things that [are] happening at home and you're far away and you're still sad or anything, you can't be sad when you are at work you still have to be smiling and happy all the time (R16).

I had a week in my first year as a ski rep, where from a personal point of view I had a bad week. I had a bereavement in my family and I wasn't living at home and it was difficult. I would fully hold my hands up and say my mind wasn't on the job and I did not work to the best of my ability (R20).

On the other hand, some representatives might **disagree with the display rule of smiling** and might decide not to behave in that way. As R19 mentioned, he could not pretend, he would not become a 'robot' and ultimately decided to quit the job.

They [the tour operator] wanted me to be the smiley and happy. [It] just didn't fit I couldn't do it and then I quit [...] They [the company] want to mould you into a little robot and I wasn't having any of it. And I couldn't do it, I couldn't get into that sort of mind-set I couldn't like pretend that I cared (R19).

Furthermore, the respondents argued that being approachable, professional and knowledgeable, warm and friendly, taking an interest in the holidaymakers or showing them that they care, as well as helping and being honest are the right kind of emotions to put across to customers in order to provide a good quality service (R15). Acting in this way can also help them avoid negative consequences such as feeling embarrassed and can make them more confident during customer interactions (R3).

Customers want to feel that you are hearing what they are saying and taking an interest in them. Empathy, friendliness, physically listening and taking notes, show that you can be trusted are all important. I always believe that being completely honest with customers shows that you are not hiding anything (R15).

The most important emotion was just trying to... just help them. Being there, showing the customers, you were there to help...and you're very approachable and knowledgeable about the place [...] As long as you are friendly and you know what you're talking about I think that's what's important for them. And it was important for me because I didn't want to look like a fool, I just wanted to look like I know what I'm doing and I'm [an expert] really (R3).

Showing the right emotions can be beneficial both for the holidaymakers' well-being as well as for representatives' well-being. The respondents mentioned that the work environment was nicer and they enjoyed it more when the customers were nice to them (R15). At the same time, showing emotions such as happiness

and being approachable can make it easier to persuade the customers to buy excursions and get high customer survey questionnaire scores (R10). R9 further commented on the fact that showing these emotions can help the representatives manage the more difficult customers and avoid negative outcomes such as personal attacks.

For me it was important to show the right kind of emotions as it made the job more enjoyable when a customer likes you (R15).

You've got to be happy, happy, happy really because you need to sell as well (R10).

It would make your job a lot easier by being friendly to the customers because if they did have an issue they would approach you more calmly and they wouldn't be so aggressive because they've already got that friendship with you (R9).

Furthermore, as already mentioned, these holiday representatives are the face of the company and their behaviour will affect the image of the tour operator even when they are not in direct contact with their customers. This means that they still need to behave or act in a certain way. For example, they need to act accordingly whenever they wear their uniform in case they have an ad-hoc encounter with the holidaymakers (R19). The holiday representatives also need to look a particular way and the tour operators even require them to cover tattoos or not smoke when they are in the company of customers (R12).

Because you wander around all the time with the jacket on with the company name on it and you always... it's like being on call. You wander around resorts [...] and they [the holidaymakers] ask you questions. You are also expected to know everything, and they're often ad hoc (R19).

You can't have tattoos. If your tattoos show [and] you'd have to go to the airport, you'd have to put bandages on. So, it just looked like [we'd] been in a massive fight. So, they'd have bandages to cover the tattoos. It was really strange (R12).

At other times, they need to engage in particular leisure activities such as eating in a particular hotel restaurant in order to show the customers that the food is good and they should trust eating that food (R11).

You have to do food checks and make sure that [the food was ok] because people [holidaymakers] would complain about the food and that. So, you would just go and have a dinner one night and kind of sit and eat (R11).

Furthermore, even when they are on their day off, this actually being the only day they have, or on a night out in their own free time, they are still at work. If they

meet with customers they cannot ignore them and they need to portray the same behaviours mentioned previously which is not an enjoyable side of the job (R8).

If you finished work at night and you need to go to the shop for something or you're going out for dinner or you're going for a walk, it's naturally you're going to bump into your guests. Really, it's a 24/7 job. No matter what time, no matter the situation you are in, you're still expected to portray certain behaviours [...] You get a day off but you are not actually off, you're always available; you're always made to be available (R8).

However, one respondent mentioned that meeting customers outside work was enjoyable if the customers were nice and fun people (R11).

The ones [the customers] that were in the places that we were, were quite fun people anyway. So, it was like... it didn't matter (R11).

5.3 The holiday representative- customer interaction

In terms of the customer interaction, the high volume of holidaymakers that the holiday representatives must cater to shows how important this part of the job is. Dealing with a high volume of guests whilst in hotels can be very intensive especially on arrival days when they could be dealing with hundreds of people at a time (R1).

There could be, for example there are on about 5200 arrivals this month. This is just in [destination name]. In other places, I've got 3 different other resorts, so imagine what number and the amount of arrivals that you get. It's crazy, crazy and you just have to handle it (R1).

5.3.1 Situations and customer behaviours

The respondents commented on the many roles the representatives have in relation to the holidaymakers. As R6 mentioned they **'transform' into teachers, priests, nurses, salespeople or medical experts**. The main analogy that they made was regarding being 'counsellors' as they need to often talk to customers about their problems or life stories (R6, R4).

You are literally a representative, a counsellor, a priest a vicar; you are all sorts of things, you are a nurse. There is so many of them I don't know where to start (R6).

So, you have to [talk] to a lot a lot of people and you turn into a counsellor after a week. Literally you sit with them making sure they're alright having a little session with them. Seriously, you literally turn into a counsellor (R4).

Most participants discussed at length the **negative customer interactions**. Dealing with **angry/irate customers** is something that the representatives encounter on a regular basis mainly because there is a high level of complaints. Customers can complain and are angry for various reasons such as issues with the rooms, food in the hotels, flight delays or airport transfers. This puts pressure on them and involves a lot of stress as they need to solve every problem to make sure that the customers are happy. Some customers might be **shouting, screaming and even swearing** at them which can be intimidating and distressing for some representatives. The respondents mentioned that when they found themselves in these situations, they had to hide their frustration, anxiety or stress (R14). One way of doing this was by smiling (R16).

[I was] shouted at for making them [the customers] wait to be seen to properly because you are still seeing the first coach [I was thinking] that they are idiots/impatient/pathetic/unkind (R14).

You know whenever you stress you have to put a smile on your face anyway. It's just better to smile all the time (R16).

R9 described this as follows:

You kind of go into autopilot. So, you're still remaining professional and you think 'oh I don't know how I'm going to be professional in such a situation'. But you do, you have to be calm because if you're not calm the whole situation it's going to get out of hand. When you're talking to them [customers] calmly it does kind of calm them down but when they're aggressive people already there's not much else you can do really (R9).

Sometimes the representatives might not be able to remain professional and portray a more deviant behaviour towards the customers. They get **revenge or they punish** the unreasonable customers. This can put the representatives in a more positive mood, thus minimising the feeling of anger that might arise from the customer interaction. For example, as R11 discussed:

If someone [a customer] is screaming at you you're like 'oh'. I've just got there [to the hotel] and they're like [complaining that] 'the reception is doing nothing and I want to change my room'. So obviously they're going at the reception half an hour before I go there and then they start going at me. So, I'd walk over to the reception [asking something about that person to the reception] 'so what's going on with [the customer] [asking the reception] 'what has been he saying to you? Can we help him, should we help him because they've been so mean, should we let them wait for an hour before we gave them a new room' 'have you got a room?' [The reception answer] 'Yes we got one' [R11 asking] 'should we make them wait for a bit because they've been so nasty to us?' 'Yes, and let's do that' (R11).

Some respondents also discussed **avoiding** customers who were not nice to them, shouting and being verbally aggressive in order to avoid negative consequences (R16).

I never had to shout at any of the guests or [had] any trouble but there were times when I'd just be like 'oh I'm sorry I've got to go and do this I really can't talk about this right now' and I tried to avoid them until they [calmed down] again (R16).

Sometimes, the customers can be very aggressive to the point of even physically threatening the representatives (R4). Some representatives might feel scared when faced with aggressive holidaymakers, but they would hide this and portray confidence instead. R17 commented on being in this situation and feeling a sense of achievement for managing the situation in this manner.

Yes, he [the customer who complained] tried to push me in the pool (R4).

I had a customer threaten to bite my nose off. I was scared, I managed to keep my calm in front of him and politely asked why he would want to do that; then got to my car and couldn't stop shaking. I didn't know why he wanted to, so I asked him calmly and it threw him off guard. I was nervous, but happy that I had handled it well (R17).

It can get to the point when angry customers can **make things very personal** and end up hurting the representatives (R1).

*Basically, they wanted a whole new boat just for them to make it private etc. and [I explained to them he couldn't do it] and then he went personal and he was like and I quote it was kind of like 'you f***** sort it out now' (R1).*

Therefore, it is important for the representatives to think about remaining **calm in these situations** and try to solve that particular complaint without getting angry and making the situation escalate further (R12).

You just think because you're the face [of the company] you're getting blamed for everything [...] It's just dealing with that. They're like shouting at you. [You] just have to remain calm and try and get this situation resolved for them (R12).

Most of the time, the representatives try to **put themselves in customers' shoes and understand customers' perspectives** and the reasons why they might act in a certain way. For example, when dealing with angry guests some think of reasons for why they might be angry. R1 mentioned that customers might be angry and situations can get heated because they are in a new destination and

might not feel comfortable, they are therefore stressed themselves and hence their behaviour.

As customers are in a different location than [what] they're used to it can get them quite heated. Because they don't know their way around, they don't know the local stores etc. It's a whole new world for them. They're only there about one week or two weeks, that's the time period they've got. And I understand when things don't go right for them all. You know straight away that it gets very, very heated (R1).

R13 commented on trying to understand customers when they were irate helped him deal with problems more effectively (R13).

I always do the job [...] putting myself in the customers' shoes. When someone complains about something I always try and look at it as a realistic situation and go 'would I complain?' Most of the time I know probably I wouldn't, but you try and put yourself into a customer's perspective and try deal with it the best you can (R13).

Some understand that the customers are paying a lot of money to get a good holiday which makes their complaints reasonable and makes them **empathise** with the customers (R6, R3).

You can understand that for most people a holiday it's a luxury now and that's the way I looked at it [...] 'people are coming and they really can't afford it so they are here so if there's any tiny little thing that is wrong with it they would either complain to me or complain to the accommodation manager' (R6).

I definitely empathise with them [the customers] because I [accept] when you reach a holiday destination you want to start of your holiday and you can't get some rest because construction is taking [place] and you don't get a proper clean room. So, of course, I felt for them and I understood why they were unhappy so I did everything I can to make it up for this (R3).

In addition, one respondent commented on the importance of **seeing angry/irate holidaymakers as friends**. Making this analogy can be helpful in situations where the customers might be hostile where they can make things personal (R9).

If you haven't got a friendship with them, if they got a problem [poor quality] they'd really be confrontational; it's a bit more like a personal attack and they're blaming you. Whereas if you've had some sort of interaction with the guests I think they are a lot more calmer and they trust you're going to sort it out and they come across to you in a more friendly manner and they're not blaming you personally; they know you're going to help them. So, the experience overall is a lot better, it's a lot calmer and you are able to assist them a lot easier (R9).

Most of the respondents presented examples on using **internal speeches** when dealing with these situations. They talk to themselves to modify their feelings especially when dealing with irate customers. This happens when they try to calm themselves down (R9) or for self-encouragement (R18).

Sometimes you just have to take that moment take a breather before you speak because you think 'if I speak too soon it's going to come out all wrong'. You quite have to take that little breath and think what they've said, take it in and then try to think about something constructive to say (R9).

I used to think afterwards 'I've done that so I can do it' so although I was thrown in the deep end I tried to take the positive of it and learn from that (R18).

Also, the findings reveal that representatives might be **reinforcing the idea** that the people who complain or are angry or unreasonable do so because of their uniform (R4, R1).

The uniform [was the reason why] they [the customers] were saying '[tour operator name] did this, [tour operator name] did this'. And I was 'ok' (R4).

Customers complain to the name tag, they're not complaining to you. So, you're just a [figure head] (R1).

R10 presented an example when initially she felt upset in such a situation, but eventually managed to calm herself by thinking that it is not a personal attack.

I had another hotel as well and it was a two star so he [the customer] booked it thinking that it's going to be amazing but at the end of the day it was a two star so he was very angry about this. [He] didn't know who to blame [and] it was very much my fault and he used my age against me saying I'm too young for this job [and that] it's all my fault, but literally in my face like screaming and I was really, not angry but sad [thinking] 'I can't cry in front of this man I can't let him win'. But you won't show it. You just got to get on with it it's your job at the end of the day. Don't take [it] too personal because you're the face of the hotel [and] is not him personally attacking you. Well, I guess it was because he used my age but you know what I mean. You just got to keep calm. It can be distressing (R10).

Some representatives deal with negative customer interactions by **ignoring the customers**. They consciously do this in order not to get upset and feel hurt particularly when the holidaymakers attack them on a more personal level (R4). R8 also added how although this can be frustrating, letting holidaymakers shout will help them manage these situations more effectively.

Some people make racial comments and stuff [...] Stuff like that [I] don't let them affect me one bit. Some people make snide remarks at you and say 'yeah'. You just ignore them (R4).

You just let it go in one ear and out the other, you just let them rant, because the more you let someone shout they'll eventually tire themselves out they'll eventually get fed up shouting. The only thing you can do [is to] stay calm not let it affect you. Just let everything get over your head and when they eventually calm down try and have a conversation with them. It can be hard because it is frustrating letting someone shout at you [...] If someone would start shouting at you in the street, you'd stand up for yourself. You can't do that though because the company they have to make sure people are having a [great] holiday. If

something is making their holiday not [enjoyable], you have to let them [vent] and sort it for them (R8).

Moreover, R15 also commented that if the representatives are honest with their customers and admit making a genuine mistake, the customers would eventually calm down.

Overall, I would generally match the emotions that I would be presenting to the customer. One situation I recall was when I was meant to have booked a taxi service that we had in [destination name] where the customer paid a certain price and had a personal car for the day. This had to be all booked with times in advance. I had completely forgotten to book the taxi for the customers and when I realised my mistake I went straight to the hotel to find the customers. They appeared very angry and had been difficult customers since they had arrived at the hotel and I had not felt any connection with them. I generally felt very bad for making a mess of their day and immediately apologised explaining that I had completely forgotten the day before to book it and had seen the message in my diary that morning and had come straight away. The customers were so impressed that I had been completely honest and not tried to blame someone else, such as the taxi driver for not turning up, that they actually said they were glad to see I had owned up and became very friendly for the rest of their stay (R15).

There can be times when representatives might find it so difficult to deal with abusive customers that they are unable to hide their own anger and they retaliate and talk back (R16).

There was one time I just said to them [the customers] 'I'm not paid to be spoken to like this' and I went inside the hotel (R16).

Representatives can even end up swearing at these types of customers (R13) especially when feeling angry which can also be intensified because of exhaustion (R4).

*[The guest] chased me out of the hotel and I was like, and it's the only time I've ever done it, I turned around and said to her 'why don't you just f*** off' (R13).*

This guy, I think [he was complaining about] his room upgrade or something, he was being horrible. He was literally that close touching my face. And I think I told him the f word. I told him 'never ever to speak with me again, I'm not your rep anymore' and just left and that was it. Especially [because] I had a long day as well and it was just too much. I was exhausted and I came there [to the hotel] and other people [customers] wanted to see me and this guy was just not... I was just like he didn't pay for an upgrade, he didn't pay for anything but he wanted all this free stuff and it was my fault... Literally I wasn't in the mood and that's the only time when I snapped (R4).

R2 discussed how talking back stopped being walked all over.

*Through the job I would just [be] like f*** it I don't care what people think anymore. At the end of the day I can't move people's rooms if there's no room to move to, I can't waste time with them explaining. Well I did explain but some people didn't understand they were like 'move me now, move me now' and I was like 'I can't, I*

can't'. But you know you just have to stick your ground, people think that they can try walk all over you, obviously because they're my age people try to walk over me (R2).

As, R19 mentioned, to **protect themselves**.

I remember there were family shouting at me and I just think I suppose at that point I was a bit stronger with it and I just said 'I'm not listening today as I'm trying to help you but I can't help you in this situation when you're reacting like this. Come and speak to me later. I looked after me a bit more (R19).

However, for some respondents dealing with **complaints and irate/angry customers were positive experiences** and saw them as a challenge and proof that they could do their job properly making them feel more positive and confident (R17).

I also like complaints – if I can resolve a complaint the customers love me for it, and it proves I can do my job (R17).

Furthermore, the findings reveal the fact that holiday representatives are also dealing with **unreasonable**/difficult customers on a regular basis. Usually, in these situations, the customers cannot accept the fact that there is nothing that the representatives can do in order to help them with a specific problem. It can make these employees feel angry and less relaxed (R11, R17).

[Customers would say] 'I need to change my room, I found a cockroach' [R11 replying to the customer] 'you're in a warm country! Yeah what you expect' (R11).

I still try to provide the same service to those as everyone else, but that complaint/problem is always hanging around (R17).

Many respondents commented on how the holidaymakers made unreasonable complaints blaming them for matters which were **out of their control** such as the weather, the lack of British 'things' in the resort. This was tedious and stressful for the representatives (R21).

Dealing with complaints about lack of British things such as no British food or [that there are too] many English speakers in [destination name]. It was difficult to deal with these issues as they could not be changed and was usually due to a bad choice of destination for that particular person. It was sometimes frustrating to have to hear these kinds of complaints (R21).

Representatives can become very angry with such unreasonable customers (R2).

There's always times when you want to punch someone [customer] in the face or just tell them to shut up. When I was just about start a welcome meeting, and [a holidaymaker would say] 'yeah I've been before I know it all. I could teach you a thing or two' [and I] was like 'go away' (R2).

For this reason, some respondents mentioned **lack of empathy** towards unreasonable or 'boring' holidaymakers (R3, R13).

No, I wasn't feeling empathetic to be honest [for the customer] because when you're booking something for the money that you are paying you should know what you are getting. If you are a reasonable person you [would] understand that you don't get [luxury] with flowers and chocolate candies and champagne because it's very cheap. So, if you're a reasonable person you know what to expect for the money you pay so I didn't empathise with her, I was just doing my job and trying to make her not complain further and just shut her up in the nice possible way (R3).

*When that customer is for example utterly, utterly boring and you're just sitting there and they come and see you for 15 – 20 minutes every single God damn day and they bore you stupid every single minute of the time [...] Maybe I haven't got lot of empathy in those particular circumstances. [That] lady's completely monotone and their life is just so mundane and so c*** and you just [think] 'go away and leave me alone' (R13).*

R16 commented on how knowing that she had to get good reviews/ customer service scores influenced her in accepting customers' behaviours (R16).

[The customer] said to me he had a daughter my age and he'd hate anyone to treat her like he treated me [and] I just had to said [to him] 'okay it's fine' because I didn't want him be complaining about me or anything. [When] he goes home and says, 'at least the rep was good' (R16).

Also, the findings reveal that these unreasonable customers can make it difficult for the representatives to deal with other holidaymakers because they feel uncomfortable (R16).

Possibly because he [customer] was always over my shoulder I felt like I couldn't really talk to my other customers because he was always like behind, where I could see him. When I was in the hotel he was always there ...it was like a stalker I just couldn't relax to talk to the other customers. It was horrible and he was so bad (R16).

Even when having to deal with **unreasonable complaints** some representatives still try to sort out the problem to make the customer happy. R5 commented on understanding these 'ridiculous' complaints as booking a holiday is not cheap for most holidaymakers.

If people saved 2 or 3000 pounds, it's quite a lot of money for lots of people in the UK so I guess you have to just take it on the chin so to speak [...] For example if it was too hot we would look at maybe getting an extra air-conditioning unit for

their bedroom [...] So even though their complaints were probably a bit ridiculous it's like showing that you are at least listening to the customer and doing what you can for them (R5).

As R9 commented, **empathising** with the customers is necessary when dealing with minor complaints as this helps solve them in an effective manner.

You do need to be sort of a very proactive and caring and understanding because if you can't empathise with the customer [and] understand where the customers are coming from then you're not going to be able to help them effectively. So, if you can't understand why this is important to the customer, you might think it is really trivial, but it's obviously something that it's really important to the customer (R9).

Furthermore, R15 commented on being **sarcastic** when experiencing negative feelings towards an unreasonable customer. R9 added on being **humorous** at the same time.

Negative feelings are inevitable in some service interactions as you can't click with every customer [...] I immediately felt negative towards him [...] I said to him it was nice to see him again and kept professional but I had some sarcastic comments inside my head. The cliché 'professional complainer' springs to mind with him but I kept my head as it was not worth the hassle to antagonise (R15).

It's really hard to not be offensive because you don't want the guest to feel that you are the one person attacking them for being stupid or to treat them like they're stupid. Sometimes it is easier to make a joke out of it and say that 'unfortunately I'm not the weather girl but hopefully tomorrow it will be a better day' or 'I'm going to pray for sunshine'. Things like that. Sometimes, just to make a light-hearted joke to soften the situation and then they would be quite happy with the answer they got. Some people just like to moan it's just the way they are (R9).

In terms of unreasonable customers, the holiday representatives must deal with **drunken** ones on a regular basis which can be very frustrating for them (R4).

[The holidaymakers] got too drunk and they got in fights. They end up in the police station and you have to go down and visit them at the police station and do reports. Some people when they get arrested and you have to get their families and then families come out. That's a bit crazy but I've never had to deal with one of them (R4).

Furthermore, most respondents discussed about dealing **with extreme situations** in their role. They can have customers who have medical emergencies such as injuries or miscarriages, mental breakdowns, deaths, grievances or even epidemics in their hotels. It is hard for them to go through these experiences which puts more stress on the representatives. It can be very distressing and can even affect their capability to do their job and harder to interact with other customers (R19, R8).

People get sick people die in a resort. So, if you do have to deal with something like that it's very hard to walk away from that situation and move on to the next one without affecting you in any way. There was a case in my hotel of child abuse. [The child] ended up in hospital. It's almost [as if] you're meant to forget about it and not let that affect you because you must make the holidaymakers happy (R8).

I once discovered a guest dead in their hotel room, they were on holiday alone and lots needed to be organised, whilst keeping the whole situation secret from other guests so as not to impact on their enjoyment (R21).

For some representatives, these types of situations can bring up memories and personal emotions which can make it harder to focus on the customer service role (R15).

As previously mentioned I was never happy with dealing with deaths in resort. In my first winter season, I had only been a resort rep for a matter of weeks) and my customer who arrived into resort 4 hours previously died at the hotel as I arrived for a welcome meeting in the evening. I had lost the year previously my grandmother and a very close family friend who had suffered with cancer for two years. I had never lost such close people before in my life and I found the death in resort brought up lots of personal emotions reminding me of how I felt at the time. I did not think I would be able to cope or what to say to a complete stranger who looked to me for guidance and support (R15).

R21 also added that these situations were so emotionally challenging that other issues seemed insignificant and easier to deal with.

It was distressing at the time [finding a guest dead in their room] and afterwards was very sad. At this time, it was a lot more difficult to deal with other issues and complaints that seemed so insignificant (R21).

Some respondents commented on the fact that they **expected to go through these difficult situations**. Thinking like this can make the representatives better prepared for dealing with them more efficiently and can minimise the emotional effect these situations can have on them. (R4).

You never know what could happen. When people come to your hotel, expect the worse kind of scenario (R4).

R19 also commented that dealing with an extreme situation should be seen as '**a problem**' which needs to be solved.

When people got injured I suppose you got to sort of be concerned. Is not that I wasn't concerned about them but they weren't a friend or a relation; they're just like a person, a customer on a trip so obviously I wanted them to be alright, but it didn't really matter if they can't ski anymore. They were just a problem that you had to sort out. You couldn't just analyse it, you have to [ask] 'is she alright is he alright' (R19).

However, R17 discussed about being genuinely concerned about a mentally ill customer feeling upset and confused herself.

A young man had a mental breakdown; he was travelling with his girlfriend and her family [...] The next day his behaviour was erratic [...] Turned out he had a [...] breakdown and was worsening by the hour [...] the family didn't want anything to do with him [...] The hotel wanted to kick him out. He was hospitalised and I had to almost beg the family to escort him back to the UK so that he wouldn't be institutionalised overseas. How can the family ignore him and not want to help? I felt incredibly sorry for the guy, confused and upset at the family (R17).

Furthermore, many respondents discussed about the positive customer interactions as well and their interactions with **nice customers**. For example, R10 commented on how dealing with nice customers and building genuine friendships with them 'made her job'.

I had one lady [customer] and she was lovely. She was always going to get me a coffee every morning. Things like that really made the job because you just got to know people [...] because they're there for two weeks they come and see you pretty much every day. So that's the most memorable thing you actually genuinely build friendships with people (R10).

R18 mentioned going the extra mile for customers who were nice.

I think you know sometimes that you go the extra mile for some people more than others (R18).

Also, the respondents commented on how they liked **customers who were sympathetic** to them and their job; customers who acknowledged what they did. This influenced them and made it easier to reciprocate by being nice and happy (R7).

I think if they [the customers] sit and talk to you and they would even say 'oh you work long hours' and they would just talk to you normally have a chat. [It was] not like you were acting to be nice to them, most of them were generally nice people so you would sit [and] have like a normal nice conversation with them so it wasn't hard to be like nice and happy (R7).

Furthermore, the respondents also mentioned the impact that the **positive reviews and recognitions including TripAdvisor** can have on the holiday representatives. Receiving good scores, reviews and small incentives make the representatives happy, feel appreciated or proud, and seem them as confirmation that they are doing their job well. It makes the representatives feel positive, confident (R15) and more upbeat when they are dealing with other customers (R21).

It made me feel good to see those comments and to receive letters of thanks; always made me feel like I had done the job well. This is a big confidence booster which in turn keeps you feeling positive (R15).

Thank you notes and cards always made you feel happier and upbeat about dealing with other guests; always made you feel more positive to know that you had a positive impact on someone's holiday (R21).

In contrast, R4 commented on **how negative reviews** can make the representatives feel depressed. R1 commented on being very hurt when these were made personal.

Someone went on TripAdvisor and called them [other representatives] dumb and dumber and that they should be sacked. They were depressed all week because people called them dumb and dumber (R4).

I had a couple of comments saying, 'rep needs to lose weight because he's not representing the company properly'. That really hit home, that hurt me quite a lot (R1).

Moreover, sometimes the representatives might have to rush their interactions with pleasant customers because of *lack of time*. R9 commented that having more time would even lead to a friendlier service.

We didn't have enough time to maybe sit and chat with them be friendly or maybe offer them as much advice as you could because a lot of the times you'd just be dealing with complaints and issues. Whereas if you've got more time you tend to speak to guests more just be genuinely friendly towards them (R9).

5.3.2 The profile of the customer and EL

The findings show how the customer profile could influence holiday representatives' approach to customer service. According to some respondents, knowing the customer type is important in order to be able to provide the right service and knowing how to behave no matter what situations they might find themselves in (R21). The representatives need to be flexible in dealing with various types of holidaymakers (R15).

I worked in varied destinations and varied roles, so I covered a huge range of interactions and types of people. It was important to be flexible and be able to deal with completely different types of people. From dealing with issues, complaints, deaths as well as socialising and being a friend (R21).

I worked a variety of hotels from 2-star apartment hotels to 5-star all-inclusive resorts with a mixture of customers from families to mature couples, to groups of young people such as stag parties. Knowing your customer type was important in order to know what type of excursions to sell and which type of service to give (R15).

As R1 added:

You can never treat anyone exactly the same, you always have to give individual service (R1).

R10 commented on the differences between the target markets:

In some places that type of job has different target market and that target market wanna get off their heads and that's what you have to [do] you've got to keep drinking. And it is very go, go, go. With me I just had a nice little family and couples and that [were] down to the ground (R10).

The behaviour and the approach to service are also different when dealing with younger and older customers. For example, dealing with younger customers can be intensive as it is mostly going out and having fun. On the other hand, with older customers, including families, they need to be more professional, and it is a calmer and more relaxed environment to be in (R16).

If you've got 18 – 30s [customers] out all night, partying, you've got to go out and be lively and party with them because they wanted to go out. I don't know why but then you still got to be at work in the morning probably really dragging in the morning [and] you've got to be like 'oh yeah that was great let's go out again'. Whereas if you've got like the older couples it can be a bit quieter and a bit calmer and they don't expect to see you out at two in the morning (R16).

In addition, some respondents mentioned that they preferred dealing **with returners** and people who they had already met before. This was because they already had a close relationship and that made it easier to interact with them (R4).

Some people are really, really, really nice. I had a guest, I met them first in [destination name] [...] Next season I was in [destination name] and they came to [destination name] and they've stayed in the hotel I was in because I was such a good rep (R4).

However, for some representatives dealing with returners can be more difficult as they already know the hotel and the resort and therefore do not need their representative as much. This can also make it more difficult to sell excursions and meet the targets (R16).

A lot of people in [destination name] as I told you they are returners. It's like 80 – 90% returners in that resort most of the time. So, a lot of people knew what they wanted to do, they'd have friends there who'd run tours themselves. So, it kind of made it really hard (R2).

5.4 Emotional labour release needed to minimise the negative feelings experienced in the job

As presented in Figure 12, many respondents commented on how they engaged in various activities in order to release the negative consequences from performing EL in their job. There is a need to release the tensions that their role brings and escape the stress and the fast-paced working environment. This release was described by the respondents as the need to escape (R9) or change of scenery in order to escape from guests (R6). As R11 mentioned, the representatives need to switch off for a little while to perform better the next day and care more about their customers.

[On a Sunday during their day off] we'd try to get away from the guests and go somewhere more secluded just to sort of have that down time away just to relax (R9).

Sometimes you just need a little escape [...] relax and change of scenery as well [they] help. Because you wake up and you see the same hotels staring you in the face. It was good just to go to different locations [and] pretend that I was on a holiday for one day (R6).

You've got to let go sometimes and kind of switch off from the job [...] Just for one night 'I don't want to think about it, I don't want to go anywhere else I don't want to see any guests' (R11).

As R18 commented, having fun outside work increases job performance of the holiday representatives:

If I was enjoying myself outside of work then that helped you work better (R18).

The **colleagues are the main source of release**. They go out together drinking, they visit places together, they go to the beach, or just simply stay at home together and relax (R7).

On [our] days off [we would be] going to the beach, just having like a lazy day playing on the beach, going for dinner having a few drinks. You got only one day off a week so that was pretty much what you spent your time doing (R7).

One respondent also discussed how it was helpful to have someone to vent at when she got home after a long day at work dealing with 'horrible' customers, feeling angry and having to be nice all the time (R4).

If you're being nice to someone who's been horrible to you all day it just makes you angry. It doesn't really make you a better person and [think] 'oh I'm going to be nice'. No, it just makes you even worse. Like when you are with other people you let everything out on other people. A lot of the reps I've known have done that. They had to be nice all day and when you go home they were just horrible.

They are letting everything out from the day, they're letting it out on their colleagues and stuff; you're venting because you don't have anybody else to talk to do you (R4).

However, for some representatives trying to relax with colleagues can be a bit more difficult when working in a smaller team and having to see the same people all the time (R18).

In a bigger resort, especially in [destination name], there was a lot more people there so having more people there that made it a little bit more entertaining and more fun (R18).

Furthermore, R20 mentioned how having fun and relaxing can become repetitive for the representatives; similar to the 'Groundhound Day' film.

So, over the course of six months if you went out two or three times a week you'd literally have the same night out every time. You were out it was a bit like 'Groundhound Day'. Every night that you had was exactly the same (R20).

Because of this, the respondents also commented on the need to **make friends outside their company** in order to have more fun (R5). In this way, the representatives might be able to step away from work (R15).

I prefer to branch out and get to know other people. It was so much fun (R4).

From the first season, I always made friends with people outside the company so that emotionally I could take a step away from the job and talk to a neutral party (R15).

Moreover, the general opinion was that **drinking** seemed to be a very popular coping mechanism for the holiday representatives both when going out with colleagues, as mentioned, but also when they were by themselves (R1). As R5 pointed out, drinking can actually be the only release for some employees when under pressure.

As soon as I finish doing this I'm just going to deliver some departure cards and stuff and then grab a bite [for] lunch at my hotel and then go home and drink the afternoon away (R1).

It was quite a pressured situation [peak season] [and] I think for people [holiday representatives] dealt with that in different ways. Speaking from a bit of experience, I'm not so much a massive drinker but lots of times, the only relief for lots of holiday reps was to go to [the] bar every night (R5).

For some respondents drinking was too much so they preferred **sleeping over this** mostly because they were very tired (R3, R4).

I still felt that I need sleep as well. They [other colleagues] seem to want to party all the time. As much as I like partying and drinking once in a while, I don't like it to be very regular and I just need rest as well (R3).

Sleep. I used to sleep [...]. Sometimes, you're just so tired you'll sleep all day (R4).

R4 discussed how small things such as walking in the sun helped her relax and not think she was constantly working.

I'd walk across the beach to my hotel and [just think] 'this is why I'm a rep' ...or if I'm on my break I would go to one of the restaurants on the promenade and just have a nice cocktail and relax. Do stuff so you don't feel like you're working all the time (R4).

However, some respondents commented that sometimes **it was not possible to break away** from work or other colleagues. As mentioned in the previous chapters, this happens because of lack of free time, having to work very long hours or because the destination does not allow them to do so, in particular, small resorts or ski resorts. As R1 commented this is not a good aspect of their job.

Sometimes we had siestas. So, we had a break, but in the summer, they expect you to work from more or less 8 AM till nine – 10 PM with maybe a short break. Again, I don't think that's healthy because you need to get away from your work environment (R1).

5.5 Long-term consequences of emotional labour for the holiday representatives

One aspect of the job discussed by the respondents was the long-term consequences of EL. The findings reveal how the respondents became better at managing situations, more conscious of what is happening around them, more perfectionist and controlling, better at managing emotions, able to work with no sleep, knowing how to sell and being more independent open minded, bubbly and more grateful for things. Some representatives also made friends for life. Overall, the general opinion was that being a representative has made the respondents **more confident** (R2) especially the ones that were younger in this job (R15). Therefore, the respondents mentioned that they are more confident with public speaking, delivering presentations in front of a larger crowd and also having more confidence in terms of interacting with people (R7).

[This job] it definitely did make me more confident (R2).

I started repping at 19 years old and I was a shy person. Now, I think nothing of standing in front of a large crowd of people for welcome meetings, dealing with delays, my confidence levels have risen (R15).

I think the social entity, [the] interaction side of it [the job] was really good; I've never done anything like that so it helped [me] build a lot of confidence (R7).

R16 also added that this job changed her a lot as it helped her become more accepting and proud of herself than she was before she became a representative.

[This job] definitely changed me a lot; just being more confident and more proud of being myself than I was (R16).

Moreover, the respondents also discussed how they became stronger people and more resilient when facing problems in their current job including dealing with angry people (R18).

When people shout at you [...] it's definitely made me stronger in the long run and in [my] job now because I just think 'well I had people shout at me before' so I can kind of deal with it again (R18).

R21 mentioned that he is more **thick skinned** and does not take things personally when he faces difficult social interactions.

I am much more thick skinned than I was, and able to [deal with] people screaming and shouting at me without me taking it personally or letting it bother me as I once would. I think it has made me far less emotional generally (R21).

Another respondent also talked about being **emotionally stronger** after being a representative, especially when being away from family and friends (R16).

I feel like I can do a lot more than I thought I could emotionally. I'm a lot stronger than I thought. I was [able] to deal with everything that we did and to be away from my family and my friends (R16).

Generally, being a representative has helped the respondents **develop skills necessary in their next/ present employment**.

It was challenging, it was definitely challenging but it was worthwhile because I did find that I learned so much and that I developed very quickly over two months of negotiation skill [or] customer service skills. Being able to develop those skills quite quickly and having a lot of exposure to things that you don't always get to have such hand on experience, it has helped me (R9).

On the other hand, there can also be negative long-term consequences. For example, because extreme situations and various aspects which might go wrong the representatives could get **scarred for life** (R11, R13).

Even though the rep is not getting sued or anything like that they [were the ones who] did the health and safety checks in there. That knowledge, that it was you that did that, that lasts with you forever. If anything would happen in any of your hotel, then that would be on your mind forever (R11).

You give that [dealing with an extreme case] to an 18-year-old person who just has no life experience... that is something that could seriously affect them forever (R13).

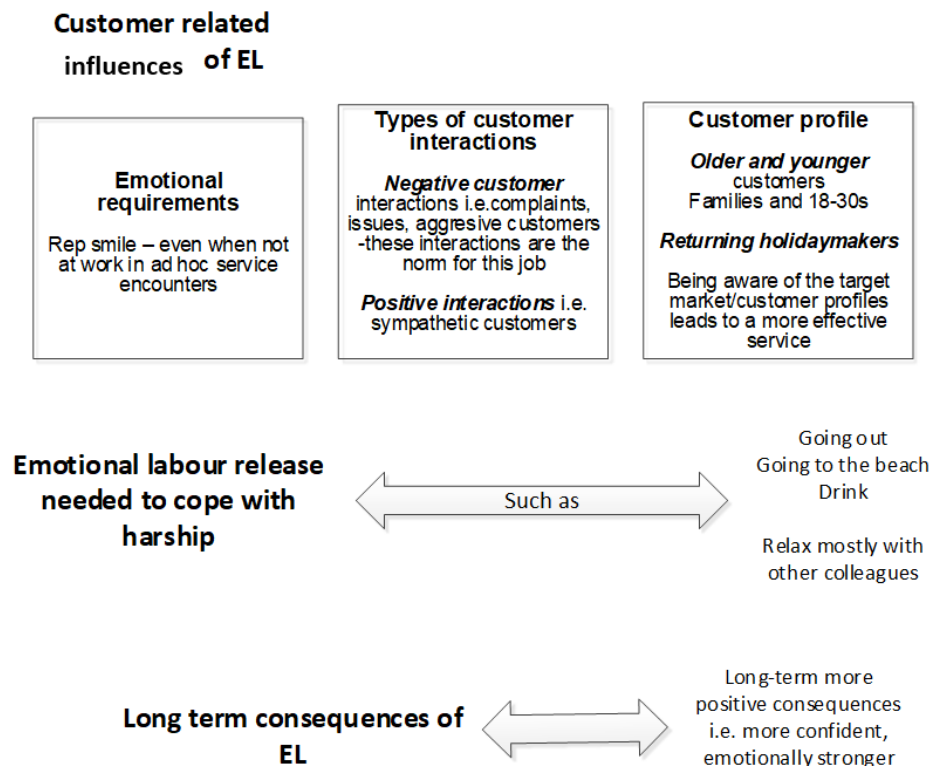
R21 pointed out another negative, the fact that he is **not as compassionate** as he was when he was new in the role.

I think that I am not as compassionate about certain complaints and feelings as I was when I started the job (R21).

5.6 Customer-related influences summary of findings

Figure 14, presents the key findings in relation to the discussion in this chapter. Customer-related influences have been divided into three categories which involve several factors. The emotional requirements, the types of customer interactions which can either be positive or negative as well as customer profile influence the representatives and how they engage in EL. In addition, Figure 14 also presents other two key findings from this chapter which are the importance and the need for emotional release in order for representatives to cope with the hardships of EL, and the long-term or post-job positive consequences of EL on an individual's wellbeing.

Figure 14: Customer related influences



5.7 Conclusion

This chapter presented the findings related to the customer facing role and the service interactions of holiday representatives. The extensive findings showed that this role is the main responsibility for these employees who always need to make sure that they show positive emotions during service transactions. As Figure 14 highlights, there are a few important customer related influences and emotional release is something which is crucial in this role. The next chapter presents the findings regarding the individual aspects which impact holiday representatives' emotions and behaviours.

Chapter 6 Individual influences of emotional labour of holiday representatives

6.1 Introduction

The interviewees also discussed various individual related aspects which have an impact on how the job is performed. Most findings show that one's personality, age and experience in the job, impact on representative's emotions and behaviours whilst at work. Therefore, this chapter will firstly discuss personality as an influence of EL and more specifically the differences between the extroverts and introverts. Further, the importance of having a strong customer orientation in this service sector role is covered, followed by the differences in relation to how young and mature representatives engage in their role as well as differences between female and male representatives. Lastly, the chapter will focus on how experience in the role is also an important influence of job performance.

6.2 The personality of the holiday representative

According to the respondents, there are important differences in terms of having a more extrovert personality or an introvert personality as a holiday representative. The findings show that extroversion is associated with being a happy person, confident and strong, whereas introversion is associated with being unconfident and shy. As a representative, having the right personality is necessary in this job in order to manage the hardships of the role and avoid experiencing damaging consequences to themselves and their well-being.

According to the respondents, extroverted holiday representatives are better suited for this job. A representative should be a people person who enjoys interacting with customers, and is a happy person, has a natural flair for customer

service, is confident, well-grounded, and puts other people first. It is also important to be strong-minded as this makes it easier to deal with angry customers, who are horrible to the representatives (R8). As R1 put it, having a tough personality or **thick skin** makes it easier to cope with these difficulties.

You have to be strong minded in a way. When people would just be horrible you just have to ignore half of the stuff they're saying (R8).

In terms of thick skin [it] is just the way that you handle things. You can't let things get to you otherwise it will break you (R1).

It seems that these employees find it easier to show empathy and they seem to be more confident when dealing with extreme situations or angry customers (R9, R6, R7).

I think you do need to be a very strong character. You need to be very confident and you do need to be sort of very proactive, caring and understanding because if you can't empathise with the customer, understand where the customers are coming from, then you're not going to be able to help them effectively (R9).

It doesn't bother me now if the guest wants to shout at me I know that it's not their problem with me. I guess that's just my personality, I can switch [off] like that and I can just be smiling and happy and nice to people (R7).

Moreover, it can become very difficult for the representatives who do not have this personality and can affect them in a negative manner to the point of even quitting the job (R4, R1).

You have to be this nice, smiley person. If it's not your personality [unclear word] it's going to affect you (R4).

[Other colleagues] completely quit from the company, people can't handle it. You have to be very strong (R1).

Some respondents mentioned that because they have a shy personality they found it difficult to cope in some situations whilst doing their job, especially when having to speak in front of other people. For example, when having to deliver welcome meetings R3 commented on being very nervous especially when she was new to the job.

All the time...especially at the beginning when I just started there... when I had to deliver welcome presentations I was feeling really anxious, I was really nervous about speaking in public, in front of a lot of people. Naturally I'm not a person who's able to speak in public with a lot of confidence. I mean, now I am much better of course, but it's not natural to me to stand in front of an audience and speak (R3).

Many interviewees agreed to the fact that if the holiday representatives are nervous or quiet they can become less confident in the role and it can lead to turnover (R4, R7).

You can't be shy, you can't be quiet, introvert; you wouldn't last (R4).

I think if you were really shy you sort of had stage fright, I think it would be hard to do that sort of job (R7).

Holiday representatives who are shy and sensitive might find it very intimidating to deal with angry customers who scream and shout at them which would make them feel hurt and upset (R15, R18).

We would be ganged up by my customers when we went to speak with them and this was quite intimidating to experience. I am only 5-foot-tall and to be surrounded by groups of people was not a pleasant feeling and my first summer I was a lot more shy (R15).

I've known another rep was a lot more timid than I was and when she used to get shouted at it did used to upset her, [having] different personalities as well (R18).

6.3 Strong 'prosocial customer orientation'

An important finding is that many of the respondents show a strong prosocial customer orientation. This means that they show a genuine interest in the well-being of the customer or genuine care. These employees have the mind-set that they need to provide the best possible service to the customers even when dealing with unreasonable or angry ones.

The representatives understand that the holidaymakers pay money to come on holiday which can be a luxury for many. For this reason, they try their best to provide a great service and make sure that the holidaymakers have a good holiday which is also a personal choice (R5). Therefore, some representatives have this attitude despite being tired or having to meet and help customers in the resort outside their working time (R8).

At the end of the day, from a personal point of view, I'd feel guilty if I didn't give my best customer service because they've paid a lot of money to come on holiday [...] Mentally it is quite draining, but at the end of the day you must give this service because if you don't give this service then I would feel personally a bad person (R5).

As far as they [the customers] are concerned you're the person that they [have] to make their holiday. They're told that on the planes going over. They're told in the buses going up there [and they're] told even before they leave the airport 'your

rep is there for you at all times'. So, they have no hesitation stopping you in the street. You can't [turn around] and tell them no. I personally couldn't. Some reps probably could, but I couldn't (R8).

For some representatives, customers become a priority before other responsibilities such as meeting targets and even go beyond their responsibilities and do certain things for their customers to make their holiday even better (R6).

I mean in the end to me it was all about the customer not about sales [...] [In] lots of places I worked, a lot of guests would come on a honeymoon or on an anniversary something like that; [something] that was special [such as] a gold or silver anniversary or something like that. So, I just went out of my way, I got cards for them, I got them flowers or wine something like that. I'd put them in the room for them before they arrived (R6).

Going the extra mile for their customers can be a motivator for representatives to do this job well and perform to the best of their capabilities (R20).

At the end of the day for me it wasn't about a reward. I thought that people there were on holiday and I've been on that sort of holiday myself. I knew what it meant to have a good rep and I've been on holidays where you've had bad reps [...] the way I try to work I use that as my motivation to get up in the morning and did the best that I could and tried to put on a great week for the people that are staying with us (R20).

Furthermore, some respondents mentioned that they sometimes had informal conversations with their customers and were honest with them, for example, when giving information about the resort (R3).

When I was delivering the welcome presentations, it was kind of [an] informal conversation and just honest advice from my side of anything they wanted to know about the island (R3).

Even when dealing with customer complaints the representatives with strong customer orientation put them first and try to do their best to make sure all runs smoothly for them no matter what (R3).

I knew it's not their [customers'] fault that I [feel] this way [stressed]. So, with the customers I would try my best to give the best service I could and I was trying to help them make the most out of their holiday. But I don't think it [feeling stressed] ever impacted on the way I treated the guests, no (R3).

Also, sometimes some representatives would show genuine interest in their customers and would try their best, but the holidaymakers would not genuinely appreciate it. This can demotivate the representatives (R11).

I've done everything possible for them [the customers] and then they sent that letter because they wanted something for free. So, then you think to yourself 'why am I trying so hard when you're just going to complain about me anyway' (R11).

6.4 Age and gender

Many respondents mentioned age as being an influence in this role in relation to job performance. The general opinion was that younger representatives are better for the job as they have the right personality, they have the necessary energy, a natural proclivity for this job, and therefore tend to enjoy it more (R3).

I think the best people are young people who like to travel a lot; they are at the young stage [of] their career, they just love partying, they're good at sales, they have the natural stance of speaking in public, they are attention seekers (R3).

However, some respondents commented on the fact that the younger representatives can get easily overwhelmed with the amount of work that needs to be done. Also, they can get homesick quite easily and might want to quit the role which can affect their job performance (R6, R8).

So, it was a bit scary. I was only 20 when I started. So, obviously, I was quite young to be going off and just pack off and leave for six months (R6).

They are real people working for them [tour operators], and a lot of them are really, really young. A lot of them are between the ages of 18-19-20. It's their first time away from home, and it can be a lot to deal with. The boy that I actually shared my apartment with was 18 at the time and he really, really struggled for the first few months [...] as I said younger people out there they would get a hell of a shock when they see some of the things that they have to deal with (R8).

One respondent pointed out that having to deal with a high volume of guests or angry customers who scream and shout in their face is more difficult for a younger representative (R8).

It's a lot of responsibility for the young people as well. If you're dealing with the hotel [having] anything between 200 - 500 people, it's a lot for a young person to deal with (R8).

At the same time, as R12 mentioned, having a lot of responsibility in this job can be very difficult for the older representatives as well, but even more unnerving for the younger ones.

So, it was a massive responsibility. Sometimes it was quite scary because you never knew what the call was that was going to come through. I was lucky when

I was repping [as] I was 30 so I had a bit of [unclear word] but I think for the younger ones it was really quite daunting (R12).

On the other hand, some respondents commented on the fact that older representatives are more mature and therefore able to deal with some situations in a more mature way. Extreme situations are far more difficult for younger employees who do not have the *life experience* of a more mature representative and can increase the level of stress (R5, R16).

I have colleagues who had deaths or they had sexual assaults with customers and everything. Obviously, that's a different level and I'm not sure any sort of 20-year-old [should have to] deal with these sorts of situations, but sometimes they were (R5).

She [the representative in question] went up and tried to wake her [a customer] and she knew she was dead but she didn't tell them [customers' friends]. She waited until the doctor came. But she was a bit older so she was a bit more sensible. I don't know what I would have done in that situation. I think she just phoned the managers to come down and help; obviously that's what they're there for (R16).

It seems that another role for the older representatives is that of providing emotional support to their younger peers. R6 presented a mother-child analogy in relation to this.

I just found that where I worked a lot of them [representatives] were under 25 [years old]. And when you're sort of 26 – 27 [years old] and trying to keep up with a 20-year-old [...] You're more of a mother to them more than anything, patching up their little bruises from the night before [when] they've fallen over. It's quite an eye-opener (R6).

According to R5, because he was a mature representative he was better at dealing with more mature customers in particular in five-star hotels:

Often, they [tour operator] did put me in maybe three or four-star hotels because I guess I'm a bit older so a bit more mature and I could speak to people about the world. You get 50-60-year-old couples. They would often want to lose their partner for half an hour or so, they would want to come and talk to you [...] So, I think it was important in the better star hotels where you got to deal with people [who] actually wanted to have a conversation about what was happening in the news or you could talk about football or you could talk about life (R5).

Moreover, the respondents also discussed how gender fits with the job role. For example, there are difficult extreme situations which can have a very powerful

impact on them. R1 discussed the fact that he found it more difficult when dealing with a particular extreme situation mainly because he is male.

The hardest one [extreme situation] was a miscarriage in the resort. That was hard; that was a tough one. I think solely because I was a man rather than a woman so it made it a little bit difficult (R1).

As R21 mentioned it does not mean that men cannot deal with more intense situations, but the women are better at managing emotions as part of their job.

I know it's not going to be 100%, but I think, generally speaking, women are better at the emotional side of things than men [are]. Better at being empathetic, better at being understanding when a guest gets homesick or when there's a knee injury or something like that. When I worked there [it] was me and another boy. So, whilst I think we were very practical [as] I think we were good at solving problems, we maybe could have been better at the emotional side things (R21).

In addition, some respondents discussed about their experiences of working in a female dominated working environment. They described this as a very difficult, intense and challenging one as there were more differences between colleagues and things could get heated (R1). It can be challenging and the team dynamics changes (R5).

*It was me and seven girls which that was challenging in its own way. I was the only guy there so that was a bit fun. It was a b***** environment which was so...it was so b***** that's all I can describe it as. [If] a bunch of girls put together for five months [then] things are going to get heated (R1).*

Usually people will fall out. It was more the girls that would fall out with other girls...boys just get on with it. I think that the girls hold grudges more [...] [You've] probably seen this with your female friends; they would be arguing, they would be falling out with each other and later they'd be okay. There's more dynamics when is more girls because there're more issues that girls might have than boys (R5).

6.5 Experience

The interviews revealed that the representatives who start their job and have **previous work experience** are better prepared for the role. More specifically, having previous customer service experience can increase their confidence and help them better cope with the pressure and the stress involved in the role of holiday representatives (R5, R9).

I think for me, because I was a [job name] so I was used to high pressure, [a] high stress job so even for me maybe it was a bit of a step down. I was dealing with 16 – 18-year-old children. They are not very easy to deal with at that age. So maybe not so much for me [it affected mentally] but maybe for the other people [representatives]. Maybe people [who] aren't used to deal with people all day, maybe would have affected on them (R5).

I felt quite confident in that sense because I worked in previous roles that were customer focused working in retail in shops so I've already had experiences working with customers so I felt I could do [the job] (R9).

Furthermore, many respondents discussed about the **experience within the role**. The respondents mentioned that having done this job for many years made it easier to cope with its challenges (R6).

I actually enjoyed the more challenging ones [the hotels] because after nine years of being a holiday rep it's really easy just to go to the ones that [were challenging] [rather than] when you had all-inclusive hotels and it wasn't challenging (R6).

In contrast, representatives with no previous experience in the role can find everything intensive at the beginning and can get easily overwhelmed if they are thrown in the deep, especially if they start the job during peak season (R10).

I think that at the beginning I felt a bit sorry for myself because I was thrown into the deep end and that's because I started in the peak season. So, if you started in April you would be very well-prepared for it. Because you do your training and you get to know the hotel and it is quiet season. So, you know what [to do] inside out when is busy. [Whereas] when you start in July you're still trying to know the area and know the hotel whilst having 50 customers a day. So, I think that's what makes it difficult. So, at the beginning I found I had a lot on my plate purely because I just started (R10).

As R9 commented, there is a lot of stress and nervousness of not making any mistakes when new in the role and having to deal with customers.

When you first started, you did feel stressed because you were in front of the customer the customer is asking you questions and you need to know the answer, the customer doesn't want to have to wait, they want to know the answer [...] Then I'd feel a bit stressed on the inside (R9).

Also, more experienced representatives know how to deal with complaints in a more effective manner (R6) which become 'normal' after a while (R18).

I think after four or five [years] I was kind of [pre-empting] what they're going to say and kind of, not ignore the problem but acknowledge the problem. Not say 'I couldn't do anything about it' offer them an alternative. So, if somebody would come to me with a problem I knew that I couldn't do anything about that problem but offer them an alternative. Acknowledge the problem (R6).

[I did not have to deal with] too many bad ones [complaints] nothing really disastrous, but then I suppose you're just used to this sort ... so what was bad at the beginning by the end of it it's just [too] normal [...] I think the first time it's quite difficult, but then when you kind of get the same complaints over again in some

ways you're then not sympathetic enough because you're just kind of like 'oh well this is what you get' (R18).

There is also evidence which shows that when representatives are new in the role they are more keen in wanting to provide a good service and help the holidaymakers. However, this can change throughout the duration of the job (R11).

In the first week, I can remember this kid hurt himself he fell over and banged his head [unclear word]. I knew where the medical centre was and I legged it down the street with this kid and his dad to the medical centre because I was so concerned about this child. And then it was nothing really wrong with him, he just got a big lump [...] I can remember that, doing it in the first week and I ran so fast because I was so concerned. And then in the end it wears you down and you start losing that kind of concern. I think that sounds awful because... you should still care as a person, but I don't think I would have run so fast with the child at the end of it as I did at the beginning (R11).

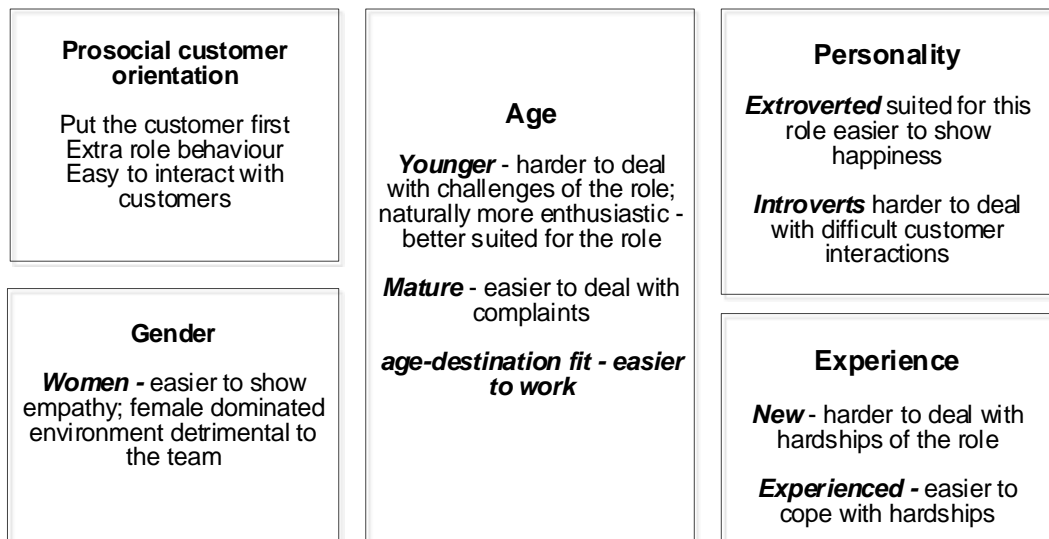
In addition, an interesting finding is that more experienced representatives, who might have been employed in the role for several years, although they do not have a problem with the difficult aspects, still decide to quit the role because it becomes 'too boring' and they need to do something more challenging (R6).

I did have great fun doing my job. Just at the end of the day I got bored with it after 8 years, eight summers and about 4-5 winters. I just didn't want to do it anymore. I wanted to do something more, something a bit more challenging (R6).

6.6 Individual influences summary of findings

Figure 15 shows a summary of the key findings regarding the individual influences of EL based on the discussion in this chapter. Demographics such as age and gender have an important role for how the emotions are expressed by the holiday representatives. Being extroverted or introverted can make EL harder or easier for these employees as well as having a prosocial customer orientation. Experience in the role is also a factor which can have different influences on how emotions are managed whilst at work.

Figure 15: Individual influences



6.7 Conclusion

This chapter has presented the findings of this study about the individual influences of the EL of holiday representative. In the context of the holiday representatives there are many individual-related factors which have an important role in shaping EL. As evidenced by Figure 15, individual influences cannot be ignored in relation to how emotions are managed and expressed. The following chapter introduces a critical discussion of the findings presented in Chapters 4-6.

Chapter 7 Discussion of findings

7.1 Introduction

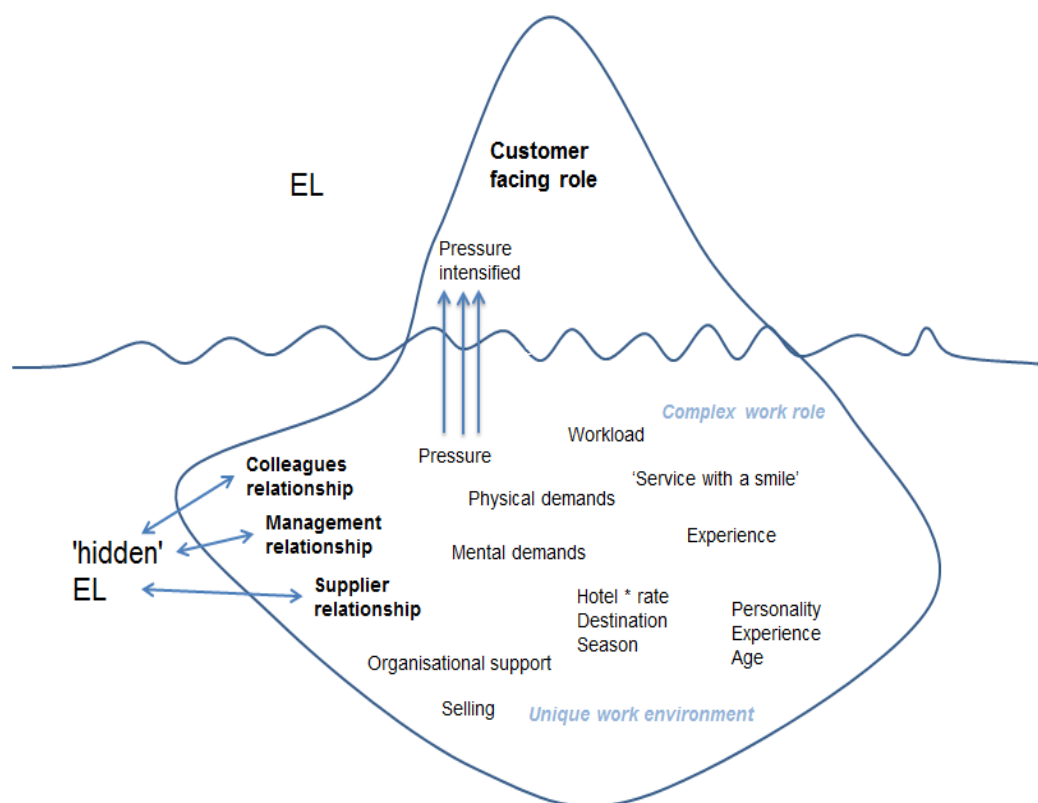
The aim of this thesis was to investigate the influences of EL in the context of the holiday representatives. This chapter interprets and discusses the findings presented in Chapters 4-6. This was an inductive study which brought a detailed insight into the context of the holiday representatives. One of the most important findings of this research was that the work environment should be considered as the most significant influence on these employees as emotional labourers. Another key finding was the identification of certain job specific factors such as hotels or the destination. EL is a concept which is based on the interaction with clients. However, an interesting finding in this study was that the holiday representatives engage in EL not only with their customers, but also with their managers, colleagues and suppliers. At the same time, the findings showed how the individual characteristics of these employees also act as important influences for the EL of holiday representatives highlighting the fact that these should not be ignored when examining EL. The identification of long-term and short-term consequences of EL is also a key finding of this research. Therefore, these will be discussed further in the subsequent sections.

Firstly, section 7.2 presents the iceberg of EL of holiday representatives which is a visualisation of EL in the researched context and a summary of the findings of this study. Further, this section introduces the model of the influences of EL of the holiday representatives developed in line with Chapters 4-6. The discussion is going to be based on this model. Initially, the contextual influences will be discussed, followed by the customer facing role of holiday representatives and the individual factors. Finally, the chapter will conclude with a discussion of the consequences of EL on the individual well-being of the holiday representatives.

7.2 The influences of emotional labour of holiday representatives model

The findings presented in Chapters 4-6 revealed that EL in the context of the holiday representatives is a complex matter. The main role of the holiday representatives is indeed to provide a good service to their customers and to make sure that they represent the company in a positive manner. However, there are many other aspects that exist in their working environment which are not very evident but still influence the holiday representatives, their emotions and consequently their EL. Therefore, EL in this context can be pictured as an iceberg as shown in Figure 16.

Figure 16: The iceberg of emotional labour

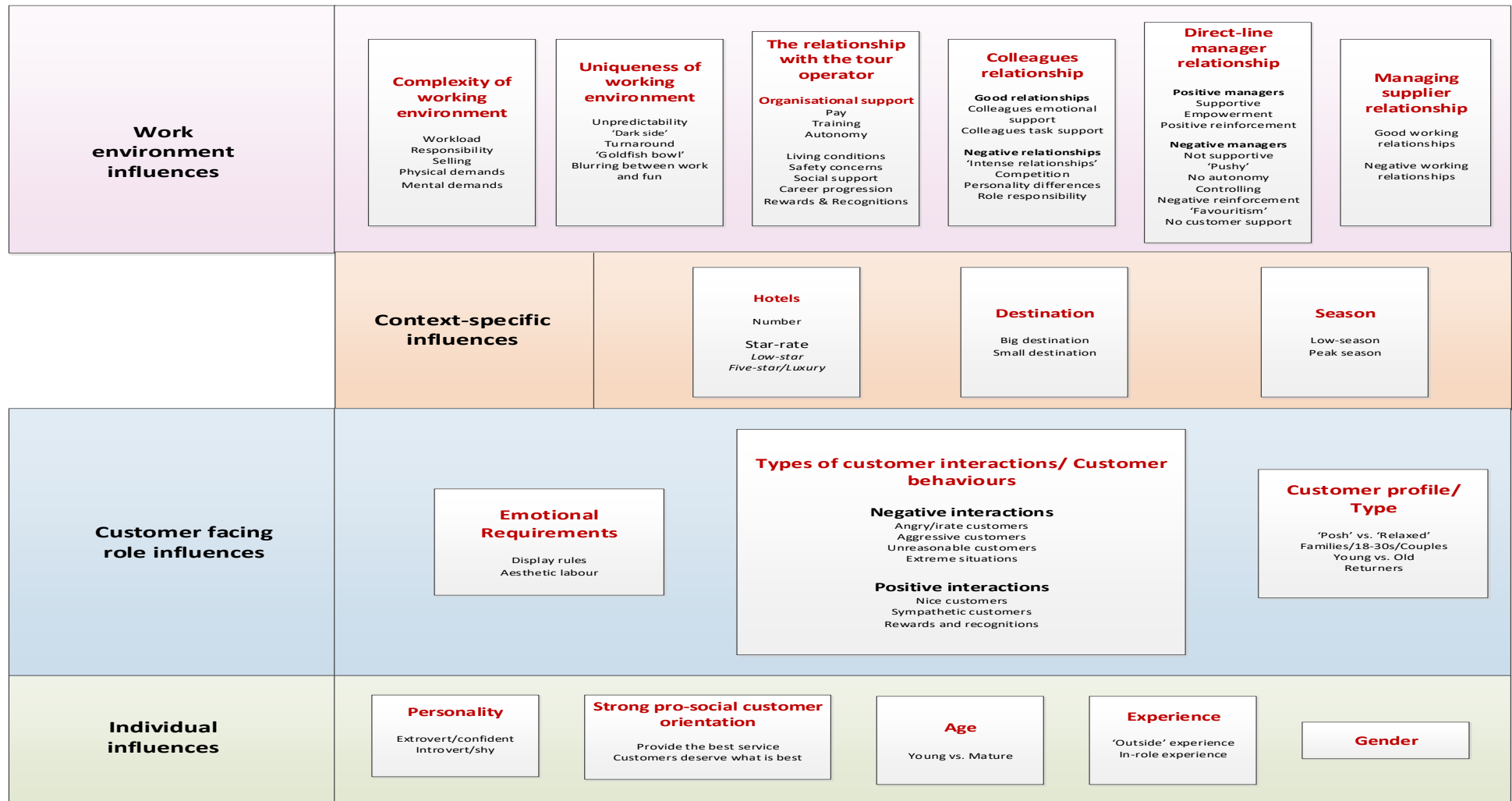


Source: Author (2017)

The customer facing role is just the tip of the iceberg and what lies beneath the surface is more complex and intensifies the pressure on customer service. All these aspects affect the visible part or the service interaction which is the main role requirement of holiday representatives. The 'hidden' part is comprised of numerous aspects which can be considered influences of EL. The physical demands of the job, the variety of the job requirements or the workload, all put pressure on the representatives and affect their customer interaction and the way in which they manage their emotions. At the same time, besides the EL performed with the holidaymakers, these employees must also manage their emotions in interactions with their colleagues, managers and suppliers which makes the role more complex and adds to the pressure. If there would not be as many aspects beneath the water which they need to consider in order to facilitate the holiday experience, then it would be easier for the representatives to focus on their main EL role. Also, the personal characteristics of these employees have an important role on how they deliver the service. The findings showed that personal characteristics can also add pressure on the visible part of the iceberg.

There are a variety of factors which act as influences of EL. For this reason, Figure 17 presents the key findings of this study on the influences identified in Chapters 4-6 in the context of the overseas holiday representatives. This model serves as a guide to the discussion that follows. As it shows, the influences have been divided into three categories in line with the literature as shown in section 2.6 Figure 7: (a) the work environment influences, (b) customer facing role influences, and (c) individual influences. However, another sub-category was added to the work environment which is context specific influences.

Figure 17: Model of the influences of emotional labour of holiday representatives



7.3 The work environment as an influence of emotional labour

As was presented in Chapter 4, the work environment of holiday representatives is very complex. As with an iceberg, there is much more 'underneath the water' than initially meets the eye. To be more specific, the customer facing role and the customer interaction are only the tip of the iceberg. This will be discussed separately in Section 7.4. There are many 'hidden' aspects to this role which are not taken into consideration in understanding holiday representatives as emotional labourers. Therefore, this is a key finding which supports Bergman and Gillberg's (2015, p.23) statement that 'there is a need to move away from a discussion about emotional labour towards a discussion of working conditions'.

In line with the Affective Events Theory (AET), experiences and behaviours of the employees are determined by certain features such as job demands, job characteristics, requirements for EL or contextual factors which will create work events that influence employees' emotions and then behaviours (Weiss and Cropanzano 1996). The contextual factors in holiday representatives' work environment serve as situational cues that evoke certain emotions and can have a direct impact on employees' EL (Grandey 2000, Moon, Hur and Jun 2013). In line with Diefendorff, Richard and Yang (2008), the non-interpersonal work events will trigger the emotional regulation of holiday representatives. Therefore, the work environment is an important factor for understanding the concept of EL in the researched context (Ashforth and Humphrey 1993, Grandey 2000, Morris and Feldman 1996).

7.3.1 The complexity of the work environment

The findings revealed that the most influential job role factors for the EL of holiday representatives are: intensive workload, high level of responsibility, and selling. According to Dale (2010), the most important duties of the holiday representatives are to represent the company, to provide outstanding customer service and to generate revenue for the tour operators by selling organised groups. However, the role is more demanding and diverse with numerous activities such as dealing with complaints, paperwork, administrative work, doing airport transfers,

conducting welcome meetings, hotel visits and managing relationship with suppliers or guiding tours. These activities are related to facilitating and controlling the holiday experience for the holidaymakers, explicitly the package holiday product (Adib and Guerrier 2001). According to the respondents in this study, the representatives do not mind dealing with customers as they accept this is part of their job, but the **workload** seems to intensify the job. The fact that they see themselves as 'slaves' shows that the workload is a major source of dissatisfaction. The representatives could experience emotional dissonance because of this feeling which will influence how they engage in either surface or deep acting when interacting with their customers (Hochschild 1983).

The respondents acknowledged that as holiday representatives they have a high level of **responsibility**. For example, overseeing health and safety procedures or having the emergency phone seems to put a lot of pressure on them. They can become distressed and experience a lot of stress which could make it harder to engage in EL with their customers and to put on the act of cheerfulness or enthusiasm that is expected of them. At the same time, they must be aware that they are the 'face of the company' and the way they perform their role affects the level of satisfaction of the holidaymakers and their view or opinions of the tour operators itself (AGCAS 2011, Van Dijk and Kirk 2008). This seems to make them more aware of how they need to behave in the workplace and manage their emotions, which shows their engagement in EL (Cote 2005). Therefore, having a high level of responsibility on top of being in a customer service role highlights the complexity of their role.

Moreover, the **selling aspect** is a major part of their role (Dale 2010). In addition to making sure that they are providing great customer service they need to meet numerous sales targets. Unlike Guerrier and Adib's (2003) findings which were unclear in terms of the pressure put on the representatives to sell, the findings of this research showed that this is very high and enforced both by the organisation and by the managers. Many respondents discussed selling and thus it can be considered as one of the most important job characteristics influences for holiday representatives which affects the way in which they perform EL. This happens because as Wong and Wang (2009) state, selling increases the emotional burden.

The findings showed that selling is more difficult and makes the representative feel uncomfortable when there is a selling requirement - personality clash or job role - personality clash, which can hinder the quality of the service provided. If the pressure to sell was not so high then the job performance could be increased. Overall, selling involves a lot of pressure, stress, frustration and a counterproductive working environment. These findings support Tang's (2012) work who found that meeting targets were seen as excessive by emotional labourers, and affected their relationship with their managers, their enjoyment of the job and consequently job performance.

Although the representatives might feel uncomfortable selling, they still do it in order to compensate for the low wage and get the commission which makes them feel guilty and misleading. This emotional dissonance leads to feeling hypocritical (Hochschild 1983). Therefore, the representatives engage in surface acting to hide these negative emotions and portray the enthusiasm necessary to convince holidaymakers to buy and get the extra money. However, although they might feel false using surface acting when selling excursions leads to an enhanced financial well-being (Grandey, Chi and Diamond 2013, Rafaeli and Sutton 1987). This shows that this strategy should not only be associated with negative consequences as illustrated by the literature such as remaining angry or feeling misled (Hochschild 1983, Brotheridge and Grandey 2002, Schaubroeck and Jones 2000).

On the other hand, there can also be a ***selling- personal values misfit***. For example, some representatives are honest with their customers in terms of the excursions or various extras such as additional leg room on the plane or food during various events that they feel are unnecessary. They put their customers' needs before the organisational ones, and they express their genuine opinions which although might not in line with the selling requirement are meeting the display rule of treating the customer right (Diefendorff, Croyle and Gosserand 2005). This shows that selling also influences naturally felt emotions which in this particular situation can make the representatives feel good about themselves. Some representatives are honest because they want to avoid potentially unhappy customers and complaints that eventually they would have to deal with. Therefore,

the use of naturally felt emotions has positive consequences both for the customers and the representatives (Humphrey, Ashforth and Diefendorff 2015).

Moreover, another aspect which enhances the complexity of this role is the high level of both **physical and mental demands** placed on the representatives. As presented in section 4.2.1 all respondents of this research discussed the negative impact of long working hours. Long hours seem to be the strongest and most intense physical demand for the holiday representatives and a source of dissatisfaction and frustration. Guerrier and Adib (2003) showed a similar finding in their research on holiday representatives. These 'rough' and irregular hours involve lack of sleep which makes the representatives feel drained, fatigued and both physically and emotionally exhausted. Despite this, the representatives must remain positive towards the holidaymakers. Therefore, these physical demands are negative working conditions which create emotional dissonance (Grandey, Rupp and Brice 2015). The representatives find it harder to provide a friendly service when they feel tired and negative and need to 'fake' these positive emotions through surface acting.

Two other physical demands that had been identified in Chapter 4 are the hot weather and having to walk between hotels during the day. Likewise, in the case of long hours, these make the representatives feel tired; they experience emotional exhaustion, they feel flustered and demotivated, which makes it more difficult to remain professional, meaning that it reduces job performance (Wright and Cropanzano 1998). Therefore, surface acting helps them put across the right emotions, such as cheerfulness, to their customers. These findings are in line with Shani et al. (2014) who found in their exploratory research of hospitality employees that the physical hardship of work affects the employees' level of acting and leads to more surface acting whereas more favourable physical conditions lead to naturally felt emotions and deep acting.

7.3.2 The uniqueness of the work environment

Another interesting finding presented in Chapter 4 was the **uniqueness** of holiday the representatives' work context. There are particular 'components' which have been identified as important influences of EL. The 'dark side' of the work

environment, the unpredictability, quick turnaround of customer interaction and the blurring of the boundaries between work and leisure. These work environment components could evoke certain emotions for the holiday representatives which will influence the way in which they might engage in emotion regulation (Ashkanasy, Hartel and Daus 2002).

Firstly, the role of the holiday representatives has a '**dark side**'. Specifically, although there is a holiday environment and they should make sure that the customers are enjoying themselves, there are many negative situations which can occur at any time that the holiday representatives have to deal with. For example, holidaymakers can die in the resort, can lose belongings or get arrested. These are **unpredictable** situations and therefore increase the pressure of the job and only induce negative emotions generally, sadness and tension or fear. In other words, these representatives could experience emotional dissonance and thus could use surface acting or deep acting (Grandey 2000). Also, the **unpredictability** in terms of the customer interaction and what sort of situation the representatives might find themselves in can be very difficult. The fact that 'anything can happen' influence the way in which some employees cope with these situations. Some can even get depressed because it is challenging to change between so many emotions which intensifies EL. However, for some representatives the unpredictable nature can be a positive experience, seen as a challenge and thus evoking positive emotions such as enthusiasm and even happiness. This finding is similar to Shuler and Sypher's (2000) conclusion who researched 911 call centre employees and found that they also saw unpredictability as an enhancer of their work lives. Therefore, some overseas holiday representatives experience 'emotional harmony' or naturally felt emotions, as their felt emotions would match with their emotional requirements and they might not need to hide or suppress their emotions (Rafaeli and Sutton 1987).

This job also involves a very **quick turnaround** of various customer interactions. For example, they might be dealing with an extreme situation and shortly after they are required to be friendly with another customer. The quick turnaround means that they must portray a large variety of emotions over a short period of time. These frequent changes in terms of the emotions that are displayed involve a higher level of EL and workload as they require more planning and anticipation

(Morris and Feldman 1996). This is intensified by the fact that it is a 24/7 job. Thus, a holiday representatives' emotional displays over such a long period of time require more emotional effort (Morris and Feldman 1996).

In addition, this job has been described by respondents as a **goldfish bowl** where it is difficult for the representatives to separate work, relaxation and living. It is not possible to break away briefly from the workplace and relax for a while, which becomes a source of job dissatisfaction for them. In relation to EL, these employees would find it more difficult to express positive emotions when they are unhappy and feel negative about the job (Humphrey, Ashforth and Diefendorff 2015). However, despite this, **lifestyle** is perceived as one of the perks and similar to Guerrier and Adib's (2003) findings, is an important source of job satisfaction. Aspects such as being in a pleasant destination which are usually luxuries in their normal life are embraced by the holiday representatives. However, sometimes the representatives are not able to balance their work and lifestyle for example, when 'having fun' especially if they go out and partying too much. This can affect their performance adversely as they will not be able to remain professional, be on time, solve customer issues efficiently or meet targets, and consequently it can lead to a situation where the management could impose disciplinary procedures on them.

The findings of this research support Guerrier and Adib's (2003) arguments that this role indeed involves **a blurred line between work and leisure**. They must engage in leisure activities and holidaymaker's antics, going out, drinking or having fun almost every day or night which makes it more difficult to achieve a work-life balance. Although they might enjoy this aspect of their job, after a while it becomes a source of dissatisfaction. They find these tasks repetitive and boring, but still need to act as though they are enjoying themselves because they are 'engaged in the business of having fun' (Guerrier and Adib 2003, p.1400) and need to obtain good customer reviews. Therefore, the findings showed that they manage to hide these conflicting emotional demands through surface acting. For example, pretending to have fun during an entertainment activity when, in reality, one would feel unhappy and bored having to engage in this with the holidaymakers. Another unique aspect of this job is that it can be **'nomadic'** in nature which means that they must move around various destinations each

season. Most respondents identified this as a source of dissatisfaction and a reason to quit because it does not enable them to develop stable long-term relationships. It is neither conducive settling nor have a family. These employees spend a lot of time working and engaging in EL which does not allow them to achieve a regular balanced work life. Therefore, feeling discontented leads to negative emotions and emotional dissonance which might require EL strategies when interacting with customers (Hochschild 1983).

7.3.3 The relationship with the tour operator

Regarding the relationship with the organisation, the respondents discussed both the positive and the negative aspects of this. The discussion revolved around organisational support, but it was extensive in particular about the negative aspects. According to the findings, being treated fairly and having support from the tour operator in terms of doing the job are some of the strongest influences on their EL. If the holiday representatives enjoy their job, but feel they are not supported by their company they would not be happy. This shows that organisational support is indeed a very important influence for these emotional labourers. The interviews revealed that many organisational support systems are seen as influences of the EL of holiday representatives because they determine the way they feel and consequently the holiday representatives' customer interaction. For example, salary, training, autonomy, living conditions, social support, job security, career progression and rewards and recognition were mentioned in the interviews. However, most of the respondents emphasised the importance of pay, training and job autonomy. Therefore, the extensive findings on the organisational support are in line with Rhoades and Eisenberger's (2002) argument that this is a strong influence on employees' affective states which influence their affective commitment and consequently how they behave in the workplace.

Pay is an influence that has been mentioned by most respondents in the interviews. So too did Guerrier and Adib (2003), whose research also revealed that salary is low in relation to the long hours and the workload involved. Although there are some perks such as getting free accommodation or eating for free in hotels, the fact that are not paid enough is a major cause of dissatisfaction and

frustration for these employees especially when they are placed in more expensive destinations. It is difficult for them to even afford essentials such as toiletries in high-end destinations. Likewise, in other service jobs, EL does not involve a fair economic exchange for the holiday representatives because of the low salary (Grandey, Rupp and Brice 2015). This aspect is not taken into consideration by the tour operators and thus the representatives feel that their employers are taking advantage of them by making them work longer and harder in order to get some commission. This is in the interest of both parties, but it is described by the representatives as 'exploitative'. Thus, the tour operators undervalue their EL (Grandey, Rupp and Brice 2015) which leads to a high level of job dissatisfaction and even turnover.

There seems to be divided opinions in terms of the **training** received. Although it might be an 'emotional roller coaster' meaning that it can be intense, training is important in order to perform well and deal with the demands of the job in an effective manner. As with Guerrier and Adib's (2003) study training of holiday representatives can be intensive and it is usually comprised of two stages: pre-resort training and in-resort training. The training that they receive would make some employees feel prepared for the job, specifically in relation to selling. If they receive the right training, then they would feel more comfortable selling and thus could help avoid the use of surface acting with their customers and the negative consequences that may arise from these situations which were presented earlier. On the other hand, some but not all representatives receive pre-resort training which makes a high level of learning more difficult and leaves the representatives less confident in the role. Thus, according to the findings, if they would receive more pre-resort training then they would enjoy their job more, they would feel more positive and avoid emotional dissonance (Hochschild 1983). Also, in line with Guerrier and Adib (2003) and Constanti and Gibbs (2005) some holiday representatives join the role mid-season and therefore they lose out on the in-resort training. They are thrown into the deep end and have to learn on the job. This puts more pressure on them to perform better, but they seem to feel satisfied and happier to learn and feel more confident and better prepared to perform their role. This finding contradicts Shani et al. (2014) who argue that learning on the job is usually linked with poor service delivery and job dissatisfaction.

Likewise Shani et al. (2014), this research revealed that some tour operators do indeed offer in-depth training on customer interaction both in-resort and pre-resort. The holiday representatives are trained to be emotional labourers by virtue of the way they need to behave; the display rules are communicated to them during training. The training focuses particularly on dealing with difficult customer interactions which as Gabriel et al. (2016) state, training makes it easier for them to handle these situations and avoid negative emotional consequences such as feeling hurt or upset. The representatives recall this training when facing these types of situations. Therefore, by doing this, the holiday representatives perform deep acting (Grandey 2003).

Having autonomy in this job makes the representatives feel supported by the tour operator they work for. Similar to Guerrier and Adib (2003), representatives have some autonomy in their job which shows how important these employees are for the tour operators. The support from the organisation in relation to the responsibility given makes them feel appreciated and thus empowered. Some tour operators give their representatives autonomy to make their own decisions 'on the spot' in terms of their customers. It seems that this increases their job performance when having to deal with complaints and makes them feel trusted by their company. They are happy, more confident and motivated to display appropriate emotions as they feel they have the freedom on how to behave during the customer interaction (Gabriel et al. 2016). The holiday representatives are able to personalise the service they provide (Chu, 2004) and therefore they are more likely to use naturally felt emotions. The findings support Morris and Feldman's (1996) argument that having autonomy can lead to less dissonance and employees are more likely to show their genuine emotions. Therefore, holiday representatives who have more autonomy perform less EL (Bono and Vey 2005). Similar to Guerrier and Adib (2003), the reason why some holiday representatives might put up with the negatives of the job such as abuse and stress, is because they have autonomy. This allows them to avoid negative consequences of EL such as feeling. Therefore, as Wharton (1999) argues the representatives experience more positive consequences when they have autonomy.

On the other hand, some representatives have limited autonomy with regards to making decisions to solve their customers' complaints more efficiently. It involves more stress as the process of resolving issues becomes tedious and complicated for them and eventually, customers are more frustrated and angry. Empowering employees to handle issues individually would determine a quicker settlement of complaints and thus resulting in increased customer and employee satisfaction (Johanson and Woods 2008). However, some representatives who experience this 'limited autonomy' in terms of procedures would go against the company policies, would take a risk and would try to solve a customer-related problem by themselves. They do this both for their own and their customers' well-being. Although this can be seen as deviant workplace behaviour, it helps them minimise the negatives of a situation that might be escalating and helps avoid dealing with an angrier customer which is likely to increase emotional dissonance and the need to act (Grandey 2000).

Furthermore, Chapter 4 presented other organisational related factors which the respondents of this research discussed. The findings revealed that the job conditions, namely living conditions that do not cater to holiday representatives' needs are a source of dissatisfaction as these makes them feel unhappy, upset and taken for granted by the tour operator. Therefore, these environment conditions cause distress and it indeed affects representatives' ability to meet the positive display rules (Grandey, Rupp and Brice 2015). Feeling like this can influence the occurrence of emotional deviance with the customers. At the same time, organisational support also occurs in the form of placing the right representatives in the appropriate resort, thus achieving the **destination-personality fit** and **destination-age fit** which makes their job easier and increases job performance. These findings support Wharton's (1999) argument that in a role that demands a considerable amount of EL, the employees experience a high level of satisfaction when there is a greater fit between the job demands and an employees' personal characteristics (Wharton 1999). The role demand- personality match will be discussed further in section 7.5.

According to Duke et al. (2009), although **social support** is usually attributed to co-workers and supervisors, the employees also attribute this type of support to the organisation which is also the case in this study's context. Some

representatives are satisfied with the organisation supporting them when they have personal problems such as their health, or with their family, but the ones that might not experience this become upset and in some cases, they decide to quit the job. At the same time, some respondents mentioned feeling at ease knowing that there is support from the organisation when they face a customer-relation issue. This minimises the potential negative emotional consequences that they might experience such as feeling pressured and also makes them more confident during service delivery. Therefore, it is possible that when the representatives perceive that they are valued by their employer they are more inspired to engage in naturally felt emotions (Lv, Xu and Ji 2012).

Furthermore, other support systems that were mentioned in the interviews, but which have not been extensively discussed are presented in Table 6. The findings were limited, but they are also considered influences of EL as they are in line with the AET which introduces organisational support as one of the main causes of affective reactions (Weiss and Cropanzano 1996).

Table 6: Job security, job ambiguity, career development, rewards and recognitions

<p><i>Job security</i></p>	<p>It seems that the tour operators do not support the representatives in terms of job security. More specifically some respondents mentioned that when they are not performing well and do not meet the standards of the organisation then the tour operators might consider firing them. This type of dismissal is a form of unfair treatment which makes the representative feel as if the tour operators do not care about them and their well-being as individuals. When the representatives feel unhappy and unsatisfied because of this they are not able to perform to their best.</p> <p>Unfair treatment also occurs in the form of work contracts and their holidays and hours worked which can make these employees feel unappreciated. Also, uncensored customer reviews upset some representatives and influence the way they engage with customers. They become very upset because of this</p>
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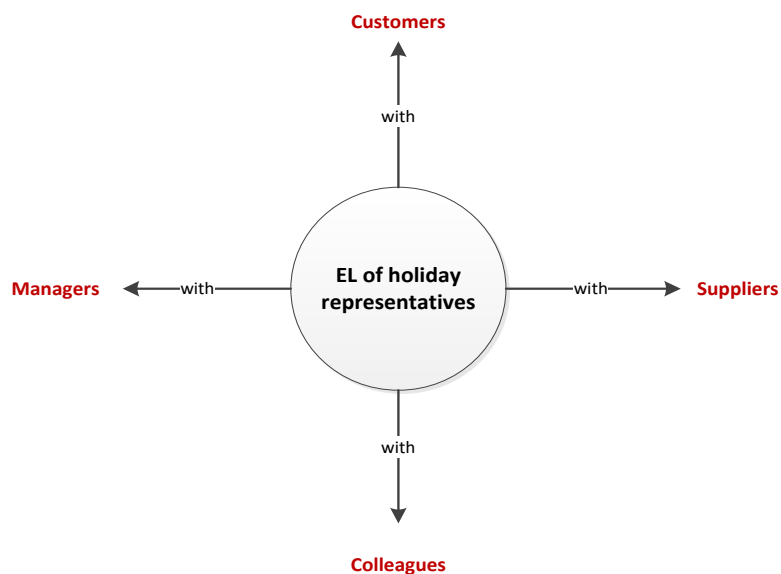
	and hide their emotions through surface acting. Therefore, the findings are consistent with those of Lee, Hung and Huang (2012) that a low level of organisational support increases the likelihood of surface acting.
<i>Job ambiguity</i>	The fact that the tour operators 'sell' this job very well in the recruitment process is a major source of dissatisfaction for the holiday representatives who feel deceived. During the recruitment process the tour operators do not clearly explain details about the job or they only discuss the nice aspects, which does not give them the opportunity to decide whether their expressive behaviour matches the display rules of the organisation (Morris and Feldman 1996).
<i>Career development</i>	Some tour operators are supportive in terms of promotion within the company, but others are not. The latter ones make these representatives feel unappreciated and 'just a number'.
<i>Rewards and recognitions</i>	<p>Some respondents mentioned receiving customer service awards which made them feel more confident, more motivated and appreciated for their input. It seems that these non-monetary rewards and recognition are more important than monetary ones. As Moon, Hur and Jun (2013) state, feeling supported will make the representative more likely to engage in deep acting. Therefore, in less harmful EL strategies.</p> <p>At the same time for other respondents, other non-monetary rewards such as getting free time when they are burnt out would be more welcome as it would make them feel less tired and thus experience less emotional dissonance. This contradicts Grandey, Chi and Diamond's (2013) argument that it is the financial rewards that are more important for increasing the satisfaction from performing EL. The representatives who do not receive any type of rewards would feel less motivated especially as they have done their best to go the extra mile for their customers.</p>

7.3.4 The stakeholders of emotional labour of holiday representatives

As it was presented earlier, EL in the tour operating context is complex in nature. EL is a dynamic concept and is also comprised of 'hidden' parts. Although most

findings were focusing on the relationship with customers, there are other stakeholders who influence EL and who should be categorised as influences. A key finding of this study is that EL although mostly occurs in interactions with customers, it also occurs with the direct line management, colleagues and suppliers in the resort such as hotel staff members, coach drivers, local tour guides or restaurant owners, as seen in Figure 18. Tour operators, however, do not require the holiday representatives to manage their emotions with the internal members of the organisation such as colleagues or managers. There is no indication of display rules with these stakeholders, but as Carlson et al. (2012) state, there are certain informal organisational display rules of maintaining a professional work environment through positive and neutral emotions. In line with Grandey, Kern and Frone (2007), EL in the context of this study occurs with internal members although it might not be required by the organisation.

Figure 18: The stakeholders of emotional labour



Therefore, the fact that these representatives must manage their emotions with other stakeholders besides customers is a key finding of this research and shows that this role involves an even greater level of EL (Morris and Feldman 1996). As in Tang's (2012) research, this study examined EL as an interactive process focusing on the effect of not only manager, colleagues and customers, but also suppliers on the emotional labourer. In other words, these stakeholders were also identified as important influences of the holiday representatives' EL.

7.3.4.1 Colleagues relationship

In terms of the **colleagues**, the respondents discussed both positive and negative aspects of these relationships. It is important to mention that in regard to positive aspects, the findings showed that support from colleagues is something that has a beneficial influence on the holiday representatives, which is in line with Guerrier and Adib's (2003) findings. This support can be 'task related', where support is given in terms of helping each other when there are difficult situations or when mentoring each other. Having this increases their confidence in the role and good relationships therefore making them feel more positive and more motivated in terms of their requirements. In line with Anderson, Shirley and Christopher (2002), colleague support is highly important when facing difficult customer interactions as it helps reduce negative emotions. It can be said that support helps cope with the stress which this role involves (Grandey 2000). However, the level of colleagues' support is not consistent within the teams. The holiday representatives seem to enjoy working in a bigger team more where the work is divided between the members thus distributing and minimising the pressures of the job which can contribute to emotional dissonance.

The colleagues support can also be 'emotional', or not specifically related to the job task, but assist in their emotional well-being. Similar to Hoffmann's (2016) findings, the importance of this support was emphasised by the respondents of this study through the 'family' analogy - that their colleagues are their 'overseas family'. The representatives are all in the similar situations, they do the same job and might face the same issue which is why it makes them feel more at ease when knowing that they have one another especially when they are not getting enough support from their managers. Although not as extensive, there is also evidence of the fact that when there are constructive friendships they tend to be honest with each other and use naturally felt emotions. As Grandey (2000) mentioned, employees who feel positive about their social environment also experience less EL because they would already feel positive as a result of their positive interpersonal relationships and thus would find it easier to offer 'service with a smile' to their customers. Their inner emotions match the display rules and

thus will minimise the need to act using deep or surface acting in their role (Ashforth and Humphrey 1993).

However, the findings also showed that there are many negatives in terms of this relationship. The ***relationships get very intense very quickly*** and it becomes more difficult to maintain a certain level of professionalism with each other. This is another example of the blurring between work and personal life. Arguments and fights between them can ultimately affect the dynamic of the whole team and some individuals become withdrawn from their colleagues. Therefore, difficulties with colleagues indeed add to the stress and tension in the job (Anderson, Chappel and Provis 2002). Some representatives confront each other when there are issues such as not working as a team and express their anger or frustration towards their colleagues in an assertive manner and thus experience and express emotional deviance towards colleagues. Therefore, emotional deviance used with other colleagues could help them solve conflicts (von Gilsa et al. 2013). For example, section 4.5 showed that when a respondent was frustrated with the performance of his colleague and made his feelings known, the colleague admitted to his mistakes and the conflict was resolved.

Personality differences can be another aspect which affects the relationships between the team members. Some individuals cannot click with their colleagues which can lead to negative moods, feeling down, isolated and even to the point where they might decide to quit their job. In line with Ozcelik's (2013) findings, some representatives might find themselves in this situation seem to use surface acting with their colleagues in order to be able to fit in with the group and avoid being left out which would probably make them feel even worse. Hu and Shi (2015) argue that using surface acting within the organisation is not desirable; the co-worker relationships are more personal and surface acting can be perceived as a violation of the authenticity expectation and it can involve negative consequences such as avoidance behaviours, counterproductive work behaviours and consequently negative job performance. However, the findings of this study show that surface acting has positive outcomes as it allows the representatives to fit into the team and experience the much-needed social environment.

Hu and Shi (2015) also argue that surface acting between colleagues affects job performance. Contradictory to this, this study finds that team members can surface act with each other whilst at work in front of customers. For example, they could fake smile at each other whilst deep inside the feelings of anger and frustration towards each other are still strong. They do this in order to avoid acting unprofessionally by not showing the holidaymakers that there are issues between themselves. Therefore, surface acting between colleagues helps them avoid customer dissatisfaction. At the same time, what is interesting in this situation is that EL also occurs between the representatives and the customers. EL is concomitantly performed with two different stakeholders which is another key finding of this research.

The environment is a competitive one as they are all trying to achieve similar targets and goals which creates a **lack of trust** between them. It seems that gossiping which is a 'covert' or more ambiguous form of aggression in the workplace also occurs between the holiday representatives (Grandey, Kern and Frone 2007). Therefore, when lack of trust and jealousy occur, the holiday representatives feel like they cannot be themselves and avoid discussing personal matters to avoid gossip. Thus, they engage in surface acting with their colleagues to control the information that they disclose to their co-workers (Ozcelik 2013). In this way, they will avoid being hurt through gossip. Hochschild (1983) indeed argued that surface acting is used by employees to self-protect when dealing with negative emotions evoked by difficult customer interactions. Therefore, surface acting with colleagues can also be considered a protection strategy, used to avoid adverse consequences such as getting hurt by their colleagues.

Being a competitive environment means that some representatives might have more responsibility if they are in a supervisory-type of role. The representatives who seem to be in this situation and have a more important role can encounter problems with other colleagues who should listen, but have an authority issue and do not do so. Therefore, the fact that other colleagues might not follow instructions can cause anger and frustration. The findings showed that at times, the representatives who are in this position of power can understand their colleagues' point of view. They put themselves in their shoes which shows that

they engage in deep acting. At other times, negative feelings such as frustration of the representative in a position of power become so intense that they influence the customer interaction. The representative might be unable to calm themselves down and they still feel angry because of their colleagues thus having to perform surface acting with their holidaymakers whilst providing 'service with a smile'.

7.3.4.2 Direct-line managers relationship

The role of the direct-line managers is a very important aspect of the environment of the holiday representatives. These managers influence the way in which the representatives behave and feel in the workplace in both a positive and a negative manner. Most respondents discussed the importance of direct-line management support for them. However, the focus of the discussions was mostly on the negative aspects of this relationship, thus supporting Grandey's (2000) argument that negative workplace events are strong influences of EL.

The findings showed that the representatives who have **positive and supportive managers** experience a higher level of managerial support. The managers help the representatives deal with customers, but also, help them improve certain skills or provide emotional support. This seems to positively influence the representatives as they feel more confident in the role and at ease when knowing that this support is present. Supervisory support, therefore, enhances employees' perceptions of interactional justice and could reduce the use of surface acting and could also shape their deep acting when facing difficulties with customers (Lam and Chen 2012). At the same time, an important finding is that the managers who are not very pushy in terms of meeting their targets seem to motivate the representatives more. Some supportive managers also empower their employees to make their own decisions and work by themselves. Trust is present and this leads to higher confidence, a sense of achievement, feeling proud and thus job satisfaction. This shows that in such a supportive environment less EL is needed as the representatives already feel positive (Grandey 2000).

Supportive managers help lower representatives' job dissatisfaction by clearly explaining to them why they need to meet the particular job requirements. Therefore, when this happens the representatives feel that they can be honest

with their managers and express their discontent regarding being cheerful all the time. The representatives are able to use their naturally felt emotions with these positive managers which then helps get rid of the dissatisfaction felt in the first place. However, it could be that some managers would not react positively to representatives expressing their naturally felt emotions freely and they retaliate. For example, the findings showed a case when a manager reacted negatively to a representatives' honesty and engaged in deviant behaviour by starting to treat the employee unfairly. Therefore, although this strategy or naturally felt emotions mostly leads to positive emotional consequences such as satisfaction (Humphrey, Ashforth and Diefendorff 2015, Zapf 2002), these important findings show that there will be cases when this will not be reciprocated.

Similar to Shani et al.'s (2014) study, most findings of this study were focused on the ***negative aspects of the relationship with managers and on unsupportive managers***. Therefore, unsupportive managerial behaviour influences the emotional responses of the subordinate and EL (Li and Liang 2016). These negative managers are pushy in terms of selling and do not understand the representatives and their concerns. They do not give autonomy and might also be controlling. At the same time, they give negative reinforcement to the representatives and may sometimes, not show support in terms of improving their skills. As Wu and Hu (2013) state, when employees perceive a higher authority, they are more likely to engage in EL with their managers as their inner feelings are inconsistent with how they need to behave with their managers. The findings of this study showed that when the representatives are supervised by controlling managers, they feel less confident about their job performance as well as less enthusiastic about the job. They experience negative emotions towards their managers and engage in surface acting with them to hide these feelings and maintain professionalism.

Some representatives can even feel like they are unable to approach their managers when they need help and might even feel bullied and unappreciated despite trying their best to do a good job. At other times, representatives do not get support from managers when dealing with angry customers. It makes this interaction more difficult especially when having to make the appropriate decision without the necessary guidance and support and worrying that it could be the

wrong one. These findings are also backed up by Shani et al. (2014) who found that in the case of emotional labourers in hospitality there is a lack of helpful guidance and professional assistance when the representatives are facing challenging and stressful situations. Moreover, the managers often provide support in these types of situations based on 'favouritism'. This is consistent with the findings of Chi and Liang (2013), who note that cynical managers lower job satisfaction which leads to representatives' demotivation and on some occasions even resignation. Therefore, these negative emotions such as feeling unsupported, demotivated and dissatisfied experienced because of unsupportive managers result in emotional dissonance which increases the likelihood of using EL with customers (Grandey 2000).

According to Morris and Feldman (1996) the subordinate is the one who must put more effort into emotion regulation than the leader because of the inequality in the position, power and social norms regarding emotional expressions in the workplace. The findings of this study support Morris and Feldman's (1996) argument that the holiday representatives often engage in EL with their ***negative and unsupportive direct-line managers***. If the leader-follower relationship is based on mutual trust, respect and understanding then there is no need to fake their emotions as would be the case, if these aspects are not present (Glasø and Einarsen 2008). Using surface acting with unsupportive managers involves a lot of emotional effort and could be associated with emotional exhaustion (Hu and Shi 2015). At times, these employees engage in deep acting when dealing with unprofessional managers by keeping their distance or even ignoring them. Therefore, supporting Carlson et al.'s (2012) argument, holiday representatives engage in EL with their supervisors because they are uncomfortable showing their authentic emotions and they might fear retaliation. However, it can also be the case that the representatives cannot manage the negative emotions that this relationship brings and eventually lash out at their leader by showing their discontent and anger, thus engaging in emotional deviance with their unsupportive managers.

7.3.4.3 *Managing supplier relationship*

The relationship with suppliers is of particular importance for the representatives who have to facilitate the holiday experience with minimum inconvenience for their customers. Therefore, if they are unable to manage these relationships especially when there are complaints they are unable to provide a high quality of service to their customers. They therefore need to display appropriate emotions with the employees of these companies. These findings align with the results of Wong and Wang (2009) and Constanti and Gibbs (2005) who also highlighted the importance of displaying appropriate emotions with these external work partners. However, the relationship with these stakeholders is not something that is widely mentioned in the EL literature (Wong and Wang 2009). As discussed in Chapter 4, there are good and negative aspects regarding this relationship.

This study revealed that good relationships with suppliers increases the job performance as they can solve issues quickly in a more efficient way. Therefore, they need to be personable when they come into contact with them (Constanti and Gibbs 2005). Unlike Wong and Wang (2009), who identified bus drivers and local tour leaders as vital to the tour guides' role, the most powerful supplier relationship for the holiday representatives is with the hotels as they are the ones in most contact with the customer. Therefore, they are the people that 'take care' of the clients in the absence of the holiday representatives. The suppliers can also be a source of emotional support especially when they inform the representatives of a potential problematic customer. This makes the representatives more prepared regarding dealing with such a holidaymaker, and thus minimising negative consequences, such as customer dissatisfaction, feeling frustrated or poor customer service. It could be the case that this would lead to the holiday representatives using deep acting as they are already aware of what situations they will be dealing with and can start planning on how to interact and meet the emotional display rules.

Having a good relationship with the suppliers can also be financially rewarding. The representatives save money by getting good deals at various restaurants or bars in the resorts. This makes them feel more relaxed and takes the pressure off them regarding money, meeting targets and getting commission. It seems that a good supplier interaction influences the use of naturally felt emotions for the

holiday representatives. Therefore, acting in this way leads to beneficial consequences such as financial rewards. These findings contradict Constanti and Gibbs (2005) and Wong and Wang (2009) who state that expressing these genuine positive emotions with suppliers can be misconstrued by the suppliers and lead to lack of cooperation as they do not perceive them as genuine.

As it was mentioned in section 4.2.3, a key finding about surface acting performed with the suppliers was the fact that often, negative emotions such as annoyance are put across, and positive emotions are suppressed only for 'show'. The representative does this for the customer, to increase customer satisfaction and job performance, but inside he still feels positive emotions towards that supplier, and this is done only to assure service quality. At the same time, the representative was performing surface acting with the customers who he was frustrated with. Similarly, Wong and Wang (2009) also found that tour leaders fake negative emotions towards suppliers to ensure the problems are solved and to achieve a high quality of service. Achieving service quality through surface acting shows that this strategy also has positive consequences. Therefore, even holiday representatives put across negative emotions and suppress positive ones occasionally, which is not something that happens frequently in a service context (Hochschild 1983).

On the other hand, genuinely negative relationships with suppliers can be burdensome (Constanti and Gibbs 2005). They can be a source of frustration for the representatives because of their 'laid back' attitude or merely because they do not want to help the representatives with their customers and can lead to poor performance. So, to maintain a level of professionalism with these stakeholders the representatives use surface acting. Similar to Wong and Wang's (2009) conclusions, in this way surface acting helps them suppress irritation, anger and other negative feelings and put across positive emotions as they need to maintain positive relationships for the sake of their customers. Therefore, being able to conceal these negative emotions is a professional, skilled behaviour and strength (Shani et al. 2014). However, some representatives experience such strong negative emotions towards unreasonable suppliers that they are unable to control their emotions. Consequently, they suffer emotional deviance and let out their frustration or anger.

7.3.5 Context-specific influences of emotional labour for holiday representatives

Section 4.6.1 showed that the *hotels and the star rating* are most influential regarding various aspects of the representatives' job role. These employees have different types of hotels that they must look after, from low-star hotels to five-star ones. Some work only in one hotel meaning that they have to deal with customers in that particular hotel, while other representatives have various ranges and they need to move between hotels throughout the work day. The number of hotels can also vary from one to as many as seven and having several hotels intensifies the frequency of customer interaction and thus the likelihood of engaging in EL (Morris and Feldman 1996), in particular surface acting. In this situation, this strategy is used to cope with the workload and make sure that they perform their job well enough. Therefore, as the frequency of service interaction increases, they find it more helpful to fake their emotions (Brotheridge and Grandey 2002).

Moving from one type of hotel to another or from a low-star to a high-star increases the number of emotions and behaviours that they should put across as their clientele is different. Therefore, some holiday representatives experience higher EL because they need to display a variety of emotions on a frequent basis over a limited period (Morris and Feldman 1996). It seems that the clientele from five-star hotels are more 'posh' who demand more and have higher expectations. Here these employees must act in a more professional and more reserved manner. Some representatives enjoy these more luxury hotels and find it more relaxing to work in, mainly because there might be a *personality-hotel star rate fit*. Therefore, in this situation the employees identify with their role. As a consequence, they are satisfied with the work and thus feel authentic when conforming to the display rules (Ashforth and Humphrey 1993) and experience more naturally felt emotions. The representatives are more likely to engage in naturally felt emotions. At the same time, it seems that the pressure to sell and meet targets reduces when working in these luxurious hotels because clients have more money and are more likely to pay for extras. However, one downside of five-star hotels is the fact that clients complain very often to the reps because of the premium prices they pay. Therefore, as Grandey (2000) argues, the

representatives are more likely to engage in EL in a five-star hotel because there is a higher frequency of complaints and they have to use either deep acting or surface acting.

Regarding low-star hotels, there are both negatives and positives influences. The holidaymakers at these hotels were described by some respondents as more 'down to earth' than the five-star ones, and thus the holiday representatives feel they can be themselves around their guests. This shows that there is a better ***fit between their personality and the hotel*** which determines emotional harmony (Chu, Baker and Murrmann 2012). Hochschild (1983) also found that people show different emotions when interacting with different target markets. For example, flight attendants would engage in longer and more sincere displays with first class passengers. Thus, these representatives are likely to perform naturally felt emotions in these hotels. Although this is an enjoyable aspect, it can be harder to sell in these hotels as the holidaymakers cannot afford to buy extras putting more pressure on the representatives which was discussed earlier. Although the holidaymakers might find it easier to deal with customers in these low star hotels, they can also be very demanding. For example, complaints can be even more difficult here as the customers seem to have unfounded expectations, too high for the small price they pay and complain about insignificant things. Dealing with this can be a source of frustration and puts more stress for the representatives. The respondents mentioned that because of the 'difficult' nature of holidaymakers, face-to-face customer interactions appear to be needed more frequently in the lower star hotels and therefore increases their EL (Morris and Feldman 1996).

The hotels also influence the supplier - representative relationship. The management of some hotels is not helpful towards the representatives who can even dread working there which affects their job satisfaction and motivation to engage with customers. At the same time, in lower star hotels the management seem not to have a genuine interest in helping the customers, and the pressure is then on the representatives to make sure everything is satisfactory for the customers. On the other hand, in the five-star ones the management does everything possible to make sure they are providing the best service which is in

line with what the representatives want. Therefore, the pressure on them is minimised to some extent, and they can focus on providing an excellent service.

Moreover, the **destination** in which holiday representatives work is another context-specific factor identified in Chapter 4. The interviews mostly revolved around big destinations versus smaller destinations. Both types have good and bad points. Therefore, a downside of working in a big resort seems to be the fact that there are more holidaymakers which increase the frequency of customer interactions and thus the EL (Morris and Feldman 1996). On the other hand, in these destinations, it is easier to sell as there are more products that the customers can choose from, which minimises the pressure to meet their targets and thus be less stressed. At the same time, being in a bigger destination involves working in a larger team which means that there is less pressure to perform as they have a stronger team where tasks are divided, thus reducing workload. In a smaller resort, the workload is increased as there are not enough team members. Also, in bigger destinations the holiday representatives can relax more unlike a smaller one such as a ski resort where they cannot 'escape' the customers where the lines between work and non-work become more blurred (Guerrier and Adib 2003).

Destinations have different clientele. There are destinations which are for 18-30s, for families or couples, and the representatives need to behave accordingly with each type. However, working in several destinations with different clientele through one season involves a high turnaround of emotions or shifting quickly from one emotion to another, and other behaviours portrayed which strengthen the argument that this role requires a greater level of EL (Morris and Feldman 1996). For this reason, the findings also showed that a **destination-personality fit** is necessary to increase performance and minimise the negatives such as job dissatisfaction or emotional exhaustion. When representatives have a strong identification with their role or the destination, they experience positive consequences from meeting the emotional requirements (Ashforth and Humphrey 1993, Lam and Chen 2012).

The last significant context-specific influence for the EL of holiday representatives is the **season**, more specifically low season and peak season. The whole 'repping' season has been described by the respondents of this research as a 'treadmill'.

The peak season is the busiest time when the representatives experience a high level of both physical and emotional exhaustion as they have more customers to take care of which becomes an even more fast paced environment; they are working longer hours and experience more stress. They experience burnout (Wright and Cropanzano 1998). Therefore, as Hochschild argues (1983), during this time their work is fast, and they are more likely to experience emotional dissonance and engage in surface acting by hiding the exhaustion and fake the cheerfulness which they have to show as part of their job. An interesting finding is the fact that these emotional labourers experience the strongest intention to quit during mid-season. This is also supported by Jung and Yoon (2014) who noted that EL during peak season increases stress which leads to increased levels of mental and physical exhaustion thus increasing the turnover intent. When the season begins, the EL does not have substantial adverse effects, but during peak season these are intensified, until eventually it gets back to normal.

7.4 Customer facing role influences

While holiday representatives have numerous 'back office' role requirements, the most important part is the customer facing one. Although interpersonal events with co-workers and supervisors trigger emotion regulations, the extensive findings of this study showed that interpersonal events with the customers are the most important as they are frequent and thus most likely to predict EL of holiday representatives (Diefendorff, Richard and Yang 2008, Grandey, Kern and Frone 2007). Chapter 5 showed how the customer facing role is crucial because they are the first point of contact for the holidaymakers, and how the customers are the main stakeholders of EL for these employees.

As in other customer service roles they do indeed have certain **display rules** imposed by tour operators for their customer interactions, and more specifically positive emotions need to be put across (Diefendorff and Gosserand 2003). According to Wong and Wang (2009) tour operators do not include explicit display rules as part of their job requirements, but there are certain expectations and societal norms in terms of how the guides have to behave (Ashforth and Humphrey 1993). The findings of this study showed that the holiday

representatives follow the organisational display rule of 'service with a smile' (Humphrey, Ashforth and Diefendorff 2015).

No matter what situations they might find themselves in, representatives need to put across 'the rep smile', but having to remain happy and jolly all the time seems to be something difficult to achieve for most of them. Similar to Grandey, Rupp and Brice (2015), this display rule seems to lead to emotional burnout of some representatives and in some situations, they cannot cope which can lead to turnover and job dissatisfaction. Therefore, EL has a negative effect on job satisfaction because of burnout (Gursoy, Boylu and Avci 2011). If they do not have 'the rep smile on' it will reflect poorly on the company as the holidaymakers will assess the quality of the tour operator based on how the service is being delivered (Pugh 2001).

One aspect that makes it even harder to meet the 'rep smile' seems to be when representatives have to deal with personal issues such as deaths in their families. This was also noted by Diefendorff, Richard and Yang (2008) who found that non-work events such as personal problems that employees bring with them to work do indeed impact them. When the representatives experience such intense feeling of sadness, they still need to behave appropriately in front of their customers, and in these circumstances the emotional effort is higher. The only way they can interact with their clients is through surface acting.

Moreover, the respondents of this study agreed with the fact that showing positive emotions is crucial despite the types of situations which the representatives are faced with. It is beneficial not only for the holidaymakers, but also for themselves as employees. More specifically, portraying these avoids embarrassment, helps them get good reviews, meet customer service scores and targets thus minimising the sales pressure and helps manage angry customer interactions. These findings contradict Brotheridge and Grandey (2002) who view display rules as negative influences of employees' wellbeing. Therefore, asking the employees to show positive emotions to customers is not a negative or controlling matter as other researchers argue (Humphrey, Ashforth and Diefendorff 2015).

Another interesting aspect in relation to customer service is ***aesthetic labour*** and ***working when not at work***. The representatives are the face of the company

and therefore they need to pay attention to their behaviours even during their time-off. This means that they can have ad-hoc encounters with customers in a resort in their own time, but they still need to be the customers' representative and act accordingly. The fact that it is a 24/7 job puts pressure on them and intensifies their EL as it increases the frequency of customer interaction which can lead to more surface acting (Morris and Feldman 1996). However, this aspect of the customer facing role does not seem to influence some representatives in a negative way as they enjoy it. It may be because there is a good person-role fit and thus they are more likely to use naturally felt emotions (Humphrey, Ashforth and Diefendorff 2015).

In addition, the representatives also have strict rules from the tour operator in terms of how they need to look, their uniform, their hair or the shoes, having tattoos and their smoking habits. Therefore, like the tour guides of Wong and Wang (2009) the holiday representatives are also aesthetic labourers. Although they may not be at work, for example, it is not acceptable for them to smoke in front of their customers as this will lead to a more negative image of the tour operator. This aspect is a source of dissatisfaction among the representatives especially in relation to their uniform which identifies them even when off duty and which can increase the frequency of interactions with customers including those with other tour operators. As Tsaur and Tang (2013) put it, clothing requirements are a burden of aesthetic labour. Aesthetic labour should also be considered a display rule in this context. Another aspect that can be placed under the 'aesthetic labour umbrella' is the fact that the holiday representatives are asked to engage in certain activities that would encourage customers to do the same. Similar to Guerrier and Adib's findings (2003), the respondents of this study mentioned that representatives need to eat in their hotels' restaurant to encourage the holidaymakers to do the same and assure them that the food is good.

Chapter 5 also showed the fact that the way in which the holiday representatives behave with customers is influenced by the ***type of situations they find themselves in or customer behaviour*** and ***the customer profile***. The representatives described themselves as counsellors, priests and doctors. The most popular analogy being the counsellor which supports the idea that they are

indeed a 'psychological link' between the new destination and home (Bastakis, Buhalis and Butler 2004). These analogies are another evidence for the large variety of situations they find themselves in and also the huge variety of emotions. In terms of the type of customer interactions these can be negative, when dealing with difficult situations, and positive, in relation to nice customers. However, most findings were on negative customer interactions because service employees show more EL when they interact with unfair and disrespectful customers as a result of the discrepancy between the negative felt emotion and the positive display rules (Grandey and Gabriel 2015, Rupp and Spencer 2006). Thus, this finding supports Grandey's (2000) argument that the negative workplace events are strong influences of EL.

The level of complaints seems to be very high in package holidays and the representatives spend a lot of their time dealing with these or other customer-related problems (Guerrier and Adib 2003, Wong and Wang 2009). Therefore, these employees must deal with many **angry holidaymakers** on a regular basis (Chu, Baker and Murrmann 2012) and no matter what the complaint might be they need to make sure that the holidaymakers are always happy. Even when the customers shout or scream these employees still need to remain professional and solve the complaint or the issue that has arisen. They should be 'thick-skinned' to manage this (Constanti and Gibbs 2005). This negative customer treatment and situations elicit negative emotions for the representatives and makes them feel intimidated and distressed (Zhan, Wang and Shi 2015). Dealing with disrespectful and impolite customers determines the perception of a higher level of interactional injustice and leads to them exerting a higher level of EL than the representatives that deal with customers who are more fair (Rupp and Spencer 2006). Therefore, the easiest way to hide their anxiety or stress, and show this professionalism seems to be through surface acting. For example, as shown in section 5.3.1 a representative who is shouted at by a customer would have to fake a smile in order to hide his frustration.

On the other hand, it seems that some representatives who are faced with these types of situations portray a more **deviant behaviour towards their irate customers**. For example, they punish or they get revenge on their customers by not catering to their needs straight away or by avoiding them. In this way, they

actually manage their negative emotions or they minimise their frustration. These behaviours should be considered as forms of deep acting which help them cope with the negative emotions and feel more positive thus supporting the main argument that this strategy is mostly related to beneficial consequences (Kim 2008, Zapf 2002). An important finding is that these angry customers would use personal attacks against the representatives which can make them feel very hurt. Some representatives experience such strong negative emotions and when this happens, they manage to hide only through surface acting. However, some manage to use deep acting by thinking of calming themselves down. These findings are in line with Grandey, Dickter and Sin (2004) who state that employees who feel more threatened by aggressive customers use surface acting.

Chapter 5 showed that most respondents discussed how they used '***internal speeches***' to achieve deep acting with angry customers. As Humphrey, Ashforth and Diefendorff (2015) confirm individuals who engage in deep acting try to experience these actual emotions by engaging in certain activities and thoughts which would arouse these emotions. More specifically, by talking to themselves they would manage to modify their negative feelings in order to bring their emotions in line with the display rules. They also put themselves in customers' shoes, empathising with them which helps them deal with the situation in a more effective manner, thus increasing the job performance and possibly customer satisfaction as the emotions are shown through empathy (Glomb and Tews 2004). The stance of 'don't take it to heart and ignore negative customers' is also taken by some. Other representatives think of customers as friends. Befriending customers as part of an act has also been identified by Wong and Wang (2009) and Guerrier and Adib (2003) as a helpful strategy especially when having to constrain and control customers as it gives them the right to be more authoritative. Moreover, an interesting finding is the fact that some representatives are sincere with their customers when they have issues and complain. These employees use naturally felt emotions which calms the situation down. The problem is dealt with in a more efficient manner as the holidaymakers are happy and content with the fact that their representatives are honest with them.

The holiday representatives must deal with abuse from customers quite often which happens because of the 'unwritten rule' that if the customers yell at employees they can get away with it (Grandey, Kern and Frone 2007). Some holidaymakers are very aggressive both verbally and sometimes physically which can make the representatives feel very scared. Some of them hide this fact and project confidence through surface acting which leads to a sense of achievement for having dealt with that particular difficult interaction. Therefore, surface acting here also has positive consequences, a key finding which contradicts Brotheridge and Grandey (2002) who state that this strategy does not lead to personal accomplishment.

However, some representatives do not seem to be able to deal with abusive customers and although they try to be professional they experience emotional deviance. This might be because the verbal abuse from customers determines a high level of job burnout (Grandey, Kern and Frone 2007). They talk back to their customers and show their frustration and at times even swear at them in order to protect themselves. Guerrier and Adib (2003) found that the holiday representatives in their study felt empowered to talk back at their customers, but in the nicest possible way. However, the findings of this study were not clear on this aspect. To put it more simply, emotional deviance is a strategy that is used in order to avoid more negative emotional consequences from abusive customers such as feeling upset or hurt and is a form of release at the end. As von Gilsa et al. (2013) state emotional deviance can also be the only way to resolve a conflict or a situation from escalating. On the other hand, although it seems that dealing with irate customers mainly evoke negative emotions during customer interactions. Some representatives do not experience this. For them, dealing with complaints are positive experiences which are perceived as challenges that they need to overcome and when they are dealt with accordingly they feel more positive and confident. Thus, as presented in Section 2.5.2, this reappraisal is deep acting (Gross 1998). This finding was also reflected in Tang's (2012) work who identified that some emotional labourers see the needy and the difficult recipients in the same way- as a challenge.

Another type of customer interaction that the representatives find themselves in is the fact that they must deal with **unreasonable** customers who might not want

to accept that some problems they might have are out of their representatives' control such as resolving an issue which management might have to deal with, or even the weather. These situations will evoke negative feelings for the representatives such as anger, frustration or stress which many find easier to hide through surface acting. Therefore, although they might act professionally having 'the rep smile' on with a customer who is complaining about the weather they are still frustrated and 'fake' the positive emotions put across. Sometimes the frustration and the anger that they feel after dealing with such holidaymakers can be so strong that the representatives have to use surface acting in other customer interactions. Unreasonable customers can also be drunk customers. Dealing with **drunken** guests is frustrating for the representatives who also use the same strategy. Thus, dealing with unpleasant customers determines surface acting (Humphrey, Ashforth and Diefendorff 2015). However, as presented in Chapter 5 some representatives perform deep acting with these unreasonable holidaymakers by putting themselves in their shoes as they understand the fact that empathising with them will increase job performance. It was also interesting to see that other means of coping with the frustration and negative emotions evoked by these situations or 'professional complainers' is through **sarcasm and humour**; another form of deep acting, which makes the representatives feel more positive.

An important finding was the fact that the strategies can change during the same incident. This means that the holiday representatives would start performing EL using one strategy, but along with the evolution of the incident this may change. For example, as shown in section 5.3.1, when dealing with an angry customer the representative might experience negative emotions and thus would use surface acting with the customer, but after a very short while this person would modify these feelings for example through internal speeches and thus use deep acting.

Furthermore, as mentioned before, dealing with extreme situations is something that the representatives deal with. This aspect has also been highlighted as being extremely important by Guerrier and Adib (2003). Medical emergencies that the customers might have, miscarriages or even deaths are very emotional situations which can also bring up similar personal memories. It is very difficult for the

representatives to deal with the sadness. They have to hide the fact that these situations affect them much and need to remain professional. Some do this through surface acting, but still remain affected by what they have to deal with and thus experience surface acting straight after with 'new customers' with whom they are cheerful. They are in fact faking this to hide the sadness from dealing with the extreme situations. Likewise, Hochschild's (1983) flight attendants, dealing with emergencies efficiently without alarming other customers can make the representatives feel proud of themselves even if surface acting is used. Thus, similar to Shuler and Sypher's (2000) view, EL has positive consequences in this case and it is rewarding for the representatives. Other representatives can perform deep acting by looking at an extreme situation as a problem which they have to solve, or by preparing themselves by anticipating this type of experience. There was also evidence that some employees become very involved when an extreme situation occurs and they act in a genuine manner, they show their true feelings through naturally felt emotions.

On the other hand, the findings also presented the case of positives in terms of customer interaction. **Positive customer treatment** elicits positive emotions for the employees (Zhan, Wang and Shi 2015, Cote 2005). For the representatives, this is an important source of job satisfaction and a case of extra role behaviour. The increase in job satisfaction from positive customer treatment has also been identified in Guerrier and Adib's (2003) research. As per the findings in Chapter 5 when the holiday representatives deal with customers who are sympathetic to their role and acknowledge their good work, they experience naturally felt emotions as it is easier for them to be nice and happy and thus meet the display rules. Another source of positive emotions are the affirmative customer reviews such as via TripAdvisor or customer service questionnaires (CSQ), and rewards and recognitions, in particular incentives that they get from the holidaymakers. These make them feel appreciated and be more confident in the role as they see it as confirmation of them performing well. When this happens, the representatives are also more positive with other customers. This means that it is easier for them to show positive emotions towards other customers thus minimising the need to act. Emotional dissonance is less likely to occur because they already feel positive (Grandey 2000, Hochschild 1983).

Moreover, although evidence is limited, the holiday representatives also interact with nice customers, but through the more genuine form of deep acting, for example when having to rush interactions because of lack of time. This supports Humphrey, Ashforth and Diefendorff's (2015) findings that even when employees deal with pleasant customers the employees could engage in deep acting. This study showed that this happens because of lack of time for customer interaction as they have a high turnaround for clients. Thus, in line with Diefendorff, Croyle and Gosserand (2005), the short duration of an interaction is a predictor of deep acting. If they would have the chance to interact with a limited number of customers over a longer period they would be able to provide a better or friendlier service.

In addition, it is important to mention that knowing the customer type makes it easier to perform their job as they are aware of exactly what type of behaviour and what emotions need to be put across. In line with, Wong and Wang (2009), the display of emotions should be customised in emotional transactions. For example, with 'posh' customers the representatives are more reserved than with 'relaxed ones' which is linked to the type of hotel as covered in section 7.3.4. Therefore, anticipating what the customers are like could mean that they are more likely to engage in more authentic emotional encounters. With older customers and families, they need to be more professional, whilst with younger ones it is more intensive and they need to invest more energy. Overall, the respondents of this study highlighted that it is important for the holiday representatives to be flexible in terms of dealing with different customer demographics, as knowing their target market would help them be more efficient. It is possible that this knowledge would make it easier to deal with the EL of the role and minimise the negatives that would arise as compared to representatives not knowing their clientele and being put on the spot resulting in feeling pressured and stressed. Also, it seems that some representatives enjoy dealing with returners as it is easier to interact with them. This might mean that they are already aware of how they need to interact with those particular customers and could minimise the need to engage in a level of acting and easily use naturally felt emotions. Likewise, according to the findings of Shani et al. (2014) employees feel more comfortable showing their genuine emotions as these relationships allow more intimacy, mutual empathy and friendliness. On the other hand, there are also others that

do not enjoy returners as this makes their job harder in terms of meeting targets from their excursions. It puts more pressure in terms of selling and lowers job performance which can increase emotional dissonance as presented in section 7.3.1.

7.5 The individual influences and emotional labour

An important finding is the fact that the individual characteristics of holiday representatives cannot be ignored in relation to the EL they perform as part of their job role. It is important to highlight the fact that although these were briefly mentioned in the literature they were not a focus of this study in the first instance. However, as seen in Figure 12, the findings showed that these are strong influences in this context. As it was presented in Chapter 6, personality, age, gender, experience and strong prosocial customer orientation have been identified as influencing these employees' emotions and behaviour in the workplace.

In terms of the **personality** of holiday representatives, the findings of this study support the main argument made in the literature regarding the fact that extroverted employees are better suited for this job which entails a high level of EL (Humphrey, Ashforth and Diefendorff 2015). Extroverted representatives are naturally happy, confident, and strong, finding it very easy interacting with holidaymakers and put across the necessary display rules (Bono and Vey 2007). Similar to Kim's (2008) research on hotel employees, this study showed that the extroverted representatives find it easier to deal with negative customers or difficult situations and try to modify their emotions to match the display rule by engaging in deep acting.

Not having this personality is linked to increased stress, emotional exhaustion and even turnover as it was presented in the previous chapter. Holiday representatives that are timid and have to deal with angry customers can become very upset and feel hurt and feel less confident. As Judge, Woolf and Hurst (2009) state, introverts experience stronger negative emotions when performing EL. When introvert representatives have to meet the display rules and not show their customers that they are experiencing these negative emotions they engage in

surface acting. Thus, the finding supports Kim's (2008) argument regarding the fact that employees who are high in neuroticism are more likely to fake their emotions through surface acting.

Moreover, an interesting finding is that many respondents discussed how important it is for them to provide a good service which shows that they can have a ***strong prosocial customer orientation***. This means that no matter what the situation their main goal or aim is to do the best for their customers, thus engaging in emotion regulation because of pleasure motives (von Gilsa et al. 2013). Even if they might be feeling tired or less positive they still portray this attitude when they interact with their customers and at times, as it was mentioned before, they sometimes put their customers' needs before the organisational goals such as when selling excursions. When the representatives have this trait, they would go the extra mile for their customers and do certain things for them which are not in their job description. This strong orientation leads to a sense of achievement, feeling appreciated and proud, especially when the customers express their contempt with their actions. Therefore, the representatives who have a high customer orientation naturally enjoy interactions and want to nurture these (Allen et al. 2010). On the other hand, at times, holidaymakers do not acknowledge the extra-role effort put in or when the representatives might genuinely want to provide a good service and the customers still complain being oblivious to their representatives' attempts to sort out their problems. Interestingly, this can lead to negative consequences for the employees as it can demotivate them although their intentions were genuine. It may be the case that it could lead to a strong emotional dissonance and the use of inauthentic strategies as they feel negative (Hochschild 1983), but this has not been shown in the findings.

In relation to the EL strategies, the findings of this research showed that these representatives usually engage in naturally felt emotions as they express their genuine feeling of happiness during their interaction. However, when they encounter more negative customer interactions or they do not feel positive and they are not in the right state of mind, they engage in deep acting. They still put their customers' needs first and put themselves in their shoes. Therefore, these findings support the literature that socially oriented employees engage in more

authentic forms of emotion regulation such as deep acting and naturally felt emotions (Allen et al. 2010, Maneotis, Grandey and Krauss 2014).

Sohn and Lee (2012) argued that the only demographic variable which influences EL in the tourism industry is experience. However, the findings of this study revealed the importance of **age**, more specifically **age – role requirements fit**. It seems that younger individuals are better suited for this job because of their natural inclination for the role and the energy needed in such a fast paced work environment. However, although this might be the case younger representatives experience more intense negative emotions. For example, they can get easily overwhelmed, shocked about the amount of work that they have, find it harder to deal with angry and aggressive customers and they could experience more stress because of the level of responsibility that this job involves. Therefore, the likelihood of experiencing negative emotions can increase emotional dissonance and thus the need to act (Diefendorff, Croyle and Gosserand 2005, Grandey, Rupp and Brice 2015, Hochschild 1983).

On the other hand, more mature or older representatives find it easier to deal with extreme situations as they have what is called the 'life experience' and thus the level of stress is diminished by their older age. For example, when dealing with deaths in the resort, mature representatives are more skilful in controlling their emotions and use deep acting. These findings are supported by Dahling and Johnson (2013) and Gross et al. (1997) who state that older workers are better suited for jobs which require EL as they are more effective at managing tense situations and effectively engage in deep acting. However, being older involves having more responsibility in terms of 'taking care' of their younger colleagues. Taking them under their wing of course then puts more pressure on them and their role. Job performance also increases when there is an **age – customer profile fit**. For example, more mature representatives might be better at interacting with older customers, while on the other hand younger representatives might be better suited to deal with 18 – 30s customers.

In addition, **experience** is another influence of EL of holiday representatives. The findings show that the holiday representatives that had previously worked in customer service roles find it easier to cope with the pressure and the stress involved in this job. It minimises the negatives associated with the role as they

already know how to behave with customers and deal with the difficult situations. Therefore, it could mean that they might not experience strong emotional dissonance during customer interactions and could find it easier to engage in more authentic emotion regulation strategies. They can recall previous similar emotional experiences and minimise the emotional dissonance through the deep acting method described by Hochschild (1983) as 'trained imagination'.

However, most findings were related to the experience within the role. It seems that as the representatives gain more experience, the job becomes easier as they feel less pressure and they are more skilful in portraying the right emotions (Wong and Wang 2009). Representatives with no experience find this job more intensive especially when they do not receive the appropriate training and get overwhelmed. This supports Kruml and Geddes (2000) who state that when employees do not have enough experience with the public they have to put in more emotional effort. In line with Grandey's (2003) findings, the holiday representatives become stressed, nervous and thus find it easier to use surface acting with their customers. On the other hand, more experienced holiday representatives find it easier to cope with difficult customer interactions which become something 'normal' and they seem to be more skilled in engaging in deep acting.

Sohn and Lee (2012) argue that tour guides who have 3-5 years of work experience mostly engage in surface acting, whilst others with 10-15 years of experience use more deep acting as they make a greater effort to manage their emotions and meet the organisation's display rules. However, although the findings of this study are in line with Sohn and Lee (2012), the experience cannot be quantified. Shifting between the strategies can happen only throughout the duration of one season as Guerrier and Adib (2003) also mention in their study. On the other hand, there were also findings which showed that the holiday representatives who are new in the role and do not have enough experience also engage in naturally felt emotions if they have a strong prosocial customer orientation. After a while this can change and they start to act more. This supports Torland's (2011) argument that when someone starts a job, he/she can be placed anywhere on the EL continuum and can change depending on situations as presented in Figure 8. For example, more mature representatives having more

experience in the role might still want to quit the role because it becomes 'too boring' or routine and are not invested emotionally anymore.

In addition, the role of **gender** in the EL of holiday representatives was briefly mentioned in the interviews. For example, there are situations when women representatives are better suited to the job, more specifically when they are dealing with particular kinds of problems which holidaymakers might have whilst on holidays that they emotionally connect with. Female representatives tend to understand other people's feelings better than male representatives and are better at performing EL (Grandey 2000, Hochschild 1983). This does not mean that male representatives are not able to be effective in these types of situations, but they seem to use surface acting whereas female representatives find it easier to deal with the emotional side of the role and find it easier to engage in deep acting because they are more empathetic than men (Torland 2011). Therefore, these findings contradict Sohn and Lee (2012) who did not find gender as an influence of EL in the tourism industry. However, although women are good at dealing with customers and more emotional situations, they can also create issues within teams. The working environment can become more intense because of the differences that they might have amongst themselves which affects the team dynamic and at times it can even affect job performance of the individuals. Identifying gender as an influence supports Guerrier and Adib's (2004) view that gender differences are important in this work context.

7.6 The consequences of emotional labour on the holiday representatives and the need for release

The consequences of EL on-holiday representatives are both positive and negative. The findings chapters showed that the consequences are (a) short-term, meaning the ones that are experienced shortly after or during the EL performance and while in employment, and (b) long-term, which refer to a longer period and after employment. It is important to mention that this categorisation was not considered initially by the researcher and was data driven. These findings are in line with Ashforth and Humphrey (1993) and Hochschild (1983) who identified long-term and short-term consequences of performing EL. However, the primary categorisation in this study was that the short-term consequences occur while

representative are still employed whereas long-term refers to consequences post-employment.

The short-term consequences were mentioned in the previous parts of this chapter. These can be grouped in four different categories which can be summarised in Table 7. These can be emotional or psychological, physical, behavioural and financial all of which are either positive or negative. However, most findings have been found on the negative aspects. This is the case because, in line with the Affective Events Theory (AET), in the work context of holiday representatives, there are a high number of negative events which influence holiday representatives' emotions and as per Grandey (2000), are stronger influences for EL.

Table 7: Summary of short-term consequences of emotional labour

Type	Description
<i>Emotional/ psychological</i>	These emotional consequences are both positive such as feeling confident, a sense of achievement, satisfied and happy, and also negative such as feeling upset, hurt, emotional exhaustion and stressed as experienced by the holiday representatives. Most however are negative especially when interacting with customers, managers, colleagues and suppliers.
<i>Physical</i>	The physical demands were mostly negative because of the nature of the job with the long hours and the workload. The representatives feel physically tired which supports Schaubroeck and Jones (2000) who also found in their study that the perception of the demand to portray positive emotions is linked to ill-health.
<i>Behavioural</i>	These are both positive and negative such as the intention to quit, deviant behaviour, turnover, drinking and extra-role behaviour with customers. However, it seems that the strongest and most occurring consequence was turnover thus supporting Jung and Yoon's (2014, p.87) statement that 'the largest influence on employees' turnover is emotional labour'. Guerrier and Adib (2003) also highlighted the high turnover of holiday representatives in their study.

<p style="text-align: center;">Financial</p>	<p>One of the most discussed aspects was the fact that the holiday representatives are not paid enough in comparison with the number of working hours, workload and the responsibility that they have. However, there are also some positives in terms of the financial aspects. For example, performing EL with the customers helps them sell excursions and get commission, at the same time they also receive incentives in the form of tips from their customers which is also a source of job satisfaction (Grandey Chi and Diamond 2013). This seems to be a very important reason for why the representatives engage in EL through various strategies.</p>
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In the short-term, the negative consequences outweigh the positives, whereas the opposite is true in terms of the **long-term consequences** where the positives seem to considerably outweigh the negatives. Unlike Wong and Wang (2009) who mention that only in the long term there are positive consequences for the tour companies. A key finding of this study shows that in the long-term, performing EL has a positive influence on the employees' well-being as well. The most important influence is the fact that after doing this job the representatives are more confident especially when interacting with people and public speaking. The representatives describe themselves as being stronger and having a thicker skin when interacting with difficult people and have learnt to use deep acting when they find themselves in such a situation. At the same time, they learn how to be emotionally stronger, deal with being away from family and develop skills that they find useful in their next employment. However, although there are numerous positives, there can also be negative long-term consequences. Although evidence is limited, negatives can occur from dealing with extreme situations which can scar people for life. This seems to be worse for younger representatives who do not have enough life experience. For example, some respondents mentioned that they might not be as compassionate to others as before. This can mean that they are unable to show empathy and thus it may be the case that they would 'fake' emotions during interactions and use surface acting. Overall the findings show that there are both positive and negative consequences of EL, but it should be emphasised that it is not equally damaging for all the holiday representatives (Morris and Feldman 1996).

Chapter 5 presented the fact that in this role there is the need for emotional labour release in order to minimise the negative consequences that their EL role has on their well-being such as exhaustion. Wong and Wang (2009) and Sharpe (2005) have also highlighted in their findings that tour leaders need ways to cope with the EL. The holiday representatives need to **escape** the fast-paced working environment and the stress that this involves, both in terms of customers and colleagues. The way in which they achieve this release varies. Some representatives start drinking as a coping mechanism as it seems to help them break away and maybe forget about their daily work problems. Many others seem to sleep as they experience a high level of emotional exhaustion and this through sleep they can 'recharge their batteries'. It seems that if these representatives are able to de-stress it will increase their job performance and they will 'care' more about their customers in particular. They will feel more positive which means that less EL is needed as their emotions match the positive display rules (Grandey 2000). **Colleagues are the main source of release** as they engage together in various relaxing activities. This supports the previous argument that they are an important emotional support system. An interesting finding is the fact that holiday representatives achieve emotional labour release through emotional deviance with their colleagues. In this case, emotional deviance is not intentional, and they lash out at each other after a long day at work in order to release all the negative emotions such as anger and frustration, experienced as a result of difficult customer interactions (Hochschild 1983). Unlike Rafaeli and Sutton (1987) who argued that emotional deviance has negative consequence for one's well-being, this finding shows that emotional deviance can be considered a release strategy with positive outcomes.

It seems however, that at times it is more difficult to relax when working in a small team in a small resort where EL release is similar to 'Groundhound Day' the movie. The coping strategies become too repetitive for the holiday representatives, they become a source of dissatisfaction and release might not be achieved at all anymore and will amplify the negative consequences. Therefore, although emotional release is crucial in this type of job, the representatives might not be able to achieve it from both colleagues and customers because of the destination, lack of time, or even working long hours (Wong and Wang 2009, Sharpe 2005). Similar to Guerrier and Adib's (2003) findings, this happens because they are

'front-stage' even when they are hanging out in the resort without the uniform or ***they work whilst not at work.***

7.7 Conclusion

This chapter has presented a discussion of the influences of EL and the way in which these affect the holiday representatives in the workplace. The beginning presented a summary of the findings chapters under the form of an iceberg which illustrated how EL is not limited to the service delivery and that there is much more beneath the water which influences it and needs to be considered. Further, section 7.2 presented the model of the influences of EL developed based on the findings presented in Chapters 4-6.

Therefore, the main argument made in the discussion was the fact that the work context and its components are the strongest influences. Aspects such as the complexity and uniqueness of the workplace, tour operator support, as well as the relationships with suppliers, colleagues and managers have a role in shaping the representatives' EL. At the same time, it has been identified that there are certain context-specific aspects peculiar to this position which affects the employees' emotions and behaviours whilst at work. These have been considered a sub-category of the work environment category of influences. The customer facing role influences, which are customer-related were drawn from the initial framework presented in Chapter 2, Figure 7. This category is part of the job requirements but was separated. This was done because the findings showed that customer service is highly important in this work-leisure work context. It is the focus of these employees, but it is also different because of the work-leisure nexus. The third category is the individual influences. The findings of this study showed that the individual factors such as personality, age, experience, gender and a high customer orientation, are something that cannot be separated or ruled out in this context.

The discussion also highlighted the dynamic nature of EL. Although most of the EL is performed with the holidaymakers, which was the primary focus of this study, the holiday representatives also engage in EL and use certain strategies with other stakeholders. These are internal members of the organisation such as

managers and colleagues and also the suppliers in the resort who are crucial for service delivery.

The final part of this chapter included a summary of the consequences of EL. It showed that these are both long-term and short-term. At the same time, also discussed was the fact that emotional labour release is something that should exist in this high EL role. The next chapter presents the conclusions and the implications of the findings of this thesis.

Chapter 8 Conclusion

8.1 Introduction

This thesis examined the influences of EL in the tour operating sector. As explained throughout the thesis the role is multi-faceted because there is a blur between work and leisure which makes their work environment quite complex. Therefore, they have to display higher levels of EL. The findings revealed that the work environment has a crucial role as an influence of holiday representatives' EL, that there are context/job specific influences and that EL is performed with various stakeholders using all strategies. This chapter presents a summary of the findings, key contributions, limitations and future research.

8.2 Research overview

The **first objective** of this research aimed at analysing the importance and the rationale for performing EL in the tour operating sector. In line with the arguments presented in Chapter 2, the findings showed that the overseas representatives know they need to provide an outstanding service and show positive emotions to hundreds of holidaymakers to achieve organisational success. Positive emotions also help meet sales targets and earn rewards and commission and maintain control of unreasonable holidaymakers and ensure that complaints are handled efficiently. At the same time, the findings revealed that this job also entails aesthetic labour, a concept that was not initially considered by the researcher. This entails wearing the correct uniform or covering their tattoos as this also influences customer perception and consequently satisfaction.

The **second objective** of this study was to discuss the nature of emotional labour and assess how these employees perform EL whilst at work. The focus of this research was on the EL performed during service interactions, and the findings in Chapter 4 indeed revealed that most of the time these representatives show EL with their customers. However, Chapter 4 also showed how the holiday

representatives engage in EL with managers, colleagues and suppliers such as hotel employees or restaurant owners. There is a 'hidden EL' which occurs which would not be considered in the first instance because of the perception that EL is part of the customer service interaction only. Therefore, as discussed in Chapter 7, there are four stakeholders of EL of holiday representatives. This significant finding shows how ***EL is multi-faceted and complex*** in this context.

The evidence revealed that overseas representatives use all the EL strategies during their interactions. *Surface acting* was identified as the most frequently used especially during difficult customer interactions. Concerning this, although there was not extensive evidence, it was sometimes used with suppliers as a show, to suppress positive emotions and express negative emotions to achieve customer satisfaction. Surface acting was also used in challenging situations with colleagues as protection in order not to get hurt or to fit in with the team, but also with managers. Evidence of *deep acting* with customers, colleagues and direct-line managers was highlighted in Chapter 7. This strategy was achieved by the representatives through various means such as putting themselves in others' shoes, 'internal speeches', recalling training, using ignorance, avoidance, humour or sarcasm.

In this research, *naturally felt emotions* was considered as an EL strategy. There was evidence of holiday representatives using this with customers, suppliers with whom they get along very well, but also with managers when trying to make their feelings known regarding workplace issues which might not always lead to positive outcomes as the managers might not reciprocate. In addition, this study regarded *emotional deviance* as a strategy, where the holiday representatives may lash out at their customers for a variety of reasons as they are unsuccessful in meeting the display rules through other EL strategies. This way they achieve a sort of emotional protection against negative customers and avoid being hurt and getting upset. This also occurs with unsupportive managers. Interestingly, emotional deviance is a way of emotional release by unintentionally lashing out at their colleagues to get rid of the negative emotions built up from their work day.

Another interesting finding is ***concomitant EL*** which was data driven. There was evidence which showed that the holiday representatives could be in a situation where they interact with two different stakeholders, and they engage in EL with

both at the same time. They could use the same strategies with both stakeholders or different strategy with each of the stakeholder. In addition, as shown in Chapters 4 and 5 **EL is variable** which was also not considered in the literature. Firstly, when dealing with customers, the use of these strategies is not consistent throughout one customer service incident. Secondly, the strategies also seem to change throughout the job or through experience on the job.

The **third objective** was to identify the contextual influences of EL of holiday representatives. The iceberg analogy presented in Chapter 7 sums up these findings and shows that the customer facing role is the 'surface' part of EL and that there are other 'underwater' aspects which influence and put pressure on the surface or the customer facing role. The extensive findings on the contextual factors found in Chapter 4 and Chapter 7 show that the work environment of representatives under study is a unique influence in this context which seems to shape the behaviours and the emotions that these employees experience and thus EL. A very interesting finding was the identification of the *context-specific influences* or role specific such as hotel star rating or destination. Also, the findings revealed that a hotel-personality fit, or a destination-personality fit makes it easier for the representatives to deal with the emotional requirements of the job.

Customer-related influences presented in Chapter 5 and Chapter 7 are also an significant aspect as indeed it is a customer facing role and service delivery is the primary job requirement for the overseas representatives. The customer facing factors identified in this research are, types of customer interactions, customer profile and emotional requirements. Findings showed that strong influences for these employees are the negative clients as they experience a high level of negative interactions which leads to a greater level of EL.

The **fourth objective** of this thesis was to evaluate the individual influences of EL of holiday representatives. As presented in Figure 15, these influences are more important for these emotional labourers than expected. Also, personality-role fit, a personality-customer profile fit, or age-job fit, and age-customer fit makes it easier for these employees to meet the display rules of the tour operator and decreases the level of acting necessary in this job.

The **last objective**, of this thesis was to develop a theoretical framework for the influences of EL in the tour operating sector. The final framework presented in

Chapter 7 was an evolved model of what has been identified in the literature review. Therefore, the last categories of influences of EL of holiday representatives are, work environment influences with the subgroup of context-specific influences, customer facing influences and individual influences. The work context is indeed the most influential one due to its complexity. The customer facing role is part of the work context, but this should be considered on its own as it is the main requirement of the job in relation to EL. Also, the individual factors cannot be ignored as they have a crucial role in how these employees perform EL.

In addition, Chapter 7 discussed the consequences of EL and the need for ***emotional release*** which is needed to overcome negatives of the role but which cannot be achieved by all representatives as some cannot entirely escape from work. This thesis separated the consequences into short-term or whilst employed, categorised into emotional/psychological, physical, behavioural, and financial, and long-term or post-employment. Most findings revealed that the majority of the short-term consequences are negative such as frustration, stress, or intention to quit, but in the long term, it seems that this EL role has many positives such as being more confident when dealing with other people.

8.3 Contribution to knowledge

This study presented findings that have made several contributions to knowledge. The main contribution of this thesis is to the influences of the EL literature. Previous research has considered the contextual and the individual separately. However, this study enhanced the knowledge as it investigated all these categories of influences together. At the same time, this research focused on both positive and negative workplace events and thus has improved the knowledge on the under-researched positive workplace events as influences of EL, in particular, positive customer interactions.

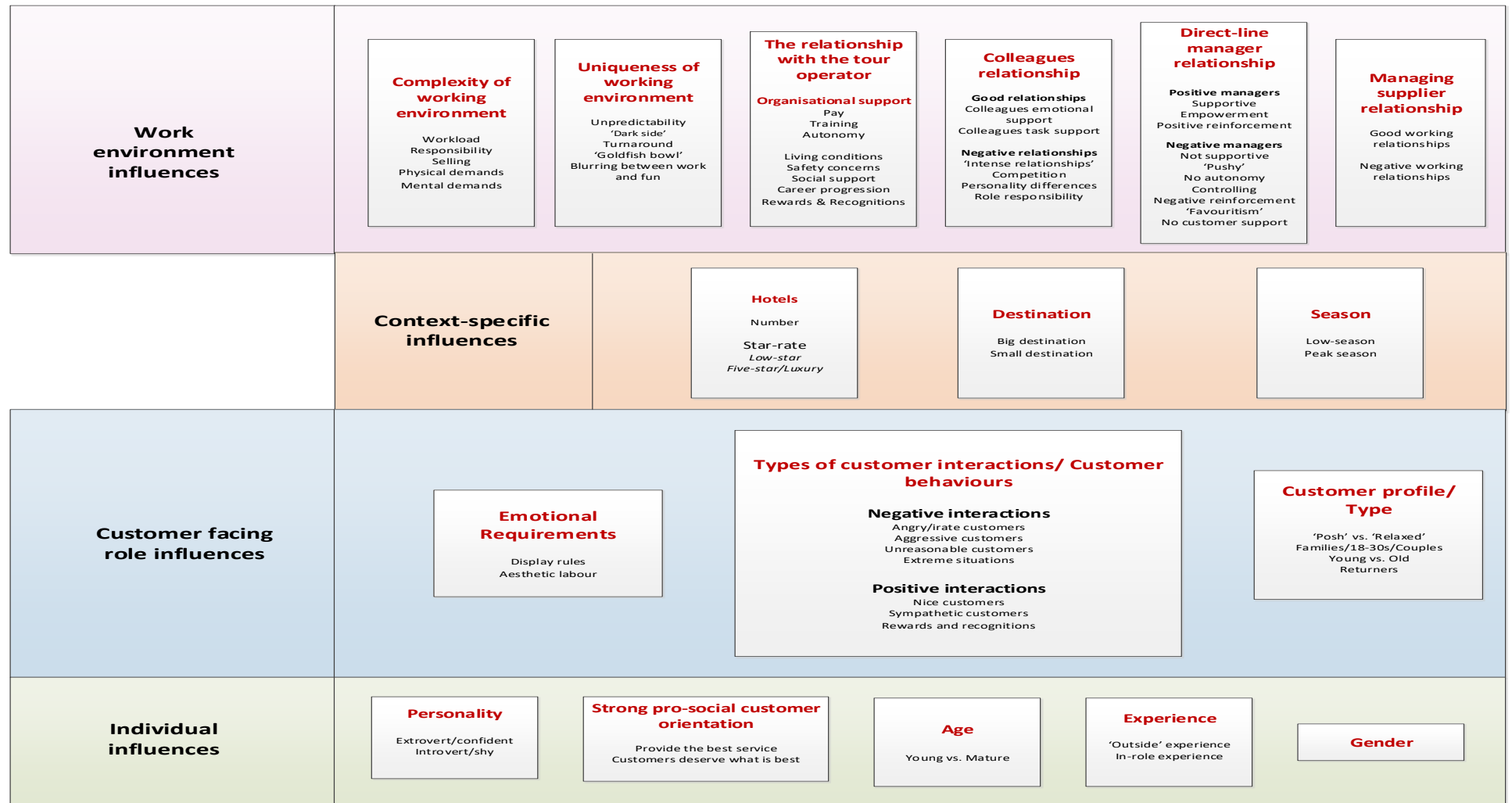
This thesis identified the work environment as the most influential factor of EL of holiday representatives. This is a significant contribution because the work context is comprised of numerous components which affect these employees' emotions such as workload, physical demands, managing relationships with suppliers or organisational support. At the same time, the framework developed

is a core contribution to knowledge as it introduces a new category of influences, the context-specific. Overall, the development of the framework, presented in Figure 19, bridges the gap in the literature concerning the determinants of EL and is a significant implication of this study.

Moreover, this thesis contributed by demonstrating the holistic view of EL. The majority of research stemming from Hochschild's (1983) work has focused on the customer-facing view of EL. However, this thesis has revealed that when researching EL a stakeholder approach needs to be adopted. The findings showed how besides engaging in EL with customers, interactions with colleagues, managers and suppliers are also part of holiday representative's role as an emotional labourer. Based on societal norms, these representatives need to maintain a good working relationship with these stakeholders. The fact that they must manage all these other relationships intensifies their EL and puts more pressure on making sure the display rules are met.

There are some key implications of this thesis concerning the strategies of EL. This study extended the knowledge on the naturally felt emotions which has not been a focus in the EL literature. This strategy was considered as it also involves effort because the representatives are still meeting the display rules when interacting with customers. The findings showed this could have negative consequences for the representatives, such as demotivation when the other party does not reciprocate and appreciate their genuine emotions. Thus, the identification of these adverse outcomes is a key implication of this study regarding genuine acting. Also, the findings revealed how emotional deviance is a component of EL and should also be considered a strategy. It has beneficial outcomes for the representatives when it occurs as a protection strategy against abusive customers, and it can also be a form of emotional release for the negative implications of EL. At the same time, surface acting can also bring positive consequences which is a research avenue also often overlooked by literature. Individuals could experience self-accomplishment when dealing with extreme holidaymakers or financial gains when selling excursions to get extra income when using this strategy. The concomitant and the variability of EL, discussed in section 8.2, are also two significant implications of this study.

Figure 19: The influences of emotional labour of holiday representatives



This thesis focused on the tour operating sector and the package holidays because the role of the holiday representative is one that demonstrates the highest levels of EL in the hospitality and tourism sectors. Besides, there is a blur between work and leisure, and therefore a gap exists. With the changing nature of work this gap between work and leisure is becoming more fundamental. Hence, this research has helped cast new light on EL in this sector and get a more in-depth understanding of its implications in this unique and under-researched context.

Moreover, contribution was also made regarding the methodology used in this field of study. While most existing research on EL has been quantitative, this study employed a qualitative approach. The use of in-depth interviews helped the researcher get a deeper understanding of the emotional experiences of holiday representatives and also about the nature of their work. Additionally, the use of snowball sampling through social networking sites which has mostly been adopted in quantitative studies has proven to be successful in recruiting more respondents and thus minimise the bias of the data that traditional snowball sampling might bring.

8.4 Contribution to practice

This study also has practical implications for the tour operating sector. Having knowledge of how these factors influence representatives' emotions will help tour operators minimise the adverse impacts of performing EL in a high customer contact environment. For example, offering representatives a more balanced working schedule will minimise the emotional and physical exhaustion and consequently the use of surface acting. More opportunities for them to engage in emotional release activities will help increase their workplace motivation and perform EL in a more genuine manner. Giving them more autonomy concerning procedures and processes will enhance their satisfaction and consequently the job performance. Overall, these changes would help reduce the high turnover in the sector which has been highlighted by the findings of this research.

At the same time, understanding what strategies the representatives use can help the tour operators know what measures to take to ensure that their employees

engage in more genuine emotion regulation strategies as these are perceived to be more authentic by customers and can increase their satisfaction. For example, organisations could provide more training to those who need it. This will improve employees' well-being, mood and consequently the service delivery and EL. The findings also showed that some of the new representatives do not receive the appropriate training when starting their job in the middle of the season and thus they might not be performing well as they do not know what to do. In order to minimise the pressure of a new job and increase the performance, the organisations should pay more attention to providing appropriate initial support.

Moreover, a key finding was on the importance of the representatives' personality for EL. Personality-role fit or individual-job fit, personality-customer profile fit and an age-job fit or an age-customer fit makes it easier to engage in EL. Thus, the tour operators should hire individuals who have the right personality and can cope with the hardships of such an intense job. More attention should be paid to placing the right people in the right resorts based in order to cater to a particular type of customers. For example, mature employees would find it easier to interact with more mature customers or a younger representative would find it simpler to do his/her job in a resort suitable for 18-30s.

8.5 Limitations

As with most research the present study has its limitations. The findings of this research cannot be generalised and caution should be taken in using them although this was an investigative study which did not aim to make any generalisations. In other words, the findings of this study may only be applicable to the respondents of this study. However, it may be the case that some would apply to other overseas holiday representatives employed for UK tour operators.

As shown in Chapter 3, the researcher tried to ensure the trustworthiness of the data through pilot interviews and through peer debriefing. However, she acknowledges that additional measures could have been implemented in order to strengthen the trustworthiness of the data collected. For example, she could have tried to use member checks. This method involves asking the participants to verify researchers' interpretations and representations of the data.

The researcher also tried to get respondents who had more recent experience in this role no more than five years previously at the time of the data collection. The researcher believed that respondents who fit into this category would find it easier to recall workplace experiences. However, as they are a hard to reach population, snowball sampling led to respondents who did not fit into this category. Some interviewees had experience that was older than five years, but this aspect did not affect the quality of the data collected as they did not have issues recalling their experiences. The interviews helped the researcher collect in-depth data on the respondents' EL and their emotions experienced in this role.

Another limitation is related to confidentiality. One of the reasons why the researcher did not gather participants through the tour operators was to ensure more confidentiality for them. However, although the researcher assured confidentiality and anonymity to her interviewees, she is not sure whether all respondents were comfortable sharing information with her regarding their employment and EL.

Some of the interviews were also conducted via email where the respondents were sent the interviews schedule. Some participants who agreed to complete it did not send this back to the researcher and some data generated from a few of the completed email interviews was limited and some questions were not answered. Perhaps, the researcher should have sent a simpler and shorter version of the interview protocol including only the most necessary questions. Also, she could have tried to probe some questions and get more information from some email interviewees, but she considered this step an intrusion of their privacy as they did not make this known to the researcher whether they would accept this. Therefore, the researcher also believes that a limitation is her lack of previous experience in conducting email interviews.

8.6 Future research

As mentioned before, this exploratory study has brought a better understanding of the role of the holiday representatives. However, taking into consideration that the study is one of the few that focuses on this service-facing role in particular, more research on this context might be useful to probably get more generalisable

data on the EL and its influences. A starting point for this could be the framework developed in this study.

The findings of this research emphasised how unique, and complicated the work environment of this job is and how there are many factors present that have the same importance as the customer facing role itself. Thus, future researchers could have more focus and research the 'below the surface' part of the EL iceberg presented in Chapter 7 as it seems to be a very important and influential aspect for these particular emotional labourers. More understanding is needed of the work context and the workload. Also, the respondents of this study were part of different groups of holiday representatives. Therefore, interesting future research could be on making a comparison of EL between the different roles and its implications to well-being.

The findings showed how the overseas holiday representatives engage in EL with various stakeholders who were not initially the focus of this study. Therefore, their relationships with managers, with suppliers and with colleagues, and the EL itself need to be investigated in more detail. Although in managerial studies there is research on the service sector employees' EL with other stakeholders besides customers, these have mostly been examined individually. Thus, future investigations of EL should focus on all these members altogether to get a more holistic understanding of this concept. At the same time, more research would be beneficial for understanding the concomitant nature of EL. Future research should also take into consideration all four strategies of EL.

An interesting finding presented in Chapter 7 was the fact that EL has both short-term and long-term consequences on the holiday representatives' well-being. Although both types have positive and negative implication, the positives outweigh the negatives for the long-term ones. Thus, another interesting area for future research could be on exploring these two categories to see whether this is also the case in other work environments or job context.

At the same time, although this study tried to investigate the relationships between EL influences and EL strategies, more is needed on this aspect. Therefore, a quantitative approach could give a better view on the relationships between the various EL strategies with different stakeholders, the influences and the consequences. Also, statistical studies could be used to develop and test

scales to measure EL in the role of overseas holiday representative which can be used by tour operators in the recruitment and selection processes.

8.7 Final remarks

This research has demonstrated the complexity and the uniqueness of EL in the context of holiday representatives. More precisely the fact that there is a 'hidden'/less obvious part of it which creates an even higher level of EL than was thought initially. Thus, there are also other stakeholders of EL in this context besides the customers which gives it a multi-faced such as direct-line managers, colleagues and suppliers.

The findings answered the aim of this study which was 'to investigate the influences of emotional labour of holiday representatives employed for British tour operators'. The work environment, the contexts and aspects such as job characteristics, organisational support, and relationships with managers and colleagues have an immense impact on holiday representatives and their EL. However, in line with previous work, the customer facing role is still an important influence for EL. At the same time, it showed that individual factors cannot be separated from the other influences and should be considered as an integral part of the whole process. The identification of context-specific influences was very interesting and should be regarded as crucial influences for these employees and their EL. Overall the researcher believes that this study has enhanced the understanding of the influences of EL in this under-researched context.

8.7.1 Researcher's personal PhD journey

The author of this thesis had a personal interest when choosing to research this topic. As she previously worked in the tourism and hospitality industries, she knew how complicated and important the role of the front-line employee was. She was always adamant that front-line employees should be credited with the success of the company, which is something that is often overlooked in practice. The researcher came across the concept of EL during her bachelor degree, but she did not research it in detail. At the same time, when working she never thought of it from an academic perspective. As soon as she started her thesis

and started learning more about emotions in the workplace she became more and more interested as she understood it from a practical perspective. The researcher has learned so much and begun linking the theory with her experience. She believes this is something which helped during data collection as she could empathise with her participants regarding their experiences as front-line employees and what EL entailed.

Researching the role of the holiday representative was also a very interesting experience as previously the student wanted to do this job. The researcher changed her opinion about it as previously she assumed, as many others, that it is a simple customer facing role. She discovered how much is there to this role and how complex and intense it really is from an EL perspective as it was shown in the findings. There are things which were very surprising in particular in relation to the job conditions and the practices of the tour operators which are not always as they should be and which have such a strong influence on how EL is performed by these employees.

Also, the author believes that because of this thesis she managed to enhance her research skills. Although she undertook qualitative research before, this was to another extent. Conducting these interviews helped learn a lot about different ways to do interviews such as telephone, Skype or email and how to deal with unforeseen issues such as internet going down, but also how to be able to conduct interviews with people who could not be seen. She learnt how to create rapport using these various ways of interviewing and managed to improve on this skill. This made the author of this thesis think of her emotional labourer as a researcher as well. She realised that as a researcher, especially in qualitative studies, this is very important as for example one needs to ensure that he/she still the researcher, perhaps hide their emotions when they disagree with an interviewee or try to put themselves in their shoes to encourage them to expand on certain issues. This is something which the investigator only realised towards the end of her PhD journey. She has learnt it is very important and she is going to be more conscious of it in future studies and why not research this topic in more detail.

Overall, the researcher learnt that a PhD is not a linear process as it is presented in the books and that one must persevere to get to the end of it. There were ups

and downs, but she enjoyed it a lot and she is now even more interested in EL theory wanting to also bring more awareness to practice or the industry through future studies.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Interview protocol

About the job	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Tell me more about your job. 2. What did you do? 3. What sort of hotels did you work for? What was the star rate? 4. Tell me more about the day of a holiday rep? How many hours did you work? Length? 5. How long did you do this job for? 	
Enjoyable aspects	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What do you think were the enjoyable aspects of your job? What effects do these have on you and the service you were providing?
Difficult aspects	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How do you think these affects the way you behave during service interactions?
The environment	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What do you consider to be the physical demands of the job? 2. How did the conditions of the work influence the way you behaved in your job? 3. How do you think these made you feel at the end of the day?
Autonomy	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Did you feel you were in the position to make decisions in your job? 2. How did this make you feel?
Personality	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Do you think someone should have a certain personality for doing this job?
Customer interaction	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Tell me more about the nature of the interaction with the guests. 2. What sort of people were they? 3. How did the customer interaction make you feel? How does this affect you? 4. How did this affect the emotions that you were experiencing? 	
Emotional displays	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. When interacting with the customers what type of emotions are you required to put across? <i>Probing: How are you expected to behave?</i> 2. What do you think were the easiest emotions to put across regardless your own personal feelings? 3. What do you consider to be the right kinds of emotions to put across to customers for your job as a holiday rep? <i>Please give some examples.</i> 4. How important is it to you to show these right kinds of emotions when you perform your job as a holiday rep? 5. When at work do the emotions you feel/experience match the emotions that you have to show?

	<p>a) <i>If yes, please give me an example when this happened. How do you think this made you feel (as a person)? How does this affect the service that you are offering?</i></p> <p>b) <i>If no, please give me an example when it didn't match. How did this affect the service you offered? How did you feel? How did you behave? What were you thinking? Follow up: Did this affect the quality of the service that you offered? Here I need to talk about the other deep or surface</i></p> <p>6. Think of an occasion when you had to hide your personal feelings during a service interaction in order to put across the required emotions/behaviour.</p> <p>a) <i>Describe the context of the incident/occasion</i></p> <p>b) <i>Describe the actual incident</i></p> <p>c) <i>Describe what were you thinking and feeling at the time?</i></p> <p>7. When you interact with the customers have you experienced any negative feelings? What brought these and how did you feel, how did you behave?</p> <p>a) <i>How about positive feelings? How do these make you feel and behave during service interactions?</i></p>
Difficult situations	<p>1. Can you please give some examples of difficult situations?</p> <p>a) <i>Describe what happened?</i></p> <p>b) <i>What were you thinking and feeling at this was happening?</i></p> <p>c) <i>How did you feel afterwards?</i></p> <p>2. How did you manage yourself? How did you deal with the hardships of the emotions you felt?</p>
Rewards and recognition	<p>1. What sort of rewards and recognition did you receive from guests?</p> <p>2. How do you feel this affect the way you feel during service interaction?</p>
Management interaction	
	<p>1. Tell me more about what sort of relationship you had with the managers/supervisors.</p> <p>2. In what ways did you feel this relationship influenced the way you feel at work/ the customer interaction?</p> <p>3. Did you have any challenges in terms of this relationship? How did this make you feel?</p>
Colleagues interaction	
	<p>1. Tell me more about the relationship that you had with your colleagues.</p> <p>2. In what ways did you feel this relationship influenced the way you feel at work/the customer interaction?</p> <p>3. Challenges? How did you manage this? How did this make you feel?</p>
Suppliers relationships	
	<p>1. What can you tell me about the relationship with the hotel members and other people in the resort?</p> <p>2. How do you think this influenced the customer service?</p> <p>3. Challenges? How did you manage these? How did this make you feel?</p>
Free time	
	1. What did you do in your free time?
De-stress	<p>1. What outlets/ EL releases did you have?</p> <p>2. What did you do to de-stress yourself?</p>
Organisational perspective	
Training	<p>1. Do you receive training on how to behave with the customer and what does this training entail?</p> <p>2. Do you think this actually prepared you for the demands of the job?</p>

Rewards and recognition	1. When you receive rewards and recognition for the organisation you worked for how does this affect your customer interaction?
Support	1. How do you feel you are supported by the organisation you work for? <i>Follow up: What happens if you are faced with a situation where you feel out of your depth?</i> 2. <i>Is there any level of support missing? How do you feel about that omission?</i> 3. Is there anything overall that you think the organisation can do better to support you when dealing with customers?
Influences overall	
1. What do you think were the factors that influenced you the most and the way you were behaving during service interactions? Give examples	
Consequences overall	
1. Has the way you feel about yourself changed as a result of doing this job?/ Do you believe this job has changed you in any way? a) <i>How did it affect you?</i>	

Appendix 2: Participant information sheet



An Investigation into the Emotional Labour of Holiday Representatives

My name is Georgiana Busoi and I am undertaking PhD research at the Sheffield Business School, Sheffield Hallam University (SHU). This study will investigate the emotional labour of the holiday representatives. Emotional labour is a requirement of a job where employees are requested to display particular emotions during customer interactions. Holiday representatives are very important within the tour operating industry. Their work involves a great deal of interaction with holidaymakers and at times they might be the only 'human' element present within the holiday experience. In other words, they are key employees as they represent the tourism product and they are the face of the tour operators. Therefore, I am interested in getting a better understanding on how emotional labour is performed in the context of holiday representatives and what factors are strongly influencing this aspect. The findings will be used to inform the organisations of the measures that can be taken in order to improve the individual well-being within the industry and minimise the negative outcomes for the employees.

A significant part of this research involves gathering the opinions and perspectives of you, because of your experience as a holiday representative. Therefore, I would greatly welcome your assistance in allowing me to interview you. The interview will be conducted at your convenience and can be conducted face-to-face, by telephone or Skype. It will last between 1-1 ½ hours, it will be recorded and then transcribed.

Participation in this interview is voluntary and if for any reason you do not wish to participate, please feel free to decline. Your identity will be anonymous and no information provided by you will be made public in any form that could identify you or the organisation you work/have worked for. All the information that will be gathered during the interview will be confidential. The recordings and any other documents will be encrypted following the SHU data encryption guidelines and I will be the only person who will have access to these. The transcribed data will only be used for the purpose of this research and it will be referred to in the thesis. At the same time the data may be used for academic publications and for presentations in academic conferences. You will be required to complete an informed consent form and you can also withdraw from the study at any time. The researcher is not aware of any risks related to this interview. On completion of the study, I will provide you with a summary of the findings should you wish.

Should you require further information before you make a decision or if you have any other questions you can contact me using the details at the end of this document. If you would like to speak to an independent person who knows about this study, you are welcome to contact my Director of Studies, Dr Alisha Ali at Alisha.Ali@shu.ac.uk / +44 (0) 114 225 4593.

I would like to thank you in advance for your assistance with this research and I am looking forward to interviewing you soon.

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The ethical aspects of this study had been approved by Sheffield Hallam University's Ethics Committee (SHUREC)

Appendix 3: Participant consent form



PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

TITLE OF RESEARCH STUDY: **An Investigation into the Emotional Labour of Holiday Representatives**

Please answer the following questions by ticking the response that applies

- | | YES | NO |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. I have read the Information Sheet for this study and have had details of the study explained to me. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. My questions about the study have been answered to my satisfaction and I understand that I may ask further questions at any point. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. I understand that I am free to withdraw from the study within the time limits outlined in the Information Sheet, without giving a reason for my withdrawal or to decline to answer any particular questions in the study without any consequences to my future treatment by the researcher. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. I agree to provide information to the researchers under the conditions of confidentiality set out in the Information Sheet. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5. I wish to participate in the study under the conditions set out in the Information Sheet. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6. I consent to the information collected for the purposes of this research study, once anonymised (so that I cannot be identified), to be used for any other research purposes. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Participant's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Participant's Name (Printed): _____

Contact details:

Researcher's Name (Printed): _____

Researcher's Signature: _____

Researcher's contact details:

(Name, address, contact number of investigator)

Please keep your copy of the consent form and the information sheet together.

|

Appendix 4: Participants' profiles

Respondent	Dates when employed	Type of repping/ what holiday representative	Gender
R1	2014- Present*	Resort rep	Male
R2	Summer 2014, 2015	Resort rep	Female
R3	March 2012- June 2012 for three months	Resort rep	Female
R4	May 2011 3 seasons	Transfer rep Holiday rep	Female
R5	2008 started 2 summers 2 winters	Mainline rep	Male
R6	2000-2007	Mainline rep	Female
R7	2011 -one season	Swimming rep but doing other things like a holiday advisor	Female
R8	2008-2009	Mainline rep	Male
R9	2008	Transfer rep, excursions rep and holiday advisor	Female
R10	2012 – one season	Standard rep	Female
R11		Mainline rep	Female
R12	2007-2009	Mainline rep Admin overseas rep	Female
R13	2001-Present	Mainline rep	Male
R14	2007-2013	Resort rep	Female
R15	2005-2010	Transfer rep, resort rep, team leader, airport rep, children rep	Female
R16	2008-2010	Children rep than mainline rep	Female
R17	2011 – present (4 summers and 3 winters)	Overseas rep Head Rep	Male
R18	2010- 2011- 2012	Children's rep Line rep	Female
R19	Present	Ski rep	Male
R20	2009-2011	Ski rep	Male
R21	2005-2013	Resort rep	Male

*Present- employed at the time of the interview

Appendix 5: Interview transcript and sample of coding in MAXQDA

	50 I: I like in any other job not everything is like pink and nice and so on but did you have issues with customers with guests over there? What sort of things did you deal with?
<p>..Deep Acting (DA)</p> <p>..Dealing with angry/irrate guests/ different COMPLAI</p> <p>..People have personal problems</p> <p>..Unpredictability of the job</p>	51 R10: oh yeah you had your fair share of problems. You do understand that they'd paid their money it's their holiday you once them to have a great time and not everything that's go right to you do come across a lot of problems it could be the simplest things from I don't know the room was on the ground floor and they didn't want to be on the ground floor so you're trying to get them to--- or something worse like, I'm trying to think of an example. I had a man who hated his neighbors and he was determined that if he was staying one more night he was going he was on the next plane home. Or you have like really awful situations where they have to fly home because there's been death in their family, lots of different things can happen. You just never really know what to expect [maybe verbatim 2045]
	52 I: how did that make you feel when you were facing these situations and you were in front of these people? How are you dealing with it?
<p>..Deep Acting (DA)</p> <p>..Satisfied with training provided</p> <p>..Dealing with angry/irrate guests/ different COMPLAI</p>	53 R10: it was quite bizarre. The thing is just what you get told as well is 'you need to be calm' 'if someone is really angry just set them down offer them a glass of water get to their level and unroll the problem so they could calm down as they are talking about it' cause you do have a lot of people who shout at you, [ease in] the situations calming everyone down and you'd be the calm one who would sort it all out. So I guess without even thinking 'oh my God what I'm gonna do what I'm gonna do [sounds scary here concerned] just start being calm and you do what they tell--- you had training before and they'd tell you 'sit yourself down get the situation out [not clear if she saying that here 2130]' before you even think about 'oh my gosh' start panicking yourself you start to unravel the problem and it makes it easier so you don't really panic that much. I think the training --- if you're doing it that way you kind of then don't have a chance to think about it, it makes you feel, I don't know.
	54 I: yeah I mean it's tough when you're in front of people and the shaft you I personally understand that as well...
<p>..Surface Acting (SA)</p> <p>..Feeling angry as antecedent</p> <p>..Surface Acting (SA)</p> <p>..Hotel/Accommodation star rate are influencers</p> <p>..Dealing with aggressive guests</p> <p>..Age differences</p> <p>..Guests can make things more personal</p> <p>..Deep Acting (DA)</p> <p>..Feeling distressed</p>	55 R10: yeah I know people can flip. You can even get angry I mean I felt angry but I'd never show it. I remember I had this man who was, I was 18 at the time as well and I'd never [unclear word] man like go up to someone--- I know it's my job and I know it's my responsibility my age regardless but he used my age against me he was just 'you're too young for this job'--- he didn't like the hotel. In my [poor quality] near the end I had another hotel as well and it was a two star so he booked it thinking that it's gonna be amazing but at the end of the day it's two star [she's being a bit sarcastic here 2252] so he was very angry of this didn't know who to blame it was very much my fault and he used my age against me saying I'm too young for this job it's all my fault, but literally in my face like screaming and I was really [emphasis on really] not angry but sad 'I can't cry in front of this man I can't let him win'. But you won't show it you just got to get on with it it's your job at the end of the day, don't take too personal because you're the face of the hotel is not him personally attacking you, well I guess it was because he used my age but you know what I mean. You just got to keep calm. It can be distressing.

Appendix 6: Shuspace announcement

Title: Participants with prior experience as overseas holiday reps required for PhD research

Content:

Have you been previously employed as a holiday representative and worked for a British tour operator? Are you willing to help improve the industry by sharing your experiences? Then you are the right person for this research!

This is a PhD study which investigates the emotional labour of holiday reps.

But what's emotional labour?

This is a requirement of a job where employees are requested to show particular emotions during customer interaction which can have an impact on employee's well-being.

What's the importance for holiday reps?

Emotional labour is different for holiday reps because this role involves a combination of leisure and work. Holidaymakers have to be kept satisfied throughout their stay and the holiday reps make sure everything runs smoothly for them at all times. This job has one of the highest levels of emotional labour among all service sectors, and it is important to understand the impacts of this for the holiday reps and the job they do.

How would this research help?

The findings will be critical in informing the measures that can be taken to manage the emotional labour for holiday reps. Therefore, your participation is important in making a change.

What would I have to do?

If you are interested in taking part then you will be asked for an interview. This can either be conducted face-to-face, by telephone, Skype or even by email, depending what would suit you best. It will only take around one hour and we will discuss your experiences as a holiday rep. Also, confidentiality and anonymity will be maintained at all time.

For further information contact Georgiana Busoi on G.Busoi@shu.ac.uk or 07474119108.

Appendix 7: Methods of performing deep acting

Method of deep acting	Explanation	Example
Situation selection (Gross 1998)	Choosing to avoid or to approach certain stimuli such as people, places, or objects in order to increase (or decrease) the likelihood of the occurrence of certain emotions	Employees might choose to avoid people who are offensive that might upset them or choose people that make them feel good.
Situational modification (Gross 1998)	Changing the external features of a situation in order to alter its emotional impact	An employee who is serving two customers might ask for a colleague's help to assist one of the customers in order to avoid the negative emotions that might occur from work overload
Attentional deployment (Gross 1998) Hochschild's (1983) deep acting is very similar to this	Thinking about events which would evoke the emotions which are needed in a particular situation. The change occurs in terms of the personal thoughts. This can be used to select which aspect of the situation a person should concentrate on in order to alter its emotional impact.	After a difficult customer interaction, an employee might decide to do something that will lift his/her mood. An aspiring opera singer whistling arias whilst serving customers in a coffee shop (doing something which one likes would make a person feel focus and express positive emotions at work). Boosting energy to teach and actively focusing on being positive and maintaining that.
	Distraction	Focus on non-emotional aspects of the situation and moves away the attention. Thinking about doing something different.
	Concentration/ Trained imagination	An actor calls to mind an emotional incident in order to portray the right emotions. An internal version of situation selection. Thinking of a funny experience in order to be happy.
	Rumination	Attention directed to feelings and their consequences. For example, focusing attention on future threats/ worrying leads to long-lasting anxiety.
Cognitive change (Gross 1998)	Focuses on changing appraisals of external situations. Alter the meaning of a situation in order to modify the emotional impact on the person through:	
	Perspective talking	Think about how another person feels.
	Cognitive re-framing	Thinking how the situation could get worse.

	Reappraisal	Interpret the situation in a different manner i.e. thinking of unreasonable customers as friends, reappraising work tasks as challenging rather than stressful would diminish stress
Underlying motivation	Generating the emotions needed for a particular situation based on an underlying motivation, such as helping others, contributing to making people happy, or being a compassionate human being.	Adventure tour leaders, who normally are not particularly excited to see a endangered animal species that they have spotted numerous times before, show genuine enthusiasm towards clients when spotting this animal. They show enthusiasm because this may be the only chance the clients have to take part in such a unique and wondrous experience

Source: Adapted from Grandey (2000), Gross (1998), Hochschild (1983), Torland (2013)

Appendix 8: Contributors to perceived organisational support

Fairness	Procedural justice- The fairness of the ways used to determine the distribution of resources among employees	
	Structural determinants- Formal rules and policies to aid decisions which affect employees	Social aspects/ interactional justice- The quality of interpersonal treatment of employees in resource allocation i.e. treating employees with dignity and respect
	Supervisor support The degree to which the supervisors value employees' contribution and care about their well-being. Supervisors act as agents for the organisation and thus represent organisational support.	
Favourableness of organisational rewards and job conditions	Recognition, rewards and promotions- Opportunities for rewards demonstrates a positive valuation of employees	
	Job security- Assurance of employment	
	Role stressors- Environmental demands with which the employees find it difficult to cope with and which are controllable by the organisation	
	Work overload- Demands that exceed what an employee can accomplish in a certain period of time	Role ambiguity- Unclear information about an individual's job responsibilities
		Role conflict- Mutually incompatible job responsibilities
	Organisation size- Large organisations do not deal with individuals' need effectively because formalised policies and procedures reduce the flexibility to do so. Individuals feel less valued in larger organisations because of formalised procedures and policies which influence the flexibility in dealing with employees' individual needs.	
	Training- Investment in the employee	
	Autonomy- Employees perceived control over how they perform their job including procedures or scheduling.	

Source: Adapted from Rhoades and Eisenberger (2002)

Appendix 9: Previous research on emotional labour in tourism

Author(s)	Industry/Sector and Sample
Hochschild (1983)	Airline industry - Flight attendants
Rafaeli and Sutton (1987)	Amusement parks
Leidner (1999)	Hospitality-Fast food workers
Seymour (1999)	Hospitality-Fast food workers
Adib and Guerrier (2000)	Tourism- Holiday representatives
Guerrier and Adib (2001)	Tourism- Holiday representatives
Guerrier and Adib (2003)	Tourism- Holiday representatives
Constanti and Gibbs (2004)	Tourism- Holiday representatives
Sharpe (2005)	Adventure tourism- Adventure tour guides
Chu and Murrmann (2006)	Hotels- Hotel employees and hospitality students
Kim (2008)	Hotels-Hotel employees
Van Dijk and Kirk (2008)	Tourism-Zoo guides and visitors
Wong and Wang (2009)	Tourism-Tour guides
Gursoy, Boylu, Avci (2009)	Hospitality, travel and culinary arts students
Torland (2011)	Tourism-Adventure tour guides
Van Dijk, Smith and Cooper (2011)	Tourism-Staff from heritage tourism site and Zoo
Chu, Baker and Murrmann (2011)	Hotels- Hotel employees
Lam and Chen (2012)	Hotels-Hotel employees
Reyers and Matusitz (2012)	Tourism- Theme park, Disney
Moon, Hur and Jun (2013)	Airline industry- Flight attendants
Houge Mackenzie and Kerr (2013)	Tourism- Adventure tour guides
Rathi, Bhatnagar and Mishra (2013)	Hospitality- Hotel employees
Shani et al. (2014)	Airline industry, Hotels and Restaurant employees
Wijeratne et al. (2014)	Tourism- Zoo managers and tour guides
Chiang and Chen (2014)	Tourism- Package tours- Tour leaders

Source: Author