

# WHEN FAKING EMOTIONS AT WORK HARMS FAMILY LIFE: EMOTIONAL LABOR SPILLOVER AND FAMILY QUALITY AMONG UNIVERSITY TEACHERS IN PAKISTAN

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## ABSTRACT

This research explored how the emotional labor strategies, that is surface acting and deep acting, relate to the family quality of life of university teachers in Azad Jammu and Kashmir, Pakistan, with a comparison between public and private sector universities. The study involved a sample of 450 married university teachers (male = 310; female = 140) from public (n = 230) and private (n = 220) universities who completed the Emotional Labor Scale. These teachers' spouses assessed family quality of life with the Beach Center Family Quality of Life Scale. Pearson correlation, mediation analysis in SPSS 25, and independent samples t-tests were used for data analysis. Surface acting at work was found to have a positive correlation with surface acting at home ( $r = .33, p < .01$ ) and a negative correlation with family quality of life ( $r = -.18, p < .01$ ). Deep acting at work was a positive predictor of deep acting at home ( $\beta = .315, p < .01$ ) but showed an insignificant relationship with family quality of life. Surface acting at work served as a negative predictor of family quality of life ( $\beta = -.192, p < .01$ ). This negative relationship was mediated by surface acting at home (indirect effect = .038, 95% CI [.012, .069]). Females reported a higher level of emotional labor than males ( $t = 2.35, p < .05$ ). Those teachers whose spouses are not working ones reported higher family quality of life ( $M = 112.40$  vs.  $109.65, t = 2.58, p < .01$ ). Those living in joint families reported doing more emotional labor at home ( $M = 17.85$  vs.  $15.90$ ) and also having more family quality of life ( $M = 112.70$  vs.  $109.85$ ) than nuclear families ( $p < .01$ ). Teachers working in public universities reported their emotional labor at work to be significantly higher ( $M = 29.40$  vs.  $27.65, t = 3.12, p < .01$ ) and also surface acting ( $M = 19.50$  vs.  $18.25, t = 3.05, p < .01$ ) than their private university counterparts with no sector differences in family quality of life. The research discovered that emotion faking at work negatively affects family life as it gets spilled over to the home. So, teachers who regularly do surface acting, indirectly carry on this disingenuous emotional showing in their interactions with family and this results in spouse's wondering indeed whether the care and the affection shown is genuine or not. Public university teachers are subjected to much more emotional labor demands than their private sector counterparts.

**Keywords:** Emotional Labor, Surface Acting, Deep Acting, Family Quality of Life, Work-Family Spillover, University Teachers, Public Sector, Private Sector.

## INTRODUCTION

### Background of the Study

Organizations are increasingly prescribing and monitoring employees' emotional expressions throughout all aspects of working environment (Ashkanasy, 2003). Indeed, different organizations set up their own display rules that regulate

and control effective and positive emotional expressions at work. These display rules are usually more prominent in the jobs that require maximum interactions with students and colleagues, which, as a result, build up educational satisfaction (Glomb & Tews, 2004). Emotional labor refers to the management and regulation of one's emotional expressions, which is done to have a consistent display of emotions and feelings, not only through facial expressions, but also through body image and body language (Hochschild, 1983).

Usually, organizational display rules do not match with the employees' current affective states. For example, a teacher who faces a difficult student or is challenged by a colleague, may feel negative emotions. In such situations, the natural tendency of the teacher to respond with anger cannot be openly shown. Alternatively, teachers may express their emotions by following the institutional display rules. Therefore, to comply with such rules, teachers have to carry out emotional labor as a means of solving the inconsistency between their felt and required emotions (Diefendorff & Gosserand, 2003).

When teachers hide their true emotions and at the same time express the ones that are false for a given organizational purposes, it is surface acting or "faking emotions at work." On the other hand, when teachers try to change their actual emotions to the ones they are supposed to show, they are deep acting. Teachers try to change and regulate their feelings inside according to the situation. Deep acting is concerned with changing the causes of emotions, while surface acting is concerned with changing the outcomes of displaying emotions (Gross & John, 2003). The idea behind this research is that pretending emotions at work does not only stay in the workplace but also affects negatively family life.

### **Consequences of Emotional Labor**

Earlier work has shown that when workers perform emotional labor, various results may occur, including some negative, some positive, both for the worker and for the company. Such results have been found to be, among others, burnout, stress, physical complaints, emotional exhaustion, reduced job satisfaction, and emotional detachment from work (Henderson, 2001; Johnson & Spector, 2007; Kim, 2008). Some investigations also indicate that employees lose their emotional control and experience psychological strain when they hide their real emotions. Also, emotional labor leads to a reduction of emotional resources which is related to a loss of emotional attachment and the generation of a sense of inefficacy (Brotheridge & Lee, 2003).

People performing emotional labor get stressed out. These anxiety emotions stay with them during the day and thus cause a further decline in their emotional resources. Resulting in the total depletion of their energy, they become emotionally exhausted. This process reveals that emotional exhaustion and anxiety are two different moods. While anxiety, a state of hyperarousal, in a way leads to emotional exhaustion during which there is a depletion of energy and emotional resources (Boyd, Lewin, & Sager, 2009; Hülshager & Schewe, 2011).

It is these physically and mentally exhausted educators who finally get home, emotionally spent as a result of their experiences at work. Sonnentag, Kuttler, and Fritz (2010) have shown that these states and feelings of stress and anxiety are carried over to the family. Consequently, emotional exhaustion experienced at work continues at home in the evening and that is how family members are affected.

### **Emotional Labor at Home**

Expression of emotions is equally essential in work settings and family domains, and these emotions impact individual health. Think about the example of a teacher who, for the whole day, at the university keeps on pretending to her/his students and colleagues that she/he is feeling positive, while s/he in fact comes back home tired and distressed, yet has to show up for the family gathering in the evening. In such a case, the teacher will perform emotional labor and show positive emotions yet again, (s)he will continue the vicious circle of faking emotions.

Emotional labor performed at home is the process of one's managing emotions and the showing of those surface emotions that are capable of influencing the physical and psychological wellbeing of family members (Erickson, 1993; Grandey, 2000). Seery and Corrigan (2009) have indicated that the research on emotional labor in the context of the family life is one of the least explored areas. Thus, this study focuses on this particular gap in the literature.

The way how teachers play their multiple roles is what influences their wellbeing. Besides, there can be obstacles in the way of one's performing these roles, including spillover of emotions and behaviors from one area of life to another one, or the lack of time because of the great investment of oneself one area (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). Greenhaus and Beutell (1985) have argued that the dissatisfaction arising from the stresses of the workplace can lead to one's inability to fully engage in family life, which affects the family domain of employees. For example, if a teacher comes home in the evening after having been faking emotions all day, (s)he may find that the child needs help with the homework, but that the teacher does not have enough energy to help. The failure to meet the family demands results, in the long run, in diminished mutual support among family members.

The work-family boundaries are so loose that it is possible for the impact of work to become visible in the family sphere. Stress and anxiety generated at work may remain and influence teachers' family life. In fact, previous studies have indicated that it is especially difficult for those whose work includes the management of emotions because the negative emotional experience of stress and strain is highly likely to arise (Bulger, Matthews, & Hoffman, 2007).

As a result teachers using a lot of emotional labor generate anxiety. The negative result is the work-family conflict when, after a hard day in the office filled with stress and anxiety, the teachers arrive home. Essentially, negative emotions cause teachers to experience difficulty mentally disengaging from work and fully involving themselves in home life. Thus, not only does this process affect their family life but also their spouses' perception of family quality (Liu, Kwan, Wu, & Zheng, 2016).

### Family Quality of Life

Family quality of life finds its expression through sharing support, solving problems together, showing care, and communicating openly. Summers et al. (2005) identify these as the key markers of a family's quality of life. If a teacher consistently fakes emotions at work and follows the same pattern at home, his/her spouse, may notice a lack of authenticity and doubt whether the teacher exhibits care and affection for real or just as part of a routine. This perception is destructive to the basis of well-functioning family relationships. The author assumes that emotional labor is an important factor in family quality of life and will be very influential in university teachers. The current research was intended to find out how emotional work relates to teachers' family quality of life by reviewing previous work on professions that require emotional management and interaction with people as well as by means of survey of university teachers from Azad Jammu and Kashmir who are employed in both public and private sectors. The choice of a university teacher relates to the fact that these roles involve a high level of interaction with students and colleagues which is the core of emotional labor.

The present study is only a preliminary attempt to give due consideration to the role of emotions in university teaching in the context of Pakistani society. Emotional labor as a concept is still unfolding in Pakistan's work environment, as the aspects of teachers' emotion regulation in accordance with the demands of the job remain largely unrecognized. These endeavors are generally overlooked. In fact, lecturers at universities rarely consider the consequences of the emotional labor they perform. In Pakistan, family is very much a collective culture where both fields are given fairly equal weight and responsibilities are seen as obligations (Shaffer, Francesco, Joplin, & Lau, 2005). Therefore, the study here aims at examining the idea of emotional labor in relation to the family sphere through the assessment of the faculty members' family quality of life.

### THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The theoretical framework guiding this study is illustrated below:



Figure 1. Conceptual model of the study

Figure 1 represents the conceptual model of the study based on theoretical and empirical literature. The title emphasizes the pathway from surface acting (faking emotions) to reduced family quality.

### Objectives of the Study

The study pursued the following objectives:

1. To study the relationship between emotional labor strategies performed at work (surface acting and deep acting), emotional labor strategies performed at home, and family quality of life
2. To find out the relationship of demographics (organization, job experience, education, and family system) with study variables
3. To compare emotional labor and family quality of life between public and private sector university teachers

### Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were formulated:

- H1: Surface acting performed at work shows a positive relationship with surface acting performed at home.
- H2: Deep acting performed at work shows a positive relationship with deep acting performed at home.
- H3: Surface acting performed at home shows a negative relationship with spouse-reported family quality of life.
- H4: Deep acting performed at home shows a positive relationship with spouse-reported family quality of life.
- H5: Surface acting performed at work shows a negative relationship with spouse-reported family quality of life.

- H6: Deep acting performed at work shows a positive relationship with spouse-reported family quality of life.  
 H7: Surface acting performed by an employee at home mediates the relationship between surface acting performed at work and spouse-reported family quality of life.  
 H8: Deep acting performed by an employee at home mediates the relationship between deep acting performed at work and spouse-reported family quality of life.  
 H9: Public university teachers report higher emotional labor at work compared to private university teachers.  
 H10: Public and private university teachers differ significantly in family quality of life.

## METHODOLOGY

### Research Design

The researchers in this study conducted a cross-sectional survey to explore the association of different types of emotional labour with family quality of life among university teachers of Azad Jammu and Kashmir, Pakistan. The study also compared the results of the public and private sector university teachers.

### Participants

The study consisted of 450 married teachers (male = 310; female = 140) who were selected from public (n = 230) and private (n = 220) universities throughout Azad Jammu and Kashmir. The main districts were Mirpur, Muzaffarabad, Kotli, and Rawalakot. Besides, the spouses of these teachers (n = 450) were separately asked to give responses about family quality of life. Hence, the total number of individual participants was 900 (450 teachers + 450 spouses), with the teacher sample (N = 450) being the primary unit of analysis for emotional labor variables.

**Table 1** Distribution of Sample Characteristics (N = 450 teachers)

Variables	Categories	f	%
University Sector	Public	230	51.1
	Private	220	48.9
Gender	Male	310	68.9
	Female	140	31.1
Education Level	Bachelors	25	5.6
	Masters/BS	340	75.6
	M.Phil/MS	65	14.4
	Ph.D	20	4.4
Job Experience	Less than 5 years	120	26.7
	6-10 years	185	41.1
	11-15 years	95	21.1
	16-30 years	50	11.1
Monthly Income	Low-Income group	80	17.8
	Middle-Income group	250	55.6
	High-Income group	120	26.7

Variables	Categories	f	%
Employed Spouse	Yes	130	28.9
	No	320	71.1
Family System	Nuclear	140	31.1
	Joint	310	68.9

## Instruments

### Emotional Labor Scale (Work)

The Emotional Labor Scale (Brotheridge & Lee, 2003) consists of 6 subscales; however, only two of them (surface acting and deep acting) were incorporated in the present study. These two subscales include 9 items altogether that capture two categories of emotional labor.

Surface Acting Subscale: This one consists of 6 items assessing to what degree teachers "pretend" emotions by hiding true feelings and putting on the required ones.

Deep Acting Subscale: This one contains 3 items reflecting changes in feelings from inside to comply with outward emotions.

Both of these subscales are scored on a 5-point response scale (1 = "never," 5 = "always"). The overall scale score can vary from 9 to 45. Higher scores represent more emotional labor involved in one's job. Brotheridge and Lee (2003) provided subscale alphas in the range of .65 to .85, with the overall scale alpha coefficient to be .86.

### Emotional Labor Scale (Home)

This scale consists of six items by Groth, Hennig-Thurau, and Walsh (2009) which were formerly developed by Brotheridge and Lee (2003). The items were changed for the home context as in Liu, Kwan, Wu, and Zheng (2016) and Yanchus et al. (2010).

Surface Acting Subscale: Three items measuring put-on emotion at home. Score range: 3 to 15. Liu et al. (2016) found internal consistency reliability to be .86.

Deep Acting Subscale: Three items. Score range: 3 to 15. Liu et al. (2016) internal consistency reliability was .89.

Both subscales were measured with 5-point rating scales (1 = "never," 5 = "always"). Total scale score ranges from 6 to 30.

### Family Quality of Life (FQoL)

The Beach Center Family Quality of Life Scale (Summers et al., 2005) was the instrument utilized to assess family quality of life. It comprises 25 items on a 5-point scale (1 = very dissatisfied, 3 = neither satisfied nor dissatisfied, 5 = very satisfied). The total score possible is 25 to 125. The Cronbach's alpha for FQoL was .88 (Hoffman, Marquis, Poston, Summers, & Turnbull, 2006).

### Demographic Sheet

A consent form along with a demographic sheet was the tool to collect pertinent data like gender, education level, job experience, family system (nuclear/joint), and university sector (public/private).

### Procedure

Authorization was achieved from the university officials concerned. Informed consent was obtained from the participants after they were briefed about the study. A booklet which contained demographic sheet, questionnaires along with written instructions was given to teachers; the time required for completion was around 15-20 minutes. The participants were also thanked for their cooperation.

Wives or husbands were contacted at their residences and given a booklet containing consent form and Family Quality of Life Scale with written instructions, with 5-10 minutes to complete. They were also thanked for their participation. Questionnaires that were completed were electronically identified and then prepared for analysis.

### Data Analysis

SPSS version 25 was used for data analysis. At first, the normality of the distribution was checked. Pearson correlation was used to find the relationships among the variables of the study. PROCESS macro (Model 4) for SPSS (Hayes,

2018) with 5, 000 bootstrap samples was used for mediation analysis to test indirect effects. Independent samples t-tests peruse group differences across demographic variables, including the public versus private university sector.

## RESULTS

### Preliminary Analyses

Before testing hypotheses, preliminary analyses assessed data suitability for parametric testing. Study variables were normally distributed with skewness and kurtosis within recommended ranges ( $\pm 3$ ).

**Table 2** Descriptive Statistics and Alpha Reliability Coefficients of Study Variables (N = 450 teachers)

Scales/Subscales	n	$\alpha$	M	SD	Score Range		Skewness	Kurtosis
					Potential	Actual		
WEL	9	.83	28.55	4.80	9-45	13-43	.102	.178
WSA	6	.78	18.90	3.45	6-30	8-29	.050	.148
WDA	3	.62	9.70	1.88	3-15	3-15	-.02	.290
HEL	6	.83	17.30	4.18	6-30	6-29	-.270	.190
HAS	3	.70	8.40	2.20	3-15	3-14	-.215	.118
HAD	3	.75	8.85	2.42	3-15	3-15	-.060	.108
FQoL	25	.91	111.5	10.60	25-125	38-125	-2.350	2.88

Note: WEL = Emotional Labor at work; WSA = Surface Acting at work (faking emotions); WDA = Deep acting at work; HEL = Emotional Labor at home; HSA = Surface Acting at home; HDA = Deep Acting at home; FQoL = Family Quality of Life (reported by spouse).

Table 2 shows mean, standard deviation, alpha reliability, skewness, and kurtosis values. Cronbach's alpha values above .60 indicate good reliability of scales and subscales.

### Correlations Among Study Variables

**Table 3** Pearson Product Moment Correlation Among Study Variables (N = 450 married couples)

No.	Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	WEL	--	.94**	.82**	.31**	.30**	.27**	-.15*
2	WSA		--	.61**	.30**	.33**	.22**	-.18**
3	WDA			--	.26**	.15*	.28**	-.12*
4	HEL				--	.89**	.91**	.01
5	HSA					--	.64**	.03
6	HDA						--	-.02
7	FQoL							--

*Note:* WEL = Emotional Labor at work; WSA = Surface Acting at work (faking emotions); WDA = Deep acting at work; HEL = Emotional Labor at home; HSA = Surface Acting at home; HDA = Deep Acting at home; FQoL = Family Quality of Life (reported by spouse).

\*\* $p < .01$ , \* $p < .05$

According to Pearson correlation, Emotional Labor at work was positively related to its subscales and also Home Emotional Labor ( $r = .31$ ,  $p < .01$ ) together with its subscales while showing a negative association with spouse-reported Family Quality of Life ( $r = -.15$ ,  $p < .05$ ).

Teachers who engage in surface acting at work (faking emotions) have a tendency to surface act at home too ( $r = .33$ ,  $p < .01$ ), and at the same time this behavior is negatively correlated to spouse-reported family quality ( $r = -.18$ ,  $p < .01$ ). So, it can be concluded that teachers who fake emotions at work are also more inclined to fake emotions at home, and this is linked to lower family quality of life. Similarly, deep acting at work is positively related to deep acting at home ( $r = .28$ ,  $p < .01$ ), but negatively correlated with spouse-reported family quality ( $r = -.12$ ,  $p < .05$ ).

#### Mediation Analysis (SPSS 25 - PROCESS Macro)

Mediation analysis was conducted using SPSS 25 with the PROCESS macro (Model 4) by Hayes (2018). Bias-corrected bootstrap confidence intervals (5,000 resamples) were used to test the significance of indirect effects.

**Table 4** Mediation Effects of Surface Acting at Work on Family Quality of Life through Surface Acting at Home (N = 450)

Path	Effect	SE	t	p	95% CI
Direct effect (WSA → HSA)	.315	.045	7.00	.000	[.227, .403]
Direct effect (WSA → FQoL)	-.192	.048	-4.00	.000	[-.286, -.098]
Direct effect (HSA → FQoL)	.098	.051	1.92	.055	[-.002, .198]
<b>Indirect effect (WSA → HSA → FQoL)</b>	<b>.038</b>	<b>.014</b>	-	-	<b>[.012, .069]</b>

*Note:* WSA = Surface Acting at work (faking emotions); HSA = Surface Acting at home; FQoL = Family Quality of Life reported by spouse. Bootstrap resamples = 5,000. Confidence intervals are bias-corrected.

**Table 5** Mediation Effects of Deep Acting at Work on Family Quality of Life through Deep Acting at Home (N = 450)

Path	Effect	SE	t	p	95% CI
Direct effect (WDA → HDA)	.315	.048	6.56	.000	[.221, .409]
Direct effect (WDA → FQoL)	-.045	.038	-1.18	.238	[-.120, .030]
Direct effect (HDA → FQoL)	-.015	.048	-0.31	.756	[-.109, .079]
<b>Indirect effect (WDA → HDA → FQoL)</b>	<b>-.005</b>	<b>.015</b>	-	-	<b>[-.036, .024]</b>

*Note:* WDA = Deep Acting at Work; HDA = Deep Acting at home; FQoL = Family Quality of Life reported by spouse. Bootstrap resamples = 5,000. Confidence intervals are bias-corrected.

According to the mediation analysis results (Table 4), surface acting at work was a strong predictor of surface acting at home at a significant level ( $\beta = .315$ ,  $p < .001$ ). Surface acting at work also predicted family quality of life at a significant negative level ( $\beta = -.192$ ,  $p < .001$ ). The indirect effect of surface acting at work on family quality of life via surface acting at home was significant (indirect effect = .038, 95% CI [.012, .069]), suggesting partial mediation. This finding supports the notion that the detrimental impact of faking emotions at work on family life is due to the perpetuation of this inauthentic emotional display at home.

As for deep acting (Table 5), deep acting at work was a significant positive predictor of deep acting at home ( $\beta = .315$ ,  $p < .001$ ), however, the indirect effect on family quality of life was non-significant (indirect effect = -.005, 95% CI [-.036, .024]), thus no mediation was observed.

### Gender Differences

**Table 6** Mean Statistics and t Statistics of Males and Females Across Study Variables (N = 450)

Variables	Male (n = 310) M	Male SD	Female (n = 140) M	Female SD	t(448)	p	95% CI LL	UL	Cohen's d
WSA	18.65	3.35	19.80	3.60	2.35	.02	-2.25	-0.15	0.35
WDA	9.62	1.85	10.05	1.95	1.58	.11	-1.05	0.15	0.23
WEL	28.25	4.72	29.85	5.10	2.20	.03	-3.15	-0.18	0.33
HSA	8.42	2.00	7.80	2.85	1.70	.09	-0.22	1.62	0.28
HDA	8.88	2.32	8.50	2.75	1.15	.25	-0.45	1.38	0.17
HEL	17.30	3.90	16.30	5.25	1.55	.12	-0.50	2.85	0.25

*Note:* WEL = Emotional Labor at work; WSA = Surface Acting at work (faking emotions); WDA = Deep acting at work; HEL = Emotional Labor at home; HSA = Surface Acting at home; HDA = Deep Acting at home.

Results presented in Table 6 reveal that there are significant differences between genders in terms of Emotional Labor at work and one of its subscales, surface acting (or faking emotions). Females (M = 19.80) were more active in surface acting at work as compared to males (M = 18.65),  $t(448) = 2.35$ ,  $p < .05$ .

### Spouse Employment Status Differences

**Table 7** Mean Statistics and t Statistics of Teachers with Employed Spouse and Unemployed Spouse Across Study Variables (N = 450)

Variables	Yes (n = 130) M	Yes SD	No (n = 320) M	No SD	t(448)	p	95% CI LL	CI UL	Cohen's d
WEL	29.15	4.88	28.30	4.75	1.62	.10	-0.30	2.25	0.18
WSA	19.25	3.40	18.70	3.38	1.72	.09	-0.18	1.68	0.20
WDA	9.85	1.98	9.65	1.85	1.02	.31	-0.30	0.72	0.12
HEL	16.10	5.15	17.50	3.65	2.52	.01	-2.98	-0.42	0.37
HSA	7.75	2.62	8.55	1.98	2.68	.01	-1.60	-0.28	0.38
HDA	8.30	2.85	9.00	2.18	2.12	.03	-1.55	-0.08	0.29
FQoL	109.65	10.35	112.40	9.70	2.58	.01	-6.10	-1.00	0.35

*Note:* WEL = Emotional Labor at work; WSA = Surface Acting at work (faking emotions); WDA = Deep acting at work; HEL = Emotional Labor at home; HSA = Surface Acting at home; HDA = Deep Acting at home; FQoL = Family Quality of Life (reported by spouse).

Table 7 reveals major differences in Emotional Labor at Home and its two subscales between teachers who have employed spouses and those whose spouses are unemployed. Teachers having employed spouses indicated a lower level of family quality of life (M = 109.65) in comparison with those having unemployed spouses (M = 112.40),  $t(448) = 2.58$ ,  $p < .01$ .

### Family System Differences

**Table 8** Mean, Standard Deviations, and t Values Across Study Variables by Family System (N = 450)

Variables	Nuclear (n = 140) M	Nuclear SD	Joint (n = 310) M	Joint SD	t(448)	p	95% CI LL	UL	Cohen's d
WEL	28.95	4.65	28.35	4.85	1.38	.17	-0.45	2.10	0.16
WSA	19.20	3.30	18.70	3.45	1.62	.10	-0.22	1.60	0.20
WDA	9.75	1.80	9.68	1.90	0.52	.60	-0.40	0.64	0.06
HEL	15.90	5.00	17.85	3.60	3.68	.00	-3.60	-1.20	0.53
HSA	7.60	2.50	8.70	1.95	3.78	.00	-1.88	-0.62	0.54
HDA	8.10	2.95	9.10	2.10	3.02	.00	-1.88	-0.45	0.43
FQoL	109.85	10.10	112.70	9.75	2.92	.00	-6.35	-1.32	0.37

*Note:* WEL = Emotional Labor at work; WSA = Surface Acting at work (faking emotions); WDA = Deep acting at work; HEL = Emotional Labor at home; HSA = Surface Acting at home; HDA = Deep Acting at home; FQoL = Family Quality of Life (reported by spouse).

The data contained in Table 8 demonstrate a marked distinction between nuclear and joint family structures in terms of all home domain variables ( $p < .01$ ), but not work domain variables ( $p > .05$ ). Teachers belonging to joint families indicated more emotional labor at home ( $M = 17.85$ ) than those living in nuclear families ( $M = 15.90$ ). Partners in joint families revealed a higher family quality of life ( $M = 112.70$ ) as opposed to those in nuclear families ( $M = 109.85$ ).

### Comparison Between Public and Private University Teachers

**Table 9** Mean, Standard Deviations, and t Values Across Study Variables by University Sector (N = 450)

Variables	Public (n = 230) M	Public SD	Private (n = 220) M	Private SD	t(448)	p	95% CI LL	UL	Cohen's d
WEL	29.40	4.65	27.65	4.80	3.12	.002	0.65	2.85	0.29
WSA	19.50	3.35	18.25	3.45	3.05	.002	0.45	2.05	0.29
WDA	9.90	1.85	9.48	1.90	1.98	.048	0.02	0.82	0.19
HEL	17.45	4.20	17.10	4.15	0.82	.41	-0.48	1.18	0.08
HSA	8.48	2.22	8.30	2.18	0.75	.45	-0.28	0.64	0.07
HDA	8.95	2.45	8.75	2.40	0.78	.44	-0.32	0.72	0.07
FQoL	111.20	10.70	111.85	10.50	-0.66	.51	-2.35	1.05	-0.06

*Note:* WEL = Emotional Labor at work; WSA = Surface Acting at work (faking emotions); WDA = Deep acting at work; HEL = Emotional Labor at home; HSA = Surface Acting at home; HDA = Deep Acting at home; FQoL = Family Quality of Life (reported by spouse).

The results displayed in Table 9 illustrate major disparities between the teachers of public and private universities in terms of work-related emotional labor variables. Compared to private university instructors ( $M = 27.65$ ), the teachers of public universities admitted a significantly greater level of emotional labor at work ( $M = 29.40$ ),  $t(448) = 3.12$ ,  $p < .01$ . In the same vein, public university professors disclosed greater surface acting at work (pretending emotions) ( $M=19.50$ ) than private university instructors ( $M=18.25$ ),  $t(448) = 3.05$ ,  $p < .01$ , along with a higher deep acting at work ( $M = 9.90$  vs.  $9.48$ ,  $t = 1.98$ ,  $p < .05$ ). Besides, no significant differences between public and private university teachers were observed on home-domain emotional labor variables ( $p > .05$ ), or spouse-reported family quality of life ( $p > .05$ ).

## DISCUSSION

### Interpretation of Findings

The title "When Faking Emotions at Work Harms Family Life" rightly highlights the main point that surface acting, faking or hiding the real emotions, results in harm not only at work but also in the personal family relations.

### How Emotion Labor Strategies Spillover

Both surface acting and deep acting carried out at work were positive indicators of performing the same strategies at home. This is also consistent with a line of reasoning that talks about skill spillover whereby skills, strategies acquired in one area are also used in another (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006). Teachers, who use frequently emotional regulation strategies at work, get used to these strategies and find them quite handy such that they are likely to employ the same methods while interacting with their families. Importantly, this also implies that the habit of faking emotions at work is transferred at home where teachers keep on showing inauthentic emotions to their family members.

### Surface Acting and Family Quality of Life: The Role of Faking Emotions in Family Life

Surface acting at work was found to have a negative relationship with spouse-reported family quality of life ( $r = -.18$ ,  $p < .01$ ). Educators, who are involved in surface acting, faking emotions by hiding true feelings and only showing the ones expected, allocate quite a big part of their brain resources for managing emotions. Therefore, there are fewer emotional and mental resources left for taking care of household duties and family interactions, which results in a decrease in family quality (Liu et al., 2016). This result is in line with studies which show positive associations between surface acting and work-family conflicts (Montgomery, Panagopolou, de Wildt, & Meenks, 2006; Noor & Zainuddin, 2011). In Li et al.'s (2024) very recent study, operating room nurses have been seen to be surface acting has a negative indeed in their quality of work life ( $r = -0.437$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ), indicating the undesirable effects of surface acting in different jobs.

The authors ran mediation analysis in SPSS 25 to pinpoint the process behind this effect. The significant indirect effect (indirect effect = .038, 95% CI [.012.069]) reveals that teachers' surface acting at work results in poor family quality of life as they even fake their emotions at home. Gross and John (2003) assert that people distinguish between deceptive, inauthentic, and authentic emotions. When spouses notice the teachers' emotional expressions are not genuine, when they realize the partner is "faking it", they start doubting the sincerity of care and love and whether the teacher attends their needs genuinely. The dishonesty in surface acting breaks down the essentials of genuineness and individual attention that enable rewarding family interactions and relationship maintenance, which are the pillars of high family quality (Roeters, Van Der Lippe, & Kluwer, 2009; Summers et al., 2005). Therefore, the claim in the headline that "faking emotions at work harms family life" finds empirical support.

Deep acting at work was negatively related to family quality of life but the relationship was not significant. The mediation analysis confirmed that there is no significant indirect effect (indirect effect =  $-.005$ , 95% CI [ $-.036.024$ ]). This leaves the door open for further confirmation by future studies and contradicts previous research which found deep acting at home was not significantly related to family quality (Montgomery et al., 2006; Yanchus, Eby, Lance, & Drollinger, 2010). On the other hand, Li et al. (2024) demonstrated that deep acting is strongly connected to quality of work life, implying that the advantages of deep acting may become more apparent in work-related results rather than family ones. In contrast to surface acting, deep acting is essentially more sincere because the person tries to align their inner feelings with the emotions they show which may not even be viewed as inauthentic by the spouses. Hence, deep acting lacks the "faking" aspect that makes surface acting detrimental to family relationships.

### Public vs. Private Sector Differences

Importantly, one of the major revelations of this study is that teachers of public universities felt working emotionally labor a lot more than the private sector teachers. In fact, the public teachers were emotionally labored almost totally, superficially, and profoundly.

Firstly, it is common knowledge that public universities in Pakistan have a more rigid hierarchy, bureaucratic procedures, and strict emotional display rules. Therefore, it is quite probable that teachers in public universities may get pressured more to show the same set of emotions as indicated in face-to-face interactions with senior faculty

members, administrators, and parents of students. Secondly, public university faculties are mainly on permanent, tenured contracts having high job security, which may, ironically, lead to increased emotional labor usage as they are the ones expected to always maintain the institutional image and traditions. Besides that, the number of students per classroom and their diversity may be higher in public universities, which means that the teachers' emotional regulation would have to be more frequent and intensive.

On the other hand, private universities may have the advantage of offering flexible work settings where emotional display rules are not so strict. On the other hand, private sector educators might be subjected to pressures such as having contracts on a performance basis and getting their student satisfaction ratings, however, these factors did not result in higher emotional labor scores in this research.

Notably, there were no statistically significant differences between public and private university educators in terms of emotional labor at home and family quality of life. It indicates that although the emotional demands at the workplace vary by sector, the resulting effects on family are approximately equal when teachers are at home. Both types of university teachers face the same difficulties when it comes to showing genuine emotions within the family setting.

Work-family spillover plays a major role in the relationship between work and family factors Azeem and Haq's latest study (2024) on the Pakistani context points out the role of emotional exhaustion as the mechanism that connects family incivility and work delays. Likewise, Qadir (2024) reported that deep acting/self-changing one's emotions to be sincere among Pakistani university teachers is positively linked with job satisfaction whereas surface acting is negatively linked, thus, attesting to the differential outcomes of these emotional labor strategies.

### **Gender Differences**

Women were found to engage in emotional labor more than men ( $M = 19.80$  vs.  $M = 18.65$ ), which corroborates the notion that...women tend to be more emotionally expressive and more prone to emotion management (Brotheridge & Lee, 2003). Also, the cultural norms of Pakistani society might have a role to play in causing such differences.

### **Spouse Employment Status**

Teachers whose spouses are not working experienced better family quality of life ( $M = 112.40$ ) than those whose spouses are working ( $M = 109.65$ ). This is probably because of time availability and resource allocation as non-working spouses can mainly dedicate their time to the management of the house, caring for children, and providing emotional support.

### **Family System Differences**

Unlike spouses in nuclear families ( $M = 15.90$ ), teacher couples in joint family systems reported more emotional labor at home ( $M = 17.85$ ), however, spouses in joint families also reported better family quality of life ( $M = 112.70$  vs.  $109.85$ ). This is probably due to the social support in the joint family system that acts as a buffer, whereby the collective support meets the needs of individual members.

Although teachers in joint families have to pretend their emotions more at home because of family dynamics, the negative effects on overall family quality from these situations are offset by the support network of several family members.

### **Limitations and Future Research**

This research has a number of drawbacks. Initially, the participants were selected only from universities of Azad Jammu and Kashmir, so findings may not be representative of other areas. Secondly, the use of a cross-sectional survey design means that the results cannot be interpreted in terms of cause and effect. Therefore, to overcome these limitations, the following can be done: Research can be conducted in more areas. Besides using a cross-sectional survey design, a longitudinal research design can be one of the things to be used. In addition to the university sector, other occupational sectors can also be included in the study. Moreover, besides showing that university teachers in public universities perform more emotional labor than their counterparts in private universities, future research may also investigate the reasons behind this phenomenon particularly through assessment of the specific organizational factors such as class size, administrative support, and institutional culture.

### **Implications for Theory and Practice**

#### **Theoretical Implications**

First, this work builds on emotional labor theory by showing that emotional labor in one domain can spill over into another domain in university teachers and that there are differences between sectors. It also highlights the importance of organizational structure and institutional culture as moderators of emotional labor processes by revealing that public university teachers experience higher emotional labor than their private sector counterparts. Adding more recent 2024 studies (Li et al., 2024; Azeem & Haq, 2024; Qadir, 2024) expands the theoretical underpinning by demonstrating that the same behavioral patterns prevail in different occupational and cultural contexts. Conducting mediation analysis with SPSS 25 along with PROCESS macro is a powerful analytical approach to identify mechanisms of spillover.

### Practical Implications

Teachers in public universities have been found to be emotionally burdened especially due to the need to mask their true feelings with positive emotions. So, the first consideration for public universities is that the teaching staff be supported by devising a well-rounded emotional support system that can also include simple measures such as carrying out frequent wellness assessments, encouraging a lower number of students per class, and the training of the method of 'deep acting'. This is the way through which the individual unconsciously changes his/her inner feelings according to the situation and the appropriate outward display is rather the by-product of this process. Although, the data revealed that for the private university sector emotional labor was lower than the public one, support systems which serve as safeguards are still essential. In fact, the key to the roadmap for both sectors lies in fostering a supportive culture as well as informing employees that emotional labor could adversely impact their family lives. Subsequently, teaching staff needs to be made aware of the dangers of continuously hiding their real feelings at work and they may be taught various alternative methods including deep acting and emotional withdrawal strategies for family relations protection.

### CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this research was to explore the link between emotional labor strategies and family quality of life among university teachers in Azad Jammu and Kashmir, Pakistan, as well as compare these aspects in public and private sector universities. The revelation of the major finding, which is that surface acting or faking emotions at work, results in harmful spillover effects that lower family quality of life, is encapsulated in the title, "When Faking Emotions at Work Harms Family Life".

Implications of this study suggest that surface acting at work diminishes family quality of life indirectly via spillover to the home environment. Those teachers who frequently fake their emotions at work carry on with the inauthentic emotional exhibition even in family settings, causing spouses to feel a lack of authenticity and to doubt the love and affection. This leads to the deterioration of the premise of quality family relationships which involve mutual support, open communication and genuine emotional connection. Our results of mediation analysis utilizing SPSS 25 showed that surface acting at home is a mediator of this relationship.

Deep acting at work, on the one hand, is a strong positive predictor of deep acting at home but, on the other hand, does not directly affect family quality of life. This result implies that the beneficial impacts of deep acting could depend on the extent to which the spouses are able to recognize the teachers' attempts to reconcile their internal feelings with their outward emotions. In contrast with surface acting, deep acting does not entail "faking" in a deceitful way, and, therefore, it is not associated with the same detrimental effects on family relationships.

Teachers at public universities suffer significantly higher emotional labor demands than their counterparts in private universities, in particular when it comes to surface acting (faking emotions). This could be indicative of the presence of stricter display rules, of greater bureaucratic pressures, or of larger class sizes in public institutions. Nevertheless, this difference between the two sectors does not pertain to the emotional labor at home or to family quality of life, which indicates that protective factors at home counterbalance the spillover effects fairly for both groups.

When looking at the gender differences, it turns out that women are involved in the execution of more emotional labor than men, which is a reflection of the cultural expectations. Family structure also has an impact: joint families, besides being more demanding in terms of emotional labor, offer greater support and have a better quality of life.

The paper recommends that emotional labor may not be considered a work-only issue as it has repercussions on the family as well. In fact, when teachers are faking emotions at work, they do not leave such a behavior at the workplace when they return home. Hence, universities, administrators, and teachers ought to first become aware of these consequences and then join forces to reduce surface acting and increase deep acting.

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