

## **Linking Personality and Emotional Labor: The Mediating Role of Relationship Conflict and Conflict Management Styles.**

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### **Abstract**

In business organizations, a number of employees with different personalities work together. During their daily interactions with one another, conflicts emerge due to their diverse personalities and personal differences. However, they are somehow required to work together and along with that, are demanded, by the management, to interact nicely with customers and colleagues, which at times may leads them to pretend positive emotions and feelings; hence suffer emotional labor. Emotional labor is a new concept in business research. It is said to be a product of the rapid growth of service industry. It is proven to have detrimental impact upon the employee psychological and physical health and resultantly on their performance. So, emotional labor has become a new challenge for the modern managers and therefore, they are trying to find ways to reduce or eliminate it. The purpose of this study is to empirically test the mediating role of relationship conflict and conflict management styles on the relationship of personality and emotional Labor. In this cross-sectional study, respective data is collected from randomly selected 450 bank managers through self-administered questionnaires. Structural equation modeling technique with AMOS software is used for data analysis. The results show that relationship conflict and conflict management styles fully mediate the relationship between personality and emotional Labor. This study will open new vistas of research by proving that emotional labor can be controlled and reduced by using appropriate conflict management style and by verifying the pivotal role of personality in relation to emotional labor, relationship conflict and the choice of conflict management style.

**Keywords:** personality, emotional Labor, relationship conflict and conflict management styles.

### **1. Introduction**

Globalization has introduced the element of competitiveness in the modern business environment. Everywhere, organizations are striving to become competitive and profitable which ultimately depends upon the positive and productive behavior of their employees.

Business organizations are the places, where different people with different backgrounds, having different personalities with different likes and dislikes, needs and interests, standards and norms, values and moralities etc. are working together. They have to interact with one another for accomplishing their work assignments and therefore, working places become interactive environments, leading to huge interrelationships that spread throughout the organizations (Garcia & Corbett, 2013). Personality clashes and differences in opinions, are observed everywhere in the organizations. All these elements lead to conflicts of different kinds. Consequently, antagonisms, tensions, stereotyping, negative attitudes, frustrations and aggressions have become a routine and inevitable part of the working environments. However, in spite of having all these negative feelings, emotions and conflicts, people have to work together. However, management expects them to behave in a friendly and professional manner with one another in order to have a smooth congenial workplace environment, which will be conducive for employee productivity. Resultantly, the employees try to comply with management demands, sometimes by showing but most of the times, by hiding these conflicts and negative emotions (i.e.) by doing emotional Labor. Researchers have indicated that, in spite of this natural and inevitable presence of conflicts and conflict phenomenon and in spite of the resultant emotional Labor, the relationship between conflict management and emotional Labor has been ignored by the researcher, “the literature on conflict has developed with an almost complete neglect of emotions”, (Nair, 2008), and there is a need for future studies in this direction shall be conducted that should examine not only the relationship between conflict management styles and emotional Labor but also their effect on reducing, eliminating or exacerbating emotional Labor (Bear et al., 2012, Nair, 2008,). This fact inspired the researcher to explore the relationship between conflict management styles and emotional Labor.

The purpose of this study is to empirically test the mediating role of relationship conflict and conflict management styles on the relationship between personality and emotional Labor. The researcher expects that they will fully mediate the relation and will reduce the negative effects of personality on emotional Labor. Structural equation modeling (SEM) technique is used for data analysis. It is thought to be the most suitable technique as it helps, at the same time, to assess “simultaneous causal positioning of variables” as well as also helps in finding out “the measurement error”, and also along with that it provides assistance in assessing “the impact strength of each variable on all others with a precision” (Scarpi, 2006).

## **2. Literature Review and Hypotheses**

Emotions are, an important element of organizational life, as human experience always includes emotions as its permanent and inseparable part. However, in the past, the researchers failed to recognize the role of emotions, in the organizational life but the recent researchers have realized the great importance of emotions if they are managed properly and effectively. The changing economic scenario of the world and the rise of service industry have made emotional Labor an inevitable and essential requisite in most of the professions and it is ever present there, wherever performance of work involves interactions with colleagues and/or customers (Mueller et al., 2013). So, companies are stressing more and more, not only upon the service work but also on the quality of it, for the attainment of the long term-goals (Zapf & Holz, 2006), as the positive attitude, behavior and proper emotional display with the customers and colleagues, have become the indispensable part of the service industry.

Along with it, there came a new realization to the researchers, that not only, ‘on the job performance’ of the employees can be influenced by their emotions, but also “the increasing classification of emotions as a commodity that needs to and can be controlled and regulated by organizations” (Hochschild, 1983). This regulation and controlling of emotions was given the name of emotional Labor by the researchers. Hochschild (1983) defined emotional Labor as, “managing one’s feelings to create a publicly observable facial and bodily display”, and Grandey (2000) defined it as “managing the emotional dissonance experienced when the emotional expression and display rules required, (given by the organization), do not match one’s internal state”. Hochschild (1983) claimed that “what people express may not necessarily be what is truly felt, and what people truly feel, may not be what is expressed and such a mismatch between felt and expressed emotion leads toward emotional Labor”. Further, Hochschild (1983) told that while experiencing emotional Labor an employee either performs surface acting or deep acting, which are the two different emotional Labor strategies having negative or positive effects on employee’s wellbeing respectively. While performing surface acting the employee changes his outward expressions whereas, while doing deep acting the employee changes his inner feelings. According to Hochschild (1983), surface acting is playing havoc with employees by tearing their selves, as a result of having a stark difference between the felt and expressed emotions.

Workers in service industry are paid for and are expected to be nice, polite, and humble with one another and with customers, however, it demands an incessant struggle from the worker, to behave positively, with different types of people whether customers or colleagues. Usually, employees try to follow the display rules and articulate what is appropriate or suitable, and in this way regularly manage their emotions on the work, however, this feigning and confining the emotions will surely have its own cost. Emotional Labor, in fact produces an inner condition in the employees, based upon such feelings and emotions, which are not stable and can bring in negative consequences, like “division between self, true feelings and job-related stress” proven by (Wharton et. al, 1993). Its confirmed outcomes are, “emotional exhaustion, job dissatisfaction and turnover” as revealed by Maslach & Jackson (1981), “reduced job satisfaction” (Yalcin, 2010), “decrements in performance” (Goodwin et. al, 2011), “withdrawal behaviors” (Grandey et. al, 2004), “job burnout” (Ghalandari et. al, 2012), “intentions to quit, high turnover” (Yang et al., 2014), “decreased employee and customer satisfaction” (Koys, 2001) etc. No doubt all this will lead directly to the fall in employee as well as organizational performance.

Emotional Labor is due to the conflict between the felt and expressed emotions, with the customers and/or with the colleagues (Hochschild, 1983). Conflict is also an inherently emotional experience (Bodtker & Jameson, 2001; Jordan & Troth, 2004). As already have been pointed out, wherever people work together, they naturally are get into conflicts. Conflicts appear to be a natural, perennial and inevitable part of the organizational life, (Rahim et al., 2001). Conflicts have their roots in individual, social, organizational and cultural relationships so, are inseparable part of people’s life (Kolb and Putnam, 1992). Conflict is defined as the “disagreement in opinions between people or groups, due to differences in attitudes, beliefs, values or needs. In the business world, differences in such characteristics as work experience, personality, peer group, environment, and situation, all lead to differences in personal attitudes, beliefs, values or needs (Thomas, 2005).”

Conflicts are of different types like, intragroup conflict (conflict within group), intergroup conflict (conflict between groups), inter organizational conflict (conflict between organizations) and relationship conflict or interpersonal conflict (conflict between people). This study deals with relationship conflict among coworkers, as it is unavoidable in any work environment due to differences among individual's attitude, behavior, values, perceptions, ideas, needs, and desires etc. and naturally leads to emotional Labor. Moreover, it is usually created, due to personality differences (Bear et al., 2012). Researchers have pointed out that relationship conflict is prevalent in organizations and has been identified as a major issue for the organizations (Bear et al., 2012). Jehn (1995) defined relationship conflict as, an "interpersonal incompatibility with others at work". De Wit et. al. (2011) in his meta-analysis has pointed out that a lot of previous research has displayed the negative consequences of relationship conflict on employee performance and also the harmful results of undesirable emotions like "anger, irritation, and frustration during relationship conflict".

Researchers have pointed out that the modern organizations are more susceptible to conflicts (Hesketh et al., 2003). "Workplace relationships that consist of conflict, rather than collaboration and support, leave the employees feeling angry, betrayed, frustrated and dismayed" (Bishop, 2004) and make them to hide their emotions while performing their daily work. Besides this, it is also an undeniable fact that, a conflict-free company has never existed and will never exist, as for as, organizations are working with different people having different personalities, so, personality differences, conflicts and resultantly emotional Labor will be the consequences. However, collaborative relationships that resolve conflict through the acceptance, understanding and integration of one another's ideas, needs, and expectations, create a foundation for resolving future conflicts as well as solid working relationships in a more relaxed work environment (Van de Vliert et al., 1995), free from emotional Labor. This poses a great challenge for the modern organizations, to find out a solution to these problems which will ensure a congenial work environment and hence smooth working of the employees that will result in organizational effectiveness and success.

This problem may be resolved, if the root cause (conflict), is controlled, managed or removed in an appropriate way, which will surely lead to reduced or eliminated emotional Labor. Therefore, the need is to make use of conflict management styles, as conflict management reduces the destructive element in conflict and enhances its positive element. For achieving this target, effective managers everywhere, try their level best to manage conflicts (Rahim et al., 2001) because, "when conflict is recognized, acknowledged, and managed in a proper manner, the result will be personal and organizational benefits", (Silverthorne, 2005). This fact inspired the researcher to find out the relevancy and impact of conflict management styles on emotional Labor. The researcher is of the view that after managing the conflicts, the employees will be able to show their genuine emotions and so, there will be no need of feigning, faking or hiding the emotions in interpersonal relationship. Moreover, conflict and cooperation are found in differing degrees in employment relationship. In fact it is a mixture of both these elements. However, these elements can be in varying degrees in different organizations and at differing times. (Marchington & Wilkinson, 2002). By managing or diminishing the conflicts and by enhancing cooperation the emotional Labor can be reduced or diminished. So, this objective can be attained by applying appropriate and suitable conflict management style.

Rahim (2010), defines conflict management as, “designing effective strategies to minimize the dysfunctions of conflict and maximize the constructive functions of conflict in order to enhance learning and effectiveness in an organization”. According to Rahim (2010), if conflict is managed properly it will lead to stimulate innovation, creativity, growth, better decision making and individual and enhanced group performance on the other hand if it is not managed properly it will become dysfunctional and will not lead to any beneficial solution (Whetten et al., 2012) and may cause distrust and suspicion, job stress, burnout, and dissatisfaction, reduced communication, damaged relationships, reduced job performance, organizational commitment and loyalty (Rahim, 2010).

In order to study conflict management, in the present study, the most widely accepted and adopted framework, the five-factor conflict management styles model, given by Rahim in 1983, is used which is based upon dual concern model originally proposed by (Blake and Mouton, 1964 cited in Rahim 1983), based on “high/low concern for self and high/low concern for people”. These five styles are: integrating (marked by “high concern for self and for others”), dominating (involving “high concern for self and low concern for others”), compromising (having “moderate concern for both self and others”), avoiding (having “low concern for self and others”) and obliging (having “low concern for self and high concern for others” (Rahim, 1983).

Besides this, the other inseparable element of business organizations, which is always at the base of every relationship conflict and resultant emotional Labor is personality. Researchers have also acknowledged the pivotal role of personality in relation to emotional Labor and conflict management phenomena. They pointed out that some personality traits lead to emotional Labor (Yalcin, 2010, Yazdani, 2013, Goel et al., 2012, Roberts, 2009) and personality is also considered as one of the major predictors of choice of conflict management styles (Goel et al., 2012). The positive behavior of an employee depends upon the type of personality he has (Goel et al., 2012). Roberts (2009), defines personality as “the comparatively enduring patterns of feelings, thoughts, and behaviors that reflect the propensity to respond in certain ways under certain circumstances.” If the human resource of an organization is productive, the organization will prosper rapidly. Most of the managers assumed that friendliness and good cheer of employees (Bowen et al., 1989) is the basic necessity of their jobs to survive in this competitive environment. People having friendly and cheerful temperament and who are social and talkative, are suitable for those jobs, in which it is a regular practice to have communication with customers and other employees (Smith & Canger, 2004).

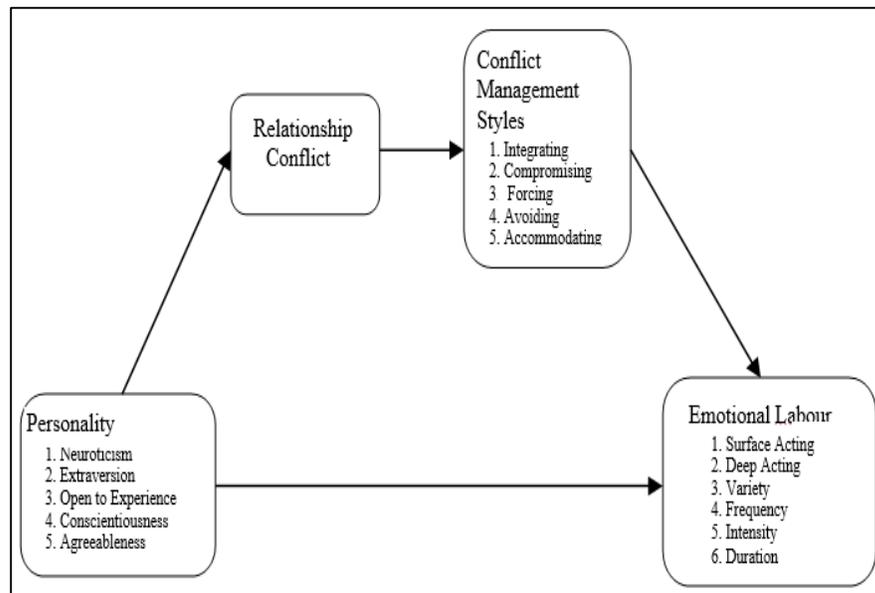
Moreover, these are the personality factors that determine what acting mechanism, (surface acting or deep acting), individuals adopt during service transactions. Individual’s ability not to express their true feelings varies from person to person depending upon their traits. Some people have the quality to pretend or fake emotions easily without taking any stress while others do not have any such quality. So, the personality of the employee has impact upon the employee’s emotional Labor behavior. Emotional Labor is “more interpersonal in nature as the management of emotion is not controlled by technology” (Funder, 2015). So, personality may bear a stronger relationship with emotional Labor behavior. Several new researchers like (Yalcin, 2010; Kiffin-Petersen et al, 2011; Gursoy, Boylu & Avci, 2011; Sohn & Lee, 2012), had recently strengthened this view that personality has an important effect on emotional Labor. Depending upon the above discussion, the researcher expects that,

➤ **H<sub>1</sub>: Personality Has Significant Positive Effect Upon Emotional Labor.**

The study of personality research revealed lot of theories, e.g. psychoanalytic, neo-psychoanalytic, humanistic, behavioral, trait theories etc. However, this study uses widely accepted trait theory for measuring personality. Costa and McCrae (1991) defined personality traits as dimensions of individual differences in tendencies to show consistent and stable patterns of thoughts, feeling, emotions and actions even in different sets of situation and time. Traits are determining tendencies or predisposition to response. Traits never occur in two persons in exactly the same way. They operate in a unique way in each person (Allport, 1961, cited in Pervin, 2001). An individual person may be said to be comprised of a wide range of distinguishing, habitual traits. Personality of an individual consists of the dynamic organization of these traits, which determine how a person adjusts uniquely to his/her environment. This study uses "The Big Five" model (McCrae & John, 1992). The five factors are labeled as neuroticism (sensitive/nervous), extraversion (outgoing/energetic), and openness to experience (inventive/curious), agreeableness (friendly/compassionate), and conscientiousness (efficient /organized).

Based upon the literature review, it can be concluded that, organizations cannot exist without the employees and employees have their own individualities and personalities that will lead to the creation of conflicts, which in its turn will create emotional Labor. So, there is a need that a research shall be conducted, which will explore that what will happen to the relationship between personality and emotional Labor, if relationship conflict which arises due to the differences in personalities is managed by an appropriate and effective conflict management strategy whether it will increase, exacerbate, diminish or decrease emotional Labor. On the basis of above arguments second hypothesis is as follows:

➤ **H<sub>2</sub>: Personality's Effect on Emotional Labor Will Be Reduced by the Mediating Role of Relationship Conflict and Conflict Management Styles**



**Figure 1: Conceptual Framework**

### 3. Methodology

This study has been conducted in banking sector setting. Because of demanding and ever changing work environment, difficult and perplexing work, diversity of interactions and most of all due to a large number of staff, having different personalities, bank settings are more prone to experience conflicts of different kinds.

This study is quantitative in nature. In order to check the proposed conceptual model linking personality (five factor model, antecedent), relationship conflict and conflict management styles (mediators) and emotional Labor (outcome), a predictive non-experimental survey design will be applied. Total number of variables in this cross-sectional study, are four (i.e.) one dependent variable, one independent variable and two mediating variables. Data was collected through self-administered questionnaire. Responses to these items were obtained by using 7 point Likert Scale. Managers were taken as the unit of analysis.

The sample for this study was drawn from the service sector as emotional Labor is found more in the service sector. From the service sector, the banking sector is chosen. The inclusion criteria will be all the three levels of managers i.e. top, middle and lower level managers. Only those banks having more than 400 branches and 4000 employees, with at least twenty years of life and a deposit base of PKR. 300 bin (apprx.) and total assets of PKR 400 bin (apprx.) were selected for this study. The sample was randomly selected from the banks of the city Faisalabad.

Structural equation modeling technique is used for data analysis. Path analysis techniques with maximum likelihood estimation is applied to test the proposed model. It is recommended by the researchers that calculation for the sample size for such testing, should be “based on a minimum of 15 cases per measured variable or indicator” (Bentler & Chou, 1987). As there are almost 17 indicators in the model, a minimum of 255 cases are required. However, sample size of present study is randomly selected 450 employees. 1100 questionnaires are distributed with a return of 487 filled questionnaires (response rate almost 44.2%). The respondents consist of 110 females and 340 males.

### 4. Measures

All of the variables are measured by using well-established scales that have undergone prior psychometric testing. Conflict management style is measured by using the Rahim Organizational Conflict Inventory-II (ROCI-II) (Rahim, 1983), which consists of 28 items measured on a 7-point likert scale that ranges from 1 ‘strongly agree’ to 7 ‘strongly disagree’. Many studies have shown acceptable internal consistency reliabilities for the subscales ranging from 0.68 to 0.90 (Tidd & Friedman, 2002). The criterion validity of this instrument have been validated by lot of the research (Lee, 1990).

Personality is measured by using Big Five Model by John & Srivastava, (1999). This scale comprised of 44 items. A 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1 ‘strongly agree’ to 7 ‘strongly disagree’ is applied. According to Goldberg (1990), lot of research has validated the Big Five personality traits across time, contexts and cultures (McCrae & Costa, 1987). It has a past reliability coefficient alpha value of (.83).

For measuring relationship conflict, a scale developed by Bear et al. (2012) is applied. This scale contains 6 items which are measured on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1 ‘strongly agree’ to 7 ‘strongly disagree’. This scale has items, which are based upon

personality conflicts and conflict behaviors both and focused on employee (e.g., ‘arguments that got personal, personal attacks, offending one another’). The scale exhibited high inter-item past reliability of (.87).

Emotional Labor was measured by using Brotheridge & Lee, 1998 scale, which consists of 14 items measured on a 7-point Likert scale that ranges from 1 ‘Never’ to 7 ‘Always’. The six dimensions of emotional Labor are measured in the workplace, which comprised of “frequency, intensity and variety of emotional display, the duration of interaction, and surface acting and deep acting”. It has a past reliability coefficient alpha value ranging from 0.71 to 0.89 (Brotheridge and Lee, 2002)

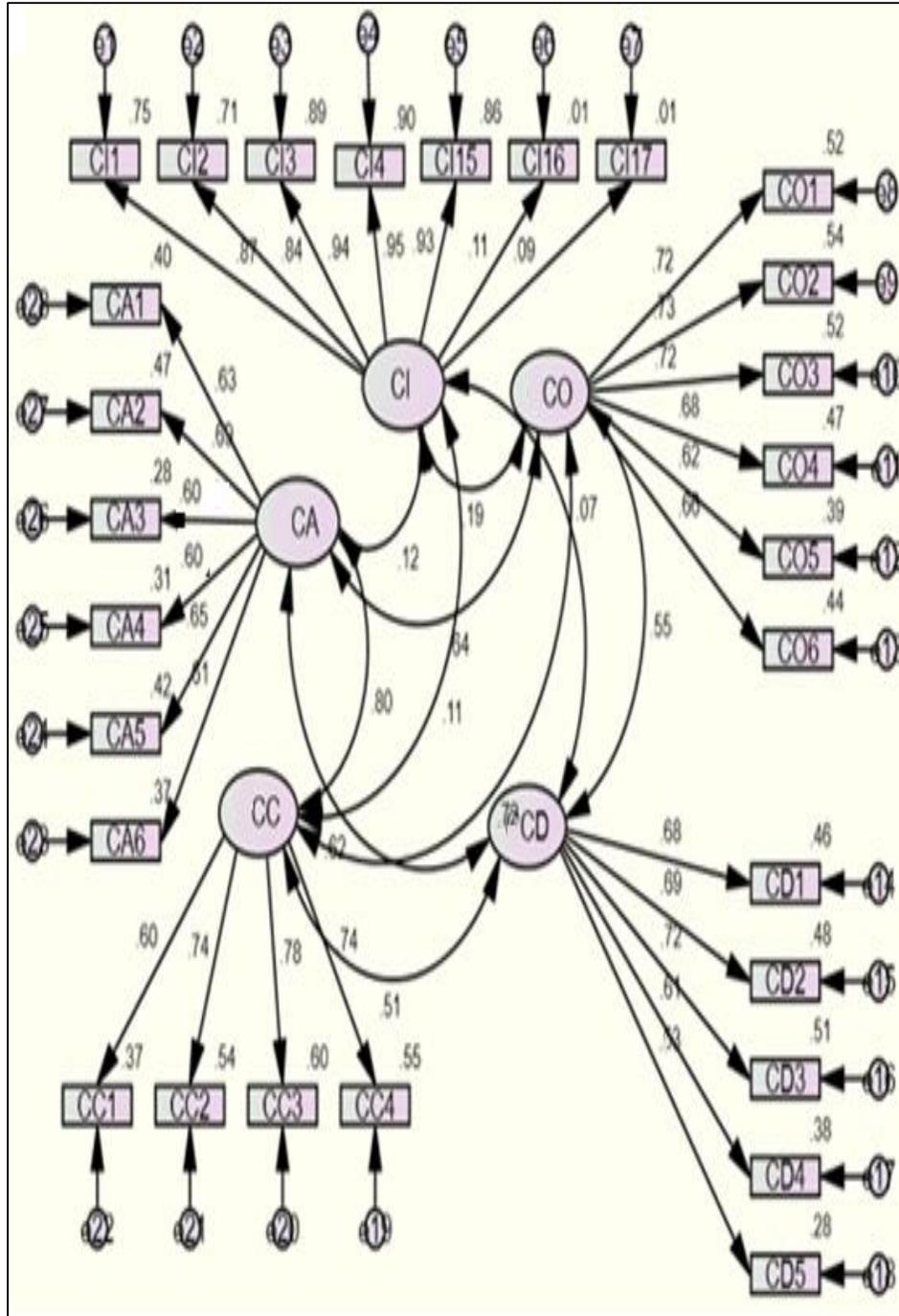
### 5. Data Analysis.

In order to get basic information about the scales and the sample, descriptive statistics (e.g., percentages, means and standard deviations) are calculated.

**Table 1: Sample Description**

Item	Category	n	Percentage	S.D	Mean
Gender	Male	340	75.6	.430	1.24
	Female	110	24.4		
Age	less than 30	177	39.3	.767	1.80
	30 - 40	195	43.3		
	40 - 50	69	15.3		
	Above 50	9	2.0		
Qualification	Bachelors	117	26.0	.589	1.85
	Masters	284	63.1		
	Above Masters	49	10.9		
Marital Status	Married	308	68.4	.465	1.32
	Unmarried	142	31.6		
Managerial Level	Top Level	52	11.6	.556	2.08
	Middle Level	308	68.4		
	Lower Level	90	20.0		
Work Experience	Less than 10 years	243	54.0	.666	1.56
	10-20	163	36.2		
	More than 20	44	9.8		

Structural equation modeling (SEM) analysis technique using AMOS software is applied to examine the strength of the relationships among all variables present in this study as proposed by (Arbuckle, 2005). Structural equation modeling (SEM) uses two-steps procedure based upon the three sub-steps. The two major procedures are, measurement model and structural model testing. Measurement model further comprised of common factor analysis and confirmatory factor analysis, as recommended by Kline (2005) and Mulaik and Millsap (2000). Fit statistics by using multiple indices are applied to analyze an overall fit of both these models.



**Figure 2: Confirmatory Factor Analysis for Conflict Management Style**  
(CFA of all Constructs based upon Pilot Study (N=200))

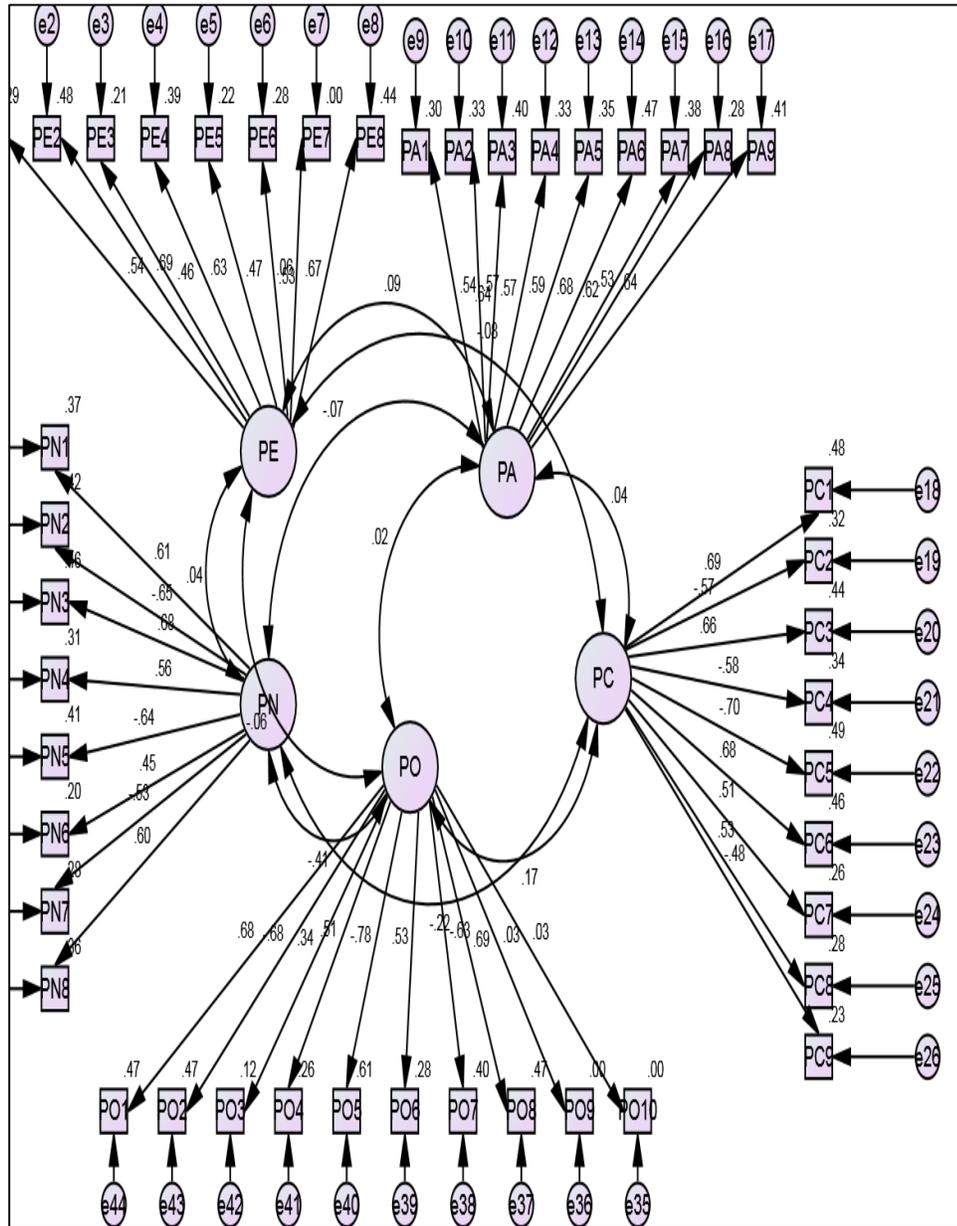


Figure 3: Confirmatory factor analysis for Personality

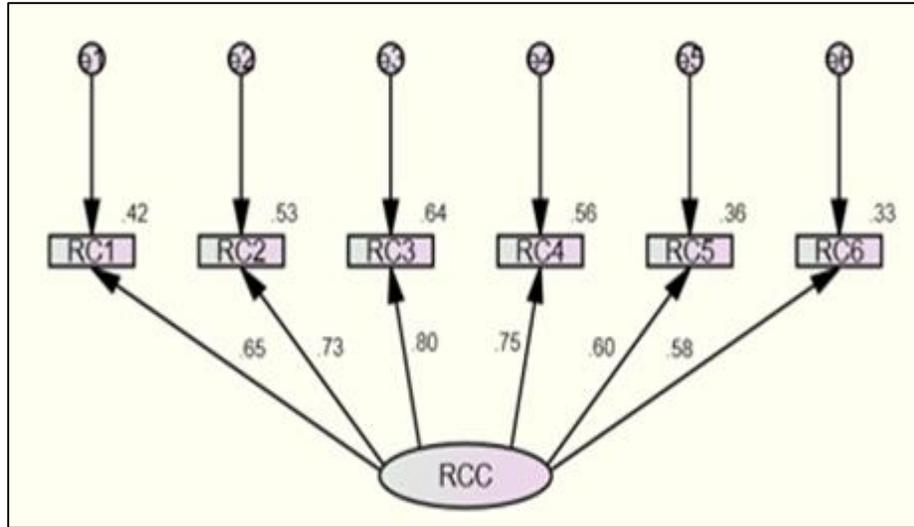


Figure 4: Confirmatory factor analysis for Relationship Conflict

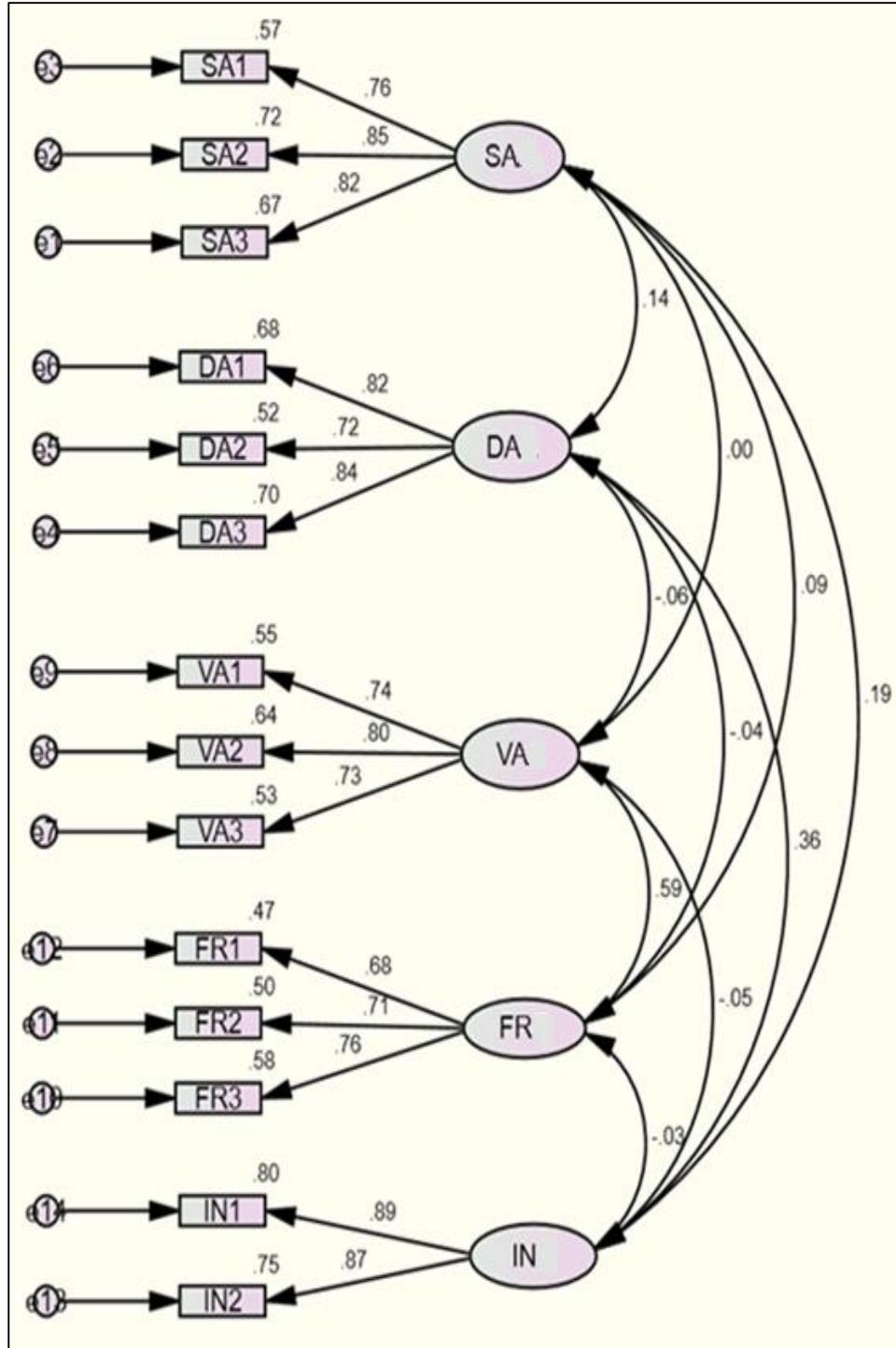


Figure 5: Confirmatory factor analysis for Emotional Labor

**Table 2: Model fitness index**

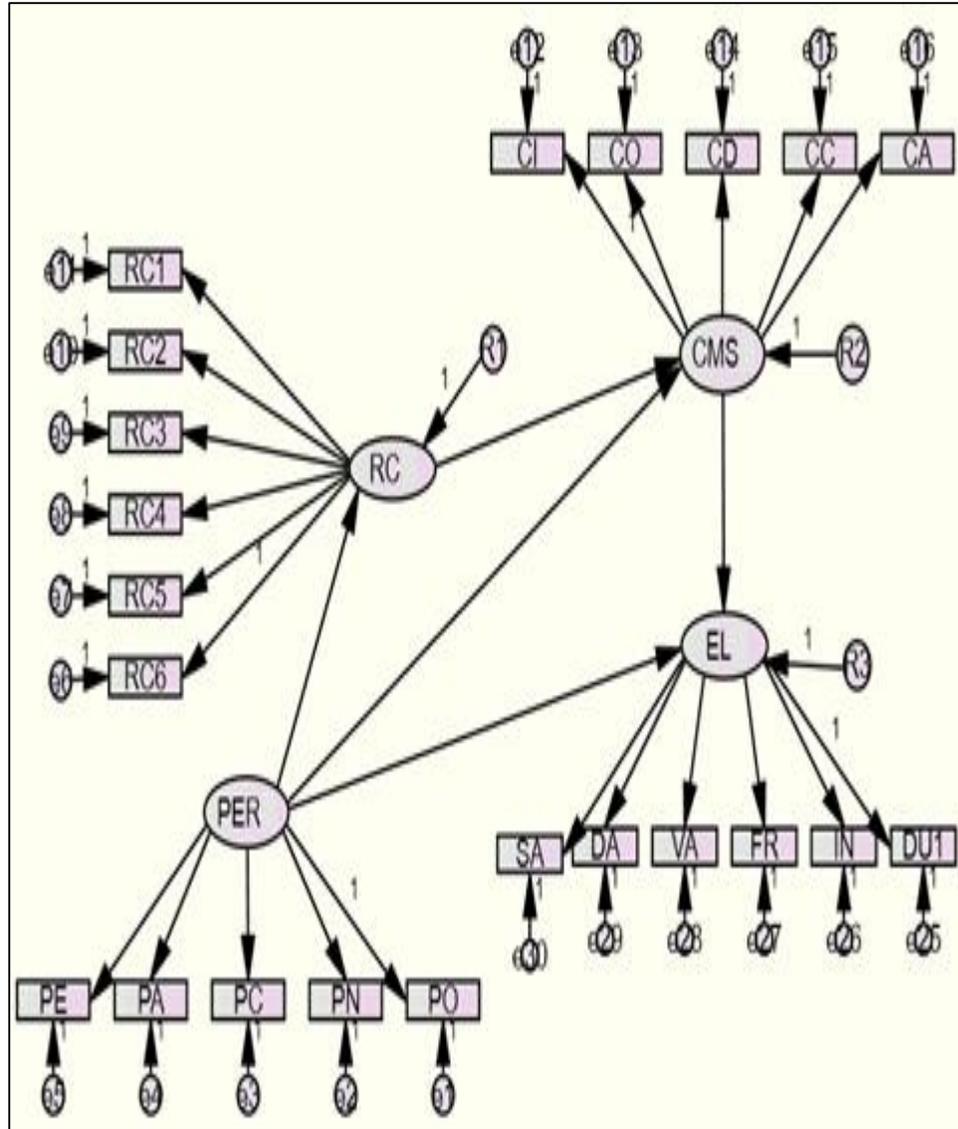
Factors	CMS	EL	RC	PER	Factors	CMS	EL	RC	PER
CMIN	1444.406	69.125	59.193	1446.40	Df	340	67	9	340
Chi-square/df	4.254	1.032	6.577	4.254	p-value	.000	.406	.000	.000
AGFI	.772	.968	.910	.772	GFI	.809	.980	.961	.809
TLI	.821	.999	.913	.821	CFI	.839	.999	.948	.839
RMSEA	.085	.008	.111	.085	RMR	.276	.055	.124	.276

*Note: Personality (PER), Conflict Management Styles (CMS), Relationship Conflict (RC), Emotional Labor (EL)*

In order to test the measurement model, confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) is conducted. It consists of four latent variables, as well as, twenty two observed variables. The measurement model is tested rigorously. The chosen indicators of the four latent variables are tested by a series of CFA based upon maximum likelihood. The path parameter is fixed and the value is set as “1” among the measurement indicators and their corresponding latent variables, with the reason for allowing the correlation among all variables and also for the sake of standardizing the latent variables as suggested by (Kline, 2005).

The examination of the model fit of the initial measurement model reveals that the fit indices are lower than the tolerance level to some extent. On the other hand, the re-specification of the measurement model is done and the analysis of its results revealed good fit. Twelve indicators, which are found to be source of misfit, are deleted, because of having low factor loading, high value of modification indices and high standardized residuals, in the specification search as recommended also by Arnold and Reynolds (2003). A re-examination of the re-specified model with the left-over indicators is done and the fit statistics are analyzed. The estimation of the final measurement model displays a reasonable fitness.

The validity and reliability of the measures found in the final measurement model is assessed. The level of reliability is satisfactory, as the Cronbach’s alpha coefficient as internal consistency predictor ranges between 0.60 and 0.871 and the estimates of composite reliability range between 0.70 and 0.81, so, almost all of these values surpass the recommended threshold of 0.70 as Fornell and Larcker (1981) have recommended. The standardized confirmatory factor loading of all the variables is within the range of 0.527 and 0.948, so surpass the suggested limit of 0.50, as suggested by (Arnold and Reynolds, 2003). The discriminant and convergent validity is evaluated for validity measures estimates. Along with it average variance extracted (AVE), the squared multiple correlations of all the factors are checked. The AVE estimates of all factors almost reach to the threshold of 0.50 as suggested by Fornell and Larcker (1981), whereas, SMCs of all items are within the range of 0.278 and 0.898.



**Figure 6: Structural Model Specification**

The next step is the estimation of the structural model which exhibits reasonable fitness. So, generally, the model fit is good, as displayed in table 3.

**Table 3: Acceptance Criteria and Comparison of Initial Model and Re-specified Final Measurement and Structural Model**

	Fit-Statistics	Ranges and Acceptance Criteria	Initial Model	Re-specified Final Model		
				Measurement Model	Structural Model	Analysis of final Models
<b>1</b>	CMIN /DF	(1.00< CMIN /DF <5.00)	45.161	1.105	1.105	Good fit (improved)
<b>2</b>	GFI	(0.90< GFI <1.00) Best fit: $\geq 0.95$ acceptable: $\geq 0.90$	0.954	0.998	0.998	Good fit (improved)
<b>3</b>	AGFI	(0.80< AGFI <1.00) Best fit: $\geq 0.90$ acceptable: $\geq 0.80$	0.543	0.980	0.980	Good fit (improved)
<b>4</b>	CFI	(0.90< CFI <1.00) Best fit: $\geq 0.95$ acceptable: $\geq 0.90$	0.842	0.999	0.999	Good fit (improved)
<b>5</b>	RMSEA	(0.01< RMSEA <1.00) Best fit: < 0.05 acceptable: 0.06 – 0.08 Poor fit: above 0.10	0.314	0.014	0.014	Good fit (improved)

6	RMR	(0.01 < RMR < 1.00) Best Fit = 0	0.030	0.010	0.010	Good fit (improved)
7	NFI	NFI > 0.90	0.842	0.994	0.994	Good fit (improved)
8	TLI	(0.01 < TLI < 1.00) Best Fit = 0	0.844	0.997	0.997	Good fit (improved)

So, there are no serious issues of misfit as is clear from the results. Therefore, there is no need of adding or eliminating any path. Hence, the hypothesized model's fitness, is achieved.

Hypotheses Testing

The proposed framework is supported by the findings and significant relationships between independent and dependent variables is established under the hypothesis.

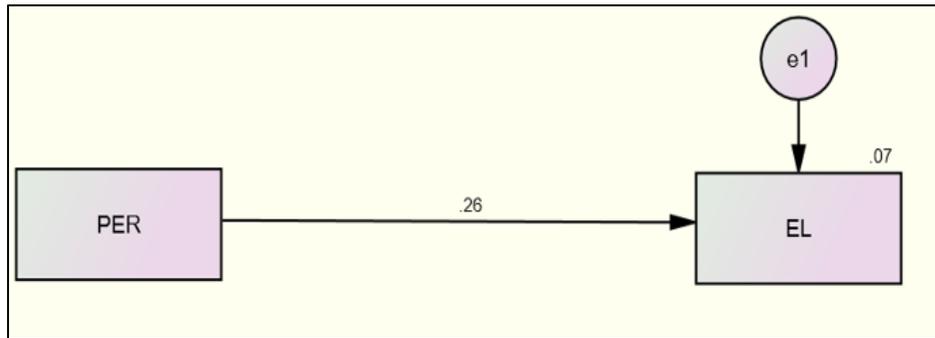


Figure 7: Direct effect of Personality on Emotional Labor

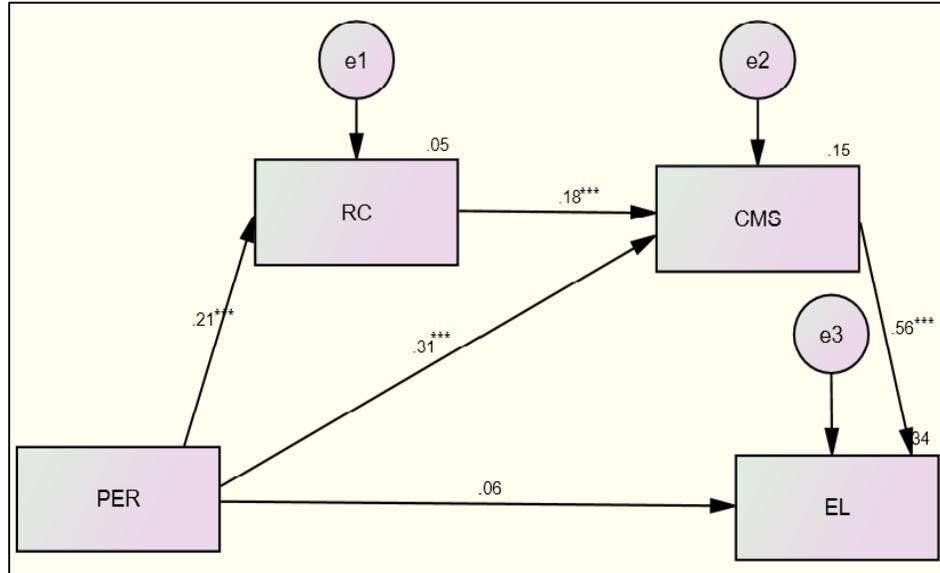
Table 4: Regression Weights: (Direct Effects)

Variables	Estimate	P-Value	Hypothesis Support
Emotional Labor ← Personality	0.257	****	H <sub>1</sub> is Accepted

Figure-3 reveals the direct effect of personality on emotional Labor without the mediating variable which shows a positive and highly significant relationship ( $r = 0.263, p < 0.05$ ), thus providing support to the hypothesis H<sub>1</sub> showing that the emotional Labor depends upon the type of personality one has.

After conducting the first mediation step of investigating the direct relationship, the next is to analyze the mediating effect of relationship conflict and conflict management styles. For analyzing the mediating effect of conflict management styles by applying SEM, the procedure given by Iacobucci et al., (2007), and Hoyle (1995) is applied. In order to get that the direct and indirect paths to be fit simultaneously the SEM analysis was conducted

as outlined above. In this double mediation the coefficient for the paths from personality (IV) to relationship conflict (mediator) and then from relationship conflict (mediator) to conflict management styles (mediator) and then from conflict management styles (mediator) to emotional Labor (DV) were significant, indicating that the full mediation was occurring and further mediation testing could be done.



**Figure 8: Structural Equation Model: Indirect Effects with Mediation**

Note: Personality (PER), Conflict Management Styles (CMS), Relationship Conflict (RC), Emotional Labor (EL)

**Table 5: Regression Weights: Indirect Effects-I**

Variables		Estimate	P-Value	Hypothesis Support
Relationship Conflict	← Personality	0.210	***	
Conflict Management Styles	← Personality	0.310	***	
Conflict Management Styles	← Relationship Conflict	0.180	***	
Emotional Labor	← Conflict Management Styles	0.560	***	
Emotional Labor	← Personality	0.063	.123	H <sub>2</sub> is Accepted

Analysis of the results indicates that personality is positively (0.260) and significantly ( $p < 0.05$ ) related to emotional Labor when relationship conflict and conflict management styles are not included as a mediating variables, however, when they are included then the

regression weights reduce substantially from (0.260 to 0.06) and become insignificant ( $p > 0.05$ ), thus fulfilling (Baron and Kenny, 1986) mediation conditions. It means that personality variable has significant direct effect on emotional Labor but insignificant and negligible indirect effect through full mediation of relationship conflict and conflict management styles; thus supporting hypothesis H<sub>2</sub>.

**Table 6: Comparison of Direct and Indirect Effects**

Variables	Direct Effects		Indirect Effects		Hypothesis Support
	Estimate	P-Value	Estimate	P-Value	
Emotional Labor ← Personality	0.260	***	0.06	0.101	

Direct and indirect effects of personality on emotional Labor are also examined through decomposition tests by using bootstrapping method as recommended by (Preacher and Hayes, 2008). Again, the overall fit of both structural models, w.r.t maximum likelihood and bootstrapping method, is assessed for structural model and measurement model both. Various indices are applied for analyzing fit statistics, however, the results show no difference at all. Moreover, the results of present research find out that direct effects of PER, RC and CMS on EL are significant. Table (7) presents the results of the statistical significance of the indirect effects.

**Table 7: Display of direct, indirect and total effects of emotional Labor**

S. No.	Variables	St. Direct Effects (St. error)	St. Indirect Effects (St. error)	St. Total Effects (St. error)	St. Significance
1	Personality	.024(.070)	.206 (.082)	.230(.100)	.027
2	Relationship Conflict	.000	.115 (.069)	.115(.069)	.081
3	Conflict Management Styles	.662(.060)	.000	.662(.060)	.001

Hoyle (1995) describes the direct effect as the directional relation between two variables. The effect of the independent variable on a dependent variable through a mediating variable is called an indirect effect, whereas, the sum of the direct and indirect effect of an independent variable on the dependent variable is called total effect.

**Table 8: Structural Model Assessment w.r.t Maximum Likelihood and Bootstrapping Method**

Structural Model		Maximum Likelihood		Bootstrapping Method		Bias
Parameters		St. Regression Coefficient	P-Value	St. Regression Coefficient	P-Value	
1	RC ← PER	.214	***	.214	.001	.000
2	CMS ← RC	.185	***	.185	.006	.003
3	CMS ← PER	.307	***	.307	.004	.001
4	EL ← CMS	.562	***	.562	***	.000

Note: Personality (PER), Conflict Management Styles (CMS), Relationship Conflict (RC), Emotional Labor (EL)

**6. Discussion**

This study uncovers interesting associations between a group of variables that researchers have formerly overlooked to study, that is, personality, emotional Labor, conflict management styles and relationship conflict. The main focus of the current study is emotional Labor, its antecedents and the factors influencing it. The researcher tried to explore the unavoidable influence of personality on emotional Labor and also the mediating effect of relationship conflict and conflict management styles on the relationship between personality and emotional Labor. Emotional Labor is proved to have detrimental effects on employee’s psychological and physical health (Hochschild, 1983) as already have been discussed. Generally, emotional Labor is a way, exhibited by the people in certain situations, at work, specifically under demanding situations, during which they try to manage interpersonal relationships. Specially, emotional Labor includes, “suppressing certain experienced emotions and hiding one’s true feelings” (Grandey, 2000) and “a dissonance between one’s internal experience and external expressions. It entails suppression concerning conflict” (De Dreu & Van de Vliert, 1997). However, when conflicts are suppressed or are tried to be ignored (as is done while performing emotional Labor) they prove to be destructive. Because the conflicts which are ignored or suppressed do not disappear rather, they persist and usually get more vigorous, as they continue to simmer underneath and prove to have more negative effects for both parties’ physical and psychological health. So, the need is to manage or remove the major cause (conflict) of the issue. This fact inspired the researcher to find out the effect of conflict management on the relationship between personality and emotional Labor when relationship conflict has appeared. The results of this study prove that conflict management fully mediates this relationship. It means that the bank managers who have relationship conflicts with other bank employees due to their personality differences, although try to work together while posing to have better relationships and trying to behave normally and making effort to paper up the cracks in the relationships, yet, they have to experience emotional Labor and due to all this hard effort they are torn between the felt and expressed emotions. However, the finding of this research indicate, that if on the other hand, instead of putting efforts in the direction of hiding or faking their emotions, which takes a lot of their energies, they

concentrate upon managing their conflict by bringing them to light and solving them with some suitable conflict management style, then surely this will not only improve their relationships and quality of interpersonal transactions rather this will reduce or remove emotional Labor. In this study, conflict management is taken as a mediating variable in the relationship between personality and emotional Labor and because of its mediating effect, the positive and significant relationship of personality with emotional Labor reduced and became insignificant. Up to the knowledge of the researcher this is the first study to explore the relationship among these variables. The results point out that if the managers manage the conflict properly, the personality differences cannot lead to emotional Labor although relationship conflict appear. In this way the findings of this study validate the conflict management theory, which posits that conflict management is a way to lessen the destructive element in the conflict while at the same time enhancing its positive elements (Rahim, 2010). At the same time these findings are also adding to emotional Labor theory by pointing out a solution and a pacifying phenomenon (conflict management) to it, which will help in reducing or diminishing the emotional Labor, the only need is the application of an appropriate conflict management style.

Another interesting finding is that, although conflict management has direct influence on the relationship between personality and emotional Labor, yet personality in itself also has direct effect on the choice of conflict management styles. Therefore, no doubt, personality differences are the major cause of emotional Labor and relationship conflict, but the same personality differences also make managers to choose different conflict management styles depending upon their different personality types. So, it means that an employee's personality is no doubt one of the basic motivator of emotional Labor and relationship conflict yet it is also the major decision maker of the choice of what conflict management style will be chosen for a particular situation to reduce or eliminate or inadvertently even exacerbate emotional Labor. These results point out that employee personality is pivotal to all this phenomena, so depending upon the findings of this research and taking person job fit theory as its basis, it can be safely said that, utmost care should be taken while selecting the employees, because selection of employees with suitable personality types ensures better working relations due to less relationship conflicts, less emotional Labor and the selection of appropriate conflict management styles in case of relationship conflict. So, the business organizations should concentrate more upon devising and developing such testing systems and procedures that will guarantee the selection of only those employees, who have suitable personality types for a particular job. Besides this, these findings also point out, that managers should take utmost care and should keep in mind, the personalities of the employees while devising training programs, so that the effectiveness of the training programs can be enhanced to the fullest and the organizations can get benefit from these programs.

### **7. Conclusion and Implications for Future Research**

There are many ways, in which this research contributes to the current literature. This research adds by exploring and testing a model of personality, relationship conflict, conflict management and emotional Labor, which is derived from a thorough review of literature and which up to the knowledge of the researcher has been overlooked by the extant research. It further adds by studying the application of a planned behavior model, in order to clarify and predict employee's emotional Labor behavior. One of the basic focus of this research is to study the effects of conflict management on emotional Labor which is yet an

unexplored area (Bear et al., 2012, Rutner et al. 2015). This is, as to the knowledge of the researcher, will be the first research to discover an association between conflict management and emotional Labor. The emotional Labor research has studied only the variety of emotional display expectations and also how these expectations influence the workers and lead to emotional Labor. On the other hand, conflict management research has explored different types of conflict, different styles of managing conflict, and antecedents and consequences of conflict and conflict management. Although, conflict is acknowledged as an inherently emotional experience, yet, never were these two concepts studied together. The results of this study revealed that, the two bodies of literature may influence each other. A new relationship is identified in the way one manages emotional Labor. So, the findings of this research will help in understanding the emotional process of employee behavior and in this way help in finding a realistic conceptual framework and also help in understanding the emotional and rational development of it. Although this will not be an in depth finding, yet it will prove to be a first step in mapping the connections between these two theoretical areas and will open new vistas of research for the future researchers.

It contributes to the body of knowledge, available so far on the employee's emotional psychology. In the current study, dispositional influences i.e. personality traits and social influences like relationship conflict and conflict management are revealed to have an important effect on employee's emotional psychology. Besides this, interesting findings are attained about the level of relationship between dispositional influences and emotional Labor. Similarly, social influences are also found to have noteworthy effect on employee's emotional psychology. Therefore, it can be claimed that employee's emotional psychology is significantly get influenced by dispositional and social influences that eventually causes enhanced or reduced emotional Labor.

This study also contributes by revealing that personality has significant direct influence upon relationship conflict, conflict management styles and emotional Labor. So, manager's personality, emotional Labor strategies and conflict management styles are extremely important when s/he is faced with relationship conflict. Therefore, it has important implications for the selection of employees as it makes clear that during interviews and internships, employers need to emphasize and convey the interpersonal requirements of the job. It will help the service organizations by enhancing their understanding about the fact that not all the people are fit for all types of works and make them realize that the process of emotional Labor and personality types of individuals should be considered while assigning jobs and while designing training programs, that can train them and encourage them to practice deep acting while avoiding surface acting. Both mentoring and formal employee orientation programs could assist employees in learning to demonstrate the emotional display requirements. Moreover, managers wishing to encourage employees towards deep acting may do so by promoting the use of appropriate conflict management style.

The findings of this research are obtained from the banks of Pakistan, where collectivistic culture prevails and maintaining interpersonal relationships and securing group interests are more important than the individual's interests, emotions and feelings. All this is quite different from an individualistic society, where the situation is reverse and more attention is given to the individual rather than to the group. In a society like ours, people generally and females specifically are trained by their elders, in such a way that they give more

importance and respect to their elders in their social circle and superiors and colleagues in their business circles and also to the group's rules, norms and values and all this is done by suppressing and sacrificing their own emotions and feelings. They in this way are facing emotional Labor sometimes deliberately and sometimes unknowingly. The findings of the current research indicate, that instead of training them in a way that teaches them suppression of their emotions, which forces them into intrapersonal conflicts, (conflicts within one's self) and eventually to emotional Labor if they learn how to manage and regulate their emotions, they are more likely to become much more productive members of business organizations and the society at large.

Another unique aspect of the present study is that it will be among those few studies that deals with emotional Labor caused by the relationship among coworkers instead of just focusing upon employee-customer relationship, which is found in the most of the previous studies on emotional Labor. Therefore, it contributes to emotional Labor literature by trying to explore emotional Labor from a different angle by studying the point of view of a different class and a relationship that is different from typical employee-customer relationship. So, knowledge about emotional Labor from a HR perspective is attained.

### **8. Limitations**

There are certain limitations of this research. In this empirical research, it is almost impossible to study all the variables affecting emotional Labor behavior, so, this study concentrates only on observing the major effects of the variables of the research-model. The cross sectional nature of this research is also another element which narrows its scope. Moreover, it only analyzes the behaviors of managers and not of all the employees or customers and selected only banks from the service sector and other organizations/institutions are not addressed which narrowed down the scope of this study. If data can be collected from different organizations in the service sectors, it will enhance the generalizability of the findings because of the diversity of sources and also will enlarge the horizon of study of emotional Labor processes, in wide-ranging organizational perspectives, as display rules may differ across organizations. This study is conducted in the banks of Pakistan (collectivistic culture), however its findings may differ, if the same study is repeated with similar settings, in a different country with individualistic culture.

In order to develop a thorough and practical model of emotional Labor, more research is required in this direction. The findings of the current study will help and guide the future researchers to explore the effects of each dimension of conflict management styles and personality upon the different dimensions of emotional Labor. This will help in attaining a deeper understanding of the relationships among these variables. Moreover, the effects of various moderators like gender, age, managerial level, marital status, qualification, work experience etc. should be included, that can add new elements in these findings which may prove very interesting in employee behavior research and may open new and important avenues for exploration. The findings of the current study will serve as a stepping stone which represent that there are certain factors that can be highly effective in regulating emotions and thereby reducing emotional Labor.

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**ANNEXTURE-1**

**Pakistani Banks Included in the Study**

<b>Sr. No</b>	<b>Name of Bank</b>
1	National Bank of Pakistan
2	Habib Bank Limited
3	United Bank Limited
4	MCB Bank Limited
5	Allied Bank Limited
6	Bank Alfalah Limited
7	Standard Chartered Bank (Pakistan) Limited
8	Askari Bank Limited
9	Bank Al-Habib Limited
10	Habib Metropolitan Bank Limited