Effects of emotional labor on leadership identity construction among healthcare hybrid managers

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ABSTRACT

In this longitudinal study, we extend theory on leadership identity construction by integrating the process of emotional labor into leadership identity claims. The study aims to fulfill the gap in the relevant literature about how emotions are managed to gain relational recognition in the process of leadership identity construction, specifically among healthcare hybrid managers who fulfill both clinical and managerial duties. Using random coefficient modeling, effects of deep acting, surface acting, and genuine emotion on the change of leadership identity at the relational level were tested on a sample of 106 manager-employee dyads over three consecutive time points. The results suggest variability in both initial leadership identity and changing rates. Hybrid managers conducting effortful strategies: deep and surface acting, have lower initial leadership identity. However, the effortful strategies help hybrid managers improve their leadership identity over time, while the effortless strategy or genuine emotion negatively interacts with the process of leadership identity construction. Our findings highlight the importance of cognitive attention required in the emotional process of leadership identity construction.

Keywords:

Leadership identity construction; Emotional labor; Hybrid managers; Healthcare

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INTRODUCTION

Recent organizational change across different sectors (e.g. O'Reilly & Reed, 2010) has created hybrid managerial roles with a unique function of bridging between professional and management groups (Llewellyn, 2001). Focusing on the medical profession specifically, the role incumbents, known as hybrid managers (Noordegraaf, 2007), have duties to improve the quality care from within medical professions whilst aligning medical issues with management demands for performance management, accountability and effectiveness (Llewellyn, 2001).

In healthcare organizations, many healthcare professionals have entered a hybrid role, all whilst there are large numbers of vacancies and high turnover rates (Janjua, 2014). Since leadership in healthcare hybrid roles rely on personal influence and relationships at a local level (HSJ, 2015), the frequent change of hybrid managers has put healthcare leadership in jeopardy. One of the main reasons why healthcare organizations have faced a low success-rate of professionals taking on managerial responsibilities is identity conflict caused by the multiple role identities required (Croft, Currie, & Lockett, 2015). Not being able to fulfill role expectations or role identity may trigger negative emotions, disrupting their identity work. The negative emotional experience among hybrid managers could be explained by identity theory (Stets & Burke, 2005), which is the most developed connection between the identity and emotion literature so far. However, there is no further investigation into how these experienced emotions could be managed by these managers to continue performing their leadership work as part of managerial duties. Our main research question is therefore what the role of emotional labor in leadership identity construction is.

Previous qualitative studies have started to conceptualize emotional labor as being used in

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working on identities among individuals with multiple identities (e.g. Clark, Brown, & Hallier, 2009). However, in the line with the original assumption of emotional labor (Hochschild, 1983), the research focus has been mainly on how role occupants manage emotions in response to stereotypical role expectations/identities at a collective level: social identity (Hogg, 2001). The focus has shown two limitations when applied to the situation among hybrid managers: 1) considering employees as a homogenous group of individuals, and 2) considering managers as trained actors – being able to respond to certain situations in the same way.

The study contributes to the literature in two ways. First, by taking the psychological and organizational behavior lenses of emotional labor (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993; Morris & Feldman, 1996; Rafaeli & Sutton, 1987), we integrate emotional labor processes with claiming tactics in the process of leadership identity work (DeRue & Ashford, 2010). Second, drawing on relational identity (Sluss & Ashforth, 2007) to consider relational recognition in leadership identity construction (DeRue & Ashford, 2010), both heterogeneity of employees that affect individual expectations about leaders, and hybrid managers' readiness of acting out the leadership identity are acknowledged. Our main assumption is that professionals who transition into hybrid roles conduct emotional labor to claim leadership identity in the process of identity work. By adopting growth modeling using random coefficient models, we aim to investigate the random effects of different emotional labor strategies on the change of leadership identity among hybrid managers at the relational level over time. In the reminder we review and integrate relevant literature to address the research position and develop our hypotheses. Then, we present and discuss the results. Lastly, we provide practical implications for hybrid managers, study limitations, and suggestions for future research.

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LITERATURE REVIEW

Perspectives on emotional labor

Emotional labor was originally described from the lens of occupational requirements - regulating emotions 1) to express organizationally prescribed emotions to the public, 2) to generate an emotional state in another person, and 3) to comply with employers' control: training and supervision (Hochschild, 1979, 1983). Individuals manage emotional expression in two ways: 'deep acting' (managing inner feelings) and 'surface acting' (managing expression). Since Hochschild's concept built on sociology: considering social effects upon the inner self, a 'persona' or a set of emotion displays is bought by organizations and emotions are transformed into a commodity. This view separates emotion management in the private domain from that in public displays. The emotion management done internally is known as emotion work; whilst that done in public displays is known as emotional labor (Hochschild, 1983).

The overemphasis of the distinction between emotional labor and emotion work is solved by the psychological and organizational behavior views. Morris and Feldman (1996) suggested that intrapsychic processes of regulating inner feelings support visible emotional displays. Therefore, conducting emotional labor has become part of desired work behaviors where individuals express emotion to fulfill role expectations (Rafaeli & Sutton, 1987).

Unlike service work, managers' emotional displays are not explicitly prescribed and controlled by an organization but rather socially accepted as a part of the job role (Bolton & Boyd, 2003). The process of emotional labor is induced by emotionally charged interactions in their role (Heuven, Bakker, Schaufeli, & Huisman, 2006). For example, certain emotional displays are produced to influence employee's attitudes and behaviours in relation to organizational goals

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(Côté, Van Kleef, & Sy, 2013). Thus, the broader perspective of emotional labor offered by organizational behavior and psychology is applicable to managers engaging in leadership.

Emotional labor in managers who engage in leadership

Conducting emotional labor is conceptualized as part of leadership roles (see Ashkanasy & Humphrey, 2011). However, how managers use emotions in their leadership role has been mainly investigated through the outward process of emotional labor (e.g. to catalyze effective leader communication of vision in Venus, Stam & van Knippenberg, 2013). This is also known as impression management: a way through which emotional expressions trigger others' internal emotions (Goffman, 1959; Hochschild, 1983). Especially in uncertain situations, employees pay attention to manager emotional displays to guide their behaviours (Hollander, 1961; Shamir & Howell, 1999). The attention is believed to make explicit emotional contagion occur: employees consciously or unconsciously copy the way managers behave (Hatfield, Cacioppo, & Rapson, 1993). Due to the obligation of being a role model, managers may try to perform emotional labor to benefit employee performance rather than the self (Niven, 2015).

For this reason, the research in the field of emotional labor among managers who engage in leadership still represents the sociology view of emotional where the private domain (the self) is not fully acknowledged. However, the in-house assumption of emotional labor has been challenged by the fact that managers also need to manage their own emotions when managing emotional displays in their leadership work (Ashkanasy & Humphrey, 2011). To acknowledge self-directed or inward emotional labor in manager's private domain, the current study takes on the psychological and organizational behavior lenses to consider both effortful processes of managing emotions (deep and surface acting: Hochschild, 1983) and naturally expressed

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emotions or genuine emotions (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993) as the third form of emotional labor. The perspectives support the idea that managers concurrently conduct emotion work as part of emotional labor to fulfill leadership role expectations. The standpoint taken by this study therefore represents the investment of identity in ongoing role relationships between managers and employees that makes emotional labor between them different from that in one-off relationships with customers.

Emotional labor, leadership, and identity

Ibarra, Wittman, Petriglieri, and Day (2014) considered leadership from the identity perspective in 3 ways: 1) as social categorization (social identity theory: SIT), 2) as a social role (identity theory: IT), and 3) as identity work. Recently, a considerable literature has grown up around conceptualizing emotional labor as identity work: emotional labor is the process in which managers are triggered by emotional experience to work on their identities with cognitive attention (e.g. to fulfill leadership roles). For example, Clark and colleagues (2009) found that managers engaged in identity work by remaining emotionally neutral through emotional detachment and engagement. That is, deep acting is conducted to work on the person's inside (inner feelings), while surface acting is conducted to work on the person's outside (emotional displays). However, those studies (e.g. Cascòn-Pereira & Hallier, 2012) mainly focused on the collective level of self where managers manage their emotions based on group norms to respond to social identity of being a prototypical leader (Hogg, 2001). The depersonalization process in social categorization again undermines identity as a person and emotion management in the private domain. Moreover, multiple role identities possessed by an individual have emerged in previous research on managing emotions during role transition, e.g. among nurse managers

(Croft et al., 2015). For this reason, managers in organizations may not work on their identities toward just one set of role expectations.

To acknowledge both person identities and role identities (as a specific type of social identity), Ashforth's work (2001) proposed the integration of SIT and IT to explain how sincere individuals perform the role when possessing multiple role identities. Individual managers who occupy the same role with the same role identity may choose to act out the role identity differently depending on their person identity. This is where the current study proposes that emotional labor strategies come into play. The interactive influence between person-based and role-based identities has been developed further as a concept of relational identity by Sluss and Ashforth (2007) that focuses on the relational level of self – the extended self in role relationships rather than stereotypes. That is, individual managers choose between deep acting, surface acting, and genuine emotions based on person identities when creating appropriate emotions to fulfill leadership role identities (goal, values, beliefs and interaction styles associated with the role). These emotional labor strategies will then shape the nature of role-relationships or relational identity between managers and individual employee.

According to DeRue and Ashford's (2010) conceptual framework of leadership identity construction, leadership is not only individual internalization of leader and follower identities but also relational recognition through the adoption of reciprocal identities as leader and follower. Therefore, the relational identity process (Sluss & Ashforth, 2007) has become part of leadership identity construction. However, DeRue and Ashford's (2010) framework has failed to consider emotion in claiming-granting behaviors/tactics in social interactions between managers and employees. Even though a recent study (Marchiondo, Myers, & Kopelman, 2015) has attempted to explore leader-follower dynamic interactions at the relational level, empirical work of

emotional labor roles in the process is yet to be fulfilled.

Emotional labor and leadership identity construction among healthcare hybrid managers

To respond to high demands for the quality and reliability of healthcare services, there is a need to extend managerial control over professionals (Noordegraaf, 2011). Getting clinicians involved in management has been considered as a way to improve the quality of care from within the medical profession by aligning medical issues with management demands (Llewellyn, 2001). This has created a specific group of managers, known as 'hybrid managers' who are clinical professionals engaging in managing professional work and staff (Fitzgerald & Ferlie, 2000). As the hybridity in their role, cooperating with their professional colleagues and dealing with non-medical management are essential for them to successfully complete their professional and managerial duties. The competence to influence the clinical performance and unite various roles to maintain credibility in both clinical and managerial groups is therefore the key aspect of leadership among hybrid managers (Witman, Smid, Meurs, & Willems, 2011).

However, emotional experience has become a significant consequence among healthcare professionals taking on managerial responsibilities; different identity demands between being a professional and a manager require hybrid managers to behave inconsistently with their default identity resulting in identity conflict (Croft et al., 2015). Despite their hierarchical position and managerial responsibilities, the inconsistent behaviours may make them sense a loss of influence on their professional colleagues (Ham, Clark, Spurgeon, Dickinson, & Armit, 2011). This could lead to lower quality and efficiency of care within healthcare organizations (Llewellyn, 2001).

In order to cope with identity conflict, an 'emotional transition' is required in the construction of

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new identities (Fineman, 1997; Tee, Paulsen, & Ashkanasy, 2013). Cascón-Pereira and Hallier

(2012) found that the rationalization of previous emotional experience had subsequent effects on

how healthcare hybrid managers engage in leadership. However, there is no investigation into

how hybrid managers manage those experienced emotions in the construction of their leadership

identity.

To make our contributions, the current study aims to investigate effects of different emotional

labor strategies on the change of leadership identity among hybrid managers at the relational

level over time. The concept of relational identity (Sluss & Ashforth, 2007) is drawn on to

consider the relational recognition in the process leadership identity construction (DeRue &

Ashford, 2010). By taking the psychological and organizational behavior lenses of emotional

labor (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993; Morris & Feldman, 1996; Rafaeli & Sutton, 1987), we

integrate conducting emotional labor into claiming tactics in leadership identity work (DeRue &

Ashford, 2010). Based on the integration, the main assumption is established: healthcare

professionals who transition into leadership roles conduct emotional labor to claim leadership

identity in the process of identity work.

The application of the extended literature to explain how individuals with multiple/conflicted

identities manage emotions to construct leadership identity provides threefold advantage to the

current study. Firstly, these concepts allow us to study emotional labor occurs in leadership

identity work at the right level - the interpersonal level (DeRue & Ashford, 2010; Ashkanasy,

2003).

Secondly, due to both clinical and managerial responsibilities, the healthcare hybrid managers in

the study context generally possesses more than one role identity at work (e.g. in Cascòn-Pereira

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& Hallier, 2012; Croft et al., 2015). By shifting the identity focus from social categories to role relationships, the integrated literature supports the assumption that hybrid managers may not engage in identity work toward just one set of role expectations. That is, hybrid managers are not always relationally recognized as a leader; their leadership identity work is not always successful, i.e. when professional identity impinges on the internalization of leadership identity.

Thirdly, at the relational level of self, employees are not considered as a group of homogenous individuals but non-identical individuals with different expectations toward their manager(s). Therefore, when identifying himself/herself as a leader in a role-relationship with a particular employee, individual managers rather estimate the employee's expectations concerning a leader than expectations/norms set by group members. Without explicit emotional display rules among organizational members, interacting with individual employees in the role could be a way hybrid managers implicitly learn about those emotional expectations (also known as contextual display rules: Diefendorff & Richard, 2008).

HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT

Initial levels of leadership identity and emotional labor strategies chosen by hybrid managers

As evidenced in previous research, hybrid managers generally possess at least two role identities: as a leader in their managerial role and as a professional in their clinical role (Cascòn-Pereira & Hallier, 2012; Croft et al., 2015). Thus, the history of claims and grants (DeRue & Ashford, 2010) in their clinical role may have an effect on how they start "trying on" provisional selves (Ibarra, 1999) as a leader during role transitions. That is, the prior history between hybrid managers and individual employees (e.g. as former professional colleagues) may increase the

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propensity of similar claims and grants happened in the current leadership identity work. The need to work on their leadership identity through conducting emotional labor may be triggered by emotional experience of perceiving the identity gap (Stets & Burke, 2005) between who they are as a leader now and who they should be as a leader of individual employees. Therefore, cognitive attention or effort is needed to manage their emotions (Cascòn-Pereira & Hallier, 2012) to claim leadership identity in the role relationship toward each particular employee.

In comparison to genuine emotions, deep and surface acting are an effortful process of working on identities (see the psychology view of emotional labor: Morris & Feldman, 1996) to express appropriate emotions as part of leadership roles (see the organizational behavior view on emotional labor: Rafaeli & Sutton. 1987). For this reason, we assume that hybrid managers, who choose to conduct deep and surface acting, tend to have lower levels of initial leadership identity toward particular employees. On the other hand, given that emotional labor is a way of expressing one's self (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993), it is possible that some hybrid managers may choose the effortless emotional labor strategy: genuine emotions. This could happen when they do not perceive the identity discrepancy or have been clearly accepted as a leader by individual employees. Therefore, this study assumes that hybrid managers, who can naturally express felt emotions, may have higher levels of initial leadership identity toward particular employees.

Different emotional labor strategies and change of leadership identity at the relational level over time

Specifically considering relational recognition in leadership identity construction, relational identity (Sluss & Ashforth, 2007) is the nature of one's role-relationship interactively influenced

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by person-based and role-based identities of managers and employees. Tracking back to Ashforth's work (2001), role identity is goal, values, beliefs, and interaction styles associated with the role or situational relevance. Person identity is personal qualities of role incumbents or actor readiness to act out role identity. Building on these concepts, there are two potential processes in which emotional labor strategies could help hybrid managers close the identity gap: 1) internal (inside person) and 2) external (outside person) processes.

Regarding internal processes, Ashforth and Humphrey (1993) suggested that deep acting makes leadership roles become central to person's sense of self more quickly than surface acting. The process could be explained by role internalization (identity theory: Burke, 1991; Thoits, 1991). Hybrid managers, who conduct deep acting to work on leadership identity, can increasingly see one's self in the leadership role since the strategy alters inner feelings or person's inside. This may make a salient valued person identity consistent with leadership role expectations learnt from socialization with employees. Therefore, the current study assumes that deep acting positively interacts with leadership identity construction over time creating bigger changes in leadership identity among hybrid managers.

On the other hand, external processes are more significant for those hybrid managers who choose to conduct surface acting to construct their leadership identity. The leadership role tends to be considered as a specific type of social category (social identity theory: Taifel & Turner, 1985) by these managers: altering outer emotional displays to comply with group norms to feel a sense of belonging. That is, these hybrid managers engage in the process of depersonalization (Turner, 1987) to fulfill stereotypic expectations of being a leader. The claimed leadership identity may successfully come across and be accepted by some employees who have similar expectations about how their leader should be to the group norms. Nevertheless, at the relational level,

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employees are not just a group of homogeneous individuals; no two individuals are identical (Ashforth, 2001). For this reason, surface acting may still positively interact with leadership identity construction over time but create smaller changes in leadership identity among hybrid managers compared to the effect of deep acting.

As can be seen, both deep and surface acting can take part in the identity process to work on closing the identity gap at the relational level of self. For those hybrid managers who rather genuinely express felt emotions, may start off the process with higher levels of initial leadership identity, but changes in leadership identity over time may be smaller due to different reasons. One possible reason is that the room for leadership identity to grow is smaller, compared to those with low initial leadership identity levels. This may happen among hybrid managers who had been accepted by individual employees as a leader before occupying authorized managerial positions, e.g. becoming leaders by exerting personal power (expert and referent power: French and Raven, 1959). The other possible reason is that some hybrid managers simply ignore or do not pay cognitive attention to working on their leadership identity, evidenced in some nurse managers in the work by Croft and colleagues (2015). Based on these reasons, the study assumes that genuine emotions negatively interact with leadership identity construction over time creating smaller changes in leadership identity among hybrid managers.

> **Hypothesis 1** *Hybrid managers, who conduct deep acting, have lower initial leadership identity but bigger changes in leadership identity over time.*

> **Hypothesis 2** *Hybrid managers, who conduct surface acting, have lower initial leadership identity and smaller changes in leadership identity than deep acting over time.*

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Hypothesis 3 Hybrid managers, who express genuine emotions, have higher initial leadership identity but smaller changes in leadership identity over time.

METHOD

Sample

The recruitment of hybrid managers from 18 participating medical practices followed the inclusion-exclusion criteria. Included were managers with a healthcare professional background, who currently occupy a hybrid role (having both managerial and clinical responsibilities). Those who have been promoted to a managerial position without any clinical practice were excluded. Employees or subordinates of the qualified hybrid managers were also included due to the dyadic characteristic of this study.

After prescreening the sample with the inclusion- exclusion criteria, the sample consisted of 113 manager-employee dyads registered to participate in the study over a period of 4 weeks. However, with the response rate of 93.8%, the final sample was comprised of 106 manager-employee dyads. The hybrid managers were public doctors (61.3%), nurses (23.6%), dentists (9.4%), and physiotherapists (5.7%). The average age was 43.93 years (SD = 7.81), and 52.8% of them were female. The majority of these managers had less than 10 years of managerial experience (65.1%) and less than 5 years of experience as a supervisor of a particular employee (68.9%), but more than 15 years of healthcare professional experience (69.8%).

Procedure

Due to the study focus on the leadership identity construction process, time is significant for manager experience and employee feedback to evolve (Lord & Hall, 2005). That is, time allows

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hybrid managers to bridge between old and new selves (Ibarra, Snook, & Guillen Ramo, 2010).

However, a formal role may or may not become a part of his/her identity over time (Ibarra et al.,

2014). For instance, once healthcare professionals occupy a hybrid managerial role, they may or

may not become relationally recognized by others as a leader. Therefore, a longitudinal research

design was chosen to provide insights into the process (Gershuny, 1998).

During the study period, two versions of paper-based questionnaires (for hybrid managers and for

their employees) were distributed to the participants in non-transparent envelopes every Friday.

For the purpose of protecting participant confidentiality, numeric codes were allocated to each

participant; only the lead researcher had access to the codes. The manager or employee identity

was revealed only in a notepad included in each individual envelope in order to make the

participants aware of whom they were answering the questions in relation to. The notepad was

destroyed immediately after each participant had completed the questionnaire.

The participants privately answered the questions over the weekend before sealing down and

submitting an individual envelope next Monday at the temporary office of the researcher located

at the head office of the 18 medical practices. Filling out the received questionnaires over the

weekend reduced the chance of participants answering the questions due to the presence of

his/her manager or employee. A reminder was sent out via SMS on Monday evening to the

participants who did not submit their completed questionnaire during the day in order to give

them an opportunity to submit it before midday on Tuesday. By doing so, the overlap between

the first, second and third questionnaires was controlled; participant answers represented each

week immediate experience and memory biases were reduced (Beal, 2015). The procedure was

repeated 3 time points during the 4-week period with the questionnaires that measured the same

constructs.

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Measures

Emotional labor strategies   As mentioned, there are 3 emotional labor strategies focused on in this study. Deep acting and surface acting were measured using the scale of Brotheridge and Lee (2003), which consists of 3 items for deep acting and also 3 items for surface acting. Regarding genuine emotion or expression of naturally felt emotion, the scale of Diefendorff, Croyle, and Gosserand (2005) consisting of 3 items was used. These emotional labor scales were administered to hybrid managers in the 3 time points during 4 weeks. We asked the managers to evaluate how often they express their emotions through different strategies toward the particular employee, who was mentioned in the notepad, on a 5-point scale (1 = never and 5 = always). The Cronbach's alpha values were 0.80, 0.82, and 0.72 for deep acting, surface acting, and genuine emotion respectively.

Leadership identity at the relational level   To measure the change of leadership identity in the manager-employee role relationship over time, the relational interdependence self-construal scale (RISC) consisting of 11 items by Cross, Bacon, and Morris (2000) was applied to the context of leader-follower relationships. For instance, "In general, my close relationships (with friends) are an important part of my self-image" was contextualized to "In general, my relationship with the employee is an important part of my self-image". Based on the study objective, the scale operationalized at the appropriate level of measurement – to measure one's identity at the relational level of self (Cross, Bacon, & Morris, 2000). The participating managers were asked to evaluate how each statement represents himself or herself in the leadership relationship with the given employee, on a 7-point scale (1 = strongly disagree with the statement and 7 = strongly agree with the statement). The Cronbach's alpha was 0.88.

Control variables   Even though leadership identity was measured as relational, how leadership identity is granted by individual employees or how those employees claim followership identity could also affect the relational recognition. For this reason, the RISC (Cross et al., 2000) was included in the employee-version questionnaire as a control to assure that initial levels of leadership identity among hybrid managers were related to how hybrid managers chose to manage emotions through effortful or effortless strategies, not just an effect of followership identity in the same role relationship.

Moreover, we included manager self-monitoring and experience as control variables. The revised version of the self-monitoring scale by Lennox and Wolfe (1984) was used. Self-monitoring is consistent patterns of individual differences in being sensitive to others' expressive behaviors and regulating self-presentation by adjusting actions to immediate situational cues (Snyder, 1979; Lennox & Wolfe, 1984). Managers with higher levels of self-monitoring may tend to have more relationship-oriented behaviors, e.g. compromising between their personal needs and employee needs. Therefore, their leadership identity may be more dependent on the relationships with employees. This may be shown as higher levels of leadership identity claimed in the role relationship. Lastly, the prior history of managers and employees can impact leadership identity construction (DeRue and Ashford, 2010). Thus, hybrid manager experiences, namely professional experience, management experience and experience of supervising particular employees, were included to control the effect of historical identity claims and grants between them.

Data analysis

Growth modeling using random coefficient models (RCM) guided by Bliese and Ployhart (2002)

was used to analysis our longitudinal data and test the hypotheses. The guidelines acknowledge nonindependence of observations provided by the same individual in longitudinal research and heterogeneity of different individuals, e.g. different emotional labor strategies chosen by managers in this study, which could affect initial levels and changing rates over time. With the main assumption that hybrid managers conduct different emotional labor strategies affecting the process of leadership identity construction, the RCM allows us to test both intra-manager and inter-manager changes of leadership identity over time. The NLME (Nonlinear and Linear Mixed Effects models) package (Pinheiro & Bates, 2000) was used to estimate the models in the R software for Mac OS X (version 3.3.3). In order to interpret the intercept of leadership identity growth modeling as initial status, code 0, 1, and 2 were used to represent week 1, 2, and 3 respectively.

RESULTS

Table 1 provides the means, standard deviations, and the correlations for all variables in the study. The results showed no significant correlations between emotional labor strategies and leadership identity at the relational level. Concerning the control variables, manager self-monitoring, professional experience, and experience of supervising a particular employee were positively related to leadership identity ($r = .25$, $p <. 01$; $r = .15$, $p < .01$; $r = .14$, $p < .05$, respectively). Based on the steps guided by Bliese and Ployhart (2002), the fixed functions of leadership identity for time were established in level 1, and predictors of random intercepts and slopes were added in level 2 to test our hypotheses.

Insert Table 1 about here

Level 1 analyses: Fixed functions between the variable time and leadership identity

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Insert Table 2 about here

The fixed relation between the variable time and leadership identity was first determined (Model 1, Table 2). The results showed that the linear effect of time was not significant (t = -0.69, p = 0.48). Since there were three time points in our data set, we could estimate two random effects. This allowed us to estimate random effects for the intercept and the slope. However, we could not estimate a random effect for the quadratic term. In other words, we needed to assume that the quadratic parameter was the same for every hybrid manager, which seemed unlikely due to different changing rates assumed for different emotional labor strategies chosen. Moreover, a linear trend could be enough to explain most of the variance in a nonlinear process (Dawes, 1979), which was found in the leadership identity construction process in this study. For these reasons, we decided to test whether there is significant variance between hybrid managers in the intercept and slope of leadership identity over time based on the linear function for time, not the quadratic function for time.

In order to estimate the strength of the nonindependence, the intraclass correlation coefficient (ICC) of the focal outcome – leadership identity at the relational level - was tested. The intercept or between-manager variance was .376 and the residual within-manager variance was .240. Thus, the ICC was .61, which was sufficient for assuming nonindependence of within-manager variance over time and beginning with a random intercept model.

To test between-manager variability in the initial levels of leadership identity, the random intercept term was added (Model 2, Table 2). The ANOVA function was used to contrast

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alternative models based on -2log likelihood difference, which depends on a chi-squared distribution (Bliese & Ployhart, 2002). Comparing Model 1 (the baseline model) to Model 2, the likelihood ratio of 114.45 was significant on the one degree of freedom associated with the fixed versus free intercept (Δ2LL = 114.45, p < .0001). Therefore, Model 2 allowing managers to randomly vary in terms of their initial leadership identity levels fitted the data better than Model 1 with the fixed intercept across individual managers.

Next, to test between-manager variability in the changing rates of leadership identity, the random slope term was added (Model 3, Table 2). Comparing Model 2 to Model 3, the likelihood ratio of 9.11 was significant on the two degrees of freedom associated with the random-slope model improved upon the random-intercept model (Δ2LL = 9.11, p < .05). Thus, Model 3 with random intercept and slopes was the best-fitted model accounting for between-manager difference in leadership identity both at the initial level and in the changing rate. Lastly, autocorrelation and heteroscedasticity was determined. Both models, which controlled for autocorrelation and heteroscedasticity, did not improve the model fits. For this reason, autocorrelation and heteroscedasticity were not controlled in the next analyses.

Level 2 analyses: Random effects of emotional labor on leadership identity over time

As analyzed in level 1, the relationship between leadership identity and time was not significant. However, the level 1 model determined only the form of intra-manager differences in change (leadership identity). Moreover, we found that individual managers differed in terms of their initial levels and changing rates of leadership identity. In level 2 analyses, we therefore examined the forms of inter-manager differences in change: how different emotional labor strategies related to the variability of initial levels (intercept values) and changing rates (different slopes) of

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leadership identity over time. The control variables (followership identity, manager self-monitoring, and manager experiences) are included in level 2 models.

Deep acting   Hypothesis 1 predicts that hybrid managers, who conduct deep acting, have lower initial leadership identity but bigger changes in leadership identity over time. To test the hypothesis, deep acting and the interaction term of time and deep acting were added to the longitudinal model (with intercept and slope variability).

Insert Table 3 about here

The results in Table 3 indicated that hybrid managers showed a decrease in leadership identity over time ($y = -0.35$, $t = -2.50$, $p < .05$). Deep acting was negatively related to initial leadership identity ($y = -0.13$, $t = -1.67$, $p < .1$), and the interaction between time and deep acting was positively related to leadership identity ($y = 0.11$, $t = 2.20$, $p < .05$). Thus, deep acting had a negative effect on initial levels of leadership identity and a positive effect on leadership identity change over time (see Figure 1). Hypothesis 1 is supported.

Insert Figure 1 about here

Surface acting   Hypothesis 2 states that hybrid managers, who conduct surface acting, have lower initial leadership identity and smaller changes in leadership identity than deep acting over time. To test the hypothesis, surface acting and the interaction term of time and surface acting were added to the longitudinal model (with intercept and slope variability).

Insert Table 4 about here

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The results in Table 4 suggested that hybrid managers showed a decrease in leadership identity over time (y = -0.26, t = -2.40, p < .05). Surface acting was negatively related to initial leadership identity (y = -0.15, t = -2.15, p < .05), and the interaction between time and surface acting was positively related to leadership identity (y = 0.10, t = 2.01, p < .05). Therefore, surface acting had a negative effect on initial levels of leadership identity and a positive effect on leadership identity change over time (see Figure 2). Specifically, even though surface acting created a positive impact on leadership identity change, the change was smaller than that created by deep acting. The results support Hypothesis 2.

Insert Figure 2 about here

Genuine emotion   Hypothesis 3 predicted that hybrid managers, who express genuine emotions, have higher initial leadership identity but smaller changes in leadership identity over time. To test this hypothesis, genuine emotion and the interaction term of time and genuine emotion were added to the longitudinal model (with intercept and slope variability).

Insert Table 5 about here

The results in Table 5 showed that hybrid managers had an increase in leadership identity over time (y = 0.27, t = 1.72, p < .1). Genuine emotion was not significantly related to initial leadership identity (y = -0.04, t = -0.62, p = .54). However, the interaction between time and genuine emotion was negatively related to leadership identity (y = - 0.10, t = -2.15, p < .05). That is, genuine emotion had a negative effect on leadership identity development over time (see Figure 3). Hypothesis 3 is partially supported.

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Insert Figure 3 about here

Regarding the control variables, only manager self-monitoring was positively related to initial leadership identity in all level 2 models (y = 0.24; y = 0.25; y = 0.28, p < .01 in Model 4, 5 and 6 respectively). Followership identity, manager's professional experience, and managerial experience were not significantly related to initial levels of leadership identity.

DISCUSSION

To investigate the random effects of different emotional labor strategies on the change of leadership identity among hybrid managers at the relational level over time, the current study adopted growth modeling using RCM (Bliese & Ployhart, 2002) to designate the forms of both intra- and inter-individual differences in change. With the strengths of the method, we were able to capture the variability of initial leadership identity and of changing rates across different time points that was proved to be the impact of different emotional labor strategies conducted by hybrid managers.

Compared to those naturally expressing felt emotions, we found that hybrid managers, who conducted effortful emotional labor strategies (deep and surface acting), had lower levels of initial leadership identity toward particular employees. These results may be due to the fact that effort of working on identities through conducting emotional labor is required by perceived identity discrepancy, which was explained by Stets and Burke (2005) as emotional experience. This is in agreement with what found in the previous qualitative research in doctor managers (Cascòn-Pereira & Hallier, 2012): experienced emotions among hybrid managers during role transitions indicate where cognitive attention is needed.

Focusing on the effortful emotional labor strategies, we found that hybrid managers conducting surface acting had lower levels of initial leadership identity than those conducting deep acting. The results suggest that when more emotional demand is perceived by hybrid managers, they tend to choose surface acting, which is a response-focused strategy requiring less cognitive resources (Grandey, 2000). That is, hybrid managers are more likely to alter just outer emotional displays when perceiving a big gap between who they are and who they should be as a leader in the role relationship with a particular employee. This confirms the influence of person identity or manager's readiness to act out the leadership role identity (Ashforth, 2001; Sluss & Ashforth, 2007). The finding is also similar to one of the leadership identity work techniques used by nurse managers in the previous qualitative study by Croft and colleagues (2015): remaining emotionally detached from leadership identity. This may result in hybrid managers considering managerial responsibilities as mundane and functional while being passionate about professional/clinical duties.

Concerning changing rates of leadership identity over time, we found that deep and surface acting helped hybrid managers in their leadership identity construction as expected. However, the deep acting effect on the changing rate of leadership identity was slightly higher than the surface acting effect. The findings confirm the aforementioned internal and external processes of leadership identity construction: internalization and social categorization with depersonalization. In short, acknowledging the interactive influence between person and role identities of both individuals in the manager-employee role relationship (Sluss & Ashforth, 2007), relational recognition in leadership identity construction does not depend only on how well a manager fulfills stereotypical expectations of being a leader but also how an employee individually sets expectation for his/her leader. Due to the heterogeneity of employees, altering outer emotional

displays to comply with group norms is always a successful strategy to claim leadership identity toward every individual employee.

On the contrary, the effect of genuine emotion on the changing rate of leadership identity was negative. This confirms the assumption that naturally expressing felt emotions is an effortless strategy of emotional labor. Hybrid mangers, who choose this strategy, therefore pay less cognitive attention on identity work leading to the decrease in identity change.

The findings of different changing rates of leadership identity offer some possible explanations as to why hybrid managers end up with different outcomes when taking on managerial responsibilities. As can be seen from Figure 1 and 2 in the results, hybrid managers can experience a successful leadership identity work – an increase in leadership identity over time - by trying on or claiming their leadership self through conducting a certain amount of effortful emotional labor strategies. This could be used to explain those who desire to remain in management.

On the other hand, for those who wish to return to full-clinical roles, there are two possible explanations. One is that they may "try on" provisional selves as a leader with low levels of effortful emotional labor strategies that could not reach the point of making the role internalized and/or making themselves categorized as a leader (see Figure 1 and 2). This may also combine with some consequences from conducting deep and surface acting. For example, individual stress may be increased from the dissonance between expressions and inner feelings when performing surface acting (Grandey, 2003) and from more cognitive resources required in reappraising emotional events when performing deep acting (Richards& Gross, 2000). The other possible explanation is that there is no effort being made in the process of identity construction. As can be

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seen from Figure 3, without cognitive attention, genuine emotion can reduce the chance that

hybrid managers can develop leadership identity. This does not mean that the identity gap of

them seeing themselves and being seen as a leader is not closed. Due to professional-leader

identity conflict perceived by some hybrid managers, these managers may simply avoid acting as

a leader to maintain group influences among professional colleagues. Therefore, they may prefer

to be seen by others as professionals rather than leaders.

Overall, the study findings answer our main research question: what is the role of emotional labor

in leadership identity work at the interpersonal level? The interdisciplinary nature of this research

in linking three important research fields: leadership, identity, and emotional labor, has been

challenging. By bridging the gap between emotional labor and identity work literature, and

drawing implications for hybrid managers, our findings offer significant contributions to

leadership identity construction literature by providing some insight into the emotional aspect.

Even though some previous qualitative research has started conceptualizing emotional labor as a

way of working on identities (e.g. Clark et al., 2009; Coupland, Brown, Daniels, & Humphreys,

2008), the current study goes further than those studies. First, the study provides the quantitative

evidence from the leadership context to confirm the idea that identity work can be conducted in

the form of emotional labor. Second, this study focuses on relational self in leadership identity

construction to acknowledge both person and role identities rather than consider leadership as a

social category. The focus provides suitable theoretical support for our unique sample: hybrid

managers who possess multiple role identities. Both managers' readiness of acting out the

leadership role and heterogeneity of individual employees are considered in the process.

Practical implications

To align professional and management demands in healthcare organization, it is increasingly important for hybrid managers to unite various roles and maintain creditability in both professional and managerial groups (Kitchener, 2000; Llewellyn, 2001; Witman et al., 2011). Our study findings have shown that not every professional manager, who officially occupies a hybrid role, can successfully manage their emotions to construct leadership identity toward given employees. Since individual employees have different expectations about how his/her leader should behave, the way that hybrid managers learn to behave according to those expectations should be more thorough the socialization process with particular employees whom they are working with rather than classroom lectures or online assignments. By doing so, hybrid managers may gain more understanding about emotion management in building manager- employee role relationships at a local level. For example, more cognitive attention is paid to work on their emotions when they perform leadership work. This could improve a chance of them being relationally recognized as a leader and subsequently increase a success rate of healthcare professionals taking on managerial responsibilities. Furthermore, hybrid managers with an understanding about the existence of emotions in the workplace are less likely to just hide/suppress unwanted emotions. This may help to reduce their stress leading to improved well-being in general.

Limitations and suggestions for future research

One limitation of this study is the fact that there were observations from only 3 different time points. This limited our opportunity to analyze random quadratic effect that needs observations from at least 4 time points. Therefore, to capture possible variability in identity fluctuation during

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the construction process, quadratic growth modeling using RCM could be applied in future studies.

Secondly, although this study could capture the identity change in level 2 analyses, and the variability of initial leadership identity and changing rates in the construction process across different individual managers, there is no significant change of leadership identity found within individual managers (see level 1 analyses). This may be due to a matter of time. Previous research, e.g. Smith, Amiot, Smith, Callan, and Terry (2013), suggested that the process of individuals adopting new identity could take over 6 months. Therefore, future longitudinal research could be conducted over a 6-month period to capture the identity change within persons.

Lastly, the study was conducted in the unique sample – hybrid managers in healthcare organization. Even though the results provide insight into how emotional labor could play significant roles in their leadership identity construction, the appliance of these findings might be limited to hybrid managers with an alternate professional background. Since the majority of our sample was public doctors, we could not compare the identity construction process between different healthcare professional groups. We encourage future research to do so, and to further study the process in different groups of professionals (e.g. engineer managers and IT managers) as well as managers in general.

CONCLUSION

Emotional labor has been conceptualized as part of identity work among individuals who possess multiple identities. Hitherto, there has not been a study quantitatively investigating the effect of emotional labor in the process of identity construction, especially in the leadership context. Our study therefore integrates the emotional labor process into claiming tactics in leadership identity

construction. With the sample of hybrid managers in healthcare organizations, this study provides

valuable findings to prove the benefits of conducting emotional labor – paying cognitive attention

to emotions when constructing leadership identity in role relationships with individual

employees.

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TABLE 1

Means, Standard Deviations (SD), and Correlations for All Variables

	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. Time	1.00	0.82									
2. Manager self monitoring	3.22	0.55	.07								
3. Professional experience	19.77	8.82	.00	.20**							
4. Managerial experience	10.62	8.47	.00	.28**	.71**						
5. Experience of supervising particular employees	4.76	4.2	.00	-.02	.40**	.27**					
6. Leadership identity at the relational level	4.83	0.78	-.04	.25**	.15**	.11	.14*				
7. Followership identity at the relational level	5.00	0.9	-.14*	-.04	.01	-.10	.14*	.12*			
8. Deep acting	2.66	0.75	-.07	.01	-.11	-.13*	.01	.07	-.06		
9. Surface acting	2.12	0.82	-.08	.00	.01	.11*	.03	-.05	-.07	.60**	
10. Genuine emotion	3.53	0.86	-.14*	.10	-.08	-.15**	-.00	.03	.28**	.01	-.02

n = 106 manager-employee pairs, **p < .01, *p < .05

TABLE 2

Results of Fixed Function for Time (Model 1) and of Fitting Random Coefficient Models to Leadership Identity (Model 2 and 3)

Parameter	**Model 1:** Linear function for time			**Model 2:** Random intercept			**Model 3:** Random intercept and slopes		
Fixed effect	*Estimate*	*SE*	*t*	*Estimate*	*SE*	*t*	*Estimate*	*SE*	*t*
Intercept	4.87***	0.07	70.00	4.87***	0.07	66.02	4.87***	0.08	61.29
Time	-0.037	0.05	-0.69	-0.037	0.03	-1.11	-0.037	0.04	-0.98
Goodness of fit									
log-likelihood	-377.22			-320.00			-315.44		
AIC	760.44			647.99			642.89		
BIC	771.71			663.02			665.42		

n = 106 hybrid managers, *** p < 0.001

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TABLE 3
Relationship between Deep Acting and Leadership Identity Intercept and Slope

Predictor	Model 4		
Fixed effects	*Estimate*	*SE*	*t*
Intercept	4.29****	0.44	9.87
Time	-0.35**	0.14	-2.50
Followership identity	-0.02	0.05	-0.49
Manager self-monitoring	0.24***	0.09	2.79
Professional experience	0.01	0.01	1.15
Managerial experience	-0.00	0.01	-0.27
Experience of supervising particular employees	0.02	0.02	1.01
Deep acting	-0.13*	0.08	-1.67
Time x Deep acting	0.11**	0.05	2.20
Goodness of fit			
log-likelihood	- 324.93		
AIC	675.86		
BIC	724.39		

n = 106 manager-employee pairs, ****$p < 0.001$, ***$p < .01$, **$p < .05$, *$p < .1$

TABLE 4
Relationship between Surface Acting and Leadership Identity Intercept and Slope

Predictor	Model 5		
Fixed effects	*Estimate*	*SE*	*t*
Intercept	4.29****	0.42	10.26
Time	-0.26**	0.11	-2.40
Followership identity	-0.03	0.05	-0.55
Manager self-monitoring	0.25***	0.09	2.92
Professional experience	0.01	0.01	0.99
Managerial experience	-0.00	0.01	-0.22
Experience of supervising particular employees	0.02	0.02	1.07
Surface acting	-0.15**	0.07	-2.15
Time x Surface acting	0.10**	0.05	2.01
Goodness of fit			
log-likelihood	- 324.92		
AIC	675.85		
BIC	724.38		

n = 106 manager-employee pairs, ****$p < 0.001$, ***$p < .01$, **$p < .05$, *$p < .1$

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TABLE 5

Relationship between Genuine Emotion and Leadership Identity Intercept and Slope

Predictor	Model 6		
Fixed effects	*Estimate*	*SE*	*t*
Intercept	3.56****	0.44	8.06
Time	0.27*	0.16	1.72
Followership identity	0.01	0.05	0.17
Manager self-monitoring	0.28***	0.09	3.23
Professional experience	0.01	0.01	1.10
Managerial experience	-0.00	0.01	-0.46
Experience of supervising particular employees	0.02	0.02	1.05
Genuine emotion	-0.04	0.07	0.62
Time x Genuine emotion	-0.10**	0.04	-2.15
Goodness of fit			
log-likelihood	- 324.77		
AIC	675.55		
BIC	724.10		

n = 106 manager-employee pairs, ****p < 0.001, ***p < .01, **p < .05, *p < .1

FIGURE 1

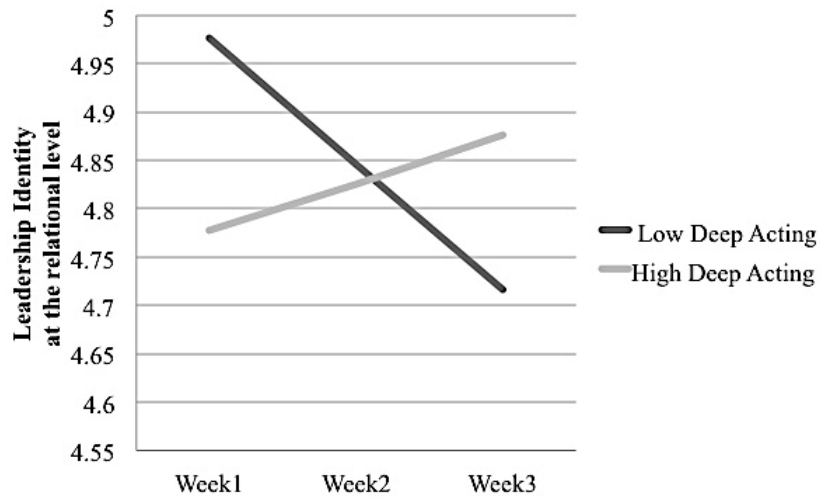Interaction between Deep Acting and Leadership Identity Intercept and Slope

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FIGURE 2
Interaction between Surface Acting and Leadership Identity Intercept and Slope

FIGURE 3
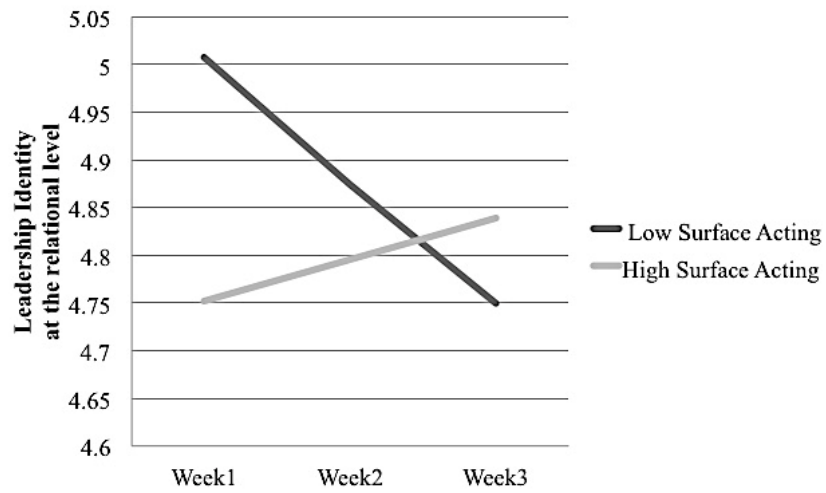Interaction between Genuine Emotion and Leadership Identity Intercept and Slope