

# The Relationship between Perceived Corporate Social Responsibility and Emotional Labor: A Literature Review Study

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## Abstract

Emotional labor holds significant importance in contemporary work environments, encompassing the processes through which employees manage and express emotions in the workplace. It plays a crucial role in maintaining client relations, enhancing job efficiency, and shaping organizational image. Emotional labor not only influences individual work experiences and well-being but is also directly linked to organizational success. This study aims to explore the relationship between perceived corporate social responsibility (CSR) and emotional labor through a comprehensive review of existing literature. Research findings suggest that employees' perception of CSR may impact their emotional labor, wherein positive perceptions of both internal and external CSR practices by the organization may reduce surface-level emotional labor behaviors and increase deep-level emotional labor behaviors among employees. Understanding this relationship contributes to a deeper comprehension of the interactive dynamics between employees' emotional experiences at work and their perception of corporate social responsibility.

**Keywords:** Emotional Labor, Corporate Social Responsibility, Organizational Success, Employee Perception, Workplace Dynamics.

**Research Background**

Based on the research by Riforgiate et al (2022), employees across various professions engage in emotional labor when they perceive the need for specific types of emotional communication to align with organizational expectations (Riforgiate, 2022). This underscores the significance of emotional labor as an integral aspect of the modern workplace, spanning millions of job positions, particularly in fields resistant to automation such as healthcare, social services, and education. The study highlights emotional labor as a tangible and energy-consuming endeavor often overlooked due to its marginalized and invisible nature, making it challenging to observe or quantify. The societal disregard for the value of emotions has negative implications for all individuals. Prolonged, high-intensity emotional labor, instances of violence from patients and family members, and humanitarian challenges can lead to emotional exhaustion and fatigue among employees, posing a threat to their mental and physical well-being (Ntim et al., 2023). This, in turn, diminishes employees' personal sense of achievement, reduces professional commitment, and contributes to an increase in turnover rates (A. Wang et al., 2023). Consequently, it is imperative to prioritize and protect employees' emotional labor, as it represents a global challenge that demands urgent attention.

Employee perception of corporate social responsibility (CSR) refers to their impression that the company is committed to actions extending beyond profit, encompassing efforts to assist both the organization and society as a whole (Cheema et al., 2020; Schaefer et al., 2020). In practical settings, discrepancies exist between employees' perceived CSR and a company's objective CSR practices due to information asymmetry, environmental influences, CSR attribution, individual cognition, and emotional differences. What truly influences employees' attitudes and behaviors is the CSR behavior undertaken by the company and perceived by the employees. The actions a company takes towards stakeholders objectively will not impact employee behavior and attitudes if employees do not genuinely perceive them (Turker, 2009). Therefore, in researching the relationship between corporate social responsibility and employee emotional labor behavior variables, it is crucial to focus on employees' perceived corporate social responsibility.

This study focuses on investigating the impact of perceived corporate social responsibility on employee emotional labor. We systematically collected, analyzed, and summarized existing research from the perspective of perceived corporate social responsibility, exploring its influence on employee emotional labor. Our aim is to address current research gaps and provide targeted directions for future studies, delving into this new perspective to deepen our understanding of the role of perceived corporate social responsibility in shaping employee emotional labor. Through this research, our goal is to offer organizations more specific and practical management recommendations while contributing to the academic understanding of the relationship between employees' perception of corporate social responsibility and emotional labor. This endeavor will assist in formulating more effective employee management strategies, enhancing employee loyalty, and ultimately promoting the long-term stability and sustainable development of organizations. We employ a systematic literature review approach to identify research gaps and potential mechanisms, proposing an agenda for future research. Guided by these fundamental principles, this study is committed to exploring the following research questions:

Main Research Question

Does perceived corporate social responsibility have a significant relationship with employee emotional labor?

Does organizational identification mediate the relationship between perceived corporate social responsibility and emotional labor?

Research Methodology

This study employs the Systematic Literature Review (SLR) method to address specific research questions. SLR emphasizes a rigorous and transparent scientific process to ensure that other researchers can replicate the results. In recent years, SLR has gained attention and recognition among scholars in the business and management fields (McGuire, 2021; Dangelico & Vocalelli, 2017). Following the SLR process recommended by Tranfield et al. (2003), we conducted searches and collected relevant secondary data from databases such as Scopus, Web of Science, and Google Scholar, aligning with previous research methodologies.

Literature review results closely related to our research topic have been summarized in the grid chart presented below. This grid chart aims to showcase and integrate key findings from prior studies, providing readers with a clear overview of the research.

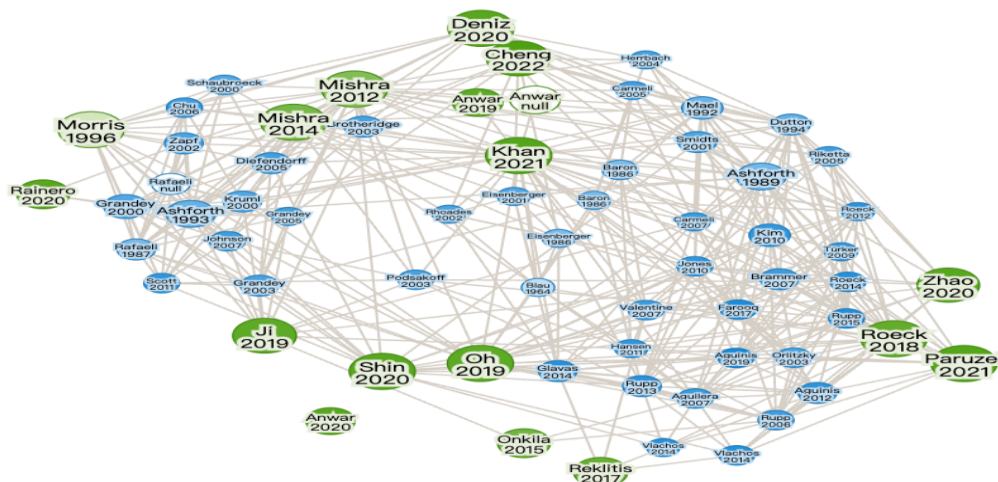


Figure 1.1: Academic Network Diagram of perceived corporate social responsibility and emotional labor research.

Source: Research Rabbit (2023)

This study examined the association between perceived corporate social responsibility and employee emotional labor using literature from the last 20 years.

After doing an initial search, items irrelevant to the research issue or focused on emotions and emotional intelligence were removed.

This review includes a total of 15 papers that met the criteria.

These papers formed a collection of relevant variables that were all published in business journals throughout the last two decades.

There were no regional limits in the literature search for this study.

Table 5-1

*Overview of perceived corporate social responsibility and emotional labor*

Item	Publication Year	Author	Title
1	2012	Mishra & Sushanta Kumar	Linkage between perceived external prestige and emotional labor: Mediation effect of organizational identification among pharmaceutical representatives in India
2	2014	Kumar Mishra & Sushanta	Linking perceived organizational support to emotional labor
3	2015	Onkila & Tiina	Pride or Embarrassment? Employees' Emotions and Corporate Social Responsibility
4	2019	Ji & Jan	The Impact of Perceived Corporate Social Responsibility on Frontline Employee's Emotional Labor Strategies
5	2019	Oh et al.	Is Deep Acting Prevalent in Socially Responsible Companies? The Effects of CSR Perception on Emotional Labor Strategies
6	2020	Christian Rainero	The concept of emotional labour within the boundaries of social responsibility
7	2020	Deniz, G	The Mediating Role of Organizational Identification on the Effects of Perceived External Prestige on Emotional Labor: A Research in Lodging Companies
8	2020	Shin & Hur	How are service employees' perceptions of corporate social responsibility related to their performance? Prosocial motivation and emotional labor as underlying mechanisms
9	2021	Paruzel & Agnieszka	The Relationship Between Perceived Corporate Social Responsibility and Employee-Related Outcomes: A Meta-Analysis
10	2021	Khan	Corporate Social Responsibility and the Reciprocity Between Employee Perception, Perceived External Prestige, and Employees' Emotional Labor
11	2021	Shujaat & Nasreen	Analyzing the Significance of External Corporate Social Responsibility On Employees Emotional Labor with Mediation Mechanism of Perceived External Prestige
12	2021	Kayani & Arqam Javed	Investigating the impact of external corporate social responsibility on employees' emotional labor: the mediating mechanism of perceived external prestige
13	2022	Cheng	The Influence of Perceived External Prestige on Emotional Labor of Frontline Employees: The Mediating Roles of Organizational Identification and Impression Management Motive

14	2022	Gao Li	The Impact of Employees' Perception of Corporate Social Responsibility on Emotional Labor: A Self-Determination Theory Perspective.
15	2022	Zhao et al.	The Influence of Corporate Social Responsibility on Incumbent Employees: A Meta-Analytic Investigation of the Mediating and Moderating Mechanisms
16	2023	Rafi & Nosheen	Impact of Internal and External CSR on Job Satisfaction: Mediating Role of Emotional Labor

Source: Author, 2023

## Research content

### Research on Perceived Corporate Social Responsibility

Perceived Corporate Social Responsibility (PCSR), also known as "perceived corporate social responsibility," refers to the extent to which individuals perceive a company's fulfillment of social responsibilities. Some scholars argue that, in comparison to the company's own awareness of social responsibility, the perception of the company's fulfillment of social responsibilities by the public is more critical. This implies that only when a company's social responsibility actions are perceived by the public will they have a substantive impact on the company's performance (Husted, 2000; Rowley & Berman, 2000). Some scholars shift the focus of corporate social responsibility from the organizational level to the micro-level of employees, asserting that employees' perception of corporate social responsibility measures the company's assumption of social responsibility at the subjective level of employees (Turker, 2009; Jeon et al., 2020).

Lee defines PCSR as the perception of employees regarding the company's activities related to social responsibility, with employees being direct internal witnesses to the company's fulfillment of social responsibility (Lee et al., 2013). Choi & Yu (2014) define perceived corporate social responsibility as "the degree to which employees perceive their employer's support for initiatives related to social responsibility" (Choi & Yu, 2014). Ng et al. (2019) argue that it reflects how employees perceive a company's efforts in social responsibility, rather than the objective corporate social responsibility from the company's perspective. They also suggest that perceived corporate social responsibility is a more direct predictor that reflects individual immediate reactions and is a crucial factor in understanding the micro-foundations of corporate social responsibility research (Ng et al., 2019). According to Jeon et al (2020), employees' perceived corporate social responsibility measures a company's social responsibility at the level of employees' subjective impressions (Jeon et al., 2020). Cheema et al (2020) defined employees' perception of corporate social responsibility as "employees' impression of the company's commitment to going beyond profit and taking actions that benefit both the company and society" (Cheema et al., 2020).

In recent years, the focus of corporate social responsibility research has switched from an organizational to a micro perspective, examining the psychological impact mechanisms of corporate social responsibility on stakeholders. Particular emphasis has been placed on employees' perceptions of corporate social responsibility (Zhao et al., 2022). Islam et al (2016) have concluded that CSR has a behavioral and psychological impact on employee outcomes (Islam et al., 2016). Some researchers determined that employees' perceptions of CSR, whether positive or negative, can impact their attitudes and behaviors (Turban et al., 1996; Rupp et al., 2006). Research indicates that meeting employees' needs for a sense of belonging, self-esteem, and self-identity through Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) can stimulate

employees' pride and strengthen their organizational identification (Jones, 2010; Kim et al., 2010). Positive CSR actions have a favorable impact on employees' perceived external status, corporate trust, and organizational identity, thereby enhancing overall employee satisfaction (De Roeck et al., 2014; Glavas, 2016; Su et al., 2019). In terms of organizational commitment, the perception of CSR has complex effects on employees, closely related to factors such as work meaningfulness and organizational support (Bartel, 2001; Carmeli et al., 2007; Farooq et al., 2017; Paruzel et al., 2021). Research reveals a positive correlation between CSR and employees' organizational identification (Zhu et al., 2014; Hsieh et al., 2016; Huang, 2016; Kang et al., 2018; Westhuizen & Malan, 2023). Furthermore, the perception of CSR significantly influences various aspects of employee attitudes, including job satisfaction, organizational citizenship behavior, and turnover intention. Particularly noteworthy is the stronger association between CSR perceptions regarding people, planet, and profit, and employees' attitudes (Boğan et al., 2018; Pérez et al., 2018; Paruzel et al., 2021). CSR also affects employees' work engagement and fatigue, subsequently influencing their intention to leave the organization (Lin & Liu, 2017; Nejati et al., 2021). Therefore, it is crucial to accurately understand the impact of perceived corporate social (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993) responsibility on employees.

### **Research on Emotional Labor**

Emotional labor, as defined by Hochschild (1983), involves the management of feelings to create observable displays, with potential implications for the commodification of emotions and employee detachment from genuine feelings (Hochschild, 1983). Ashforth and Humphrey (1993) extend this concept, emphasizing conformity with display rules and decoupling the experience of emotion from its expression, recognizing surface acting, deep acting, and genuine emotional expression as forms of emotional labor (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993). Morris and Feldman (1996) focus on emotional labor in the context of social interactions, linking it to employee-customer interactions, continuous psychological processes, wage exchange, and organizational guidelines for displaying emotions (Morris & Feldman, 1996). Mann (1999) expands the understanding to encompass the internal and external states of the laborer, describing it as a state where displayed emotions differ from genuinely felt ones (Mann, 1999).

Gross (1998) and Grandey (2000) contribute to the evolving understanding of emotional labor, with Gross defining it as the process of influencing emotions, and Grandey emphasizing emotional regulation as a common theme across related concepts (Gross, 1998; Grandey, 2000). Grandey (2000) defines emotional labor as the process of regulating both feelings and expressions for organizational goals, aligning it with emotional regulation strategies such as surface acting and deep acting (Grandey, 2000). Various scholars, including Wharton (1999), Schaubroeck and Jones (2000); Brotheridge and Grandey (2002); Glomb and Tews (2004); Diefendorff et al (2005), offer diverse perspectives on emotional labor, collectively highlighting its complexity and multifaceted nature in professional settings over time (Wharton, 1999; Schaubroeck & Jones, 2000; Brotheridge & Lee, 2002; Glomb & Tews, 2004; Diefendorff et al., 2005).

The fundamental influences on choosing emotional labor techniques come from three sources: individual employee variables, situational factors, and organizational factors. Emotional labor is influenced by individual factors, including demographic variables such as gender, age, work experience, and education level, as well as personality trait variables like the Big Five, emotional intelligence, and positive/negative affectivity (Kruml & Geddes, 2000;

Brotheridge & Grandey, 2002; Jung & Yoon, 2014). Gender differences are evident, with women often excelling in emotional labor, expressing emotions more frequently and intensely than men (Adelmann, 1995). Age, seniority, and institution type also play roles in shaping the nature of experienced emotional labor and the employed strategies (Mahamad, 2018; Rasheed-Karim, 2020). Various personality traits, particularly those associated with the Big Five model and emotional intelligence, impact emotional labor, with higher emotional intelligence scores linked to effective utilization of surface or deep acting (Austin et al., 2008; Sohn & Lee, 2012; Grant, 2013; Yeh et al., 2020). Additionally, core self-evaluations and self-monitoring have been identified as factors influencing emotional labor and its potential reduction of adverse individual effects (Pujol-Cols & Dabos, 2021; Babalola & Nwanzu, 2022).

Situational factors, such as positive or negative emotional events and the frequency/duration of encounters with service receivers, significantly influence emotional labor, with heightened emotional burden observed as employees serve more customers (Grandey, 2000; Diefendorff et al., 2008; Haar & Spell, 2009; Wong & Wang, 2009). Organizational factors encompass emotional work display requirements, autonomy, organizational support, leadership support, and corporate external reputation. Organizational rules for emotional expression impact emotional labor behaviors, with a stronger association when employees identify with these rules (Gosserand & Diefendorff, 2005a, 2005b). Job autonomy, task routine, and clarity of display rules also influence emotional labor (Morris & Feldman, 1996). Organizational support, fairness, and corporate external reputation contribute to employees' choices in emotional labor behaviors (Lu et al., 2019; Shapoval, 2019; Shin & Hur, 2020a; Khan et al., 2021; Zeng et al., 2021). These factors collectively shape the intricate landscape of emotional labor in professional settings.

Based on the literature review above, this study finds that it remains challenging to go beyond individual, situational, and organizational factors as antecedents of emotional labor. Reviewing the existing literature, there are relatively limited studies on organizational factors compared with individual and situational factors, especially on the perception of corporate social responsibility as the antecedent of emotional labor.

### **Research on the Relationship between Perceived Corporate Social Responsibility and Emotional Labor**

Oh et al. (2019) find that CSR perception is positively (negatively) related to deep acting (surface acting). Affective organizational commitment mediates the relationship between CSR perception and surface acting but not between CSR perception and deep acting. Moral identification moderates the effects of CSR perception on surface acting through affective organizational commitment (Oh et al., 2019). Ji & Jan (2019) explores the relationship between corporate social responsibility and emotional labor strategies of frontline employees. The findings show that the selfish motives of corporate social responsibility (CSR) increase cynicism whereas the altruistic motives of corporate social responsibility increase authenticity and decrease cynicism of frontline employees. In addition, this study reveals that CSR-cynicism leads to surface acting and reduces deep acting whereas CSR-authenticity increases deep acting and does not significantly affect surface acting of frontline employees. (Ji & Jan, 2019). Shin & Hur (2020) indicates that as members become more aware of the CSR activities of their organizations, their levels of prosocial motivation tend to increase. Consequently, prosocially motivated service employees tend to regulate their inner feelings (i.e., deep acting) during service delivery. Further, those who adopt deep acting demonstrate superior service performance (Shin & Hur, 2020b). Khan et al. (2021) revealed that positive perception of

internal CSR encourages employees to manage their emotions via perceived organizational support. Similarly, the positive perception of external CSR builds positive emotional labor through perceived external prestige. Moreover, we showed that both types of CSR (ie, internal and external) not only enhance the deep acting among employees, but they also diminish the element of surface acting from employees working at the front line of the organization.(Khan et al., 2021). Gao Li (2022) explored the relationship between perceived corporate social responsibility (CSR) and emotional labor based on Self-Determination Theory. The study findings revealed that employees' perception of corporate social responsibility had a significantly positive impact on deep acting and a significantly negative impact on surface acting. Moreover, autonomous motivation and controlled motivation played mediating roles in the relationship between perceived corporate social responsibility and emotional labor (Gao Li, 2022)

### **The role of Organizational Identification in Perceived Corporate Social Responsibility and Emotional Labor**

Mishra (2012) examines the linkage between perceived external prestige and emotional labor strategies among the pharmaceutical representatives in India. Drawing from the social comparison theory and social identity theory, the study shows that perceived external prestige influences employees' emotional labor strategies directly as well as through organizational identification(Mishra et al., 2012). Deniz (2020) investigate the mediating role of organizational identification on the effects of external prestige perceptions of employees in lodging companies on their emotional labor. The results indicate that negative perceptions of external reputation will diminish employees' sense of identification with the organization. Therefore, in situations where external prestige is low, employees may exhibit emotional labor through emotional conflict (Deniz & Gaye, 2020). Cheng et al (2022) Drawing on both the organization identification and impression management theories, propose that perceived external prestige of frontline employees influences their emotional labor through organizational identification and impression management motive. The results indicate that perceived external prestige is positively related to deep acting, and negatively related to surface acting. Organizational identification partially mediates the relationship between perceived external prestige and deep acting. However, the relationship between perceived external prestige and surface acting is partially mediated both by organizational identification and impression management motive (Cheng et al., 2020).

### **Limitation**

This review has some limitations. To begin, despite our rigorous review of key relevant databases, as well as the use of human searches and citation monitoring, we cannot ensure the inclusion of all relevant studies. Future research could provide a more comprehensive understanding of the relationship between perceived corporate social responsibility and emotional labor by undertaking a broader examination, using larger databases, and refining search algorithms.

Second, in light of the quality of the literature and the practicality of the review, we concentrated our primary selection on peer-reviewed journal publications. This decision may result in the exclusion of potential contributions from conference papers, book chapters, and grey literature, thereby restricting the study's comprehensiveness, as these alternative sources may give varied viewpoints and insights.



Furthermore, our study focused on the relationship between perceived corporate social responsibility and emotional labor, but this does not indicate that we have covered all relevant material on the subject. Other relevant literature on this topic may not have been considered, which represents a potential study constraint.

Despite these limitations, the purpose of this literature review is to offer a comprehensive overview of the relationship between perceived corporate social responsibility and emotional labor using existing research. This study takes employees' perspectives and delves into the relationship between their perception of CSR and emotional labor, providing a fresh viewpoint for the micro-level investigation of CSR. It enriches the research framework in corporate social responsibility. Besides, This study enables business managers to understand the impact of perceived corporate social responsibility on employees' emotional labor. It also provides a more in-depth understanding of how the degree of corporate social responsibility fulfillment influences employee behavior attitudes. This can guide business managers in the targeted implementation of social responsibility practices.

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