

Emotional Labour in Fieldworkers in a Community Mental Health Organisation:

A Thematic Analysis

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Attestation of Authorship

I hereby declare that this submission is my own work and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, it contains no material previously published or written by another person (except where explicitly defined in the acknowledgement), nor material which to a substantial extent has been submitted for the award of any other degree or diploma of a university or other institution of higher learning.

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Abstract

In this project emotional labour in fieldworkers at a community mental health organisation has been explored using thematic analysis. Six fieldworkers from the organisation participated in one group and one face-to-face interview each. Exploration of fieldworkers' narratives yielded five themes: (i) Work context and fieldworker role; (ii) Experience of face-to-face work that included two subthemes, (a) Emotions and their displays with clients and (b) Controlling emotions, managing with clients and setting boundaries; (iii) Experience of other aspects of work; (iv) Areas of impact on client work; (v) Impact of work on fieldworkers. When interacting with clients fieldworkers were found to regulate their emotions both in terms of experience and display. Emotions were regulated through deep acting to enhance the internal experience of empathy and other positive emotions and the control of negative emotions, the display of which was seen as detrimental for clients. Fieldworkers also regulated the intensity of genuinely occurring emotions that were present during most of their interactions with clients. Emotional labour was viewed to be performed for the sake of clients. The impact of emotional labour was found to result from the workload and the multiple aspects of fieldworkers' role. Several factors were also found to impact on the emotional labour itself. Limitations of the current study and implications for future research are discussed.

Chapter 1

Introduction

From moments of frustration or joy, grief or fear, to an enduring sense of dissatisfaction and commitment, the experience of work is saturated with feeling (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1995, p. 98).

My interest in this research has developed over the years, at first as a result of my training in psychology as well as my experiences of part-time work in the customer service industry as a waitress and a barista. I consider the common thread between the two different vocations to be *people work*, which necessarily involves *emotion work* as its aspect (Brotheridge & Grandey, 2002). Emotion work is at the core of human interaction and everyday encounters require some form of emotional management (Hochschild, 1983; Morris & Feldman, 1996). I did however, feel a difference between emotion management in a social situation and emotion management as a work requirement in the customer service context. The difference was also apparent between two previous contexts and emotion management in the context of mental health work. Emotion management that takes place outside of purely social interactions and is, instead, enacted as a part of work requirements constitutes *emotional labour* (Hochschild, 1983).

Hochschild (1983) was the first to coin the term *emotional labour* and to offer a theoretical framework of the phenomenon. Over the years many definitions and frameworks of emotional labour have been proposed (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993; Morris & Feldman, 1996; Grandey, 2000). Each framework focuses on different aspects of emotional labour, which, for research purposes, creates difficulties in measuring emotional

labour and even deciding on what it is that will be measured. Generally, emotional labour is seen as a type of forced affective performance that more often than not results in negative consequences for the performer (Hochschild, 1983). These range from decreased job satisfaction to burnout. Emotional labour is performed when there is a disparity between the workers' felt emotions and the emotions that are believed to be subscribed to in a given occupational and organisational context. The context of labour process is what shapes emotional labour (James, 1992).

Emotional labour, both in its original form and various incarnations over the years, has been applied to various occupational contexts: the airline industry (Whitelegg, 2002; Williams, 2003), call centre workers (Korczynski, 2003), criminal interrogators (Rafali & Sutton, 1991), legal professions (Harris, 2002; Livley, 2002), teaching (Price, 2001), nursing (Aldridge, 1994), and the medical profession (Larson & Yao, 2005). As it will be shown in chapter 2, context, despite its obvious significance, was not often taken into consideration in developing frameworks of emotional labour and rarely in researching emotional labour. This, perhaps, was due to the belief that emotional labour will be unchangeable across contexts and occupations. This belief may have resulted from the original developer of the concept, Hochschild (1983), specifying that given that a job meets certain criteria (e.g., face-to-face or voice-to-voice contact and a requirement that a worker produces an emotional state in another person, and job training allows for control of the employee's emotional activities), emotional labour would be an aspect of that job.

Although Hochschild (1983) never applied the concept of emotional labour to mental health professionals, she it would be a component within these professions. Despite this belief and abundant research on emotional labour, studies investigating issues of

emotional labour for mental health professionals are few (Karabanow, 1999; Yanay & Shahar, 1998). This research aims to partially address this absence by investigating the specificity of emotional labour and how it is performed and why in the context of fieldwork at the Auckland branch of a community mental health organisation.

The oversight of research on emotional labour in mental health profession is surprising because mental health work requires considerable emotional work. In all helping or human service sector professions emotional labour is a central aspect of work (Zapf, Vogt, Seifert, Mertini, & Isic, 1999). Mental health professionals, like other healthcare professionals, encounter stressors at work but the nature of working with distressed individuals means they may face even higher emotional strain (Moore & Cooper, 1996). For mental health professionals, like for everybody else, stress can result from factors both inside and outside of work but, as Kottler and Schofield (2001) demonstrate, client contact has a unique set of stressors associated with it:

The clients you see constantly push your buttons. They present problems that you have not fully resolved yourself. They struggle with issues related to death, personal meaning, mediocrity, fears, personal responsibility, temptation, impulsiveness – the same things that you face on a daily basis. They test you, try to manipulate you, and deceive you. Sometimes they even try to hurt you. In spite of the demands that you appear confident, poised and in control, and always the consummate expert, you must live with your own doubts (p. 427).

In this research study I will investigate whether fieldworkers believe they experience stress that results from performing emotional labour, the possible impact of

emotional labour (both positive and negative) on their work and lives outside of work, and their coping strategies. The main aim of this research is to investigate emotional labour in fieldworkers in a manner that is not skewed towards the negative effects of emotional labour, unlike the majority of past research. Rather, I want to look at it holistically and pay respect to both the necessity of doing emotional labour ‘in good will’ in order to assist others that can bring satisfaction as well as the possible negative impact of emotional labour.

The reason for proposing this research is two-fold. First, the nature of work of mental health professionals is such that clients’ and professionals’ own emotions are almost always a part of that work and second, due to the gap in research around emotional labour in mental health work (and specifically fieldworkers), the currently proposed investigation is particularly pertinent. Investigating emotional labour in sectors other than the traditional customer service sector offers new angles of looking at emotional labour and its potential effects (Karabanow, 1991) and considering emotional labour in the human service sector “can provide a vital contrast to retail service work” (Sass, 2000, p. 332).

Since emotional labour was shown to differ in both magnitude and form across various service sectors (Pugliesi, 1999), I will investigate the role of fieldworkers. Knowing the specificities of that role may assist future endeavours of researching emotional labour in other mental health fields by clarifying where potential differences in emotional labour may come from. It is important to investigate the specificity of emotional labour in fieldworkers because no research on emotional labour has been conducted in New Zealand and no one has explored emotional labour in fieldworkers. Inquiring into emotional labour in fieldworkers, the impact of other aspects of the job on the performance and experience of

emotional labour, alongside the potential influence of the enactment of organisational prescriptions around emotional displays, would contribute to the fields of psychology, sociology, and potentially other fields as well.

This chapter provides an introduction for the current research project, by stating the aims and introducing the concept of emotional labour. Chapter 2 will give an overview of theoretical frameworks and research on emotional labour, introduce the organisation where data collection took place, and present a theoretical framework chosen for the current study. Chapter 3 will describe the research methodology used in this research. This will include a description of participant selection, analysis, and interpretation. Results will be reported in chapter 4 and the discussion and conclusion will constitute chapters 5 and 6 respectively.

Conclusion

This chapter presented an overview of the purpose of the current research project. It briefly pointed toward the gap in research on emotional labour as well as the importance of considering a context within which emotional labour is investigated.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

Evolution of Emotional Labour

This chapter discusses several theoretical frameworks of emotional labour and research pertaining to the phenomenon. For the purpose of structure I have subdivided the existing theories into six subgroups based on their definition and explanation of the emotional labour process. Following that is the description of the community mental health organisation where data collection took place to provide context for the research. A discussion of the theoretical framework chosen for the current study concludes the Chapter.

Emotion Management as Emotional Labour

Hochschild (1983) described emotional labour as emotion management. “This labour requires one to induce or suppress feeling in order to sustain the outward countenance that produces the proper state of mind in others...” (Hochschild, 1983, p. 7). The many propositions in Hochschild’s work that build up the how’s and why’s of performance of emotional labour, worked toward explaining its possible outcomes, mainly in terms of individual outcomes that were negative and, briefly, organisational outcomes that were positive.

Hochschild (1983), therefore, viewed emotions/feelings (used interchangeably in her work) as having ‘signal function’, meaning that they communicate information about the outside world and, more importantly, signal an individual’s inner disposition towards the outside world. She stated that people make judgements about themselves based on how they feel about events and situations they find themselves in. As a result, she saw emotion management in emotional labour, resulting from organisational demands, as unnaturally

interfering in the natural function of feelings. In this view a possible price of emotional labour, of suppressing felt emotions in order to reproduce unfeeling emotions for the purpose of service, was estrangement and alienation from self and the ability to feel.

The reasons for enacting emotion management and knowing what to enact and what not, stem from *feeling rules* (Hochschild, 1983). Although Hochschild (1983) described feeling rules in the context of social interactions, she showed how such rules can be a part of organisational requirements for work-roles and can be presented overtly as well as be implied by the actions of others. Whichever form they are presented in, the impact on emotion management is just as pervasive. She also demonstrated that the feeling rules not only determine which emotions are appropriate to feel and display and which are not, but also that they govern the appropriate intensity of the experience and the display.

Feeling rules were taught as a part of initial training of flight attendants as well as the ongoing training in the form of service improvement seminars. Training emphasised the importance of smiling when with 'customers', no matter how difficult they were. Some flight attendants interviewed by Hochschild (1983) shared stories that can only be described as horror stories of being demeaned and assaulted; having hot coffee thrown at them and male passengers make inappropriate physical overtures. All of this had to be endured while maintaining a friendly demeanour and it was during training that flight attendants learnt of the importance of feelings rules as well as ways of enacting them through types of acting.

Hochschild (1983) believed that management of feelings or performance of emotional labour was to be accomplished in one of two ways: surface and deep acting. Surface acting is "disguising what we feel or pretending to feel what we do not ... (we) deceive others about what we really feel but we do not deceive ourselves"(Hochschild,

1983, p. 33). Deep acting is “deceiving oneself as much as deceiving others” (Hochschild, 1983, p. 33).

It seems that for Hochschild (1983) deep acting presented a bigger threat to the integrity of a worker’s sense of self than surface acting. Organisational requirements to present an authentic, genuine emotion that can only be summoned through deep acting, rather than a plastered on smile that relies only on display rather than actual feeling, required a worker to compromise their private emotional experiences and reactions on a much deeper level. It is the deep acting that the author considered as emotion work that resulted in estrangement from self, while surface acting was believed to result in *emotive dissonance*. In her view, feeling rules necessarily create a discrepancy between the actual feelings and the displayed feelings. Prolonged discrepancy leads to tension that for workers can only be reduced by altering what they are feeling so that it closer resembles what needs to be displayed. The diagrammatic representation of Hochschild’s (1983) framework is presented in Figure 1.

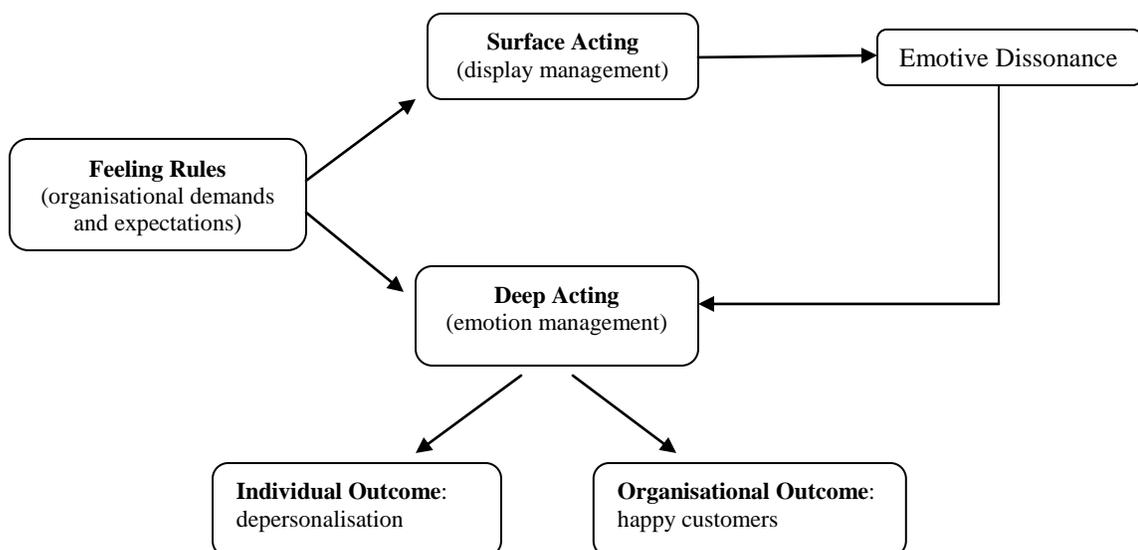


Figure 1. Diagrammatic representation of Hochschild’s (1983) framework of emotional labour

Emotional Display as Emotional Labour

After Hochschild (1983), Ashforth and Humphrey (1993) were the first to consider a re-conceptualisation of emotional labour. According to their understanding, emotional labour is “the act of displaying appropriate emotion (i.e., conforming with a display rule)” (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993, p. 90) and is thus a form of impression management. The term *display rules* (Ekman, 1973, as cited in Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993) substituted Hochschild’s (1983) feeling rules, when referring to organisational expectations regarding emotional expressions with customers or clients. Thus, display rules govern emotional expressions and can be seen as organisational norms of affective conduct. Ashforth and Humphrey (1993) argued that focus on behaviour rather than on internal management of feeling, as proposed by Hochschild (1983), was more appropriate because of its observable nature and because complying with display rules need not involve management of feelings.

Ashforth and Humphrey’s (1993) understanding of conforming to organisational display rules and displaying a required emotion through surface and/or deep acting is much the same as Hochschild’s (1983). But unlike Hochschild (1983), Ashforth and Humphrey (1993) put forward an idea of *spontaneous and genuine emotion*, “whereby one spontaneously and genuinely experiences and expresses the expected emotion ... a nurse who feels sympathy at the sight of an injured child has no need to ‘act’” (p. 94). In this instance there is no effort exerted by the performer of emotional labour to display a desired emotion because it is already being felt.

Ashforth and Humphrey (1993) view emotional labour in a much more positive light than Hochschild (1983). According to them, emotional labour can not only increase task effectiveness – an organisational outcome – through the compliance with display rules,

but also self-efficacy of the employee performing emotional labour – a positive individual outcome. When adhering to display rules as guides and leading the interaction so that it complies with those rules, the workers may feel they have successfully managed the said interaction.

Self-expression can also be facilitated because, as the authors argue, the existence of display rules still allows for variations in expression of the desired emotions and thus employees maintain a degree of authenticity in their interactions with customers by fitting the organisational display rules into their personal style of interactions. This, according to the authors, should promote personal well-being.

These propositions highlight two aspects involved in emotional labour that were not considered by Hochschild (1983). One, workers do not get passively ‘imprinted’ with display rules and follow them robotically. They are active participants in the transaction established between organisational requirements of appropriate displays and their own emotional displays. They modulate the required displays based on their interpersonal style of interaction. This, in turn, highlights the second aspect of this framework – job-control that actually allows for modulation of expression based on display rules. Although Ashforth and Humphrey (1993) did not actively incorporate it as a possible mediator variable between emotional labour performance and its outcomes, its presence appears to be subsumed.

Despite noting the positive impact of emotional labour, Ashforth and Humphrey (1993) also acknowledge that “what is functional for the organisation and customer may be dysfunctional for the service provider” (p. 96). They agree that both surface and deep acting can lead to negative consequences both for the organisation – inhibited performance of

emotional labour and thus customer dissatisfaction that can lead to loss of revenue – and for employees performing emotional labour – emotional dissonance, sense of inauthenticity, self-alienation, and decreased well-being.

The authors utilise *social identity theory* in order to explain how emotional labour can result in both negative and positive outcomes for individuals. In their opinion strong identification with one's work, or rather work-role, would result in a sense of authenticity and well-being when adhering to organisational norms, including display rules. The flipside of identification may be stronger impact of job stressors or failures (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993). Those who identify with values different to those of their work-role would experience emotional dissonance and a sense of inauthenticity when adhering to display rules. This understanding is different to Hochschild's (1983), for whom dissonance was the end result of performing emotional labour. For those workers who are indifferent to the identity associated with their work-role, emotional labour would have a very limited impact, positive or negative (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993). Emotional labour in this light is dependent on the fit between employee's identity and the work identity offered by an organisation.

They also consider internal and external 'pressure' to identity that results from performing emotional labour. Internal pressure to identify with the role can be resolved through surface and deep acting. Deep acting, where real emotions are induced, can make it difficult for people to distance themselves from their work-role. Workers may find they are identifying with the work-role without attempting to do so, thereby reconstructing their own identity (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993). Surface acting creates emotional dissonance due to the difference between felt and the displayed emotion. Emotional dissonance, being

an unpleasant experience, produces the need to minimise it by means of realigning self-identity with work-role identity. Here too, the worker begins to accept the role in the organisation by identifying with it.

External pressure comes from an organisation's attempts to foster identification with the work-role through establishing a 'service culture'. It is established through training, feedback, observation models, and general socialisation of workers. As a result workers learn "the content, intensity and variety of emotions that ought to be experienced and expressed while performing the work role" (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993, p. 103). Identification then is reinforced through validation like praise, promotion, bonuses, and raises.

The authors see emotional exhaustion, high stress levels, and burnout not as direct results of performing emotional labour but rather identification with the work-role. For instance, identifying with a work role may automatically increase the impact of work-related stressors and/or failures of performance because of the internalisation of the commitment and responsibilities associated with the work-role.

The strength of this model, despite downplaying the emotion management element, lies in a broader consideration of aspects that can impact on emotional labour and its mediating factors, like identification with the work-role. Also, the propositions in this theory did not rely on research from one occupation type in the service sector (although it was definitely dominating) but nursing, social work, and counselling. At the same time, some of the assumptions were based on research done on trainees or novices in the human service sector. Being a 'new kid on the block' in any profession is hard because you do not completely know how everything works. In helping professions trainees and novices

encounter many more stressors than established professionals, because they are only beginning to establish their professional identity and personal competency and these processes produce stress and anxiety (Cormier & Hackney, 2005). Therefore, it is possible that trainees and novices would show both – more emotional labour and more negative consequences of performing emotional labour compared to experienced workers. Thus, making generalisation from trainees' experience of emotional labour can produce two faulty assumptions. First, higher rates of emotional labour are characteristic of helping professions and second, higher rates of emotional labour performance have a negative impact on workers. In this context both assumptions would be incorrect.

Job Characteristics and Dissonance as Emotional Labour

Morris and Fieldman (1996) redefined the concept of emotional labour several years after Ashforth and Humphrey (1993). They defined emotional labour as “the effort, planning, and control needed to express organisationally desired emotion during interpersonal transactions.” (p. 987). The main focus is given to “the level of planning, effort, and skill that are required to present appropriate emotional display in organisational settings.” (p. 989). Unlike Ashforth and Humphrey (1993) these authors consider emotional labour in terms of external organisational components as well as internal states. They were the first to incorporate internal and external components of emotional labour to define and measure the construct itself rather than see them as pressures of emotional labour to a person's identity.

According to Morris and Feldman (1996) emotional labour consists of four dimensions: frequency of emotional display, attentiveness to required display rules, variety of emotions required to be expressed, and emotional dissonance. The first three relate to

external, organisationally specific requirements/demands and the last one relates to the internal experience of workers. According to the authors the first dimension, *frequency of emotional display*, has been widely examined and refers to the rate at which organisationally desired and sanctioned emotions are displayed in a work setting. *Attentiveness to required display rules* is “the level of attentiveness to display rules required by the job” (p. 989), where psychological energy required from the employee is proportional to the amount of attention they need to pay to the display rules. This dimension consists of the duration of emotional display and the intensity of emotional display. The third component is *variety of emotions required to be expressed*, where emotional labour increases as the variety of emotions that need to be displayed increases.

The last component, which relates to the internal experience of conflict by the worker, is *emotional dissonance* that can be experienced when there is an inconsistency between the internally felt emotion and the emotional display required by an organisation. And it is emotional dissonance that was seen to be responsible for lower job satisfaction. All four components are assumed to contribute to emotional labour and the higher the intensity of each component, the more effort is required on the worker’s part and thus more emotional labour is performed. The hypothesised relationships between the four dimensions as proposed by the authors are presented in Figure 2.

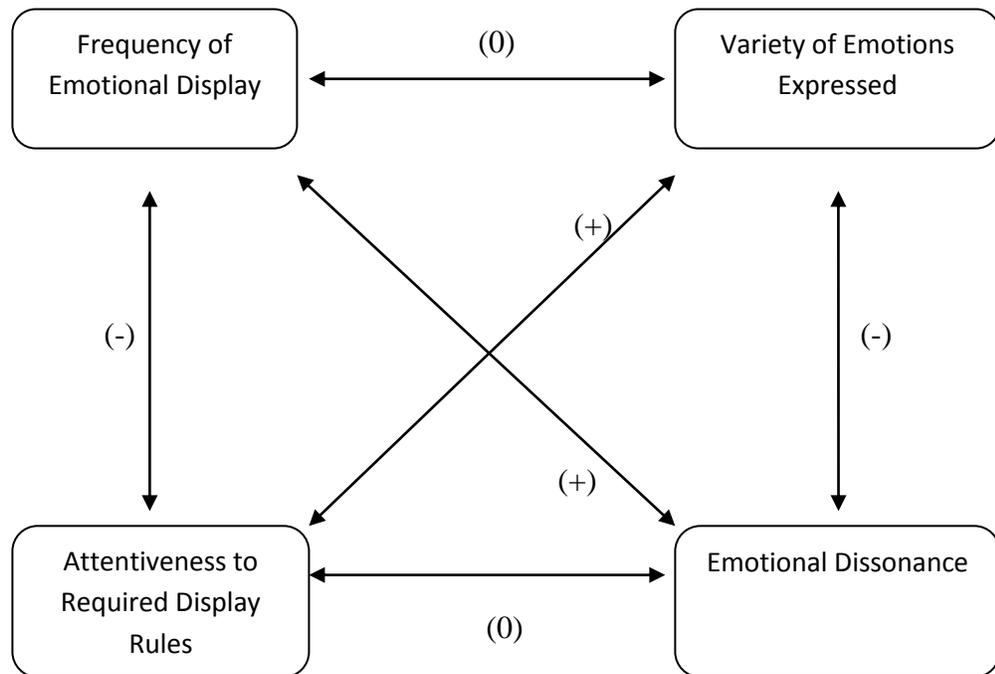


Figure 2. Relationships between dimensions of emotional labour (Morris and Feldman, 1996, p. 993). The negative (-) symbol denotes a negative relationship between components; the positive (+) symbol denotes a positive relationship between components; zero (0) symbol denotes an absence of a relationship between components.

Morris and Feldman (1996) did not incorporate surface and deep acting used to perform emotional labour in to their framework, but they are seem to be implied in the frequency of emotional display dimension. These mechanisms may not have been included because this framework focused on the display of organisationally desired emotions rather than on the internal work done by performers of emotional labour. Unlike Hochschild (1983) and Ashforth and Humphrey (1993), Morris and Fieldman (1996) included dissonance as a dimension of emotional labour rather than its outcome.

Morris and Feldman (1996) proposed organisational and individual antecedents associated with all four dimensions of emotional labour (see Table 2.1.).

Table 1. Organisational and Individual antecedents of the four dimensions of emotional labour (based on Morris and Feldman, 1996).

Dimensions of Emotional Labour	Organisational Antecedents	Individual Antecedents
Frequency of emotional display	<p>Explicitness of display rules</p> <p>Closeness of monitoring</p> <p>Routineness of tasks</p> <p><i>All three are predicted to positively associate with this dimension</i></p>	<p>Gender</p> <p><i>Women are predicted to have a greater frequency of emotional displays than men</i></p>
Attentiveness to required display rules	<p>Routineness of tasks</p> <p><i>Predicted to have a negative association with this dimension</i></p> <p>Power of role receiver</p> <p><i>Predicted to have a positive association with this dimension</i></p>	
Variety of emotions required to be expressed	<p>Power of role receiver</p> <p><i>Predicted to have a negative association with this dimension</i></p> <p>Task variety</p> <p><i>Predicted to have a positive association with this dimension</i></p>	
Emotional dissonance	<p>Form of interaction</p> <p><i>Number of face-to-face interactions are predicted to have a positive association with this dimension</i></p> <p>Job autonomy</p> <p><i>Predicted to have a negative association with this dimension</i></p>	<p>Affectivity</p> <p><i>Positive affectivity is predicted to be positively correlated with this dimension when the requirement is to express negative emotion and to be negatively correlated if the requirement is to express positive emotion</i></p>

The antecedents were chosen from the many available organisation and job characteristics in regard to each dimension of emotional labour. One of the compromising aspects of the chosen organisation/job characteristics is the selection process. The authors admit that other variables could be considered and their choice was guided by theorising which antecedents would have the greatest impact on the emotional labour dimensions they proposed and, from their point of view, would be useful for future research considerations. It seems appropriate to assume that if other emotional labour components were identified then other organisation/job characteristics would take prominence in terms of their impact.

To support their hypothesis Morris and Feldman (1996) used existing data, the majority of which was obtained from research undertaken in the service sector. So it is possible that some of their deductions would not hold when applying their framework to other fields, like health or mental health fields for instance.

Display Rules and Dissonance as Emotional Labour

Another attempt to reconceptualise emotional labour in terms of both internal management of emotions combined with organisational demands/display rules was done by Mann (1999). She defines emotional labour as:

The state that exists when there is a discrepancy between the emotional demeanour that an individual displays because it is considered appropriate, and the emotions that are genuinely felt but that would be inappropriate to display (p. 353).

Several key elements are included in the definition. First, for emotional labour to take place emotional dissonance must be felt by an employee. Secondly, emotional

dissonance must also go together with a “behavioural emotional display”. Thirdly, appropriate emotional display can result from either formal (explicit or subtle) display rules or informal protocols. Just like Morris and Feldman (1996), Mann (1999) considers internal states and external forces in her framework. However, there is no consideration of the effort because emotional labour is conceptualised as effortful. She also acknowledges what can be seen as surface acting, which is referred to as ‘faking’, and suppression of felt emotions which is loosely connected to deep acting.

Three dimensions were suggested by Mann (1999): one relating to job demands/characteristics – *expectations of rules about emotional display* – and two relating to internal mechanisms of *emotional suppression* and *emotional faking*. Within each dimension several factors contributing to emotional labour were identified and the author acknowledges that other factors can be involved in the performance of emotional labour and some of them were identified by Morris and Feldman (1996). The factors included the number of people involved in the encounter, consideration of whether the encounter took place face-to-face or over the phone, employees’ level in the organisational hierarchy, purpose of communication, and who the communication was with (e.g., customer/client or co-worker and whether they were above or below the respondent in the organisational hierarchy).

The framework was mainly tested on employees of banking and telecommunication companies, but also included one television broadcasting company and one manufacturing company. The results indicate that both frontline and non-frontline workers experience emotional labour, with non-frontline workers reporting more ‘very low’ scores comparing to frontline workers. Processing customer complaints involved higher levels of emotional

labour than other types of communications. Participants reported 'feeling fake' in 58% of their communications, needing to hide their true emotions to some extent in 60% of their communications, and expressing an emotions because that emotion was expected in 53% of their communications. It is the latter that was found to be significantly associated with the overall emotional labour score.

While Mann (1999) argues that at least three dimensions are involved in the emotional labour construct, she acknowledges Morris and Feldman's (1996) proposition of the four possible dimensions. Dimensions considered in the two frameworks differ in a number of ways. First, they vary in the amount of focus given to the importance of internal experiences of workers on the one hand and external, organisational, demands and job characteristics that contribute to emotional labour on the other. Second, Mann (1999) sees effort as emotional labour rather than its component thereby making emotional dissonance a necessary and unavoidable part of emotional labour, without which there would be no emotional labour. Morris and Feldman (1996) on the other hand, did not see effort as emotional labour because they believed that even when there is a congruence between felt and displayed emotions, just because of the nature of a work-related encounter, there is some effort exerted to display even felt organisationally sanctioned emotions appropriately.

However, Mann (1999) also brings forward the idea of coping strategies in her discussion of the possible impact of emotional labour on employees. The reason this is important to consider for the current piece of research is because in mental health work the importance of coping strategies is both taught as a part of training as well as carried forward in supervision. She also notes the importance of employees' perceptions of 'faking' emotions in relation to their perception of success of communication with a

customer. She noted that people rated communication with high emotional labour – high faking – as less successful possibly because in their minds faking was thought to be deceitful and thus having to employ it was seen as a failure. It is expected that ‘faking’ emotions in mental health work with clients would also be perceived as negative since being authentic is not just valued in this line of work but is almost a requirement.

Emotional Regulation as Emotional Labour

Grandey (2000) provides a definition of emotional labour that incorporates theories of Hochschild (1983), Ashforth and Humphrey (1993), and Morris and Feldman’s (1996). Thus, it is a third major framework incorporating job- and employee-focused emotional labour into the overall framework of emotional labour. Grandey (2000) suggests that previous definitions of emotional labour are actually its components. For instance, Morris and Feldman’s (1996) definition of emotional labour as job characteristics is a situational aspect that requires emotional labour, while the observable display of required emotions by workers – emotional labour as defined by Ashforth and Humphrey (1993) – is a goal of emotional labour (Grandey, 2000). She argues that despite the many differences between previous models they all have one common component – regulation of emotions and emotional expressions.

Emotional labour, then, is the process of regulating both feelings and expressions for organisational goals. ... The process of surface acting (managing observable expressions) and deep acting (managing feelings) match the working definition of emotional labour as a process of emotional regulation, and they provide a useful way of operationalising emotional labour (Grandey, 2000, p. 97).

Grandey (2000) applies Emotion Regulation Theory developed by Gross (1998a, 1998b) in order to explain emotional labour. According to this theory people influence not only what kinds of emotions they have and when they have them but also their experience and expression of these emotions (Gross, 1998a). Gross separates emotion regulation process into five sub-processes including situation selection, situation modification, attention deployment, cognitive change, and response modulation (Gross, 1998a, p. 281). The regulation of emotions can be (1) antecedent-focused and incorporates the first four sub-processes and (2) response-focused, accomplished by the fifth sub-process (Gross, 1998b). All four aim to modify emotion before the emotional response has actually been fully engaged and, in turn, modify what emotion is experienced and how it is experienced, whereas response modulation occurs later in the emotion-reaction process and aims only to alter the emotional expression (Grandey, 2000; Gross, 1998a, 1998b).

Grandey (2000), in applying Emotion Regulation Theory to emotional labour, suggests that aspects of antecedent-focused emotion regulation – attention deployment and cognitive change – are very similar to the concept of deep acting. In attention deployment an individual directs their attention either toward non-emotional aspects of the situation or from the situation itself, toward an emotional trigger to produce the emotions required in a given situation, or directing attention toward emotions and their consequences (Gross, 1998a). Cognitive change allows individuals to re-evaluate a situation, which elicits undesirable emotions, and assign it a variant meaning in order to elicit the desired emotion (Grandey, 2000; Gross, 1998a). She also likens response-focused emotion regulation, or response modulation, where the focus is on the expression of an emotion, to surface acting.

By building on the previous models of emotional labour Grandey (2000) successfully incorporated various aspects of emotional labour that previously had been considered separate, and by structuring them through the lens of Emotion Regulation Theory created a detailed conceptual model of emotional labour (see Figure 3.).

In this model antecedents of emotional labour are situational factors that include interaction expectations with customers, governed by job/organisation characteristics, and emotional events. Consequences of emotional labour are understood in terms of employee wellbeing and organisational wellbeing. Factors that affect emotional labour and its performance were separated into individual factors and organisational factors. The emotional labour itself is conceptualised as emotion regulation through deep and surface acting methods.

In the theoretical frameworks described so far, whether the focus is on the internal effort exerted in the performance of emotional labour to display the desired emotions instead of the felt ones or the external forces that guide the display, emotional labour seems to be conceptualised as something that workers have to do primarily for the organisation and not for customers/clients/patients. I argue that in mental health work these frameworks may not generalise because they are based on assumptions that may not hold true for mental health professionals, and therefore the way emotional labour has been conceptualised so far is missing a major component, which makes it hard to make sense of how emotional labour is performed in mental health work.

Situational Cues

Emotional Regulation Process

Long-Term Consequences

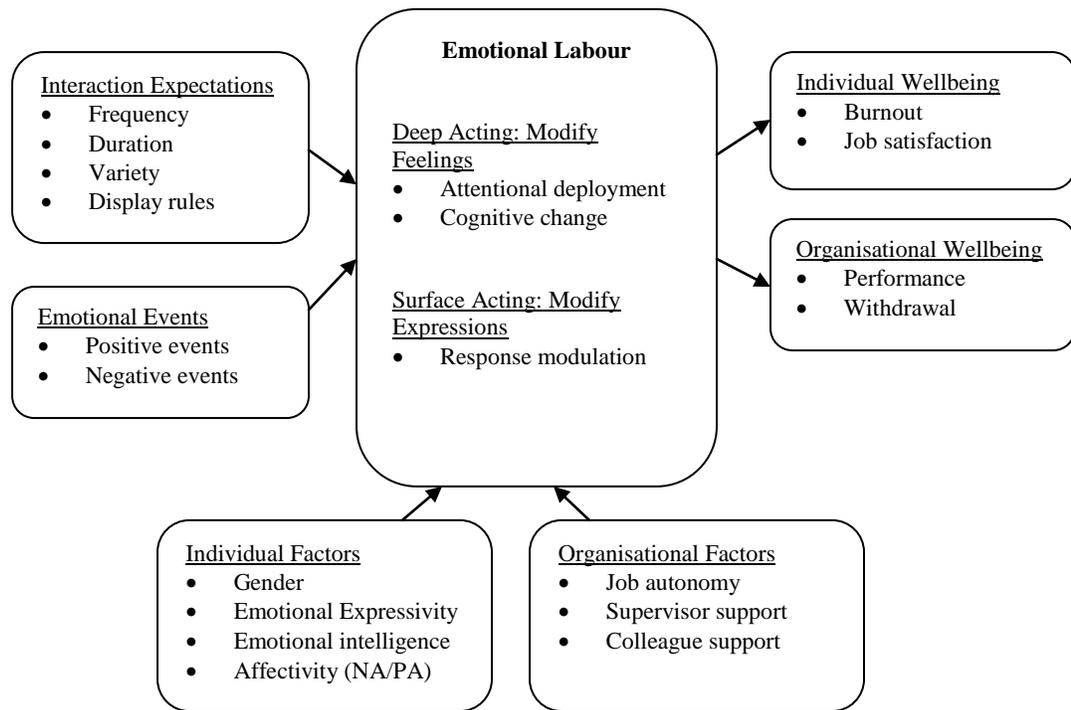


Figure 3. Conceptual framework of emotional regulation in the work setting (Grandey, 2000, p. 101).

The assumptions include (1) the existence of organisationally sanctioned modes of feeling and expressing necessarily puts a strain on employees and the result is often increased stress; (2) emotional labour necessarily involves effort or emotional dissonance that would be detrimental for workers; (3) positive outcomes are mainly thought of in terms of the recipients of emotional labour or organisational gains. It is not my intent to dismiss the hardships and the possible increase in stress levels for those who perform emotional labour. Rather I believe it is important to consider all that is involved in emotional labour including possible positive and negative outcomes, and especially specificity of working environments, occupational characteristics, and other components of emotional labour.

One such component was provided by research into emotional labour in nursing. Nursing is the second largest area of investigations into emotional labour. It is within this profession that the concept of emotional labour, and its function shifts from a purely financial transaction between essentially non-caring participants to genuine care. Emotional labour is essential “to the concept of caring” in nursing (Mann & Cowburn, 2005, p. 155). In nursing the care for patients and emotional regulation performed in order to provide care is done out of a desire to ease a patient’s burden.

Care as Emotional Labour

James (1989) defines emotional labour “as the labour involved in dealing with other peoples’ feelings, a core component of which is regulation of emotions” (James, 1989, p. 15).

[Regulation of emotions] is shaped by the place, people and organisation under which it takes place. Emotional labour does not exist in isolation from the conditions under which it is carried out, rather the circumstances under which it takes place influence the content and form of emotional labour (James, 1989, pp. 25-26).

James (1992) incorporates the idea and act of care within the framework of emotional labour and not just care in terms of organisationally sanctioned activity. James (1989, 1992) is one of the first to introduce genuine care for another person’s wellbeing when performing emotional labour. Although, she argues that for emotional labour to be effective it does not have to involve caring about the recipient of emotional labour. In her studies (James, 1989, 1992), however, caring about the patient was an integral part of emotional labour performed by nurses – something never considered before in the human

service sector, probably because the focus in the latter was placed on observable units of emotional labour that result from organisational demands which did not involve caring but rather doing as-if-caring. In nursing, caring for patients, although a part of the job, is also a part of genuine desire to help reduce suffering and improve patients' quality of life. James (1992) writes that the hospice nurses she interviewed made genuine effort in their care for patients, even if it was at their own expense.

James' (1989, 1992) work is ideologically closer than any other to Horchschild's (1983) in seeing emotional labour as a commodity. But she uses "the concept of emotional labour in a broader sense than Russell Horchschild, to cover the processes through which emotional labour are carried out in the public and the domestic domain, and I suggest that the more common form of emotional labour is that where its centrality and values are not recognised" (James, 1989, pp. 30-31). She likens emotional labour with emotion management performed by women as a part of domestic unpaid labour. She focuses on the fact that jobs characterised by dealing with emotions of others' are generally reserved for women, are highly underpaid, and emotional labour invisible.

It is here that the negative impact of emotional labour can be seen. But the impact does not follow directly from emotional labour. Rather, it follows from and, in turn, highlights the larger social processes in regard to the separation between emotionality and rationality, where the former has historically been a female domain that did not require consideration and did not involve effort. As a result, in the hospice where James (1989, 1992) conducted her research, there was a clash between organisational demands on nurses (in terms of tasks other than talking with patients and the number of those tasks that needed

to be performed with regularity) and nurses' ideas of care for patients that in their minds and professional opinion had to take precedence.

One of the nurses interviewed by James (1989) talked about feeling like she was not doing anything when she could not provide the kind of care she thought was needed. She described feeling shattered and horrible when going home on those occasions. James (1989) also points out that working through difficult feelings that arise when helping unwell people and their families on a regular basis would take time. This points to the importance of time allocation for dealing with emotions that arise when caring for people.

This can potentially explain a finding by Mann and Cowburn (2005) who conducted a study on the associations of emotional labour and stress (interaction stress and daily stress) on a sample of mental health nurses. The results showed that nurses, who reported greater levels of interaction stress, reported greater levels of emotional labour, the increase of which was associated with higher daily stress. However, as researchers point out, the casual connection between stress and emotional labour is unclear. It could be that emotional labour causes high levels of stress or, alternatively, if the level of stress is already high it leads to increase in emotional labour or emotional labour is performed in order to "mask the stress they are experiencing is itself a source of further stress" (Mann and Cowburn, 2005, p. 159).

Nurses work gruelling hours in demanding environments combined with working with other peoples' emotions as well as modifying their own and with ongoing high occupational stress levels. Perhaps availability of time allocation to deal with emotional stressors of the job and availability of emotional support (de Jonge, Le Blanc, Peeters, & Noordam, 2008) would mitigate the level of stress.

Although James (1989, 1992) did not attempt to develop a detailed theoretical construct of emotional labour she nevertheless contributes to the ways in which emotional labour can be understood and increases our understanding of the complexity of emotional labour and the amount of variability locked in this one concept. She provides one of the most important components that has been missing in the existing frameworks despite the fact that they were developed after James had put forward her arguments.

It is obvious that the domain of emotional labour is complex and multi-layered. Current research and theories have only started scratching the surface of components of emotional labour, its antecedents and consequences. Because of variant focus of research endeavours, where some focus on job-demands and others on emotional management or regulation, it is not surprising that the research results are at times contradictory. New facets of emotional labour are still being hypothesised and investigated. Next I will present some of the more encompassing research studies on emotional labour that include theoretical frameworks discussed in the previous sub-sections.

Putting Emotional Labour Frameworks into Empirical Perspective

In this section I will present a number of inconsistencies in research findings that applied to (some of) the emotional labour frameworks presented in the previous section. In the first subsection I will discuss possible reasons for the inconsistencies by considering the focus of various frameworks, application of the frameworks, and assumptions that are shared by all the frameworks. In the second subsection I will present more recent research findings regarding emotional labour.

Issues With the Concept and With Research Findings

Investigations of emotional labour originated in the early 80s and have been undertaken ever since, but not without difficulties along the way. Many authors, for instance, present conflicting results in relation to emotional labour causing stress and burnout. Hochschild (1983) believed that the need to manage emotions in the work place through surface acting or deep acting would be damaging for workers. Wharton (1993) found that emotional exhaustion was positively associated with job autonomy, working hours, and duration of job tenure rather than just emotional regulation. Another interesting finding was that emotional labour was positively related to job satisfaction.

Hochschild (1983) argued that both surface and deep acting were associated with alienation from self. However, research conducted in later years demonstrated that it was the surface and not deep acting that was associated with increased depersonalisation (Brotheridge & Grandey, 2002), emotional exhaustion, and decreased job satisfaction (Grandey, 2003). Additionally deep acting was found to produce a sense of authenticity, which, in turn, related to reduced emotional exhaustion, while surface acting was found to be a drain on workers' emotional resources (Brotheridge & Lee, 2002).

Maslach (1982) proposed that frequency, duration, and intensity of interactions with clients/patients, job demands, which are conceptualised as either dimensions of emotional labour (Morris & Feldman, 1996) or as antecedents of emotional labour (Grandey, 2000; Kruml & Geddes, 1998), lead to emotional exhaustion, one of the indicators of burnout. Others found job stressors like work overload and time pressure, rather than job demands, to be associated with emotional exhaustion (Schaufeli & Enzmann, 1998).

Several reasons can account for the inconsistencies in findings. First, there is still no universal agreement on what emotional labour is. Over the years variant ideas were put forward regarding emotional labour, its enactment, composition/dimensions, antecedents, outcomes, and indeed the concept itself (Grandey, 2000; Zapf, 2002; Zapf, Vogt, Seifert, Mertini, & Isic, 1999). Even the original framework, where emotional labour was defined as an internal struggle experienced by flight attendants when felt emotions could not be displayed and other, sometimes opposite emotions needed to be portrayed, emotional labour was measured “in terms of external characteristics of the job” (Mann, 1999, p. 348). It is this conflation of two aspects of emotional labour and lack of operational definition that lead to difficulties in measuring emotional labour empirically (Mann, 1999). It goes without saying it can be difficult to investigate something if we do not know what it is.

The second issue, that escaped the attention of many, relates to two general assumptions behind the concept. The first assumption relates to the application of the concept, which was developed through investigating flight attendants’ work in the airline industry. The concept was applied very rigidly without consideration to different work contexts. Different contexts would introduce different organisational expectations around emotional displays that would guide not only the magnitude of emotional display but also the types of emotions that need to be suppressed or expressed. For instance, criminal interrogators in Rafaeli and Sutton’s (1991) study had to display negative emotions, while the majority of workers in other service sectors need to suppress negative emotions and display positive emotions (Mann, 1999). According Martines-Inigo, Totterdell, Alcover, and Holman (2007) requirements regarding which emotions need to be suppressed and which ones need to be expressed can result in a different impacts of emotional labour. It is possible that other, organisationally determined, aspects of face-to-face work that depend

on the profession itself would also change how emotional labour is performed and its consequences for individual workers.

The second assumption relates to the idea of negative outcomes of emotional labour. Currently, most literature on emotional labour focuses only on its negative consequences (Kruml & Geddes, 2000). This leads to the third issue. For Hochschild (1983), emotional labour was synonymous with workers' self-alienation (Shuler & Sypher, 2000) and thus, could cause only negative outcomes (Sass, 2000). It seems that for a lot of researchers the main value of the concept of emotional labour is its ability to explain work-related stress, burnout, and job satisfaction from a new standpoint; that of affective states and rules of appropriate display of appropriate emotions at an appropriate time.

There is a myriad of models of work-related stress and burnout as well as empirical examinations of these phenomena already and many factors have been put forward to explain the reasons that lead to employees' stress and burnout (for an overview see Kenny & McIntyre, 2005; Kompier & Taris, 2005). However, by looking only at the negative side of emotional labour a lot of possibilities for both research and practical application are overlooked. Rather, emotional labour needs to be considered from a standpoint that allows for the understanding of emotions involved in labour (James, 1992) with a potentially positive and not just a negative impact for individual workers.

Hochschild's (1983) original work on emotional labour warned of the negative consequences of commodifying emotions. The word commodification has a negative slant, especially when used in a context of offering emotions as a product for the purpose of organisational profit. It can be attributed to linking of this concept with Marxist ideology and beliefs around mechanisms of development of the capitalism (Marxists Internet

Archive, Encyclopaedia of Marxism, Glossary of terms, Index of the Letter C, Commodification, para. 2). Hochschild (1983) herself makes references to Marx and his examinations of “the human cost of becoming an instrument of labour” (p. 3) and draws similarities between victims of the gruelling impact of child labour of the nineteenth century and, in her view, the gruelling impact of emotional labour on flight attendants.

Although the majority of current authors and researchers have lost Hochschild’s (1983) ideological emphasis on exploitation and instead examined emotional labour in terms of individual and organisational well-being (Grandey, 2000; Morris & Feldman, 1996), most have, nevertheless, retained the negativism of the original discourse. In turn, this bias affected the general view of emotional labour as detrimental to workers’ psychological health and wellbeing and thus shaped the direction of empirical enquiries along a narrow path.

General Research Findings

The two studies that investigated emotional labour in the contexts and occupations closest to those of the current research are qualitative (Karabanow, 1999; Yanay & Shahr, 1998). In his study, Karabanow (1999) explored the concept of emotional labour in Canadian workers at a youth shelter. The nature of emotional labour was identified within the themes of ‘giving one’s heart out’, ‘pro-kid’, and ‘workers’ status’ of being friends rather than professionals when interacting with youth at the shelter. Clear links were shown between organisational demands or display rules placed upon workers’ expressions and emotional labour performance.

The negative consequences of emotional labour performance demonstrated by Karabanow (1999) seemed to be isolated to workers’ beliefs that for management, what the

workers did was never enough and never good enough. The un-appreciation was combined with enormous pressure, created by the display rules, of always needing to give more. Interestingly, little was discussed around performance of emotional labour with 'clients' – youth at the shelter. Rather, emotional labour seemed to arise in interactions with management and the display rules. This, however, illuminates an important aspect of emotional labour, one that often was overlooked. Emotional labour is not performed only with clients and its negative impact can result from the overall organisational structure.

Yanay and Shahr (1998) investigated emotional labour performed by third year psychology students at a residential psychiatric facility in Israel. Feeling rules (display rules) were seen as professional modes of feeling and behaving in relation to residents of the facility. The difficulties students encountered related to the uncertainty of what it was to be a professional. Performance of emotional labour was a constant negotiation between having 'normal' emotional reactions, like anger or desire to yell at provocations from the residents, on the one hand and the discourse of appropriate professional feelings and behaviour on the other (Yanay & Shahr, 1998). Students had to control their emotions according to their perceptions of what is professionally appropriate.

In their study Brotheridge and Gradney (2002) separated conceptualisations of emotional labour into job-focused and employee-focused to investigate their prediction of burnout (consisting of emotional exhaustion, depersonalisation, and diminished sense of personal accomplishment) in five occupational groupings. The *Job-focused* emotional labour was conceptualised as emotional work demands (intensity, frequency, duration, and variety) in interactions with customers and perceived control over expression of specific emotions (also known as display rules), while the *employee-focused* emotional labour was

conceptualised as experience and process of managing both emotions and their expressions required by the former (through surface and/or deep acting). The authors wanted to test differences in emotion work demands and burnout by occupation, the impact of emotional regulation, emotional demands and control on burnout (Brotheridge & Grandey, 2002).

Human service workers were found to have the highest levels of emotion work demands for control over emotional expressions. Occupation type was not found to predict emotional exhaustion. The only factor that was significantly related to exhaustion was a perceived need to hide negative emotions, like anger and fear. What is of interest for the current study is Brotheridge and Grandey's (2002) finding regarding two other markers of burnout – depersonalisation and personal accomplishment. The authors found depersonalisation to be lowest in human service professions, in this case nurses and social workers, while sense of personal accomplishment was significantly higher than in other occupational sectors they investigated. This finding does not support the claims that human service sector workers, specifically nurses, are highest in burnout (Maslach, 1982). Human service workers also reported higher rates of deep acting, which were found to be associated with greater sense of personal accomplishment and self-efficacy (Brotheridge & Grandey, 2002).

Brotheridge and Lee (2002) took Ashforth & Humphrey's (1993) definition of emotional labour as an act of displaying organisationally required emotions but added job demands as antecedents of emotional labour. In order to display appropriate emotions workers engage in surface and deep acting, thereby exerting effort. For the authors, types of acting were resources that rely on social support, role identification, and ability to self-regulate and self-monitor. In order to satisfy job demands or display rules the resources are

exhausted. Job demands, categorised as frequency, intensity, and variety of interpersonal interactions, trigger emotional labour. The authors proposed that if job demands and available resources are out of balance, emotional labour would cause negative effects, like burnout.

The results show that performance of emotional labour through deep acting relates to the sense of authenticity, which, in turn, negatively relates to emotional exhaustion. Supportive relationships were found to increase rewarding relationships, which is important because the lack of rewarding relationships was associated with depersonalisation, emotional exhaustion, and inauthenticity, and the latter was found to correlate with the reduced sense of personal accomplishment. Brotheridge and Lee (2002) explain the importance of rewarding relationships with customers and a sense of authenticity in relation to well-being independent of frequency of interactions, because they explain why previous research did not find a relationship between frequency of interaction and distress.

A similar idea was used by de Jonge et al., (2008). They wanted to test how balancing or matching the resources at work with job demands would impact on employee well-being, indicated by level of emotional exhaustion, motivation, and creativity. The resources included support from colleagues and supervisors and job control, the latter implied in Ashforth and Humphrey's (1993) framework.

They found that emotional job resources did indeed moderate the relationship between job demands and employee wellbeing. de Jonge et al., (2008) argue that burnout results from having to perform emotionally demanding interactions combined with the lack or unavailability of resources like support. They only, however, included one indicator of burnout – emotional exhaustion. Depersonalisation and loss of sense of personal

accomplishment were not included. Therefore, to say that their results explain development of burnout is exaggerated. Interestingly, some job demands (those including interactions with aggressive patients) were found to be associated with indicators of wellbeing, motivation and creativity, when high level of support was available. Also, those health professionals who reported high job control also reported high motivation, showing that having control may translate into less effort when dealing with job demands.

The impact of emotional labour can be mitigated by other factors as well. A qualitative study by Karabanow (1991) on workers at a children's shelter discovered that positive identification with work and a sense of solidarity and support from co-workers mitigate the impact of emotional labour. Abraham (1998) also found social support as well as job autonomy to moderate emotional dissonance, which she identified "as one of the sources of the negative impact of emotional labour" (p. 243).

Organisational Context of the Current Research

The organisation where the current research study was undertaken, preferred to stay anonymous. Therefore, it will be referred to as a 'community mental health organisation' or just 'organisation'. The information presented herein is predominantly based on communications with the Regional Manager of the community mental health organisation (Anonymous, personal communication, November 19, 2008) and the team leader (Anonymous, personal communication, 28 November, 2008). It also draws on information available in the Fieldwork Orientation Manual (Anonymous, Fieldwork Orientation Manual, 2007).

Background

The community mental health organisation that collaborated with me on the current research project was formed with the purpose of assisting families of people diagnosed with a mental illness (Anonymous, Fieldwork Orientation Manual, 2007). The Auckland branch, where the data collection will take place, is the largest in the country and covers the four Northern Region District Health Boards (Anonymous, Fieldwork Orientation Manual, 2007).

The organisation supports families of people who are experiencing mental health issues rather than consumers of mental health services (Anonymous, personal communication, November 19, 2008). The organisation provides families with free support, advocacy, education, (Anonymous, personal communication, November 19, 2008) as well as information about mental illness and various service providers. Their core values reflect both the nature of the work provided for families and the aim of that work and include: empowerment, partnership, compassion, support, and hope (Anonymous, Fieldwork Orientation Manual, 2007).

The importance of supporting families in mental health results from the belief that when a family member is experiencing a mental illness, all family members, including the extended family, are affected by it. The main aim of this organisation is to enhance the ability of families to deal with such challenges so they can sustain their own wellbeing and can aid the family member experiencing mental illness (Anonymous, personal communication, November 19, 2008).

Support at the organisation includes peer support, support groups, Maori services, Asian services, and Pacific services as well as phone, email, and face-to-face support

(Anonymous, personal communication, November 28, 2008). The delivery of day-to-day services to families and actual work with families, either at the offices of the organisation or at families' private residential addresses, is done by fieldworkers (Anonymous, personal communication, November 28, 2008).

Fieldwork at the Organisation

Fieldworkers come to the organisation from various backgrounds. The selection criteria for employment ranges from personal/family/friend experience of mental illness to having had prior work experience in a mental health field. The main focus of applicant selection is on the person and what they can offer to the organisation and families that the organisation supports rather than prior work experience (Anonymous, personal communication, November 19, 2008).

Half of the workload carried by each individual fieldworker includes direct work with families and includes aspects of support mentioned previously. The direct work includes visiting families at their residences, telephone work, and write up of case notes. The other half is a combination of "shared team objectives/meetings, facilitating family/whānau support groups, promotional events, networking with local agencies, keeping up with new readings and presenting the organisation or training programmes to other services" (Anonymous, Fieldwork Orientation Manual, 2007, p. 15).

Training of Fieldworkers

Training of fieldworkers at the organisation includes the initial orientation upon entry into the organisation, where novice fieldworkers are familiarised with policies and the general fieldworker role (Anonymous, personal communication, November 19, 2008). There is also ongoing professional training, which was brought to my attention by the

fieldworkers during the focus-group interview. As a result of this information new questions regarding ongoing training were added to the questions for individual interviews.

The orientation manual contains information that can be seen as establishing display rules. They are not presented as overt specifications of appropriate or inappropriate emotional displays of fieldworkers but rather seem to give direction. “...act in a supportive manner, be warm and friendly with clients, but keep it in the context of a working relationship” (Anonymous, Fieldwork Orientation Manual, 2007, p. 16). The manual also describes ways of dealing with situations where the appropriate display fails, for one reason or another, like seeking assistance from a supervisor or colleagues.

Current Theoretical Framework

In this research, performance of emotional labour, when applied to the mental health field, is not conceptualised as organisationally forced modes of feeling and thinking that commodify emotions and disregard human beings as expendable resources. This supposition shaped the main aim of the current research – to investigate emotional labour without the preconceived expectations that emotional labour is unpleasant to those performing it and has a necessarily negative impact on workers.

Theoretical Framework Used in Current Study

Through the literature study it is clear that there is no one way to conceptualise emotional labour. Emotional labour and its performance have never been explored in fieldworkers. Furthermore, because of the impact of the context/organisation on emotional labour, existing frameworks are not expected to have a good fit with the context chosen for the current study. However, Grandey’s (2000) conceptualisation of emotional labour as

emotional regulation was the closest, out of all presented frameworks, to my own understanding of emotional labour.

Some aspects of Grandey's (2000) framework – emotional labour as emotional regulation, presence of display rules, impact on emotional labour from individual and organisational factors, and impact of emotional labour on a person's wellbeing – are incorporated into the current theoretical framework (see Figure 4.). It merely demonstrates what aspects of emotional labour performance were inquired during data collection.

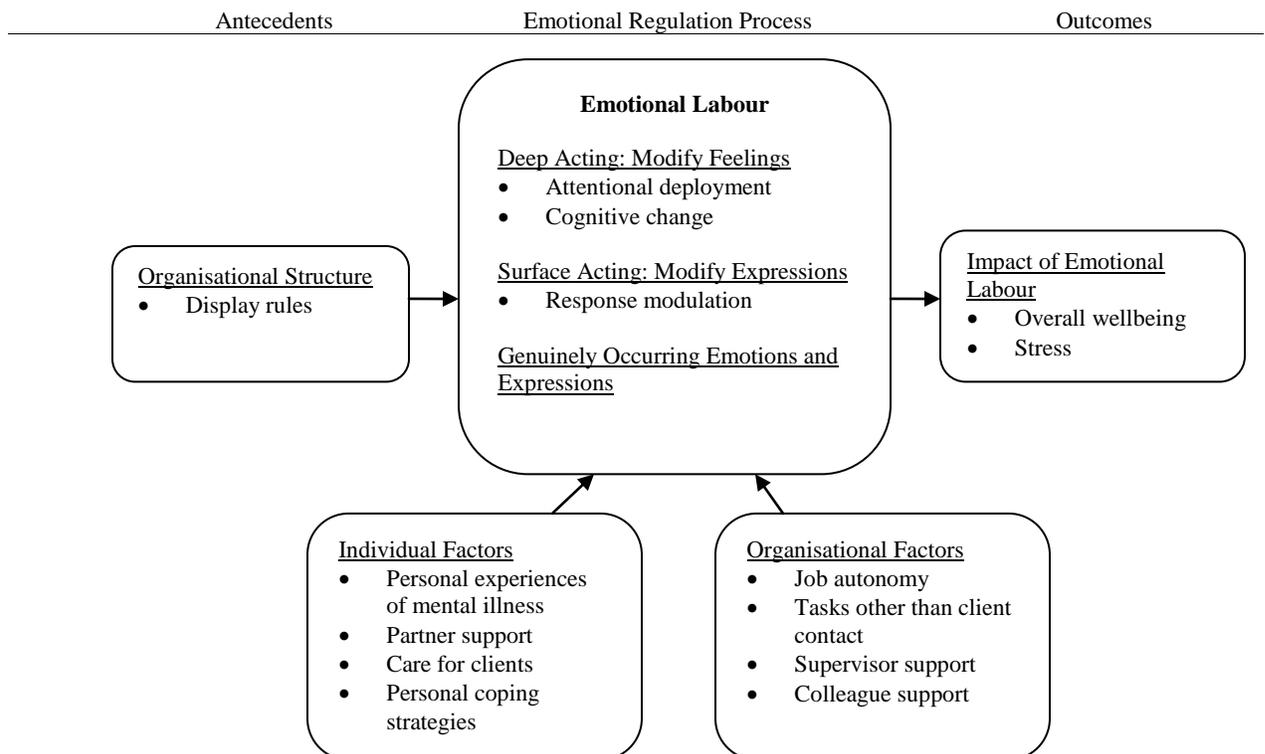


Figure 4. Conceptual framework of emotional labour in the current study (Adapted from Grandey, 2000, p. 101).

Some parts of the framework were modified based on research findings as well as my own assumptions about and interests in performing emotional labour in the mental health context. The left side of the framework in Figure 4. contains *organisational context* as an antecedent of emotional labour. As it was shown, context shapes emotional labour, therefore it was deemed important to investigate. I added *genuinely occurring emotions* as proposed by Ashforth and Humphrey (1993) as a third mechanism of enacting emotional labour. As it was demonstrated by James (1989, 1992) genuine care is a part of the nursing role. I propose that the same would be true for fieldworkers. Therefore *care* and *empathy* were added to individual factors that influence emotional labour performance.

Personal experiences were added because the community mental health organisation where current research project was undertaken hires fieldworkers based on their previous work and/or personal/family experiences with emotional difficulties of someone in their families. Coping, or rather the ways people cope with stress, impacts on their mental health (Aldwin, 1994). Therefore, *coping strategies* were also added as they may promote the ability to handle stress that can result from interpersonal contact with clients. Although *partner support* is not technically an individual factor, it may provide a worker with additional lines of coping with job-stressors. *Organisational forms of support* and *job autonomy* were left from the original framework as these two factors promote positive outcomes when performing emotional labour (de Jonge et al., 2008).

I added *tasks other than client contact* to organisational factors because fieldworkers' job-requirements do not include only client contact. Outcomes of emotional labour substituted individual wellbeing because the scope of the current research is limited and individual well-being is too broad to investigate in detail. *Stress* substituted burnout in

the individual outcomes of emotional labour because measuring burnout is beyond the scope of this research, while inquiring into stress levels of fieldworkers can be done during interviews. *Overall wellbeing* was added to allow participants to talk freely about any impact they perceive client contact may have on them, be it positive or negative.

Construct Definitions

For the purpose of clarification, the following section presents and defines construct definitions that will be used in this study

Emotional Labour: Refers to the process of regulating both feelings and expressions for organisational goals (Grandey, 2000)

Emotional Regulation: Refers to the process of influencing temporal (when) and qualitative (types) experience and expression of emotions (Gross, 1998b)

Display rules: Rules around the display of appropriate emotions, at appropriate times, and with appropriate intensity (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993).

Deep acting: inducing an emotion that is thought to be required and then displaying it (Hochschild, 1983)

Attentional Deployment: Refers to the way people direct their attention within a situation that requires a specific emotional display, in order to influence their felt emotions (Gross & Thompson, 2007)

Cognitive Change: Refers to how people assess the situation that requires a specific emotional display and thereby alter the emotional significance of that situation. Done by either altering how they think about the situation or altering thoughts about their capacity to cope with it (Gross & Thompson, 2007)

Surface acting: displaying an emotion that is seen as appropriate but without actually feeling it (Hochschild, 1983)

Response modulation: Refers to modulation of emotional expression (Gross & Thompson, 2007)

Empathy: Refers to the ability to understand another person's experience and to 'feel with' the other person (Cormier & Hackney, 2005)

Authenticity: Refers to a sense of personal 'trueness' or genuineness in regard to emotional experiences and expressions (based on Hochschild's (1983) definition of inauthenticity).

Job Autonomy: Refers to having control over performance of and decision-making around work-related tasks (Schaufeli & Enzmann, 1998).

Conclusion

In this Chapter I presented the relevant literature and background for the current study. It reflected the multidimensionality and complexity of the construct of emotional labour and clarified the need for further research. Information about the community mental health organisation where the data collection took place and fieldworkers was presented to provide the background for the context where this study will be undertaken. The theoretical framework to be used in this study was also presented and constructs clarified. The following Chapter discusses methodological process used in this research.

Chapter 3

Methodology

This chapter begins with the rationale for a qualitative approach and explains the researcher's subjective and epistemological position within the research. It then describes the participant sample, the research design, the process of data collection and analysis, and discusses ethical considerations and the issues of trustworthiness. Limitations of the methodology are also discussed.

Qualitative Design

This research project is a qualitative inquiry study. Qualitative research aims to answer research questions by investigating social settings and individual people in these settings (Berg, 2001). I wanted to get a deeper understanding of emotional labour among fieldworkers at the community mental health organisation, which made qualitative design a logical choice. The reason for choosing a qualitative design was also governed by the kind of information I wanted to gather. My intent was to investigate field workers' perceptions of their training at the organisation, how they think it prepares them for emotional labour and other aspects involved in working with clients, what they think about emotional labour (even though they may not use this term), how they perform it and how it affects them, what types of acting are predominant, and whether authenticity is compromised or enhanced when performing emotional labour in the participants' mental health field.

These types of questions, according to Denzin and Lincoln (2003) can only be answered using a qualitative approach because qualitative research aims to: (1) understand the meaning of the phenomena under investigation for the participants, (2) preserve individuality of participants' accounts and thus understand how meanings and actions are

formed by the unique conditions, and (3) identify unexpected influences, due to the flexibility of qualitative approaches (Maxwell, 2005). Also, because of the complexity of emotional labour concept and framework there is a need for depth and complexity of individual accounts rather than a shallower, ‘en-masse’ account provided by quantitative research (Mason, 2002).

Researcher's Position

Qualitative research design is also congruent with my epistemological position of social-constructionism. This position implies interest in specific cases within specific contexts (Patton, 2002), which is a singularly qualitative interest, and assumes that our understanding of the world and indeed, ourselves is constructed through communicative social processes (Coyle, 2007).

I take a social-constructionist stance both in looking at emotional labour, its past and present incarnations, and in investigating emotional labour in fieldworkers. This stance urges us to be critical in our observations of any phenomena and to question taken for granted assumptions and singular truths (Burr, 2003). Through this questioning the general view of emotional labour as negative appears to be both limited and limiting, as it allows only for a restricted line of inquiry.

It is important, at this stage, to explain that the theoretical framework described in the previous chapter was chosen more as a framework of understanding and a representation of how I think emotional labour may present itself in field-workers’ practice. It is not my aim to test applicability of this or other frameworks, because that will imply a supposition of a “singular truth and linear prediction” (Patton, 2002, p. 546), to which I do not subscribe. Neither do I expect that the framework will apply directly and rigidly to the

experiences of fieldworkers. Therefore data analysis, described further in this chapter, will be data- rather than theory-driven. Themes, identified during thematic analysis (chapters four and five), will not necessarily follow this framework. Rather I intended to leave space for participants' individual accounts to take shape, while allowing myself and readers the benefit of a (subjective) structure and visual representation of my assumptions around emotional labour.

Furthermore, my interest in this project, the focus of this interest, my own ideas, beliefs, and experiences were some of the factors that shaped the current study. The research was performed with the help of fieldworkers, with their own sets of 'realities', beliefs, and perceptions. Results of the research were discursively constructed during interviews, where a shared reality was built through the convergence of various individual contributions. The results presented in the next chapter are the fruits of that shared reality.

Recruiting Participants

Six fieldworkers from the Auckland branch of the community mental health organisation – the name of the organisation was omitted from the write up on request from the Regional Manager of the Auckland branch of the organisation – volunteered to take part in the interview. Six was deemed to be an appropriate number for a qualitative research of this magnitude. To be selected for this research the only criteria participants had to fit was being a fieldworker of the Auckland branch of the organisation. The Auckland branch was chosen for its geographical location and impossibility for me to travel to branches in other cities.

The first contact with the organisation was made by my secondary supervisor who then suggested, at the brainstorming process of this research, that research can be

conducted at this particular organisation. After holding several meetings with the Regional Manager of the Auckland branch I gave a presentation to all fieldworkers interested in participating, reiterating major research questions. Several copies of the Information Sheet (Appendix 1) were brought to the meeting and given to all the fieldworkers that came. Fieldworkers were encouraged to express any questions or concerns they had about research and participation during the presentation. No incentive to participate was offered to fieldworkers, apart from an opportunity to share their knowledge, understanding, passion, and beliefs about their work. They were encouraged to contact either myself or their fellow-fieldworker, who was my liaison at the organisation, to express their availability to participate or to ask any questions regarding the research.

It was decided that if more than six fieldworkers express their desire to participate in this research the first six who contact me would be accepted. In the end, this selection was unnecessary as exactly six fieldworkers volunteered. Out of the six four were New Zealand European, one was Maori, and one was Pacific Islander. This created an opportunity to investigate a possible cultural impact on understanding of face-to-face work and emotional labour. Other demographic characteristics were not collected as they had no bearing on the current research.

Research Design

The research design for the current research is summarised in the following list.

1. Before undertaking data collection, literature on emotional labour was intensively investigated. It provided information into the research on the topic up to date and highlighted gaps, one of which the current research attempts to address

2. Research proposal and Ethics application were submitted and approval received for both. The process of approval for the latter included an in-depth consideration of the procedures to be used in the current research and their adherence to Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee's standards and guidelines in regard to conducting research involving participants. These included issues around participants' rights, of informed consent, and confidentiality.
3. Potential participants were contacted on their work site first through the Regional Manager of the organisation and then me. A presentation on the research was given after which a meeting for focus-group and later for individual interviews were arranged.
4. Semi-structured, open-ended interviews were conducted with six volunteering participants.
5. Transcriptions of the interview data were completed and sent out to participants for authenticity control
6. Analysis of the data was done within the framework of data-driven thematic analysis.

Data Collection Method

Data for this research was obtained during interviews with the fieldworkers working in the Auckland branch of the organisation. Data collection was undertaken in a two-stage process. The first stage included a focus-group interview with all six participants that lasted for approximately an hour-and-a-half. The rationale behind conducting the focus-group was to 'prime' and stimulate participants' thinking around questions they may not have

contemplated or verbalised before. Therefore, during this stage more general questions around their participants' work and training, their feelings and attitudes towards work, and supervision were presented.

The second stage of data collection consisted of individual interviews, one interview with each participant. The duration of individual interviews ranged from approximately fifty minutes to an hour and a half, depending on individual participants, and likely, their communication styles. At this stage the questions were constructed to elicit more in-depth, detailed answers from participants. The questions concerned 'shape' and performance of emotional labour among fieldworkers, as well as possible display rules and where they were perceived to emanate from, types of acting engaged in during family work, emotions and emotional displays that were considered to be appropriate and inappropriate and why, how it applied to 'difficult' clients, and the experience of stress in relation to family work and ways of coping.

Questions for the interviews were constructed based on the information presented in various empirical and theoretical literatures on emotional labour. The Fieldwork Orientation Manual helped to ground these questions in fieldwork practice. It provided guidance for interview questions in regard to training, supervision, and fieldworkers' perception of appropriate versus inappropriate emotional displays and 'being' with families. Other 'inspiration' for question construction came from my postgraduate psychology training and my understanding of how emotional labour may 'shape up' in a mental health context. This means that, to an extent, the research and where the discussions with participants went was guided by me, my interests, and maybe even my own beliefs

and convictions around emotional labour. This was somewhat mitigated due to the semi-structured nature of the interviews.

A list of questions was generated based on the sources described above. Those were the questions that were deemed important to ask every participant as they were meant to answer the research questions. These questions guided the interview process and elicited information, to an extent. The process was also guided by individual participants. Their stories and accounts varied and more details were sought within those individual stories by additional questions that often varied from participant to participant.

Both the focus-group interview and the individual interviews were semi-structured (see Appendix 2 for the interview schedule) and open-ended (see Appendix 3 for the interview schedule). The choice of semi-structured interviews over structured interviews was based on my belief that no one person will describe one specific event event in the same way; the understanding of and meaning given to that event is governed by their life experiences, socialisation, and context. I wanted to allow for these differences to emerge and be investigated. The choice of semi-structured interviews over unstructured resulted purely from me not feeling confident enough without the 'backup' of written questions in front of me. Interviews were audio recorded and later transcribed. Transcriptions of the audio data were done by the researcher. The guidelines for transcriptions were loosely based on McLellan, MacQueen, and Neidig (2003) and the Unified Committee for Afro-American Contributions and the Southern Maryland Folklife Project (2003). Since the Results Chapter contains rich descriptions for the data in the form transcripts excerpts, the transcription key is included in the Appendix 4. Transcripts are available from the researcher on request.

Any transcription relies on interpretation of recorded discourse by the transcriber (Fairclough, 1992). Interpretation is subjective of the researcher's position by default (Parker, 2005). Therefore, the researcher/participant relationship was treated as collaborative, a collective process of understanding the experience of emotional labour and face-to-face work. Participants were offered to review transcribed interviews after they were completed in order to ensure their accounts were as authentic as possible as well as to comply with ethical guidelines and give participants a chance to withdraw some of the information from the interviews. All participants opted for reviewing the transcripts. Sufficient time was given for the review. In the end no changes were made in any of the transcripts, because some participants believed no changes were required while others opted out from reviewing transcripts due to other commitments.

Method of Data Analysis

Thematic analysis (TA) was utilised for the purpose of data analysis. At the core of thematic analysis is the identification of patterns and themes present in the data (Boyatzis, 1998), which are subsequently coded and analysed (Braun & Clarke, 2006). These characteristics make it a useful and an appropriate approach for this study. During and after transcription, 'stories' of all participants' are coded according to the themes 'emerging' both within individual data sets and across data sets. Then, assumptions and ideas underlying the emergent themes will be examined (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

Because of the limited amount of research into emotional labour and training among field workers this investigation will attempt to only investigate some aspects of the latter two phenomena. Thematic analysis provides a useful tool to investigate how and what field

workers think about emotional labour and their work with clients because thematic analysis as a research tool provides a rich and complex account of data (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

Braun and Clarke (2006) recommend six steps or phases of the TA. These steps are described below.

Step 1: Familiarising yourself with the data. The familiarisation process started during the interview transcription and before the formal data analysis stage. Each transcript was be read twice. The first reading allowed me to become more familiar with the data. The second reading combined surface identification of codes written on the transcript with a pencil.

Step 2 and 3: Generating initial codes and searching for themes. During this stage a more active generation of codes within the data took place and identification of broader level themes began. Coding was done manually, first, using a pencil. As the coding continued, broader level themes were begun to be identified. Codes that were seen as falling into a theme were written using the same colour. Numbers were also assigned to each code. The same number and colour was given to repeating codes; for instance, every time participants talked about training it was written in red and assigned number the ten. Recalling from the interviews, there were variations within participants' accounts around training. For instance, they talked about their experience of training as well as possible improvements of training. The codes for these then, were also written in red and were assigned numbers of ten point one and so on. In order to make sure that each identified code was related to a broader theme I referred back to the theme the code seemed to fall into. If it did not seem to fall into an already identified theme, it was left written in pencil.

Every time a new theme was identified I compared codes left written in pencil with these new themes to see if they ‘fit’.

All identified codes and preliminary themes were then collated. Collation was done manually by copying extracts of data and a corresponding preliminary theme every time it was identified within a transcript. The list of the preliminary themes identified within the transcripts of each interview is presented in Appendix 5.

Step 4: Reviewing the themes. In this stage the developed preliminary themes were reviewed and refined. All coded data extracts comprising each theme were re-read to ensure they formed a coherent homogenous pattern. At this stage some of the themes collapsed into each other when their overall meaning was closely related. Appendix 6 contains these refined themes. Soundness of the preliminary themes in the relation to the entire data set was considered to determine if they accurately represent the meaning of the entire data set.

Step 5: Defining and naming themes. During this stage the identified themes were further refined to capture the essence of each theme. Each previously identified theme was re-read together with data extracts representing it while considering what each theme represented from the data. By considering this broader level of meaning themes were further collapsed into overall themes and possibly sub-themes. These final themes are presented in Appendix 7 and described in chapter 5.

Step 6: Producing the report. This step involved the write up of the report based on the results from the thematic analysis. Chapter 4 presents these results as well as describes a number of decisions that need to be made before the formal analysis starts.

Ethical Considerations

In any research, but especially in social science research, there are ethical obligations that need to be fulfilled; participants' "rights, privacy, and welfare" need to be ensured (Berg, 2001, p. 39). To ensure participants are able to make an informed consent about their participation in the current research, copies of all relevant information about this research project was provided in writing. They were also given the opportunity to ask questions before the data collection stage commenced. After ensuring that the participants knew what the research participation entailed, each signed a consent form.

To protect participants' privacy and ensure full confidentiality, participants were given a choice of using pseudonyms or any other 'code' in transcripts and the final write up of the research. In the end it was decided to use numbers that were chosen based on the turn they spoke during the focus-group interview (e.g., the first participant who spoke was 'coded' as Participant 1 (P1) and so on). The majority of participants were female therefore, the male participant is more readily identifiable. To ensure his anonymity a female pronoun is used in relation to all participants and although it hides gendered responses, confidentiality was deemed to take precedence. Also, to ensure the anonymity of the organisation, as requested by the manager of the Auckland branch, the name of the organisation is not used and instead, I refer to it 'community mental health organisation' or just 'organisation'. The name is also omitted from the in-text citations, from the reference list, and from the Information Sheet in Appendix 1.

Interviews were recorded on a digital voice recorder and after interviews each voice file was transferred on the researcher's password protected laptop. The

researcher was the only one who has access to the laptop. The voice files were deleted from the recorder after the transfer. Precautions were taken in regard to keeping transcripts and especially consent forms and nobody but the researcher had access to the latter. Only the researcher and her supervisor had access to the former of which participants were informed. No identifiable information is contained in the final report.

Quality and Credibility

Tests of rigour, reliability, and validity are necessarily carried out in quantitative research. But these standards do not transfer directly to qualitative research because the concepts themselves carry a different set of meaning within these two paradigms (Davies & Dodd, 2002; Stenbacka, 2001). Thus a direct transfer of quantitative evaluation standards to qualitative research is problematic. According to Coyle (2007) there is no one agreed upon criteria for evaluation of qualitative research. Patton (2002), on the other hand, argues that there are well established standards in evaluative criteria but they depend on the chosen approach of the qualitative inquiry.

Guba and Lincoln (1998) propose two sets of criteria to judge quality of a constructivist inquiry: trustworthiness criteria and authenticity criteria. Trustworthiness includes credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. Authenticity includes fairness, ontological authenticity, educative authenticity, catalytic authenticity, and tactical authenticity. Due to the scale of this project it will be impractical to utilise all of these procedures and in their full scope. The main steps undertaken here include establishing credibility and transferability, fairness, ontological, and educational authenticities. Following is the description of the procedures utilised to satisfy two evaluative criteria.

Credibility

This criterion suggests accuracy in understanding depth of the matter being investigated and accuracy of interpretations and results from the viewpoint of both the participants and the researcher (Rodwell, 1998). To satisfy this criterion data sources were triangulated (Lincoln & Guba, 1985), which refers to improving validity of the findings by obtaining information from various sources and using multiple methods (Mathison, 1988). Information was obtained from six individuals, who were asked some of the same but also some different questions. This ensured that collected data was rich and reflected both the breadth and depth of the participants' positions. I was also aware of my assumptions and subjective position from the very beginning of the research and ensured that it was clarified in the write up of the research. The audio recorded interviews were transcribed ensuring they adequately reflect participants' meanings. For the same purposes transcripts were given to participants to review (where two chose not to review). Transcript excerpts are also included when reporting findings in the next chapter.

Transferability

This criterion is reflective of external validity or generaliseability in quantitative research (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The literature review demonstrated that even in quantitative research on emotional labour there were often issues of generaliseability of findings across contexts – organisations and occupations. To address the issue of transferability I provided a detailed overview of fieldworkers' role and the organisation within which they work, to specify the context in which current findings may also apply. Data analysis may also provide some variables that are specific to fieldworkers.

Fairness

Fairness, according to Lincoln and Guba (2000) refers to balance in giving equal voice to the participants. Therefore in data analysis there would be no omissions of participants' perspectives and beliefs. Equal value was be given to all contributions in both the analysis and the write up of the results.

Ontological Authenticity

This criterion refers to the increasing knowledge, understanding and awareness of the issue of investigation (Rodwell, 1998) as well as self-awareness (Lincoln & Guba, 2000). This was achieved through extensive reading on the topic of emotional labour and familiarising myself with the organisation and fieldworkers' role before conducting data collection. It also involved the reflexive process of 'locating' myself within the frameworks of emotional labour and research, and being aware of my own knowledge and position in regard to the topic.

Educative Authenticity

This criterion refers to awareness of others' perspectives (Rodwell, 1998). In my mind this criterion is closely link to respect or rather respectful awareness. Participants' individual views were respected and valued. When I was receiving different answers to the ones I was expecting I investigated further to get a deeper understanding of the participants' position and beliefs, which I believed only increased the richness of the gathered data as well as my expanded my own view of the issue under investigation.

Limitations

One of the main limitations was utilisation of only some procedures to ensure trustworthiness and authenticity. But, as mentioned previously, due to the scope of this research, employing all of the procedures was impractical.

Another aspect of the research that may appear as a limitation, which is inherent in much of qualitative research, is subjectivity. But, according to Rubin and Babbie (2009) researchers paradigm would determine whether subjectivity is a strength or a weakness. In social constructionist research we are interested in specific, discursively constructed realities that are subjective and reflect a shared meaning of social actors (Lincoln & Guba, 2000). My position has been described at the beginning of this chapter. In this research the question of subjectivity versus objectivity is not judged in relation to the researcher, but rather in relation to “the manner in which conceptual categories are arrived at” (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 334). To ensure that results reflect a shared meaning produced through the process of interviews rather than notions impinged upon data by the researcher, a combination of participants’ own terms and theoretical constructs chosen by the researcher were used to arrive at conceptual categories. The possible weakness here is the chosen theory-driven rather than inductive approach. To mitigate that transcript excerpts are used throughout the results chapter and a detailed account of theme and code development is described in the next chapter.

Conclusion

In this Chapter I described the methodology utilised for the current research. The chapter presented a detailed account of the participants, data collection process, ethical considerations, and quality and credibility of the research process and results. The

researcher's position was clarified in relation to epistemology and its impact on the research process and evaluation was discussed. The next chapter explains a number of decisions pertaining to TA that were made before the formal analysis took place and presents the results of the data analysis.

Chapter 4

Results

This section presents the data analysis process undertaken in the current research. It then describes the results, in the form of themes, that were generated during the data analysis phase.

Data Analysis Process

Thematic analysis (TA) was used for the purpose of data analysis. Steps undertaken during analysis, that were described in the previous chapter, were originally formulated by Braun and Clarke (2006), who claim that TA “should be considered a method in its own right” rather than a tool used as a part of other qualitative methodologies (p. 78). The following decisions were made before the analysis, based on recommendations by Braun and Clarke (2006).

Decision 1: What counts as a theme? This is a question of prevalence of a theme within individual data items (in this case each of the individual and one group interviews with participants) as well as across the data set (Braun & Clarke, 2006). It is not to say that the more the theme is found to be present across the data set the more central it is or that it needs to consist of many data items. In qualitative research these considerations do not amount to quantity but rather whether an identified theme “captures something important in relation to the overall research question” (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 82). Therefore, attention was paid equally to all the data items in the process of theme generation.

The decision as to whether a theme is present would be based on its meaning within and across the data set and what it contributes to answering and considering the research question. Since the concept of emotional labour is still being developed, and was never

investigated in fieldworkers, attention will be given to themes generated within interviews that can contribute to better understanding of emotional labour and variables that can impact on it.

Decision 2: A rich description of the data set or a detailed account of one aspect. For the purpose of the current project it was decided that a rich description of the entire data set would be most appropriate. This research attempts to better understand what constitutes emotional labour in fieldworkers, including the influences of emotional labour and the influenced on emotional labour.

Decision 3: Inductive versus theoretical thematic analysis. In this study preference was given to the language used by participants. Theme identification was also strongly grounded in the data. However, because the current study is embedded in a social constructionist frame, interview transcripts as well as the literature on emotional labour constitute sources of information. Therefore, when it was appropriate to explain a point identified in participants' narratives, language patterns in literature were also used. My own interest and knowledge in the field of emotional labour had an impact on the process of analysis and theme development. The positioning of the researcher as a co-author is congruent with this framework.

Decision 4: Semantic or latent themes. Current analysis was focus primarily on the explicit or semantic level of meaning. According to Braun and Clarke (2006) semantic analysis is a progression from description to some interpretation. The results section focuses primarily on the description of themes generated from the data. In chapter 5 some interpretation of significant patterns is offered.

Decision 5: Epistemology. The question of epistemology was addressed in the methodology chapter. Generally, when choosing a constructionist epistemology the analysis tends to be on a latent level and focuses on specific rather than broad aspects of the data. However, my perspective can probably be labelled as weak social constructionism as I do not subscribe to a belief that a phenomenon does not exist unless someone has spoken or written about it (Hacking, 1999). As Braun and Clarke (2006) also point out “different combinations are possible” (p. 86).

Themes

Theme 1. Work Context and the Fieldworker Role

This theme incorporates information about the organisation and the services it provides. It highlights the complexity of the fieldworker role and thus demonstrates factors that can potentially impact on emotional labour and its performance.

In describing their job and their role within the organisation, fieldworkers participating in the study highlighted the multilayered nature of their work. One of the ‘layers’ pertains specifically to client or family (used interchangeably) contact. The work with families however, is not done solely face-to-face.

P1: We provide, ah, support, ah in a number of ways, we, ah, as as field workers can offer one-to-one support to our families by face-to-face meeting or ah by phone, and and and other (--.)

P2: Email text

P1: ...email yeah... predominantly it's, um-m, face-to-face meeting, and and quite often phone calls (...) support groups...

The majority of participants believed that face-to-face work is their priority when it comes to their role as fieldworkers. For example, Participant 5 said that “...families ... should be our core business ... at [name of the organisation] we are supporting families so that should be ... the main...”. Another possible reason for prioritising face-to-face contact, comparing to other types of family contact, seems to be due to funding from District Health Boards. Funding is specifically provided for face-to-face client contact.

When it comes to client contact, fieldworkers provide support for a number of difficulties. A lot of these difficulties relate to emotional turmoil experienced by families when a member is diagnosed with a mental illness.

P1: ...ah-h (..) their own um-m (..) processes their own recovery their own grief issues and and and stress and emotional issues that come out of all this (..) a-and then sometimes we are dealing with something that's a little bit beyo (--) goes a little bit further than that that peop (--) our clients themselves have got their own kind of counselling (..) or or their own issue their own personal ah-h issues that may even need individual counselling which is not what we provide but we will help them move towards the right um-m service that can provide them with that, so that might be four sort of general areas, aye, that we (--)

P3: A lot of the times when people find out (..) that their family member has a mental health issue, it can be a first timer ... and the first time they find, that (--) that's what their family member has got, it can be (..) very (..) they can suffer from grief... denial (...) guilt that was actually their fault

especially if it's a parent or sibling, that it's their fault that their brother or child has mental health issues

P4: It's kind of also I think too the um-m, first time hospitalisation is very very frightening mental health that they don't understand, um-m (..) and I think when there is a hospitalisation the families really feel left out

Other sets of difficulties fieldworkers provide support with are more practical in nature. The need for this results from the uncertainty families experience when a member is diagnosed with a mental illness. Families can struggle because they may not know what to do and how to overcome, together as a family unit, the issues that arise with the diagnosis.

P2: Communication issues often is with the teams (--) mental health teams there's knowledge there's practical stuff people often come, what happens next why I do that... how do I get this person to do this and, and so it sort of always seems to come back to (..) lack of or poor communication

P1: Sort of four broad areas would be issues with the services communications with the services and engagement and understanding of how the services operate (..) ah-h (..) how to (..) respond to and and ah-h deal with the the loved ones' mental illness and its symptoms...

Fieldworkers have to keep both aspects of emotional and practical support in mind in their work with families. They need to be aware of how to deal with the emotional issues clients present with as well as be knowledgeable in the more practical information around community services that families can access. But to define their role is not as straightforward as it might seem according to several participants. One of the participants suggested that “What we actually do depends on on on each individual person, and so it's

always hard to say what do we actually do? what's needed kind of thing [laughs]". This statement demonstrates the priority of clients as well as the individual approach to family work.

Difficulties in defining the fieldworker role are reflected in how participants talked about it, comparing and contrasting it with other mental health support workers. Their descriptions also indicate a sense of uniqueness of the role but at the same time a degree of ambiguity in defining their job.

P1: I heard it takes about a year ah ah well I could vouch that it takes a good year to sort of get a grasp on on what (..) supporting families is about and and it's quite a unique sort of a role cause it's not a clinical role but it's um-m an' an' it's not just a peer support role, it's it's somewhere in between

P4: Yeah yeah

P5: And sometimes I describe when people ask what is it that you do? you know you have to think but (--) I sometimes (--) and you know, I've heard others (..) say it like you know there's services out there for the person who has a mental illness, and they support them (..) whatever and so we are you know there for the families cause there are no others who can assist[?] with families although there are other services that are[?] attached you know

P4: Our dedicated support is to the family (...)

P5: Yeah

P4: ...not so much the unwell person but to the family

Apart from family contact, fieldworkers have other responsibilities of which there are many. These do not involve direct client contact but are nevertheless performed in order to assist families.

*P3: ...our job script is fifty percent networking (..) fifty percent case work...
so you get to also meet a whole heap of different people as well*

P1: Yeah that is in general aye (--)

P3: Absolutely

P1: ...when you interact with so many other services

*P6: And too we are probably encouraged to (..) be on different forums and
(..) phoning[?] and going (--) working parties and all kinds of stuff to make
a difference for families, be the family voice (..) so that's kind of an
additional thing but um, it's quite satisfying*

Networking is an important aspect of the fieldworkers' role. It assists fieldworkers in increasing their knowledge about community mental health organisations that their clients can access. It is also a source of exposure for the organisation and getting referrals from other health professionals. Apart from networking, fieldworkers are involved in ongoing training in order to maintain their level of skills when it comes to working with families. They receive and give presentations and workshops both within the team as well as outside of the team to other mental health workers. Almost every aspect of their work involves a high degree of face-to-face or voice-to-voice contact and all aspects are seen as very demanding.

P2: ...there's a lot of mental thought before you go into the meeting, when you go into the meeting, when you're writing up the notes, when we have these sorts of discussions, when we train and that's what I find is like from way to go there's no one part of the job [where] you're not (..) using (..) quite a lot of brain power

It is clear that the fieldworkers' role is multifaceted and includes both client contact as well as other aspects of the job that are not related directly to client contact. Participants' descriptions of their roles indicate that when considering fieldworkers and their role it is important not to focus solely on face-to-face contact with clients. When a job has this many dimensions they all need to be considered holistically. As it will become apparent from the analysis that will follow, emotion work, as seen by participants, is involved in nearly all aspects of the job and there is a lot of interconnectivity between the aspects of work and their impact on fieldworkers. The currently described theme sets the stage for further consideration of all the aspects of the fieldworker role when considering performance of emotional labour and defining what constitutes emotional labour in fieldworkers.

Theme 2. Fieldworkers' Experience of Face-to-Face Work

This theme groups together experiences of client contact the fieldworkers reported during interviews. It is the largest and the most complex theme combining two subthemes, 'Emotions and their display with clients' and 'Controlling emotions, managing with clients, and setting boundaries'. The two subthemes are discussed separately.

Subtheme 2.1. Emotions and Their Display with Clients

Face-to-face work with families, as seen by fieldworkers, involves many tasks. These tasks are seen as demanding on both the emotional as well as mental processing

level. They involve a combination of emotional connection to clients, ability to understand exactly what clients' issues might be, while keeping in mind the main aim of their work with clients, and applying rules or boundaries pertaining to client contact.

P2: Well you've got to hold everybody who's there including the unwell person and you may only be meeting one person from the family but you can't (..) you've got to sort of be aware that this is a dynamic that that's (..) that this one person might say it's all this other person, but you, you can't take sides it's not about being the advocate for that individual person, it's it's yeah, it's sort of holding all those things at once...

P1: ...to sit with a family (..) or or a number of families in the case of when you're doing a support group (..) um-m and and get your head around their situation and to also listen to some of the the um-m their stories and some of the (..) the tragic or sad things that they are going through, and then to at the same time be thinking about how you can (..) um-m support them and resource them and and and you're assessing and and and and bringing and and and (--) how you can (--) looking at how you can (..) um-m bring an intervention that will be helpful...

P3: that's what mental illness and recovery is about, it's actually person with mental illness and the one about them (--) around them, trying you know get back on their individual wakas, and the trick is trying to get them on the same waka and move forward together

P4: [the idea is] to get the family back together as a family unit, or living (..) relatively happy together that they understand the mental illness both (..)

both the unwell person and the well people in the family um-m take responsibility or their part of responsibility (. . .) mental[?] illness and living back together again

Some of the above tasks demonstrate an aspect of face-to-face work which involves a more practical part of working with families. Fieldworkers need to be able to understand what the family is going through, their need for a change, and in what areas it has to occur in order to alleviate their difficulties. They need to develop a plan and establish goals based on the families' stories.

Very often what the fieldworkers hear from clients is an array of difficulties, which they need to prioritise, based on the clients' needs as well their own professional judgement. Several fieldworkers noted that, although they do not counsel their clients but provide support, at times they do need to partially adopt the role of the counsellor because going through an emotional upheaval can trigger clients' own issues. These issues need to be addressed on some level in order to make it possible for clients to support the family member with a mental illness. If, however, personal issues are too much they help clients to get in contact with counsellors or psychologists who will assist them with resolving those issues.

It is obvious that even the more practical aspects of client work are not necessarily straightforward and easy. As one of the fieldworkers expressed when she first started working at the organisation

P2: ...there was a gap I felt of what I did with that, you know [laughs] it's like what did I (-- I'm here I'm listening and (-- how far I had to go did I have to do things for the family do I rush around

This aspect, according to another fieldworker, has been clarified more through tightening of the procedures, training, and a more comprehensible definition of the role. It helped to resolve the sense of uncertainty the original lack of understanding produced.

The practical decisions are always intertwined with emotional content of both families' experiences and those of fieldworkers themselves. As it was demonstrated in the previous theme, field-workers deal with a variety of emotional issues when working with families. When dealing with people who are in distress, vulnerable, or frustrated, fieldworkers can encounter a degree of aggression and anger from clients. Several fieldworkers experienced some form of anger from clients, where they "have had people yell and scream at me and abused", or "have people crying and swearing and yelling", or had been accused of being "heartless and rude" and getting angry and upset. These reactions from clients can be difficult to deal with and fieldworkers need to manage both clients' emotional reactions and their own and "try and control it or calm the situation".

P2: ...I had a fright once, with one family um-m (..) cause he-e heard voices... and he turned around to me it's so funny actually now and said what did you say about my balls... and he is a big guy and I went [continues to laugh] I sort of went (..) I didn't say anything, but it was real sort of oh God [in a panicked voice] what do I say what do I say to the whole thing and then I went I went back to being honest [chuckles] I didn't say anything about you know, and he went oh ok

In an everyday situation these kinds of emotional displays from another person would cause us either to answer in a similar fashion or leave to avoid a confrontation. Some

fieldworkers describe some of the similar reactions, like getting angry or wanting to leave, but they try to experience them internally without an outward display.

Some participants mentioned that the clients they sometimes need to work with “are actually not very nice people... sometimes that can be a challenge you know, you have to kind of try and keep positive...”. As another fieldworker said that “...even if we don’t like them and they are not nice people” there is still an attempt to be non-judgemental.

P2: ...like you said, we are gonna sit there and be non-judgemental [emphasis on every syllable] and I wanna go home and I watch (--) and I just go it’s just really hard to hold that non-judgemental because that’s not actually what we do as people normally, that it’s like being that fair and nice [laughs] all the time...

P6: ...I always try to be friendly and um-m still professional you definitely work with people that you don’t like (..) and even what you’re hearing like help, you don’t like it but you still you still have to work with them (..) um-m (..) but I don’t think that kind of affects (..) how I work

Fieldworkers attempt to work with all clients in a similar fashion, whether they like them or not. It is a part of what participants called being professional. It meant not letting personal likes and dislikes interfering in the work and maintaining a non-judgemental stance, friendliness, and a positive attitude. Maintaining these was done for the families’ benefit and as one fieldworker put it: “most times you’re trying be positive, because you need that positiveness to reflect onto your families”. These emotions were seen as desirable emotions to display when with clients and more will be described further in this theme.

All fieldworkers agreed that some of emotions they experience with clients are negative and should not be displayed. They would interfere with the display of positive emotions and as such are seen as damaging to clients' progress. Those emotions are anger, frustration, disgust, annoyance, and fear. Instead of these, fieldworkers believe they needed to project other emotional states, like calmness.

P3: ...sometimes you know you've got a husband for example a husband who suffers from say bipolar and say antisocial disorders (..) he really dislikes the fact that you are there with his wife, so he is yelling abuse at you and you are standing there (...) and you (--) inside you're like shaking cause you're really really scared cause this is this guy this big, and you stand there, have you finished yet? could you please stop yelling at me, still shaking inside [laughs] but the the, the look is you're calm you're collected (..) if not for anybody else's safety but your own

P6: Probably I think calm (--) being calm cause often we are in situations that are not calm you might not feel calm but you've got to be keep calm to keep control of the situation ...or even not to (..) (--) if you are feeling intimidated by the situation, I think so often there you might be feeling intimidated but you've gotta try and be calm and manage it

P1: Similar to that ah you know there's, um-m often (..) um-m cases where... you're just not sure how you can help or or or it seems very difficult and and um-m (..) you're just not sure what to do... but you you still have to present with a a calmness and, and and show that you you you still have some

confidence that you're self-confident and and till till you can get out the door [chuckles]

The importance of showing calmness and staying neutral is seen in the narratives of all participants. Staying calm or at least trying to stay calm accomplishes several things. It helps fieldworkers to stay in control and not get overwhelmed by the clients' emotions or experiences, which, as they described, had happened to all of them at one point or another. Staying calm also acts as almost a cue for clients to also calm down and thus diffuses the situation.

P5: ...in the past that I've discovered that if you (..) you know, remain calm then you're modelling for the other person and they (..) they normally calm down

P3: ...it's trying to keep this tone of voice [lowering her voice and making it softer] because you can see people (..) people lower their tone when you talk in a different mannerism

P6: ...I try and be calm (..) and I think that's my strength a lot of people I work with say I'm calm when I meet with them so I try to be calm and be in control of the situation or at least manage it, so even if they've got a say (..) how they feel or whatever still kind of be (..) in control of the situation

More often, when fieldworkers experience intense negative emotions, they do not necessarily stem from clients' anger displays. Neither are they always negative.

P3: The cool thing is (..) when people want to change (..) you know change the environment or change things around them, it's really cool to be able to be a part of that (..) the frustration comes when (...) they want the help (..)

but they don't want to change they want someone to go and fix everything, that is extremely hard because there's nothing you can do

P4: Sometimes you can work with families and you do get quite exasperated because it's (...) if only they do this or that but you can't do that...

P6: ...sometimes you can be ah-h frustrated (..) um-m because often [exhales audibly] they're half the problem or they are not helping the situation (..) sometimes with family and their reaction or inability to manage the situation is actually (..) created half the problem...

It seems that fieldworkers may have more negative emotions with clients who, for one reason or another, cannot accept the responsibility and take control of their own actions. That makes it harder for fieldworkers to do their job because clients can be more resistant to make changes. It is not to say that participants believe clients need to make it easy on them. There was an awareness that often client work can be challenging and that clients would not be there if they did not have difficulties. If there are difficulties then they would manifest when working with fieldworkers. Rather, fieldworkers experience some situations, due to an emotionally charged nature of their work, as more difficult and challenging than others.

One of the fieldworkers, for instance, spoke about experiencing “intense anger” with one of her clients. The reasons for that anger were related to the client having a lot of her own issues that needed to be addressed but were outside of the fieldworker’s scope of practice. The client was also “sabotaging” the work the fieldworker was trying to do with her and her family. The fieldworker thought the client was also making it difficult for the member of the family diagnosed with a mental disorder. As a result the fieldworker felt she

could not work with that client anymore because it was excessively hard to manage her own emotions and stay professional.

P1: it's pushing my (..) my ability out there (-- my ability to to (..) sort of hold down those sorts of feelings to sort of pushing it up, I mean the worst is... at times [chuckles] perhaps it's cause you are (-- got professional (-- your professional hat on and and and you probably (..) sort of gird yourself up more... it is pushing it out there and (..) I've (..) at times felt (..) with this client that I've I've had enough...

The anger this fieldworker was experiencing is one of the emotions all fieldworkers in the current study said was negative and detrimental to working with clients. It seems the main reason that this emotion is seen as unprofessional and as interfering with the process of face-to-face work is because it can negate other emotions that are seen as necessary for face-to-face work with people, like empathy, care for clients, and a non-judgemental attitude.

What the fieldworker was feeling with that client was her personal reaction. The client was seen as interfering in the work she was trying to do and thus the fieldworker was, in a way, making the meeting about herself or about her work. The anger did not allow for taking a step back and identifying why she was feeling what she was feeling. Another participant described a similar experience and frustration that followed when she felt stuck with her client and felt like they were going around in circles. The 'stuck-ness' was seen as the client's fault and the fieldworker recalled thinking "[it is] so obvious, can't you get that". However, after analysing the situation, which she took time to do after the meeting,

she realised she missed the point and thus felt stuck, all because she was feeling “pissed off”.

Participant 4, who did not report very strong emotional reactions in relation to working with clients, did however feel annoyed with the system because people who were both a consumer and a family member were not getting the support from appropriate services. At times, she ends up working with the consumers although it is not something fieldworkers are there for but it is something she feels needs to be done because what fieldworkers attempt to do is to get the family back together, which sometimes means doing things outside the scope of the fieldworkers’ immediate practice.

P4: ...this is another thing that annoys me, everybody pushes prevention, but when you try to do it there’s nothing there... or it’s very hard you know you’ve got the CMHCs all around the place but you can’t just get somebody to go in there or no they have to be within the mental health system and I just[?] I hate[?] [laughs] yeah that gets frustrating, if you know that you are mentally unwell and (..) you have your ups and downs and you’re going through a down time (..) um-m they should be able to get the help because unfortunately our GPs (--) we haven’t got enough of them that understand mental health that can actually work with them

Another participant conveyed a similar attitude in regard to having more negative emotions in relation to politics rather than when working with clients.

P2: ...intense emotions sometimes it’s more about (...) I think the politics of it, that, that you are an example of twenty other people that are out there like this and and that there is you know, that the funding one[?] you know I

*get so angry sometimes very intensely angry at the injustice of the world um-
m, not necessarily with the client, so I mean they're kind of the symbol of
that (. . .) I think that's the most intense I get a bit scary*

So far fieldworkers' emotions when with clients were described as reactions to clients' outbursts, as reactions to perceiving clients as interfering with the work fieldworkers try to do, as well as resulting from a wider unhappiness with the system. Another trigger for fieldworkers' emotions is their clients' stories. All participants mentioned hearing sometimes difficult, horrible, painful, and "hideous" things that their families have been through. They often did not describe a specific emotional reaction that those stories elicited but rather conveyed a sense of 'feeling for' the clients.

*P6: some of the things we hear you think (--) I constantly think help you
know often when you're hearing thinking don't let your mouth drop cause
it's (--) some of it can be pretty horrible*

*P5: sometimes in the support groups they bring up some real (...) like my
son cuts to the bone [somebody groans] ...that sort of thing you know just
gives you that picture*

*P1: support groups are (--) when... that's when you really sometimes take on
a load, when you've heard you know three four five or more families talking
about these difficult situations*

When hearing difficult things from clients, the strongest emotions most fieldworkers describe are empathy, sadness, concern, and worry. These emotions are valued by fieldworkers when working with clients and are seen as appropriate as long as how they are manifested is also appropriate.

P6: ...that can be a strength I think when you are working with people that you got compassion we feel concern or (--) well you are really you know worried for them you know because you understand, so I don't think it's inappropriate it's probably how you maybe manifest it (--.)

P1: Yeah

[murmurs of agreement from other participants]

P6: ...it's about being professional

P2: ...it's totally appropriate sometimes I mean why not have a tear in your eyes when something tragic has happened (--.)

P6: That's right

P2: ...um-m or laugh or be joyous and happy...

The idea of an appropriate display of a genuine positive emotion is that it can show clients they are being heard and understood. Allowing clients to see sadness or happiness their stories have produced in fieldworkers validates their experience. What was clear from all of fieldworkers' accounts was a sense of not letting their own emotions interfere with the clients' process. It seems that displaying an appropriate, genuine emotion can be inappropriate if the intensity of the display is too high.

P2: ...I was thinking last [time? night?] in group one of the members, you know revealed why (--) not a very pleasant thing that happened to his family and (..) sometimes it's sitting silent and letting them be and not judging it and not (..) (--) it's really important that it's not (--) you don't freak out...

P6: I think something you said made me think like recently I heard someone's story about, how their sister was brutally murdered and the whole lot of things and it was really (..) sad and in fact I had a few tears, but I was sitting there thinking be calm cause I didn't want my (..) just sheer concern for her to impact on her but I was thinking just what you were mentioned well she's so amazing she's so brave cause it was a situation where she was facing all this stuff...

It is here where two important facets of being with clients become apparent: awareness and prioritising clients over self. Awareness is needed in order to identify what it is they are feeling and why, whether to display the emotion and how to display it, who the displaying is about – the client or themselves – and whom it will serve. It is also needed in order to be able to take a step back and not buy into the clients' emotional expressions. It is awareness and the ability to reflect on what is the emotion fieldworkers are feeling and whether it is theirs or the clients'.

P3: are you actually angry about them cause they won't move on or is that because you're a frustrated cause you know what's good for them (..) but they don't know what's so good for them, and it's that asking that question who is it about, and what are you there for, probably a bit of ah-h well clarity

P2: M-m, you need to be aware of of of who you're doing it for or something like that so you you can't remove emotion from it but you can be aware that you know, it's not appropriate to get panicky cause the person (--) or by (--) you'll be aware, it's like I've been aware of times of where the anxiety that a

client is feeling it can spill over and you can go oh gosh I am starting to feel anxious what do I need to do change that because that's not gonna be helpful and and what you were talking about before P4 about those, you know those skills that you have and you make it (--) you gotta bring yourself back to what is my purpose in this that I am with the client, I'm not living their life

P4: ...I purposefully try not to take their issues in here [pointing at her heart]... I look at it from how am I gonna help this family or what does this family for[?] help or what is the best way, so by having that yes I can understand (..) and show empathy and all the (..) rest of the bits and pieces that come into it um-m (..) but again I don't take on board cause it's not my issues...

By being able to identify whether their own emotions are beginning to creep into the meeting, fieldworkers can decrease the likelihood of getting their emotions enmeshed in the session and they can find ways of how to “bring it back down”.

The second facet of how to be with clients comes down to the importance of putting clients, their emotions, and experiences first and above those of fieldworkers.

P2: ...your feelings aren't that important in this process, it's the other person's feeling and the other person's beliefs and the other (--) so you need to (...) let go... you're there to work towards a solution or work alongside a person rather than dominate and tell what to do

P6: ...even though what you hear might impact on you, you are actually thinking about the person cause that girl ...trying to be calm and almost

passive (..) um-m so it can just (--) so you're relaxed so your tension is not going to them...

Thus, the management of emotions and displays is done for clients.

The reasons for not displaying some emotions were related to ideas of professional behaviour. Being professional with clients was a way of talking about appropriate and inappropriate displays and behaviours with clients.

P3: You try that positiveness (..) you know you inside might be saying oh God here we go again (...) it's that (--) however the professional says[?] I'm here to actually do a job and this is my job and right now this is what I need to be doing (..) whether I like it or not

Professional behaviour seemed also to be tied up with the meaning participants assign to expressing the emotions they do not feel or do not feel strongly at the time. Some participants said that they always experience the desired emotions, like empathy and care, when they express them. Others, however, said that it does not always happen but they would still display them because they can “understand what they're [clients] going through” and feel a connection with their clients. It seems that what these participants are talking about is that empathy is threaded to other emotions, like compassion, in the way fieldworkers relate to their clients and they can get access to it in some shape or form.

Generally, there is an idea that expressing emotion that is not felt is a sign of not being genuine and pretending. One of the participants joked by saying “so we are good at faking”. However, not even she believed that fieldworkers ‘fake’ their positive and desired emotions and displays when with clients. As another fieldworker put it:

P2: I don't know if we fake it... I think there's a professional level of what's appropriate like we talked earlier what emotions to share with our (..) (--) I I just [sigh] (--) there's times when you do get frustrated with your ah (--) and you've got to value that person...

The general consensus among participants was that all of them have an enormous amount of respect for their families and, as a result, genuine empathy and desire to help. Part of that can be due to the type of work they do and the belief for the need to have genuine emotions in order to do the job right. Part of it also stems from the fact that some fieldworkers had or still have family members diagnosed with a mental illness. As one of the participants explained it other fieldworkers “start to pick it up... by osmosis”.

The expression of desired or helpful emotions for clients, comes down to the necessity to show clients empathy either through words or body language and facial expressions and feeling it on some level. Fieldworkers need to establish rapport and trust with their clients and coming off as un-empathetic and uncaring would compromise these. With trust and rapport compromised clients may not open up and talk about their difficulties freely and then fieldworkers would not be able to assist them in moving forward and in supporting them.

As a result, participants saw the display of emotions they barely felt (empathy) or did not feel at all (calmness) at the time as a necessary part of their job. The reason they did not see it as faking was because it was done with the client in mind and with what would be most beneficial for the client. Not showing anger when it is felt, for instance, is done for the benefit of the client because displaying anger would make the situation worse and will not amount to helping clients move on. Showing a calm demeanour when in reality they may

be scared or feeling out of depth serves the same purpose of providing clients with hope that things can change. Only one participant said that “there’s times where I have felt like I’ve been faking it... and I hate that I would rather be genuine”. It was the same participant who mentioned that fieldworkers do not fake their emotions. The reason for feeling fake was tiredness after doing several meetings a day or not being prepared.

P1: ...there’s an energy at being genuinely in a room and and do that genuine listening to hear all those things, it’s actually quite (..) tiring (--)

P1: It is tiring

P5: It is

P2: ...and it’s (--) when I feel like I’ve faked is I’ve gone in there and I just haven’t had the energy to do that, and I haven’t said it and haven’t, you know I haven’t said look can I (--) can we reschedule I just, I feel like I have to I’m I’m (--) I feel obliged and and yeah (..) so, it’s that for me

P3: Mine is when (--) usually when I’ve got a whole heap of stuff (..) I’ve got children and I’ve seen parents so, Wednesdays, Wednesdays is netball, netball practice pick up my baby, the child needs to go home... and then you got this... client sitting there crying to you [laughs]

P2: It’s when you’re (. . .) it’s exactly it and you start thinking about all those other things that going on and that’s when I feel, oh shit I’m not here I’m not doing this P3: Is dinner, is dinner cooked and you’re thinking washing done and you got this person (..) unloading to you and it’s like (...) oh that’s right, sorry mate I really have to blah blah blah, you know, and that’s (--) it’s over

There are some obvious similarities between the accounts of Participants 2 and 3 – that is not being able to be fully present with a client during a meeting – was seen as a negative. Being fully present seems to relate to being emotionally and cognitively involved in the process of the meeting, being aware of both the client and self, and not being distracted due to tiredness or thinking about personal things. There were also differences between the two accounts. Participant 3 did not say anything about equating her not being fully present with faking, which Participant 2 saw exactly as that. For the former Participant, as long as ‘putting up a face’ was not long term then it was acceptable, and did not make her feel like she was not doing her job. The latter Participant, despite being tired and likely knowing that she will be having a hard time being fully present with a client, felt obligated to go to the meeting and could not bring herself to re-schedule it. Participant 3, on the other hand, asked for a possibility of arranging a meeting on another day.

The explanation of faking as not being genuinely present with the client seems to be connected with a feeling of not doing a job properly. Viewing not being hundred percent present as faking can result from several beliefs fieldworkers expressed. One, fieldworkers feel that they need to be genuine with clients and if they are not they would not last on the job for long because they would not feel they are doing their job well. Second, not being present may have been seen as a somewhat partial emersion into the clients’ world, where only a limited understanding of the clients’ situation was possible. At the same time, the effort to be present and to understand was being made by participants and only one participant seemed to believe that it was not about the effort but rather about the result – are you fully present or are you not.

Other participants saw it differently. For them, just being with the client, truly caring for them and wanting to help, and doing their best was seen as being genuine even when they were not necessarily fully present. The effort and the desire to help indicated genuineness and did not leave them feeling like they have faked.

P6: I always think I'm genuine [laughs]... when I'm meeting the families cause that's my role so I go there with their best intentions at heart I suppose (..) so yeah so probably maybe just taking a slightly different angle to P2 but ... I think that can be your strength too... to come across like you're genuine

P1: I've had that happen at time too when you just (--) it's probably more like you say when you're really tired and you start to (--) your mind's wandering but I, I don't feel like I'm not being genuine to keep ah ah a certain um-m face or whatever because ah-h I think I still want to do the best for that client and and I genuinely do... you know like, a mum with a newborn baby who doesn't really feel like getting up and feeding it at (--) in the middle of the night but um-m, she she does and and and that's genuine and... I think I could say like I'm being genuine but, sometimes I do have to um-m (..) wear a certain... persona or something

Participants also talked about the importance of wanting to work with clients and help them even when they did not want to be there at the time. It seems that this accounts for a more wide desire to do the job they are doing for people in order to alleviate their distress or difficulties. Interestingly, Participant 2, who felt that she faked when she could not be fully present also said that “just wanting to be there [for the family] is important”.

Described in this sub-theme are the emotions fieldworkers can experience with clients. Some of the emotions participants saw as negative and believed clients should not be made aware of those, other emotions are seen as appropriate given they reflect what the client is going through and others as necessary to both experience and display. The negative emotions participants described do not constitute the majority of their experience of client-contact. These emotions arise only with 'difficult clients' and difficult situations. Faking versus being genuine, displaying felt or produced emotions with clients is a complex interaction of multiple variables. It would require more detailed investigation than the one undertaken in the current research. What has become apparent, however, is that fieldworkers need to manage and control their emotions and by doing so they can manage clients' emotions and the process of the meeting.

Subtheme 2.2. Controlling Emotions, Managing with Clients and Setting Boundaries

Fieldworkers have to deal with the clients' emotions, their own emotions, as well as monitor the process of face-to-face meetings. Some of the emotions they experience are viewed as interfering with their role of getting their families better. Fieldworkers talked about the importance of controlling their own emotions, both felt and displayed, so that there is no interference with clients. One of the participants also mentioned, when describing a fright she had with one of the families, that she does not normally stay in the emotion too long. Her logic sets in almost immediately, which assists her in being able to stay in control of the situation. For instance she said in that instance if she had stayed in the fear she "would've frozen".

Different participants utilised different strategies in order to help them control their emotions. One of the participants looks at meetings with clients from "...a business point of

view because that's my job, and then I don't get that emotional". There seemed to be some difficulty in explaining looking at client work as a job she needs to do and relaying that there is still real empathy and care for clients. The possible reason for that is that fieldworkers feel they need to express genuine, positive emotions when working with families. Looking at something from a business side of things can imply that there is no actual genuine care. However, in this case there was. Another participant expressed an idea similarly in terms of its contradiction. She was talking about getting an impression from some of the training that fieldworkers need to develop some emotional control but combine it with the "idea that you can show some emotion too".

Fieldworkers believed the experience as well as the display of negative emotions needed to be managed and controlled, while only the intensity of the display of positive emotions needed to be modulated. The control of felt and displayed emotions took several forms: self-talk in order to stay on track with clients, boundaries, and awareness of their role and purpose when with clients. By way of self-talk fieldworkers manage both the desired emotions and the intensity of expression of those emotions as well as the non-desired emotions.

*P5: I'm thinking oh, you know, this lady sounds tired and she just (..) you know um-m (..) because she was she's suffering from cancer as well and um-m yeah and so you know (..) her frustration is (..) quite valid (..) because she is probably just

tired*

P2: Depending on what it is though often I find it say (..) look be honest about it, that that would've terrified me, you know if that did (-) because

it's not me though, you see that's it is (...) (--) yes this other person who's feeling this (...) but I also (--) it's going they are there they are alive they are here seeking help or support (...) there's so many positive things in that

P1: if I can just get out of this meeting I can take in all the information, kind of assess the the the family, and and ah-h-um-m (...) make a note of all their issues and if I can just hold on and then go away and then (...) handle[?] this[?] and come back to it, then then (...) then reflect on it and process it later... what gets you through is a hope that yeah we can just (--) we don't (-) I can come back (...) to it and and and if I can just brace till then so it's knowing that it's not a definite you've just got another (--) if you can just wait another ten minutes twenty minutes and get [chuckles] get out of there

P6: Yeah (...) well I suppose for them you feel sad you know and I've kind of learnt from experience [chuckles] if (...) if you know they are doing it to you, they must they must be feeling really overwhelmed often it's symptomatic of their hopelessness or (...) (--) in a very out of control situation (...) so um-m yeah (...) so often I feel sad for them (...) um-m and you gotta let them do that before you can kind of start to help them

Many other participants utilised self-talk in order to calm down if they were feeling edgy or angry. That seemed to help them to go back to the purpose of their job as well as increased their ability to empathise with even the more difficult clients. Several participants talked about not taking things personally as there was always a reason behind clients' more unpleasant displays. Self-talk was also used by one of the participants when her sadness for clients seemed to be too strong and probably would have interfered with her ability to work.

P4: I can deal with adults with a mental illness but when you see children with mental illness it really (--) and being a mother it really (..) ... they're so young (..) and to have your life sort of possibly screwed up at such a young age but then I'm now looking at it from the other side if there is an illness coming out at this young age um-m it's getting it early enough to be able to educate them so they accept it and live with it plus the families instead of (..) getting to adult stage and suddenly it just turning to custard (..) which then usually breaks up probably their relationship their family relationship you know there's a lot more involved (..) when you're older

Another participant saw removing herself from the situation as a way of not letting herself to act out the negative emotions she was experiencing. It was the same when she felt she was getting sucked into the clients' emotions, when someone was yelling at her and she felt like yelling back at them.

P3: I'm gonna lie but I need to go now, I'm gonna remove myself ... even if I can't leave the whole situation (..) right now mate I need to make a call ... Even if it's from you know, they are here and I can go out that door, right (..) right now mate I'm unsure what we can do, maybe I just ring up my mate or I go and sit in the car or do something but (..) it's that moving and if I am capable of doing that (..) even I can say right now mate I don't wanna stop you however I need to go to toilet

This shows that at times, when fieldworkers' own emotions interfere in the process, they can be hard to control and the best way to not let them impact on clients is to leave.

Participants also talked about controlling their emotions in terms of almost inducing a desired emotion. Most of participants talked about how seeing clients as victims or someone going through a difficult time can at times by itself produce empathy or compassion even when feeling frustration or anger toward that client originally. Another way to induce the necessary emotion, like empathy, was around talking yourself into feeling it by verbalising it to the client "...it must've been really sucky". It is about trying to understand how it was for the client to go through all they have been through and to look at a situation from the client's point of view.

P4: I try to put myself in their position of where they are and because I've sort of been through some of those (..) positions um-m (...) I can still show empathy in that but I can still show (..) this is what really needs to be done (..) it's it's giving them (..) probably that word hope of well there is a way out, it's gonna take a long time but you know (..) there is a way we can do this

P2: Probably try (...) to communicate sort of try and understand a bit more... I do empathise because it will be (--) there will be a connection so... saying something it's like oh God, I need to understand them, I don't get that, um-m, so I try and reflect back and say so is this what it is? and (..) they will come, um-m (..) you know, it will be different, it will be like... I can see how hard they are working towards this how much effort they put into it, or (..) how sad they are or you know, it'll be at some (--) there'll be something

Empathy can be experienced on two different levels, either on the emotional or the intellectual. She controlled her internal reaction of frustration with the clients by understanding, on an intellectual level, that what they are going through is difficult for them. By doing this she was able to empathise.

P3: The worst one is when again and this is a bit of transference, victims, poor me this always happens to me [in a weepy tone of voice] and there's that you know, you can't empathise (-- well[?]) you can empathise with them because it must really suck to be a victim but then my guard is going up and seems[?] get the fuck over it [in a muffled voice] [laughs] and you're trying to say man that must be really sad, how did you cope before, how often does this happen, and you try to reinforce the positive stuff (..) while the internal dialogue is mate get over it, you're not a victim, don't play that tune[?] to me[?]

Another participant talked about something similar but in a way of strength of emotions like empathy. For her feeling very deep empathy does not always happen and she believed that feeling deep empathy or another required emotion all the time and with every single client is impossible. She, nevertheless, always feels moved by clients' stories and feels compassion and empathy or sadness to some degree.

P1: I can be hearing some quite tragic stuff and I'm not particularly feeling deeply (...) saddened or my own feelings you know, sinking but, but I'm I am listening and I am and I am (..) (-- I guess I'm empathising to one of the best of my ability and I am moved by it but I'm not (...) necessarily emotionally... take taking it all on

One of the fieldworkers also talked about the value of sometimes “saying the hard thing” and sharing what is being felt with the client. It seems to be another way of controlling emotions but, at the same time, not hiding it. It is a compromise, based on professional judgement, between not showing frustration or anger but acknowledging it nonetheless.

P2: ...it's not the thing that's the nicest thing to say is, sometimes is saying I am really (--) I am finding this a really frustrating situation, how about you? owning what you feel (..) which is sometimes really hard to identify because you can be so concentrating on this other person...

Several other fieldworkers concurred that by openly discussing with clients the emotion they were feeling they provide a corrective experience for their clients; they model better ways to manage anger and frustration that does not involve the aggressive display. This honesty and owning experiences and emotions on the part of fieldworkers, provides clients with options of behaviour that are not destructive to the wellbeing of the family.

All fieldworkers had good and not so good days at work when dealing with clients. It seems that on the good days, be it as a result of not working with difficult cases or not feeling tired, it can be easier for fieldworkers to keep positive thoughts about the families they are working with. As it was shown previously, positive thoughts and positive self-talk assists in controlling and managing fieldworkers' own emotions in relation to clients. On the not so good days the management may be made harder because the positive thoughts are not as readily available.

P2: you have good days (--.)

P6: That's right

P2: ...when you look at them and you go what an amazing family how amazing is that family to have gone through all that and then when you're on your not so good day you go, argh

It seems that participants saw the necessity to control their emotions and how they are expressed for two reasons. One of them related to professional behaviour and was guided by policies, some aspects of training, as well as input from other fieldworkers.

P1: I think some of our training does help... what you (--) you come out with is that it's it's about sitting with people and learning um-m to sit with them and be with them (--) alongside of them listening and empathising not having all the answers and and you get the sense that you've got to learn to control your emotions a little bit and and so somehow we do

The other reason for controlling or managing the process of sessions and especially fieldworkers' own emotions, even those that are appropriate and genuine, was because of their value for clients and doing that work for their sake.

P1: if you just express what you (..) what you feel like expressing, it's (--) this is not gonna help this person it could actually (..) make it worse

P6: ...you wanna support them, like, you know sometimes I find (--) I go (--) you know you hear terrible things and you go help, you know so you've got that but you've got to manage that, um so it doesn't you know, impact negatively on them

P3: ...it's appropriateness of what that mother doesn't need me doing is [in a loud voice] oh yeah it was a really dumb idea weren't it... it wouldn't

*really be appropriate for me to say that... the appropriateness rather than...
more emotional why and what's going on*

Two different approaches of controlling emotions with clients had emerged. Some participants talked about a need to detach or cut out emotions. Others talked about the importance of staying connected to emotions because if they did not they would not be doing their work properly. On the surface, it may seem there is a difference between how fieldworkers manage their emotions but the difference may have resulted from how they understood my questions around emotions. The former group of participants talked about cutting out their own personal emotions so that they do not interfere with clients' processes. They nevertheless were connected to emotions in relation to clients' experiences and felt genuine empathy and care, as it became apparent throughout the interviews. The latter group talked about staying connected emotionally and this seemed to also mean staying connected in order to feel and express empathy and care that is genuine.

Control of emotions and management of meetings with clients was also accomplished through the establishment of boundaries. Establishing boundaries with clients is an aspect of face-to-face work with families. One of the fieldworkers summarised what boundaries are needed for, which was reflected in other participants' understanding of boundaries.

*P1: ... you can become too warm and too friendly and too relaxed and and
you know, lose (--) become ah-h (..) your your (--) or lose your
professionalism, maybe saying that in which case you you need to bring it
you know (--) have some self-awareness and come back to boundaries o-or
is it suggesting that... there's a risk of becoming (..) ah-h um-m (--) showing*

other negative emotions other than warmth and friendliness and actually becoming angry or frustrated and showing that, could be both and and so (..) um-m and I think probably at times being aware (..) that that I'm sort of (...) you know pushing boundaries with those areas (..) in the sense that I've um-m become a little frustrated and angry with clients but had to really control that emotion and and still (..) appear or come across as (..) as as um-m I'm still warm and friendly I guess [chuckles]

Boundaries are about professional behaviour, appropriate and inappropriate conduct with clients that is governed by organisational expectations and rules (reinforced by guidelines, internal and external supervision, as well as colleagues). It is also about safe practice for both clients and fieldworkers.

P3: if you don't have clear boundaries a either you're gonna get into trouble or something is gonna happen that shouldn't happen, and that's why we have phones to call up team leaders [laughs]

P2: ...be nice, but you're there for a job and you're representing [the organisation]...

Face-to-face work can be tricky because it is done on such a deep level. One of the more important issues around maintaining boundaries is ensuring that clients come out self-sufficient and that the fieldworkers do not engender dependency in their clients.

P4: Um-m (...) well it's like you know explained in the group thing... it probably gonna sound coldhearted but it's the way I deal with it, I deal with the families... in a business sort of way so that (..) I don't become involved with them and I am very aware of if there's any transference of them um-m

becoming (--) relying on me or something as their support or to that (...) (--) well that's crossing the boundaries as far as I'm concerned (..) um-m so (..) I think by having that always in the back of my mind I don't allow those (--) I can still do my work and be friendly and you know show the empathy or what is needed at that time or whether I need to be (..) a little bit firmer because (..) they are sort of wallowing...

A boundary of not getting personally involved in the clients' case or life also helps this fieldworker not to take their issues to heart, meaning that she may have an easier time controlling her emotions. That is why the rules of "working alongside" clients apply. If they are not in place there may be more harm done to a person than good. Safety for fieldworkers also comes in here because boundaries specify how much work needs to be done with clients. It is not about trying to do all the work for clients. It is about helping them to do it for themselves, which can sometimes mean showing firmness even if on the inside fieldworkers feel some guilt for not doing more.

All fieldworkers agreed that establishing and maintaining boundaries is not a straightforward process, nor do the same rules apply to all clients: "there's gotta be give and take" and "it's gonna be always dependant on the situation". Some boundaries can be 'bent', like the duration of a first meeting, giving or not giving clients cell phone numbers, giving a client a hug or not, and discussing personal details. There are others, however, that always need to be in place. For instance, establishing what can and cannot be worked on and sticking to it, making sure clients are aware of the fact that the organisation is not an emergency service, and setting plans and goals.

Maintaining boundaries is another area of face-to-face work that requires awareness on the part of fieldworkers.

P2: ...you need to become aware of what it is when your boundaries are crossed, you need to be aware of what you feel like when you cross other people, what what are the signs that you've crossed boundaries with other people, and you start out learning you know, just, I am bit, pissed off at that person... what was it about being angry at that person, it's like you know, well they're rude and then you go, ok well are you gonna do anything about it? um-m, you know are gonna let that affect the next time you deal with them

Decisions on whether boundaries can be bent require awareness of what is going on in the relationship and why, in this situation, it would do no harm to the client if the boundaries are bent a little. For instance, one of the participants described a client who, due to her emotional difficulties, could develop a dependency on the worker and the service, which would not help her move on. Despite falling into the client's manipulation at the start of their relationship, she realised that the boundaries were getting blurred, that she was buying into the client's neediness, and in doing so not actually helping that client.

Boundaries can get blurred when a client is lonely and isolated or vulnerable. As one of participants put it "...there's people who just seem so helpless you just want to wrap your arms around them rescue them...". Two other participants described situations where their clients wanted to be friends. Participant 3 saw that coming over to client's house after work would not be good for that client in the end. Despite knowing that according to professional conduct and organisation rules she was right not to become too close to the

client, emotionally it was difficult because she felt for the client. Here, empathy – one of the desired emotions – was something that got in the way of another organisational rule – keeping professional boundaries. Participant 5 made a different decision but only after some deliberation around appropriateness of going to celebrate a special occasion with her client. But she still said that “sometimes it is hard to know whether (..) you know (..) to go over and celebrate...”

The establishment of boundaries seems to be almost a fine art that is dependent on several variables. In the end, however, the process is guided by what is the best professional practice and what is best for the client. For instance, some fieldworkers reported wanting to do more for their clients because they care for them. This is all in all an appropriate and admirable desire that is in line with the unspoken rule of genuine care for clients. However, this can lead to negative consequences for clients by conditioning their dependency and also for fieldworkers because by doing more they become more tired and it “can emotionally drain you”. Another fieldworker also realised that even if she genuinely wants to help families and thus bends some boundaries she still “can’t help anyone if they don’t wanna help themselves”.

All participants described instances of buying into participants’ stories, emotions, and experiences, which was seen as a type of breaking boundaries.

P2: ...more subtle boundary braking of (..) buying you in to what drama and you know, God it’s terrible when (..) where it’s you sort of end up (..) being on that person’s side kind of thing, um-m (..) so you’re not being the impartial person... where you get being in the rescuer’s role rather than the

supporter's role, or where you end up being on the side against oh they are terrible

When getting caught up in clients' stories participants described having difficulties on several levels. On one, if the clients' emotion was anger or frustration and the fieldworker working with that client began to experience the same emotion, either through countertransference or as a chain reaction, there was a danger of saying something inappropriate.

P3: ...when somebody's on the phone and they are yahooing on the phone [changes into a more strict voice] look mate I'm really really sorry but right now I need to go to toilet, I need to go outside so, I will I will ring you in half an hour or an hour's time, not for their safety it's actually not about them and I am really sorry that I have to do it but it's actually about me, because I am gonna say something inappropriate (...) not intentionally (..) because I am starting to buy into what they are going through

In a sense, the ability to control the emotion was negated because the fieldworker was beginning to feel exactly what the client was feeling and experienced that emotion as her own and personal. If the emotion that fieldworkers are buying into is hopelessness or sadness then the process of getting the client better was stalled because the fieldworker was feeling the same hopelessness and, just like the client, did not see any way out of it. It made it difficult to support clients emotionally as well as provide them with more practical, hands-on solutions to move forward, like developing goals and plans of action. It is probably for this reason that one of the fieldworkers saw the importance of looking at face-to-face work as a business or as a job.

P4: So I think that's (..) if you can learn to remove the emotion from yourself when you're dealing with other people, and that's why I say it might sound cold when I say it this way but that's why I sorta look at it as, oh this is my business this is what I have to do and this is the order[?] that I've got to go and fulfil, um-m and I do it that way (..) and so therefore I'm not actually taking it here [pointing at heart] I can understand from here to come out but I don't take it here cause it's not mine

All participants reported some issues with maintaining selected boundaries. These breaches seem to be related to personal triggers. For example, Participant 3 said that with some families it is very clear what the boundaries are, what she will and will not do with them, while with others the boundaries become blurred, when she wants to do more for clients than what is dictated by protocols and procedures. Similarly Participant 4 also felt that she sometimes has to do more counselling than what is required because of her awareness that the mental health system is not perfect and some people fall through the cracks. If she does not provide this type of support it is unlikely that that particular person will get it elsewhere.

Some of the participants talked about work they do outside of client meetings, especially around the more challenging cases. The need for that extra work stems from the desire to help their families and thus they try to work out how and why something went wrong through analysis and reflection. In doing so it makes it less likely that the same issue will arise with that family or at least next time it will be easier to manage. Generally difficulties with clients are brought to supervision or other fieldworkers. But even with the

extra help and support fieldworkers still try and solve their difficulties with clients in their own time.

All of the fieldworkers expressed that very often clients just want for someone to listen to them, to unload the burden they carry with having a loved one diagnosed with a mental illness and the enormous difficulties and strains it had created for the family. Just sitting there and listening can sound easy enough but it is not just listening that is involved in face-to-face work even with the most lovely and easy clients. As it was described previously being present with the family requires energy. Also, the fieldworkers' value of authentic emotions when with clients as well as management and control of internal emotions and their displays as well as clients' emotional reactions, combined with sometimes heart wrenching stories of human suffering, make "just listening" into hard work that taps into intellectual and emotional reserves. The next two themes show that fieldworkers perform emotion work not only during face-to-face interaction with clients but also during other tasks that are a part of a fieldworkers' role.

Theme 3. Experience of Other Aspects of Work

Dealing with other mental health professionals. This theme includes participants' experiences of the aspects of work that do not include client-contact but are a part of their role as fieldworkers. Often, as a part of their role, fieldworkers have to work with other mental health professionals who are involved with the member of the family with mental illness. Some of fieldworkers report a tense relationship, specifically with the clinical teams that are invariably involved with the member of the family with a mental illness.

P1: ...dealing with people other mental health professionals is (..) is got some its own set of tensions too and I think there is a (..) ah-h (--) I was

talking about this just the other day when sometimes clinical (..) people in the clinical services um-m (..) (--) kind of there's a there's a maybe arrogance or (--) not necessarily arrogance but rather they they don't see (--) they they kind of (..) look down upon our role ... our services are a little bit undervalued maybe yeah ah ah (..) um-m (..) and then sometimes even if it's not the case, um-m when you when you dealing with a ah-h a lot of highly trained mental health professionals that can sort of (..) maybe sometimes (..) be a bit daunting too, ah ah certainly is for families and that's why we are (- -) it's great that we can sit with them when they when they meet with clinical teams and in a room by themselves with the whole lot of clinical um-m (...) team members highly trained people that can be quite quite scary

She still has to work with the clinical teams because it is both a part of her job and is “very much valued by clients”. Her experience, of it however, was as something “daunting” and I imagine there also may be a sense of inferiority, not because she thinks her job is not important or somehow less so, but rather due to the elitist ‘club’ membership, with which some clinicians seem to view their professional standing. The same participant recalled having to give a “presentation with training components to groups of psychiatric registrars” and that the experience left her “maybe wanting in some ways”. And, I imagine, it may be hard to develop a meaningful working relationship with someone who you believe is looking down on you.

A somewhat similar experience was described by another fieldworker in relation to dealing with clinical teams. She, however, does not experience a sense of inferiority or

“wanting in some way” and believes that clinicians see her as “one of them which [she] is not”.

P6: ...often I feel scared (...) like you know you've gotta ring up psychiatrists or psychologists or people that might (...) not have positive dealings with your clients (...) and you've gotta ring them up out of the blue and try and make appointments and negotiate and get on their side too (...) you know so (...) I'm quite good at working thin[?] too[?] cause you know (...) they kind of think I'm one of them which I'm not but (. . .) but um-m but I find it really scary, completely puts me out of my comfort zone but I have to make myself do it (...) so it's more of those kind of things that I struggle[?] with but in fact I do I make myself do it and um- m often as a result of that it turns out really good and I'll get lots of work from the clinical teams but (...) by becoming their friends you can get really good results for the people you're supporting

Training. Another aspect of the fieldworkers' role is ongoing training. Participants, all but one, saw their training as needing improvement.

P6: I can just say from my own experience but I think (...) [training] probably needs to just be improved it's just (...) after the orientation... two weeks four weeks six weeks just follow up, cause you can sit in the office and read all the manuals and go yes (...) and then you go out and start working and then you think oh what about that and what about that (...) and (...) you know we know what the policies are but sometimes you might need to talk to the team leader (...) how in fact does this relate to the policy or you discover

exception to the rule so um-m (...) especially when you are in that learning phase, I think that would be helpful (...) cause it's one thing to have ah-h (...) I suppose the principles when you start applying what (...) you know

P3: I think it needs to be more in-depth, very very (...) (--) it's very limited ... if I didn't have the training that I've already got, with a lot of my social work background or papers as such, I'd actually be really really lost ... I learnt the micro counselling skills that was actually done through Polytec, not with [the organisation] ... and I think that really needs to be encouraged, or part of the (...) um-m orientation package

At the same time a positive aspect is that fieldworkers feel they do not have to know everything in order to be able to help clients. There is also no pressure from the management and the team leader for them to utilise everything they learn in their work. Generally, it is up to the individual fieldworker to decide which aspects of the training they can utilise when working with families. They expressed a belief that they still can do a good job with whatever knowledge they already have. However some expressed a need for a slightly different training that can be more readily integrated into their work.

P1: ...I think there could be a place for role playing in our ongoing training maybe if we can yeah (...) and and and helping us to-o integrate some of the theoretical training into our practice, um-m maybe a bit more discussion... I'd like to see more discussion after ah-h, after theoretical training session or presentation or workshop from from a-a a (--) who (--) from um-m whoever it is, ah-h the opportunity to sit down as a team and and discuss how we might (...) um-m apply that in our practice (...) and and look at case

s-s cases and and see how we might, um-m use this new training in in what we do with our (--) with current or past cases

P2: ...you do a bit more training and you just start trying to integrate that training into what you're doing... the best training is we get when you can actually integrate almost immediately, it's not overly complicated it's like oh actually I can see where that will help this family or will help me or will help someone else, um-m the the really complicated stuff that takes (--) we did family dynamics, that was really interesting and I think there's some parts of it that you can immediately use, um-m, I think (..) what do you call it (..) naive inquirer? (..) that was helpful but [accent on 'but'] it's actually really hard without a lot of practice [chuckles] to actually do that successfully, so that sort of training we did I'm not using

A lot of the training, or rather ideas about the usefulness of some techniques compared to others and the best ways to integrate the actual training, seems to come from other fieldworkers. All of the participants expressed an importance of discussions of training and skills with each other. The discussions provide them with input into better practice and better use of training material. Peer discussions and support were one of the aspects of training fieldworkers believe needed if not improving then at least more of it. They talked about a need for more “buddying” – working together with another more senior fieldworker for feedback and improvement of work skills – especially in the beginning of their work at the organisation.

P3: By working and experiencing by being able to listen to other people talk about (..) dilemmas as such, by rattling it off to other people... [communication] it's number one (..) it's gotta be number one

Participant 3 mentioned that when she first started there were not many experienced staff and even no team leader but she was lucky to be buddied up with one of the experienced fieldworkers. Participant 2, on the other hand, believed that if there was more buddying and more team discussions pertaining to family work when she had started working at the organisation she would have been better equipped to manage her caseload. She believed that it would have also lessened some of her anxieties in relation to whether what she was doing with families was correct and in line with good professional practice.

P1: ...what would've been nice, i-is actually you know having say, at least a month of going out regularly like, once a day with someone else to a family meeting and a range of field workers ... but you take the lead and the other field worker who is supporting you (..) and at the end of both of those sort of sections you always book in half an hour where your both sit and discuss as field workers well, how did that go (..) and actually maybe even have a structured kind of evaluation (--) peer evaluation kind of thing happening because ... you sort of end up going oh did I (--) I felt really uncomfortable with that part did that go alright? how would you do that? um-m, and feedback back to each other um-m, you know it seems to me that that went really well but you forgot to tell them about this part, the administration (..) because that's how you learn...

Despite most of the participants agreeing that some aspects of their training needed improving, especially around reflective team discussions, two believed that the current training was more than enough for them to do their job properly. One of the main reasons for that was the previous training they had received elsewhere. Participant 4 saw training at the organisation as a “refresher course” of what she had previously learnt and therefore saw no need for its improvement. Participant 5 believed that the organisation hires people who generally already have an experience of work in mental health and thus expect a certain level of skill in regard to face-to-face work. At the same time she thought that

if people that haven't worked in mental health before and not (--) don't realise sort of (..) um-m (..) emotional (..) um-m (...) you know, attachment or emotional (..) you know (--) and how that can affect people... I think people can become discouraged, so-o even buddying or ah-h peer to peer you know, just to (..) you know, help them along

The importance of training reflected in participants' statements shows that training provides two broad areas of skill and knowledge. One the one hand, it introduces practical skills of what to do with families. On the other, it gives an idea of, and to some degree prepares fieldworkers for, the impact of dealing with other people and their emotions. It is for this reason that Participant 4 took one of the newer fieldworkers under her wing because she knew the toll people work can have.

Workload. Another aspect of work that was discussed during interviews was participants' experience of their workload. This aspect is the one with perhaps the most difference in both opinion and experience among fieldworkers. All participants agree that the workload can be heavy and some of them are “challenged to work more efficiently”.

P6: I have a really high workload I have a high caseload and I do lots of other things (..) and I just you know manage another project as well for the organisation (..) so I have a really high caseload [however] ...it's very individual (..) um-m a-and amongst the team there's quite different work ethics (..) work styles and different personalities too um-m so you can be as busy as you want in this organisation or (...) maybe you know have (..) the opposite work ethic (..) so I think it's more about that like yeah (--) so some team members are really busy and really productive and manage that well and other people don't do much and don't and don't cope with (..) (--) so it's very (..) (--) yeah, from my opinion anyway I'm sure other people have quite a different opinion

All of the participants find that they can manage their workload, especially their client or caseload. However, there are days that get much busier and participants do not have “time to turn around”. The workload, both client and non-client related, was seen as going in ups and downs. Workload and its heaviness at times is partially related to having so many components to their role. As Participant 5 said: “...we have other commitments as well (..) um-m you know, different projects and (..) um-m (..) attend the networks”. On the days or weeks when there are presentations, training, as well as client meetings, the working day can extend over the working hours. Heaviness of the workload is also partially related to staffing issues.

P1: ...it can be quite a high workload although it may not appear so in our in our (..) um-m statistics that we we submit monthly but um I think everyone (..) in the team realises that (..) you know um-m, five (..) family meetings in a

week is is (--) involves a lot of work with all the other stuff that we have to do and *(..)* the thing is a lot of the other stuff we have to do doesn't kinda get um recorded or or or is not immediately apparent, so um-m I mean you might even if *(--)* what *(--)* I had a week last week where a couple of my cli *(--)* um-m meetings were cancelled and and I didn't have any family meetings, and yet I was still very busy catching up on note taking and arranging other things so there's all [*emphasis on the last word*] these different aspects of of of this job ah-h that impinge on on on the basic work with families as well

P6: sometimes just having (..) a lot to do (..) um-m sometimes to-o (--) cause I *(--)* what I find if I hear really bad things often when I go back to the office I am I'm incl *(--)* I feel I'm inclined to write the notes *(..)* cause I wanna stop thinking about it *(..)* so sometimes it can be overwhelming, you know just that *(..)* yeah *(..)* yeah so again I think it's a combination of things and if they happen on the same day or the same week you know, it can be like ok right *(..)* you know deal[?] to this

There was a sense of needing to control the workload and manage it in order to be able to come out on the other side.

P6: Probably comes down to um-m (..) I suppose trying to control it so it doesn't control you cause like was mentioned it's endless and it can be overwhelming, so you have to really kind of recognise (...) you know (..) that there's gonna be more or that it's been a bad week or that you know, to cope so you can keep going cause it can be really good but it can be relentless and and (...) especially I think (..) there's lots of work to do and you can

easily say I'll do this and I'll do that and it goes on and on and on so that's probably a challenge to manage

This participant seems to be using self-talk as a way of focussing herself on the things that need to be done and managed. Two other participants expressed ideas that may help with improving the situation with the workload in order to make it both more manageable and be able to work more efficiently with families.

P1: ...maybe ah-h people employed to do (..) not field work but say marketing or networking or, or training you know, someone appointed just to do training... and take that off fieldworkers so that fieldworkers can get down to their idea[?] their work focus just more to to families and other (..) key, key tasks, yeah...

P2: I think I'm sure they should really consider (..) the Waitemata (...) we still need to talk through and work out how we assign families, you know is it by area (..) um-m, because it's a huge area to cover, can we actually manage with two staff... do we start working smarter and how the st (--) the priorities, cause I think there's the final[?] priorities, which is we have to see families face-to-face but, I think we could actually support more people more families with limited people by doing more peer support and really getting that under way... but, that actually takes planning and time to set up those sorts of things, um-m which you don't tend to necessarily have the time to do, so you kind of end up running (..) to chase your tail um (..) so it's kind of, I don't know, maybe having a bit of a plan ... I can't speak for the other teams but I think South Auckland definitely [needs more staff] I think...

use people's strengths... but yeah more staff definitely would help (...) and whether or not you then as a team go what are your passions... so you could actually say the more people between you assign specialties, whereas when there's two of you, you both have to do everything

The main issue that may prevent these improvements is funding. In order to take on additional staff more space would be needed, which, in turn, would require more funding. To organize fieldworkers and assign tasks not related directly to family contact depending on their own preferences would also require time, which, as participants expressed, they generally do not have.

Theme 4. Areas of Impact on Client Work

Workload. Workload was shown to depend on fieldworkers' individual work ethics and choices. It can thus be argued that fieldworkers need to manage their workload better and not to take on too many things. However, this argument is negated by some participants, who expressed the need to do more for clients because (i) the mental health system as whole is far from perfect and (ii) the central district is the only one where there are four fieldworkers, which means they can share the caseload as well as negotiate other aspects of their workload. In the other districts the DHB funds only two fieldworkers. This means that all the families that are referred to them are managed by only two fieldworkers.

P6: where I work (..) there's only two of us, we could do with four of us (..) because there's huge number of referrals and we just got endless work (..) um-m so yeah definitely but then like this team here, they got a lot of fieldworkers and so it's (..) probably different ... you have to have the statistics to-o you know prove that you

have a case for funding and you know so yeah yeah (. . .) funding and getting the contracts to (..) to prove to the funders there's a need for a specific contract

One of the participants referred to conscientiousness and realisation that if she does not do more family work and more networking, there would be no one else there to do it. For that reason and for the sheer desire to help people deal with a mental illness in their family some fieldworkers feel they have to maintain heavy workloads. They feel like they have to do it, despite not being forced into it, like there is no other choice if families are to be supported in a proper fashion.

P2: ...you just keep saying yes [chuckles] keep saying yes to things, because each project is so incredibly valid, each family's so valid, um-m (...) individually fieldworkers I think and I needed to be much stauncher and go ok, if phone (..) is answered and it's not an emergency I can't actually see you for two weeks, I can't see you for three weeks, um-m (..) knowing that you don't actually have to (...) jump...

According to this, fieldworkers she would have wanted to have permission to sometimes say “no” to taking on more things and not feel guilty about it. Due to budget limitations she would like to see that as long as she does what is required of her in terms of the role “you sort of actually got to say, that's enough, and if that's all you achieve you're doing a bloody good job”.

Workload was also seen to impact on training and the improvements to training fieldworkers wanted to see. For instance, Participant 1, who wanted to see more buddying before having to go to meetings with families on her own admits that “there are constraints around time”. All fieldworkers have a lot to do and as a result there may not be enough

time for longer periods of buddying up or giving each other feedback on the performance and skills or longer team discussions around cases and incorporating newly learnt material into practice.

Workload was also seen to affect client work, something participants saw as their priority. Participant 5 for instance, said that having back-to-back meetings can make it more difficult for her to work. "...families all they want to do is just (..) offload" so working with one family after another and hearing their stories while trying to manage both them, yourself and the process can lead to tiredness, which for Participant 5, meant more chances of being triggered by clients stories.

P5: And I think um-m for me I've learnt over the times that, sometimes when I've had three, two or three people in the day (..) then I yeah do get stressed out so and then I try to just see (. . .) two, at least, you know, that's the most of the people that I would see in a day is two, cause if I do any more I stress

Participant 2 expressed a similar opinion but in relation to her ability to be genuinely present with a family during a meeting after having done several back-to-back meetings. Participant 1 believed that she can cope with more cases if she had "more focus just on that and and ah-h I think it's with all the other things that make it a very (--) a real challenge".

P1: ...like for example I've recently ah-h done a ah-h (..) (--) I had to do a workshop for um our peer-to-peer (...) training ah ah for volunteers that are interested in doing peer-to-peer support work... so I took out the whole day but it involved hours and hours of preparation which took away time from my my work which is fairly busy anyway, and um-m (..) ah-h it was an

enjoyable thing to do I don't mind doing that but it's (..) (--) when you've got a whole lot of other things to do um it does become a bit of a stress and and ah-h yeah

Influences outside of work. Apart from aspects within the work environment that can impact on work with clients there are outside factors that can also exert their influence. One of the participants said that how well she copes with family meetings and how “drained” she feels after them can depend on her mental state before she goes to the meeting and whether she is already feeling tired. It seems that for her, managing client meetings when already feeling tired requires more work on her part. As a result she would feel more drained after the meeting when she goes there already tired.

Most of participants talked about life outside of work as impacting on their client work. Two participants, who have children living with them, talked about how sometimes, when they are with clients, their thoughts are with their families or household chores and that that interferes with their client work. Two other participants, who are in different situations, compared it to their younger colleagues.

P4: ...I've only got myself so (..) you know I don't ha (--) I don't have other (..) worries or kids or anything like that so, and I think too um possibly, I mean I could be wrong here, but my age probably would make a bit of a difference because I've been through life and I've sort of got to that point and you sort of think ah-ah, but now I look back in and I sorta live more for day-to-day... you look back on life differently when you're older (..) a-and you sort of don't worry about the same things you used to when you were a bit younger

P5: And also I think your family had grown like for me, my family had grown so I don't have the same (..) (--.)

P4: Yeah, that's what I mean

P5: ...you know like I would when my children were younger they would need more me (..) would need me at home more, so yeah, I think I agree with you...

P4: Yeah when I go home I don't have to have the table... to have the tea on the table at set time, I can eat what I want when I want how I want ... the ones that sorta haven't got the commitments at home, are different to the ones that have got (..) outside commitments it's been (--.) you seem to (..) fall into that (--.)

Participant 1 also talked about the importance of not letting issues outside of work interfere with her work with clients. As an example she talked about her anger with one of her clients, that resulted from both her life outside of work as well as the reaction to the client's perceived interference with her work.

...maybe dealing with any of my own anger issues and issues (..) (--.) making sure I keep (..) those sorts of issues myself attended to, so that I'm not coming to work with a bit of anger... out of my own personal life and and and allowing that to stack on top of it when I am working[?] with a client

It seems that in this situation there was a mutual triggering of anger. She was dealing with some issues outside of work that evoked the anger or perhaps made her more on the short-fused side. Dealing with the client who was frustrating triggered "the underlying anger". If she had worked with a different client her own anger may not have

been triggered and vice versa, if she was not already experiencing anger she may not have been as frustrated with that client. This shows that when it comes to working with people and their emotions, factors that are not necessarily immediate or even related to work need to be considered, as they too can have an impact on work and, in turn, on fieldworkers.

Positive influence. The aspects interfering with work described above have demonstrated the presence of a negative impact on work, especially client work. However, participants have also mentioned positive aspects related to work that can assist them with working with families. All participants mentioned a degree of freedom when it comes to client work as well as the caseload. It was briefly mentioned previously that fieldworkers did not feel pressure from the management to know everything in relation to training and client work. They have a high degree of control over decisions in regard to how they work with families and also have some say in the training they receive.

Freedom to make decisions around how to work with clients translates into flexibility fieldworkers have, and thus less pressure and worry about whether what they are doing is right and appropriate. Participant 5, for instance mentioned that cultural differences emerge in how she works with clients, specifically in setting boundaries, compared to other fieldworkers. Although at times she may question the appropriateness of boundaries she sets with clients who are from the same culture, she accepts that with them it will be appropriate. In having this freedom she realises that a 'one size fits all' approach may not always work and thus she can make decisions with individual clients that would suit them better. Participant 6 described a similar individual approach to setting boundaries with one of her clients, who was from a different culture.

Another positive aspect of working at the organisation that can mitigate negative impact on the work was support from peers, the team leader, and external supervisors. Participants saw support from their colleagues, internal and external supervisors as invaluable both for the purposes of learning as well as emotional support. When they experienced difficulties with client work they contacted supervisors in order to better understand and become aware of what was not going right in the meeting with the client so that the next time they saw that family the same issues would not arise, or at least be minimised. Colleagues provided very similar support as well as an opportunity to offload.

P6: if I'm having a bad day or I'm stuck I can ring up and go what about this you know, so I think that's important (...) um-m and probably outside too you know, I've got a good husband so I can go home and [mimics crying] you don't talk about how I feel or (..) yeah so I think it's a combination of things that can help you (..) manage ... if ah-h if it's really difficult (--) one of my colleagues I (--) you know who I really respect I might talk (--) ring her up and talk to her, um-m if I need (..) if I've got to do it properly and I've got to cover my back I'll ring the team leader and say (..) this is what happened this is what I've done you know, so um-m so kind of (..) that probably I do that (..) sometimes if it's a really bad day I'll go and have a cup of coffee [chuckles] you know or something um-m (..) yeah these are probably the main things (..) go home and talk to my husband

Participants also talked about the importance of having a team leader who they can call and consult if they are having difficulties with clients. As one of the participants mentioned it has to do with knowing that if something did not go well with a family and

they asked the team leader for support they would not be punished or made to feel like what they did was wrong. The issue of trust and knowledge that they will be able to receive emotional and practical support made participants' work easier and potentially the impact of that work more manageable.

P2: ...it's about learning to do it better... which means I can trust her to discuss, which is so important in this field that you can bring things, I don't how to do this, I'm (--) I think I've screwed this up [whispering], because when you're dealing with people and you're not gonna get it right all the time (..) and if you're frightened (..) or if you're getting it wrong, and you're not gonna talk about it (...) you gonna hide it and all those sorts of things (..) and, I think it's quite dangerous

There is also an enormous amount of trust in and respect for other fieldworkers. One of the participants said that their "team is really really supportive". As a result they can provide each other with support that all of them see as necessary for the kind of work they do. Participant 4 said that at times, another fieldworker would not have to ask for support because others can pick up on the fact they have had a difficult call, for instance, and offer "a chance to sort of (..) spill out".

The support fieldworkers provide each other with is vital in terms of learning new skills as well as emotional support. This link between learning and support from the team and supervisors is apparent throughout the interviews. It seems like both aspects tend to lessen uncertainty in relation to client work and provide emotional grounding and thus help with managing the workload and managing the emotional impact that can result from working with people.

P4: Yeah I mean if there is something you know I sort of say (..) you know is say hey guys I've got something I wanna share with you and then you [making explosion sound and gesture] and then it's gone or (--) and you may get some good feedback of it or (..) not but at least you get it out (..) or I may've gone to the family and I'll come back and I say oh my God you wouldn't believe you know, and so you can just offload quickly um-m (...) and I'm trying to get others to do the same...

Two of the fieldworkers also talked about the importance of support from their partners at home. Talking to their partners was yet another way to offload after a difficult day.

P4: I think too it all depends on who you've got at home with you, in your own home, um-m and how understanding is your partners or family relationship...[individual interview] I find it very difficult working with children (..) a-and that was though my own personal thing... so when I went home I talked about it with my partner who is very good and he's one I bounce a few (..) things off um-m (...) and then we turned it around and discussed what was I afraid of, and I said well it's the children because I (--) to cut a long story short I lost a stepdaughter at the age of seventeen

P6: ... and probably outside [of work] too you know, I've got a good husband so I can go home and [mimics crying] you don't talk about how I feel or (..) yeah so I think it's a combination of things that can help you (..) manage

Apart from emphasising the importance of support from other people, participants talked about personal coping mechanisms that help them deal with work. One of the

participants plays soccer. It helps her to get away from talking and thinking about mental health because no one on the team is related to the kind of work she does. Another way to deal with work and specifically the workload that was expressed by Participants 1 and 2 is being well organised in regard to the things they need to do at work. Some of them mentioned having breaks between seeing clients, “go have a coffee... self care”, or “if I had a bad day I often will go home and I say, I’ll just have a drink...and have a bath... kind of, go get rid of it”, or turning off their cell phone after finishing work. Participant 4 had a more elaborate coping mechanism that she called her “cloak of protection”.

I actually put a cloak on when I meet up with somebody I don't know (..) and that's my cloak of protection (..) um-m and the when I leave them I throw it away (..) um-m and to me all their issues (--) so I don't take their issues on board with me (..) because there're people too that are out there that I call um-m energy vampires, you know they drain everything from you... so over the years I have learnt to (..) do that protection with (--) for myself a-and when (..) that scenario sort of comes up which it does I haven't had one that's really really bad but you can see it starting to build (..) um-m then I do call on on (..) well I call it the other side for my own protection and strength to not get (..) (--) take that as (..) as my issue

Three of the participants talked about using humour as a coping mechanism that helps them deal with some of the more emotionally difficult aspects of client work.

P2: ...I think you need to have a joke and a laugh because you are generally dealing with intense stuff so inappropriate humour inappropriate at (--) appropriate time with the right people is important...

P1: I think humour is a bit of part of helping us to cope with (. . . .) I think (..) there's always a respect for families but at times we just find ourselves wanting to just make jokes probably about the more difficult people (..) I don't know if (--) how ethically right it is... I don't think it's (..) in any sort of stigmatising language about people with with mental illness (..) maybe there is occasionally but (..) that I think there's there's a respect and and (--)) for people who are suffering from those issues but, yeah at times some of those difficult (..) people do um-m (..) ah-h as you share some humour comes into it

P4: because of the sort of job that we do yeah um-m I sort of class myself a little bit as a village idiot (..) I mean I (--) upstairs we get told off cause we laugh too loud... at time um-m which I know is probably wrong but sometimes I make fun of the mental illness side of things because it's (..) (--) we have to have that release valve anyway

When talking about coping mechanisms, participants acknowledged some of the difficulties they can encounter as a part of their job. Some of the coping mechanisms are taught during training either at the organisation or at participants' previous training. Others come from their own experience and knowing what helps them cope in what situation, be it being organised or doing physical work in a garden. No matter the origin, they all seem to be a part of skills that are as necessary for client work as practical or procedural knowledge because without them, the work and its sheer enormity can probably become too much. That would make it impossible for fieldworkers to work with clients to the best of their ability.

Theme 5. Impact of Work on Fieldworkers

This theme seems to be the most controversial in terms of difference of opinions and experience in relation to the impact of work. A lot of what participants experienced seems to be related to more individual differences and abilities to cope as well as personal preferences and dislikes of certain aspects of their job. When talking about the impact of work on them, participants mainly talked about a combination of things at work and outside of it.

P3: I've been through a real bad patch over the last eighteen months and I'm slowly coming through it again... a whole heap of things, and I'm sorry I'm not gonna go into details but... a lot of it was work related (...) the bulk of it was work related

Part of their stories related to the impact of client work and part to the overall responsibilities of their role as fieldworkers. Participant 3 said that trying to do too much for families and trying too hard “can emotionally drain you” and sometimes she can come home “tired, mentally and physically exhausted... and its not so much the physical stuff, it's the mental drainage”. This “mental drainage” seems to result from both the workload and the nature of face-to-face work and dealing with the emotional difficulties of other people. As it was shown in the second theme, participants' own emotions at times were triggered during sessions with clients and that required more active management of both the emotion and the process of the meeting. Like one of the participants described it also makes it more likely to take it home:

P5: ...it's not good when you sort of like get carried away with it (..) emotional stuff, yeah (R: What would happen if you get carried away with

emotional stuff?) Well I think I would take it home and just (..) yeah dwell on it, yeah... it's happened a few times (R: How was it for you?) draining (...) tiring

Another participant, while talking about the need to be non-judgemental with clients said that because of doing it all day with clients “I get home and I go I am out of nice”. There seems to be an effort involved in being non-judgemental and attempting to do so genuinely, whether on an intellectual or an emotional level. As a result, at least for some participants, maintaining that level of genuineness and understanding can translate into not being able to bring themselves to have tolerance or ‘niceness’ outside of work.

One of the participants saw the impact of working with clients as something that is not immediately perceptible but nevertheless having consequences for her.

P1: it's not like I come home grumpy and go off at everyone but (..) um-m ah-h (..) I'm realising (...) more and more that there are kind of (--) there are there are these underlying effects which we may not be aware of yourself um um sort of subconscious things that affect you and and I I I don't know that it is that much understanding of those sorts of dynamics but (..) I am aware that to to sit with a family (..) or or a number of families in the case of when you're doing a support group (..) um-m and and get your head around their situation and to also listen to some of the the um-m their stories... and then to at the same time be thinking about how you can (..) um-m support them and resource them... listening to their stories can especially (..) I think can have an effect which is quite (..) (--) with all those other things it is

*draining but it's not necessarily immediately after you've met them it might
might hit you later I think sometimes*

For this participant feeling drained after client work translated into not wanting to be around people socially on the days she was feeling stressed. She also said that at times there is emotional exhaustion “to a point where I just wanna let my brain just do something escapist...”. At the same time it is clear that the effects this and other participants were talking about are not there all the time. Rather, some days or some family meetings can be more challenging and it is then that fieldworkers begin to feel drained, stressed, and not wanting to see people socially and be left alone.

Participant 2 expressed a slightly different opinion that corresponded with the beliefs of several other participants, in saying that often for her the stress is not related to a particularly difficult case or day but work as a whole, together with face-to-face contact as well as the quantity of the overall workload.

*P2: I find I don't get stressed about this individual thing, this family... but
it's a cumulative thing it's like at the end of the week there's (--) you
suddenly find I'm I'm crying over stupid ads on the television or [laughs]
you know, seriously ones with the ducks for some reason... I watch I watch
terrible programmes and I go oh that makes me feel so sad or (..) I am I'm
going faster n' faster n' faster 'n feeling (--) you know it's like it's not a
direct correlation to that family that's made me stressed out, that's made me
stressed or that it's (..) it's the whole thing for me, it's the no time from work
to home to, (--) you know (..) and you do [last word said with emphasis]
start viewing the world after a while, as like, as mental health*

Face-to-face contact did not seem to lead to very negative consequences that were long term for all participants except for one. It is possible that the reason for that is the view of face-to-face family work as the main priority and something that fieldworkers enjoy and aspects other than client work were seen as having a more negative effect.

P5: with this work (..) I think um-m (...) ah-h I find visiting families (..) you know but then there's always other things that come (..) you know, with visiting families... those I find a bit tiring but the actual (..) visiting families is (..) is fine[?] yeah... (R: ...do you sometimes feel emotionally exhausted after work?) P5: (long pause, 7 s) usually after Fridays (..) team meetings [laughs] (R: So on Fridays as far as I know you don't tend to see families) Yeah... Just emotionally drained yeah sometimes (..) it's the team dynamics... [working with families] that's what I enjoy doing

P1: sometimes I feel like I'm wearing this (..) sense of (..) never never catching up and and never getting there it's always (--) and and that can be a little bit wearing and I've woken up at times and think oh my gosh whe (--) it's just, you know I'm not gonna (..) (--) there's this kind of (...) um-m (long pause) unresolved (..) something (--) some some sort of sense of not getting (...) well it's (--) maybe it's the stress of not not feeling or properly (--) ever being able to get hold of everything and have it really well organised in your week and get through things

Similar to the previous two accounts, Participant 6 believed that it is often a “combination of things” at work that “can be overwhelming”. The impact depended on the workload, which “goes in waves”, as well as the frequency with which she was seeing the

family she was finding challenging. When seeing that family everyday thoughts about them were ongoing, both inside and outside of work, but when “things settle down” the impact disappears. It seems that for several participants the impact of client work is palpable only when there is a difficult case and not all client work would necessarily have a negative impact.

Similarly, Participant 2, when describing a client calling her “heartless and rude” talked about the impact of that specific case on her. It seemed the impact was on two levels. One, immediately after the meeting, where she had “quite a strong emotional reaction to the client” and then “sat in the car and felt argh... did not feel good”. On the other level, the impact seemed to be somewhat more long term.

P2: ...that did affect me for the rest of the day (..) the interesting thing... the physical feeling of emotion and the (..) um-m, actual being in the emotion, you go ok I've rung up, I've debriefed I've done that, and then you start (-- you might start thinking all the (-- the issues will keep popping back into your head and you'll go through it a few times, but you might not be (...) really upset or really concerned, but it's there (..) and it's like I find, and probably when I went home that night and other times when it's been quite intense family meeting where you've listened to a whole lot of intense um-m things, um-m (...) you can do all the right things but you probably (-- it's, it's like a residue, um-m (..) that's there and then all of a sudden it's coming out in many ways (..) um-m, to the extent of you know, I'll snap at the children... you know you do, because stress... I didn't wanna talk, going, I just (-- I don't have any strength to talk about my family's (..) things and

what they were doing and how they felt about it so, so if Neel [name changed] came home my husband and he was stressed, I would pick it up, but I kind of (--) I just don't (--) I can't (--) it would actually feel really intrusive to me, like I just (--) no I can't actually cope with you being stressed, I can't cope with my teenage daughter, who's a teenage girl so has strong emotions that are really ah [laughs]

This participant was the one out of the group who decided to leave the organisation because she felt her work interfered too much with her home life. Out of all participants she was the one to report the strongest impact of the workload and some impact from face-to-face work. For her “it’s not the work so much as the amount of work” that was creating more negative consequences and was making it impossible to enjoy her family life because “work became overbalanced”.

Some of the participants reported a more general impact of working in a mental health field.

P2: we are in this really intense kind of industry where people come and tell you stuff that is just isn't told anywhere else and it makes you, view, the world differently... we talk at work on such a deep level really people are telling you stuff that (..) you know, it's real personal, when I go out socially with a group of friends and things where we talk on that normal normal, um-m level... I often can feel really did dis disingenuous I just feel like we're having a (--) this (--) I'm just bullshitting, it's like, I I feel like I (--) actually friends I've known for years over the last six months for example, I feel really disconnected with, I don't feel like we've had a conversation, because

I'm (--) it's all hap (--) it's so hard at work, you just you just (--) you're on this level at work [demonstrating high level with a hand]...

P6: I've got a couple of friends that have got mental health issues and so I'm in a really good position to support their families... it's like argh, I don't think I wana hear another story... you know, and I don't wanna see these people all the time [laughs]

For one of the participants there was a collision between work and her own life because the area where she works and lives is small.

P3: ...do you say hello to them? (..) do you just walk straight past them? [laughs] (R: How do you deal with that how do you answer those questions for yourself?) Sometimes I walk straight past them, if they say hello to me [beamingface] how is it[?] or duck (..) ... you can't avoid it, again the small area... what do you do? you ignore them? You walk straight past them? Either way you gonna get a dilemma (..) but you stopped[?] me[?] you went straight past me the other day

The impact of the job also presented itself in the way participants felt about their job. One participant, who was leaving the organisation, expressed the most ambiguous feelings about her work in saying that she both enjoyed it but at the same time did not like it. There was a sense of enjoyment and seeing some parts of the job as being great. However, in the end she did not feel like she can ever do enough to make a difference for families. Despite loving the job and the people that she works with there seems to be a sense of disillusionment that resulted from the amount of workload and almost never getting a sense of closure: “you finish one project and straight down on the next there's no

celebration there's no endpoint". She talked about the need to manage the viewpoint of knowing that her work and what she does with families helps and the one where she felt that there was no point in what she was doing: "...unless you've got that perspective of what's right in the system and holding both those real negatives and real positives it's like it can (--) it swings".

The main difference between this participant and others, in terms of experiencing a negative impact of work, was the belief that what they are doing does indeed help families with their difficulties. Participant 5, for instance, was talking about family work and that "sitting down and having conversations with families" was what she liked the most about her job and that it was other aspects, like the workload, that were overwhelming. She agreed with Participant 2 in that there was no closure or "celebration" when finishing a case. It seems that for some participants there is a connection between being able to acknowledge the success of finishing work with the family and a sense of satisfaction and actually feeling that something positive has been accomplished.

Similar to Participant 5, Participant 6 was saying that she loves her job because "you can help people, you can make a big difference and often doesn't take much and you can get really good outcomes for people". Participant 3, to make the work "worthwhile", pictured some of the families that she had helped and that were able to move forward when working with some of the "not so good cases".

The majority of participants, apart from Participant 2, reported neither much of the negative impact nor the long lasting impact from client work, while expressing a satisfaction specifically with the face-to-face aspect of their role, if not with all the other aspects involved. Some participants also reported positive consequences of their work.

P5:... I think with working in mental health I've actually (--) it's been a healing process for me as well, it's really um-m sort of like ok (..) facing your demons [chuckles] yeah and having to deal with them...

The majority of participants also relayed a sense of satisfaction they get from their job. There is recognition that sometimes there are bad days that leave them feeling wanting to do more for clients, or dwelling on the meetings and thinking what could have been done differently. They also recognize that there are good days and it is during those days that participants feel like they have made a difference for someone and that the work they do matters.

P6: ...you can help people, you can make a big difference and often doesn't take much and you can get really good outcomes for people...

P1: ...everything's come together right and and you (--) and who you are is kind of (..) all together somehow um-m um-m just been right for that person and... I get this real (--) really satisfying (..) positive (..) sort of ah-h boost sort of boosting, makes you realise this (..) I am sort of (..) the way I am created something ah-h ah-h (--) I am just kind of made for this type of work...

P4: ...when you do have one family that has success or works or they've done it... when you see that I mean it can only be one every six months but you know you've done it

Conclusion

This chapter presented results of the thematic analysis on the interview transcripts of six fieldworkers working at the community mental health

organisation. It demonstrated what emotional labour ‘looks’ like for the fieldworkers and presented factors that were found to impact on performance and experience of emotional labour as well as the impact of emotional labour on fieldworkers.

Chapter 5

Discussion

This Chapter provides a discussion of the results by integrating the themes into the theoretical model of emotional regulation provided in Chapter two. The model incorporates the antecedents of emotional labour in the form of display rules, the performance of emotional labour through emotional regulation strategies, individual and organisational factors that impact on emotional labour, and the impact of emotional labour. Display rules and their origins are considered and the performance of emotional labour by fieldworkers is discussed. Factors that impact on emotional labour are discussed together with the impact of emotional labour fieldworkers have experienced.

Organisational Structure: Display Rules

Client Contact

Fieldworkers' knowledge about how to be with families, what is appropriate and what is not, what emotions are desirable and need to be displayed with clients can be seen as display rules. Display rules prescribe emotions (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1995) and "specify the range, intensity, duration and object of emotions that are expected to be experienced – or at least displayed." (Mann, 2006, p. 553). These relate to job characteristics according to Humphrey (2000) and influence the display rules and the emotional displays of workers.

The range of emotions fieldworkers are expected to display is fairly large. In general, there is a difference as to the expectation of either positive or negative emotional displays across occupations (Rafaeli & Sutton, 1987). Erickson and Ritter (2001) also accounted for agitated emotions. In this study, fieldworkers sometimes experienced

emotions with clients they considered to be negative – ‘negative emotions’. ‘Positive emotions’, that fieldworkers experienced and displayed appeared to separate into ‘appropriate emotions’ that can be displayed at appropriate times matching what the clients are talking about and what emotions they may be feeling, as well as ‘necessary emotions’ that fieldworkers needed to display and feel, at least to some degree. Table 5.1. lists various emotions and emotional displays reported by fieldworkers in their work with clients.

According to the data, fieldworkers are expected to display positive emotions that are considered necessary and acceptable, which also need to be authentic and genuine and thus felt. They must regulate emotions that are unacceptable and negative, and regulate the intensity of the display of positive acceptable and necessary emotions. However, they are not required to only display positive emotions like empathy, concern, or compassion, though these are displayed most of the time. In some situations fieldworkers needed to be more direct and firm with clients, when clients pushed boundaries, for example. Situations acted as cues for activation of specific display rules regarding emotional regulation that may have been applicable to one situation but not another (Sutton, 1991).

Table 2. Classification of emotions pertaining to client contact described by fieldworkers during the course of the interviews

<u>Negative Emotions:</u> Inappropriate Emotional Displays	<u>Positive Emotions:</u> Appropriate Emotions to Feel and Displays		Necessary Emotions to Feel and Displays
Anger	Sadness		Empathy
Frustration	Concern		Care
Disgust	Worry		Compassion
Fear	Joy		Understanding
Anxiety	Firmness		
Sexual/Romantic Attraction	Verbalising negative emotions		
	Calmness		
	Composure		

The duration of interactions with clients was always the same, one hour per meeting. However some fieldworkers mentioned they allowed one and a half hours for the first visit. The intensity of interactions with clients that were evident in fieldworkers' narratives was dependent on the fieldworkers' perception of the difficulty or challenging nature of these interactions for them. Intensity of interaction is a somewhat complex aspect of the display rules because, as stated above, there many prescriptions for emotional experience and emotional displays.

Past research suggests that high-to-medium intensity of interactions and medium-to-long duration of interactions are associated with high emotional labour that, in turn, is associated with high stress (Mann, 1999; Mann & Cowburn, 2005). However, there was no indication that these were associated with high, unmanageable stress levels in fieldworkers. Only the regulation of negative emotions, in an attempt to suppress them and not let them show, was associated with stress. But these were not frequent occurrences and stress was not reported to last over an extended period of time. Negative emotions were experienced with either 'difficult' clients or were not related to clients at all.

There seems to be an interconnection between rules pertaining to emotional displays and those pertaining to behaviour as well as fieldworkers' thoughts and feeling for clients. When working with clients fieldworkers not only needed to regulate their emotional displays but similarly, their behaviour and what they think about clients. Fieldworkers talked about monitoring their behaviours, how they were sitting, and whether they were displaying appropriate empathy or concern. All these occurred simultaneously and in fieldworkers accounts were a part of their perceptions of how they needed to be with

clients. Perhaps, when it comes to client work on a deep level not only the rules regarding emotional displays need to be taken into account.

Outside of Client Contact

There seemed to be expectations about appropriate display and behaviour outside of client contact as well. When interacting with other mental health professionals, be it while networking or going with families to see clinical teams, some fieldworkers are there to represent the organisation or to ensure the best results for their clients. These interactions point to the existence of display rules that pertain specifically to appropriate ways of interacting with other mental health professionals. These display rules may vary depending on the aim of the interactions as well as the place where these interactions take place. Participants did not indicate that these display rules were overtly stated within the organisation but some display rules can be estimated from professional norms (Tschan, Rochat, & Zapf, 2000).

When interacting with supervisors or managers and especially with colleagues, fieldworkers' accounts spoke more of relaxed display rules regarding emotional expressions. Frustration and anger about clients were expressed and it is with these emotions that colleagues and supervisors provided support. Tschan, Rochat, and Zapf (2000) showed that deviating from display rules was more likely to occur with one's colleagues than clients. It still seemed however, that display rules dictating what needs to be thought or felt for clients still partially applied. For instance, when talking about sharing humour as a coping mechanism to counteract the emotional strain that client work can create, fieldworkers expressed that they do not do it in a derogatory fashion and that there is still respect for families. It is of course possible that those comments were made more for

my benefit so that I would not have a faulty impression that there is a lack of regard for clients. For instance, two participants expressed that clients can be not very nice people and that it is probably something they 'should' not say. It also points to the strength of identification with their role and the display rules as well as a high degree of respect for clients.

Display Rules: Where do They Come From?

Display rules or emotional prescriptions, according to Ashforth and Humphrey (1995), represent a blend of influence from within as well as outside the organisation. Some of the display rules, evident in fieldworkers' stories, seemed to be located within the organisation in the form of the mission statement, procedures, policies, and protocols around client contact. For instance, the motto of the organisation is to support clients and empower them. The motto itself carries a meaning of what it is that can be done for clients and with clients. It is about supporting them and not doing all the work for them because that will not promote empowerment. At times that means being firm, or saying the difficult thing, while at the same time making sure that clients know they are being cared about and understood.

Display rules were also perceived from some aspects of training and were reinforced by supervisors and other fieldworkers. Immersion of the worker into display rules often begins during training (Hochschild, 1983). For instance, fieldworkers learn to establish and maintain boundaries with clients. Boundaries, as display rules, specify how fieldworkers need to be with clients – friendly but not too friendly, while maintaining a professional relationship. Fieldworkers set boundaries as much for clients as for themselves

in order to ensure that display rules are being adhered to and thus their conduct with clients is at an appropriate professional level.

Supervision in mental health work is both a method of teaching while practising, as well as a means to assist supervisees to address emotions and attitudes that can be problematic with clients (Ladany, Friedlander, & Nelson, 2005). Diefendorff and Richard (2003) found that supervisors' influence on workers' beliefs about suppression of negative emotions to be strong and presents a unique influence, separate from the influence of job-based expectations of emotional expressions – display rules. Fieldworkers receive this guidance from the team leader and the external supervisors as well as colleagues. They saw both groups as providing a form of informal training about how they need to be with clients and why.

Fieldworkers also referred to display rules that seemed to be located outside the organisation and within the larger professional mental health practice. One of the participants, for instance, talked about being “guided by the code of (..) ethics which is you know, do no harm and um-m (..) (-- yeah but you can be friendly with people (..) yeah but at the same time maintaining that you know (..) work relationship”. Ideas around emotion management strategies and specific professional attitudes were assimilated through professional socialisation (Brown, 1991). The display rules discussed previously have often been inferred in participants' discourses of professionalism or being professional, thus making emotional regulation a part of fieldworkers' skills, which can be enhanced by supervision.

Fieldworkers often talked about professional behaviour or wearing a professional hat when talking about appropriate or inappropriate emotions. According to Yanay and

Shahar (1998) counsellors can struggle to display professional feelings, which authors characterised as neutrality, objectivity, and care. Fieldworkers talked about similar emotional displays. The professional discourse seems to operate as a vehicle that carries a meaning of what it is to be a mental health worker and includes prescription of behaviours, internal emotional experiences as well as emotional displays when working with clients.

Fieldworkers seemed to embrace the display rules, especially around appropriate and inappropriate emotional displays with clients. Commitment to display rules ensures changes in behaviour in accordance with these rules (Gosserand & Diefendorff, 2005). In the case of fieldworkers it did not affect only the observable emotional expressions but the internal experience of emotions as well. Fieldworkers saw genuine emotions like empathy, compassion, concern, respect, care, and the desire to help – all of which are display rules pertaining to both the organisation and seemingly wider context of mental health work – as necessary aspects of their work, without which their capacity to help families would be impaired. These display rules are not just about appropriate displays when with clients. They are about the actual feeling and experiencing of the emotions that are seen as desired and therefore needed to be portrayed to clients. For example, one of the participants expressed that she understood from training that there needs to be emotional control but at the same time it has to be combined with an idea that some emotions are allowed and are needed to be expressed.

Performance of Emotional Labour by Fieldworkers

Client Contact

Displaying, shaping, masking, or suppressing emotions (Erickson & Ritter, 2001) happens in accordance with display rules and constitutes management or regulation of

emotions. All of the aforementioned display rules govern fieldworkers' behaviour and emotional experiences and expressions with clients. Fieldworkers' accounts of controlling and managing emotions are examples of emotional regulation performed through types of acting. Control and management are the ways fieldworkers perceive to regulate their emotions. In the model discussed in Chapter two and briefly described in the beginning of this Chapter, two types of acting are presented – deep acting and surface acting – as well as the expression of genuine, naturally occurring emotions.

Surface acting. All participants reported showing emotions they do not feel to clients. When they are feeling angry or scared or frustrated they mask those emotions and attempt not to display them. Instead they used their facial expressions and body language to project feelings they may not have been feeling at the time (Theodosius, 2008), like calmness and neutrality. Technically speaking, these represent surface acting. In the literature, surface acting has been described as 'pretending' (Martinez-Inigo, Totterdell, Alcover, & Holman, 2007) and 'faking' (Brotheridge & Grandey, 2002). These descriptions give a distinct feel of the performer not being genuine and not bothering with attempting to feel and express a genuine emotion. According to fieldworkers, they do not feel like they fake but rather feel genuine when they are with clients. 'Faking', as was reported by one fieldworker, related to sometimes not having the energy to be completely present with her families. And although she described it as faking it does not relate to the conceptualisation of surface acting but rather to a sense of somehow minimising the value of that session for her clients and thus even a possible feeling of guilt.

Looking at the non-display of emotions that are considered to be 'bad' for clients as pretending or faking does not constitute surface acting. It may likely be so in other

professions but not for fieldworkers. If surface acting was to be consistently conceptualised in more neutral terms like “feeling that is displayed” (Erickson & Ritter, 2001p. 149) or “managing the expression of behaviour rather than feelings” (Mann, 2005, p. 304) without the more colourful additions, the argument would be made that fieldworkers surface act. Until then such argument cannot be made. It may seem like a matter of semantics but in actuality it is not, because in the current state of conceptual diversity fieldworkers’ emotional labour performance may be misrepresented and their obvious pride in the work they do as genuine and caring professionals marred.

Instead, I argue that fieldworkers ‘surface act’ for the clients’ sake, when what they are experiencing would not be beneficial for clients. To say that fieldworkers are genuine in their surface acting may appear to be an oxymoron but nevertheless seems to be true. They do not attempt to deliver fake emotions but rather to present a more appropriate emotional display that can calm an agitated situation. Appearing composed and calm when in reality being angry or scared is similar to what one of the nurses in Staden’s (1998) study referred to as “coming across alright”, when faced with a dying patient. The ‘coming across’ was not because she did not feel for her patient, rather it was for the patient’s benefit. Expressing felt emotions in caring professions may not be helpful for clients and it is the performance of emotional labour to control negative emotions that is of benefit (Mann, 2005).

There was a sense in fieldworkers’ narratives that displaying an emotion considered to be negative instead of calmness or empathy would cause fieldworkers to feel like they have not done their job properly. It indicates adherence to display rules but also something else. Projection of calmness and masking or controlling negative emotions was seen to be

done for the sake of clients and not only because it was dictated by the display rules. From fieldworkers' points of view when they were with clients they were there completely for them and their own emotions should not interfere with the work they were trying to do with clients. 'Doing it for the clients' can be viewed as a display rule but it is so much more than that for fieldworkers; it is genuine care and desire to help. If one's own emotions are seen as damaging for clients then they must be minimised and priority given to clients' emotions and experiences.

Erickson and Ritter (2001) found that experience and covering up of agitated emotions (anger, irritation, and nervousness) and negative emotions (helplessness, sadness, guilt, fear, and shame) were associated with a sense of inauthenticity in workers. Contrary to these findings a sense of inauthenticity in fieldworkers was not associated with masking anger, anxiety, frustration, and fear – emotions fieldworkers named as negative over the course of the interviews. It seems that a different understanding of the necessity of not displaying these negative emotions accounts for the results. Fieldworkers view the cover up of negative emotions as necessary for their clients' journey toward emotional wellbeing. Theodosius (2008) wrote: "the purpose of the emotional labour is the management of emotion" and for health professionals it is the need and even a responsibility to prioritise "emotional welfare" and emotional needs of their clients/patients (p. 6).

However, as a part of their practice, fieldworkers can verbalise to clients, in a polite manner, when they are experiencing some of the negative emotions like frustration or anxiety, especially when they perceive it as something they 'picked up' from clients. It is very much different to, for instance, service sector professions and no research on emotional labour I have identified so far looked at the expression of negative emotions

through verbalisation with clients/customers. It is most likely because in the service sector this would not be appropriate due to time limits of interactions as well as the nature of interactions within the context of service occupations.

Deep acting. Deep acting “is the process of controlling internal thoughts and feelings to meet mandated display rules” (Brotheridge & Grandey, 2002). Fieldworkers performed deep acting through self-talk when they tried to think about their clients and what they have been through. It was particularly obvious when fieldworkers talked about dealing with the more difficult families. Deep acting enabled fieldworkers to regulate their negative emotions not just in terms of display but in terms of experience and increased their ability to be non-judgemental and empathic. As a result, they were able to manage the session so that it did not deteriorate and was helpful to the clients. Seeing clients as victims, explaining clients’ anger displays as symptomatic of their psychological difficulties, and looking at the situation from the clients’ point of view were the discourses utilised when attempting to enhance positive emotions while deep acting. These are similar to what Hochschild (1983) described in flight attendants when they were trying to conform with the display rules and exhibit positive emotions when in reality feeling negative.

It seems that for fieldworkers, strategies of deep acting were shaped by both professional discourses as well as personal preferences. For instance, seeing clients’ displays as indicative of their psychological difficulties is something that is generally realised during the course of training from the literature on therapeutic modalities. The personal preferences aspect seems also likely. One of the participants, for instance, mentioned that when clients act liked victims it made her angry because the attitude makes them less likely to move on. Therefore, for her, attempting to see clients as victims was

likely to evoke a negative emotion rather than a positive one and thus, would not have had a desirable effect.

It is the positive emotions that fieldworkers sometimes felt they needed to induce or enhance through deep acting, so that they would become more pronounced. It generally happened only when a case was particularly difficult but otherwise fieldworkers reported feeling genuine empathy and other desired emotions without any effort on their part – they were just there. When the desired emotion needed to be induced participants felt that it was because they did not develop a full understanding of the clients' problem or situation. In that situation they relayed empathy verbally. Even when empathy was not strongly present there was still a sense of connection to the client as well as the desire to work with them and to be there for them, as a result of which, empathy always surfaces.

Automatic regulation. Hochschild (1983) believed that people can learn to deep act extremely well, to the point where they would not be aware of the emotional work they put into creating a required emotion. For fieldworkers, the learning to deep act well can come from self-monitoring. Self-monitoring relates to self-reflection (Shepard & Morrow, 2003), which, in turn, promotes awareness.

Self-monitoring that participants reported is the ability “to ‘read’ the demands of the particular social situation, monitor, and control (or disguise) inappropriate information or feelings and usually express oneself in a positive and socially approved manner” (Riggio & Friedman, 1982, p. 33). Brotheridge and Lee (2003) and Diefendorff, Croyle, and Gosserand (2005) found self-monitoring to be a predictor of surface acting. However, in fieldworkers self-monitoring seemed to be a process that enabled emotional labour as well as allowed fieldworkers to monitor other aspects of the meeting and made them aware of

the evolving process of the meeting. Through self-monitoring, which was directed at self and others (Riggio & Friedman, 1982) they were consciously aware of the process of the meeting and whether the boundaries were in place or being pushed by either party. It did not automatically imply a display of unfeared emotions; rather, it made fieldworkers more attuned to the needs of their clients.

Self-monitoring corresponds with reflective practice, which is a part of fieldworkers' practice. Reflective practice can increase self-awareness and insight into how one reacts to situations and can be a self-management strategy (Dearmun, 2000). Reflective practice and self-awareness are not solely about emotional labour, but it seems to be included as an aspect. Fieldworkers needed to be aware of clients' emotions and experiences as well as their own emotional reactions and their possible interferences. They needed to be able to reflect on whether displaying emotions, be they positive or negative, would be about clients or about them. Self-awareness can be thought of as a constant stream of thought pertaining to the progress of the session, including emotional and experiential contexts. It is not unlike self-talk but it cannot be called an internal dialogue, which is generally associated with deep acting.

Gross (1998a) sees emotional regulation as a continuum from controlled regulation that requires effort to automatic and effortless. Controlled regulation in fieldworkers includes types of acting as well as the modulation of genuine displays. It is also likely that control and management of emotions in fieldworkers can be done automatically, when a situation does not present a difficulty for fieldworkers. Two things point to this conclusion. One, display rules around professional behaviour have been internalised and accepted by fieldworkers. Two, self- and other-monitoring is a part of the reflective practice, which is

integrated into fieldworkers' practice on a daily basis. Automatic emotion regulation is a more unconscious process that is relatively effortless (Bargh & Williams, 2007) and there may not necessarily be a focused and purposeful attention deployment or cognitive change because they are all performed automatically.

Genuine emotions. Another aspect of emotional management that was included in the framework of emotional labour was around genuinely occurring emotions that are in line with display rules. Displaying naturally occurring emotions requires little effort, according to Ashforth and Humphrey (1993). Fieldworkers in the current study described displaying genuinely felt emotions that were within the range of positive emotions listed in Table 5.1. It is the display of these emotions that constituted the majority of their interactions with clients.

Showing empathy to clients was one of the more important emotions that needed to be displayed and felt. Empathy can be thought of as one of the acting methods in emotional labour (Larson & Yao, 2005). As Larson and Yao (2005) point out "empathy should characterise all health care professions" (p. 1100). They further argue that empathising with clients or patients makes physicians better 'healers'. Fieldworkers seemed to hold a similar opinion. They believed that without genuine empathy and concern, which arguably comes from empathy, their work would not be possible because then they would feel like they were not doing their work – i.e., helping clients to move on and live a happier existence.

The majority of fieldworkers always felt genuine empathy on some level. When it was not felt there was still a sense of connection to clients' emotional difficulties and understanding of those difficulties. Fieldworkers were also aware that displaying genuine positive emotions may not have been beneficial for their clients if the intensity of the

display was high. The modulation was seen as necessary not just because it corresponded with the display rules but because there was an understanding that fieldworkers' emotions would interfere in clients' processes.

The majority of the studies on emotional labour do not consider the display of naturally felt emotions when investigating emotional labour (Diefendorff, Croyle, & Gosserand, 2005). Diefendorff, Croyle, and Gosserand (2005) argue that the display of naturally felt emotions is more predominant than research would suggest, and surface and deep acting are more compensatory strategies that "occur in response to difficult situations" (p. 348). It coincides with participants' discourses of needing to manage their emotions and displays through deep acting when they were with a client they were finding difficult for one reason or another.

Phillips (1996), in her discussion of emotional labour in nurses, argues that the core of emotional labour is grounded in "genuine spontaneity" (p. 142) and in its value for clients and patients. For fieldworkers it is very much the same. The generally spontaneous emotions they display to clients are there not only because the display rules pertaining to professional demeanour say so; they are there because of the care for clients. Sabo (2006) argues that empathy, compassion, and caring, the emotions described by fieldworkers as genuinely present during most of the interactions with clients, can come at a cost for those feeling them. Participants in the current study suggested that being genuinely present with clients could be tiring and draining. But it seemed that not being genuine would come at a higher price than being genuine. Genuineness with clients was seen as necessary not just for clients but for fieldworkers themselves. They felt if they were not genuine they would not feel like they are doing their job, they would feel like they are faking and being

disingenuous. It is faking and not being authentic that can result in negative consequences (Hochschild, 1983).

Similar to nurses in Bolton's (2001) study, fieldworkers walk the fine line between showing empathy, concern, or sadness and still presenting a professional and neutral demeanour. It is for this purpose that regulation of the intensity of the display of spontaneously felt positive emotions is performed. Participants felt they needed to control these positive emotions just as much as they needed to control the negative ones. The difference was that the former had nothing to do with experience because by experiencing these emotions fieldworkers were in line with display rules. Rather, it was about displaying the appropriate emotion so that it did not interfere with clients' processes. For instance, experiencing sadness and showing it to some degree was appropriate but displaying it by beginning to cry uncontrollably would not be as the session then may become about the fieldworker rather than the client.

There was an awareness that fieldworkers were there to do a job and becoming too friendly, for instance, or too sad was unacceptable and unprofessional. However, it was also unprofessional not to display emotions like empathy or show tears when clients were talking about something sad that had happened to them. So it seems that it is not just being the caring professional, but also being human. This can make fieldworkers appear less like 'professionals' in terms of emotional distance and more approachable and easier to relate to. This so-called 'befriending' of families is done in order to be able to provide them with better care by establishing trust and making it easier for them to open up (Gray, 2001).

According to Smith and Gray (2000, as cited in Mann & Cowburn, 2005), a nursing role of making people feel safe and comfortable has emotional labour at its core. The same

can be said of mental health workers, especially in the establishment of trust with clients, whereby they aim to make clients feel secure and comfortable. It seems that emotional labour in fieldworkers is not just about types of acting or experiencing naturally occurring emotions. It is also about the effort of trying to be fully present with the family and wanting to be there even while really wanting to be somewhere else. It seems like a contradiction but actually it is not. At times, fieldworkers felt like being somewhere else but there still was a genuine desire to help and to assist their clients and to fulfil their role. In the end it was this desire and the effort to do the best job they can do with all their clients that constitutes emotional labour. Therefore, it is not just about regulating emotions through types of acting. Rather emotional labour also consists of the effort that sometimes can be sizeable, exerted by fieldworkers to do right by all their clients.

Outside of Client Work

The idea that emotional labour counts as emotional labour only when the object at whom it is directed is a client, a customer, or a patient is widespread throughout the research field of emotional labour (Bailey & McCollough, 2000; Gorman, 2000; Sass, 2000; Williams, 2003). It is not that the sentiment is often overtly stated but the predominance of research and theory considering emotional labour in relational work with customers or clients makes the argument for itself. However, emotional energy is exerted during interactions with colleagues, supervisors, and managers (Maslach, 1982) and some of the display rules regarding these interactions have been described previously. These are evident in fieldworkers when interacting with other mental health professionals, with supervisors, management, as well as within the team. These interactions involved either

face-to-face or voice-to-voice contact, some of the prerequisites for the presence of emotional labour according to Hochschild (1983).

Grandey, Tam, and Brauburger (2002) in their investigation of affective events at work on emotional responses included events occurring with both customers and co-workers. It is my perception that fieldworkers' interactions that were work-related but did not involve clients also involved emotional labour or, as emotional labour is conceived in the current study, emotional regulation. Although there was no actual investigation of emotional labour on this level of work because the main focus was on client work, it seems that fieldworkers aimed to maintain a degree of professionalism, and thus may also regulate their emotions and displays during these interactions.

Fieldworkers often worked closely with clinical teams. One of the participants described this aspect of fieldworker role as being something of a mediator between clients and clinical teams where two sides may not see eye-to-eye. Fieldworkers, from the participant's description, needed to attempt to control the meeting for both sides in order to achieve the best results for clients. In these situations their own emotions might be more prominent as they have their opinions and experiences of working with the clinical teams. Due to that and having to hold two parties instead of one family during a meeting, more emotional regulation was likely needed then when working with clients.

Several participants disclosed having had negative emotions when it came to working with clinical teams. However, they did not express these emotions. It was not explored how and why participants knew they needed to conceal these emotions. Often though, when it comes to work-related interactions, general societal rules take presence,

which normally dictate being polite and not exhibiting displays that can be conceived as rude and bad-mannered (Leary, 1996, as cited in Tschan, Rochat, & Zapf, 2000).

Emotional regulation seemed to be needed with colleagues or rather those working on the managerial level. One of the participants described that in the past, when the team leader was different, she did not have trust in receiving good input and also did not feel comfortable to bring difficulties she was having with a family at the time. There was a sense of fear of punishment or repercussions and being made to feel like she had done something wrong with the family and should not have. Again, this level of emotional work was not investigated. However it seems likely that apart from trying to hide what had transpired with the client there was also a need for emotional regulation as the relationship with previous management was somewhat tense. Even when there is a sense of dislike, and a belief that management themselves are not professional, workers may still need to maintain a degree of emotional control subordinates generally display for their superiors.

Emotional Labour: What Affects it and What it Affects

Factors that were identified as impacting on emotional labour and explanations of the impact of emotional labour on fieldworkers will be discussed together as there is significant interconnection between them. Emotional work performed by the caring professions is complex (Bolton, 2001). For fieldworkers it involves frequent negotiation between prescriptions of display rules pertaining to what emotions need to be displayed and felt and in what situations and the regulation of both displayed and felt emotions. It is also impacted by factors outside and inside work.

Organisational factors

Control at work. Several factors were found to impact on emotional labour in fieldworkers at an organisational level. Having several meetings a day left fieldworkers feeling exhausted and drained because dealing with a number of people is strenuous (Maslach, 1982). In such situations they would exert even more effort to regulate their emotions. However, fieldworkers had a degree of control. They could reschedule a meeting with their clients if they were already feeling tired before the meeting.

Not having a strict script and thus having control over decisions around work performance is negatively related to burnout (Schaufeli & Enzmann, 1998) and makes workers less likely to experience emotional exhaustion (Wharton, 1993). Fieldworkers had control over how they work with their clients and that includes bending some of the boundaries and choosing what training to incorporate into their practice. It was up to them to decide how to work with clients and they generally approached clients individually. Establishment of some of the boundaries and their maintenance was also something fieldworkers approached individually depending on what felt comfortable and appropriate with clients. This may have lessened concern and worry about keeping with a strict script of client work and the pressure fieldworkers may have experienced otherwise when working with families.

Having control over how emotions are displayed allows workers to incorporate who they are, their authentic selves into work and as a result experience less dissonance and thus less negative impact of emotional labour (Kruml & Geddes, 2000). Fieldworkers' suggested that they are being themselves at work, only with a 'professional hat' on. How they worked with clients was individual to who they are and their personality styles. These

factors could also explain no perceived negative impact of work with clients, at least in terms of emotional dissonance.

Support. de Jonge et al., (2008) found that having high job resources – control and support at work – are negatively related to emotional exhaustion. Fieldworkers' accounts indicated that there was a high level of job resources they can tap into. Social support, especially supervisor and, to a lesser extent colleague support, is associated with lower strain produced by stressors at work (Dormann & Zapf, 1999). Fieldworkers placed more importance on colleague support when it came to 'unloading' after a difficult meeting with clients or asking for more practical advice regarding client work.

By unloading or venting, fieldworkers unburdened themselves of the negative emotions that otherwise would have lingered and emerged in the next meeting with that family as well as impacted on their emotional state at least on that day. Venting, it seems, was frequently combined with feedback and analysing the meeting, reflecting on what had gone awry and where, and reflecting on the next meeting with that family to determine whether the same difficulty would likely interfere with the process of the meeting.

Colleague support is what Korczynski (2003) referred to as communities of coping, where workers form a group, a collective mechanism through which they provide each other with the necessary support to be able to withstand the difficulties that can be associated with people work. In mental health settings, where the emotional demands on employees are higher and more complex than in service professions, the availability of emotional and practical support from colleagues is likely even more valued. Supervisor and team leader support were more around feedback on the practical aspects of client work but

also, as one participant mentioned, personal development that included emotional level work, understanding, and awareness.

The importance of having a supportive, knowledgeable and professional manager and a team leader was highlighted by all participants. Not having trust in the team leader in the past resulted in not consulting them when practical advice or emotional support were needed. Not getting much needed feedback can potentially lead, especially new fieldworkers, to more doubts about themselves and their professional practice and worry whether what is being done for clients is, in fact, appropriate or best practice. Doubts and worry can result in more emotional regulation not to let clients see the doubt but instead appear calm and composed. Supervision can normalize the feeling of being overwhelmed and helps to develop and implement strategies to cope with emotional exhaustion and stress that can result from client contact (Ladany, Friedlander, & Nelson, 2005). Personal coping strategies, as shown in the previous chapter, can also help fieldworkers cope with some of the stresses of their job during meetings with clients as well as outside of those meetings.

Workload. Workload, another organisation factor, impacts on emotional labour both directly and indirectly. The indirect impact comes via training. The majority of fieldworkers expressed ideas regarding improvements to the training. They specifically highlighted the need for more peer discussions and reflections after a training session in order to summarise the information and discover the best ways to integrate it into their practice. However, due to the high workload, both in terms of cases and other projects and responsibilities, it may have been impossible to have an opportunity for more peer discussions. This may, in turn, led to not integrating some aspects of training, especially if

they were too complex, and thus denied fieldworkers the benefit of useful information that may have assisted them with clients.

The more direct impact of workload on emotional labour results from having too much to do, not in terms of client work but other aspects of the fieldworker role. Fieldworkers did not report any significant long term negative effect of emotional labour with clients. Some short term negative consequences, however, were associated with the combination of other aspects of work. Edwards, Burnard, Coyle, Fothergill, and Hannigan (2000) report that mental health community nurses experience stress and burnout because of high workloads and a lack of resources. Zapf (2002) also argues that empirical research shows that it is organisational job stressors, like workload and time pressure, that are the strongest predictors of burnout and stress rather than emotional job demands. This is consistent with the information collected from participants. Feelings of tiredness and exhaustion in fieldworkers were mainly related to workload, and specifically to the workload associated with non-client contact, and a sense of never having enough time to catch up with everything. Client contact was something that the majority of fieldworkers experienced as positive and enjoyable, despite admitting that it could be very difficult at times.

There seemed to be a general consensus that some days or cases could be more challenging and demanding than others, and occasionally participants took their work home. At times, the emotional residue of the difficult meeting stayed with them after work but it was never long term. Fieldworkers talked about how a combination of all the aspects of their role, including training, networking, presentations, and caseload could make them

physically and emotionally tired. Going into the meeting already tired after having a busy day could result in exhaustion at the end of that day and feeling drained.

For two participants client work, or rather knowledge that there would be other cases and other people who are going through a difficult time, could result in thoughts about whether what they were doing would make any difference on a big scale. Only one participant however felt a sense of disillusionment in her work. But even this participant said that it was not about the individual family that made her tired, nor was it that she found it difficult to cope; rather it was a combination of things and the realisation that there would be no end and there would always be other people needing help and support. This same participant talked about not wanting to be there for her family after work and not having enough time and energy for her family. For some fieldworkers face-to-face work gave them a sense of satisfaction both with the job and themselves as mental health professionals. As long as they could manage using coping strategies and get support, face-to-face work was experienced positively.

Wharton (1993) found that jobs involving emotional labour with clients are seen as more satisfying than similar jobs without emotional labour. Fieldworkers' stories indicated a sense of pride and satisfaction with the work they could do with and for their clients. Challenges at work and their own ability to meet these challenges, the ability to help people, and an opportunity to interact with a variety of people are some of the things that made work enjoyable despite the difficulties associated with emotional regulation (Wharton, 1996). Making a difference for another human being could be a powerful experience that made it worth doing for all fieldworkers but one. It was the sense of making a difference that differentiated the fieldworker who intended to leave the organisation from

others, as she had lost faith that a perceptible difference could be made on a larger societal scale.

Training. Training was also shown to impact on emotional labour with clients. Training of fieldworkers included a buddying system that provided practical and emotional support and workshops with hands-on components followed by discussions with colleagues around integration of the new material into their practice. Anderson (1993) argues that a ‘buddy system’, ongoing support, onsite supervision, and advice “needs to be formalised within a continuous development scheme” (p. 14). Fieldworkers already enjoyed a degree of integration of these elements into their ongoing training and practice.

This type of training provided fieldworkers not only with practical skills but also the insight into professional behaviour and practice. It prepared fieldworkers for the impact of emotional labour and gave them confidence in their abilities. Being confident meant there is less worry and less emotional regulation to mask that worry when with clients and, perhaps, with management and other mental health professionals. Training, in developing reflective practice, also seems to not only give an idea of the display rules but also shapes the process of performance of emotional labour through deep rather than surface acting.

Individual Factors

Work and family. Individual factors that impact on emotional labour were also apparent in participants’ narratives. For some participants, having outside family commitments, at times, made it difficult to be present with their clients. This either led to feeling like they were not doing their job properly and thus exerting more effort to be present, or rescheduling the meeting. Interaction between competing roles at work and at home can be a source of strain (Majomi, Brown, & Crawford, 2003).

Several fieldworkers illustrated a point that having families, especially young families with children still living at home, could result in becoming distracted during client meetings because, on occasion, fieldworkers began to think about what they needed to do outside of work with and for their own families. Montgomery, Panagopolou, de Wildt, and Meenks (2005) found that having emotional demands both at work and at home contribute to work-family interference. Wharton and Erickson (1993) emphasise the importance of considering multiple roles of workers in terms of performance of emotional labour both at home and at work. The authors demonstrate that work-home conflict can result from high emotional management both at home and work and the experience of “incongruence in the display norms governing these domains” (Wharton & Erickson, 1993, p. 479). For one of the fieldworkers the impact of work on her family life was very noticeable; she had neither the time nor emotional resources left for her family after work. As a result she decided to leave the organisation rather than feel torn between the obligation to families she deals with at work and obligations to her own family.

Ways of coping. It is necessary for mental health workers to have strategies to combat stress, which can include increased social support, exercise, relaxation, or deep breathing (Kottler & Schofield, 2001). Support from a partner, to assist with coping during difficult days at work, was mentioned by two fieldworkers. It seems that having understanding and supportive partners could help fieldworkers to vent some of their frustrations with clients and to talk about their experiences. I would also imagine that there may have been less regard for keeping a more professional facade with partners compared to colleagues or supervisors, and they could vent like ‘normal’ people and use language that may be frowned upon by other professionals. Having personal coping strategies also assists with not taking on clients’ stories or negative emotional reactions and helps to let go.

Coping involves both cognitive and behavioural efforts at managing or reducing external demands and internal negative emotional reactions (Folkman & Lazarus, 1980).

Some of the coping strategies fieldworkers mentioned can be used during client contact and allow fieldworkers to maintain neutrality; for example, being conscious of the fact that a difficult meeting is time-limited and will be over, or using ‘a cloak of protection’ not to take on clients’ negative emotions. Other coping strategies could be used for eliminating the emotional residue that can linger after a particularly difficult meeting, like having a bath or doing physical work in the garden. They allowed fieldworkers to calm down and reflect on the meeting and understand why it was difficult so the next time they see that family, the same difficulties would not occur. In turn, that would mean less emotional regulation or at least less effort when regulating emotions.

Experience of mental illness. Some fieldworkers had experienced mental illness in their own families. As a result, it made it easier for them to better understand clients and what they were going through. This understanding assisted in not having to exert much effort in trying to put themselves in the client’s situation, when the client was acting angry or was uncontrollably upset, thus making it possible to maintain a degree of genuine emotions that corresponded with display rules. Other fieldworkers also picked up the attitude of respect for the families from the fieldworkers who had a personal experience of mental illness in their own family. This also allowed them to better understand their clients and feel for them and with them, which, again, could promote genuinely occurring emotions.

Care. Care for clients, the desire to help and a more general desire to do this type of work also seemed to make emotional labour, specifically with ‘difficult’ clients, easier. If

there was no care for the wellbeing of the family then several undesirable outcomes would likely have ensued. First, fieldworkers may not have tried to fully understand what clients were going through. Thus, they may not have felt genuine empathy because empathy is about understanding peoples' feelings, thoughts and needs accurately, and communicating this understanding clearly (Smith, 2002). For the same reason they may have utilised more surface acting than deep acting when portraying positive emotions and surface acting is associated with a sense of inauthenticity which, in turn, predicts levels of emotional exhaustion (Brotheridge & Lee, 2002). Two, the attitude of doing it for the clients' sake would not be present and thus some of the more negative emotions that fieldworkers generally masked would likely have spilled out during sessions. Both of these could have potentially led to less positive results for client improvement. Three, lack of care would most likely result in fewer occurrences of genuine emotions and expressions because being genuinely present, requires substantial effort.

All three potential points of impact may have produced a more negative effect on fieldworkers. The expression of unfeared emotions, not being genuine, and not feeling real empathy would go against the display rules. It was the compliance with the expectations specified in display rules, through identification with their roles, that made workers feel authentic (Ashforth & Tomiuk, 2000). Participants described a sense of authenticity of their experience of client work and displayed the necessary emotions that are in line with display rules genuinely. Several research studies found that expression of naturally felt emotions is negatively related to emotional exhaustion and stress and is associated with satisfaction from client or patient interactions (Kim & Han, 2009; Martinez-Inigo, Totterdell, Alcover, & Holman, 2007; Zapf, 2002). The fact that fieldworkers reported face-to-face work with

clients as enjoyable, despite the difficulties and short-term sense of being drained that it could cause, may be as a result of finding interactions rewarding and satisfying.

Self-monitoring. Self-monitoring described by fieldworkers was another aspect of work that was likely to mitigate the negative impact of emotional labour. Workers who were high self-monitors were less negatively affected by the performance of emotional labour (Wharton, 1993). Another possible reason why fieldworkers did not report significant negative impact from their interactions with clients compared to occupations in service sector, was the long term nature of their relationships. Tschan, Rochat and Zapf (2000) discuss the impact of the length of relationships in terms of interactions with colleagues, where violation of display rules can be restored. Fieldworkers' narratives indicated a similar possibility with clients. Several fieldworkers expressed that even when mistakes were made with their clients they could go away, reflect on the issue with either supervisors, colleagues, or by themselves, and address it during the next meeting with their clients.

Emotional regulation. The way emotional labour is performed, or what type of regulation is used can also account for the presence or lack of long term, significant negative impact of emotional labour (Mauss, Cook, & Gross, 2007). Regulation of emotions can be "automatic or controlled, conscious or unconscious" (Gross, 1998a, p. 275). Controlled or deliberate emotional regulation can be response-focused and antecedent-focused (Gross, 1998a, 1998b). Response-focused emotional regulation corresponds with surface acting (Grandey, 2000), which is associated with a negative impact of emotional labour, like exhaustion, job dissatisfaction (Grandey, 2003), and depersonalisation (Brotheridge & Grandey, 2002; Naring, Briet, & Brouwers, 2006).

Antecedent-focused emotional regulation corresponds to deep acting (Grandey, 2000). Fieldworkers did not utilise fake emotions, or what surface acting is normally referred to, but they did utilise deep acting, which is normally associated with lack of negative consequences of emotional labour, like emotional exhaustion (Grandey, 2003) and presence of positive consequences, like a sense of personal accomplishment (Brotheridge & Grandey, 2002).

Automatic emotional regulation, as stated previously, is more or less effortless. The conscious regulation of emotions during specific situations when performed over a period of time with the same goal or plan in mind can develop into an automatic emotional regulation (Bargh & Chartrand, 1999). Mauss, Cook, and Gross (2007) argue that compared to controlled regulation, automatic emotional regulation comes at a smaller cost, or none at all. Perhaps the reason why fieldworkers' performing what resembled surface acting did not produce the negative impact normally associated with this type of acting is because they had learnt to do it automatically – to display calmness when feeling anxious or frustrated – and may only have needed to reverse back to deep acting when a situation was more challenging for them.

Conclusion

In this chapter I provided a discussion of the most pertinent aspects of the data to the current study. Results of the analysis were integrated with the relevant literature on emotional labour and some similarities and differences were noted and explained.

Chapter 6

Conclusions

Current Research

This study undertook an exploration of emotional labour in fieldworkers at a community mental health organisation. The existing theoretical frameworks of emotional labour are multiple and differ from each other even in the basic conceptualisation of the phenomenon itself. The most common conceptualisations see emotional labour as conforming with display rules (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993); as effort, control, and planning that are needed to conform with display rules (Morris & Feldman, 1996); and as emotional regulation (Grandey, 2000). The latter conceptualisation by Grandey (2000) and her framework were chosen as a way of representing and understanding emotional labour in fieldworkers.

Emotional labour and its performance by fieldworkers were found to be shaped by the display rules that originate both within the organisation and within the wider context of professional practice. Fieldworkers demonstrated conformity with the display rules because they saw them as guidelines to best professional practice and thus the most appropriate way to help their clients. The display rules dictated what emotions fieldworkers needed to regulate when they were both with clients as well as with other mental health professionals, the management and the colleagues, with only exploration of the former undertaken.

The emotions fieldworkers reported to have experienced with clients were grouped into two categories. Category one included ‘negative emotions’ that were seen as inappropriate to display. Category two, ‘positive emotions’, was comprised of ‘appropriate emotions’ that fieldworkers could feel and displayed as long as they reflected the clients’

emotional experience and the ‘necessary emotions’ that fieldworkers needed to feel, at least to some degree, and needed to display to their clients.

It was argued that emotional labour was not performed through ‘faking’ or surface acting. Regulation of the negative emotions through control and management and the display of other, more appropriate emotions (e.g., calmness), was seen as necessary for the clients. Fieldworkers’ own emotions were considered to be unimportant and secondary during meetings with clients. Deep acting, accomplished through self-talk, was needed to be enacted when a meeting was perceived as challenging and genuine empathy needed to be enhanced. Fieldworkers always attempted to understand clients’ difficulties from clients’ points of view and, as a result, experienced a connection with them and their stories, even when empathy was low. The display of genuine positive emotions characterised most of fieldworkers’ interactions with the clients. The intensity of the display of these emotions also needed to be regulated.

Several factors were found to affect emotional labour with clients. Having control over client work, feeling authentic with clients, self-monitoring and awareness, support from colleagues, the team leader, and supervisors, and the ongoing training had a positive impact, making the performance of emotional labour easier. Self-monitoring, reflection, and awareness that are a part of fieldworkers’ practice, also assisted with emotional labour, likely through priming automatic emotional regulation that is more effortless than controlled regulation – types of acting. Workload and fieldworkers’ own family commitments were the only variables to have had a negative impact on emotional labour.

The impact of emotional labour was seen as occurring through the interaction of all the aspects of fieldworkers’ role and the workload. It was the never ending amount of work

and stress related to it that many fieldworkers saw as impacting on them outside of their work. Client contact was seen by fieldworkers as the best part of their job and resulted more in satisfaction with the job and with themselves as mental health professionals, despite the short-term feeling of being stressed and emotionally drained.

Emotional labour in fieldworkers is thus about prioritising clients, their emotions and experiences, regulating one's own negative emotions so that they are not displayed and thus, cannot impact on clients, and regulating the intensity of the display of genuine positive emotions for the same purpose as the regulation of negative emotions. The driving force behind emotional regulation is the desire to help and the genuine care, respect, and regard for clients. It informs fieldworkers' practice and emotional labour performance.

Limitations

Several limitations were identified within the current study. One concerns the sample size. Six participants were recruited due to the small scale of the study and time limitation on its completion. The results thus may not be generalisable to all fieldworkers working at the organisation, especially outside of the Auckland area as training varies from city-to-city. To develop a better and a more complete understanding of emotional labour in fieldworkers, a cross-country study with fieldworkers from all branches of the organisation participating would be valuable.

The two main limitations are (i) the small number of interviews conducted with each participant and (ii) using only participants' stories as a source of data. In order to generate a fuller picture of emotional labour in fieldworkers a greater number of in-depth interviews would be needed as well as observation of fieldworkers with clients, both face-

to-face and on the phone (if consent given by both fieldworkers and their clients), familiarisation with the policies, and the ongoing training.

A detailed account of emotional labour in fieldworkers was not possible for several reasons. One, a choice was made to look at the overall picture of the generated themes rather than focus on a specific theme due to the novelty of the population group and scarcity of research on emotional labour in mental health workers. Two, the word and time limitations placed on the current project did not allow for a detailed account of all the generated themes. A detailed account is normally made possible by choosing a theme that represents an area of interest across the data set (Braun & Clarke, 2006) and, as stated above, a different choice was made for the current project.

Implications for Future Research

The current study explored emotional labour in fieldworkers. Several implications for future research were qualified in the previous subsection. There is a need for more in-depth interviews with fieldworkers from around New Zealand and multiple data sources. Understanding of emotional labour in fieldworkers, its experience and performance, organisational and wider professional display rules that direct and shape it, individual and organisational factors that impact on emotional labour, and its impact may provide some basis for an understanding of emotional labour in other mental health professions. However, there would most definitely be differences. Therefore, exploration of all that is and can be involved in emotional labour in other mental health professions would be beneficial.

A more clear and consistent definition of surface acting is necessary. Perhaps it would be possible to have a stable concept of surface acting but qualify it with workers'

perceptions of it as either, just displaying an emotion without feeling, or perceiving it as faking and not being authentic. Differences in current conceptualisations create problems for developing measures of emotional labour because if in one surface acting is characterised as faking and in another displaying an emotion, results may be incompatible but it would not be obvious to other researchers.

It may be valuable to explore the display rules and discourses that constitute them both within and outside of the organisation. By knowing more about the display rules we can understand more about the needs for emotional regulation.

Training can impact on emotional labour by providing coping strategies, knowledge, and preparing for what can be expected from client contact. Therefore, further investigations into training, of both fieldworkers and other mental health professionals, to determine which aspects are most important to prepare for emotional labour and counteract its potentially negative impact.

Another possible line of inquiry can investigate types of emotional regulation. Automatic emotional regulation was shown to be more effortless and less likely to have a negative impact. Thus, exploring to the degree emotional regulation in fieldworkers and other mental health professionals is automatic or controlled and what factors determine whether it is one or the other can be of benefit. Deep acting in fieldworkers can be seen as turning into automatic regulation due to awareness and ongoing reflection that is part of their practice. Thus, researching the nature of the reflective practice in terms of 'priming' automatic, unconscious emotional regulation can uncover ways of performing emotional labour that can be potentially free of the negative impact for the performer.

Family-work interference was discovered to have an impact on fieldworkers' ability to perform emotional labour and to be fully present with their clients. A more detailed investigation of the impact of family life on emotionally demanding work roles and their interaction will contribute to the field of emotional labour studies.

Conclusion

This final Chapter summarised the main finding of the current research project, discussed limitations, and provided ideas for future research.

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Appendix 1

Participant Information Sheet

**Date Information Sheet Produced:**

24.12.2008

Project Title

Emotional Labour in Fieldworkers at a Community Mental Health Organisation:
Thematic Analysis

An Invitation

You are being invited to participate in this research study. It is important that you understand the purpose and what will be involved. Research will be conducted at the Auckland branch of the organisation [name of the organisation was omitted on request to preserve the anonymity]. This information sheet will help you make an informed decision on whether you want to be a part of the study or not - it is your choice. Your participation is voluntary and, if you decide to withdraw, there will be no pressure on you to change your mind. You can withdraw at any time up until the data collection process is complete. If you decide to participate you will (a) take this form with you to keep and (b) sign a consent form (and provide the information indicated on the second page of the consent form) stating that you fully understand this research project and want to participate.

What is the purpose of this research?

The purpose of this project is to examine how well training at the organisation prepares field workers for the impact of emotional labour on work-related stress, possible burnout, job satisfaction, and other aspects of face-to-face work with clients. I specifically want to look at the impact the rules (both perceived and overtly stated in training of field workers) around appropriate display of emotions when working with clients, have on suppressing emotions of workers and whether certain ways of enacting those rules affect stress, emotional exhaustion, and job satisfaction in field workers. And because you are the ones who do this important face-to-face work, it is your opinion that I am interested in. This study is conducted for a Thesis towards the completion of the Master degree in psychology.

How was I chosen for this invitation?

Because I am doing this project with the help of the Auckland branch of [name of the organisation omitted] you were chosen based on your employment there.

What will happen in this research?

If you decide to participate you will attend two interviews. The first interview is a group interview, where you will meet other participants that you already know from your work (there will be six) and will be asked a series of questions about your training and your work with clients, what benefits as well as shortcomings you believe the training had in preparing you for face-to-face work, what aspects of work you find most difficult and most rewarding, and what impact these have on you (both in and outside of work). It will last for around hour-hour and a half. It is important to keep in mind that during group interviews you might share personal information with me and other participants and that it will be important that you do not disclose this information to people outside of this participant group.

You will also have one individual face-to-face interview. It will last for around one hour and during it you will be asked more in-depth questions about issues mentioned above.

All interviews will be audio recorded and then transcribed. All audio tapes together with transcripts will be kept in a securely locked place and no one but the researcher and her supervisor will have access to them. Identity of every participant will be masked (e.g., pseudonym) on both transcripts and the research write-up.

What are the discomforts and risks?

It is possible that you may feel uncomfortable discussing difficulties you may experience in relation to your work because of a belief that it will not be a good reflection on your professionalism and/or on the organisation you work at. But what is important to remember is that this study is about learning more about the work that you do and how training can be improved, from your point of view, to even further benefit your work. It is not about judging.

How will these discomforts and risks be alleviated?

If any discomfort occurs you can contact my supervisor or a counsellor on campus (details at the end of the form). If contacting a university counsellor in relation to this research you will get three free sessions. For any other issues not in relation to research counselling is will not be free as you are not an AUT student. You will also need to advise the receptionist, when/if making an appointment, that you are a research participant and provide them with my contact details (see at the end of the form) to confirm this.

What are the benefits?

For you the benefits of this study will be (1) an increase in understanding of emotional aspect of your work, in terms of coping, stress, and job satisfaction, because often talking in depth about something that is already familiar can bring forward new ways of thinking and understanding and (2) a possibility to actively contribute to the improvement of training at the organisation. General benefits will be an increase in theoretical knowledge around emotional labour that can be applied to many disciplines (psychology, social psychology, sociology) as well as potential to provide justification for requesting more funding for training fieldworkers.

How will my privacy be protected?

All forms, tapes and transcripts will be kept locked. The access to them will be limited to the researcher and her supervisor. You will be protected through the use of pseudonyms in transcriptions and all the research write-ups. No identifiers of who you might be will be given in any of the reports.

What are the costs of participating in this research?

You will need to spend some time reading this information form to decide on participation. Both interviews will take up about two-two and half hours of your time. We will work around each other's schedules so that there are no extra costs involved in transportation.

What opportunity do I have to consider this invitation?

You will have a full week to consider whether you want to be a part of this research project. Your participation is voluntary and if you decide to withdraw anytime up to the completion of data collection you can do so without any influence.

How do I agree to participate in this research?

If you agree to participate in this research project you will be asked to sign a Consent Form that will be given to you by me prior to the interviews.

Will I receive feedback on the results of this research?

The feedback will be sent to you on request either by post or email closer to the end of 2009. Just remember that I am interested in your views, opinions, and ideas, which can differ to other participants. So there are no right or wrong answers to interview questions.

What do I do if I have concerns about this research?

Any concerns regarding the nature of this project should be notified in the first instance to the Project Supervisor, Mike Richards, email daniel.shepherd@aut.ac.nz , 921-9999 ext 7238.

Any concerns regarding the conduct of the research should be notified to the Executive Secretary, AUTEK, Madeline Banda, email madeline.banda@aut.ac.nz , 921-9999 ext 8044.

Whom do I contact for further information about this research?***Researcher Contact Details:***

Yulia Bondarenko,
Postgraduate Masters student
Email: tjj4553@aut.ac.nz

Project Supervisor Contact Details:

Daniel Shepherd
Senior Lecturer
School of Psychology
921-9999 ext 7238

University Counselling Contact Details

City campus counselling centre
Room WB219
Phone 921 9992
North Shore campus counselling centre
Room AS104
Phone 921 9998

For more information check counselling website:

http://www.aut.ac.nz/students/student_services/health_counselling_and_wellbeing

Appendix 2

Semi-Structured Focus Group Interview Schedule

1. Attitudes toward work

1.1. Why did you decide to join this organisation?

1.2. Do you feel passionate about your work at this organisation?

1.3. The core structure of your work is Support, Advocacy, and Education. Tell me more about each of these. What do they entail?

2. Training and Emotional Labour

2.1. How do you find training at this organisation? Anything you would expand on/limit in training, change?

2.2. What do you think was most important in your training?

2.3. How do you find your training prepared you for the actual work? (What situations is your training most helpful? Least helpful?)

2.4. In training, were you taught how to think/feel about your clients? (to display some emotions and not to display others?). Is there a right way to feel about a client?

2.5. Was it more about how you feel about clients internally or was the focus more on what you display, whether felt or not?

2.6. Do you monitor yourself when with a client? (How? Why?)

2.7. Have you ever felt a strong emotion when with a client? what was it about?

2.8. Do you think clients have certain expectations of you, and how a field worker should be? Does this affect you?

2.9. Are there certain emotions that you think are appropriate when with clients?

(empathy, caring, etc.) How do you know? (to Feel or to Display)

2.10. Are all emotions you display genuine at that moment or do you, at times, have to 'talk yourself into feeling' them? (Give details for both yes and no)

2.11. Have you ever had a 'difficult' client? (Give details)

2.12. During training/supervision are you given any prompts about how to better think about or handle difficult clients?

3. Stress and Burnout

3.1. Does it ever take an effort to do your job? Give details

3.2. What are the hardest days for you? (Specific clients, specific things to do).

3.3. From your point of view, did training at this organisation provide sufficient coping skills?

Appendix 3

Semi-Structured Individual Interview Schedule

Attitudes toward work

1. You do direct work with families (making visits), write up case notes and do telephone work, which according to your manual takes up 50% of your work. The rest of your time in your role as an SF Fieldworker will be a combination of shared team objectives/ meetings, facilitating family/whanau support groups, promotional events, networking with local agencies, keeping up with new readings and presenting SF or training programs to other services that your team has targeted. How do you feel about this time allocation (useful, necessary, can be adjusted? Explain)
2. What do you rely on in setting boundaries (training at SF, other work experience, going with the gut, all of the above)
3. Has there been a situation where you thought boundaries became blurred? (If yes, give details and go to 4.a. If no, can you think of a situation when that can happen? And go to 4.b)
- 4.a How did you become aware of that? (Were you aware of that while it was happening and made a conscious decision (why?) or did someone else brought your attention to that, like during supervision?)
- 4.b How do you think you would become aware of it? (Would you become aware of it while it is happening or do you think someone else will need to bring your attention to that, like during supervision?)

5. In setting clear boundaries for family members in their care of their loved ones what is most difficult?
6. You are encouraged to express your concerns about boundary issues to your Fieldwork Coordinator and/or External Supervisor. Have you ever worried about expressing your concerns?
7. Your SF supervision is once per month. Your thoughts on that? (Sufficient, not sufficient)
8. What is, according to you, supervision is best for (benefits if supervision). What is it not good at addressing?
9. Anything you would be reluctant to bring to supervision? (Explain)
10. Have you ever felt supervision was not beneficial? What was it about the supervisor/situation (personality, attitude)?
11. How is it for you to go to people's homes to do your work?
12. Do these feelings have an effect on your ability to do your job?
13. Maintaining professional boundaries with clients is described as something very straightforward in your manual. Do you find it so?

Training and Emotional Labour

1. Tell me about your training. (How did you find it? Did it meet your expectations? Was there something you did not expect? Was something, that you expected, missing?)
2. In your manual it says: "Acting in a supporting manner, be warm and friendly but keep it in the context of a working relationship. If you are finding this difficult with a particular family it is your responsibility to bring back the boundaries". Has it ever happened (If yes go to 3a; if no go to 3.b)?

- 3.a Why do you think it happened?
- 3.b Can you think of a situation when this difficulty can arise? (Give details)
6. Did your training provide sufficient resources, knowledge for you to handle this situation?
4. If you are have a difficult client and you are beginning to feel angry/annoyed do you tell yourself anything to calm down?
5. Have you ever felt a need/necessity to detach yourself from your own emotions when working at SF (with clients, other colleagues, etc)?
6. Do you ever try to feel an emotion when with a client? (If yes, go to 10; if no go to 13)
7. Why do you think you need to feel it?
8. How do you accomplish it? Give details
9. Is it a difficult task to accomplish?
10. Can you describe a deep/intense emotion you felt when you were with a client?
- 11.a How do you think you need to think when you are with a client?
- 11.b How do you want to think when you are with a client?
- 12.a What do you think you need to feel when you are with a client?
- 12.b What do you want to feel when you are with a client?
- 13.a What do you think you need to portray when you are with a client? (is there a persona that you feel you need to portray?)
- 13.b What do you want to portray when you are with a client? How do you know that this is what you need to think/feel/portray?
14. If there are discrepancies between 11a – 11b, 12a -12b, and 13a – 13b inquire into why there is a difference between ‘need to’ and ‘want to’. What is it about?

15. Has there ever been a time when you went to see a client but felt
low/angry/stressed/agitated?
16. Did you share it with the client or did you try and act as if you were not feeling like
that? (If yes, go to 17; if no go to 19)
17. How was it for you?
18. How did you manage the incongruence between what you were feeling and what
you portrayed?
19. With the kind of work you do you need to be empathic toward a client. Describe the
feeling as you feel it and any thoughts you have when you are feeling it.
20. Have you ever felt you were not being authentic with a client?
21. In your manual it says that you need to put clients at ease during the first meeting
before going into work 'mode' by chit-chatting. How does it feel to you to do that,
is it easy/difficult?
22. Do you think about it before the meeting or does it flow by itself?
23. Did you get an idea from your training/supervision about how to deal with/what and
how to think about difficult clients?
24. What is most frustrating for you in your work? (if anything?)
25. Are there any emotions that you would never express in front of the client? (why?)
26. Recall a situation where you were having a difficult time with the client. What was
it about? Did you rely on your training to find a way out? Anything else?
27. What do you portray to your clients, with your behaviour, words, etc?
28. Does what you portray always match with how you felt on the inside?
29. Have you ever had an impression, either from training or policies in place, that you
need to be a certain way with clients?

30. Have you ever felt that you need to go 'all out' for the client, emotionally?
31. Are there any aspects of work that you dislike/find difficult/that you disagree with?
(Explain, give details)
32. Compare how you felt when you first started working at SF and now, in terms of easiness or difficulties of your work.

Stress and Burnout

1. Do you at times feel emotionally exhausted after work? (if yes go to 2; if no go to 4)
2. How often does that happen?
3. How does it affect your work/life outside of work?
4. Are there days when you wake up in the morning and think I cannot go to work today (If yes go to 5; if no go to 6)?
5. Any specifics about those days (clients, general exhaustion, etc)?
6. Are there days when you wake up and look forward to your day at work? (Give details)
7. What is it that you look forward to?

Appendix 4

Transcription Key

- Audiotapes were transcribed verbatim; repeated words and mispronunciations were transcribed as they were said by participants
- No punctuation marks were used in the transcript apart from comma , that indicates natural pauses and intonations within participants' utterances
- Information in square brackets [] is the information added by the researcher for clarification of aspects of transcript segments, e.g., nonverbal sounds [laughter]
- [?] adjacent to a word indicates that the word is not clear, e.g., client[?]
- Two or more words in square brackets with adjacent question mark to each indicates that it is not clear which one of these words was said, e.g., [client? mine?]
- (--.) indicates an interrupted speech
- ... prior to participant's communication indicates continuation after some form of interruption
- (--) indicates a false start
- (..) indicates a short pause
- (...) indicates a pause
- (Long pause) indicates a long pause
- (. . .) indicates that one word was incomprehensible
- (. . . .) indicates that more than one word was incomprehensible

Appendix 5

Preliminary Themes

Preliminary Themes	Presence of Themes in Interviews						
	GI	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6
1. Types of services provided by organisation	√	x	x	x	x	x	x
2. Issues for which support is provided	√	√	√	x	√	√	√
3. Defining fieldworker role	√	√	√	x	√	√	x
4. What face-to-face work requires/entails	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
5. Freedom within practice	√	√	√	x	√	√	√
6. Relating to work	√	√	√	√	√	√	x
7. Emotions when with client	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
8. Experience of face-to-face work	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
9. What is appropriate and inappropriate with clients	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
10. Good and bad days at work	√	√	x	x	x	x	x
11. Negative impact of work	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
12. Experience of workload	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
13. Experience of training	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
14. Personal coping strategies	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
15. Clients' stories	√	√	x	√	x	√	√
16. Feeling and displaying emotions	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
17. Controlling emotions with clients	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
18. Managing the process of meetings	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
19. Thoughts about clients	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
20. Positive Impact of work	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
21. Negative impact of work	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
22. Impact of workload on work with families	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
23. Support at home	√	√	√	√	√	√	√

24. Outside influences on work	√	√	√	√	√	√	x
25. Impact of workload on training	√	√	√	√	√	√	x
26. Improvements in training	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
27. Support from peers	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
28. Positive self-talk	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
29. Genuine, authentic emotions with clients	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
30. Support from supervisors	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
31. Being professional	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
32. Boundaries	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
33. Getting caught up in clients' experiences/emotions	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
34. Doing it for clients	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
35. Are we genuine or do we fake	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
36. Client work continues after the meeting is over	√	√	x	√	x	x	√
37. Awareness	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
38. Monitoring when with clients	√	x	x	x	x	x	x
39. Viewing clients as active participants	√	√	x	x	x	x	x
40. Straightforwardness with clients	√	√	√	√	√	√	x
41. Dealing with other mental health professionals	x	√	x	x	√	x	√
42. Differences between life and work	x	x	√	√	x	x	√

Appendix 6

Revised Preliminary Themes

Organisation of Themes	Organisation of Sub-Themes
1. Context of work	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Types of services provided by the organisation 2. Issues for which support is provided 3. Defining fieldworker role
2. Experience of face-to-face work	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What face-to-face work requires/entails 2. Emotions when with clients 3. Thoughts about clients 4. Managing and controlling the process of meetings 5. Doing it for clients 6. Are we genuine or do we fake 7. What is appropriate and inappropriate with clients 8. Boundaries
3. Experience of other aspects of work	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Experience of training 2. Experience of workload 3. Improvements in training 4. Dealing with other mental health professionals
4. Impact on work	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Freedom within practice 2. Personal coping strategies 3. Impact of workload training 4. Support at home 5. Support from peers 6. Support from supervisors

5. Impact of work

7. Outside influences on work

1. Relating to work
 2. Positive Impact of work
 3. Negative impact of work
 4. Differences between life and work
-

Appendix 7

Final Themes

1. Work context and fieldworker role
2. Fieldworkers' experience of face-to-face work
 - 2.1. Emotions and their displays with clients
 - 2.2. Controlling emotions, managing with clients and setting boundaries
3. Experience of other aspects of work
4. Areas of impact on client work
5. Impact of work on fieldworkers