



Emotional labor and core self-evaluations as mediators between organizational dehumanization and job satisfaction

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Abstract

This study aimed to examine the mechanisms underlying the negative relationship between the feeling of being dehumanized by the organization and employees' job satisfaction. More precisely, we argue that emotional labor (i.e., surface acting) and core self-evaluations act as mediators in this relationship. A total of 326 employees participated in our study. Firstly, the results showed that, independently of one another, both surface acting and core self-evaluations partially mediated the relationship between organizational dehumanization and job satisfaction. Secondly, surface acting and core self-evaluations were found to have serial mediation effects in this relationship. Accordingly, experiencing dehumanization from the organization leads employees to perform more surface acting with deleterious consequences for their core self-evaluations and finally their job satisfaction.

Keywords Organizational dehumanization · Emotional labor · Surface acting · Core self-evaluations · Job satisfaction

Scholars have recently begun to examine the dark side of the employee-employer relationship through the concept of organizational dehumanization (e.g., Bell and Khoury 2016; Caesens et al. 2017). Organizational dehumanization is defined as “the experience of an employee who feels objectified by his/her organization, denied personal subjectivity, and made to feel like a tool or an instrument for the organization's ends” (Bell and Khoury 2011, p.170). Recent studies (e.g., Bell and Khoury 2016) provided strong evidence that organizational dehumanization has harmful consequences for both organizational performance and employees' well-being. In particular, Caesens et al. (2017) showed that experiencing organizational dehumanization led to reduced job satisfaction. Defined as “a pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from an appraisal of one's job” (Locke 1976, p.1304), the concept of job satisfaction has a long-standing tradition in the organizational literature because of its relationships to a variety of relevant

workplace behaviors such as counterproductive workplace behaviors, turnover, job performance, and organizational citizenship behaviors (Crede et al. 2007).

While the link between organizational dehumanization and job satisfaction has been previously found, no research has tried so far to determine the mechanisms underlying this relationship. Filling this gap, the present research aims at identifying variables that would intervene alone and/or together in the organizational dehumanization-job satisfaction relationship. As pointed out by many scholars, job satisfaction is predicted by both situational (Duffy et al. 2015) and dispositional (Judge and Larsen 2001) antecedents. Accordingly, we propose to examine emotional labor and core self-evaluations as partial explanations for why organizational dehumanization leads to low job satisfaction. Below, we present the theoretical arguments underlying each of our research hypotheses.

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Organizational Dehumanization and Job Satisfaction

The concept of organizational dehumanization was derived from the social psychology literature (Haslam 2006). Dehumanization is defined as “a psychological phenomenon whereby people perceive of other human beings as something lesser than, or profoundly different from, themselves; in other words, their human characteristics are being denied”

(Väyrynen and Laari-Salmela 2015, p. 2). Haslam (2006) proposed a dual model of dehumanization that includes two forms. On the one hand, “animalistic” dehumanization refers to deny features differentiating humans from animals (e.g., civility, maturity) and is particularly relevant in relation with immigration, war and genocide issues (Haslam 2006). On the other hand, “mechanistic” dehumanization refers to situations where individuals are associated with non-human objects (i.e., machines) which are interchangeable and lack features defining human nature (e.g., individuality, emotional responsiveness). If Bell and Khoury (2011) have suggested that both forms of dehumanization should exist in the context of work, they however proposed a definition of organizational dehumanization that is in line with the mechanistic form. They indeed defined organizational dehumanization “as the experience of an employee who feels objectified by his or her organization, denied personal subjectivity, and made to feel like a tool or instrument for the organization’s ends” (p. 168). In accordance with this view, Christoff (2014) later stated that mechanistic dehumanization is more likely to occur in organizational contexts than animalistic dehumanization. Accordingly, literature on organizational dehumanization focuses so far on mechanistic dehumanization when referring to and studying organizational dehumanization.

Recently, some scholars have begun to examine the potential predictors and consequences of organizational dehumanization. Specifically, Bell and Khoury (2016) found that organizational (procedural) justice reduced employees’ organizational dehumanization perceptions, which in turn increased employees’ turnover intentions among women. In the same vein, Caesens et al. (2017) showed that organizational dehumanization mediates the relationships between perceived organizational support and three indicators of employees’ well-being, i.e. emotional exhaustion, psychosomatic strains and job satisfaction. Concerning more particularly the link between organizational dehumanization and job satisfaction, Christoff (2014) suggested that dehumanizing mistreatments from the workplace might thwart employees’ basic psychological needs. Yet, following Deci et al.’s (2001) self-determination theory, need satisfaction is associated with well-being whereas need frustration is associated with ill-being. More precisely, cognitive evaluation theory (i.e., a sub-theory within self-determination theory; Deci and Ryan 1985) suggests that fulfilling versus thwarting people’s innate psychological needs (e.g., need for autonomy or competence) facilitates versus forestalls the natural processes of self-motivation, which is essential for facilitating growth and integration, as well as for constructive social development and personal well-being. Accordingly, employees experiencing organizational dehumanization might be more prone to display indicators of psychological ill-being and therefore be unhappy with their job. Supporting this view, a recent study empirically showed that employees who experienced organizational dehumanization reported lower levels of job satisfaction (Caesens

et al. 2017). In line with this unique evidence, we first hypothesized that organizational dehumanization would be negatively related to job satisfaction (Hypothesis 1).

Emotional Labor (Surface Acting) as a Mediator

Emotional labor is defined as the management of feelings and expressions of emotions as a requirement of work duties (Hochschild 1983). Specifically, employees might use among two strategies of emotional regulation to comply with the organization’s display rules. Deep acting is characterized by the modification of felt emotions that leads to a genuine emotional display, whereas surface acting is defined by the expression of unfeared emotions by faking, suppressing, or amplifying emotions. Regarding more precisely our dependent variable of interest, Mesmer-Magnus et al.’s (2012) meta-analysis indicated that surface acting was negatively associated with job satisfaction ($r = -.23, p < .001$), whereas deep acting was not related to job satisfaction ($r = .06, p > .05$). We will thus focus in this study on surface acting when we refer to emotional labor.

According to Bhawe and Glomb (2016), performing surface acting makes employees feel dissatisfied with their jobs because of the emotional dissonance it implies. More precisely, surface acting involves a constant monitoring of the felt and desired emotions. The employee has to invest continuous effort to change the emotional expression, by suppressing the felt emotion and replacing it by the desired one. Yet, Locke (1976) argued that job satisfaction is the result of the discrepancy between what should exist and the actual situation.

Regarding the antecedents of surface acting, models on emotional labor have suggested that both personal and situational factors play a determinant role in the development of surface acting (Grandey 2000). Situational factors include the quality of treatment received at the workplace which has received considerable attention from scholars (Grandey 2000). In particular, mistreatments by customers, coworkers (e.g., Adams and Webster 2013), and supervisors (e.g., Carlson et al. 2012) lead employees to demonstrate more surface acting.

In the present study, we argue that organizational dehumanization can be assimilated to a sort of mistreatment coming from the organization. In contrast with mistreatments coming from customers, supervisors or colleagues, organizational dehumanization is obviously not a mistreatment arising from interpersonal interactions since it stems from interactions between an individual (i.e., the employee) and a nonhuman entity (i.e., the organization). Because employees have the human tendency to personify their organization by attributing its malevolent or benevolent intentions based on organizational policies and practices (Coyle-Shapiro and Shore 2007; Levinson 1965), organizational dehumanization is rather an

experience resulting from global perceptions and beliefs regarding the extent to which the abstract and distal entity that is the organization considers him/her as a tool or instrument. The fact remains that, as any mistreatment, it is however an emotion-provoking experience (Adams and Webster 2013). Bastian and Haslam (2011) indeed showed that experiencing a mechanistic dehumanization produces feelings of anger and sadness.

In line with the studies showing that being mistreated leads to more surface acting (e.g., Adams and Webster 2013; Carlson et al. 2012), we suggest that despite the negative emotions that they feel, employees experiencing organizational dehumanization will perform more surface acting and, hence, comply with organizational display rules in terms of emotions. According to the conservation of resources theory (Hobfoll 2001), individuals seek to acquire and maintain the resources that they value, i.e. material, social, personal or energetic resources. Yet, being treated in a dehumanizing way by one's organization induces a significant loss of resources. Employees experiencing dehumanization will thus strive to prevent or, at the very least, to reduce any future loss. Precisely, not respecting the organizational display rules would engender important losses because of the potential conflicts with internal and/or external stakeholders that would presumably follow. Therefore, by performing surface acting, employees preserve a positive work climate and avoid the considerable losses that would result from not conforming to organizational display rules in terms of emotions (Carlson et al. 2012). In addition, by performing surface acting employees may also seek to give an emotional response, i.e. a characteristic defining human nature (Haslam 2006), in an attempt to regain humanity lost. Consistent with the above, it is reasonable to assume that employees were prone to demonstrate more surface acting when exposed to organizational dehumanization.

Considering the association between surface acting and both mistreatment from the workplace and job satisfaction, we suggested that surface acting would mediate the relationship between organizational dehumanization and job satisfaction (Hypothesis 2).

Core Self-Evaluations as a Mediator

The concept of core self-evaluations (CSE) refers “to fundamental, subconscious conclusions individuals reach about themselves” (Judge et al. 1998, p.18). It is composed of four dispositional characteristics, i.e. self-esteem, generalized self-efficacy, locus of control, and neuroticism. Since their conceptualization, CSE has kept growing as a topic of investigation in the organizational field, as it has been found to be associated with various phenomena. In particular, scholars have regularly reported high correlations between CSE and job

satisfaction (e.g., Judge et al. 1998; Nguyen and Borteyrou 2016). Judge et al. (1997) suggested that people's appraisals of the external world (such as their job) are affected by assumptions people hold about themselves. As stated by Wu and Griffin (2012), “people with higher core self-evaluations are more likely to attend to and seek positive feedback from the environment and strive to obtain positive experiences, such as (...) higher job satisfaction, to confirm their positive self-view” (p.331). In that respect, CSE help to explain the dispositional source of job satisfaction.

While CSE have initially been proposed as a static personality trait that influences individuals' work experiences including their job satisfaction, subsequent studies have provided evidence for their malleability. Through a longitudinal study, Wu and Griffin (2012) found that CSE could change over time, showing that they can also be influenced by work experiences. Consistent with this view, recent research tested how diverse characteristics of the workplace affect CSE (e.g., Nguyen and Borteyrou 2016).

In line with these studies, we propose in this research that experiencing dehumanization from one's organization, should lead the employee to low CSE. This assumption is in accordance with Bastian and Haslam's (2010) findings that, being socially excluded is a mechanistic dehumanizing experience involving mainly the denial of one's human nature characteristics. Yet, previous research showed that being ostracized leads to negative self-views (e.g., Sommer and Baumeister 2002). Therefore, as a negative social treatment (i.e., social ostracism), organizational dehumanization that refers to the perception to be mechanistically dehumanized should produce negative evaluations of the self. Based on the above arguments, one can reasonably assumed that organizational dehumanization should contribute to low CSE.

Overall, we suggested that CSE would mediate the relationship between organizational dehumanization and job satisfaction (Hypothesis 3).

Mediating Effects of Surface Acting and Core Self-Evaluations

Surface acting allows employees maintaining organizational display rules to keep their job, but at what cost? By performing surface acting, employees misrepresent their inner feelings by modifying their displays (Grandey 2003). Several scholars emphasized that such misrepresentation is a harmful emotion strategy and, as such, could lead to negative evaluations of oneself (e.g., Brotheridge and Lee 2003; Hochschild 1983). More precisely, not being true to oneself and to others and the feelings of inauthenticity and dishonesty that it implies (Gino et al. 2015) would alienate the individual from the self and from others (Gross and John 2003). In particular, if employees blame themselves for this insincerity, they may

become estranged from themselves and thereby suffer from negative feelings about the self (Seeman 1991). In line with this view, scholars have reported associations between surface acting and various negative self-relevant indicators such as reduced self-esteem and self-efficacy (e.g., Grandey 2000; Hochschild 1983). In accordance with these studies, we argued that surface acting would provoke a re-evaluation of self-perceptions and would therefore be negatively related to CSE.

Given the positive relationships that we previously assumed between organizational dehumanization and surface acting on the one hand (cf. Hypothesis 2) and between CSE and job satisfaction on the other hand (cf. Hypothesis 3), we predicted that surface acting and CSE might act as serial mediators in the organizational dehumanization-job satisfaction relationship (Hypothesis 4). In sum, this study is the first to link the employee's experience of organizational dehumanization with their attempts at surface acting and to examine how these attempts lead to reduced CSE and finally to job dissatisfaction. By doing so, our original contribution is to explore the mechanisms explaining the previously reported effects of organizational dehumanization in terms of job dissatisfaction (Caesens et al. 2017). Figure 1 represents the hypothesized theoretical model tested in this research.

Method

Participants and Procedure

Participants were recruited via Prolific Academic, i.e. a UK crowdsourcing platform. To take part in the study, participants had to be native speakers of English, be part-time or full-time employees, and not be self-employed. Participation was anonymous and voluntary. Three hundred and fifty-seven participants fully completed the survey. However, 31 participants were not included in the analyses due to wrong answers to at least one attentional check question (e.g., “please tick strongly disagree”). Therefore, the final sample was composed of 326 employees (71% female) with an average age of 37.98 years ($SD = 10.30$). On average, they have been working in their current organization for 7.19 years ($SD = 6.27$). Most of the respondents held a bachelor degree (39.5%) and worked in medium-sized organizations (18.7%).

Measures

Organizational Dehumanization Participants' perception of organizational dehumanization was measured using the scale developed by Caesens et al. (2017). The scale was composed of 11 items measuring the extent to which an employee feels that he/she is treated as a mere object or an instrument by his/her organization. Responses were asked on a scale ranging from “1” (strongly disagree) to “7” (strongly agree). An

example included “*My organization treats me as if I were a robot*”. The scale had a very good internal consistency ($\alpha = .95$).

Surface Acting Four items derived from Brotheridge and Lee (2003) and Grandey (2003) were used to measure the extent to which an employee portrays emotions that he/she is not really feeling. Participants responded to the items using a 7-point rating scale assessing the frequency with which they exhibit each behavior (1 = never to 7 = always). A sample item was “*Pretend to have emotions that I don't really have*”. Our analyses revealed that the scale had a good internal consistency ($\alpha = .87$).

Core Self-Evaluations Core self-evaluations was measured using Judge et al.'s (1997) scale. In line with the definition of the construct, the scale measures four personality dimensions (i.e., self-esteem, generalized self-efficacy, locus of control, and neuroticism). It consisted of 12 items rated on a 7-point scale ranging from “1” (strongly disagree) to “7” (strongly agree). An example was “*When I try, I generally succeed*”. A good internal consistency was obtained for this scale ($\alpha = .89$).

Job Satisfaction Job satisfaction was assessed using the four items of Eisenberger et al. (1997). Participants indicated their agreement with each item on a 7-point scale ranging from “1” (strongly disagree) to “7” (strongly agree). A sample item was “*All in all, I am very satisfied with my current job*”. The Cronbach's alpha for this scale was .91.

Data Analyses

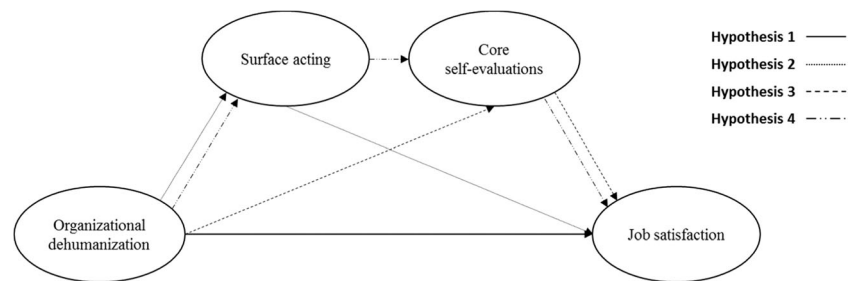
Data were explored using SPSS 23 and Lisrel 8.8 (Jöreskog and Sörbom 1996). To examine our hypotheses, structural equation modeling was first used because it allows dealing with latent constructs and accounting for measurement errors. We used item-parceling strategy for organizational dehumanization and CSE variables (i.e., item-to-construct balance technique; Little et al. 2002) to reduce the large number of indicators to four per factor. This strategy allowed controlling for inflated measurement errors from multiple indicators of latent variables. Second, bootstrapping analyses using the PROCESS macro (model 6; 10,000 samples; Hayes 2013) were performed to test the significance of the mediated effects.

Results

Preliminary Analyses

As shown in Table 1, level of education, organizational size, and tenure with the supervisor were all correlated with CSE,

Fig. 1 The hypothesized model concerning the mediator role of surface acting and core self-evaluations in the organizational dehumanization-job satisfaction relationship



whereas tenure with the supervisor was also correlated with surface acting. As recommended by Becker et al. (2016), we tested our model with and without these control variables. The inclusion of these control variables did not change the interpretation of the findings. Therefore, the results presented here were free from any control variable to reduce model complexity (Spector and Brannick 2011).

Measurement Model

Confirmatory factor analyses were performed to examine the distinctiveness of the latent factors included in our model. The results showed that the four-factor model fitted the data well ($\chi^2(98) = 177.68$; RMSEA = .05; SRMR = .04; NNFI = .99; CFI = .99) and was significantly superior to all more constrained models. All the factor loadings of the indicators on their latent variables were significant, showing that all the latent factors were well represented by their respective indicators.

Structural Model

We tested the structural equation model represented in Fig. 1. This hypothesized model showed a good fit with the data ($\chi^2(98) = 177.68$; RMSEA = .05; SRMR = .04; NNFI = .99; CFI = .99). Figure 2 shows the standardized parameter estimates of the model. The results indicated that organizational dehumanization was directly associated to job satisfaction, supporting Hypothesis 1. In line with Hypothesis 2, the results showed that organizational dehumanization was positively associated with surface acting which was negatively associated with job satisfaction. Regarding Hypothesis 3, organizational dehumanization was also negatively related to CSE, which were negatively associated with job satisfaction. In addition, surface acting was negatively related to CSE, which together with the significant relationships between organizational dehumanization and surface acting and between CSE and job satisfaction, is in line with Hypothesis 4.

Finally, bootstrapping analyses were used to explore further the mediating roles of surface acting and CSE in the organizational dehumanization-job satisfaction relationship. Table 2 indicates that the indirect effects of organizational dehumanization on job satisfaction via surface acting and

CSE were significant, supporting Hypotheses 2 and 3. In addition, the results showed that the indirect effect of organizational dehumanization on job satisfaction through surface acting and then CSE was also significant, confirming the serial mediation hypothesis (Hypothesis 4).

Discussion

Although the relationship between organizational dehumanization on job satisfaction has already garnered some theoretical and empirical support (e.g., Caesens et al. 2017), research on the mechanisms underlying this relationship remains scarce or even, to our knowledge, nonexistent. Filling this gap, this study empirically examined the mediating effects of surface acting and CSE in the organizational dehumanization-job satisfaction relationship.

Consistent with our predictions, the findings first indicate that organizational dehumanization and job satisfaction are significantly and negatively related. The magnitude of the correlation (i.e., $r = -.69$) is relatively close to that found in the literature. For instance, Caesens et al. (2017) reported a correlation of $-.61$. This finding indicates that employees whom perceived to be treated as an object or instrument by their organization tended to be unhappy with their job. By confirming the deleterious effect of organizational dehumanization on job satisfaction, this study highlights again the harmful consequences of organizational dehumanization. As such, this research provides new empirical evidence to the burgeoning literature on organizational dehumanization and its effects for both employees and organizations (e.g., Bell and Khoury 2016; Caesens et al. 2017). Importantly, it also indicates that future research should investigate further the determinants of this experience of dehumanization and therefore identify how organizations may act to reduce this feeling among their personnel.

Second, the results show that, independently of one another, both surface acting and CSE partially mediated the organizational dehumanization-job satisfaction relationship. Concerning the mediating role of surface acting, the findings are in line with previous studies having shown that surface acting was negatively associated with job satisfaction (e.g., Bhawe and Glomb 2016). Our results are also in accordance

Table 1 Descriptive statistics and correlations among variables

	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1. Organizational dehumanization	3.73	1.60	(.95)									
2. Surface acting	3.97	1.28	.47**	(.87)								
3. Core self-evaluations	4.67	1.04	-.44**	-.47**	(.89)							
4. Job satisfaction	4.54	1.67	-.69**	-.46**	.47**	(.91)						
5. Gender	–	–	-.12*	-.04	-.09	.04	–					
6. Age	37.99	10.30	.05	-.08	.07	-.10	-.04	–				
7. Level of education	3.56	0.99	.01	-.02	-.11*	.02	-.14*	-.11	–			
8. Organizational size	4.77	2.73	.23**	.03	-.17**	-.11	-.03	-.03	.17**	–		
9. Tenure in the organization	7.19	6.27	.03	-.03	.12	-.00	-.12	.42**	-.21**	.11	–	
10. Tenure with the supervisor	3.89	3.86	-.11	-.16*	.19**	.09	-.04	.30**	-.19**	-.19**	.66**	–

$N = 326$. Reliability alpha values are on the diagonal. Gender was coded 1 for male and 2 for female. Level of education was coded from “1” (low education) to “6” (high education). Organizational size was coded from “1” (small organization) to “9” (large organization)

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$

with Carlson et al.’s (2012) study which reported that employees who were exposed to workplace mistreatments demonstrated more surface acting by faking the emotions that are expected on their jobs (Hochschild 1983). Interestingly, the present study reveals that a mistreatment emanating from that abstract and quite distal entity that is the organization elicits more surface acting with the subsequent negative consequences that we know (cf. Mesmer-Magnus et al. 2012). Future research should certainly further examine the impact of an organizational mistreatment such as dehumanization on the different dimensions of emotional labor above and beyond interpersonal mistreatments coming from other entities of the workplace (i.e., customers, coworkers, supervisors).

Regarding the mediating role of CSE in the organizational dehumanization-job satisfaction relationship, this finding is in line with studies showing the significant role of CSE in the development of job satisfaction (for a review, see Chang et al. 2012). In addition, our results also highlight the influence of organizational dehumanization on negative evaluations of the self, confirming prior studies conducted on the impact of social mistreatments on self-esteem and self-efficacy (Baumeister et al. 2005; Zadro et al. 2004). Concerning more specifically the CSE construct, this research supports the view that the context influences these self-appraisals, and therefore

suggests to consider CSE as partially dynamic (see Nguyen and Borteyrou 2016 for similar conclusions). While the focus in this study was on evaluations that employees have about themselves through CSE, future research might be interested in examining how experiencing organizational dehumanization may also affect evaluations individuals hold about the external world in general using the core external evaluations construct. One may reasonably assume that being victim of a dehumanizing treatment at the workplace may profoundly influence employees’ views and opinions about the world and its functioning. Interestingly, such a finding would extend our own results by demonstrating that the harmful consequences of organizational dehumanization are far beyond work-related outcomes.

Finally, surface acting and CSE were found to have serial mediation effects in the organizational dehumanization-job satisfaction relationship. Accordingly, experiencing organizational dehumanization leads employees to perform more surface acting with deleterious consequences for their self-evaluations, which in turn leads to be unsatisfied with their job. These results are in line with previous research giving support for a negative correlation between surface acting and CSE (e.g., Hochschild 1983). More generally, these findings highlight the deleterious effect of organizational dehumanization

Fig. 2 Results of the structural equation modeling analyses. Completed standardized coefficients are reported ($N = 326$). * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$

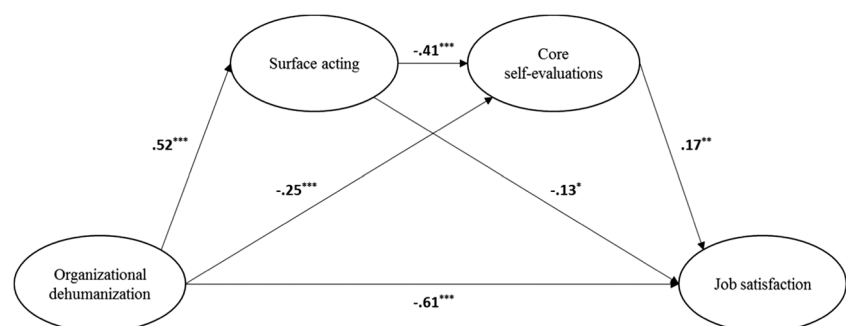


Table 2 Bootstrapping indirect effects and 95% confidence intervals for the hypothesized mediations

Model pathways	Indirect effect	Standard error	95% CI	
			Lower	Upper
1. OD → SA → JS (Hypothesis 2)	-.0529	.0226	-.1011	-.0118
2. OD → CSE → JS (Hypothesis 3)	-.0495	.0174	-.0903	-.0211
3. OD → SA → CSE → JS (Hypothesis 4)	-.0292	.0093	-.0520	-.0146

N = 326.

OD organizational dehumanization; SA surface acting; CSE core self-evaluations; JS job satisfaction

on employees' job satisfaction through an emotional regulation strategy and a dispositional characteristic. Importantly, however, our findings clearly indicate that this mediation in sequence is partial, suggesting that other mechanisms are at stake in the organizational dehumanization-job satisfaction relationship too. Accordingly, future research might examine in a single model the role played by competing mechanisms in the understanding of the influence of organizational dehumanization on job satisfaction.

Limitations and Perspectives for Future Research

Despite its contributions, the study presented several limitations that must be acknowledged. Firstly, the cross-sectional design makes causal conclusions impossible to establish. Thus, the results should be interpreted with caution. These findings should be strengthened with future experimental or longitudinal approaches to determine the causal links among the constructs included in our model. Secondly, even though our results showed that gender was not related to our variables of interest, the sample size was represented by a high female to male ratio. This female skewedness might be a potential limitation of the study at various levels. On the one hand, Haslam (2006) stated that women are "typically assigned lesser humanness than men" (p. 253) suggesting that women might feel more dehumanized by their organizations. Yet, we hypothesized that employees demonstrate more surface acting when exposed to organizational dehumanization. As a result, the high percentage of women might have inflated the organizational dehumanization effect on surface acting. On the other hand, Johnson and Spector (2007) found that gender moderated the negative relationship between surface acting and job satisfaction, with stronger effects for women. Therefore, the female skewedness might also have exacerbated the negative effect of surface acting on job satisfaction. Thirdly, the entire questionnaire was self-reported and is thus vulnerable to biases (e.g., common method bias). Thereby, future research may benefit from corroborating our results by means of alternative measures (e.g. peer ratings). Fourthly, we defined organizational dehumanization as referring mainly to mechanistic dehumanization because, according to several authors (e.g., Bell and Khoury 2011; Christoff 2014), this form of dehumanization is more likely to occur within organizational

contexts. Yet, the same authors also suggested that animalistic dehumanization might also arise within organizations. Consistent with Caesens et al.'s (2017) suggestion, it would be interesting in future research to explore whether both forms of dehumanization differ from one another and to identify the potentially specific antecedents and consequences of each form.

Practical Implications and Conclusion

Overall, our findings indicate that when employees feel dehumanized by their organization they engage in emotion strategies that increase the likelihood of developing negative self-evaluations which lead to experience lower levels of job satisfaction. Organizations would therefore be well advised to reduce at maximum organizational dehumanization perceptions among their personnel in order to promote employees' well-being (i.e. employees feeling good about themselves and ultimately at work). The limited empirical evidence on the antecedents of organizational dehumanization provides levers on which organizations and their managers may act to get low levels of organizational dehumanization.

First, Caesens et al.'s (2017) findings indicated that employees' perception of organizational support reduces the experience to be dehumanized. Accordingly, organizations should thus foster their employees' beliefs regarding the extent to which their contributions are valued and their well-being is cared within the organization. Concretely, that means implementing human resources practices and policies such as valuable training or developmental programs that promote employees' personal growth (e.g., Eisenberger and Stinglhamber 2011). Offering favorable job conditions is another practical way that organizations might take to enhance employees' perceptions of organizational support (e.g., Kurtessis et al. 2017). For instance, by giving high levels of job autonomy, organizations show how much they trust their employees in carrying out their job duties, which in turn should lead employees to perceive more support from their organizations (Rhoades and Eisenberger 2002) and thus reduce their organizational dehumanization with the positive consequences that the present study has shown. Finally, managers have an important role to play to develop employees' perceptions of support from the organization. As agents or

representatives of the organization, their support has been found to generalize to the support received from the whole organization (e.g., Eisenberger et al. 2002). Therefore, proposing training programs to help managers to treat subordinates supportively may be a very effective way to finally reduce the perception to be dehumanized by their organizations (e.g. Gonzalez-Morales et al. 2016).

Second, Bell and Khoury (2011) found that procedural justice was negatively associated with organizational dehumanization. In line with this result, organizations and their managers should thus be attentive to promote fairness in the way organizational human resources politics and rewards are administrated by for instance permitting employees to voice their opinions or by consistently applying the organizational rules and procedures (e.g., Eisenberger and Stinglhamber 2011).

Overall, if organizations follow these principles, they should avoid or, at the very least, should maintain the felt dehumanization of their employees to levels that are subjectively considered as acceptable, i.e. to levels that are inherently induced by employment (Bell and Khoury 2011). While it may be acceptable for employees to be considered as tools devoted to the organization's success or to be valued through their individual performance because being productive at work is "part of their job", it is certainly much less tolerable for them to be viewed as interchangeable cogs in the machine or objects that we can easily get rid of. Given the chain of variables identified in the present research and its negative consequences for individuals but also, given the well-known consequences of job satisfaction (Crede et al. 2007), for the organizations that employ them, it is in their best interest to act accordingly.

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Compliance with Ethical Standards

Conflict of Interest On behalf of all authors, the corresponding author states that there is no conflict of interest.

Ethical Approval All procedures performed in studies involving human participants were in accordance with the ethical standards of the institutional and/or national research committee and with the 1964 Helsinki declaration and its later amendments or comparable ethical standards.

Informed Consent Informed consent was obtained from all individual participants included in the study.

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