



## Caring with Co-Workers

*The Collegial Embeddedness of Emotional Labor*

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Merete Monrad  
PhD Thesis

Caring with Co-Workers  
The Collegial Embeddedness of Emotional Labor

This thesis is submitted as four articles. The thesis falls in two parts, the first part consists of an introduction and framework for the four articles, while the second part consists of the four articles:

Monrad, M. (2010): Faglig uenighed i relationsarbejde - følelsesmæssige barrierer for konstruktiv udnyttelse af faglig uenighed blandt pædagoger (Professional Disagreement in Relation-Centered Work – Emotional Barriers to the Constructive Exploration of Professional Disagreement Among Childcare Professionals). *Tidsskrift for Arbejdsliv*, 12(3): 87-101.

Monrad, M. (Manuscript submitted to *Work and Occupations*): Would It Kill Them if You Were Sad? Care Work, Emotional Labor and Happiness.

Monrad, M. (Manuscript submitted to *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology*): Remembering the Neglected Situation: Emotional Labor, Identity and Context.

Monrad, M. (Manuscript submitted to *Acta Sociologica*): On a Scale of One to Five, Who Are You? Mixed-Methods in Identity Research.

Through the preparation of the thesis, a report intended for childcare practitioners on the attitudes of childcare professionals and a book introducing and discussing vignette methodology have been co-authored:

Ejrnæs M. & M. Monrad (2012): Vignetmetoden: Sociologisk metode og redskab til faglig udvikling (The Vignette Method: A Sociological Method and Instrument for Professional Development). København: Akademisk Forlag (Chapters 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8).

Ejrnæs, M. & M. Monrad (2010): Enighed, Uenighed og Udvikling: Pædagogisk faglighed i daginstitutioner (Agreement, Disagreement and Development: Pedagogical Professionalism in Day Care Institutions). København: BUPL.

These texts are not formally part of the thesis. However, they have been significant as part of the process of reflecting on the research questions and will be drawn on in the discussions in the introduction and framework where relevant.

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## Acknowledgments

This thesis is an offshoot of project *Pædagogers holdninger, faglighed og profession* (Childcare Professionals' Attitudes, Professionalism and Profession) that was financed by the labor union BUPL and on which I have worked together with Morten Ejrnæs since fall 2008. The thesis was intended to delve deeper into themes analysed in the report *Enighed, Uenighed og Udvikling: Pædagogisk faglighed i daginstitutioner* (Ejrnæs & Monrad 2010), but as I became increasingly fascinated by the emotional dynamics in childcare and eldercare work, this theme eventually absorbed me completely in consequence altering the focus of my research.

Throughout the entire process of working on the thesis, Morten Ejrnæs has been a most valued collaborator and supervisor and an important source of support and recognition. He has always been available, been considerate and shown great respect for my arguments and choices in designing and writing the thesis. In addition, he has shown personal concern for my progress and given me feedback on everything from paper drafts to presentation and teaching skills whenever I needed it. I am most grateful for this and for bearing with me when I chose to change the research question to something outside his expert knowledge. Furthermore, we have had a great collaboration and both the undertaking of feature days in 12 municipalities across the country, teaching courses in vignette methodology and co-authoring the book *Vignetmetoden: Sociologisk metode og redskab til faglig udvikling* (The Vignette Method: A Sociological Method and Instrument for Professional Development) (Ejrnæs & Monrad 2012) has been enjoyable and inspiring. Thank you very much.

A crucial time in the writing of the thesis was spend at University of California, Riverside (UCR), studying under Jan E. Stets. She has been a great source of inspiration, advice and support in my staggering attempts at clarifying what my thesis was all about. Her great theoretical and methodological expertise as well as her enthusiasm and commitment to scientific rigor has been truly fascinating and I have enjoyed intensely discussing everything from methodology to theoretical developments of identity theory with her. Furthermore, she has put great effort into making my time in Riverside stimulating and has always been available for discussions and has provided feedback on papers both during my stay in Riverside and even after I returned to Denmark. I am very thankful for the opportunity to study under you and for your involvement in my research.

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*Merete Monrad*  
17<sup>th</sup> of July 2012

## **PART 1 INTRODUCTION AND FRAMEWORK**

It is much, much worse being together with someone who is just mega burned out and you know is in their late thirties and has totally chalk-white hair and deep furrows on her forehead – who looks like Satan himself – really it is much worse looking after children with someone like that than doing it all on your own. Because the children they just become, they become even more crazy from having someone like that in the house [...] then you have to play pocket psychologist, how do I get Louise over there in a good mood again, I damned well have to get the guitar, then we'll sing some song with the kids and we'll dance a little and then afterwards we'll take her favorite song, I know she likes that “What a wonderful world” a lot, then I'll just sing, just you know for fun, then Louise smiles for three seconds again and then whew! Then we can make it through lunch (laughs)  
(Interview childcare assistant<sup>1</sup>)

## Introduction

This thesis is about providing care for others in a collegial context. Care entails a practical and emotional dimension – caring for and caring about (Himmelweit 1999) – and hence requires the performance of what has been termed emotional labor (James 1992; Hochschild 2003). Emotional labor involves creating certain emotions in oneself and in others as part of one's work, for instance, creating a feeling of security in parents leaving their child in day care for the first time, comforting an elderly nursing home resident, engendering self-confidence in a child attempting to walk or fostering joy among co-workers. As the quotation above illustrates, the mood of co-workers may be decisive for the emotional labor performed and workers may feel called on to manage the emotions of co-workers, for example, by attempting to induce positive emotions in co-workers. A vast amount of research has studied how emotional labor affects workers. While researchers have tended to focus on the well-being of individual workers, I shall focus on the role of emotional labor in collective processes among co-workers. These processes may be very important for the well-being of workers and are often overlooked in analyses of emotional labor that tend to focus on the emotional labor performed with clients, users or care recipients.

In the following, I shall use an example of a concrete situation from childcare to illustrate what I mean by emotional labor in collective processes among co-workers. Then I shall specify the aims and objectives of the thesis further. A childcare professional I interviewed described the following situation that occurred some years ago. The childcare professional

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<sup>1</sup> Throughout the thesis, I use the term *childcare assistant* for workers in childcare who either have no formal qualifications or have completed vocational training of approximately two years (pædagogmedhjælper). The term *childcare professional* is used for workers with a professional qualification of 3-3½ years (pædagog), while the term *childcare worker* is used as a collective designation for workers in childcare regardless of their qualifications. In the same way, I use the term *eldercare worker* for workers in eldercare regardless of their qualification. The terms *social and health care helper* (or SOSU helper) and *social and health care assistant* (or SOSU assistant) will also be used for eldercare workers with one year and seven months of vocational training and three years and three months of vocational training, respectively. The term *care worker* is used as a more general term for both childcare workers and eldercare workers.

describes how the children were eating at two tables, and that she sat with the older children at one table and her colleague sat with the rest of the children at the other table:

And then one of the girls down at my table, there has been sort of a little stir and a little hullabaloo, and they play up and I don't know what, and she [the colleague] was very rigid and structured and there has to be quietness, cleanliness, and regularity, that was what she was accustomed to. And this girl, she then knocks over her cup of milk and I haven't seen whether she did it on purpose or whether it was an accident. And this adult from the other table, she comes rushing over and she storms and rages at her [the girl] and that she is not supposed to knock over her cup and she has to sit properly and she [the colleague] takes her away from the table and moves her over into the sofa and she is of course terribly frightened this girl and she starts to cry, and I get quite startled too and think oh my! And I think, just for a second, what do you do now, because she also interfered in my table, she interfered in a situation that was mine. And I think, I get up to go over to this girl. Then she says [the colleague] 'You can sit back down, don't even try to interfere in this,' she says to me. Oh dear! I sit down again. And this situation stays with me for two reasons: first of all, because she tells me off and hey stay out of this, and, secondly, because I do not help the girl after all. I do not help her. So she sits over there all alone and has been given this mega telling off for something that she may not even have done.

(Interview childcare professional)

This quotation shows the embeddedness of institutional<sup>2</sup> care in collegial relationships. The childcare professional is interrupted in her work by a co-worker who does not tolerate the “hullabaloo” the children are making. The co-worker tells off a child and as the child cries, the childcare professional wants to interfere, but is cut off by her co-worker. This particular case illustrates how emotional labor is embedded in collegial processes. Although the case is extreme, it highlights a more general condition for paid care work in an institutional setting, since it will often be the case that colleagues are present as co-participants in the care provision or as actual or potential observers of the care work of their colleagues. Hence, in relation to the emotional labor performed, co-workers are much more than just a resource of social support. The quotation above shows that co-workers are important for the work of care workers in at least three other ways:

- Firstly, the care worker cannot perform her work independently of the co-worker, the actions of the co-worker may for instance require counterbalancing actions at the same time as the emotions the co-worker evokes in the children, the atmosphere the co-worker creates in the room and the actions the co-worker performs affect the emotions of the care worker and the emotional labor she is performing.
- Secondly, the care worker and the co-worker may hold different attitudes towards the performance of the work and these differences in attitudes may have very real implications as illustrated by the quotation above where “quietness, cleanliness and regularity” clash with “play up” and “hullabaloo”.

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<sup>2</sup> Here, I use the concept of institution in an everyday sense to denote the physical setting of care in a day care institution or nursing home and not as a concept for social structures such as the family, civil society or religion.



- Thirdly, the actions of co-workers may put care workers in unwanted positions that are discrepant from how they want to be as care workers. The significance of such altercasting<sup>3</sup> is obvious from the quotation above, where the care worker describes that she still remembers the incident years after it occurred, because she was told off and disempowered by her co-worker and did not manage to help the child. Therefore, the incident stands out as an offence or violation of herself and may be perceived as identity-threatening.

These three ways in which co-workers are important for the emotional labor performed comprise three dimensions of the collegial context in care work:

- 1) the mood created by co-workers and the emotional dynamics among co-workers (that may crystallize in particular emotion cultures),
- 2) the similarity or differences in attitudes among co-workers and the way these are managed,
- 3) the role of co-workers in confirming or threatening the identities of care workers.

All of these dimensions have implications for the working life and well-being of care workers and throughout the thesis I shall study each of them more closely.

## Research Question

Returning to a more formalized conceptualization of the aims and objectives of the thesis, the concern with collegial processes and emotional labor has led me to the following main research question:

- In what way is emotional labor in institutional paid care work embedded in collective processes among co-workers and how does this embeddedness of emotional labor affect care workers?

Subsequently, I shall briefly clarify the key concepts in the research question, before specifying my approach further. *Emotional labor* can broadly be understood as labor where employees deal with the emotions of others as part of their job (James 1989: 15). Emotional labor is often defined more narrowly as the employee's management of their own emotions in order to create a particular affective state in others (Hochschild 2003: 7). This narrower conceptualization of emotional labor has been influential in my approach to the research question (particularly so in the article *Remembering the Neglected Situation*<sup>4</sup>).

The focus on *institutional paid care work* implies a delimitation in relation to the kind of work performed and hence the context for the emotional labor. It is important to take this context into consideration since emotional labor may have a different significance to

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<sup>3</sup> A person's actions do not only indicate his or her position in the interaction (self-presentation), they also create a position for the interaction partner, termed *altercasting*. Altercasting describes the projection of an identity on to others and can be seen as a form of interpersonal control (Weinstein & Deutschberger 1963). For instance, children may be told by their parents to "be a good girl/boy" and thereby implicitly (or explicitly) to behave in some manner desired by the parents. Here, the parents attempt to control the child's behavior by encouraging the child to assume the identity of "good girl/boy".

<sup>4</sup> In the introduction and framework, I generally refer to the titles of the articles in abbreviated form. Further, I refer to the titles of Danish publications that I have authored or co-authored in English translation (except for the first time these titles are mentioned).

workers when it is part of care for dependent others compared to emotional labor as part of, for example, the provision of personal services (Wærness 1984: 189) or the interrogation of criminals (Stenross & Kleinman 1989). Further, the focus on institutional paid care work entails a delimitation from unpaid care work (e.g. family-based care) and care provided in non-institutional contexts (e.g. home care for dependent elderly people, a nanny or au pair caring for children in the home). The thesis focuses more specifically on two forms of institutional paid care work: day care for children aged 0-6 years and nursing home care for dependent elderly people.

In this thesis, *collective processes among co-workers* are broadly understood as social processes occurring among co-workers during work in relation to the performance of the work. An example of such processes would be professional disagreement amongst the staff which is a fundamentally collective (rather than individual) process. I delimit myself from collective processes among care recipients or between care recipients and staff, and further from collective processes among the staff that are unrelated to the work (e.g. having fun during a lunch break, going to the movies after work), unless these are framed by the care workers themselves as being important for the performance of emotional labor.

The term *embeddedness* is used to indicate that emotional labor is entwined in collective processes among the staff. Thus, processes among the staff are not just added onto emotional labor processes that are similar to emotional labor processes outside a collegial context, rather it is an important argument of the thesis that the collegial processes change the emotional labor by shaping the way it is performed and the way it affects workers. The institutional setting is important, since it creates particular conditions for processes among the staff which affect the emotional labor performed and, consequently, the well-being of care workers.

The research question will, finally, be examined from the perspective of the working life of paid care workers<sup>5</sup>. Hence, I shall examine how processes among co-workers related to the performance of emotional labor *affect workers*. I shall discuss what improves and impairs the well-being of care givers, but not the implications for the well-being of care recipients, the quality of care, the efficiency of care provision or the performance of care givers, although these of course are important issues. In the thesis, well-being is examined in a narrow sense as affective individual well-being while at work (see the “Conceptual Clarifications” section for a more detailed description of my usage of the concept of well-being).

The collegial embeddedness of emotional labor is a common theme for the different articles in the thesis. However, I have chosen to go into details with a number of important sub-questions under the umbrella of collegial embeddedness of emotional labor. Therefore, I shall neither conceptualize nor examine the collegial embeddedness as such (i.e. in terms of all its different dimensions), but rather see the collegial embeddedness as the common denominator for the thesis. The sub-questions examined will be clarified in the following.

## **Focal Points**

As my point of departure I have chosen to focus on the three dimensions of the collegial

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<sup>5</sup> Care worker is used as a term covering workers providing care as part of their job and in the thesis includes both eldercare and childcare workers.

embeddedness of emotional labor mentioned above. These three dimensions will serve as focal points to guide the analyses. Thus, the main research question, as stated above, will be examined through the lens of the following focal points:

- The emotion culture among co-workers
- Care workers' management of the emotions of co-workers, in particular with regards to the management of differences in attitudes among co-workers
- Identity processes

In the following I shall briefly describe what I mean by each of these focal points. By using the term emotion cultures among co-workers, I imply the collective ideals, beliefs and norms that inform expressive behavior. Such cultures are dependent on broader societal tendencies, tendencies within the professions working with care provision, the organizations and local institutions and work groups where interactions among co-workers may crystallize in local emotion cultures. The emotion culture among co-workers is important since it constitutes the background for the emotional labor performed by individual care workers. The emotion culture among co-workers has to a large extent been overlooked in emotional labor research and the current research is an attempt to counterbalance this neglect. The focus on emotion culture among co-workers has also been motivated by the analyses of the empirical data that showed common considerations among interviewees to be about the creation of joy and how co-workers affect one's mood. This dimension is particularly examined in the article *Would It Kill Them if You Were Sad?*. This article identifies a culture of positivity and joy among Danish paid child and eldercare workers and it discusses how this culture affects workers.

Turning to the management of differences in attitudes<sup>6</sup>, a recent research project found that with regards to both some daily occurring and some rare, serious events in childcare, there was widespread disagreement among childcare professionals in their attitudes as to what to do in particular situations (Ejrnæs & Monrad 2010). The study also found many questions where childcare professionals were in agreement, however, to the present thesis the finding on disagreement has been the most important. The disagreement among childcare professionals was so widespread that it was likely to occur frequently, also within care institutions (during the project evidence was found that this was actually the case). Hence, co-workers may have to engage in daily negotiations over the performance of care or may, at least sometimes, realize that they have very different beliefs or notions about how care should be provided. The differences in attitudes raise the question of how disagreement is managed and what part emotion management plays in this collegial process. In this thesis, the focus on emotion management in relation to the management of disagreement is thus motivated by the empirical finding of widespread disagreement among co-workers in childcare. Co-workers' management of each other's emotions may, however, occur in a range of different situations, for different reasons and in different ways (e.g. as a form of social support, as negative sanctions imposed on workers expressing deviant<sup>7</sup> emotions),

<sup>6</sup> Attitudes are here understood as dispositions to perceive things in certain ways and to think, feel and want to act in certain ways. Attitudes can, hence, be seen as inclinations to react in certain ways. Furthermore, attitudes have an object; they are directed at something (Katzenelson 1994: 154-155; Monrad & Ejrnæs 2012b: 24-6).

<sup>7</sup> Deviant emotions are emotions that "differ in quality or degree from what is expected in given situations" (Thoits 1990: 181).

that may be important both for the well-being of workers and for the performance of emotional labor in relation to care recipients. I shall therefore not exclusively examine collegial emotion management related to the management of disagreement, even though particular attention shall be given to this specific context for collegial emotion management, since it has to my knowledge not previously been examined. The role of emotion management in the management of disagreement among co-workers is examined in the article *Faglig uenighed i relationsarbejde* (hereafter, I refer to this article using the translated title: *Professional Disagreement in Relation-Centered Work*). In this article, emotional barriers to articulating professional disagreement in childcare work are analyzed, and implications of the management of professional disagreement for professional development and for experiences of meaningfulness at work are discussed. Collegial emotion management in a broader sense is discussed in the article *Would It Kill Them if You Were Sad?*. In this article, the performance of mutual emotion management in the work group is examined in relation to a norm of positivity.

Identities provide a sense of who we are and who others are and thus help guide us in social interactions. Identity processes have been found to be important for affective well-being in previous research and the pursuit of identity verification<sup>8</sup> (that is, having others confirm one's self-concept) has been described as a motivating force that drives people to behave in certain ways and not others (Burke & Stets 2009; Erickson 2008; Stets 2007, 2005; Stets, Carter, Harrod, Cerven and Abrutyn 2008). Since identity verification is dependent on the responses of others, the responses of co-workers may be important for workers' experiences of identity verification at work and thereby for their well-being (identity verification is in Burke and Stets' (2009) identity theory conceptualized as resulting in positive emotions). Emotional labor has been discussed in relation to identity processes and it has been asserted that emotional labor may give rise to feelings of inauthenticity in the person performing emotional labor (Hochschild 2003; Erickson & Ritter 2001). However, emotional labor research has only in very few studies considered the role of co-workers in identity processes related to the performance of emotional labor (Martin 1999; Pierce 1995; Tracy 2005). Since co-workers provide each other with feedback on their professional identities which may be decisive for identity verification and consequently well-being, such collegial identity-related processes can be assumed to be important for working life. Hence, it is relevant to consider work-related identity processes in relation to the collective processes among co-workers when discussing emotional labor. The focus on identity processes has been motivated by literature reviews and attempts at rethinking psychological strain related to the performance of emotional labor. Identity-relevant feedback from colleagues related to the performance of emotional labor is examined in the article *Remembering the Neglected Situation*. In this article, the significance of the situational context for associations between emotional labor, identity verification and well-being is, furthermore, examined. In addition, I discuss the use of different methods in examining identity processes in the article *On a Scale of One to Five, Who Are You?*. In this article, I particularly discuss the quantitative approach to the study of identity processes as employed by Burke and Tully (1977). This

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<sup>8</sup> In Burke and Stets' identity theory people are taken to ascribe particular meanings to themselves and to seek to have others perceive them in the same way as they perceive themselves. In social interaction, others provide the individual with identity-relevant feedback and when the feedback is consistent with the self-meanings the person ascribes to herself, others confirm the identity of the person, and thus *identity verification* occurs.

approach has with some adjustments been used in the article *Remembering the Neglected Situation*.

The choice of these focal points has been motivated by an interest in going beyond co-workers as a source of social support and instead examining how they may play a constitutive role in the emotional labor process. I use the term *constitutive role* in order to indicate the collective embeddedness; that is, collective processes among co-workers are not simply added on to emotional labor as an extra layer, but rather the collective processes among co-workers are interwoven in the performance of emotional labor and the way it affects workers. To give some concrete examples of this constitutive role, co-workers manage each other's emotions, co-workers participate in establishing norms for the performance of emotional labor and co-workers may represent an important source of feedback on one's performance of emotional labor. Hence, when performing emotional labor in a collegial context co-workers participate in each other's emotional labor (for instance by attempting to create a good mood in the work group), affect the kind of emotional labor performed (for instance through norms of positivity) and respond to each other's emotional labor (for instance with disapproval, if a colleague is not attempting hard enough to foster positivity). The emotional labor performed by individual workers is, therefore, in important ways dependent on the emotional processes in the work group. However, it should be noted that while the constitutive role of colleagues and the embeddedness of emotional labor in collegial processes delimit the theme of the thesis, these are not concepts that I define and use in the empirical analyses. Rather, they frame the thesis and the kind of research questions I have posed in the data collection and analysis for each article.

## **Empirical Focus**

In examining the collegial embeddedness of emotional labor, I have chosen to focus on institutional child and eldercare in Denmark. Care work has been chosen as the empirical focus because I find it intriguing and important to examine the working life of professionals who are essentially performing other-oriented work. My preconception is that workers may face particular difficulties in caring for their own needs when negotiating the obligations towards the individual care recipient at the same time as they represent organizations with particular goals and working procedures (see for instance Rasmussen 2000: 41). My motivation to research the working life of paid care workers is both an interest in the dilemmas facing workers, dilemmas created by the range of different rationalities that are intersecting in their work (efficiency, professionalism, attentiveness, solicitude, etc.), and a recognition of the importance of care work for the welfare state in increasing labor market participation for women and in providing social services for dependent people regardless of social class.

More specifically, I am focusing on care work performed in day care for children aged 0-6 years (pre-school children) and care work performed at nursing homes for physically and/or mentally debilitated elderly people. Care work in these settings is well-suited for examining the collegial embeddedness of emotional labor, because emotions are at the core of this work (both in discourses about care work and in the daily practice) and because care provided in institutions often occurs in the presence of co-workers or with the participation of co-workers (e.g. in caring for physically incapacitated elderly nursing home residents or making activities for children). I have chosen to include both institutional child and

eldercare in the study in order to examine how collegial dimensions of emotional labor in care work manifest themselves in different institutional settings. These are nursing homes with round-the-clock care and day care for children, meaning two different groups of care recipients: elderly people who are debilitated and becoming dependent on help *versus* children who are developing towards independence. However, in the analyses, I shall focus on the similarities across these two care settings rather than attempt to analyze and clarify the differences. Furthermore, because the thesis originates from a research project on childcare I had the opportunity to collect a larger data material regarding childcare than eldercare.<sup>9</sup> Hence, empirically the data will cover both childcare and eldercare, but with the main emphasis on childcare.

The empirical basis of this thesis was created during two phases of data collection. The first phase was carried out from 2009-2010 and included a quantitative survey using vignettes with 491 respondents, 12 focus group interviews and 7 individual interviews.<sup>10</sup> This phase only included childcare professionals and also included childcare professionals working with a broader age group of children (0-10 years) than those included in the settings that are the main focus of this thesis. This first phase of data collection was conducted as part of a larger project on the attitudes of childcare professionals resulting in the report *Enighed, Uenighed og Udvikling: Pædagogisk faglighed i daginstitutioner* (hereafter, I refer to this report using the translated title: *Agreement, Disagreement and Development: Pedagogical Professionalism in Day Care Institutions*) (Ejrnæs & Monrad 2010). However, from this first phase of data collection it has primarily been the individual interviews that have been used directly in the thesis even though the entire phase of this data collection and analysis has been important for the framing of the thesis. The data from the first phase are used in the article *Professional Disagreement in Relation-Centered Work*. The second phase of data collection was carried out from 2010-2011 and consisted of 27 qualitative individual interviews (10 interviews with eldercare workers employed in nursing homes, 17 interviews with childcare workers employed in day care institutions for children aged 0-6 years) and a questionnaire using scenarios with 358 respondents (all childcare professionals employed in day care institutions for children aged 0-6 years). The qualitative interviews have been used in the article *Would It Kill Them if You Were Sad?* and in the preparation of the questionnaire, particularly in the development of the scenarios. The quantitative data in this phase have been used in the article *Remembering the Neglected Situation*.

## Methodological Approach

Methodologically, this thesis takes inspiration from current multi-method and mixed-methods debates and therefore represents an attempt at combining post-positivist quantitative analysis with interpretivist qualitative analysis. Approaches from these different research paradigms have been combined, acknowledging that each of them “offers a meaningful and legitimate way of knowing and understanding” (Greene & Caracelli 1997: 7). Based on a pragmatist position, I have not sought to reconcile any contradictions between these approaches, however, these have not been ignored since I have sought to

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<sup>9</sup> During my PhD-studies, I attempted to secure funding to collect a similar data material on eldercare, but was unfortunately unsuccessful.

<sup>10</sup> This phase of the data collection was carried out in collaboration with Morten Ejrnæs and a group of interviewers: Heidi Sørensen, Anette Stenslund, Anders Sevelsted and Jonatan Kolding Karnøe.

clarify and discuss the different epistemologies of the approaches (see Greene & Caracelli 1997: 8-9). The purpose of combining the methods has been to construct the object of study in different ways and thereby arrive at a more complete understanding of the collegial embeddedness of emotional labor. Qualitative and quantitative methods have, therefore, been combined in different ways throughout the thesis:

With regards to the article *Professional Disagreement in Relation-Centered Work*, the analysis of the attitudes of childcare professionals and the management of differences in attitudes was based on a quantitative survey followed by qualitative individual and focus group interviews (Ejrnæs & Monrad 2010). The article draws on results from the quantitative survey regarding the existence of professional disagreement while analyzing the meaning and management of this disagreement based on qualitative interviews. Here, qualitative and quantitative data contribute to the analysis of different aspects of the same research question.

However, in my analysis of further interviews and a survey collected later in the research process, the qualitative and quantitative analyses contribute to examining different sub-questions under the general topic of the collegial embeddedness of emotional labor. In these analyses the qualitative and quantitative data have been examined separately and are only related through their common contributions to the main research question in the thesis. The article *Would It Kill Them if You Were Sad?* draws on qualitative individual interviews with both child and eldercare workers, while the article *Remembering the Neglected Situation* draws on quantitative scenario-based survey data with childcare professionals as respondents.

In examining the focal point of identity processes, I have been inspired by identity theory (Burke & Stets 2009). In line with the quantitative approach associated with this theoretical framework, identity dynamics have been examined quantitatively in the article *Remembering the Neglected Situation*. The novelty of this quantitative approach in a Danish research context led to methodological considerations of different approaches to identity processes and their advantages and drawbacks. This resulted in the methodological article *On a Scale of One to Five, Who Are You?*

## Theoretical Approach

The theoretical approach to the research question has been inspired by the sociology of emotions, particularly theories of emotions with a structural and cultural emphasis<sup>11</sup> (Goffman 1961; Gordon 1981, 1989; Hochschild 1979, 2003) and symbolic interactionist theories of emotions (Burke & Stets 2009; Cooley 1902; Stets 2007). Furthermore, governmentality theory (Foucault 1991; Rose 1999), ritual theory on emotions (Collins 2004) and theory on group processes (Janis 1982) have also been important. Regarding the structural/cultural and symbolic interactionist theories, the thesis mainly draws on theories of emotion management (Gordon 1981, 1989; Hochschild 1979, 2003) and structural

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<sup>11</sup> The approach of Hochschild has often been labeled cultural, but as argued by Erickson (2008), Hochschild has a strong structural emphasis that is important to acknowledge. Erickson (2008: 266) suggests denoting the approach of Hochschild *contextual* instead of cultural, thereby referring to both structure and culture. Such a cultural-structural notion might also apply well to the work of Goffman. Further, categorizations of theories are always contestable. Goffman's theoretical framework might equally well be characterized as dramaturgical or ritual.

symbolic interactionist identity theory (Burke & Stets 2009). Whereas Burke & Stets' identity theory focuses on felt emotions arising from identity processes (Burke & Stets 2009; Stets 2005; Burke 1991), the emotion management literature has focused on the socio-cultural framework for expressing and managing emotions (e.g. Hochschild 1979, 2003; Pierce 1995). In 1979 Hochschild pointed out that the social ordering of emotions may be studied in two distinct ways: either by focusing on how social factors influence the emotions experienced or by focusing on how emotions are managed. Hochschild emphasized that these two approaches to the study of emotions are compatible and may stimulate each other (Hochschild 1979: 552). Hochschild herself focused on the latter, and unfortunately, the two theoretical approaches have remained distinct.<sup>12</sup> There has thus been a tendency for scholars either to be preoccupied with the social factors influencing emotions experienced or with questions of how the socio-cultural context affects the ways in which these emotions are managed. However, the processes leading to the experience of emotions and emotion management must be regarded as closely intertwined. Particularly, emotion management has its starting point in actual emotions (or lack of emotions) and may alter the felt emotions or give rise to new emotions. Hence, this thesis seeks to use theoretical frameworks from both strands of research in order to obtain a fuller understanding of the interrelationship between collectively embedded emotional labor and worker well-being.

On the face of it, emotions may seem as private processes occurring within the individual and hence as a curious topic for sociological analysis. However, the view of this thesis – and a whole branch of sociological research – is that emotions are fundamentally social and should be analyzed as such (see e.g. Gordon 1981; Harré 1986; Thoits 1990; Turner & Stets 2005). Emotions can of course be analyzed as psychological, physiological or chemical processes, but if the analysis is confined to these levels we neglect crucial dimensions of emotions; for instance, that emotions are defined socially and derive meaning from social contexts, that emotions are shaped in relation to social norms and beliefs, that emotions may have a social origin (arising in social interactions and developing in long-term social relationships) and that emotions have social consequences since they may lead to solidarity, support of others, conflict or violation of others (Gordon 1981; Thoits 1990: 180). In this thesis emotions are primarily considered in two ways: as objects for management and as outcomes of identity processes. In the thesis, both of these ways of considering emotions entail analyzing the role of co-workers.

## **Reading Instructions**

The thesis consists of four articles and an introduction and framework. The introduction and framework shall situate the research in current scholarly debates, discuss important theoretical, methodological and meta-theoretical issues, that, due to limitations of space, I have not been able to address in the articles, and further provide a discussion of the contributions across the articles. The introduction and framework begins with a brief conceptual clarification that is followed by a summary of the four articles. Subsequently, the empirical field of investigation and a state of the art for research on well-being in care work and particularly emotional labor is presented. Afterwards, the theoretical approaches to identity are introduced and discussed at some length before turning to some brief considerations over theory of science and some more lengthy methodological

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<sup>12</sup> I am indebted to Jan E. Stets for making me aware of this distinction in the literature.



considerations. This is followed by a broader discussion across the four articles: their findings, methodology, theory and research contributions and suggestions for further research. Finally, a brief conclusion sums up the main contributions of the thesis.

All interviews have been carried out in Danish and all quotations have been translated into English. In the translation, the meaning of the quotations has been sought preserved rather than performing a literal translation. However, attempts have been made to retain the original wording in the quotations and, therefore, some grammatical errors have been maintained in the translation (to the extent that such errors, when translated, did not interfere with the comprehensibility of the quotation in question). The original Danish quotations are available in Appendix 1. Further, the scenario-based questionnaire was also in Danish and is available in Appendix 2 in the Danish original and in English translation in Appendix 3. Furthermore, in the references I have included page numbers when referring to a specific argument or finding (particularly so when referring to books), but not when referring to the approach of an author or an argument that is developed throughout the entire publication. The reference style varies across the articles due to the different styles required by the journals to which the articles have been submitted.

# Conceptual Clarifications

## Emotions

From a sociological perspective it is possible to make an analytical distinction between emotions as experiences and emotion culture (Bloch 2001: 14). The emotion culture is defined by the ways in which we assess, classify and regulate our emotions. It includes norms, for example, norms for what one should feel and how emotions should be expressed, as well as “common sense” beliefs about emotions; that is, conceptions of what emotions are, what causes specific emotions and what consequences these emotions have (Bloch 2001: 14-15). Conversely, emotions as experiences refer to the subjective experience of emotions.

Emotions are characterized by both having an imperative character where they may interfere with ongoing activities and by being malleable. Emotions are malleable in a superficial sense, since it is possible to hide one's emotions from others, but they are also malleable in a more profound way, in the sense that it is possible to change, remove or induce emotions in oneself and others; this has been conceptualized as emotion regulation, emotion management, emotion work (Gross & Thompson 2007: 5) and in a work context as emotional labor. Emotions are to some extent under conscious control which means that it is important to examine experienced emotions in the context of the emotion culture in a given context.

The thesis discusses various aspects of the emotion culture, although I shall not attempt to provide a comprehensive definition of what constitutes emotion cultures as such. In the analyses I shall clarify what aspects of emotion culture I examine and the state of the art defines and provides a thorough discussion of emotional labor. In the following, I shall provide a broad conceptualization of emotions as experiences.

In conceptualizing emotions, I mainly draw on the philosophers Bennett and Hacker who in *Philosophical Foundations of Neuroscience* (2003) present a nuanced, instructive and well-argued conceptualization of emotions. It is important to be aware that emotions are not taken to include only brief instances of affect (a rage of anger), but also include long-term affective states that do not involve perturbation (being frustrated over one's working conditions) (Bennett & Hacker 2003: 203). Bennett and Hacker (2003: 199-200) conceptualize emotions as a subgroup of affections (affections also include moods), and characterize affections as particular kinds of feelings that are distinct from other kinds of feelings such as sensations, tactile perceptions and appetites (e.g. hunger, sexual lust). Emotions are characterized by being directed at an object (Bennett & Hacker 2003: 206; Solomon 2008: 12); that is, you are angry at *someone*, you love doing *something*, you are ashamed of *something*, etc. This directedness or intentionality distinguishes emotions from moods and affective atmospheres. Here, it is important to distinguish between the cause of the emotion (being angry *because* nobody listens) and the object of the emotion (being angry *at* co-workers, children, etc.) (Bennett & Hacker 2003: 206).

Further, emotions are related to the beliefs and knowledge held by the person (e.g. feeling sorrow for an elderly nursing home resident knowing that her beloved husband just passed away) and include an appraisal of the object of the emotion with regards to the

commitments and interests of the person (Bennett & Hacker 2003: 207). Thus, emotions are related to our preferences, desires and wishes and are directed at things, persons and activities that are significant to us in a positive or negative sense (Bennett & Hacker 2003: 218). Bennett and Hacker describe this very clearly: “Emotions, we have suggested, are ways in which we manifest what is important to us” (Bennett & Hacker 2003: 206). Therefore, emotions are also related to values in the sense that one's values are something that one considers important, even though the strength of the commitment to the different values to which one ascribes may vary. Similarly, the strength of one's emotional responses to transgressions or support of one's values may vary too. Moreover, emotions motivate us to act in certain ways and this motivating force of emotions may be one way of indicating the strength of an emotion. Hence, the strength of emotions is not limited to the intensity of the emotion or how often one feels in a particular way. It also depends on the extent to which the emotion motivates one to act in certain ways or to avoid certain situations, for instance, one's love of Italian food is shown in the miles one is willing to trot through a foreign city in search of an Italian restaurant (Bennett & Hacker 2003: 204-5).

It is important to note that although some emotions evoke characteristic bodily and expressive reactions (increased heart rate, facial expressions, body posture, gestures, etc.), bodily aspects of emotions should not be considered apart from the circumstances in which they occur. Bennett and Hacker express it thus:

Bodily responses are not 'the fundamental facts of an emotion' in any illuminating sense. [...] The bodily responses of fear of physical harm – for example, increased pulse rate, perspiration and trembling – can all be exhibited without any fear whatsoever, as when one trembles with excitement on entering a hot room expecting a delightful surprise. What makes those responses fear responses are the circumstance in which they are exhibited, and the beliefs, desires and thoughts of the agent.

(Bennett & Hacker 2003: 209)

Bennett and Hacker argue that although bodily reactions may be integral to emotions (indeed they may inform one about one's emotions), they are not sufficient in themselves to understand emotions and to differentiate between different emotions. Instead we need to consider the interpretations made by the person, the meaning ascribed to the situation he or she is in, the concerns held, the motivation to act, etc. Bennett and Hacker continue to clarify this:

The 'fundamental facts of an emotion', in the case of human beings, are the agent's awareness of, or belief about, an appropriate object of emotion in the circumstances, the character of his concern for the object of his emotion (why it matters to him), and the consequent reasons for action he may have, the motivation afforded the agent by the relevant appraisals or evaluation, the behaviour or behavioural disposition thus connected with the object of the emotion, and the associated thoughts, fancies and wishes. [...] It is precisely in the context of the recognition of an appropriate object of an emotion, of concern for it, and of a form of behaviour or inclination to behave appropriate to that object (given the agent's goals and beliefs) that somatic accompaniments, voluntary actions and involuntary reactions of an agent can be characterized *as* manifestations of that emotion. (Bennett & Hacker 2003: 209-10)

Thus, bodily reactions need to be seen in the light of the beliefs, reasons for action, interpretations, wishes, etc. held by the person. Only when taking this framework of meaning into account can we understand a given bodily reaction as related to a particular

emotion. This way of conceptualizing emotions is, I believe, both fruitful and adequate from a sociological perspective. Fruitful because it highlights the importance of values, beliefs, interpretations and meaning and makes it possible to analyze the role of social processes in emotions, for example, the role of norms in shaping what is held to be an appropriate object of anger in a certain context. At the same time, it is suitable for sociological analysis, because it, in my view, convincingly clarifies how emotions cannot be reduced to biological, neurological, physiological or chemical processes.

As a consequence of my sociological perspective on emotions and emotional labor, I shall not consider affective personality traits<sup>13</sup> even though these, of course, may play a part in determining the effect of emotional labor and its collective embeddedness on worker well-being (see e.g. Brief, Burke, George, Robinson and Webster 1988; Watson, Clark and Carey 1988). Hence, I do not examine personality traits, such as dispositions to be happy or sad which will, of course, to some degree limit the scope of the conclusions that may be drawn. However, it is not the aim of this thesis to synthesize theoretical perspectives to provide a grand theoretical model of emotional labor and worker well-being. Instead the thesis seeks to develop our understanding of one particular aspect of emotional labor; that is, its collective embeddedness.

In the thesis, I examine emotions, moods and affective atmospheres. Moods can be distinguished from emotions as representing more general frames of mind or affective states that are not necessarily directed at any particular object. Moreover, while moods color one's actions and thoughts they are not motivations for action in the same sense as emotions are (Bennett & Hacker 2003: 202). Affective atmospheres may tentatively be characterized as being similar to moods in that they are affective states that are not directed at any particular object, but distinct from moods in being collective. For the sake of simplicity, I shall throughout the thesis use the concept of the sociology of emotions loosely to denote a sociology that examines both emotions and affections such as an atmosphere or a mood. Further, I shall sometimes use *feelings* as a collective designation for affections that encompasses emotions, moods and affective atmospheres (e.g. feeling good may both refer to an emotion, a mood and an affective atmosphere).

## *Positive and Negative Emotions*

Some theories make a broad distinction between positive and negative emotions (e.g. Burke & Stets 2009). The concept of “negative emotions” is often used as a collective designation for emotions such as distress, anger, fear and shame, while the concept of “positive emotions” covers emotions such as enthusiasm, excitement, inspiration and pride (according to the *Positive And Negative Affect Schedule* (PANAS) (Watson, Clark and Tellegen 1988)). However, these dimensions are not necessarily opposites (even though sometimes described this way in the literature), rather they can be seen as covering two distinct affective dimensions (Watson, Clark and Tellegen 1988: 1063-4). Furthermore, the concepts of positive and negative emotions are not normative designations (for what one ought to feel), but rather descriptive collective designations for emotions that are believed to be related. Still, the attributes positive and negative imply a distinction between emotions experienced as favorable and unfavorable, or as feeling good and feeling bad. However, we should be

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<sup>13</sup> It should be noted that affective personality traits must be regarded as distinct from emotions (Bennett & Hacker 2003: 203).

cautious in generally classifying some emotions as positive/pleasurable or negative/unpleasant, since their perception would be highly dependent on the individual and the context. For example, feeling enthusiastic at a funeral may be experienced as highly unpleasant, while feeling and expressing anger at someone thought to deserve this can be pleasurable. Thus, even though the concepts of positive and negative emotions are sometimes used in the thesis for the sake of simplicity and due to the reliance on the framework of Burke and Stets, these collective designations should be interpreted with caution. In addition, while much theoretical work merely discusses the causes and consequences of negative and positive emotions it is important to be attentive of differences between various emotions and not take one or a few emotions to be prototypical or paradigmatic for all emotions. Emotions vary in their objects, their motivating force, the actions with which they are associated and the presence of bodily sensations and perturbations (Bennett & Hacker 2003: 205). This insight into the complexity and diversity of emotions has inspired me to seek to examine particular emotions more closely (see the articles *Remembering the Neglected Situation* and *Would It Kill Them if You Were Sad?*). However, some of the analyses and discussions in this thesis remain on a more general level to include only considerations of negative and positive emotions. In these cases the concepts refer to whether the individual feels good (positive emotions) or feels bad (negative emotions) and, consequently, also refer to the well-being of the individual.

## Well-Being and Ill-Being

A discussion of how the collegial embeddedness of emotional labor affects workers also means discussing the well-being of workers. Hence, it is important to establish what is meant by well-being in the thesis. First, it should be noted that the focus is on the well-being of workers while at work and not on how the work affects their general well-being.<sup>14</sup> However, where the interviewees explicitly relate work-related stressors to their general sense of well-being, I may comment on the experiences of general well-being, but these instances are exceptions. Further, I focus on the individual's well-being and not the well-being of collectives such as the staff considered as a group. Individual and collective well-being may diverge and the thesis does not aim to examine collective well-being. However, I may briefly comment on collective benefits or disadvantages in my discussion of emotional labor.

Well-being has several dimensions. Overall, a common distinction is between cognitive and affective well-being, where satisfaction with life has been seen to indicate cognitive well-being<sup>15</sup> and experiences of positive and negative affect or more complex affective dimensions have been seen to indicate the extent of affective well-being (Nieboer, Lindenberg, Boomsma and van Bruggen 2005: 314; Watson, Clark and Tellegen 1988; Warr 1990). However, other distinctions have also been made in the literature, for instance, between social and physical well-being (Nieboer et al. 2005: 313-315). In the thesis, I focus on individual work-related affective well-being which may be regarded as a subgroup of psychological well-being. Furthermore, affective well-being is particularly relevant to the

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<sup>14</sup> Consequences of work-related stressors for the general well-being of care workers have for instance been found by Tufte, Clausen and Borg (2008).

<sup>15</sup> The conceptual distinction between cognitive and affective well-being is not clear cut, and satisfaction with life has, hence, sometimes been taken to indicate affective well-being (see Warr 1990: 196).

examination of identity processes, since positive and negative emotions have been seen as outcomes of identity processes (Burke & Stets 2009: 163). Hence, worker well-being is conceptualized as the worker's affective responses to the job.

Quantitative studies that examine the relationship between psychological strain and emotional labor have often employed measures of *burnout*<sup>16</sup> or aspects of burnout (Hülshager & Schewe 2011; Grandey 2003; Wharton 1993). The concept of burnout has been developed in analyses of care work and therefore seems particularly relevant in the present context (Maslach & Pines 1977; Maslach & Jackson 1981). Throughout the thesis I attempt to examine the dynamics of emotional labor in a collegial context more closely by situating the analyses in specific situations. Burnout, on the other hand, must be regarded as a long-term outcome of work-related emotional strain, and therefore I will not be able to draw conclusions regarding the impact of collectively embedded emotional labor on burnout.

A criticism that has been voiced in relation to emotional labor studies since Hochschild's (2003) original work is that the emphasis on psychological strain excludes the possible positive outcomes that emotional labor might have for workers (Wouters 1989: 96). These positive effects are very important from a working life perspective, and indeed necessary to study in order to gain a fuller understanding of how emotional labor impacts worker well-being. Therefore, I shall attempt to pay heed to both potential affective strains and rewards when discussing how collectively embedded emotional labor affects workers in institutional care work.

Throughout the thesis I use a range of different words to describe the well-being or ill-being of workers such as strain, distress or specific emotions such as pride, shame, joy, frustration and more general concepts of negative and positive emotions. These different concepts all refer to the affective dimension of well-being. Consequently, strain refers to affective strain as a form of work-related ill-being. Even though the affective dimension of well-being may be related to other dimensions of well-being, I do not discuss such relationships in the thesis.

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<sup>16</sup> Burnout is characterized by emotional exhaustion and a loss of concern for the people (clients/care recipients) one is working with. Burnout involves three factors: 1) emotional exhaustion, 2) depersonalization and 3) personal accomplishment (Maslach & Pines 1977; Maslach & Jackson 1981).

## Summaries of Articles in the Thesis

*Monrad, M. (2010): Faglig uenighed i relationsarbejde - følelsesmæssige barrierer for konstruktiv udnyttelse af faglig uenighed blandt pædagoger (Professional Disagreement in Relation-Centered Work – Emotional Barriers to the Constructive Exploration of Professional Disagreement Among Childcare Professionals). Tidsskrift for Arbejdsliv, 12(3): 87-101.*

The article focuses on what is arguably an important aspect of relations between colleagues in childcare institutions: professional disagreement. The article is based on a quantitative survey of attitudes using vignette methodology with 491 respondents combined with qualitative interviews: 7 individual interviews and 12 focus group interviews (all participants are childcare workers). The article mainly relies on the individual interviews in the analyses. In the article, it is argued that professional disagreement may be conducive to professional development, since the different views of colleagues can challenge habits and assumptions and thus lead to a more reflective practice. In the light of this, emotional barriers to articulating professional disagreement in childcare work are examined. The article establishes, that childcare professionals find it difficult to express professional disagreement in relation to their colleagues. It is argued that professional disagreement among colleagues in relation-centered work can be especially difficult to articulate, since professional criticism may be difficult to separate from a personal criticism, and since childcare workers are aware that professional criticism may be difficult for co-workers to receive. Furthermore, consideration for colleagues, confidence in colleagues, social cohesion and a desire to avoid potential conflicts are identified as barriers for articulating disagreement among colleagues. It is emphasized that work in small groups with a common professional identity poses an obvious risk for the development of unidirectional group processes, groupthink, where disagreement is concealed and pressure towards agreement arises. Furthermore, the expectations concerning agreement with colleagues among childcare professionals are illuminated, and the ideals of agreement are discussed. Concerning the ideals of agreement, a desire to relinquish ideals and demands of agreement and for colleagues to express disagreement is identified among some childcare professionals and it is argued that in order to benefit constructively from professional disagreement it may be necessary to abandon ideals of consensus and to appreciate disagreement as an unavoidable and potentially rewarding aspect of pedagogical work. Finally, the discussion of articulation of professional disagreement is linked to a discussion of meaningfulness in relation to work, and it is argued that the practice of colleagues including their emotional labor may be decisive for the working life of childcare workers since the work of colleagues contributes to the experience of meaningfulness at work and of being part of a productive community. Due to a commitment to care recipients, childcare professionals may feel a responsibility for the entire care provision and feel called on to correct undesirable actions of colleagues. This radical responsibility for the care may, however, be a strain on workers.

*Monrad, M. (Manuscript submitted to Work and Occupations): Would It Kill Them if You Were Sad? Care Work, Emotional Labor and Happiness.*

Based on 27 qualitative interviews, a culture of positivity and joy is identified among Danish paid childcare and eldercare workers and it is discussed how this culture affects workers. Positivity appears in three ways in the empirical data: as a mode of identification,

as a way of caring and as a norm or demand directed at workers. These three manifestations of what may be termed a regime of positivity are analyzed in terms of the subjectivities of workers, the emotional labor performed and the structural conditions in the public sector (particularly cost-containment efforts). In terms of identification, childcare and eldercare workers often describe themselves as happy or positive and these emotions appear both as naturally occurring and as an accomplishment requiring a conscious effort. Positivity as a way of caring relies on a form of phronesis knowledge; it is based on experience and motivated by the concern for the care recipient. Positivity and joy was both seen as necessary in order to perform the job, but also as something that made the job easier to perform. Furthermore, positivity appeared as a norm, where happiness and joy was expected and negative sanctions were sometimes imposed by colleagues when emotions were expressed that departed from the norm. Hence, it appeared that workers were obliged to contribute to create a good atmosphere in the staff. The mood of co-workers was in this context experienced as contagious and the atmosphere among the staff seemed to be an important precondition for the emotional labor performed towards care recipients. Hence, a positive atmosphere among the staff may facilitate the performance of emotional labor by creating a shared positive mood making it easy to approach care recipients positively. At the same time, a negative mood may also be spread amongst the staff, making it difficult to perform the emotional aspects of care. Importantly, happiness, positivity and joy among the staff may thus ease the emotional labor performed with clients. However, remaining positive is also used as a coping strategy when facing high demands and lack of resources and here it may be a strain on workers, potentially hindering critique of working conditions and individualizing responsibility for the consequences of increased demands and cost-containment efforts.

*Monrad, M. (Manuscript submitted to Journal of Occupational Health Psychology): Remembering the Neglected Situation: Emotional Labor, Identity and Context.*

This article develops current accounts of the association between emotional labor and worker well-being through the theoretical and empirical analysis of situated identity processes. It is proposed that identity discrepancy (that is, a discrepancy between one's self-meanings and the self-relevant feedback received from others, i.e. lack of identity verification) partially mediates the effect of emotional labor on worker well-being. Further, it is argued that researchers need to be attentive to characteristics of the social situation in which emotional labor is performed. The proposition of partial mediation is, therefore, tested on a sample of 358 Danish childcare professionals using three scenarios to study affective events. The scenarios describe a situation with a parent, a child and a colleague, respectively. The study focuses on identity-relevant feedback from colleagues in the three situations. The proposition receives support with regards to surface acting<sup>17</sup> in the child and colleague scenarios, most consistently so in the colleague scenario. No support is found for a partial mediation of deep acting<sup>18</sup>. The consequences of emotional labor for worker well-being are found to be much more dependent on the situational context than has previously been assumed in quantitative research. In the three scenarios, three different associations

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<sup>17</sup> Surface acting is a form of emotional labor where one changes how one appears but not one's actual emotions, for instance, one hides what one feels or pretends to be feeling something that one does not actually feel (Hochschild, 2003: 33).

<sup>18</sup> Deep acting is a form of emotional labor where one attempts to change how one actually feels (Hochschild, 2003:33).



between emotional labor and well-being are found: in one scenario, emotional labor is both somewhat positively *and* negatively related to well-being, but otherwise largely unrelated to well-being, in one it is positively related to well-being and in one it is negatively related to well-being. Based on these results, it is suggested that the nature of the situations in which emotional labor is performed needs to be taken into account when considering the consequences of emotional labor for worker well-being. Further, it is argued that the meaning of emotional labor and its impact on identity processes may differ across situations and interaction partners. It is suggested, that the relationship between the meaning of emotional labor and the self-meanings of the worker may be crucial for the experience of emotional labor. Thus, in some situations inauthentic emotional expressions may be less straining than authentic ones, because they help verify a salient identity. Hence, expressing genuinely felt emotions and having one's identity verified may in some instances contradict each other and when they do it is argued that the motivation to have one's identity verified may be stronger (and more important for the well-being of workers) than the motivation to express one's actual feelings. Based on the situational differences found, researchers are called on to seriously consider the situational context of emotional labor and to examine the meaning workers ascribe to themselves and to the performance of emotional labor, as well as the significance of others in providing identity-relevant feedback on the performance of emotional labor.

*Monrad, M. (Manuscript submitted to Acta Sociologica, currently being revised to be resubmitted): On a Scale of One to Five, Who Are You? Mixed-Methods in Identity Research.*

Identity research is growing at a tremendous pace utilizing a variety of methods. However, the potential advantages of methodological combinations across the qualitative-quantitative divide remain largely unexploited. This article therefore calls for the use of mixed-methods in the study of identity. The article approaches identity from a symbolic interactionist perspective and discusses what aspects of identification different methodological approaches provide access to. In order to facilitate mixed-methods research, the interplay of methods, theoretical content and meta-theoretical assumptions in identity research are discussed. The article focuses on a particularly influential quantitative approach to identity: the Burke-Tully approach developed in the context of the structural symbolic interactionist identity theory and compares this to different qualitative approaches, particularly narrative interviews. Further, it is discussed how different methodological approaches imply different ontological assumptions about identity, for instance regarding the stability of identities, the constitution of identities and the conception of meaning. It is concluded that a quantitative self-report measure of identity necessarily neglects aspects of identification, among them the narrative, performative and embodied quality of identity. However, the quantitative approach of Burke and Tully enables the systematic, standardized comparison of individuals using identity as a variable thus making it possible to identify patterns between identification, social position, actions and experiences in large populations. Since all the methods discussed in the article enable the study of some aspects of identity, while remaining blind to other aspects, mixed-methods may contribute to a more complete insight into identity processes. Importantly, mixed-methods may be used to examine both patterns as they are available to the outside observer and the lifeworld of the individual actor and thus to both explain and understand.

## **Presentation of the Empirical Context**

Throughout the thesis, I examine both institutional eldercare in nursing homes and childcare in day care institutions. The empirical focus is primarily on childcare (two out of the three empirical articles only draw on data on childcare) and I do not analyze the differences between collegial embeddedness in childcare and eldercare. I have, however, chosen to examine these different empirical settings in part in order to bring different institutional contexts into the examination of the research question and in part because research often remains within one of these fields despite the immediate similarities between the kind of work performed. However, in order to contextualize the studies performed this section will present each of the empirical contexts and highlight some main similarities and differences.

The section begins with a brief presentation of the Scandinavian welfare state in which the provision of childcare and eldercare is immersed and continues to outline the professionalization of paid care work and current trends in the governance of childcare and eldercare. It ends with a description of the spatial and temporal context of care and the significance of the part of the life of the care recipient with which childcare and eldercare deal.

### **Publicly Provided Care in a Scandinavian Welfare State**

The Danish welfare state can be characterized as a Nordic or Scandinavian model with a high degree of universalism (in terms of accessibility of services) and defamiliarization of care responsibilities (care provided independently of family relations) (Rauch 2007: 251-2). Indeed Denmark appears almost prototypical for the ideal type of a Scandinavian model, since eldercare and childcare provision is at the highest level in the Nordic countries in terms of coverage (Burau & Dahl forthcoming; Leitner 2003: 361; Rauch 2007). While childcare and eldercare services are widely used, in eldercare an ideal of staying "at home as long as possible" with the aid of publicly provided care has the consequence that only the weakest care recipients are living in nursing homes (Burau & Dahl forthcoming). The public childcare and eldercare is tax-financed with significant user-fees. The state assuming responsibility for (part of) the care provision and financing was historically related to the increasing labor market participation of women (Dahl 2000: 26; Hansen, Lorentsen, Pedersen and Gravesen 2010: 68). Here, the defamiliarizing capacity of the Danish welfare state is high as indicated by the high employment rate for women: In 2011, 69.5 percent of women were in paid labor compared to 72.8 percent of men (Statistics Denmark 2012a; see also Boje 2007). Finally, even though the state is increasingly regulating the provision of care, the municipalities who are responsible for the actual care provision have a considerable local autonomy (Burau & Dahl forthcoming).

### **Professionalization of Childcare and Eldercare**

Paid work in eldercare and childcare have both witnessed a professionalization but this has historically occurred in different ways in the two areas. Regarding eldercare, home helpers were initially *housewife substitutes* that helped in the home during childbirth or illness (and hence not in particular related to eldercare) (Dahl 2000: 162). Formal education for home helpers was not required until 1974 and at that point the length of training was only set to

four weeks (Dahl 2005a: 50). Since then a move from ideals of home helpers as *good housewives* to *professionals* has occurred (Dahl 2005a: 51; Dahl 2000: 163, 245). Hence, the education for home helpers is now one year and seven months of professional training (social and health care helpers, in the following termed SOSU helpers) and for the more advanced social and health care assistants (in the following termed SOSU assistants) an education of three years and three months is required.

In childcare, education of 1-2 years was introduced more than a century ago (though not state subsidized until 1953) (Andersen 2007: 28-9) and the first law regarding training of social educators (childcare professionals) came in 1969 and set the length of the education to 3 years (Hansen et al. 2010: 69). Since then the education of childcare workers has become a professional bachelor education of 3½ years and the academic demands in the education have been emphasized (Hansen et al. 2010: 69).

Furthermore, eldercare and childcare educations are distinct in admission requirements: in childcare upper secondary school (gymnasium) or a relevant vocational training of corresponding length is required; in eldercare lower secondary school is required.

As evident of the professionalization of care in these areas most workers employed in eldercare and in childcare for children aged 0-6 years have a professional education within their field. In day care institutions for children aged 0-6 years, approximately 58 % of care workers have a professional education, if we consider only the personnel providing childcare (that is disregarding leaders and other administrative personnel) (Statistics Denmark 2012b). Among public sector social and health care workers (the group of workers employed in eldercare) approximately 12 percent have no education, 34 percent are SOSU helpers and 26 percent are SOSU assistants (FLD 2010).<sup>19</sup> However, the statistics regarding eldercare must be read with caution<sup>20</sup>, but are still indicative of the professionalization of care.

Wage labor in the eldercare and childcare sector has suffered from a lack of recognition and has in societal discourse been regarded as low-status work (Dahl 2010; Ahrenkiel, Nielsen, Schmidt, Sommer and Warring 2012: 42).<sup>21</sup> The lack of recognition of care work has, as I shall return to, been associated with the gendered nature of this work (England 2005: 382-3; see the section “State of the Art”). Eldercare and childcare are indeed highly gendered professions: 92,5 percent of eldercare workers are women (Statistics Denmark 2010) while approximately 85 percent of workers in pedagogical institutions (including both pedagogical institutions for children and adults) are women (Uggerhøj, Langsted and Bayer 2005).

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<sup>19</sup> Other large groups than the one's mentioned above are trainees (approximately 13 percent) and auxiliary nurses (approximately 8 percent) (FLD 2010).

<sup>20</sup> Note that these statistics are drawn from *The Common Municipal Wage Data Office* (Det Fælleskommunale Løndatakontor) and it was impossible to have the data divided after area of employment (e.g. eldercare). The statistics therefore cover social- and healthcare workers employed in municipalities or regions but may contain workers employed elsewhere than in eldercare (e.g. in hospitals). The statistics should be considered with this reservation in mind. However, the statistics include only care personnel and not medical staff such as nurses. Further, privately employed social- and healthcare workers are not included in the statistics (even though these perform a considerable amount of home care).

<sup>21</sup> With regards to eldercare, it has been argued that care for ill and dying people (which in eldercare particular occurs at nursing homes) may contribute to the low status of this work due to its character of *dirtywork* (Jacobsen & Antoft 2011: 236).

Based on statistics from the labor union for childcare professionals BUPL regarding their members, a significant differentiation, however, exists between childcare institutions in the way that fewer men are employed in institutions for the youngest children (among childcare professionals organized in BUPL, 1.5 percent of are men in institutions for children aged 0-2 years and 6-7 percent are men in age-integrated institutions and institutions for children aged 3-5 years) (BUPL 2007).

## **Current Developments in the Governance of Childcare and Eldercare**

Both eldercare and childcare work have been areas with a high degree of decision latitude regarding how to perform the work and thus with a high degree of professional discretion. Recent developments have challenged this autonomy. However, it should be noted that childcare workers in 2004-5 still reported high levels of influence at work, while eldercare workers employed at nursing homes reported somewhat lower levels of influence (NFA 2004-5). Neo-liberal cost containment efforts related to New Public Management<sup>22</sup> have been influential in both eldercare and childcare in Denmark. Common themes for developments in the two areas are standardization, centralization of control and consumerism. As shall become clear in the following, the neo-liberal developments within the area of childcare and eldercare are in many respects also different and within each area sometimes ambivalent.

In childcare, New Public Management is described as resulting in a centralized governance and attempts at standardization at the same time as a discursive shift towards consumerism occurs (Ahrenkiel et al. 2012: 31-2; Hansen et al. 2010: 73). However, New Public Management has not just involved centralization, initially a decentralization of responsibility governed through increased documentation and evaluation occurred, but this has been followed by a centralization of control (Andersen 2007: 49-50). The standardization is a consequence of an increased centralized control over the pedagogical work in the form of both national and municipal regulations, most notably in the form of required language assessments of 3-year-olds with insufficient language skills and required educational curricula (and as a part of this, an evaluation of the children's environment) (Ahrenkiel et al. 2012: 29-31; regarding the implementation of educational curricula, see Olesen 2011). Further, increased demands of statement of objectives, documentation of efforts and evaluation of results are made (Ahrenkiel et al. 2012: 27-31; Andersen 2007: 49). The discursive shift towards consumerism does not entail a privatization of childcare, but rather a change from a discourse of day care as a *societal institution* (notable in the concept day care institution (daginstitution)) towards day care as *service* of customers or users (notable in the concept day care supply (dagtilbud))(Ahrenkiel et al. 2012: 29-32; Warring, Ahrenkiel, Nielsen, Schmidt and Sommer 2011).

In eldercare, consumerism is also evident, particularly in the introduction of *Free Choice*

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<sup>22</sup> New Public Management is a collective designation for international trends in public administration. It covers a range of tenets that in any concrete application of New Public Management may be present to varying degrees. Hood (1991: 4-5) identifies seven such tenets: Visible control of the organization from the top, use of standards and performance measures, output controls, breaking up of units and use of contract management, competition in the public sector, use of private-sector management styles and cost-containment efforts.

(Frit valg) where care recipients have the right to choose their care provider among competing providers, both private and public (Burau & Dahl forthcoming). In order to introduce this marketization where providers compete, a split between purchaser and provider has been introduced at the municipal level, in such a way that the municipality performs needs assessments and the care is provided by the private or public provider chosen by the care recipient (from a list of approved providers). Hence, the needs assessment and the provision of care are carried out by different staff (la Cour & Højlund 2001: 10; Schultz-Larsen, Kreiner, Hanning, Støvring, Hansen and Lendal 2004: 49-50). This consumerist development entails a discursive shift parallel to that in childcare, here the change is from *citizens* to *consumers* (Burau & Dahl forthcoming). Related to this marketization is a *de-composition of care* (Dahl 2005a: 53) where care is split up into smaller parts and the needs assessor assigns help to delimited tasks (Dahl 2005a; la Cour & Højlund 2001: 10-11). This form of standardization is probably most clearly expressed in the instrument *Common Language* (Fælles sprog) introduced by the Association of Local Authorities (KL) (Hansen & Vedung 2005). With this instrument an attempt was made to define the abilities and needs of elderly persons and connect these to common categories of service provision (Burau & Dahl forthcoming). The standardization of service provision is related to an intention of cost containment (KL, Ministry of Finance and Ministry of Social Affairs 2006: 4). A tight time control is performed and some comment that the care provision has become time squeezed in the sense that eldercare workers have less time to care for more care recipients (la Cour & Højlund 2001: 16). In sum, in eldercare we see a centralization of control in the central government that regulates in increasingly detailed ways, a regulation that is both related to cost-containment efforts and regards the content of care (Burau & Dahl forthcoming).

While research indicates that the childcare area has experienced cutbacks the past 25 years (judged by the number of children per childcare worker in day care) (Ugebrevet A4 2011; Statistics Denmark 2012b), the development in eldercare and childcare cannot be characterized by quantitative retrenchment in the sense of a retreat of the state as care provider (Burau & Dahl forthcoming; Dahl 2005a; Statistics Denmark 2012b). In childcare, the proportion of children in day care has been growing the past five years and in 2011 68 percent of children aged 0-2 years were in day care (including state-subsidized day care in private homes and in day care institutions), while 97 percent of children aged 3-5 years were in day care institutions (Statistics Denmark 2012b). In eldercare, 20 percent of people aged 65 or over receive home care (Burau & Dahl forthcoming), while approximately 20 percent of those over 80 years of age live in an assisted living facility or a nursing home (Statistics Denmark 2011). Thus, the state-subsidized care provision remains universalist in coverage. However, in both areas the time workers spend performing administrative tasks away from care recipients has grown (Ugebrevet A4 2011; Schultz-Larsen et al. 2004: 8). Hence, while a retrenchment has not occurred a significant change in the use of resources and discourses of care has taken place (Burau & Dahl forthcoming; Dahl 2005a; Ahrenkiel et al. 2012: 27-32).

## **Spatial and Temporal Organization of Work**

An important difference between childcare and eldercare in terms of the collegial embeddedness of emotional labor is the spatial organization of work. Childcare for children

aged 0-6 is often provided in rooms or at playgrounds where several childcare workers perform activities together or each performs different activities beside each other. A smaller group of children may be taken to the gym or to a separate room to do concentrated activities with one care worker or a care worker may be alone with a child in the bathroom while changing a diaper, but a lot of the time several care workers are together in the same room or when being in adjacent rooms at least audible to each other. In nursing home eldercare, the ward will consist of an apartment for each resident and some common areas. To the extent that the care needs of residents can be met by one care worker, a large part of the work is performed in the residents' apartments where careworkers are neither visible nor audible to co-workers. However, a large part of the work is still carried out in common areas (at mealtimes) and in cooperation between several careworkers (e.g. when residents have to be lifted), where co-workers are co-present. Further, when going from one apartment to the next care workers will continuously meet in the corridor and when an emergency occurs, co-workers are in proximity. However, it should be noted that the round-the-clock care at nursing homes may for some eldercare workers result in varying work hours where one is not always at work with the same team of co-workers. Furthermore, night-shifts at nursing homes differ markedly in the collegial embeddedness of emotional labor, since there are fewer workers on shift and hence workers are not co-present with co-workers to the same extent as in the day-shifts. The empirical data in the thesis only cover nursing home workers who perform most of their work in day-shifts, and the conclusions in the thesis cannot easily be extrapolated to night-shift workers who face different collegial conditions.

## **Working with Death and Deterioration Versus Working with Growth and Development**

A further difference between eldercare and childcare is the part of life that is brought into the work through the kind of care recipients that are cared for. Eldercare, particularly nursing home care, represents work with people who are physically or mentally debilitated or even dying. Even though promoting development in care recipients towards better functioning may be part of this work (e.g. healing of wounds or bone fractures or rehabilitation after operations), the care for the oldest and weakest involve a concern with physical and mental decline. In contrast, childcare is concerned with development of the capacities of children (e.g. physical, cognitive, emotional and social). This difference between the two work areas may be significant for the working life of care workers. However, it should not be taken to mean that eldercare is primarily concerned with unpleasant emotions related to decay and that childcare is primarily concerned with pleasant emotions related to development: eldercare may for instance involve joy over the vitality of elderly care recipients and childcare may involve worry over the lack of development or problematic development of children. In addition, while the proximity to death in eldercare may give it a status of *dirtywork* (Jacobsen & Antoft 2011), childcare for the youngest children in particular involves close contact with aspects of life that may be considered tabooed (faeces and urine) (cf. Jacobsen & Antoft 2011: 236). Hence, though the two areas of care are quite distinct, commonalities in the character of the work warrants research cross-cutting these areas.

An important commonality between the eldercare work in nursing homes and childcare work in day care institutions is that it is *people work* performed through relations to care

recipients and relatives of care recipients and that a major part of this work entails the provision of care for dependent others. In the next section, the thesis will be positioned in working life research, research on people work and care work as well as in emotional labor research.

## **State of the Art**

The present research project adopts a working life perspective on the emotion management performed by paid care workers. In doing this, the thesis draws on several theoretical and empirical fields, especially: working life studies in the demand-control-support framework, studies of the working life of professional caregivers (particularly in a Scandinavian context) and emotional labor research.

In presenting the state of the art, I seek to position the thesis in extant research, motivate the focus of the thesis and provide a foundation for the later discussion of the research contributions. I have focused on the strands of research that have inspired the framing of this thesis, specifically the research that has emphasized social processes among co-workers. For more than a century, researchers have been occupied with how work affects well-being (see e.g. Carson & Barling 2008). The volume of research on working life therefore makes a brief comprehensive overview extremely difficult to draw up. Because of the breadth of research drawn upon in the thesis, the state of the art will be relatively extensive, however, without attempting to provide a complete state of the art for each subfield that has influenced the thesis. A state of the art for the focal points in the thesis (emotion culture, management of the emotions of co-workers and identity) will not be provided here either, since the articles contain a positioning in the most relevant research in these fields. Therefore, this section will remain at the more general level and seek to provide the context for the thesis as a whole. Furthermore, while this section positions the thesis in some theoretical traditions, I shall not provide a thorough discussion of the theoretical frameworks used in the thesis. These frameworks will be discussed in the individual articles and in the case of theories of identity a thorough presentation and discussion follows after the state of the art.

The review begins with research in the demand-control-support framework and positions the thesis with regards to concepts of social support, social capital and social integration. Hereafter, focus is narrowed to research on people work and in particular care work and the thesis is situated with regards to Scandinavian care work research. Subsequently, research on the relationship between emotional labor and worker well-being is presented. Key empirical findings and theoretical models of emotional labor and worker well-being are introduced and discussed and, finally, shortcomings of this research with regards to the main research question of the thesis are discussed.

## **Social Support, Social Capital and Social Integration**

The thesis is inspired by international working life research based on the demand-control model (Karasek 1979; Karasek & Theorell 1990),<sup>23</sup> particularly extensions of this model including social support as an important resource for workers when coping with work stressors (for reviews of the research on this framework see Van der Doef & Maes 1999; Häusser, Mojzisch, Niesel and Schulz-Hardt 2010). In a narrow sense, social support is a functional characteristic of social relations that may be described as the extent to which the social relations provide the individual with emotional concern, information or instrumental

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<sup>23</sup> The implication is that particular combinations of demands and (lack of) control may lead to psychological strain (Karasek 1979: 288-297).



help (House & Kahn 1985).<sup>24</sup> However, social support has also been conceptualized in a broader sense as a collective designation encompassing four core aspects of the social relations at work: social support resources (as the narrow concept of social support described above), socialization (promoting particular norms and values), community and belonging and protection against demands from the management (Nielsen 2011: 27). In the thesis, particularly the role of the collegial group as promoting or even enforcing particular expressive norms has been an important concern.

The resources available through social relationships have also been conceptualized in terms of *social capital* (e.g. by Bourdieu 1986; see also Portes 1998).<sup>25</sup> Bourdieu (1986: 248-9) conceptualized social capital as the actual or potential resources related to one's possession of a social network and hence as a resource that may give access to the cultural and economic capital of others. In terms of working life research, the effect of social capital on worker well-being has been discussed (e.g. by Agneessens & Wittek 2008) and in this context the usage of the concept resembles that of social support in the sense of providing the individual with emotional concern, information or instrumental help.

In examining the collegial embeddedness of emotional labor, I have, however, not primarily approached social processes as a matter of availability of social support resources or social capital as a resource, but rather sought to examine social processes among co-workers in a broader sense, e.g. how processes among co-workers shape the emotional labor performed and the meaningfulness of the work.

The concept *social integration* has also been used to discuss broader aspects of the social context at work and Nielsen, Christensen and Nielsen (2008: 263) even place social integration at the core of their tentative model over work environment and social processes at work. This model provides an overview over the relationship between social processes at work and worker well-being and is, therefore, useful in clarifying my position in the research in this area of study. However, I find the concept of social integration rather imprecise as a term for the social processes at work (and potentially misleading given the range of different ways in which this concept has been used) and I shall, therefore, not be using the term in the thesis. A simplified version<sup>26</sup> of Nielsen et al.'s model is reproduced on the following page.

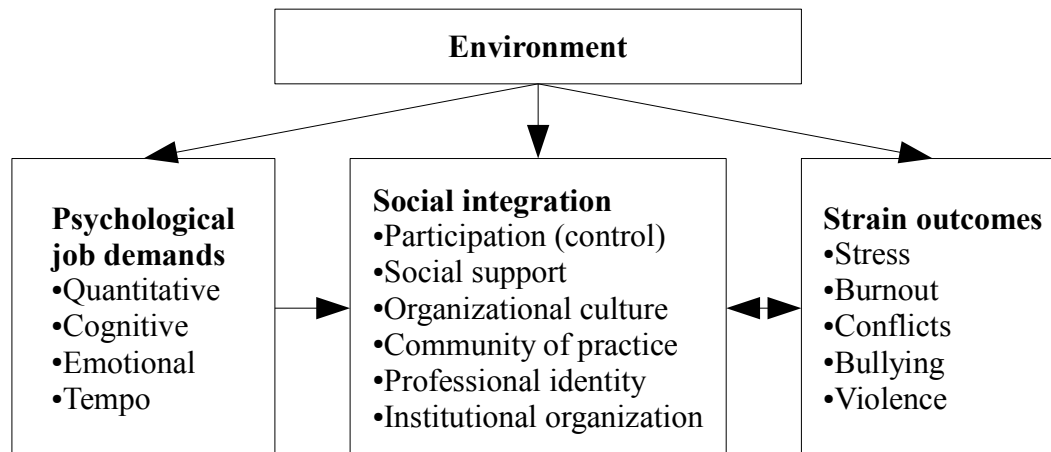
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<sup>24</sup> Social support may be available from the variety of social relationships in which the individual is immersed, but in a work setting, work-related sources of social support can be expected to be more important than other sources of social support (LaRocco, House and French 1980: 212). Social support has been seen as buffering the individual against work stressors; however, not all kinds of social support are equally helpful in all situations (Jacobson 1986).

<sup>25</sup> Putnam also discusses social capital, but not specifically as a resource, rather he speaks of social capital broadly as “[...] features of social organization such as networks, norms, and social trust that facilitate coordination and cooperation for mutual benefit” (Putnam 1995: 67).

<sup>26</sup> Nielsen et al. (2008: 263) include preventative staff work in the model, but since I do not discuss this perspective, I have omitted it from the model presented here.

*Figure 1: Social processes in the work environment*



Based on Nielsen et al. 2008: 263; Nielsen 2011: 45

Overall the model presents associations between psychological job demands and strain outcomes mediated or moderated by social integration. The three dimensions: demands, social integration and strain cover the three main dimensions of the working life discussed throughout the thesis: emotional labor (demand), collegial embeddedness of emotional labor (social integration) and worker well-being (strain). Thus, my focus on emotional labor must be seen as a narrow focus on one type of demands facing workers. Further, social integration covers a range of social processes and I shall primarily focus on three of the dimensions mentioned in the figure above: *organizational culture* (more specifically the emotion culture in the work group/organization and collegial emotion management performed), *community of practice* (more specifically the experience of a productive community) and *professional identity*. A large literature has examined participation under the more common notions of *control* or *influence* and also the role of social support as a resource available to workers (see the reviews of Van der Doef & Maes 1999; Häusser et al. 2010) and therefore I place my main focus on other aspects of the social processes at work. Among the different strain outcomes, I focus on affective well-being (not shown in the figure above). In this manner, the thesis seeks to extend upon the still relatively limited research on processes of social integration and work environment (Nielsen 2011: 31), by going into details with selected dimensions of demands, social processes and strain/well-being.

Nielsen et al.'s model presented above implies that emotional labor affects and is mediated by social processes among co-workers. In contrast to this, I do not see the social processes among co-workers solely as a mediator or moderator of the effect of emotional labor on well-being. Rather, I examine how emotional labor is immersed in social processes among co-workers that affect the character of the emotional labor and what it means to perform emotional labor.

Whereas the concepts of social support, social capital and social integration all emphasize the positive consequences of sociability, social processes at work not only improve worker

well-being, but may also be a source of strain in workers. This is less clear in the concept of social support, but the model of social integration (shown above) clarifies this with outcomes such as conflict and bullying. The literature on social capital has also discussed such drawbacks of sociability and Portes (1998: 15) summarizes four possible adverse consequences of social capital: exclusion of outsiders, excess claims on group members, restrictions on individual freedoms and downward leveling norms. In the thesis, I shall not discuss all these possible adverse consequences of social processes in a work context since I do not study the social processes among co-workers in their own right, but rather examine them as they relate to the performance of emotional labor. In terms of emotional labor, the detrimental consequences of particular expressive demands for workers has been thought to lie in the restrictions and emotional claims placed on individuals, even though these claims have been seen as originating from the organization in which workers are employed rather than the social network (see Hochschild 2003). Nonetheless, throughout the thesis I shall be attentive to the ways in which social processes among co-workers related to the performance of emotional labor may both strengthen and impair well-being at work.

After these general comments on the social processes at work, the subsequent section presents research on the particular kind of work examined in the thesis: people work and more specifically, care work.

## **People-Work, Care Work**

Institutional paid care work is a form of work that may be placed in larger categories of relation-centered work (Moos 2004) or people-work (Nielsen 2011: 26; Agervold 2008) e.g. eldercare, childcare, social work, health care, personal assistance for handicapped persons. Broadly speaking, these types of work entail professionally working with other people and through one's relations to these people in order to preserve or bring about changes in the social, psychological or physical state of the other person (Moos 2004; Nielsen 2011: 26). In terms of work environment, people-work has been regarded as containing particular stressors that may be detrimental to the well-being of workers. These are related to the face-to-face interaction with other people that may be very personally involving and entail high emotional demands including demands to hide one's actual emotions (Agervold 2008: 61; Nielsen 2011: 26).

Research on the psychological working environment and people-work has often had an individual focus, examining the working life of individuals while neglecting the role of collectivities including colleagues (Kristensen, Hasle and Pejtersen 2008: 31; Hasle, Hvid, Kristensen, Limborg, Møller, Pejtersen and Hvenegaard 2008: 66). Some people-work is indeed performed alone, approximately every fourth performing people work does this decidedly alone e.g. in the home of care recipients (Nielsen 2011: 25). However, in this thesis, I focus on people-work performed in interaction with or proximity to colleagues and thereby seek to address a gap in the research on the working life in people work.

In terms of the working life of employees performing people-work, the burnout-perspective has been important. Burnout is characterized by emotional exhaustion, lack of personal accomplishment and a loss of concern for the people one is working with (depersonalization) (Maslach & Pines 1977; Maslach & Jackson 1981; Maslach 1982: 3). Burnout is a long-term consequence of stressors related to people work (particularly being

unable to help the clients properly with the available resources) and may be seen as a distinct form of stress (Agervold 2008: 61-3).<sup>27</sup> A broader concept for the strains of people work is *psychological attrition* that is distinct from burnout by not containing the dimension of depersonalization (Tufte, Clausen and Borg 2008: 90). However, both concepts are focused on long-term consequences of the work with clients and do not ascribe a central role to collegial processes (even though colleagues are sometimes discussed as a source of social support). Therefore, these perspectives have not been decisive for the approach in the thesis.

The concepts of people-work and relation-centered work are, however, not specific enough to accurately describe the distinctive features of eldercare work in nursing homes and childcare work in day care institutions. As Dybbroe (2006: 68) has underscored, relations are important in this type of work, but they are not distinctive for this work, since relations are also central in work regarding communication or services (tourism or trade), and emphasizing the relations excludes the importance of the character of the work to be performed through the relations and the conditions under which it is performed. Further, the term people work, while emphasizing people as the object of the work is too broad to specifically describe the kind of work performed by eldercare and childcare workers (Dybbroe 2006: 68). Following Dybbroe it is, therefore, necessary to specify the work performed as care work.

## Care Work

Research on paid care work has been characterized by a feminist and critical perspective, examining associations between care work, gender, power, recognition and structural welfare state reforms. In the following, I shall provide a brief overview over some main currents in care research (primarily Scandinavian) and position my own approach in relation to this research. In this overview, I shall focus on discussions about the concept of care, gender and care as paid labor, including professionalization and the structural conditions for this work (particularly in terms of New Public Management).

### *Concepts of Care Work*

Care has been conceptualized as a multidimensional phenomenon, containing both practical and emotional dimensions. While Himmelweit (1999: 29) describes care as a combination of emotion (caring about) and the activity of caring (caring for), James (1992) explicitly includes organization as a component of care and thereby not only emphasizes the physical and emotional labor of care, but also the cognitive labor (of organizing and planning) and the organizational context of institutional care entailing a gendered division of labor.

In British research a narrow concept of care has been employed, where care work is seen as unpaid and provided for dependent family members by women (Thomas 1993: 654). In contrast to this narrow concept of care work, Scandinavian research has employed a broad concept of care work, where care work is seen as encompassing practical activity (physical and cognitive) and emotional concern provided mainly by women for dependent adults and children in public or domestic domains as either paid or unpaid work (Thomas 1993: 653-654; Wærness 1984: 189). My approach draws on this broad concept of care, however, examining only a very particular form of care: I focus on the emotional labor of caring

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<sup>27</sup> For a comparison of the burnout-perspective and emotional labor, see Brotheridge and Grandey 2002.

performed by women and men<sup>28</sup> for dependent adults and children in the public domain as paid work. Further, I examine only care provided in an institutional<sup>29</sup> context in contrast to home-based care, and as institutional contexts I examine nursing homes (a residential institution) and day care (a non-residential institution). Further, the care work examined is performed in the formal public labor market, and hence excludes unpaid care (in the family or as volunteer work), care provided in the informal labor market (e.g. baby-sitting) and private paid care provided in the home (e.g. au pairs) (cf. Leira 1994: 193).

Throughout the thesis, I shall not use care work (omsorgsarbejde) as a concept guiding the analyses, rather it serves as a common denominator for the focus on childcare and eldercare and contextualizes and specifies the kind of emotional labor examined.

## *Care and Gender*

Care work has been examined by feminist researchers as gendered work that is devalued both economically and in terms of recognition. Such devaluation can be regarded as relevant both in relation to paid and unpaid care work. In terms of the economic valuation of paid care work, jobs that are predominantly occupied by women pay less than jobs predominantly occupied by men controlling for differences in education, skill level and working conditions, at the same time as interactive service work (that may be constructed as feminine work) has a “pay penalty” (England 2005: 382-3). The recognition of care work is a long-standing theme for feminist analysis. Feminist researchers have sought to make women’s care work visible and have called attention to care work as skilled labor and underscored the vital role of care in society (Leira 1994: 187-9). Further, feminist researchers have examined the uneven distribution of care obligations, the financial and emotional costs of caring, the role of the state in fostering recognition and misrecognition of care work, including implications of forms of governance (specifically New Public Management) for struggles of recognition (Dahl 2009, 2010; Hochschild 1990; Thomas 1993; Williams 2001; Wærness 1984).

Research on emotional labor has also sometimes had an explicit gender perspective and has examined gender-differences in the consequences of emotional labor for worker well-being (with mixed results, compare Scott & Barnes 2011; Erickson & Ritter 2001). Differences in *feeling rules*<sup>30</sup> for men and women and following different dilemmas faced by men and women performing emotional labor have also been examined (see e.g. Martin 1999; Pierce 1995). Identification has been central in research emphasizing the gendered character of emotional labor and several studies have explored how emotional labor intersects with gender identities and how employees strive to align their emotional labor with their gendered self-meanings (Pierce 1995; Leidner 1991; Stenross & Kleinman 1989). Importantly with regards to the collegial embeddedness of emotional labor, different emotion norms may prevail for men and women in a work group. Martin describes how

<sup>28</sup> While some researchers have approached care as the work of women (see Thomas 1993: 656-60), Martinsen (1993: 9) describes the ontology of care as universal in its essence, but dependent on gender, class and culture in its empirical expression.

<sup>29</sup> Note that I use the concept institution to denote the physical setting of care in a day care institution or nursing home and not as a concept for social structures such as the family, civil society or religion.

<sup>30</sup> Hochschild (1979: 563-7) used the term feeling rules to describe the shared, social guidelines for what should be felt in particular contexts. Hochschild describes the concept of feeling rules as related to framing rules (guidelines for ascribing meaning to situations).

such differences play out in police work:

In informal interaction with other officers, women are cast into the mother or confidante role, expected to be supportive of a man's emotional venting, but criticized for expressing similar feelings. (Martin 1999: 124)

Thus, emotion norms may differ for men and women, and while masculinity is commonly associated with “hard” emotions such as anger, femininity is often associated with “soft” emotions such as care (Martin 1999: 114). Depending on their identification as masculine or feminine, workers may, therefore, face different dilemmas in the collegial interactions at work.

The Danish public child and eldercare is predominantly provided by women, and as such this work is highly feminized. However, I have in the thesis chosen neither to focus on gender nor to use a gender perspective in the analyses examining the collegial embeddedness of emotional labor. This is not to suggest the irrelevance of a gender-based analysis of the collegial embeddedness of emotional labor, for instance in terms of differences in feeling rules and expectation directed at women and men in a work group. However, instead of assuming gender-based identification to be most relevant for the working life of care workers, I have asked care workers how they see themselves as care workers and proceeded from the meanings they emphasized, whether they be gender-based or not. Furthermore, the scope of this thesis has not been to examine the relationship between social hierarchies and the embeddedness of emotional labor in work groups (where ethnicity, education, age and experience are other obvious candidates for analysis), but rather to question the individual focus of much emotional labor research and examine some central ways in which emotional labor might be embedded in collegial processes. Extending this agenda to examine the role of social hierarchies in the work group is important in future research, but will not be sought in the present thesis.

### *Paid Care Work, Professionalization and New Public Management*

Important debates with regards to paid care work have been about what happens to care, when it becomes work, is commodified, and is subject to bureaucracy and professionalization (Stone 2000). Whereas some researchers have seen care as tied to the intimate relations in the family and therefore seen formal care as fundamentally different from family-based care (e.g. Graham 1983: 29), others have convincingly criticized the dichotomy between care provided by family members and paid care work (England 2005: 392-5; Wærness 1984: 204) a dichotomy that has also been influential in emotional labor research (Hochschild 2003). As I shall return to when discussing emotional labor research, I reject the view that providing care as labor should be inherently alienating or render impossible genuine affectionate caring relationships.<sup>31</sup>

However, an important agenda related to the study of care as work is how the organization and governance of care affects workers. Recent debates have centered on the consequences

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<sup>31</sup> In this context, empirical research has shown that relationships in formal care may entail a personal engagement and deep emotional involvement (e.g. Liebst & Monrad 2008; Karner 1998: 79), and it has been argued that family-based care need not be based on love and may sometimes solely be based on obligation (Wærness 1984: 189). Instead of a binary opposition between “love” and “money”, it may be more appropriate to speak of “love *and* money” (England 2005: 392).

of New Public Management for workers (Dahl 2009, 2010; Vabø 2003; Warring et al. 2011; Ahrenkiel et al. 2012). Dahl (2009) has for instance shown how different implementations of New Public Management affect workers in terms of recognition (and lack of such). Furthermore, researchers have examined how workers cope with the governance of care and how they sidestep bureaucratic rules in order to adjust the care to the variance in the daily needs of the care recipients (Szebehely 2006; Liebst & Monrad 2008). Performing such adjustments may be important not only for the quality of care, but also for the working life of care workers who are frustrated and may feel inadequate when being unable to meet the needs of care recipients. Since the satisfaction with work for care workers often derives from the contact with care recipients, being unable to meet the needs of care recipients constitutes a serious threat to the working life of care givers (Szebehely 2006: 54).<sup>32</sup> Inspired by the research on the governance of care work, I have in one of the articles (*Would It Kill Them if You Were Sad?*) discussed the interplay between collegial processes and governance. However, I shall not compare and discuss implications of different forms of governance or different implementations of particular forms of governance.

New Public Management has been seen as challenging the autonomy of professions (Sehested 2002).<sup>33</sup> However, the interrelationship between New Public Management and professionalization of care work is complex: On the one hand, some logics of New Public Management entail a standardization that may encroach upon the professional discretion (and hence involve a dequalification) (Dahl 2005a: 54-5, 2005b: 42; Warring et al. 2011). On the other hand, new possibilities for attainment of status as a profession become available with New Public Management, and furthermore, new tools for assessment, evaluation and documentation may be experienced as status enhancing since they make explicit the skills involved in caring and may support and develop the field of expertise of care professionals (Dahl 2005a: 54, 2005b: 42-55; Eriksen & Dahl 2005: 9). Demands for professional development and knowledge-based or evidence-based work are commonly directed at care professionals, social workers, teachers etc. and sometimes result in the introduction of standardized procedures and practices. Such initiatives often reflect a mistrust and misrecognition of the expertise of the professionals and may be detrimental to development of the professional expertise (Ejrnæs 2012: 231-5; Warring et al. 2011: 2). Since the misrecognition and reduction of the control of professionals over their work involved in attempts to secure the quality and efficiency of care work through standardization may impair the well-being of care workers, I discuss an alternative avenue for professional development in one of the articles (*Professional Disagreement in Relation-Centered Work*). However, the professionalization of care work is not a general theme in the thesis.

In the following, the concept of emotional labor will be introduced and research on the relationship between emotional labor and worker well-being will be presented. The initial emphasis of Hochschild in her introduction of the term emotional labor in *The Managed Heart* from 1983 will be discussed at some length before turning to a brief overview over

<sup>32</sup> This motivation in the client's needs is not unique to care work and has also been found in call centers (Korczynski 2003: 57-62)

<sup>33</sup> Both in the field of childcare and eldercare a professionalization has been sought (Dahl 2005a: 50-1; Ejrnæs 2006: 14; Eriksen & Dahl 2005: 4-5). The relationship between on the one hand care work and on the other professionalization and (scientific) knowledge is a long-standing debate (see Dahl 1997; Davies 1995; Martinsen 1993; Wærness 1984).

empirical findings with regards to associations between emotional labor and worker well-being. Subsequently, theoretical models of emotional labor and worker well-being will be presented and the thesis will be positioned in research on emotional labor and collegial relationships.

## **The Concept of Emotional Labor**

In the emotion management literature, the ground-breaking research of Hochschild (1979; 2003) has been very important. Her research on emotion work, emotional labor and feeling rules has set the research agenda for numerous studies (for reviews see Hülshager & Schewe 2011; Holman, Matinez-Iñigo and Totterdell 2009; Bono & Vey 2005; Wharton 1999; Steinberg & Figart 1999).

Hochschild defined emotional labor as a form of labor where the worker is required to manage his or her own emotions in order to create a facial and bodily display “[...] that produces the proper state of mind in others [...]” (Hochschild 2003: 7). In managing emotions on the job to create the required display Hochschild (2003: 33) suggested that both *surface acting* (changing how you appear, that is hiding what you feel and/or pretending to be feeling what you do not feel) and *deep acting* (changing what you actually feel) may be used. Since then, more complex conceptualizations of emotional labor have been proposed, maintaining the central element of expressing organizationally desired emotions, but elaborating the dimensions of emotional labor (Morris & Feldman 1996; Brotheridge & Lee 2003). For instance it has been suggested, that it should also be considered emotional labor when employees express their genuinely felt emotions, since workers still have to express their emotions in ways that are appropriate in the work context (Ashforth & Humphrey 1993: 94; Morris & Feldman 1996: 988). According to this broader conceptualization, emotional labor covers situations where employees deal with other people's emotions as part of their work, regardless of how they actually deal with these emotions (James 1989: 15). In the thesis, I examine emotional labor both in the narrow sense of regulating one's own emotions and in a broader sense, where emphasis is not so much on whether you hide or change your own emotions, but on the emotional content of the job where you deal with the emotions of others. To give a brief example of emotional labor as it appears in my empirical data, one childcare worker expressed being affectionate towards children thus:

Well, as to being affectionate, I just think that all children have a right to be loved, everybody has a right to be loved. So I just decide that no matter how fucking awful and bloody annoying some kids can be, then I usually know why they are like that and I just decide to have the balls to love them, even though they simply are bloody annoying from when they get up in the morning until they go to bed (laughs). Just like that. No matter how extremely annoying they are, then still, you, take them under your arm and give them a hug and say “I like you, do you want to play a game of Stratego?” To do that. (Interview childcare assistant)

As the quotation shows, performing emotional labor may be demanding. Not all children and elderly persons are immediately loveable and care workers do not simply wake up in the morning with a sense of compassion and care flowing in their veins just waiting to be poured out on care recipients. Even though emotions on the face of it may appear as



“naturally” occurring, as impulses, expressing particular emotions on the job may be a deliberate accomplishment performed in order to achieve particular goals for instance creating conditions where others may develop and flourish.

## Emotional Labor and Worker Well-Being

### *Hochschild's Approach*

Hochschild (2003: 187-189) envisioned that the consequences of emotional labor for workers would depend on the worker's stance towards the work, that is the worker's identification with the job. Elaborating this, she suggested three different scenarios: First, workers may identify too much with the job, with the consequence that they may lose contact with their “real” self and emotions and therefore risk burnout. Second, workers may distinguish themselves from the job, maintaining a clear separation between the role and the self, which protects the “nonacting” side of the self from the intrusion of the demands of the work role. The separation of self and role may, however, at the same time create feelings of inauthenticity.<sup>34</sup> Finally, workers may detach themselves entirely from the role, refusing to act, that is perform emotional labor. In this case the workers may be seen as doing the work poorly and experience negative sanctions imposed by others.

The possible adverse consequences of emotional labor in Hochschild's framework can be summed up as burnout, inauthenticity and alienation from the self (the emotion and display of emotion) or from the work role (Hochschild 2003). The problem for the worker, according to Hochschild (2003: 19), is caused by the commercialization of emotions, what she describes as a *transmutation*, where “private” emotions are sold as commodities. Hochschild (2003: 90) sees the alienation from the workers' own emotions as arising when the job demands emotions that are not genuinely felt, thereby creating a discrepancy between what the workers genuinely feel and what they have to express (or even make themselves feel). For Hochschild the negative consequences of emotional labor thus lie in the way the work role imposes itself on the self, either suppressing the “real self” or creating an *emotional dissonance* between what is felt and what must be expressed.

An important criticism that has been raised in relation to Hochschild's conceptualization of the emotional labor process is that the dynamics of alienation described by Hochschild rest on an untenable binary public/private distinction (Wouters 1989; Bolton & Boyd 2003: 293). Furthermore, it has been criticized that Hochschild has a tendency to see the private self as more “real” than the public self (Wouters 1989: 98). Using Turner's (1976)

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<sup>34</sup> Authenticity describes one's relationship to oneself. An individual's sense of authenticity is comprised of meanings that the individual attributes to self or simply self-values (Erickson 1995: 126, 131). Authenticity may be defined as the “extent to which one fulfills the expectations or commitments one has for self” (Erickson 1995: 131). Inauthenticity may then in turn be experienced when persons feel that they are “not fulfilling the commitments they have to self.” (Erickson 1995: 125). Inauthenticity may arise when the person experiences violating his or her sense of self (Erickson 1995: 125) and as such, the concept of authenticity resembles the concept of personal integrity (see for instance the usage of Sørensen 2008). However, it should be noted that Hochschild, when using the concept of inauthenticity, implies an direct link from inauthentic emotional expressions to experiences of inauthenticity. Hence, Hochschild does not take account of the self-meaning or self-values held by the individual that are rightly emphasized by Erickson (1995).

distinction between an institutional and impulsive<sup>35</sup> anchorage for self, it seems Hochschild has decided on impulse as the real self. From the impulsive perspective, adhering to institutional norms and commitments is an alienation from the real, impulsive self. As Turner (1976: 996) remarks "... for some scholars in the Freudian tradition, self-estrangement means institutional anchorage." The problem with this implicit assumption in Hochschild's theoretical understanding of emotional labor is that she overlooks the possibility that the emotional labor may be experienced as a positive expression of one's institutional commitment (e.g. one's self-control). It has thus been suggested that not all people experience the same desire to express their actual emotions and that to some workers expressing the organizationally desired emotion may be a way of re-affirming an institutional identification (Gordon 1989). The meaning of the emotional labor in relation to the self is in Hochschild's conceptualization assumed beforehand instead of seen as an empirical question.

Furthermore, several scholars reject the idea that the commercialization of emotions should be intrinsically alienating and, hence, the commercialization of emotions need not be a cause of strain in workers (Bolton & Boyd 2003: 293; Brook 2009: 8). In the context of this thesis, it should moreover be noted that the commercialization of emotions may play out in a different fashion altogether in publicly provided paid care than in the service industry. Since Danish paid child and eldercare is publicly provided, the employer is the state and therefore the emotional labor is simultaneously commodified and placed under the governance of the state (and the municipality). Accordingly, the emotional labor is a commodity in the sense that it is part of wage labor, but not in the sense that it is sold for profit by a company. Because of this particular context for the emotional labor, the demands regarding emotional displays and genuine emotions likely take another form than the demands Hochschild found in her study of flight attendants and bill collectors. Particularly, demands of emotional labor may be motivated by user satisfaction and societal ideals of care rather than profit (e.g. emotional labor may be used to mitigate user criticism in the face of cutbacks or insufficient care provision). Further, feeling rules in a paid public care context can be expected to be imposed on care workers informally rather than formally, for instance through societal expectations of care (represented by users and relatives) and professional norms upheld by colleagues (Bolton & Boyd 2003: 293). This fundamental contextual difference from Hochschild's study (2003) may change the consequences of the commercialization of emotions for workers.

A final critique of Hochschild's framework that I wish to mention here, points out that Hochschild exaggerates the freedom to negotiate the terms of emotional exchange in private life and underestimates the freedom to negotiate the terms of emotional exchange in public (commercial) life (Wouters 1989: 98). Based on these critiques it seems critical to re-conceptualize the cause of strain in the emotional labor process, especially since the idea of commercialization of the private life and alienation from a real, impulsive self plays such a

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<sup>35</sup> Turner (1976) proposed that people see their real self as either anchored in institutions or impulse. The distinction between the two is aptly summarized in this description by Turner: "The institutional goal is correspondence between *prescription and behavior*; the goal of impulsives is correspondence between *impulse and behavior* [...]" (Turner 1976: 994). The institutional anchorage for self is thus characterized by self control, achievement and morality, while the impulsive anchorage for self is found in the uninhibited, spontaneous impulse, by resisting institutional pressures to conform to norms and duties (Turner 1976).

large part in Hochschild's theoretical understanding of the effects of emotional labor on worker well-being. Several alternative mechanisms linking emotional labor and strain have been suggested and in the following I shall briefly describe these explanatory models. But first, I shall provide an overview over some main empirical findings regarding the associations between emotional labor and strain. After the presentation of explanatory models, I shall turn to a discussion of how I seek to develop emotional labor research.

### *Research Findings: Emotional Labor and Strain*

The past 30 years a growing body of literature on various occupations within different countries has examined the relations between emotional labor and strain suggested by Hochschild. In the following, I shall briefly present some main results with regards to emotional labor and strain in order to provide a context for the findings in the thesis. In this overview, I shall not distinguish between studies of different professions. Further, since only few studies of emotional labor and strain have been carried out in Denmark, I shall not distinguish between societal contexts. This is, however, not to say that professional, cultural and societal contexts are insignificant for the consequences of emotional labor for worker well-being.<sup>36</sup>

As mentioned, Hochschild envisioned emotional labor as a potential source of strain for workers, carrying with it the risk of burnout, inauthenticity or alienation from the worker's own emotions. This prediction has received mixed empirical support (Brotheridge & Lee 2003; Stenross & Kleinman 1989). Emotional labor has in some studies even been found to be associated positively with job satisfaction (Wharton 1993; Adelman 1995). Adelman (1995), furthermore, found that the relationship between emotional labor and three dimensions of job satisfaction<sup>37</sup> disappeared when she controlled for other characteristics of the job (job complexity, control and income). This led her to conclude that "... emotional labor per se is not strongly related either positively or negatively to job reactions" (Adelman 1995: 378). These are, however, not the last words said on the subject and many studies have in fact found associations between emotional labor and strain. Here, I shall focus on the meta-analysis by Hülshager and Schewe (2011) in order to provide a general overview.

In their quantitative meta-analysis of costs and benefits of emotional labor, Hülshager and Schewe (2011) analyze results from 95 independent empirical studies (most of them cross-sectional). Most notably in our context, they examine the relationships between on the one

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<sup>36</sup> In their meta-analysis, Hülshager and Schewe (2011: 376) thus found a significant moderating role of culture on the size (but not direction) of the association of emotional labor and well-being (by coding the studies after country and clustering countries in e.g. a Germanic cluster). Compared to what they termed the Latin European cluster, the relation between surface acting and emotional exhaustion was stronger in what they termed the Anglo cultural cluster and the relation between surface acting and job satisfaction was stronger in the Germanic cluster. Such cultural differences are interesting given that most studies on emotional labor and strain have been carried out in Anglo-Saxon countries, that arguably have strong norms for emotion regulation (Grandey, Fisk and Steiner 2005). Thus, it is important not to take the transferability of results across cultures and societies for granted.

<sup>37</sup> In the study Adelman included measures of satisfaction with job, growth opportunities, social aspects and supervision. Only the relation between emotional labor and satisfaction with growth opportunities remained after including controls in the regression (Adelman 1995: 375-377)

hand surface acting, deep acting and emotional dissonance<sup>38</sup> and on the other hand worker well-being. In the meta-analysis they find surface acting and emotional dissonance to show strong positive associations with most indicators of strain, while deep acting shows weak to non-existing relationships with worker well-being (Hülsheger & Schewe 2011: 373). In addition, Hülsheger and Schewe (2011: 375) find the association between emotional dissonance and worker well-being to be partially mediated<sup>39</sup> by surface acting. However, Hülsheger and Schewe (2011: 373) note that the correlations between emotional labor and worker well-being differed across samples and they suggest that it is relevant to consider moderators of the relationship in further analyses.

From this brief review it is clear that it is mainly surface acting and emotional dissonance that may be detrimental to worker well-being, while deep acting is largely unrelated to well-being. Furthermore evidence of the direction of causal processes from surface acting to well-being is beginning to accumulate (see Hülsheger, Lang and Maier 2010).

### *Theoretical Models of Emotional Labor and Strain*

A range of studies have explored the relationship between emotional labor and strain, but in empirical studies the mechanisms causing strain are rarely explained (Diefendorff & Gosserand 2003: 946). While some see the *emotion management* workers perform as affecting worker well-being, others describe worker well-being as affected by *organizational feeling or display rules*<sup>40</sup>. The latter, therefore, regard the effect of feeling and display rules to be operating prior to (and independently of) the emotion management of the worker. In Table 1, an overview over some of the most important explanations of the relationship between emotional labor and strain and their proponents is provided.

*Table 1: Key explanations of the relationship between emotional labor and strain*

<b>Mechanism causing strain</b>	<b>Explanation</b>	<b>Proponents</b>
<b>Depletion</b>	Emotional labor is laborious since the employee has to focus attention on and regulate felt and/or expressed emotions. This effort takes up mental resources and may thereby cause strain and at the same time drain resources that could have been used for other aspects of job-performance. Organizational feeling rules therefore have an indirect effect on well-being by necessitating emotional labor that drains the individual. The effort in emotional labor is thus the mechanism believed to be causing strain.	Grandey 2003, 2000; Grandey et al. 2005; see also Diefendorff et al. 2011: 173; Brotheridge & Lee 2002

<sup>38</sup> Emotional dissonance has sometimes been conceptualized as a discrepancy between felt and expressed emotions, but the more common conceptualization that emphasizes the discrepancy between required and felt emotions and thus separates the state of dissonance and the emotion management is employed here (see Hülsheger & Schewe 2011: 363).

<sup>39</sup> Baron and Kenny (1986) describe a partial mediation as dependent on four criteria, in this case that 1) emotional dissonance is related to well-being, 2) emotional dissonance is related to surface acting, 3) surface acting is related to well-being and 4) the effect of emotional dissonance on well-being is reduced when controlling for surface acting.

<sup>40</sup> The concept display rule has been used to describe expressive requirements or expectations directed at workers. These may exist at work-group level as shared norms for expressive behavior (Diefendorff, Erickson, Grandey and Dahling 2011). For an early discussion of display rules (though not using this concept), see Rafaeli & Sutton (1987).

<b>Felt inauthenticity</b>	Based on the assumption that people strive to express themselves, but may be hindered in this by work-related emotional requirements, this perspective sees inauthentic expressions as detrimental to worker well-being. Since surface acting entails faking or suppressing emotions it may blight feelings of authenticity, while deep acting involves an alignment between felt and expressed emotions and hence does not affect feelings of authenticity. Strain is seen as resulting from workers being impeded in expressing themselves emotionally.	Hochschild 2003; Erickson & Wharton 1997; see also Brotheridge & Lee 2002: 59
<b>Undesirable responses of others</b>	This explanation focuses on the impact emotional labor may have on interactions with others. It is based on people being able to distinguish between authentic and inauthentic expressions of emotions and responding negatively to inauthentic expressions of emotions. Inauthentic expressions of emotions (surface acting) are seen as eliciting undesirable responses from others that in turn affect the worker negatively, creating strain. Deep acting leads to authentic expressions, but may elicit unfavorable responses depending on the emotions expressed (e.g. anger elicits unfavorable responses, happiness elicits favorable responses). The mechanism causing strain is the positive/negative responses of others that affect worker well-being.	Côté 2005
<b>Emotional dissonance</b>	Emotional dissonance describes situations where felt emotions are different from what is required. Emotional dissonance has been conceptualized as a conflict between the person and the role and it has been suggested that it impacts workers by placing them in a state of tension having to choose between adhering to their own felt emotions or the organizational feeling rules. The mechanism linking emotional dissonance to well-being is the tension experienced by workers placed in a role conflict being forced to choose between their own emotions and their organizational obligations (and it consequently affects workers independently of how they manage this tension).	Hochschild 2003 <sup>41</sup> ; Rafaeli & Sutton 1987; Abraham 1999
<b>Lack of autonomy/control</b>	Organizational feeling rules are conceptualized as detrimental to the well-being of the worker regardless of the way the worker actually regulates his or her emotions, since lack of autonomy or personal control is conceptualized as causing strain. Thus, emotion management need not lead to strain, if the individual chooses to engage in these behaviors herself and the expression of emotions is under his or her own control. The mechanism causing strain is lack of autonomy/control.	Hochschild 2003; Erickson & Ritter 2001: 151; Goldberg & Grandey 2007; Grandey et al. 2005
<b>Constrained identity construction</b>	Emotional labor is seen as supporting or hindering the claim of desirable identities. Workers may be required to perform forms of emotional labor that convey meanings and hierarchies of status/power that undermine valued identities held by the workers (or made available by discourse). However, other kinds of emotional labor may be used by workers to defend or claim desired identities. Strain associated with emotional labor is hence explained with reference to the enabling or constraining impact of emotional labor on identity processes.	Stenross & Kleinman 1989; Tracy 2005

<sup>41</sup> I have included Hochschild as a proponent for the dissonance perspective, even though she mainly emphasizes the discrepancy between felt and expressed emotions (Hochschild 2003: 90).

The explanations in Table 1 are represented somewhat schematically, and it should be noted that researchers often combine explanations, e.g. autonomy may be considered as a buffer for depletion of resources (see Grandey et al. 2005). Looking across this table, it is evident that a large group of explanations emphasize authenticity, whether at the intra-individual level or the interactional level (and some even emphasize authenticity at the work group level (see Grandey, Foo, Groth and Goodwin 2012)). Further, many of the explanations describe processes within the individual or between the individual and the organization. As Côté (2005) has noted, most explanations of strain related to emotional labor have emphasized *intrapersonal* mechanisms at the cost of *interpersonal* mechanisms. However, even though collective processes have largely been neglected in research on emotional labor (Korczynski 2003), recent studies are beginning to include both interactional and group-based processes in the fundamental framework explaining associations between emotional labor and worker well-being (see Côté 2005; Grandey et al. 2012; Korczynski 2003). These explanations are despite their important contributions unfortunately often limited in scope. Research examining the impact of the work group on emotional labor has thus mainly discussed the work group as a source of social support assisting the coping with the individual emotional labor workers perform (Korczynski 2003; Grandey et al. 2012). In contrast to this, it is a main argument in this thesis, that the importance of work groups in emotional labor may be much broader and more profound than the notion of social support would suggest.

Furthermore, Côté's (2005) framework of social interaction, though notable in attending to the social context of emotional labor, rather than only discussing internal processes has a rather shallow conceptualization of processes of social interaction, emphasizing mainly the positive or negative responses of others and not more profound processes of e.g. identity negotiation, creation and re-creation of meaning, norms. In addition, it is notable that most of the explanations described above have a very general, acontextual, acultural and ahistorical way of framing the relationship between emotional labor and well-being (with identity construction as a notable exception). Hence, depletion, inauthenticity (in the sense of expressing emotions that are not felt), undesirable responses of others, emotional dissonance and autonomy all describe very general frameworks for understanding emotional labor that may be employed across a range of occupations, purposes with the emotional labor, situational contexts etc.<sup>42</sup> It is striking that detailed considerations of contextual factors are next to absent in the theoretical explanations above<sup>43</sup> at the same time as large differences in the associations between emotional labor and worker well-being have been found across studies, indicating the importance of contextual factors (see Hülshager & Schewe 2011: 373). In the thesis, I seek to address the significance of situational contexts in the article *Remembering the Neglected Situation* and the significance of some cultural and structural conditions in the article *Would It Kill Them if You Were Sad?*.

In closing of the "State of the Art", the subsequent section shall briefly comment upon research on collegial relations and emotional labor.

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<sup>42</sup> Autonomy of course highlights one important contextual factor (autonomy), and emotional dissonance highlights the importance of the feeling rules (that may be an important part of the organizational and situational context), but these are not integrated into a more comprehensive understanding of the significance of the occupational and situational context.

<sup>43</sup> Such detailed considerations are, however, often part of qualitative studies with a less nomothetic scope.

## *Emotional Labor in a Collegial Context*

While early research on emotional labor and strain tended to focus on the relationship between the worker and the customer or client, researchers have acknowledged the emotional labor performed towards colleagues and supervisors (see Pierce 1995; Poder 2010; Pugliesi 1999; Tschan, Rochat and Zapf 2005). Managing the emotions of co-workers has been suggested to be an important part of a relational identity work, where colleagues contribute positively to the worker's identity construction (Poder 2010). The emotion management in interactions with co-workers has, however, also been conceptualized in a more dim view. Pierce (1995: 83-102) for instance shows how female paralegals are expected to manage the emotions of attorneys and argue that the paralegals through this emotion management unintentionally sustain their subordinate position. In addition, Pierce (1995: 83-102, 143-175) found, that workers who do not conform to these collegial emotion norms are seen as unprofessional, experience negative economical sanctions and risk being fired. Hence, collegial emotional labor may have very real implications not only for the well-being of workers while at work, but also for their job security and economic situation. Further, both Pugliesi (1999) and Tschan et al. (2005) found negative associations between emotional labor performed towards colleagues and worker well-being. Thus, while emotional labor performed towards co-workers perhaps may support the co-workers, it may also be detrimental for the well-being of the worker.

Still, relations between co-workers may ease the emotional labor performed towards clients, particular if a “climate of authenticity” prevails in the work group (that is, if it is experienced as legitimate to express frustration, sadness or distress in the work group) (Grandey et al. 2012) or if a “community of coping” exists, where co-workers provide each other with mutual emotional support (Korczynski 2003). In this thesis, I seek to further analyze such interpersonal mechanisms related to emotional labor by focusing on collective dimensions of emotional labor among co-workers including the impact of co-workers on identity processes.

Through this section, I have placed the thesis in existing research on working life, care work and emotional labor. Importantly, the thesis focuses on the collegial context of emotional labor, a dimension of the working life of care workers that has not been devoted much attention neither in research on care work nor in emotional labor research. The thesis expands upon existing approaches to colleagues as a source of social support in attempting to analyze how the emotional labor performed is interweaved in collegial processes. Furthermore, the thesis seeks to include the contexts of emotional labor in a broad sense from micro-level situational contexts (in the article *Remembering the Neglected Situation*) to meso- and macro-level contexts (in the article *Would It Kill Them if You Were Sad?*), thereby attempting to move beyond individual and decontextualized understandings of associations between emotional labor and worker well-being.

## Theories of Identity

While I focus relatively extensively on emotion culture and collegial emotion management in two of the articles and in the state of the art, space has in the articles not permitted me to provide a thorough background discussion of identity processes. In the following, I shall, therefore, discuss the theoretical frameworks of identity employed in the thesis. The section begins with an introduction to the identity framework of Burke and Stets<sup>44</sup> (Burke & Stets 2009; Burke 1991, 1980; Burke & Tully 1977) that has been important for the articles *Remembering the Neglected Situation* and *On a Scale of One to Five, Who Are You?*. Burke and Stets' identity theory and its structural symbolic interactionist affinity is introduced at some length, since it has to my knowledge not previously been used in a Danish context. Subsequently, the significance of Goffman for the thesis is briefly sketched out and discussed in relation to Burke and Stets' identity theory. While the theoretical framework of Goffman has only played a minor part in the analyses in the thesis it has been important in my situational emphasis in the article *Remembering the Neglected Situation* and particularly through the work of Hochschild it has also been important for the broader framing of the thesis. After the brief discussion of Goffman, Foucault and Rose's governmentality perspective, that has been drawn upon in the article *Would It Kill Them if You Were Sad?* is discussed in relation to Burke and Stets' identity theory. The section ends with a discussion across the three theoretical perspectives of Burke & Stets, Goffman and Foucault & Rose.

### Burke and Stets' Identity Theory

Burke and Stets' identity theory describes identities as processes, where individuals strive to maintain certain self-meanings (Burke & Stets 2009: 62). These self-meanings are partly conventional, that is role-expectations that the individual has learned and internalized, and partly idiosyncratic, that is meanings that the specific person holds for herself as an individual role occupant (Burke & Stets 2009: 63). Individuals constantly reflect on themselves (with more or less conscious effort) and the feedback they receive from others in social interaction. This feedback can be explicit about the identity others ascribe to the person, but it will often be implicit, showing for instance in the way others act and move and the way they talk (or seek to avoid talking) to a person. The individual compares this feedback (termed *reflected appraisals*<sup>45</sup>) with his or her identity (the meanings applied to the self termed the *identity standard*<sup>46</sup>). When the feedback is consistent with the self-meanings,

<sup>44</sup> Throughout the introduction and framework of the thesis, I denote this theory *Burke and Stets' identity theory*, since Burke and Stets (2009) have provided the most comprehensive presentation of it. However, several other scholars have also contributed to the approach and the measurement approach of Burke and Tully (1977) discussed in the article *On a Scale of One to Five, Who Are You?* is also part of this school of thought.

<sup>45</sup> The reflected appraisals of others consist of the ways in which people see themselves reflected in the way others respond to them (Burke & Stets 2009: 25). Not all reactions of others in the situation will be relevant here, only the reactions that indicate how the individual is perceived by others (and accordingly can be termed identity-relevant).

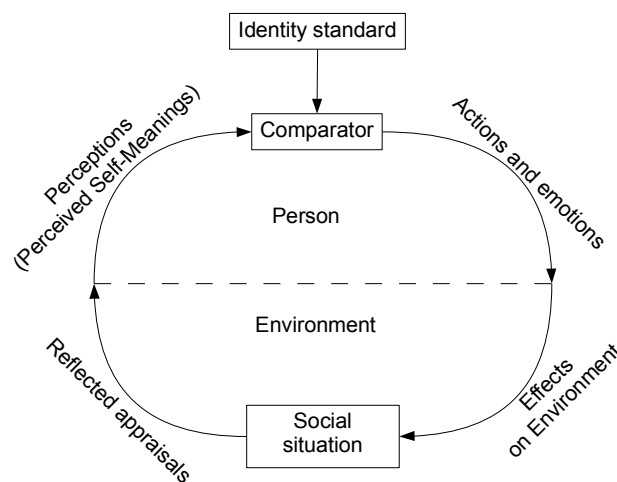
<sup>46</sup> The identity standard consists of meanings the individual ascribes to herself, meanings that are derived from cultural expectations related to the occupied category, position or social group membership through past social interactions. These meanings define the content of the identity and may differ across persons occupying the same position. Thus, one SOSU helper may see herself as emotionally close to care recipients, while another may see herself as professionally distanced from care recipients.



others confirm the identity of the person, and *identity verification* occurs. When the feedback is discrepant from the self-meanings of the person, the identity is not verified, that means others act towards the person in a manner different from how the person perceives herself.<sup>47</sup> The theory suggests that when lack of identity-verification occurs, people will experience negative emotions and attempt to alter their behavior in such way as to reduce the discrepancy (Burke & Stets 2009: 163-4). On the other hand, when the identity is verified by others, positive emotions are experienced. Emotions are accordingly important in Burke and Stets' identity theory since they are seen as an outcome of identity processes. Even though Burke and Stets' identity theory mainly conceives of emotions as a product of the verification process, emotions must also be seen as something affecting the social situation and thereby affecting the continued identity process (Burke & Stets; Burke 1991: 838; see also Gross & Thompson 2007: 6).

A central tenet of Burke and Stets' identity theory is that the meanings of an individual's behavior should correspond to the individual's identity standard (Burke & Stets 2009: 49). This means that people will attempt to behave in ways that will make others perceive them properly. The identity process as conceived in Burke and Stets' identity theory is illustrated in Figure 2 below.

*Figure 2: The identity process in Burke and Stets' identity theory*



(Based on Burke 1991: 838; Burke & Stets 2009: 62).

<sup>47</sup> In Burke and Stets' identity theory, individuals are seen as motivated to have their identities verified by others rather than to experience self-enhancement (Burke & Harrod 2005). Thus, even persons with a self-conception that is socially devalued will attempt to have others verify this identity. This is in contrast with theories that see enhancement as the motive guiding individual conduct (for a further discussion of self-enhancement vs. self-verification, see Swann, Pelham and Krull 1989). The motive of self-verification is theoretically seen as a means to increase the ability to predict and thus control the world, since a relatively stable conception of who one is increases predictability (Burke & Stets 2009: 58).

The figure shows how identity processes are flows of meaning, where the individual perceives the reflected appraisals of others, compares these to identity-meanings held in the identity standard and acts to counteract discrepancies and adjust the reflected appraisals of others. Emotional labor is not theorized by Burke and Stets, but may be included in the model as a form of action that may affect the reflected appraisals of others and thereby either support or undermine identity verification and individual well-being. Emotions are a response to the verification of the identity or lack of such. What is important in this model is the relationship between the perceived reflected appraisals (meanings pertaining to the self in the situation) and the identity standard (self-meanings already held by the person) (Burke & Stets 2009: 50-51). It is the individual's perception of the reflected appraisals that counts, not whether this perception actually reflects the intentions of the other person or not (mirroring the Thomas theorem (Thomas & Thomas 1928: 572)). The verification of the identity by others is crucial for individual well-being, since lack of identity verification may be a painful experience (Burke & Stets 2009: 160-1).

The identity process in Burke and Stets' model is seen as a feedback loop, where individuals seek to control the feedback from others by adjusting their own behavior in the situation. Thus, the theoretical assertion is, that individuals do not seek to control their behavior rather they adjust their behavior to control the reflected appraisals they perceive from others, in metaphorically speaking the same way as a thermostat does not attempt to keep the radiator giving out the same temperature at all times, rather the thermostat works to ensure that the room is kept at the set temperature which sometimes requires the radiator to be turned off and sometimes to heat to the highest extent (Burke 1991: 837). Individuals then neither act solely based on their self-meanings or solely based on the feedback from others, they act based on the relationship between their self-meanings and the feedback of others with the goal of keeping them aligned. The metaphor of the thermostat, though somewhat mechanic, may both illustrate the feedback loop and illuminate how the motivation to have the identity verified is a conservative drive to maintain a certain self-image.

The apt reader will notice that the identity standard is itself not subject to the flows of meaning in the identity model. This is not because the identity standard is in fact unaffected by the identity process. But, the identity standard is conceived as relatively stable and, therefore, only subject to gradual change over time. Thus, while the individual will attempt to alter his or her behavior to counteract a discrepancy between the identity standard and the perceived reflected appraisals of others, the identity standard may also gradually change due to a continued discrepancy (Burke 2006). Identity processes are hence fundamentally social, since identities are both developed and gradually changed in social interaction and people are dependent on others for verification of their identity.

### *Identity Interruptions – An Example of Affect in Identity Theory*

In Burke and Stets' identity model, negative affect arises when there is a discrepancy between the perceived reflected appraisals and the identity standard. The notion of interruptions of the identity process has been used to conceptualize when and why such discrepancies may arise. Since the idea of identity interruption has been used in the article *Remembering the Neglected Situation* and since it illuminates the implications of Burke and Stets' identity theory, I shall briefly describe it.

Burke (1991) suggests different ways in which the identity process may be interrupted, resulting in feelings of distress<sup>48</sup>. One cause of identity interruption is what Burke (1991: 841) terms a broken loop, thereby indicating that the continuously elapsing identity process depicted in Figure 2 is interrupted. The feedback loop is broken, when the individual is unable to affect the way others treat him or her, for instance when others label the individual independently of his or her behavior, or when others do not pay attention to the efforts of the individual, but it may also occur when a person loses access to the situations where the identity standard is applicable (for instance by losing one's job). In these situations the individual is unable to adjust his or her behavior in such way as to receive identity supportive feedback (Burke 1991: 841-842).

Another kind of identity interruption is due to conflicts between different identities the individual holds. This may either be caused by contradictory meanings in two identities that are active at the same time, making it impossible to verify both identities at once, or because of constraints on time or resources, making it impossible to maintain both identities. Burke exemplifies this with the conflict between work- and family-related identities, where constraints on time and energy may make it impossible to verify both identities at once. On the one hand, people with a high workload may experience distress from lacking time and/or energy to verify family-related identities. On the other hand, people with care obligations at home may experience distress from being unable to verify their work-related identities (e.g. inability to perform well after a night of continuous childcare). Lack of time for proper identity performance in a situation may also be a source of identity interruption, when a person does not have the time to perform in accordance to the identity standard and to adjust his or her behavior to take account of reflected appraisals departing from the identity standard (Burke 1991: 844). This is an interesting perspective in terms of well-being at work since it means that time constraints may have a disrupting and distressing effect on individuals by interfering with identity performance.

This presentation of identity interruptions reveals how identity processes may be disrupted in different ways resulting in feelings of distress. Several of these modes of interruptions are relevant in care work, and the framework of identity interruptions is therefore used in one of the articles in the dissertation (the article *Remembering the Neglected Situation*).

In Burke and Stets' identity theory there is a tension between the general theoretical model of the identity process that is seen as potentially applicable to any particular identity process and the specific context in which the identity process occurs. Burke and Stets' identity theory includes the context in the identity process through the identity standard that varies across the different identities a person holds and through the reflected appraisals that varies across situations. Regarding the identity standard, one may for instance seek to have different meanings verified as a mother, as a woman, as a friend, as a gardener, as a soccer player, as a wife and as a lover. However, the identity standard is not seen as varying across the different interactions one engages in for instance as a mother. One will attempt to verify the same identity-meanings in different interactions where this particular identity is active. As I shall discuss in the following, this emphasis on stability is at odds with traditional symbolic interactionism (and the approach of Goffman that I shall discuss later in this section).

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<sup>48</sup> Burke discusses the relationship between identity processes and stress and uses the term distress in a very broad sense as denoting the "subjective feelings associated with stress" (Burke 1991: 836).

## *Structural Symbolic Interactionism*

Burke and Stets' identity theory draws on symbolic interactionist thought, in particular the framework Stryker (1980) has termed *structural symbolic interactionism*. Structural symbolic interactionism shares with traditional symbolic interactionism (most notably Blumer 1969) the assertion that social action should be understood from the point of view of individuals by examining the definitions and interpretations people have of themselves, others and the social situations in which they act (Burke & Stets 2009: 33; Stryker 1980: 2; Blumer 1969: 73). Both symbolic interactionist schools of thought examine the social world from the perspective of the individual and attempt to understand the meanings individuals ascribe to self, events, actions etc. in order to understand their actions. However, two main differences between the two schools of symbolic interactionist thought are worth highlighting. Firstly, as the term suggests, structural symbolic interactionism emphasizes social structure to a larger extent than traditional symbolic interactionism. Secondly, structural symbolic interactionism emphasizes the development of theoretical generalizations based on hypothesis testing in contrast to traditional symbolic interactionism where the theoretical framework would be chosen based on an examination of the empirical world (rather than test pre-selected theories) and where observation of naturally occurring social interactions would be a preferred method (Stryker 1980: 1-13, 52-85; Blumer 1969: 46-49, 87-88; Burke & Stets 2009: 33-37).

Traditional symbolic interactionism conceives of the social structure as relatively fluid, as something that is constantly being created and re-created (Blumer 1969: 67), whereas structural symbolic interactionism regards the social structure as more stable and more limiting for the actions of individuals (Stryker 1980: 65-66). Thus, structural symbolic interactionism would emphasize hierarchies of status, the distribution of resources and norms to a higher extent than traditional symbolic interactionism. Because traditional symbolic interactionism sees the interpretations of situations and thereby the social structure as more fluid, theoretical generalizations becomes problematic in this school of thought. Since every situation is to some extent unique, the use of theories is to depend on the examination of the empirical social world (Blumer 1969: 48). At the same time, the development of theoretical generalizations that seek to move beyond the complexities of the particular temporal, spatial and social context of the empirical study are seen as problematic (Blumer 1969: 131). In contrast to this, the conceptualization of social structures as relatively stable means that in structural symbolic interactionism it becomes meaningful and important to develop and test theoretical generalizations often using methods that are rejected by traditional symbolic interactionism such as surveys and experiments (Stryker 1980: 12-14; Blumer 1969: 48-49). Theory then performs quite distinctive roles in the two schools of symbolic interactionist thought. It is not that theory is unimportant in the traditional symbolic interactionism and important the structural symbolic interactionism. Rather structural symbolic interactionism emphasizes the development and test of theoretical explanations, seeking more general theoretical accounts of the social world (Stryker 1980: 13), while traditional symbolic interactionism is skeptical of the test of hypotheses and of approaching the empirical world from a predetermined theoretical perspective. Instead traditional symbolic interactionism suggests the use of sensitizing concepts that indicate what to look for when examining empirical instances in their unique and distinctive character and context (Blumer 1969: 30-33, 148-149).

Burke and Stets' identity theory draws on structural symbolic interactionism in emphasizing the significance of the social structure in shaping identities through the positions that are accessible to people and the available resources to claim and ensure verification of identities. At the same time the structural emphasis means that identities are seen as relatively stable, changing only gradually over long periods of time or by role loss/acquisition of new roles (Burke & Stets 2009: 34-37).

### *Pros and Cons of Burke and Stets' Identity Theory*

The main advantage of Burke and Stets' theoretical framework in relation to the research question of this thesis is, that it contains a very explicit theoretization of the significance of emotions in identity processes (see Burke & Stets 2009: 155-174), thereby serving as a good starting point for examining the interplay between worker well-being and collegial identity processes.

Another important advantage of this approach is, that it focuses mainly on *role identities*<sup>49</sup> in contrast to social or person identities.<sup>50</sup> Role identities are identities that are based on the position an individual occupies in the social structure and the different expectations that are tied to this position (the role). Since the identification examined in the thesis is related to the performance of work this emphasis in the theory is useful.

A final advantage of Burke and Stets' identity theory is that it has a very explicit focus on the social structure in identity processes (Burke & Stets 2009: 96-110). This can be seen in the emphasis on role identities that are tied to positions in the social structure. This emphasis is important, because it underscores that possibilities of identification are unequally distributed in a society, since identities are tied to positions in the social structure to which people have unequal access. Furthermore, it underscores the social distribution of resources for identity-verification and how identity-verification may be impeded by lack of resources to ensure proper identity enactment. This aspect of Burke and Stets' identity theory makes it promising in discussing the significance of structural constraints in care work for the emotional experiences of care workers and the impact of identity in these processes.

However, Burke and Stets' identity theory also has limitations. In particular, the impact of important dimensions of culture in identity processes is undertheorized and the significance

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<sup>49</sup> Even though the identification examined in the thesis can be characterized as role-based, I shall throughout the thesis simply use the notion of identity and not role identity.

<sup>50</sup> In contrast to role identities, *social identities* are based on identification with certain groups and dis-identification with other groups and thus based on membership rather than performance. Burke and Stets further describe both role and social identities as different from what they term *person identities* since a person identity consists of meanings that the individual applies to herself as a unique and distinct individual and not related to a certain category one occupies or a group one is member of. Despite the differences between the concepts of role, social and person identity it is important to note, that all three bases of identification are social: the meanings individuals apply to themselves are culturally shared and derived from social interactions and people are dependent on others for verification of their identities (Burke & Stets 2009: 113-125). However, it is important to note, that the distinction between role and social identities is analytical, in the sense that it is a way of looking at and analyzing identification, not a clear cut empirical distinction. Thus, the identification as for instance a nursery teacher could both be examined as a role identity, highlighting the performance of the work, and as a social identity, highlighting the membership of a professional group or membership of a labor union.

of power in identification is primarily discussed in terms of positions in the social structure and how resources and access to positions are available to people to varying degrees. Culture is present in the theory through the concept of role/expectations of others and it is often implied or briefly mentioned, but the way broader societal tendencies and discourses shape what meanings are available for people to draw on in their identification is not sufficiently incorporated into the approach. Due to this limitation, I have found it necessary to draw upon a quite different approach to identification in the article *Would It Kill Them if You Were Sad?*: the governmentality perspective of Foucault and Rose.

Furthermore, Burke and Stets' identity theory has a very detailed and theoretically developed account of the social processes that may give rise to negative and positive emotions (the account of negative emotions is particularly well-developed). However, Burke and Stets' identity theory does not theorize the emotion management that may occur in relation to the experience of emotions (only in recent work has the feeling rules in the situation been considered) (Stets & Carter 2012). Thus, in the analysis of emotional labor and identity processes, I shall attempt to extend the conceptualization of identity processes in Burke and Stets' identity theory to include the impact of emotional labor. I discuss the issue of emotional labor and identity processes in the article *Remembering the Neglected Situation*. In order to theorize the emotion management, I draw on Goffman (1961), Gordon (1981, 1989) and Hochschild (1979, 2003). In the following, I shall discuss the differences between Burke & Stets' identity theory and the approach of Goffman and Foucault & Rose, respectively, at greater length.

## Structure and Symbolic Interaction

Throughout the thesis, I have been inspired by the writings of Goffman (1961, 1964), particularly his emphasis on the micro-level interactions and his fundamentally sociological perspective on the individual's emotions. Goffman's thinking has been fundamental to the theoretical work on emotion management of Hochschild and is particularly evident in the concept of *feeling rules* that she suggests as a counterpart to the concept of framing rules (Hochschild 1979). However, even though I am inspired by Goffman, my approach in important ways differs from his.

Although sometimes labeled symbolic interactionist, Goffman's approach is more structuralist than symbolic interactionist in Blumer's (1969) sense (Gonos 1977).<sup>51</sup> Whereas symbolic interactionists are concerned with the interpretations made by actors and how people act based on the meaning things hold to them (Blumer 1969: 2), Goffman emphasizes the interactional structures rather than the individual actor and the meaning he or she ascribe to situations, as is famously expressed in his statement: "Not, then, men and their moments. Rather moments and their men." (Goffman 2005: 3). The emphasis on structure may seem to bring Goffman's approach closer to that of Burke and Stets' identity theory and structural symbolic interactionism, however, the concept of structure in Goffman's theoretical framework differs from the concept of structure in the structural symbolic interactionist tradition. Both perspectives see subjectivity as fundamentally shaped by social structures and dependent on the validation of others, but while Goffman grounds

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<sup>51</sup> Here, I rely on a structuralist reading of Goffman. Since Goffman's writings vary in their emphasis on structure/agency across his works this reading is contestable. Compare for instance the structuralist reading presented here with Goffman's discussions of stigma management (Goffman 1963).

his analysis in micro-structures that bestows particular subjectivities on to people, Burke and Stets' identity theory grounds the analysis in the individual's struggle for identity verification and thereby retains the individual as the starting point for the analysis while recognizing that the subjectivity is shaped by social structures. In Goffman's framework, subjectivity becomes a product of micro-structures, "a dramatic effect" (Goffman 1959: 245), while subjectivity in Burke and Stets' identity theory is both a social product and a social force, since subjectivity derives from a combination of internalized role expectations and idiosyncratic meanings that then serves to guide individual conduct (Burke & Stets 2009). The capacity for individual action is hence much larger in Burke and Stets' identity theory than in Goffman's analysis. As Goffman expresses it:

In analysing the self, then, we are drawn from its possessor, from the person who will profit or lose most by it, for he and his body merely provide the peg on which something of collaborative manufacture will be hung for a time. And the means for producing and maintaining selves do not reside inside the peg; in fact these means are often bolted down in social establishments. (Goffman 1959: 245)

Goffman here argues that the person is merely the coathook on which the self is hung. Furthermore, the self is a product of the interaction and not a cause of it (Goffman 1959: 245). Whereas Burke and Stets' identity theory conceives of persons as acting in order to foster identity verification (which is ultimately dependent the responses of others) (Burke & Stets 2009: 5-7), the quotation above shows that Goffman does not place any ability to maintain selves in the person.

However, the concept of structure also differs between Goffman and structural symbolic interactionism. Whereas structural symbolic interactionism emphasizes positions in the larger social structure and the roles related to these positions, Goffman (1983: 2) with the concept of the *interaction order* emphasizes situational structures in the face-to-face interaction (even though Goffman also discusses the relationship between the interaction order and macro-structures (Goffman 1983: 8)). Hence, structural symbolic interactionism (and Burke and Stets' identity theory) conceives identity as differing across the positions a person occupies in social structure (mother, teacher, baseball player) due to the different roles (social expectations) related to these positions, but as relatively stable within each position. In this framework, identities are products of prior social interactions with regards to the particular social position in question, where the individual internalizes the expectations of others and uses these to ascribe meaning to him- or herself when occupying this position. Perhaps a metaphor of sedimentation of experiences of social interactions and the social expectations of others over time may illustrate the process of identity creation and gradual change in Burke and Stets' identity theory. In stark contrast to this concept of relatively stable identities related to the social structure through the expectations related to positions held, Goffman conceives of subjectivity as a product of situational frames. Hence, to Goffman identity is not something stable, established over time guiding interactions with others, it arises in the social situation and is not a motivating force established within individuals. A common metaphor for this concept of identity is liquid; it does not have a stable form but changes shape according to the surroundings. Thus, while the identity standard (in Burke and Stets' identity theory) denotes a relatively stable set of meanings individuals use to guide their behavior across different interactions as occupants of a particular social position, Goffman would conceive identities as much less stable, arising in situations and therefore differing across situations. Hence, in Goffman's framework,

subjectivity is not something that enters into interactions and shapes them, it arises in the situation as a consequence of the frames in the situation (Goffman 1959: 245).

Methodologically, these differences have important implications. Since Burke and Stets' identity theory conceptualizes identity as meanings the individual ascribes to himself or herself as occupant of a given social position or member of a group, self-report with reference to the particular position or group membership becomes the most valid expression of identification (Burke & Stets 2009: 225-7; see also Stryker 1980: 2). In contrast, the self in the theoretical framework of Goffman emerges from the the situated social interaction and the micro-structures of this interaction and Goffman disregards the individual's perspective on self and social situation (and consequently disregards self-report as valid) and instead focuses on the "objective situation", the framing rules and methodologically relies on ethnography (Goffman 2005: 2; Gonos 1977: 864). Goffman's approach thus necessitates observation rather than interviews or surveys.

Though inspired by Goffman, I rely on a structural symbolic interactionist perspective on identity processes in the articles *Remembering the Neglected Situation* and *On a Scale of One to Five, Who Are You?*. In these articles, I do not conceptualize subjectivity mainly as a product of the social situation (see Gonos 1977: 865), rather I ascribe it a relative permanence with regards to a given social position and I consequently see subjectivity as something that enters into particular situations and affects them. Thus, I conceive of subjectivity as largely a product of prior social interactions that is affected by and affects the present situation.

## **Subjectivity and Governmentality**

Burke and Stets' identity theory is focused on the individual's control process with regards to role-based identities. This theoretical framework accordingly conceptualizes identity processes in the individual's performance of social roles rather than societal tendencies in identification (such as the tendencies described by Giddens 1991). The importance of larger societal tendencies, cross-cutting positions in the social structure, in shaping the meanings available to individuals is acknowledged in Burke and Stets' identity theory, but rarely explicitly analyzed or discussed. In the qualitative analysis in the article *Would It Kill Them if You Were Sad?* this became evident, since Burke and Stets' identity theory despite its structural emphasis was found inadequate in analyzing what I found could best be described as a cultural phenomenon: a culture of happiness.

The identity theory of Burke and Stets has a strong understanding of the structural dimension of identification in the sense that identities are tied to social positions to which people have unequal access at the same time as people have unequal access to resources to ensure identity verification.<sup>52</sup> Thus, a structural understanding of power is inherent in the theoretical framework of Burke and Stets' identity theory. The power in shaping the available subjectivities through making certain meanings available and calling on people to perform in certain ways, while other meanings and performances are marginalized is in

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<sup>52</sup> In the concepts of Bourdieu (1986: 243), Burke and Stets' identity theory recognizes the importance of social, economic and cultural capital in identity processes (even though these resources are conceptualized differently). As such, the concept of structure found in Burke and Stets might resemble that of Bourdieu, even though Bourdieu's conception of structure is more detailed and developed.



Burke and Stets' identity theory conceptualized in terms of structural positions and role expectations related to these. While power in the social structure is explicitly recognized in Burke and Stets' identity theory, culture is mostly present as the frames of meaning available in certain positions or as the shared knowledge in the generalized other. It is, however, not theorized how subjectivities are related to government, that is how power significantly shapes subjectivities in accordance with certain ends by calling on individuals to be certain kinds of persons and how these subjectivities are related to truth/knowledge and may cross-cut positions in the social structure, for instance as cultural tendencies.

When analyzing what can be termed a *regime of happiness* in care work it became evident that the pressure to be happy and the identification of care workers as happy had consequences for their understanding of their work, consequences that conceived from a governmentality perspective had larger implications than their internalization of role-based meanings. Thus, in order to understand this regime, I found it necessary to draw on a quite different theoretical framework: the governmentality perspective (Foucault 1991; Rose 1999). This perspective calls attention to another form of power than the power entailed in access to resources, social positions and meanings. It is a productive power working through knowledge by addressing individuals as certain persons thus creating subjectivities with aspirations that are aligned with social and political ends and who are capable of governing themselves in accordance with these ends. Thus, a main difference between Burke and Stets' identity theory and governmentality is, that in the governmentality perspective the meanings that people are called on to ascribe to themselves are connected to government: a certain form of power that works through the subjectivities of individuals.

Emanating from constructivist philosophy, the governmentality perspective conflicts with Burke and Stets' identity theory in several ways. As I use them in this dissertation, I make no claim to their compatibility, since they have different theoretical inheritances, make quite different ontological and epistemological assumptions, and use quite different methodological approaches. However, since they provide different ways of knowing, ask different questions and thereby make different insights and understandings possible, I have found it fruitful to use both approaches, albeit not attempting to integrate them in one article. In recognition of the clash between these theoretical perspectives, I would like to dwell briefly on the governmentality perspective and highlight its main contribution to the thesis in relation to Burke and Stets' identity theory and furthermore discuss the differences between these perspectives.

## *Governmentality*

The governmentality perspective takes its point of departure in the writings of Foucault who used the term governmentality to describe the conditions (e.g. institutions and reflections) that make possible a certain form of power: the government of a population (Foucault 1991: 102-103). Foucault examined a vast variety of forms of power, but what is of main interest in the governmentality perspective as I use it, is a productive power that does not work through external control or force, but by creating certain subjectivities (Rose 1999: 4). It is a power that works through knowledge and the establishment of truths about the social world, truths that makes the world intelligible in certain ways by making available categories and ways of understanding that people employ in making sense of themselves and their worlds (Rose 1999: 6). These discourses or frames of understanding at the same time delimit what

can be thought and said (Lawler 2008: 57). Rose (1999: 3), who has developed on the thinking on governmentality, describes how this power works through our way of thinking, by affecting our beliefs, dreams and aspirations. What is crucial in this perspective is how subjectivities are created by addressing people as certain persons. We are called on to be autonomous, independent, responsible subjects and thereby called on to actively promote our own wealth, health and happiness by working on ourselves applying what has been termed “techniques of the self” (Rose 1999: 11; Rose & Miller 1992: 174). Thus, the individual's regulation of self is aligned with political rationalities and institutional goals in such a way that individuals are governed through their freedom, not through a repression of their freedom. As Rose expresses it:

It achieves its effects not through the threat of violence or constraint, but by way of the persuasion inherent in its truths, the anxieties stimulated by its norms, and the attraction exercised by the images of life and self it offers to us. (Rose 1999: 10)

The governmentality perspective highlights a form of regulated freedom, where people act on themselves, regulate themselves, but do so in accordance with certain frames of meaning, certain truths and certain desires, that seem self-evidently true and good. Power thus operates by creating subjectivities that are self-governing in accordance with certain rationalities (Rose & Miller 1992). This governmental power is not possessed by a bureaucracy or a rational political subject; it is rather a logic whereby the actions of individuals are regulated by acting on their freedom, on their subjectivities through knowledge, thereby aligning personal and institutional goals (Rose 1999: 4-5). The aim of Rose's research is not to reveal certain knowledge to be untrue, but to examine how something is established as true and what consequences truths have, in the sense that knowledge is related to power in creating the social world and the available subjectivities and frames of meaning (Rose 1999: 3-4).

### *Governmentality and Burke and Stets' Identity Theory*

Whereas Burke and Stets' identity theory emphasizes the management of identities and how people struggle to have their identities verified, the emphasis of the governmentality perspective is on *what* subjectivities people attempt to verify and how these subjectivities are installed. The meanings people seek to verify (what is termed the identity standard in Burke and Stets' identity theory) are often a point of departure in studies within the framework of Burke and Stets' identity theory seeking to explain emotions or behaviors, but in governmentality studies these meanings constitute the focal point. The governmentality perspective examines how people are subjectivated; how they are addressed as certain persons and how their desires are shaped in accordance with the workings of power (Lawler 2008: 63). As Rose expresses in the following quotation, we are called on to see ourselves in certain ways, have certain aspirations and to achieve these aspirations by using the knowledge of experts:

The government of the soul depends upon our recognition of ourselves as ideally and potentially certain sorts of person, the unease generated by a normative judgement of what we are and could become, and the incitement offered to overcome this discrepancy by following the advice of experts in the management of the self. (Rose 1999: 11)

What Rose describes here is how we evaluate ourselves and strive to be certain persons

applying criteria established by others. The subjectivation to the workings of power hence takes the form of the creation of certain subjectivities, capable of acting upon themselves to achieve personal goals that are congruent with institutional goals (Rose 1999: 10). It is interesting to compare this view of subjectivity to the view found in Burke and Stets' identity theory. Using the concepts of Burke and Stets' identity theory, the governmentality perspective analyses how people come to have certain self-meanings (that is identity standards), how they engage in self-regulation and self-scrutiny in order to verify self-meanings that they have been enjoined to engage with. The description offered by Rose in the quotation above is strikingly similar to the identity process envisioned by Burke and Stets' identity theory: people come to ascribe certain meanings to themselves (see themselves as "certain sorts of person") and are distressed when experiencing reflected appraisals of others that are incongruent with their self-concept ("unease generated by a normative judgement"). Furthermore they are motivated to change their behavior to reduce the discrepancy ("the incitement offered to overcome this discrepancy"). Here, the theoretical perspectives of Burke and Stets' identity theory and governmentality thus resemble each other. Further, Burke and Stets' identity theory recognizes that the available identity-meanings are shaped by culture and structure and in the theoretical content there is here no necessary conflict between the governmentality perspective and Burke and Stets' identity theory. But while Burke and Stets' identity theory places emphasis on the agency of the individual in the verification process, the governmentality perspective recognizes that people attempt to have their identities verified, but place emphasis on how individuals are externally moulded in certain ways (even when they experience themselves as free), that is how individuals come to hold certain subjectivities and not other. Delving a bit deeper, the agreement between the theories is diminished even further to the point of vanishing, since the character of the theoretical propositions clash. This clash is due to radically different truth-claims made by the two perspectives: the governmentality perspective offers an analysis of social tendencies and the construction of subjectivities occurring in the current historical period in western liberal democracies and it does not claim to give a real or true general model of identification. Rather, it attempts to show, how knowledge creates certain subjectivities that accomplish certain ends using certain means and reject realism in the sense of attempting to uncover how things really are (Rose & Miller 1992: 177). In complete contrast to this, Burke and Stets' identity theory seeks to describe the real workings of identity, and could therefore be seen as part of the assemblage of knowledge to which Rose (1999: xiii-xvi) refers when he critically discusses the knowledge practices related to what he terms "psy"<sup>53</sup> (even though I do not believe Burke and Stets' identity theory has found its way into more popular conceptions of self-management). Thus, while one claim is constructivist: about a social tendency creating a certain self and certain self-practices, the other claim is realist: about the nature of identity-processes. At the same time, the two perspectives focus of two different dimensions of identity processes: while the governmentality perspective emphasizes how particular identifications invested with power are installed in individuals, that is how identities are created, the identity theory of Burke and Stets emphasize how people seek to control their identities, that is how they respond to discrepancies between their identity-meanings and the feedback received from others. I shall not elaborate the implications of these differences further, but simply underscore, that I do

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<sup>53</sup> Rose (1999: xiii-xv) describes psy knowledge as psychological knowledge, but does not delimit the field to the practice of psychologists.

not attempt to bridge these perspectives, but use them both, since they give insight into different dimensions of emotional processes in care work. Thus, I may forgo theoretical consistency, but at the gain of a deeper insight into the interplay of subjectivity and emotions in care work.

## **Perspectives on Identity**

The difference between positivist and constructivist social science is present in the three different perspectives represented by Burke & Stets, Goffman and Foucault & Rose, and shows itself not only in the truth-claims of the theories, but also in the methods favored by them. To recapitulate, Goffman and the governmentality perspective of Rose and Foucault conceptualize subjectivity quite differently from what is found in Burke and Stets' identity theory. To Foucault, subjectivity is little more than a position made available by discourse, and in the same vein Goffman's subject is a product of the framing rules of the situational encounter. While subjectivity is a social product in Burke and Stets' identity theory it also contains capacity for social action to a much larger extent than admitted by Foucault and Goffman. Further, even though all three theoretical perspectives emphasize structure they hold different conceptions of what structure is. In Burke and Stets' identity theory, social structure consists of hierarchically ordered positions to which different expectations and different resources are available. The larger social structure affects the individual's identity processes in shaping the identity standard (through roles) and the resources available for identity verification. In contrast, Goffman emphasizes micro-level structures, the rules (or frames) that govern social interactions. Goffman thus asserts a level of social reality between the large scale structures and the individual. Hochschild has argued that Goffman thereby diminishes the relevance of both concepts of the individual and larger structures:

Structure, he seems to say, can be not only transposed but reduced “in and down,” while personality can be reduced “up and out” to the study of the here-now, gone-then interactional moments. (Hochschild 1979: 556)

However, even though Goffman focuses on interactional structures, it must be noted that he also acknowledges and discusses macro-level structures and the relationship between micro- and macro-level structures (Goffman 1983: 8). While Goffman focuses on the situational structures, the structures to which Foucault is attentive are large scale discursive tendencies, shaping what might be thought, said and done. The structures Foucault is preoccupied with are neither situational nor positions in a social hierarchy, but rather structures of thoughts, where discourses shape how we see ourselves and how we act and what we do not see and think. The structures in the framework of Foucault relate macro-level cultural spaces of the thinkable and unthinkable to individual subjectivity and action, but do not include the situational structures that Goffman points to. Hence, all three perspectives emphasize structure, but they speak of different structures and following have different conceptions of subjectivity.

Because of the different structures and processes one is able to see and analyze using these diverse perspectives, they are fruitful to use together. However, their conflicting ontological and epistemological claims and assumptions make a synthesis or coherent integration impossible and for the purpose of this thesis unnecessary.

## Post-Positivism and Construction of Research

As became evident in the presentation of the theoretical framework, a plurality of philosophies of science have been influential in this thesis. On the one hand theories with a constructivist-interpretive approach have been influential in the construction and analysis of qualitative interviews, while a theoretical framework with a positivist approach on the other hand has influenced the construction and analysis of the scenario-based quantitative data through the application of Burke and Stets' identity theory. By using these approaches in the thesis, I make no claim as to their compatibility. Rather, by approaching collegial embedded emotional labor in care work through different theories of science the studied phenomena are constituted in different ways (that is, different dimensions of and perspectives on the phenomena become visible and different kinds of knowledge become possible) thereby providing a more extensive insight into collegial embedded emotional labor.

In the following, I shall not provide a broader discussion of the meta-theoretical positions present in the thesis, but rather focus on issues related to the approach of Burke and Stets (2009) that has been characterized as positivist (Boyns 2007), since this approach has been influential in the thesis and there is a tension between the meta-theoretical position of this approach and my own position (which will be introduced through the discussions in this section). Though characterized as positivist, Burke and Stets' identity theory is distinct from much thinking associated with positivism (e.g. behaviorism). In the following, the meta-theoretical assumptions of Burke and Stets' identity theory will, therefore, be clarified and through a discussion of these assumptions, the thesis will be positioned meta-theoretically.

### Positivism and Burke and Stets' Identity Theory

Burke and Stets' identity theory has been characterized as positivist, but since a range of different claims – some of them contradictory – have been labeled positivist (Jacobsen 1999: 17-18), it is necessary to clarify what kind of positivism is at stake. The most distinctly positivist in Burke and Stets' identity theory is probably the nomothetic scope of the approach, i.e. seeking general laws. As Burke and Stets express it: “Many structural symbolic interactionists are committed to developing and testing predictive explanations of social behavior as are we” (Burke & Stets 2009: 37). The aim of research in Burke and Stets' identity theory might then be regarded to explain and predict rather than to understand, or said in other words examining *causes* of behavior rather than understanding *reasons* for actions. However, this distinction is too simplistic to capture the case of Burke and Stets' identity theory, since subjective states take up a central place in the explanatory models, thereby fusing an interpretive perspective focused on the meanings individuals ascribe to themselves and the situations they are in with an explanatory perspective aiming at theoretical generalizations. Thus, when characterizing Burke and Stets' identity theory as positivist it is important to note that some aspects of the approach are characteristically positivist, while other aspects are not and it may, therefore, be discussed whether this approach should be characterized as positivist at all.

In this context, it should be noted that my meta-theoretical standpoint in the thesis is not that of positivism. I do not see the primary aim of science as the development of universal laws and I find the knowledge acquired through both quantitative and qualitative approaches to be situated (dependent on the position and perspective of the researcher, research

community and research participants) and context-dependent (cf. Haraway 1988).<sup>54</sup>

### *Interpretive Processes*

Positivism has historically been associated with behaviorism, reducing subjective matters to external responses that are readily available for objective study by a detached researcher (Jacobsen 1999: 21). Burke and Stets' identity theory does not adhere to such reductionism, since self-meanings, emotions and perceptions are central in the theoretical framework and the empirical studies carried out. Thus, the framework of Burke and Stets is not anti-subjectivist, rather it attempts to make subjective processes available for measurement, in that way attempting to reconcile an interpretive agenda (symbolic interactionism) with a positivist conception of science as relying on quantification, empirical tests (falsification) and controlled experiments (a combination that Blumer (1969: 49) by the way explicitly refers to and rejects). This tension is evident in the measurement of self-meanings that I discuss in the article *On a Scale of One to Five, Who Are You?*. Interpretive processes are integral to the identity model proposed in Burke and Stets' identity theory and this theory is therefore far from stimuli-response models, where subjective interpretations are neglected. However, in Burke and Stets' identity theory it is seldom studied how individuals themselves construct meaning in ongoing social life and what reasons they themselves give for their actions, rather more abstract measures of the meaning that results from and enters social processes are used. Thus, experienced emotions, meanings ascribed to self in a given position and perceptions of situational self-relevant meanings are used as variables in statistical analysis to uncover and test associations between emotions, perceptions, identification and behavior that the research subjects are not necessarily aware of. Much effort has in this school of research been invested in developing testable propositions and theoretically sound quantitative measures of these rather intangible variables. Since subjective states are not reduced to overt observable behavior, but measured using self-report measures, there is no sharp line dividing what is measurable and what is unmeasurable in Burke and Stets' approach. However, since emphasis is placed on developing theory by formulating and empirically testing propositions, theoretical assertions that are simply untestable are not devoted much attention.

### *The Relationship between Theory and Knowledge*

Positivism has been associated with a reduction of theory to accumulations of empirical results that in turn are seen as acquired through a passive perception of an already given world (see Carleheden 1999: 12-13). The positivism of Burke and Stets' identity theory should not be equated with such crude empirical generalizations, since it – as the name implies – is heavily based on theory. The effort of empirical studies using Burke and Stets' identity theory has also mainly been to develop and test theory. This is methodologically reflected in the use of experiments and convenience samples that may have high internal validity and make it possible to test theoretical associations, but low external validity, making generalizations to broader populations questionable.<sup>55</sup>

<sup>54</sup> This is not to say that Burke and Stets' identity theory ignores the social context. Burke and Stets (2009: 37, 205-6) are not blind to differences across time and place, but believe it possible to develop general explanations based on studies across time and place.

<sup>55</sup> Even though research using community samples has been called for within this school of research, the

My position is (following countless critiques of positivism) that the creation of knowledge is an active accomplishment rather than a passive reception. The world is not just available to be captured by a detached observer instead the researcher plays an active part in constructing the object of science and making sense out of a multitude of impressions. Furthermore, empirical facts are always dependent on assumptions, beliefs, theoretical presuppositions and interests and must therefore be regarded as immersed in theory rather than independent of or external to theory (see e.g. Carleheden 1999). Thus, the researcher plays an active part in creating empirical data, and these data are always already saturated with theory. Therefore, a test of theory against empirical data will always be a test against empirical data already informed by theory. However, this does not make it impossible to create knowledge, but it presupposes another concept of knowledge than assumed in classical positivism. Following Carleheden (1999: 22) we can describe this as a move from positivism to post-positivism, a move that entails a shift from *Reason* (as objective and universal) to *situated reason* without making the anti-positivist leap to “*reason*” (as pure construction). I shall not delve into the controversies between realist and constructivist epistemologies, but simply note my position as recognizing the constructed and social character of knowledge while still acknowledging the possibility of acquiring valid knowledge.

Furthermore, it is important to recognize that the knowledge obtained is immersed in power. In the case of quantitative analysis this power is perhaps most notable in the difficulty faced by the majority of the population in interpreting and criticizing the results and the assumptions underlying the research design. However, power is not only nested in the interpretation of findings, but also in the design of research. In most research - both qualitative and quantitative - the researcher, research community and agents funding research are the ones who define the research questions and the approaches used, rather than the people who are immersed in empirical studies as research subjects (or the general population). Further, in the concrete data collection the researcher decides what questions should be asked and what counts as sufficient answers from research subjects (or what settings should be observed and what field notes should be recorded). In survey research using closed-end questions, the researcher even decides the ways in which research subjects may respond. Based on this, I side with Ronkainen (1998) who discusses the survey as a construction and argues that knowledge is possible, but that knowledge will always be partial, situated and invested with power (in the sense that some perspectives are marginalized in the construction of knowledge).

## **The Survey as a Construction**

In the thesis, the positivist approach of Burke and Stets' identity theory has inspired the quantitative study of identity and emotional labor (see the article *Remembering the Neglected Situation*). However, epistemologically it should be noted that survey data do not provide an unmediated image of reality; survey data are constructed by the researcher for a specific purpose and construct reality in a certain way. Survey data are hence not the result

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assumption seems to be that when testing associations that are expected to hold across all populations it is defensible to use narrow samples (even while being aware of the limitations of such samples). Here a universalist assumption of the theoretical project is evident, even though the applicability of the theory across cultures is regarded to be an empirical matter.

of a neutral measurement of an objectively given reality that the survey provides unproblematic access to, rather survey data are constructed according to theoretical and methodological assumptions and preconceptions held by the researcher and research community, for instance through the choice of relevant variables and the way of measuring these (Ronkainen 1998). While the survey can be characterized as a positivist or post-positivist methodology, it is, therefore, important to be aware that the use of survey data does not necessarily imply an anti-constructivist epistemology.

Inspired by Law (2004: 9), I reject the normativity of method, i.e. the implication that some methods are better, more rigorous or provide a truer knowledge regardless of the research question examined. Rather than a monotheistic vision of method, I find methodological diversity and combination fruitful, particularly because different methodological approaches reveal different dimensions of the studied phenomenon (see Harrits 2011: 156-7). In the thesis, I have accordingly combined the quantitative approach of Burke and Stets' identity theory with qualitative interviews in order to be able to examine both patterns in emotions, collegial identity processes and emotional labor that may be invisible to research subjects and how research subjects themselves experience their working life and construct meaning with regards to the emotional labor performed. Thus, while quantitative analysis makes certain knowledge available through a certain way of knowing, such analysis provides a knowledge that is no more valid than knowledge derived from the use of qualitative methods, but it is a knowledge which is largely unavailable using qualitative methods. Important associations that are otherwise not visible may be brought to light, for instance associations between identity processes and strain while controlling for demographics and job characteristics.

In quantitative studies we are not studying something outside social constructions, rather we are examining patterns in a world that is socially constructed; patterns that had otherwise not been evident (e.g. unacknowledged disagreement among professionals). Survey data can, therefore, not only be discussed in terms of classical issues such as bias, validity and reliability, but also in terms of how the object of the study is constructed, by whom, for what purpose and with what assumptions (which are of course also important considerations when using other methods). The knowledge acquired is thus situated and context-dependent (in a temporal, cultural and spatial sense). This does not invalidate the survey approach or the credibility of the conclusions that can be drawn from survey data, but it means that it is necessary to consider the ways in which the derived knowledge is dependent on the partial and situated perspective of the researcher and his or her research community.

### **Situated Knowledges<sup>56</sup>**

Since knowledge is always constructed from a position and dependent on the locatedness of the researcher, I shall briefly comment upon how my social position researching the working life of professional paid caregivers might have affected the research project. Perhaps as a consequence of my ethnic background as belonging to the majority group of a society with a national narrative of ethnic homogeneity and being part of a research community studying the field of emotional labor where ethnicity is under-theorized (Mirchandani 2003; Wingfield 2010) ethnicity has been a blind spot in the research project,

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<sup>56</sup> I owe the term *situated knowledges* to Haraway (1988).



in effect perhaps leading to a “normalizing of whiteness” (Mirchandani 2003: 728) in the thesis. Seeing ethnicity as a blind spot does not mean that minorities are underrepresented in the empirical material, in fact several of the interviewees had minority background. Rather, ethnicity has not been controlled for in the quantitative analyses, and the importance of ethnicity for the studied emotional labor and collegial relations have not been analyzed. As mentioned earlier with regards to gender-issues, questions of the significance of social hierarchies (for instance regarding emotion rules) have not been part of the research question, but it remains a blind spot in the thesis nonetheless. Based on the research of Wingfield (2010: 256), ethnic minorities may experience more restrictive feeling rules than their white/majority co-workers, but may because of racism encountered in the work place (and broader society) also have a harder time complying with the feeling rules that are common to all workers (particularly demands of being positive). Hence, workers with minority background may have to perform *more* emotional labor and may have a *harder* time performing emotional labor than their colleagues with ethnic majority background (Wingfield 2010: 265-6). This suggests that the collegial embeddedness of emotional labor might have different consequences for people with ethnic minority background than for people with ethnic majority background. The difficulties of adhering to the norm of positivity is particularly interesting in this context because of the widespread demand of positivity found in childcare and eldercare work (in the article *Would It Kill Them if You Were Sad?*).

Other consequences of my social positioning are the physical location of the qualitative part of the research (mainly in regions near the Danish capital), the study of the conditions of a Scandinavian welfare state and the very particular conditions of childcare and eldercare work in this type of welfare state (e.g. in terms of professionalization and coverage) and a linguistic bias in the literature on which I draw (Danish, Swedish, Norwegian and English).

Returning to the relationship between post-positivism and constructivism in the thesis, quantitative surveys are combined with interpretive studies of how individuals conceive of their world and their experiences. This combination provides a more complete picture of the studied phenomena than would have been possible with either one of these perspectives. However, it may be impossible to unite the accounts into a comprehensive picture, and the conclusions arrived at may be contradictory or difficult to compare, because of the differences in the ways of knowing and the language used to describe the results. In the following, I shall elaborate on the concrete ways in which different methodological approaches have been combined.

## Methods and Research Design

In this section, the methodological approaches in the thesis will be presented. Focus will be on important methodological issues that the limited space in the four articles has not permitted me to account for or discuss there. Hence, the use of mixed-methods, the choice of methods, the construction of the identity measure used in the scenario-based survey (reported on in the article *Remembering the Neglected Situation*), the trustworthiness and generalizability of the findings and issues of causality will be presented.

The research design of the thesis has been inspired by multi-method and mixed-methods debates and qualitative and quantitative methods have therefore been combined in different ways throughout the thesis. More specifically, combinations of qualitative individual interviews (and to a lesser extent focus group interviews) and surveys have been carried out. See Table 2 for an overview of the methods used and the resulting data for each of the empirical articles (the fourth article, *On a Scale of One to Five, Who Are You?*, is not based on empirical data but instead consists of a methodological discussion of identity processes).

*Table 2: Methods and data in the three empirical articles in the thesis*

Article	Methods	Data	Respondents/ interviewees	Phase of data collection <sup>57</sup>
Professional Disagreement in Relation-Centered Work	Quantitative vignette-based survey, qualitative individual and focus group interviews	491 survey-responses 12 focus group interviews 7 individual interviews	Childcare professionals and very few childcare assistants	Phase 1
Would It Kill Them if You Were Sad?	Qualitative semi-structured individual interviews	27 individual interviews (10 with eldercare workers and 17 with childcare workers)	Childcare workers and eldercare workers	Phase 2
Remembering the Neglected Situation	Quantitative scenario-based questionnaire (as well as qualitative and quantitative pre-studies)	358 survey-responses	Childcare professionals	Phase 2

Before motivating the choice of these methods, the concept of mixed-methods will briefly be clarified and the thesis will be situated in current mixed-methods debates with regards to *why* and *how* methods have been mixed.

### Approaching Mixed-Methods

Mixed-methods have been seen as a way of escaping dogmatism and methodological prejudices in approaching research questions (Greene & Caracelli 1997: 9; see also the discussion in Bergman 2011). In using both qualitative and quantitative methods in the thesis, I am thus inspired by the pragmatist rejection of methodological dogmatism and the emphasis on methodological flexibility rather than paradigmatic coherency (cf. Greene &

<sup>57</sup> These phases are the phases of data collection mentioned in the introduction.

Caracelli 1997: 8-11). Hence, I see the research question as decisive for what methods to use (cf. Hesselberg 1998: 4-8). In mixing methods in the present study, I am not only combining different methods in the sense of technical approaches (interview and survey), but also different paradigms (interpretive and post-positivist). Though inspired by pragmatism, I find it important to reflect upon the epistemology and ontology of the different paradigms that are combined, as has been done in the section on theories of identity and in the article *On a Scale of One to Five, Who Are You?*.

Based on an analysis of different conceptualizations of mixed-methods, Johnson, Onwuegbuzie and Turner (2007: 123) offer the following general definition of mixed-methods:

Mixed methods research is the type of research in which a researcher or a team of researchers combines elements of qualitative and quantitative research approaches (e.g., use of qualitative and quantitative viewpoints, data collection, analysis, inference techniques) for the broad purpose of breadth and depth of understanding and corroboration.

This definition specifies mixed-methods research in several ways: mixed-methods research combines qualitative and quantitative approaches (in contrast to a *bricolage* that involves combinations of different qualitative approaches (Kincheloe 2001)); this combination can be made at several stages of the research process and accordingly involves a broad understanding of what method is; and the purpose of this combination is either enhanced knowledge of the empirical phenomenon studied or validation of findings.

The emphasis on corroboration is evident in the early articulation of the advantages of mixed-methods found in the conception of *triangulation*, where convergence of results stemming from the use of different methods is seen as a validation of the findings, since the use of different methods should cancel out biases of any single method (Johnson et al. 2007: 113-5). In terms of using mixed-methods in order to achieve improved knowledge of a phenomenon, some researchers have argued that mixed-methods may increase the possibility of drawing causal inferences. Here, quantitative cross-case analysis may be used to identify empirical patterns, while qualitative within-case analysis may be used to analyze the causal processes that are operating in depth (Kuehn & Rohlfing 2010; see also Harrits 2011: 152-6). However, an important criticism of such an approach is that it assumes that the complementarity of data across methodological approaches is unproblematic and that conflicting findings made using the different methods are evidence of a flawed theoretical model (Harrits 2011: 156-161). Though this may be the case, researchers should allow for the possibility that conflicting findings may be part of the reality examined (Harrits 2011: 160-1).

## **Mixed-Methods in the Thesis**

When using a mixed-methods approach, methods may both be mixed within a single study and across a set of closely related studies (Johnson et al. 2007: 123). In the thesis, methods have been mixed both within single articles and across the different articles, and it may be appropriate to describe the approach used in the overall thesis as both *multimethod* (different methods are used in parallel but are not integrated during data collection and analysis, but only at the stage of drawing conclusions) and *mixed-method* (different methods are

integrated during the design, data collection or analysis) (cf. Bazeley quoted in Johnson et al. 2007: 119). An overview over the combination of methods in the three empirical articles is provided in Table 3.

*Table 3: Combinations of methods in the empirical articles*

<p><b>Professional Disagreement in Relation-Centered Work</b></p> <p>Mixed-methods were used sequentially in design and analysis: New research questions appeared based on a quantitative analysis, and these questions were pursued in a qualitative data collection and analysis with an interpretive scope. The quantitative analysis revealed patterns of professional disagreement among childcare workers that informed the design, data collection and analysis of the qualitative data. The qualitative analysis expands on and develops interpretations of findings from the quantitative analysis. The main emphasis is on the qualitative data, but the quantitative analysis has been decisive for the qualitative design and analysis.</p> <p><b>Would It Kill Them if You Were Sad?</b></p> <p>Semi-structured qualitative individual interviews were conducted both as a pre-study to the quantitative study (described below) and to perform a complementary interpretive data analysis. However, an unexpected dominant theme of positivity emerged from the data and led to a revision of the research question. The theme of positivity was thus pursued and the original complementary ambition in the research design was abandoned. Though data were collected with the intention of a mixed-methods study, the analysis remained mono-method (solely qualitative).</p> <p><b>Remembering the Neglected Situation</b></p> <p>Mixed-methods were used only in the design phase: qualitative semi-structured interviews and open-ended survey questions were used to develop the questionnaire (primarily scenarios and identity-measures). These were afterward pre-tested both quantitatively (in pilot-studies) and qualitatively (in cognitive interviews). The data analysis was solely based on quantitative survey data. The methods were hence mixed sequentially and emphasis was placed on quantitative methods.</p>
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## *Explaining and Understanding*

In the thesis, qualitative and quantitative methods has been combined in order to examine both patterns and regularities as they appear to an “outside” observer and the meaning and experiences as they appear from “within” to the research subjects (cf. Harrits 2011: 160). This reflects my structural emphasis (inspired by structural symbolic interactionism) and at the same time my symbolic interactionist emphasis, focusing on the meanings individuals ascribe to themselves, others, actions etc. Even though studies using Burke and Stets' identity theory have mostly been quantitative (emphasizing a nomothetic and explanatory knowledge interest), I believe that the emphasis on structure *and* meaning or explanation *and* understanding calls for a mixed-method approach in the same vein as Bourdieu's emphasis on both structure and the practices producing this structure do (see Harrits 2011: 156). This is not to say that explanations cannot include the meanings of actors or that qualitative approaches cannot be explanatory and include an outside perspective (Guldager 2008: 50; Bourdieu 1999: 613).

The realization that qualitative and quantitative methods make it possible to study different aspects of the phenomenon at hand has been important in guiding my choice and use of

mixed-methods. While quantitative methods make it possible to identify patterns that research subjects are not necessarily aware of (such as professional disagreement), qualitative methods make it possible to examine the rationalities guiding actors and the motivations and reasons actors themselves have for doing as they do (such as reasons for not expressing professional disagreement) (Harrits 2010).<sup>58</sup> Even though the quantitative approach utilized incorporates the perspective of the individual (by using subjective measures), the rationalities of individuals cannot be fully understood through closed questions in a questionnaire. Here, the open format of the qualitative interview makes it possible to examine the rationalities guiding individual actors (e.g. why they perceive it as difficult to express professional disagreement). At the same time, quantitative methods make it possible to identify patterns in attitudes or between identification, behaviors (emotional labor) and emotions that may not be evident from a limited number of qualitative interviews (e.g. professional disagreement, correlations between emotional labor and identity verification controlling for other factors). This possibility of examining a correlation between different experiences and behaviors would be impossible to achieve in a small number of semi-structured qualitative interviews. At the same time, quantitative approaches make it possible to control for background factors while examining correlations.

In the thesis, a combination of a perspective from the inside and the patterns visible from the outside has been sought. In the work on management of professional disagreement (resulting in the article *Professional Disagreement in Relation-Centered Work*) a qualitative data analysis with an interpretive scope builds upon and develops the significance of patterns found in a prior quantitative study. Here, the methods were mixed sequentially in that the qualitative study build upon the quantitative study and sought to examine a research question that arose from the quantitative analysis. In the work on identity processes (in *Remembering the Neglected Situation*) and emotion culture (in *Would It Kill Them if You Were Sad?*) a mixed-methods research design was constructed in order to *explain* well-being related to collegial embedded emotional labor from an outside perspective by testing hypotheses deriving from a theoretical framework and to *understand* collegial embedded emotional labor processes as they appear to care workers themselves (how they interpret the emotional labor they perform and its relationship to collegial processes and their own well-being). Here, data were collected with the intention of a mixed-methods analysis, but the analyses did largely remain distinct for reasons elaborated in the following section.

### *Revising the Intended Mixed-Methods Design*

In the second phase of data collection (resulting in the articles *Would It Kill Them if You Were Sad?* and *Remembering the Neglected Situation*), the explanatory ambition was translated into a quantitative design with closed-ended questions testing theory-based hypotheses, while the interpretive ambition was translated into semi-structured qualitative interviews emphasizing subjective experiences of emotional labor in a collegial context. The expectation was that these sources of data would be complementary carrying the potential that the analyses could inform each other. However, while the qualitative data analysis did

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<sup>58</sup> The combination of these two forms of knowledge (and the dialectical relationship between them) makes it possible to move from a objectivist or subjectivist account to what Bourdieu terms “praxeological knowledge” (Bourdieu 1973; Harrits 2010). For reasons clarified in the sections below, the thesis has, however, not performed this move towards a praxeological knowledge.

not reject the theoretical model examined in the quantitative analysis, one very conspicuous and pervasive new theme emerged in the qualitative analysis that the hitherto used theoretical model was found unhelpful in addressing (as I discuss in the section “Theories of Identity”). It was appraised as important to pursue this emerging theme and the research question for this part of the analysis was therefore changed. As a consequence of the revision of the research question, the initial plan of integrating the explanatory and interpretive analyses was abandoned. The revised research question for this part of the thesis (reported on in the article *Would It Kill Them if You Were Sad?*) was therefore examined using only the qualitative interviews. Through the qualitative analysis, the object of study was thus constructed differently than in the quantitative analysis, examining a different sub-question and using a different theoretical framework, thereby engendering insights into different dimensions of the main research question. Hence, the qualitative and quantitative analyses in the articles *Would It Kill Them if You Were Sad?* and *Remembering the Neglected Situation* are not mixed in the sense of examining the same research question with different methods (see Patton in Johnson et al. 2007: 120). While conflicting results due to the differences between approaching the research question from an “outside” perspective on the one hand and from an “inside” perspectives on the other hand might be expected (Harrits 2011: 160-1), differences in the findings in these studies rather resulted from the research question being constituted in different ways through the respective analyses (in particular, from the revision of the sub-question guiding the interpretive analysis).

Thus, while the intention was to integrate two different forms of knowing: from the “inside” and from the “outside” and thereby both understand and explain, the findings in the qualitative analysis raised a new research question that necessitated a departure from the integration of these perspective. Instead, an inside perspective is present in the article *Would It Kill Them if You Were Sad?* while an outside perspectives is present in the article *Remembering the Neglected Situation*.

## Choice of Methods

In the articles, the methods used have briefly been presented and here I shall not reiterate the details of each study, but instead expand on my reasons for using the different methods. I shall focus on the usage of qualitative individual interviews and the scenario-based survey. A quantitative vignette study and focus group interviews (also using vignettes) on the attitudes of childcare professionals have also been carried out during the writing of the thesis, but these were mainly used in the report *Agreement, Disagreement and Development: Pedagogical Professionalism in Day Care Institutions* (Ejrnæs & Monrad 2010) and have served as background for the articles in the thesis. Considerations on the use of focus group interviews and vignette methodology are provided in Ejrnæs and Monrad (2012) *Vignetmetoden: Sociologisk metode og redskab til faglig udvikling* (The Vignette Method: A Sociological Method and Instrument for Professional Development) and Ejrnæs and Monrad (2010): *Agreement, Disagreement and Development: Pedagogical Professionalism in Day Care Institutions*.<sup>59</sup>

<sup>59</sup> Vignette methodology was used to examine contextualized patterns in attitudes since a vignette-based survey design is particularly suitable for discovering patterns of agreement and disagreement that may not be recognized by research subjects. Further, focus group interviews were used to examine the negotiations

## *Individual Qualitative Interviews*

The use of qualitative individual interviews was motivated by an interest in understanding childcare and eldercare workers' interpretations of emotional labor in a collegial context: how they ascribe meaning to the emotional labor performed; what importance they ascribe to colleagues and the emotional labor of colleagues; what reasons they give for performing emotional labor in particular ways and not others; and how they experience that the emotional labor affects their well-being. Focus group interviews or ethnographic fieldwork might also have been used to obtain these ends. However, it was expected that discussing emotions at work – particularly emotions regarding colleagues – would be too sensitive for focus group interviews potentially leading to impoverished data. Regarding ethnographic fieldwork, a reservation was that I might be positioned in the work groups in a way that could make it difficult for care workers' to talk openly about their subjective experiences of collegial difficulties or conflicts. Here, individual qualitative interviews performed by a person that would not be part of the social context at work for a prolonged period of time might make it easier for interviewees to speak freely of their experiences with colleagues (cf. Simmel 1998: 97; Monrad 2009: 21-2). In choosing qualitative individual interviews, I willingly prioritized the individual's perspective on the collegial processes and his or her interpretations, motives and beliefs over examining how care workers actually interact with co-workers, what they do and when. Hence, the qualitative interviews make it possible to examine the interpretive framework of care workers (e.g. that they believe joy to be important for care), but not what care workers actually do (e.g. whether they express joy or not when providing care). Based on the findings in the current research project, ethnographic fieldwork would, however, without a doubt be fruitful in future research on the collegial embeddedness of emotional labor (for instance examining how co-workers interact, what emotions are expressed in collegial contexts and the affective responses to collegial interactions).

## *Survey Using Scenarios*

In examining the associations between emotional labor, identity verification and well-being, a scenario-based survey with self-report measures was used. The main advantages of this approach is that it makes it possible to examine the impact of the situational context on the associations between the variables of interest and that it standardizes the situational context across respondents and hence facilitates comparisons. While quantitative methods in general hold the advantages of facilitating cross-case comparisons and making it possible to examine the strength of associations between variables an important limitation is the decontextualization performed when measuring items (Castro, Kellison, Boyd and Kopak 2010). Here the use of scenarios can be placed in between the decontextualized approach of traditional surveys and qualitative in-depth studies of contextualized experiences and was therefore seen as advantageous. The significance of the situational context could also have been studied in depth using qualitative interviews or observation, but though potentially fruitful these approaches were not selected: observation because the comparison across situations may be difficult since each observed situation is distinct in many ways; interviews because a widespread understanding among childcare professionals, met during the first

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of agreement and disagreement among childcare workers and as an efficient means of collecting data on different arguments for the attitudes held.

phase of data collection was that the particular situation is decisive for one's actions and the existence of such a frame of interpretation made it interesting to approach the context from an outside observer's perspective and examine how the context appeared from this perspective.

In this context, I would like to call attention to a distinction between scenarios and vignettes that has been made throughout the thesis. This distinction has been implemented since scenarios and vignettes though seemingly similar are fundamentally distinct and yield knowledge about different phenomena. Vignettes are used to elicit respondents' judgments, beliefs or attitudes about hypothetical situations. This approach yields contextualized data on normative orientations (e.g. attitudes, values) and is appropriate when one wishes to examine judgments or the attitudes people hold (Monrad & Ejrnæs 2012b: 31). However, this approach does not examine how people have acted or are going to act since conclusions regarding past or future actions cannot be drawn based on answers to hypothetical situations (see Monrad 2012; Parkinson & Manstead 1993). In contrast to this, the use of scenarios is a way of contextualizing responses regarding *past experiences* of the research subjects. Here, questions regard what people have actually experienced and respondents who have never experienced the described situation are omitted from the analysis. The purpose of the scenario-approach is to contextualize, standardize and aid the recall of respondents and not to elicit judgments or attitudes. This is also reflected in the form and length of the text used. Vignettes may be either long or short containing varying degree of detail used to contextualize the judgments of respondents. But because the situation described in scenario-based studies needs to be recognizable to respondents and lead them to associate to prior experiences it cannot be overly detailed, instead it is short and describes only the central features of the situation.

## **Measures in the Scenario-Based Survey**

The length of article *Remembering the Neglected Situation*, reporting on the quantitative scenario-based survey, did not allow for thorough description of the measures employed. Most of the measures in this study are drawn from existing measurement scales, but as the measure of identity was developed for this study, a brief account of the development of this will be offered in the following.

### ***Developing the Measure of Identity***

In the article *Remembering the Neglected Situation*, the quantitative approach to the study of identity developed by Burke and collaborators (Burke & Tully 1977; Burke 1980; Burke & Stets 2009) has been used. As mentioned, this approach conceptualizes identities as meanings attached to the self and therefore the measurement of identity is a measurement of meaning. In order to measure the identity-meanings, it was first necessary to identify the relevant meanings that childcare professionals use to characterize themselves (this part of the study only covered childcare). This was done by conducting 11 individual qualitative interviews with childcare workers and by including an open-ended question about the workers' self-meanings<sup>60</sup> in a larger questionnaire that was gathered for another purpose. 171 professional care-workers answered the open-ended question, most of them indicating

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<sup>60</sup> The question was: What qualities are characteristic for you as a childcare professional?



with a few words how they would characterize themselves. Similar words were grouped together, resulting in 145 different descriptors. Descriptors that had only been mentioned by one or two care-workers were eliminated, leaving 42 descriptors (this was done in order to eliminate idiosyncratic meanings from the measure of the identity). Together with the qualitative interviews, these descriptors were the basis for a quantitative pilot-study with 43 respondents, asking childcare workers to indicate how characteristic each descriptor is for them as a childcare worker (on a scale of 1-7). This pilot-study revealed significant problems with the use of detached descriptors (e.g. caring) since childcare workers felt these to be superficial descriptions of themselves. Since such detached descriptors are also problematic on methodological grounds (see the discussion of interpretation in the article *On a Scale of One to Five, Who Are You?*), brief descriptions of each adjective was included in the measure and the measure was tested again using cognitive interviews. The descriptors included in the final measure were selected both based on the empirical pre-studies, theory and an intention to cover different dimensions of childcare work (based on responses to the open-ended survey question the following dimensions appeared important and were included: action, affect, cognition, communication and relational competence).

## **Trustworthiness and Generalizability**

### *Trustworthiness of the Qualitative Studies*

#### **Vignette-Based Qualitative Interviews**

In the first phase of the data collection (reported on in the article *Professional Disagreement in Relation-Centered Work*), semi-structured individual and focus group interviews were carried out. The focus group interviews were centered on group discussions of attitudes regarding vignettes that were also used in a quantitative survey in this phase of the data collection. The individual interviews were initiated with vignettes and questions regarding the vignettes, but then continued to probe about knowledge about the attitudes of co-workers, management of disagreement amongst the staff and experiences of situations where co-workers perform the work in ways different from or maybe even in conflict with how the childcare worker would have performed the work. The part of the interviews that were focused on the vignettes have played a minor part in the thesis, but were used in the report *Agreement, Disagreement and Development: Pedagogical Professionalism in Day Care Institutions* (Ejrnæs & Monrad 2010) to provide fuller accounts of the attitudes of childcare workers and the rationales behind different attitudes. Thus, it has mainly been the last part of each of the individual interviews that have been used in the thesis (in the analysis that is reported on in the article *Professional Disagreement in Relation-Centered Work*).

Having initiated the interviews with vignettes, it is important to be aware that the vignettes have set the context for the experiences that have come into mind when the interviewees afterward were asked about their experiences with colleagues. The use of vignettes may have had the advantage of aiding recall of significant situations and thus opening for more detailed accounts than might otherwise have been the case. At the same time, the vignettes may of course also have had a context effect<sup>61</sup> by making some memories salient to

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<sup>61</sup> The concept *context effect* is used to describe the impact of the response context on the answers given. Context effects occur, because questions may be interpreted differently depending on the context in which

interviewees and by making other memories appear irrelevant to the issues discussed (Monrad 2012: 205). Since the individual interviews were initiated with a range of different vignettes it is hard to assess the significance of such context effect. However, the use of different vignettes across interviews hold the advantage that one particular context has not been allowed to dominate the interviews, rather a broad array of experiences may have been made salient by the vignettes.

The individual and focus group interviews using vignettes were carried out by the present writer and a group of interviewers.<sup>62</sup> This holds the potential advantage of creating quite different interviewer-effects across the different interactions between interviewer and interviewee, potentially leading to a broader range of experiences articulated throughout the interviews. However, it also holds disadvantages, most notably that the present writer has not been present during the collection of all the interviews and therefore has not experienced the embodied and tacit affective aspects of the interview situation making accurate interpretations of the interviews more difficult. To counterbalance this as much as possible, central passages of the recordings of the interviews have been listened to while analyzing the transcriptions.

### **Semi-Structured Qualitative Interviews**

In the second phase of the data collection, qualitative individual interviews with workers in childcare and eldercare were carried out (these have been used in the article *Would It Kill Them if You Were Sad?* and for development of the questionnaire used in *Remembering the Neglected Situation*). Apart from six interviews in childcare of a more exploratory nature, the same interview guide was used to conduct these interviews across childcare and eldercare. All the interviews in this phase of the data collection were conducted by the present writer. Having been present during all the interviews, I had a more holistic experience on which to draw when interpreting the interviews, particularly in terms of expressions of emotions.

Since the interviewees appeared to hold quite different motivations for being interviewed, these shall briefly be commented upon. Some interviewees volunteered to be interviewed because they wanted to voice their criticism of their working conditions and hoped that the research project might contribute to this aim. Others participated out of empathy for the researcher (no one else from the institution had come forward), due to coincidence (the one who had volunteered to be interviewed was ill), or because the supervisor had recommended it. A more peculiar case was the interviews with two care workers from the same institution who turned out to have an ongoing collegial conflict and here the head of institution might have found it beneficial that they both discussed the conflict with an outsider. Thus, a range of different motives for participating in the research project were present. The interviewed eldercare and childcare workers all appeared very committed to their work and the most significant consequence of these different motives to be interviewed is probably that workers who are not committed to their work have been underrepresented.

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they appear. Context effects are expected to be less critical when questions regard the respondents' experiences than when they regard attitudes (Olsen 2006: 58).

<sup>62</sup> The interviews were carried out in collaboration with Morten Ejrnæs and a group of interviewers: Heidi Sørensen, Anette Stenslund, Anders Sevelsted and Jonatan Kolding Karnøe. Thorough briefings of all interviewers were held and a continuous communication regarding the aims of research and the structure of the interviews occurred during the entire data collection.

Approaching a research arena that is currently under pressure (from cost-containment efforts, new demands, reorganizations (see Ahrenkiel et al. 2012: 15; Dahl 2009: 643)) and requesting to perform interviews on the subjective experiences of people in this field contains the danger that the interviewees may expect changes that the research project cannot fulfill. This ethical concern was dealt with by underscoring to potential interviewees that the research project was mainly part of an academic dissertation, but that findings would be reported on to them when the dissertation was finished and in the case of childcare workers that the findings would also be reported on to the labor union BUPL who had financed a large part of the research project. Further ethical concerns such as securing anonymity and underscoring that interviewees could abstain from answering questions they found unpleasant were of course also undertaken in both phases of data collection.

### **Social Desirability Bias**

It has been an initial consideration, that while qualitative interviews would make it possible to examine emotive experiences in detail, the face-to-face interaction with the interviewer might give a larger social desirability bias than when respondents are replying to an anonymous questionnaire, particularly since the topic of well-being, emotions and emotion management may be experienced as sensitive by research subjects. However, my experience from the qualitative interviews is, that while the interviewees may have tried to communicate a desirable picture of themselves and their profession, they still expressed emotions that could be seen as discrediting (e.g. feelings of powerlessness, emotional exhaustion) and described experiences that may be tabooed and that one interviewee admitted being uncomfortable with and feeling guilty for expressing (e.g. conflicts with colleagues, controversial attitudes towards the sickness absenteeism of colleagues, dislike of children). However, particular experiences may be tabooed in the studied context and my experience that interviewees were willing to talk about themes I regard as difficult such as collegial conflicts and experiences of powerlessness is of course no guarantee that the experiences that actually are tabooed in this setting were expressed. The general picture of the qualitative interviews was, nonetheless, that the interviewees described even intimate emotional experiences in great detail, and thus, that a social desirability bias if present, did not hinder the analysis of difficult and discrediting emotive experiences. Furthermore, one interviewee expressed relief over being able to express frustrations with colleagues without having to take into account the potential consequences that her expressions would have for the future cooperation with other staff members. Here, approaching the interviewees as an outsider seems to have been beneficial.

### ***Trustworthiness of the Scenario-Based Survey Study***

The main difficulty in using scenarios is constructing scenarios that contain enough detail to standardize the situational context across respondents, but do not include more detail than for the scenarios to still appear relevant and recognizable to research subjects. This balance was sought by constructing relatively brief scenarios containing a general description of a type of problem relevant for childcare. In constructing the scenarios, I relied heavily on qualitative interviews and included quotations from these in order to make the scenarios appear more relevant to research subjects. Furthermore, I chose situations where emotion management was likely to be performed. Based on the theoretical assumption that the interaction partner might be significant for the identity processes and emotion management,

I described situations with three different interaction partners: a parent, a child and a colleague. Further, I was careful to avoid descriptors that could offend respondents, for instance gender or ethnicity of a disliked child.

The use of scenarios may increase the internal validity<sup>63</sup> of cross-case comparisons by standardizing the response context and thereby diminishing variations in respondents' frame of reference when responding to the questionnaire. Compared to social psychological research that often uses students as respondents, the use of a sample of childcare professionals to test theoretically derived hypotheses about emotional labor and identity processes in this work should also increase the external validity<sup>64</sup>. In examining processes affecting the well-being of *workers* the use of a student sample would, furthermore, be problematic, since experiences as a student cannot be transferred to the experiences workers might have. To improve the validity and reliability of the study, existing measurement scales have been used when possible, the questionnaire has been kept as short as possible to avoid satisficing<sup>65</sup> and both qualitative and quantitative pre-tests have been performed to test both the structure of the questionnaire and the respondents' understanding of specific questions.

### *Generalizability and Transferability*

The thesis covers both eldercare and childcare, but most extensively so childcare. The thesis has not emphasized the differences between these areas of study, but it is important to be aware that two of the empirical articles are only based on empirical data on childcare and the generalizability of the findings of these studies to eldercare or other areas for that matter remains an empirical question. Of course analytical generalizations<sup>66</sup> may be drawn both to eldercare and to other forms of care work and people work after careful comparisons of the context of the present study and the context to which the results are sought transferred.

Further, the quantitative study based on scenarios places the study in three specific situational contexts and the findings based on these contexts cannot immediately be generalized to other situations or to associations between general measures of the same variables without breaking the logic of using scenarios. Since the contexts in the scenarios have been important in constructing the data, they should be so in the interpretation as well.

### **A Note on Causality**

Theoretically, the relationships between emotional labor, identity discrepancy and well-being examined in the article *Remembering the Neglected Situation* are conceptualized as

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<sup>63</sup> The internal validity can be conceptualized as the validity of the associations found and the inferences made and relates to the comparability of the answers of respondents' and the similarity of the response context (Monrad & Ejrnæs 2012c: 142).

<sup>64</sup> The external validity is the validity of generalizations of associations and inferences made in the study to larger populations (Monrad & Ejrnæs 2012c: 142)

<sup>65</sup> Satisficing is a tendency for respondents to carelessly read and respond to the questionnaire thus diminishing the quality of the responses. The length of the questionnaire influences the tendency to satisfice (Stolte 1994).

<sup>66</sup> An analytical generalization is an appraisal of whether the results, interpretations or inferences made in a study may apply to a different context (Kvale 1997: 228). Another term for analytical generalization is *transferability* that is a theoretical generalization (in contrast to a statistical generalization) (see Thagaard 2004: 191-2; Monrad & Ejrnæs 2012a: 186)

causal. Emotional labor is seen as affecting the identity process causing either diminished or heightened identity discrepancy. Identity discrepancy is then seen as a cause of work-related strain. Ideally, these causal relations would be examined in a longitudinal design making it possible to settle the direction of effects. However, since feedback processes between these factors might occur within a single situation (e.g. well-being affecting the performance of emotional labor) it is quite difficult to make a longitudinal design that would allow for conclusions regarding the direction of effects (without performing a laboratory experiment introducing a whole range of different problems). A cross-sectional design measuring all these factors at one point in time has, therefore, been employed, raising the issue of endogeneity. Thus, feedback processes may be present such that the identity discrepancy for instance affects the respondents' coping including their performance of emotional labor.

When it comes to structural or organizational factors, the feedback from such a coping-process is deemed to be of minor importance, since the structural and organizational factors to a wide extend are beyond the individual's immediate control (even though the individual's experience of these factors may shift due to the coping efforts). However, in terms of emotional labor and identity-processes such feedback mechanisms need to be considered.

Regarding the identity standard<sup>67</sup>, identity-meanings are theoretically understood as relatively stable over time and people are seen as acting to resist changes in their identity (Burke & Stets 2009: 176). However, a large discrepancy between identity-meanings and reflected appraisals over an extended time period is such a strain on the individual, that the individual may be forced to change his or her identity-meanings (Burke & Stets 2009: 180). However, in the day-to-day activities of everyday life people strive to maintain their identity-meanings and will only adjust the identity-meanings after long periods of identity discrepancy (Burke & Stets 2009: 176). Therefore, it is unlikely that the emotional labor on the short run affects the identity-meanings (even though this is possible and perhaps even likely on a longer run).

When it comes to the relationship between on the one hand emotional labor and on the other identity discrepancy and well-being the issue is more complicated. It seems plausible that the worker's degree of identity discrepancy and well-being may affect the emotional labor performed. For instance, workers' who are discontented may perform more emotional labor, especially surface acting (Grandey 2003: 93). Here, my empirical data only warrant conclusions regarding statistical associations and conclusions about causality will therefore only be speculative. However, previous research with a longitudinal design lends support to the assumed direction of causality from emotional labor to well-being (Hülsheger et al. 2010). While no current research is available to support the assumed causal direction from emotional labor to identity discrepancy,<sup>68</sup> previous experimental research has found that

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<sup>67</sup> A longitudinal design ensuring exogeneity of the *identity standard* could be carried out by measuring the identity standard prior to the measurement of emotional labor, reflected appraisals (used to calculate the identity discrepancy) and well-being, since the identity standard is conceptualized as relatively stable. However, using scenarios the identity standard would need to be measured prior to the experience of the situations in the scenarios which would require a long time-span between the two measurement points. Further, such a longitudinal design would require the respondents to answer two questionnaires and since the response rate was already expected to be low (50-60 %), a design requiring such extended participation from the respondents was judged to be untenable, since it would probably lower the response rate even further.

<sup>68</sup> A previous study has found an association between emotional labor (more specifically surface acting) and

identity discrepancy affects affective well-being (see Stets 2007: 216-20).<sup>69</sup>

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identity discrepancy and implied that identity discrepancy affects the performance of emotional labor (Erickson 2008: 277). While this differs from the approach in the article *Remembering the Neglected Situation* it is not in conflict with the theoretical framework suggested in this article, since the identity process is a feedback loop where behaviors (such as emotional labor) are both responses to previous identity discrepancies and affect the situation thereby in turn affecting the occurrence of subsequent experiences of identity discrepancy.

<sup>69</sup> In a laboratory setting, Stets found this to be the case for identity non-verification in a negative direction, whereas identity non-verification in a positive direction resulted in positive emotions. She argues that the unexpected finding of positive responses to identity non-verification in a positive direction is likely to be a consequence of the design of the experiment leading respondents to seek enhancement rather than verification (Stets 2007: 216-7).

## Discussion of Contributions and Further Research

In the following, I shall discuss some of my main research contributions in a broader theoretical perspective. I shall not repeat the conclusions and contributions from each study, but instead focus on some important contributions to the research in this field. In addition, I shall suggest agendas for further research. But first, I shall discuss some tensions between the contributions of some of the articles in the thesis.

### **Tensions between Governmentality and Professional Development through Disagreement**

In the thesis there is a tension between the governmentality perspective used in the article *Would It Kill Them if You Were Sad?* and the focus on possibilities for professional development in the article *Professional Disagreement in Relation-Centered Work*. In the article *Professional Disagreement in Relation-Centered Work*, professional development is taken to be an unproblematic good that ought to be fostered, in particular through a constructive management of disagreement. However, from a governmentality perspective development (whether personal or professional) may be regarded as a somewhat murky ideal, since the call to develop oneself or one's professionalism may contain a governmental logic where employees are called on to take it on themselves to promote the goals of the organization they are working in. Hence, the ideal of professional development is highly political (see McKendall 1993: 102) and from a governmentality perspective it may work to individualize responsibility for organizational ills, since people are held individually responsible for their own development and goal-attainment within the organization (see Bovbjerg 2003; Tynell 2002). The professional development discussed in the article *Professional Disagreement in Relation-Centered Work* is, however, in important ways distinct from the personal development criticized by research inspired by the governmentality perspective.

Before discussing the tension between professional development and governmentality critiques of demands for development among employees, the context for suggesting development through disagreement shall be sketched. The development through disagreement has been advanced in opposition to attempts to secure the quality of work through standardization and centralized control (through manuals to be followed in different situations) (Ejrnæs & Monrad 2010: 45; Ejrnæs 2012: 232-5) and in response to empirical findings of widespread disagreement among professionals in relation-centered work (Ejrnæs 2006; Ejrnæs & Monrad 2010). Hence, this perspective is explicitly critical of standardization of relation-centered work and the related misrecognition of professionals and constitutes a counter-vision of professional development and an alternative avenue for qualifying practice. Thus, the perspective is explicitly normative, attempting to challenge existing ideas about professionalization on a theoretically and empirically informed ground. In contrast to the governmentality perspective that raises a theoretical critique of governmental developments, the development through disagreement perspective is on a practical level, suggesting an alternative path to development.

However, in the light of governmentality critiques of employee development and critiques of organizational change, it may be fruitful to set aside the assumption that professional

development is beneficial and discuss the implications of the professional development through constructive use of disagreement for the working life of care professionals. Here, four concerns are important to address: 1) Organizational change may affirm the power and position of management, 2) Development may be demanding for employees who are required to constantly reflect on and improve their practice, 3) Promoting employee development may entail an individualization of responsibility for the work and the well-being of employees, 4) Professional development in groups may be promoted in order to standardize and streamline the work of the group members. In the following, I shall discuss each of these concerns.

Regarding the first concern, it has been suggested that organizational change holds an inherent tendency to support the power of management through the creation of uncertainty, changes in informal organization and reaffirmation of the management's position and purposes (McKendall 1993).<sup>70</sup> However, the professional development through disagreement is intended to be bottom-up in its form, being controlled by employees and taking the employees' desire for professional development as a point of departure (so saying that development through disagreement should not be initiated without the approval of employees). Therefore, a professional development based on discussions of disagreement among co-workers is not expected to lead to the experiences of misrecognition and augmented management power that may be associated with top-down implemented re-organizations (see McKendall 1993; Dahl 2009: 643). Still, the use of disagreement to develop practice may affect the informal organization of work and thereby unintentionally serve to undermine the solidarity and cohesion among coworkers as well as the potential for collective resistance to management initiatives (cf. McKendall 1993: 98).

To address the second concern raised above, demands of professional development may be taxing for workers who are required to constantly reflect on and improve their practice. Thus, the demand for development through disagreement may constitute a strain on workers who may feel compelled to constantly be able to justify their practice. While this may develop practice (and improve the quality of care), it may be cognitively demanding for workers to change habitual practices and formulate coherent arguments for a practice that may be experience-based and relying on tacit knowledge (see Martinsen 1993: 16-7). Further, it may be emotionally demanding to voice and experience disagreement in a collective context. These concerns are substantial and makes it all the more important that development through disagreement is only initiated when employees feel a desire to engage in professional development and further that employees control the development process themselves.

The third concern raised above regards a mayor criticism of employee development voiced from the governmentality perspective: that development may be associated with an individualization of responsibility for work-related burdens. When employees are managed through their autonomy and through personal development, they may be held individually responsible for their well-being and goal attainment at work and called on to take it on

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<sup>70</sup> McKendall (1993) discusses the implications of planned organizational change for employees. Planned organizational change is defined as "change which occurs in people, technology, structure and/or process, originates from within the organization, is decreed by management, and is profound enough to affect organizational members at minimally the departmental/work team level." (McKendall 1993: 95). To the extent that development through constructive use of disagreement is decreed by management, this form of professional development may fall under the definition of McKendall.



themselves when they are unable to reach goals or when they do not thrive at work (Tynell 2002; Bovbjerg 2003). However, the professional development through disagreement is not expected to individualize the responsibility for development, since it works through collective processes in the work group. Ideally, the discussions of disagreement may even collectivizing the responsibility for professional development and for the quality of the work performed thereby constituting a safeguard against individualization of responsibility for decisions that turn out to be problematic.<sup>71</sup> The approach may, however, still place responsibility for work-related ills with the staff instead of with poor working conditions, lack of resources etc. Here, the development through disagreement does not challenge the fundamental assumption that professional development is necessary and a “cure” for problems in the care provision (rather than structural problems such as lack of time or control), but it runs counter to other kinds of development in so far as it emphasizes employee control.

The last concern raised above regards tendencies of standardization that have been associated with New Public Management. Organizational change and group-based professional development may be inscribed in such tendencies of standardization and streamlining of work performance (see Bovbjerg 2003: 49-51; McKendall 1993: 96). However, in contrast to professional development seeking common values, consensus or a joint effort, the development through disagreement emphasizes the opposite: identifying, legitimizing and discussing disagreement, not to resolve the disagreement but to develop the reflexivity of the practitioners. Hence, variations in the performance of the work may be legitimized through this approach. Further, the discretion of care professionals may be supported, since collective discussions of disagreement may show, that there can be good arguments for a differentiated practice (see Ejrnæs & Monrad 2010: 38-45).

While this discussion does not resolve the tension between development through disagreement and the governmentality critique of employee development, it may clarify the reasons for combining these different perspectives in the thesis. The discussion elucidates on the one hand the distinctiveness of the development through disagreement from other kinds of employee development and on the other hand the distinction between the theoretical critiques raised by governmentality-inspired researchers and the attempt to create a practical and productive counter-vision of professional development.<sup>72</sup>

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<sup>71</sup> Evidently this may of course turn out differently. Power structures in the work group may for instance lead to a placement of responsibility with one or a few workers.

<sup>72</sup> Another way of resolving the tension between the governmentality critique and the ideal of professional development than the one suggested here would emphasize the distinctiveness of personal development from professional development, since the self of the individual to be developed may be conceived as involved in these processes to a different extent. However, even though personal development explicitly aims at including the entire person in the development while this is not the case in professional development, the distinction between these two forms of development may not be that clear cut. Importantly, it is unclear how a professional development in relation-centered work would not also have implications for the more personal dispositions of the individual in question and Bovbjerg (2003: 50), furthermore, finds that employees do not distinguish clearly between their professional and personal development. Hence, the difference between personal and professional development may not be decisive and emphasizing this distinction does not resolve the tension between the governmentality critique and ideals of professional development in a viable way.

## **Complexity or Coherence**

Looking across the articles, some of the conclusions advanced in the different articles may seem contradictory: can joy at the same time be a positive outcome of successful identity processes and a demand that potentially strains workers? Can identity verification at the same time be a source of well-being and a technology of power? I believe that the bold answer to both questions is yes and I do not see the ambiguity in these conclusions as compromising the validity or trustworthiness of the results. Rather this ambiguity should be seen as a consequence of the complexities and contradictions of the social world and the perspectives through which we may examine it. In the thesis, I have revealed and managed this ambiguity by relying on several sources of data (individual and focus group interviews as well as survey data using vignettes and scenarios) and different theories of science (constructivism and realism). Joy is hence analyzed as an outcome of identity processes and as a cultural demand and ideal that creates certain realities. Identity verification is analyzed as a source of well-being at the same time as the significance of power in creating subjectivities seeking verification of particular identities is analyzed. In my opinion, these analyses based on realist and constructivist perspectives, respectively, each provide important insights into the working life of paid care givers and the collegial embeddedness of emotional labor. However, these accounts may not be reconcilable and instead of seeking coherence I believe it is more fruitful for sociological analysis to retain the complexity and irreconcilability. As Law (2004: 1) polemically states, if the social world is an awful mess, then we may need messy approaches in order to describe it. Hence, instead of seeking clarity and congruence of explanations and risk reducing the phenomena we study, we may be better off choosing complex, but ambiguous understandings.

## **Collegial Processes, Emotional Labor and Well-Being**

In this and the following sections, some selected contributions from the articles will be discussed in a broader theoretical perspective. Emotional labor was by researchers initially mainly considered in relation to clients (that is, users, customers, care recipients or relatives of care recipients), but researchers have for some time now called attention to the emotional labor performed towards co-workers, indicating that emotional labor is not only related to the formal object of interactive service work in a narrow sense (e.g. provision of care, service, sales), but has a much broader relevance (Pierce 1995; Poder 2010; Pugliesi 1999; Tschan et al. 2005). While emotional labor may be performed towards both clients and co-workers, it is important to be aware that differences may exist between the norms guiding interactions with clients (in the thesis care recipients and their relatives) and the norms guiding interactions among co-workers. Different kinds of emotional labor may be performed towards these different counterparts and the meaning the emotional labor is ascribed may differ as well. Thus, it has been suggested that workers have greater expressive latitude towards co-workers than clients and accordingly emotional deviance has been found to be more prevalent in interactions with co-workers than with clients, whereas emotional dissonance is more prevalent in interactions with clients (Tschan et al. 2005). That the norms guiding emotional labor performed in interactions with clients and co-workers differ was confirmed in a vignette-based survey of childcare professionals carried out during the writing of this thesis. In this study, empirical indications of differences in norms regarding expression of emotions for interactions with care recipients and relatives of

care recipients compared to the norms regarding expressiveness towards colleagues and one's supervisor were found. Hence, childcare professionals generally felt that they ought to hide their negative emotions from care recipients (children) and relatives of care recipients (parents), but not from colleagues and their supervisor (Monrad 2012: 216-222). These differences in norms for expressiveness towards different counterparts do, however, not mean that the emotional labor performed towards co-workers is irrelevant for the well-being of care workers. It may be that exactly the emotional labor performed towards colleagues may have a tendency to become invisible (to both researchers and research subjects), because it is not related to the formal object of the work and therefore not immediately thought of when considering the work. However, this should not lure us into believing it to be insignificant for the well-being of workers.

In contrast to extant research on emotional labor, that has begun to acknowledge the significance of colleagues as an object for emotional labor, the current thesis has not only examined the emotional labor performed towards colleagues but also the immersion of emotional labor in collegial processes. Colleagues have a broader and much more profound significance for the performance of emotional labor and the way it affects workers than has previously been acknowledged, since colleagues contribute to defining the affective atmosphere, the ideals and norms of expressiveness, place the emotional labor in a meaningful larger context (or fail to do so), provide identity relevant feedback and act in ways that place workers in more or less desirable roles which may necessitate the performance of emotional labor.

The emotional labor among co-workers in institutional care may create an affective atmosphere that eases the emotional labor with care recipients, but co-workers may also be a source of emotional demands that may be a strain on workers. Further, care workers may feel an extensive responsibility for the care provided and one implication of this extensive responsibility is feeling called on to manage the emotions of co-workers in order to improve the care provided. However, it is not only one's own performance of emotional labor that is decisive for one's well-being at work, not even when including the emotional labor one performs towards co-workers. The effort of co-workers, the moods they create and the emotional labor they perform may also influence the well-being of workers. For instance, the contribution of co-workers is significant for care workers' experiences of the work as meaningful and thereby for their well-being. Hence, affective processes among co-workers are vital to include in the understanding of the psychosocial consequences of emotional labor for workers. Such broader implications of collegial processes for associations between emotional labor and worker well-being have largely gone unexamined by emotional labor research, and here lies a main contribution of the thesis.

## **Affections, Not Only Emotions**

Throughout the analysis in the article *Would It Kill Them if You Were Sad?* it became evident that when discussing the impact of emotional labor on workers it is not only relevant to consider affective events (Grandey 2000), work group norms (Grandey et al. 2012) and emotions (that are directed at certain objects), but also the mood and common affective atmosphere among co-workers (that is affections that are not object-related). Whereas the concept of emotions (which are directed at certain objects) is suitable to analyze affective responses to specific persons, events, norms etc., the transmission of moods that may occur

between co-workers is an important condition for emotional labor that is not evident when employing the concept of emotions. Affections spread between people, both in the form of emotions (I become frustrated over the lack of resources because you are frustrated), but also in the form of moods and atmospheres (your depressed mood makes me depressed). Hence, the emotional labor is not only embedded in emotional processes, but also in affective processes that are not object-related and not cognitive and where the individual's intentionality, goal-directed behavior and responses to demands and resources in the environment may be of minor relevance. Instead, such processes may be understood as fundamentally collective and bodily. Atmospheres and moods may be stemming from other individuals (colleagues, supervisors, care recipients and relatives of care recipients), but also from the physical surroundings, the organizational, spatial and temporal ordering of the work and the character of the work (e.g. hairdressing in contrast care for dying patients) (see also the discussion of affect<sup>73</sup> in Pile 2010). Hence, we should be careful not to focus too narrowly on the individual as the source of affections, but also embrace the significance of processes occurring for instance in the work group as a whole where a particular affective atmosphere may prevail (see Fribo 2008) or in interactions where a member of the work group may be in a certain mood (depressed, happy etc.) and in turn affect the mood of other workers. This raises the question of the relationships between non-object related affections such as mood and atmosphere, object-related affections (emotions) and emotional labor and the collective character of these phenomena. An important relationship between emotional labor and mood and atmosphere is, based on the article *Would It Kill Them if You Were Sad?*, that the mood of others and the collective affective atmosphere affect the need to perform emotional labor (because they affect the worker's own mood). Here, the atmosphere could be conceived as a collective flow that may fuel or impede the performance of emotional labor.

Since affective atmospheres constitute the affective context for the performance of emotional labor they may impact on the way emotional labor is performed, the self-feelings related to the performance of emotional labor and the effort required to perform emotional labor. The study of affective atmospheres thus constitutes an important agenda for further research on emotional labor and worker well-being.

In examining affective atmospheres in future studies, researchers might benefit from using methodologies making it possible to observe how colleagues act towards one another, for instance how the culture of positivity finds expression in actual care provision and collegial interactions both during care provision and at staff meetings. Using ethnographic fieldwork embodied dimensions of the collegial embeddedness of emotional labor could be examined. In this context, it may be important to enter into the work place and feel the collective atmosphere oneself (cf. Fribo 2008: 166-7). Such research should furthermore examine the significance of the temporal and spatial arrangement of work for the collegial dynamics related to emotional labor (e.g. architecture, divisions of a department into compartments, transitions between day and night shifts and the similarities and differences in collegial dynamics on these shifts).

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<sup>73</sup> It should be noted that there is a conceptual difference between *affections* as described by Bennett and Hacker (2003: 199) as a collective designation covering emotions, agitations and moods and *affect* as described by Pile (2010: 8) as non-cognitive flows between bodies. I do not rely on the psychoanalytically inspired approach of Pile, but find the idea of non-cognitive flows between bodies useful in understanding phenomena such as affective atmospheres and the transmission of moods.

## **The Contextuality of Emotional Labor**

Throughout the thesis, I have relied on data from qualitative interviews and quantitative surveys. Interestingly, it was a quantitative part of the study that most clearly showed the contextuality of associations between emotional labor and worker well-being (in the article *Remembering the Neglected Situation*). Interpreting the large impact of the situational context on associations between emotional labor and well-being in this study, it seems that the person towards whom one performs emotional labor (and the importance one ascribes to interactions with this person), the purpose of the emotional labor and the characteristics of the particular situation in which the emotional labor is performed all are significant for the well-being of workers performing emotional labor. Here lie both potential theoretical and methodological contributions to existing research on emotional labor that will be discussed in the subsequent sections.

### *Context and Theory*

In terms of theory, research on emotional labor has mainly suggested explanations that are largely independent of the characteristics of the situation in which emotional labor occurs. The finding of large situational differences in the associations between emotional labor and well-being suggests that such general explanations need to be supplemented with explanations taking account of the characteristics of the concrete situation, both in terms of the structure of social interactions (Goffman 1961) and in terms of the meaning ascribed to the situation (Blumer 1969: 2; Thomas & Thomas 1928: 572). Further research should examine associations between emotional labor and worker well-being across different situational contexts and expand upon what dimensions of the situational context might be decisive for the impact of emotional labor on worker well-being. Here, the meaning of emotional labor to workers appears particularly promising.

Related to the significance of the situational context is the occupational context of collegial embedded emotional labor. The current study has examined two such contexts, childcare and eldercare, and future research should expand on the findings from this study by examining the collegial embeddedness of emotional labor in other types of work. Such other types of work should both include work environments where colleagues are co-present much of the time (for instance residential institutions for children and young people, hospitals or hairstylists in large hairdressing salon's) and work environments where cooperation with colleagues may occur but only during minor parts of the work day (for instance teachers or home care workers). Such studies may contribute to clarify the different ways and degrees to which emotional labor may be embedded in collegial relations and the different consequences of this embeddedness for workers.

### *Context and Methodology*

In terms of methodology, the different associations between emotional labor and well-being found across scenarios suggest that the main quantitative approach currently employed where emotional labor is studied using traditional surveys containing general measures of the amount of different kinds of emotional labor performed may be unfit to reveal important processes leading to psychological strains and rewards when performing emotional labor. Since most theoretical accounts of the relationship between emotional labor and well-being

have not emphasized situational factors these have implicitly been deemed irrelevant in a methodology based on general measures. However, the situational differences found in this thesis indicate that it is necessary to create sensitivity towards the situational context and this may have major implications for the design of research on emotional labor. Here, the use of scenarios may be one way to secure the possibility of large scale comparisons across individuals at the same time as remaining sensitive to the context. Qualitative and ethnographic studies may also be beneficial in revealing what situational dynamics to be attentive to. Integrating these different forms of design, data collection and analysis in mixed-methods studies would in particular be a productive approach to developing emotional labor research. Qualitative pre-studies are nonetheless advantageous when using scenarios in order to ground the scenarios in actual experiences and make them recognizable to respondents.

The advantages of scenarios in contextualizing quantitative research makes them promising for a range of research contexts where the associations studied are expected to be dependent on the concrete situation. Notably researchers in the fields of social psychology and social work may benefit from using this method as a viable way to perform quantitative comparisons without resorting to general approaches that neglects the context of the associations studied. However, further research on the validity of the scenario approach (e.g. in terms of recall bias), the advantages and disadvantages with regards to particular kinds of research questions and the relationship between responses to scenarios and to general questions is indicated.

Hence, the empirical finding of situational differences may have important theoretical and methodological implications for future research on emotional labor and questions the validity of using aggregated measures of emotional labor across different situations and professions facing radically different contexts for their daily work.

## **Meaning and Meaningfulness**

In two of the empirical articles in the thesis, concepts of meaning were used to discuss the findings (in *Remembering the Neglected Situation* and *Professional Disagreement in Relation-Centered Work*). The findings in these articles indicate that emotional labor research may benefit from examining closer, what makes the performance of emotional labor meaningful to workers and what might undermine such meaningfulness. Meaningfulness has become an increasingly important concept in Scandinavian working life research (Ravn 2008; Hasle et al. 2008: 95-6; Sørensen 2008: 79) and has also been discussed in the context of care work (Kamp & Munk-Madsen 2008), but does not play a significant part in the international emotional labor research. Further, studies of the meaning workers ascribe to the performance of emotional labor are lacking in research on emotional labor (Sloan 2007: 315-6). There are two levels of significance related to the concept of meaning, that the thesis indicates are important for the working life of people performing emotional labor: the first is the meaning that is ascribed to the performance of emotional labor (how it is interpreted), the second is whether the performance of emotional labor is experienced as meaningful (whether it is experienced as purposeful).

Beginning with the meaning ascribed to the performance of emotional labor, the findings in the article *Remembering the Neglected Situation* indicate, that emotional labor holds

different meaning to workers in different situations and that this meaning may be decisive for the experience of emotional labor. From a symbolic interactionist perspective the meaning ascribed to the situation, self, others, actions etc. is of core concern when understanding how these situations impact on people. The interpretive processes regarding the performance of emotional labor may hence be crucial for what kinds of emotional labor are experienced as straining, when emotional labor is straining (in what situations, with regards to what counterparts) and who emotional labor is straining for (depending on their identification) (see for instance the illuminating analysis by Stenross & Kleinman 1989).

The interpretations (meaning) of emotional labor are also related to the meaningfulness of this labor. The meaning of emotional labor namely relates to the purpose for which it is performed, and here, the emotional labor may become meaningless for workers if they experience it as disturbing important parts of the work (e.g. eldercare workers who have to manage the emotions of discontented relatives may experience this as taking time from the care of care recipients) or meaningful when the emotional labor is experienced as contributing to the purposes the worker perceives as important in the work (e.g. a care worker may see comforting sad care recipients as a central part of the care provision). Ravn (2008: 64) conceptualizes the meaningfulness of a phenomenon as residing in the experience of the phenomena as part of a larger context. Thus, the meaning lies in the connectedness to a larger context. Within this overall framework, Ravn (2008) describes meaningfulness at work as containing four dimensions: realization of strength (styrkerealisering), value creation (værdiskabelse), contribution (bidrag) and productive community (produktivt fællesskab). Realization of strength covers the use of one's particular strengths and talents, while value creation describes the experience of the creating value for others. Further, contribution covers the experience of making a valuable contribution to a greater whole, while productive community covers the experience of making this contribution together with others. Emotional labor may be meaningful and meaningless in all these four senses: emotional labor may be meaningful when one experiences using one's resources and strengths, when one is good at creating a comfortable atmosphere, managing the anger of others etc., and it may be a source of loss of meaning when one has to perform emotional labor, but in doing this becomes unable to use one's strengths (e.g. a SOSU assistant may spend all her time managing the emotions of others and not be able to reflect on the medical or developmental needs of the care recipients that she was trained to take care of). Emotional labor may contribute to the experience of value creation when the emotional labor makes others feel cared for. In the reverse case, emotional labor may be experienced as meaningless if it does not benefit others, if the emotional labor for instance consists of a distanced attitude towards the care recipient and the care worker experiences this as counterproductive for the care recipient. Moreover, the worker may experience contributing when performing emotional labor, i.e. that his or her own effort is important in the care provision. Finally, the emotional labor is not to be conceived as an individual accomplishment, for the work to be meaningful in the sense of being part of a productive community others have to contribute to the same whole. As was found in the article *Professional Disagreement in Relation-Centered Work*, the job performance of co-workers may be decisive for the experience of work as meaningful. Here, the totality of the job performance of co-workers is important, but clearly the emotional labor may be a crucial part of it. If the care worker for instance places an effort in creating a positive atmosphere and a supportive emotional environment for care recipients, co-workers who grumble at care

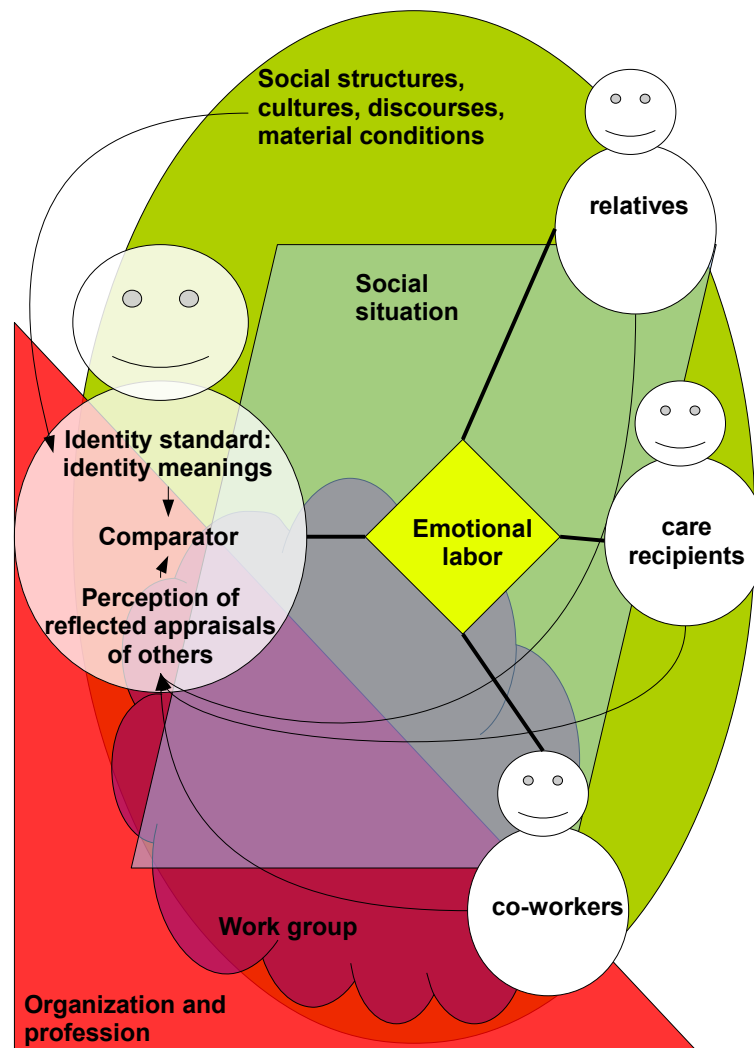
recipients or scold them undermine this effort. This sense of meaningfulness, therefore, includes the collectivity the worker is part of. Thus, performance of emotional labor may affect the experience of one's work as meaningful in different ways, some of them closely related to the collective processes among co-workers. Meaningfulness has been considered an important dimension of a good psychosocial working life (see Ravn 2008: 59) and emotional labor research may, therefore, benefit from considering the implications of emotional labor for meaningfulness further.

## **The Embeddedness of Emotional Labor**

One of the mayor strengths in Hochschilds (2003) original work *The Managed Hearth* was her sociological imagination (Wright Mills 1959): her ability to connect the micro-processes of regulating one's emotions as part of paid labor to larger structures of exploitation and gender. Since then, research on emotional labor has tended to lose sight of the broader structures and mainly focused on isolated aspects of emotional labor processes. Some research on emotional labor is even directly opposing Hochschild's engagement in revealing exploitation and instead provides recommendations for managers on how to recruit the right kind of workers and to improve individual coping with the emotional labor (Erickson 2008: 265). In constrast, it is the argument of this thesis that we need a broad sociological perspective on emotional labor that does not only consider the emotional laborer (and his or her internal processes) or at the most whether the responses of the person at whom the emotional labor is directed are negative or positive (see Côté 2005). Rather than such reduced accounts, we need to examine the embeddedness of emotional labor in social processes, both in terms of social micro-level processes at the interactional level, meso-level processes regarding for instance organizational and professional norms and job structure and larger macro-level processes such as discursive tendencies and structures such as social hierarchies and the social distribution of resources and status (see also Erickson 2008). Throughout the thesis, I have focused on the embeddedness of emotional labor in collegial processes, but the analyses I have performed in doing this have also revealed the embeddedness of emotional labor in social processes in broader senses. The figure on the following page is an illustration of this embeddedness, but should not be taken as a comprehensive model or theoretical synthesis. Instead the model seeks to illustrate some of the layers of social reality that may impact upon emotional labor processes and therefore needs to be examined in sociological studies of the implications of emotional labor. The layers should not be interpreted as homogenous and the processes at and between different layers need not be in agreement.



Figure 3: The embeddedness of emotional labor



With this figure, I attempt to illustrate the interplay of subjectivity, intersubjectivity, social situation, social structure and culture.<sup>74</sup> These are not distinct, and the transparency of the layers of the figure seeks to illustrate this. The large person at the left is the care worker, and within this person is illustrated part of the identity process in order to indicate the significance of the subjectivity of the worker. However, this subjectivity is not separated

<sup>74</sup> In the figure, social structures, cultures, discourses and material conditions are illustrated in the same layer, but these elements are not coincident (though they of course enter into a mutual interplay) and they are primarily placed together in order to avoid making the figure visually chaotic. I discuss dimensions of structure, culture and discourse to some extent in the section “Theories of Identity”. However, here I wish to comment on the relationship between discourse and culture, since these concepts are somewhat overlapping and discourse is sometimes even seen as a particular concept of culture (see the discussion in Bech 2005). Thus, while discourses may be understood as frames of understanding that delimit what can be said, thought and done (Dahl 2000: 12), culture encompass norms, values and beliefs (Bloch 2001: 14-5) and may broadly be conceptualized as systems of meaning (Erickson 2008: 266).

from the social contexts, which is illustrated by the transparency of the person and the arrows from social structures, cultures, discourses, material conditions and from the three other persons. At the core of the model is emotional labor immersed in the web of concrete situated interactions among the care worker, colleagues, supervisors, care recipients and relatives of care recipients. These interactions include affective events and are embedded in situational micro-structures (e.g. feeling rules) and larger social structures (e.g. hierarchies of status), cultures (e.g. a culture of happiness), discourses (e.g. New Public Management, neo-liberalism) and material conditions (e.g. resources), but also in group processes, most notably processes in the work group (e.g. negotiation of disagreement, affective atmospheres), but other group processes may of course also be relevant to consider, for instance group processes among care recipients. Further, the organization within which care is provided importantly affects the interactions and the emotional labor (e.g. through organizational goals, organizational structures such as division of labor, work place hierarchies, degree of autonomy and organizational cultures such as affective norms and expectations) at the same time as the professional norms, ethics etc. do (these are visually placed together but that is not to indicate any mutual connection).

In drawing this broader picture of the embeddedness of emotional labor, I wish to highlight the broader social dynamics that may be important for the experience of performing emotional labor. The present thesis has demonstrated the collegial embeddedness of emotional labor and indicated that a range of social dynamics may be important for the way emotional labor affects workers. Hence, emotional labor researchers are encouraged to expand their imagination and go beyond explanations and dynamics that are limited to intra-individual processes or reductionist accounts of interactional processes.

## **Additional Themes for Further Research**

Throughout the work on the thesis, a range of questions regarding the collegial embeddedness of emotional labor that lie beyond the scope of the thesis have appeared. In this section I wish to highlight a few additional agendas for further research related to the collegial embeddedness of emotional labor (without reiterating suggestions for further research made in each of the articles).

### ***Methodological Collectivism***

Throughout the thesis, I have discussed the collegial embeddedness of emotional labor from the perspective of the individual care worker. This focus was chosen to examine the subjective experiences of managing emotions and well-being and was in line with most research on psychosocial work environment and work stressors that has an individual focus. However, examining the collegial embeddedness of emotional labor from an individual perspective has the consequence that one remains oriented towards the individual and may lose sight of the social whole at the work place. Further research might benefit from abandoning this methodological individualism when examining the consequences of emotional labor for workers. Approaching the working life from a collectivist perspective may make it possible to understand the social processes regarding emotional labor to a fuller extent. Here, focusing on the affective atmospheres and moods at the work place appears promising and may provide new perspectives on the emotional labor. Another approach to

such focus on the collectivity could be an organization or company based social capital perspective as has recently been advanced in working life research (Kristensen et al. 2008), as well as an approach inspired by Lysgaard's (2001) classic study of the worker's collectivity. These approaches may reveal processes that promote and undermine the well-being of the work group collectivity, processes that may remain obscure when retaining an individual perspective on the working life. Such a collective framework appears particularly promising in the light of research that has found individual job satisfaction to be influenced by the job satisfaction of trusted colleagues (Agneessens & Wittek 2008: 630), indicating that worker well-being is a much more collective phenomenon than is often assumed.

### *Outcomes Regarding Care Recipients and Relatives*

In the thesis focus has been on the well-being of care workers, but other important outcomes of the collegial embeddedness of emotional labor should also be examined. Particularly, the impact of the collegial embeddedness of emotional labor on outcomes related to the performance of care (e.g. the quality of care) and to the experiences of care recipients is here weighty (e.g. the well-being of care recipients), but outcomes related to relatives of care recipients should also be considered (e.g. satisfaction, confidence). It seems likely that the work group culture significantly affects the well-being of care recipients, but further research is needed to settle to what extent, when, why and how collegial processes affect care recipients.

### *Identity Processes of Self and Other*

Regarding the symbolic interactionist identity approach utilized in the thesis, an interesting research agenda concerns the relationship between emotions deriving from one's own identity processes (from the verification or non-verification of one's identities) and affections deriving from the identity processes of others. As noted by Robinson, Smith-Lovin and Wisecup (2007: 198-9), symbolic interactionist perspectives on emotions tends to emphasize the emotional response to the persons' own identity processes. However, when performing emotional labor the worker may be engaged in the identity processes of others, and the outcomes of these identity processes may in important ways affect the worker, both through direct emotional responses of others that the worker may have to deal with, through desirable or undesirable actions taken by the other person, through empathy or emotional contagion, through attainment (or lack of attainment) of work-related goals etc. Hence, further research should examine the different ways in which emotional labor affects the identity processes of others (e.g. through identity-supportive or identity-threatening emotional labor), and how these identity processes of others in turn affects workers.

### *The Impact of Management*

Another important agenda for further research is the impact of the management and the management structure on the embeddedness of emotional labor. In the thesis, I found it necessary to omit this perspective, but the significance of management in affecting the work place culture, communities among workers, the affective atmosphere and collegial emotion management may be important. In the empirical data in the thesis, heads of departments for instance often seemed to act as buffers or valves for frustrations directed at colleagues and

thereby in important ways affected both collegial dynamics and the performance of emotional labor.

In examining the collegial embeddedness of emotional labor, this thesis has raised more questions than it has answered. Hopefully future research will expand upon the many themes raised in this thesis and contribute to our understanding of the collegial dynamics of caring.

## Conclusions

This thesis consists of four articles with separate aims and conclusions. Together the articles examine relationships between emotional labor and collective processes among co-workers in institutional care settings, as well as the impact of these collective processes and emotional labor on the well-being of care workers. In the following, some main conclusions from each article will be highlighted. Subsequently, it will be shown how the articles, seen as a whole, answer questions centering on different dimensions of the main question: *In what way is emotional labor in institutional paid care work embedded in collective processes among co-workers and how does this embeddedness of emotional labor affect care workers?* Finally, conclusions regarding the theoretical framework and methodology will be drawn.

### Main Conclusions in the Four Articles

*Professional Disagreement in Relation-Centered Work – Emotional Barriers to the Constructive Exploration of Professional Disagreement Among Childcare Professionals:* This article contributes to the overall research question by showing the dependence of the well-being of workers on the emotional labor performed by colleagues and by examining processes of collegial emotion management related to collegial disagreement. Based on the findings of disagreement among childcare professionals, it argues that professional disagreement among colleagues may be conducive to professional development. Therefore, emotional barriers to articulating professional disagreement among colleagues in childcare are examined. The article establishes that childcare professionals find it difficult to express disagreement in relation to their co-workers, partly because of their knowledge that colleagues rely on personal relation-competencies in their work. Consideration for colleagues, confidence in colleagues, social cohesion and a desire to avoid potential conflicts are identified as barriers to the expression of disagreement among colleagues. A desire for abandoning ideals and demands of agreement and for colleagues to express disagreement is, however, also identified. It is concluded that the practice of colleagues – including their emotional labor – may be decisive for childcare workers' experience of working life, since they are not only committed to providing quality care themselves, but also to securing the quality of the entire care provision. The work of colleagues may in this context contribute to the experience of meaningfulness at work and of being part of a productive community.

*Would It Kill Them if You Were Sad? Care Work, Emotional Labor and Happiness:* This article contributes to the overall research question by examining the emotion culture among co-workers and how this culture affects the emotional labor performed and the well-being of workers. It identifies a culture of positivity and joy among childcare and eldercare workers and discusses how this culture affects workers. Positivity appears in three ways in the empirical data: as a mode of identification, as a way of caring and as a norm or demand directed at workers. Workers experienced positivity as necessary in order to perform the job, but also as making the job easier to perform. Furthermore, the mood of co-workers was experienced as contagious. Based on these findings, the article argues that the atmosphere among the staff may be an important precondition for the emotional labor performed

towards care recipients in the way that a positive atmosphere among the staff may facilitate the performance of emotional labor. However, workers also used positivity as a coping strategy when facing high demands and lack of resources and the article raises the concern that positivity in this context may be a strain on workers, potentially hindering the criticism of working conditions and individualizing responsibility for the consequences of increased demands and cost-containment efforts.

*Remembering the Neglected Situation: Emotional Labor, Identity and Context:* This article contributes to the main research question by examining the interrelationship between collegial identity processes, emotional labor and worker well-being. It develops current accounts of the association between emotional labor and strain through the theoretical and empirical analysis of situated identity processes. It is argued that researchers need to be attentive to characteristics of the social situation in which emotional labor is performed, the work-related identity held by workers and the identity-relevant feedback received from others – colleagues in particular – when performing emotional labor. It is proposed that identity discrepancy partially mediates the effect of emotional labor on worker well-being. The proposition is tested in three scenarios and receives support with regards to surface acting in two scenarios. No support is found for a partial mediation of deep acting. Emotional labor is found to be much more dependent on the situational context than has previously been assumed in quantitative research: in three scenarios, three different associations between emotional labor and well-being are found. Based on these results, it is argued that the meaning of emotional labor and its impact on identity processes and well-being may differ across situations and interaction partners.

*On a Scale of One to Five, Who Are You? Mixed-Methods in Identity Research:* This article does not directly contribute to the main research question, but it examines methodological issues that arose during the design and collection of data used in the article *Remembering the Neglected Situation*. The article discusses the interplay of methods, theoretical content and meta-theoretical assumptions in identity research. It is concluded that a quantitative measure of identity necessarily neglects aspects of identification, among them the narrative, performative and embodied quality of identity. However, it is argued that while all the discussed methods may enable the study of some aspects of identity, they will remain blind to other aspects, and therefore a mixed-methods approach may contribute to a more complete insight into identity processes. In this context, the contribution of the quantitative approach of Burke and Tully is to enable the systematic, standardized comparison across individuals and within individuals over time making it possible to identify patterns between identification, actions and experiences in large populations. Drawing on the research tradition following Bourdieu, it is finally argued that mixed-methods may be used to examine both patterns as they are available to the outside observer and the lifeworld of the individual actor thereby allowing for a combination of explanation and understanding.

## **The Collegial Embeddedness of Emotional Labor**

The main research question concerning the embeddedness of emotional labor in collective processes among co-workers in institutional paid care work has served as an umbrella for the articles. Various aspects of this question have been examined in the empirical context of institutional childcare and eldercare, where colleagues to a large extent are present and part of the care provision. In this context, it is particularly evident that the emotional labor

between the worker and the care recipient does not occur in isolation from broader emotional logics and processes. The collective processes among co-workers have been approached as more than a matter of social support (or lack thereof), and through the different articles I have, therefore, focused on collegial emotion cultures, collegial emotion management and identity processes taking place among co-workers. Importantly, the emotional labor performed by childcare and eldercare workers in relation to care recipients, relatives and colleagues was found to be embedded in an emotion culture that emphasizes positivity. This culture may ease the emotional labor performed towards care recipients, however, it may also, at the same time, drain the resources of care workers, particularly when faced with work stressors. In addition, workers were found to manage each other's emotions, both by inducing emotions in colleagues (e.g. having fun with colleagues to create a positive mood), urging colleagues to perform emotional labor (e.g. encouraging them to be in a good mood), and taking account of the emotions of colleagues when considering how and when to discuss professional disagreements (e.g. to avoid that the colleague lose face when bringing up the disagreement). These processes may be supportive of care workers, for instance by supporting their identity management, but may also constitute a source of strain when colleagues demand certain affections and impose negative sanctions on emotional expressions that depart from the norm. Colleagues must, furthermore, be considered a source of feedback in identity processes related to the performance of emotional labor. The consistency or inconsistency between the identity-meanings and the feedback received affects the well-being of the worker when performing emotional labor.

However, the collegial embeddedness was not only present in the emotion culture, emotion management and in identity feedback processes. The mood of colleagues was also experienced as contagious and thereby important for the emotional labor performed and the associated well-being of workers. The transmission of colleagues' negative moods was experienced as making the care work harder to perform, while colleagues' positive and optimistic attitudes were experienced as making it easier to cope with work stressors (e.g. lack of resources). Thus, such moods and affective atmospheres that neither stem from the individual care worker, nor from the care recipient, were significant for emotional labor and worker well-being. However, care workers also emphasized the need to create a positive mood and here the regard for the affective atmosphere in the work group may potentially be detrimental to the working life if it hinders criticism and expression of work-related frustrations.

Finally, care workers' experience of their work as meaningful is dependent on the experience of a productive community where they, together with colleagues, contribute to shared goals. Here, providing care seems to imply a responsibility for the entire care provision and not only one's own effort. Hence, when co-workers act in ways the care worker finds questionable, he or she may feel called on to interfere and it seems that hiding one's emotions in such situations may constitute a strain on workers. Here, the desire to save the face of the colleague may run counter to one's desire to interfere and protect or care for the care recipient.

These conclusions show that emotional labor in institutional paid childcare and eldercare is fundamentally embedded in collegial processes, an embeddedness that has generally been overlooked in the existing research on emotional labor. Emotional labor research has mostly

focused on intra-individual processes or the relationship between the performer of emotional labor and the client, user or customer in relation to whom the emotional labor is performed. In doing this, important parts of the social context in which the emotional labor is performed have been left largely unexamined, in particular work group cultures, collegial relations and dynamics, affective atmospheres and in quantitative research, the situational dynamics in relation to emotional labor. Emotional labor researchers are therefore encouraged to rethink the many different ways in which emotional labor is socially embedded, since this embeddedness is crucial for the working life of people performing emotional labor.

## **Conclusions Regarding the Theoretical Framework and Methodology**

The main research question has been approached from different angles both theoretically, methodologically and meta-theoretically. Common to the different approaches is an intention of broadening the individual focus of much emotional labor research. Hence, I have attempted to include not only the subjectivity of the worker (in terms of identification and well-being), but also situated intersubjective processes (in terms of the interactional context and reflected appraisals), group-level factors (in terms of emotion cultures and productive community) and larger structures (in terms of organizational processes and societal discourses). Through the contributions of the different articles, emotional labor processes from the micro-level to the macro-level have been discussed. The inclusion and connection of micro-, meso- and macro-level processes in relation to emotional labor represents an important contribution – and challenge – to the dominant approaches of emotional labor research that seem to be caught in reductionist explanatory frameworks that often remain on psychological (emotional dissonance, depletion of cognitive resources) or even physiological levels (physical state of tension). Sociological concerns over interactions, group-processes and larger structures are not absent from the sociological emotional labor literature, but sociological concerns are often disregarded in approaches stemming from health psychology and management.<sup>75</sup>

Using different theoretical frameworks (structural, cultural, ritual and symbolic interactionist theories of emotions and governmentality) has been advantageous in making it possible to examine emotional labor at different levels, e.g. the individual's striving for identity verification, the importance of discourse and power in instilling ideals to be strived for and the impact of norms and work group processes in guiding emotion management. The choice of these theories has in part been driven by the empirical analyses and, on the theoretical level, by a desire to understand the collective embeddedness of emotional labor on different levels. Combining these perspectives has been fruitful in providing a fuller insight into the collective embeddedness of emotional labor than would have been possible with any single one of them.

Methodologically, the thesis has contributed to the literature on emotional labor and identity in two main ways: Firstly, by discussing the relationship between Burke and Tully's quantitative approach to identity and a range of qualitative approaches to identity thoroughly it was possible to highlight the pros and cons of different approaches and

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<sup>75</sup> This concern is also raised by Erickson (2008: 265) regarding organizational psychology and the medical literature. For an example of this tendency, see Bono & Vey (2005: 232).



thereby, it is hoped, facilitate novel combinations of methods and a theoretically informed broadened use of the vast methodological toolkit in identity research (see the article *On a Scale of One to Five, Who Are You?*). Secondly, the use of scenarios in quantitative emotional labor research as a way of taking account of the situation in which emotional labor is performed proved successful and may contribute to the abandonment of crude general measures of emotional labor and to the increased consideration of situational processes in emotional labor (see the article *Remembering the Neglected Situation*). The use of scenarios was fruitful in that it gave rise to new understandings of the importance of the situation and the different ways in which emotional labor and well-being may be associated. These findings underscore the attractiveness of the scenario-based survey approach in making quantitative comparisons possible while retaining sensitivity towards the context.

## Summary

### *Caring with Co-Workers: The Collegial Embeddedness of Emotional Labor*

This PhD thesis is about performing paid care work in a collegial context. The thesis focuses on childcare in day care institutions and eldercare in nursing homes. The thesis is submitted as four articles with separate aims and conclusions. Together the articles examine relationships between emotional labor and collective processes among co-workers and the impact of these collective processes and emotional labor on the well-being of workers. The main research question: *In what way is emotional labor in institutional paid care work embedded in collective processes among co-workers and how does this embeddedness of emotional labor affect care workers?* has been an umbrella for the four articles. Theoretically the thesis is inspired by different approaches from the sociology of emotions, particularly structural, cultural, ritual and symbolic interactionist approaches, but the thesis also draws on theories of group processes and a governmentality perspective. The thesis is based on survey and interview data.

The thesis falls in two parts. The first part draws up the framework for the four articles and consists of an introduction of the overall research question, conceptual clarifications, presentation of the empirical context, state of the art, theoretical, methodological and meta-theoretical discussions as well as a discussion of the contributions across the articles and suggestions for further research, and finally, a conclusion. The second part consists of the four articles.

The first article examines emotional barriers to articulating professional disagreement in childcare work. It is shown, that childcare professionals experience it as difficult to articulate their professional disagreement with colleagues and reasons for this are suggested. Professional disagreement is linked to meaningfulness in relation to work, and it is argued that the practice of colleagues including their emotional labor may be decisive for the working life of childcare workers since the work of colleagues contributes to the experience of meaningfulness at work and of being part of a productive community.

The second article identifies a culture of positivity and joy among Danish paid childcare and eldercare workers and it is discussed how this culture affects workers. Positivity appears in three ways in the empirical data: as a mode of identification, as a way of caring and as a norm or demand directed at workers. Positivity and joy was both seen by workers as necessary in order to perform the job, but also as something that made the job easier to perform. The mood of co-workers was experienced as contagious and the atmosphere among the staff seemed to be an important precondition for the emotional labor performed. However, positivity was also used as a coping strategy when facing high demands and lack of resources and here it may be a strain on workers, potentially hindering critique of working conditions and individualizing responsibility for the consequences of increased demands and cost-containment efforts.

The third article develops current accounts of the association between emotional labor and worker well-being through the theoretical and empirical analysis of situated identity processes. The study examines emotional labor, well-being and identity-relevant feedback from colleagues across three situations. The consequences of emotional labor for worker well-being are found to be much more dependent on the situational context than has

previously been assumed in quantitative research. Based on the situational differences found, it is argued that the meaning of emotional labor and its impact on identity processes may differ across situations and interaction partners.

The fourth article is a methodological article, discussing the interplay of methods, theoretical content and meta-theoretical assumptions in identity research. It concludes that a quantitative self-report measure of identity necessarily neglects aspects of identification, among them the narrative, performative and embodied quality of identity. However, it enables the systematic, standardized comparison of individuals making it possible to identify patterns between identification, social position, actions and experiences in large populations. The article calls for the use of mixed-methods in the study of identity in order to obtain a more complete insight into identity processes by examining both patterns as they are available to the outside observer and the lifeworld of the individual actor and thus both explaining and understanding identification.

Based on the four articles, the thesis argues that emotional labor in institutional care is collegially embedded and that this embeddedness in significant ways affect the emotional labor performed and the well-being of workers. This embeddedness has generally been overlooked in research on emotional labor and researchers are therefore called on to rethink the many different ways in which emotional labor is socially embedded, since this embeddedness is crucial for the working life of people performing emotional labor.

## Resumé

### *At yde omsorg sammen med kolleger: Kollegial indlejring af følelsesmæssigt arbejde*

Denne PhD afhandling omhandler betalt omsorgsarbejde der udføres i en kollegial kontekst. Afhandlingen fokuserer på pædagogisk arbejde i daginstitutioner og ældreomsorg på plejehjem. Afhandlingen er indleveret som fire artikler, der har hver deres forskningsspørgsmål og konklusioner. Tilsammen belyser artiklerne forhold mellem følelsesmæssigt arbejde og kollektive processer blandt kolleger og betydningen af disse kollektive processer og det følelsesmæssige arbejde for omsorgsarbejdernes trivsel. Forskningsspørgsmålet: *På hvilken måde er følelsesmæssigt arbejde i betalt omsorgsarbejde i institutioner indlejret i kollektive processer blandt kolleger og hvordan påvirker denne indlejring af det følelsesmæssige arbejde omsorgsarbejdere?* har fungeret som en paraply for de fire artikler. Teoretisk er afhandlingen inspireret af forskellige tilgange fra følelsessociologien, særligt strukturelle, kulturelle, rituelle og symbolsk interaktionistiske tilgange, men afhandlingen trækker også på teorier om gruppeprocesser og et governmentalitets-perspektiv. Afhandlingen er baseret på spørgeskemadata og interview.

Afhandlingen falder i to dele. Den første del skitserer rammen for de fire artikler og består af en indledning, der introducerer det overordnede forskningsspørgsmål, begrebsafklaringer, præsentation af den empiriske kontekst, en forskningsoversigt, teoretiske, metodologiske og videnskabsteoretiske diskussioner såvel som en diskussion af forskningsbidrag på tværs af artiklerne, forslag til videre forskning og en konklusion. Den anden del af afhandlingen består af de fire artikler.

Den første artikel undersøger følelsesmæssige barrierer for artikulering af faglig uenighed blandt pædagoger. Artiklen viser, at pædagoger oplever det som vanskeligt at give udtryk for faglig uenighed med kolleger og artiklen foreslår grunde til disse vanskeligheder. Diskussionen af faglig uenighed forbindes til mening i arbejdet og der argumenteres for at kollegers praksis inklusiv deres følelsesmæssige arbejde kan være afgørende for pædagogers arbejdsliv idet kollegers arbejde bidrager til oplevelsen af mening i arbejdet og følelsen af at indgå i et produktivt fællesskab.

Den anden artikel identificerer en positivitets og glædeskultur blandt danske pædagoger i daginstitutioner og SOSU-medarbejdere på plejehjem og det diskuteres hvordan denne kultur påvirker medarbejderne. Positivitet fremstår på tre måder i det empiriske materiale: som en form for identifikation, som en måde at yde omsorg på og som en norm eller et krav, der rettes imod medarbejderne. Positivitet og glæde bliver af medarbejderne både set som nødvendige for at udføre arbejdet, men også som noget der gør arbejdet lettere at udføre. Kollegers humør bliver oplevet som smittende og stemningen blandt personalet fremstår som en vigtig betingelse for det følelsesmæssige arbejde der udføres. Positivitet bliver dog også brugt som en mestringsstrategi når medarbejderne står overfor høje krav og manglende ressourcer og i denne sammenhæng kan positivitetskulturen være en belastning for medarbejderne, idet den potentielt hindrer kritik af arbejdsvilkårene og individualiserer ansvaret for konsekvenserne af forøgede krav og besparelsesforanstaltninger.

Den tredje artikel udvikler eksisterende forståelser af sammenhængen mellem følelsesmæssigt arbejde og medarbejder trivsel gennem en teoretisk og empirisk analyse af situerede identitetsprocesser. Gennem et empirisk studie belyses følelsesmæssigt arbejde,

trivsel og identitets-relevant feedback fra kolleger i tre situationer. Studiet finder, at konsekvenserne af følelsesmæssigt arbejde for medarbejdertrivsel er langt mere situationsafhængige end kvantitativ forskning hidtil har antaget. På baggrund af de fundne situationelle forskelle argumenteres der for at den mening, som det følelsesmæssige arbejde tilskrives, og betydningen af det følelsesmæssige arbejde for identitetsprocesser kan variere på tværs af situationer og interaktionspartnere.

Den fjerde artikel er en metodisk artikel, der diskuterer samspillet mellem metoder, teoretisk indhold og videnskabsteoretiske antagelser i identitetsforskning. Artiklen konkluderer at et kvantitativt selv-rapporterings mål for identitet nødvendigvis negligerer aspekter af identifikation, blandt dem den narrative, performative og kropsliggjorte karakter af identitet. Tilgængæld muliggør et sådant mål systematisk, standardiseret sammenligning af individer, hvilket gør det muligt at identificere mønstre imellem identifikation, sociale positioner, handlinger og oplevelser i store populationer. Artiklen efterspørger brug af mixed-methods i studiet af identitet med det formål at opnå en mere fuldstændig forståelse af identitetsprocesser ved både at undersøge individernes livsverden og mønstre som de fremstår for et udefra-perspektiv og dermed både forstå og forklare identifikation.

På baggrund af de fire artikler argumenteres der for at følelsesmæssigt arbejde i omsorgsinstitutioner er kollegialt indlejret og at denne indlejring på afgørende vis påvirker det følelsesmæssige arbejde og medarbejdernes trivsel. Denne indlejring er generelt blevet overset i forskning i følelsesmæssigt arbejde og forskere opfordres derfor til at gentænke de mange forskellige måder hvorpå følelsesmæssigt arbejde er socialt indlejret, siden denne indlejring er yderst vigtig for arbejdslivet for de som udfører det følelsesmæssige arbejde.

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## PART 2 ARTICLES

### Article 1:

Monrad, M. (2010): Faglig uenighed i relationsarbejde - følelsesmæssige barrierer for konstruktiv udnyttelse af faglig uenighed blandt pædagoger (Professional Disagreement in Relation-Centered Work – Emotional Barriers to the Constructive Exploration of Professional Disagreement Among Childcare Professionals). *Tidsskrift for Arbejdsliv*, 12(3): 87-101.

### Article 2:

Monrad, M. (Manuscript submitted to *Work and Occupations*): Would It Kill Them if You Were Sad? Care Work, Emotional Labor and Happiness.

### Article 3:

Monrad, M. (Manuscript submitted to *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology*): Remembering the Neglected Situation: Emotional Labor, Identity and Context.

### Article 4:

Monrad, M. (Manuscript submitted to *Acta Sociologica*): On a Scale of One to Five, Who Are You? Mixed-Methods in Identity Research.