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Emotional Regulation, Work Engagement, and In-Role Performance: Evidence from University Lecturers

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Abstract: Lecturers frequently encounter emotional demands in their daily academic responsibilities, including teaching, mentoring, research, and administrative tasks. These demands require them to manage their emotional expressions in ways that support effective professional performance. Emotional regulation, therefore, becomes an important psychological process that shapes how lecturers' function in their roles. This study examines how two emotional regulation strategies, surface acting and deep acting, influence lecturers' in-role job performance. It also analyses the mediating role of lecturers' engagement, represented by vigour, dedication, and absorption. A quantitative design was employed by distributing an online survey to 271 lecturers at private universities in Central Java, Indonesia, and the data were analysed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM). The findings show that deep acting enhances lecturers' engagement and in-role performance, whereas surface acting reduces engagement and weakens performance. Mediation analysis indicates that vigour and dedication significantly transmit the effects of emotional regulation on in-role performance, while absorption does not play a mediating role. These results suggest that authentic emotional expression supports higher motivation and energy, which contribute to better job performance, whereas suppressing or faking emotions strains emotional resources and reduces effectiveness. The study highlights the distinct roles of emotional regulation strategies and engagement dimensions in shaping lecturers' professional outcomes. These insights can help universities develop work environments that support emotional well-being and maintain lecturer performance.

Keywords: Emotional regulation, Surface acting, Deep acting, Work engagement, In-role performance

1 INTRODUCTION

Lecturers often face complex emotional demands arising from teaching, mentoring, research, and administrative responsibilities. These demands require them to express emotions in ways that support professional expectations, making emotional regulation an essential component of their daily work. Emotional regulation can be understood as the process of regulating emotional experiences and expressions in professional settings, typically enacted through two strategies: surface acting refers to modifying external emotional expressions without altering one's true feelings, whereas deep acting involves consciously changing internal emotions to match the expected emotional display (Hoschchild, 1983). These strategies shape how educators interact with students and colleagues and influence how they respond to academic challenges.

In higher education, lecturers frequently encounter complex emotional expectations due to their roles in teaching, mentoring, conducting research, and participating in administrative activities. In addition to technical proficiency, adequate emotional control is necessary to meet these expectations. While emotional regulation has been widely explored in service-oriented fields, its application in academic contexts remains underdeveloped and continues to attract scholarly interest

Work engagement plays an important role in linking emotional regulation strategies to job performance. Underpinning the Job Demands and Resources model, emotional regulation is conceptualized as a personal asset that fosters motivation, which manifests in the forms of vigour, dedication, and absorption. These

three dimensions illustrate how educators commit their energy and attention to their professional responsibilities, supporting long-term effectiveness. Prior studies have indicated that deep acting is frequently associated with beneficial outcomes such as increased engagement and a sense of authenticity (Humphrey et al., 2015; Lazányi, 2010; Vinahapsari et al., 2024), whereas surface acting has been connected to negative consequences like emotional fatigue and psychological withdrawal (Choi et al., 2019; Jeung et al., 2018; Li et al., 2017; Sousan et al., 2022; Yikilmaz et al., 2024).

This study explores the relationship between surface acting, deep acting, work engagement, and in-role performance among university lecturers. It also examines whether work engagement explains how emotional regulation influences performance. The research focuses on private universities in Indonesia, where lecturers often face emotional and structural challenges. By viewing engagement as a psychological link, the study contributes both theoretically and practically to the understanding of emotional regulation in education. The findings are intended to inform institutional strategies for enhancing lecturer well-being, fostering motivation, and promoting resilience within academic environments.

1.1 Emotional Regulation and Work Engagement

Emotional regulation describes how employees regulate their emotional displays to meet organizational expectations (Hoschchild, 1983). Two main strategies are commonly examined. Surface acting involves faking or suppressing emotions, creating emotional dissonance that often leads to strain. Deep acting involves internal effort to genuinely experience the required emotion, resulting in more authentic interactions.

Previous studies show that surface acting tends to reduce employees' motivational states, including energy, enthusiasm, and psychological involvement (Choi et al., 2019; Jeung et al., 2018). Because surface acting consumes emotional resources, employees may experience lower vigour, reduced dedication, and weakened cognitive immersion. In contrast, deep acting is often associated with positive outcomes such as authenticity, meaningful interaction, and higher engagement (Humphrey et al., 2015; Lazányi, 2010; Vinahapsari et al., 2024). When individuals regulate emotions more genuinely, they are more likely to feel energized, committed, and absorbed in their work. Based on this reasoning, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H1: Surface acting negatively affects vigour.
H2: Surface acting negatively affects dedication.
H3: Surface acting negatively affects absorption.
H4: Deep acting positively affects vigour.
H5: Deep acting positively affects dedication.
H6: Deep acting positively affects absorption.

1.2 Work Engagement and In-Role Performance

Work engagement reflects a positive and fulfilling work-related state, comprising vigour, dedication, and absorption (Schaufeli et al., 2006). Vigour represents energy and resilience; dedication refers to enthusiasm and meaningful involvement; and absorption describes deep concentration in work. Prior research has demonstrated that engaged employees tend to exhibit better performance, particularly when they experience strong energy and emotional commitment (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007).

Empirical findings show that vigour and dedication consistently predict higher in-role performance, as energized and committed employees are more likely to invest effort, display persistence, and meet job expectations. Absorption, however, produces more mixed results, as being deeply immersed in tasks does not always align with measurable performance outcomes. Thus, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H7: Vigour positively affects in-role performance.
H8: Dedication positively affects in-role performance.
H9: Absorption positively affects in-role performance.

1.3 Work Engagement as a Mediator

Work engagement is theorized within the Job Demands–Resources model as a psychological mechanism that links personal resources, including emotional regulation strategies, to performance outcomes. When individuals use deep acting, they may experience increased motivation and meaningful involvement, which can strengthen performance. Conversely, surface acting may reduce engagement and weaken performance.

Prior studies confirm that engagement often functions as a mediator between emotional processes and work outcomes, particularly through the motivational components of vigour and dedication. Absorption, however, frequently shows non-significant or inconsistent mediating patterns. Based on this theoretical

and empirical background, the following mediation hypotheses are proposed:

H10: Vigour mediates the relationship between emotional regulation (surface acting, deep acting) and in-role performance.

H11: Dedication mediates the relationship between emotional regulation (surface acting, deep acting) and in-role performance.

H12: Absorption does not significantly mediate the relationship between emotional regulation and in-role performance

2 METHODS

2.1 Research Design

This research employed a quantitative approach, using a survey method to collect data from lecturers at private universities in Central Java, Indonesia. Respondents were chosen through purposive sampling based on specific inclusion criteria and their availability to participate. The conceptual framework, presented in Figure 1 below.

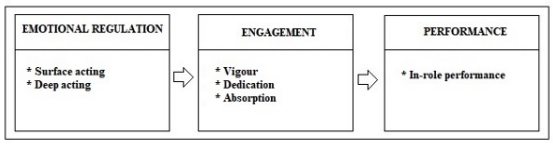

Figure 1. Conceptual Research Framework

Figure 1 illustrates how work engagement mediates the link between emotional regulation and job performance. The novelty of this study lies in positioning work engagement as the mediating variable in this relationship.

2.2 Participants and Sampling

Two hundred seventy-one participants were selected using a purposive sampling technique. The inclusion criteria focused on lecturers actively working in teaching roles. To calculate the minimum sample size, a power analysis was conducted using G*Power. Based on a two-tailed test with a medium effect size of 0.3, an alpha level of 0.05, and a statistical power of 0.95, the analysis indicated a minimum of 138 participants.

Figure 2 illustrates the characteristics of respondents in this study. The gender category is divided into two types, namely male and female. In addition, the age category is divided into four age ranges, namely more than 20 years less than 30 years, more than 30 years less than 40 years, more than 40 years less than 50 years and more than 50 years.

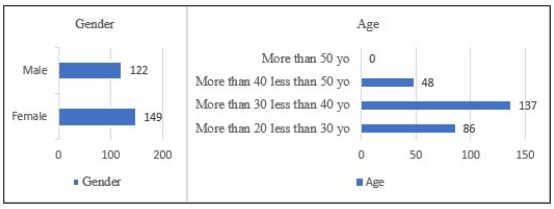

Figure 2. Respondent Characteristic (N=271)

Referring to data in Figure 2, N=271, the gender profile shows that 45 per cent of respondents are male and 55 per cent are female. Furthermore, in the age profile, the majority of respondents fall within the age range of 30 to 40 years, with a percentage of 51%.

2.3 Data Collection Procedure

Data were collected through an online questionnaire comprising four sections: demographic background, emotional regulation strategies, work engagement, and in-role job performance. Emotional regulation was assessed using scale items adapted from the work of Brown (2012), which distinguish between surface acting and deep acting. Measures of work engagement were derived from Schaufeli et al. (2006)'s UWES. In-role performance was measured using indicators developed by Goodman & Svyantek (1999).

2.4 Data Analysis Technique

Data analysis was carried out using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) with the help of SmartPLS software. The analysis followed a two-step approach, starting with the evaluation of the measurement model and then proceeding to assess the structural model.

3 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Measurement Model Analysis

The measurement model was evaluated by examining the reliability and convergent validity of each latent construct. Convergent validity was assessed through standardized factor loadings, average variance extracted (AVE), and composite reliability (CR). Items with loading values below 0.70 were excluded from the analysis to ensure indicator reliability (Hair et al., 2021). Table 1 presents the study's overall convergent validity and reliability test findings.

Table 1 provides a summary that all constructs demonstrated composite reliability values above 0.70, and AVE values exceeded the minimum threshold of 0.50. These results confirm that the constructs exhibit satisfactory internal consistency and adequate convergent validity, supporting the use of the measurement model for further structural analysis.

Table 1. Convergent Validity and Reliability

Construct	CA	CR	AVE
Surface acting	.893	.921	.701
Deep acting	.784	.874	.698
Vigour	.815	.890	.729
Dedication	.817	.916	.844
Absorption	.793	.876	.703
In-role performance (IRP)	.858	.921	.702

Source: Authors' Analysis using PLS Algorithm

3.2 Structural Model Analysis

The suggested theories were tested using structural model analysis, both directly and indirectly. Tables 2 and 3 show the direct links between the variables, while Table 4 describes the indirect impacts, including the mediation of work engagement. Higher education institutions looking to improve university lecturer's performance using engagement-driven emotional regulation techniques can benefit from these findings, which also empirically corroborate the theoretical approach.

Table 2 summarizes the statistical relationships between emotional regulation strategies and the three components of work engagement. The findings indicate that surface acting is consistently associated with negative outcomes across all engagement dimensions. Specifically, lecturers who rely on surface acting report significantly lower levels of energy, commitment, and immersion in their work. In contrast, deep acting demonstrates a strong positive association with each engagement component. Those who regulate their emotions more authentically tend to experience greater energy ($\beta = 0.235$), a stronger emotional bond with their work ($\beta = 0.278$), and higher cognitive involvement ($\beta = 0.324$). These results suggest that the way lecturers manage their emotions plays a substantial role in shaping how engaged they feel at work.

Table 3 presents the influence of each dimension of work engagement on lecturers' in-role performance. The results show that vigour, which reflects work energy and persistence, has the strongest and most significant impact on performance ($\beta = 0.403$, $p < .001$). Likewise, dedication, which involves emotional involvement and enthusiasm, also contributes positively to performance, although at a lower magnitude ($\beta = 0.368$, $p < .001$).

However, absorption, which refers to being fully concentrated and engrossed in work, does not show a statistically significant effect ($\beta = 0.107$, $p = .072$). This suggests that being deeply focused on tasks might not directly translate into measurable job performance, at least within the evaluation criteria considered in this study. The data highlight that motivational aspects like energy and commitment are more critical for performance outcomes than cognitive immersion alone.

Table 4 outlines the mediating role of work engagement in the relationship between emotional regulation strategies and job performance. The data show that surface acting leads to negative indirect effects on performance through vigour ($\beta = –0.105$) and dedication ($\beta = –0.073$), both statistically significant. This suggests that suppressing emotions can reduce energy and emotional commitment, which in turn undermines job performance.

On the other hand, deep acting shows significant positive indirect effects through vigour ($\beta = 0.095$) and dedication ($\beta = 0.102$). These findings highlight that when lecturers regulate their emotions authentically, they are more energized and emotionally engaged, leading to improved performance.

In both emotional regulation strategies, absorption does not significantly mediate the effect on performance. This implies that cognitive focus alone is insufficient to drive performance outcomes without the emotional and motivational support provided by vigour and dedication.

3.3 Discussion

This study examined how university lecturers' emotional regulation strategies affect in-role job performance, with work engagement as a mediating variable. The discussion integrates three key theoretical perspectives (e.i., emotional regulation theory, job demands-resource (JD-R) theory, and self-determination theory) to interpret the direct and indirect effects among variables.

3.3.1 Emotional Regulation Strategies on Work Engagement

This study provides clear evidence that not all emotional regulation strategies yield the same outcomes

Table 2. The Effect of Emotional Regulation Strategies on Lecturers' Work Engagement

Path	β	Std Dev.	T-Value	P-Value	Interpretation
Surface acting → Vigour	-.262	.064	4.114	.000	Significant negative effect
Surface acting → Dedication	-.197	.055	3.597	.000	Significant negative effect
Surface acting → Absorption	-.281	.059	4.769	.000	Significant negative effect
Deep Acting → Vigour	.235	.067	3.511	.000	Significant positive effect
Deep acting → Dedication	.278	.058	4.799	.000	Significant positive effect
Deep acting → Absorption	.324	.055	5.914	.000	Significant positive effect

Source: Authors' Analysis using PLS Bootstrapping

Table 3. The Effect of Work Engagement Dimensions on Lecturers' In-Role Performance

Path	β	Std Dev.	T-Value	P-Value	Interpretation
Vigour → IRP	.403	.067	5.975	.000	Strong positive effect, significant
Dedication → IRP	.368	.064	5.737	.000	Moderate positive effect, significant
Absorption → IRP	.107	.060	1.797	.072	Not statistically significant

Source: Authors' Analysis using PLS Bootstrapping

Table 4. Indirect Effects of Emotional Regulation on In-Role Performance through Work Engagement

Path	β	Std Dev.	T-Value	P-Value	Interpretation
Surface acting → Vigour → IRP	-.105	.033	3.216	.001	Significant negative indirect effect
Surface acting → Dedication → IRP	-.073	.023	3.141	.002	Significant negative indirect effect
Surface acting → Absorption → IRP	-.030	.018	1.676	.094	Not significant
Deep acting → Vigour → IRP	.095	.030	3.138	.002	Significant positive indirect effect
Deep acting → Dedication → IRP	.102	.028	3.635	.000	Significant positive indirect effect
Deep acting → Absorption → IRP	.035	.020	1.747	.0081	Not significant

Source: Authors' Analysis using PLS Bootstrapping

when it comes to work engagement. Among university lecturers in Central Java, those who engaged in deep acting consistently reported higher levels of engagement across all three dimensions: vigour, dedication, and absorption. The strength of these relationships, indicated by significant beta coefficients (vigour: $\beta = 0.245$, dedication: $\beta = 0.265$, absorption: $\beta = 0.276$), supports the idea that when emotional expressions feel genuine, they energize rather than exhaust.

This outcome is aligned with both emotional regulation theory and self-determination theory. Deep acting supports the lecturer's sense of autonomy and fosters meaningful connections with others, which are key psychological needs. When these needs are met, lecturers are more likely to be intrinsically motivated and emotionally invested in their work. In the context of the JD-R model, deep acting operates as a personal resource that offsets job demands and enhances engagement.

By contrast, surface acting appears to deplete psychological resources. The data reveal consistent negative effects across vigour ($\beta = –0.261$), dedication ($\beta = –0.191$), and absorption ($\beta = –0.294$). Lecturers who frequently rely on surface acting may feel emotionally strained, disconnected, and less enthusiastic about their roles. This pattern reflects emotional dissonance and is often accompanied by reduced motivation, as surface acting undermines feelings of authenticity and control, two critical components of self-determination.

The difference between these two strategies can be explained by how each affects the satisfaction of basic

psychological needs. Deep acting enhances a sense of purpose and relational closeness, allowing lecturers to feel aligned with their work. Surface acting, on the other hand, restricts personal expression and distances individuals from both their emotions and others, gradually eroding engagement.

Given these insights, higher education institutions would benefit from recognizing emotional regulation as more than a private coping mechanism. Instead, it should be viewed as a professional skill that influences the broader academic environment. Fostering conditions that support deep acting (e.i., providing autonomy, encouraging authenticity, and reducing unnecessary emotional strain) can help lecturers stay motivated, reduce the risk of burnout, and stay meaningfully engaged in their roles.

3.3.2 Work Engagement on In-Role Job Performance

This study finds that not all dimensions of work engagement contribute equally to in-role job performance. Among the three components, vigour shows the strongest positive effect ($\beta = 0.476$, $p < 0.001$), suggesting that energy and resilience play a central role in helping lecturers carry out their professional duties. Dedication also demonstrates a significant effect ($\beta = 0.247$, $p < 0.001$), indicating that personal commitment and enthusiasm support higher levels of performance. In contrast, absorption does not have a statistically significant impact ($\beta = 0.099$, $p = 0.095$), implying that being deeply focused on work does not automatically lead to better outcomes.

Lecturers who report high vigour are more likely to engage in their tasks with persistence and a strong sense of drive. This capacity is essential in an academic environment where teaching, research, and administrative duties can be demanding. Similarly, when lecturers feel dedicated, namely emotionally connected to their work and its broader purpose, they tend to invest more effort, take initiative, and maintain a sense of responsibility toward student learning and institutional goals.

However, the lack of a significant link between absorption and performance suggests that being mentally immersed in tasks does not always result in effective or measurable job execution. In practice, lecturers may spend substantial time preparing teaching materials, engaging with academic literature, or working on research which involves deep concentration, but these activities may not directly align with how performance is evaluated by institutions.

These findings are consistent with the job demands-resources (JD-R) model, which highlights vigour and dedication as key motivational elements that help convert available resources into tangible work outcomes (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007). Absorption, on the other hand, may serve more as a subjective experience of engagement rather than a driver of observable performance. In addition, from a self-determination theory perspective, both vigour and dedication reflect the presence of autonomous motivation, especially when lecturers feel competent in their roles, experience autonomy, and maintain meaningful connections in their work environment.

These psychological conditions support sustained effort and high-quality performance. Absorption without those underlying motivations may lack direction or alignment with performance standards, even when the lecturer appears highly engaged in their tasks.

For higher education institutions, these results point to an important distinction. Efforts to improve lecturer performance should prioritize the motivational and energetic aspects of engagement namely vigour and dedication. Simply increasing task involvement or focus (i.e., absorption) may not be sufficient. Strategies that support autonomy, clarify goals, and emphasize the value of academic work are more likely to translate into effective performance and long-term institutional benefit.

3.3.3 The Mediating Role of Work Engagement

This study finds that work engagement functions as an important mediator in the relationship between emotional regulation strategies and job performance. Each dimension of engagement (vigour, dedication, and absorption) contributes differently to this relationship.

Lecturers who engage in deep acting experience meaningful indirect effects on performance through both vigour ($\beta = 0.116$, $p < 0.001$) and dedication ($\beta = 0.066$, $p = 0.002$). These findings indicate that authentic emotional expression helps sustain energy and emotional commitment in academic work. When lecturers perceive their roles as meaningful and consistent with their values, they tend to be more motivated and resilient in carrying out their duties. This aligns with the job demands and resources theory, which suggests that personal resources such as emotional authenticity can increase engagement and lead to improved performance.

In contrast, absorption does not show a significant mediating effect ($\beta = 0.027$, $p = 0.112$). Although absorption involves deep focus and involvement in work

tasks, it may not directly relate to outcomes valued by institutions. Lecturers may become highly engaged in specific academic tasks such as reading or research preparation, but these activities do not always translate into measurable job performance. This suggests that energy and emotional dedication are more relevant to performance than cognitive immersion alone.

Surface acting shows a different pattern. It has a negative indirect effect on performance through vigour ($\beta = -0.124$, $p < 0.001$) and dedication ($\beta = -0.047$, $p = 0.005$), but not through absorption ($\beta = -0.029$, $p = 0.107$). These results imply that suppressing or faking emotions can drain emotional resources and reduce motivation. When lecturers rely on surface acting, they are more likely to experience fatigue and emotional strain, which undermines their ability to stay engaged and perform effectively. This finding supports previous research that describes surface acting as emotionally costly and harmful in the long term.

Self-determination theory provides further explanation for these patterns. Deep acting supports the fulfilment of essential psychological needs such as autonomy and relatedness by allowing lecturers to express themselves in ways that feel authentic and connected to their professional identity. This contributes to intrinsic motivation and long-term persistence. On the other hand, surface acting is often driven by external expectations and leads to a disconnect between inner values and outward behaviour. This disconnection hinders psychological need satisfaction and contributes to reduced engagement and performance.

These findings are particularly relevant in academic settings, where emotional demands are common but often underestimated. Lecturers are expected to manage teaching, research, mentoring, and collegial responsibilities, all of which require emotional effort. How they regulate their emotions while managing these tasks has a direct impact on how well they engage and perform.

Rather than viewing engagement as a fixed personal trait, this study presents it as a psychological process that connects emotional regulation with performance outcomes. For institutions seeking to support faculty effectiveness, it is important to foster conditions that allow for authentic emotional expression, encourage motivation, and protect emotional resources. Especially in environments where demands are high and resources are limited, supporting internal psychological processes becomes essential for long term academic resilience and effectiveness.

4 CONCLUSIONS

This study highlights the central role of emotional regulation and work engagement in shaping the job performance of university lecturers. The findings show that deep acting, as an authentic emotional strategy, contributes positively to both engagement and in-role performance, particularly through increased vigour and dedication. In contrast, surface acting, which involves emotional suppression or faking, tends to weaken engagement and reduce performance outcomes. Notably, absorption does not significantly influence performance, either directly or as a mediator, suggesting that cognitive immersion alone is insufficient without the support of emotional energy and commitment.

These results reinforce the idea that work engagement is not a single, uniform experience but a multidimensional process that channels emotional resources into job effectiveness. The evidence supports theoretical perspectives such as the job demands and resources model and self-determination theory, both of which emphasize the importance of personal resources and psychological need satisfaction in driving motivation and performance.

For higher education institutions, these insights carry practical relevance. Supporting lecturers' emotional well-being is not only beneficial for individual resilience but also for institutional performance. Policies and professional development programs that foster emotional authenticity, autonomy, and meaningful engagement can strengthen motivation, reduce burnout, and improve academic outcomes. In environments where emotional labor is often overlooked, recognizing and addressing its impact becomes essential to building a sustainable and effective academic workforce.

4.1 Implications

Theoretical Implications. This research enriches the literature on emotional regulation in the academic context by integrating three theoretical perspectives. Emotional regulation theory explains how different emotional strategies lead to divergent outcomes, while JD-R Theory frames emotional regulation as a resource that promotes engagement and performance. Self-determination theory further clarifies how deep acting supports intrinsic motivation, leading to sustainable well-being and effectiveness. By combining these frameworks, the study offers a more holistic understanding of how emotional processes shape academic resilience.

Practical Implications. For Universities. Higher education institutions need to acknowledge emotional regulation as an essential professional competence that contributes to effective teaching and lecturer resilience. To foster this skill, universities should incorporate emotional regulation training, especially deep acting, into faculty development initiatives, cultivate supportive work settings that encourage autonomy, collaboration, and psychological safety, and consistently assess lecturer engagement and well-being as part of academic quality assurance efforts.

For Lecturers. Lecturers should be encouraged to develop personal awareness of how their emotional regulation strategies impact their engagement and teaching effectiveness. Deep acting can be strengthened through reflective teaching, emotional awareness, and empathy-based communication. Managing work demands with proactive coping strategies also helps maintain energy and commitment. Emotional regulation should be seen not as emotional suppression, but as aligning one's personal values with professional responsibilities.

For Students. Students are indirectly affected by how lecturers manage their emotions, as emotional expressions shape the classroom climate. Student feedback should include reflections on emotional atmosphere and lecturer engagement. Emotional literacy programs can help students better understand and respond to emotional dynamics in class, fostering a more supportive environment. When lecturers are emotionally engaged, it boosts students' motivation and well-being highlighting the vital role of emotional regulation in effective learning.

For Government and Policy Makers. Government bodies responsible for higher education should recognize emotional regulation as a core teaching competency and include it in national professional standards. Policies should support balanced workloads and prioritize lecturer well-being as part of performance evaluations. In addition, funding should be directed toward research and training programs that integrate emotional resilience and engagement strategies into broader higher education reforms.

For Industry. The industry, particularly sectors collaborating with universities, can benefit from recognizing emotional regulation as a valuable competency in academic–industry partnerships. Companies engaged in joint research, internships, or training programs with universities should provide environments that respect and support the emotional well-being of academic staff involved. Emotional regulation skills, especially deep acting, can enhance the quality of industry–academia collaboration by fostering clear communication, constructive feedback, and sustained engagement in long-term projects. Furthermore, industry partners can co-develop professional development initiatives with universities, focusing on resilience, adaptability, and collaborative problem-solving. This approach not only strengthens partnerships but also ensures that the academic workforce remains motivated, innovative, and capable of delivering outcomes that meet both educational and industry needs.

By addressing these four levels, the study offers actionable insights to build more emotionally resilient, engaged, and effective educational ecosystems aligned with the broader goal of strengthening institutional capacity and educational quality in emerging economies.

4.2 Limitations and Further Research

Although this study provides meaningful insights into the influence of emotional regulation and engagement on academic performance, it has certain limitations. First, this study focused primarily on lecturers' in-role performance, such as teaching and academic responsibilities formally outlined in their job descriptions. Future research could explore extra-role performance, including voluntary behaviors like mentoring, committee work, or initiatives that go beyond formal duties, to gain a more comprehensive understanding of how emotional regulation influences overall professional functioning in higher education.

Secondly, the non-significant role of absorption in predicting job performance opens space for deeper qualitative exploration. Future research could investigate why certain engagement dimensions are more impactful than others, especially in the context of academic work.

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