

Emotional Labour in the Hospitality Industry.

introduction & theoretical background.

Emotional labour has first been introduced by Arlie Hochschild in her book 'The managed heart' in 1983 and has since become an important part of tourism research (Hochschild, 1983). Especially as there is currently a labour shortage in the industry (Causa et al., 2022), it is important to find ways for employers to help employees cope with emotional labour, which can result from customer misbehaviour. Therefore, the following research question has been proposed: *How can employers help employees cope with the emotional labour they endure during their everyday work lives?*

EMOTIONAL LABOUR AND CUSTOMER MISTREATMENT

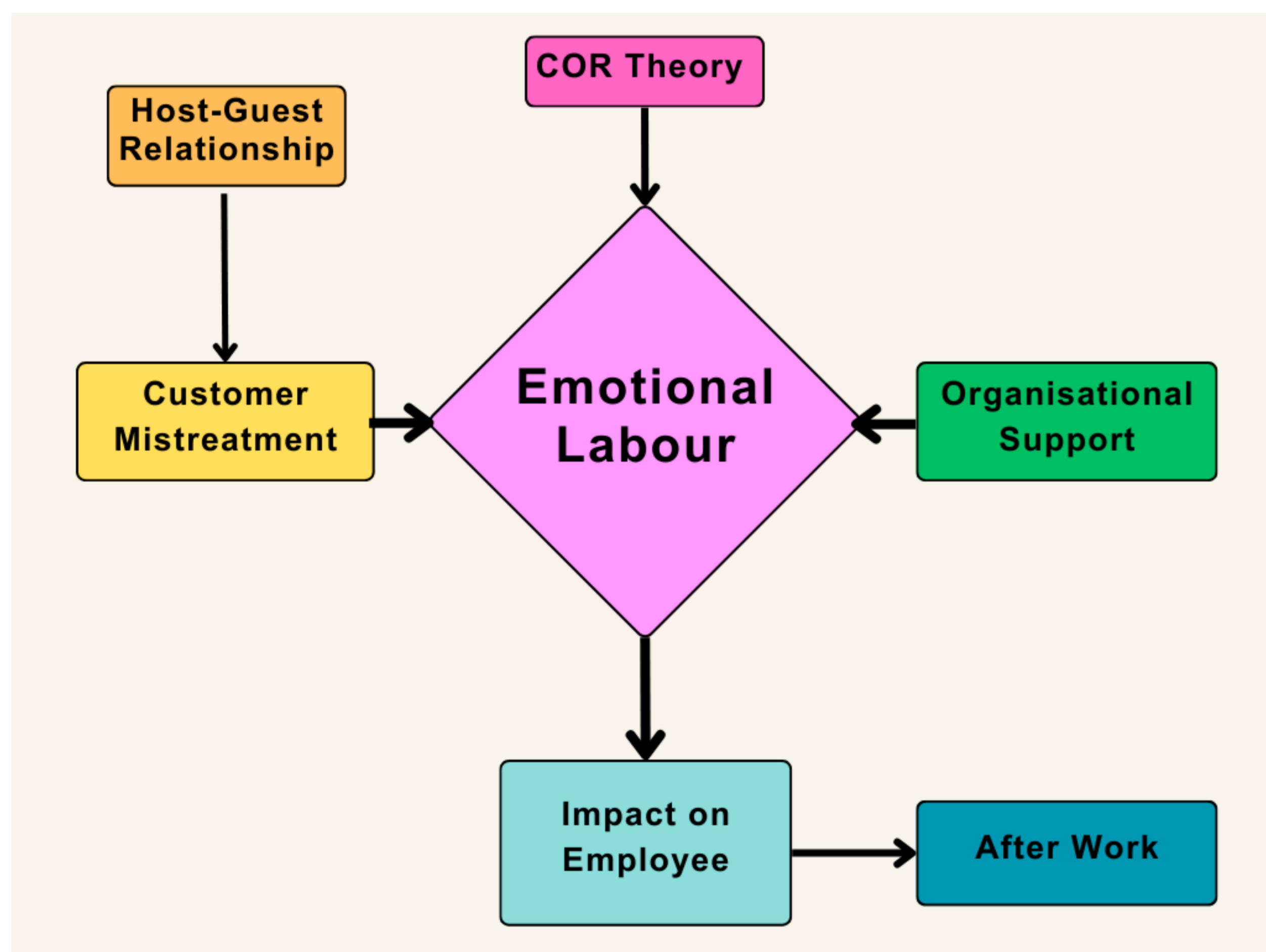


Figure 1.: Conceptual Framework

Emotional labour is connected to a number of different antecedents, mediators and moderators that lead to different outcomes, which include organisational and psychological ones (Lee & Madera, 2019). The guest is an important part of the service an organisation and its employees provide, especially in the hospitality industry, resulting in customer misbehaviour being an almost daily occurrence for some frontline employees (Fullerton & Punj, 1997; King, 1995). Hence, this research focuses on the emotional labour that stems from guest misbehaviour, as the host-guest relationship is an integral part of the day-to-day work of hospitality employees.

research design.

This study used a qualitative research method, in particular semi-structured interviews with 15 participants, of which 14 work at a hotel reception and one works for the human resources department of a hotel. The interviewees were asked about their opinions and experiences in regard to emotional labour and customer mistreatment.

LIMITATIONS

- Small convenience sample which cannot be applied to the broader population
- Majority of participants were female
- Interviewees were between 18 and 30 years old, which leads to an underrepresentation of older generations

findings.

EMOTION REGULATION STRATEGIES

To cope with emotional labour, there are different emotion regulation strategies: deep acting, surface acting and naturally felt emotions (Cossette & Hess, 2015). Most participants used a combination of deep and surface acting, whereas only few interviewees either used only surface acting or the combination of all three strategies.

ORGANISATIONAL SUPPORT AS A MODERATOR

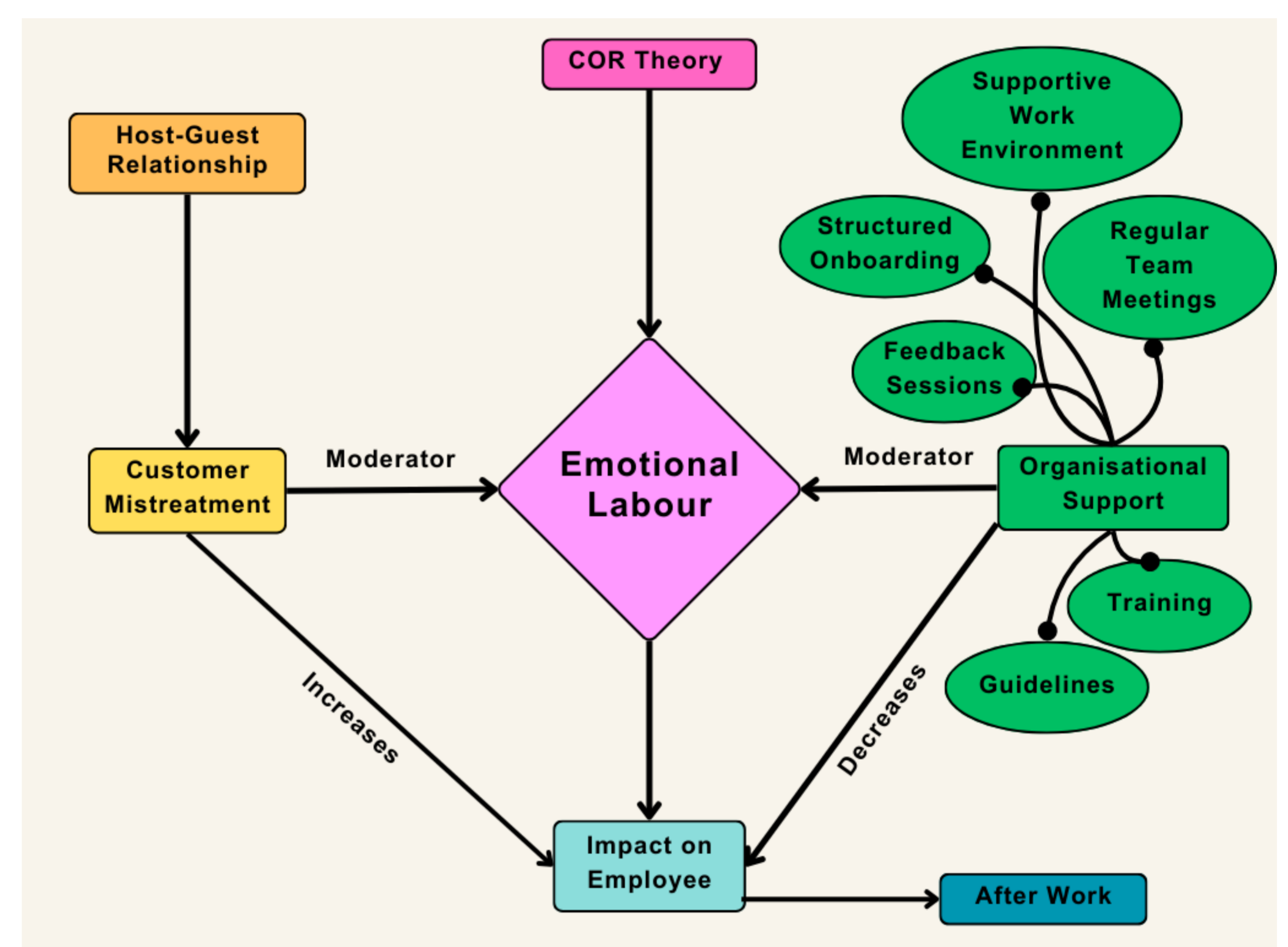


Figure 2.: Revised Conceptual Framework

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS



Figure 3.: Recommended Actions

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