

Emotion work of International Business Scholars

Managing emotions in relation to publishing setbacks

Master thesis in International Business

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Date: 13-06-2022

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Date: June 13, 2022

Abstract

Emotion work is of increasing interest, yet little research is conducted concerning this topic. High job demands can negatively influence mental well-being, which indicates the importance to be able to 'work' your emotions. Academics are under constant pressure as their job is very stressful and high demanding. Numerous studies demonstrate bad mental well-being of academics caused by job demands. This study investigated the emotion work of international business scholars, an insufficiently researched yet important group to study. In order to gain knowledge about emotion work of international business scholars, the following research question is answered: *How do International Business Scholars within Dutch universities work to manage their emotions in relation to publishing setbacks?*

To answer the research question, a qualitative content analysis, with abductive reasoning, of 14 semi-structured interviews with international business scholars within Dutch universities is conducted. The results show **eight ways in which international business scholars manage their emotions after publishing setbacks**. The strategies can be summarized as: **anticipating, giving your emotions space, realizing that nobody is perfect, seeking peer support, using physical techniques, resilience, avoidance and problem-focused coping**. In the results it is indicated that emotions and emotion work of academics might be influenced by **context-related issues**. These issues include **immoralities, different requirements per university, experience of the researcher and quality of the review reports**. The design of the study did not **control** for these context-related issues, which results in many avenues for further research, including researching the differences of emotion work between universities, differences between junior scholars and more experienced scholars, cultural differences and the connection between high publishing pressures and the number of publishing setbacks.

Keywords: Emotion work, academics, international business scholars, publishing setbacks

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1. Introduction

1.1 Introduction of the topic

There is a growing interest in emotion work. Emotion work means that you evoke, appeal, conceal and divert emotions as a reaction to conditions in the organizational environment (Briner, 1999; Moisaner, Hirsto, & Fahy, 2016; Pekrun & Frese, 1992). High job demands and consequently job stress negatively influence mental health when badly managing your emotions (AbuAlRub, 2004; Jamal, 1984; Pisaniello et al., 2012). The stress in working life can result in burn-outs and lower job satisfaction (Zapf, 2002). Therefore it is important to know how to 'work' your emotions in stressful periods. Working your emotions is extra difficult when your job is high demanding (Lam, Xu, & Loi, 2018). University academics have a very stressful and high demanding job (Arar & Öneren, 2021; Urbina-Garcia, 2020). Numerous studies show negative effects on well-being of academics caused by these high job demands (Mohamed & Abed, 2017; Padilla & Thompson, 2016; Talbot & Mercer, 2018; Urbina-Garcia, 2020). The academic world even has become more stressful over the years (Darabi, Macaskill, & Reidy, 2017). Being capable to manage your emotions can reduce stress, which makes emotion work a relevant field of study (Sloan & Geldenhuys, 2021). Nevertheless, little research is done on how academics cope with this stress.

As said, an Academic career is proved to be highly stressful, resulting in burnouts of many scholars, especially in the beginning of their careers (Goddard & Goddard, 2006). Earlier studies repeatedly researched all aspects of academic work with a focus on teaching and less attention given to pressures of research (Antoniadou & Crowder, 2021; Goddard & Goddard, 2006). Therefore, the focus of this study will be on publishing pressures. Most academic scholars at universities have to deal with numerous publication rejects (Carson, Bartneck & Voges, 2013). Furthermore, if academics have a temporal work contract, the continuance of this contract depends on how many publications they can write within a certain time (Carson et al., 2013). This study focuses only on publishing setbacks, to gain deep knowledge about the topic, instead of superficial covering every aspect in a small paper. As the available studies mostly focus on all aspects, this study covers a gap in the literature.

As highlighted above academics who are in the beginning of their career have more chance of burnouts and their temporal work contract can cause more publishing stress (Carson et al., 2013; Goddard & Goddard, 2006). Because junior scholars probably struggle more, it is relevant to research this group of academics. However, 'experienced' researchers might still struggle or can tell about their struggles in the past and how they did overcome these with the

help of emotion work. Perhaps junior scholars can learn from these more experienced scholars, because people with advanced experience and age are often better in emotion-regulation (Scheibe, 2021). Therefore, both types of scholars are included in the research.

This thesis has scientific relevance by studying the effects of publishing setbacks on management of emotions of academics, which is not well studied yet. All academics would be a too diverse group and therefore one discipline is chosen, namely international business scholars. The specialism of this master thesis is International Business, which makes researching this group relevant for the field of study. Why specifically this group will be discussed in further detail in the method chapter.

The study touches upon multiple gaps. At first, a **small comparison between different tracks of academia (juniors and professors) and their emotion work in relation to publishing setbacks is made.** Second, the focus is on one discipline, **namely international business scholars, which is not yet researched.** Third, **emotion work is an upcoming topic that is of increasing relevance, however not often studied yet.** Lastly, deep knowledge is gained about publishing setbacks, as most studies focus on all aspects of academic life, without focussing on the specific pressures that come from publishing requirements (Urbina-Garcia, 2020).

1.2 Research question and objective

The research question of this thesis is as follows:

How do International Business Scholars within Dutch universities work to manage their emotions in relation to publishing setbacks?

The objective of this study is to highlight how international business scholars at universities work to manage their emotions in relation to publishing setbacks. With this study it becomes more clear how academic scholars are capable of maintaining or creating more positive emotions after negative events, specifically publishing setbacks. Would it be that this study sheds light on a possible problem, for instance that (junior) academics have difficulties with managing their emotions specifically after publishing setbacks, which results in low levels of well-being, then an interesting topic for future research is how to solve this problem.

1.3 Outline of the thesis

In chapter two a theoretical framework of the existing literature is outlined, consisting of emotions in general, emotion work in general, the nature of academic work and emotion work of academics. Second, a chapter is devoted to the methodology, including the method used,

data collection, data analysis, and research ethics. Further, in chapter 4 the results of the study are discussed which consist of eight ways of emotion work and a side note that context plays a big role in the publishing world. Out of these results a conclusion is made and an answer to the research question is formulated. As a final point, chapter 6 contains a discussion about the limitations of the research, practical implications, what it contributes to existing literature, and recommendations for further research.

2. Theoretical framework

This chapter consists of four paragraphs. First emotions in general are discussed. After that emotion work is explained. As this research focuses on the profession of researchers, the nature of academic work is discussed 2.3. Lastly, 2.4 includes theory about emotion work of academics.

2.1 Emotions

Emotions are difficult to define, but Scherer (2005) shoot his shot and his definition is still used (Burić, Slišković, & Macuka, 2017). He defined it as: “Interrelated, synchronized changes in the states of all or most of the five organismic subsystems in response to the evaluation of an external or internal stimulus event as relevant to major concerns of the organism” (Scherer, 2005, p. 697). These subsystems are systems in your body such as an information processing system or a monitoring system (Scherer, 2005). What is important for this study, is that these systems have an emotion function. The subsystem of information processing, for example, makes you evaluate events which triggers the cognitive component of emotion. The emotion functions of the five organismic subsystems are: “Evaluation of objects and events, System regulation, Preparation and direction of action, Communication of reaction and behavioural intention, and Monitoring of internal state and organism” (Scherer, 2005, table 1, p.698). The body makes use of these emotion functions after stimulus events. A stimulus event is an event that triggers one or multiple emotion(s). Often emotions are seen as something that is independent from the person and just happens to you (Antoniadou & Crowder, 2021; Hochschild, 1983). However, in this study the interactional perspective is carried out, that sees emotions as something you can ‘work’, meaning that we as humans can influence our own emotions by ourselves.

2.2 Emotion work

As said, stimulus events can arouse particular emotions. **Not all emotions are desired, for example feeling sad. Therefore it is important that people are able to carry out emotion work** Emotion work can be defined as coping with so-called ‘feeling rules’. Hochschild (1979) stated that feeling rules cause people to induce or inhibit feelings to make it fit to what is expected from them in particular situations. These feeling rules make us compare what we feel and what we ought to feel. Hochschild (1983) made a distinction between emotion emotion work and emotional labor. According to Hochschild, what is meant with emotional

labor is managing your emotions as part of your job. You receive wage to express the right feelings and to induce the right feelings in others, so then we talk about emotional labor. As an example Hochschild mentioned the job of flight attendants. Flight attendants have to act 'nicer than natural' because this simply is part of their job. Emotion work is basically the same thing, but in this case it is in a private context, so the emphasis is more on managing your own emotions for your own benefit.

In the literature there are different ways to define emotion work. As mentioned above, Hochschild (1983) made a distinction between emotion work and emotional labor. Emotional labor is defined as the quality of interactions between employees and clients (Zapf, 2002; Zapf, Seifert, Schmutte, Mertini, & Holz, 2001). The focus is mainly on expressing appropriate emotions as a job requirement. This is different from the distinctive term emotion work we use for this study, which refers to **emotions as a reaction to conditions in the organizational environment (Briner, 1999; Pekrun & Frese, 1992)**. In this case emotions at work are considered, so then the focus is on emotions triggered by work conditions, for example workspace or job demands. Emotion work, then, entails that you **'work' those emotions, meaning that you are evoking or appealing to emotions, but also by concealing and diverting these emotions (Moisander, Hirsto, & Fahy, 2016)**. To summarize, emotion work, according to Antoniadou and Crowder (2021), is not about work-related demand, but about **regulating your emotions as a response to external work-related triggers to safeguard your own well-being and performance in the workplace**.

Being able to work your emotions can help to overcome work stress (Sloan & Geldenhuys, 2021). An approach to work your emotions according to Sloan and Geldenhuys is to achieve self-focused emotional intelligent. This consists of two concepts, namely emotional appraisal and emotional regulation. Appraisal is about self-awareness. This means that you are aware of how you are going to react to certain situations and that you are able to identify these emotions. Regulation is about changing your emotions to make it fit within the situation. This way of self-regulating positively influences job performance.

This study focuses on academics. In the research of Bloch (2002) interviewees acknowledge that being a researcher is scary because your brain is the one that has to perform and you do not have much more than that. It can be stated that a big part of the job of academics is to think, so they can be defined as knowledge workers (Tennant, 2010). Knowledge-intensive jobs are very suitable for remote working (Howe & Menges, 2021). Howe and Menges (2021) conducted a study about remote working and found that the

mindset of a person predicts the emotions and productivity. After the covid pandemic it is more than ever normal to work remotely. This asks for a higher autonomy. In the research of Howe and Menges (2021) it is stated that employees who are emotionally more stable are better able to deal with high autonomy. What Howe and Menges (2021) also highlight, is that persons with a growth mindset, which consists of the thought that qualities of a person can develop, show more positive emotions. Persons with a fixed mindset show more negative emotions. In turn, the negative emotions can influence job motivation, creativity and absences (Howe & Menges, 2021). This, again, shows the relevance of research into emotion work.

2.3 Nature of academic work

Academic work consists, among other things, of research, teaching, supervision and going to conferences. A very stressful part of academic work is doing research. As earlier stated, your brain is the one that has to perform, and that can be scary (Bloch, 2002). Next to that, the world of doing research is a competitive one. The way academics receive recognition for their work is via other researchers, who are your competitors and clients at the same time (Bloch, 2002). As other researchers are your competitors and reviewers, those are the ones who are least likely to give recognition without debate and a thorough analysis. This might on the one hand contribute to a better quality of papers because of critical thinking, however, it can also result in unethical evaluations and animosity. Additionally, having a long list of publications and being a prominent academic can result in selective favouring within scientific evaluations.

Being new in the world of Academia can be scary. The work contracts of untenured faculty are often temporal and the continuance of them is related to if they can publish the desired amount of articles within the tenure track contract (Carson et al., 2013). After receiving your tenure, academics mostly get a permanent contract. Most researchers experience several publication setbacks. Carson et al. (2013) found that **these setbacks demotivate many academic scholars. The studies they write are often rejected** by journals or asked for modification multiple times in the so-called 'revise and resubmit' phase (Pombo & Ogliastrì, 2015). This 'revise and resubmit' phase means that you have a chance to publish in the journal, but many rounds of revision are possible and then there still is the possibility that your study gets rejected. Depending on the particular journal only about 2-8% of studies sent to the journal gets published. This low percentage and all these phases of modifying, revising and resubmitting make the assumption that the work of a researcher can be high demanding and stressful. Other research demonstrated that the world of Academia is unfair and there has

to be strived for a kinder evaluation system (Zivoni, 2019). This is enough reason to look into the emotions of academics in this existing evaluation system. As this research is not focused on the quality of interactions with ‘clients’ as part of your job, but focuses on emotions caused by conditions in the organizational environment, specifically publishing setbacks, it will dive into the concept of emotion work instead of emotional labor. There is little research done about emotion work in academic organizations, however, this topic is definitely relevant. In the research of Antoniadou & Crowder (2021) it is concluded that individual emotion management of your personal and professional activities is an important responsibility you have as an academic. How academics work their emotions after (continuous) publishing setbacks is important to research as it might influence job performance and mental state (Zapf et al., 2001).

2.4 Emotion work of academics

As explained in section 2.2, emotion work is distinctive from emotional labor. This research focuses on how international business scholars, under the circumstances of publishing setbacks, an external work-related trigger, work their emotions and therefore the term ‘emotion work’ is applicable. Other work pressures such as teaching and supervising are not taken into account, which makes emotional labor inapplicable for this study. The research objective to gain insights in emotion management of academics with an indirect goal to have a preliminary idea of how they manage their own well-being fits within this applied definition of emotion work.

It is important to look into emotion work of academics, as a recent paper of Urbina-Garcia (2020) showed that academics suffer from high levels of stress and burnout and poor levels of mental health. In his literature review, Urbina-Garcia concludes that very little is known about what coping mechanisms academics use to deal with these high job demands and feelings of stress. Only three studies researched how academics or teachers cope with the high workload pressure (Talbot & Mercer, 2018; Mohamed & Abed, 2017; Darabi, Macaskill, & Reidy, 2017). This is not restricted to research pressures, as they focused on other pressures too, such as teaching and supervising. This might cause that the coping mechanisms mentioned by the respondents of their studies are not applicable to this study about publishing pressures, as some coping mechanisms are related to teaching and supervision pressures.

Talbot & Mercer (2018) made a distinction between strategies to work **your** emotions after negative events and after positive events. As this study is focused on publishing

setbacks, a negative event, only the coping mechanisms after negative events will be discussed. The coping mechanisms that were most commonly used according to Talbot and Mercer (2018) were cognitive reappraisal, self-comparison and problem-focused coping. Cognitive reappraisal means that you reframe a negative event into something more positive. Self-comparison entails that you compare your situation with someone less fortunate. The last method, problem-focused coping, means that you act after a negative event to change the situation to a more positive situation. The results of the second article show similarities with the article explained above (Mohamed & Abed, 2017). They both mention the method cognitive reappraisal. Additionally, problem solving is in both articles one of the most used coping strategies. Mohamed and Abed also found that accepting your responsibility and seeking social support are often used methods. Lastly, the study of Darabi et al. (2017) found seeking peer support and effectively managing time as the most used methods. In these three studies, the general focus is on all aspects of academic demands and small sample sizes are used. This opens new avenues for further research into a more specific and high demanding part of academic life: conducting research.

Bloch (2002) investigated the field of academia, particularly the world of research. The focus of this study is on managing emotions concerned with social relations in terms of competition and recognition. In the results of her study some elements of different ways of managing emotions are formulated, which is useful theory for this research. A first way to manage emotions is pretending (Bloch, 2002). Your research, your own work, is all you have and if that is inadequate that is the worst nightmare for researchers. Therefore people pretend to have confidence and that everything is going well, instead of actually showing that they feel uncertain and despondent (Bloch, 2002). So their way to manage fear is to pretend it is not there and just go on. They do not share their fiascos with colleagues out of shame and pride. Other techniques of emotion work are physical techniques. Taking medication and practising breathing exercises are two examples. A cognitive method used is to split your work from you as a person. So when your work is criticised you try to not take it personally. What was noticeable in the results of Bloch (2002), was that PhDs and junior researchers were more aware and vocal of certain feeling rules. Another way of emotion management can be identified after negative peer reviews. There is a very thin line between disrespectful criticism or constructive feedback. Some peer reviews can be very destructive and do not make a valuable contribution, according to the academics. The results of Bloch's showed that those criticisms can be taken very personal and seen as disrespectful, which can result in feelings of depression or rage. A way academics cope with these criticisms is by placing the

editor in question and wanting nothing to do with him/her anymore. Other ways are confronting the editor or not greeting each other anymore. A last coping mechanism is by criticising the work of the editor in academic journals as sort of a revenge. These are all examples of showing anger. To summarize, Bloch found different ways of emotion management, namely: not sharing your fiascos, physical techniques, not taking it personally and placing the editor in question resulting in confronting, ignoring and criticising the editor. When comparing these with the above mentioned studies that focused on all academic pressures, no similarities in emotion work are found. An explanation might be because of the specific focus on social relations in terms of competition and recognition versus all aspects of academic life.

The study of Tunguz (2016) showed a difference between the amount of emotional labor of tenured faculty versus untenured faculty. Tenured faculty engage in lower levels of emotional labor. A reason for this might be that they experience less job stress because of job security and therefore have to 'work' their emotions less. This is in line with the research of Bloch, where the untenured researchers are more aware of feeling rules and therefore probably exercise more emotion work to meet these feeling rules requirements. Nevertheless, the research of Tunguz (2016) focused on interaction with students and the emotional labor that comes with that, so it is not the same context as this study. However, it can be an interesting starting point to investigate if there is a difference between tenured and untenured faculty in the context of publishing pressure.

3. Methodology

3.1 Research strategy

This study is conducted via qualitative research. The objective of qualitative research is to gain an understanding about the meaning and experiences of humans' lives (Fossey, Harvey, Mcdermott & Davidson, 2002). The focus is on meaning making of texts, actions, and social contexts, and how this is understood by the respondents. To answer the research question how International Business scholars work to manage their emotions, there is no measuring involved, but rather asking 'how' and 'why' things happen. Example questions for respondents can be: "How do you get over a rejection?" or "How do you motivate yourself to rewriting?" So it is about understanding situations, which causes this research to fit within a qualitative approach.

This study tries to answer 'how' International Business scholars in Dutch universities manage their emotions, which makes a qualitative case study well-suited for this research because the focus is on answering 'how' questions (Yin, 2003). The unit of analysis is the emotion work process of International Business scholars within Dutch universities. The observation units are International Business scholars within Dutch universities. A single holistic case study design is applied, as emotion work of one group of scholars in one environment is looked into, namely International Business scholars within Dutch universities who face publishing setbacks in their academic work (Baxter & Jack, 2008). Existing literature on work pressures of academia mostly focusses on all aspects of academic work, meaning teaching, supervision, research, etc. (Talbot & Mercer, 2018; Mohamed & Abed, 2017; Darabi, Macaskill, & Reidy, 2017). Consequently, this research covers a gap in deep knowledge about publication rejects.

International business scholars within Dutch universities are chosen as the group of interviewees. The justification for this groups starts with why academics? Academics are investigated because they have a high demanding job with constant rejection which can negatively affect their emotions, however, little research is done on how they work their emotions (Carson et al., 2013; Bloch, 2002). The small amount of research that has been done concerning emotion work of academics is mostly focused on academics in general (Bloch, 2002). For this small case study, researching all academics would be a too diverse group as the process and requirements of publishing are different per discipline and the sample would be too small to represent every discipline evenly and thoroughly. Therefore one group of

academics is chosen to gain deep knowledge of this group. International business scholars are chosen as this is an insufficiently researched group of academics. Next to that, a survey about mental well-being of PHDs can increase the risk that this group keeps insufficiently researched as this group scores best on mental health and has the lowest score on burnout-scale (Mattijssen, Van Vliet, Van Doorn, Kanbier, Teelken, 2020). However, the survey stresses that almost half of the PHDs in general have an increased chance of developing a psychiatric disorder, which stresses the importance of researching every discipline group. As the group 'economics and business' scores lowest on mental health problems and the burn-out scale, researching this group may be perceived as irrelevant by other researchers. Lastly, a practical reason is that business is the discipline of the researcher conducting this study, resulting in easy access of this group. Two types of researchers will be interviewed: juniors as they are new in the field and probably struggle the most. Nevertheless, more experienced scholars will also be researched, because they might still struggle or have struggled in the past and can talk about these previous experiences. It might be the case that they became better at emotion work. This can be relevant for junior scholars, as they can learn from this potential learning curve.

An abductive research approach is applied. This is a combination of inductive and deductive reasoning (Mantere & Ketokivi, 2013). Abductive reasoning tries to search for the best possible explanation. It tries to theorize. Abduction is about understanding and interpreting, which fits with this research. It starts with some ideas and beliefs, and then tries to gain new knowledge from the data collected. So there is an iterative process going on between theory and empiricism.

3.2 Data collection

Semi-structured interviews are used to collect data. Interviews and focus groups are the most used methods for qualitative research (Gill, Stewart, Treasure, & Chadwick, 2008). Focus groups are left out in this research because of the fact that emotion work can be a too sensitive topic to discuss in a group. Additionally, focus groups look at group dynamics, which is not applicable in this research. Interviews, however, 'can be used to explore the views, experiences, beliefs, and motivations of individual participants' (Gill et al., 2008, p.1). This suits the research goal and therefore interviews will be the method.

Specifically, semi-structured interviews are conducted. Semi-structured interviews are interviews with open questions, with no strict order which question has to be asked first and interviewees can bring up new topics (Gill et al., 2008). With semi-structured interviews many information about the topic can be collected, as participants are willing to extensively talk about proprietary information (Gioia, Corley, & Hamilton, 2013). In the theoretical framework some strategies of emotion work are defined. Based on this and some own intuitive insights about how to collect data about emotion work, interview questions are formulated (Appendix 1). When completely following the theory and fully base the interview questions on the theory, there is no room for discovering new concepts, only affirming the existing ones (Gioia et al., 2013). Hence, to gain knowledge about the informants' sensemaking the theory is not completely followed.

Every respondent answered the same key questions. This increases reliability of the research. Sometimes the researcher went more in-depth about an interesting topic with follow-up questions. There is chosen for semi-structured instead of structured, because the goal is to make sense of texts and meaning, so answering options do not meet this goal. In addition to that, theme interviews and open interviews are also not chosen, because there is already some theory available where interview questions are based on. The interviews take place in real-life or online with Zoom or Teams. Fourteen International Business Scholars of Dutch universities are being interviewed. These were selected by searching names of international business scholars on websites of universities. In the invitation is asked if the researchers experience or have experienced publishing setbacks to check if the researchers are useful informants for the study. The names, their position, the university they work in, the interview method used, the variant of interviewing, and which transcript number are summarized in the table below (figure 1).

Respondent	Function	University	Method	Variant	Transcript number
Respondent 1 (R1)	Professor	Radboud	Semi-structured interview	Zoom	1
Respondent 2 (R2)	Assistent professor	Radboud	Semi-structured interview	Zoom	2

Respondent 3 (R3)	Professor	Radboud	Semi-structured interview	Zoom	3
Respondent 4 (R4)	Assistent professor	Radboud	Semi-structured interview	Real life	4
Respondent 5 (R5)	Professor	Groningen	Semi-structured interview	Teams	5
Respondent 6 (R6)	Assistent professor	Groningen	Semi-structured interview	Teams	6
Respondent 7 (R7)	Professor	Radboud	Semi-structured interview	Teams	7
Respondent 8 (R8)	Professor	Groningen	Semi-structured interview	Teams	8
Respondent 9 (R9)	Junior researcher	UVA Amsterdam	Semi-structured interview	Teams	9
Respondent 10 (R10)	Assistent professor	Radboud	Semi-structured interview	Teams	10
Respondent 11 (R11)	Assistent professor	Groningen	Semi-structured interview	Teams	11
Respondent 12 (R12)	Junior researcher	Radboud	Semi-structured	Real life	12
Respondent 13 (R13)	Professor	Maastricht	Semi-structured interview	Teams	13

Respondent 14 (R14)	Junior researcher	Radboud	Semi- structured interview	Teams	14
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Figure 1

3.3 Data analysis

To analyse the data, interview transcripts are made. With these transcripts, coding took place to find common themes. The data is analysed via abductive content analysis. The understandings of the interviewees are shaping into codes that work towards common themes (Gioia et al., 2013). This research is an iterative process. If new insights made it necessary to change the name of codes or themes, this is done. The coding is conducted with first open, then axial and then selective coding (Williams & Moser, 2019). First starting with open, trying to see patterns of the same kind of emotion management. After that codes were combined to bigger themes of emotion work. Lastly, selective coding. Here main categories were thought of and based on these an answer to the research question is written. The transcripts are coded with Atlas.ti. This is a helpful tool to systematically code the transcripts. In the next paragraph the coding is explained more thoroughly.

Open coding was the first step. At first, the codes were based on searching for ways of emotion management, without using the theory, so inductive coding. However, the researcher is informed about prior work and open coding might be influenced by memory of the known theory (Gioia et al., 2013). The open coding started with more detailed codes and after coding three transcripts an evaluation of the open codes is done. The researcher critically looked if the codes could become more broader to fit more quotations into one code. Subsequently, the rest of the transcripts were coded. At the end, all the open codes were evaluated. After this evaluation, axial coding took place. Different codes were put in categories together to formulate common themes of emotion work. The researcher constantly switched between the data and their own preunderstanding. The knowledge of prior work, consciously or not, influenced the coding. Mostly, the themes were not exactly the same as the theory, which resulted in new concepts. This is the result of the researcher remaining open to being surprised by the data (Mantere & Ketokivi, 2013). The abductive approach is necessary to prevent the results to be a reflection of the researcher's preunderstanding only. In appendix 2 a coding tree is included with all the strategies of emotion work found in the empirical data.

3.4 Quality of the research

The validity of the study is important to consider. Two types of validity are considered (Bleijenberg, 2015). First, internal validity aims to measure what is intended to measure. Abductive reasoning tries to find surprising facts, with constantly going back and forth between sourcing surprising facts and keeping in mind prior knowledge. This way measuring what you want to measure is safeguarded by looking for the best possible explanation with an open mind, without being influenced too much by previous studies (Mantere & Ketokivi, 2013). A factor that decreases the internal validity is that abductive reasoning is very subjective and influenced by my own interpretation (Golafshani, 2003). Next to that, some circumstances are not controlled for, for example personal circumstances of the respondent. This again decreases internal validity. A last decreasing factor is that the data is not collected right after a setback happened. Many respondents talked about setbacks that happened years ago, which can influence their memory and perception of the emotion work at that time. To end with a position note, only one group is researched, namely international business scholars in Dutch universities, which enlarges the internal validity.

Second, external validity implies that the study is generalizable to a broader context (Bleijenberg, 2015). As one specific group is researched, this reduces the external validity. However, the group is not one specific organisation, but a group of people with the same profession in the same environment. This increases the external validity as the results are generalizable to other international business scholars in Dutch universities. On the other hand, the sample of the study is small, only 15 scholars are interviewed, and the small and uneven sizes of the 'groups', meaning in which university the scholars work, make it difficult to generalize to all Dutch universities (Golafshani, 2003). A last point about generalisability is that the results might be generalisable to emotion work of general setbacks, as the theory shows methods such as 'taking a walk', which might also be relevant when managing your emotions after general negative life events.

Reliability is providing extensive information how the research is conducted, with the objective that other researchers can follow your steps (Bleijenberg, 2015). This includes providing the interview questions and a detailed method section in which methodological choices are justified. The study is reliable as the method is extensively formulated, including choice of informants and interview questions. The term verifiable is preferred in this qualitative study, as reliability, meaning that researchers get the same results when they repeat your research, is difficult to obtain with this sample size.

Reflexivity is always something to consider when conducting research, as the conduct of the researcher influences the results. I am part of the research and my assumptions and beliefs will influence the process. That abductive reasoning is chosen, gives an extra note to the reflexivity. With an abductive approach there is a possibility that I as a researcher am not open to new data, but too much hammered to preunderstanding of the data I gained before data collection (Mantere & Ketokivi, 2013).

3.5 Research ethics

For the research ethics, the principles of the Netherlands code of conduct for research integrity are used (KNAF et al. 2018). I as a researcher will be honest during the research process. I will report the process of the research. I as a researcher will be transparent about my research goals to participants. The participants are free to withdraw from the research whenever they want. The information is confidential and will be saved on a locked computer. The transcripts and codes are only saved in Atlas.ti, with a password to access the specific project. All the participants will receive a copy of the results to stay transparent. I will conduct my research in a scientific way. If I have collected my results, I will think of possible implications that my findings can have to international business scholars. When interviewing the respondents, I will ask for permission to record the interviews. I will assure them that this will stay confidential. Anonymity of the informants is ensured by naming them respondent 1 until respondent 14, instead of actual names. Only their position, meaning (assistant) professor or junior researcher, is shared, without mentioning their exact function. This ensures anonymity as the reader does not know specific information with the respondent numbers, for instance that one of the respondents is a professor in strategy.

I as a researcher have been honest and transparent to the participants. I behaved respectful and professional to the participants. All participants were informed about the research goals of the study and more information was provided when needed. During the interviews, the researcher listened respectfully to the respondents without interrupting or judging them. At the end of each interview the respondents were asked if they would like to receive a summary of the study when it has been conducted. Every respondent indicated the wish to receive the summary, so this will be provided to the interviewees to guarantee transparency.

4. Results

In this chapter the results of the interviews are discussed. The interviews are analysed by signalling different ways of managing emotions of International Business scholars after publishing setbacks. The different ways of emotion work are summarized in the figure in appendix 2 (coding tree). The pink arrows show relations between the emotion work methods, which are explained in this chapter. Discrepancies, additions and similarities between theory and the empirical results are formulated.

4.1 Anticipate

A first category of emotion work is 'anticipate'. To anticipate means that you take into account possible outcomes beforehand. Two components of 'anticipate' are taking preventive measures and conducting a rejection inventory. An example of a preventive measure is given by respondent 6:

'I guess I'm old enough to sort of know right that that I manage the stressors of my job [publishing setbacks] much better if I exercise regularly and if I meditate regularly'' (transcript 6).

This quotation shows a preventive action to manage emotions better as this person knows that she is better capable of working her emotions after publishing setbacks when she, in general, exercises and meditates regularly. Other researchers also talked about taking a walk or riding the bike home, just to feel healthy and mentally stable as a preventive measure. So this is not a literal reaction to a publication setback. The second way to anticipate is a rejection inventory. This means that before sending a paper to a journal, you estimate the chance of getting rejected. Several scholars use this technique. A respondent explained that if you do not expect to get a R&R at a journal, the impact is far less when you get rejected than when you really feel like you have got a chance of publishing, and then still get a rejection. This method is effective in case of a fit between estimation and reality, as this results in lower emotional impact. So a rejection inventory seems to be a useful part of anticipating, however, when there is a mismatch between the rejection inventory and reality, the method is not effective.

4.2 Give your emotions space

Another theme that is often discussed is 'Take some time to give your emotions space'. Many interviewees agree that putting your work aside for a period of time after a publishing setback and give your emotions space, is a very effective way of dealing with your emotions. Several examples concern putting aside the specific work that made you feel upset and do another

work-related task. However, there are also some cases of completely taking some time off, not work-related:

“Or I do just try to not work or on that same day or so basically I I just try to go back home and relax” (transcript 11), or “sometimes I choose to read a book, or really go outside, like some kind of activity or sports, that kind of stuff. Because otherwise you keep thinking about it and you do not have rest really” (transcript 12).

Giving your emotions space shows many positive outcomes and is the most used method according to the data. One of the academics explained the effectiveness:

“You need some time to let off some steam, but at the end you know that that manuscript needs to be published, even if it is at a lower ranked place. So finding the logistical, practical solution is eventually where we will go. But yes, we will take a brief pause to emotionally regroup” (transcript 2).

So giving space to your emotions positively influences continuance of research. Furthermore, it is noteworthy that all the researchers, juniors, assistant professors and full professors, frequently take time to give their feelings space. No difference is found between the groups. One professor stated that he still used this strategy to be able to look more objectively to the setback. Without using the strategy he easily takes setbacks personally:

“If reviewers say it is not good enough, then you think ‘then I am not good enough’. So you need to take some time to disconnect the judgement from you as a researcher” (transcript 1).

In the literature a strategy to deal with setbacks is to approach your work as something distinct from you as a person (Bloch, 2002). In reality it seems like this is more of a goal to be reached, and you need a strategy to achieve that goal [taking some time], instead of an actual type of emotion work. Another professor stated that taking some time to give his emotions space is his most important technique of emotion work, even after all these years of experience:

“About dealing with sort of emotions from publishing. I said, I think, you know, the most important thing for me is that I need to distance myself from the decision every time you know. And not ruin my day by diving into the reviewers comments, that I need to protect myself, even as a full professor. Maybe I’m just a sensitive guy. I don’t know but I need to protect myself still from that because it still hurts” (transcript 8).

When comparing the theme ‘Take some time to give your emotions space’ with the existing literature about emotional intelligence, it is only partly similar (Sloan & Geldenhuys, 2021). The first aspect of emotional intelligence is about self-awareness. The researchers are indeed aware that they are going to respond to emotionally if they look at the review letters immediately. This awareness is nicely summarized in the following quotation:

*‘I give it space that that’s my technique. So I know that after a rejection I will be **angry, irritated, Disappointed, sad** and all of these things when I first received a rejection’ (transcript 6).*

The researchers are able to identify their emotions. Therefore, a similarity is seen between the theory and the results. The second part of emotional intelligence is emotional regulation. This means changing your emotions that it fits the situation. However, emotional regulation is not supported in the results of this study. According to the researchers, emotion work is more about accepting your emotions, instead of controlling them or wanting to change them, as respondent 6 and 8 point out:

‘I don’t believe in controlling my emotion. I think I believe more in accepting my emotions. Umm, which is why most of my techniques are designed around giving them space’ (transcript 6), and: ‘It’s not really about controlling the emotions, but about giving them space and not letting them interfere too much with the with the process’ (transcript 8).

A last thing that can be noticed within the theme ‘take some time to give emotions space’ is, a different side of the coin, namely that the method can be ineffective in some cases. For example in the case of respondent 6:

‘Even if, you know, let the emotions set aside for a month and then come back to the review letters, it still doesn’t make sense. It’s like, I don’t know what to do with this’ (transcript 6).

In this particular case, giving your emotions space is not effective enough to know how to proceed further with your manuscript. This respondent is an assistant professor and relatively new in the field, which might be a factor that plays a role in this negative outcome.

4.3 Nobody is perfect

After a publishing setback it is easy to get emotional about it. Therefore emotion management is important. A way of doing that, and applied by several researchers, is by **putting it into perspective** and to realize that nobody is perfect. Realizing that nobody is perfect involves being able to look objectively to a setback, realizing that everyone has setbacks, being happy with a revise and resubmit (R&R), acknowledging that your work can be improved (and not

consider this as something bad) and learning by experience. Many of the academics are able to come to this realisation, for example the following professor:

“If you share it with others, you can put it into perspective. They [peers] can say to you: ‘Recently I had a rejection too.’ Then you realize again; it is not me, it is just the process of publishing” (transcript 5)

In the next quotation a combination of realizing that everyone has setbacks and learning by experience can be noticed, as the researcher has a learning curve that evolved over time.

“At the beginning I had a hard time with it [publishing setbacks], but after a certain time you notice that everyone experiences setbacks” (transcript 14).

Many respondents try to look objectively to a setback as a coping mechanism. One of the researchers explained that you will not survive if you take everything in this profession very personal. You have to be able to look objectively to a setback. Looking at the quotation below, it is mentioned that you have to ‘grow up’ in this profession, which assumes that you learn how to look objectively to setbacks along the way, instead of having these qualities from scratch.

Conflict: Personal work but critiques cannot be taken personally

“It's your data, it's your analysis is your writing. Which makes the failures feel very personal. And I think much of the growing up that we do in this profession is to know that this is a job. And I think if you can't learn that emotionally, it's impossible to stay in this job” (transcript 6).

Numerous respondents made clear that it is very important to see a R&R as a victory. You are still in the running and it would be weird to immediately get accepted at a journal, so a R&R is normal and you do not want to look at that as a setback. This has similarities with the emotion work strategy cognitive reappraisal which was mentioned in the articles of Mohamed & Abed (2017) and Talbot and Mercer (2018). Cognitive reappraisal means that you reframe a negative event into something more positive. It is easy to become negative about R&Rs because it means extra work and that something is not good enough. Reframing it to ‘I have a shot’ is a way of emotion work.

“You can see it kind of a victory because they do not immediately say it's not good enough and reject you” (transcript 2).

So it is crucial to realize that your work almost always can use some improvement. Nobody is perfect and it is normal that you have to change it, sometimes a lot of times. Understanding

why your work is not good enough is an important element in not taking it personally, as respondent 14 explains:

“I mean, I like to see constructive feedback and mostly I get that kind of feedback. Then I can clearly understand why I am rejected. But it is never that I think ‘I am not qualified enough or I am taking this very personal’” (transcript 14).

However, even if you understand why your work is not good enough, it still can be frustrating that you need to revise it over and over again. Many researchers mention that it is easier said than done to see R&Rs as a victory if you had many R&Rs without actually publishing. One interviewee explained that you invest time in a particular journal and revise your paper conform to the requirements of that journal, and if they reject it after that you can start all over again. This results in lack of motivation and interest of the researchers. How these emotions can be ‘worked’ via resilience will be explained in paragraph 4.6

A pattern can be found between taking some time to give your emotions space and looking objectively to the setback. After taking some time and putting the work aside, the researchers are better able to detach the rejection from themselves.

“because then I have enough distance from my emotions and then I can actually rationally look at the review letters” (transcript 6).

Several quotations show this relationship, therefore I carefully state that taking some time to let off steam has a positive influence on looking more objectively to the publishing setback.

4.4 Seeking peer support

Another method that is frequently used is seeking support, for example talking about setbacks that had an emotional impact with friends or relatives.

“I have a lot of girlfriends. You know, I’m a sociable person. And so you know I would, I I needed to cry it out” (transcript 13).

Besides, what is perceived very effective and more frequently used than talking to friends or relatives, is seeking peer support. Peer support can help to realize that everyone has setbacks, which is part of the theme ‘nobody is perfect’. Compared to friends and relatives, colleagues have a better understanding the high expectations and frustrating parts of academia work. One of the researchers described that:

“A problem shared is a problem halved. Realizing that you are not unique in this is pleasant and helps to put it into perspective” (transcript 5).

Several scholars acknowledged that realizing that a lot of their peers experience publishing setbacks helps them cope with negative emotions. Discussing rejections with peers and realizing that you are not alone in it, is one way of seeking peer support. Another aspect is distraction from the setback. Respondent 2 explained that it helps to

“you know waste 2 hours talking about a bunch of different stuff, maybe even unrelated to our profession and to help take things off my mind” (transcript 2).

Take things off your mind seems to be a big part of emotion work, as earlier highlighted. Often the method of seeking peer support is used simultaneously with ‘take some time to give your emotions space’, as the International Business scholars use this ‘time’ to talk with their colleagues. A discrepancy is found between the theory and the results. The results show that the researchers prefer to talk about their setbacks to seek peer support, when in fact the literature stated that researchers do not want to share their fiascos and do not want to share their uncertainties (Bloch, 2002). A possible influencing factor can be the culture differences between countries. In this study only Dutch researchers are interviewed. One of the respondents notices a difference between the Netherlands and the place he grew up:

“I come from East Asia and the culture I come from you’re supposed to be very quiet and secretive about your failures” (transcript 2).

4.5 Physical techniques

Physical approaches are again linked to taking some time to give your emotions space. This ‘time’ can be used to perform a physical technique. Often mentioned is taking a walk through nature, but also mindfulness techniques, sleeping enough and running are part of physical techniques. Taking pills has been mentioned in the literature as a physical technique. In contrast to the literature, the respondents claim that they do not use or have used pills. The word ‘claims’ is indicated, as shame or pride can influence the answers of the researchers. It might be that they did not want to admit using pills. However, there is no proof of this interpretation.

4.6 Resilience

A last emotion work method is resilience. Resilience is defined as the ability to recover from setbacks and the negative emotions that come with them. The way International Business

scholars achieve resilience is by having a positive mindset, liking the job, ‘just’ getting back into the fight as hard as it is and trying it with another journal. These aspects influence each other. When you like the job, a positive mindset is easier and that makes getting back into the fight more easy to do. Sometimes to get over bad periods the researchers rely on their enthusiasm of their job.

“You have to get back in that creative process, and that is a part I really like about this job. I think that [liking the creative process of the job] is where my motivation comes from” (transcript

5)

One researcher is convinced that you cannot be a researcher without being passionate about your profession and the topics you write about:

“You need to really know the subject. Need to be passionate. Yeah, OK, and you need to be courageous. And you need to really love your subject” (transcript 13).

A part of resilience is getting back into the fight, as hard as it is. A few researchers talked about accepting the situation as it is, even if that means that you do not like your job for a period in time.

“If you need to finish many different tasks, then you just do it and you do not think about it.

Then you are just a bit unhappier than normally for a period in time, that’s allowed too”

(transcript 14)

In the study of Mohamed and Abed (2017) an often used method of emotion work is accepting your responsibility. This is in line with the results, as a few researchers are capable to accept the situation and continue their responsibilities.

When a journal rejects your paper, a strategy is to try it with another journal. Many researchers do not give up that quickly and try different journals to get their article published. Additionally, believing that your research will be useful in some kind of way is part of a positive mindset.

“Well, then it does not get into that journal, then you send it to another. Or maybe I can publish it in a handbook. Or keep it a working paper and give it to students as a background article for their thesis. In this way you use it in another way. So I always try to find an adaptation how the paper can be utilized” (transcript 4).

4.7 Avoidance

Publishing setbacks can have a big impact on productivity. Several researchers have periods with a lack of interest and productivity, caused by the pressure to publish. Sometimes they are not able to work their emotions to fix this lack of interest and productivity on the short term.

“I think there have been periods of low motivation. Umm. And in those periods of low motivation I have not been productive. I think I'm having one of those right now actually. And I I just, I don't write well. I don't want to look at the data. I look at it superficially. So in general, I experience lack of productivity. And lack of interest if I get too many rejections at the same time” (transcript 6).

Rewriting also seems to be a frustrating factor, as earlier mentioned. Getting a desk rejection or a R&R always means extra work. In case of a R&R you have to rewrite your paper accordingly to the wishes of that journal and in case of a desk rejection you have to go and try it with another journal. Multiple researchers state that every journal has totally different wishes and guidelines, which makes it extra difficult and time consuming. Researchers told they have difficulties with constantly rewriting.

Just no motivation anymore. At a certain time you are done with that paper. You wrote it already for 3 or 10 times and at a certain time you want to move on but you are not able to. And that's.. I have trouble with that. That's difficult” (transcript 7)

A reason for low productivity can be work pressure. Work pressure is quite high in the academic world, as many interviewees talk about it. Some researchers mentioned being less productive because of this high publishing pressure.

“You have to book so many successes [publishing successes to meet the norms in research]. For me it is counterproductive, because it [pressure of booking successes] blocks and causes you to spend time on the wrong things [tasks unrelated to research] instead of inspiring or stimulating me, or whatever” (transcript 7).

“I don't know if this is generalizable, but maybe the pressure [high publishing pressure] isn't conducive to the final results. You know, maybe people don't publish as successfully as they would if they weren't under this constant pressure to publish. Because you have to submit papers as quickly as possible, you don't really get to take the time to think about it longer to present it a bunch of times to let it rest” (transcript 8).

In some cases publishing pressure can have such a detrimental impact on your performance and ability to manage your emotions that you end up quitting your job.

“Your employer is saying you’re not performing to expectations. You know that was psychologically kind of a a tough a tough thing and it actually led to me, in part it wasn’t the only thing, but it led to me changing jobs. I actually left the university and I went somewhere else where I had more teaching responsibility and less publishing pressure. And that, oddly enough, somehow freed me up to kind of take more risks and and be less emotionally invested somehow in the publishing because it wasn’t that important and I had my greatest successes in that role”
(transcript 8).

In the example above the researcher did not have any publishing successes in the beginning of his career when he was an assistant professor. He submitted multiple things but it did not work out, resulting in a negative evaluation from his employer. In his opinion his PHD period did not prepare him well enough for the tough publishing game. He concluded that he is not able to publish under this high pressure and that resulted in a new job with 80% teaching responsibility. Interestingly enough, respondent 8 got more successful because of this avoidance technique. He became successful in publishing due to the fact that he got out from underneath that expectation that he was not living up to. With the self-confidence he collected at this job he actually came back to a job with 50% teaching and 50% publishing responsibilities.

“So I think the fact that people under so much pressure to publish leads them to submit papers that aren’t ready to be published, and then you get rejections. And that just undermines the process even more and. So maybe the fact that I wasn’t be expected to publish is what allowed me to be successful in publishing” (transcript 8).

In a way respondent 7 and 8 are arguing that high publishing pressures contributes to publishing setback. This study focused on emotion work after publishing setbacks and did not focus on the cause of setbacks. Nonetheless, this might be an interesting relationship to look further into in future research.

One other researcher explained that earlier in his career he left a university as a junior scholar because it felt unfair to compete with full professors who got more research time. Here high publishing pressure is again a factor in someone quitting his job. However, in this case the feeling of unfairness plays a big role.

“You are new at a job as a junior and you have to compete for research time with full-time researchers. They have research funding, are busy with projects that will allow them to buy

themselves out of teaching. Well, that gives universities the dilemma of, yeah but teaching also needs to happen, but happily we have our juniors who do not have research yet. Well, let's give them many teaching responsibilities'' (transcript 4)

The researcher suffered from this feeling of unfairness. He worked this emotion by the technique 'avoidance'. He left the university for a different profession, unrelated to research and teaching.

'I left within 3 months. I think that [competing with full-time researchers] is unfair competition'' (transcript 4).

4.8 Problem-focused coping

These are the 'only' examples of researchers that quitted their job. Only is between quotation marks, as 2 out of 14 respondents is almost 15% of the sample. Nevertheless, many researchers suffer from this feeling of unfairness. The source of this feeling is mostly that 'big names' get accepted or a chance to revise their work more easily or that people with money just hire other people. There are multiple examples that proof that the world of academics is unfair, especially for people who do not have many publications or money:

'I think if you have one big name in your team or if you are a big name, it is more easy to get a chance of revision once more'' (transcript 5)

'It is known thing that if you don't have big names on your papers, it's difficult'' (transcript 6)

'I think it certainly makes a difference what kind of reputation and publication list you have, and with who you work, if an editor chooses your side [getting a R&R or acceptance instead a desk reject] or not'' (transcript 10)

'There is something morally corrupt, you know, because the the thing is I have seen people who have money. I mean, this happens all the time in academics. You know they have money. They hire people and they [other researchers] just you wonder how come they have such a high rating'' (transcript 13)

Most researchers work this feeling of unfairness by just accepting the situation as it is. They accept that the world of publishing is an unfair one and that they cannot do something about it, which is part of resilience. However, there is one researcher that quitted his job (as mentioned above), and next to that there are two outliers that tried to work their feelings by problem-focused acting, which is similar to the problem-focused coping theory in the studies of Talbot & Mercer (2018) and Mohamed & Abed (2017). At first, one researcher started an

NGO to help women households in India to get toilets. Because of immorality in academics, she felt she had to do something in general for social justice. The other outlier told about a paper he had been working on for 3 years already and now the data is outdated but he does not have time to collect new data. His way of handling this situation was to buy his way out of emotional stress. He acknowledges that this is actually unfair, but if the system is unfair and this feels like your only option, a way of dealing with emotional stress is to cheat yourself:

*“We pulled together some funds to hire a research assistant out of our own pocket, who will then go ahead and collect the data. So we're basically trying to **buy our way out of uncertainty and you know emotional stress because we know that** if we send the same paper again with minor modifications, the first thing they will ask is your data is too old, who cares about the results? So this is just one example, but there might be other examples, like inviting somebody else who is also strategically placed. Let's say a big name in that field. This is. You might say this is kind of cheating or hacking the system. But it is practical. The reality is, if you have a big dollar with the in your team, the likelihood of acceptance goes up, but this is kind of our last resort because we want to see if we can do it on our own” (transcript 2)*

4.9 Context matters

Context plays a big role in how harsh the world of publishing can be. This study focused on emotion work after setbacks and not which factors influence the negative emotions in the world of academia. However, some context-related comments are mentioned that many times that it is too important not to mention as a side note in this study.

The first note is already discussed in the previous paragraph: there are some immoralities in the world of academics. In the theory it is highlighted that unethical evaluations and selective favouring can take place within scientific evaluations (Bloch, 2002). The study of Zivoni (2019) also acknowledged that the world of academia is unfair and there has to be strived for a kinder evaluation system. The results of this study confirm these statements.

Second, the observation units differ in certain ways. The university where they work is a first distinction. These are Radboud University (RU), University of Amsterdam (UvA), Maastricht University (UM) or Rijksuniversiteit Groningen (RUG). What is often mentioned is that the publishing requirements are different per university. For example, the Radboud is quite flexible concerning in which journals you may publish. In contrast, the university of Groningen has very strict rules that researchers may only publish in particular top journals.

“Some universities have very strict lists of journals you can publish in. Getting rejected in that case then has a totally different emotional load than when universities accept a long list of journals” (transcript 1).

“I did my PHD in Tilburg. There only 6 journals are allowed to publish in. The rest does not count” (transcript 10).

It is interesting to note that there are differences in requirements between Dutch universities, which can influence the emotional impact. However, the ‘groups’ are too small and not evenly represented to actually compare the differences per university. Not much can be said about each group. Additionally, only researchers from four different universities are compared. When comparing differences between Dutch universities, all the universities should be included.

Third, the experience of academics differs. Among the interviewees are junior scholars and more experienced scholars. In the interviews it is frequently highlighted that their position influences their work pressure. More experienced scholars feel a reassurance because of early performance. They already have a long list of publication and do not have to prove themselves anymore and therefore they do not feel the same stress they had as a junior anymore.

“It’s easier because of the experience. It’s easier because you don’t have to prove yourself the same way you do when you’re an assistant professor. There’s much less at stake” (transcript 8)

Next to that, their work contract is permanent, which again results in less stress. Lastly, as stated in the previous paragraph publishing might get easier along the way because of their reputation. Multiple professors stated that they think they manage their emotions better now than they did when they were junior scholars. However, interestingly enough, when comparing the most mentioned emotion work strategies between junior researchers and more experienced researchers, no clear differences in strategies can be found. Experienced researchers claim to be better at looking objectively to setbacks and not taking it personally, but these capabilities are also highlighted by the junior scholars. A possible explanation can be that experienced researchers actually got better at looking objectively to a setback, but used this technique to a lesser extent earlier in their careers. As there is no quantifiable measurement in this research that shows to what extent juniors versus experienced researchers take setbacks personally or are able to look objectively to a setback, it is difficult to draw conclusions out of this. Another possible explanation of the discrepancy can be that the researchers simply do have less stress after years of experience and do not work their

emotions differently. They just have less negative emotions they need to ‘work’, which might feel as if they have become better at managing their emotions. This would be in line with the studies of Bloch (2002) and Tunguz (2016) that junior scholars are more aware of feeling rules and engage in higher levels of emotional labor.

A last context related issue is the quality of review reports: a frustrating factor for many researchers. Similar to what is stated in the research of Bloch (2002), review reports are often lack valuable quality and constructive feedback.

“For example, I did A, B, and C, and then the reviewers state: “The authors should consider to do A, B, and C”. Well, that’s literally what I have done. They just did not read it thoroughly” (transcript 14)

“Recently I got a desk rejection which stated: “You do not look at discrimination.” Literally the second sentence and the abstract discussed discrimination” (transcript 3).

The researchers do not work their emotions differently after these unvaluable review reports compared to ‘normal’ rejections. This contradicts with the study of Bloch (2002), as she found different active emotion work methods, namely: confronting the editor, not greeting the editor anymore and criticising the work of the editor. All these revenge methods are not found in the results of this study.

5. Conclusion

In this chapter an answer to the research question will be formulated. The research question is: *How do International Business Scholars within Dutch universities work to manage their emotions in relation to publishing setbacks?*

International Business Scholars use multiple ways to manage their emotions after publishing setbacks. The strategies can be summarized as: anticipating, giving your emotions space, realizing that nobody is perfect, seeking peer support, using physical techniques, resilience, avoidance and problem-focused coping.

The first strategy is anticipating. This means that emotions are worked before the actual setback. Anticipating consists of two components: taking preventive measures and conducting a rejection inventory. The second of component of anticipating is only successful if there is a fit between estimation and reality.

A second emotion work method is giving your emotions space. This method is the most used and shows, with the exception of one example, many positive outcomes, for junior researchers and (assistant) professors. The method shows similarities with the theory as both highlight the ability of being self-aware and identifying your emotions as important emotion work. A discrepancy between the results and the theory is that the results of this study do not show emotional regulation.

The third way of working your emotions is by realizing that nobody is perfect. This can be accomplished through the use of multiple strategies: look objectively to a setback, realize that everyone has setbacks, be happy with a R&R and acknowledge that your work can be improved. It is carefully stated that looking objectively to a publishing setback is positively influenced by the method 'giving your emotions space'.

The fourth method is seeking peer support. This theme is related to 'nobody is perfect' as peer support can help to come to the realization that everyone has setbacks. Peer support can help to give your emotions space and is often simultaneously used with this method. According to the theory researchers do not want to share publishing setbacks with colleagues, which contradicts with the results of this study.

Physical techniques are a next emotion work strategy. This is again linked to giving your emotions space, because it can take place simultaneously. Physical techniques that are mentioned by the researchers are: taking a walk, mindfulness exercises, getting enough sleep and running. A contradiction with the literature is the method of taking pills that is not used

by any of the respondents. A disclaimer is the possibility that the respondents feel ashamed or too proud to share this information.

The sixth method is called resilience. This means being able to recover from setbacks. The interviewees showed resilience by having a positive mindset, liking the job, 'just' getting back into the fight as hard as it is and trying it with another journal. The aspects of resilience can positively influence each other. Resilience has similarities with the method 'accepting your responsibility' which was outlined in theory.

The next emotion work method is avoidance. This technique entails inability to work your emotions as desired in the organizational setting in which you are present at that time, resulting in quitting your job to become emotionally stable again. It is argued that high publishing pressures contribute to publishing setbacks, which results in the emotion work method of avoiding the high publishing pressure.

A last emotion work method is 'problem-focused coping'. This method is also highlighted in the literature and means that you act in a way that a negative situation becomes more positive. This way of emotion work is applied after a feeling of unfairness.

In the world of publishing, context matters. It is important to take context into account, as these influence how publishing setbacks are perceived. A first issue is that the academic world is full of immoralities. This is already stated in the theory and the results confirm this. Second, the interviewees state that there is a difference in requirements per university, which might influence work pressure. Third, experience, having a long list of publications and a permanent work contract can contribute to less publishing pressure, which might influence emotion work. Lastly, the quality of the review reports can lack valuable quality and constructive feedback. The results show no difference between emotion work after a 'bad quality report' or a 'normal' report, which is different from the theory of Bloch.

To summarize, international business scholars use eight main categories of emotion work to manage their emotions after publishing setbacks, nevertheless, context matters!

6. Discussion

6.1 Interpretation of the results and contribution to the knowledge

This study focused on the question how international business scholars within Dutch universities work to manage their emotions in relation to publishing setbacks. The results show several emotion work strategies, which is conform to my expectations as I did not expect there is one magical solution to work your emotions, as every academic is different and every setback differs in intensity and impact. The results in relation to the theory indicate many discrepancies. This is interesting as this demonstrates there is not one way to work your emotions and more research should be done to find out what induces these dissimilarities. The study proves that publishing pressures are highly stressful and an emotional burden on academics. Additionally, the study provides a confirmation for the need to undertake action concerning mental well-being of academics, as enough academics indicated having difficulties with managing their emotions.

6.2 Practical implications

A step is taken towards more awareness of the emotional health of academics. Publishing setbacks seem to be highly stressful resulting in difficulties with emotion work of academics. Nevertheless, many of the informants indicated the impact of teaching pressures and combining these pressures with publishing pressures and other work-related tasks as a big influence on their capabilities of managing their emotions. This study focused on publishing pressures to gain deep knowledge about the topic. Although proven to be highly stressful and definitely relevant to gain deep knowledge about, it seems that publishing pressures are too deeply interconnected with teaching pressures and other work-related tasks to not take them into account when researching emotion work of academia. Future research that wants to focus on publishing setbacks should control for the variables teaching pressures, pressures from other work-related tasks and pressures from organizing the work, as these pressures cannot be seen completely separately from each other.

6.3 Further research

This study sheds light on directions for further research. First, if the results had indicated some preliminary differences between the two groups, that would be interesting and useful information to further look into the difference of emotion work capabilities of the two groups. The more experienced researchers thought they became better at working their emotions over

the years, however, the data shows no big differences in emotion work between juniors and 'seniors', which means that this thought of the experienced researchers cannot be confirmed. Nevertheless, that fact that there is a discrepancy between the expectation of the experienced researchers and the actual data is interesting. This opens new avenues for further research, as this study was too small to thoroughly compare two groups. Additionally, it might be interesting to research why experienced scholars think they manage emotions better than juniors, especially if further research into the differences between the groups with a bigger sample again shows no clear differences which would again indicate a discrepancy between expectation and reality.

A second suggestion for further research is to compare emotion work of international business scholars between all the Dutch universities. The results demonstrated that publishing requirements are very different per university, which influences the amount of publishing pressures. This study did not focus on the differences per university, but the number of times researchers mentioned that there is a difference in requirements per university is significantly high. Comparing the universities is beyond the scope of this study. The groups are too small, for example only one participant works at the UvA, and only four universities are included in the study. Hence, not much can be said about each group.

A third suggestion for further research is to research universities in a country with a culture where you have to be very secretive about your failures. One respondent mentioned that he noticed a difference between his home country and the Netherlands, because the Netherlands has a very open culture where you can share your failures. Seeking peer support is one of the emotion management strategies found in this study. For this reason, it might be interesting to investigate how scholars in a country with a less open culture work their emotions.

Next to that, an interesting topic for a future study can be to research the relation between high publishing pressures and the amount of publishing setbacks, as two academics indicated their counterproductivity when feeling too much pressure to publish. This study only focused on emotion work after publishing setbacks, therefore no clear conclusion can be drawn from these two interesting comments.

Overall, it seems that several context-related matters influence how much stress international business scholars experience. Factors that can play a role but are not investigated in this small study, as it goes beyond the scope and time limit, are: university, experience,

gender, personality, culture, and probably more factors that are being forgotten. This provides many openings for further research.

6.4 Limitations

The study has its limitations. First, the study is conducted by one researcher which means intersubjectivity is not guaranteed. Intersubjectivity is important to compare the subjective parts of a study, in this case coding (Bleijenberg, 2015). The researcher thought of codes on her own, with some help from prior theory and some inductive reasoning. Additionally, this subjectivity and the abductive approach partly causes wrong own interpretations about what entails emotion work. This negatively influences construct validity.

Second, the limited time available for the study resulted in a small study, which makes it difficult to generalise the results. Next to that, many international business scholars rejected the invitation for an interview for the reason that they are too busy with their work. These scholars would have been very interesting to study as they clearly experience stress. The participating interviewees might experience much less stress than the scholars who rejected the invitation, which may result in biased observation units. Related to the rejections and limited time available, is the number of interviewees. Many scholars rejected the invitation which resulted in only 14 participants. If more time was available and less scholars rejected the invitation, it would have been possible to find more informants, which would provide more reliable and accurate results.

A last limitation is related to all the context-related matters that apparently play a role in publishing pressure. All these contexts-related matters are not controlled for in this study, which makes it difficult to state some kind of causal relation, for example that publishing pressure is the reason for bad emotion management, as many other aspects influence emotion work.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Interview questions

General questions:

1. Can you explain what your job is exactly?
2. What is the balance between research and other work-related tasks?
3. Why did you choose for working in academia?
4. How much experience do you have in publishing or in trying to publish?

Specific questions:

- What are publishing setbacks for you? For example, do you see it as a text that you need to revise and resubmit over and over again or is a desk rejection a setback?
- To what extent did you experience publishing setbacks?
- How do you take publishing setbacks?
- To what extent do you take publishing setbacks personally?
- To what extent do you have the feeling that you are not qualified enough after a publishing setback?
- Do you feel stressed after publishing setbacks? And why?
- To what extent is the stress you experience related to losing your job position?
- How do you motivate yourself to rewriting?
- How do you discuss about rejections with your peers and bosses?
- What techniques do you use to control your emotions?
- To what extent you do use physical techniques, such as taking pills or doing breathing exercises, to control your emotions?
- To what extent do publishing setbacks influence your absences?

