

## **Addressing Emotional Labour: A Need of the Hour**

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**Abstract:** Emotions were ignored in the study of Organizational Behaviour in the past. Recently organizational behaviour researchers have started increasingly recognizing the important role of emotions within the work setting. Although this research is still in development, it is becoming clear that emotional dimensions pervade the entire spectrum of organization behaviour including human behaviour. Now-a-days many researchers of organizational behaviour are concentrating on emotions and its relationship with work effectiveness. One area of research in emotions that has received considerable attention within work setting is emotional labour (EL). Managing emotions at work is termed as emotional labour. When an individual performs emotional work as a required part of his job performance it is called emotional labour. All service industries require interaction with customers. These jobs require employees to be courteous and nice to customers, regardless of how the customer is treating the employee- cause emotional labour. The main focus of this paper is to explore the concept "Emotional Labour". The discussion includes historical background, definition, dimensions of EL, various facets and challenges that are faced by employees while performing emotional labour and consequences of EL.

**Keywords:** Emotional Labour, Service Industry

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### **I. Introduction:**

Emotions were ignored in the study of Organizational Behaviour in the past. Recently organizational behaviour researchers have started increasingly recognizing the important role of emotions within the work setting ( Hartel, Zerbe, & Ashkanasy,2005). Although this research is still in development, it is becoming clear that emotion dimensions pervade the entire spectrum of organization behaviour including human behaviour. Mumby and Putnam (1992) characterized this as a shift in perspective from "bounded rationality" to "bounded emotionality" (Martin, Knopoff & Beckman, 2000). In particular, recent advances in emotional research have spanned all levels of organizational analysis.

One of the reasons that organization science has been so belated in researching emotions is because of the inherently ephemeral and idiosyncratic nature of emotion. The work place was considered having rational environment which has no place for emotions. But many research studies have successfully demonstrated that emotions in workplace can explain many individual and organizational outcomes. (Arvey, Renz,Waston, 1998). Now-a-days many researchers of organization behaviour are concentrating on emotions and its relationship with work effectiveness. One area of emotion research that has received considerable attention within work setting is emotional labor (EL) (Ashforth&Tomiuk, 2000; Grandey, 2000; Hochschild, 1983).

Managing emotions at work is termed as emotional labour. When an individual performs emotional work as a required part of his job performance it is called emotional labour(Hochschild, 1983). This means that the person evokes or suppresses certain emotions to conform to social norms. All service industries require interaction with customers. These jobs require employees to be courteous and nice to customers, regardless of how the customer is treating the employee- cause emotional labour. The practice of emotional labour is most evident when a service transaction is going wrong, when the customers are unhappy for any number of reasons. In most, situations, the employee will remain calm and polite to the customer. Feeling rules are the reason that the employee knows they must be polite. Feeling rules are scripts by which people decide the correct emotional response to situation. When system breaks down, however, there are harmful consequences for the individual.

### **II. Methodology :**

The present study used a systematic review to clarify emotional labour concept. This study initiates the research process with an analysis of literature. Its purpose was to capture the overall essence of the concept and how it is defined and used in literature. All the reviewed articles were published between 1983 and 2010, with majority being quantitative in nature and design.

### **III. Emotional Labour**

Arlie Hochschild first coined the term in her book, "The managed Heart". The actual definition of the construct has evolved through the years, and many versions have been proposed (Bono & Vey, 2005). Hochschild (1983) originally referred to emotional labor as the purposeful control of feelings in order to outwardly demonstrate an appropriate facial and body display. This control could be managed by using either surface acting, in which the outward expression was altered, or deep acting in which the actual emotion felt was altered through re-appraisal or directly conjuring the appropriate feeling.

Surface acting refers to the display of the characteristics of an emotion that are regarded as appropriate, but are not actually felt. For example: "Put on a mask in order to express the right emotions for the job" or "to pretend to have the emotions you need to display for the job" (Brotheridge & Grandey, 2002; Zammuner & Galli, 2005b).

Deep acting is a regulation that aims to produce the experience of a required emotion. The employee tries to actually feel the emotions that he or she is supposed to express in the service interaction (Zammuner & Galli, 2005a). Hochschild (1983) called this "active deep acting". It is rather modifying emotions than expressing them. For example of deep acting is: "Try to actually experience the emotions that you must show". Suppression: sometimes an employee is required to hide emotions in order to be effective on the job (e.g. "hiding your anger about something someone has done").

Ashforth and Humphrey explained emotional labour using a more behavioural approach. They suggested that emotional labour is "the act of displaying the appropriate emotion" (i.e., conforming with a display rule). Thus, they concentrated on discernable behaviour rather than intrinsic feelings or emotional states, thereby separating the experience of emotion from the expression of emotion

Morris and Feldman proposed that emotional labour composed of four dimensions: frequency of appropriate emotional display, attentiveness to required display rules, variety of emotions to be displayed and emotional dissonance.

**Frequency of appropriate emotional display:** Frequency of emotional display has been the most examined component of emotional labour; most previous research, in fact, has focused on the frequency of interaction between service providers and clients as the key dimension along which jobs can be arrayed in terms of emotional labour. The premise has been that stakeholders (customers or clients) are more likely to do business with an organization when the affective bonds of liking, trust, and respect have been established through employee behaviour (Wharton & Erickson, 1993). Consequently, the more often a work role requires socially appropriate emotional displays, the greater the organization's demands for regulated displays of emotion will be.

### **IV. Attentiveness to Required Display Rules**

The second dimension of emotional labour is the level of attentiveness to display rules required by the job. The more attentiveness to display rules required, the more psychological energy and physical effort the service job will demand from employees—and hence the more "labour" emotional displays will entail. Attentiveness to display rules required consists of both the duration of emotional display and the intensity of emotional display.

Emotional displays of longer duration should require more effort and thus more emotional labour. Cordes and Dougherty (1993) reported that longer interactions with clients are associated with higher levels of burnout. Emotional intensity refers to how strongly or with what magnitude an emotion is experienced or expressed. Previous research suggests that duration of emotional display and intensity of emotional display are positively related. Short displays of emotion are more likely to be scripted and require little emotional intensity, whereas long displays are more likely to be unscripted and require the display of more intense (sincere) emotions (Rafaeli, 1989b).

**Variety of Emotions Required To Be Expressed :** The third major dimension of emotional labour is the variety of emotional displays required by work roles. The greater the variety of emotions to be displayed, the greater the emotional labour of role occupants will be. Service providers who must alter the kinds of emotions expressed to fit specific situational contexts have to engage in more active planning and conscious monitoring of their behaviour. Consequently, the amount of psychological energy they have to expend in emotional labour will be greater as well.

**Emotional Dissonance:** Middleton (1989) defined the conflict between genuinely felt emotions and emotions required to be displayed in organizations as emotional dissonance. Workers may experience emotional dissonance when the emotional expression required by the job's display rules clashes with their inner or "real"

feelings. When mismatches between genuinely felt and organizationally required emotions exist, then, greater control, skill, and attentive action will be needed.

#### **V. Consequences of Emotional Labour:**

It has been estimated that some degree of emotional labour is present in approximately two-thirds of workplace communications (Mann, 1999). But, it is a fundamental component of service work where a high degree of emotional labour need to perform to maintain good relations with the customers (Brotheridge and Grandey, 2002). The expression of organizationally desired emotions is not an end in itself. Emotions are shown to have an influence on clients. Expressing emotions is one possible way to influence the client's emotions. To be able to do so, the accurate perception of the client's emotions, as well as the accurate identification of the emotional display required, is an important prerequisite. Hochschild (1983) argued that carrying out emotion work for long hours would overtax the employee's ability to show the desired emotions. They would go on smiling, but they would not feel the expected emotions. This discrepancy between displayed and felt emotions is called emotional dissonance, which in the long run, could lead to psychological ill health. Many researches were carried out to investigate the relationship between aspects of emotional labour and psychological well-being like Emotional exhaustion, burnout, psychological distress, Job satisfaction, work life conflict etc. This study focuses on emotional exhaustion and job satisfaction.

#### **VI. Emotional Exhaustion:**

Emotional exhaustion refers to a state of depleted energy caused by excessive emotional demands made on people interacting with customers or clients (Saxton, Phillips, & Blakeney, 1991). It is specific stress related reaction, and it is considered a key component of burnout (Maslach, 1982). Emotional exhaustion measures one's feelings of being burnout, frustrated and perceiving working with people to be demanding.

Maslach's (1982) work indicated that regular interaction with clients and interactions that are emotionally intense and of longer duration are higher levels of emotional exhaustion also greater planning for a wide variety of emotional displays lead to emotional exhaustion. Further Kahn's (1993) suggested that caregivers are more likely to suffer from emotional exhaustion, because intense display of emotion is often required in their jobs.

Research by Wharton (1993) has shown that although jobs requiring emotional labor do not place employees at greater risk of emotional exhaustion than other jobs, all else being equal, emotional labor does result in negative consequences under some circumstances. Emotional labor leads to increased emotional exhaustion among employees with low job autonomy, longer job tenure, and who work longer hours. Specifically, employees with low job autonomy are constrained by organizational display rules with little latitude to deviate from these rules. In the case where their feelings do not match the display rules they may engage in surface acting in order to display the appropriate emotions.

Research by Kruml and Geddes (2000) supports this notion because they found that employees who engage in surface acting were more emotionally exhausted than those who adhered to display rules by deep acting. The duration of emotional labour, whether in job tenure or hours worked, requires either emotional dissonance (surface acting) or emotional effort (deep acting) both of which may lead to emotional exhaustion.

In particular relationship between emotional dissonance and emotional exhaustion found to be positive in the studies done by Heuven and Bakker (2003), Lewig and Dollard (2003), Zerbe (2000), Morris and Feldman (1997).

#### **VII. Job Satisfaction:**

Job Satisfaction deals with the feelings that an individual has about his/her job. Organizational behaviour research has revealed the individuals who are highly satisfied in their jobs are likely to be more productive, have higher involvement and are less likely to be resigning than employees with less satisfaction.

The research on the relationship between emotional labour and job satisfaction has found both positive (Adelmann, 1995; Wharton, 1993) and negative relationships (Abraham, 1998; Morris & Feldman, 1997).

There is some quantitative research that has explored the relationships between emotional labour and job satisfaction of other occupational groups that does distinguish between deep acting and surface acting. For example, some researchers have proposed that deep acting could have a negative (Grandey 2000; Hochschild 1983) or neutral (Johnson & Spector 2007; Judge, Woolf & Hurst 2009) effect on employees' job satisfaction, while other researchers have shown that deep acting could have a positive effect on workers' job satisfaction (Ibanez-Rafuse 2010; Ozturk, Karayel & Nasoz 2008; Sheetal 2010). 90 Furthermore, some studies have

suggested that surface acting is unrelated to job satisfaction of employees (Johnson & Spector 2007; Ozturk, Karayel & Nasoz 2008), whilst other studies have shown that surface acting has a negative effect on employees' job satisfaction (Bono & Vey 2005; Grandey 2000; Hochschild 1983; Judge, Woolf & Hurst 2009).

Thus, it may not be frequency of emotional expression, the attentiveness to required display rules, or the variety of required emotional displays that influences job dissatisfaction. Lawler(1973) suggested that it is the discrepancy between the employee's perceptions of conditions that should exist and those that actually do exist that determines job satisfaction. Further Rutter and Fielding (1998), for instance, found that a perceived need to suppress genuinely felt emotion in the workplace is negatively associated with job satisfaction.

### **VIII. Conclusion**

In this study we explored that emotional labour is a multidimensional concept. This contains frequency of emotional display, attentiveness to required display rules, variety of emotions required to be expressed and emotional dissonance. Emotional labour can be performed through surface acting or deep acting; they both require emotional efforts, albeit in different forms.

The importance of emotions has become even more common with expansion of service economy. Oftentimes the product provided by service employees are intangible and perceived quality of the service is related to the interpersonal interactions between the employees and customers. Hence, it is expected from employees working in service sector that adopt an appropriate method for providing qualified services to customers by exploiting an emotional labour, understanding the way of employing an emotional labour and value for it to increase effectiveness of organization.

Research has proven that emotional labour influences physical and psychological well beings of employees which further affect the organizational effectiveness. Therefore the challenge for service sector is to attempt to remove the factors that are causing emotional labour and it has to be managed before it manifests into burnout and low organizational commitment.

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