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## EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND EMOTIONAL LABOR: AN EMPIRICAL STUDY ON ORGANIZED RETAIL SECTOR

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### ABSTRACT

*The concept of emotional labour was first coined by first coined by sociologist Arlie Russell Hochschild (1983), since then EL has become an increasing interested topic in service sector. In service sector, retail sector is in its formative years and growing in leaps and bounds. Retail sector, being part of service industry characterized by work roles which focuses on the interaction between service providers and customers, thus involves emotional labor. Emotional labour can be performed through three acting techniques: SA, DA and GA. In the present research paper only SA and DA technique of emotional labor are considered. The main purpose of this research is to examine the relationship between Emotional intelligence and the Emotional labour. To test the relationship, the data has been collected from organized retail houses situated in national capital region. For selecting organized retail houses, quota sampling and convenience sampling method are used whereas for selecting retail sector employees (respondents), random sampling method is used. The data has been collected through questionnaire which is constructed on the previous established scales. The Pearson's coefficient of correlation has been conducted to test the proposed hypothesis. The result indicated that an individual possessing high emotional trait will regulate emotions from inside out with great ease by indulging in deep acting technique of emotional labour and on the other hand an individual, low in emotional intelligence trait will regulate emotions from outside only by indulging in surface acting. The research analysis indicate that an organized retail house should pay attention to an individual characteristic while making selection, i.e. should select an individual who are high in emotional intelligence traits because he/she would not feel drained out while regulating emotions as per the display standards of an organization.*

### KEYWORDS

emotional labour, surface acting, deep acting, genuine acting, emotional intelligence.

### INTRODUCTION

*"Now hiring smiling faces!"*

*"Friendly people wanted!"*

*By Kay Hei-Lin Chu (2002)*

The role that emotions play in understanding the workplace phenomenon had been ignored in organizational. Initially, most researchers had a belief that emotions were all negative and in order to achieve good performance, an organization had to be free from emotions (see for example Marsick, 1987; Simon, 1979; Taylor, 1911; Weber, 1946). The concept of emotional labour was first coined by sociologist Arlie Russell Hochschild (1983). According to Hochschild (1983), Emotional display rules are certain standards with respect to employees behavior while interacting with customers and employees adjust their emotions to meet these specified standards. Since then EL has become an increasing interested topic in service sector. Emotions can be regulated through techniques.

### SURFACE ACTING

When an employee simulates emotions which are not actually felt, by manipulating his/her outward appearances (i.e., facial expression, gestures, or voice tone) while exhibiting required emotions then this type of acting process is called surface acting technique. Thus an employee by using the surface acting technique changes the outward expression of emotion by not altering his/her inner feelings so as to meet the displayed rules. In surface acting, an individual felt emotions are different from the required one.

### DEEP ACTING

It happens when employee's emotions do not match the situation; then an employee uses his/her training or past experiences to display appropriate emotions. Unlike surface acting, deep acting involves altering inner feelings so as to display appropriate outward emotions. Hochschild (1983) classified deep acting as

- (1) Exhorting feeling, whereby one keenly attempts to evoke or curb an emotion, and
- (2) Trained imagination, whereby one actively call up thoughts, images, and memories to fetch the associated emotion (thinking of a wedding to feel happy or a funeral to feel sad).

### GENUINE ACTING

Genuine acting refers to the genuinely expressed emotions, i.e. an individual need not to regulate his or her emotions because their felt emotions are same as the required ones. But it is significant to note that the genuine acting strategy is theoretically feasible because this technique of emotions regulation still requires some effort and it would be unfeasible to separate genuine acting measurement from the measurement of deep acting (Morris & Feldman, 1996). Kruml & Geddes, 2000a, described the genuine acting as passive deep acting. Thus, the present study considers deep acting and surface acting as the technique for manipulating emotional labour. and it also helps in augmenting satisfaction level of customers, immediate improvements in the sale level, gives continuous deals, and ultimately, enhances monetary profits (Hochschild, 1983; Rafaeli & Sutton, 1987; 1989).

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

C'eleste M. Brotheridge and Alicia A. Grandey (2002) conducted a study in which she compared two perspectives of emotional labor as predictors of burnout beyond the effects of negative affectivity: job-focused emotional labor (work demands regarding emotion expression) and employee focused emotional labor (regulation of feelings and emotional expression). It is found that the use of surface-level emotional labor, or faking, predicted depersonalization beyond the work demands. Perceiving the demand to exhibit positive emotions and using deep-level regulation are linked with a heightened sense of personal accomplishment, signifying positive benefits to this aspect of work.

### EMOTIONAL LABOR

Celeste M. Brotheridge (2006) reviews the theoretical and empirical literature on emotions in the workplace and revealed that employees, depending on the nature of the emotional labour that is performed, it may result in increased emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, physical health, turnover, role ambiguity, and conflict, and reduced levels of personal accomplishment, job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and personal authenticity. Thus researcher recommends that individuals should find employment that fits with their personal emotional character, build up their personal resilience, and manage their emotions more consciously.

Stephen Brown (2010) did investigation on the effects of emotional labour on wellbeing. The results show that the management of natural emotion should be included as an emotional labour strategy and, along with deep acting, should be considered preferable to surface acting for the well-being of employees and for organisational outcomes such as turnover intention. Employers can assist employees by preparing employees for interactions and by ensuring adequate support Elizabeth Levine Brown (2011) focused on the emotional labor involved in teaching. This study found that teachers performed emotional labor on the job despite teachers not knowing the emotional display rules required in their schools. Findings show that (a) teachers' emotional labor related to their knowledge of



emotional display rules on the job, but this sample expressed that no explicit emotional display rules existed in their schools; (b) teachers' knowledge of emotional display rules can vary by district; and (c) teachers perform emotional labor through both surface acting and deep acting.

Abraham (2000) found that although EI is related to job satisfaction, this is moderated by the environmental characteristics like job control. Based on these results, it is not sufficient to hire emotionally intelligent employees and organizations must offer autonomy in decision making.

#### EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

Wong and Law (2002) found the significant relationship between EI and job satisfaction and job performance. According to Patra (2004) EI can create a pleasant workplace and effect employees' job satisfaction and efficient management and organizational development.

Rozell, Pettijohn and Parker's (2004) did the research with the purpose to determine the relationships existing between customer-oriented selling, emotional intelligence and organizational commitment. The results indicate that a salesperson's customer-orientation level is significantly related to emotional intelligence and commitment.

Lisa Gardner (2005) systematically examined the relationship between EI and the occupational stress process, including stressors, strains (health), and outcomes of stress (job satisfaction and organisational commitment). In this study 320 employees of ten different public organizations (school/university, business consulting, insurance, manufacturing, and not-for-profit) from Melbourne and its surrounding suburbs participated. The study reveals employees who reported using EI are less likely to report feelings of stress, ill-health and lowered satisfaction and commitment.

Sy, Tram and O'Hara (2006) examined the relationships among employees' emotional intelligence, their manager's emotional intelligence, employees' job satisfaction and job performance for one hundred eighty seven food service employees from nine different locations of the same restaurant branches. The researchers found that the employees' emotional intelligence is positively associated with job satisfaction and performance. In addition, manager's emotional intelligence has a more positive correlation with job satisfaction for employees with low emotional intelligence than for those with high emotional intelligence.

Jamali, Sidani and Abu-Zaki (2008) empirically investigated variations in EI competency scores (self-awareness, self-regulation, self-motivation, social awareness and social skills) in a sample of employees and managers. The findings suggest differences in EI scores across different EI competencies for males and females. With males scoring higher on self-regulation and self-motivation and females scoring higher on self-awareness, empathy and social skills and that EI levels increase significantly with managerial position.

Kafetsios and Zampetakis (2008) examined the extent to which positive and negative affects at work mediate personality effect on job satisfaction by using the Wong-Law emotional intelligence scale. The result showed that in males, affect at work fully mediated the EI effect on job satisfaction. In addition, use of emotion and emotion regulation were significant independent predictors of affect at work.

Law and Wong (2008) explored the effect of EI on job performance among research and development scientists in the large computer companies in China. They assumed that the EI is a significant predictor of job performance beyond the effect of the general mental ability on job performance.

Cheung, Francis Yue-Iok, Tang and Catherine So-kum (2009) investigated how emotional intelligence influence the use of emotional labor strategies at work. Results indicated that EI is a significant correlate for both deep acting and expression of naturally felt emotion.

Sang Hee Kim, (2010) focused on the Emotional Intelligence of salesperson's which is necessary to meet customer's needs/wants effectively and display positive emotions while interacting with the customers. The result shows that greater salespersons' emotional intelligence results in better adaptive selling and positive emotional expression. Such adaptive selling and positive emotional expression had significant effects on the quality of service perceived by customers.

Jahanvash Karim and Robert Weisz (July 2010) did a study with the purpose to explore (1) whether employees differing in emotional intelligence level would differ in their emotional labour styles and (2) whether these styles would mediate the impact of emotional labour on psychological distress. The results of this study indicated that (a) emotional intelligence was positively and significantly related to deep acting; (b) surface acting was positively and significantly related to psychological distress, and; (c) neither surface acting nor deep acting mediated the relationship between emotional intelligence and psychological distress.

Ghoniem, Khouly, Mohsen and Ibrahim (2011) examined the effect of emotional intelligence and gender on job satisfaction in three different governmental organizations in Egypt. The results have shown that emotional intelligence and gender could be used as a predictor of job satisfaction. In addition, respondents with high emotional intelligence are more satisfied with their job than a respondent with low EI.

Madiha Sahdat, Syed Imran Sajjad, Muhammad Umar Farooq and Kashif ur Rehman (2011) did a conceptual research on impact of Emotional Intelligence on Job Satisfaction. After reviewing the literature it has been analyzed that if the those employees knowing their own emotion and they are able to manage them they work more efficiently and productively Thus, research reveals that Emotional Intelligence is positively correlated with the job satisfaction.

#### NEED AND IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY

Extensive research work on emotional labour in the industries Call Centre, real estate sales professionals, teaching, Mental Health Care, adventure tour, hospitals, Teaching, Police Officers, airline industry, Tourism Management, cellular services and banking sectors, physicians, coach and athlete has been done in foreign countries and very marginal work has been done in India. The present paper has made an attempt to study individual characteristics (Emotional Intelligence) with emotional labor in organized retail sector, with reference to national capital region. The present study has focused on organized retail sector because retail sector is in its formative years and growing in leaps and bounds. In today's scenario, when competition is so high, retail sector ensures not only "getting a job completed but also focuses on "how job is done". The company ensures that an employee is appropriately decked up with the expressions of seriousness, attitude and concern for the clients so as to match up with the display standards because the client do not separate interactive experience from the product. Thus, service quality is largely determined by employees' interactions with customers require that employees continuously manage and monitor their emotional responses during service transactions with clients. This management and manipulation of emotional responses, when paid and done for a wage, is called emotional labor (Hochschild, 1983). Hence, raises the interest of the research scholar.

#### STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

The purpose of the research paper is to explore the relationship between individual characteristic, i.e. emotional intelligence trait, and emotional labor. The present study investigates how an individual characteristic, i. e extroversion trait, affect the way people engage in executing emotional labour.

#### OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objective of the study is to find out the relationship between individual characteristic (emotional intelligence) and the emotional labor. The present paper focuses on the degree of manipulation that an employee uses to display the appropriate emotions. From the review of literature, it has been observed that an individual can perform emotional labour in any one of the two ways: surface acting and deep acting. (Hochschild, 1983). These two acting mechanisms vary in nature and requires different degree of manipulation. Thus, what makes an employee to choose deep acting (regulation of emotions from inside out) rather than surface acting (regulation from outside only) is the main objective of the present research. To answer this question, individual characteristic may be an important factor which will find out what acting technique (surface acting and deep acting) individuals tend to select during service interaction with the client.

#### HYPOTHESIS-EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND EMOTIONAL LABOUR

##### EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

Emotional intelligence has been defined as the "ability to monitor one's own and others' feelings and emotions, to discriminate among them, and to use this information to guide one's thinking and actions" (Salovey & Mayer, 1990, p. 185). In other terms, emotional intelligence can be broken down into three parts: appraisal and expression of emotion, regulation of emotion, and utilization of emotion (Mayer & Salovey, 1993; Schutte, Maulouff, Hall, Haggerty, Cooper, Golden, & Dornheim, 1998). It would be reasonable to argue that if an individual is high on emotional intelligence, which incorporates the use of emotional regulation strategies in its definition and measurement, then that individual would tend to use emotional regulation strategies for the purpose of an organization more often.

Dieffendorf and Gosserland (2003) suggested that the type of emotional regulation strategy that will be employed may be based on whether the emotional event that is occurring is anticipated or unexpected. Anticipated events, such as planning to confront an unruly customer in the lobby, are more likely to generate a deep acting strategy. On the other hand, unexpected emotional events, such as a customer approaching an employee with a complaint, would generate a surface acting strategy, as the emotional reaction may have already begun. Since emotionally intelligent people are better able to anticipate emotional events, they will be able to use the deep acting strategy more often, and not have to use surface acting as often as a less emotionally intelligent individual. Two hypotheses are proposed for empirical testing.

**Hypothesis 1 a:** There is no relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Deep acting method of Emotional Labor.

**Hypothesis 1 b:** There is no relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Surface acting method of Emotional Labor.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Data for the analysis has collected through structured Questionnaire. The questionnaire is constructed on the previously established scales on Emotional Intelligence (Emotional Intelligence Scale by Wong & Law, 2002) and Emotional labor (Emotional labor scale by Brotheridge & Lee 1998). The present study has been conducted in the national capital region consisting of large number of organized retail outlets. It would be impracticable, if not impossible, to test, to interview or observe each unit of universe under controlled condition in order to arrive at principal having universal validity. Thus, relatively small number of retail houses have been selected from national capital region and analyzed in order to find out something about the entire universe from which it has been selected. In this study researcher has used quota sampling method and convenience sampling method (non-probability sampling method) for selecting organized retail houses from national capital region. The data has been collected from 20 organized retail houses from national capital region with the sample of 500 employees, working in these organized retail houses at the designation of managers and non-managers (cashiers and team members). The data so collected has been analyzed by implementing descriptive statistical tools (mean, standard deviation and Pearson's coefficient of correlation).

## RESULT AND DISCUSSIONS

In hypothesis, it is postulated that there is no relationship between Emotional intelligence and deep acting method of emotional labor. To test the hypothesis, Pearson's coefficient of correlation is conducted. After analyzing the data, collected from the sample of 500 respondents, the Pearson's coefficient of correlation of Deep acting and Emotional Intelligence comes out to be  $r=0.20$  (Table 1.1). The analysis indicates that there is a positive correlation between Deep acting and Emotional Intelligence as far as the present sample is concerned. Therefore, the null hypothesis i.e. there is no relationship between deep acting and emotional intelligence, is rejected. From the analysis, it can be concluded that an employee high in emotional intelligence regulates his or her emotions with greater ease and effectiveness from inside out by indulging in deep acting technique of emotional labour.

**TABLE 1.1: DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS AND INTERNAL CONSISTENCY RELIABILITY FOR EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND DEEP ACTING OF EMOTIONAL LABOUR**

Variable	Emotional Intelligence (EI)	Deep Acting (DA)
Descriptive Statistics		
No. of Respondents	500	500
Internal consistency reliability	0.94	0.89
Mean	81.046	12.29
Standard Deviation	10	2
Correlation EI and DA	0.20	

Hypothesis 1b proposes that there is no relationship between Emotional intelligence and Surface acting method of emotional labor. The hypothesis is tested through Pearson's coefficient of correlation. The Pearson's coefficient of correlation between Surface acting and Emotional Intelligence comes out to be  $r=-0.09$  (Table 1.2) for the selected sample. The result of the analysis indicates that there is a negative correlation between Surface acting and Emotional Intelligence as far as the present sample is concerned. The analysis does not support the hypothesis, therefore the null hypothesis i.e. there is no relationship between surface acting and emotional intelligence, is rejected. From the analysis, it can be concluded that an employee low in emotional intelligence trait will regulate his/her emotions from the outside only by indulging in surface acting of emotional labour.

**TABLE 1.2 DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS AND INTERNAL CONSISTENCY RELIABILITY FOR EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND SURFACE ACTING METHOD OF EMOTIONAL LABOUR**

Variable	Emotional Intelligence (EI)	Surface Acting (SA)
Descriptive Statistics		
No. of Respondents	500	500
Internal consistency reliability	0.94	0.86
Mean	81.046	8.59
Standard Deviation	10	4
Correlation EI and SA	- 0.09	

## FINDINGS

Hypothesis 1 (a) and Hypothesis 1 (b) results analysis indicate that emotional intelligence is positively correlated with deep acting and negatively with the surface acting. Therefore, an individual, with elevated levels of emotional intelligence are better able to regulate their emotions to meet organizational display rules. This hypothesis result is consistent in terms of deep acting with Totter dell and Holman (2003) observation, Totter dell and Holman (2003) who found a significant relationship between emotional intelligence and the deep acting component of emotional labor. This finding has interesting implication in the selection process of service employees i.e. employers would hire those potential employees who have high level of emotional intelligence because it appears to contribute to employee Job Satisfaction in the service context.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The present study has found significant relationship between personality characteristic (emotional intelligence) and emotional labor indicating that individuals with certain dispositions are more likely to engage in deep acting. Individuals who are high in emotional intelligence trait, reported higher levels of deep acting. Similar patterns of relationships are also found for outcomes of emotional labor. Employees with high levels of deep acting reported high levels of job satisfaction. Thus, these findings recommend that selecting an individual who is predisposed to display (express) positive emotions and experience positive feelings may prove beneficial for both organizational and employee well-being. Putting into practice personality tests or interviews in selection processes may be helpful for maintaining person- job fit.

## CONCLUSIONS

It is hoped that this study will provide a better understanding of how employees perform emotional labor and how this labor should be measured statistically. The findings of the study will contribute not only in literature of emotional labor but also but also to the retail sector by making organized retail industry aware of their

employee's emotional contribution to the organization's performance. Retail industry should take emotional labor seriously since it influences customer contentment, customer loyalty, and eventually, financial performance of the organizational. Emotional labor deserves researchers' attention. Service industry employees, who perform emotional labor, deserve the public's respect and should be paid nicely.

### LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Research being a never ending process makes the ground for more researches. The findings and limitations of any study may be the starting point for another research. Firstly, the number of organized retail houses selected for the analysis from the national capital region are small because of shortage of time. Secondly, lack of willingness to fill up the questionnaire by the respondents because of their busy schedules, posed the greatest challenge. Last but not the least, statistical tools used in the study too have their inherent limitations, the descriptive statistics used are mean, standard deviation and Pearson's of coefficient of correlation. Some elements of inaccuracy might have crept in because of misinterpretation of the questions on the part of the respondents

### SCOPE FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

For future research, there is a need to categorize the organized retail sector for more precise analysis. As different organized retail sector has different display rules, therefore more samples of organized retail sector should be taken. The future research should take more individual characteristics so as to study relationship between dispositional antecedents and emotional labor. This study concentrated only on the antecedents of emotional labor, future researcher should investigate the consequences of emotional labor.

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In this age of Commerce, Economics, Computer, I.T. & Management and cut throat competition, a group of intellectuals felt the need to have some platform, where young and budding managers and academicians could express their views and discuss the problems among their peers. This journal was conceived with this noble intention in view. This journal has been introduced to give an opportunity for expressing refined and innovative ideas in this field. It is our humble endeavour to provide a springboard to the upcoming specialists and give a chance to know about the latest in the sphere of research and knowledge. We have taken a small step and we hope that with the active co-operation of like-minded scholars, we shall be able to serve the society with our humble efforts.

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