

Emotional Labor and Turnover Intention: Literature Review and Model Development on Mediating Role of Job Satisfaction and Emotional Exhaustion

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Abstract: Jobs that involves human interactions especially customer service work have pre-defined expectations of appropriate emotional displays. Employees undergo emotional labor to overcome the conflict between experienced emotions and emotions expressed to conform to display rules. This may definitely result in negative consequences in the work place, and the employees' view regarding stability on the job may get hampered. The study tries to review the earlier researches that have addressed the effect Emotional Labor on Emotional Exhaustion and Job Satisfaction of employees involved in customer service work, which may further have its impact on employee Turnover Intentions. The concepts and research findings related to different strategies of performing emotional labor: deep acting and surface acting, and their impacts on job satisfaction, emotional exhaustion and turnover intentions were also discussed. The study also helped in proposing a research model which will be used to analyze the mediating effect of job satisfaction and emotional exhaustion on relationship between emotional labor and turnover intentions in the upcoming research.

Key Words: Emotional labor, turnover intention, job satisfaction, emotional exhaustion, mediation.

1. INTRODUCTION:

One of the most noticeable trends in the workplace over the last few decades has been the increased emphasis on service. In order to remain profitable in this highly competitive world, companies need to offer a pleasing customer service interaction in addition to a good product at a competitive price. As a result most jobs today have employees interacting with and monitoring their responses to customers.

Emotional Labor exerted in professions vary in terms of intensity and frequency but almost all the professions will have to face it according to the job expectations. Emotional Control is challenging as it requires on-the job emotional regulation and lies at very heart of being professional. It is important to recognize that emotional labor is a job trait, an aspect of a role, rather than a trait of the individual who fills the role. But, it is also visible that modulation of expressions and masking of moods to match it with the display rules of the job can take emotional toll on the individual performing the role. Emotional Labor exerted by these service professionals if not willful can result into negative work outcomes like increased Emotional Exhaustion and decrease in the satisfaction that they derive out of the job that they are pursuing. These negative consequences can finally lead to extend where an individual can decide about quitting the job.

The current study reviewed the past researches on the impact of Emotional Labor on Turnover Intention and role of job satisfaction and emotional exhaustion as mediators. The study also attempted to create a research model based on the review of literature, which would be tested for authenticity in further research.

2. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK:

2.1 Emotional Labor

The concept of emotional labor was introduced by Hochschild, but the actual definition of the construct has evolved through the years. Different approaches to the concept have been generated by various researches (Asforth & Humphrey, 1993; Grandey, 2000; Morris & Feldman, 1996). There is difference in classification regarding the Emotional Labor behavior depicted by employees based on the perspective of different researchers. Researches on Emotional Labor generally focus on how employees exhibit the expected behaviors in their routine work life. Hochschild classified the concept under two broad heads of Surface Acting and Deep acting. According to him 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 manipulation of emotional expressions without changing felt emotions. Whereas during Deep Acting, individuals consciously change the way they feel in order to display appropriate emotions. Although deep acting is a more authentic way of emotional regulation, both processes require effort. Hochschild mentioned that this effort of managing emotions has detrimental consequences for employees and leads to experiences of repeated stress, alienation and burnout.

Hochschild faced criticism with respect to the dimensionality of emotional labor. Several researchers suggested that emotional labor is a multidimensional construct and may involve strategies other than surface and deep acting (Kruml & Geddes, 2000; Morris & Feldman, 1996; Pugliesi, 1999). Keeping in view the fundamental difference in the level of internalization of the emotions the researcher considers that that Emotional Labor can be categorized in three levels: Surface Acting, Deep Acting and Genuine Acting. The current study focused only on the consequences employees face by adopting two strategies of performing Emotional Labor: Surface Acting and Deep Acting.

The table presented below tries to address the various definitions, and emotional labor strategies crafted by prominent researchers over the period of time.

Table 1. Definition and Dimensions of Emotional Labor

Authors, year	Conceptual Definition	Emotional Labor Dimensions/ Strategies
Arlie Hochschild, 1983	Emotional Labor is the management of feeling to create a publicly observable facial and bodily display; emotional labor is sold for a wage and therefore has exchange value.	<p>Employees regulate their emotions to match display rules in two ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Surface Acting refers to the manipulation of emotional expressions without changing felt emotions. • During Deep Acting, individuals consciously change the way they feel in order to display appropriate emotions.
Ashforth and Humphrey, 1993	They defined emotional labor as an act of expressing desired emotions.	<p>Ashforth and Humphrey proposed addition of third strategy to already proposed strategies by Hochschild.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Surface Acting • Deep Acting • Genuine expression of emotions
Morris and Feldman, 1996	They explicitly defined emotional labor as the “effort, planning, and control needed to express organizationally desired emotion during interpersonal transactions to display appropriate emotions”.	<p>They proposed that emotional labor has four dimensions which are interrelated. These are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frequency of appropriate emotional display, • Attentiveness to required display rules, • Variety of emotions to be displayed, and • Emotional dissonance which occurs when expressing fake emotions.
Grandey, 2000	Defined emotional labor as a process of management of psychological arousal and cognitive appraisal in order to comply with display rules at work and to express organizationally desired emotions.	<p>According to Grandey, there are two types of emotional regulation strategies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Antecedent-focused regulation involves strategies such as attention deployment and cognitive change, and is therefore equivalent to deep acting. • Response-focused regulation involves manipulation of the emotional expression by faking or adjusting the intensity of emotion evoked by a situation, it is similar to surface acting.
Brotheridge C. M. and Lee R. T. (1998, 2003)	Brotheridge and Lee described Emotional labour as “actions undertaken as a means of addressing role demands” (1998, p.7) or the effort involved when employees “regulate their emotional display in an attempt to meet organizationally-based expectations specific to their roles” (2003, p. 365).	<p>They developed an Emotional labor Scale with 6 dimensions which measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The intensity of interaction, • Frequency of interaction, • Variety of emotional display, • Surface acting, • Deep acting and • The duration of interaction.
Kruml S. M. and Geddes D. (1998, 2000)	Kruml and Geddes (1998) have used the concept of dissonance as a defining dimension of Emotional labor.	<p>Kruml and Geddes (2000) identified two dimensions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emotive dissonance refers to Hochschild’s concept of Surface acting and passive Deep acting (automatic emotion regulation). • Emotive effort explains the effort employees take to change their inner feelings to match the feelings they are expected to display which is incorporated from Hochschild’s (1983) concept of active Deep acting.

Zapf D. and his Colleagues (1999, 2002)	Zapf (2002) used the term Emotion work and he defined the concept as “the psychological processes necessary to regulate organizationally desired emotions” (p. 239).	Zapf, Vogt, Seifert, Mertini, and Isic (1999) developed Frankfurt Emotion Work Scale of emotion work that include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emotional regulation requirements (sub-scales: the requirement to express positive emotions; the requirement to express and handle negative emotions, the requirement to be sensitive to clients’ emotions, and the requirement to show sympathy), • Emotional regulation possibilities (control), and • Emotional regulation problems (Emotional dissonance).
Diefendorff J. M. and his Colleagues (2003, 2005)	Diefendorff and Gosserand (2003) defined Emotional labor as the process of regulating emotional expressions of individuals in response to the display rules.	The Emotional labor Strategy Scale developed by them has three dimensions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deep acting, • Surface acting and • Expression of naturally felt emotions.

2.2 Turnover Intention

Turnover intention may be defined as the intention of employees to quit their organization. Turnover intention of employees is matter of great concern for maximum organizations because with the intention of quit no one can perform at one’s best for the organization. Employees who have intention to quit are less likely to commit their performance for the organization (Yun, Hwang & Lynch, 2015). Turnover intention is a state when an employee has a plan to leave the organization, turnover intention leads to actual turnover. Intentions of employee turnover are characterized by various matters concerning the behavior of employees, such as: increased absentee, frequent laziness during working, rise in the courage to violate the work ordered, the courage to oppose or protest against a superior, and seriousness to resolve all the responsibility of the employee who is very different than usual (Sutanto & Kurniawan, 2016). These indications can be used for prediction of any intentions an employee has regarding quitting the company.

2.3 Emotional Exhaustion

Emotional exhaustion is a specific stress-related reaction, and it is considered a key component of burnout (Maslach, 1982). Maslach observed that during interactions with patients, clients and children, employees exert much effort to feel empathy and need to be emotionally involved. For, these professions, regulation and management of emotions are considered to be a key factor for successful performance. However, with passage of time, employees working in these occupations are no longer able to properly manage their emotions while interacting with customers. This situation is, then, considered to be an indication of burnout. Burnout has three components: emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and decreased personal accomplishment (Maslach, 1982a, 1982b; Maslach & Jackson, 1984, 1986).

2.4 Job Satisfaction

Spector, 1997 considered job satisfaction as an attitudinal variable defined by how much people like or dislike their job. The phenomenon of job satisfaction is closely related to what motivates and de-motivates employees (Locke 1976). Job Satisfaction is defined as “a pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of the job” (Locke, 1976). Mustafa, Martin, & Hughes, 2016, defined Job Satisfaction as employees’ attitudinal evaluative judgment of their job experiences it also expresses their affective reaction (Wong & Laschinger, 2012) to their job. Job satisfaction is a positive attitude and emotional state which results out of the assessment of one’s job or work experience. Job satisfaction has also been defined as the amount of the total positive effect of the work (Griffeth et al., 2000).

3. PROPOSITION FORMULATION:

Ashforth and Humphrey (1993) considered emotional labor as a double-edged sword. At one side it can facilitate task performance by regulating interactions and preventing interpersonal problems. On the other, emotional labor can disrupt performance by priming expectations of good service that cannot be met (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993). Numerous researches in emotional labor address unfavorable outcomes. The most-often-cited outcomes are burnout (Hochschild, 1983; Morris & Feldman, 1996) and job dissatisfaction (Morris & Feldman, 1996; Grandey, 1999; Wharton, 1993). Other impacts on the individual’s psychological well-being were also cited in the literature, such as poor self-esteem, depression, cynicism, role alienation, and self-alienation (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993; Fineman, 1993; Tolich, 1993; Wharton, 1993).

Although most literature on emotional labor implies negative consequences, some researchers have concluded positive consequences of emotional labor for both organizations and individuals. At organizational level, regulating employees’ emotional display in a highly scripted manner can ensure task effectiveness and service quality (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993), and can also help in increasing sales and repeated business (Rafaeli & Sutton, 1987). At the

individual level, the positive outcomes of emotional labor include financial rewards (i.e., tips or salaries) (Rafaeli & Sutton, 1987); increased satisfaction, security, and self-esteem (Tolich, 1993; Wharton, 1993); increased self-efficacy and psychological wellbeing (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993); and decreased stress (Conrad & Witte, 1994).

Numerous studies have been conducted in past that focused on the concept of emotional labor and its outcomes. As the current study focuses on impact of emotional labor on emotional exhaustion, job satisfaction, and turnover intentions of the employees, various researches that helped in development of the study model have been discussed further.

3.1.1 Emotional Labor and Turnover Intention

Both Hochschild (1983) and Grandey (2000) stated in their studies that since continuous regulation of emotions results in physiological arousal and is often perceived as a stressful activity, employees might decide to leave their jobs. Mobley (1977) points out that the intention to quit is the underlying reason for turnover. Some researchers argue that turnover behavior may be a result of emotional labor (Grandey, 2000; Cote & Morgan, 2002; Chau, Dahling, Levy, & Diefendorff, 2009). Lv, Xu, & Ji (2012) claim that emotional labor is related to the intention to quit. Walsh and Bartkowski (2013), found a positive relation between surface acting and the intention to quit. According to Grandey (2000), the very fact that an employee engages in high levels of surface acting is, in fact, an indicator of person- job misfit. Coté and Morgan (2002) found that suppression of negative feelings (surface acting) was positively related to employees' intentions to quit. Grandey (1999) reported in his study that high levels of surface acting significantly and positively related to intentions to quit the job. A study by Chau et al. (2009) reiterated these results by showing that surface acting increased employees' intentions of job turnover through emotional exhaustion. Ünler-Öz (2007) also examined the relationship between emotional labor strategies and employee turnover intentions and reported that when moderated by supervisory support, surface acting was positively related to employees' turnover intentions. Based on the above arguments the following was proposed:

H1(a): A significant relationship will exist between Emotional Labor and Turnover Intention.

H1(b): A significant negative relationship will exist between Deep Acting and Turnover Intention

H1(c): A significant positive relationship will exist between Surface Acting and Turnover Intention.

3.1.2 Emotional Labor and Job Satisfaction

Various studies have examined the relationship between emotional labor and job satisfaction. Hochschild (1983) argued that the fact that employees' personal feelings are commoditized and exchanged like a property should be very dissatisfying on the part of workers. In support of Hochschild's view, Grandey (2000) also assumed that emotional labor would be negatively correlated with employee job satisfaction. However, empirical findings have shown mixed evidence for this assumption.

Morris and Feldman (1997) found a significant negative correlation ($r = -.37, p < .001$) between emotional dissonance and job satisfaction. Their research revealed that dissonance and emotional exhaustion are positively related. In other words, when employees "fake" emotions (surface acting), they feel emotionally exhausted.

Rutter and Fielding (1988) found a negative relation between suppression of real feelings and job satisfaction. Negative correlations between emotional labor and job satisfaction were also reported by Bulan, Erickson and Wharton (1997), and Parkinson (1991).

Studies that based their assumptions on the distinction of surface and deep acting, share the common view that surface acting has more detrimental consequences than deep acting on the part of employees (Brotheridge & Grandey, 2002; Brotheridge & Lee, 2002; Judge, Woolf, & Hurst, 2009). Based on the findings of these studies the present study expects that surface and deep acting will have differential effects on job satisfaction. Based on the above arguments the following was proposed:

H2(a): A significant relationship will exist between Emotional Labor and Job Satisfaction.

H2(b): A significant positive relationship will exist between Deep Acting and Job Satisfaction

H2(c): A significant negative relationship will exist between Surface Acting and Job Satisfaction.

3.1.3 Emotional Labor and Emotional Exhaustion

The relationship between emotional labor and emotional exhaustion has been examined in various researches. Morris and Feldman (1996) proposed that there would be a direct, positive relationship between emotional labor dimensions (frequency of emotional display, attentiveness to required display rules, variety of expressed emotions, and emotional dissonance) and emotional exhaustion.

Zapf (2002), suggested that emotion work would be related to emotional exhaustion. Grandey (2003) also argued that both surface acting and deep acting dimension should be positively related to emotional exhaustion. But,

her study found significant correlations with only surface acting dimension, and with regard to deep acting no relationship was found. Zapf and Holz (2006) predicted that emotion work, which includes requirements to display positive emotions, requirements to display negative emotions, sensitivity requirements, interaction control and emotional dissonance, is a significant predictor of emotional exhaustion. Johnson (2004) found while researching that surface acting was positively and significantly related to emotional exhaustion, and negatively and significantly related to affective well-being and may be considered possible consequences of emotional dissonance. Johnson (2004) also argues that the negative relation between deep acting and emotional exhaustion shows that the employee faced with a conflict between a felt emotion and the organizationally mandated emotion would be better served to attempt to actually feel the required emotion, as less emotional exhaustion is likely with this method. Furnell (2008) conducted research on call center executives which revealed no significant relationships between deep acting and emotional exhaustion. It would thus seem that by using deep acting techniques individual's feelings of personal efficacy increases. Based on the above arguments the following was proposed:

H3(a): A significant relationship will exist between Emotional Labor and Emotional Exhaustion.

H3(b): A significant negative relationship will exist between Deep Acting and Emotional Exhaustion.

H3(c): A significant positive relationship will exist between Surface Acting and Emotional Exhaustion.

3.5 Mediating Role of Job Satisfaction

Abraham (1999) confirmed in a study that job satisfaction mediates the relationship between emotional dissonance and intention to quit. According to Abraham (1999), increased emotional dissonance results in decreased job satisfaction, which then results in increased turnover intention.

Tett and Meyer (1993) in their study found strong support for the relationship between satisfaction and turnover intention ($r = -.53, p < .05$). The path analyses conducted by Tett and Meyer (1993) also presented a clear picture of the relations among satisfaction, intention to quit, and turnover. They confirmed that dissatisfaction leads directly to turnover intentions.

As emotional conflict and surface acting are conceptually similar constructs (Grandey, 2003), superficial acting may increase the intention to quit through job dissatisfaction. As in sincere behavior no emotional conflict is experienced, a negative relation can be expected between the expression of naturally felt emotions and the intention to quit.

The findings of a research conducted by Anafarta (2015) on health care workers indicate that job satisfaction only mediates in the relation between the surface and deep acting dimensions of emotional labor and the intention to quit.

Judge, et.al (2009), in a study underline the fact that engaging in only superficial acting leads to negative emotions that, in turn, negatively affect job satisfaction. Thus, as health sector workers are likely to experience emotional conflict, it is possible that their job satisfaction decreases more due to this conflict, resulting in increased intentions to quit. In contrast to this, deep acting creates more positive emotions compared to surface acting (Yürür & Ünlü, 2011). It is likely that the job satisfactions of individuals experiencing positive emotions increase, and their intentions to quit decrease.

Walsh & Bartikowsk (2013) conducted a research on German service employees and results of analysis indicated that job satisfaction partially mediates relationships between emotional labor and quitting intentions. A research conducted by Zito, et.al (2018) on more than 300 call center agents of an Italian Telecommunication Company, states that, emotional dissonance reveals a negative relation with job satisfaction and a positive relation with turnover. Moreover, job satisfaction is negatively related with turnover and mediates the relationship between job resources and turnover.

Based on the above arguments the following was proposed:

H4: A significant negative relationship will exist between Job Satisfaction and Turnover Intentions.

H5 (a): Job Satisfaction mediates the impact of Emotional Labor on Turnover Intention.

H5 (b): Job Satisfaction mediates the relationship between Deep Acting and Turnover Intention.

H5 (c): Job Satisfaction mediates the relationship between Surface Acting and Turnover Intention

3.1.4 Mediating Role of Emotional Exhaustion

Zhao Xu (2013) chose frontline service employees of 4 hotels in Chang Chun as a sample, then examined the relationship of emotional labor, burnout and turnover intention. The results indicated that surface acting and deep acting have a remarkable impact on three dimensions of burnout, which is respectively positive and negative on this consequence. Due to the mediation of burnout, emotional labor produced an effect on turnover intention.

Na & Park (2019) conducted a study on Nurses which revealed that emotional exhaustion significantly increased turnover intention. Conversely, personal accomplishment significantly reduced turnover intention. The study pointed out that surface acting had an indirect effect on turnover intention that was mediated by emotional exhaustion.

A study conducted by Kawal & Ajaz (2019) on the sample of 127 responses of flight attendants revealed that the more the employees perform, the more emotionally exhaust he/she feel and his/her intentions to leave the job increases.

The empirical work contributed by Chau et al. (2009) has not found any direct relationship among emotional labor and turnover intentions however the relationship is bridged by the emotional exhaustion which remains the central reason of turnover.

Based on the above arguments the following was proposed:

H6: A significant positive relationship will exist between Emotional Exhaustion and Turnover Intentions.

H7(a): Emotional Exhaustion mediates the impact of Emotional Labor on Turnover Intention.

H7(b): Emotional Exhaustion mediates the relationship between Deep Acting and Turnover Intention.

H7(c): Emotional Exhaustion mediates the relationship between Surface Acting and Turnover Intention.

4. PROPOSED RESEARCH MODEL:

Based on the studies conducted earlier and discussed in literature review it can be predicted that employees experiencing high levels of emotional labor would have greater probability of quitting their jobs in future. It can also be assumed that employees involved in surface acting would have greater turnover intentions, whereas the same cannot be said for the employees performing deep acting. The earlier studies also helped in understanding that emotional labor has positive effect on emotional exhaustion and negative effect on job satisfaction. Employees performing surface acting would report higher levels of emotional exhaustion and decrease in job satisfaction. However, the employees who were involved in deep acting had lower levels of emotional exhaustion and increasing job satisfaction.

Evidences were also found that job satisfaction mediates the relationship between emotional labor and turnover intentions. It can be inferred that surface acting leads to decrease in job satisfaction, resulting in increased intentions to quit. In contrast to this, deep acting increases job satisfactions of individuals, and their intentions to quit decrease. The previous studies also formed a base in predicting the mediating role of emotional exhaustion while studying the relationship between emotional labor and turnover intention. The results indicated that surface acting increases emotional exhaustion which adds on to the turnover intention of the employees. Whereas, the employees who deep act have lower emotional exhaustion, which may further lead to reduction in turnover intention.

These findings helped in crafting a research model that can be tested for understanding and validating the predicted relationships between emotional labor, turnover intention, emotional exhaustion and job satisfaction. The proposed model with hypotheses is presented below.

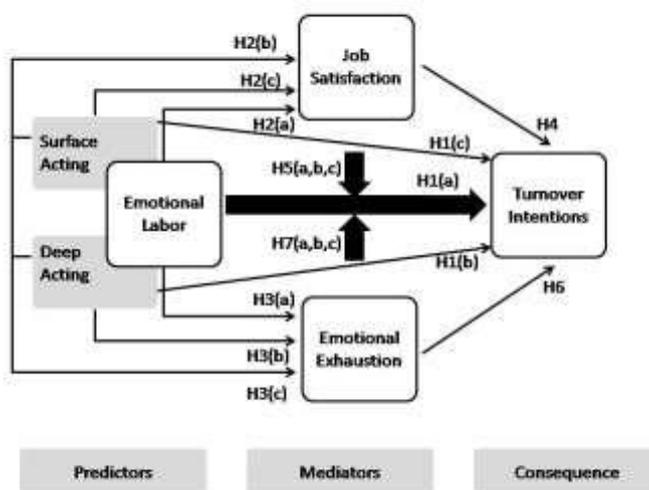


Figure 1: Proposed Research Model

5. DIRECTION FOR FUTURE RESEARCH:

The literature review provided the basis of conducting future research exploring the relationship between emotional labor strategies and work related outcomes. Based on the empirical findings of the past researchers it can be concluded that the two emotional labor strategies: surface acting and deep acting would not have different impacts on

the work outcomes: job satisfaction, emotional exhaustion and turnover intentions. It is evident through earlier finding that emotional labor does have an impact on the three outcomes considered as a part of the study. The findings suggest that surface acting has detrimental effects where as deep acting does not support negative consequences.

The further research would be conducted on assumptions based on the deep study done on the consequences of surface acting and deep acting. The research would be considering that: Surface acting would impact job Satisfaction negatively; where as it would have a positive effect on emotional exhaustion and turnover intention. Similarly deep acting would result in increasing job satisfaction and would reduce the experience of emotional exhaustion and turnover intention of employees involved in customer service work. The mediating effect of job satisfaction and emotional exhaustion would also be studied. Hypotheses drafted would be tested to explore the relationships between the study variables in the research model; various empirical tests would be conducted to validate the usage of the proposed model. Use of structural equation modeling for confirmatory factor analysis and path analysis would be done to analyze the proposed model.

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