

Impact of Emotional Labor on Mental Health: A Study of Marketing Executives Working in The Banking Industry

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Abstract : The present study observed that emotional labor is an antecedent of mental ill-health among private bank marketing executives of selected banks in the state of Punjab, India. This research investigated the impact of emotional labor on the mental health of employees. A total of 80 respondents were surveyed and selected through a multi-stage sampling technique. It was found that there is a negative impact of emotional labor on the mental health of employees. Correlation and Multiple Regression analyses were used to ascertain results.

Keywords: Emotional labor, Surface acting, Deep acting, Mental health, Marketing executives

Introduction

In order to gain competitive advantage, the employees of service organizations are considered to perform in an unexpected way, especially, front line employees or for those who are engaged directly with the customers (Constanti and Gibbs, 2004). Hence, the behavior of employees requires 'emotional labor' where they have to either hide or manage their actual feelings for delivering a successful service (Hochschild, 1983). Such direct personal interaction related jobs are required to manage their behaviors. Emotional Labor has been developed as a major element of interactive service work (Lewig and Dollard, 2003). Emotional labor is executed in two ways, namely; surface acting and deep acting (Hochschild, 1983). Lazanyi (2011) defined surface acting as emotions displayed which are not as same as he truly feels and it can be further understood as when a person conceals his original emotions and act as per the requirements of the job at the workplace. On the contrary, deep acting refers to the adjustments of emotions in order to conform to the job requirements of the organization.

Similar to any other labor, emotional labor is strenuous, energy demanding, and pushes towards emotional exhaustion in the long run. Extreme emotional labor may have a negative impact on employee's behavior as well as their psychic and somatic well-being (Gelderer et al., 2007; Karim, 2009). The current research work describes the emotional labor as an antecedent of mental ill-health of private bank marketing executives

Emotional Labor And Mental Health

Jackson et al. (1986) explained that when an employee gets over emotionally involved in direct interactions with the clients, often encounters burnout. Cordes and Dougherty (1993) explained burnout occurs because of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment. Most researchers have linked burnout with essential organizational consequences like

turnover and performance (Grandey, 2000). Turnover Intentions among employees are the consequence of mental ill-health caused due to Job Stress (Singh, 2016). There are certain situations where frequent regulation of emotions is required, which makes an employee emotionally exhausted or may give him the loss of energy and fatigue. While coming up with the same, the employee may lead to experience a reduced sense of personal accomplishment (Cordes and Dougherty, 1993). Abraham (1998) explained that emotional dissonance is related to emotional exhaustion which is dependent upon emotional labor.

Surface Acting

Emotional labor impacts negatively the work performance as well as personal accomplishments (Zapf, 2002). Butler et al. (2003) opined that emotional labor results in un-dissolved emotional dissonance, hence, it will result in higher stress levels, which occurs due to stimulation physiological processes in controlling the actual emotions. Surface acting may lead to a compromised self-evaluation and leads to depression in the long run, which further reduces the level of work motivation, absenteeism and turnover intentions among employees. There is a negative impact of emotional labor on various personal and work-related segments (Brotheridge and Grandey, 2002). Employees performing surface acting were found more emotionally shattered in comparison to employees performing deep acting (Johnson, 2004). Surface acting found to be associated with emotional exhaustion (Brotheridge and Lee, 1998).

Deep Acting

Chu (2002) specified that deep acting implicates in altering inner feelings by changing something more than the external appearance of a person. Brotheridge and Grandey (2002) detailed that deep acting is a process where we control our internal feelings and show the required feelings, as desired by the organization. Grandey (2003)

wrote that deep acting results in negative correlation with job satisfaction. Deep acting often leads to self-estrangement from individual's real emotions. Any rise in the level of deep acting encompasses a more risk, which may further lead to emotional exhaustion in the long run (Lazanyi, 2011). At the same time, few other researchers are of a different point of view. Brotheridge and Grandey (2002) established deep acting helps in improving actor's perception of effectiveness and self-image at work. Lazanyi (2011). Chu (2002) revealed that employees performing deep acting feel lesser fake, which may make them less stressful. Regulating emotions through deep acting may result in a sense of accomplishment, yet it is dependent upon the employee's level of identification at work (Ashforth and Humphrey, 1993).

After reviewing the existing work on the topic, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H1: Surface acting will have a tendency to impact the mental health of bank marketing executives.

H2: Deep acting will have a tendency to impact the mental health of bank marketing executives.

Statement of Research Problem

The objective of this study is to determine the impact of emotional labor on the mental health of marketing executives working in the private banking industry.

Research Methodology

The present study has been conducted on 80 marketing executives selected through multistage sampling technique, covering top three private banks namely, HDFC Bank, ICICI Bank, and Axis Bank within the Doaba region of the Punjab state. Out of the sample, 68 percent are males and 32 percent are females; 76 percent of the respondents possess 0-5 years of experience and 24 percent have 5-10 years of experience; 62 percent possess a postgraduate degree and 38 percent are having Bachelor's degree.; 81 percent of the respondents are in the age group of up to 28 years and 19 percent in 28-35 years; 74 percent of the respondents earn up to INR 25,000 per month while 26 percent earn up to INR 40,000 per month. Different scale items were collected from the work of various researchers for surface acting and deep acting, and mental health (eg. CUKU, 2009; Thisera and Silva, 2017; Singh, 2016). The individual reliability analysis for the constructs was measured by Cronbach's alpha for scales were as: surface acting (alpha=0.729), deep acting (alpha=0.666) and mental health (alpha=0.821) which are perfectly adequate (Field, 2009).

Results and Discussion

Multiple regression analyses were performed to check the impact of surface acting and deep acting upon mental

health (refer to table 1) among marketing executives, where mental health was kept as the dependent variable.

Table 1: Regression results for emotional labor and mental health

Emotional Labor Factor(s)	Mental Health
	β
Surface Acting	.32*
Deep Acting	.04*
R	0.352
R²	0.213

*p < 0.001

The value of R² came out to be 0.213, which clearly apprises that emotional labor has accounted for 21.3 percent of the variation in 'mental health' of marketing executives. It is clear that surface acting (p < 0.001) have a significant impact on mental health of marketing executives and deep acting (p < 0.001) also has a little impact on mental health of marketing executives. It shows that both of the hypotheses (H1 and H2) are supported which means, mental health of employees is being impacted by surface acting and deep acting performed by employees at the workplace. Martinez-Inigo et al. (2007) found that there is an impact of surface acting and deep acting on emotional exhaustion. The level of emotional labor performed is directly proportionate with the level of stress among employees (Lazarus, 1999), performing emotional labor may lead to emotional exhaustion (Wright and Cropanzano, 1998), may also lead to burnout, (Klein and Verbeke, 1999). These outcomes can further push the employees towards mental ill-health. Emotional exhaustion, stress, and burnout are the determinants of mental ill-health among respondents.

Conclusion

In a husk, this part of the research was an endeavour to observe the impact of emotional labor on the mental health of marketing executives working in private banking industry specifically to the employees working in Doaba region of the Punjab State. In general, it was established that both subfactors of emotional labor (surface acting and deep acting) have an impact on mental health marketing executives working in the private banking industry.

Limitations And Future Research

Since the design of the study is cross-sectional, hence, it becomes a limitation in ascertain good results. Another limitation can be regarding the generalizability of the findings beyond the definite research setting. Future research ought to be extended to a broader level and in diverse geographical, demographical, and organizational backgrounds, and should also find some other possible

bases which may impact the mental health along with the emotional labor.

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