

Emotional Labor within Hotel Industry – A Case Study of Hotels in Ranchi

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ABSTRACT

Hotel Industry is a labour intensive, service industry and the core of any service industry is to keep the customer satisfied. However, to achieve this goal, the staffs working in the hotel industry many times must fake their emotions. This is termed as Emotion Labour and many researchers have worked in the field of emotional labour. However, most of these works focused mainly on the core of emotional labour in general and hotel industry specific emotional labour research is very few. Even those which are available, are not in the context of Indian Hotel Industry. Hence, there remains a gap in the research and more work is to be done in Emotional Labour in Indian Hotel Industry. In this backdrop, current study is an attempt to find the existence and acceptance of emotional labour in employees of hotel industry. The study was conducted in Hotels of Ranchi to find how the employees interpret themselves as emotional labourer. Questionnaire was floated to the employees who interact with the guest in hotel industry and their responses were recorded in the Likert five-point scale. The result suggest that emotional labour is high in the hotel industry and the hotelier need to change their perception regarding staff involvement. The study also suggests that emotional labor should be considered seriously, as it affects and influence customer satisfaction, loyalty, and ultimately leading to better financial performance of the organization.

Keywords: Emotional Labour, Service industry, Hotel Industry.

INTRODUCTION:

Hotel Industry is a labour intensive, service industry and the core of any service industry is to keep the customer satisfied. However, to achieve this goal, the staffs working in the hotel industry many times have to fake their emotions. Social interaction gives rise to emotion, which are influenced by socio-cultural, interpersonal and existing situational condition. Emotions are feelings experienced, interpreted, expressed and managed by people. When a job requires a particular role to be played, people express a specific emotion and suppress feelings not relevant, and emotion management is done for a wage. Hochschild (1983) explained such behaviour of compliance to occupational and organizational norms by one's emotion as "emotional labor." She defined emotional labor as "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". According to Hochschild (1983), three qualities are required for a job involved in emotional labour. Requirement of making facial and verbal contact with public by the worker. Secondly, the requirement of creating emotional feelings in the client or customer by the worker and thirdly, it enables the employer to exercise some control over the emotional activities of workers. Since, in hotel industry these characteristics hold true, one can term job in this industry involving emotional labour.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE:

Service industry is known for its characteristics i.e. intangibility, heterogeneity, perishability and inseparability. The last characteristic, i.e. inseparability implies that production and service are done at single time and service provided cannot be separated from service receiver. As to receive service of Doctor, patient and doctor need to interact, similarly to avail service of barber, the person who need haircut and barber need to be present together, similarly for hotel services, the staff and guest need to be present together. This result, in evaluation of the nature of the service interaction by the overall experience and hence, the behaviour of service staff becomes prime importance. Most frequently, when the service staff works on the peripheral edge of the organization and performs the peripheral interactive roles (Tushman, 1977: 587; Friedman & Podolny, 1992), the organization has major stake about the performance of employees during service process and their behaviour in service interactions. Therefore, organizations, tries to control and manage interaction between employees providing service like (Food and Beverage Service employees, Housekeeping and Front office employees) and customers. Thus, employees providing service in hotels have become potential focal centre of managerial intervention. As the perception of customer about the service quality is influenced by the state of emotional expression during service encounter (Pugh, 2001), organizations desire and demand to display specific level of emotions from their employees in addition to high level of skill, competence and expertise in the job (Grandey, Fisk, Mattila, Jansen, & Sideman, 2005). Since, the emotions felt by employees do differ from the emotions needed by organisation, the employee had to put effort to portray desired emotions as asked by the organization. Such type of labour is termed emotional labour.

Many researches have divided the emotional labour through three types of acting mechanism: surface acting, deep acting, and genuine acting.

Surface Acting:

Surface acting involves triggering emotions by the employees that are not actually realised, by artificial change of their outer and external appearances (i.e., gestures, tone, or facial expression) while expressing desired emotions.

Deep Acting:

This is another type of acting. Such type of acting occurs when feelings expressed by the employee does not match the situation; in such condition the employee use their past experience and training to express required appropriate emotions. Contrary to surface acting, deep acting needs change of inner feelings by changing something more than by simply outward appearance.

Genuine Acting:

Genuine acting is empathetic acting used to address the situation whereby employees spontaneously experience and express their same emotion befitting the situation.

Ashforth and Humphrey (1993) explained emotional labor as a double-edged sword. In one hand, it enables and facilitates task performance by guiding and controlling interactions and restricting interpersonal problems. On another hand, it may impede performance by increasing expectations of good quality of service that cannot be satisfied.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

Sources of Data: Data have been collected from two diverse sources i.e. Secondary data and Primary data.

- **Secondary Data:** Data was collected from various magazines, websites, internet, books, etc.
- **Primary data:** Data was collected from various questionnaires that was floated to the employees.

Sample Design:

Population Definition:

- i. **Elements:** Employees of Hotel in Ranchi
- ii. **Sampling Units:** Hotels in Ranchi
- iii. **Extent:** Ranchi
- iv. **Sample Size:** 70

Data collection tools: A structured questionnaire with prearranged questions was given to the employees working at reception, housekeeping and food and beverage outlets of hotel. The questionnaire consists of close ended questions, which includes multiple choice questions. To frame questionnaire, researcher analysed various previous studies and modified questionnaire was used by seeking help of focus group. Dutch researchers Briët et. al (2005), Näring et. al. (2007) questionnaire was analysed and certain questions were modified and adopted.

A total of 70 questionnaire were given out of which 69 valid questionnaires were returned to the researcher. The questionnaire was divided into three parts, first was demographic, followed by two other segments, one how much they are using their emotions in their job (09 Questions) and next the impact of it on their job and behaviour (6 questions). They were asked to express their opinion for each statement by marking appropriate number for each statement. The rating was done on the Likert scale of 1-5, where 1 states strongly disagree and 5 denotes strongly agree and 3 being neutral (neither agree, nor disagree).

Data was analysed using SPSS:

Data Interpretation:

Table 1: Gender

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	61	88.4	88.4	88.4
	Female	8	11.6	11.6	100.0
	Total	69	100.0	100.0	

As depicted from above graph, 61 respondents were male as compare to 8 female respondents. The second part i.e. 10 questions regarding use of emotions in work area are as under:

Table 2: Faking facial expressions to reflect right emotions from your job makes you feel unhappy

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Dis Agree	7	10.1	10.1	10.1
	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	12	17.4	17.4	27.5
	Agree	30	43.5	43.5	71.0
	Strongly Agree	20	29.0	29.0	100.0
	Total	69	100.0	100.0	

Table 3: You have to hide your true feelings when dealing with consumers

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Dis Agree	8	11.6	11.6	11.6
	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	17	24.6	24.6	36.2
	Agree	21	30.4	30.4	66.7
	Strongly Agree	23	33.3	33.3	100.0
	Total	69	100.0	100.0	

Table 4: You show emotions that you are not truly feeling

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Dis Agree	3	4.3	4.3	4.3
	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	14	20.3	20.3	24.6
	Agree	33	47.8	47.8	72.5
	Strongly Agree	19	27.5	27.5	100.0
	Total	69	100.0	100.0	

Table 5: You fake emotions when dealing with consumers

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Dis Agree	7	10.1	10.1	10.1
	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	22	31.9	31.9	42.0
	Agree	26	37.7	37.7	79.7
	Strongly Agree	14	20.3	20.3	100.0
	Total	69	100.0	100.0	

Table 6: Your communication with consumers is like a robot

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	3	4.3	4.3	4.3
	Dis Agree	6	8.7	8.7	13.0
	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	23	33.3	33.3	46.4
	Agree	24	34.8	34.8	81.2
	Strongly Agree	13	18.8	18.8	100.0
	Total	69	100.0	100.0	

Table 7: You fake in order to deal with consumers in a right way

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Dis Agree	8	11.6	11.6	11.6
	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	15	21.7	21.7	33.3
	Agree	30	43.5	43.5	76.8
	Strongly Agree	16	23.2	23.2	100.0
	Total	69	100.0	100.0	

Table 8: You behave differently from how you actually feel

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Dis Agree	8	11.6	11.6	11.6
	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	19	27.5	27.5	39.1
	Agree	25	36.2	36.2	75.4
	Strongly Agree	17	24.6	24.6	100.0
	Total	69	100.0	100.0	

Table 9: Although you are not feeling better, you show good emotions to consumers

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Dis Agree	3	4.3	4.3	4.3
	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	24	34.8	34.8	39.1
	Agree	24	34.8	34.8	73.9
	Strongly Agree	18	26.1	26.1	100.0
	Total	69	100.0	100.0	

Table 10: When helping the consumer, you try to create emotions in yourself that present the image of your hotel desires

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Dis Agree	10	14.5	14.5	14.5
	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	18	26.1	26.1	40.6
	Agree	29	42.0	42.0	82.6
	Strongly Agree	12	17.4	17.4	100.0
	Total	69	100.0	100.0	

From the above 9 Table, it is evident that the hotel staff are manipulating their emotions to satisfy the need of the organisation. Table 2 suggests that almost 70% of the employees are not happy as they must manipulate their emotions. Table 3 suggests that 64% of employee hide their true feeling while dealing with consumers. Table 4 on the other hand suggests that 70% employee show those feeling which they are not feeling. Table 5 inform that 57% employee fake their emotions when they deal with consumers. Table 6 suggests that 52% of respondent are of opinion that their communication with consumer is not real, it is robotic, i.e. repetitive in nature and of similar kind in comparable situation. Table 7 suggests that 66% employee fake their emotion to

deal with consumer in right way. As per Table 8, 60% of respondent behave differently from what they feel. Table 9, suggests that 60% of the respondent show good emotions, though they may not feel better. As per Table 10, 59% of respondent believe that they try to create emotions as per the demand of the organisation. The last part of the question was its effect on their job and behaviour. The analysis is as under:

Table 11: Faking facial expression leads to satisfaction in your job

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	25	36.2	36.2	36.2
	Dis Agree	20	29.0	29.0	65.2
	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	9	13.0	13.0	78.3
	Agree	10	14.5	14.5	92.8
	Strongly Agree	5	7.2	7.2	100.0
	Total	69	100.0	100.0	

Table 12: When you are ready for work, you say yourself that today will be a good day

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	15	21.7	21.7	21.7
	Dis Agree	27	39.1	39.1	60.9
	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	13	18.8	18.8	79.7
	Agree	9	13.0	13.0	92.8
	Strongly Agree	5	7.2	7.2	100.0
	Total	69	100.0	100.0	

Table 13: You show the emotions to consumers that you actually felt

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	21	30.4	30.4	30.4
	Dis Agree	24	34.8	34.8	65.2
	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	19	27.5	27.5	92.8
	Agree	5	7.2	7.2	100.0
	Total	69	100.0	100.0	

Table 14: I usually think of pleasant things when starting work

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	7	10.1	10.1	10.1
	Dis Agree	22	31.9	31.9	42.0
	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	12	17.4	17.4	59.4
	Agree	19	27.5	27.5	87.0
	Strongly Agree	9	13.0	13.0	100.0
	Total	69	100.0	100.0	

Table 15: I try to truly feel the emotions that I have to show when communicate with consumer

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	19	27.5	27.5	27.5
	Dis Agree	17	24.6	24.6	52.2
	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	9	13.0	13.0	65.2
	Agree	16	23.2	23.2	88.4
	Strongly Agree	8	11.6	11.6	100.0
	Total	69	100.0	100.0	

Table 16: I endeavour not to reflect positive emotions to consumers

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	24	34.8	34.8	34.8
	Dis Agree	32	46.4	46.4	81.2
	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	12	17.4	17.4	98.6
	Agree	1	1.4	1.4	100.0
	Total	69	100.0	100.0	

From the above six table, it is evident, that they are not satisfied with the use of emotions in their job, but since it is demand of their organisation, they must perform it. Table 11 depicts that 65% of employee are dissatisfied as they must fake their emotions in job. Table 12 suggests that 70% employee do not even say that today will be a good day as they must fake their emotion every day and it is not a one-day task but every single day task for them. Similarly, table 13 suggests that 65% of employee never show their real emotions to customers. Table 14 suggests that 42% employee do not feel that their day will be good. Table 15 reveal that 52% of employees do not feel the emotion which they are showing to the guest while communicating with them. Similarly, 81% of employee do not reflect positive emotions to consumers.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION:

Employees in the hospitality sector are involved in providing service which is intangible in nature. Hotel employees are paid to provide quality service backed by appropriate emotions enabling them to be nice with their clients. It requires relentless and continuous effort to be nice with strangers consistently. When such efforts sustain and succeeds, it becomes remarkable achievement. Emotional labor should be considered seriously, as it affects and influence customer satisfaction, loyalty, and ultimately leading to better financial performance of the organization. Hospitality researchers need to concentrate and pay more attention to Emotional labor as it affects positively the performance of hospitality organization and also People involved in emotional labor deserve the public's respect. Based on finding, it can be said that hotel industry should take certain measures to ensure that staff can handle the pressure of being an emotional labor. For this, they must be motivated each time, they must be appreciated for their work done, there should be possible increment in their salaries, different types of training must be given, different allowances must be provided, and they should get chance to interact with guest after proper training. It is expected that this study will provide a better insight and understanding of employee's performance as emotional labor and its effect on productivity. In addition to this, the study will enable and create awareness in the hospitality industry about the contribution of emotions expressed by the employees' in the organization's performance and productivity.

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