

Muhammad Asif Khan¹

IMPACT OF EMOTIONAL LABOUR ON EMOTIONAL EXHAUSTION, AND MODERATING ROLE OF SOCIAL SUPPORT: AN EMPIRICAL STUDY ON HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY IN PAKISTAN

The study examines empirically the impact of emotional labour on emotional exhaustion, and the moderating role of social support on emotional labour and emotional exhaustion relationship. Structured questionnaire was used to collect data from the sample of 300 frontline employees working in the hospitality industry. The results indicate that emotional labour has positive and statistically significant effect on emotional exhaustion, and social support moderates the relationship. The study finds that female employees are more resilient to emotional labour.

Keywords: emotional labour; emotional exhaustion; social support; hospitality industry; Pakistan.

Мухаммад Асиф Хан

ЕМОЦІЙНЕ ВИСНАЖЕННЯ ПРИ ЕМОЦІЙНІЙ ПРАЦІ, ЗГЛАДЖУВАЛЬНИЙ ЕФЕКТ СОЦІАЛЬНОЇ ПІДТРИМКИ (ЗА ДАНИМИ ГОТЕЛЬНОГО БІЗНЕСУ В ПАКИСТАНІ)

У статті оцінено вплив емоційної праці на емоційне виснаження персоналу при згладжувальному ефекті соціальної підтримки. Для збору даних проведено структуроване анкетування 300 співробітників фронт-офісів готелів. Результати опитування вказують на суттєвий вплив емоційної праці на емоційне виснаження персоналу, при цьому соціальна підтримка дійсно має згладжувальний ефект. Також доведено, що персонал жіночої статі є більш стійким до емоційної праці.

Ключові слова: емоційна праця; емоційне виснаження; соціальна підтримка; гостинність.

Табл. 4. Літ. 37.

Мухаммад Асиф Хан

ЭМОЦИОНАЛЬНОЕ ИСТОЩЕНИЕ ПРИ ЭМОЦИОНАЛЬНОМ ТРУДЕ, СГЛАЖИВАЮЩИЙ ЭФФЕКТ СОЦИАЛЬНОЙ ПОДДЕРЖКИ (ПО ДАННЫМ ГОСТИНИЧНОГО БИЗНЕСА В ПАКИСТАНЕ)

В статье дана оценка влиянию эмоционального труда на эмоциональное истощение персонала при сглаживающем эффекте социальной поддержки. Для сбора данных проведено структурированное анкетирование 300 сотрудников фронт-офисов гостиниц. Результаты опроса указывают на существенное влияние эмоционального труда на эмоциональное истощение персонала, при этом социальная поддержка действительно имеет сглаживающий эффект. Также доказано, что персонал женского пола более устойчив к эмоциональному труду.

Ключевые слова: эмоциональный труд; эмоциональное истощение; социальная поддержка; гостеприимство.

1. Introduction. Service quality provides sustainable competitive advantage in today's dynamic business environment. The emotional display of employees plays an essential role in work-related activities (Barsade, 2002). Management of emotions

¹ Assistant Professor, Shaheed Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto Institute of Science and Technology, Islamabad Campus, Pakistan.

has become a core competence of services employees because of its effects on an individual in managing emotional conflicts (Weiss and Cropanzano, 1996), interpersonal relationship with customers and colleagues, and other stakeholders (Frederickson, 1998). The strategic role of emotions' management has made it an imperative dimension in managerial performance with a view to ensure regulation and management of employees' behaviour and emotional expression to achieve service excellence, employees' satisfaction, and profitability (Steinberg and Figart, 1999).

The purpose of this study is to examine empirically the effects of emotional labour (EL) on emotional exhaustion (EE), and job satisfaction (JS) of employees in hospitality industry of Pakistan. The study also investigates the moderating role of organizational social support (SS) on EL and EE relationship, and the role of gender in experiencing EL. Besides a contribution into the existing knowledge on the subject, the study provides valuable insights on this phenomenon in a developing economy. The results provide opportunities for HR practitioners, and professional managers to identify the outcomes of this phenomenon, initiate and implement appropriate intervention strategies to enhance employee competency with regard to emotions management in highly interactive competitive environment.

2. Literature Review. Hochschild (1983) defined emotional labour as "the effort, planning, and control needed to express organizationally desired emotions during interpersonal transactions". The EL takes place as a result of a conflict between true emotions and the desired work-related emotions. The construct of EL is multidimensional. However, two important dimensions have been discussed in literature. Emotional dissonances or surface acting (Guy et al., 2008) entail suppressing true emotions and expressing false emotions. The workers do not feel the emotions they are expressing (Hochschild, 1983). The emotive effort or deep acting that relates to employees' compatibility of inner feelings and the expressed emotions during work-related activities. Recalling of good events and memories in the past invoke such feelings during interaction with others (Grandey, 1999).

Strong evidence exists in literature that emotional labour results in negative outcome of burnout (Kahn, 1993), job dissatisfaction (Morris and Feldman, 1996), poor self-esteem, role alienation, depression, and self-alienation (Ashforth and Humphrey, 1993; Wharton, 1993) Regulating workers' emotions is likely to improve individual effectiveness and service excellence, repeated purchase by customers, financial rewards for employees in the form of tips, salaries, and bonuses (Rafaeli and Sutton, 1987), increased self-efficacy and psychological wellbeing and reduced stress (Ashforth and Humphrey, 1993).

Emotional exhaustion, a core dimension of burnout, is an essential stress-related reaction with depleted energy to work-related issues caused by excessive psychological and emotional demands that occurs during individuals' work with people (Maslach, 1982). This state emotionally exhausts the individual. There is significant positive relationship between emotional exhaustion and emotional labour (Kruml and Geddes, 2000; Brotheridge and Grandey, 2002)

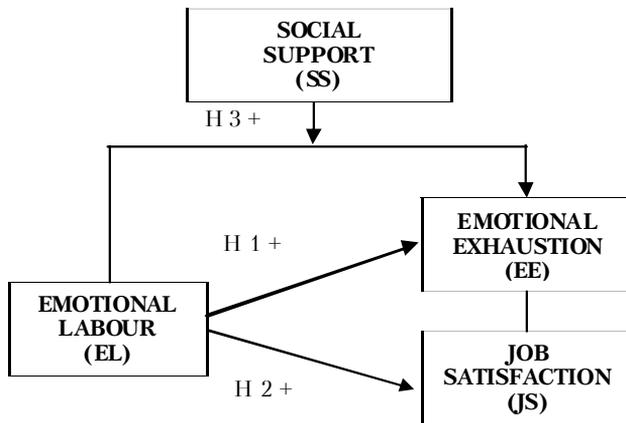
Locke (1976, p.1318) defined job satisfaction as a "pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of the job." The relationship of EL and JS has shown inconclusive results. Researchers deduced that EL has inverse relationship with JS (Hochschild, 1983; Rafaeli & Sutton, 1987). Empirical results show positive

relationship between emotional labour and job satisfaction (Adelmann, 1995; Morris and Feldman, 1997). It has been emphasized to further explore this relationship.

SS entails coworkers and organizational support that mitigates the negative fall-out of EL. It entails encouragement and feedback from coworkers, identification of workers' problems, providing emotional support to perform work, and providing network to alleviate stress (Caplan, 1974). Research indicates that social support moderates the negative effects of EL (Abraham, 1998; Grandey, 1999).

The role of gender has been discussed within the context of emotional labour. Hochschild (1983, p. 162) stated that "there is a relationship between emotional labour and gender roles. Women are thought to manage expression feeling not only better but more often than men do." Literature provides strong evidence that women are more likely to offer emotional labour in service organizations (Grandey, 2000; Wharton, 1993).

Based on the above literature review, the theoretical framework of the study is presented at Figure 1.



Following hypotheses are theorized:

H1: EL positively affects EE.

H2: EL positively affects JS.

H3: Social support moderates the relationship between EL and EE.

H4: Females employees are more resilient to EL.

3. Method

3.1. Sampling and Instrument. The primary data for the study has been collected from the front office employees working in fifteen hotels in Rawalpindi and Islamabad. These hotels have commitment to providing excellent quality of services to customers who have very high expectations for service quality. Management of emotions to provide superior service quality exposes these employees to a high degree of physical and psychological pressures. The working environment of these employees makes them perform the maximum EL. The sample is composed of 300 respondents. The average experience varied from 3 to 10 years, and educational level varied between undergraduate and graduate.

Primary data was collected through a self-administered questionnaire. The instrument was based on different scales adapted from the literature review. 300 questionnaires were delivered to the respondents using multiple means.

The emotional labour scale consisted of 22 items. 14 items measured emotive dissonance, and 8-item measured emotive efforts. The emotional exhaustion of respondents was measure using 9-item scale adapted from Maslach and Jackson (1981). Job satisfaction scale of 5 items was adapted from Hackman and Oldham (1975). The social support was measured with 8-item the scale adapted from Caplan et al. (1980).

The pilot study of the instrument was undertaken to establish reliability of the instrument. The Cronbach's alpha for all variables was measured to ensure that these values remain within an acceptable range as recommended by Nunnally (1978). Face and content validity was established through discussion with professionals, academicians, researchers, and a few potential respondents. The construct validity of the instrument was established through factor analysis. Principal axis factoring with varimax rotation extraction method was used. Factors with Eigen values (> 1) were retained. Factor items having loading ($< .50$) were not accounted for in the data analysis. Correlation and regression analysis have been used for data analysis.

4. Results. 320 completed questionnaires were received. 20 questionnaires were not accounted for because of incomplete information. 300 questionnaires were used for data analysis. The composition of respondents included 180 males and 120 females.

The reliability of the instrument was measured using Cronbach's alpha values. The Cronbach's alpha values for variables of EL (0.79), EE (0.76), JS (0.81), and SS (0.81) were within acceptable limits as recommended by Nunnally (1978). The face and content reliability was established through circulation and discussion of instruments with academicians, experts, and selected potential respondents. The construct validity was measured through factor analysis.

Correlation analysis was undertaken to measure the relationship of variables. The correlation matrix at Table 1 indicated the relationship among variables. The relationship is statistically significant at ($p < 0.05$).

Table 1. Correlation Matrix

VARIABLE	EL	EE	JS	SS
EE	.497*			
JS	.249*	-.407*	-	
SS	-.253*	-.251*	.275*	-

Significance level: $p < 0.05$ (two tailed).

Principal component factor analysis with varimax rotation was undertaken to measure the intercorrelation between variables. The results of factor analysis indicated measure of adequacy of sampling with Kaiser Meyer Olkin (KMO) score of (0.81), and Bartlett's test of sphericity that was significant at ($p < .000$). Factors with Eigen value greater than 1 and factor loading ($> .50$) were retained.

The results of regression analysis are reflected at Table 2. The predictor variable of EL accounted for 24.7% of variance in criterion variable of EE. The F-statistics

determined the overall model fit ($F = 94.301, p < 0.000$). The independent variable EL explained 12.2% variance in dependent variable of JS. The F-statistics indicated model fit. The results supported H1 and H2.

Table 2. Regression Analysis

IV	DV	R2	F	Sig	Beta	T-value	Sig
EL	EE	.247	94.301	0.000	.497	9.711	.000
EL	JS	.122	40.115	0.000	.249	6.334	.000

The results of the moderation effects are illustrated in Table 3. The results indicated the moderation effects of social support on relationship between EL and EE. The EL had significant positive effect on EE (Beta = .531, $p < .05$), whereas the SS had significant negative effects on EE (Beta = -.301). The results indicate that the higher the SS, the lower the EE employees are likely to experience. The interaction between EL and SS significantly add to the reduction of EE. The results manifest that SS indeed moderate the relationship between EL and EE. The results lend support to H3.

Table 3. Moderation Effects of Emotional Dissonance and Social Support on Emotional Exhaustion

Variable	R 2	R2 Change	t-value	Beta	Sig
Step 1					
EL	.282	.282	10.648	.531	.000
Step 2					
EL	.350	.068	6.962	.381	.000
SS			-5.502	-.301	.000
Step 3					
EL	.366	.016	4.690	.827	.000
SS			-4.632	-.637	.000
EL x SS			-6.045	-.690	.008

The independent sample T-test was undertaken to compare the mean of male and female groups on the predictor variable of EL. The results are shown in Table 4. The results indicate there is a statistically significant difference between female and male employees with regard to their perception about EL they experience.

The results also highlight that female employees are more resilient in experiencing EL as compared to male employees. The results support H4.

Table 4. Independent Sample T-Test

Levene's test of variance						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig (two-tailed)
EL	Equal variance assumed	649.860	.000	-6.237	298	.000
EL	Equal variance not assumed			-4.709	107.529	.000
N = 300						

Conclusion, Recommendations and Future Implications. The purpose of this study was to examine empirically the impact of EL on two essential dimensions of work outcomes of EE and JS, and the moderating role of SS on EL and EE relationship. The study found that EL positively and significantly affects EE. Lack of congruence of work-related requirement of positive expression and individual genuine

feelings increase stress, anxiety, and leads to depletion of emotional energy. Unpleasant interaction with customers results in increased distress, frequent anger, and recurrent frustration of employees. An extended exposure of employees to such environment compels employees to invest less emotive efforts in their assignments to reclaim their self-esteem (Hochschild, 1983). Customers and employers expect employees to exhibit real emotional expression during service encounters. Employees' commitment toward this expression enhances their vulnerability to burnout (Wharton, 1993). The results on EL and EE provide support for earlier studies (Grandey, 1999; Morris and Feldman, 1997).

The relationship of EL and JS is found to be positive and statistically significant. Grandey (1999) found that incompatibility in regulation of emotional display and real emotions significantly affects JS. It has been established that during emotional labour, employees' interaction with optimistic emotions in other are expected to influence employees and invoke positive feelings in them. Wharton (1993) found that congruence of emotions displayed by employees with the felt emotions leads to job-related benefits. Guy et al. (2008) found that EL may improve individuals' emotional competency and enhances one's social functioning. The results on EL and JS draw support for the studies by (Ashford and Humphres, 1993; Guy et al., 2008; Kruml and Geddes, 2000; Wharton, 1993). The results are in contrast with the findings of some earlier researches (Abraham, 1998; Morris and Feldman, 1997). Prevailing economic environment in Pakistan is characterized by uncertain economic future, high unemployment rate, and mobility of industrial infrastructure to other countries. Holding to a current job is essential to support self and family. Such behaviour of employees manifests normative commitment (Mayer and Allen, 1991). The cumulative efforts of employees and defined rules of emotional expression by organizations have regulated multiplier effects on employees generating positive emotional outcomes and leading to employees' satisfaction (Kahn, 1992).

SS from organizational members provides influences on emotional regulation for employees. The realization of this bond energizes employee to excel in meeting organizational goals (Wayne et al., 1997). This aspect creates positive work environment and decreases emotional labour (Schneider and Bowen, 1985). The findings of our study that SS has a moderating role in EL and EE relationship is in congruence with the earlier studies (Abraham, 1985; Baruch-Feldman et al., 2000; Zapf, 2002).

The role of gender in experiencing EL has been an area of research. The results of this study indicate that females are more resilient to EL. Glomb et al. (2004) noted that female respond more positively to EL environment. Brody and Hall (2008) indicated that females demonstrate more emotional expressiveness and emotional intensity. Simpson and Stroh (2004) established that cordial relationship is more apt to females than males. These emotions are carried into workplace and aligned with organizational norms to affect different roles for females in responding to the EL environment. The results of this study provide empirical support to the earlier studies (Glomb et al, 2004; Brody and Hall, 2008; Scott, 2011).

The study has important implications for policy makers, practicing professionals, HR managers, and academicians. The most significant dimension that needs attention is selection of employees for the jobs entailing emotional labour. The right fit has to be ensured through a comprehensive and rigorous selection process aug-

mented by extensive psychological tests to determine the personality profile of candidates to the demanding job requirement.

It has been emphasized that specific personality dimensions of employees, compatible with higher tolerance to EL, are more effective than subsequent training or redesigning of jobs (Diefendorff et al., 2005).

Training of employees to manage their emotions should remain the prime focus for the employees involved in high intensity emotional labour environment. Employees should be made aware of EL, its related effects, and using its dimensions to one's advantage for personal improvement and enhanced performance. Comprehensive training programmes for managers, supervisors, and employees should have a broad scope covering important aspects of modalities for provisioning of emotional support, complaints handling, providing adequate feedback, supportive communication, and sharing, and offering constructive opinions. EL dimensions and organizational display rules need to be comprehensively included in to training programmes, role modeling process, and formal socialization (Diefendorff et al., 2006; Wilk and Moynihan, 2005).

The role of managers and supervisors is essential with regard to monitoring of EL. The need for an effective mechanism for monitoring facilitates early identification of affected employees. Managers and supervisors need to be proactive in reaching their employees to find the effects of EL on their behaviour and performance. Early identification of this issue would enable initiating appropriate intervention approach to deal with this situation.

The role of SS is significant in reducing the effects of emotional labour. This social support is provided by coworkers, supervisor, and operational managers. There is a need to provide formal and informal arrangement to discuss EL related issues relating to work. Arranging social meetings to discuss openly the work-related issue entailing emotional labour provides an opportunity to employees to vent frustration, anxiety, and depression to reduce the effects of EL. Open communication and positive feedback inspires the affected employees to work smarter and improve their productivity. This also enhances the resilience of the affected employees to improve their capacity to manage anger and frustration in a desirable way (Sutton, 1991).

Compensation and reward policy need to be directed toward acknowledging employees contribution to organizational objectives. Affected employees should be adequately rewarded to elicit positive response and desirable emotional expression, and constructive behavior.

Organizations need to pursue quality of work policies to motivate employees to adhere to desirable emotional expression rules. The important areas include employment involvement and empowerment, advancement opportunities within an organization, fair and just reward (Allen et al., 2003), and diminishing acuity of organizational politics (Hochwarter et al., 2003).

Because EL has direct impact on individual performance, its management needs to be linked with performance of managers, supervisor, and employees. Emotional display behaviour should be an essential metrics to measure performance. Appropriate feedback on this aspect during appraisal review meetings is essential. Compatible reward for desirable emotional behaviour will increase commitment and enhance conformity to rules.

The study is based on the cross-sectional data. In addition, the number of organizations is small. The sample is based on convenience. These aspects affect the generalizability of the study. In order to draw inference from the causality of relationship among variables in the study, a longitudinal study would determine the relationship, and any change that may take over time. The role of leadership in influencing employees to regulate work-related emotions, and reduce EL is critical (Bono et al., 2005). This aspect may be explored to determine the relationship between supportive leadership and EL. Future research may extend to other service occupations in which cheerful emotions are considered desirable expression. A new direction might include public and private sector organizations as well. Future research may explore the moderating role of pride in work, personal efficacy, contextual factors, personality dimensions, organizational culture, and emotional intelligence. Another avenue for future research is exploring the most effective strategy for emotional management to enhance employees' competency to manage emotions.

The study provides valuable insights about effects of EL on employees' related outcome. The quest of excellence in services and resultant EL has necessitated emotional management as a new paradigm. This provides an opportunity to professionals and HR practitioners, to initiate and implement requisite intervention strategy to enhance employees' competency in managing emotions. The presence of EL goes unnoticed and unacknowledged as it is embedded in the work. Organizations need to undertake multipronged strategy to effectively deal with this phenomenon. Salient aspects of the strategy should include creating awareness about the effects of EL, building conducive work environment to lessen the effects of EL, enhancing employees' competence, provisioning of an effective mechanism, and its monitoring, to build and enhance social support to employees to improve their resilience to EL, and consistent monitoring to make this initiative a success.

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