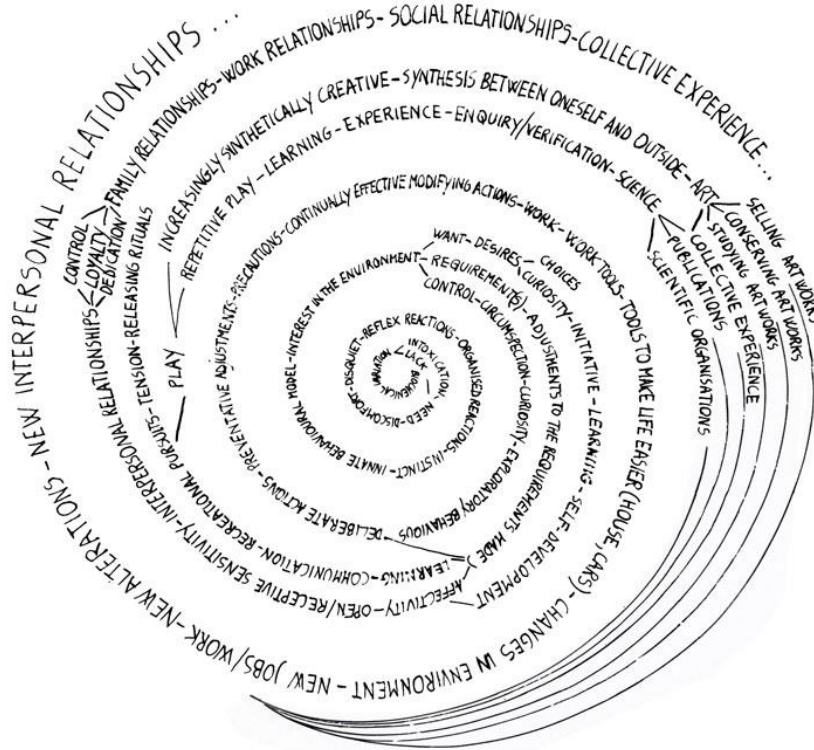


**Assignment 2:
Report & Essay.**


Q. Emotional Labour, define/discuss (3000 words).



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Due Date: 14th October 2009
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Declaration: “I certify that I can provide a copy of the attached assignment if required” - “I certify that the attached assignment is my own work and that all material drawn from other sources has been fully acknowledged”

Signed: 

Dated: ...14th August 2009...

TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	3
INTRODUCTION	4
DIMENSIONS OF EMOTIONAL LABOUR	5
THE ROLE OF EMOTIONAL FACTORS.....	6
EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AT WORK	8
USAGE OF EMOTIONAL LABOUR	11
EMOTIONAL LABOUR EFFECT	13
FLEXIBILITY	15
CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	16
REFERENCES.....	17
BIBLIOGRAPHY	19

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This paper highlights the four basic meanings of emotional labour as well as gives a general overview of what emotional labour constitutes – this includes reflection of emotional labour stress, conflicting factors, and the effect within oneself. Emotional labour is discussed in layers and terms of acting, and examples are cited pertaining to specific jobs that may require emotional labour. The distinction between how women and men generally react to emotional labour is also made.

A dissonance effect highlights the crucial element between the difference of genuine emotive feelings and play acting – this can in turn have a significant effect on the employee at the workplace. Thus, emotional factors can be the cause of hatred, anxiety, stress and a wide array of factors if the employee is not able to integrate into the demands of emotional labour within a workplace. Emotions can be partially predicted through psychological theories, and in this paper the concept of emotional intelligence shall be briefly touched upon. Emotional intelligence does remain a crucial factor to warrant performance for an emotional labourer.

The usage of emotional labour can cause alienation within a work environment if incorrectly implemented. The skill and ability of being able to deal with different people remain one of the key attributes of emotional labour. Some common tools of emotional manipulation are also highlighted in this paper.

Finally, emotional labour side-effects are also covered; these are covered through issues such as fatigue, interference with family life, and stress due to the encumbering pressures of detaching oneself from the real world towards one of acting and role-playing. Aspects that need attentiveness and close monitoring are discussed.

INTRODUCTION

Emotional labour is work that considers the significance of social interaction as a crucial element of service provision (Callinan, Forshaw & Sawchuck, 2007, p. 58). The term itself, ‘emotional labour’ is commonly used in four basic meanings:

Emotional labour as product – “Emotional labour” here essentially refers to the result (someone else’s emotion transformed by the production process), that is the expression is used in the same way as we say: “It’s a craft”, or “She did a really good job”. “All those jobs that have human beings as their object... such as caring for an elderly person, looking after a child or taking care of a sick person”

Emotional labour as subjective effort and ability – There exists a variety of terms, often used as synonyms, to indicate the capacities required in order to carry out this work, including above all: “acute and objective perception”, “awareness of the situation”, “sensitivity” and “intuitive knowledge” (considered by many as a supreme form of intelligence). By saying “emotional labour” we are saying (is it tautological?) that there exist jobs based on the power, or rather the potential of the heart. And they are termed “emotional” because emotion is the sensible (sometimes visible) expression of perception.

Emotional labour as a stressing job – Another important and common meaning of the term is “work that implies suffering”, which makes one feel painful, distressing emotions. Involvement/distress is often felt together. But women workers even feel the need to put themselves at stake emotionally. “Emotional labour” here defines the effect of the work on the emotions, and can therefore be applied to all jobs because they all have this effect

Emotional labour as ‘work on oneself’ – In psychoanalytical language: in order to process/digest one’s own emotions within oneself. The expression is also used for inner, spiritual searching. (Battistina, 1994)

Emotional expression and language breaks out, when affiliated in roles of care, with a strong emotional component. In contrast, the artificial confines of manual or analytical jobs are often not sufficient for emotional labour adaptation in certain scenarios.

DIMENSIONS OF EMOTIONAL LABOUR

Consider the following scenarios:

- 1) Collection agent – exhibits a non-sympathetic, tough and threatening stance towards a customer.
- 2) Caregiver – exhibits a genuine caring concern for patients.
- 3) Service agent – exhibits helpfulness, and calm concern to a customer who is blaming him/her for a lost order.

All the above jobs are examples in which employees, out of necessity, are required to manage their personal emotions in order to shape their customers responses.

Emotional labour can essentially be seen as a tool, and virtual commodity, to be sold to prospective clients. Emotional management perspective essentially categorizes their employees based on the degree of ‘acting’ that they perform. However, what if the employee genuinely feels the emotions he is supposed to feel while serving a customer on the job – it can then be said that the employee is engaged in passive deep acting.



Figure 1: Layers of mannerisms

The difference between feigned acting and genuine sentiments can be deemed as ‘social dissonance’ and in turn relates to how workers exert emotional labour of which may have a direct impact on job performance.

Hochschild (1983), as cited by Kruml & Geddes (2000, p.24), argues that because our societal culture invites women, more than men, to focus on feeling, women are more adept at the practice of emotion management. In Western culture men are generally discouraged from expressing negative feeling, whereas women are advised to express them. However, further on that fact, studies (Kruml et al, 2000) show that women are more aware of emotional cues and hence can discern emotional expressions easier than men. It is therefore postulated that women will express more emotive effort and dissonance than men.

On a contrasting thought, managers ought to consider the extent to which employees will become emotionally attached to their customers in a service encounter – the stronger the bonds the less dissonance is experienced and greater service may be provided. It is also thought that the environment, and specific situations, by which employees work may in fact affect dissonance behaviour.

THE ROLE OF EMOTIONAL FACTORS

There is relatively little research done pertaining to how emotional liabilities and assets affect more tangible aspects of liabilities and assets, namely accounting and intellectual facets. It is acceptable to add to the value of firms by managing emotional liabilities and assets but this has not been widely addressed in existing literature. Abeysekera (2004) states that without the inclusion of emotional assets and liabilities financial statements are unable to indicate accurately the economic efficiency of the firm.

Intellectual and accounting assets are said to be activated by emotional assets, whereas emotional liabilities are said to de-activate both tangible and intellectual assets. Emotional liabilities and assets are said to be encompassed by emotional capital – emotional assets include attributes such as delight, passion, determination, pride, tranquillity, commitment, care and trust provided by an organization to its clientele. Emotional liabilities include attributes such as anxiety, hatred, anger, and

stress provided by a firm to its clientele (Thomson, as cited in Abeysekera, 2004, p. 2).

It is argued that all types of assets whether intellectual, tangible, or emotional, if incorrectly managed may potentially lower in value and thus reduce the value of the organization.

ORGANIZATION	CORE EMOTIONAL ASSET
Motorcar manufacturer	Pride
Banker	Trust
Hospitality firm	Joy
Meditation centre	Tranquillity
Nursing home	Care

Figure 2: Monitoring core emotional assets (Abeysekera, 2004)

True emotions are unpredictable and pass rapidly depending on people's experiences, and thus may flash for seconds before disappearing – emotions can also be seen as contradicting, i.e. gestures differ to tone of voice. In all, there exist six predominant theories within psychology that may interpret the relationship between the management of emotions provided by an organization to its clientele. These are:

- mood theory;
- affect infusion theory;
- emotional labour theory;
- affective events theory;
- emotional intelligence theory;
- and
- communicative theory of emotions.

This paper will address the concept of emotional intelligence in further detail.

EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AT WORK

Emotional Intelligence (E.I.) can be defined as the ‘set of abilities’ (verbal, gestured, or thought dependant) that enables an individual to evaluate, express, generate, recognize and understand emotions of theirs, and others, so as to lead thought and action to successfully cope with the demands and pressures incumbent onto them (Suliman & Al-Shaikh, 2006, p. 209). E.I. can also be interpreted and defined as the incumbent’s capability to ‘read’ the emotions, and feelings, of others as well as themselves in such a way that they are able to categorize different emotions to guide their thoughts and actions. E.I. remains as a crucial factor to warrant efficient performance so as to imbue the individual to stay at the head of the flock by giving them a ‘seemingly’ intellectual advantage over others. E. I. aids people to:

- “be more aware of their interpersonal style;
- recognize and manage the impact of emotions on their thoughts and behaviour;
- develop their ability to judge social dynamics in the workplace; and
- understand how well they manage relationships and how to improve.”

(Suliman et al., 2006, p. 208)

Jordan et al. cited in Suliman et al. (2006), attempted to study relationships between EI, team process effectiveness and goal focus. Results from such studies suggested that reflection in initial performance of the teams is linked to the E.I. level. Teams with low E.I. scores thus tended to perform at a lower efficiency than high E.I. teams. It ought to be noted that the primary factor for successful organization leadership pertains to E.I., and that is effective conflict management – by being able to manage conflicts an individual is said to have a higher degree of emotional intelligence.

On a related note, emotional labour is said to exemplify the affective facts of work. This is clearly seen in organizations with direct client contact, it is also fundamental to work providing services, as explained in the previous chapter.

People's capacity to do work is strongly affected by stress, and this can re-emerge at different times within the lifetime of the organization. These facets can be grouped into the following three main themes:

- 1) The impersonal procedures needed to coordinate complex services may overwhelm individual needs – this is the stress posed by working in large firms.
- 2) Workers may witness events that may cause them to feel sympathy for individuals – this is the stress that comes from the type of work in itself.
- 3) Lastly is the stress that may be experienced when workers feel the need to support the individual in contrary to work mandates (i.e. a salesman who knows his product is of no use to the individual and in turn advises him/her against purchasing it).

Emotional labour necessitates the need that surface acting may undoubtedly be simply part of the job – the consequences arising from deep acting are less well founded, and in fact the individual worker may suffer from job dissatisfaction by displaying a fake character. Emotional labour, in some jobs (i.e. life insurance vendors, salesmen, nurses) can be a great source of stress for those employees who have not yet developed a high E.I. quotient and cannot remain impartial to the suffering of others. Whilst being confident of the harm that their actions may cause it is essential to maintain a positive attitude.

Different individuals may respond in different ways to facets pertaining to emotional labour, and indeed it is their inner stability, and emotional intelligence, which at times prepares employees for the worst of situations. As an example, as cited in Sorensen and Iedema (2009), Doctor's may need to adopt responses in compartments when dealing with deaths of patients:

These responses included detachment from the patient as a person, denial of and reluctance to engage with the feelings of others, and projection of anxiety on to others.

Doctors' seeming control of their feelings may mask a lack of confidence in their clinical and interpersonal skills to confront death and to manage the consequences of revealing the feelings and emotions that accompany it (Harvey, 1996). The absence of a social support

system for doctors condemned them to remain locked within their own negative judgements of their skill adequacy and precluded the type of personal development experienced by some nurses and essential if clinicians are to survive their experience in end-of-life care.

(Sorensen et al, 2009, p.17-18)

Emotional workers can only minimize stressful effects from emotional labour through deliberate intent by acting in unison with collective workplace strategies.

USAGE OF EMOTIONAL LABOUR

The difficult natures of most jobs that require emotion management have been ignored by not recognizing emotion at work. More often than not, emotional labour is alienated by organization members. Organization employees are generally accustomed to have their physical labour, time, and time controlled by the organizations for which they work, however, control over the emotional mannerisms of individuals is not usually acknowledge despite the commonality of it. When the organization sets out rigid rules over how an employee should manage his/hers emotions it is said that emotional labour is being actively performed.

“The emotional labourer must deal with issues such as cynicism, self-esteem maintenance, disconnection from self, and feeling like a ‘phoney’.” (Shuler & Sypher, 2000, p. 55)

Common tools of emotional labour include the telling of jokes, storytelling to customers, and perceiving the work arena as an entertaining game each day that may entail some active creative role-playing. The importance of partaking in emotional labour during dangerous situations may be easier to understand than the sole act of role-playing. For instance, a fire-fighter may need to exaggerate the urgency of a fire scenario on site in order to get the message across to residents that it is not safe to stay in order to scavenge their belongings. This can be considered as lying, however, if a fire-fighter does not stress the consequences on its extreme form it may be that the respondents will not heed his safety advice and thus place him/her in legal jeopardy if something goes wrong.

A job may also appear to be mundane and full of tedious routines at times, and the element of role-playing can significantly enhance a worker’s time at the job (i.e. a waiter commenting about a wine in the menu that ‘it is simply divine’, despite never trying it before). The concept of role-playing does bring excitement to work each day as the employee is focusing his acting skills to further the needs of the company as well as his/her own towards a goal of promotion.

In the past the literature saw emotional labour a different way, and indeed if emotions were talked about at all it would have been mainly because they interfered with rational decision-making or were also part of interpersonal conflict – this due to the fact that emotions can have positive or negative effects. Leaders must know how to influence employees’ emotional reactions – this may be referred as the process in which leaders influence the moods, emotions, performance and motivation of their subordinates through emotional labour skills.

There is a growing importance of emotional expression in leadership as leaders often assume an acting role that requires them to display a wide variety of emotions (i.e. anger, sympathy, friendliness...). Thus, leaders are required to be able to display all the different kinds of emotions required by their subordinates – judgment is required also as to when to apply these emotions correctly. It is seen that leaders with transformational, and supportive, leadership help overcome workplace obstacle’s mood damaging effect. Individuals that can manage the emotions of team members often emerge as leaders as they help influence feelings of optimism and frustration. The following propositions focus on this field of study:

- Under conditions of ambiguity or uncertainty, group members look to ‘leaders’ emotional responses: leaders with optimistic emotional displays will increase group members’ positive moods and feelings of confidence, whereas leaders with negative emotional displays will increase group members’ negative moods and feelings of frustration.
- Group members’ moods influence performance, with feelings of frustration lowering performance and feelings of optimism and confidence raising performance. (Humphrey, Pollack & Hawver, 2006, p. 156-157)

Leaders may often be required to display surface acting in order to demonstrate confidence despite experiencing doubts and worries. The concept of ‘emotional contagion’ occurs when people catch or begin expressing their mood towards those around them. This often occurs through copying of movements, postures, vocalization, and expressions.

EMOTIONAL LABOUR EFFECT

Work family interference (WFI) is reflected in work and family roles when pressures at work become correspondingly incompatible. This occurs so participation in one role makes it difficult for the other role. It is also believed that taking up of emotional labour the need to adhere to job-mandated emotional display rules will exacerbate their feelings of WFI. For instance, Schulz et al. cited in Montgomery, Panagopolou, Wildt, & Meenks (2005), in a daily diary study of couples, demonstrated an interesting example of emotional spill-over, in that negative emotional arousal at work predicted angrier marital behaviour for women and more withdrawn behaviour from men.

The upholding, and continued use, of management of emotions in social situations can work in detriment. Emotional regulation can function two ways, that is; antecedent-focused and response-focused. In this perspective surface acting becomes concerned with modifying expression whereas deep acting indicates a change of the focus of personal thoughts and fluctuating appraisal perspectives. Similarly, job focused emotional labour or display rules (such as displaying positive emotions and hiding negative emotions) are predicted to be processes of emotional control that minimize the sentiments of emotional autonomy from the employee.

Burnout can be a side effect from too much exertion into an acting role in a workplace, and thus can be viewed as a syndrome of cynicism, exhaustion and in effect may cause a decrease in competency at work. Burnout can be referred as chronic job stress and hence can indicate psychological health. Individuals may be noted with such symptoms through observance of speech and mannerisms as the individual may indeed become quite edgy.

An explanation for burnout is that it may be related to the frequency or quantity of interactions with customers/clients, thus contributing to role overload. Such relationships can also encompass the need for workers to control their emotions in a mandated way. Employees working in a demanding and emotional environment need to de-stress before continuing with their normal life – meditative practices as well as

involving the individual in something that he/she enjoys, before and after work, can be classed as suitable activities to de-stress.

“Grandey (2000) views emotional labour and display rules as a proximal predictor of stress, and this is consistent with the idea that people bring the emotional stress from work to home.” (Montgomery et al, 2005)

On a re-cap, emotional labour is an important antecedent of both burnout and WFI. It is essential that an awareness of employee’s emotional experiences be noted by managerial and supervisory staff – hence training protocols would include perceptive skills as well.

Emotional labour may be the cause of a wide array of inappropriate coercive behaviours by managers onto subordinates – expectations of managers may actually exceed what is possible by employees, and in order to address customer’s needs it is essential that the manager be aware of exactly what level of service is desired. As an example, in Moscow, when McDonald’s first operated it was deemed that staff ought to always smile at customers – this created a backfire as customers, due to different cultures, perceived the employees as laughing at them.

Managers, and leaders ought to avoid the following behaviours in comportment towards employees: manipulation, sarcasm, verbal abuse, threats, intimidation assignment to unpleasant jobs, bad-mouthing, duplicity, exclusion, isolation, forcing of resignation and (in the odd case) physical violence. These bullying behaviours by managers (in order to instil emotional labour to their standards) significantly degrade the health and wellbeing of the great majority of those who experience the behaviours.

Emotional labour hold relevance to service encounters because:

- front-line service personnel are situated at the organization-customer interface and therefore represent the organization to its customer;
- service transactions often involve face-to-face interactions between service agents and customer;

- there is uncertainty created by customer participation in the service encounter, such encounters often have a dynamic and emergent quality; and
- the services rendered during an encounter are relatively intangible, making it difficult for customers to evaluate service quality (Ashforth & Humphrey cited in Mann, 1997).

FLEXIBILITY

Emotional labour flexibility paves the foundations for an integrated role-playing work environment. Flexibility evokes the capability to cope quickly with the changing environment and circumstances or environmental uncertainty. Individuals, in turn, may have personalities that make them better candidates for flexible jobs. Emotional stability, agreeableness, and conscientiousness have proven to be pertinent factors for workplace personal interactions such as teamwork. Emphasis on time, quality, flexibility (time), and authenticity of emotions can lead to a reliable methodical way of predicting emotional labour flexibility.

Managers need to pay close attention to the emotions and moods of their followers, thus it is essential emotional labourers act less in a business-like manner and instead focus on displaying emotions in a business-like manner. In most cases flexibility of emotions derive from leaders' substantial influence over subordinates moods and emotional states. By coaching employees, leaders can motivate them to perform better and more effectively whilst helping them maintain a genuine positive outlook within the workplace.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

There is evidence that elevated levels of acting, or emotional labour display, are not necessarily rewarded with higher wages. Instead rewards are primarily dependant on the level of cognitive demands necessitated by the job. This is said to vary from job to job, however, some jobs rely almost solely on emotional labouring skills (sales people) which in turn can reflect to an enhanced level of emotional intelligence. Employees involved in emotional labour ought to be hard-headed and able to cop criticism without taking it too seriously if they are to truly succeed. Failure to do so may result in burnout and interference to the life of the individual outside work hours.

Emotional labour is skill that an individual can improve on through practice. Some common tools such as the usage of humour, emotion manipulation, and the art of storytelling can all come into use when addressing a customer. In the end of the day it is those that can work sociably well, and be genuine at the same time, that succeed in the services industry.

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