



Identifying the complex relationships among emotional labor and its correlates

Doğan Gursoy^{a,*}, Yasin Boylu^{b,1}, Umut Avci^{c,2}

^a College of Business, School of Hospitality Business Management, Washington State University, USA

^b Commerce and Tourism Education Faculty, Gazi University, Turkey

^c School of Tourism and Hospitality Management, Mugla University, Turkey

ARTICLE INFO

Keywords:

Emotional labor
Job satisfaction
Culture
Personality
Job autonomy
Tourism

ABSTRACT

Studied since the late 70s, emotional labor has received much attention especially in the service product context due to its presumed double edged wedge potential. Several job-related and person-related factors are postulated and tested for influence on emotional labor. However, the influence of culture, as a blanket factor, has been overlooked thus far. The aim of this study is to measure the complex relationships between emotional labor and a few of its antecedents and outcomes, including those previously measured and those missed such as culture. A structural equation modeling approach is used to identify the complex relationships inherent among emotional labor and other relevant factors, namely, personality, culture, work experience, job autonomy, and job satisfaction; job satisfaction was identified as being dependent on emotional labor and all other variables were identified as being independent. Findings revealed a negative relationship between emotional labor and job satisfaction and a surprising positive relationship between emotional labor and neuroticism but not extraversion, which are both defined by cultural values. Job autonomy, affected by work experience and extraversion, had a positive relationship with job satisfaction.

© 2010 Elsevier Ltd. All rights reserved.

1. Introduction

Emotional labor, namely employees' emotional performance, is a relatively new subject of inquiry investigated since the late 70s, started by Hochschild (1979, 1983). Emotional labor has received much attention, especially in the service product context due to its presumed double edged wedge potential. Emotional labor is suspected to have a potential negative influence on employees' well-being, while it can have a positive impact on company success through customer satisfaction. It is purported to have a potential influence on a company's well-being through positive effects on customer attitude, quality perception, service failure recovery, customer satisfaction, and customer retention (Pugh, 2001; Ashkanasy et al., 2002). However, it is also believed to have negative influences on employee-related factors such as attitudes towards a job, job satisfaction and burnout (Kim, 2008). Therefore, conceptualization and measurement of emotional labor as well as its antecedents and outcomes have been the subject of several studies.

Several factors are postulated to be antecedents of emotional labor; some are related to job characteristics and some are related to personal characteristics of workers. Job characteristics that are purported to influence emotional labor include job autonomy (Kim et al., 2007; Morris and Feldman, 1996, 1997); emotional display rules of the organization (Brotheridge and Grandey, 2002; Brotheridge and Lee, 2002; Diefendorff et al., 2005; Diefendorff and Richard, 2003; Hochschild, 1983; Kim, 2008); and variety, frequency, duration and routineness of interactions with emotional display (Brotheridge and Grandey, 2002; Hochschild, 1983; Brotheridge and Lee, 2003; Diefendorff et al., 2005; Kim, 2008). Overall, results of previous research show that all these variables related to the nature of a job positively influence emotional labor, in the way of surface or deep acting, or both. Also, personal factors such as socio-demographics, personality and job experience are also postulated to have an impact on emotional labor (Ashkanasy et al., 2002; Brotheridge and Grandey, 2002; Brotheridge and Lee, 2003; Diefendorff et al., 2005; Diefendorff and Richard, 2003; Hochschild, 1983; Kim, 2008; Kruml and Geddes, 2000; Wharton and Erickson, 1995; Wong and Wang, 2009; Zapf and Holz, 2006). Due to its potential in defining how people think and behave (Ashkanasy et al., 2002), personality traits, more specifically, positive affectivity (PA) and negative affectivity (NA), or extraversion and neuroticism are some of those factors that researchers identified affecting surface acting or deep acting (Brotheridge and Grandey, 2002; Brotheridge and Lee, 2003; Diefendorff et al., 2005; Diefendorff and Richard, 2003). Some socio-demographic variables

* Corresponding author at: 479 Todd Hall, P.O. Box 644742, Pullman, WA 99164-4742, USA. Tel.: +1 509 335 7945; fax: +1 509 335 3857.

E-mail addresses: dgursoy@wsu.edu (D. Gursoy), yasin@gazi.edu.tr (Y. Boylu), umutavcis@gmail.com (U. Avci).

¹ Tel.: +90 312 485 1460; fax: +90 312 484 4124.

² Tel.: +90 252 2111868; fax: +90 252 2239164.

have also been purported to influence emotional performance of employees (Hochschild, 1983; Kim, 2008).

Based on the literature, a model of emotional labor and its correlates can be purported as displayed in Fig. 1. As can be seen in Fig. 1, various aspects of emotional labor have already been examined in other studies. However, other potential antecedents such as culture have been overlooked in the current literature even though it is believed to have significant influences on factors that are vital to service providers, such as emotional labor (Furnham and Walsh, 1990; Kristof, 1996; Lovelace and Rosen, 1996; Powell, 1998; Testa et al., 2003). Since culture is likely to influence emotional labor directly or indirectly, it is crucial for service providers to identify the direction and strength of this influence. Also, the complex nature of the relationships among emotional labor and the related concepts calls for methods investigating multiple relationships among the related concepts.

Therefore, the objective of this study is to examine the complex relationships between emotional labor, a few of its antecedents, including those previously examined and those missed such as culture and one of its outcomes, namely job satisfaction. Because of the potential complex relationships among these concepts, a structural equation model will be used to identify potential relationships between concepts included in this study. By doing so, we also follow the track set by Karatepe and Aleshinloye (2009), who utilized Hobfoll's Conservation of Resources (COR) theory in investigating the antecedents and outcomes of emotional dissonance and exhaustion in hospitality employees in Nigeria. According to Hobfoll's COR theory (as cited in Karatepe and Aleshinloye, 2009), individuals have "object, personal, condition, and energy resources" that they try to save and when they are "confronted with excessive demands and/or inadequate resources in the workplace may have negative outcomes" (Karatepe and Aleshinloye, 2009, p. 350). Applied into the antecedents and consequences of emotional labor, hospitality employees' personal factors such as culture, experience, and personality can be taken as resources that can face threat and result in negative outcomes such as job dissatisfaction. Thus, as displayed in Fig. 1, culture is conceptualized as having indirect influence on emotional labor through personality while employees' personality type is proposed to influence emotional labor directly. In addition, the model proposes that employees' personality type and their work experiences are likely to have direct impact on their perception of job autonomy. Both emotional labor dimensions and job autonomy are hypothesized to influence job satisfaction in the end.

2. Literature review

2.1. Emotional labor

Emotional labor, "the management of emotions as part of the work role" (Diefendorff and Richard, 2003, p. 284), is believed to influence a company's well-being through customer satisfaction (Kim, 2008). That's why, the measurement of emotional labor strategies, coping strategies in case of conflict, as well as influential factors have received increasing attention from researchers, resulting in many different methods of measurement and several emotional labor terms. The most commonly used terms of emotional labor are surface acting, deep acting, and genuine acting (Ashforth and Humphrey, 1993; Hochschild, 1983). Hochschild's (1983) was one of the first researchers who initiated the theoretical development of emotional labor. Since then several researchers examined the dimensions and nature of emotional labor presented by flight attendants, fast-food employees, wait staff, amusement park employees supermarket cashiers, nurses, bank tellers, university administrators and hospitality employees (Adelmann, 1989; Brotheridge and Lee, 2003; Chu and Murrmann, 2006; Grandey,

2000; Hochschild, 1983; Kim, 2008; Kim et al., 2007; Kruml and Geddes, 2000; Leidner, 1993; Morris and Feldman, 1996; Rafaeli and Sutton, 1987; Schaubroeck and Jones, 2000; Seymour, 2000). In recent years, interest in emotional labor among hospitality researchers has also accelerated rapidly. While earlier studies examined the behavior of hospitality employees, such as waitresses or fast food employees, to accumulate knowledge and construct a theory of emotional labor, recent studies have started using a more systematic, quantitative approach to measure the dimensions and nature of emotional labor presented by hospitality employees (Chu and Murrmann, 2006; Kim, 2008; Seymour, 2000)

As suggested by the emotional labor theory, emotional labor is a big part of employee performance because certain jobs require employees to display certain emotions (Hochschild, 1979, 1983; Ashforth and Humphrey, 1993). The expectation of certain emotions by the employees is defined as "feeling rules" (Hochschild, 1983) or "display rules" (Ashforth and Humphrey, 1993; Morris and Feldman, 1996), which are postulated to have a potential to cause emotional conflict or dissonance for employees if these emotional expectations are different from an employees' actual emotional inclinations (Hochschild, 1983). Hochschild (1983) identified two strategies that employees usually use to cope with emotional conflict or dissonance: (1) surface acting or faking feelings to align with expectations, and (2) deep acting or modifying feelings to match expectations. In surface acting, employees change their observable features, gestures, facial expressions, or voice tone, while they change both observable features and unobservable inner states in deep acting (Chu and Murrmann, 2006). Of these emotional labor terms, passive acting and deep acting are believed to provide positive and better outcomes for both service providers and customers (Kruml and Geddes, 1997; Brotheridge and Lee, 2003; Kim, 2008). Kim (2008), for example, revealed that emotional labor does not cause hotel service personnel's burnout especially when they sincerely try to have appropriate emotions (deep acting), rather than fake it (surface acting).

Researchers utilized several different approaches to study emotional labor. While some of them emphasized the roles of job characteristics (e.g., Morris and Feldman, 1996), occupational differences (e.g., Hochschild, 1983; Wharton, 1993), others emphasized display rules (e.g., Schaubroeck and Jones, 2000), personal identities (Ashforth and Humphrey, 1993), emotional dissonance and emotive effort (Kruml and Geddes, 2000), and emotion regulation strategies (Grandey, 2000). For example, Morris and Feldman's (1996, 1997) studies included frequency and duration of interactions with customers, attention to display rules of the organization, variety of emotional expressions needed to be displayed, and emotional dissonance felt in case of conflict between emotional display rules and actual emotions. Brotheridge and Grandey (2002) conceptualized emotional labor in two categories, one focusing on job characteristics and the other focusing on an employee's actions to manage their emotions: (1) "job-focused emotional labor", including the frequency, duration, variety, and intensity of emotional labor and display rules; and (2) "employee-focused emotional labor", a technique used by employees to manage their emotion while interacting with customers. Brotheridge and Lee (2003) used a similar conceptualization of emotional labor and developed a measure covering job-oriented and employee-oriented variables, including frequency of interaction, intensity and variety of emotional display, duration of interaction, and surface and deep acting. The spontaneous and genuine emotions defined as passive deep acting by Hochschild (1983) have usually been overlooked by many researchers. Diefendorff et al. (2005) attempted to fill this void and included "the display of naturally felt emotions" in their three-dimensional emotional labor scale including surface acting, deep acting, and naturally felt emotions. All these different measures of emotional labor reveal that job-related variables, such as fre-

Download English Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/en/article/1009655>

Download Persian Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/article/1009655>

[Daneshyari.com](https://daneshyari.com)