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Emotional Labour and Job satisfaction: A Case Study on Bank Tellers in Sri Lanka*Himanthi, P. W. U. and Arachchige, B. J. H.***Abstract****Area of the Study**

As a significant determinant of performing emotional labour in service sector, this study is to discuss the relationship between emotional labour and job satisfaction of bank tellers in Sri Lanka.

Problem of the Study

This study attempts to explore the relationship between job satisfaction and emotional labour of bank tellers in Sri Lanka. The research problem of this study: is there a relationship between job satisfaction and emotional labour (surface acting and deep acting) of bank tellers in Sri Lanka?

Method of the Study

The data were collected from a randomly selected sample of 92 bank tellers within the Western province by administering a structured questionnaire, which consisted of 46 questions/statements with 7 points scale. The data analysis included the univariate, bivariate and multiple regression analysis.

Findings of the Study

The findings of the study are that emotional labour, surface acting and deep acting are positively correlated with job satisfaction. Both emotional labour and surface acting have a weak positive relationship with job satisfaction and deep acting has a moderate positive relationship with job satisfaction. As per the multiple regression analysis, deep acting has a greater impact on job satisfaction than surface acting.

Conclusion of the Study

Study found that there is a weak positive relationship between emotional labour and job satisfaction.

Key words: Emotional Labour , Surface Acting , Deep Acting, Job Satisfaction

Introduction

The concept of emotional labour was introduced by Arlie Hochschild in her book “*The Managed Heart*” published in 1983. Emotional labour is relatively a new term. Arlie Hochschild has explained that people control their emotions in personal life as well as work life. Hochschild has mentioned about two types of emotional acting; they are surface acting and deep acting. Simply, emotional labour can be defined as the degree of manipulation of one’s inner feelings or outward behaviour to display the appropriate emotions response to display rules or occupational norms (Chu, 2002). Surface acting and deep acting (active deep acting and passive deep acting) are two dimensions of emotional labour. Surface acting is expressing an emotion without feeling the emotion (Hochschild, 1983). Deep acting display is a natural result of working on feeling; the actor does not try to seem happy or sad but rather expresses spontaneously (Hochschild, 1983). There are two ways of doing deep acting. One is by directly exhorting feeling, the other by making indirect use of a trained imagination. Hochschild has introduced some feeling rules in her book regarding the emotional labour. Present context of the emotional labour become increasingly popular because economies of

developing countries are shifting from manufacturing to service sector. “The spirit of service industry is not only getting a job done, but also involve getting the job done with right attitude” (Chu , 2002).

The generic purpose of Human Resources Management is generating and retaining satisfied workforce who can give the maximum contribution to the organizational success (Opatha, 2009). Employee satisfaction can influence both organizational performance as well as customer satisfaction. Also employee satisfaction is linked with absenteeism, turnover and productivity of employees. Specially in emotional labour: emotional employees have to put greater psychological effort to perform required emotions to commercial purposes. Therefore, job satisfaction is an important factor to their psychological well-being. This study tries to ascertain the relationship between emotional labour and job satisfaction.

Problem Background and Problem of the Study

Sri Lankan banking industry expanded with the introduction of private banking corporations and foreign banks. Present condition of banking sector in Sri Lanka is very competitive and it is a growing industry in Sri Lankan service sector. The banking industry; especially commercial banks in Sri Lanka is one of the growing sectors in economy. When considering the employees of service sector, emotional labour is a vital topic. Tellers are the employees who directly contact with the customers in banks. They are the emotional labour in banking sector. As competitive service organizations, tellers in Sri Lankan banks also have to play a significant role to satisfy their customers to protect and enhance their market share. Customer perception about quality of service highly depends on the performance of tellers in the bank. Along with the growth competition; workload of banking employees has also increased. Currently, the commercial banks are undergoing competition among twenty four domestic and foreign commercial banks (http://www.apbsrilanka.org/general/05_banks_in_sri_lanka.html). So it is important to examine the job satisfaction of tellers who perform emotional labour. This study mainly focuses on examining the job satisfaction of tellers as they have to manage their feelings to tally with organizational norms and display some emotions for commercial purposes.

Research Framework

Emotional labour – According to Hochschild (1983), Grendey (2000; 1999), Chu (2002), Seery and Corrigan (2009) and Johnson (2004), performing emotional labour relates to job satisfaction either negatively or positively. Based on literature, following hypothesis was developed to be tested in this study.

Hypothesis 1

H0 (a) – There is no significant relationship between emotional labour and job satisfaction

H1 (a) – There is a relationship between emotional labour and job satisfaction

Surface acting and deep acting - According to Johnson (2004), Morris and Feldman, Seery and Corrigan, (2009) Kim et al, (2012) surface acting negatively correlates with the job

satisfaction and deep acting positively correlates with job satisfaction. Based on above findings following hypothesis were developed.

Hypothesis 2

- H0 (b) – Surface acting is not negatively correlated with job satisfaction
- H1 (b) – Surface acting is negatively correlated with job satisfaction

Hypothesis 3

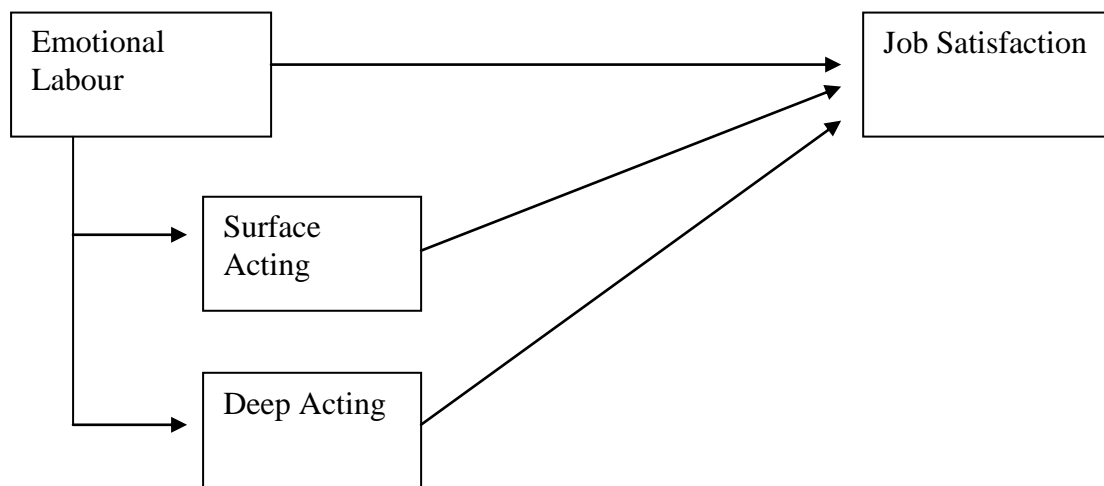
- H0 (c) – Deep acting is not positively correlated with job satisfaction
- H1 (c) – Deep acting is positively correlated with job satisfaction

Impact of emotional labour on job satisfaction – Based on the above hypothesized relationship researcher tries to ascertain which acting techniques have greater impact on job satisfaction and following hypothesis were developed to be tested.

Hypothesis 4

- H1 (d) – Deep acting has a greater impact on job satisfaction than surface acting.

Figure 1: Schematic Diagram of the Research Framework



Method

The objective is to establish the relationships between these independent variables and the dependent variable. Therefore, the type of investigation of this study was correlational. Study is non – contrived in setting because this study examines the correlation between emotional labour and job satisfaction of tellers of banking industry in a natural working environment where events normally occur. The survey method was selected as the method of data collection. This study was based on primary data. The survey was carried out among the sample of 92 front line employees of banks in the Western province. Study used convenience sample coming under non probability sampling.

Measures

The variables in the research model: job satisfaction, emotional labour, surface acting and deep acting were measured through questionnaire with seven point scales, which were completed by the respondents themselves approximately as they have experienced.

The dependent variable of the research model was measured by Hackman and Oldham (1975) job satisfaction scale and Brayfield and Rothe’s (1951) job satisfaction index (JSI). The job satisfaction in this study is measured as uni dimensional concept.

Surface acting and deep acting techniques of employees are measured by emotional labour scales presented by Brotheridge and Lee (2003) and Kruml and Geddes (2000). Surface acting is measured in two dimensions as faking and suppression. Deep acting is measured by two dimensions called method acting and self prompting. Emotional labour is measured as an aggregate value of surface acting and deep acting. All the dimensions measured by seven point likert scale which is classified, 7 as strongly agree and 1 as strongly disagree. Finally this study collects qualitative data to prove hypothesis further using one open ended question.

Validity and Reliability

According to Sekaran and Bougie (2010) when well- validated measures are used, there is no need to establish their validity again for each study. The reliability of the items can, however to be tested. So this study measures the reliability of both pilot study and final survey.

The internal item consistency reliability was examined with Cronbach’s Alpha test. The results of (Cronbach’s Alpha) test are given in Table 1, which suggests that the reliability of each instrument was satisfactory.

Table 1: Results of reliability

Concept	Cronbach alpha coefficient
Surface acting	0.79
Deep acting	0.874
Job satisfaction	0.804

When compared with the pilot study, only the value of surface acting declines. But it also exceeds the 0.70 ($\alpha > 0.70$) and can conclude that still questions are reliable. Alpha level of both job satisfaction and deep acting has increased and also has exceeded the 0.70 and can conclude that all the three variables are reliable.

Techniques of Data Analysis

Data collected from primary (questionnaire) source were analyzed using the computer based statistical data analysis package, SPSS (version 16.0) for reliability and relationship testing. The data analysis included univariate, bivariate and multiple regression analysis.

Results

To investigate the responses for independent and dependent variables of the bank tellers, univariate analysis was used. The results of the univariate analysis are given in the table 2.

Table 2: Univariate Analysis

Variable	N	Mean	St Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
Surface Acting	92	4.52	0.74	3.13	6.40
Deep Acting	92	5.25	0.78	3.33	6.93
Emotional Labour	92	4.88	0.67	3.23	3.23
Job Satisfaction	92	5.08	0.92	2.20	2.20

According to the table, mean value of the responses given by the respondents for surface acting is 4.52 which can be interpreted as closer to the level of “slightly agree” in the questionnaire. It can be stated that the level of surface acting used by the employees in the Bank of Ceylon is lower. By considering the above table, it can be observed that the mean value of the responses given by respondents for deep acting is 5.25 which can be interpreted as exceeding the “slightly agree” but less closer to “agree” level of the questionnaire. It can be stated that the level of deep acting perform by employees of banks in the Western province is exceed the moderate level.

According to the table, mean value of the emotional labour is 4.88. It implicates that respondents’ response for whole emotional labour questions were exceeding the moderate level. The mean value of the emotional labour is close to the level of “slightly agree” level in the questionnaire. It concludes that employees of the bank of Ceylon employees perform emotional labour but in a lower level. Final character in the table is job satisfaction and it is obtaining 5.08 for mean value. That value represents the job satisfaction level employees of the banks in the Western province and is closer to the “slightly agree” level and they have a high satisfaction level.

The bivariate analysis, Pearson’s Correlation between job satisfaction, emotional labour, surface acting and deep acting are illustrated in tables.

Table 2: Pearson’s Correlation between independent and dependent variables

Variables	Pearson’s Correlation	Sig value
Emotional labour	0.398	0.000
Surface acting	0.159	0.065
Deep acting	0.531	0.000

Table 4: The impact of emotional labour on job satisfaction

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	2.215	.600		3.694	.000
	SA	-.234	.131	-.189	-1.789	.077
	DA	.748	.124	.635	6.017	.000
a. Dependent Variable: JS						

Coefficient table for multi independent variable discloses some important findings. This table carries out the details of whether both independent variables affect to the job satisfaction. Sig value for surface acting is 0.077 and it is higher than 0.05. It implies that the relationship is statistically insignificant. Sig value for deep acting is 0.000 and it is less than 0.05 and explains that deep acting is statistically significant for job satisfaction. Slope of the each variable is represented by the B value. Surface acting has obtained -0.234 as value of the slope and it expresses, when considering the combined effect of surface acting and deep acting on job satisfaction, surface acting does not influence the job satisfaction level. At the same time slope 0.748 for deep acting expresses if deep acting increases in 1% it causes to increase the job satisfaction by 74%. Constant value is the job satisfaction value when surface acting is zero.

Based on the comparison between two B values obtained from the regression analysis for surface acting and deep acting, it is possible to test the final hypothesis. It is implied that deep acting has a greater impact on job satisfaction than surface acting. Therefore the alternative hypothesis is accepted.

Discussion

This research mainly aims to identify the relationship between performing emotional labour and its linkage to job satisfaction. Data analysis states that there is a significant weak positive relationship between emotional labour and job satisfaction. However, the above findings are matching with the international evidence which implies that emotional labour has a relationship with job satisfaction either negatively or positively (Johnson, 2004, Grandey, 2000).

According to literature, previous researches prove that there is a negative relationship between surface acting and job satisfaction (Grandey 2003; Seery and Corrigan, 2009). It is not applicable to this selected organization. According to the Sri Lankan context, there is a weak positive relationship between surface acting and job satisfaction. This may be due to the cultural factors. In Sri Lanka, people are generally hospitable to the outsiders; and it is natural for the employees to act in a pleasant manner towards their customers (Even without any training).

Statistical analyses show that there is a significant moderate positive relation between deep acting and job satisfaction. This research finding is in line with previous literature (Seery & Corrigan, 2009; Johnson, 2004).

Impact of deep acting is 0.748 and impact of the surface acting is -0.234. After the multiple regression analysis it is proved that the gravity of deep acting 74% is on job satisfaction and when considering the combined effect, surface acting do not influence job satisfaction. So in the Sri Lankan context, deep acting has a greater impact on job satisfaction than surface acting. Even though it can be concluded as a summation of surface acting and deep acting, R square 0.307 in multiple regression analysis express is that emotional labour influences the job satisfaction level of bank tellers in 30%.

In addition to the above main hypothesis, this study aims to identify the type of emotional acting performed (surface acting and deep acting) by bank tellers in Sri Lanka. Considering multiple regression analysis and the hypothesis testing it can be concluded that the employees of the selected organization use deep acting technique more than surface acting technique. Furthermore, descriptive statistics also support the above finding. Surface acting obtains 4.52 mean and at the same time deep acting obtains 5.25 mean value. Thus deep acting has a greater mean value.

Matching with international evidence, the bank also has more female workers in the front office than male workers. Normally there is an idea that female workers perform emotions in the work place than male workers. Gender distribution in the sample is 62% female workers and 38% male workers and these tallies with the above idea. Hochschild (1983) mentions, that in general women can manage and express feelings more than men. Also Hochschild (1983) implies that women adapt more to the needs of others and cooperate more than men do. According to the descriptive statistics for demographic variables there is no considerable difference of surface acting comparing the male and female workers but female workers perform deep acting little more than male workers.

Conclusion

This study concludes that emotional labour is constructive to job satisfaction of bank tellers in Sri Lanka. Both surface acting and deep acting have a positive relationship with job satisfaction. In the Sri Lankan context, surface acting does not reduce job satisfaction which comparing the surface acting and deep acting it can be concluded that Sri Lankan bank tellers perform deep acting more than surface acting. Considering the combined effect of deep acting and surface acting on job satisfaction, deep acting has a greater impact and surface acting does not influence job satisfaction. It can be assumed that religious background, cultural norms and values, heritage from the great history of the country influence the people to have good personal qualities such as empathy, hospitality, sympathy, selflessness and gratitude and they have an impact on deep acting in their work life.

Recommendation

According to descriptive statistics mean value of the emotional labour is 4.88 and that is close to “slightly agree” level. Further, R square value also adjusts with the above mean value (0.554). It implies that selected bank has a moderate consideration but not a high consideration on emotional labour. When considering the benefits that can be obtained through emotional labour, it is recommended to consider more about the concept. Top management level in human resource filed can consider this more and apply the concept in to practice.

According to the conclusion it is proved that tellers in the banks in the Western province perform deep acting technique more than surface acting and it has a moderate positive relationship with job satisfaction. So it is recommended to the bank to give more training to develop necessary skills to perform deep acting. It is special to mention that training to develop necessary skills is not enough and it is better to have a training evaluation method to measure the effectiveness of the training and include emotional labour criteria on performance evaluation process.

In order to increase performing deep acting and surface acting, so as to obtain the benefits of emotional labour it is recommended to use emotional labour as selection criteria in the front office employees’ selection process. According to demographic variable analysis, nearly 43% employees’ duration of career was one year or less than one year so it is recommended to build the attitude among them about deep acting so as to give a better customer service because it is easy to change the mind of freshers. Further it is prescribed to use an orientation program to convey appropriate attitudes and display rules to the new employees.

By reviewing the qualitative data it can be concluded that employees are engaged in passive deep acting and inspiring the employees to act passive deep acting may both be beneficial to the organization as well as individuals. When considering the cultural aspects of Sri Lanka, it may be easy to inspire the employees to act passive deep acting. According to Chu (2002), front line employees are not only responsible for performing emotional labour at work place, but managers also may know how to inspire, motivate and appreciate front line workers for it. Thus this study is suggested to train managers on emotional labour. Considering the monthly income of the sample it can be concluded that front line employees are at the lower level in the bank hierarchy. Thus they may get less paid. So it is important to appreciate the performing of emotions for job by financial compensation.

Limitations

This study has some limitations which hinder generalization of findings in to another organization.

Firstly, the structured questionnaires and the entire concept are developed to a western culture and it is questionable to what extent they match with the Sri Lankan context. Secondly the sample size is selected according to researcher’s accessibility and considering about the time frame and cost. It will provide more confident results if the sample size is increased. Thirdly

this research does not study about mediating and moderating variables which affect the relationship. Finally this study is conducted in the working environment which is in government nature, but sometimes the results may differ if considered the private sector.

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Himanthi, P. W. U.

Department of Human Resource Management, University of Sri Jayewardenepura

Arachchige, B. J. H.

Senior Lecturer, Department of Human Resource Management, University of Sri Jayewardenepura