



The Social Psychology of Affect, Thought and Behavior among Service Workers

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Abstract

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Intra-organizational and inter-organizational emotional exchanges can have consequences for the organization, employees and customers. Attitude with proper emotions forms one of the ultimate links which further motivates employees in any organizations. The purpose of this study is to assess the role of Emotional Labour on Job Attitude. Empirical verification was done with a sample of 430 Law Enforcement Officers. Instruments used were Emotional Labour Scale (Susan & Jayan, 2010), and Job Attitude Questionnaire, (Jayan, 2004). Result indicates that Emotional Labour influences Job Attitude.

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Significant advances in understanding the relationships between psychosocial work conditions and well-being have been made through examining the effects of general job characteristics, such as workload and control, on workers in a wide range of workplaces and occupations. However, it seems likely that they are important differences in workplaces and occupations which mean that the nature, meaning and effects of these general job conditions will depend on specific organizational and job contexts.

In parallel to the shift in thinking about demands of work from the physical and cognitive to the emotional there has been a move towards considering the emotional aspects of workplace, organizations and jobs. Emotions are increasingly being viewed as signals that provide information, direct attention, and facilitate attainment of goals and are seen as organizing processes that enable people to think and behave adaptively. Emotions were ignored in the study of organizational behaviour in the past (Arvey, Renz, & Watson, 1998; Putman & Mumby, 1993) but during the past two decades, substantial advances have been made in understanding the importance and role of emotion in workplace behaviour (Fisher, 2000).

There has been an increase in face-to-face and voice-to-voice interaction in occupations, along with the development and establishment of new role requirements increasingly connected with work in the 21st century. Of these new role requirements, organizations and occupational bodies have formulated 'display rules' which serve as the standard for the appropriate expression of workplace emotions. 'Display rules' are a social group's informal norms about when, where and how one should express emotions (Wikipedia, Free Encyclopaedia, 2009). Display rules vary, and acts as requirements across occupational categories.

With regard to such kind of modifications in expressing one's emotion in workplace, researchers have begun to explore the importance of emotion as an expression, skill and labour. The regulation of emotional expressions and feelings as part of the paid work role or managing emotions for a wage has been termed EMOTIONAL LABOUR (Hochschild, 1983). EL being a multidimensional construct also has three components in them just like Attitude. It has an affect (feelings), cognitive (the thought process) and a behavioral (the outcome) component.

Numerous studies have been conducted over the past two decades assessing emotional labour in a variety of professions. Despite this proliferation of studies, research on the emotional labor on service control jobs which includes policing has received relatively little attention (Stenross & Kleinman 1989; Rafaeli & Sutton 1991; Martin 1999). This is unfortunate, but the study of emotional labor within policing should be of great interest to researchers on many different levels of Law Enforcement officers in India.

Police as an organization in the 19th century's Governing Act and 20th century outlook could hardly face 21st century challenges. Among several essential prerequisites for public acceptance of the police, legitimacy of all their actions depends upon the extent to which the public judges the police in accordance with the basic rules and values. The central aspect of this facet is Rule of Law. If the police behave and are seen as strictly behaving according to law then the legitimacy ascribed to them will be enhanced. This is often interpreted as accountability to law.

From an organizational perspective, employees' adherence to emotional labor demands is valuable because of the potential benefits in achieving organizational outcomes, particularly in service occupations (Grandey & Brauburger, 2002; Pugh, 2001; Tolich, 1993). From the worker's perspective, emotional labor demands have effects on relevant job and psychological outcomes such as job satisfaction, emotional exhaustion, and well-being; these effects are typically negative (Grandey, 2000; Hochschild, 1983; Morris & Feldman, 1996; Pugliesi, 1999; Wharton, 1993).

As organizations are struggling to become more efficient, an accrued interest has evolved around the concept of professionals working life. An increasing body of evidence suggests that emotions are more specifically affecting the attitude towards job (Henderson, 2001; Chu, 2002; Yang & Chang, 2008; Bozionelos & Kiamou, 2008; Johnson, Cooper, Cartwright, Donald, Taylor, & Millet, 2009).

Attitude is the evaluative statements or judgments concerning objects, people, or events. More precisely attitudes can be defined as a persistent tendency to feel and behave in a particular way toward some object which may include events or individuals as well. One's job satisfaction, job involvement and (affective) organizational commitment are all likely to be higher as a result of perceiving more support and opportunities as reward from one's organization, as indicated by past research (Brown & Leigh, 1996; Netemeyer et al., 1997). As observed in the past perceptions, if support from the organization or a perception of opportunities act as rewards it is related to employees' positive attitudes towards job.

The policemen's role contains two principal variables, danger and authority which are interpreted in the light of a "constant" pressure to appear efficient. Given the unique social structural position of policing in the society, its peculiar organizational and demographic tendencies and pressures, and the necessity that its officers utilize a broad range of emotion work in the execution of their duties, it seems that law enforcement provides fertile ground for the study of emotional labor. It is the purpose of the present work to explore the importance of emotional labor within policing. It is proposed that a better understanding of the specific role that emotional labor plays in policing will help police administrators better understand the impact and social psychology of emotion on Job Attitude within policing.

Objective

1. To study the role of Emotional Labour on Job Attitudes among Law Enforcement officers.

Hypothesis

1. There is no significant interaction between the classificatory factors of Emotional Labour on Job Attitude among Law Enforcement Officers.

METHOD

Participants

Most of the researches among law enforcement officers have been examined in large departments and policemen of higher grades thus far. For the present investigation, the sample comprised of 430 civil police officers from all districts in Kerala.

Instruments

1. Emotional Labour Scale: The scale is a 22-item self-report scale that measures positively stated five facets of emotional display in the workplace. The reliability of the test has been established by the method of Cronbach alpha and the alpha coefficient obtained is 0.754. Face validity of each domain were established.
2. Job Attitude Scale: This scale consist of three domains of job attitude which includes Job Commitment, Job Involvement and Job Satisfaction (Jayan, 2004). Each domain is rated using five point scales. The reliability of the test has been established by the method of Cronbach alpha and the alpha coefficient obtained is 0.842. The split-half reliability of each domain varies from 0.73 to 0.89 and the test-retest reliability is also found to be significant and varied from 0.63 to 0.73 respectively. Criterion validity and predictor validity of each domain were established.

Procedure

Randomly selected officers were met personally and were given the two instruments along with the personal data sheet. They were requested to read all the statements carefully and respond them honestly.

Result and Discussion

To study the objective of the investigation, one- way analyses were done. Taking into account the sample of 430 civil police officers, Emotional Labour scores was divided into three levels (low, moderate and high) based on the Mean and Standard Deviations. Table 1, shows the F-value on different dimensions of Job Attitude scores on Emotional Labour.

Table 1

Summary of One-way ANOVA of different dimensions of Job Attitude on Emotional Labour (N=430)

Variables	Source of Variance				F- value
	Between group		Within group		
	Sum of squares	Mean squares	Sum of squares	Mean squares	
Job commitment	182.166	.041	24184.459	56.638	3.216*
Job involvement	33.847	16.923	9836.023	23.035	0.735
Job satisfaction	71.552	35.776	19609.248	45.923	0.779
Overall Job Attitude	943.354	471.677	90691.521	212.392	2.221

*p< .05

Table 2

Mean and SD of Low, Moderate and High levels of Emotional Labour

Variables	Emotional Labour					
	Group I		Group II		Group III	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Job commitment	32.2835	8.06413	33.377	7.59806	31.1641	6.84218
Job involvement	31.8031	4.92490	32.468	4.73649	32.0703	4.75905
Job satisfaction	31.3937	6.45025	31.514	7.59224	32.0703	4.75905
Overall Job Attitude	95.4803	14.9049	97.360	15.9219	93.8125	12.0985

Summarizing the One-way ANOVA, Table I, reveals that not all sub dimensions of job attitude does influence all the three levels of Emotional Labour. The Overall Job Attitude shows the sum of square and mean square of between group as 943.354 and 471.677 respectively. For within group the sum of square and mean square was found to be 90691.521 and 212.392 respectively and their F-value was 2.221 which were found to have no significant differences. But Job Commitment showed F-value (3.216) to be significant at $p > 0.05$ level.

Table 2, Illustrates the Mean and SD of low, moderate and high levels of Emotional Labour with Job Attitude. Moderate group mostly determines the dimensions of Job Attitude. F-value indicates that there exists no significant difference among the three levels of Emotional Labour on Job Attitude. Thus, the formulated hypothesis is more or less accepted.

Emotional theory suggests that the emotional requirements of one's work should have a substantial effect on one's psychological well-being. Ashforth and Humphrey (1995), stated, "The experience of work is saturated with feelings". Emotion has become an entity with which organizations are forced to content because of the proliferation of service jobs where the employee is a prominent representative of the organization having constant contact with organizational customers. Employees are emotional beings, and, as such must be instructed by the organization to present themselves according to certain emotional rules that are dictated in keeping with the culture and values the organization aspires to present. This is especially so in service jobs where the employee customer interaction is dynamic with uncertain outcomes (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993 ; Mann, 1997; Morris & Feldman, 1997).

Job commitment as suggested by Porter, Steers, Mowday, and Boulian (1974), is defined as the reflect on the three dimensions of commitment: (1) desire to retain membership in the organization; (2) belief in and acceptance of the values and goals of the organization; and (3) willingness to exert effort on behalf of the organization.

Commitment is a broader concept and tends to withstand transitory aspects of an employee's job. It is possible to be dissatisfied with a particular feature of a job while retaining a reasonably high level of commitment to the organization as a whole. When creating a commitment strategy, Amstrong (1999), asserts that "it is difficult to deny that it is desirable for management to have defined strategic goals and values. And it is equally desirable from management point of view for employees to behave in a way that support those strategies and values."

Social control job includes occupations such as Law enforcement officers. In general, the type of emotions that employees have to display varies by the type of service job. Chu (2002), investigated the impact of individual characteristics on the way emotional labor is performed among hotel employees. It was found that both surface acting (high emotive dissonance) and deep acting (emotive effort) associate positively with job satisfaction and negatively with emotional exhaustion. Among police officers emotional work had minimal effect on cynicism



and burnout (Schaible, 2006). Bozionelos and Kiamou (2008) studied the relationship of emotional work with emotional exhaustion and a variety of attitudes towards the job and the organization was investigated in a sample of Hellenes (Greek) employees in the banking industry who were performing frontline service jobs. The results revealed the presence of a substantial number of interaction effects in the relationship of emotion work with emotional exhaustion and work attitudes.

Conclusion

To conclude, unlike other service sectors, which is more or less customer oriented, police officers confront with the problem of serving the basic underlying functions of law-enforcement and order maintenance they had always served. Two distinct sets of roles are expected of them. On one hand, the traditional expectations, officers are expected to be physically and emotionally tough, distant, professional and efficient in carrying out their duties to maintain public order, enforce law, and preserve officer safety. On the other hand, under the expectations of community oriented policing, it is expected of officers that they be warm, understanding and compassionate towards the members of the community they are policing. As a consequence, law enforcement officers are simultaneously placed in a position of acting as both the "toe" and the "heel" thus may put them in a precarious psychological position of determining which self to present and also the continuous change in emotions and the wide variety of job demands may or may not affect and puzzle them.

In spite of all these adversaries, Kerala Police as always accountable to law has partially shown an influence of Emotional Labour on Job Attitudes, except for Job Commitment. It is of the indication that moderate level of Emotional Labour is necessary for the commitment towards job. Hoping that the findings of the present investigation will serve as a fruitful basis for the police organization especially in the recurrent training, operational and administrative practices. Future studied should attempt to integrate alternative frame work that may explain the influence of Emotional Labour on Job Attitudes.

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