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Relationship Between Work Engagement and Deep Acting aspect of Emotional Labour: A Study on Nursing Staff

Pooja Gupta & Himangini Rathore

Abstract

This research paper explored the relationship between work engagement and deep acting aspect of emotional labour among nursing staff. The sample consisted of 250 nurses between the age group 35-55 years from hospitals in Alwar district, Rajasthan (INDIA). The results revealed that deep acting was positively correlated with work engagement ($r = .298$, $p < 0.01$) and also with the dimensions- absorption ($r = .212$, $p < 0.01$), vigour ($r = .250$, $p < 0.01$) and dedication ($r = .270$, $p < 0.01$). The findings have indicated the importance of creating meaningful environment and emotional exchange at workplace as well as the need for emotional regulation in professional health practice setup.

Keywords: Hospital Staff, Emotional Labour, Work engagement, absorption, vigour, dedication, occupational psychology

Introduction

Emotions play a different role in our life including work, society, religion etc. Without a proper emotion we cannot express our views completely. Emotional labour is defined as “the process where employees regulate their emotional display in an attempt to meet organizationally based expectations specific to their roles.” (Brotheridge & Lee, 2003).

Emotional labour is characterized by the managing the emotion to meet the job needs. Hochschild is the one who first used the term emotional labour in 1983 in the book “The managed heart”. Defining two different types of emotional acting, first one is Surface acting which is without feeling the certain emotion someone can express that emotion, more useful in

emotional acting used in the workplace settings. The second one is deep acting which refers to feeling the desired emotion. Grandey (2003) suggested that deep acting and surface acting both try to attempt, control the displayed emotions but both have different intentions and motives. While using surface acting emotions, individuals try to conceal or fake the emotions which are experienced while following rules to complete job responsibilities. In the surface acting, people are engaged to display of fake positive emotions and suppress their negative feelings without changing it genuinely. In deep acting emotions, individuals try to modify the emotions cognitively in order to make them look more authentic (Gosserand & Diefendorff, 2005). According to Cote (2005) and Brotheridge & Grandey (2002) deep acting is the one who contributes in gaining resources by avoiding emotional discrepancy. It is also said to improve the sense of efficacy and personal achievement in employees.

In the present paper we focused on the emotional problems of nurses which can affect their outcome of job. For them to compromise with their emotion for their work is major indicator to lessen their work engagement. The profession of nurses are required to enhance positive emotions and suppressing of negative emotions.(Hur, Han, Yoo, & Moon, 2015; McQueen, 2004).

Schaufeli et al. (2002) defined work engagement that as a positive state which is the composition of absorption, vigor and dedication in different work activities. Absorption is defined by being deeply engaged in work, fully concentrated, happy, time passes quickly and showing problems when stop them to doing their work. Vigor is stated to showing high level of energy and mental resilience at work. Dedication defines to a sense of significance, enthusiasm, inspiration, pride and challenge. The study of Salanova et. al. (2005) concluded that the employees are more likely to feel positive perception when they are more engaged. The study of Liu et al. (2010) analyzed the correlation between job engagement and emotional labor. The study was conducted on 258 participants. There results revealed that emotional labour has an impact on job engagement. Deep acting is positively correlated with work engagement because employee managing the emotions voluntarily and proactively. So there is a less chances to feeling disengage with work. (Hulsheger & Schewe, 2011 ; Mesmer-magnus et al., 2012).

Methods

Objective-

To study the relationship between work engagement (absorption, dedication and vigor) and deep acting aspects of emotional labour on nursing staff.

Hypothesis:-

H1. There will be a positive relationship between deep acting aspect of emotional labour and work engagement (absorption, dedication and vigor).

Sample-

The participants of the study comprised of nurses in the age range from 35 – 55 years (N=250) who were selected from the public and private hospitals of Alwar. Purposive sampling was used to collect data.

Tools used-

Emotional labour:

In order to measure emotional labour, Brotheridge and Lee (2003) 3 - item measures of surface acting, 3- item measures of deep acting and 3- items measuring the frequency of the emotions, 3- items measuring intensity and 3-items measuring the variety of emotions. All the dimensions were measured on 5-point Likert scale which were ranging from 1 as rarely to 5 as very often. The cronbach alpha use to measure reliability coefficient found for frequency was 0.52, intensity 0.81 and variety of emotional display .79 ,surface acting 0.80 and for deep acting was 0.83.

Work engagement is measured by Utrecht scale of work engagement:-

Work commitment will be estimated with the abbreviated form of UWES-9 of Schaufeli and Bakker (2003). This Scale (UWES) is 17 self report survey that estimates work commitment. The internal consistency reliability ranged between 0.75 and 0.83 for vigor ,between .86 and 0.90 for dedication and 0.82 and 0.88 for absorption.

Results-

The analysis of data and results are shown in the following tables:-

Table 1- Mean value of all the variables (N=250)

Variables	Mean
Deep acting	10.15
Work engagement	69.76
Absorption	24.18
Vigor	23.90
Dedication	21.67

Table 2 Correlation for all the variables for total sample (N=250)

Variable	Deep acting	Work engagement	Absorption	Vigour	Dedication
Deep acting	1	.298**	.212**	.250**	.270**

* 0.05 level of significance

** 0.01 level of significance

Table 2 for the total sample reveals that Deep acting is **positively** correlated with work engagement $r = .298$, $p < 0.01$, absorption $r = .212$, $p < 0.01$, vigor $r = .250$, $p < 0.01$ and Dedication $r = .270$, $p < 0.01$.

Discussion

Work engagement is defined as the deliberate participation or involvement with work, task, and other organisational activities which include cognitive, emotional and physical aspects. It is further described as hav-

ing positive views to improve their effectiveness in work, to feel positive about executing the tasks and take advantage of their energy to achieve their goals. The present paper aims to see the relationship between deep acting and work engagement.

The correlation between deep acting and work engagement found to be $r=.298$ (significant at .01 level) which shows the positive correlation between two of them. The results depict that person who plays deep acting have better work engagement. The people who show genuine emotions are more authentic and more prone to stick in one job. In deep acting, individuals appear authentic by change their feeling cognitively. The studies supported our findings that deep acting is positively correlated with work engagement because employee managing the emotions voluntarily and proactively. So there is a less chances to feeling disengaged with work (Hulsheger & Schewe, 2011 ; Mesmer-megnus et al., 2012). The study of Wynne (2009) completely support our finding by stating that the participants who are more engaged in their work found to display deep acting and performed better.

The correlation between Deep acting and Absorption found .212 which is significant at .01 level. It depicts that when the person displays deep acting seems to be more happy, fully concentrated and deeply occupied in work and it is hard them to detach from work. According to Kruml & Geddes (2000) positive experience and feelings have come with deep acting which create high level of job satisfaction and keeps the employee engage in their work. The employees who display deep acting to have a higher level of engagement with work then those employees who choose to display surface acting. So from this it is concluded that high level of job satisfaction keep the employee happy and deeply engrossed in work so they can do their work with full concentration.

The table 1 shows the mean value for deep acting and Absorption which is 10.15 and 24.18 consequently. The mean value shows the higher value of absorption. It means higher the absorption, more the person display deep acting. It can be hypothesized on the base of Zapf's(2002) point of view that when people are engaged in deep acting they demands greater psychological resources which improve the trust, reduce the fatigue and advances their goal progress. Hence they are deeply engrossed in the work because deep acting tries to modify their emotions cognitively to look more authentic.

The correlation between Deep active and Vigor to experience is found

.250(significant at .01 level). Vigor is the dimension of work engagement which defines the individual who are imaginative, artistic, having high level of energy, wide interest and unconventional values. It is seen that when the situation is not match the expectation , deep acting facilitate the employees to sense good and pleased about them. Therefore it is an approach that can save employees' energy and get better flow at their work. The result is supported by Martinez et al. (2007) by revealing that before the emotional encounter, deep acting need to invest the energy. This is the strategy that avoids a discrepancy between expressed and felt emotions which protect against resource drain and to facilitate by gaining other kinds of psychological resources as stated by Martinez et al. (2007).

The mean value for both the variable is 10.15 and 23.90 which shows the higher level of vigor and deep acting. The result concluded that person who displays deep acting has high level of vigor. According to Chughatai & buckley (2008) vigor is something that can increases the effectiveness of person to give the best outcome in job. Person having high vigor puts much effort in their work and are better able to manage their emotions.

The statistical result between deep acting and Dedication found .270 which is significant at .01 level of confidence. Dedication defines to spend the lot of time in a particular activity or in job which someone's enjoy very much. Cote (2005) revealed that when the employees display deep acting, they seem more engaged in flow of work due to the extraction of positive interpersonal feedback from the target of the emotional expression which makes them to take pleasure at their work and to be absorbed in the interaction. This can make employee to more dedicated and devoted toward their job.

In table 1 the mean value showing for deep acting and dedication which is 10.15 and 21.67 consequently. It depicts that higher the person displays deep acting; the more dedication towards work is seen. The study of Liu et al.(2010) shows the positive association between dedication and deep acting.

In the area of occupational psychology and Human resource management this study has major contribution. Findings would help management and administration to formulate those policies which are meant to enhance employee performance in a suitable working environment favourable for managing and maintaining emotions. These results recommend the organizations to authorize the training programs that may enhance the emotional intelligence of leaders to ensure effective emotional management to

be better engaged in their work.

Conclusion

It is concluded from the study that Deep acting and work engagement are interlinked. Deep acting is found positively correlated with work engagement and its dimensions absorption, vigor and dedication. The people who display emotions by deep acting are better able to engage in their work. They are fully concentrated, happy, more energetic and enthusiastic. These kinds of people are eager to devote much effort in their work even in the different situations.

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