

Chapter 5

Emotional Labor in the Tourism Industry: Strategies, Antecedents, and Outcomes

Rajat Gera

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7558-1426>

Manav Rachna International Institute of Research and Studies, India

Shilpa Arora

Manav Rachna International Institute of Research and Studies, India

Sahil Malik

Manav Rachna International Institute of Research and Studies, India

ABSTRACT

The chapter reviews the key concepts, definitions, individual and organizational antecedents, and individual and organizational outcomes of emotional labour (EL) in the tourism industry. The application of the concept in research and practice is discussed along with the implications. The theoretical domains of convergence and divergence are identified. key challenges and applications of EL with airlines cabin crew, restaurant service staff, and hotel industry frontline staff are identified and discussed. A systematic review of literature on EL in tourism is undertaken followed by critical appraisal of the implications of EL for HR practices in the tourism and hospitality industry.

INTRODUCTION

Hochschild's (1983) initially conceptualized emotional labor within the theatre metaphor wherein service is envisioned as a "show", service employee as the "actor", customer as the "audience" and the work place as the "stage, " in which the actor (employee) is expected to enact a role according to a script. Emotional labor is highly relevant to service's as they are difficult to evaluate, perishable (which makes it impossible to rectify any mistakes in the service which has been offered), and employee behavior and

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attitude significantly impact customer emotions, cognitions and behaviors produced during the service encounters Zapf (2002).

Tourism is labor intensive service (Deery & Jago, 2009) with humans at the centre of exchange process (McKercher & Robbins, 1998). Therefore, emotional displays by employees potentially can determine the employee-customer relationship in the service delivery (Julian, 2008; Lee & Ok, 2015). The emotional labor of the service provider is therefore embedded in the tourism product (Olsen, 2002; Sharpe, 2005; Van Dijk & Kirk, 2007).

Employees in hospitality and Tourism Industry are expected to express cheerfulness, enthusiasm, friendliness as mandated and expected by the Organization even if they are experiencing negative emotions (Pizam, 2004; Wong and Wang, 2009). The service providers (employees) may embody the product being offered such as 'adventure', 'excitement', 'intrigue' or 'fantasy' when enacting their role irrespective of the routine nature of the work (Beardsworth & Bryman, 2011;).

The Tourism industry expects the employees to perform by offering emotional labor in addition to the physical and Intellectual labor (Chu & Murrmann, 2006; Sharpe, 2005; Zapf, 2002, Constanti & Gibbs, 2005; Guerrier & Adib, 2003). Employees in the Hospitality and tourism industry are in direct contact with customers of the employing organization and need to enact a role which requires them to perform emotional labor in their encounter with the customer/visitor (Anderson, Provis, & Chappel, 2003). The three types of workers who deliver tourism are Directors and stage managers, performers and intermediaries of cultural performances who embody the attributes of emotional labor and power. Thus for exp., workers who provide 'dancing' as part of hotel evening entertainment have a human capital requirement of 'dancing' but it also has elements of emotional labor as they are expected to have friendly and positive disposition even with irate, demanding or impatient customers .

The most studied jobs in Tourism have at least two of the characteristics specified by Hochschild (1983) for high EL jobs ie frequent interactions with the public (i.e., customers); the expectation of inducing emotions in others, and the management or control of these emotional interactions. From perspective of tourism industry, the jobs most researched are cabin crew, frontline staff of airlines, tour guides and restaurant waiters to some extent.

Tourism focused service providers (employees) provide emotional expressions to service receivers (visitors) to elicit the desired emotional response to the interaction (Sharpe, 2005). The employers manage the same by designing and providing scripts consisting of simple instructions to detailed processes to direct their employees physical and emotional movements. (Erickson and Wharton, 1997).

Hotel service work requires managers to manage their own emotions and those of the service employees (Young and Corsun, 2009) for organizational success. This requires emotion management between the service provider and service receiver in order to meet the desired service quality expectations (Lashley, Morrison, & Randall, 2005). These rules and norms are framed by the hospitality organizations to maximize customer satisfaction and service quality, Kim (2008).

Organizational norms or "feeling rules" are attempts to control the private thoughts or feelings and inner lives of employees. However, scholars later argued that the appropriate term is "display rules" as organizations can only regulate the observable behavior or emotional expressions and had no control over the unobservable inner states (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993; Rafaeli & Sutton, 1989).

The customers (visitor's) reaction and perception to the experience is partially determined by the service providers adoption of appropriate emotional expressions (Grandey, Fisk, Mattila, Jansen, & Sideman, 2005). Thus service quality may be evaluated adversely if the customer (visitor) does not perceive the emotional expressions and facial and bodily cues as authentic (Ekman, Friesen, & O'Sullivan, 1988;

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