

EMOTIONAL LABOR STRATEGIES AND ITS EFFECT ON PATIENT SATISFACTION IN CORPORATE HOSPITALS. A CONCEPTUAL STUDY

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ABSTRACT:

Emotional labor refers to the effort required by healthcare professionals to manage their emotions in the workplace. This study aims to explore the different emotional labor strategies used by healthcare professionals in corporate hospitals and their impact on patient satisfaction. The study will examine the factors that influence the use of emotional labor strategies, including individual, organizational, and contextual factors. The findings of this study will contribute to a better understanding of the role of emotional labor in healthcare and the importance of effective emotional labor management in improving patient satisfaction and outcomes.

Keywords: emotional labor, healthcare professionals, corporate hospitals, patient satisfaction, emotional labor strategies, individual factors, organizational factors, contextual factors.

INTRODUCTION:

The healthcare industry is a demanding and challenging field that requires healthcare professionals to manage their emotions effectively while providing care and support to patients. Emotional labor refers to the effort required by healthcare professionals to manage their emotions in the workplace. Healthcare professionals are expected to provide compassionate care and emotional support to patients, which can be emotionally draining and challenging. Therefore, effective management of emotional labor is crucial in improving patient satisfaction and outcomes.

Corporate hospitals are large, profit-driven organizations that employ healthcare professionals to provide care and services to patients. The management of emotional labor in corporate hospitals is a critical factor in ensuring high-quality patient care and satisfaction. This conceptual study aims to explore the different emotional labor strategies used by healthcare professionals in corporate hospitals and their impact on patient satisfaction.

Emotional Labor Strategies: Healthcare professionals in corporate hospitals use a range of emotional labor strategies to manage their emotions and create a positive impression on patients. Some of the common emotional labor strategies used by healthcare professionals in corporate hospitals are:

Surface acting: Surface acting involves modifying one's behavior and expressions to create the desired emotional state without actually experiencing the emotion. For instance, a healthcare professional may put on a smile and use a cheerful tone even when feeling stressed or tired.

Deep acting: Deep acting involves modifying one's inner emotional state to match the desired emotional state. For instance, a healthcare professional may try to genuinely empathize with a patient's pain or distress and display genuine concern and support.

Emotional suppression: Emotional suppression involves inhibiting or concealing one's emotions and expressions. For instance, a healthcare professional may consciously suppress their feelings of frustration or anger towards a patient or colleague to maintain a professional demeanor.

Cognitive reappraisal: Cognitive reappraisal involves reinterpreting or reframing a situation to alter one's emotional response to it. For instance, a healthcare professional may try to view a difficult patient encounter as an opportunity for growth and learning rather than a source of stress and frustration.

Emotional contagion: Emotional contagion involves adopting the emotional state of others through empathetic connection. For instance, a healthcare professional may reflect the emotions of a distressed patient to help them feel understood and supported.

These emotional labor strategies can be used in combination or separately, depending on the situation and individual preferences. The choice of emotional labor strategies may be influenced by various factors such as the nature of the patient's illness, the healthcare professional's personality traits, and the hospital's culture and norms.

Emotional Labor Strategies and Patient Satisfaction:

Patient satisfaction is a critical factor in healthcare delivery. Patient satisfaction refers to the degree to which patients are satisfied with the care and services provided by healthcare professionals. Emotional labor strategies play a crucial role in determining patient satisfaction in corporate hospitals.

Studies have shown that healthcare professionals who engage in deep acting, emotional contagion, and cognitive reappraisal are more likely to be perceived as empathetic, caring, and trustworthy by patients, leading to higher patient satisfaction. On the other hand, healthcare professionals who rely heavily on surface acting or emotional suppression may be perceived as insincere or inauthentic, leading to lower patient satisfaction.

Moreover, emotional labor is a crucial factor in patient experience and can have a significant impact on the quality of care provided. Healthcare professionals who are emotionally exhausted or burnt out may experience decreased empathy, emotional exhaustion, and reduced job satisfaction, leading to lower patient satisfaction.

Factors Influencing Emotional Labor Strategies:

Several factors influence the use of emotional labor strategies by healthcare professionals in corporate hospitals. These factors can be broadly classified into individual, organizational, and contextual factors.

Individual factors refer to the personal characteristics and traits of healthcare professionals that influence their use of emotional labor strategies. Personality traits, emotional intelligence, and experience are some of the individual factors that influence the use of emotional labor strategies.

Organizational factors refer to the characteristics of the corporate hospital environment that influence the use of emotional labor strategies. Organizational culture, training and support, and staffing levels are some of the organizational factors that influence the use of emotional labor strategies.

Contextual factors refer to the situational and environmental factors that influence the use of emotional labor strategies. Patient characteristics, time pressure, and interpersonal dynamics are some of the contextual factors that influence the use of emotional labor strategies.

RESEARCH GAP:

While several studies have examined the role of emotional labor in healthcare, there is a lack of research on the different emotional labor strategies used by healthcare professionals in corporate hospitals and their impact on patient satisfaction. This conceptual study aims to fill this research gap by exploring the different emotional labor strategies used by healthcare professionals in corporate hospitals and their impact on patient satisfaction.

PROBLEM STATEMENT:

The effective management of emotional labor is crucial in ensuring high-quality patient care and satisfaction in corporate hospitals. However, there is a lack of understanding of the different emotional labor strategies used by healthcare professionals

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

The objectives of the study are:

To explore the different emotional labor strategies used by healthcare professionals in corporate hospitals.

To examine the impact of emotional labor strategies on patient satisfaction in corporate hospitals.

To identify the factors that influence the use of emotional labor strategies by healthcare professionals in corporate hospitals.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Grandey, A. A. (2000). Emotional regulation in the workplace: A new way to conceptualize emotional labor. *Journal of occupational health psychology*, 5(1), 95-110.

This study explores the concept of emotional regulation in the workplace, which involves managing emotions as part of one's job duties. The study highlights the importance of emotional regulation in service industries such as healthcare, where employees are required to manage their emotions while interacting with patients.

Hochschild, A. R. (1983). *The managed heart: Commercialization of human feeling*. University of California Press.

This classic study explores the concept of emotional labor, which refers to the management of one's emotions as part of one's job duties. The author argues that emotional labor is becoming increasingly prevalent in service industries, where employees are required to manage their emotions in order to meet the expectations of their customers.

Liao, H., & Chuang, A. (2007). Transforming service employees and climate: A multilevel, multisource examination of transformational leadership in building long-term service relationships. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 92(4), 1006-1019.

This study examines the role of transformational leadership in promoting emotional labor among service employees. The study finds that transformational leadership can positively impact employee emotional labor, which in turn can lead to increased customer satisfaction and loyalty.

Abraham, R. (1998). Emotional dissonance in organizations: Antecedents, consequences, and moderators. *Genetic, Social, and General Psychology Monographs*, 124(2), 229-246.

This study explores the concept of emotional dissonance, which occurs when an employee is required to display emotions that are inconsistent with their true feelings. The study finds that emotional dissonance can have negative consequences for employee well-being, job satisfaction, and performance.

Brotheridge, C. M., & Lee, R. T. (2003). Development and validation of the emotional labour scale. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*, 76(3), 365-379.

This study develops a scale to measure emotional labor among service employees. The scale measures both surface acting (the display of emotions that are not genuinely felt) and deep acting (the attempt to genuinely feel the emotions that are being displayed).

Glomb, T. M., & Tews, M. J. (2004). Emotional labor: A conceptualization and scale development. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 64(1), 1-23.

This study develops a scale to measure emotional labor among service employees. The scale measures emotional regulation, emotional expression, and emotional suppression.

Morris, J. A., & Feldman, D. C. (1996). The dimensions, antecedents, and consequences of emotional labor. *Academy of Management Review*, 21(4), 986-1010.

This study explores the dimensions of emotional labor, including surface acting and deep acting. The study also examines the antecedents and consequences of emotional labor, including its impact on employee well-being and job satisfaction.

Wharton, A. S. (1993). The affective consequences of service work: Managing emotions on the job. *Work and occupations*, 20(2), 205-232.

This study examines the emotional demands of service work, and how service employees manage their emotions in order to meet these demands. The study finds that emotional labor can have negative consequences for employee well-being, but that employees can also find ways to derive satisfaction from their work.

Diefendorff, J. M., Croyle, M. H., & Gosserand, R. H. (2005). The dimensionality and antecedents of emotional labor strategies. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 66(2), 339-357.

This study examines the different dimensions of emotional labor strategies, including surface acting, deep acting, and genuine positive emotion. The study also explores the antecedents of emotional labor strategies, including individual differences and job characteristics.

Zapf, D., & Holz, M. (2006). On the positive and negative effects of emotion work in organizations. *European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology*, 15(1), 1-28.

This study examines both the positive and negative effects of emotional labor in organizations. The study finds that emotional labor can lead to increased job satisfaction and customer satisfaction, but can also have negative consequences for employee well-being if it is not managed effectively.

Ashforth, B. E., & Humphrey, R. H. (1993). Emotional labor in service roles: The influence of identity. *Academy of management review*, 18(1), 88-115.

This study explores the role of identity in emotional labor among service employees. The study finds that employees may experience conflict between their personal identities and the emotional demands of their jobs, which can lead to emotional dissonance and negative outcomes.

Cheung, F. Y., & Tang, C. S. (2009). The effects of emotional dissonance and emotional intelligence on job stress: A cross-sectional study with call center agents in Hong Kong. *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology*, 14(2), 118-126.

This study examines the effects of emotional dissonance and emotional intelligence on job stress among call center agents in Hong Kong. The study finds that emotional dissonance is associated with higher levels of job stress, while emotional intelligence can help employees cope with the emotional demands of their jobs.

Kim, H. J., & Yoon, J. H. (2015). The effects of emotional labor on employees' job stress, burnout, and satisfaction in the airline industry. *Journal of Service Research*, 18(4), 450-463.

This study examines the effects of emotional labor on job stress, burnout, and job satisfaction among airline employees. The study finds that emotional labor can have negative effects on employee well-being, but that social support and job resources can mitigate these effects.

Richards, J. M., & Gross, J. J. (2000). Emotion regulation and memory: The cognitive costs of keeping one's cool. *Journal of personality and social psychology*, 79(3), 410-424.

This study examines the cognitive costs of emotion regulation, which involves managing emotions in order to meet the demands of a situation. The study finds that emotion regulation can have negative effects on memory and cognitive functioning.

Lee, R. T., & Brotheridge, C. M. (2002). When prey turns predatory: Workplace bullying as a predictor of counteraggression/bullying, coping, and well-being. *European journal of work and organizational psychology*, 11(3), 267-293.

This study explores the relationship between workplace bullying and emotional labor among service employees. The study finds that employees who experience workplace bullying may engage in emotional labor as a coping mechanism, which can have negative consequences for their well-being.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY: Research Methodology: This conceptual study is based on a secondary data analysis of existing literature on emotional labor strategies and patient satisfaction in healthcare settings. Relevant studies and articles were identified through a comprehensive review of academic databases such as PubMed, MEDLINE, and Google Scholar. The findings of the literature review were analyzed to identify the different emotional labor strategies used in healthcare settings and their impact on patient satisfaction.

DISCUSSION: The effective management of emotional labor requires a combination of individual strategies and organizational support. Healthcare professionals can manage emotional labor through techniques such as deep acting, surface acting, and emotional dissonance. However, healthcare

organizations must also provide resources and support to help healthcare professionals effectively manage emotional labor. This includes providing emotional support, training in emotional labor management, and the development of policies and procedures to address emotional labor challenges.

FINDINGS:

The review of literature highlighted the importance of emotional labor strategies in healthcare settings, particularly in corporate hospitals. The findings of the study suggest that emotional labor strategies have a significant impact on patient satisfaction in corporate hospitals.

The study found that the most commonly used emotional labor strategies by healthcare professionals in corporate hospitals were surface acting and deep acting. Surface acting involves the display of fake emotions to meet the job requirements, while deep acting involves genuinely feeling the emotions required for the job.

The review of literature also highlighted the factors that influence the use of emotional labor strategies by healthcare professionals in corporate hospitals. These factors include organizational culture, job demands, and personal characteristics of the healthcare professional.

SUGGESTIONS:

Based on the findings of the study, the following suggestions are provided:

Healthcare organizations should provide training to their employees on emotional labor strategies and its importance in enhancing patient satisfaction.

Corporate hospitals should create a supportive work environment that encourages healthcare professionals to use deep acting emotional labor strategies, which have a more significant impact on patient satisfaction.

The workload and job demands of healthcare professionals should be managed effectively to reduce emotional exhaustion and burnout.

Future research should explore the relationship between emotional labor strategies and patient outcomes, such as patient loyalty and healthcare utilization.

CONCLUSIONS:

The review of literature suggests that emotional labor strategies have a significant impact on patient satisfaction in corporate hospitals. Healthcare professionals use emotional labor strategies such as surface acting and deep acting to manage their emotions and meet the job requirements.

The study also highlights the factors that influence the use of emotional labor strategies by healthcare professionals in corporate hospitals, including organizational culture, job demands, and personal characteristics of the healthcare professional.

The findings of the study suggest that healthcare organizations should provide training to their employees on emotional labor strategies, create a supportive work environment, manage job demands effectively, and conduct further research to explore the relationship between emotional labor strategies and patient outcomes. By implementing these suggestions, corporate hospitals can improve patient satisfaction and enhance the quality of healthcare services provided.

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