Emotional labour among employees: What Could Go Wrong and What could Make It Right?

By

Salman Ali

(Registration No: 00000327080)

Executive Master of Business Administration

School of Business

National University of Sciences & Technology (NUST)

Islamabad, Pakistan

(2024)

Emotional labour among employees: What Could Go Wrong and What could Make It Right?

By

Salman Ali

(Registration No: 00000327080)

A Business Project submitted to the National University of Sciences and Technology, Islamabad,

In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Executive Master of Business Administration

Supervisor: Dr. Safa Riaz

School of Business

National University of Sciences & Technology (NUST)

Islamabad, Pakistan

(2024)

BUSINESS PROJECT ACCEPTANCE CERTIFICATE

It is Certified that final copy of EMBA Business Project written by Salman Ali, Registration No. 327080 of EMBA 2K20 has been vetted by undersigned, found complete in all aspects as per NUST Statutes/Regulations/MS Policy, is free of errors, and mistakes and is accepted as fulfillment for award of EMBA degree. It is further certified that necessary amendments as pointed out by GEC members of the scholar have also been incorporated in the said business project.
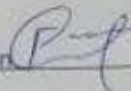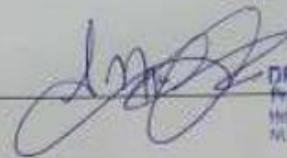
Signature of Supervisor with stamp: Dr. Safa Riaz _____

Date: _____

Programme Head Signature with stamp: Dr. Muhammad Fawad Khan _____

Date: _____

Signature of HoD with stamp: Dr. Asfia Obaid _____

Date: _____

DR. ASFIA OBAID
Professor
HoD Management & HR
NUST Business School, (NBS)

Countersign by

Signature (Dean/Principal): _____

Principal & Dean
Dr. Naukhez Sarwar
NUST Business School

Date: _____

CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

This is to certify that the research work presented in this Business Project / thesis, entitled "Emotional labour among employees: What could go wrong and what could make it right?" Was conducted by Mr. Salman Ali under the supervision of Dr. Safa Riaz.

No part of this Business Project / thesis has been submitted anywhere else for any other degree. This Business Project / thesis is submitted to the...Nust School of Business. In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Executive Master of Business Administration (EMBA). Department of Management Sciences at National University of Sciences and Technology, Islamabad.

Student Name: Salman Ali   Signature: _____

Examination Committee:

    a) Internal Examiner 1: Name   Signature: _____
    (Designation & Office Address)
    ……………………………….

    b) Internal Examiner 2: Name   Signature: _____
    (Designation & Office Address)
    ………………………………

Supervisor Name: Dr. Safa Riaz   Signature: _____

Name of Dean/HOD: Signature: _____

AUTHOR'S DECLARATION

I _____ Salman Ali _____ hereby state that my MS Business Project / thesis titled "Emotional labour among employees: What Could Go Wrong and What could Make It Right?"

Is my own work and has not been submitted previously by me for taking any degree from National University of Sciences and Technology, Islamabad or anywhere else in the country/ world.

At any time if my statement is found to be incorrect even after I graduate, the university has the right to withdraw my MS degree.

Name of Student: Salman Ali _____

Date: _____

PLAGIARISM UNDERTAKING

I solemnly declare that research work presented in the Business Project / thesis titled "<u>Emotional labour among employees: What Could Go Wrong and What could Make It Right?</u>" is solely my research work with no significant contribution from any other person. Small contribution/ help wherever taken has been duly acknowledged and that complete Business Project / thesis has been written by me.

I understand the zero tolerance policy of the HEC and National University of Sciences and Technology (NUST), Islamabad towards plagiarism. Therefore, I as an author of the above titled Business Project / thesis declare that no portion of my Business Project / thesis has been plagiarized and any material used as reference is properly referred/cited.

I undertake that if I am found guilty of any formal plagiarism in the above titled Business Project / thesis even after award of MS degree, the University reserves the rights to withdraw/revoke my MS degree and that HEC and NUST, Islamabad has the right to publish my name on the HEC/University website on which names of students are placed who submitted plagiarized Business Project / thesis.

Student Signature: _____

Name: _____ Salman Ali _____

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my supervisor, Dr. Safa Riaz, for her invaluable guidance, encouragement, and unwavering support throughout the completion of this research. Her expertise and constructive feedback have been instrumental in shaping this work.

I am deeply thankful to my parents and siblings for their constant love, encouragement, and sacrifices that have enabled me to pursue my academic goals. My sister Sara Ali who has always rescued my throughout my education journey. My elder brother Areeb Ali who has been an inspiration for me to always be the best. My family's unwavering belief in my abilities has always been and will always be my source of inspiration.

To my wife Sumaiyya Ali, I owe a debt of gratitude for her unwavering support, patience, and understanding during this journey. Her encouragement and belief in my abilities have been my strength.

Last but not least, I am grateful to my son Muhammad Ali Khan, whose infectious enthusiasm and boundless energy have been my motivation to strive for excellence. Your presence in my life continues to inspire me every day.

This research is a culmination of their collective support, and I am truly fortunate to have such incredible individuals in my life.

Abstract

This research seeks to determine the effects of emotional labor especially surface acting on employee's well-being among the workers in telecommunications sector, with attention on PTCL in Pakistan. The research focuses on emotional labor as a phenomenon with multiplicity to include surface acting and its implications for employee well-being in PTCL. It relies on a broad base of literature and studies gender relationships, work-life balance, and managerial practices. An unstructured and qualitative research design was utilized, supported by in-depth interviews by a range of PTCL employees. This was this technique that was used to get knowledge about subjective experiences and perceptions of emotional labor in organizations. The findings reveal significant trends including gender bias and the impact of surface acting, as well as how emotional labor influences workplace harmony and the critical role of employee voice in the office environment. The need to maintain a balance between the professional and personal life of employees emerged as a primary factor shaping the employee experience, alongside other considerations distinct from emotional labour and surface acting at work. The necessity to maintain composure amidst personal and professional challenges further demonstrates the widespread presence of surface acting across all departments. The research concludes that surface acting and emotional labor significantly influence employee health, workplace discipline, and the overall environment at PTCL. It highlights the importance of implementing effective management strategies and organizational policies to mitigate these effects. Furthermore, a key finding of this research is the role of voice mechanisms as a major intervention, underscoring the necessity to incorporate employee voice in addressing the challenges of emotional labor in the telecommunications sector. Voice mechanisms means how employees express their opinions and ideas in the organisation. . This is not limited to providing feedback to the managers, giving your ideas and suggestions for improvements. As organisational leaning promotes employee voice behaviours and their engagement in the organisation. And clear documented voice policies create a psychological safety, transparency and conflict resolution.

Keywords: Emotional Labor, Surface Acting, Telecommunications Industry, Employee Well-being, Voice Mechanisms, Work-Life Balance, Organizational Culture, PTCL.

Table of Contents

Chapter 1: Introduction

Emotional effort, often a critical yet overlooked factor in shaping employee well-being in telecommunications, has become an integral aspect of this fast-paced and bustling industry. The notion of emotional labor is based on the emotional display rules that are used by employees to meet the standards of the organization or occupation and this is one of the key dimensions of employee experience and customer behavior (Keller et al., 2020). The staff members working in this field have to develop a high level of emotional regulation as they have to serve the customers all the time and have to provide them with the required satisfaction. Meeting the expectations of employers vs that of an employee is a challenge for telecom companies like PTCL, as day by day the market is becoming more competitive and thus increasing required service excellence in the technological advancements (Lee et al., 2019).Emotional labor is all-pervasive for the sphere of telecommunications, and its significance cannot be overestimated because it affects the quality of services provided, the level of loyalty to the company and the brand as a whole (Fan & Wang, 2022). The environment of the telecommunications sector is very dynamic, highly competitive and technological innovations are constantly being introduced. This sector is, therefore, characterized by unique demands on employees (Kaltiainen et al., 2020). Not only that, this layer is also responsible for adapting to the rapid changes in technology and ensuring a calm and customer-oriented attitude at all times. Therefore, the success in this industry is determined by the capability to efficiently work the emotional labor. Decoding the finer details of emotional labor is, therefore, not just pertinent for the well-being of employees but also to the quality of customer service that is needed in this field (Aung & Tewogbola, 2019). This underscores the importance of research focused on emotional labor in the telecommunications industry, which is vital for enhancing both employee satisfaction and service excellence. Emotional labor, as defined by Hochschild (1983), refers to the process of managing emotions to fulfill the emotional requirements of a job, thereby impacting both personal well-being and professional performance.

While surface acting can be considered a vital part of the customer service within the telecommunications industry, it stems from the destructive nature of its consequences on both the individual employee and organizational structure (Kahn, 2019). Deep down in its essence, surface acting requires that employees hide their real emotions in order to put on a face of what is

acceptable, an ultimate condition that over time can cause tremendous psychological stress (Hussein, 2018). Emotional exhaustions, which is one of the aspects of burnout, occur for a single employee when the continuous efforts to put up an emotional mask that does not reflect one's internal state (Hsieh & Karatepe, 2019). This chronic stress and fatigue not only ruin the employee's mental health and satisfaction with the job but even bring physical health problems such as headaches, sleeping disturbances, and increased vulnerability to various diseases. Feeling inauthentic only adds to the psychological strain, with misalignment between the self and emotions leading to lower levels of general well-being and work engagement. It is quite prevalent in the industry throughout the world that customer service representatives are forced to fake smiles, pretend that they are truly empathic to the customer and suppress their true emotions just to avoid complaints (Gosserand & Diefendorff, 2005). The widespread application of surface acting can lead to a significant reduction in the quality of the provided services from the organizational point of view (Karkoulian et al., 2023). On the surface, employees might seem to continue to smile and play the professional, but their interpersonal behaviors may not convey true empathy and understanding-two critical components of customer satisfaction (Ju et al., 2019). In the long run, this can diminish the loyalty of customers and negatively impact the company's brand name.

The situation of emotional dissonance can result in the negative outcomes of the workplace environment. It may lead to a situation whereby communication is devoid of authenticity, making the teamwork and cooperation to go down. In this regard, this can impact on organizational effectiveness and innovation, because individuals who have been drained emotionally are unwilling to participate actively in joint ventures or engage in innovativeness (Bakker, A. B., Demerouti, E., & Euwema, M. C. 2005). Surface acting, when persistent, also tends to result in a rise of the attrition rate in organizations (Jiang & Chen, 2018). When employees feel emotionally drained on a regular basis, they have greater intentions to leave for other jobs, and this contributes to increased turnover. This not only leads to costing for the organization in the sense of finding and training, but also leads to the loss of the skilled and experienced personnel (Lee et al., 2019). The consequences of surface acting are manifold in that they undermine the well-being of employees and the productivity of organizations. These results show that it is not only the question of the welfare of a human being that requires the elimination of surface acting in the workplace but also the strategic necessity to keep the condition of an organization healthy and its service at the highest level (Niven, K., Totterdell, P., Holman, D., & Headley, T. 2012).

A multidimensional approach would be required to solve the issues posed by surface acting in terms of the telecommunications domain, incorporating organizational strategies and the key role of the first-level supervisor. Overcoming that is preventing the negative impacts of surface acting requires creating a working environment that allows the employees to truly demonstrate their emotions and get support for emotional labor (Jeung et al., 2018). In this instance, one cannot ignore the role of the immediate supervisors. Voice mechanisms means how employees express their opinions and ideas in the organisation. . This is not limited to providing feedback to the managers, giving your ideas and suggestions for improvements (Pulakos, E. D., Hanson, R. M., Arad, S., & Moye, N. 2015). As organisational leaning promotes employee voice behaviours and their engagement in the organisation. And clear documented voice policies create a psychological safety, transparency and conflict resolution (Milliken, F. J., Morrison, E. W., & Hewlin, P. F. 2003).The support staff or an employee should be trained to identify the emotional burnout symptoms and provide assistance where necessary. For instance, this may include employee review/ employee evaluation process on a regular basis, whereby they can discuss their well-being emotionally and their coping mechanisms in dealing with workloads (Luo et al., 2019).Successful organizations have proper employee voice behaviours in which they are encouraged to speak up , their offices are operating on open door policies. So that employees have no hindrance in speaking up (Grant, A. M., & Parker, S. K. (2009). To fostering a more humane environment, supervisors must actively promote and implement voice mechanisms, ensuring conditions where employees are encouraged and rewarded for freely expressing their thoughts and feelings. While this method is helpful for enhancing communication, it has wider impact for better workplace environment. This method not only alleviates the need to engage in surface acting but also aids in creating trust and morale in the team. Hence improving the decision making, fostering open communication, resolving the conflicts, increasing employee engagement and satisfaction. Integration of voice functions is also a major approach which include organizational values and culture, open to change and improvements in the organisation, solving the problems and decision making, expressing their opinions and ideas (Detert, J. R., & Burris, E. R. 2007). Other types of mechanisms that organizations can establish for employee feedback include the use of channels through which employees can be free to ventilate their complaints, concerns, suggestions, or provide constructive criticism regarding the work environment and the emotional labor demands (Jafarli & Doroudi, 2020). These measures must provide anonymity and immunity from retaliation to ensure fair and

transparent communication. By listening and responding to such feedback, organizations can make emendations in order to decrease the use of surface acting and increase the job satisfaction in general.

The training and the provision of resources that help people to master emotional resilience would allow the employees to cope with their emotions better. Workshops for stress management, mindfulness, and effective communication can make employees powerful to manage emotional labor in more positive ways. Organizations may ensure positive channeling of emotional labor by creating a co-operative and friendly working environment. Promoting team-building activities and peer networks would allow employees to share some experiences and strategies for coping with emotional reactions, thus, reducing isolation and stress (Ioana, 2020). This also promotes curtailing undesirable behaviors such as gossips since employees are provided with healthy outlets for their emotions and frustrations. Rethinking the measures of performance to encompass attributes that would rely on genuine interactions rather than just conformity to a green face could drastically lower the pressure to surface act (Rabiul et al., 2023). Such changes convey to employees that the organization respects authentic emotionality and is genuinely interested in customer involvement, creating a more authentic and rewarding work environment.

This research on emotional labor, especially centered on surface acting in the telecommunications industry, holds many critical implications and provides great advancements in the theoretical and practical domains, respectively (Hwang et al., 2021). It empirically broadens the current knowledge base on emotional labor by encompassing it in the framework of a high-pressure, customer-centric industry. It gives a more detailed view of how emotional labor especially surface acting can influence employee well-being and the dynamics in an industry known for technological changes and high intensity of customer interactions (Marques et al., 2018). This consciously sums up the whole issue of occupational Psychology and Organizational behavior as well as effects the many issues between emotional labor and work-related restrictions or barriers. Surface acting has some costs. It is not an exceptional case. The first is employees. The second is organizational performance. Thus, enterprise mechanism should be set up in order to prevent the phenomenon of unprompted behavior (Henderson & O'Leary-Kelly, 2021). The results reduce the possibility that the industry leaders and HR professionals will ignore the emotional burden that a worker is required to bear and can help them to develop a more sensitive and caring workplace. Incorporating

voice mechanisms more prominently in organizational structures offers a concrete solution for creating an environment that is both inclusive and responsive (Wang, 2021). When discussing the role of supervisors, it is essential to emphasize their responsibility in facilitating these voice mechanisms, ensuring that employees have the platform to express their thoughts and feelings, which in turn fosters a more engaging and collaborative workplace culture. First, this not only increases employee welfare and job loyalty but it may also increase service quality hence the high retention rate of customers resulting in organizational success (Wen et al., 2019). This, therefore, means that this research is not only relevant to the academic world but also provides a practical lens through which the telecommunications sector can transform itself through better organizational practices.

1.1 Problem Statement

Surface acting as a common sort of emotional work refers to the situation when customer service representatives and office employees' change their external emotional behaviors to fit into professional standards and requirements that are usually in the contradiction with their real feelings. This practice, which is seen to be a necessity in an industry that is geared towards the delivery of customer satisfaction and service excellence requires that employees always project a friendly and agreeable exterior despite their true emotional feelings (Han et al., 2020). The essence of emotional dissonance that is manifested by surface acting is the critical problem in that it is a contradiction between the emotions that are felt and the ones displayed. The fact that surface acting has a practical objective of ensuring that the employees maintain a decent standard of professionalism and politeness in customer relations is at the same time a major source of problems and disadvantages (Hadadian & Sayadpour, 2018). A long time of surface acting on a job manifests in emotional exhaustion whereby employees cover or fake emotions to meet the job requirements. This constant emotional regulation requires a great deal of psychological effort and effort that can easily result in work-related stress or burnout.

The incongruence between the depicted emotion and actual feeling may create a feeling of artificiality, which triggers dissatisfaction and the lack of commitment to the job. This, in the process, influences work relations hence might reduce real teamwork and collaboration. Moreover, when employees are frequently surface-acting the latter is likely to unwittingly affect the quality of service, for interactions become mechanically transactional instead of truly empathetic. This

research assesses the surface acting that is in play in the telecommunications industry in an effort to draw attention to the challenges that are associated with such a practice and the implications that are broader than the surface acting (Grandey et al., 2019). Knowing the sorts and gravity of surface acting can help us find ways to reduce the negative impact that surface acting has on employees and, in turn, the overall quality of customer service. Addressing this problem is not only important to increase the employee satisfaction and well-being but also to sustain the high level of customer engagement which is essential in a competitive telecommunication market.

1.2 Research Question

What role do voice behaviors and company policies play in mediating the effects of surface acting on the well-being of employees in the telecommunications sector?

How does surface acting relate to employee well-being in the telecommunications field?

How does surface acting influence workplace behaviors such as task performance and engagement in negative gossip among telecommunications employees?

How can immediate supervisors within telecommunications companies effectively address and mitigate the negative impacts of surface acting among their teams?

1.3 Research Objectives

To examine the impact of surface acting on psychological and emotional wellbeing of employees in Telecom sector of Pakistan.

To examine the impact of surface acting on work behaviours such as performance and workplace gossips.

To examine the role of voice mechanisms at work towards the employees' experiences of emotional labor and surface acting.

The research was conducted at PTCL, which is one of the leading and national telecommunication service provider in Pakistan. The firm's status as the leading air passenger carrier in the world is evident because its representatives in customer service have diverse client base. These customer service representatives therefore do emotional labor (Grandey & Sayre 2019). PTCL's strong industry presence, and the fact that organization's still uses services based on human interaction demonstrates an interesting opportunity to dig in to the sometimes hidden world of emotional

labor, especially within an industry that is one the cutting edge of technological innovation, making the topic both practical and relevant. Among others, this is of high importance, for with the current gradual shift coming towards technological advance and market customer-behavior, an acute perception of the emotional role could be gathered in the business that could be highly demanding of emotional labor in such a dynamic sector. Besides, filling in this research hole is another crucial element that needs to be emphasized. Instead, the books which studied emotional labor do not give the detailed picture of this in a fast evolving environment of the telecommunication industry in Pakistan. The purpose of this research is to bridge this gap and present the myriad forms of emotional labor in PTCL as a basis for learning which could be applied to other similar contexts in telecommunications sector.

1.4 Research Gaps

Emotional labor and the voice at work are one of the main factors that have a direct impact on the employees in an organisation. Employee's mental and physical health is affected by surface acting, negative work place behaviors and gossips. These things impact the wellness of the workers as well. The other area that this research is set to cover is the various aspects of continuous surface acting in PTCL and its effects. However, there are still limitations in this research. Although the general consequences of emotional labor and voice at work are well established, there is a need for studies focusing on the telecommunications sector, particularly in regions such as Pakistan. This research seeks to address this gap by exploring these dynamics in PTCL, one of the leading telecommunications company in this industry. Many current studies present a general picture of emotional labor and voice at work with little discussion of the interaction between these factors and other control variables like negative work place behaviors and employee work relationships (Ripatti, 2021). This research investigates how these variables mediate the relationship between emotional labor/surface acting, voice at work, and employee well-being in PTCL. To investigate their effects on employee well-being, more studies need to be done to integrate theoretical frameworks from emotional labor and voice at work. This research aims to combine these frameworks, giving a comprehensive analysis of the relationship and impact of these frameworks in PTCL.

The negative consequences of emotional labor, such as burnout and job dissatisfaction, are often highlighted, but there is less focus on how positive organizational practices can reduce these effects. This research seeks to identify and recommend such practices about PTCL. The literature tends to treat voice at work as a homogeneous concept only after adequately researching the variations and different forms it can take (Reynolds Kueny et al., 2020). This research will focus on the various voices at work in PTCL and their relationship with employee satisfaction and engagement. This research will build on the current knowledge base by filling these gaps to offer fresh insights focused on the telecommunications sector and PTCL. It also presents the practical implications that can be used to enhance the employee's wellbeing and organizational effectiveness in PTCL that support the purpose of the research to improve workplace practices.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

In this research's literature review, it is analyzed how emotional labor, voice at work and control variables such as gender and the working environment are complicated. Its purpose is twofold: to map the current landscape of the academic field around these topics and then to locate how they appear in the setting of PTCL. This research is important because PTCL's industry, characterized by rapid technological innovation and changing consumer preferences, provides a rare setting where these constructs operate. As part of customer service work, emotional labor is analyzed for its effect on employee health and work performance (Fisher & Noble, 2021). The intricate behaviors of surface and deep acting, which employees adapt to work-related pressures, are discussed concerning PTCL's operational context. Voice at work is discussed in terms of its impact on organizational culture and employee empowerment, especially how it defines and is defined by the PTCL management strategies. The review recognizes the role of gender and the broader work environment as critical factors that can influence emotional labor and the manifestation of voice at work. By mapping this terrain, the literature review establishes a sturdy base that the research can use to advance its goals: to identify insights unique to the telecommunications sector and add to the general discussion on employee experiences in dynamic service industries.

2.1 Well-being at Work:

Worker's wellbeing is a wholeness of physical, emotional and psychological dimensions all of which are important aspects in overall health and performance of the employees in the work setting (Everly Jr et al., 2019). Physical well-being is related to the lack of hazardous conditions and presence of practices that advance the physical condition of employees. This comprises ergonomics, work environment security, and amenities relating to health (Wan Mohd Yunus et al., 2021). Emotional wellbeing is the last and related to how people feel in terms of their work, job satisfaction as part of it. It also embraces positive sentiments that entail contentment, happiness as along with not much tension or negative cadres of emotions such as dread and irritation (Wepfer et al., 2018). Apart from the psychological well-being, there can be elements including autonomy, competence and relatedness in workplace. It represents an employee's feeling of meaning, accomplishment, and development that he or she derives from work. These dimensions of well-being are most evident in the telecommunications industry mainly because of the high-stress and fast-paced nature of the work done (Diefendorff et al., 2019). The employees are under pressure

of working in rapidly changing environment and customer-centric models causing concerns not only on their professional performance but also on their personal life. A number of features within the work environment can play a major role in shaping these dimensions of well-being. Some of these aspects are organizational culture, leadership culture, job requirements, work-life balance, and access to learning and development (Lee 2019). The telecommunications industry experiences high speed technological change, which can enrich or undermine employee well-being due to high customer interaction. Considering and dealing with these issues is essential to creating a healthy working environment that is conducive to productivity and ensuring an adaptive, invested labor force.

2.2 Concept of Surface Acting

The concept of surface acting is one of the most important aspects of emotional labor paradigm and refers to an individual's attempt to project emotions that are not held in reality and, thus, to put on a face that is required by the workplace (Di Stefano & Gaudiino, 2018). In contradiction to deep acting that entails a conjunction of an individual's internal feelings with their expressions, surface acting conceptualizes a discrepancy between felt and demonstrated feelings. A kind of emotional labor is widely used in the field of customer relations where employees have to stay polite no matter what mood they are in. For this reason, in the field of telecommunications, which is very much related to the flow of interactions with customers, surface acting becomes a common practice. Patience, positivity, and empathy are some of the qualities which are needed to represent a person even in the most difficult and stressful situation (Brueller et al., 2020). The psychological procedures that come with the direct activation technique are likewise demanding as they involve a considerable amount of suppression of emotional processes. Either the constant assumption of covering or to pretend. If the occasion were to be right, those attempts, sooner or later, will result in continuous emotional exhaustion building up for years, emotionally overloaded states and a low job satisfaction (Deery et al., 2002). On the flipside the due diligence is the surface acting which repeatedly takes place in the customer service industry, most notably in telecommunications where there is dynamism and the customer is at the center of everything. This emphasizes the research which needs to be carried out on the impact of surface acting (Bertrams, 2021). As a result, the knowledge of distinguishing an active versus a deep performer may be of a great value aimed at

development of those strategies promoting the sphere of employee well-being and developing the links of kind and empathetic regard between the customers and employees.

2.3 Emotional Labor and Its Impact in the Customer Service Department of PTCL

In the case of PTCL, customer service department is the most critical and decisive factor in how the connection with customers is perceived and the way emotional labor should be performed in the telecoms sector. This department in return, as the first point of the communication with the clients, greatly affects the own image and the level of the service provided. According to recent studies by Magdeny et al. (2019) and Kahn (2019), emotional work done by both customer service professionals and clients, is centered on the norms of the professional environment and managing the complexities of the emotional interactions. Surface acting, which involves supervisors masking their outward emotional expression, because their inner feelings do not correspond to the outward expression, is particularly required in this situation. Such emotional labor dilemmas can be the aspect for managers and thus, needs a robust intervention and supportive systems to mitigate it. Such initiatives should not only aim for exceptions but also to consider the overall mood of the employees. As the customers response to the CSR directly affects the mood of the employee. The strategic integration of voice mechanisms, as suggested by Juetal (2019), in customer service protocols can facilitate a more authentic and empathetic communication approach, thereby enhancing both employee satisfaction and customer experience.

2.4 Historical Context and Evolution of PTCL

PTCL is the national telecommunication organization of Pakistan and the backbone of Pakistan's telecom infrastructure. PTCL was set up in 1952, a few years after the attainment of independence by Pakistan in 1947, as a branch of telephone and telegraph. In the recent decades, the entity has emerged as the most powerful integrated ICT Company in Pakistan. PTCL's privatization and change from a government-managed enterprise into a competitor in the telecommunication market illustrates a significant development in Pakistan's history. This process was, made even faster by starting the telecommunication in Pakistan in January 2003. This implied that PTCL was no longer a monopoly because the sector was now operational and therefore open to other players and competition, which meant that competition pushed PTCL to innovativeness and better service delivery (Bargsted et al., 2019). Among the most important occurrences in the history of PTCL was the year 2005 where the Government of Pakistan sold 26% stake and management control and

Etisalat, Abu Dhabi Company. This privatization was opposed and the protests across the country were witnessed by the PTCL workers which led to the breakdown of the company and the intervention of military to restore smooth running of the company. In the end, an agreement concluded that a wage increase was to be given to the employees.

From the telephony products, PTCL has diversified its products to carry out modern ICT solutions. It has established subsidiary mobile and data companies such as Ufone, and has been part of major submarine communication cable networks with Pakistan becoming globally connected. In order to address the challenges, PTCL has continued to invest in its infrastructure as it rolls out services such as high-speed broadband Internet coverage in thousands of cities and the introduction of digital TV services (Anwar et al., 2019). They have also been able to conduct successful trials of advanced technologies like 5G, and thus they are a front runner in the telecommunication innovation in Pakistan. Telenor Pakistan purchase in late 2023 is a big step by PTCL, which will ensure that the company is able to broaden their presence and improve its services in the telecommunication sector. It is with every tactical move that PTCL is the indispensable player in the development of Pakistan's communication environment, answering to the ever-changing technological and market trends (ANAÇ & ÖZYER, 2021). The evolution of PTCL is the history of a company that has grown along with the country, constantly aiming to unite and modernize while dealing with the challenges of a dynamic and competitive market.

2.5 Emotional Labor: Conceptual Framework

Sociologist Arlie Hochschild coined emotional labor in her 1983 book "The Managed Heart." Emotional labor refers to controlling one's emotions to meet the emotional demands of a job. It refers to controlling one's facial expressions and emotions to conform to organizational or occupational standards. Particularly, emotional labor is quite significant in customer or client-based roles, where there is a requirement to emanate emotions that are not reflective of what is inside. Surface acting involves changing the outer appearance of emotion without altering the content of the emotions—pantomiming (Altunoğlu et al., 2019). For instance, a customer service agent might put on an insincere smile while remaining courteous to a difficult client even if they may be feeling irritated or enraged. CSR's have to face the burden of challenging customer interactions (Grandey et al., 2004). Deep acting, on the other hand, takes it a notch higher since it entails making an individual try his or her level best to try and feel the emotions he or she wants

to show. This may, for example, refer to sympathy towards a customer's predicament other than just being sympathetic. Emotional labour in the customer service roles in PTCL cannot be disputed in any way. The employees in PTCL are the face of the company and its responsibility is to maintain a demeanor that is consistent with the dedication of the latter to deliver service excellence in situations that are stressful or tricky. They not only have to be answerable for the technical aspects but also have to listen to the frustrations of annoyed customers (Wang et al., 2011). This level and type of emotional labor effectiveness can have a considerable impact on the customer satisfaction, employee welfare, and organizational productivity.

Employees especially in customer service departments in PTCL, and in many telecommunications companies, are necessarily kept below surface by the requirements to follow pre-written scripts and remain calm in response to complaints or service issues. The ones able to deep acting may find more inner satisfaction in their roles, for reducing the pressure of emotional incongruence, because the authentic feelings are congruent with behavior. Emotional labor takes on special significance when discussing PTCL, which continues to grow in a competitive market. Because of the transformation from a government-controlled monopoly to a market driven organization PTCL has since become the need for quality customer service. The retaining ability of the organization to train and support its employees in the sophisticated skills of Emotional Labor is critical to its long-term success. It signifies broad industry patterns in which a customer experience is considered a major competitive advantage (Jiang & Chen, 2018). Emotional labor is the concept that can provide a framework for the interpretation of the employee-customer interactions in the context of PTCL. It highlights the invisible but essential work that supports in the formation of a favorable customer's experience and a good environment for work. Understanding and managing emotional labor is important as it can result in positive outcomes for both the employees and the organization, and therefore, it is an important area of emphasis for PTCL's operational strategies.

2.6 Voice at Work

Voice at Work is the manner through which workers voice their opinion to the employer and can influence the issues concerning them in the workplace. It includes individual and group channels whereby employees can voice their opinions, concerns, and suggestions, influencing decisions within the workplace (Dosono & Semaan, 2019). A good voice leads to trust-building, innovativeness, productivity, and organizational development. When employees feel their voice is

heard, they feel more satisfied about their jobs and more powerful in the company. The link between management practices and employee voice is essential. Managers are central in encouraging employees to voice out and share their views (Jeung et al., 2018). The voice should be characterized by complementary channels and leaders who listen and act on employee feedback to be effective (Taris & de Jonge, 2024). The contemporary workplaces, including in the case of PTCL, can also involve a range of participation including direct participation, when workers make decisions autonomously, and representative participation, in the form of trade union or non-union representatives negotiating with management on behalf of employees.

Voice policies have a remarkable influence on employee satisfaction and performance. With the employees being given the ability to share their thoughts and opinions, they play a part in the creation of a conducive environment where they are engaged, productive, and inventive (Keller et al., 2020). They are also likely to be dedicated to the institution, which is why the turnover rates are lower and the company culture is favorable. Companies such as PTCL can benefit greatly from creating a culture where employee voice is respected, leading to many positive organizational changes. All employees at all levels must be able to contribute their perspectives and expertise as the company navigates competitive markets if continuous improvement and adaptation are to be achieved. This development towards personal voice channels like one-to-one contacts between employees and managers to replace the collective bargaining process. This change is reflected in contemporary organizations and can be traced back to the new forms of Work communicated via remote and digital tools that provide new opportunities for employee voice (Hwang et al., 2021). "Voice at Work" is about speaking out and establishing a culture in which such behavior is the norm, is valued, and becomes part of the decision-making process. In the case of PTCL, this implies building and sustaining communication networks that ensure that the employees' voice is heard and responded to, thus contributing to the well-being and success of the firm. This will necessitate continual efforts from the management to facilitate and foster employee communication that is in line with the operational objectives of PTCL and its employees and employee's well-being.

2.7 Manager-to-Employee Relations

Manager-to-employee relations dynamics hold an important position in determining the workplace culture; they can be referred to the emotional labor and employee well-being. These relationships

are basic for the creation of the environment in the workplace and therefore influence various aspects of mutual relations such as satisfaction with the job, motivation, and mental health of people (Ioana, 2020). Surface acting is a dangerous behavior that needs to be minimized by proper managerial support to do so. Managers who are sensitive enough to listen to and acknowledge emotions can foster a safe and comfortable workplace in which employees are appreciated and appreciated. This, indeed, is especially critical in occupations where there is a high level of emotional work, like telecommunications customer service. Surface acting can be reduced through the provision of adequate resources, emotional intelligence training and support to these managers (Wilk, S.L., & Moynihan, L. M. 2005).

Bad manager to employee relationships which have been identified are caused by poor communication, lack of trust, absence of true employee evaluation. Which results in lack of harmony (Pan & Lin, 2018).

Other important aspects include communication style (Kahn, 2019). Trust and free-flowing communication with managers can be developed by being open and honest and consistent in their communication. Employees should not fear expressing challenges and concerns when they know that management will not meet any consequences on them. This form of communication promotes the appearance of more genuine expression of emotions, which creates possible situation when surface acting can be eliminated. Work environments that advocate for employees' well-being and encourage a healthy balance between work and life are also beneficial because they emphasize the value of employees' health and well-being (Hadadian & Sayadpour, 2018). Emotional labor cannot be respected and valued without leaders who demonstrate emotional intelligence by showing real concern for their team's well-being and by setting a tone for the organization that respects and values emotional labor. To conclude, manager-to-employee relations, which can be described as an expression of supportive, communicative, and emotionally sensitive leadership, can greatly influence the amount of emotional labor employed in the workplace and thus contribute to employee well-being.

2.8 Interplay between Emotional Labor, Voice, and Well-being

Emotional labor and voice at work have an impact that influences the well-being of workers. Emotional work, and especially surface acting, which involves no correspondence between the inner feelings of employees and their external manifestations, leads to an energy deficit and

exhaustion, and as a consequence, to dissatisfaction with the work (Wang et al., 2019). On the other hand, deep acting has been positively related with voice behaviors (Oz, M., Saygin, M., & Adan-Bayad, O. 2020). Deep acting has a positive impact, because it brings inner emotions to the real action, and this leads to job satisfaction. From the perspective of PTCL workforce, this implies that creating an environment that fosters deep acting, whereby employees' emotional state fits their behaviors, may lead to an increase in well-being and job satisfaction. The voice at work that is perceived as legitimate through meaningful involvement can turn emotional labor into a process of resources accumulation that is based on employees' recognition value. Their views are heard, hence they could invest a lot of time in the organization and also show proactive behaviors. When in an organization the employees feel that they can float their ideas without any hesitation i.e. when their voices are heard, their concerns are addressed, they may experience greater job satisfaction and psychological safety, reducing the need for surface acting (Chamberlin et al., 2018). Policies could be developed that recognize the emotional nature of work, foster EI development, and provide mechanisms for authentic employee feedback that PTCL could adopt (Tiwari et al., 2020). This kind of approach can lead to an engaged workforce in which employees feel like theirs and they have the same mission as the organization so their performance will impact on the participants and the organizations itself.

2.9 Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework of this research is based on the concepts of emotional labor and voice at workplace, which are used to investigate the impact of the two concepts on employee well-being. According to Hochschild, emotional labor is the process of controlling emotions based on organizational demands by assessing surface acting and deep acting. While being crucial in customer-oriented roles of the likes in PTCL, these principles might have varied results on the welfare of the employees (Singh, 2022). The deep acting is more efficient because it requires real emotions and the organizations norms, which leads to higher job satisfaction, while surface acting leads to emotional exhaustion and lower job satisfaction. With respect to voice at work, the ability of employees to convey their thoughts and opinions and influence choices is imperative. The employee's psychological resources may be increased or decreased by the voice behavior that emotional labor causes, which disrupts engagement and well-being. In a work environment that takes into account the emotional elements of work and proactively encourages genuine voice

expression, the people get increased levels of job satisfaction, lower turnover, and overall better performance (Scherer et al., 2020). These ideas are embedded in developing a culture of PTCL that encourages emotional labor and employee voice. This can lead a more satisfied and engaged workforce, which will have positive consequences for the organization's development.
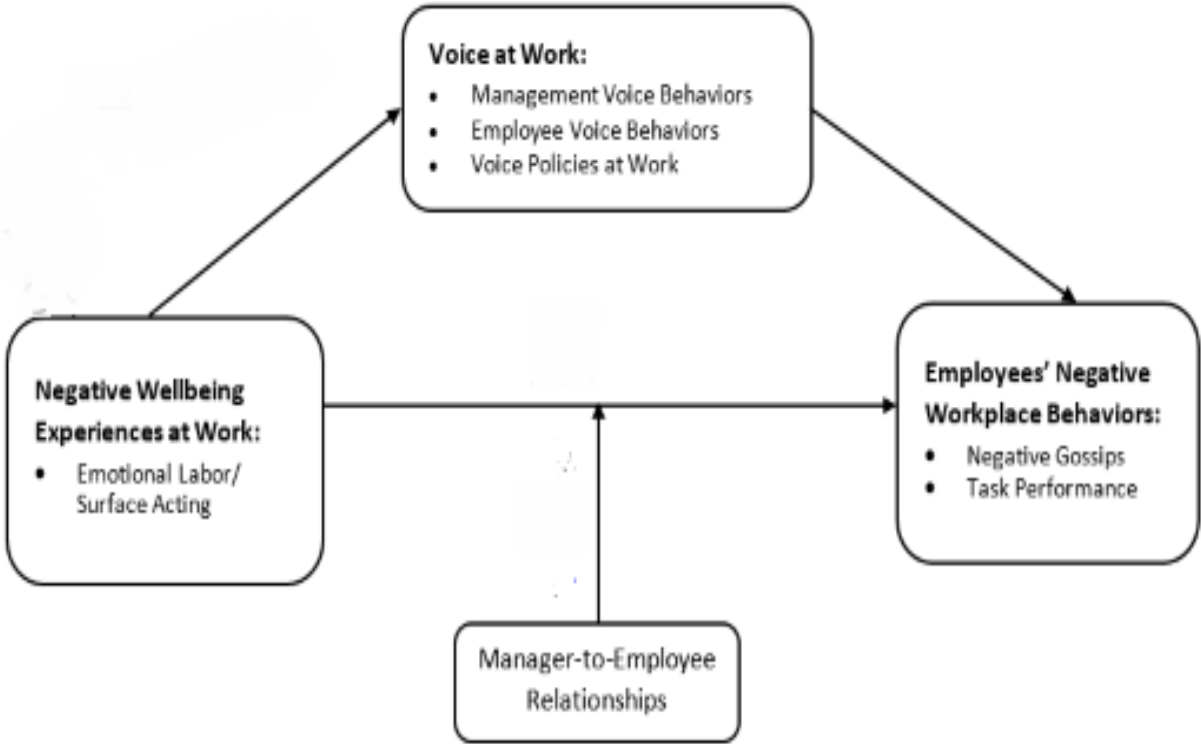

Figure 1: Theoretical Framework

Chapter 3: Methodology

The qualitative approach to the emotional labor and the voice at work is used in this research on PTCL. The method is qualitative as the data involved in-depth interviews with the PTCL employees and this allows for a deeper level analysis of the personal elements and perceptions (Rawski et al., 2022). This practice is appropriate to share the underlying mechanisms that connect the emotional aspect of an individual, the opportunity for understanding voice behaviors, and helps in knowing the wellbeing/ mental health state of an individual as a whole. The qualitative focus of this research is aimed to provide a thick description of the above discussed concepts within the limits of the PTCL organizational framework.

3.1 Research Design

The present work utilizes a qualitative research method that can be strategically inductive. In other words, theories and themes are developed by the qualitative data collected during the interviews with PTCL employees. This is one of the essential practices for the subjective qualitative exploration of the emotional labor and voice at work. It emphasizes on generating theory from the insights and trends of observations, unlike deductive research. In deductive research there is a pre-existing theoretical framework or hypothesis which is being used for driving results. While if we talk about inductive research; it is more open-ended and exploratory, allowing the researcher to construct theories or explanations based on the insights derived from the data. Such an approach is particularly effective in revealing the hidden information, often unspoken aspects of workplace dynamics, crucial in understanding the complex phenomena within PTCL's organizational structure. In qualitative research methodologies one of the most commonly used studies are Inductive studies. Such as signaling theory, social exchange theory, social information processing theory, ethnography, grounded theory, case studies and phenomenology.

We have conducted thorough interviews with which we ascertain that the research approach we have used is inductive in nature. To conduct this research, a qualitative research methodology is used because an adequate qualitative research design is a valid approach to investigate complex and multi-dimensional topics such as emotional labor and voice at work in PTCL. Thus, the qualitative research methodology that is needed to conduct a thorough analysis of human emotions, interpersonal relations, and organizational climate is the use of qualitative research as the research

of subjective experiences and deep analysis. This is also a good way of understanding the multi-dimensionality of emotional labour. In contrast, such types of labor can be detected in attitude and feeling research where the qualitative studies are required (Rasul & Masood, 2022). The qualitative framework allows for a more creative approach to PTCL employees' experiences and at the same time aims to offer an understanding that the quantitative methods may not be able to achieve as easily. It contributes to obtaining qualitative and detailed information, which may cast light upon the peculiarities and differences in terms of emotional work, voicing or complaining at work. The use of a qualitative approach can be justified with the fact that it is possible to discuss the social world from an insider's point of view, which makes it possible to interpret the hidden, often invisible aspects of emotional labor and communication in PTCL (O'Farrell et al., 2021). This methodological choice is crucial in uncovering the details and the individual stories hidden below the bigger patterns and themes that are relevant to the research's objectives.

3.2 Participant Selection

In the research working environment of PTCL, the respondent selection was well packaged to reflect the different experiences in the organization. Diversity of department, role and experience, was a major factor in the selection of interviewees. A variety of perspectives were covered through the respondents' selection from important fields, for instance, Customer Service, Marketing, HR, IT, and Sales. The participant characteristics was also heterogeneous in the gender and age dimension as well as in terms of experience within the organization. This heterogeneity was helpful in that it was an effort to paint a broader picture of the culture of work, through the lenses of on-boarders and vets. The participants in the research spanned a wide range of positions within PTCL, including not just managerial roles but also non-managerial employees at various levels. This diverse group encompassed individuals from entry-level positions through to middle management and more senior roles, ensuring a comprehensive perspective on the workplace dynamics and emotional labor experienced across different hierarchical levels. The professional status and the working experience gap made it possible to discuss the 'intricacy of emotional labour and its influence on the interaction process between employees of different positions in the professional pyramid; with which it is possible to see how the emotional labour outlines the work sphere at PTCL.

3.3 Data Collection

In this research, a diverse group of both managerial and non-managerial PTCL employees were interviewed, with their demographics covering various departments, ages, and seniority levels. The ethics guidelines were stringently followed, and that stood for voluntary participation, comfort with questions, confidentiality, the option to withdraw, and managing the recordings as well as taking care of the privacy and wellness of the participants. As a method, there is a structural interview taken to research PTLC dynamics. A total of 15 employees were interviewed. In which there were 10 males and 5 females. They were ensured that their name will not be used anywhere, as per their privacy concern. Here, an interview questionnaire was created and it found out the employees' attitude towards emotional labor, their working environment, and their personal experience as well that was provided by PTCL. The interview questions' detailed script has been included as an appendix to this report which serve as the bases for the methodologies used in the research and is also helpful to an understanding of the context of the findings. The questions were designed in a way that the survey was emergent, which resulted into the open responses that were not biased by the themes of the research. The participants of the interview were promised of confidentiality. This was explained to them before the interview which was set to take place in a peaceful and amiable environment where people would be allowed to talk comfortably. The sessions were recorded digitally to help pursue the truth of the discussions and with members' consent (Nicklaus and Stein, 2022). In this manner, the researchers managed to record the whole voice spectrum of the participants' words and intonations. After the interview, the transcripts of the interview were produced verbatim. The transcription process was done carefully, ensuring that the details are not lost in the translation, it was necessary to maintain the true meaning that the participant intended to communicate. This step was necessary for appropriate data analysis and interpretation. All the steps in the process were confidential. All respondents were promised confidentiality, and personal names were erased or modified in the transcripts. This approach adhered to ethical research principles and encouraged respondents to be open and honest in their recounts; respondents felt safe to share their experiences without the fear of suffering any consequences or being judged. The ethical issue was vital in making the research results and the subjects satisfactory.

3.4 Data Analysis

Thorne (2000) described data analysis as one of the critical and difficult phase of qualitative research, and one that receives less discussion in the literature. Data analysis conducted in a systematic approach can be transparently communicated to others (Malterud, 2001; Sandelowski, 1995). Qualitative researchers often neglect a detailed description of how analysis is conducted within published research reports (Attride-Stirling, 2001; Tuckett, 2005); however, many have argued that researchers need to be clear about what they are doing, why they are doing it, and include a clear description of analysis methods (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Malterud, 2001; Thorne, 2000). The analysis technique used for this research was "manual thematic coding" as done by previous studies such as Galdas Cheater, & Marshall (2005), Lunny et al., (2015), Riessman (2008), and Tuckett (2005). The thematic analysis involved a careful interpretation of the data including steps such as transcription, sense-making (reading and re-reading), categorization and making patterns out of emerging themes, outcome, and linking it with the theory.

The decision to use thematic analysis as a methodology for the data analysis chosen for the PTCL research was based on the fact that this method is particularly well-suited for locating, analyzing and reporting patterns (themes) within data. This technique is, in essence, a close reading of the interviews that have already been transcribed to have a rough idea about the scope and details of the content. This was an iterative and inductive form of thematic analysis, with themes developed from the data, but controlled, modified and refined throughout the process of analysis. This thematic analysis helped us in theme identification and identifying thematic patterns. These themes were not only common topics but hidden messages or subtexts that it was necessary to understand the emotional labor, voice at work, and PTCL's well-being (Martínez-Tur, 2020). Detailed analysis and classification of all the themes to match their meanings in the sense that they reflected the data that were expressed in the statements provided.

This thematic analysis helped in ensuring that the investigator had a lot of knowledge of information, which led to the creation of a complex and deep interpretation of the employees' experiences with PTCL (Mazzetti et al., 2023). This was the final phase in which a report was prepared, whereby findings obtained were organized and presented in a logical and educational manner. This analysis contributed to the linkage between the identified themes and the research questions and aims; moreover, it helped to understand the subjective elements of emotional labor,

voice at work, and well-being in the organizational setting of PTCL. Interview qualitative data were assigned to an extremely stringent thematic analysis to ensure a valid and reliable interpretation was achieved.

Chapter 4: Result and Findings

The dynamic world of telecommunications, particularly in the context of PTCL, reveals that factors like surface acting, emotional labor and the role of voice mechanisms significantly influence the development of a productive organizational culture. These elements, essential to our research objectives, help to understand the psychological and emotional wellbeing of employees, impact on the performance and workplace dynamics, including gossips, and determine the efficiency of voice mechanisms in navigating emotional labor. While organizational work environment might play a role in shaping these aspects, it serves as a secondary, supportive dimension in our discussion rather than a primary focus. This case takes a look into the complex dynamics of the factors that influence employee well-being in PTCL which is one of the leading service provider of telecommunication in Pakistan. We have focused on four core themes: gender favoritism, emotional labor and surface acting, voice mechanisms and employee interactions. First, this research tries to unravel the interconnection between surface acting and employees' well-being based on the stories of PTCL employees from different departments who have experienced it, and how it relates to the practices within the workplace, the organization, and how it is managed.

4.1 Theme 1: Gender Favoritism

Gender favoritism is an issue which requires careful examination within the organisational context. It is not limited to biased treatment, unequal opportunities and difference in expectations based on gender. This can be observed in the context of PTCL with respect to career opportunities and other soft corners they get on being a female.

On few instances during the interviews, it was revealed that certain employees received preferential treatment and access to career opportunities based on their gender. And not on their experience and educational background. This favoritism often leads to better promotion aspects, access to trainings programs and others. Moreover, this gender favoritism also impacts the decision making process especially in the matters liked performance evaluations, project allocations and job assignments. In the sphere of gender favoritism at PTCL, Respondent 1 from Marketing provided an insightful perspective. He presented the gender distribution of roles in terms of predominance of one gender in certain positions. He also addressed the influence of gender on the arising of professional opportunities and the perception of performance at the workplace. He told:

''I wanted to diversify my experience and applied to transfer to another department, along with other candidates. I believed I was the most qualified candidate for that position, given my experience and educational background. However, when the results were announced, I wasn't selected. Instead, a new female hire was chosen for the opportunity. The person responsible for hiring decided to place her in his department.'' (Respondent 1)

A female respondent from IT gave her opinion on gender bias towards women; more specifically, this speaker elaborated on the difficulties that women had to face in the mostly male-dominated workplace environment. She discussed topics of concern with regard to work and family harmony, especially for women who are responsible for family. She provided insight on issues to do with equal opportunities in the workplace, progress in career, and the general treatment of male and female colleagues in her department. She followed with an example such as:

''During our annual closing, we had to work late at the office, and I was the only female in the team. Given the security concerns in the country, it wasn't feasible for me to travel home late, so I suggested maximizing our productivity during regular working hours. In our society, women also have responsibilities at home. Amidst this situation, I experienced headaches and my family even suggested that I should consider leaving the job.'' (Respondent 2)

It was a concern from one of the respondents that the other gender often gets the soft corners at workplace as he mentioned that:

"I was one of the persons who would always show up on time and never asked for any holidays, but one odd day i wanted a leave and it was closing going on. Which I knew was very important but I was refused for the holiday because one of the female member was also ill the same day and she was given with the holiday instead of me." (Respondent 3)

These type of behaviours at workplace creates dissatisfaction (Smith, J. D., & Johnson, K. L. 2020). Tackling gender bias at PTCL demands a comprehensive strategy that involves revising policies, transforming cultural attitudes, and initiating proactive measures. Instituting and rigorously upholding transparent and impartial human resource policies and practices is vital to guarantee equitable treatment and prospects for employees of all genders. Moreover, cultivating an inclusive and supportive organizational environment that appreciates diversity and gender

equality is pivotal in confronting and eradicating deeply rooted prejudices and stereotypical notions.

4.2 Theme 2: Emotional Labor and Surface Acting

Respondent 3 as a CSR went into the details regarding the difficulties of surface acting in his job role. He elaborated on the requirement that, regardless of the actual feelings, he should demonstrate certain emotions frequently when working with customers. This aspect of the job is not easy for the employee and his insights highlight the emotional burden that this side of the job can entail. This merely reiterates the need for a high level of emotional intelligence in customer-facing roles.

He further added:

"I was dealing a customer whose complaint was not being getting resolved due to public holidays and it took a bit longer than the usual, the customer literally abused me getting too personal. In this situation I wished I could literally beat him to death but due to the limitations of the job. I had to do surface acting and suppress my emotions. Which then ended up a dispute with my wife, later in the evening as well." (Respondent 3)

From the Marketing department, Respondent 4 went into detail about the importance of always staying positive no matter the circumstances, be they associated with one's personal life or professional life. One of the key points of his discussion is the importance of surface acting for marketing specialists to ensure that a desirable brand image is created even though this may come at the cost of their personal well-being and authenticity regarding work. For instance, When Respondent 4 and their entire team went on a branding/marketing campaign for their brand to a university, they had to answer even to the things which were not related to their own domain.

"During Q and A session at a university, someone asked aren't you guys ashamed of the quality of service you guys provide, being the only national company? It was an embarrassing moment for me and the entire marketing team which had nothing to do with it but their technical team who drives the technical part." (Respondent 4)

4.3 Theme 3: Employee Interaction and Workplace Relationships

Emotional labor and surface acting are critical parts of employee's interactions within PTCL. Dynamics of employee relationship do influence these both components. Their impact can shape

both positively and negatively. Determining the culture of the organization and influencing individual well-being. Positive influence is not limited to employee supportive relationships, trust factors, mentorship, culture etc. While negative influence contain unsupportive work environment, lack of emotional support and other factors as well. Quality and nature of relationships influence and determine the impact on emotional labour and surface acting. If there will be positive and supportive work environment, it will foster creativity, genuine emotional expressions. While if there will be negative work environment it will lead to emotional labour and increased surface acting.

In the HR department, Respondent 5 talked about the dynamics of internal interpersonal relations. She discussed the communication dynamics within and across her team. She said they need clear and transparent communication in HR related issues. On the same note, she mentioned the part that HR played in fostering healthy employee relations and conflict resolution and the privileged position that the department enjoyed in the middle of worksite disputes. She quoted the following example from her experience:

"During the appraisals process, they had to do a lot of surface acting in front of the employees. One of the employee was not performing well but due to her role she had to sugar coat the truth and tell you can improve. But she knew that the employee was about to get terminated." (Respondent 5)

Respondent 6, who was an IT Specialist, discussed his views on teaming and communication with the technical team. He highlighted the importance of departmental respect for profession and the importance of teamwork. He also observed that the nature of IT work demands the need for efficient teamwork and problem-solving, which plays an important role in creating a proactive work environment. For instance, he quoted:

"The employees who have good relations with the IT team, their work gets solved on priority instead of the ones who don't. Even the ones who don't have good relations submitted their issue before others. It should not be like this, as IT is there to solve the problems and it should be the department where everyone is treated equally."(Respondent 6)

4.4 Theme 4: Voice at Work and Manager-Employee Relationships

Voice at work is defined as the expression of employee's opinions, concerns and ideas regarding the work related issues. Whose primary focus is to bring a positive change or for the betterment of the organization. It has several benefits which are not limited to the problem identification, performance and productivity enhancement, employee engagement etc. During the interview process, respondent 7 told us one of his experiences as a CSR:

"*I was responsible for handling the customer complaints and suggestions. I was observing a continuous issue in billing process of the company which was frustrating the customers. Despite knowing it and telling the upper management about it, I hesitated voicing my concerns in team meetings, because I felt intimidated by the manager, who often used to dismiss the suggestions from the juniors. (Respondent 7)*

As his concerns were being overlooked, it lead to persistent customer dissatisfaction and an escalating workload for the customer service representative (CSR) team. As time passed, he grew increasingly exasperated with his manager's indifferent stance and the absence of avenues to voice his thoughts and apprehensions. Consequently, he began to experience a sense of disengagement and diminishing motivation in his professional endeavors, resulting in a decline in productivity and job satisfaction levels.

Respondent 7 shared a specific incident:

"Once the leader himself was the victim of volatility, as he demonstrated his emotions and unintentionally discharged aggression on us, his team." Here, the fact that communication is not necessarily connected to voice at work, yet still underlines the importance of fair and efficient feedback does reveal this. It illustrates how employee dialogue becomes essential for the correction of such scenarios in workplace environment. The capability to bring those issues to the surface and voice them for the sake is the key element of any healthy work community." (Respondent 7)

Respondent 8, the head of sales, who told us about the different channels of communication between staff and management, in the sales department. He highlights the importance of communication for strategic planning and understanding issues that employees may face to eventually improve team performance and morale. He further added:

"In our department we have to decide targets after discussing and through trial and error process. But once in a particular month they all were given with abnormal target from their manager which was not achievable. One of the employees tried to say it was very tough considering the current market dynamics but his concern was addressed quite aggressively from the manager. Due to which none of the remaining had the courage to speak up and we had to agree to it. That target didn't get achieved and employees didn't get the commission on it as well. Which caused demotivation among the whole team." (Respondent 8)

Chapter 5: Discussion

Our research within PTCL's telecommunications context unearthed significant findings revolving around the primary themes of surface acting, emotional labor , voice mechanisms , gossips, employee interactions and manager-employee relationships. Each of these themes offers critical insights into the organizational dynamics and the well-being of employees. *Gender Bias:* the research highlighted how gender roles influenced job allocations and career advancements, affecting workplace satisfaction. This finding points to a systemic issue where underlying biases shape the professional landscape, impacting both opportunities and the work-life balance, especially for female employees. *Emotional Labor and Surface Acting* to our research, this theme revealed how employees manage their emotions to conform to job demands. A departmental extent of surface acting across the organization proved its major effect on employee welfare. We feel it is necessary, but our results do indicate that a professional facade can be quite draining and even the mood in the workplace can suffer. The business relationships turned out to be a significant element affecting the way the workplace was perceived. Employees who collaborate on problem resolving and communicate effectively in the work team are encouraged to feel fulfilled in their work which in turn leads to increased productivity. By the way, this can show miscomprehension or disruption of the process resulting in inefficiency. The theme of *Voice and Manager-Employee relationship* would therefore showcase the relevance of employee voice in shaping their work life. Having a voice and the capability to raise issues and concerns is closely related to job satisfaction and morale. On the other side, when the feedback of the workers was not heard, it produced frustration and disengagement.

From our inductive studies, we found the Social Exchange Theory most the accurately explanation of our outcomes. Thus, this concept can underline the processes viewed in the PTCL. The difference in gender roles which is imbalance and opportunities is regarded as a break of reciprocal social contract that results in the decline of job satisfaction of engagement among the female staffs. Through the lack of fair chances, the organization no longer lives up to its deal by which it exchanges this for the service of an employee, hence disheartened and puts this person at a higher risk of quitting. Social Exchange Theory by Merritt can help to define emotional labor as the 'investment' by the employees. Eventually, this imbalance in the social exchange causes to social dissatisfaction and, in worse case, emotional exhaustion which means that the benefits from social

investment are unjust. Positive communication between employees and between them and management benefits team member's ability to help and accept each other and respect and understand them. This sort of engagement develops a generally contented workforce and a common social identity. Thus, organizations obtain a competitive advantage. The possibility that workers may express their certain matters and see them to be done leads to the construction of a positive social exchange. It builds mutual confidence and devotion towards the organization which diminish when exchanges are excluded contrary to the increased morale and engagement. The current research carried out within PTCL environment explored meaningful themes that seemed to be associated with Social Exchange Theory. This just reinforces that no type of imitations between organization and employees are of great importance especially in handling emotional labor, gender bias, building positive work environments, and effective communication. PTCL could bring about an era of equitable, fulfilling and productive workplaces by unionizing organization's practices of social exchange, creating an example that the telecommunication sector must follow in working on employee-oriented interests.

Emerging Theory:

In this research there were different emerging theories which we observed after interviewing the respondents. As per signaling theory individuals engage in strategic behaviors to convey specific signals or messages to others (Karasek, R., & Bryant, P. C. 2012).. In our research, participant's expressions of emotional labor and voice at work served as signals to their colleagues or supervisors, influencing perceptions and interactions within the organizational setting. Social information processing theory suggests that individuals interpret and respond to social cues within their environment, shaping their attitudes and behaviors (Bucy, E. P., & Newhagen, J. E. 1999). This theory shows how PTCL employees process and utilize social information, such as feedback or support, in their interactions with others. Moreover, social exchange theory suggests that how individuals engage in relationships where the exchange of resources like recognition, word of mouth, or support influences their behaviours and attitudes (Cropanzano, R., & Mitchell, M. S.2005).

All these theories correspond in here. The dominant theory was social exchange theory. As the employees were greatly influenced by their surroundings and work environment. While other two were the emergent themes in this research.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

This research was meant to measure some goals in the telecom sector, highlighting organization PTCL in Pakistan. With the help from our research, the connection between surface acting and the psychological health of employees can be seen in great detail. Tendency towards surface acting as a response to certain situations was strongly portrayed. As well as its impact on stress and job dissatisfaction. The highlights of the research show the straight connection between surface acting and the performance of the tasks as well as harmful gossip. The surface acting showed that it could cause a deficiency in tasks and even worsen the interactions between the coworkers. This research determined that voice mechanisms and employee policies are the main contributors in surface acting and employee well-being. It was found that the companies which had channels for employee's feedback and response management showed better employee satisfaction and greater productivity among them. It also enables employees to positively react to surface acting and so it can help mitigate the negative effects. We successfully mapped the intricate relationship between surface acting, employee well-being, and organizational dynamics, providing valuable insights and aligning closely with our initial research objectives. This conclusion underscores the importance of addressing the nuanced aspects of emotional labor in the telecommunications industry to foster a healthier and more productive work environment. The aim of this research is to carry out a thorough analysis of the subject on emotional labor in PTCL. To be able to know emotional labor in all its dimensions and its impact on the employee's welfare. In essence, understanding how emotional labour affects the work environment particularly. As this is the research in the telecommunications sector was our key objective. Through detailed interviews of PTCL human resources, we traced the issues of emotional labour, its impact, and coping strategies applied by practitioners to deal with this crucial aspect of their professional life. This research is finally completed; therefore, it is necessary to concentrate on the complexity of the deduction from a complex interviewee canvas. The accounts and interpretations of the participants that we have provided are an interesting source of information that can also be used as frameworks for PTCL's strategies as well as a means to contribute to the wider discussion on emotional labour in the telecom industry. That is why this chapter completes our venture into the language and reality of the PTCL staff, revealing the delicate relationship between feelings and work and health.

The interviewees from PTCL came out with vital revelations on emotional labor and the way this practice was shaped to affect workspaces. From the data analyzed, several key themes are distinguished that show how the emotional climate, professional behavior, and the resulting well-being interact within the organization. Another theme is "Gender Relations in the Work Place" which interviewees revealed that there was gender bias that was prevalent in varying degrees across different departments. The research revealed that gender roles and expectations have a lot of influence on the responsibilities carried out at work and how the people interact at work, especially for the female employees who have to double up their professional duties and the society's expectations. The theme of "*Emotional Labor and Surface Acting*" focuses on the ways through which the employees regulate their emotions like, surface acting. It was established that emotional labor is not a homogeneous experience and different groups of workers experience it in different ways influenced by their roles within the organisation and departmental cultures. On one end of the continuum, emotional labor was found to affect well-being by increasing job satisfaction and reducing emotional exhaustion.

"Work-Life Balance and Negative Well-being" revealed how professional life can trespass on personal time, with workload being an extra burden. Frequently occurring issues among participants' were stress, burnout, and the need for organisational support. One of the themes from the perspective of "Workplace Social Dynamics and Surface Acting" was the impact of social groups in building the culture of the workplace and emotionality. The phenomenon of surface acting was all-pervasive, affecting employees' working experiences and level of job satisfaction across departments. In the article titled "Voice at Work and Manager-Employee Relations" the authors illustrated various aspects of voicing concerns and opinions; more satisfying relationships between managers and workers resulted in a more satisfying working environment. Taken together, these results highlight the need for a more sophisticated understanding of emotional labor in PTCL and reiterate the relevance of gender, work-life balance, and fair workplace cultures to the promotion of employee wellbeing.

6.1 Implications for PTCL and the Telecommunications Industry

This research has far-reaching implications for PTCL and the overall telecommunications market. By more critically analyzing gender dynamics, emotional labor, and workplace social dynamics, PTCL can use the insights to develop targeted interventions for inclusion and equity in the

workplace. The solutions for adjusting to gender bias, diversity, and redefining hiring and promotion policies may result in a well-balanced representation of gender in various positions of a company. Employee's emotional labor experiences can be recognized along with the provision of support, leading to enhanced job satisfaction and overall well-being. The research, in the broad context of the telecommunications industry, brings to light the need for addressing the challenges associated with the emotional labor. It highlights the importance of organizations fostering work-life integration, offering avenues for open communication, and offering employees emotional support. Such approaches can improve employee well-being, lower employee turnover rate, and help the industry triumph in a competitive market. In terms of practical applications, the findings can inform PTCL HR policies, training programs, and workplace culture, while also providing constructive knowledge to telecommunication firms that intend to promote healthier and supportive workplaces.

6.2 Recommendations

The information ascertained from the interviews highlighted various salient issues related to emotional labor, workplace environment, and work life balance in PTCL. Such information has great relevance for the company as well as for telecommunication industry. Above all, PTCL will benefit from improved comprehension of the difficulties that its employees are confronted with.

Following are the recommendations:

- Provide Training and Support
- Promote a Supportive Organizational Culture
- Implement Flexible Work Policies
- Recognize and Reward Emotional Labor
- Establish Clear Role Expectations
- Offer Emotional Support Resources
- Monitor Workload and Work-Life Balance
- Encourage Feedback and Continuous Improvement

The research emphasizes vital aspects of gender relations, emotional labor, work-life balance, and manager-employee relationships to transform the workplace into a healthier and more productive one. With the adoption of the suggestions presented above, PTCL can be on the path of improving employees' well-being, which along with increased job satisfaction in turn can contribute to higher work performance and lower attrition rates. The significance of these findings for PTCL, Could

have greater implications for the telecommunications industry as a whole. The challenges and themes that were identified in the interviews are likely to resonate with employees of other companies in the same industry who hold similar positions to those who were interviewed. Consequently, the results can be used as a measure to guide other telecommunications companies in improving the work environment and employee welfare. Not only does this research add to the knowledge base of emotional labor, but it also provides an actionable roadmap for PTCL and the wider telecommunications industry. It emphasizes the emotional aspects of work, inclusivity, and developing the ability to support an employee's work-life balance and well-being.

6.3 Limitations of the Research

The interviews provided some very useful information, but there are certain limitations to this research that should be acknowledged. One obvious weakness is the sample size, whereby the research is conducted on PTCL with relatively small participants. Although an attempt was made to ensure diversity in terms of respondents, the results may not reflect the entire range of experiences of people in the telecommunications industry. The method of data collection only entailed interviews, and this could result in biases in responses. A future research with larger and heterogeneous samples, and an interdisciplinary approach would allow for a better understanding of emotional labor in this industry.

The research has revealed the intricacies of emotional labour in PTCL, and by extension, the telecommunications industry. The results have contributed useful information to the understanding of the employee's experiences in the day-to-day work with emotional labor. Most importantly, a number of key insights can be made from this research. Gender dynamics in the workplace are not necessarily overt but rather complex and nuanced. The levels of gender biasing are different in different departments where it not only affects the proportion of gender but also forms roles, duties and relationships among people. These are dynamics that need to be recognized, and the acknowledgement of these is important if one seeks to create a more inclusive work environment. In PTCL emotional labor and professional etiquette is an inseparable entity. The most common approach to managing emotions of employees is surface acting. Although it is a means for dealing with the problem, it can also result in emotional fatigue. As a result, support and recognition of emotional labor challenges by the organization is critical to employee well-being.

One of the most difficult aspects of this situation is having to find a balance between work and the personal life, because work demands interrupt the personal time and affect the well-being of the individual. Stress and burnout are common, and there is a need for proper interventions to reduce this burden and ensure that employees have both mental and physical health. Emotional labor is largely shaped by the nature of social dynamics between people that develop in the workplace and are often based on the social groups. Surface acting, Is one of the most widespread practices today, and it is not limited to customer-facing positions but also affects the overall internal roles. The development of an emotional labor supportive culture which would promote genuine expression of emotions is the key. The relationship between the manager and the employee and, in particular, the potential of the employee to speak out are essential for the employee's welfare. Relationships and communications with openness increase the satisfaction of an individual's work life, while the poor quality of relationships creates more challenges to emotional labor. The relevance of these conclusions in the case of PTCL and the telecommunications industry as a whole. PTCL can enjoy a more inclusive and supportive work culture that recognizes the need to adapt to the emotional labor situation and find the way to overcome the challenges detected in this research. For the broader telecommunications sector, acknowledging the importance of emotional labor and its effects on the mental state of employees is vital. This research provides several lessons that organizations can learn from and apply in order to create environments that are more humane, inclusive, and ultimately, increase the satisfaction and productivity of workers. Emotional labour is not just a concern of ensuring the worker's wellbeing but a matter of strategic importance to organizations seeking to be leaders in a competitive industry. Emotionality is an essential part of the office and, correctly identifying and managing emotions, a better workplace can be attained.

References

Altunoğlu, A. E., Şahin, F., & Babacan, S. (2019). Transformational leadership, trust, and follower outcomes: a moderated mediation model. *Management Research Review*, *42*(3), 370-390.

Anac, A.S., & Özyer, K (2021). Emotional Labor: A Conceptual Review. *Journal of Organizational Behavior Studies*, *1*(1), 51-64.

Anwar, F., Ahmed, I., Waqas, M., Ismail, W. K. W., & Islam, T. (2019). Effects of external prestige on emotional labour: mediation by organisational identification and moderation by perceived organisational support. *Middle East Journal of Management*, *6*(2), 186-203.

Aung, N., & Tewogbola, P. (2019). The impact of emotional labor on the health in the workplace: a narrative review of literature from 2013–2018. *AIMS Public Health*, *6*(3), 268.

Bakker, A. B., Demerouti, E., & Euwema, M. C. (2005). Job resources buffer the impact of job demands on burnout. Journal of Occupational Health Psychology, 10(2), 170–180.

Bargsted, M., Ramírez-Vielma, R., & Yeves, J. (2019). Professional self-efficacy and job satisfaction: The mediator role of work design. *Revista de Psicología del Trabajo y de las Organizaciones*, *35*(3), 157-163.

Bertrams, A. (2021). The cognitive association between effortful self-control and decreased vitality. *Frontiers in psychology*, *12*, 631914.

Brueller, D., Brueller, N. N., & Doveh, E. (2020). Expressing Negative Emotions in Work Relationships and Affective Organizational Commitment: A Latent Difference Score Approach. In *Emotions and Service in the Digital Age* (pp. 173-192). Emerald Publishing Limited.

Bucy, E. P., & Newhagen, J. E. (1999). Social information processing in television news production: Inputs, outputs, and a dual-process conceptualization. *Communication Research, 26*(1), 25-54.

Chamberlin, M., Newton, D. W., & LePine, J. A. (2018). A meta-analysis of voice and its promotive and prohibitive forms: *Identification of key associations, distinctions, and future research directions. Personnel Psychology, 71(1), 11-71.*

Cropanzano, R., & Mitchell, M. S. (2005). Social exchange theory: An interdisciplinary review. *Journal of Management, 31*(6), 874-900

Di Stefano, G., & Gaudiino, M. (2018). Differential effects of workaholism and work engagement on the interference between life and work domains. *Europe's journal of psychology*, *14*(4), 863.

Deery, S., Iverson, R., & Walsh, J. (2002). Work relationships in telephone call centres: Understanding emotional exhaustion and employee withdrawal. *Journal of Management Studies, 39(4), 471-496*

Detert, J. R., & Burris, E. R. (2007). Leadership behavior and employee voice: Is the door really open? *Academy of Management Journal, 50(4), 869-884*

Diefendorff, J. M., Gabriel, A. S., Nolan, M. T., & Yang, J. (2019). Emotion regulation in the context of customer mistreatment and felt affect: An event-based profile approach. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *104*(7), 965.

Diefendorff, J. M., Gabriel, A. S., Nolan, M. T., & Yang, J. (2019). Emotion regulation in the context of customer mistreatment and felt affect: An event-based profile approach. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *108*(4), 966.

Dosono, B., & Semaan, B. (2019, May). Moderation practices as emotional labor in sustaining online communities: The case of AAPI identity work on Reddit. In *Proceedings of the 2019 CHI conference on human factors in computing systems* (pp. 1-13).

Everly, Jr, G. S., Lating, J. M., Everly, G. S., & Lating, J. M. (2019). The concept of stress. *A clinical guide to the treatment of the human stress response*, 3-18.

Fan, J., & Wang, H. (2022). Customer misbehavior and service employees' emotional exhaustion: Effects of surface acting, involvement, and mental elasticity. *Social Behavior and Personality: an international journal*, *50*(12), 1-13.

Fisher, C. D., & Noble, C. S. (2021). A within-person examination of correlates of performance and emotions while working. In *Emotion and Performance* (pp. 145-168). CRC Press.

Galdas, P. M., Cheater, F., & Marshall, P. (2005). Men and health help-seeking behaviour: literature review. *Journal of Advanced Nursing, 49(6), 616-623.*

Gosserand, R. H., & Diefendorff, J. M. (2005). Emotional display rules and emotional labor: The moderating role of commitment. Journal of Applied Psychology, 90(6), 1256–1264.

Grandey, A. A., Dickter, D. N., & Sin, H.-P. (2004). The customer is not always right: Customer aggression and emotion regulation of service employees. *Journal of Organizational Behavior, 25(3), 397–418.*

Grandey, A. A., & Sayre, G. M. (2019). Emotional labor: Regulating emotions for a wage. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, *28*(2), 131-137.

Grandey, A. A., Frone, M. R., Melloy, R. C., & Sayre, G. M. (2019). When are fakers also drinkers? A self-control view of emotional labor and alcohol consumption among US service workers. *Journal of occupational health psychology*, *24*(4), 482.

Grant, A. M., & Parker, S. K. (2009). Redesigning work design theories: The rise of relational and proactive perspectives. The Academy of Management Annals, 3(1), 317–375.

Hadadian, Z., & Sayadpour, Z. (2018). Relationship between toxic leadership and job related affective well-being: The mediating role of job stress. *European Online Journal of Natural and Social Sciences: Proceedings*, *7*(1 (s)), pp-137.

Han, S. H., Oh, E. G., & Kang, S. P. (2020). The link between transformational leadership and work-related performance: moderated-mediating roles of meaningfulness and job characteristics. *Leadership & Organization Development Journal*, *41*(4), 519-533.

Henderson, K. E., & O'Leary-Kelly, A. M. (2021). Unraveling the Psychological Contract Breach and Violation Relationship: Better Evidence for Why Broken Promises Matter. *Journal of Managerial Issues*, *33*(2).

Hochschild, A. R. (2022). The managed heart. In *Working in America* (pp. 40-48). Routledge.

Hsieh, H., & Karatepe, O. M. (2019). Outcomes of workplace ostracism among restaurant employees. *Tourism Management Perspectives*, *30*, 129-137.

Hussein, S. (2018). Job demand, control and unresolved stress within the emotional work of long-term care in England. *International Journal of Care and Caring*, *2*(1), 89-108.

Hwang, S. H., Kim, B. R., & Kang, H. S. (2021). The development of emotional intelligence scale in sport coaching. *Korean Journal of Sport Science*, *32*(1), 126-137.

Ioana, T. (2020). Illusory Control and Well-Being in a Non-Clinical Sample. (2), 14-26.

Jafarli, F., & Doroudi, H. (2020). The effect of Emotional labor strategies and Emotional exhaustion and job satisfaction on Student satisfaction. *Journal of New Approaches in Educational Administration*, *11*(44), 101-120.

Jeung, D. Y., Kim, C., & Chang, S. J. (2018). Emotional labor and burnout: A review of the literature. *Yonsei medical journal*, *59*(2), 187-193.

Jiang, Y., & Chen, C. C. (2018). Integrating knowledge activities for team innovation: Effects of transformational leadership. *Journal of Management*, *44*(5), 1819-1847.

Ju, D., Xu, M., Qin, X., & Spector, P. (2019). A multilevel research of abusive supervision, norms, and personal control on counterproductive work behavior: A theory of planned behavior approach. *Journal of Leadership & Organizational Studies*, *26*(2), 163-178.

Kahn, W. A. (2019). Dynamics and implications of distress organizing. *Academy of Management Journal*, *62*(5), 1471-1497.

Kaltiainen, J., Lipponen, J., Fugate, M., & Vakola, M. (2020). Spiraling work engagement and change appraisals: A three-wave longitudinal research during organizational change. *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology*, *25*(4), 244.

Karasek, R., & Bryant, P. C. (2012). Signaling theory: Past, present, and future. *Academy of Strategic Management Journal*.

Karkoulian, S., Kertechian, K. S., Balozian, P., & Nahed, M. B. (2023). Employee voice as a mediator between leader-member exchange and creative performance: empirical evidence from the Middle East. *International Journal of Process Management and Benchmarking*, *14*(3), 311-328.

Keller, L., Gollwitzer, P. M., & Sheeran, P. (2020). Changing behavior using the model of action phases. *The handbook of behavior change*, *2*, 77-88.

Kern, M., Trumpold, K., & Zapf, D. (2021). Emotion work as a source of employee well-and ill-being: The moderating role of service interaction type. *European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology*, *30*(6), 850-871.

Kim, J. K., & LePine, J. A. (2019). Employee Engagement: The Past, the Present, and the Future. *The SAGE Handbook of*, 371.

Kim, W. G., Han, S. J., & Kang, S. (2019). Individual and group level antecedents and consequence of emotional labor of restaurant employees. *Journal of Human Resources in Hospitality & Tourism*, *18*(2), 145-171.

Kittinger, J. D., Walker, A. G., Cope, J. G., & Wuensch, K. L. (2020). The relationship between core self-evaluations and affective commitment. *Journal of Behavioral and Applied Management*, *11*(1), 68-92.

Larson, R. B. (2019). Controlling social desirability bias. *International Journal of Market Research*, *61*(5), 534-547.

Lebrón, M., Tabak, F., Shkoler, O., & Rabenu, E. (2018). Counterproductive work behaviors toward organization and leader-member exchange: The mediating roles of emotional exhaustion and work engagement. *Organization Management Journal*, *15*(4), 159-173.

Lee, J.-E., Xue, L., Chae, J., & Han, K. (2019). Relationship between core factors of knowledge quality and technicians' customer-solving behaviors in technical call centers. *International Journal of Information Management, 46, 286–296*

Lee, Y. H. (2019). Emotional labor, teacher burnout, and turnover intention in high-school physical education teaching. *European Physical Education Review*, *25*(1), 236-253.

Lee, Y. H., Lee, S. H. B., & Chung, J. Y. (2019). Research on how emotional expressions of emotional labor workers and perception of customer feedbacks affect turnover intentions: Emphasis on moderating effects of emotional intelligence. *Frontiers in psychology*, *9*, 2526.

Lennarz, H. K., Hollenstein, T., Lichtwarck-Aschoff, A., Kuntsche, E., & Granic, I. (2019). Emotion regulation in action: Use, selection, and success of emotion regulation in adolescents' daily lives. *International journal of behavioral development*, *43*(1), 1-11.

LePine, M. A. (2022). The challenge-hindrance stressor framework: an integrative conceptual review and path forward. *Group & Organization Management*, *47*(2), 223-254.

Lorelli S. Nowell, Jill M. Norris, Deborah E. White, Nancy J. Moules (2017). Thematic Analysis: Striving to Meet the Trustworthiness Criteria. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods Volume 16, Issue 1, 5-6, 1-2.*

Lunnay, B., Borlagdan, J., McNaughton, D., & Ward, P. (2015). Ethical use of social media to facilitate qualitative research. *Qualitative Health Research, 25(1), 99-109.*

Luo, A., Guchait, P., Lee, L., & Madera, J. M. (2019). Transformational leadership and service recovery performance: The mediating effect of emotional labor and the influence of culture. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, *77*, 31-39.

Malterud K. (2001). Qualitative research: Standards, challenges, and guidelines. *The Lancet*, 358, 483–488.

Sandelowski M. (1995). Qualitative analysis: What it is and how to begin. *Research in Nursing and Health*, 18,

Marques, G. S., Correia, A., & Costa, C. M. (2018). The influence of customer orientation on emotional labour and work outcomes: a research in the tourism industry. *European Journal of Tourism Research*, *20*, 59-77.

Martínez-Tur, V. (2020). The service encounter. *The Cambridge Handbook of Workplace Affect*, 284-296.

Mazzetti, G., Robledo, E., Vignoli, M., Topa, G., Guglielmi, D., & Schaufeli, W. B. (2023). Work engagement: A meta-analysis using the job demands-resources model. *Psychological Reports*, *126*(3), 1069-1107.

Milliken, F. J., Morrison, E. W., & Hewlin, P. F. (2003). An exploratory study of employee silence: Issues that employees don't communicate upward and why. *Journal of Management Studies, 40(6)*

Morris, J. A., & Feldman, D. C. (2020). Managing emotions in the workplace. *Journal of Managerial Issues*, *32*(1), 84-102.

Nicklaus, M., & Stein, D. (2022). A Lie or Not a Lie, That Is the Question. Trying to Take Arms Against a Sea of Conceptual Troubles: Methodological and Theoretical Issues in Linguistic Approaches to Lie Detection. In *Language as Evidence: Doing Forensic Linguistics* (pp. 131-183). Cham: Springer International Publishing.

Niven, K., Totterdell, P., Holman, D., & Headley, T. (2012). Does regulating others' feelings influence people's own affective well-being? *Journal of Social Psychology, 152(3), 246–260.*

Nixon, A. E., Ceylan, S., Nelson, C. E., & Alabak, M. (2020). Emotional labour, collectivism and strain: a comparison of Turkish and US service employees. *Work & Stress*, *34*(2), 168-188.

Nübold, A., & Hülsheger, U. R. (2021). Personality states mediate the effect of a mindfulness intervention on employees' work outcomes: A randomized controlled trial. *European Journal of Personality*, *35*(4), 646-664.

O'Farrell, G., Grimard, C. M., Power, J. L., & Lee, R. T. (2021). Targets of workplace bullying and mistreatment: helpless victims or active provocateurs?. *Pathways of job-related negative behaviour*, 297-336.

Oz, M., Saygin, M., & Adan-Bayad, O. (2020). Emotional labor, voice behavior and creativity: The moderating role of positive/negative affect. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management, 32(9), 2829-2848.*

Pan, W., & Lin, T. R. (2018). Employee responses to psychological contract breach: A dyadic test of self-consistency theory versus social exchange theory. *Management and Organization Review, 14(1), 197-219*

Pulakos, E. D., Hanson, R. M., Arad, S., & Moye, N. (2015). Performance management can be fixed: *An on-the-job experiential learning approach for complex behavior change. Industrial and Organizational Psychology, 8(1), 51-76*

Rabiul, M. K., Al Karim, R., & Ahmed, S. U. M. (2023). Task performance of hotel employees: role of ostracism, meaningfulness, and emotional exhaustion. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management*, *56*, 314-321.

Rasul, F., & Masood, S. (2022). Reliability and Validity Estimation of Job Stressor Measures Interpersonal Conflict at Work Scale, Quantitative Workload Inventory and Organizational Constraints Scale in Urdu Language. *Foundation University Journal of Psychology*, *6*(1).

Rawski, S. L., O'Leary-Kelly, A. M., & Breaux-Soignet, D. (2022). It's all fun and games until someone gets hurt: An interactional framing theory of work social sexual behavior. *Academy of Management Review*, *47*(4), 617-636.

Reynolds Kueny, C. A., Francka, E., Shoss, M. K., Headrick, L., & Erb, K. (2020). Ripple effects of supervisor counterproductive work behavior directed at the organization: using affective events theory to predict subordinates' decisions to enact CWB. *Human Performance*, *33*(5), 355-377.

Riessman, C. K. (2008). Narrative methods for the human sciences. Sage.

Scherer, S., Zapf, D., Beitler, L. A., & Trumpold, K. (2020). Testing a multidimensional model of emotional labor, emotional abilities, and exhaustion: A multilevel, multimethod approach. *Journal of occupational health psychology*, *25*(1), 46.

Singh, P. (2022). Emotional Labour and its Relationship with Job Satisfaction: Role of Organizational Support. *Indian Journal of Positive Psychology*, *13*(2), 137-141.

Smith, J. D., & Johnson, K. L. (2020). Gender disparities in job satisfaction: *A qualitative analysis. Journal of Gender Studies,* 17(3), 321-339

Taris, T. W., & de Jonge, J. (2024). Workaholism: Taking Stock and Looking Forward. *Annual Review of Organizational Psychology and Organizational Behavior*, *11*, 113-138.

Tiwari, A., Saraff, S., & Nair, R. (2020). Impact of emotional labor on burnout and subjective wellbeing of female counselors and female teachers. *Journal of Psychosocial Research*, *15*(2), 523-532.

Thorne S. (2000). Data analysis in qualitative research. *Evidence Based Nursing*, 3, 68–70

Tuckett A. (2005). Applying thematic analysis theory to practice: A researcher's experience. *Contemporary Nurse*, 19, 75–87.

Wan Mohd Yunus, W. M. A., Badri, S. K. Z., Panatik, S. A., & Mukhtar, F. (2021). The unprecedented movement control order (lockdown) and factors associated with the negative emotional symptoms, happiness, and work-life balance of Malaysian University students during the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic. *Frontiers in psychiatry*, *11*, 566221.

Wang, H., Hall, N. C., & Taxer, J. L. (2019). Antecedents and consequences of teachers' emotional labor: A systematic review and meta-analytic investigation. *Educational Psychology Review*, *31*, 663-698.

Wang, Z. (2021). The elusive pursuit of incentive systems: Research on the cadre management regime in post-Mao China. *Journal of Chinese Political Science*, *26*(3), 573-592.

Wang, Y.-S., Wu, S.-C., Lin, H.-H., & Wang, Y.-Y. (2011). The relationship of service failure severity, service recovery justice and perceived switching costs with customer loyalty in the context of e-tailing. *International Journal of Information Management, 31(4), 350–359.*

Ward, J. (2019). Arlie Russell Hochschild. In *Beyond rationality in organization and management* (pp. 22-36). Routledge.

Watkins Fischer, M. (2019). *The Impact of Emotional Labor on Burnout Over Time: How Emotional Work Impacts Well-Being at Work* (Doctoral dissertation).

Wen, J., Huang, S. S., & Hou, P. (2019). Emotional intelligence, emotional labor, perceived organizational support, and job satisfaction: A moderated mediation model. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, *81*, 120-130.

Wepfer, A. G., Allen, T. D., Brauchli, R., Jenny, G. J., & Bauer, G. F. (2018). Work-life boundaries and well-being: Does work-to-life integration impair well-being through lack of recovery?. *Journal of Business and Psychology*, *33*, 727-740.

White, M., Becker, J., & du Plessis, M. (2021). Unintended positive consequences of development centres in university graduates. *Frontiers in Psychology*, *12*, 5421.

Wiese, C. W., Burke, C. S., Tang, Y., Hernandez, C., & Howell, R. (2022). Team learning behaviors and performance: *A meta-analysis of direct effects and moderators. Group & Organization Management, 47(3), 571-611.*

Wilk, S. L., & Moynihan, L. M. (2005). Display rule "regulators": The relationship between supervisors and worker emotional exhaustion. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 90(5), 917-927*

Wingfield, A. H. (2021). The (un) managed heart: Racial contours of emotion work in gendered occupations. *Annual Review of Sociology*, *47*, 197-212.

Yagil, D. (2021). Abuse from organizational outsiders: Customer aggression and incivility. *Special topics and particular occupations, professions and sectors*, 109-134.

Yang, C., Chen, Y., & Zhao, X. (2019). Emotional labor: scale development and validation in the Chinese context. *Frontiers in psychology*, *10*, 2095.

Zapf, D., Seifert, C., Schmutte, B., Mertini, H., & Holz, M. (2001). *Emotion work and job stressors and their effects on burnout. Psychology & Health, 16(5), 527-545.*

Zito, M., Emanuel, F., Molino, M., Cortese, C. G., Ghislieri, C., & Colombo, L. (2018). Turnover intentions in a call center: *The role of emotional dissonance, job resources, and job satisfaction. PloS one, 13(2), e0192126.*

Appendix

CV: Gender

1. Have you ever felt favoritism prevails in terms of gender?

2. How often you stay at office after your working hours?

3. Do you feel comfortable while interacting with your colleagues?

CV: Emotional labor

1. How do you regulate your emotions while dealing with customer/co-workers/clients?

2. How are you expected to deal with customers who behave rudely with you?

3. Do you feel women are more subjected to emotional labor since they are expected to manage finances while looking after the home?

4. Do you feel that while implementing the policy of 'Customer is always right', the employees have to suffer?

5. Are you encouraged to express your disagreements at work?

6. Consider a scenario where there is a workplace issue and you disagree with it. Do you feel the fear of suffering from negative consequences?

CV: Employee interaction

1. Does interacting with fellow employees have positive impact on your mood?

2. What role workplace social groups play in binding the coworkers?

3. Do you feel comfortable while sharing personal experiences with your coworkers?

4. Do you discuss non-work events with colleagues (such as holidays, weddings, etc.)?

5. Do you feel happy when my colleagues include you in their social interactions at work?

CV: Surface Acting

1. Do you feel free to express your emotions (anger, sadness, disappointment, anxiety, fear, happiness, distress) at workplace?

2. How often you suppress your emotions (anger, sadness, disappointment, anxiety, fear, happiness, distress) and refrain from expressing them?

3. When your opinion is not given value, do you feel unimportant? Do you feel the need to hide your emotion?

4. Do you really enjoy company's official dinner with your colleagues or you have to pretend?

5. Do you feel that town hall meetings are important?

CV: Negative Wellbeing

1. Does your boss keep in mind emotional aspects while giving you work?

2. What do you pretend when the things don't go as per your perspective?

3. Do you feel over worked?

4. Are you satisfied with remuneration offered against the services you provide?

5. Does your work suffer due to slow systems or malfunctioning equipment's?

CV: Voice at work

1. Does your manager take your suggestions?

2. Does the management cares for the employees?

3. Does your company take employees suggestions?

4. How much autonomy do you have to make your own decisions?

5. Are you kept well informed about company's plans, mission, and progress?

Manager to employee Relation

1. Does your supervisor try to create a balance between subordinates?

2. Are you encouraged to do your best?

3. We know gossips exist at work place, is it at a dangerous level at your organization?

4. How is the evaluation process? Do you feel appraisals are justified and promotions happen on merit?

5. Company culture celebrates doing well at home and at work. Are you expected to respond to emails/texts/calls in off duty hours?

Discussion with Manager

1. How well do you know about each of your employee?

2. Do they trust you with their issues at workplace?

3. If an issue arises at workplace, does the concerned parties come to you to share it or you hear it from third parties?

4. Do you discuss the task before assigning it to your employees?

5. What steps you take to enhance the motivation level of employees?

6. Does gender biasedness affect the nature of task assigned to employees?

7. How do you ensure gender equality at workplace?

8. How do you deal with employees who come up with any personal reason for not being able to complete the assigned task on time?

9. Leader v/s manager? What is your style of management?

10. How do you deal with an employee who is consistently giving poor performance?

11. Do you plan to invest in new systems and equipment?

12. Are sufficient promotion possibilities provided?