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## THE EMOTIONAL LABOR OF EMPLOYEES IN THE SERVICE SECTOR CHARACTERISTICS, CONSEQUENCES, AND POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

### Abstract

*The paper aims to explain the characteristics of emotional labor of employees that work in the service sector. Emotional labor is the effort that employees invest in order to manage the display of their emotions and behavior, in a way that satisfies their clients, and to express emotions desired in the organization. Many researches show that emotional labor positively correlates with the job satisfaction of employees, but also leads to their emotional exhaustion and affects their well-being. The paper suggests some possible solutions for lowering the harm of emotional labor among service sector workers, and the measures for improving their mental health.*

**Keywords:** *emotional labor, service sector employees, emotional exhaustion, mental health*

### Introduction

#### Introduction to the emotional labor in the service sector

A share of the service sector and hospitality industry in the modern society have established new methods for creating a competitive edge within the delivery of a top quality service (Shani et al., 2014: 151). In order to meet the requests and needs of the most demanding clients, the emotional labor of service employees is considered as an inevitable part of creating validity for prospective clients. In general, emotions are managed in response to the display rules for the organization or job (Ekman, P., & Friesen, W. V., 1975). Employees in the service sector are required to display positive emotions during service encounters and are expected to “serve with a smile,” while controlling or suppressing negative emotions (Rathi, 2013). Many researches (Nur Iplik, F., Topsakal, Y., Iplik, E., 2014; Brotheridge & Grandey, 2002; Ghalandari et al., 2012; Glomb and Tews, 2004; Kruml and Geddes, 2000) are paying attention to the issue of emotional labor related to the manufacturing and service sectors.

Ashforth & Humphrey point out several reasons why the concept of emotional labor has a particular relevance to service encounters (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993; Bowen, Chase, Cummings & Associates, 1990; Bowen & Schneider, 1998; Brown, Gummesson, Edvardsson & Gustavsson, 1991). Firstly, front-line service personnel represents the organization to customers, since they are situated at the organization’s customer interface. Secondly, service communication often involves face to face interactions between the service agents and the customers. Thirdly, the uncertainty created by customer participation in service encounters creates a dynamic and emergent quality. Fourthly, the intangible quality of services makes them emergent.

## Emotional labor

The term “emotional labor“was coined by a sociologist Arlie Hochschild (Hochschild, 1983). She wrote the thesis on how the human emotions, in a large part, belong to a social sphere. In her study from 1983, “The Managed Heart – Commercialization of Human Feelings“, she examined the two groups of public-contact workers: flight attendants and bill collectors, and tried to discover what happens when private emotions of workers become a part of the public world of work. These two groups of workers present two extremes, since the flight attendant’s job is to provide a service and be “nicer than natural” and the bill collector’s job is to collect on the service, and if necessary, to deflate the status of the customer by being “nastier than natural.” Hochschild chose to display these two professions in order to provide understanding of the emotional labor requirements for all other jobs: “The reason for describing the polar extremes of emotional labor, as represented by the flight attendant and the bill collector, is that it can give us a better sense of the great variety of emotional tasks required by jobs that fall in between“(Hochschild, 1983: 138).

On the other hand, Ashforth and Humphrey defined emotional labor as — the act of displaying the appropriate emotion (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993, 90). These authors focus on behaviour because they consider that an actual behaviour or compliance with the display rules is directly observed by and directly affects the service recipients. As they point out, one may conform with the display rules without having to manage mere feelings. While Hochschild defines emotional labor as the management of feelings in order to comply with the display rules, implying that surface or deep acting must be performed for compliance to occur, Ashforth and Humphrey allow the instances whereby one spontaneously and genuinely experiences and expresses the expected emotion. They consider that emotion may be felt and displayed with relatively little effortful prompting (Ashforth and Humphrey, 1993).

Morris and Feldman, (1996) with their interactionist approach, defined emotional labor as the effort, planning, and control needed to express organizationally desired emotion during interpersonal transactions (Morris and Feldman, 1996). In their work, they specified the four dimensions of emotional labor as the frequency of emotional display, attentiveness to required display rules (duration and intensity of emotional display), variety of displayed emotions, and emotional dissonance. The most important concepts included in Morris and Feldman’s dimensions of emotional labor are display rules as a standard that dictates when and how emotions should be expressed, and emotional dissonance as a state wherein the emotions required to be expressed are discrepant from the genuine emotions.

In addition, recent studies, (Bono and Vey, 2007) which examined the effects of congruence of personality with the demands of emotional labor jobs, found that emotional regulation would be less stressful for the individuals who were asked to display personality congruent emotions. Their results are congruent with those of

Judge and his associates (2009) who found that emotional labor was more difficult for introverts compared to extroverts, implying that emotional labor is more difficult when it conflicts with personal dispositions or attitudes.

### Methods of providing emotional labor

In his “dramaturgical sociology“, sociologist Erving Goffman explained how we manipulate our scripts, costumes, stages and sets through particular grooming: clothing, hair, accessories, to present a specific kind of self (Goffman, 1959). Hochschild went a step further and offered an opinion that emotional cues may be among the most important in human interaction. She listed several methods of emotion management. One is cognitive and active when we change our ideas or thoughts in order to change the way people feel about something. Another approach involves the use of body leading the emotions in a desirable direction. For instance, people will take a deep breath in order to calm themselves before speaking in public. A third way of managing emotions involves using expressive gestures. Sometimes people smile in order to provoke pleasant emotions like happiness or joy, even though they do not feel that way. But the most important way of managing emotions is through deep acting (Hochschild, 1979).

Emotional labor, as the process of regulating feelings and expressions for the organizational goals, includes both surface and deep acting as a way of managing emotions. There are several studies that show how deep acting and surface acting relate to organizational and individual outcomes. A deep acting method includes engaging in emotions through reappraisal or self-talk. It is proven that deep acting may regulate observable signs of emotions and even the individual’s perception of his or her own emotions. On the other hand surface acting, or antecedent-focused emotion regulation includes the customers or clients always seeing the expressions that are mandated, even when the employee might be feeling differently. In other words, a worker does not try to reappraise situation, but to provide the desired behavior in spite of feeling differently (Grandey, 2000). However, Hochschild (1983) pointed out that surface acting could have a detrimental effect on employees, since suppressing real emotions, and expressing false emotions requires effort that results in stress outcomes and burn-out syndrome. There are a few studies (Gross, 1998a; Gross & Levenson, 1997) that show how both methods (surface and deep acting) may result in the required emotional expression in a way that satisfies service expectations, but can be dysfunctional for the employee’s health and cause stress.

### The characteristics of emotional labor

Emotional labor can be viewed through the prism of different perspectives, but for the purpose of this paper, we will mention: the cultural perspective, gender differences, personality traits and expectations of customer interaction.

## The cultural perspective of emotional labor

In a service sector, especially in the hospitality industry, service workers often have team members with various cultural and religious characteristics. This international staff environment brings with it their cultural patterns, and personal spiritual practices and beliefs that could affect the way in which they handle the emotional labor. Arlie Hochschild, has generally explored emotional labor from one particular cultural context. Participants in her study were primarily women from North America. Certain authors (Mesquita & Delvaux, 2013) wanted to explore emotional labor in connection with its cultural context, and to go further, beyond the North American context. For that purpose, they compared emotional labor among North American flight attendants (reported in Hochschild's study *The Managed Heart*) and, in an interview study, the everyday emotional regulation practices by Japanese respondents (Mesquita et al., 2006). In this study, they included 50 Japanese and 50 American respondents and asked about their feelings in an offensive situation. American respondents showed the will to oppress the offender: "The American and the Japanese narratives of their offense situations were very different. On the one hand, a large majority of American respondents in our study blamed the offender, reported that they had been aggressive towards the offender, and distanced themselves from him or her. Among American respondents there was thus apparently a tendency to claim one's right, to guard one's autonomy, and, if necessary, to do so by severing the relationship" (Mesquita & Delvaux, 2013: 252). On the other hand, Japanese respondents reported similar reactions as Hochschild's respondents from North America: "The most prevalently reported emotional responses were trying to justify the behavior of the offender by taking his/her perspective, taking responsibility for the situation, trying to restore the relationship or regain proximity to the offender, and deliberately doing nothing (letting the situation cool down). Japanese respondents coped with the offense in ways that served to maintain or reestablish a harmonious relationship with the offender, and their emotional responses were reminiscent of the strategies taught to the flight attendants in Hochschild's book" (Mesquita & Delvaux, 2013: 253).

Authors (Mesquita & Delvaux, 2013) proposed that emotional labor and emotional regulation at work may be alienating and stressful to the extent that it contrasts with workers' everyday regulation strategies. They argue that this is primarily the case in North American cultural context, where emotions are felt to be expressions of individuality. Thus, emotion regulation is a function of social expectations. There are other cultures where accommodation of one's feelings and expressions to social norms is a part of everyday life, and these reactions are automatic. As some authors emphasize (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993), societal norms vary among cultures. They illustrate their point by describing when McDonalds opened a fast food outlet in Moscow, where the staff smiled at customers. Since this particular norm did not exist in the former Soviet Union, some patrons concluded that staff

members were mocking them. Rules about desirable emotions to be expressed at work differ among cultures. To understand different emotion regulation strategies it is necessary to consult cross-cultural research.

### Gender category in providing emotional labor

The reason why the female gender is considered as an issue when it comes to emotional labor is simply because a majority of service jobs are performed by women (Grandey, 2000). Some authors found (Kruml & Geddes, 1998) that women are more likely to report not expressing their true feelings. Another study (Timmers, et al., 1998) showed that men and women have different reasons for regulating emotions. While women are more concerned on getting along with their guests or clients, men are mostly motivated to stay in control and express powerful emotions, such as anger or pride. Alicia Grandey pointed out that, in the customer service setting, this motive may not work in men's favor, which is why she suggests that men need more training in order to manage emotions when dealing with customers (Grandey, 2000).

### Influence of personality traits on providing the emotional labor

The emotional labor literature has explored influences of extroversion on service worker's emotional labor. There are authors who have already pointed out that extroversion is related to perceived emotional labor demands (Diefendorff & Richard, 2003). Moreover, ample research has supported Hochschild's (1983) claim that emotional labor creates a sense of strain that may be felt more acutely by introverted employees, for whom emotional labor should be more effortful and provide fewer payoffs (Bono & Vey, 2005). In addition, Demaree and others suggest that surface acting should be less negative for extroverts, because they are not as strongly affected by the physiological arousal prompted by response-focused emotion regulation (as cited in Judge et al. 2009). Neuropsychological research demonstrates that introverts are more cortically aroused than extroverts and that extroverts adapt better to high levels of arousal (Kumari, Ffytche, Williams, & Gray, 2004). Moreover, Pauls & Stemmler (2003) suggest that extroversion is positively correlated with self-deceptive enhancement, suggesting that extroverts would be more easily able to convince themselves that they are actually feeling the desired emotions (as cited in Judge et al. 2009).

### Customer interaction expectations

In the service sector, various job descriptions dictate different levels of emotional labor that is required by the service workers. Morris and Feldman (1996) wrote about characteristics of the duration of interactions and variety of emotional expression. When interacting with customers, it is not the same for the

service workers if the interaction lasts 15 minutes or 5 hours. For instance, hotel receptionist may greet new guests every half an hour, and that interaction may last

expectations and emotional labor, found non-significant correlations on frequency of interaction and duration with dissonance (Morris & Feldman, 1997) and between frequency of interactions and surface or deep acting (Grandey, 1999). In another study, the frequency had significant positive contacts with surface acting and deep acting (Brotheridge & Lee, 1998), but the duration was not related to the surface or deep acting.

### Organizational factors that influence emotional labor strategies

Employees in service sector not only have to deliver high quality services, but must also provide these services in a particular way. In particular, many organizations specify explicit rules to observe as part of their service performance. Gosserand and Diefendorff (2003) investigated a motivational factor behind emotional regulation strategies committed to display rule. Particularly, they found that the more committed individuals were to display rules, the stronger the relationship of display rule perceptions was with surface acting and deep acting. Inspired by these results, a group of authors (Cossette & Hess, 2009) conducted a research that focused on the motivation to regulate one's emotions as an antecedent of emotional labor strategies. In order to better understand the effect of motivation to regulate emotions on emotional labor strategies, the study includes organizational factors such as job autonomy and organizational justice. Both variables are likely to affect employees' motivation. The major research questions were: What is the relationship between employees' motivation to withhold their negative emotions and their tendency to use certain emotional labor strategies? What are the impacts of organizational factors on employees' motivation and emotional labor strategies? It was discovered that employees' self-determined motivation to withhold negative emotions was positively related to reappraisal (deep acting) and to the naturally felt emotions - absence of emotional dissonance. That is, when employees endorsed the organizational demands to regulate negative affect, they adopted a more authentic stance towards their customers and regulated their affect by reappraising the situation. A surprising result was the absence of the impact of job autonomy on self-determined motivation. Despite this non-significant path between autonomy and motivation, results suggested two additional links from job autonomy related to the improvement of the initial model. Job autonomy directly affected reappraisal and naturally felt emotions. A possible explanation for these links is the fact that employees may automatically appraise the situations in a way that inner feelings are already aligned with the display rules, when they do not need to focus on a technical task. Consequently, employees who felt more autonomy in their job were more likely to adopt an adaptive emotion regulation strategy. Specifically, job autonomy allows

employees a greater freedom to act in a more genuine way. In fact, when they feel independent in their job, employees are more likely to pay attention to customers' problems and concerns, and, consequently, are more likely to feel adequate emotions in their interactions (Cossette & Hess, 2009).

### Consequences of the emotional labor

It was explained how workers in hospitality sector often use various technics for providing emotional labor: "Deep acting" and "Surface acting". Another important term is "Emotional -dissonance" – a discrepancy between expressed and felt emotions (Kruml and Geddes, 2000). It was established that emotional dissonance can lead to burning out, poor self-esteem, cynicism, role and self-alienation and deviance, deterioration in the quality of service, job turnover, absenteeism, and low morale, tension, and stress (Anderson et al. 2002; Hatzinikolakis and Crossman, 2010; Keily and Sevastos, 2008).

Hochschild's major contribution to the theory of emotional labor (1983) is that this management of emotions requires effort. She pointed out that managing emotions in the work setting may be detrimental to the employee. "When deep gestures of exchange enter the market sector and are bought and sold as an aspect of labor power, feelings are commoditized" (Hochschild, 1979: 569). The mere fact that personal emotions become a commodity of organization indicates that emotional labor, which requires a certain effort, leads to stress and even the burning out syndrome.

For the past 30 years or so, psychologists have found that emotions and the management of emotions are associated with health problems such as cancer and heart disease (Gross, 1989, 1998a; Pennebaker, 1990; Steptoe, 1993). Several parts of research show a link between emotion labor and burning-out or emotional exhaustion. Authors Gross and Levenson (1997) pointed out that there is a physiological effort demanded to inhibit emotions. Other studies (Abraham, 1998; Morris & Feldman, 1997) found a link between emotional exhaustion and emotional dissonance.

In order to be able to reduce the harm the service sector workers suffer through, and to prevent the emotional exhaustion and burning out, managers or supervisors need to come up with a quality training and adequate professional support for their employees.

### Measures for improving mental health of service workers

The way emotional labor and emotion regulation affect the physical and mental well-being of service workers was explained. In order to prevent enormous stress, burning-over, and therefore often turnover, managers need to provide an adequate professional support for their workers, which is possible through various steps. Some authors think that employees in hospitality industry need to implement

emotional management skills (Ashkanasy et al., 2002). Others (Seymour, 2000: 168) think that organizations should offer more training to their employees to help them

on emotional labor proposed by various authors.

Author(s)	Proposed forms of training on emotional labor
Grandey 2000: 97	To successfully face emotional labor issues the author proposed organizational training on emotional labor with stress management programs.
Mackenzie, and Kerr 2013: 11	Developing mentoring relationships is recommended in order to develop psychological skills that enable employees to regulate emotions and cope with different motivational states, stressors and emotions.
Ashkanasy, Härtel, and Daus 2002: 308; Mackenzie, and Kerr 2013: 11	Intercultural trainings are also recommended, to get familiar with the expectations of different cultures, to decrease stress and stereotyping and increase cultural awareness.
Lee, and Ok 2014: 184	Cognitive reappraisal was proposed, because it enables individuals to see situations more positively and to easily modify emotions.
Shon and Lee 2012: 124; Jung, and Yoon 2014: 87	The authors found the role playing programs where all the issues can be worked upon important in coping with the emotional labor issues.
Chu, Baker, and Murrmann 2012: 913	The authors propose training(s) to cope with the difficult customers; like the perspective-taking technique that places employees in the clients' shoes and in this way they can adopt customers' viewpoint.
Medler-Liraz 2014: 69	As the effective form of training, the method acting was proposed, which stimulates employees to think about how remembering happy events can bring about positive feelings.
Karatepe, and Aleshinloye 2009: 357	The process of training on the potential empowerment and on how to deal with customers' complaints is found to be greatly effective.

In academic discussions on emotional labor authors mostly agree that managers should provide training and learn the different strategies and technics for emotion regulation of their employees. At the same time, these authors rarely provide detailed guidelines and descriptions of these technics, even though this is crucial for the practical implementation at work. In the following text, we will provide several examples and describe various technics which are considered helpful in maintaining the good mental health of workers who provide emotional labor as a part of their job.

### Emotional intelligence training

Emotional Intelligence is defined as the ability to identify, assess, and control

one's emotions, the emotions of others, and whole groups. (Goleman, 1995). To learn how to regulate their emotions, employees first need to learn how to recognize their emotions. Daniel Goleman is considered a pioneer in the field of emotional intelligence, and he developed a model (Goleman, 1998) which focuses on emotional intelligence as a wide array of competencies and skills that drive leadership performance, and which consists of five areas:

Self-Awareness – It is important for service workers to recognize guest's or client's emotions and needs, and recognize their impact on guests/clients, while using gut feelings to guide behaviors and decisions.

Self-Regulation – Implies the ability to manage or redirect disruptive emotions and impulses and to adapt to changing circumstances. This is especially important when service workers deal with a demanding or aggressive guest/client.

Social skill – This implies the ability for a smart verbal and nonverbal transaction with customers.

Empathy – Ability to recognize, understand, and consider guest's/client's feelings.

Motivation – Ability to motivate themselves. This is necessary for difficult situations, when service workers need to develop a self-supporting mechanism. This is possible through the technic of developing nurturing and encouraging self-talk.

By acquiring knowledge through emotional intelligence training, service sector employees could learn how to recognize their and client's emotions, how to manage their emotions and how to more effectively communicate, even with clients and customers who are difficult communicators. One Korean study (Lee, 2010) showed that emotional intelligence is positively related to emotional consonance that mediated the relationship between trait EI and surface/deep acting. Emotional consonance is defined as the subjective state of workers when they do not experience discrepancy between naturally felt emotions and emotions that they perceive to be the required display in the workplace (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993; Rubin et al., 2005). A survey questionnaire was administered to 600 employees from 22 subsidiaries of a Korean conglomerate. Results showed that surface acting was positively and deep acting was negatively related to emotional exhaustion and depersonalization, but EI had a larger effect on both dimensions of job burnout. While surface acting did not have a significant effect on personal accomplishment, deep acting had a positive effect on personal accomplishment. Authors concluded that the concept of emotional labor can complement EI because it includes the contextual factors of a job that can have an effect on the regulation and expression of emotions of the workers.

### Transactional analysis training

Transactional analysis (TA) is a psychoanalytic theory, developed in 1950 by Eric Berne. The method of therapy includes analysis of social transactions to determine the ego state of the patient (whether parent-like, child-like, or adult-like) as a basis for understanding behavior. As the founder of TA, dr Eric Berne wrote, Transactional Analysis is a method for studying interactions between individuals.

(<http://www.ericberne.com/transactional-analysis/>).

Concepts of transactional analysis are very useful in organizational training devoted to improving communication and social skills of employees. Several concepts of transactional analysis can be applied to the training of service workers, but here we will give an example of:

- Complementary and Crossed Transactions;
- How various transactional responses (from various Ego States) provide more freedom and autonomy in communication between employees and clients;

Complementary Transactions - Successful communication in the workplace requires complementary transactions ([www.smallbusiness.chron.com](http://www.smallbusiness.chron.com)). This involves one person initiating a conversation in one of the three ego states, such as parent-to-child, and the respondent sending a reply back to the sending ego state, such as child-to-adult ego state. For example, a guest/client communicates in the parent-to-child ego state when he criticizes the service worker for unsatisfying service. If the service worker responds by apologizing and saying it will not happen again, the service worker is in the child-to-parent ego state, and the result is a complementary transaction. A complementary transaction occurs when the sender of the message gets the intended response from the receiver. Complementary transactions are recommendable because they result in a more effective communication with fewer arguments and hurt feelings. On the other hand, crossed transactions lead to a break in the communication unless one person shifts his response to a complementary ego state. This may happen when the receiver forms the wrong impression about the sender's message or responds in an ego state different than the one sender might expect. For example, a guest in a restaurant cannot decide what to order and asks, in the adult-to-adult state, "Which meal is better? I will take this. No, I have changed my mind, I will choose something else". A crossed transaction occurs if the employee, instead of the complementary transaction, responds using the parent-to-child ego: "Call me when you make up your mind!" Cross transactions are damaging because they result in surprise, disappointment, and hurt feelings of the sender of the message. The unexpected response often makes the person emotional, which often results in his or her changing to the adapted child ego state, which causes the communication to further deteriorate. Cross transactions often end in arguments and hurt human relations. ([www.zeepedia.com](http://www.zeepedia.com)). By getting familiar with this concept, employees can prevent conflicts in communication with clients or customers, or can better understand why the conflict occurred. Understanding this dynamic can help employees to feel empowered and protect their mental health.

Ego States and various transactional responses - Transactional Analysis is considered as a method for improving communication (<http://www.businessballs.com/transactionalanalysis.htm>). One of the most applied TA concepts in organizations is the Ego State concept / Ego state structural model: Parent Ego State, Adult Ego State and Child Ego State. Parent Ego State refers to behavior, thoughts and feelings copied from parents or parent figures. Integrating Adult Ego State refers to behavior, thoughts and feelings which are direct responses to the here and now. Lastly, Child Ego State refers to behavior, thoughts and feelings replayed from childhood (Mountain and Davidson,

2011). Ego state structural model includes differentiation between:

Controlling Parent (CP) – behavior promoting rule following, what should and must be done.

Nurturing Parent (NP) – behavior conveying acceptance, nurturing, caring.

Adult – behavior related to responding to the here-and now logically and rationally.

Adapted Child (AC) – behavior often replayed from childhood that either respects or swears against the rules and expectations of a parental figure.

Free Child (FC) – behavior that express spontaneity, creativity and is independent from others' expectations (<http://www.uktransactionalanalysis.co.uk/transactional-analysis/key-concepts/ego-states>).

Transactional options enables the reaction from various ego states and prevents possible conflict, even one provoked by a customer or client. For illustration, let us imagine a situation where a customer or client verbally offends the employee (“You are incompetent!). By understanding the theory of transactions, he or she can choose between various reactions and provide the answer from various ego states:

The answer from a Nurturing Parent ego state: “It is good that you are honest with me. How can I help you?”

The answer from a Controlling Parent ego state: “You have the right to be angry, but not to insult me. I do not allow that! If you continue this way, we shall not speak again!”

The answer from an Adult ego state: “Can you explain to me how you came to that conclusion?”

The answer from an Adapted Child ego state: “I am sorry if I threatened you in any way because that was not my intention. What do you expect from me?”

The answer from a Free Child ego state: “Wow! If I would to talk that way, I probably would not have a stomach ulcer.”

In certain communication contexts, knowledge of ego states and their complementarity can greatly enhance communication skills or social skills. In the TA jargon, the term “hooking” is used (Romano, 1981, pp. 95-136). This skill involves two things:

- How to call a certain ego state of another person,

- How to recognize what another person calls some of our particular ego states.

The principle is that employees can react to any stimulus from any of the five ego states mentioned above. The freedom to choose the reaction to the external stimulus provides autonomy and a sense of control over the situation, and therefore it can affect the reduction of emotional exhaustion as one of the most frequent consequences of emotional work.

Certain authors (Whitley-Hunter, 2014) researched effects of transactional analysis and emotional intelligence on service sector employees, particularly nurses. They pointed out the validity of transactional analysis and emotional intelligence in training nursing students. They considered emotional intelligence (EI) as a critical component of a nurse's characteristic trait, as it is acknowledged as a significant predictor of a person's job performance and life success. Moreover, they pointed out that

Transactional Analysis (TA) plays a fundamental role in nurse-patient communication and management of emotions during difficult dialogue with the patients.

The method used is a literature search using databases, such as Medline, EBSCO, and Google Scholar, etc. to form a critical discussion of this area. Four studies involving EI and TA were sampled. A combination of data collection tools, such as lecture series and intervention programs, were used to authenticate the results. The collection of samples from the literature involved qualitative and quantitative methods. Qualitative tools such as the semi-structured and cognitive interviews, lecture series, and unstructured observation practice were used to corroborate the data. Literature research involving quantitative methods were used, such as convenience sampling, Mayer-Salovey-Caruso Emotional Intelligence Test (MSCEIT) and 360 test, student and faculty information forms, and ego states questionnaires to authenticate the outcome of the statistical results. Other instruments used were ego state questionnaires, empathy, and five point Likert scales. Sixteen nurses attended a six-week psycho-education program, which used communication and empathy scales, and patient satisfaction surveys to improve their empathetic and communication skills. The result of the mean communication score increased after training and the empathy score as well. The overall result reflected how training can improve emergency nurse's communication and empathy skills. Cordier et al. (2011) provides a relevant example of how nurses frequently have difficulty accepting their own anger at the patients. During patient care, nurses have a tendency to experience negative feelings such as hostility, which can be directed towards the patient. In that moment, the nurse may not be able to manage his/her feelings appropriately; which can compromise patient care. Understanding an emotion involves appreciating its depth, diversity, and complexity. Once a nurse correctly identifies, understands, and uses emotion to facilitate reasoning, there is a greater ability to manage emotional situations effectively. Mastering these abilities can increase the level of communication and in turn improve the patient's satisfaction. Research of emotional intelligence in nursing suggests there is a great potential that this concept will improve nursing performance, prevent burnout, and recuperate retention.

### Mindfulness training

Jon Kabat-Zinn defines mindfulness as an "awareness that arises through paying attention, on purpose, in the present moment, non-judgementally." ([www.mindful.org](http://www.mindful.org)). In the seventies, Dr. Jon Kabat-Zinn founded the Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) program at the University of Massachusetts, this approach became popular in the organizational context as well. Today, several institutions help professionals and organizations to integrate mindfulness into work ([instituteformindfulleadership.org](http://instituteformindfulleadership.org)).

According to the health reports, the highest number of absences from work is provided by the service sector (Borman et al., 2011). Mindfulness approach is considered as an effective intervention when it comes to the mental health of service workers. It is currently on the forefront of various therapeutic approaches. The

reason why mindfulness assists in cultivating an open, attentive and receptive mode of thinking is because it helps the practitioner to detach from preconceptions, thereby reacting more flexibly and in concordance with personal needs (Roemer & Orsillo, 2009). Here we will shortly present a research output of the study of the effects of mindfulness meditation on emotional exhaustion and well-being of emotional workers. Effects of a mindfulness intervention were explored via conducting a quantitative diary study extending over ten working days (Feinholdt, 2012). This research hypothesized that effects of mindfulness practice on well-being variables would be mediated by experiential avoidance and by perspective taking. It was proven how mindfulness meditation predicted negative affect, emotional exhaustion, and job satisfaction. Moreover, participants in the experimental group reported less often negative affect and feelings of emotional exhaustion, and their job satisfaction rates were higher than in the control group. Following their prediction, effects of mindfulness on the well-being variables were largely mediated by experiential avoidance, which respectively exacerbated emotional exhaustion and negative affect, but when mindfulness meditation was not controlled it led to drops in the job satisfaction and positive affect. As authors explain, people experience less negative affect and are less emotionally exhausted, not because they practice mindfulness meditation per se, but because practicing mindfulness lowers a person's tendency to engage in experiential avoidance, which has direct consequences on feelings of emotional exhaustion and negative affect. (Feinholdt, 2012).

In order to use mindfulness approach for the training of employees in the service industry, educators should be also trained in mindfulness approach and should have relevant experience that connects providing emotional labor with mindfulness technics. Service workers need to learn about mindfulness meditations, breathing technics, and awareness practice. These components may be helpful in learning to observe their emotions and reactions without judgment, which could be useful and possibly lower the emotional exhaustion level. Also, these technics may help in observing the reactions and behavior of demanding clients in a neutral way, which consequently makes responding adequately easier.

The three technics listed above: emotional intelligence, transactional analysis and mindfulness were recognized as methods that could improve mental health of service sector employees and prevent or lower harm of emotional labor. Training of EI, TA and mindfulness can help in improving the communication between service sector employees and their clients or customers. Moreover, by using those three methods employees can learn how to recognize and manage their emotions and how to accept their emotions in a non-judgmental manner. This can be very helpful in lowering emotional exhaustion and preventing burnout syndrome.

## Conclusion

It is an indisputable fact that service workers provide high emotional labor that affects their job satisfaction, but leads to emotional exhaustion as well. Emotional

exhaustion and burnout syndrome correlate with frequent sick leaves, turn out and loss in investments and new recruiting process. To protect their workers, managers need to provide an adequate training for their staff. There are several factors that influence emotional labor, here we discussed the cultural perspective, gender, and customer interaction expectations. These factors should be taken into consideration when preparing the training for service workers. In academic circles, there are numerous papers regarding emotional labor, but managers lack publications which offer a detailed description of the technics and practical exercises for developing skills that could improve emotion regulation and protect the mental health of service workers. Here we described a few examples that could be beneficial in the service workers training: emotional intelligence, transactional analysis and mindfulness. It is evident that there is a significant need to establish a more comprehensive list of useful methods in emotion regulation of service workers that will provide a practical implementation of all academic insights.

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## EMOCIONALNI RAD ZAPOSLENIH U USLUŽNOM SEKTORU – KARAKTERISTIKE, POSLEDICE I MOGUĆA REŠENJA

### Apstrakt

*Rad nastoji da prikaže karakteristike emocionalnog rada zaposlenih u uslužnom sektoru. Emocionalni rad je napor koji zaposleni ulažu da bi prikazali svoje emocije i ponašanja na način koji će zadovoljiti klijenta i da bi izrazili emocije koje su poželjne u njihovoj organizaciji. Mnoga istraživanja pokazuju da emocionalni rad pozitivno utiče na zadovoljstvo poslom kod zaposlenih, ali takođe i vodi ka emocionalnoj iscrpljenosti i utiče na njihovo blagostanje. Rad nudi neka potencijalna rešenja za umanjeње štetnosti emocionalnog rada među zaposlenima u uslužnom sektoru kao i mere za unapređenje njihovog mentalnog zdravlja.*

**Ključne reči:** *emocionalni rad, uslužni sektor, zaposleni, emocionalna iscrpljenost, mentalno zdravlje*