

Research on Emotional Labor and the Influence on the Improvement of Customer Service Quality

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Abstract: With the rapid development of China's tertiary industry, especially the service industry, more and more people engaged in the service industry. Service personal contact with the customer directly, so service personal's emotion will affect the customer experience directly. Therefore, Emotional labor is increasingly valued by managers. Emotional labor is a process which staff interact with customer in accordance with certain organizational rules. The study shows that emotional labor has a significant effect on a series of outcome variables in organizational context, both positive and negative, and its target audience includes the actor, the trader, and the rule maker. Through 7-ELEVEN case investigation, the paper finds emotional labor problems that exist in the current service industry and find propose solutions.

1. Introduction

In an era of increasingly fierce competition, the demand for service industries in domestic and foreign markets has increased dramatically. During the period of the new normal economy, the adjustment of the domestic economic and industrial structure has progressed steadily. Nowadays, the service industry accounts for an increasing proportion in China and even the world economy. According to the National Bureau of Statistics, the proportion of the service industry in the country's GDP exceeded 50% for the first time in 2015, reaching 50.5%. As of the end of 2018, the service industry accounted for 52% of the country's GDP. Therefore, the service industry is the cornerstone of China's rapid economic growth and occupies an important strategic position in the national economy. Laiyun Sheng, Director of the National Economic Comprehensive Statistics Department of the National Bureau of Statistics, once said that the GDP of service industries in developed countries accounts for more than 70%, or even 80% of the total national GDP. There is still a big gap between countries. In the new normal state of the economy, China will move towards this goal, and the era of a service economy has arrived. Do not number your paper: All manuscripts must be in English, also the table and figure texts, otherwise we cannot publish your paper. Please keep a second copy of your manuscript in your office. When receiving the paper, we assume that the corresponding authors grant us the copyright to use the paper for the book or journal in question.

In "The Third Wave" book, Alvin Toffler once pointed out that "the next step of the service economy is to experience the economy, and merchants will win by providing such experience services." Today's service economy and future experience economy all convey to us a common message-the service industry provides more customer experience, not just the goods themselves. In order to bring customers a better experience and improve customer satisfaction, service staff must smile and face customers sincerely, and not bring their negative emotions into their work. Nowadays, more and more organizations require service personnel to face customers in accordance with regulations, and they need to work with emotions for a long time, which is also a pressure on service personnel. Organizations should give service personnel the emotional work they deserve remuneration. In the service economy era, front-line service personnel have direct face-to-face contact with customers. If service personnel can establish certain emotional exchanges and interactions with customers, they can improve customer satisfaction. Because of this, service organizations will also formulate Some require the service staff to meet the expectations of the

organization.

2. Literature review

2.1 Connotation of emotional labor

Before the emergence of the term emotional labor, scholars used emotional work to define the process of adjusting external behavior expression or internal emotional feelings according to the rules of emotional expression. In 1979, Hochschild first proposed the term emotion management, which means that the service staff should restrict their emotions according to the requirements of the environment. In 1983, Hochschild defined emotional labor, which refers to emotional management for the creation of a fair and visible facial and physical expression [1]. Hochschild takes airline stewardess as the research object and analyzes their service process. The study found that the stewardess can face passengers with smile service anytime, anywhere. They can effectively manage their emotions, Airlines will serve this smile Paying a certain reward is emotional labor [2]. Other foreign scholars have also defined emotional labor from other angles, and the concept of emotional labor has also been improved. For example, Diefendorff and Gossierand define emotional labor from the perspective of psychological theory, and consider it to be a dynamic process, that is, to emotional Imbalances are managed to bring them in line with organizational requirements [3].

2.2 Status of Emotional Labor Research

Only in the 1980s did foreign scholars focus on emotional issues in organizations. In 1983, Hochschild first proposed the term emotional labor [4]. Since then, foreign scholars have started a systematic analysis of their research on emotional labor. A series of studies have also been carried out on the content related to emotional labor, such as: emotional labor dimension model, emotional labor scale, internal mechanism of emotional labor, emotional labor-related variables, and another participant in emotional labor-the customer Research, etc. Grandey found that emotional labor has a certain positive prediction of the service performance of service personnel. Organizational expression rules are not related to surface play, but are positively related to deep performance and promote each other. Spencer and Rupp's research shows that customers' different treatment of all service personnel will lead to internal imbalances of these service personnel, thereby increasing the emotional labor intensity of service personnel. Tottrdell and other scholars have found that deep behavior has a positive impact on service personnel, while surface behavior has a negative impact, which can lead to emotional imbalance of service personnel and reduce service personnel's loyalty and job satisfaction.

Chinese scholars' research on emotional labor is not comprehensive enough. One part is translate and interpret the works of foreign scholars, and the other is make certain extensions and extensions based on the experimental research of foreign scholars. The study did not reach a consensus. Tang Chaoying believes that emotional labor is to control and regulate one's emotions in order to meet the expectations of the organization [5]. Wang Yigui divides the structure of emotional labor into three aspects, which are mode orientation, work characteristic orientation, and content orientation. Due to factors such as national conditions, culture, and tradition, some foreign theories may not be suitable for the development of China's service industry. Some domestic scholars have combined with China's unique background and achieved some remarkable research results. Zheng Lingru set the research target to the front-line service personnel engaged in the financial industry, and studied the relationship between front-line service personnel's emotional burnout, emotional exhaustion, job satisfaction, and organizational expectations. Empirical research results show that emotional labor is directly proportional to job satisfaction [6]. Hu Yang takes the front-line employees of logistics companies as the research object, and assumes the influence of the five personality traits on personal service orientation from the perspective of personality traits and behaviors. Empirical analysis shows that the true emotional expression in the emotional labor of front-line employees of logistics companies affects the quality of customer service Promotion has a positive effect, and the impact of surface and deep behaviors on service orientation is not obvious [7].

3. Discussion on Emotional Labor and Customer Service Quality

3.1 Relationship between emotional labor and customer service quality

In the service industry, employees often communicate face-to-face with customers. In the process of communication, employees' emotions have a great influence. When employees communicate with customers smoothly, customers can get satisfactory service from employees, and then promote the improvement of corporate performance. When there are obstacles in the communication between employees and customers, the service process deviates from the plan and deviations occur. The employees and customers cannot control and predict the communication results well, and some unpredictable changes occur, which will have a negative impact on the quality of customer service. Employees working in a good mood can help reduce their work pressure, and at the same time can promote the improvement of customer service quality. If employees' emotional labor is not compensated, employees will be slack in the work process, their work seriousness will be significantly reduced, and they will even become bored with their work. Once this happens, it will inevitably reduce the quality of service, fail to obtain customer satisfaction and trust, cause customer service quality to decline, and even lose customer resources. In 1924, the famous Hawthorne Experiment in the field of management showed that employees' emotions had a huge impact on productivity. When the employees in the experimental group knew that they were being concerned, their production enthusiasm was fully mobilized, and productivity reached the usual level several times, this far exceeds the experimenter's prediction. This shows that the emotional management of employees has a huge impact on the performance of the company.

3.2 Factors Affecting Emotional Labor

Studies based on the theory of resource conservation show that, whether it is surface or deep play, these labors will consume employees' energy to varying degrees. When such consumption accumulates to a certain degree, it will cause disharmony within the employee's body, which will affect employees' Psychological state, causing employees to have a burnout mentality. Research shows that there is a great correlation between emotional labor and job burnout, but the two are not a simple linear relationship. There are intricate and complex factors intertwined between the two, which mainly include individual factors and organizational factors.

3.2.1 Individual factors

Individual factors are mainly caused by employee's job burnout due to personal reasons. These factors affect the employee's emotions, which has a negative impact on the work, leading to a decline in customer service quality. Among the personal factors, there are three main factors that have an important effect on emotions, including gender, personal characteristics, and emotional intelligence.

(1) Gender

Previous studies have shown that men and women have very different ways of expressing their emotions. Women tend to disguise positive emotions and suppress negative emotions in their emotional expressions, whereas men are just the opposite in this regard. Negative emotions and suppress positive emotions. It is the difference in emotional expression between men and women that causes women to often “pretend to smile” during work, suppressing their true feelings. Therefore, women play more surface roles in emotional labor, and surface roles need to suppress negative emotions more. The high degree of mismatch between the true feelings inside and the actual behavior makes female employees more prone to burnout during work.

(2) Personal characteristics

The influence of personal traits on job burnout is mainly reflected in whether employees choose surface or deep play during the work process, which depends on the choice of employees' emotional regulation strategies. Among them, self-monitoring and neuroticism can more accurately predict surface play, and the sense of responsibility and extraversion show a negative correlation with surface play. Pleasantness has a high accuracy in predicting deep play. In addition, extraversion plays a positive role in the perception of positive emotions.

(3) Emotional intelligence

Emotional intelligence is the ability to process emotional information at work. High emotional intelligence can effectively buffer the effects of job burnout caused by negative emotions at work. In this process, employees with high emotional intelligence have better ability to regulate emotions. In the course of work, such employees spend less energy on emotional regulation than employees with low emotional intelligence, and correspondingly less emotional stress. Employees with high emotional intelligence are more inclined to play in depth. During the process of deep play, employees' internal feelings are consistent with actual actions, which will make employees' job burnout odds much lower. In general, high emotional intelligence can help employees effectively regulate emotional stress.

3.2.2 Organizational factors

Individual factors emphasize the influence of employees' own characteristics on emotional regulation. Among organizational factors, it is the influence of factors in the environment of an enterprise on employees' emotional regulation and job burnout. There are two types of factors that have a more significant effect on regulating emotions, including work autonomy and supervisor support.

(1) Work autonomy

In emotional labor, surface acting is the main reason for consuming employees' emotions. Work autonomy is an important way for employees to regulate their emotions. In the surface play, although the emotional exhaustion of the employees is consistent to some extent, the employees who work autonomously can master a certain degree of autonomy in the work and perform customer service in their own way, so they can experience more positive emotions effectively reduce the chance of job burnout. Work autonomy can not only alleviate the negative effects of emotional exhaustion in surface acting, but in deep acting, employees with high work autonomy can also experience the positive effects of positive emotions more than employees with low work autonomy.

(2) Supervisor support

According to the theory of resource conservation, employees will find supportive resources in their work environment, such as asking for help from supervisors after suffering losses from emotional labor. After employees suffer losses caused by emotional labor, supervisors should give compensation to employees in a timely manner, including both material compensation and spiritual compensation, which has an important effect on improving employee motivation. But if supervisors pay too much attention to employees' emotional labor, they may receive the opposite result. The more the supervisor pays attention to the emotional performance of the employees, in order to meet the requirements of the supervisor in order to achieve an increase in position or salary, the employee will deliberately use surface acting, which will increase the chance of job burnout.

4. Emotional labor of 7-ELEVEN employees

4.1 Analysis of employees' emotional labor status

7-ELEVEN convenience store (hereinafter referred to as 7-ELEVEN) is a Japanese retail giant and the world's largest chain group. However, since 7-ELEVEN settled in China, many complaints have been received. Most of the complaints are employees with bad attitudes and bad tone, failing to provide satisfactory services to customers, and failing to meet customer expectations. These current conditions indicate that the 7-ELEVEN head office in China does not pay much attention to the emotional labor of employees, and the employees of 7-ELEVENs do not do their own emotional management. Based on this situation, the author conducted a detailed investigation of the 7-ELEVEN in Qingdao.

4.1.1 7-ELEVEN ignores the emotional labor of employees

7-ELEVEN excessively requires employees to face customers with the best mental state in order to bring the greatest satisfaction to customers. The service concept advocated by the entire 7-ELEVEN is "the customer is God" and "whatever the customer requires be satisfied", putting

employees and customers in an unequal position. 7-ELEVEns are customer-centric, ignore the emotional needs of employees, and allow our two parties to be unequal, which makes some 7-ELEVEn customers irritable and aggressive, and the customer's attitude is not good, it will naturally affect the employees' emotions. One-sided requirements require employees to treat customers with prescribed service content, focusing only on results and not on the consequences of employees' long-term emotional labor. In addition, 7-ELEVEn employees have relatively low salaries, limited career development opportunities, and sometimes cannot be sufficiently respected. Employees' emotional problems have not received sufficient attention, and the quality of customer service will also decline.

4.1.2 Relying too much on employee self-regulation

The manager of 7-ELEVEn lacks attention to employees' emotional problems, which makes it difficult to improve the quality of customer service. When there is a conflict between employees and customers, managers will think that customers are right, and let employees apologize to achieve customer satisfaction, which will cause employees to lose their emotions. Compensation for employees' emotional labor is paid solely through salary increases, without paying attention to employees' emotional regulation. When employees are engaged in negative emotions in emotional labor, they are mainly self-regulated and lack of standardized management of 7-ELEVEn companies, which results in reduced employee job satisfaction, high turnover rates, and low employee loyalty.

4.1.3 Confusion about the meaning of emotion management

The manager of 7-ELEVEn cannot understand the meaning of emotion management accurately. Emotional management is not just the ability of employees to produce prosocial behavior through the control of their own emotions. Emotional management is an individual's need to maintain physical and mental health, and is a process of perception, control and regulation. The focus of emotional labor is that employees express their desired emotions through physical movements or language to improve employee performance and customer service quality. 7-ELEVEns should pay employees a certain salary for emotional labor. If managers want to improve the quality of customer service, it is not enough to start with the concept of emotional labor. They also need to design the management system in combination with the macro environment of each 7-ELEVEn. The development of the current service economy and the demand for emotional experience by people's consumption concepts require the managers of 7-ELEVEns to pay attention to the role of emotional labor.

4.2 Suggestions for 7-ELEVEn Emotional Labor

According to the research status of scholars at home and abroad, it is found that emotional labor has an important role in improving the customer service quality of 7-ELEVEns. Good emotional management of 7-ELEVEns can greatly improve organizational efficiency. From 7-ELEVEn The head office, the manager of the 7-ELEVEn, and the employees themselves will discuss it separately.

4.2.1 7-ELEVEn Head Office

(1) Shaping a good corporate culture

7-ELEVEn should pay attention to the emotional labor of employees, shape a good corporate culture, and no longer ignore the emotional problems of employees. The impact of corporate culture on emotional labor is mainly reflected in the internalization and integration of organizational emotional rules. Therefore, 7-ELEVEn integrate organizational emotional expression rules into corporate culture to form common values of employees. Managers should try to create a harmonious working atmosphere and environment to improve the job satisfaction of employees. A good corporate culture can increase employee loyalty and make employees proud to work in such an organization. In this way, during the work process, employees will always face the work with a positive attitude, reducing the occurrence of work stress and anxiety, which undoubtedly has an important role in promoting the quality of service for employees. Having a good organizational culture means that employees have solid cohesion. This positive organizational emotional atmosphere will slowly infect everyone in the organization, so that employees can spontaneously

carry out emotional labor. In this kind of voluntary emotional labor, the speed of emotional exhaustion will decrease significantly. Only when employees feel the sincere attention given by the organization and then they provide sincere service to external customers.

(2) Improve salary structure

7-ELEVEN head office should raise the salary of employees to make it consistent with the return of employees' emotional labor. Salary encouragement is the internal driving force to drive employees' emotional labor. The important role of salary management is to directly stimulate employees' job satisfaction, promote employees' spontaneous compliance, and recognize the status of the organization's emotional labor management, thereby improving the quality of customer service for employees. Employees' emotions are complex and changeable, and the impact of emotional labor is time-sensitive. Therefore, 7-ELEVEN's incentive measures must be timely, and the role of non-material compensation in emotional labor management must be emphasized. Satisfy the needs of employees as the premise, provide appropriate incentives, such as: increase salary, provide opportunities for promotion, arrange employee vacations, and so on.

4.2.2 7-ELEVEN Manager

(1) People-oriented

The managers of 7-ELEVENs cannot ignore the concept of "all people are created equal." Customers are not always right, unreasonable customers always exist. In the past, managers only paid attention to the cost, efficiency, profit and other factors related to organizational performance in the process of managing the organization. Emotional labor is often ignored by managers because it affects the performance of the enterprise indirectly. The managers of 7-ELEVENs should realize that in the service industry, the importance of people must be the first. It's not just customers, employees are the same. In the management process, managers should deeply realize that, while considering efficiency, they also consider the various emotions of employees, and give employees more humane care. In this process, the two sides are frank, the manager treats the employees with an equal attitude and gives them more care. This will put the employees in a relaxed working atmosphere, and the employees will reduce their anxiety and improve the quality of service. In the organization, there are more informal groups in addition to formal groups. These informal groups usually have more influence in the daily work of employees than in formal groups. Therefore, the managers of 7-ELEVENs should attach importance to informal groups and give full play to their positive significance. Employees' emotional changes are often affected by specific things happening in the organization, leading to negative emotions. Therefore, managers should pay attention to those seemingly insignificant things, which often have a profound impact on employees.

(2) Organizing collective activities

Convenience stores have a single working environment. Employees who work long hours are prone to fatigue and tiredness, which will lead to a decline in customer service quality. At this time, if 7-ELEVEN organizes some group activities, it will greatly relieve the employees' negative emotions in daily work. Irregular group activities mobilize the curiosity of employees, make employees full of expectations for the content of the activities, and improve their enthusiasm for work. At the same time, group activities promote communication between employees, enhance the feelings between colleagues, and increase employee loyalty to the organization.

4.2.3 7-ELEVEN employees

(1) Fully recognize yourself

If employees can't understand themselves correctly and don't know how to discover their own advantages, then employees will doubt their ability. In the face of customers, failure to express their views completely and clearly will lead to a decline in service quality. Employees should neither underestimate themselves nor overestimate themselves. When employees are arrogant, they can easily develop pride and arrogance, which reflects that they cannot listen to the needs of customers well during the work process. Such cognition leads to work mistakes. Therefore, employees must have correct self-awareness, which is the premise for employees to perform good emotional labor.

(2) Harmonious interpersonal relationships

Everyone plays their role in a complex social network, as long as we live in society, no one can be separated from social organizations. Establishing good interpersonal relationships is one of the important ways to ensure a person's mental health. In a 7-ELEVEN, if an employee cannot integrate into the and establish a good relationship with colleagues, then during the work process, the employee is likely to be excluded by colleagues in the store. Therefore, employees should respect each other, be considerate of each other, and create a harmonious organizational culture. When employees are in a harmonious network of relationships, they can work easily and happily to meet the needs of customers with high quality service.

(3) Emphasis on emotional management

Emotional management is an effective control of one's own emotions. One's ability to control and manage emotions is called emotional intelligence. After long-term research, psychologists have found that only 20% of a person's achievements can be attributed to IQ, and the other 80% are controlled by EQ. Therefore, if employees want to achieve good development, they must learn to improve their emotional intelligence. Human beings are different from other animals in that they have rich feelings. Human feelings are complex, diverse and dynamic. When emotions change, employees must have enough emotional intelligence to control their emotions and regulate their emotions so that their negative emotions have no bad effect on work. The emotional management methods mainly include self-consolation and temporary diversion. Employees need to use these methods flexibly to effectively manage their emotions.

5. Conclusion

In this paper, we take the 7-ELEVEN employees as a case study to explore the current situation of the emotional labor of service employees in China. Based on the research of domestic and foreign scholars, we analyze the problems and status of 7-ELEVENs' employee emotional management. We propose a support system for emotional labor management strategies that conforms to 7-ELEVENs, and provide theoretical references and practical guidelines for improving customer service quality, including theoretical research and management exploration. We propose a support system for emotional labor management strategies in line with 7-ELEVENs, which provides theoretical reference and practical guidance for improving customer service quality, including theoretical research and management exploration. At present, domestic research on emotional labor is still in its infancy, and most of the existing researches are empirical studies on the factors affecting emotional labor. This paper links emotional labor with the quality of customer service. It emphasizes that in management practice, corporate managers must pay attention to emotional labor, design a good corporate culture, and provide comprehensive organizational support for employees' emotional labor to achieve corporate goals and customer satisfaction.

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