

# A Study on Emotional Labour among Teaching Professionals in an Indian Context

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**Abstract:** Emotional intelligence is one person behaving in accordance with the other person's emotions. This by itself is in a way Emotional Labour prohibiting display of actually felt emotions. The consequences of this is more significant in the superior subordinate relationship that prevails in the workplace because of contradictions that may arise in day to day workplace issues which demands execution of emotional and intellectual decisions from either sides. The researcher made an attempt to study the emotional aspects of the teaching faculty members in schools and colleges. The researcher choose 112 private school teachers and 112 private college faculty members for the present study using purposive sampling technique by non-probability method. The samples were chosen from a metropolitan city Chennai which has cosmopolitan crowd of people representing all states of the country. Hence, the findings of the study can be generalized to whole of the country as the opinion of academicians. The findings of the study are discussed in detail in the paper.

**Keywords:** Emotions, Emotional intelligence, Emotional Labour, Teachers, Chennai

## 1. Introduction

Emotional intelligence or Emotional Labour, could be both is a significant aspect of discussion in every type of industry or organization irrespective of sectors. This study is however specifically pertaining to academic sector targeting the teachers because they play a significant role in influencing the life of the students who are the future citizens. The teachers are expected to control or balance the emotions to a greater extent for two main reasons. First is that they are very much younger by the age to their teachers and the second is instant gratification is prevalent among the present day students, whereby they are unable to accept high powered emotional decisions from their older people of any relationship like parents, teachers, relatives, friends etc. Moreover, in our country the children are emotionally bonded with the parents all the life in contrast to other continents where the child is grown up with individually right from the time of being born. The Emotional Labor Theory deals with emotions which employees feel or pretend to feel in order to meet their job requirements, irrespective whether or not they are different from their true emotions. Emotional labour is defined as the way of managing publicly perceptible emotional displays, i.e. those mediated by physiognomies and body language.

## 2. Review of Literature

The researcher has highlighted very studies that had been done in earlier years which highlights about deep acting and surface acting that majorly is related emotional labour.

Karim,(2009) stated in the study done on emotional labour that excessive emotional labour may have a negative influence on one's behaviour as well as one's psychic and somatic well-being. This inturn may have a negative impact on the workplace.

Emily, A. B et al (2007) did a very significant study on the cultural impacts on the emotional labour on workplace. The researchers compared the Europeans, Asians and Americans

in their studies as everyone is facing the challenge of interacting with people of varied continents as per present work system. The study emphasizes that women showed bicultural values in order to avoid suppression due to emotional labour in workplace.

Butler et al (2003), in their study quoted that surface actors find it harder to balance their emotions because surface acting leads to higher stress levels. The high level stress leads to affecting of the immune system. Surface acting will lead depression in the long run, reducing motivation at work, increasing absenteeism and the turnover from organizations.

Grandey (2003),in the study done found that deep acting does not create much problems like surface acting because the deep actors are very clear in depicting the actual action they wish to display. By doing this they don't worry about the true emotions thereby showing negative correlation of emotional labour with job satisfaction.

Brotheridge and Grandey (2002) have found in their study that deep acting has increased the deep actors' perception of efficiency and self-image at work. They are able to maintain their desired image at workplace based on their acting that they are able to hold on to.

The studies discussed shows that whatever be the context of emotions the perception of emotions cannot be denied. Hence, this study is an attempt to understand the context of emotional labour of teaching professionals which might be a value addition to the existing literature on emotions.

## 3. Methodology

### 3.1 Methods and Measures

Purposive sampling by non-probability method was exploited to choose the samples for the study. Primary and secondary data served as the base for the methodology of this study. Secondary data were collected from the journals, magazines, publications, reports, books, dailies, periodicals,

articles, research papers, websites, company publications, manuals and booklets. Primary data were collected through well framed questionnaires. The questionnaire of the research consisted statements in Likert's five point scale. The first section dealt with the personal and organizational profile of the respondents. The second section consisted of self- developed 6 items to understand the emotional labour experienced by the teaching professionals. The study was done among the school teachers and college teachers chosen purposely from Chennai City and from the teaching fraternity. The tool used was self-developed to suit the needs of the teaching fraternity.

### 3.2. Emotional Labour Scale

A tool containing 6 items to study the Emotional labour was developed by, Sowmya.K.R. The tool was self developed to study the emotions of school teachers and college teachers chosen purposely from Chennai City and from the teaching fraternity in Indian scenario. The tool was tested for its reliability, and its cronbach's alpha co-efficient was 0.872. Sample items were: "I always do things to impress the students", "I always do things to impress my Superior", "I am able to balance my work and life effectively".

## 4. Analysis and Discussion

An 8 item tool was administered to study the emotional labour experienced by the teaching professionals in Chennai city. The data collected was analyzed using paired t-test to identify the factor that causes emotional labour for the teachers. The data was collected from the college teachers and school in equal numbers of 112 purposely. Paired t-test was exploited to do a comparative study as the sample size was equal from both sectors.

**Table 1:** An Analysis on Emotional Labour perceived by School and college teachers

S. No	Emotional Labour	N=112	Mean	Std. Deviation	T value	Sig
1	I always do things to impress the students	College	4.6051	.90218	2.494	.013
		School	3.9979	1.08667		
2	I always do things to impress my Superior	College	3.8875	.95653	-3.921	.000
		School	3.8047	.82131		
3	I am unable to maintain good relations with peers due to pressure from the profession	College	4.2017	.59401	11.339	.000
		School	3.8960	1.36046		
4	I feel that the students of present day are very challenging	College	4.2951	.78548	5.300	.000
		School	4.2887	.78379		
5	I am able to balance my work and life effectively	College	2.7701	1.25960	3.1432	.000
		School	3.0255	1.11243		
6	I feel although I am strong in my subject emotionally it is challenging to handle students.	College	3.5117	.66797	-4.654	.661
		School	3.5096	.79852		

N=112 for school and college teachers respectively

From the table 1, it is evident that the emotional labour perceived statement-wise showed difference for all the 6

items. In the first item "I always do things to impress the students" the mean (4.6051) of college teachers is greater than the mean (3.9979) of school teachers. In the second item "I always do things to impress my Superior" the mean (3.8875) of college teachers is greater than the mean (3.8047) of school teachers. In the third item "I am unable to maintain good relations with peers due to pressure from the profession" the mean (4.2017) of college teachers is greater than the mean (3.8960) of school teachers. In the fourth item "I feel that the students of present day are very challenging" the mean (4.2951) of college teachers is greater than the mean (4.2887) of school teachers. In the fifth item "I am able to balance my work and life effectively" the mean (2.7701) of college teachers is lesser than the mean (3.0255) of school teachers. In the last item "I feel although I am strong in my subject emotionally it is challenging to handle students." the mean (3.5117) of college teachers is greater than the mean (3.5096) of school teachers. This shows that there is a significant difference in perception of varied factors that contribute to the Emotional labour of a teacher. However, the scores of the college teachers are higher for 5 out of 6 items for which the emotional labour of the college teachers are higher than the school teachers.

## 5. Conclusion

This researcher infers that in 5 out of the 6 items the college teachers experienced more of emotional labour than School teachers. It can be interpreted that the college teachers face lot of challenges in managing their emotions among peers, Superiors and among students. Hence, in comparison to the school teachers they are unable to manage the work and life effectively due to the emotional labour experienced in the workplace. This may be due to several reasons but not restricted to technological advancements in present days, the exposure of present day college students, their friend circles, and the way they are brought up at home .There are situations which even the parents are unable to control their children at home and thereby which may be even more challenging for the college teachers to handle at workplace. The college or school teachers , educational counselors, school & college managements are moreover instructed nowadays not to put too much of pressure on students and at the same time expected to manage the students effectively. The teachers who are found in the mid of managing this pressure is found to suffer emotional labour where they are unable to express their real emotions. Whatever be the mind state of the students, the teachers must be counseled extensively to not take too much emotional pressure which in turn will affect their wellbeing in all aspects. The management must support the teachers to handle their emotional pressure by conducting emotional intelligence programs, counseling programs, etc , else a happy community of teachers may not be available in future to serve the forthcoming students community.

## 6. Practical Implications

The practical implications of the study, was with respect to generalizing the finding to the whole universe. This is because although the study is a perception based study, it may differ based on the cultural impacts on students in varied countries. However, the findings of this study may be

generalized to the whole of India and this may give way to comparative study across countries in the context of emotional labour.

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