

WHAT ASPECT OF SERVING CUSTOMERS PRODUCES THE MOST NEGATIVE EMOTION LABOR? IT'S A MATTER OF CULTURE

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Abstract

This article assesses how individual cultural orientation affects the way individuals make attributions, experience and manage emotions during and after service encounters, and their subsequent work attitudes. We present a series of research propositions to show how culture acts as a key mediator in the notion of emotional labor. Based on this line of argument, we propose that during a service encounter, an individualist service provider experiences more emotional labor relative to a collectivist service provider. Conversely, in coping with the repercussion of emotional labor, a collectivist service provider experiences more emotional exhaustion, subsequently leading to a decrease in job satisfaction, whereas an individualist service provider experiences less emotional exhaustion, subsequently leading to less or no negative impacts in job satisfaction. In addition, it is proposed that emotional experiences and regulations vary across service work roles - whether a service provider occupies a high or low status hierarchical position relative to the customers. Theoretical and managerial implications are discussed.

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