Associations of Personality, Political Skill and Emotional Intelligence with Emotion Work

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Associations of Personality, Political Skill and Emotional Intelligence with Emotion Work

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Abstract- In customer service occupations, emotional control plays a crucial role in client interface. Employees in these occupations require skilful handling of customer related issues. This demands adequate control of clients' feelings and emotions. A blend of qualities in employees persuades them to respond to the clients. Thus, the degree of emotional stability that employees have strongly influences their inner self. By using cross sectional descriptive survey on 200 customer service workers across the country, the study examines the associations of personality, political skill and emotional intelligence with emotion work. The subjects were assessed on emotion work, personality, emotional intelligence, and political skill. Pearson correlation and hierarchical multiple regression were used to analyze the data. Results revealed that personality, political skill and emotional intelligence emerged as strong predictors of emotion work. This study highlights the need for understanding emotion work as an important potential interpersonal variable for enhancing employees' as well as organizational health.

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I. Introduction

In customer service occupations, display of appropriate emotions plays an integral role in helping employees' maintain work life balance. Employees engaged in such occupations use several techniques to handle customer demands. Evidence shows that positive characteristics such as optimism, self esteem, self control, reasoning etc. acts as a prerequisite for making the communication process effective. It is necessary for organizations to understand the potency of individuals in terms of dealing with client related issues. Employees, in general, posses a specific blend of qualities which persuade them to react in a certain way. This may either facilitate or impede the interaction among the concerned units. Under such circumstances, the intensity of emotional stability that employees internalize through experience strongly influences their inner self. It has been reviewed that external manifestation of organizationally desired expressions lead to suppression of negative emotions, which might further affect the employees mental health than when such emotions are manifested internally (Zapf, Vogt, Seifert, Mertini & Isic, 1999). Internalization of positive traits plays a very important role for the individual in displaying appropriate emotions and influencing

customers through social interaction. Customer service encounters often mandate that an employee should display certain emotions and suppress others (Hochschild, 1983; Ashforth & Humphrey, 1995). For example, bill collectors are expected to be angry and irritated (Rafaeli & Sutton, 1987), nurses are supposed to show caring and empathy (Zerbe, 2000), and customer service workers are expected to maintain 'service with a smile' (Pugh, 2001). In order to comply with such requirements, employees manipulate their emotional expressions. In this process, they tend to experience discordance between felt and required emotions by suppressing their genuine emotions. Such kind of emotional regulation at work is termed as 'emotion work'. In other words, it can be referred to as the psychological processes necessary to regulate organizationally desired emotions as part of one's job (Zapf, 2002). The researchers viewed emotion work as a multidimensional construct with both positive and negative health effects (Zapf & Holz, 2006).

Emotional regulation plays an important role in client interaction and related service occupations. In the current scenario, people from different ethnic backgrounds use appropriate emotional expressions to interact and influence others in order to achieve customer satisfaction by delivering quality services. Individual differences in personality and application of various emotional management techniques determine the employees' efficiency to handle customer demands. These differences further result in negative effects on their psychological and physical health. Thus, it is important to understand the role of personality, political skill and emotional intelligence on emotion work in organizations where employees are required to frequently interact with their clients to accomplish organizational objectives.

Researchers have shown personality as a psychological predictor of emotion work (Tews & Glomb, 2003; Austin, Dore & Donovan, 2008). Big five factors of personality, namely, neuroticism, extraversion, openness to experience, conscientiousness and agreeableness are assumed to play a crucial role in determining emotional stability of individuals engaged in customer service work. Neuroticism is concerned with the display of negative feelings during social interactions. The existing literature suggests that people who are high on neuroticism place a more negative interpretation on stressful work events, resulting in a

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deleterious impact on affective outcomes. For instance, over time, greater experience with negative affect leads to analytical thinking patterns which tends to become one of the most habitual characteristic of their decision making process, regardless of any changes in current mood (Brief, Butcher & Roberson, 1995). Research has shown that neuroticism is positively related to emotion work (Kokkonen & Pulkkinen, 2001;). It was also reported that neuroticism has direct relationships with employees' perceptions of demands to suppress negative emotions, where employees belonged to occupations such as sales, management, education, healthcare etc. (Diefendorff & Richard, 2003). Professionals who engage in frequent contact with customers, e.g. bill collectors, have been found to perform better in jobs that require the expression of negative emotions as compared to jobs requiring display of positive emotions (Sutton, 1991). It is also evident that people dealing with customers in sales, nursing and teaching with high neuroticism traits were positively associated with surface acting and suppression of negative emotions (Bono & Vey, 2007).

Extraversion reflects one's ability to be sociable, outgoing, optimistic and assertive. Individuals high on this trait are assumed to be enthusiastic while interacting with their customers. Research indicates that such people experience less emotion work and they are more likely to exhibit positive emotions during client interface. For example, a study found that service workers e.g. cashiers with high sociability traits are characterized by the display of more positive emotions than by service employees with low extraversion traits (Tan, Foo, Chong & Ng, 2003). Some studies have specifically reported that extraversion correlates negatively with surface acting and positively with the expression of naturally felt emotions (Diefendorff, Croyle & Gosserand, 2005; Tews & Glomb, 2003). A meta analysis was conducted to examine the role of extraversion as one of the predictors of emotion work, where, extraverts were found to have greater ability than introverts for responding to organizational demands by displaying positive feelings through deep acting (Bono & Vey, 2005). In its support, researchers experimentally attempted to induce positive mood in a group of three hundred and fifty nine undergraduate students and found a stronger positive mood effect among extraverts than in introverts (Larsen & Ketelaar, 1991).

Openness to experience is assumed to play an important role in influencing emotional control of an individual. It focuses upon broad-mindedness, originality, sensitiveness, imagination and curiousness in one's attitude toward the environment. Literature suggests that customer service employees high on this trait appear to be sensitive towards clients' emotions and get emotionally attached to their customers by establishing a sense of warmth, support and confidence. A study found inverse relation of openness

to experience with depersonalization and diminished personal accomplishment (Zellars, Perrewe & Hochwarter, 2000). It is also evident that this trait is positively correlated with deep acting and negatively correlated with surface acting emotion work strategy (McCance, 2011).

Conscientiousness emphasizes hardworking, responsible, and achievement oriented attitude shown by the employees during social interactions. Literature review indicates that individuals high on conscientiousness optimistically deal with their clients' emotions and experience less emotion work. For example, researchers reported that healthcare workers with high conscientiousness are positively associated with deep acting and experience greater degree of positive emotions than those scoring low on this trait (Diefendorff, Croyle & Gosserand, 2005; Austin, Dore & Donovan, 2008).

Agreeableness indicates a person's willingness to maintain and establish social relationships with others and the desire to be liked by others. Such people are more likely to exhibit positive feelings and maintain social harmony during client interface. Research indicated that agreeableness was positively related to suppressing negative emotions (Tews & Glomb, 2003).

However, despite these findings, prior researchers have contended that personality alone may not predict job performance, but rather requires social effectiveness skill e.g. political skill to predict work outcomes (Barrick & Mount, 1993; Semadar, Robbins & Ferris, 2006; Hogan & Shelton, 1998). A study proposed that political skill also plays a facilitating role with personality in the prediction of job performance (Blickle et.al., 2008). Political skill reflects one's ability to accurately understand interpersonal interactions combined with the capacity to deal with different situational demands. The role of political skill as a factor influencing emotion work has not been directly examined in past research. It is evident that political actors develop strong social networks and exhibit a sense of personal security, calmness, self-confidence and a feeling of comfort with the clients. All such characteristics enable them to meet the situational demands and experience less emotion work (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993; Collins, 1981). On the contrary, researchers have confirmed that full time management employees with high political skill are more likely to be affected by emotion work (Liu, Perrewe, Hochwarter & Kacmar, 2004).

Existing literature have suggested that big five personality factors along with emotional intelligence also play an important role in determining one's satisfaction with social relationships (Lopes, Salovey & Straus, 2003). Emotional intelligence deals with the ability to appropriately regulate emotions. It reflects one's capacity to perceive and understand the emotions of oneself and others and effectively expressing them by

using it appropriately in the decision making process. Research reported that emotional intelligence correlates negatively with surface acting and positively with deep acting (Prati, 2004; Ghalandari, Ghorbani & Jogh, 2012). Furthermore, it is evident that when confronted with emotion work, nurses experienced lower levels of burnout and somatic complaints and this effect was found to be mediated by the choice of emotion work strategies (Mikolajczak, Menil & Luminet, 2007). A study experimentally demonstrated that negative emotional differentiation was positively related to the frequency of negative emotional regulation, particularly at higher levels of emotional intensity (Barrett et.al., 2001). The researchers also reported that emotional differentiation and the aspects of emotion regulation comprise two important components of emotional intelligence. As the sociocultural background of Indian customer service workers varies widely from their western counterparts, the study attempts to explore the role of personality, political skill and emotional intelligence as psychological predictors of emotion work relevant to them. This may prove to be beneficial for the customer service organizations in promoting employee's wellbeing and their organization health.

II. OBJECTIVES

- To understand the relationship of personality, political skill, emotional intelligence and emotion work in Indian customer service work.
- To examine the associations of personality, political skill and emotional intelligence as psychological predictors of emotion work in Indian customer service work.

III. METHOD

a) Participants

The participants of the study include 200 customer service workers across the country from different geographical locations employed in customer service industries. Table 1 presents their demographic information.

Appendix

Table 1: Demographic Composition of the Sample (N = 200)

Demographics	Mean (SD)	Percentages
Age	35.94 (9.91)	
Gender		
Male		59.5
Female		40.5

For this study a cross – sectional descriptive design was used. The participants belonged to a variety of service occupations, such as, banking and insurance (12%), sales (10.9%), marketing (6%), software engineer (4.5%), legal advisor (3.5%), financial advisor (0.5%), customer service (11.9%), psychologist (10.4%), HR (33.3%), consultants (1.9%) and technical (5%). The sample comprised 59.5% males and 40.5% females. Their age ranged from 21 to 65 years with mean age of 35 years (M =35.94, SD =9.91). The sampling frame was narrowed to the criteria of subjects who have face-to-face or voice-to-voice interactions with clients/ customers and they are of either entry-level employees or middle-level managers. Stratified random sampling technique was used to collect the data. In demarcating the boundary of the sample, eight strata were identified and from which unequal respondents representing each group were drawn, thus bringing the total number of respondent to 346 indicating disproportionate stratified random sampling.

b) Procedure

Each participant read and signed an informed consent document. The questionnaires were individually administered to 200 employees across the country from different geographical locations working in service industries on full time basis. The service industries comprise professions such as sales/ marketing, strategic sourcing, law, banking, customer care, counseling, corporate training etc.. The participants were instructed to give responses which best describes their attitudes towards the statements given in the questionnaire. After collecting the data, scoring was completed and the responses were analyzed.

c) Measures

The following psychological measures were administered on the sample.

Frankfurt Emotion work scale (Zapf, Vogt, Seifert, Mertini & Isic, 1999): Frankfurt Emotion work scale (FEWS) measures the psychological processes necessary to regulate organizationally desired emotions as part of one's job. This comprises five subscales, namely, positive emotions, negative emotions, sensitivity requirements, emotional dissonance and interaction control. All subscales are scored independently of one another, with higher the score indicating greater emotion work. The scale is found to be internally consistent with cronbach alpha ranging from .51 to .92. Correlations between the FEWS and Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) provide evidence for high content validity.

Big Five Inventory (Rammstedt & John, 2007): The ten item scale of Big Five Inventory (BFI) provides a measure of personality consisting of five dimensions, namely, extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, neuroticism and openness to experience. The scale is quite reliable and valid having test retest reliability and convergent validity coefficient of .75 and .44 respectively. The scale correlated significantly with NEO-PI-R inventory.

Political Skill Inventory (Ferris et.al., 2005): The 18 item scale of Political Skill Inventory (PSI) measures social astuteness, interpersonal influence, networking ability and apparent sincerity. The inventory deals with the individuals' ability to understand others and to act on that knowledge in influential ways in order to enhance one's personal and/or organizational objectives. Higher the mean score on the scale, greater the degree of political skill and vice versa. The scale is found to have acceptable internal consistency reliability estimate of .90. Correlations of the scale with Mc Crae & Costa Conscientiousness Scale, State-Trait Anxiety Inventory, Synder's self monitoring scale, political savvy scale and Emotional Competence Inventory University Edition provide evidence for high convergent and discriminant validity.

Genos Emotional Intelligence Inventory (Palmer, Stough, Harmer & Gignac, 2009): The 14 item scale of Genos Emotional Intelligence Inventory measures emotional intelligence at workplace. The high score indicates the individual's ability to identify, assess, and control the emotions of self and others. The scale is quite reliable having internal consistency reliability estimate of .87. The concurrent validity was established through a series of empirical correlation with the Swinburne University Emotional Intelligence Test (SUEIT) (the predecessor of Genos EI), the Trait Meta-Mood Scale (TMMS), organizational commitment, and transformational leadership.

All the above scales were selected on the basis of the literature review and psychometric properties for all the psychological measures adopted. These scales were also standardised on Indian population and have proven reliability with cronbach alpha ranging from 0.35 to 0.84.

d) Statistical Analyses

For the current study statistical analysis was done using SPSS version 15. The analysis was done on three levels. Level I comprised of data cleaning. This was done by doing outlier analysis using box whisker diagrams (box plot analysis). Skewness and kurtosis were also carried out to see the normality of the data. Level II consists of descriptive statistics and reliability analysis. Means, standard deviations and Cronbach alpha were computed. Level III comprised relational analysis. Pearson correlation was used to assess the strength of the relationship between the predictors and the dependent variable. Level IV consists of prediction analysis. Hierarchical regression was used to evaluate the relationship between a set of independent variables and the dependent variable, controlling for or taking into account the impact of a different set of independent variables on the dependent variable.

IV. RESULTS

The purpose of this study is to examine the associations of personality, political skill and emotional intelligence with emotion work. The survey data obtained on a sample of 200 customer service workers were analyzed descriptively.

Table 2 : Descriptive Statistics of the Study Variables (N = 200)

Variable	M	SD	Alpha	Skewness	Kurtosis
PE	33.58	6.12	0.84	-0.62	0.32
NE	19.68	5.25	0.69	0.65	0.39
SR	13.49	2.39	0.37	-0.25	-0.29
ED	14.75	3.18	0.52	0.04	0.07
IC	12.43	2.72	0.36	-0.21	0.19
E	7.47	1.90	0.53	-0.32	-0.84
A	8.09	1.57	0.43	-0.62	0.33
C	8.20	1.63	0.41	-0.64	-0.36
N	4.14	1.87	0.56	0.66	-0.43
O	6.91	1.44	0.35	0.43	-0.50
PS	99.25	16.76	0.85	-0.91	1.11
EI	52.51	7.35	0.80	0.14	-0.69

Note: PE = Positive Emotions, NE = Negative Emotions, SR = Sensitivity Requirements, ED = Emotional Dissonance, IC = Interaction Control, E = Extraversion, A = Agreeableness, C = Conscientiousness, N = Neuroticism, O = Openness, PS = Political skill, EI = Emotional Intelligence

Table 2 shows the mean, standard deviation, cronbach alpha, skewness and kurtosis value of all the study variables. The mean and SD value of positive emotions, negative emotions, sensitivity requirements, emotional dissonance and interaction control are 33.58 (6.12), 19.68 (5.25), 13.49 (2.39), 14.75(3.18) and

12.43(2.72) respectively. Among the predictor variables the highest mean value is of political skill 99.25 (16.76) followed by emotional intelligence (M = 52.51, SD 7.35), conscientiousness (M=8.20, SD 1.63), agreeableness (M =8.09, SD 1.57), extraversion (M =7.47, SD 1.90), openness (M =6.91, SD 1.44) and neuroticism (M =4.14, SD 1.87). Normality of the collected is established through skewness and kurtosis. It was found that the value of skewness for positive emotions was (-0.62), negative emotions (0.65), sensitivity requirements (-0.25), emotional dissonance (0.04) and interactional control (-0.21), extraversion (-0.32), agreeableness (-0.62), conscientiousness (-0.64), neuroticism (0.66), openness (0.43), political skill (-0.91) and emotional intelligence (0.14). These values indicate that the study variables are reasonably close to normal as its skewness and kurtosis have values between –1.0 and +1.0.

Table 3 : Correlation Coefficients of the Study Variables (N=200)

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
PE	1.00											
NE	0.08	1.00										
SR	0.40**	0.07	1.00									
ED	0.12	0.26**	0.27**	1.00								
IC	.23**	0.28**	0.32**	0.29**	1.00							
E	0.11	0.05	0.04	-0.01	0.09	1.00						
A	0.09	-0.15*	0.18*	-0.05	-0.01	0.06	1.00					
C	0.11	-0.17*	0.04	-0.10	0.09	0.30**	0.22**	1.00				
N	-0.21**	0.19**	-0.20**	0.20**	0.06	-0.21**	-0.41**	-0.28**	1.00			
O	0.04	-0.01	0.17*	-0.05	0.13	-0.05	0.15*	0.15*	-0.04	1.00		
PS	0.42**	-0.05	0.29**	0.04	0.19**	0.40**	0.30**	0.37**	-0.41**	0.10	1.00	
EI	0.31**	-0.26**	0.32**	-0.12	0.04	0.22**	0.40**	0.42**	-0.52**	0.16*	0.48**	1.00

Note: PE = Positive Emotions, NE = Negative Emotions, SR = Sensitivity Requirements, ED = Emotional Dissonance, IC = Interaction Control, E = Extraversion, A = Agreeableness, C = Conscientiousness, N = Neuroticism, O = Openness, PS = Political skill, EI = Emotional Intelligence
*p < .05 **p<.01

Table 3 reports the pearson correlations among the study variables. The data indicated a positive significant correlation between positive emotions and political skill (r = 0.42, p<.01), followed by emotional intelligence (r = 0.31, p<.01) and negative correlation with neuroticism (r = -0.21, p<.01). A significant negative correlation was observed between negative emotions and emotional intelligence (r = -0.26, p<.01), followed by conscientiousness (r = -0.17, p<.05), agreeableness (r = -0.15, p<.05) and positive correlation with neuroticism (r = 0.19, p<.01). The data also indicated a positive significant correlation between sensitivity requirements and emotional intelligence (r = 0.32, p<.01), followed by political skill (r = 0.29, p<.01), agreeableness (r = 0.18, p<.05), openness (r = 0.17, p<.05) and negative correlation with neuroticism (r = -0.20, p<.01). A significant positive correlation was also observed between emotional dissonance and neuroticism (r = 0.20, p<.01) and also between interaction control and political skill (r = 0.19, p<.01).

Table 4 : Hierarchical Regression Predicting Emotion Work from the Study Variables

Predictor	PE ΔR²	PE β	NE ΔR²	NE β	SR ΔR²	SR β	ED ΔR²	ED β	IC ΔR²	IC β
Step 1	0.01		0.01		0.04*		0.04*		0.02	
Age		-0.12		-0.12		-0.19*		-0.16*		-0.07
Gender		-0.02		-0.05		0.03		0.08		0.09
Step 2	0.07*		0.06*		0.11**		0.04		0.03	
E		0.07		0.14		0.03		0.04		0.09
A		0.04		-0.05		0.15*		0.06		-0.01
C		0.04		-0.17*		-0.05		-0.04		0.08
N		-0.20*		0.14		-0.19*		0.19*		0.08
O		0.04		0.04		0.16*		-0.16		0.12
Total R²	0.08		0.08		0.14		0.08		0.05	
N	200		200		200		200		200	
Step 3	0.12**		0.00		0.04**		0.02*		0.04**	
PS		0.44**		0.02		0.24**		0.18*		0.24**
Total R²	0.20		0.08		0.18		0.10		0.09	
N	200		200		200		200		200	
Step 4	0.03*		0.03*		0.04**		0.00		0.00	
EI		0.21*		-0.21*		0.27**		-0.08		-0.03
Total R²	0.23		0.10		0.22		0.10		0.09	
N	200		200		200		200		200	

Note: PE = Positive Emotions, NE = Negative Emotions, SR = Sensitivity Requirements, ED = Emotional Dissonance, IC = Interaction Control, E = Extraversion, A = Agreeableness, C = Conscientiousness, N = Neuroticism, O = Openness, PS = Political skill, EI = Emotional Intelligence
**p<.01; *p<.05

Table 4 displays the result of multiple hierarchical regression analysis. Regression analysis was obtained in four stages. In the first stage control variables were entered into the equation. In the second stage personality variables were entered. In the third stage, political skill was entered into the equation followed by emotional intelligence in the fourth stage. In each step of the analysis the predictor and control variables were regressed on each dimension of emotion work accordingly. In Table 4 for model 1 the value of R^2 of control variables is .01 which indicates that control variables accounted for one percent of the variance in positive emotions. The data also reported that when control variables were entered in the equation together with personality dimensions in the second model the value of R^2 secured more variance (0.08).This indicated that when the personality dimensions were entered the change in R^2 was 0.07. In the third and fourth model, the value of change in R^2 is 0.12 and 0.03 respectively. This implies that the control variables along with the predictor variables accounted for 23% variance in the positive emotions. The beta value showed that political skill has a positive significant effect on positive emotions (β = .44; p <.01) followed by emotional intelligence (β = .21; p <.05). Also, neuroticism emerged as a negative predictor of positive emotions (β = .20; p <.05).

When negative emotions was entered into the equation as the dependent variable, the control variables accounted for only 1% variance in table 3 model 1 (ΔR² =0.01). This value increased to 8% of variance when personality and political skill variables were entered in model 2 (ΔR² =0.06), model 3 (ΔR² =0.00) respectively, followed by 10% of variance when emotional intelligence was entered in model 4 (ΔR² =0.03). The beta value showed that emotional intelligence emerged as the significant negative predictor of negative emotions (β = -.21; p <.05) followed by conscientiousness (β = -.17; p <.05).

In table 4 model 1, the control variables explained only 4% of variance in sensitivity requirements (ΔR² =0.04). The R² value for the control variables was observed to be 0.14 i.e. 14% of variance was accounted by the control variables when personality, political skill variables were entered in model 2 (ΔR² =0.11) and model 3 (ΔR² =0.04) respectively, followed by 22% of variance when emotional intelligence was entered in model 4 (ΔR² =0.04). Furthermore, the beta value showed that emotional intelligence has a positive significant effect on sensitivity requirements (β = .27; p <.01), followed by political skill (β = .24; p <.01), openness (β = .16; p <.05) and agreeableness (β = .15; p <.05). Also, both age as one of the control variable and neuroticism emerged as a negative significant predictor of 'sensitivity requirements' with (β = -0.19; p <.05).

When emotional dissonance was entered into the equation as the dependent variable, the control variables accounted for only 4% variance in table 4 model 1 (ΔR² =0.04). This value increased to 10% of

variance when personality, political skill and emotional intelligence variables were entered in model 2 (ΔR^2 =0.04), model 3 (ΔR^2 =0.02) and model 4 (ΔR^2 =0.00) respectively. The beta value showed that neuroticism has a positive significant effect on emotional dissonance (β = .19; p <.05), followed by political skill (β = .18; p <.05). Age also emerged as a negative significant predictor of emotional dissonance (β = -.16; p <.05).

In table 4 step 1 for interaction control, control variables accounted only 2% of variance in the said dependent variable. This value increased to 9% when personality, political skill and emotional intelligence variables were entered in step 2 (ΔR^2 =0.03), step 3 (ΔR^2 =0.04) and step 4 (ΔR^2 =0.00) respectively. The beta value showed that political skill emerged as a positive significant predictor of interaction control (β = 0.24; p <.01).

IV. Discussion

The study examines the associations of personality, political skill and emotional intelligence with emotion work. Regression analysis shows neuroticism as a negative predictor of positive emotions and sensitivity requirements and positive predictor of emotional dissonance. These findings are consistent with the study on 1158 employees from hotel business, call centers, banks and kindergartens, where neuroticism was positively associated with emotional dissonance (Zapf & Holz, 2006). Numerous studies have also shown that employees from management, hotel business, call centers, tourism and airline industry with high neuroticism traits are more likely to engage in physical complaints and express feelings of anger and frustration (Tronvoll, 2011; Hopp, Rohrmann, Zapf & Hodapp, 2010; Liu, Perrewe, Hochwarter & Kacmar, 2004). Furthermore, agreeableness and openness to experience emerged as positive predictors of sensitivity requirements. A research reported that agreeableness was positively related to suppressing negative emotions (Tews & Glomb, 2003). A study noted that openness to experience was inversely related to depersonalization and diminished personal accomplishment among health care workers (Zellars, Perrewe & Hochwarter, 2000). Finally, conscientiousness inversely predicts negative emotions. In its support, prior researchers stated that healthcare workers low in conscientiousness were less likely to express naturally felt emotions (Diefendorff, Croyle & Gosserand, 2005; Austin, Dore & Donovan, 2008).

Political skill emerged as positive predictor of positive emotions, sensitivity requirements, emotional dissonance and interaction control. Research supports that political actors in customer service occupations interpret the emotional experiences as positive and are capable in dealing with emotionally demanding situations (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993). On the other

hand, a study also confirmed that management, hotel business and call center employees with high negative affectivity and political skill experienced greater emotion work (Liu, Perrewe, Hochwarter & Kacmar, 2004). This may be attributed to the fact that in order to comply with the situational demands, politically skilled employees exert greater emotive effort while portraying a warm and friendly attitude towards their clients. As a result, their personalities were observed to be incongruent with the requisite job characteristics of the customer service occupations considered in the sample, leading to emotional dissonance.

Emotional intelligence also predicted positive emotions and sensitivity requirements positively and negative emotions negatively. Studies have found that emotionally intelligent employees rendering services in nursing, sales and teaching exhibited positive display rules and deep acting, whereas employees with low emotional intelligence were positively associated with faking and suppression (Brotheridge, 2006; Austin, Dore & Donovan, 2008).

The above findings imply that neuroticism, openness, conscientiousness, agreeableness, political skill and emotional intelligence emerged as strong predictors of emotion work. These results reveal that individuals employed in customer service occupations are assumed to be sensitive towards clients' emotions, goal oriented, organized, reliable and hardworking towards work. These characteristics enable them to develop an optimistic approach towards work life leading to emotional competence and positive emotional experiences. The composite make up of such personality characteristics facilitate customer service employees in impression management and adapting to social change quickly in line with what the situation demands.

There are certain limitations in this study. The use of self-report measure of emotion work may have been influenced by socially desirable answers which could have affected the results of the study. The sample of the study comprises employees mostly belonging to private sector. The individuals in the sample were mostly from banking, legal, training, human resource etc. Call centre employees were not included in this study. Lastly, the sample doesn't comprise equal number of males and females.

Despite these limitations, the study provides a new insight about predicting emotion work on the basis of certain personal attributes such as personality, political skill and emotional intelligence. This area of research has been explored by few Indian researchers in the field of management which provides a very narrow perspective about emotional regulation at workplace. Empirical studies in India have focused on the role of individual factors such as self concept, emotional intelligence, social support etc. on emotion work. Future researches can focus on the impact of emotional

expressivity, perceived social support and psychological climate on emotion work amongst employees working in both industrial and government service sectors. Also, population comprising call centre employees representing gender equalization can be studied further with respect to the dispositional antecedents of emotion work highlighting the gender differences.

Moreover, the degree of emotional work amongst employees in service sector organizations can be further explored with an assumption that it tends to differ among different professions such as counseling, customer service, human resources etc. However, this study may help organizations to evaluate their employees' strength in dealing with client problems. This potency can be further raised by conducting wellness programs which might increase the mental health of their employees.

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