

THE IMPACT OF EMOTION ON EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE AT HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY: A CASE STUDY IN AAA HOTEL

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Abstract

This study examines the emotional dynamics of tourism workers, focusing on hotel employees in Nusa Dua. Using a quantitative descriptive method with Likert-scale questionnaires, the research explores the impact of burnout, characterized by emotional exhaustion and stress from long hours and high job demands. Emotional labor theory (Swart, 2020) highlights the need for employees to manage emotions effectively, as positive emotions enhance service quality, while negative emotions reduce productivity and risk burnout. Data from 20 employees at AAA Hotel reveal that 50% experience high stress, 65% face emotional exhaustion, and 60% attribute stress to excessive workloads. Employees with strong emotional management skills improve guest satisfaction by 30%, underscoring the value of stress management training and well-being programs. The study concludes that addressing burnout through emotional support initiatives and work-life balance strategies is essential for enhancing employee performance and guest satisfaction.

Keywords: emotion, employee, impact, performance

A. INTRODUCTION

The tourism industry is one of the most demanding sectors globally, requiring workers to consistently maintain high levels of service and emotional positivity to ensure customer satisfaction (Kusumarini et al., 2024). Among tourism employees, particularly those working in hotels, there is a unique set of emotional challenges that stem from the nature of their work. Employees often face high expectations from guests, irregular work hours, and demanding workloads, all of which contribute to emotional strain and can lead to burnout (Pratama et al., 2024). This study focuses on the emotional dynamics of tourism workers, particularly hotel employees in Nusa Dua, Indonesia, a major tourism hub. By employing quantitative methods supported by in-depth qualitative interviews, this research seeks to understand the emotional experiences of these workers and how they manage stress and emotions in a demanding work environment (Pratama et al., 2024).

Emotional dynamics in the workplace, especially in service industries, have been extensively studied, with theories on emotional labor, burnout, and emotional regulation providing a foundation for understanding employee experiences in high-stress environments. Swart's theory (2020) on emotional regulation and burnout identifies the profound impacts of prolonged stress on mental and physical health, emphasizing how emotional strain can lead to structural changes in the brain and negatively affect decision-making abilities. Hochschild's theory (Kurnia Harahap et al., 2024) on emotional labor explains how employees are often required to display certain emotions that may differ from their actual feelings to maintain customer satisfaction and meet job expectations. These theories underscore the importance of

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understanding and addressing the emotional demands placed on tourism workers and their impact on employee well-being and performance.

Burnout is a common issue in the tourism sector, where workers experience physical, mental, and emotional exhaustion due to prolonged exposure to high job demands and constant customer interaction. According to Maslach and Leiter (2016), burnout is often characterized by three dimensions: emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment (Diwyarthi & Prawira, 2024). In the tourism industry, particularly among hotel employees, these symptoms can manifest due to extended hours, high expectations, and the need to regulate emotions while dealing with demanding customers (Adi Pratama & Diwyarthi, 2024).

Dr. Tara Swart's research on burnout further adds to the understanding of the long-term impacts of chronic stress on brain function, suggesting that prolonged emotional labor can lead to changes in brain structure, impacting cognitive abilities and emotional regulation (Program, 2015). Physical health implications include increased risks of heart disease and a weakened immune system, highlighting the critical need for adequate stress management strategies. Additionally, Lovelock (2018) argues that emotional labor is especially taxing for tourism workers who must continuously perform "service with a smile," masking their true emotions to fulfill job requirements (Bashori & Meiyanto, 2019).

In the tourism industry, positive emotional expression is vital for maintaining high-quality service, as satisfied customers are more likely to return and recommend the service. Research by Gursoy et al. (2019) shows that positive emotions such as enthusiasm and satisfaction can enhance service quality by increasing employee motivation (Arif et al., 2021). However, when workers experience high levels of stress and negative emotions, productivity and service quality decline, potentially leading to increased turnover rates (Program, 2015).

B. RESEARCH METHOD

The study uses a quantitative research method complemented by qualitative insights. A descriptive approach was adopted to gather and analyze data on employee emotions. Likert-scale questionnaires were distributed to employees at AAA hotel in Nusa Dua, focusing on aspects of job stress, emotional exhaustion, and the presence of burnout symptoms. Additionally, in-depth interviews, observation and questioner with hotel manager and 20 employees were conducted to explore individual emotional experiences and stress management strategies (Y et al., 2023). The use of both quantitative and qualitative methods provides a comprehensive view of the emotional dynamics and allows for a deeper understanding of the challenges and coping mechanisms used by tourism workers (Lj Moleong, 2017).

C. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Data Result

The quantitative data indicates a high prevalence of stress and emotional exhaustion among tourism employees: 50% (10 employees) report high levels of stress, often due to long working hours and excessive job demands. 65% (13) of employees exhibit signs of emotional exhaustion, aligning with the burnout dimensions outlined by Maslach and Leiter (2016). 65% (13 respondents) identify job demands and extended hours as the primary contributors to their stress levels.

A positive correlation was found between emotional management skills and guest satisfaction scores. Specifically, 60% (13) of employees with strong emotional management skills improved guest satisfaction by an average of 15%, (6 employee) compared to those who primarily relied on technical skills. This finding supports Hochschild's (1983) theory that effective emotional labor positively influences customer satisfaction.

The quantitative data reveals a significant prevalence of stress and emotional exhaustion among tourism employees, particularly hotel workers. Approximately 50% (10 employees) report experiencing high levels of stress, primarily attributed to long working hours and excessive job demands. This aligns with Maslach and Leiter's (2016) burnout model, which defines burnout as a state of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment. Furthermore, 65% (13 employees) exhibit clear signs of emotional exhaustion, underscoring the urgency of addressing these challenges within the tourism sector.

Job demands and extended hours emerged as the primary contributors to stress, with 65% (13 respondents) identifying these factors as central to their experience. The findings emphasize the impact of structural and environmental workplace conditions on employees' emotional well-being. Tourism, as a service-oriented industry, often requires workers to maintain high levels of emotional engagement while meeting the demands of a fast-paced, customer-centric environment. This can exacerbate feelings of exhaustion and stress, particularly when coupled with insufficient organizational support or lack of work-life balance.

A noteworthy aspect of the study is the relationship between emotional management skills and guest satisfaction. Employees with strong emotional management abilities demonstrated a marked improvement in customer satisfaction scores. Specifically, 60% (13 employees) with well-developed emotional management skills achieved an average increase of 15% in guest satisfaction (6 employees) compared to their peers who primarily relied on technical skills. This finding corroborates Hochschild's (1983) theory of emotional labor, which posits that the effective regulation of emotions during service interactions positively influences customer perceptions and satisfaction.

The data highlights the critical role of emotional labor in the tourism industry, where maintaining a positive demeanor and managing emotions effectively are integral to delivering high-quality service. Employees often face the challenge of masking internal emotions to align with organizational expectations of friendliness and professionalism. While this practice enhances guest experiences, it also adds to the emotional strain workers endure, increasing their susceptibility to burnout.

Given these findings, addressing emotional exhaustion and stress among tourism employees is imperative. A multifaceted approach is required, encompassing organizational, managerial, and individual strategies to mitigate burnout and promote well-being. For instance, hotels can implement comprehensive employee support programs that prioritize stress management training, counseling services, and opportunities for relaxation. Encouraging work-life balance through flexible scheduling and fair workload distribution can also significantly reduce the sources of stress identified in the study.

Moreover, the development of emotional management skills should be a core component of employee training programs. Equipping workers with the tools to navigate emotionally demanding situations can enhance their resilience and improve overall job performance. Training modules could include techniques for emotional regulation, conflict

resolution, and effective communication, ensuring employees are better prepared to handle the interpersonal challenges inherent in tourism roles.

The findings also suggest that fostering a supportive organizational culture is essential for mitigating the negative effects of emotional labor. Managers should actively recognize and address the emotional demands placed on employees, providing regular feedback, fostering open communication, and acknowledging the value of their contributions. By creating an environment where employees feel valued and supported, organizations can improve employee morale, reduce turnover, and enhance service quality.

In conclusion, the study underscores the prevalence of stress and emotional exhaustion among tourism employees, driven by excessive job demands and long working hours. The positive correlation between emotional management skills and guest satisfaction highlights the importance of emotional labor in the industry. Addressing these challenges requires a holistic approach that includes organizational support, training programs, and strategies for promoting work-life balance. By prioritizing employee well-being, tourism organizations can not only enhance service quality but also create a more sustainable and fulfilling work environment for their employees.

Research Insights

The interviews provide additional insights into the emotional experiences of tourism workers. Employees frequently mentioned the pressure to maintain a positive demeanor even when feeling stressed or exhausted. Many employees also expressed a lack of sufficient breaks and time off, contributing to a cycle of exhaustion and diminishing their ability to manage emotions effectively. Managers emphasized the importance of emotional support, noting that team-building activities and stress management training could be beneficial in improving employee resilience and overall job satisfaction.

Moreover, interviews revealed a clear gap in structured well-being programs within hotels. Most workers indicated a need for better support systems, including counseling services and flexible schedules to help manage emotional demands. Managers highlighted the need for increased resources to implement these changes, recognizing that such improvements could reduce turnover and enhance service quality.

Discussion

The findings align with previous research on burnout and emotional labor, showing that hotel employees in high-demand environments face significant emotional challenges. Swart's (2020) work on burnout and brain health highlights the potential for long-term effects of emotional strain, suggesting that tourism workers' mental and physical health could be at risk if proper emotional management strategies are not implemented.

The result support research by Swart (2020) and Hochschild (2023) that offers a robust framework for understanding the complexities of emotional labor and burnout. Swart's work, particularly her studies on burnout and brain health, underscores the long-term risks associated with sustained emotional strain, such as cognitive fatigue, emotional exhaustion, and physical health declines. The findings of this study align closely with Swart's research, suggesting that the continuous need for emotional regulation in tourism can lead to significant

risks for mental and physical well-being if effective emotional management strategies are not in place (Dawam & Setiawan, 2022).

The tourism industry, with its emphasis on customer service and positive interactions, places high emotional demands on its workforce, particularly hotel employees who work in high-demand environments. As tourism workers interact with guests from diverse backgrounds and respond to varying levels of expectation, they must often regulate their emotional expressions to align with job expectations, which can contribute to emotional strain and burnout. Building on established theories of burnout and emotional labor, this study provides insights into the mental health challenges faced by tourism workers, such as those employed in Nusa Dua hotels, and the potential strategies that could mitigate these challenges.

The emotional labor theory, as proposed by Hochschild (Y et al., 2023), is particularly relevant in the context of tourism work, where employees are expected to consistently exhibit positive emotions, regardless of internal feelings. This study demonstrates that employees with strong emotional management skills are better able to fulfill these expectations, positively impacting guest satisfaction and service quality (Arifiani et al., 2019). The interviews underscore the need for a holistic approach to employee well-being, as noted in Swart's research, suggesting that stress management and emotional support programs are essential to improving employee health and performance. Comprehensive support for tourism workers should include counseling services, structured time off, and stress management training to help employees cope with emotional demands more effectively (Lestary & Chaniago, 2018).

The result support Burnout theory by Swart (2020), is a state of physical, mental, and emotional exhaustion, commonly triggered by prolonged exposure to stressors without adequate recovery. In high-demand environments, such as those in the tourism sector, burnout can arise due to extended working hours, high levels of interaction with guests, and the need to maintain an emotionally positive demeanor regardless of personal circumstances. Swart's findings on the neurobiological aspects of burnout indicate that chronic stress can alter brain structure, impair cognitive functioning, and heighten susceptibility to mental health issues such as depression and anxiety. These long-term effects underscore the importance of implementing stress management practices and providing emotional support to tourism workers. Swart's research also explores how unmanaged burnout affects brain health, highlighting that prolonged stress leads to dysregulated cortisol levels and decreased brain plasticity, both of which can hinder an individual's ability to process emotions and maintain a stable mood. This physiological impact suggests that the emotional strain experienced by tourism workers extends beyond immediate mental exhaustion; it can also contribute to more profound and enduring changes in brain function, making burnout a critical area for intervention.

The emotional challenges faced by tourism workers indicate that proactive measures are necessary to support employee well-being and prevent burnout. Findings from this study, coupled with insights from Swart, Hochschild, and Lestary & Chaniago, highlight the critical role of organizational support in mitigating burnout and improving service quality. Given the tourism industry's reliance on positive customer interactions, supporting the mental health of employees is essential for maintaining high levels of service and customer satisfaction.

By implementing a comprehensive approach that includes emotional management training, counseling services, and structured time off, tourism employers can create an environment that prioritizes both employee well-being and high-quality service delivery. This

approach is beneficial not only for employee retention but also for fostering a positive work environment that encourages sustained performance and minimizes the risk of burnout.

Future research in order to build upon the findings of this study, a cross-cultural analysis to investigate emotional labor and burnout across different cultural contexts to identify universal and culture-specific factors affecting tourism employees.

D. CONCLUSION

This study concludes that tourism workers, particularly hotel employees at AAA hotel in Nusa Dua, face significant emotional challenges that affect their well-being and job performance. High levels of stress and emotional exhaustion were identified, largely stemming from demanding workloads and long hours. The positive correlation between emotional management skills and guest satisfaction scores highlights the importance of emotional labor in tourism work and suggests that well-being programs can play a crucial role in improving both employee and customer satisfaction.

Implementing structured well-being programs, including stress management training and emotional support initiatives, can mitigate burnout and improve service quality. Theories on emotional labor and burnout underscore the importance of managing emotions effectively, both for personal well-being and professional success. Addressing these needs through a holistic approach, as suggested by Swart (2020) and supported by this study's findings, can significantly enhance employee satisfaction and performance, benefiting the tourism sector as a whole.

E. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

While this study provides valuable insights into the emotional dynamics of tourism workers, further research could expand on several areas. Future studies might explore the long-term impacts of burnout on mental health within the tourism sector, as well as the effectiveness of various stress management strategies in different cultural contexts. Comparative studies across various tourism locations could also shed light on specific regional challenges and coping mechanisms among tourism employees. Additionally, longitudinal studies on the effects of well-being programs in reducing burnout and improving job satisfaction would provide further evidence for best practices in supporting tourism workers.

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