Emotional labour and burnout syndrome among nigerian politicians

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Abstract
The manner in which politicians express their emotions while interacting with the electorates determines how the electorates will perceive the ability of the politicians to fulfill their electoral promises if voted into power. This paper aims to investigate the relationship between politicians' emotional labour and burnout syndrome. The sample consists of 400 politicians spread around Four (4) Local Government Areas in Delta State, namely: Aniocha North, Aniocha South, Oshimili North, and Oshimili South Local Government Area of Delta State, Nigeria, irrespective of their political party affiliations. Emotional Labour Scale developed by Diefendorff, Croyle, and Gosserand (2005), and the Maslach Burnout Inventory developed by Maslach and Jackson (1986) were used to collect data from the respondents. Data analysis was done using descriptive statistics, t-tests, Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) and regression analysis. Results indicate that the politicians exhibit a high level of surface acting in the discharge of their responsibilities. It also revealed that they show the least amount of genuine emotions in their work, while the level of deep acting is moderate. In terms of burnout, politicians experience a very high level of emotional exhaustion, a moderate level of both depersonalization and lack of personal accomplishment. Results of the regression analysis show that the three dimensions of emotional labour (surface acting, deep acting and genuine emotions) are very important predictors of burnout among politicians. Consequently, this present results offer a very crucial and innovative contribution to emotional labour literature and more studies are therefore required in order to expand the scope of this research to ensure a more adequategeneralization.

1. Introduction

Research has shown that what determines how the customer will perceive the quality of the organizations' services is the manner in which service employees express their emotions when having a face to face interaction with their customers [36] (Pugh, 2001). Interestingly, emotional labour is not specifically meant for the enjoyment of customers or clients, what is important are for the employing organization to benefit from it. For example, those who work as bill collectors or in law enforcement may find that an angry demeanor results in the best "customer" response (Hochschild, [21, 22] 1983). Considering the fact, that most times, organizationally desired emotion may be different from the emotion of the individual employee, there is need therefore on the part of the service employee to attune his emotions in order to align with the organisations' desired emotions. This effort on the part of the service employee is what has been conceptualized as emotional labour.

So many studies have been done Emotional labour literature, for instance: emotional labour and teachers (Brackett [7], Palomera, Mojsa-Kaja, Reyes, & Salovey, 2010; Beilock [5], Gunderson, Ramirez, & Levine, 2010; Chen [13], 2016); emotional labour and medical workers (Sawbridge, & Hewison , 2016; Gray, & Smith, [19] 2009); emotional labour and policemen (Bhowmick [6], & Mulla, 2016); Rafaeli [37] & Sutton, 1991; Brown &

Campbell, 1990). Moreso, several authors have investigated the relationship between emotional labour and burnout in the tourism and hospitality industry, for example Chen, Sun, Lam, Hu, Huo, & Zhong, 2012; Kim [25], 2008; Tepeci [40], & Pala, 2016). From the review of literature on emotional labour and burnout, there is no study that we know that has investigated the relationship between emotional labour and burnout among politicians. This study is designed specifically to fill that gap. The aim of this paper, therefore, is to investigate the relationship between emotional labour and burnout syndrome among Nigerian politicians.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Political parties

Political parties as we know are also classified as organizations since they have the attributes of an organization. Based on Hochschild's definition, emotional labour relates so much to organizationally desired behaviour. And since politicians work for their political parties, they tend to act and display the emotions that relate with their parties' display rules even though it is not in tandem with their own emotions. Secondly, it relates to getting paid for it because according to Callahan [11] and McCollum (2002) emotional work is appropriate for situations in which an individual personally chooses to manage his emotions for his or her own financial benefits. Lee, An, and Noh [26-28] (2015) posit that emotional labour is appropriate only when emotion work is exchanged for a valuable consideration, such as a wage or any other type of reward. Another way of looking at it is the case of politicians who campaign for their candidates for electoral positions. Most times the promises they make are political promises and they give the electorates the impression that their candidates will fulfill those promises. According to Benmerikhi [4] (2014) good politicians are those who lie, and the best amongst them are those who lie with conviction. Here conviction comes from a well practiced or an incredible ability to circumvent real problems and gold plate situations. Politicians are well known and acknowledged for their rhetoric, as in speeches or campaign advertisements. According to Charteris-Black [12] (2005) they are better known for using common themes that allow them to develop their political positions in terms familiar to the voters. Many people have had to criticise politicians for being out of touch with the public. Areas of friction include the manner in which politicians speak, which has been described as being overly formal and filled with many euphemistic and metaphorical expressions and commonly perceived as an attempt to "obscure, mislead, and confuse the electorates.

Most at times, they know within themselves that those promises are mere political promises. Our concern therefore is to investigate whether politicians, as individuals with emotions, do they feel any of the negative consequences of emotional labour.

2.2 Emotional labour

According to Hochschild (1983, p. 7) emotional labour is the act of whereby "employees regulate their emotions for a wage consideration". The term "emotional labour" is appropriate only when emotional work is exchanged for something, such as wages or some other type of valued compensation (Jeung [24], Kim, & Chang, 2018, p. 187). In other words, it relates to getting remuneration for it because according to Callahan and McCollum (2002) emotional work is appropriate for situations in which an individual personally chooses to regulate his emotions for som financial benefits. Emotional labour is generally defined as the act of expressing organizationally desired emotions during service interactions (Ashforth [1], & Humphrey [23], 1993; Chu [15], & Murrmann, 2006). In fact the former focused their own definition directly on behaviour rather than its underlying emotions. Hochschild (2003) argue that there exist two types of rules that govern the display of emotions: the rules of expression and the emotional rules. The former has to do with the emotions that must be publicly expressed through behaviour, while the latter has to do with these behaviours that are truly experienced internally by the individual.

In other words, Hochschild (1983) is saying that there are two components of emotional labour: surface acting and deep acting. Surface acting is where employees pretend to feel the emotions they do not feel by using facial expressions, gestures, tones, and mimics, thereby acting to the desired organizational display rules. According to Basim [2, 3] and Begenirbas (2012) surface acting implies that employees are pretentious since they do not portray, through their body language and facial expression, what they feel. On the other hand, deep acting occurs when an employee genuinely tries to feel organizationally desired emotions (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993). It includes efforts to change employees' inner feelings in order to feel expected emotions. The implication is that the individual tries to change how he or she feels internally in the hope that you can authentically display more positive emotions. According to Rupp [38], McCance, Spencer, and Sonntag, (2008) one way in which an individual

can do this effectively is through empathy. Finally, sometimes employees' emotions and organizationally desired behaviour are the same at that particular point in time. This is referred to as genuine acting and the employee expresses that emotion spontaneously without making any effort to modify or alter that emotion (Degirmenci-Oz [16] & Baykal, 2018; Humphrey, Ashforth, & Diefendorff [17], 2015). In fact, Diefendorff et al. (2005) posits that employees from a diverse range of industrial organizations express genuine emotions during some of their service encounters.

2.3 Burnout

Merriam Webster's [33] Collegiate Dictionary defines burnout as 'exhaustion of physical or emotional strength or motivation usually as a result of prolonged stress or frustration. Burnout is also defined as a physical, emotional and mental state observed in people in constant face-to-face interaction with other people, which have to do with physical fatigue, long-term exhaustion, desperateness, hopelessness, as well as a feeling of inadequacy and negative feelings towards oneself and others [30-32] (Maslach & Jackson, 1981). They went on to say that burnout is a common emotional exhaustion and cynicism syndrome widely seen among individuals employed in jobs requiring continuous face to face interaction with people.

Maslach, Jackson and Leiter (1997) classified burnout into three components: emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and lack of personal accomplishment. Emotional exhaustion is the most fundamental dimension of burnout syndrome (Maslach, & Jackson, 1981). It describes situations of physical and emotional fatigue resulting from lack of energy in individuals who interact intensely with people and the feeling that their emotional resources are exhausted because of excessive psychological demands (Lee, & Shin, 2005). Emotionally exhausted employees feel they cannot focus on their jobs anymore and it gives them a sense of hopelessness. Depersonalization emerges as a consequence of emotional exhaustion. In this process, employees see customers and colleagues as nothing more than objects and display a calm, reckless, and sarcastic attitude toward them (Halbesleben & Buckley [20], 2004). Lack of personal accomplishment refers to the loss of self-sufficiency and self appreciation at work (Zhang [42] & Zhu, 2008). Additionally, it indicates a low motivation, lack of control, despair, and even loss of self-respect (Maslach & Jackson, 1981).

2.4 Relationship between Emotional Labour and Burnout

From the review of the literature there are many studies of the relationships between emotional labour and burnout, for example (Erickson [18] & Ritter, 2001; Hochschild, 1983; Morris & Feldman [34], 1996). So many studies have been done in areas such as emotional labour and teachers, for example Chang, 2009; Hargreaves, 2000; Isenbarger & Zembylas, 2006; Lois, 2006; Naring, Briet, & Brouwers, 2007; Noor [35] & Zainuddin, 2011; Sutton & Wheatley, 2003; Zhang & Zhu, 2008); Furthermore, studies have also been done on the relationship between emotional labour **and** burnout among healthcare professionals , for instance: Fahrenkopf et al., 2008; Linzer et al., 2001; Shanafelt, Bradley, Wipf, & Back, 2002; Tunc et al., 2014; Golfenshtein & Drach-Zahavy, 2015; Chapman, 2018; Grandey & Sayre 2019; Degirmenci-Oz & Baykal (2018).

In addition, studies have been done on the relationship between emotional labour and burnout among policemen for instance, Schaible [39], & Gecas, 2010). However, there is no study that we know that has investigated the relationship between emotional labour and burnout among politicians. Many people now view politics as a profession. Also, political parties are viewed as possessing all the attributes of an organization and so, they have display rules in which members are required to exhibit when interacting with their customers, in this case, the electorates. Finally, there is a valid consideration for regulating their emotions based on their political parties' display rules. In this context, the purpose of this research is to investigate the relationship between emotional labour and burnout among politicians. Therefore, we have posed the following three research questions:

1. What is the level of emotional labour that is practiced by politicians?

2. What is the level of burnout that is experienced by politicians in the performance of emotional labour?

3. Does the emotional labour of politicians predict their level of burnout?

2.5 Research Methodology

This study used the Survey research method in order to determine the relationship between politicians' emotional labour and the level of their burnout. The study targeted 400 politicians spread around four (4) Local Government Areas in Delta State, namely: Aniocha North, Aniocha South, Oshimili North, and Oshimili South Local Government Areas, without any particular interest in political party affiliations. 400 questionnaires were conveniently administered to the targeted politicians, out of which only 315 were returned. A careful examination of the returned questionnaires revealed that 65 were not properly completed, hence they were discarded. Only 250 were certified useful for data analysis.

This research work made use of the Emotional Labour scale that was developed by Diefendorff, Croyle, and Gosserand (2005). The Scale consists of 13 Likert-type items used to determine politicians' emotional labour level. For the purpose of proper analysis, the scale is further decomposed into three dimensions: surface acting, deep acting, and genuinely felt emotions. Scale items are scored from "I never" (1) to I always" (5). As a result of the explanatory factor analysis, factor loading values of the scale were reported to be 0.53-0.81, 0.72- 0.88, and 0.82-0.89 for surface acting, deep acting, and for genuinely felt emotions respectively.

The three dimensions of emotional labour (Surface acting, deep acting and genuine acting) explain 34.09 percent, 20.99 percent, and 11.47 percent, respectively of the total variance. The 13- item structure (grouped under three factors), were further subjected to confirmatory factor analysis, (CFA) which was used to calculate chi-square (χ^2) statistical significance levels (χ^2/SD=4.32). It is used to test whether measures of a construct are consistent with a researchers understanding of the nature of the construct. The objective is to test whether the data fit a hypothesized measurement model. It was considered ideal for the specified model. Furthermore, the following indices were utilized: Goodness of Fit Index (GFI) which is 0.96; Adjusted Goodness of Fit Index (AGFI) is 0.93. It should be noted that the standard value for GFI and AGFI, according to Hu and Bentler (1999), is 0.90 and above. The Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) is 0.054. RMSEA is an absolute fit index and the value ranges between 0 and 1. A smaller value indicates a better fit and a value of 0.06 or less indicates an acceptable fit (Joreskog, & Sorbom, 1993). Confirmatory Factor Index (CFI) is 0.92. CFI is an incremental fit that compares the fit of a hypothesized model with that of a baseline model. According to Hu and Bentler (1999) a CFI value of 0.95 or above is presently accepted as an indicator of good fit. Cronbach's Alpha coefficient was used to examine the reliability of the scale, which was calculated to be 0.81 for surface acting, 0.75 for deep acting, and 0.87 for genuinely felt emotions.

The Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI-HSS) was the research instrument used in generating responses from the respondent based on burnout variable. This is the original and the most commonly used version of the MBI. It is considered appropriate for individuals working in a diverse array of occupations, including nurses, physicians, teachers, social workers, police, clergy and correctional officers etc. Maslach Burnout Inventory is an introspective psychological inventory consisting of 22 Likert type items relating to occupational burnout which is used to assess an individual's the level of burnout. The scale measures three dimensions of burnout: Emotional exhaustion (9 items); depersonalization (5 items); and reduced sense of personal accomplishment (8 items). It takes about 10 minutes to complete and can be administered to individuals or groups. Scale items are scored from 1 ("I never") to 4 ("I always"). Items under the personal accomplishment dimension are scored in a reversed order. The following standard scores were given: Scores less than 0.80 signifies a very low level of burnout, Scores between 0.80 and 1.59 signifies low level of burnout, scores from 1.60 to 2.39 signifies moderate burnout level, scores from 2.40 to 3.19 signifies high level of burnout, while scores from 3.20 to 4.00 signifies a very high level of burnout. Cronbach's Alpha reliability coefficients were found to be 0.82, 0.76 and 0.79, respectively, for emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and personal accomplishment dimensions of burnout.

2.6 Analysis of Data

Descriptive analysis was used to determine the politicians' emotional labour and burnout levels, t-test for dual comparisons, and one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) for comparisons with the three dimensions.

Honesty Significant Difference (Tukey) test was used to determine if the relationship between the dependent and independent variables is statistically significant. In other words, to check whether there is a strong chance that an observed numerical change in the independent variable will lead to a significant change in the dependent variable. Multiple regression analysis was used to determine whether politicians' emotional labour predicts burnout level in a significant manner. According to Buyukozturk (2005) a correlation coefficient value that is above 0.70 denotes a high level of relationship, a value between 0.30 to 0.69 signifies a moderate level of relationship, while a value below 0.30 is classified as a low level of relationship.

3. Results

This section primarily reveals findings regarding the participants' emotional labour and burnout levels. Then, it tries to determine to what extent the emotional labour has predicted their burnout level. Out of 250 valid questionnaires that were returned, 89 respondents representing 35.6 percent of the respondents are female (n=89), and 161 representing 64.4 percent are male (n=161); The number of years of playing active politics ranged between 5 and 25 years. Politicians with less than 10 years of service represents 36 percent (n=90), for 10–19 years, 42 percent (n=105), and for 20 years or more of service, 22 percent (n=55).

Politicians exhibited the highest level of surface acting with a mean (M) of 4.52 and a standard deviation (SD) of 0.95. Their level of deep acting show a mean (M) of 3.71, with a standard deviation (SD) of 0.92; and the show of genuine emotions has a mean (M) of 3.16, and a standard deviation (SD) of 0.72. The analysis of the three burnout variables used in this study shows that the sampled politicians possess a high level emotional exhaustion with a mean (M) of 3.21, and a standard deviation (SD) of 0.28. Personal accomplishment dimension of burnout has a mean (M) of 2.56, with a standard deviation of (SD) of 0.63, while depersonalization dimension has a mean (M) of 2.43, with a standard deviation (SD) of 0.77. The politicians' level of burnout is high for both emotional exhaustion and personal accomplishment dimensions, but moderate for depersonalization dimensions.

From table 1, we observed that there is a significant and positive relationship between emotional exhaustion and surface acting dimension of emotional labour (r = 0.37). This totally supports the work of Lv, Xu, & Ji, [29] 2012; Newnham, 2017; and Choi [14], & Kim, 2014. In addition, there is a significant negative relationship emotional exhaustion and with genuinely felt emotions (r = -0.23). This is not in line with most work in the extant literature, (for example, Tepeci, & Pala, 2016). Furthermore, we could see that there exist a significant positive relationship between emotional exhaustion and deep acting (r = 0.21). Generally, it should be noted that the three dimensions of emotional labour indicate a statistical significant relationship with politicians' level of emotional exhaustion (R=0.36, p≤0.01).

Table 1: Multiple Regression Analysis Results for Prediction of the level of Emotional Exhaustion

	β	SE	B	T	P	Zero Order	Partial
Constant	1.972	0.240	-	6.262	0.000	-	-
Surface acting	0.148	0.016	0.421	5.323	0.000	0.37	0.28
Deep acting	0.017	0.048	0.018	0.191	0.05	0.21	0.13
Genuine Emotion	-0.076	0.058	-0.139	-1.525	0.08	-0.23	-0.14

R=0.36; R^2=0.19 $F_{(3-206)}$ =14.05, p=0.00

Based on the standardized regression coefficient (β), the relative order of importance of predicting variables on politicians' emotional exhaustion are genuine emotions, deep acting, and surface acting. Having examined the results of t-tests regarding the significance of regression coefficients, the three dimensions of emotional labour have been seen as important predictors of the emotional exhaustion of politicians. All dimensions of emotional labor explain 19 percent of emotional exhaustion levels of politicians. Based on the obtained findings, the regression equation of emotional exhaustion is as follows:

EE = 1.972 + 0.148SA - 0.017DA - 0.076GE.

Note: EE=Emotional exhaustion; SA=Surface acting; DA=Deep acting; GE=Genuine emotions

Table 2 gives the results of the multiple regression analysis conducted to see whether the emotional labour of politicians predicts the level of their depersonalization.

Table 2: Multiple Regression Analysis Results for Prediction of the level of Depersonalisation

	β	SE	B	T	p	Zero Order	Partial
Constant	1.585	0.138	-	4.137	0.000	-	-
Surface acting	0.214	0.144	0.312	4.424	0.000	0.37	0.28
Deep acting	0.091	0.061	0.118	0.169	0.05	0.21	0.19
Genuine Emotion	-0.147	0.128	-0.117	-1.444	0.17	-0.19	-0.16

R=0.39; R^2=0.21 $F_{(3-206)}$ =24.10, p=0.00

From the analysis in table 2, we can deduce that there is a significant and positive relationship between depersonalization and surface acting (r = 0.28). Also, the relationship between depersonalisation and deep acting is positive and statistically significant at (r = 0.21). However, the relationship between genuinely depersonalization and genuinely felt emotion is negative, albeit, not statistically significant (r = -0.19). Two dimensions of emotional labour have a moderate and significant relationship with depersonalization levels of politicians (r=0.39, p<0.01). It is therefore correct to say that surface acting and deep acting is predictors of depersonalization dimension of burnout. 21 percent of the depersonalization level of politicians is explained by the three dimensions of emotional labour.

Therefore, the regression line of depersonalization is as follows:

DP = 1.585 + 0.214SA + 0.091DA – 0.147GE

Note: DP = depersonalization; SA=Surface acting; DA=Deep acting; GE=Genuine emotions

Table 3 gives the results of the multiple regression analysis conducted to see whether the emotional labor of teachers predicts their personal accomplishment level.

Table 3: Multiple Regression Analysis for the Prediction of the level of Personal Accomplishment

	β	SE	β	T	p	Zero Order	Partial
Constant	2.021	0.113	-	5.105	0.000	-	-

Surface acting	0.144	0.169	0.304	3.212	0.000	0.27	0.19
Deep acting	-0.142	0.045	0.128	0.077	0.05	-0.21	-0.16
Genuine Emotion	-0.114	0.123	-0.212	-1.212	0.07	-0.29	-0.18

R=0.34;   R²=0.21 $F_{(3-206)}$ =22.04, p=0.00

From table 3, we notice that there is a significant and positive relationship between personal accomplishment and surface acting (r = 0.27). Furthermore, there is a negative and significant relationship between personal accomplishment and surface acting and genuine acting at (r = -0.21) and r = -0.29) respectively. However, personal accomplishment and genuine acting is more significant than personal accomplishment and deep acting. The three dimensions of emotional labour prove a moderate and significant relationship with politicians' personal accomplishment levels (R=0.34, p<0.01). From the t-test of the regression coefficients, the three dimensions of emotional labour are clear predictors of politicians' personal accomplishment. 21 percent explain the variations in personal accomplishment levels of politician. Based on the obtained findings, the regression equation of personal accomplishment is as follows:

PA = 2.021 + 0.144SA - 0.142DA - 0.114GE

Note: PA=Personal accomplishment; SA=Surface acting; DA=Deep acting; GE=Genuine emotions

4. Discussions of findings

This study is aimed at determining the relationship between emotional labour and burnout among politicians. Burnout is decomposed into three dimensions: emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and personal accomplishment.

From the data analysis, we discovered that politicians exhibit a high degree of surface acting. They do this for a variety of reasons. The most important of which is to ensure that they win the hearts of the electorate, thereby making the electorate to vote for them, their candidate or their political party. Only a negligible percentage of them engage in deep acting and genuine emotions. This discovering is not in consonance with most other studies based on other professions like nurses, teachers and the police (Begenirbas, & Meydan, 2012; Brotheridge, & Grandey, 2002; Hagenauer, Hascher, & Volet, 2015). Politicians care only for their own self without caring for the masses. When it is time for election, they canvas for votes from the electorate by pretending to have their interest at heart, but immediately after the election, they do not attempt to fulfill even those promises they made before the election.

In terms of burnout, politicians' level of emotional exhaustion and depersonalization is very high. However, the level of personal accomplishment is moderate. This finding overlaps with other research studies in the literature. This result supports Yilmaz (2014) study on teachers and teachers' burnout level in terms of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and lack of personal accomplishment.

The third objective of this study is to determine whether emotional labour predicts politicians' level of burnout. Multiple regression analysis was utilized for this purpose. The result shows that the three dimensions of emotional labour are good predictors of the three dimensions of burnout. There is a significant and positive relationship between the emotional exhaustion and surface acting dimension of emotional labour, and a significant negative relationship with genuine felt emotions. There is also a positive and moderate relationship between depersonalization and surface acting, yet a negative and low relationship between genuine emotion and burnout of politicians. There is a significant and positive relationship between depersonalization and surface acting. Also, the relationship between depersonalisation and deep acting is positive and statistically significant. However, the relationship between depersonalization and genuinely felt emotion is negative, albeit, not

statistically significant. Furthermore, there is a negative and significant relationship between personal accomplishment and surface acting and genuine acting.

5. Conclusion

This study revealed that surface acting, which is to pretend to be feeling a certain emotion through words and body language, even if not felt at that moment, leads to emotional exhaustion and research have shown that is detrimental to both the individual and the organization that the individual represents. So many studies have indicated the negative effect of surface acting, which apart from emotional exhaustion can also lead to depersonalization as well as lack of personal accomplishment. This study view emotional labour as roles that should be played by politicians as part of their job, since they are doing it for a wage consideration. It is very important for politicians to show genuine emotions by acting what they feel rather than being deceptive just for the purpose of winning elections. This study is limited to the extent to which the scope covers. Further studies are needed to expand the scope beyond four local government areas in the state. When it is done, it will make generalization more worthwhile.

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