



## The Relationship between Emotional Labor in Sports Organization and the Level of Loneliness in Organizational Life\*

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### ARTICLE INFO

#### Article History:

Received 01.06.2020

Received in revised form

16.08.2020

Accepted 01.09.2020

Available online

28.09.2020

### ABSTRACT

The aim of this study is to evaluate the relationship between emotional labor of sports business employees and loneliness levels in organizational life. For the purpose of the study, the universe of the research consists of sports service within the organization of Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality Sport İstanbul employees while the sample is created by volunteer participants who are identified through simple random sampling method (n = 330) In the study which is conducted by applying a relational screening model, the data were collected by using the survey method technique. Personal information form, emotional labor and loneliness scales in business life were applied to the participants. The data obtained were registered to the SPSS 25 package program. Correlation and regression analysis were applied as statistical process. As a result, it was determined that there is a moderate negative relationship between the emotional labor level of the employees of the sports organization and the level of loneliness in organizational life, emotional labor is the predictor of loneliness in organizational life and it explains approximately 21% of the total variance. As the level of meeting the business expectations of the employees in the service delivery increases in demand their experience of loneliness decreases in business life. Therefore, it is realized that emotional labor plays an important role in the level of loneliness in organizational life.

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#### Keywords:

Emotional Labor, Loneliness in Business Life, Sports Organization

### 1. Introduction

The society in which people live, social structure and technological developments create awareness or sensitivity in people's life. This situation reflects to "the climate and culture of the organizations" (Turhan, 2019). It is realized that people are in interaction / communication with organizations in their lives due to the fact that human is an undeniable fact in the provision and use of a service. Therefore, it is pointed out an emotional bond between people and organizations. The emotional bond can be considered as emotional labor in employees. The concept of emotional labor was first introduced to the literature through the Hochschild' s studies. According to Hochschild (1983), emotional labor is the state of facial expression (gestures and signs) that can be observed by other people by managing the feelings of the individual for business. It is defined as "the effort to feel and convey the appropriate emotion in order to serve its stakeholders in the best way while implementing the rules determined by the organization where the employee works" by Eroğlu (2011). The communication problem that people experience may lead to sense of loneliness. So, human beings cannot achieve the intended communication and they isolate themselves from their environment. This situation can be observed in the working environment as well as in the social environment. The inability of individuals in the business world with their own unique working conditions to

\* This study was presented as an oral presentation at the ERPA International Congresses on Education, 10-12 April, 2020.

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<http://dx.doi.org/10.17220/ijpes.2020.04.014>

adapt to their environment, being inadequate to respond to what is expected of them can make them feel lonely and this situation may appear as loneliness in organizational life (Nartgün and Demirer, 2016). Wright (2005) defined the loneliness in business life as “environmental, organizational and individual factors. He stated that organizational loneliness in the literature has two sub-dimensions. It was stated that the first one, the emotional loneliness dimension, caused by the lack of an emotional attachment to any person in the organization, and the second one, the dimension of social loneliness, caused by the deprivation of shares in the business environment.

The individual, who has to show emotional labor in business life, may experience negative emotions such as, alienation, fatigue and social isolation during the stage of having his feelings in parallel with business environment. An individual who faces these negative situations in his business life, feeling alienated, pessimism and dejection may occur. For this reason, tendency to resign and lack of productivity and performance can be observed in individuals. Worker's getting into these feelings appear as loneliness in organizational life (Turhan, 2019). The research conducted by Bell, Roloff, Van Camp and Karol (1990) reveals that high-ranking individuals in companies who feel that they are successful, feel less isolated, while individuals who think they are less successful feel more isolated in business life. It is thought that emotional labor will have an important role in terms of achieving success both in organizational and individual basis and in occurrence of various attitudes and behaviors. For this reason, it is aimed to do a research on the link between emotional labor and loneliness in organizational life of employees of sports businesses. Between emotional labor and level of loneliness in organizational life, inverse relationship is expected to be found.

## **2. Method**

### **2.1. Research Model**

The study is carried out to evaluate the relationship between emotional labor of sports business employees and loneliness levels in organizational life. Accordingly, relational screening method which is a research model aiming to determine the presence and / or degree of co- variation between two or more variables was used (Karasar, 2016).

### **2.2. Participants**

In line with the purpose of the study, the population of the study consist of Sport İstanbul employees who work in the organization of Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality, and the sample is voluntary participants determined by simple random sampling method (n = 337). After examining the responses of the participants to the scales, in total the scale of the (n=330) participant was taken into consideration by removing missing and incorrectly filled scales.

### **2.3. Measurement Tools**

Descriptive form created by the researcher consists of 4 questions: marital status, status, professional experience and educational level. “Emotional Labor Scale” consisting of 13 items and 3 sub-dimensions, Developed by Diefendorff, James, Meredith Croyle and Robin (2005) and adapted to Turkish by Basım and Likirbaş (2012) was implemented. Scale superficial role behavior (Articles of 1,2,3,4,5,6.) are formed in-depth role behavior (articles of 7,8,9,10.), and intimate role behavior sub-dimensions (articles of11,12,13.). In his study Turhan (2019) found emotional labor scale Cronbach Alpha Coefficient as 0.949 in superficial role behavior sub-dimension, 0.940 in in-depth role behavior sub-dimension and 0.939 in intimate role behavior sub-dimension. The scale is rated as 5-point Likert type. “Loneliness Scale in Business Life” consists of 16 items, developed by Wright, Burt and Strongman (2006), and adapted to Turkish by Doğan, Çetin and Sungur (2009) is used to identify employees' loneliness in organizational life. Researchers (2009) revealed the scale's Cronbach Alpha value as 0, 90 and they stated that it was reliable. The Scale consists of "Emotional deprivation" (Articles 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9) and “Social friendship” (Articles 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15 and 16) sub-dimensions. Articles 5-6-10-11-12-14-15 and 16” of the scale asked in reverse this way and coding during analysis implemented accordingly. Articles in the scale of loneliness in business life are rated as 5-point Likert type.

### **2.4. Data Analysis**

The data which is acquired from personal information form, emotional labor and loneliness scales in business life were entered to SPSS25.0 package program and analyzes were carried out through this program. Personal information about candidates, average inventory and factor scores are given by detecting frequency (f) and percentage (%) values. The normal distribution of points was revealed by examining normal distribution curves, skewness-kurtosis values, normal distribution curves through histograms, and Kolmogorov-Smirnov test values used when the group size is greater than 50. The data do not show normal distribution. As a statistical process, Spearman Correlation and Regression analysis were used.

### 3. Findings

**Table 1.** Demographic characteristics of the participants

		f	%
Marital status	Married	256	77.6
	Single	74	22.4
Status in the Institution	Manager	49	14.8
	Trainer / Coach	128	38.8
	Office Staff	153	46.4
Professional Experience	1-5 Year	30	9.1
	6-10 Year	100	30.3
	11 Year and Above	200	60.6
Education level	Middle School	51	15.5
	High School	64	19.4
	University	188	57.0
	Graduate	27	8.2

When Table 1 is examined; it is revealed that 77.6% of the participants are married, 22.4% of them are single, 14.8% of them are manager, 38.8% of them are trainer / coach and 46.4% of them work as office staff. Also, 9.1% of them have 1-5 years, 30.3% of them have 6-10 years, 60.6% of them have 11 years or more of professional experience, 15.5% of them have secondary school, 19.4% of them have high school education level, 57% of them have university education and 8.2% of them have graduate education.

**Table 2.** Descriptive analysis of the answers given to the scales

	n	Mean± Sd
Emotional Deprivation	330	2.37±0.46
Social Friendship	330	2.00±0.63
Loneliness in Business Life	330	2.21±0.48
Superficial Role Behavior	330	2.18±0.82
In-depth Role Behavior	330	3.59±0.84
Sincere Role Behavior	330	3.97±0.74
Emotional Labor Total	330	3.03±0.48

When Table 2 is examined; it is determined that loneliness scale of the participants in business life, average of emotional deprivation subscale is 2.37±0.46, average of social friendship subscale is 2.00±0.63, and total average of loneliness scale in business life is 2.21±0.48. According to the determinations, emotional labor scale of the participants, the average of superficial role behavior sub-size is 2.18±0.82, the average of in-depth role behavior sub-dimension is 3.59±0.84, the average of candid role behavior sub-dimension is 3.97±0.74, and the total average of emotional labor scale is 3.03±0.48.

**Table 3.** The relationship between emotional labor level and loneliness in organizational life

		Loneliness in Organizational Life
<b>Emotional Labor</b>	r	-.462
	p	.000
	n	330

\*\*P<0.01

When the relationship between the emotional labor level of the sports organization employees and the level of loneliness in organizational life is examined in Table 3; a moderate negative relationship was found between emotional labor and loneliness in organizational life (r=-.462; p=.000).

**Table 4.** Regression analysis for predicting loneliness in organizational life

	B	Standard Error B	$\beta$	T	p	VIF
<b>Stationary</b>	2.045	.168		12.149	.000	
<b>Emotional Labor</b>	.054	.055	.054	.975	.000	1.000
R= -.462	R <sup>2</sup> =.213					
F(1.528)=17.500	P<0.001					
Durbin Watson=1.711						

\*\*P&lt;0.01

When Table 4 is analyzed, it is seen that there is a relationship between the emotional labor level of the sports organization employees and the level of loneliness in organizational life ( $R=-.462$ ;  $R^2=.213$ ;  $P<.001$ ). Standardized regression coefficient values ( $\beta$ )=.054,  $t=12.149$ ,  $p=.000$  reveals that emotional labor is the predictor of loneliness in organizational life and, it explains approximately 21% of the total variance. In other words, as the level of emotional labor provided to the organization by employee increases, the levels of loneliness in business life decrease. According to the analysis data,  $VIF < 5$  indicates that there is no multiple co-linearity problem and the fact that Durbin Watson value is around 2 indicates that there is no autocorrelation between the error terms (Gürbüz and Şahin, 2018).

#### 4. Conclusion and Discussion

It is observed that the level of loneliness and emotional labor in the business life of the sports organization employees is at a good level. Establishing a good level of emotional ties with employees constitutes an important indicator especially for service businesses. Considering the fact that the feeling of appreciation of the workers turns into positive behavior, it shouldn't be forgotten that the performance of individuals who have positive personal life and working life and who are pleased with their work will be higher and their performance will turn into a work of good quality. As a result of experiencing loneliness, workers are not able to deliver great performance, and their feelings redound negatively on their bond with organization, job satisfaction and desire to show organizational citizenship behavior (Turhan, 2019).

It has been confirmed that there is an intermediate level negative correlation between the emotional labor of sports organization employees and their level of loneliness in the organizational life. In other words, the more increase in the level of emotional labor provided by the employee to the business, the less becomes the level of feeling loneliness in business life. In a similar work, Turhan (2019) expresses that there is an inverse, low-level and meaningful correlation between emotional labor, the dimension of in-depth attitude and loneliness in business life, sub-dimension of emotional deprivation and inverse, low-level and meaningful correlation between emotional labor, sincere role behavior and loneliness in business life and sub-dimension of social friendship. In the literature, not enough number of studies which study on the correlation between emotional labor and level of loneliness in organizational life has been encountered. Acar (2019) expressed that there is a low-level correlation between emotional labor and organizational commitment. Gafa (2019) expressed that there is a strong inverse correlation between the job satisfaction scores and scores in loneliness in work life of form teachers.

It has been confirmed that the level of emotional labor of sports organization employees is the precursor variable of loneliness in organizational life and clarifies the 21% of the total variance. In other words, it is noticed that emotional labor plays an important role in reducing the level of loneliness in work life.

When literature is examined, Turhan (2019) states that the workers' showing organizational citizenship behavior interacts positively with showing emotional labor and in this interaction, the role of loneliness in organizational life is negative. Keser and Karaduman (2014) state that there is a negative correlation between organizational citizenship behavior and loneliness. Bıyık and Aydoğan (2014), in the study that they have conducted, have confirmed that there is a positive and meaningful correlation between emotional labor and organizational citizenship.

It is needed that employees are provided with both financial and moral support which they need to have to find creative solutions and fulfill their duties efficiently and productively. Employees with the sense that they are not provided with support in subjects that they need, cause that employees feel a sense of loneliness (Eroğlu, 2018).

Consequently, it is determined that there is a intermediate level negative correlation between the level of emotional labor and loneliness level in organizational life of sports organization employees, it is also determined that emotional labor is the predictor variable of loneliness and clarifies 21% of the total variance. The more intended increase in the employees' level of satisfying the expectations, the less feeling of loneliness in work life occurs. Because of this, it is understood that emotional labor takes up an important role in level of loneliness in work life.

Researches about the differences between the demographic characteristics of individuals working in sports service areas and the levels of loneliness in emotional labor and organizational life contribute to the literature. In addition, the relationship between customer-oriented behavior that is thought to affect loneliness in organizational life and internal entrepreneurship behavior can be examined.

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