

An Examination of Emotional Labor Among Nursing Supervisor-Subordinate Dyads

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Though emotional labor has become an increasingly important topic within organizational psychology, past research has mainly focused on intrapersonal mechanisms in the mind and the body of individuals who regulate their emotions during their interactions with important others, such as clients, coworkers, and supervisors. More current research emphasizes social interaction contexts of emotional labor and grounds the primary goal of this research--to examine emotional labor in supervisor-subordinate dyads.

This project seeks to examine emotional labor in an interpersonal interaction context by examining how surface-and deep-acting exhibit different effects on employee outcomes in nursing supervisor-subordinate dyads. Due to the physical and mental proximity of subordinates and supervisors, it is likely that crossover (attitudes flowing from one person to another) effects of emotional labor exist. Additionally, the multiple directions (from subordinates to supervisors and vice versus) and the nature (surface versus deep acting) of emotional labor crossover effects will be investigated to determine whether their prevalence in such a social interaction context extends into perceptions of work strain, well-being, as well as social support.

Finally, supervisor social support will be examined to determine if it may mediate the relation between emotional labor and work strain, as well as occupational well-being. Social support is usually regarded as an important buffering factor in the work strain area; however, few studies have explored its mediating effect, let alone examined the role of emotional labor in the giving-receiving of social support relationships.

A dyadic design will be used to examine emotional labor among nursing supervisors and nurses within a major hospital from a major U.S. city. This study will survey consenting hospital nurses by valid measures on emotional labor and employee outcomes. Proposed hypotheses will be tested through the data in this project.

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