Role of Managerial Hierarchy level in determining the Emotions of Employees at Workplace

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Abstract

This study explores the role of managerial hierarchy in shaping the emotions of employees within the workplace. Managerial hierarchy, defined by the levels of authority and responsibility in an organization, significantly influences various aspects of employee experiences, including emotional responses, job satisfaction, and performance. The research examines how different hierarchical structures impact emotional labor, emotional intelligence in leadership, and perceived organizational justice, thereby affecting employee emotions. It highlights that flatter hierarchies often promote autonomy and open communication, leading to positive emotional outcomes, while taller hierarchies can create environments of controlled interaction and emotional suppression, potentially resulting in negative emotional states. The study also underscores the importance of emotional intelligence in leadership for managing the emotional climate and fostering supportive and inclusive work environments. Understanding the interplay between managerial hierarchy and employee emotions provides valuable insights for organizations aiming to enhance employee well-being and organizational effectiveness through strategic management practices and organizational design.

Keywords: *Emotion, Emotional labor, Employee- Organization Relationship (EOR), Managerial Hierarchy*

Introduction

Understanding the interplay between managerial hierarchy and employee emotions is vital for organizational effectiveness and employee well-being. The hierarchical structure of an organization influences various aspects of employee experiences including emotional responses, job satisfaction, and performance. This research study synthesizes recent research on the impact of managerial hierarchy on employee emotions in the workplace. It also explores the mechanisms through which hierarchical dynamics shape emotional outcomes.

Research indicates that the way managerial hierarchy is perceived and enacted can significantly affect employees' emotional well-being. For instance, clear and supportive leadership within a hierarchical framework can enhance job satisfaction and reduce workplace anxiety (Schein, 2010). Conversely, rigid and overly bureaucratic hierarchies may lead to feelings of alienation and frustration among employees, adversely impacting their emotional state and overall job performance (Ashkanasy & Daus, 2002).

Literature Review

a. Managerial Hierarchy

Managerial hierarchy refers to the formal structure of authority and responsibility within an organization. It delineates the roles, power dynamics, and communication flows among different levels of employees.

Research indicates that the structure of managerial hierarchy significantly affects employee behavior and attitudes. A study by Gupta *et al.* (2022) found that flatter hierarchies, characterized by fewer layers of management, promote greater employee autonomy and engagement. In contrast, taller hierarchies, with multiple levels of authority, may lead to more controlled and structured environments, which can impact employees' emotional states.

Ashkanasy and Daus (2023) argue that emotional regulation is crucial for leaders to manage team dynamics and maintain organizational harmony . This regulation can, however, lead to emotional exhaustion if not managed properly. Furthermore, Wang *et al.* (2024) found that mid-level managers frequently use emotional intelligence to navigate interpersonal relationships and mediate conflicts between upper management and lower-level employees, underscoring the importance of emotional skills in middle management roles .

The hierarchical structure influences decision-making and communication patterns within organizations. Lee and Edmondson (2021) highlight that flatter hierarchies facilitate open communication and collaborative decision-making, leading to positive emotional outcomes for employees. Conversely, hierarchical structures with rigid chains of command may hinder upward communication, resulting in frustration and disengagement among lower-level employees.

b. Employee Emotions in the Workplace

Employee emotions encompass a wide range of feelings experienced in response to various workplace stimuli. These emotions can significantly impact job performance, satisfaction, and overall well-being.

Emotional labor, the regulation of emotions to meet organizational expectations, is a critical aspect of employee experience. Grandey*et al.* (2019) emphasize that employees in hierarchical organizations often engage in emotional labor, managing their emotions to conform to the expectations of their supervisors. This can lead to emotional exhaustion and reduced job satisfaction if not adequately supported.

Leadership plays a crucial role in shaping the emotional climate of an organization. Wong and Law (2020) demonstrate that emotionally intelligent leaders create a supportive environment, fostering positive emotional experiences and enhancing employee morale and performance.

Bindal*et al.*, (2022) highlighted that flexible work environment can improve the individual emotions at

the workplace. Sharma (2022) highlighted about the baldrige approach that can improve the performance of employees in the organization.

d. Managerial Hierarchy and Employee Emotions

The relationship between managerial hierarchy and employee emotions is multifaceted, with hierarchical structures influencing emotional dynamics and vice versa.

Keltner *et al.* (2020) found that individuals in higher hierarchical positions have more freedom to express their emotions, while lower-level employees often suppress their emotions to conform to organizational norms. This suppression can lead to negative emotional outcomes, such as stress and dissatisfaction.

Colquitt *et al.* (2019) report that perceived organizational justice, including fair treatment by supervisors and equitable resource distribution influences employees' emotional responses. Positive perceptions of justice are associated with higher job satisfaction and commitment, while perceived injustices can lead to negative emotions and decreased motivation.

The cultural context of hierarchical structures also shapes the emotional climate of the workplace. Organizations with a hierarchical culture that values authority and control may foster an environment where negative emotions, such as fear and anxiety, prevail. In contrast, a supportive hierarchical culture that emphasizes respect and inclusivity can promote positive emotional experiences and enhance overall employee well-being.

Research Objective

- To examine the role of managerial hierarchy level in determining the individual emotions of the employees at the workplace in the organizations

Research Methodology

In this research study, the primary data has been collected from 420 respondents in Delhi- NCR region through Google forms.

TABLE 1: Distribution of Respondents Based on Managerial Hierarchy and Latent Variable Emotions

Latent Variables	Managerial Hierarchy in the Organization	Obs.
EMOTIONS	Top Level	78
	Middle Level	224
	Lower Level	118
	Total	420

The table 1 provides a detailed breakdown of respondents based on their managerial hierarchy in the organization, segmented under three primary latent variables: Emotions,. For each of these variables, the respondents are further categorized into three managerial levels: Top Level, Middle Level, and Lower Level. The data reveals that there were 78 respondents from the Top Level, 224 from the Middle Level, and 118 from the Lower Level for the latent variable Emotions. This distribution offers insights into the representation of each managerial level in the study, ensuring a comprehensive understanding of the different perspectives across the organization.

Data Analysis and Inter-pretation

The detailed statistical analysis of the latent variable "EMOTIONS" across three managerial hierarchies: Top Level, Middle Level, and Low Level are highlighted in Fig 1(i), Fig 1(ii) andFig 1(iii).

For the Top Level managerial hierarchy, the average emotion score is 4.4301 with a standard error of 0.05507. The 95% confidence interval for this mean ranges from 4.3205 to 4.5398. The 5% trimmed mean, which removes the lowest and highest 5% of scores, is 4.4822, and the median score, representing the middle value, is 4.5500. The data has a variance of 0.237 and a standard deviation of 0.48640. The scores in this category span from a minimum of 2.90 to a maximum of 5.00, resulting in a range of 2.10. The interquartile range, which measures the spread of the middle 50% of the scores, is 0.48. The skewness value of -1.809 indicates a significant negative skew, and the kurtosis value of 3.095 suggests a leptokurtic distribution, which means the distribution has heavier tails than a normal distribution.

For the Middle Level managerial hierarchy, the average emotion score is 4.2924 with a standard error of 0.03080. The 95% confidence interval for this mean lies between 4.2317 and 4.3531. The 5% trimmed mean is 4.3262, and the median score is 4.4000. The variance is 0.212, with a standard deviation of 0.46090. The scores range from 2.80 to 5.00, resulting in a range of 2.20. The interquartile range is 0.60. The skewness value of -1.103 suggests a negative skew, and the kurtosis value of 1.183 indicates a mesokurtic distribution, which is similar to a normal distribution.

For the Low Level managerial hierarchy, the average emotion score is 4.4331 with a standard error of 0.03159. The 95% confidence interval for this mean ranges from 4.3705 to 4.4956. The 5% trimmed mean is 4.4549, and the median score is 4.5000. The variance is 0.118, with a standard deviation of 0.34314. The scores range from 3.35 to 5.00, resulting in a range of 1.65. The interquartile range is 0.26. The skewness value of -1.266 indicates a negative skew, and the kurtosis value of 1.427 suggests a mesokurtic distribution.
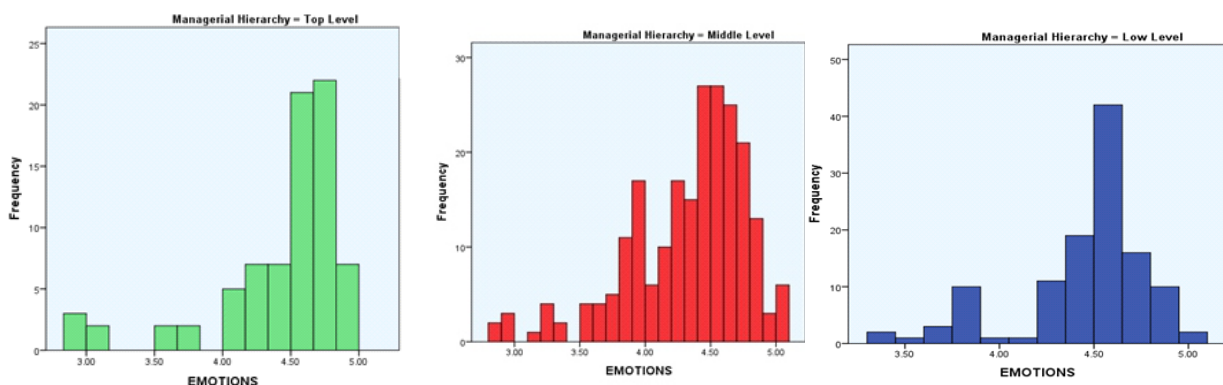
6. Conclusion

The findings highlight the fact that the managerial hierarchy level plays an important role in determining the individual emotions of employees at the workplace. The interplay between managerial hierarchy and

employee emotions is a critical area of study in organizational behavior. Recent research underscores the importance of understanding how hierarchical structures influence emotional dynamics to create supportive and effective work environments. By integrating insights from studies on managerial hierarchy and employee emotions, organizations can enhance their management practices and promote a positive and productive workplace.

Implications of the study

Understanding the interaction between managerial hierarchy and employee emotions has practical implications for organizational management and development.

Investing in leadership training programs that emphasize emotional intelligence can equip managers with the skills needed to navigate the emotional complexities of hierarchical structures. Such training can enhance leaders' ability to support their teams, manage conflicts, and foster a positive emotional climate.

Organizations can benefit from designing flexible hierarchical structures that balance authority with employee autonomy and open communication. Implementing policies that promote fairness and inclusivity can mitigate negative emotional outcomes and enhance overall organizational effectiveness.

Limitations and Future Research Directions

In this research study, the effect of managerial hierarchy is investigated only on one variable, i.e., Emotions; it can be further observed on the other variables like emotional climate, emotional culture and emotional dissonance. This research study has been conducted only in Delhi-NCR region; it can further be conducted in different parts of India and outside India.

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