

Cultural Effects on Emotional Labor: A Case of South Korea

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Abstract

Culture is considered to be psychological in nature and may directly or indirectly influence emotional labor. Maintaining harmony among group members and prioritizing group goals are characteristics of collectivist culture. People in South Korea are highly collectivist and tend to be self-effacing and submissive to ingroup members. In the public sector, the culture of in-group collectivism as an ideology is also widespread among street-level bureaucrats and drives them to act in this manner. In order to conform to the work demands of the public organization, public employees will suppress their “discordant” emotions or expressions in order to prioritize and remain loyal to the organization’s goals. In this study, we examine the effects of collective culture, specifically in-group collectivism, on positive (job satisfaction) and negative (burnout) outcomes for individuals, and the mediation effect of deep acting.

A questionnaire survey was conducted among 208 street-level bureaucrats in South Korea, and regression analysis was conducted to quantify the results. The results indicated that in-group collectivism is a particularly important predictor of deep acting and job satisfaction among street bureaucrats. Also, deep acting mediated the relationship between in-group collectivism and job satisfaction.

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Contrary to expectations, the study did not find any effect of in-group collectivism on job burnout.

Keywords: in-group collectivism, emotional labor, deep acting, job satisfaction, burnout

I. Introduction

South Korea (hereafter, Korea) is a collectivist nation where group cohesiveness and vertical relationships are emphasized (Lu et al., 2021). According to Hofstede's dimension of individualism, a score of 1 indicates the highest collectivism and 100 indicates the highest individualism, Korea indicates one of the most collectivist countries (score of 18).¹ Thus, Korean individuals value more on long-term commitment to the in-group and foster positive relationships with co-workers than people in the out-groups. Moreover, Korea embraces a high degree of in-group collectivist culture. In-group collectivism refers to "the degree to which individuals express pride, loyalty, and cohesiveness in their organization or families" (House et al., 2004, p. 12). Based on the GLOBE study,² the Confucian Asia societal cluster, including the countries of Korea, China, and Japan, is characterized by higher performance orientation and in-group collectivism. The organizational goals of these countries are collective and family oriented where the rewards for individuals' performance are highly related to collective goals. Mastracci and Adams (2019) also confirmed that Korea is a strong in-group collectivism cultural nation.

In general, the expression of negative emotions towards in-group members in collective cultures is perceived as disrupting harmony (Matsumoto, 1990), whereas moderation or suppression of emotions is highly valued in Eastern cultures (Eid & Diener, 2001; Matsumoto, 1990). One of the strategies that Korean people sustain with in-group relationship is to display more positive emotions to members of in-groups and more negative emotions to those of out-groups. In the same vein, Korean people are less willing to reveal their personal emotion, but they tend to attune themselves to others for social and organizational cohesion, and even accept some degree of sacrifice in the workplace (Lu et al., 2021).

Studies on emotional labor in the public administration arena have been

¹ Hofstede Insights serves as an accessible platform for comprehending the influence of culture. To gain insights into the variations in cultural dimensions among countries, one can access this resource at the provided link <https://www.hofstede-insights.com/>

² The GLOBE study is a global research initiative examining cultural practices, leadership ideals, and trust in 150 countries. It operates under the idea that effective leadership is influenced by cultural and societal factors, as well as organizational norms and values. For more details, visit their website: <https://globeproject.com/>

increasing in both western and eastern culture countries. Emotional labor refers to manage individuals' emotions to comply with organizational display rules (Hochschild, 1983). In the context of the public services, street-level bureaucrats, such as enforcement officers, dispatchers, social workers, and administrative officials, experience emotional labor. Since public service jobs directly relate to help citizens' lives to the fullest as possible, the intensity of the emotional display, which refers to the depth of feeling during the people interaction, is much higher with them than that of salesclerks or receptionists (Yang et al., 2018). Most studies have found that emotional labor brings harmful outcomes (e.g., burnout, absenteeism, and turnover intention); however, a number of recent studies conducting in eastern culture countries have found different results in the sample of public service employees. For example, Yang and Guy (2015) and Lee (2018) found positive relations between emotional labor and job satisfaction among Korean street-level bureaucrats, and Lu et al. (2021) also found that emotional labor brings positive outcomes in the sample of Chinese and Korean street-level bureaucrats. Further, Stenross and Kleinman (1989) found positive relations between emotional labor and job satisfaction among police detectives. However, Cheung et al. (2011) found no significant relationship between emotional and job satisfaction among Chinese public teachers. As such, cultural factors may influence, either directly or indirectly, the outcomes of emotional labor. Therefore, more studies including cultural factors are necessary to conclude the consequences of emotional labor successfully.

So far, studies on emotional labor including the variable of in-group collectivism have not been explored. Because individuals in countries with a high degree of in-group collectivism tend to commit to their organization, it is worth examining how in-group collectivism influences job satisfaction and burnout through emotional labor. It is logical to hypothesize that in-group collectivism is a key variable for Korean street-level bureaucrats responding to emotionally intense situations. To explore the relationships, researchers treat emotional labor as a mediating role between in-group collectivism and job satisfaction and burnout. Deriving the study hypotheses, we first present the theoretical underpinnings of what is meant by in-group collectivism and emotional labor and how it may be

related to job satisfaction and burnout for Korean street-level bureaucrats. Lastly, the study is followed by conclusion with discussing the implications of the findings.

II. Literature review

A. Deep acting as a type of emotional labor strategy

Emotional labor, as introduced by Hochschild (1983) in her book *The Managed Heart: Commercialization of Human Feeling*, encompasses the creation of publicly observable facial expressions and physical behaviors through the management of emotions. The emotional labor possesses transactional value, as it is something that can be bought and sold. Mary E. Guy and her colleagues played a pioneering role in advancing research on emotional labor within the realm of public service studies. Their primary objective was to underscore the significance of emotional labor and prevent its dismissal as inconsequential. Thereafter, this concept has undergone examination in various public service occupations, including police officers (Kop et al., 1999), social workers (Moesby-Jensen & Nielsen, 2015), and street-level bureaucrats (Yang & Guy, 2015).

Surface acting and deep acting are two emotional labor strategies utilized to convey the required emotions in accordance with the organizational standards that service employees are expected to adhere to when interacting with customers (Hochschild, 1983). Specifically, surface acting entails employees feigning emotions they do not genuinely experience by altering their outward appearances, which includes aspects like facial expressions, gestures, or tone of voice. Employees essentially “put on” the expected expressions as though wearing a mask, concealing their true emotions through surface acting. In contrast, deep acting goes beyond external appearances to alter inner feelings. This can be achieved by directly summoning emotions or indirectly using trained imagination (Hochschild, 1983). It represents a shift from the surface to the core, where employees draw upon their training or experience to evoke appropriate emotions when their personal feelings do not naturally fit the situation. Often, employees may adjust their emotions to present a more authentic performance, even if it means misrepresenting their true feelings.

Prior studies pointed out that deep acting and surface acting have different effects. Specifically, surface acting results in several negative outcome variables with more detrimental effects on stress, job performance, job satisfaction, and service delivery (Bhave & Glomb, 2016; Erickson & Wharton, 1997; Grandey, 2003). A meta-analysis found that although deep acting requires some initial energy expenditure to change one's underlying emotion, once the true feelings have been revised, one can consistently display the desired emotion without additional effort (Mesmer-Magnus et al., 2012).

B. Job satisfaction

Locke (1976, p. 1304) defined job satisfaction as “a pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job or job experiences”. Although job satisfaction and job attitude are often used interchangeably, they both refer to an individual's emotional orientation toward the job role he or she is currently performing. These emotional orientations are considered important motivators since they lead to behaviors such as approaching or avoiding the workplace. A number of previous studies have demonstrated that high job satisfaction boosts employee confidence and loyalty to their jobs and improves productivity (Pugliesi, 1999).

Previous research has firmly established a significant correlation between emotional labor and job satisfaction within the public sector workforce (Guy et al., 2008; Psilopanagioti et al., 2012; Pugliesi, 1999). The impact of emotional labor on service employees is moderated by their level of identification with their roles. Greater identification with the role leads to a milder negative impact on well-being and a more pronounced positive impact, as illustrated by Ashforth and Humphrey (1993).

C. Burnout

Freudenberger (1974) first introduced the concept of burnout, defining it as a physical condition stemming from excessive demands on one's energy, strength, or resources. This concept was put forth in response to the challenges of chronic

emotional stress and its associated symptoms. Building upon this foundation, Maslach and Jackson (1981) took burnout beyond mere description by developing a measurement scale that assessed three key facets of the syndrome: emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and personal accomplishment. A pivotal element in Maslach's theory was the notion that stress arises from the worker-client relationship (Devereux et al., 2009; Maslach et al., 2001). Burnout, characterized as a form of stress reaction, describes a prolonged social problem prevalent in research investigating the consequences of negative workplace experiences (Perlman & Hartman, 1982).

Burnout continued to be a challenge for employees, including physical symptoms like work stress, anxiety, anger, depression, as well as potential health problems like headaches, back pain, upset stomach, musculoskeletal pains, listlessness, fatigue (Basinska et al., 2014; Gorter et al., 2000; Maslach & Leiter, 2016; Szczygiel & Mikolajczak, 2018) and risk of cardiovascular disease (Brandstätter et al., 2016; Melamed et al., 1992). Negative consequences of job burnout have prompted calls for the development of intervention strategies such as health and fitness, relaxation strategies, coping skills, social support, and healthy workplaces (Maslach, 2017).

The initial exploration of burnout primarily occurred within the fields of human services and education, but more recently, work in public administration has emerged (Guy et al., 2008; Hsieh et al., 2011; Kalliath & Morris, 2002). Research pertaining to burnout has centered on healthcare professionals (Vahey et al., 2004), law enforcement officers (Burke, 2016; Kop et al., 1999), street-level bureaucrats (Hsieh et al., 2011) and teachers (Chang, 2009). In general, public employees who contend with long working hours, potential violence and threats, or who provide services to citizens and patients, are susceptible to prolonged job-related stress, heightened anxiety, and even burnout. Recent studies indicate that individuals in public sector have been more prone to experiencing burnout, a trend attributed to the exigencies of the COVID-19 pandemic, the global financial crisis, job insecurity, reduced incomes, and societal instability (Adamopoulos & Syrou, 2022; Martínez-López et al., 2021).

The costs and benefits of emotional labor are interrelated (Guy et al., 2008;

Wharton, 1999). Emotional labor should not be exclusively associated with negativity; it can yield both favorable outcomes like increased job satisfaction and adverse consequences like burnout. To better understand how employees can derive advantages from emotional labor, as proposed by Guy et al. (2008), we can explore the concept of work engagement. When employees effectively manage their emotions and perceive emotional labor as personally enriching, it can significantly enhance their work engagement. Public employees tend to experience higher levels of fulfillment and satisfaction when they willingly and enthusiastically adhere to display rules. Additionally, the Conservation of Resources (COR) theory offers valuable insights into the impact of burnout, given its widespread application in the realm of general work-related stress and burnout. According to the COR theory, individuals are naturally driven to acquire, maintain, and safeguard resources they value (Hobfoll, 1989). They may feel threatened when they perceive the risk of losing these crucial resources or failing to acquire them in the workplace (Hobfoll, 1989). Consequently, when employees suppress their emotions, the demands of their daily work deplete their personal resources, ultimately leading to burnout.

D. In-group collectivism

Understanding cultural differences is highly crucial, and there is a widespread recognition among scholars of the urgent need for cross-cultural studies on emotional labor (Allen et al., 2014; Ashkanasy & Daus, 2013; Guy et al., 2019; Mastracci & Adams, 2019; Mastracci & Hsieh, 2016). Research on emotional labor has largely been conducted on samples from North America (Mastracci & Adams, 2019). However, variations in emotional labor experiences may become apparent in cultures that value individualism and collectivism. Previous research has shown that employees in collectivist cultures may experience less difficulty with emotional labor than those in individualist cultures (Butler et al., 2007; Mastracci & Adams, 2019; Mesquita & Delvaux, 2013). Hofstede (1980) model included a metric for individualism, which he identified as one of the poles of the cultural dimension known as Individualism-Collectivism (I-C). Individualism refers to a more casual interpersonal atmosphere that stresses “Everyone is expected to look after themselves and their immediate family only.” Conversely, collectivism emphasizes

an integrated society where individuals are placed into robust, cohesive in-groups from birth and are consistently safeguarded throughout their lives in exchange for unwavering loyalty and an emphasis on harmony (Brewer & Venaik, 2011; Hofstede, 1980).

Project GLOBE divides Hofstede's Collectivism dimension into institutional and in-group collectivism. According to House et al. (2004, p. 12), in-group collectivism is the degree to which individuals express pride, loyalty, and cohesiveness in their organizations or families. Specifically, in-groups characterized by a potent internal cohesiveness among its members, which includes a multitude of contents, including families, tribes, nations, and organizations (Triandis, 2001; Yi, 2019). In-group collectivists are community-oriented, cooperative, committed to the same values, closely connected with one another, and show unquestionable loyalty (House et al., 2004; Triandis, 1995; Triandis et al., 1988). It follows that in-group collectivist values play a crucial role in the development of a social mission that relates to the interests of the group and addresses social problems (Pathak & Muralidharan, 2016).

Triandis (1982) built on Hofstede's investigation of cultural dimensions and claimed that the criteria used to differentiate between in-group and out-group vary significantly across cultures. In some cultures, this may be determined by factors such as tribes and families. In others, it may be based on nation, religion, language, political ideology, or occupational groups. As a result, the composition of in-groups can differ between cultures, and individuals may belong to multiple in-groups. Hofstede (1993) found that a country's position on cultural dimensions can help predict how certain aspects of its society and management processes operate to some extent. Recent research, such as that conducted by Gabelica and Popov (2020), also used the cultural dimensions perspective to explain how they shape individual perception in organizations. They reject the notion that culture is limited to Hofstede's cultural dimensions and instead provide a more comprehensive and inclusive view of the individual-level concept. In line with the view of Schwartz (2014), Gabelica and Popov (2020) argued that because each member brings their values, norms, beliefs, and attitudes to their organization, the organization can also be seen as a container of culture. Culture is expressed at the team level when team

members interact in organizational activities.

E. In-group collectivism in Korea

This study examines Korea's sociocultural context to shed light on its internal logic regarding emotional labor. A number of Confucian values permeate society and government, including social harmony, respect for authority, filial piety, benevolence, and the preservation of manners (Im et al., 2013; Shin & Sin, 2012). Therefore, Korean citizens develop a collective ideology based on these values. Singelis et al. (1995) highlighted the importance of making the distinction between vertical and horizontal collectivism (HC) and vertical collectivism (VC). Korea has been identified as having an HC cultural pattern, consisting of communal sharing and equality matching, as well as an individual seeing himself as a member of an in-group (Lu et al., 2021; Singelis et al., 1995). Accordingly, in Korean culture, people strongly endorse a strongly defined social framework that encourages them to conform to society's ideals and the in-groups they belong to. Moreover, to become Korean government officials, applicants need to pass competitive civil service examinations, which appear to be one of the most demanding in terms of preparation and qualifications. Therefore, being a government official in Korea receives a certain degree of social prestige, and government officials are also proud of working in government sectors. Especially when government officials perceive themselves as a good fit with government organizations, high commitments to public service motivation (PSM) and in-group collectivism are generated.

F. The relationship between in-group collectivism, deep acting, job satisfaction and burnout

Emotional labor involves expressing organizationally desired emotions and suppressing inappropriate ones. Differences in emotional labor experiences may manifest in individualistic and collectivist cultures (Mastracci & Adams, 2019). Public employees with an in-group collectivistic orientation are more likely to feel a sense of alignment with the public organization's service goals, follow display rules, and develop trust, loyalty, and commitment. When public employees

are engaged in-group collectivism, they feel energetic and efficient, which is the opposite of burnout (Guy et al., 2008). Consequently, in-group collectivism prevents conflicts between public employees and the work environment. Public employees are more likely to adopt the deep acting strategy when they work hard for the good of the organization. In their day-to-day efforts, public employees can find self-realization and fulfillment in achieving organizational goals, which is expected to result in higher job satisfaction and lower burnout levels. Based on the above discussions, the following hypotheses are tested:

Hypothesis 1: There is a statistically significant positive relationship between in-group collectivism and deep acting.

Hypothesis 2: There is a statistically significant positive relationship between in-group collectivism and job satisfaction.

Hypothesis 3: There is a statistically significant negative relationship between in-group collectivism and burnout.

Deep acting, as previously discussed, offers employees a perspective where they see their expressed emotions as something they “pump up” rather than “push up” (Grandey et al., 2020; Guy et al., 2008). Drawing from the COR theory, deep acting can be seen as a way to compensate for personal resources. Research has consistently demonstrated that deep acting reduces emotional exhaustion, enhances job satisfaction, and improves in-role performance, particularly in collectivist cultures and team environments, where authentic and appropriate emotions can be readily shared among group members (Becker & Cropanzano, 2015; Mastracci & Adams, 2019).

Consequently, collectivist bureaucrats, who place significant emphasis on group goals and values, discover that deep acting empowers them to make more efficient adjustments and align themselves better with the organization’s expected emotional expressions. This alignment helps bridge the gap between their true feelings and outward expressions. When they genuinely perceive the mandated emotions as their own, they may find that it requires less effort to manage their emotions during job performance. The result is that the perception of emotional regulation is replaced

with enjoyment and active engagement. In light of these findings, we argue that deep acting can mediate the relationship between in-group collectivism and work outcomes, leading us to formulate the following hypotheses:

Hypothesis 4: Deep acting mediates the relationship between in-group collectivism and job satisfaction.

Hypothesis 5: Deep acting mediates the relationship between in-group collectivism and burnout.

III. Method

A. Survey respondents

The sample of the study is drawn from Korean street-level bureaucrats who were employed in the municipal government, *Gu* (similar to district). Between April and June 2015, researchers visited five *Gu* (e.g., there are 25 *Gu* in Seoul, Korea) to distribute paper-based survey questionnaires to a sample of 300 ward officials. Ward officials refer to the frontline civil servants of the district office in Korea. *Gu*, is an administrative unit in South Korea and each *Gu*'s government handles many of the functions that are handled by city governments in other jurisdictions. In this study, we randomly selected 60 ward officials from each *Gu* who were the frontline civil servants spending most of their time interacting with citizens seeking administrative service (e.g., issue and manage official documents). Two weeks later, researchers visited each *Gu* to collect completed questionnaires, and 254 were collected, which showed 84.6% response rate. After dropping several incomplete responses, 208 respondents were used in the study.

Demographic factors about all the respondents are as follows. The average age of the respondents was 37.6 years, with a range from 28 to 57 years, and gender represented as female, 55.3% and male, 44.7%. The average length of public-sector work experience was approximately 10 years, and most of the respondents (77.3%) were working in administrative service areas that entailed frequent citizen contact. Regarding education, 64.4% of the respondents were college graduates. More details of the descriptive statistics are illustrated in Table 1.

Table 1*Demographic Characteristics: Korea (N=208)*

Items	Categories	Frequency	Percent (%)
Gender	Female	115	55.3
	Male	93	44.7
Age	Less than 30	48	23.1
	30-39	75	36.1
	40-49	53	25.5
	50-59	30	14.4
	60 or more	0	0
	NA	2	0.9
Education Level	Less than high school	0	0
	High school graduate	19	9.1
	Some college	11	5.3
	2-year associate degree	18	8.7
	College graduate	134	64.4
	Some graduate school	7	3.4
	Master's degree	10	4.8
	Law degree (J.D., LL.B.)	0	0
	Doctorate degree (Ph.D., M.D., Ed.D., etc.)	1	0.5
Other (please specify)	8	3.8	
Public service experience	Less than 10	113	54.3
	10-19 years	30	14.4
	20-29 years	55	26.5
	30 or more	3	1.4
	NA	7	3.4

Source: Compiled by the authors.

B. Definition of the operational variables

We had four variables with all 13 items (see Table 3), including 3 items for measuring deep acting, 4 items for measuring job satisfaction, 3 items for measuring burnout, and 3 items for measuring ingroup collectivism. The questionnaire used a seven-point Likert-type scale (1= strongly disagree, 7= strongly agree) for each item. All measures were originally created in English and underwent a back-translation process into Korean, conducted by bilingual experts. Subsequently, these items were adjusted to align with local linguistic conventions. The modified items were then retranslated back into English. To ensure uniformity and equivalence, we conducted a thorough comparison between the back-translated English versions and the original English drafts.

Deep acting. The variable reflects how street-level bureaucrats psych themselves into experiencing displaying rules on the ground. The measurement scales used in this study were taken from previous research by Hsieh et al. (2012) and Diefendorff et al. (2005). A sample of the items used in the measurement scale is “I try to actually experience the emotions that I must show to clients/customers.”

Job satisfaction. This variable assesses the bureaucrats’ perceptions of their job and work experiences. The items used for measurement were chosen from prior research conducted by Guy and Lee (2015). An example of one of the selected items is “I feel satisfied with my supervisor.”

Burnout. Using this variable, we can measure how overwhelmed, and emotionally drained street-level bureaucrats feel because of the demands of work. An evaluation of this factor examines the service providers’ reaction to emotional labor’s well-established negative effects. Measurement items are also selected from Guy and Lee (2015). A sample item is “I leave work feeling emotionally exhausted.”

In-group collectivism. The variable measures how much the public organization’s culture creates pride and loyalty among street-level bureaucrats. Measurement scales from the foundational work of House et al. (2004). A sample item is “In this organization, group managers take pride in the individual accomplishments of group members.”

The analysis included four background variables as control variables: age,

gender, educational level, and seniority in public service. The study by Marchand et al. (2018) emphasized the significance of age in relation to burnout and its potential impact on employee cynicism and reduced professional efficacy, which led to its inclusion in this study. Marchand et al. (2018) also suggested that the relationship between age and burnout can be significantly moderated by gender, which is why gender was also taken into account. Additionally, Jamaludin and You (2019) found that educational level has a significant effect on burnout levels. Bachelor's, Master's, and PhD holders tend to show higher tendencies towards emotional exhaustion, while Diploma holders do not. Additionally, seniority in public service was considered because a meta-analysis conducted by Brewer and Shapard (2004) showed a negative correlation between burnout and years of work experience.

IV. Results

A. Data quality test

In this study, the scale's reliability and validity were first tested before validating the hypotheses. Reliability testing measures the consistency of a variable, and convergent validity was determined using factor loadings when the Cronbach's Alpha value obtained was above 0.70. As shown in Table 2, the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) statistic is 0.738, which is greater than 0.5, and Bartlett's test shows $\chi^2 = 1570.637$ with 78 df and a significance level of 0.000, indicating that the data are adequate for factor analysis. The rotated component matrix, sometimes referred to as the factor loadings, demonstrated satisfactory alignment between the four common factors and their associated items, as evidenced by load values exceeding 0.4. This conformity with the expected dimension divisions supported the validity of the factor structure. Detailed results of the validity analysis and reliability analysis are presented in Tables 2 and 3.

Table 2
Factor Analysis

KMO and Bartlett's Test			
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.			.738
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square		1570.637
	<i>df</i>		78
	Sig.		.000

Source: Compiled by the authors.

Table 3
Constructs and Reliability of Scales (N=208)

Scale	Survey Item(s)	Rotated Component Matrix	Cronbach's α
Deep acting	I try to actually experience the emotions that I must show to clients/customers.	.911	.924
	I work hard to actually feel the emotions that I need to show to clients/customers.	.937	
	I work at developing the feelings inside of me that I need to show to clients/customers.	.902	
Job satisfaction	My job provides career development and promotion opportunities.	.815	.733
	I feel I am being paid a fair amount for the work I do.	.838	
	I feel satisfied with my supervisor.	.541	
	Overall, I am satisfied with my job.	.646	
Burnout	I leave work feeling tired and run down.	.909	.919
	I leave work feeling emotionally exhausted.	.912	
	I feel "used up" at the end of the workday.	.938	
In-group collectivism	In this organization, group managers take pride in the individual accomplishments of group members.	.759	.827
	In this organization, employees feel loyalty to the organization.	.888	
	I think this organization shows loyalty toward its employees.	.857	

Source: Compiled by the authors.

Table 4
Correlation Analysis

	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Age	37.58	9.54	1							
2. Gender	.55	.49	-.295**	1						
3. Seniority	10.82	9.44	.906**	-.213**	1					
4. Education Level	4.88	1.54	-.312**	.103	-.288**	1				
5. Burnout	4.57	1.45	-.108	.198**	-.100	.105	1			
6. JS	4.57	.96	-.089	-.029	-.126	.085	-.169*	1		
7. DA	4.85	1.22	.182**	-.108	.132	.004	-.078	.284**	1	
8. IG	4.43	.98	-.159*	-.058	-.189**	.060	-.049	.420**	.248**	1

Note. JS= Job satisfaction, IG= In-group collectivism, DA= Deep Acting.

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed), *Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

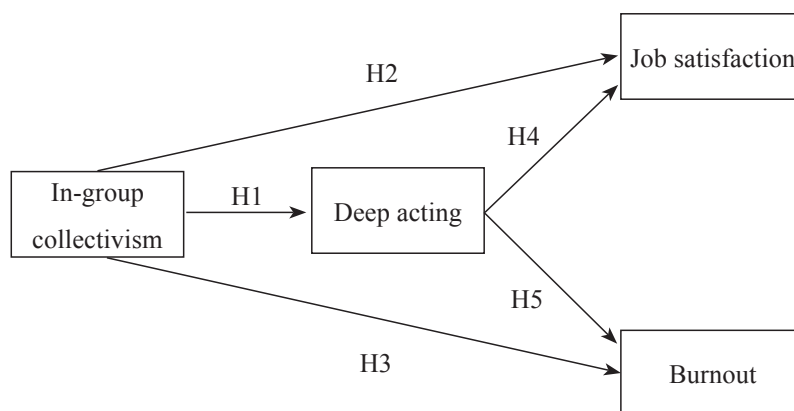
Source: Compiled by the authors.

We used the Pearson correlation coefficient for correlational analysis. As seen from table 4, in-group collectivism correlates positively with deep acting ($p < 0.01$) and job satisfaction ($p < 0.01$) but not with burnout. Deep acting has a positive correlation with job satisfaction ($p < 0.01$), and as expected, job satisfaction has a negative correlation with burnout ($p < 0.05$).

B. Hypothesis test

In this study, multiple regression analysis was employed as a statistical technique to examine and evaluate the potential cultural effects on emotional labor. To illustrate the theoretical relationships between variables, a conceptual model was developed and presented in Figure 1. The statistical findings and estimates of the relationships between variables could be found in Tables 5, 6, and 7, which are included in this study to provide further evidence for the proposed conceptual model.

Figure 1
Research Model



Source: Compiled by the authors.

Table 5
Results of Multiple Regression Analysis on Deep Acting

	Model 1			Model 2		
	β	SE	<i>t</i>	β	SE	<i>t</i>
Constant	3.352**	.788	4.253	1.739**	.867	2.005
Age	.038	.023	1.672	.040	.022	1.812
Gender	-.129	.186	-.693	-.062	.181	-.342
Seniority	-.016	.022	-.708	-.010	.021	-.472
Education Level	.067	.060	1.115	.061	.058	1.067
IG				.332	.086	3.881**
R^2		.043			.112	
R^2 change		.043			.069	
F change	$F=2.196, p=0.071$			$F=15.064, p=.000$		

Note. Dependent Variable: Deep Acting; IG= In-group collectivism; * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$.

Source: Compiled by the authors.

Table 5 presents the results of a multiple regression analysis focused on deep acting as the dependent variable. To provide context, Model 1 incorporated four control variables, none of which yielded statistically significant coefficients, indicating their limited influence on deep acting. In contrast, Model 2 introduced

in-group collectivism as an additional predictor, significantly enhancing the model's predictive capacity. The R-squared change of 0.069 underscores the considerable impact of in-group collectivism on deep acting. Importantly, the coefficient associated with in-group collectivism was highly significant at the 0.01 level, affirming its substantial positive predictive power regarding deep acting. Furthermore, the F-change statistic provided compelling evidence for the significance of Model 2 ($F= 15.064, p<0.001$), reinforcing the robustness of the model. These results unequivocally support Hypothesis 1, which posits a positive association between in-group collectivism and deep acting.

Table 6
Results of Multiple Regression Analysis on Job Satisfaction

	Model 1			Model 2			Model 3			
	β	SE	<i>t</i>	β	SE	<i>t</i>	β	SE	<i>t</i>	
Constant	4.208**	.625	6.734	2.300**	.654	3.515	2.040**	.650	3.140	
Age	.010	.018	.577	.012	.016	.756	.007	.016	.400	
Gender	-.085	.148	-.575	-.005	.136	-.039	.004	.134	.030	
Seniority	-.021	.017	-1.206	-.014	.016	-.902	-.013	.016	-.822	
Education Level	.049	.047	1.042	.043	.043	.997	.034	.043	.797	
IG				.393**	.065	6.085	.343**	.066	5.211	
DA							.150**	.053	2.822	
R^2		.025			.181			.213		
R^2 change		.025			.156			.189		
F change		$F=1.258, p=0.23$			$F=37.025, p=.000$			$F=7.965, p=0.005$		

Note. Dependent Variable: Job Satisfaction; IG= In-group collectivism, DA= Deep Acting; * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$.

Source: Compiled by the authors.

Table 6 provides an overview of model summaries, specifically focusing on R-squared and R-squared change values associated with each step in the hierarchical regression analysis. In Model 2, when in-group collectivism is introduced as a predictor of job satisfaction, it reveals a statistically significant positive relationship with job satisfaction ($\beta= 0.393, p<0.01$), which supporting the hypothesis 2.

Additionally, Table 6 also suggests that deep acting plays a mediating role in the relationship between in-group collectivism and job satisfaction. Here is how we arrive at this conclusion: In Model 3, when deep acting is included as a predictor alongside in-group collectivism, we observe that the coefficient for in-group collectivism remains significant ($\beta= 0.343, p<0.01$), reaffirming its positive relationship with job satisfaction. The significant coefficient for deep acting ($\beta= 0.150, p<0.01$) in Model 3 suggests that deep acting also has a direct positive impact on job satisfaction. However, the introduction of deep acting results in a reduction in the coefficient for in-group collectivism compared to Model 2. This reduction indicates that some of the positive effect of in-group collectivism on job satisfaction is explained by the mediating role of deep acting. In other words, deep acting helps elucidate why in-group collectivism positively influences job satisfaction, suggesting that it acts as a mediator in this relationship (Hypothesis 4 is supported).

Table 7
Results of Multiple Regression Analysis on Burnout

	Model 1			Model 2			Model 3			
	β	SE	<i>t</i>	β	SE	<i>t</i>	β	SE	<i>t</i>	
Constant	4.489**	.923	4.863	4.778**	1.054	4.536	4.851**	1.066	4.549	
Age	-.013	.026	-.492	-.013	.027	-.503	-.012	.027	-.436	
Gender	.415	.218	1.901	.403	.220	1.834	.400	.220	1.818	
Seniority	.004	.026	.160	.003	.026	.121	.003	.026	.104	
Education Level	.063	.070	.899	.064	.070	.910	.066	.070	.942	
IG				-.060	.104	-.573	-.046	.108	-.423	
DA							-.042	.087	-.481	
R^2		.040			.041			.042		
R^2 change		.040			.002			.001		
F change		$F=2.026, p=.092$			$F=.329, p=.567$			$F=.231, p=.631$		

Note. Dependent Variable: Burnout. IG= In-group collectivism, DA= Deep Acting, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$.

Source: Compiled by the authors.

Table 7 presents the results of a multiple regression analysis on burnout. In Model 2, we introduced in-group collectivism as a predictor to examine its relationship with burnout. However, the coefficient is not statistically significant ($\beta = -0.060$, $p > 0.05$), suggesting that in-group collectivism does not have a significant direct impact on burnout in this model, which leads to the rejection of hypothesis 3.

Thereafter, in Model 3, we introduce deep acting as a predictor alongside in-group collectivism. Similar to Model 2, the coefficient for deep acting is also not statistically significant ($\beta = -0.042$, $p > 0.05$), indicating that deep acting is not a significant predictor of burnout. The R-squared values for all three models were low, suggesting that the independent variables explained only a small proportion of the variance in burnout. Overall, the results imply that the variables included in the models are not strong predictors of burnout, strongly rejecting hypothesis 5.

Table 8*Model Fit Metrics*

Common indicators	GMIN	GFI	CFI	RMSEA	Standardized RMR
standard	<5	>0.9	>0.9	<0.08	<0.08
value	4.941	0.988	0.937	0.138	.043

Source: Compiled by the authors.

Table 9*Indirect Paths*

Path	Indirect effect value	Lower Bounds (BC)	Upper Bounds (BC)	Test results
In-group collectivism → Deep acting → Job satisfaction	.008	0.011	0.104	H4 Accepted
In-group collectivism → Deep acting → Burnout	.266	-0.096	0.024	H5 Rejected

Source: Compiled by the authors.

In order to further substantiate the indirect effects of in-group collectivism on job satisfaction and burnout through deep acting, we employed path analysis to test our hypothesis models. Referring to the model fitting indices in Table 8, with the exception of RMSEA at 0.138, which deviates slightly from the reference standard, other indices such as GMIN= 4.941 (<5), GFI= 0.988 (>0.9), CFI= 0.937 (>0.9), and Standardized RMR= 0.043 (<0.08) are all fall within or approximate the acceptable range. These results indicate an acceptable model, reasonably reliable analytical outcomes, and compelling conclusions.

Upon analyzing the results presented in Table 9, it becomes apparent that indirect effect values are considered insignificant if the confidence interval (CI) includes zero within its upper and lower bound limits. This observation confirms that deep acting indeed mediates the relationship between in-group collectivism and job satisfaction. However, this mediation effect is not observed in the context of burnout. Therefore, we can confidently support hypothesis 4 while rejecting hypothesis 5. Furthermore, Table 10 serves as a valuable resource for interpreting the results of the hypothesis tests in this study.

Table 10
Hypothesis Tests Results

Hypothesis 1	There is a statistically significant positive relationship between in-group collectivism and deep acting.	Supported
Hypothesis 2	There is a statistically significant positive relationship between in-group collectivism and job satisfaction.	Supported
Hypothesis 3	There is a statistically significant negative relationship between in-group collectivism and burnout.	Rejected
Hypothesis 4	Deep acting mediates the relationship between in-group collectivism and job satisfaction.	Supported
Hypothesis 5	Deep acting mediates the relationship between in-group collectivism and burnout.	Rejected

Source: Compiled by the authors.

V. Discussion and conclusion

This study investigates the influence of in-group collectivism on both deep acting and work outcomes, drawing on survey data from Korean street-level bureaucrats working in municipal government positions. Additionally, it explores the complex mediating role of deep acting in the connection between in-group collectivism and work outcomes.

First, the research findings indicate that street-level bureaucrats with a strong sense of in-group collectivism tend to use deep acting to maintain in-role performance. The cultural dimension named collectivism can elucidate this phenomenon as it underscores the importance of group goals and values (Hui & Triandis, 1986), giving them priority over individual objectives, thereby shaping consistent behavior among group members and subsequently impacting their emotional expressions at work. In alignment with this notion, deep acting entails individuals modifying their genuine emotional states (Grandey, 2003) to bridge the gap between their inner feelings and outward expressions in order to meet organizational expectations. In other words, those who perceive in-group collectivism as an extension of themselves are intrinsically motivated to embrace deep acting. Another reason to explain why bureaucrats in collectivist organizations prefer to adopt deep acting as an emotional labor strategy is based on the theory of emotional contagion. This theory elucidates how one member's emotions and emotional expressions can influence other members within the group, and deep acting can serve as a shared approach for addressing emotional needs (Becker & Cropanzano, 2015).

Based on the above-mentioned findings, the public sector could benefit from a collectivist culture. The development of a collectivist organizational climate among street-level bureaucrats can lead to cultural consensus and loyalty to organizational goals. Nonetheless, an excessive obedience to organizational orders can also have negative consequences, such as over-dependence, the avoidance of mistakes, and a fear of change and innovation. Therefore, it is important for street-level bureaucrats to identify and find self-fulfillment in in-group collectivism, thereby increasing their job satisfaction and output.

The second observation of this study is that, contrary to expectations, there is no connection between in-group collectivism and emotional exhaustion among street-level bureaucrats. The finding explains the fact that a deeply rooted collectivist culture in national culture has almost no impact on work-related emotional exhaustion. In other words, Korean people feel more secure when they are part of a group than when they are independent. When street-level bureaucrats prefer unity and uniformity over individualistic feelings, there is limited conflict between the two. Having this type of in-group collectivism culture environment allows street-level bureaucrats to express themselves authentically, sacrifice voluntarily, and dedicate themselves selflessly without feeling coerced or controlled by organizational display rules.

The third finding in this study is that deep acting mediates the relationship between in-group collectivism and job satisfaction. In the public sector, bureaucrats are perceived as actors performing for discerning audiences, inevitably causing emotional friction that leads to dissatisfaction. However, deep acting provides street-level bureaucrats with an opportunity to align their genuine emotions more closely with the performance. The more fully committed and voluntary they are, the more likely they are to genuinely believe that their real emotions match those of the performance. It is possible that street-level bureaucrats' emotional labor functions as a platform for showing in-group collectivism. When a larger number of members within the same group follow the same methods to adhere to display rules, it leads to greater alignment, reduced emotional exhaustion, higher job satisfaction, and improved in-role performance. This phenomenon can be likened to the idea that 'Good acting requires a good cast' as described by Becker and Cropanzano (2015).

It is important for street-level bureaucrats to experience or imitate emotions from group members, but once they are able to regulate their emotions in a way consistent with the display rules, they will no longer need to struggle and will be able to articulate their integration into the organization effectively. That is, those involved in deep acting can lead to more favorable professional outcomes, fostering benefits and higher satisfaction, as it involves the authentic sharing of emotional states (Grandey, 2003). The result is that they engage in more deep acting to satisfy citizens and reap the benefits of high levels of job satisfaction in the process.

This research has implications for public management, as a better understanding of cultural factors affecting emotional labor could enhance human resource management in the public sector in South Korea. Specifically, a greater focus should be placed on how culture affects street-level bureaucrats to foster high levels of in-group collectivism, which can sustain employee engagement, increase job satisfaction, and improve service quality.

VI. Limitations and future directions

Although this study makes new contributes to the domain of emotional labor by re-examining how collectivist culture influences in-group collectivism, it has some limitations. First, this study used survey questionnaires that were administrated at a single time point, thereby making common method bias a concern. The findings must be interpreted with caution since self-reported data from a single source can inflate the relationships between predictor and dependent variables. Second, this study did not include surface acting which is another emotive strategy of emotional labor. We suggest that future studies should investigate the relationship between surface acting and the outcomes to conclude the cause-effect relationship. Third, this study only used deep acting variable as a mediator, and thus future study can also consider other variable such as public service experience. Because public service experience is a promising variable that may predict and explain mediators, it's better to adopt a qualitative research design. The qualitative information will help us gain a greater understanding of the meanings of the study results and richer knowledge of the impact of in-group collectivism on employee attitudes.

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文化對情緒勞動的影響：韓國案例之啓示

張藝瀟*、李泫廷**

摘要

文化對情緒勞動的直接或間接影響不容忽視。集體主義的文化特點即在於維繫群體成員間的和諧並優先考慮群體目標。在韓國，高度的集體主義傾向之下，自我壓抑並順從內團體成員的現象相當普遍，而此一群體內集體主義文化，亦是公共部門的基層官僚中普遍存在的一種意識形態，也構成其行事方式。為符合公共部門的工作要求，公務員會優先考慮並忠於組織目標，並壓抑其「不和諧」的情緒或表達。本文即著眼於集體主義文化—特別是群體內集體主義—對個人工作的積極（工作滿意度）和消極（職業倦怠）結果之影響，並抉發其中深層演出的中介作用。經由針對韓國 208 名基層公務員的問卷調查、迴歸分析並量化結果，結果顯示，群體內集體主義是預測基層官僚深層演出和工作滿意度的重要因素。同時，在群體內集體主義與工作滿意度之間的關係中，深層演出亦起中介作用。與預期假設相反，本文未發現群體內集體主義對工作倦怠的影響。

關鍵詞：群體內集體主義、情緒勞動、深層演出、工作滿意度、職業倦怠

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