

Abstract

Surface acting, a process through which employees feign the organizationally desired emotions to their customers, has been found to have negative impact on employees' mental and physical well being. The present study advances research on how personal and social identity, as an internal resource, safeguards individuals' well being against surface acting by investigating the moderating role of personal self esteem and collective self esteem on the association between surface acting and negative outcomes across cultures. I further proposed that employees from individualistic culture draw resource from their personal self esteem while employees in collectivistic culture revamp the resource from their collective self esteem when protecting their well being from surface acting. With an online-based survey of 327 employees from China and 284 employees from U.S. with customer service experience, results yielded some support for the hypothesis. Consistent with past research, employees who had practiced more surface acting reported higher levels of emotional exhaustion and more physical symptoms. Interestingly, both personal self esteem and collective self esteem buffered this negative impact of surface acting on Chinese employees' well being but failed to do so among American employees. Overall, these findings help clarify the role of personal self esteem and collective self esteem in the research of surface acting across cultures. Future direction and practical implications are discussed.

摘要

表面演繹 (surface acting)，是員工對客戶佯裝表現出組織所期望的情緒體驗的過程，會對員工的心理 (mental) 和身體健康 (physical well being) 造成負面影響。本研究通過調查在不同文化下個人自尊 (personal self esteem) 與集體自尊 (collective self esteem) 在表面演繹和員工身心健康中起到的調節作用 (moderating effect)，進一步分析了這兩種自尊，作為個人內部資源 (internal resource)，如何保障表面演繹負面影響下員工的身心健康。另外我們亦認為，在個人主義文化 (individualistic culture) 下的員工，會從他們的個人自尊裏汲取資源去平衡表面演繹的負面影響。相對地，集體主義文化 (collectivistic culture) 下的員工則會運用集體自尊裏的資源來調節身心。對三百二十七位中國及二百八十四位美國、擁有從事服務性工作經驗員工的網上問卷調查結果與實驗假設部份吻合。結果顯示，表面演繹會增加員工的情緒耗竭 (emotional exhaustion) 及身體病徵 (physical symptoms)。對於中國員工，個人自尊及集體自尊 (兩者) 都能起到調節 (moderator) 作用，減輕表面演繹對其身心健康所造成的負面影響；而對於美國員工，個人自尊和集體自尊的調節作用均不顯著。總括來說，通過對表面演繹的研究，本文進一步闡明了不同文化下個人自尊及集體自尊在表面演繹及其負面影響中的作用機制。最後，本文亦討論了未來研究方向以及本結果對機構組織和員工應用層面上的意義。