



## The Influence of Chinese Yunnan Tour Guides' Emotional Labor on Psychological Capital—the Mediating Role of Emotional Intelligence

Yufeng Zhang

International Chinese College, Master of Business Administration

Rangsit University, Pathum Thani, Thailand

E-mail: yffzhang163@gmail.com, ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0009-0005-5256-3272>

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### Abstract

**Background and Aim:** This study aims to investigate the influence mechanism of tour guides' Emotional labor on psychological capital, understand the detailed influence of different Emotional labor strategies on psychological capital, and use emotional intelligence as the Mesomeric effect on its mechanism, providing reference value for tourism management departments and human resources departments, and urging enterprises to strengthen the training of tour guides' Emotional labor, Improve the satisfaction of tour guides, enhance their psychological capital, win the favor and satisfaction of customers, provide theoretical support for enterprises and customers to achieve mutual benefit and win-win situation, and provide feasible suggestions and strategies.

**Materials and Methods:** A total of more than 500 questionnaires were sent this time, and a total of 452 questionnaires were collected. Finally, 420 questionnaires were selected after screening, and the questionnaire efficiency reached 84%.

**Results:** The results found that there is a significant relationship between emotional labor and the psychological capital of Yunnan tour guides, and emotional intelligence plays an intermediary role.

**Conclusion:** This study concludes that Yunnan tour guides need to further strengthen their emotional intelligence and psychological capital, in a new round of tourism peak, to welcome the arrival of tourists from all over the world with a new attitude.

**Keywords:** Yunnan Tour Guides; Emotional Labor; Psychological Capital; Emotional Intelligence

### Introduction

China's tourism industry is a new industry, and with the rapid development of reform and opening up and the development of the market, it has become a key pillar industry to promote national development. In China's historical travel, Yunnan Province still has a special position in the tourism development of the entire country. As Yunnan Province is located on the northwest border of China, it is naturally dominated by mountains and grasslands.

Yunnan is the province with the largest number and most diversity of ethnic minorities in China, and its unique characteristics and colorful ethnic customs are breathtaking. From dance culture to cultural tradition construction, from religion to nature worship, from clothing to folk culture, the situation in Yunnan is diverse and breathtaking. Yunnan Province has a variety of situations, from the traditional social culture of the Yi ethnic group in Chuxiong Prefecture to the architectural cultural tradition of the Bai ethnic group in Dali,

Since the outbreak of the COVID-19 virus, Chinese government departments have taken immediate action to attach importance to the management of virus prevention and control. The goal is that government departments at all levels will put people's safety first and actively control the spread of the virus. All regions in China have also started emergency response at the level of public health emergencies promptly. They have taken measures such as "closing cities", "closing villages", closing roads, closing scenic spots, suspending various leisure venues, and terminating tourist routes Measures such as controlling personnel mobility and concentration have effectively prevented the spread of the





virus, while also causing a significant decrease in our domestic and international passenger flow, providing great protection for the safety and physical health of the people throughout the country. The tourism industry is experiencing an unprecedented crisis, and China's tourism industry is facing unprecedented challenges. Although the pandemic in China has not yet completely ended, the prevention and control of influenza have entered a normalized stage, and many tourist industries still face difficulties. However, with the opening of the tourism industry, Yunnan's tourism industry is currently facing new opportunities. Therefore, research on tourism in Yunnan is representative and can provide a reference for the resumption of work and production in the tourism industry in other provinces. At the same time, how the tourism industry can break through the current difficulties, orderly resumption of production and work, and stable and orderly operation in the post-pandemic era has become a problem that needs to be studied (Brotheridge and Lee, 2003; Salovey and Mayer, 1990; Ahad et al., 2021).

## Objectives

This paper takes tour guides as the reference subject, adopts the empirical research method of a questionnaire survey, deeply analyzes the influence mechanism of tour guides' Emotional labor on psychological capital, understands the detailed influence of different Emotional labor strategies on psychological capital, and uses emotional intelligence as the Mesomeric effect on its mechanism, providing reference value for tourism management departments and human resources departments, and urging enterprises to strengthen the training of tour guides' Emotional labor, Improve the satisfaction of tour guides, enhance their psychological capital, win the favor and satisfaction of customers, provide theoretical support for enterprises and customers to achieve mutual benefit and win-win situation, and provide feasible suggestions and strategies.

## Literature review

Ashforth and Humphrey (1993) pointed out that Emotional labor refers to individual employees' unremitting efforts to show appropriate and rational emotions to meet the needs of social organization and career development. Wharton and Erickson (1993) defined that employees with Emotional labor ability should include the following three factors: first, workers must have contact with customers, such as voice, body language, etc. Secondly, when facing customers, employees' express emotions that meet the needs of the organization. Finally, managers can manage employees' Emotional labor. Morris and Feldman (1996) described Emotional labor as a process in which employees, through their own efforts, plan and manage emotions and performances that conform to professional characteristics in the process of interpersonal communication.

Waters et al. (2020) pointed out that emotional labor is an effective behavior, which can help employees better meet organizational and professional requirements and expectations, and improve work efficiency and performance through emotional adjustment. Grandey and Sayre (2019) further pointed out that Emotional labor is a process of psychological processing, which can help employees better understand and master work content, to better complete work tasks. Lee and Madera (2019) pointed out that Emotional labor is a process of constantly adjusting one's own emotions to meet social needs, and using emotions to affect the emotions of others to achieve one's own goals. Emotional labor





as defined by Yin et al. (2019) defined Emotional labor as the efforts made by individuals to constantly improve their emotions to achieve the company's performance appraisal goals. So far, in the fields where we can search for information, we have not seen any labor-related information targeting travel agencies.

Researchers' cognition of Emotional labor has profoundly affected its structure. Since the concept of Emotional labor was put forward, the dimensions of Emotional labor have always existed in a diversified perspective, and relevant research has also emerged. However, the academic community has not yet formed a consistent view and standard to define the dimensions of Emotional labor. Hochschild (1989) pointed out that emotional labor can be divided into two aspects: surface expression and deep connotation. According to Ashforth and Humphrey (1993), the performance of Emotional labor can be divided into the surface performance of Emotional labor, depth performance of Emotional labor, and natural performance of Emotional labor. Brotheridge and Lee (2003) defined the Emotional labor dimension as frequency, Strength, Diversity, persistence, surface behavior, and deep behavior. Salovey and Mayer (1990) believe that emotional intelligence is the ability of individuals to control their own and others' psychological states and emotions and to effectively recognize and apply this information to guide their own thinking and actions. Ahad et al. (2021) study further confirms this view that individuals can self-regulate, understand their own feelings, and effectively control their own feelings. Morón and Biolik-Morón (2021) state that emotional intelligence is the sum of various emotional, personality, and interpersonal abilities that directly affect a person's ability to cope with social and environmental requirements and various pressures. They also pointed out that emotional intelligence should also include an individual's ability to cope, make decisions, and transform in specific situations. Parinussa et al. (2023) define emotional intelligence as the sum of individuals' abilities to mediate and manage their own and others' emotions. Cui (2021) proposed that emotional intelligence is a comprehensive function of studying an individual's emotional judgment, emotional expression, management, and application of emotions, studying an individual's insight into their own and others' emotions. Ko and Jung (2021) believe that emotion is a noncognitive psychological function that mainly consists of five levels: emotional discovery, emotional judgment, emotional response, emotional regulation, and emotional expression.

Meyer et al. (1997) conducted a study on emotional abilities, which included evaluating emotional expression, controlling emotions, and using emotions to guide expression. Salovey and Mayer (1990) believe that emotional ability mainly includes cognitive evaluation and expression ability, cognitive guidance ability, cognitive analysis and processing ability, and emotional regulation and promotion ability. Santangelo et al. (2021) proposed a new method to evaluate individual emotions and applied it to practical situations to achieve the goal of regulating emotions. Wang et al. (2019) divided the dimensions of emotional intelligence into understanding oneself, managing oneself, motivating oneself, perceiving others' emotions, and handling relationships properly. They also believed that the dimensions of emotional intelligence include self-perception, self-management, social knowledge, and communication skills.

With the vigorous development of positive psychology and active Organizational behavior, psychological capital has also begun to attract the attention of domestic researchers. Psychological capital has become a new professional category, providing a new vision for enterprise managers to fully



understand and develop existing resources and effectively control the human resources department of enterprises. The concept of psychological capital is first presented in papers on market economy, asset science, and socialism, Goldsmith et al. (1997) first explicitly proposed the concept of 'psychological capital' "In this definition, psychological capital is a feature that can directly affect the efficiency of human individuals. With the views of positive organizational social psychology and positive Organizational behavior as the reference framework, it clearly puts forward the definition of positive organizational psychological capital with strengthening the positive psychological motivation of social individuals as the core content, which makes human beings pay more attention to the definition of psychological capital and its related empirical research and application.

The theory of psychological capital was often applied in the analysis of psychological economics and sociology in the early stages. For example, economists Biggs et al. (2017) pointed out that psychological cost is a concept that reflects an individual's self-awareness, and the various activities generated by these concepts can have a positive or even negative impact on individual labor efficiency. On this basis, psychological capital can also be considered as a special psychological mechanism generated by individuals under early influence. With the development of positive psychology in the 1990s, the concept of psychological capital began to be gradually introduced into the field of psychological research. Luthans and Youssef (2004) pointed out that psychological capital is a positive and upward mindset that can inspire individuals to take correct and beneficial actions, thereby improving their own quality of life. Asbari et al. (2021) have a clearer definition of psychological capital, which states that individuals can possess positive psychological elements beyond the scope of human and social capital through planned inspiration and enlightenment. Barratt and Duran (2021) revised the concept of psychological capital, which is reflected in A. Self-efficacy is an ability that helps individuals maintain confidence in facing challenges and adjust the way they achieve goals when necessary. In addition, confidence is also an ability that can help individuals actively belong to their current and future achievements; Resilience refers to the ability of individuals to persist, quickly recover, and overcome problems in adverse environments, thereby achieving success.

At present, scholars have three completely different views on the nature of spiritual human capital: firstly, the theory of characteristics, which points out that spiritual human capital is a personality characteristic that has an impact on personality performance and happiness work index. For example, Goleman (2021) pointed out that positive psychological motivation is a truly effective positive psychological condition that enhances one's work efficiency and corporate confidence. It helps stimulate one's positive organizational motivation, thereby improving work performance and corporate confidence; The "quasi phenomenon" points out that psychological resources have unique characteristics, ranging from stable to relatively fixed conditions. Therefore, Davies (2020) proposed that effective intervention measures should be taken to stimulate these characteristics to achieve the best psychological effects. With the continuous deepening of research on mental health, more and more scholars acknowledge the comprehensive theory that the cost of mental health is not just a class state variable of psychological trait variables, but a continuous psychological state variable that can explore psychological capital from multiple perspectives, thus bringing new perspectives to mental health research.

Goldsmith et al. (1997) proposed dividing spiritual assets into self-esteem and control points.



Luthans et al. (2007) classified spiritual assets as dreams, confidence, and perseverance. Meanwhile, Luthans et al. (2007) further divided it into four dimensions: confidence, desire, happiness, and resilience. Page (2004) pointed out that these five dimensions should be further subdivided into confidence, desire, perseverance, and honesty.

### Conceptual Framework

The paper titled “The Influence of Chinese Yunnan Tour Guides’ Emotional Labor on Psychological Capital—the Mediating Role of Emotional Intelligence” is designed with the conceptual framework as followed;

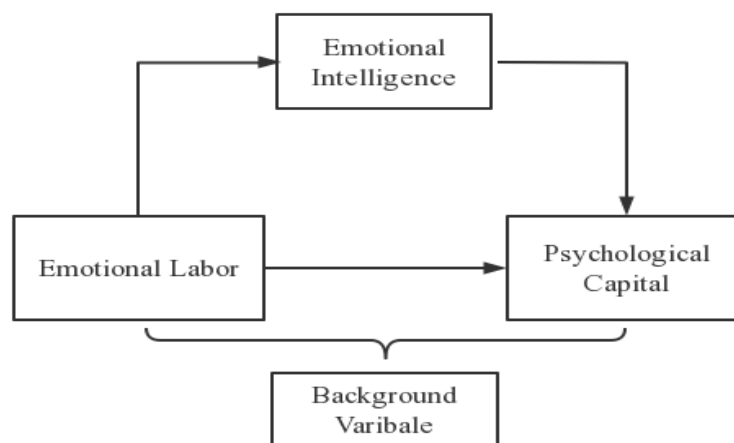


Figure 1 Conceptual Framework

Based on previous research, the author proposes the following assumptions.

Based on the experimental purpose and main issues, this experiment provides the following assumptions by reviewing the data:

H1: There are gender differences in emotional labor, emotional intelligence, and psychological capital among tour guides in Yunnan Province of China.

H2: There are age differences in psychological capital among tour guides in Yunnan Province, China.

H3: There are income differences in emotional intelligence among tour guides in Yunnan Province, China.

H4: Emotional labor of tour guides in Yunnan Province, China has a positive and significant impact on psychological capital.

H5: Emotional labor of tour guides in Yunnan Province of China has a positive and significant impact on emotional intelligence.

H6: The emotional intelligence of tour guides in Yunnan Province, China has a significant positive impact on psychological capital.

H7: The emotional intelligence of tour guides in Yunnan Province, China plays a mediating role between Emotional labor and psychological capital.





## Methodology

Questionnaires were used in this study, 500 questionnaires were sent to tour guides in Yunnan, China, and 420 valid questionnaires as samples were collected and selected. And this paper aimed to find whether the Emotional labor of tour guides in Yunnan Province, China has a positive and significant impact on psychological capital, and whether the emotional intelligence of tour guides in Yunnan Province, China plays a mediating role between Emotional labor and psychological capital.

## Empirical Results

According to the results it can be seen that in terms of gender, there are 168 male tour guides, (accounting for 40%) and 252 female tour guides (accounting for 60%) among the respondents. In terms of the age of the respondents the main group has people under 25 years old (34%) 143. In terms of the educational background of the respondents the main group has people with a college 273 education or above (accounting for 65%). In terms of the average annual income of the respondents the main group has people with an income of 5001-10000 yuan (accounting for 41.7%) 175. In the respondents' working years the main group has people who worked for 3-5 years (40.0%) 168.

Table1 Demographic Information

Variables	Options	Frequency	(%) Percentage
Gender	Male	168	%40
	Female	252	%60
Age	Under 25 years old	143	%34
	years old 35-25	140	%33.3
	years old 45-36	108	%25.7
	More than 45 years old	29	%7.0
Education Level	College or others	112	%26.7
	Bachelor's Degree	273	%65
	Master's Degree and Above	35	%8.3
Monthly Income	5000RMB and Less	168	%40.0
	10000RMB-5001	175	%41.7
	20000RMB-10001	42	%10.0
	More than 20000RMB	35	%8.3
Working Experience	Less than 1 year	98	%23.3
	year-5 years 1	168	%40.0
	years-10 years 6	140	%33.3
	More than 10 years	14	%3.4

According to the following Table 2, the results show that the guide perception of the emotional labor, emotional intelligence, and psychological capital's p-value is greater than the significance criterion of 0.05, so this item is not significant. The results show that there is no perceived difference in emotional labor, emotional intelligence, and psychological capital among tour guides of different genders at this stage.

Table2 Gender Difference with T Test

Variable	Male	Female	t	p-value
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	M	SD	M	SD		
Emotional Labor	4.23	0.68	4.34	0.56	0.867	352.
Emotional Intelligence	4.18	0.66	4.25	0.51	1.476	225.
Psychological Capital	4.15	0.68	4.16	0.57	0.974	324.

According to following Table 3, the results show that the F value were both significant, which means the hypothesis is supported, there are differences in emotional labor, emotional intelligence, and psychological capital among tour guides of different ages at this stage.

Table3Age Difference with ANOVA Analysis

Variable	Emotional Labor		Emotional Intelligence		Psychological Capital	
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
Under 25 years old	3.9942	82964.	4.1460	76979.	3.9851	699.
years old 35-25	3.9707	48994.	3.9881	48324.	3.9754	599.
years old 45-36	3.9333	53975.	3.9812	49833.	3.9058	564.
More than 45 years old	4.2334	47262.	4.2850	44797.	4.2207	728.
P-value	0.04		0.01		0.01	
F Value	**2.796		***5.623		***5.370	

According to following Table 4, the results show that the F value was not significant, which means the hypothesis is supported, there are no differences in emotional labor, emotional intelligence, and psychological capital among tour guides of different incomes at this stage.

Table 4 Income Difference with ANOVA Analysis

Variable	Emotional Labor		Emotional Intelligence		Psychological Capital	
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
5000RMB and Less	3.9597	.73317	3.9000	.69970	3.8705	.73767
5001-10000RMB	3.9390	.50775	3.8730	.45271	3.7703	.50078
10001-20000RMB	4.0104	.49011	3.8843	.48923	3.8218	.48718
More than 20000RMB	4.2260	.29159	4.1474	.25200	4.1154	.35518
P-value	0.198		0.207		0.106	
F Value	1.562		1.526		2.053	

According to following Table 5, there is a significant positive correlation between tour guides' Emotional labor, emotional intelligence, and psychological capital, and there is also a positive correlation between tour guides' Emotional labor and emotional intelligence.

Table5 Relationship Analysis Between Emotional Labor and Psychological Capital

	Emotional Labor	Emotional Intelligence	Psychological Capital
Emotional Labor	1	/	/
Emotional Intelligence	0.852***	1	/
Psychological Capital	0.837***	0.902***	1

According to following Table 6, it can be seen that in Model 1, the F value is 838.576, corresponding to a p-value of 0.000. In Model 2, the F-value is 1292.733, corresponding to a p-value of 0.000. In Model 3, the F-value is 1842.684, corresponding to a p-value of 0.000. In Model 4, the F-





value is 182.037, corresponding to a p-value of 0.000. Therefore, tour guides in Yunnan Province of China believe that emotional intelligence has a mediating effect between emotional labor and psychological capital.

Table 6 Regression Analysis

Dependent Variable: Psychological Capital					
	Model 1 Psychological Capital	Model 2 Emotional Intelligence	Model 3 Psychological Capital	Model 4 Psychologica l Capital	VIF
Emotional Labor	***836.	***852.		***181.	1.132
Emotional Intelligence			***902.	***822.	1.132
R <sup>2</sup>	618.	735.	822.	726.	
R <sup>2</sup> Adjusted	617.	734.	821.	725.	
F	***728.576	***692.733	***1262.615	***182.037	

### Assumption Verification

According to the results, the researcher found that there are gender differences in emotional labor, emotional intelligence, and psychological capital among tour guides in Yunnan Province of China, so hypothesis 1 was supported. And there are no age differences in psychological capital among tour guides in Yunnan Province, China, so hypothesis 2 was not supported. There are no income differences in emotional intelligence among tour guides in Yunnan Province, China, so hypothesis 3 was not supported.

Then, the researcher also found that the emotional labor of tour guides, in Yunnan Province of China, has a positive and significant impact on psychological capital, so hypothesis 4 was supported. The emotional labor of tour guides, in Yunnan Province of China, has a positive and significant impact on emotional intelligence, so hypothesis 5 was supported. The emotional intelligence of tour guides, in Yunnan Province of China, has a significant positive impact on psychological capital, so hypothesis 6 was supported. The emotional intelligence of tour guides in Yunnan Province, China plays a mediating role between Emotional labor and psychological capital, so hypothesis 7 was supported.

### Conclusion and recommendations

Through this study, the researcher found that the emotional labor and emotional intelligence of tour guides in Yunnan will affect psychological capital. Tour guides should pay attention to self-regulation of Emotional labor, and travel agencies and relevant management units should improve the working environment to help tour guides reduce the burden of Emotional labor. Then, Attention should be paid to cultivating and enhancing the psychological capital of tour guides. Tourism enterprise managers should take various measures to enhance the psychological capital of tour guides so that they can better unleash their potential and better respond to work challenges. To this end, they can guide tour guides to set career development goals, stimulate their inner growth motivation, and motivate them to identify and predict potential bottlenecks, help them develop effective solutions, and improve their level of psychological capital accumulation. Encourage tour guides to continuously improve their career





goals, and at the same time, provide external support such as optimistic psychological training to improve the mental health status of employees, thereby continuously enhancing their psychological capital.

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