

Emotional Intelligence in Everyday Social Life: A Cultural Sociological Approach to Emotional Representations and Practices

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Abstract: This theoretical and analytical study examines the concept of emotional intelligence from a cultural sociological perspective. It originates from the critical observation that prevailing treatments predominantly adopt the individual as the primary unit of analysis, focusing almost exclusively on intrapsychic capacities to perceive, understand, regulate, and manage emotional experiences. While acknowledging the scientific validity of this psychological entry point, the study argues that it does not exhaust the sociological inquiry regarding how such capacities are socially constituted within society. Individuals do not merely learn how to think and behave; they also learn how to express anger, grief, joy, fear, and empathy—internalizing precisely when, to whom, to what degree, and under what socio-cultural rules these emotions should be displayed or concealed. The study addresses the central question: How is emotional intelligence constituted among individuals within the context of everyday social and cultural life? This overarching question branches into three sub-inquiries: (1) How do individuals conceptualize emotional intelligence in everyday practices? (2) How do socialization and culture structure emotional expression and regulation? and (3) How do social actors deploy emotional intelligence in constructing relationships and negotiating interpersonal interactions? Methodologically, the study adopts a theoretical-analytical framework drawing upon the sociology of emotions, socialization theory, symbolic interactionism, and foundational emotional intelligence literature, with special operationalization of Arlie Russell Hochschild's concepts of 'feeling rules' and 'emotion work' (Al-Jawhari, 2015; Hochschild, 1979). The findings demonstrate that emotional intelligence cannot be reduced to an isolated, stable intrapsychic trait. Although it involves individual faculties, it is fundamentally socially constructed, derives its meaning within interactional contexts, and is mediated by cultural normative scripts that delineate legitimate emotional conduct. The article thus proposes reconceptualizing emotional intelligence as a multi-tiered social competence synthesizing self-awareness, alter-centric interpretive aptitude, relational management, and practical mastery of cultural feeling rules. The study bridges the concept of emotional intelligence with the sociology of emotions, redefining it as an embodied socio-cultural practice rather than a purely individual psychological disposition (Al-Jawhari, 2015; Salovey & Mayer, 1990).

Keywords: Emotional Intelligence; Culture; Emotions; Socialization; Social Interaction; Feeling Rules; Emotion Work; Cultural Sociology.

La inteligencia emocional en la vida social cotidiana

Una perspectiva desde la sociología cultural sobre las representaciones y las prácticas emocionales

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Resumen

Este estudio teórico y analítico examina el concepto de inteligencia emocional desde la perspectiva de la sociología cultural. Parte de la observación crítica de que los enfoques predominantes adoptan al individuo como principal unidad de análisis y se centran casi exclusivamente en las capacidades intrapsíquicas para percibir, comprender, regular y gestionar las experiencias emocionales. Aunque reconoce la validez científica de este enfoque psicológico, el estudio sostiene que este no agota la indagación sociológica sobre cómo dichas capacidades se constituyen socialmente. Los individuos no solo aprenden a pensar y a comportarse, sino también a expresar ira, tristeza, alegría, miedo y empatía, interiorizando cuándo, ante quién, en qué medida y conforme a qué normas socioculturales deben manifestar u ocultar estas emociones.

El estudio aborda la siguiente pregunta central: ¿cómo se constituye la inteligencia emocional de los individuos en el contexto de la vida social y cultural cotidiana? De ella se derivan tres interrogantes: (1) ¿cómo conceptualizan los individuos la inteligencia emocional en sus prácticas cotidianas?; (2) ¿cómo estructuran la socialización y la cultura la expresión y la regulación de las emociones?; y (3) ¿cómo movilizan los actores sociales la inteligencia emocional para construir relaciones y negociar las interacciones interpersonales?

Metodológicamente, el estudio adopta un marco teórico y analítico basado en la sociología de las emociones, la teoría de la socialización, el interaccionismo simbólico y la literatura fundacional sobre inteligencia emocional, con especial énfasis en la operacionalización de los conceptos de «reglas del sentir» y «trabajo emocional» de Arlie Russell Hochschild (Al-Jawhari, 2015; Hochschild, 1979). Los resultados muestran que la inteligencia emocional no puede reducirse a un rasgo intrapsíquico aislado y estable. Aunque implica facultades individuales, se construye fundamentalmente en el ámbito social, adquiere significado en los contextos de interacción y está mediada por pautas culturales normativas que delimitan las conductas emocionales legítimas.

El artículo propone, por tanto, reconceptualizar la inteligencia emocional como una competencia social de múltiples niveles que integra la autoconciencia, la capacidad interpretativa orientada hacia los demás, la gestión de las relaciones y el dominio práctico de las reglas culturales del sentir. El estudio vincula así el concepto de inteligencia emocional con la sociología de las emociones y lo redefine como una práctica sociocultural encarnada, en lugar de una disposición psicológica exclusivamente individual (Al-Jawhari, 2015; Salovey & Mayer, 1990).

Palabras clave: inteligencia emocional; cultura; emociones; socialización; interacción social; reglas del sentir; trabajo emocional; sociología cultural.

1. Introduction

The conceptual emergence of emotional intelligence in contemporary academic literature represents a paradigmatic shift in theoretical approaches to the nexus between emotion, cognition, and human conduct.

Historically, classical epistemological models of intelligence prioritized cognitive and intellectual aptitudes, routinely conceptualizing emotionality as an impediment to rational deliberation. Over the past three decades, however, an expanding body of empirical research has demonstrated that affective states do not merely disrupt rational thought, but fundamentally structure cognitive orientation, evaluative judgment, decision-making, and interpersonal dynamics. In their seminal contribution, Salovey and Mayer (1990) formulated the inaugural scientific model of emotional intelligence, defining it as a constellation of mental abilities involved in the accurate appraisal and expression of emotion, the adaptive regulation of feeling, and the strategic utilization of emotional information to guide cognitive processing and behavioral adaptation (Salovey & Mayer, 1990). Subsequently, Goleman (1995) catalyzed the broad dissemination of the concept across popular, educational, organizational, and managerial discourses (Al-Khawalda, 2004; Goleman, 1995; Jarwan, 2012).

Consequently, emotional intelligence has become a focal concept in behavioral inquiry, directly linked to an actor's capacity to decode, regulate, and mobilize internal affects and the emotional signals of others across divergent situations. The salience of this construct is acutely visible in everyday social life, where individuals continuously encounter interactional matrices requiring communication, symbolic negotiation, relational stabilization, and conflict mediation. As emotional intelligence migrated from clinical and developmental psychology into adjacent disciplines, its practical efficacy was widely documented. However, deciphering its manifestations in daily interaction necessitates transcending purely psychologistic paradigms that treat it solely as an intrapsychic disposition. In lived reality, emotional competence is indelibly shaped by primary and secondary socialization, collective values, normative expectations, and cultural scripts that dictate legitimate modes of affective expression.

Transitioning from psychological reductionism to sociological analysis formulates a radically different set of inquiries. While psychological approaches investigate an individual's cognitive and physiological capacity to regulate affect, sociological inquiry moves upstream: Where and through what relational pathways did the individual learn that anger must be restrained according to specific modalities? Why is weeping deemed socially appropriate in one context yet pathologized or sanctioned in another? And why do legitimate expressions of empathy fluctuate systematically across lines of social status, role hierarchy, gender, and age? Posing these questions demonstrates that emotions do not exist in an extrasocial vacuum. What is commonly designated as 'emotional competence' inherently presupposes an embodied, tacit knowledge of situational norms and culturally defined expressive boundaries.

Herein lies the critical contribution of Arlie Russell Hochschild's sociology of emotions in establishing an analytical bridge between affective life and macro/micro social structures. Hochschild posited that individuals do not experience affective states in isolation from normative societal expectations; rather, they actively work to produce, attenuate, or suppress emotions to align them with situational requirements. Her seminal concept of 'feeling rules' delineates the socially shared guidelines that govern what individuals ought to feel and display in specific encounters, while 'emotion work' designates the cognitive, bodily, and expressive efforts exerted to harmonize internal feelings with social expectations (Hochschild, 1979). Building upon this framework, this study proposes examining emotional intelligence as a tri-level phenomenon situated at the convergence of: (1) a psychological level of affective awareness and intrapsychic regulation; (2) an

interactional level of alter-centric interpretation and relational navigation; and (3) a cultural level of normative scripts that define legitimate emotional performance. This sociological reframing does not discard psychological insights, but contextualizes them within social reproduction and symbolic interaction (Hochschild, 1979).

1.1. Research Problem and Analytical Questions

Emotional intelligence represents a transformative construct in human behavioral sciences, having redirected scholarly attention from exclusively cognitive metrics toward socio-emotional competencies. In modern everyday life, characterized by structural complexity, communicative density, and relational fluidity, interpersonal engagements are governed not solely by explicit institutional codifications, but by subtle proficiencies in navigating affective realities. Nevertheless, the cognitive representations individuals construct regarding emotional intelligence, alongside their practical deployment of it, do not occur in a social vacuum. Instead, they are structured by socialization frameworks and cultural matrices that establish the boundaries of legitimate emotional conduct. Consequently, an academic tension emerges between conceptualizing emotional intelligence as an individual intrapsychic skill versus understanding it as a culturally produced social practice that organizes social ties.

Furthermore, the proliferation of emotional intelligence literature has generated an array of competing theoretical models, measurement inventories, and commercialized interventions. Contemporary debates extend beyond utility to contest fundamental definitions and psychometric operationalizations—specifically whether emotional intelligence constitutes a discrete cognitive-mental ability, a personality trait, or an eclectic amalgam of competencies. Recent systematic reviews corroborate that these psychometric and structural debates remain active (Ding et al., 2024). However, an excessive focus on measurement risks reifying emotional intelligence as an endogenous personal attribute abstracted from social ecology. This assumption is sociologically problematic: an individual who exercises consummate emotional restraint within domestic kin networks may deploy entirely divergent expressive strategies within corporate, academic, or public settings. Similarly, a single expressive gesture—such as communicative silence—can signify solemn wisdom in one cultural context, covert defiance in another, or subordinate acquiescence in a third. Hence, the sociological meaning of an affective act does not stem from its physiological properties, but from the symbolic interpretive frameworks of the social group.

The central problem of this research addresses the relationship between emotional intelligence and the socio-cultural construction of emotion. Do social actors possess a monolithic, context-free profile of emotional intelligence? Or is emotional competence intrinsically bound to social learning that instructs actors when, where, and how to enact specific feelings? Furthermore, how do primary and secondary socializing institutions—specifically the family, schools, peer groups, workplace environments, and digital telecommunications—participate in producing this affective knowledge? Accordingly, the study articulates its primary research question:

How is emotional intelligence constituted among individuals within the context of everyday social and cultural life, and in what manner do socialization and cultural structures mediate the expression, regulation, and relational deployment of human emotion?

This overarching inquiry generates three analytical sub-questions:

- How do individuals conceptualize and make sense of emotional intelligence within their everyday social realities?
- How do socialization agencies and cultural norms structure the expression, modulation, and management of emotional states?
- How do social actors mobilize emotional intelligence to construct interpersonal relationships and navigate social interaction?

1.2. Objectives and Significance of the Study

First, this study seeks to reconstruct the conceptual architecture of emotional intelligence within the theoretical horizon of cultural sociology by shifting the analytical axis from the possession of ability to the social constitution of ability. Rather than quantifying intrapsychic variance, the inquiry analyzes the socio-cultural pathways through which actors acquire the capacity to decode emotional encounters and adapt to situational contingencies. This analytical pivot emphasizes socialization processes, habituated dispositions, symbolic boundary-making, identity formation, and relational hierarchies.

Second, the study establishes an integrative dialogue between academic traditions that have developed along segregated tracks: psychological research on emotional intelligence (models of ability, traits, and competencies) and the sociology of emotions (emotion work, feeling rules, and interactive affective regulation). Comparing these two literatures highlights theoretical complementarities and epistemological divergencies, generating a robust analytical vocabulary capable of treating emotion as an embodied social phenomenon.

Third, the research underscores the cultural embeddedness of affective life. Affective phenomena are not universally codified or uniformly understood across human societies. Comparative studies on emotional socialization across diverse cultures reveal marked cross-cultural variations in how parents acknowledge, discuss, and regulate childhood emotions, confirming that affective competence develops within culturally specific scaffolding rather than along an invariant biological trajectory (Halberstadt & Lozada, 2011; Kitzmann, 2012).

Finally, the study carries practical, pedagogical implications. Conceptualizing emotional intelligence as a situated social practice provides critical insights for designing educational curricula and professional training modules. Such programs can advance beyond prescriptive formulas of intrapsychic 'self-control' toward fostering reflexive awareness of culturally contingent feeling rules, situational sensitivity, and the critical distinction between authentic empathy and performative compliance, as well as between healthy regulation and repressive emotional labor (Halberstadt & Lozada, 2011).

2. Methodology and Theoretical Framework

This investigation adopts a rigorous theoretical-analytical qualitative design structured to deconstruct and recontextualize emotional intelligence within the sociology of culture and symbolic interactionism. The methodological framework integrates two complementary analytical approaches:

- The Descriptive-Hermeneutic Approach: Mobilized to systematically document the chronological evolution of emotional intelligence models (from early ability formulations to mixed and trait paradigms) and delineate the sociological critiques leveled against intrapsychic reductionism.
- The Socio-Analytical Approach: Deployed to deconstruct the structural and symbolic interfaces connecting emotional competence with primary and secondary socialization, dramaturgical impression management, embodied habitus, and institutional feeling rules.

Given its foundational theoretical scope, this study conducts an exhaustive, critical synthesis of seminal and contemporary literature across emotional intelligence studies, the sociology of emotions, socialization theories, and symbolic interactionism. The analytical corpus includes foundational psychometric treatises (Salovey & Mayer, 1990; Mayer et al., 2004, 2024; Goleman, 1995; Bar-On, 1997), sociological theories of emotion and labor (Hochschild, 1979, 1983; Thoits, 1989; Cerulo, 2023), sociological treatises on habitus and identity (Bourdieu, 1980; Dubar, 2022; Goffman, 1973), and contemporary cross-cultural and digital communication studies (Audrin & Audrin, 2024; Jardine et al., 2022; Halberstadt & Lozada, 2011).

Epistemologically, the study operates without empirical field sampling or statistical psychometric testing. This intentional design carries a defined methodological boundary: the inquiry does not generate statistical generalizations regarding individual variance. Instead, it builds a grounded theoretical model identifying the generative social mechanisms—specifically feeling rules, emotion work, emotional habitus, and interactional calibration—that can serve as the conceptual foundation for future comparative empirical investigations in diverse cultural contexts.

3. Theoretical Findings: Reconstructing Emotional Intelligence in Socio-Cultural Life

3.1. Literature Synthesis: From Intrapsychic Measurement to Social Ecology

A systematic analysis of the academic trajectory of emotional intelligence reveals three primary paradigms:

1. The Ability Model Tradition: Pioneered by Salovey and Mayer (1990) and elaborated by Mayer, Salovey, and Caruso (2004), this paradigm defines emotional intelligence as a standard mental aptitude comprising four cognitive-affective branches: perceiving emotion, utilizing emotion to facilitate thought, understanding emotional complexity, and regulating emotion adaptively. While psychometrically rigorous, this model abstracts affective aptitude from the socio-normative contexts wherein emotions acquire meaning.

2. The Mixed and Competency Tradition: Popularized by Goleman (1995) and Bar-On (1997), this framework incorporates personality traits, motivational drives, and generalized social proficiencies into emotional intelligence. Although instrumental in disseminating emotional competence into corporate and educational spheres, it generates significant boundary ambiguity, often conflating emotional intelligence with broad personality constructs (such as the Big Five).

3. The Contextual and Sociological Perspective: Emerging from the sociology of emotions and developmental cultural psychology, this orientation conceptualizes emotional competence not as an innate trait, but as an acquired capacity cultivated through recurrent social interactions, familial modeling, and

institutional socialization within culturally distinct communicative environments (Kitzmann, 2012; Halberstadt & Lozada, 2011).

Recent systematic reviews demonstrate that factorial and conceptual debates remain unsettled in contemporary scholarship. Factor analyses of multiple inventories consistently isolate abilities related to perception, comprehension, and management, yet researchers emphasize that these abilities function dynamically within specific social ecologies rather than as static cognitive modules (Ding et al., 2024; Mayer et al., 2024).

3.2. Deconstructing Emotion: Cultural Naming, Feeling Rules, and Emotion Work

Contemporary cultural sociology establishes that while emotions are grounded in somatic sensations, they are semiotically named, interpreted, and evaluated through cultural frameworks. An actor experiences physiological arousal, but the social legitimacy, communicative form, and moral valuation of that arousal are determined by cultural definitions of the situation. Language provides the interpretive repertoire through which raw affect is classified—such as differentiating between righteous indignation, disruptive rage, dignified forbearance (*waqār*), or modest reserve (*ḥayāʾ*).

Central to this social organization of affect are Arlie Russell Hochschild's concepts of feeling rules and emotion work. Feeling rules function as the normative standards that delineate what an actor is socially expected to feel in specific settings (e.g., joyous celebration at weddings, solemn grief at funerals, deference in hierarchical corporate meetings). When private feelings diverge from situational feeling rules, actors experience an internal-external strain, prompting the mobilization of emotion work (or emotion management). Emotion work entails cognitive, bodily, and expressive efforts exerted to bring feelings into alignment with social expectations (Hochschild, 1979, 1983). Consequently, emotional intelligence manifests sociologically not as effortless intrapsychic control, but as an active, learned negotiation between internal affective states and collective normative scripts.

3.3. Primary and Secondary Emotional Socialization Across the Lifecourse

The acquisition of feeling rules and expressive competence occurs through structured socialization trajectories. The family constitutes the foundational arena of primary emotional socialization (Al-Hassan, 2009). Within domestic interactions, children internalize implicit and explicit behavioral boundaries through parental cues (e.g., 'speak calmly,' 'do not cry,' 'show respect'). Cross-cultural scholarship demonstrates that parental emotional socialization practices vary widely—ranging from open verbal exploration of affects to stoic restraint—producing culturally distinct emotional maps that correlate with social competence and peer relationship quality (Kitzmann, 2012).

This socialization trajectory extends across secondary socializing agencies: educational institutions, peer subcultures, professional workplaces, and digital media (Dubar, 2022). In schools, students learn cognitive attentiveness and behavioral containment; in corporate environments, employees master professional neutrality and client-oriented empathy; and in public spaces, strangers navigate mutual civil inattention. Emotional competence is thus continuously rehearsed, reinforced, or sanction-modified through exposure to social feedback across diverse institutional fields.

3.4. Theoretical Integration: Habitus, Impression Management, and Identity

To fully articulate the sociological dimensions of emotional competence, the study synthesizes three foundational sociological theories:

1. Pierre Bourdieu's Habitus: Habitus explains how external cultural norms become internalized, durable, and embodied practical dispositions (Bourdieu, 1980). Applied to affective life, an 'emotional habitus' accounts for why individuals instinctively modulate vocal tone, maintain interpersonal distance, or express deference without continuous conscious calculation. Emotional competence is partially a manifestation of the socialized habitus, reflecting an actor's social trajectory, class origins, and accumulated cultural resources.

2. Erving Goffman's Dramaturgical Analysis: Everyday interaction involves continuous impression management and the strategic presentation of self (Goffman, 1973). Emotional intelligence corresponds directly to an actor's capacity to maintain 'face'—safeguarding both personal and alter-centric dignity during interaction through tactful timing, modulated tone, timely apologies, and empathetic de-escalation.

3. Claude Dubar's Sociology of Identity: Identity is an ongoing, relational process mediating between self-ascription and social categorization (Dubar, 2022). Emotional competence contributes to constructing social identity: individuals labeled 'emotionally mature' internalize self-conceptions of reliability, whereas those categorized as 'volatile' encounter social pressure to realign their conduct. Emotional competence thus operates as an evaluative standard within struggles for social recognition.

3.5. Emotional Intelligence in the Workplace and Digital Spaces

In professional service environments, the distinction between individual emotional competence and institutional emotional labor becomes acutely visible. As Hochschild (1983) demonstrated, service economies frequently mandate the commercialized display of positive affect (smiling, empathetic listening, composure) as a formal job requirement sold for a wage. Framing emotional regulation exclusively as an individual employee's 'emotional intelligence' risks obscuring structural organizational stressors—such as unmanageable workloads, occupational precarity, and rigid supervisory surveillance—by individualizing structural problems (Davis & Nichols, 2016).

Concurrently, digital communications have established novel matrices for affective management. In virtual text-based exchanges and social media platforms, somatic and vocal cues are largely absent, requiring actors to convey and decipher emotional meaning through textual syntax, punctuation, timing, and emojis (Audrin & Audrin, 2024). Digital spaces produce distinct feeling rules (e.g., expectations regarding reply latency, interpretation of punctuation marks as emotional distance). While digital mediation affords expanded opportunities for impression management (editing messages before dispatch), it simultaneously introduces risks of affective misinterpretation, highlighting the need for culturally attuned digital emotional competence.

3.6. A Four-Dimensional Sociological Model of Emotional Competence

Synthesizing these theoretical insights, this study articulates a comprehensive four-dimensional model that reconceptualizes emotional intelligence as an embodied, context-sensitive social competence:

- Dimension 1: Emotional Self-Awareness: The reflexive capacity to recognize and interpret one's somatic and affective states.
- Dimension 2: Emotional Regulation (Emotion Work): The capacity to modulate affective intensity and expressive displays to preserve personal integrity and situational harmony.
- Dimension 3: Interactional Interpretation: The alter-centric capacity to decode, contextualize, and respond to the verbal, bodily, and symbolic emotional cues of others within unfolding interactions.
- Dimension 4: Cultural and Normative Awareness: Practical, situated knowledge of the explicit and implicit feeling rules that govern legitimate emotional performance in a given social setting.

The Generative Sociological Trajectory of Emotional Competence: *Individual Dispositions & Capabilities → Primary & Secondary Socialization → Habituated Expressive Styles (Emotional Habitus) → Interactional Rehearsal & Impression Management (Face-Work) → Cultural Norms of Legitimacy (Feeling Rules) → Institutional Regimes & Power Structures → Embodied, Context-Sensitive Emotional Competence.*

4. Discussion

The theoretical synthesis presented in this study demonstrates that conceptualizing emotional intelligence exclusively as an individual intrapsychic trait is epistemologically incomplete. While psychological models effectively evaluate cognitive processing components, they systematically overlook the social conditions that give those components practical meaning and legitimacy. By situating emotional competence within the sociology of emotions and cultural sociology, several critical discussion points emerge:

1. From Fixed 'Intelligence' to Contextual Competence: The term 'intelligence' historically implies an invariant, measurable cognitive capacity. In everyday social life, however, what constitutes 'competence' varies across interactional settings. In some encounters, unvarnished verbal candor is celebrated as emotional maturity; in others, communicative silence and diplomatic tact represent the only legitimate responses. Contextual competence demands the reflexive capacity to read situational feeling rules rather than relying on a static behavioral formula.

2. The Interpersonal Paradox and Power Asymmetries: While quantitative meta-analyses confirm robust correlations between emotional intelligence and relationship satisfaction (Jardine et al., 2022), sociological analysis reveals that emotional displays are embedded within power relations. Expressive prerogatives are not symmetrically distributed: who possesses the institutional right to express anger without consequence? Who is systematically expected to absorb emotional strain and perform pacifying labor? When female professionals or subordinate employees are expected to demonstrate greater empathy and emotional restraint, celebratory discourses of 'high emotional intelligence' can mask unequal burdens of emotional labor (Hochschild, 1983).

3. The Critical 'Dark Side' of Emotional Competence: Emotional intelligence is not inherently prosocial or morally benign. The capacity to accurately decode the emotional vulnerabilities and motivations of others

can be strategically mobilized for manipulation, coercion, and corporate dominance (Davis & Nichols, 2016). Consequently, an adequate sociological model must distinguish between technical emotional competence and its ethical deployment within structural hierarchies.

4. Emotional Competence as Social and Cultural Capital: Viewing emotional competence as an acquired disposition raises the critical sociological question of its social distribution. Actors socialized within privileged socioeconomic environments often acquire linguistic repertoires, negotiation styles, and emotional composure that align seamlessly with corporate and institutional expectations. Recognizing this dynamic prevents treating socialized emotional habitus as an innate personal virtue, situating emotional competence within the broader reproduction of social stratification (Bourdieu, 1980).

5. Conclusion and Strategic Recommendations

This study concludes that emotional intelligence is a multidimensional, socio-cultural phenomenon that cannot be reduced to an isolated intrapsychic metric. While individual cognitive-affective abilities are necessary to process emotional experiences, these abilities acquire form, direction, and social meaning through primary and secondary socialization, symbolic interaction, and cultural feeling rules. By bridging emotional intelligence research with the sociology of emotions, the study reframes the construct as an embodied, context-sensitive social competence.

Ultimately, the central sociological inquiry shifts from the psychological question: 'How much emotional intelligence does this individual possess?' to the sociological question: 'What form of emotional competence does an actor acquire, through what institutional socialization, within which structural contexts is it valued, and under what cultural feeling rules is it legitimized or sanctioned?'

Based on these theoretical findings, the study outlines the following research and practical recommendations:

- Advance Comparative Empirical Field Research: Transition from abstract theoretical modeling toward comparative qualitative and quantitative field investigations examining how diverse social actors conceptualize emotional intelligence and acquire feeling rules across generational, gender, class, and regional contexts.
- Integrate Contextual Socio-Emotional Learning: Design educational curricula and university modules that move beyond rigid formulas of 'self-control' toward fostering reflexive awareness of culturally diverse feeling rules, empathetic perspective-taking, and conflict management.
- Recognize Cultural Specificity in Emotion Assessment: Encourage researchers and clinical practitioners to account for cultural norms and linguistic variations when assessing emotional expressions, avoiding the uncritical universalization of Western-centric psychometric tools.
- Investigate Workplace Emotional Labor: Promote organizational sociology investigations into how service-sector mandates for emotional labor affect employee mental health and structural power dynamics in commercial and public institutions.

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