Public Employees' Awareness of Traditional Korean Administrative Culture: An Appraisal

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to analyze the variance of public employees' awareness of traditional Korean administrative culture including generalism, authoritarianism, formalism, and familism according to their socioeconomic status and work experience measured in terms of gender, age, rank, and job position. The results of the statistical analysis are as follows. First, public employees' awareness of formalism and familism varies depending on their gender. Second, public employees' awareness of generalism, formalism, and authoritarianism varies depending on their rank. Lastly, public employees' awareness of generalism varies depending on their job position. Implications for a better understanding of public employees' values as well as the effective management of government agencies are drawn from these results.

Key words: administrative culture, generalsim, authoritarianism, formalism, familism

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Introduction

The notion of administrative culture has been treated in countries including Canada (Dwivedi and Gow, 1999), Israel (Caiden, 1970), South Korea (Paik, 1990), and India (Sharma, 2000). However, other cultural interpretations such as organizational culture and political culture have pushed the study of administrative culture into the shadows (Henderson, 2004). Through studies on administrative culture, it is possible to understand the characteristics of public employees working for government agencies as well as of administrations themselves. In addition, such studies can help enhance the performance of administrative systems. Based on the results of their study on faculty members' perceptions of cultural dimensions in universities in Pakistan, Bashir et al. (2012) argued that studies of such cultures will not only aid in the implementation of relevant policies regarding Pakistani administrative culture but also in managing employees more smoothly.

Administrative culture consists of several sub-cultures in organizations (Rose, 1988; Sackmann, 1992). A sub-culture is "an ethnic, regional, economic, or social group exhibiting characteristic patterns of behavior sufficient to distinguish it from others within an embracing culture or society (Merriam-Webster, 2012)." According to Yates (1982), for example, heterogeneous cultures can be found among government agencies according to the existence of clients, the extent to which higher skills and standards are needed in work, the history of the organization, the size of the organization, among other factors.
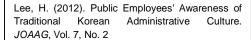
In South Korea, however, most studies have not taken into account that a variety of characteristics exist within every administrative culture (Park, 2008). The failure of administrative reforms in South Korea has been attributable to the existence of a gap between the new systems and traits of the country's administrative culture, resulting from the lack of understanding of administrative culture (Hwang, 2003). Due to the increasing complexity and specialization of work in government agencies, sub-cultures of public organizations will be diversified (Park, 2008). In order to enhance organizational performance, sufficient understanding of sub-cultures should precede investigating characteristics of the administrative culture as a whole.

According to Yun and Hwang (2011), the administrative culture in South Korea can be divided into Confucian culture, developmental state culture, democratic culture, and New Public Management culture. Among the various types of administrative cultures, this study focuses on Confucian culture because it has generally prevailed in South Korea as compared to other cultures (Yun and Hwang, 2011). Although the democratic administrative system has been introduced from the West since the establishment of the South Korean government in 1948, Confucian traditional culture has remained strong across the country's entire administrative environment. As a result, the Western democratic administrative system has not taken root in South Korean government agencies (Lee, 2008).This study uses the phrase *traditional Korean administrative culture* to emphasize traditional cultural aspects of Confucian culture.

The purpose of this study is to examine variability in public employees' awareness of traditional Korean administrative cultures according to their socio-economic characteristics and to draw implications for public management accordingly. The remainder of this article proceeds as follows. First, I provide a general review of definitions of administrative culture. Second, I select four traditional Korean administrative cultures and provide an overview of them, and present a definition of cultural awareness. Third, I use survey results to test my hypothesis that local public employees' awareness of traditional Korean administrative cultures will be different according to various characteristics including gender, age, rank, and job position. Finally, I present the implications of the findings.

Theoretical Background

The Meaning of Administrative Culture

It is necessary to be clear about what culture is prior to defining administrative culture. Hofstede (1997) noted that culture distinguishes the members of one group from members of another through a collective programming of the mind. This programming continues throughout group members' life times, from family and school to workplace. According to Schein (2004), culture is comprised of the basic assumptions and beliefs that have been invented, developed, and learned by a given group while they address external and internal problems. The notion of culture varies at the civilization level, at the country level, and within the country level (Dangal, 2005).

There are various definitions of administrative culture. Sharma (2002) defines the administrative culture as the culture of public employees whose behaviors are limited to only the administrative environment. According to Richardson & Baldwin (1976), administrative culture is the combination of beliefs, attitudes, values, and systems which affect the operation of government agencies. Oh (2008) argues that administrative culture can regulate the behaviors and attitudes of government agency members because it is composed of values, beliefs and fundamental premises shared by these members. According to Lee (1990), administrative culture is formed through training and communication following the point at which individuals are hired to government agencies. There is also the argument that administrative culture stands at a mid-point between organizational culture, which focuses on analyzing individuals in organizations, and political culture, which mainly concerns itself with the entire polity and its features (Henderson, 2004).

Based on the discussion above, administrative culture can be defined as the scope of public employees' values and point of views, which can differ among different government agencies and work environments.
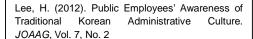
The Meaning of Cultural Awareness

Cultural awareness allows a person to explore his or her cultural and professional background in-depth. The sufficient recognition of a person's own cultural or professional values prevents one from enforcing his or her beliefs or values on another culture (Leininger, 1978). According to Baker (2011), cultural awareness means the recognition of the following: "1) culture as a set of shared behaviors, beliefs, and values; 2) the role culture and context play in any interpretation of meaning; 3) our own culturally induced behavior, values, and beliefs and the ability to articulate this; and 4) others' culturally induced behavior, values, and beliefs and the ability to compare this with our own culturally induced behavior, values, and beliefs" (p. 66).

Among the multi-faceted definitions of cultural awareness, this study focuses on aspects of an individual's perception of values, behaviors, and beliefs that he or she believes are shared by a great many people.

The Literature of Traditional Korean Administrative Cultures

Traditional Korean administrative cultures, which have a strong base in Confucian values, have been explored by many scholars in South Korea. According to Yun (2006), Confucian administrative culture is characterized by extensive hierarchy among superiors and subordinates, the rule of man instead of the rule of law, and strong leadership. The topics of studies on traditional Korean administrative cultures range from their meaning and contents to comparisons, changes in the culture, and research problems. Most previous research has discussed the negative aspects of traditional Korean administrative cultures prior to 1990. During the 1990s, however, many scholars have begun to stress the positive aspects of this administrative culture (Yun, 2009). In addition, there studies have assessed the theoretical and methodological weaknesses of previous studies, considering the ways in which traditional Korean administrative cultures actually affect the administration of public organizations and finding potential changes of direction within traditional Korean administrative cultures. In the 2000s, some scholars claimed a need for studying traditional Korean administrative cultures according to a cultural theoretical framework applicable to many countries. The traditional Korean administrative cultures that have been discussed include authoritarianism, formalism, familism, generalism, fatalism, toadyism, sectionalism, and conformism

(as cited in Park, 2008). There has been a difference in opinion concerning whether cultures should be designated as traditional Korean administrative cultures (Park, 2008). In this study, I focus on authoritarianism, formalism, familism, and generalism, which appear to have been widely agreed upon by scholars (Kim, 1981; Oh, 1998; Paik, 1995).

First of all, authoritarianism believes hierarchy exists in all human relations and places importance on subordinates' obedience to superiors. Under the influence of authoritarianism, communication is mostly done in a top-down manner, and low-rank employees mostly follow orders or directions delivered by supervisors. According to Adorno et al. (1950), authoritarianism features conventionalism; aggression to people who violate traditional values; submission; and resistance to showing emotion under the influence of authority, power and toughness. South Korea's strong authoritarianism is rooted in the country's history. The status system of the Silla Dynasty and the nobles and means system of Chosun Dynasty, which clearly reveal a Korean hierarchical tradition, are rooted in Korean bureaucracy and have exerted strong influences on Korean administrative culture. In addition, the country's experience of Japanese colonialism and the military regime's long-term seizure of power in the post-colonial era have strengthened the authoritarianism of the country's administration. The influence of authoritarianism is demonstrable not only in official meetings but also in private ones. Many Korean public organizations have adopted the merit system, but seniority is also customary, which may be attributable to the authoritarian tradition (Kim, 1985).

Second, formalism puts more priority on procedures and rules than output and outcomes, sometimes resulting in the displacement of goals. One of the side effects of formalism's strong influence is that a public employee can exaggerate his or her administrative achievements, which prohibits citizens from knowing the truth. This can result in a weakening of citizens' trust toward government agencies (Park, 2008). Merton (1957) used the term "trained incapacity" to cast formalism in the light of a bureaucratic pathology. Although formalism results in public employees' adaptation to rules and procedures, this culture can also prevent public employees from coping with changing environments and achieving organizational goals. The root of formalism in South Korea can be found in the ruling classes of Chosun Dynasty, who emphasized socially desirable procedures and forms in order to systematize Confucian ethics, which emphasize Elders first, distinction between the sexes, and a male-oriented society. Under the influence of Confucian ethics, people were expected to observe and not deviate from designated categories (Kim, 2001). During the colonial periods, Japan applied German law, which can be characterized by legitimacy, to Korean bureaucracy. This has resulted in inflexibility and uniformity in bureaucratic behaviors, and this custom continues to the present time (Paik, 1990). According to Paik (1990), the strong prevalence of formalism may lead to the avoidance of uncertainty and change, with reliance on formalized rules and procedures. This tradition can be traced to evasions of responsibility in the politically unstable society that followed the 1945 Liberation of South Korea as well as factional disputes in Chosun Dynasty (Do, 1999).

Third is familism, which, similar to nepotism, involves a dedication to family over a dedication to society more generally. That is, people recognize themselves as members of a family rather than as individuals. Characteristics of Korean familism range from the patriarchal family system to primogeniture (Kim, 2002). Under the prevalence of familism, public employees are likely to make decisions that are favorable for people with whom they share close relationships, especially relatives. In South Korea, it is commonly understood that it is beneficial for one to have connections based on regionalism, school relations, and kinship in order to achieve cooperation and expected goals. Such an outlook risks shading into a spoils system or corruption (Park, 2004).

Fourth, generalism assigns more importance to a wide array of knowledge and skills than professional knowledge and techniques. Generalism can be traced back to Confucian ethics insofar as it respects scholars, and disrespects people working with professional skills (Cho, 1995). The generalism prevents specialization in public administration because it disregards technical posts in the belief that everything can be addressed with general knowledge (Paik, 1995).

Table 1 shows both the positive and negative sides of authoritarianism, formalism, familism, and generalism, which have been discussed among many scholars.

Table 1 Positive and negative aspects of traditional Korean administrative cultures

Negative aspects	Cultures	Positive aspects
1. closed and secret administration 2. over conformity to superiors 3. top-down communication 4. demoralization of members 5. irrational decision making 6. irresponsible bureaucrat behavior	Authoritarianism	1. enhancement of leadership 2. unity and cohesiveness 3. prohibition of nonproductive conflicts 4. thrust of policy implementations
1. goal displacement 2. conservative behaviors 3. red tape	Formalism	1. justification of administration 2. compliance with regulations and procedures 3. maintenance of order
1. patriarchal control system 2. spoils system 3. confusing public and private matters	Familism	1. humane management 2. promotion of team spirit
1. inhibiting specialization	Generalism	1. enhancing integration 2. flexibility in managing work force

Adopted from Kim and Park, 2002.

Even though many studies have focused on exploring the remains of traditional Korean administrative cultures in the present public organizations, there are some opinions about deviations from traditional Korean administrative cultures. The recent trends of globalization and industrialization may have weakened traditional Korean administrative cultures (Oh, 2002). Globalization allowed Western culture to spread widely, and the development of Information Technology brought about fundamental changes in ways of working in government organizations (as cited in Park, 2008). In addition, the rise of national prestige as a result of rapid economic growth, the institutionalization of democracy, and the maturity of civic society have promoted individualism and participation instead of authoritarianism (Eom, 2010). While the financial crisis swept through South Korea in the late 1990s, New Public Management (NPM)-based systems such as performance-related pay and contracting out were introduced to the country, and it may have raised levels of individualism in government administration (Park and Kim, 2002).

Hypotheses

In this study, the dependent variables are authoritarianism, familism, generalism, and formalism. Independent variables are gender, age, rank, and job position. Hypotheses were set on the premise that public employees' awareness of dependent variables can be different according to independent variables. The hypotheses are as follows.
Hypothesis 1 Awareness of traditional Korean administrative culture will be dependent on gender.
    1-1 Differences in awareness of generalism will appear according to gender.
    1-2 Differences in awareness of authoritarianism will appear according to gender.
    1-3 Differences in awareness of familism will appear according to gender.
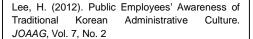   1-4 Differences in awareness of formalism will appear according to gender.
Hypothesis 2 Awareness of traditional Korean administrative culture will be dependent on age.
    2-1 Differences in awareness of generalism will appear according to age.
    2-2 Differences in awareness of authoritarianism will appear according to age.
    2-3 Differences in awareness of familism will appear according to age.
    2-4 Differences in awareness of formalism will appear according to age.
Hypothesis 3 Awareness of traditional Korean administrative culture will be dependent on rank.
    3-1 Differences in awareness of generalism will appear according to rank.
    3-2 Differences in awareness of authoritarianism will appear according to rank.
    3-3 Differences in awareness of familism will appear according to rank.
    3-4 Differences in awareness of formalism will appear according to rank.
Hypothesis 4 Awareness of traditional Korean administrative culture will be dependent on job

position.
    4-1 Differences in awareness of generalism will appear according to job position.
    4-2 Differences in awareness of authoritarianism will appear according to job position.
    4-3 Differences in awareness of familism will appear according to job position.
    4-4 Differences in awareness of formalism will appear according to job position.

Methods

Survey Design

The survey measuring gaps in public employees' awareness of traditional Korean administrative cultures was conducted on 330 public employees in Daegu, South Korea, from October 11, 2010 to October 26, 2010. 329 questionnaires were collected, but 30 questionnaires were removed because of low validity. Therefore, 299 questionnaires were analyzed to find the variance among local government public employees' awareness of traditional Korean administrative cultures according to several characteristics.

Table 2 Contents of the questionnaire

Cultures	Measurement indicators	Cultures	Measurement indicators
Authoritarianism	Obedience	Formalism	Commitment to regulations
	Hierarchy		Peace-at-any price principle
	Power abuse		Following the precedence
	Top-down communication		Red tape
Familism	Human bonding	Generalism	Administrative domination
	Connection		Common sense principle
	Acquaintance		Preference to general administrative positions
	Patriarchy		
Independent variables	Gender, age, rank, job position		

The questionnaire was composed of 22 questions derived from previous studies. A 5-point Likert scale was used for questions concerning the four traditional Korean administrative cultures (the dependent variables). For questions that asked about the independent variables, nominal, interval, and ratio scales were used depending on each independent variable. Table 2 shows the contents of the questionnaire.

Data Analysis Methods

SPSS Ver. 12.0 was used for the empirical analysis. First, a frequency analysis was carried out to identify the common characteristics of subjects of this study. Second, t-test and analysis of variance (ANOVA) were carried out in order to recognize the variance of public employees' awareness of four traditional Korean administrative cultures according to independent variables. A t-test was used for gender, and a one-way ANOVA was used for the rest of the independent variables.

Characteristics of the Respondents

Table 3 shows the characteristics of the respondents based on independent variables. There are more males (58.2%) than females (41.8%). By age, individuals in their 30s (33.1%) and 40s (36.5%) are included more than individuals of any other age groups. By rank[2], many respondents fall

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[2] In South Korea, the rank of public employees' divided into 9 levels, except the president, a prime minister or equivalent, a deputy prime minister or equivalent, a secretary or equivalent, a deputy secretary or equivalent, and an

between level 8 and level 6, and there are fewer respondents who fall into level 9 or level 5 or lower. Lastly, by job position, general administrative position (68.2%) is the most common response, whereas others (4.35%) are less common.

Table 3 Characteristics of sample

Division		Frequency (percent)
Gender	Male	174(58.2)
	Female	125(41.8)
Age	Twenties	35(11.7)
	Thirties	99(33.1)
	Forties	109(36.5)
	Over fifty	56(18.7)
Rank	Below nine	22(7.4)
	Eight	73(24.4)
	Seven	125(41.8)
	Six	56(18.7)
	Five	11(3.7)
	Four	12(4.0)
Job position	General administrative position	204(68.2)
	Technical position	62(20.7)
	Simple technical position	20(6.7)
	Others	13(4.3)
Total		299(199.0)

Reliability

The results of the reliability analysis of the measured variables are shown in Table 4. Although Cronbach's α shows slightly lower confidence levels of 0.4 to 0.6, it meets the minimum standard of analysis that is used for exploratory research.

Table 4 Analysis of the reliability of the measured variables

Variables	the first entry	the last entry	Cronbach's α
Generalism	3	2	**.418**
Authoritarianism	4	4	**.563**
Familism	4	3	**.426**
Formalism	4	2	**.551**

Validity

The results of the validity analysis of the measured variables are shown in Table 5. As a result of a factor analysis for traditional Korean administrative cultures, the four factors including generalism, authoritarianism, familism, and formalism are extracted, which runs parallel with the original design of this study. All eigen values are over 1.0, explaining 57.5% of the total variance. Analysis of these factors reveals that there is no problem with the validity of measuring traditional Korean administrative cultures.

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assistant secretary or equivalent. The lower a public employee's level is, the higher his or her rank is.

Table 5 Analysis of the validity of the measured variables

Division	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4
Authoritarianism 2	**0.672**	-0.197	0.134	-0.065
Authoritarianism 3	**0.672**	0.162	-0.018	-0.166
Authoritarianism 4	**0.629**	0.121	0.107	0.330
Authoritarianism 1	**0.601**	0.091	-0.233	0.346
Formalism 1	-0.003	**0.804**	0.152	0.077
Formalism 2	0.096	**0.744**	-0.229	0.096
Familism 2	-0.148	-0.013	**0.721**	0.088
Familism 1	0.191	-0.302	**0.647**	-0.120
Familism 3	0.140	0.393	**0.619**	-0.161
Generalism 1	-0.067	-0.057	0.024	**0.803**
Generalism 2	0.171	0.249	-0.120	**0.691**
Eigen value	1.780	1.599	1.496	1.445
Variance(%)	16.179	14.536	13.600	13.136
Accumulated variance(%)	16.179	30.716	44.316	57.452

Findings

Verification of Hypothesis 1

Table 6 shows the t-test results of hypothesis 1. Formalism and familism show statistically significant differences at level 0.05, whereas generalism and authoritarianism show no significant differences. Therefore, hypotheses 1-3 and 1-4 are adopted, while hypotheses 1-1 and 1-2 are rejected. Familism is more strongly perceived by men than women, whereas formalism is more strongly perceived by women than men.

Table 6 Awareness of traditional Korean administrative cultures according to gender

Division		Average	Standard deviation	t-value	p-value
Generalism	Men	3.34	0.807	-1.824	0.069
	Women	3.50	0.753		
Authoritarianism	Men	3.57	0.493	1.236	0.217
	Women	3.50	0.471		
Familism	Men	3.53	0.473	3.190	0.002
	Women	3.35	0.499		
Formalism	Men	2.61	0.681	-2.237	0.026
	Women	2.79	0.629		

Verification of Hypothesis 2

Table 7 shows the results of a one-way ANOVA of hypothesis 2. No hypothesis shows a statistically significant difference at a significance level of 0.001. Therefore, all of the hypotheses are rejected.

Table 7 Awareness of traditional Korean administrative cultures according to age

Division	Age	Average	Standard deviation	Sum of squares	F value	p-value

Division		Average	Standard deviation			
Generalism	20s	3.57	0.655	3.142	1.700	0.167
	30s	3.43	0.720			
	40s	3.43	0.793			
	over 50s	3.21	0.938			
Authoritarianism	20s	3.64	0.483	1.308	1.877	0.134
	30s	3.47	0.434			
	40s	3.59	0.488			
	over 50s	3.48	0.546			
Familism	20s	3.38	0.537	0.700	0.967	0.409
	30s	3.46	0.428			
	40s	3.43	0.513			
	over 50s	3.54	0.522			
Formalism	20s	2.90	0.705	6.418	5.045	0.002
	30s	2.81	0.617			
	40s	2.63	0.678			
	over 50s	2.46	0.620			

Verification of Hypothesis 3

Table 8 Awareness of traditional Korean administrative cultures according to rank

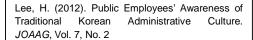| Division	Rank	Average	Standard deviation	Sum of squares	F value	p-value
Generalism	below 9	3.55	0.615	18.094	6.358	0.000
	8	3.38	0.725			
	7	3.60	0.788			
	6	3.23	0.744			
	5	2.95	0.688			
	4	2.54	0.891			
Authoritarianism	below 9	3.43	0.431	2.955	2.589	0.026
	8	3.54	0.478			
	7	3.58	0.444			
	6	3.41	0.508			
	5	3.91	0.655			
	4	3.54	0.572			
Familism	below 9	3.41	0.423	2.379	2.006	0.078
	8	3.40	0.530			
	7	3.41	0.464			
	6	3.54	0.487			
	5	3.76	0.579			
	4	3.67	0.471			
Formalism	below 9	2.75	0.612	9.336	4.478	0.001
	8	2.92	0.640			
	7	2.66	0.621			
	6	2.56	0.681			
	5	2.64	0.869			
	4	2.08	0.597			

Verification of Hypothesis 4

Table 10 is the result of a one-way ANOVA of hypothesis 4. Generalism shows a statistically significant difference at a significance level of 0.05, whereas the rest of the cultures show no significant difference. Therefore, hypothesis 4-1 is adopted, and the rest of hypotheses are rejected. Those who hold technical positions exhibit the highest awareness of generalism, while those in general administrative positions exhibit the lowest awareness of generalism.

Table 9 Awareness of traditional Korean administrative cultures according to job position

Division	Job position	Average	Standard deviation	Sum of squares	F value	p-value
Generalism	General administrative positions	3.18	0.744	32.992	21.360	0.000
	Technical positions	3.93	0.658			
	Simple technical positions	3.75	0.716			
	Others	3.92	0.534			
Authoritarianism	General administrative positions	3.54	0.476	0.717	1.021	0.384
	Technical positions	3.58	0.509			
	Simple technical positions	3.36	0.462			
	Others	3.52	0.515			
Familism	General administrative positions	3.48	0.503	1.305	1.818	0.144
	Technical positions	3.46	0.492			
	Simple technical positions	3.30	0.403			
	Others	3.23	0.344			
Formalism	General administrative positions	2.69	0.672	3.065	2.346	0.073
	Technical positions	2.56	0.617			
	Simple technical positions	2.78	0.550			
	Others	3.08	0.813			

Discussion

Based on the results of hypotheses testing, the implications of this study are as follows. I begin with the first hypothesis testing displaying that public employees' awareness of formalism and familism differ depending on gender. Women may have a higher awareness of formalism because the majority of female public employees still work at low-level jobs that mostly require simple and repetitive tasks. In 2010, among 1342 senior executives in senior executive services, the number of women was only 36 (2.6%) (Park, 2010). Another survey result, which was conducted by the New Progressive Party in 2010, showed that women accounted for only 7.6 percent of public employees at positions higher than level 5 in the nation (Ahn, 2010). Given the current trend of increasing the

numbers of women working at high-level positions, however, the gap in awareness of formalism between men and women will likely diminish in the future. According to Kim (2012), the number of women at positions higher than level 5 in MOPAS has increased from 420 in 2000 to 2143 in 2010. Considering the increasing number of women who pass the national examination for hiring high-level public employees in South Korea, more women will begin their work at positions higher than level 5 in the public sector. Besides, male public employees' higher awareness of familism may show that traditional patriarchal ideas still exert influence over public employees at work. We may also assume that some male public employees think they are superior to female employees, treating them in an authoritative manner. This may prevent cooperation at work.
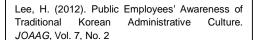
The results of the second hypothesis testing based on age contradict the commonly believed notion that the older one is, the stronger he or she is inclined to traditional characteristics (Kim and Ha, 1997). Lim (1988) said that in the public sector younger generations are willing to accept and internalize new values while old generations are likely to stick to values of traditional administrative cultures. The findings match with some previous studies contending that there is not much difference in the recognition of authoritarianism between different age groups (Ahn and Kim, 1991; Hwang, 2003). Kim (2005) found that 31.6 percent of respondents had decided to work in the public sector because of job security. Based on this result, it appears that personal characteristics of employees matter more in the formation of administrative culture than age.

The results of the third hypothesis testing show that public employees' differing awareness of generalism, formalism, and authoritarianism according to rank may be attributed to the following reasons. Low-level public employees' higher awareness of generalism may be rooted in the simplicity of most low-level jobs, which do not require special knowledge or skills. Considering the job characteristics of low-level employees, their higher awareness of generalism seems predictable, but public employees may risk feeling bored and unsatisfied with their jobs. To balance effective work and high job satisfaction of the part of low-level public employees, continual job enrichment efforts such as job rotation and empowerment are recommended. Next, low-level public employees' higher awareness of formalism may be associated with authority and responsibility within the organization. It is likely that low-level public employees tend to follow instructions given by high-level public employees. In addition, low-level public employees may have fewer opportunities to exercise their discretion at work, feeling that burdens of responsibility will follow, and thus may prefer instead to follow previous procedures. Lastly, the diverse distribution of public employees' awareness of authoritarianism shown here contradicts a previous study that claimed that higher rank correlates with increased authoritativeness (Park, Lee, and Ju, 2006). It suggests that the extent to which public employees possess authoritative characteristics may depend on various factors such as personality, duties, atmosphere at work, etc. In addition, the variability of public employees' awareness of authoritarianism can depend on the size and maturity of organizations (Park, Lee, and Ju, 2006). The above findings suggest that it is important for public organizations to take rank into account in terms of management and the introduction of new systems (Hwang, 2003).

The results of the fourth hypothesis testing may reveal that the majority of public employees think common knowledge and sense are required in jobs regardless of their job positions. If the awareness of generalism remains high in technical positions in the public sector, the professionalism of organizations may be inhibited. In addition, public organizations will experience difficulties in attracting new employees with specialized knowledge and skills. Therefore, public organizations need to increase their efforts to create an atmosphere in which employees working in technical positions can utilize their knowledge and have their performance recognized in return.

Conclusion

The purpose of this study is to analyze the variance of public employees' awareness of traditional Korean administrative culture according to gender, age, rank, and job position in hopes of

suggesting the implications for further study of traditional Korean administrative cultures. The following are results of statistical analysis: (1) differences in awareness of formalism and familism appear according to gender; (2) differences in awareness of generalism, formalism, and authoritarianism appear according to rank; and (3) differences in awareness of generalism appear according to job position. Since most previous studies have explored traditional Korean administrative cultures within the scope of government agencies as a whole, it is hoped that this study will improve understandings of the diverse characteristics existing in each agency's administrative culture. Also, this study recognizes the importance of understanding the heterogeneity of public employees' awareness of traditional Korean administrative culture, which can contribute to the implementation of appropriate policies and to future plans regarding human resource management. It may also to lead to higher performance in government agencies.

Since the scope of the study is limited to one local government in South Korea, it is difficult to generalize its findings. In order to reinforce the results of the study, conducting long-term observation and in-depth interviews of government agencies in several regions are required for further research. Another area for future research would involve tracking changes in public employees' awareness of administrative cultures. As we see in this study, administrative culture is not monolithic, but is rather composed of complex sub-cultures. In addition, public employees' awareness of administrative culture can be diversified or altered in the course of time due to various factors such as increased interaction with other countries, education, etc. Therefore, further study on changes in public employees' awareness of administrative culture may help mangers decrease gaps between personnel policies and public employees' attitudes. Future research may also include more socioeconomic variables such as type of institution, working years, education level, etc., leading to more implications.

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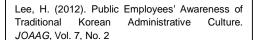
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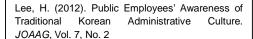
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