

Culture, participative decision making and job satisfaction

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Abstract

This study explores the impact of culture on participative decision making (PDM) and job satisfaction (JS) using data obtained from the European Values Study. We parameterise two different cultural variables using principal components analysis: first a continuum based on survival versus self-expression values, and second a continuum based on traditional versus secular-rational values. Application of ordered logistic regression to Likert scales of PDM and JS suggest that greater self-expression in the survival versus self-expression variable enhances both PDM and JS; more traditional values in the traditional versus secular-rational continuum have the same effect.

Keywords: Job satisfaction; participatory decision making; culture

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1 Introduction

The retention of quality labour has become a central point of interest for organisations. Research suggests that employees with higher levels of job satisfaction are less likely to quit and that organisations can reap significant benefits from more satisfied employees. These two important considerations have made employee job satisfaction policies essential for effective management strategy. Although such research and strategy are of undoubted value, the effects of external phenomena, such as globalisation, on job satisfaction have been overlooked. An important component of globalisation is the international movement of labour and many countries are facing a labour force with diverse cultural identities. A better understanding of how differences in cultural values can affect the behaviour of employees has become an important concern for organisations.

In order to facilitate the understanding of how employees respond to certain organisational changes, several theoretical models of job satisfaction have been developed (Hebb, 1949; Morse, 1953). Arguably, the most comprehensive model of job satisfaction was developed by Locke (1969), where the concept of job values was used as a foundation in predicting employees' job satisfaction. With job satisfaction being such a subjective concept, empirical researchers have worked towards identifying the determinants of job satisfaction and the evidence suggests that contributory factors include socio-demographic (e.g., gender, age, marital status, education), disposition (e.g., personality traits) (Judge and Bono, 2001) and work situation influences (e.g., job challenge, acknowledgment, job security) (Kovach, 1995). Such research provides insights from which organisations can develop strategic programmes to foster greater levels of employee job satisfaction.

One such organisational programme entails providing employees with the freedom to participate in decision making (PDM). Theoretical literature has argued that allowing for PDM can satisfy employees' higher-order needs (Maslow, 1943) such as self-expression (Miller and Monge, 1986) and independence (French *et al.*, 1960), which ultimately promotes job satisfaction (Vroom, 1964). Such claims are empirically supported (Alutto and Acito, 1974; Black and Gregersen, 1997; Schuler, 1980) by results which indicate that higher levels of PDM enhance job satisfaction.

Cultural explanations of economic events have largely been neglected in economic literature. Although some modernisation (e.g., Inglehart and Baker, 2000) and economic growth theorists (Lucas, 1988; Romer, 1986; Schlicht, 1993) have acknowledged the value of cultural characteristics as economic variables, empirical literature linking such traits to certain economic phenomena (e.g., job satisfaction, PDM) remains limited. This is surprising given the cultural diversity of many labour markets. Arguably, one of the main reasons why cultural explanations of economic phenomena may have been avoided is due to the subjective nature of an individual's cultural characteristics. Obtaining data to sufficiently measure and effectively capture these features may have constrained empirical research. Although these underlying issues remain present, progress has been made in effectively measuring a wide range of cultural beliefs that individuals hold (Inglehart, 2006; Inglehart and Baker, 2000) through the use of cross-country data sets (e.g., European Values Study (EVS)) that have become more readily available. Consequently, there are now a few empirical studies that have presented investigations into the link between differing cultural beliefs and job satisfaction (Fargher *et al.*, 2008; Lange, 2009; Xu and van de Vliert, 2003). Although there still remains a dearth of research that focuses on the link

between various cultural characteristics and PDM, which is surprising given the existence of large variations in PDM practices across the world. An important exception is Sagie and Aycan (2003) which provides a theoretical framework detailing how opposing cultural attitudes influence the type and level of PDM programmes employed.

This study aims to fill this gap in the literature by empirically investigating whether differences in cultural attitudes have varying impacts on both job satisfaction and the freedom of individuals to participate in job-related decisions. In this study, we make use of Inglehart and Baker's (2000) approach in classifying cross-cultural differences between countries and individuals based on their orientation towards traditional vs. secular-rational values and survival vs. self-expression values. While the link between such cultural values, which is often parameterised using multiple variables (often highly collinear in nature), and job satisfaction has been empirically examined previously, the important empirical contributions to the literature of this paper are: (i) to employ principal components analysis to create singular variables for the purpose of capturing two different cultural dimensions, and (ii) to test their validity in influencing PDM *and* job satisfaction through the use of recently released data (2008 EVS). To the knowledge of the authors this paper is the first to empirically inspect the relationship between different cultural characteristics and PDM.

The paper is organized as follows: Section 2 reviews the literature that links job satisfaction and PDM with a range of cultural beliefs. Section 3 outlines the data and methodology and Section 4 presents the results. Conclusions and recommendations for future research are made in Section 5.

2 A review of the literature

Job satisfaction has become one of the most widely focused areas of interest in organisational research due to the growing awareness of its relationship with employee behaviours such as absenteeism, intention to quit, and motivation. Early work on this subject (Hoppock, 1937; Kerr, 1948) laid the foundation for what has become a multi-disciplinary pursuit, including extensive work in human resource management, applied psychology, sociology and labour economics. Research in the social sciences continues towards identifying explanatory variables of job satisfaction. These variables range from socio-demographic variables (e.g., gender, age, marital status, educational level) to more domain-specific variables such as dispositional influences (e.g., personality traits) (Judge and Bono, 2001) and work situational influences (e.g., job challenge, acknowledgment, job security) (Kovach, 1995).

In comparison, the literature on the influence of participatory decision making on job satisfaction is relatively underdeveloped. Although much debate surrounds the meaning of PDM, one of its most comprehensive definitions was proposed by Heller *et al.* (1998, p.42), who suggests that it is:

“the totality of forms, i.e. direct (personal) or indirect (through representatives or institutions) and of intensities, i.e. ranging from minimal to comprehensive, by which individuals, groups, collectives secure their interests or contribute to the choice process through self-determined choices among possible actions during the decision process”.

From an organisational perspective, the primary motivation for implementing PDM programmes is to promote gains in productivity (Greenberg, 1975) and PDM should be centred on issues which employees are knowledgeable about in order to ensure and accrue organisational benefits (Miller and Monge, 1986). Cognitive models of participation suggest that greater employee engagement is a viable organisational strategy as it enhances the flow and use of information (Miller and Monge, 1986). Underlying such rationale is the observation that employees are closer to their own work than are top management, and hence employees could have a relatively greater understanding of work-related problems given their potentially greater or more up-to-date source of information (Rodgers and Hunter, 1993). Moreover, if employees are involved in designing solutions to work-related problems then they may gain an understanding of the implementation of such solutions (Ritchie and Miles, 1970). Conversely, if firms discourage employees from communicating their work-related issues and from suggesting potential solutions to such issues then they stand to lose out on innovative suggestions relating to work processes, programmes, and technologies that could enhance organisational efficiency and productivity.

From a human resource perspective, the primary motivation for implementing PDM programmes is the potential for job enrichment (Greenberg, 1975). Some theorists (Likert, 1967; McGregor, 1960) suggest that this is achieved by the effects resulting from the link between PDM and job satisfaction. Under affective models of participation, the primary role of the organisation is to provide a working environment within which employees have PDM responsibilities. Such responsibility is said to be conducive to the healthy development of employees as it leads to the attainment of higher-order needs (Maslow, 1943), such as self-expression (Miller and Monge, 1986)

and independence (French *et al.*, 1960), which ultimately promotes their job satisfaction (Vroom, 1964).

The affective models of participation have come under great scrutiny from those supporting the cognitive effects of participation. Typically they state that managers simply believe in “involvement for the sake of involvement, arguing that as long as subordinates feel they are participating and are being consulted, their ego needs will be satisfied” (Ritchie and Miles, 1970, p. 348). Nonetheless, affective models of participation have found empirical support. For instance, by assuming that PDM is positively related with job satisfaction, Alutto and Acito (1974) found that employees who were classified as being in decisional equilibrium (i.e., participating in as many decisions as desired) generally displayed higher levels of job satisfaction than those classified as decisionally deprived (i.e., making fewer decisions than desired). Research by Black and Gregersen (1997) supports this perspective as they indicated that employees who had greater levels of involvement in all decision making processes generally displayed higher levels of job satisfaction. These findings were also consistent with those of Schuler (1980) who found positive correlations between PDM and job satisfaction.¹

A role for cultural characteristics

Cultural explanations of economic events have largely been avoided in economic research due to the difficulty of quantifying cultural influences. As with job satisfaction, cultural beliefs are subjective concepts which pose many challenges

¹ The dates of these empirical studies indicate the lack of contemporary research in this field.

when attempting to empirically demonstrate their significance. A broad definition of an individual's culture is provided by Panther (1999), whereby culture pertains to a set of learned meanings and evaluations shared by a distinct group. Such a group can be of ethnic, religious and/or social affiliation (Guiso *et al.*, 2006). When reference is made to a set of learned meanings and evaluations, what is being referred to is a collection of durable beliefs, values or routines that permeates a group (Cantebury, 1995; Guiso *et al.*, 2006).

Recent contributions to the parameterisation and influence of these set of beliefs / values include Fargher *et al.* (2008), Lange (2009) and Xu and van de Vliert (2004). Fargher *et al.* (2008) compared the effects of cultural beliefs and values on job satisfaction between Eastern and Western Europe and identified that traditional beliefs and values (e.g., the importance of work, religion, family and friends, and deference to authority) were more imbedded in Western European culture, and thus played a more influential role in job satisfaction for this region. From a similar standpoint, Lange (2009) illustrated how a legacy constructed on communist industrial relations in Central and Eastern Europe influences job satisfaction, even after economic and social transition had occurred. Taking a different approach, Xu and van de Vliert (2004) found that job level was positively correlated to job satisfaction in countries with individualistic culture² and had no effect on job satisfaction for employees working in countries with collectivistic culture³.

² Culture that promotes the welfare, interests and goals of the individual and his/her core family (Sagie and Aycan, 2003).

³ Culture that advocates membership within communities or large groups; it considers the welfare, interests and goals of the group to be more important than that of the individual group member (Sagie and Aycan, 2003).

Although the importance of the relationship between culture and PDM has been acknowledged (e.g., Hayes and Kleiner, 1989) there is, to the knowledge of the authors, currently no empirical research that has investigated this subject. Finding cultural explanations for varying PDM practises could be of great value within an organisational setting as managers would understand how cultural roots can manifest certain behaviours amongst employees (e.g., participation avoidance) (Sagie and Aycan, 2003). Given the lack of empirical work on this front, the remainder of this paper attempts to fill this gap in the literature.

3 Data and Methodology

Data

Our data represent the first release of the fourth wave (2008) of the European Values Survey (EVS) and includes data on 39 countries.⁴ The sample is restricted to those who were employed and of working age (i.e., between the ages of 18 to 64), and the exclusion of the self-employed. This yielded a final sample of 15,140 respondents, of which 43.3% were males.

Job satisfaction is a self-reported ordinal variable on a scale of 1-10, with 1 representing 'complete dissatisfaction' and 10 representing 'complete satisfaction'

⁴ Countries included in 2008 first release sample are Albania, Azerbaijan, Austria, Armenia, Belgium, Bosnia Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Belarus, Cyprus, Northern Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Northern Ireland, Kosovo, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Moldova, Montenegro, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russia, Serbia, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Spain, Switzerland and Ukraine.

with the respondent's job. In the EVS the job satisfaction variable focuses on 'overall job satisfaction' as a single-item.⁵

The extent of participatory decision making is measured in relation to the question: "How free are you to make decisions in your job?". In line with job satisfaction, this variable is categorical and is ordered on a Likert scale of 1-10, with 1 representing 'no freedom for decision making' and 10 representing 'a great deal of freedom for decision making' in the respondent's current job. This variable is distinctive because it captures two important considerations: (i) whether PDM exists within the respondent's current job, and (ii) to what extent management allows PDM to be practised. The former consideration is of interest, as it may reflect the influence of asymmetries in cultural values (Sagie and Aycan, 2003). This variable is aligned with the definition of PDM provided by Heller *et al.*, (1998), as it captures all forms of PDM, as well as the intensities of PDM.

Inglehart and Baker (2000) have demonstrated cross-cultural differences between countries based on their orientation towards traditional vs. secular-rational values and survival vs. self-expression values. Traditional value orientation emphasises the importance of work and religion and deference to parental authority, whereas secular-rational values emphasize the opposite. A country orientated towards survival values tends to prioritise security, traditional gender roles, have low levels of inter-personal trust and be intolerant of outsiders, whereas countries orientated towards self-expression values tend to display the opposite preferences.

⁵ It needs to be acknowledged that Loo (2002) and Rose (2005) argue that a single-item measure of job satisfaction tends to overestimate the percentage of people satisfied in their jobs. The alternative multi-item measures can have the advantage of indicating particular areas for management to target (e.g. pay, job challenge, etc). However, Oshagbemi (1999) explains that a single-item measure of job satisfaction is also useful in eliminating the unique characteristics of a specific job.

To capture such cultural distinctions, the variables outlined in Table 1 were selected from the EVS and based on the selection rationale of Inglehart and Baker (2000). Application of principal component analysis to each group of variables and the retention of each of the principle components (which account for the most variance of each domain) provides separate parameterisations of the two culture dimensions: i) traditional vs. secular-rational, and (ii) survival vs. self-expression. The rationale for employing the principal component analysis approach is also twofold: (i) the influences of a country's culture will be captured by a group of factors, rather than being attributed to a single factor, and (ii) it aligns with existing theoretical and empirical work (Inglehart, 2006).

{Insert Table 1 about here}

Calculation of country level means for the two cultural domains permits the construction of a cultural map of Europe, as shown in Figure 1, and serves as a visual summation of cultural differences between countries. Two observations are worth emphasising here. First, traditional and survival values appear to be complements to each other and a similar complementarity is identifiable for secular-rational and self-expression values. This is shown by the concentration of country means in the top right and bottom left quadrants, with very few countries present in the opposite quadrants. Second, countries from Western Europe are more likely to fit into the bottom left quadrant, while those in the top right grouping are primarily from Eastern Europe.

{Insert Figure 1 about here}

Econometric approach

Given the ordinal and categorical nature of the dependent variables, the most appropriate econometric estimation method to apply to identify the determinants of job satisfaction and PDM is ordered logistic regression. This permits the inclusion of both cultural variables in the regression analysis as well as other *a priori* socio-economic attributes. In both regressions the general form of the ordered logit model is:

$$Y_i = \beta X_i' + u_i \quad i = 1, 2, \dots, N \quad (1)$$

with the ordered responses, Y , in both our cases having 10 categories. The ordered response model is defined as:

$$\Pr(Y = j | X, \alpha, \beta) = F_j(\alpha_j - X' \beta) - F_{j-1}(\alpha_{j-1} - X' \beta) \quad (2)$$

where $j = 1, 2, \dots, 10$, $\alpha_0 = -\infty$, $\alpha_{j-1} \leq \alpha_j$, $\alpha_m = \infty$ and F is the cumulative distribution function of the logistic distribution $F_j = 1/(1 + \exp(-(\alpha_j - X' \beta)))$.

The underlying job satisfaction and participatory decision making functions for estimation can be specified as:

$$\begin{aligned} JS = & \alpha + \beta * \text{Culture} + \beta * \text{PDM} + \beta * \text{Job values} + \beta * \text{Job level} \\ & + \beta * \text{Gender} + \beta * \text{Age} + \beta * \text{Education level} + \beta * \text{Marital status} \\ & + \beta * \text{Employment status} + \beta * \text{Household income} \\ & + \beta * \text{Number of household dependents} + u \end{aligned} \quad (3)$$

and

$$\begin{aligned} PDM = & \alpha + \beta * \text{Culture} + \beta * \text{Job values} + \beta * \text{Job level} \\ & + * \text{Gender} + \beta * \text{Age} + \beta * \text{Education level} + \beta * \text{Marital status} \\ & + \beta * \text{Employment status} + \beta * \text{Household income} \\ & + \beta * \text{Number of household dependents} + u \end{aligned} \quad (4)$$

4 Results

Job satisfaction model

Table 2 presents the results of the job satisfaction model which provides corroborative evidence for previous literature. For example, males were less likely to report higher categories of job satisfaction ($\beta = -0.080, p < 0.05$) which is in line with Clark (1997), Gazioglu and Tansel (2006) and Lange (2009) who find that women are generally more satisfied in their jobs than their male counterparts.

{Insert Table 2 about here}

The regression results support the U-shaped relationship between age and job satisfaction ($\beta = -0.024, p < 0.1; \beta = 0.0003, p < 0.05$; respectively) which Clark *et al.* (1996) attribute to individuals' personal circumstances, life-stage and non-employment factors that impact on job satisfaction. In terms of education, the regression results suggest that as the level of educational achievement increases, job satisfaction was likely to decrease. More specifically, employees with middle or higher levels of education were more likely to report lower categories of job

satisfaction ($\beta = -0.178, p < 0.05$; $\beta = -0.368, p < 0.01$; respectively) when compared to employees with lower levels of education, while holding all other variables constant, which is an effect that is well-established in the literature (Clark *et al.*, 1996; Gazioglu and Tansel, 2006). With greater amounts of higher education, the importance of certain job values may evolve such that values aimed at achievement (or the level of influence within a job) may become more intense, and this may result in a greater discrepancy between job values and the perceived achievement of such values within the work environment, and hence lower job satisfaction.

The effect of being widowed, or separated/divorced, relative to being married, has a negative impact on job satisfaction, albeit statistically insignificant for widowed. This finding corroborates research by Clark (1996) who identified married employees as displaying higher overall levels of job satisfaction. The regression results also indicated that an individual's employment status would differentially affect their job satisfaction. Part-time employees were also more likely to report lower categories of job satisfaction ($\beta = -0.192, p < 0.05$) when compared to full-time employees; this lends support to the similar results presented by Miller and Terborg (1979) and may be a reflection of part-time workers (perceived or otherwise) partial inclusion or partial exposure to the organisation's dynamics, which may result in lower tolerance for organisational demands.

In terms of household income, the regression results suggest that respondents who are members of middle or higher income earning households were more likely to report higher categories of job satisfaction ($\beta = 0.194, p < 0.01$; $\beta = 0.323, p < 0.01$;

respectively) relative to low income households. Also, as the number of people in the household increases then the level of worker job satisfaction decreases.

To turn our attention to the variables of interest, results presented in Table 2 show that a movement towards traditional (i.e., less secular-rational) values results in significantly higher job satisfaction. With traditional values advocating the importance of work in an individual's life (Inglehart and Baker, 2000), it seems logical that an individual with traditional values would gain greater satisfaction from their job when compared to an individual who is primarily orientated towards secular-rational values.

Theoretical expectations regarding this cultural variable are supported by our results. For instance, Locke (1969) argues job satisfaction will be determined by the extent to which an individual perceives his/her values to be achieved within the work environment. Therefore, simply being employed may achieve traditional values and hence promote job satisfaction. Additionally, by utilising the odds ratios,⁶ it can be stated that for an employee who becomes more orientated towards the traditional value domain, the odds of reporting a higher category of job satisfaction is approximately 11% greater than that of an employee who is orientated towards the secular-rational value domain, while holding all other variables constant.

The other finding pertaining to culture shows that a movement toward survival (i.e., less self-expression) results in significantly lower job satisfaction. This is understandable as individuals who are orientated towards self-expression values are

⁶ Calculated by estimating e^{β} (Tarling, 2009)

expected to display higher levels of subjective well-being, while individuals orientated to the survival value domain are expected to prioritise economic and political security over individual well-being (Inglehart and Baker, 2000).

Lastly, focussing on the other core variable in this analysis, PDM, *a priori* expectations suggest that employees would experience higher levels of job satisfaction as their freedom to participate in job-related decisions increase; the results strongly support this hypothesis ($\beta = 0.365, p < 0.01$). Using the odds ratio of this coefficient, it can be stated that for an employee whose freedom to participate in job-related decisions rises to the next highest category, the odds of reporting a higher category of job satisfaction will be 1.44 times greater, holding all other variables constant.

PDM model

Table 3 presents the results of the regressions that seek to explain the variation in participatory decision making. Job values, such as using initiative and wanting to achieve something, are associated with increases in freedom for PDM. This is in line with the observation that organisations generally provide greater freedom for PDM to employees who use their initiative and who are achievement-driven because of the potential efficiency and productivity gains. Although such relationships are well grounded within the theoretical literature (Davis, 1963; Miller and Monge, 1986), empirical research and thus confirmation of the significance of these relationships has been lacking.

{ Insert Table 3 about here }

In terms of job level, employees whose jobs were classified as skilled, less skilled and manual were more likely to report lower categories of freedom for PDM ($\beta = -0.437$, $p < 0.01$; $\beta = -0.608$, $p < 0.01$; $\beta = -0.937$, $p < 0.01$ respectively) when compared to professionals.⁷ Generally job level is considered to be positively related to freedom for PDM, as it has been shown that those in senior positions are perceived as being more competent in their decision making capabilities (Rosen and Jerdee, 1976). Alutto and Belasco (1972) also provide support for the notion that individuals in senior positions are more likely to be decisionally saturated (i.e., making more decisions than desired) when compared to individuals in junior positions who were largely decisionally deprived.

The results also suggest gender differences in the reported freedom for PDM, with males being more likely to report higher categories of freedom for PDM ($\beta = 0.222$, $p < 0.01$). A possible reason for this gender effect can be attributed to the common situation of the female in the household being a secondary income provider. Often secondary income providers need to balance family commitments with work (which are sometimes part-time in nature) and thus may end up in a reduced choice set of jobs. Consequently, the type of jobs females do may be influencing this result. Older workers were also found to be more likely to report higher categories of freedom for PDM. Although this result is statistically insignificant, the direction of impact is consistent with findings by Alutto and Belasco (1972) who found that the young were more likely to be decisionally deprived when compared to older workers.

⁷ The four categories of occupational status used in this paper (Professionals, Skilled, Less skilled, and Manual) correspond to the ISCO-08 classifications of major groups (1 and 2, 3 and 4, 5 to 7, 8 and 9). See ILO (2010).

Within existing empirical studies, household income levels have not generally featured as a factor that influences an employee's freedom for PDM. Nonetheless, the results from this study indicate that respondents who are members of middle to higher income earning households were more likely to report higher categories of freedom for PDM ($\beta = 0.410, p < 0.01$; $\beta = 0.623, p < 0.01$; respectively) when compared to members of lower income earning households, while holding all other factors constant. These findings may indicate that members of lower income earning households could generally be categorised as being employed within lower level positions, or on a part-time basis.

Focussing on the variables capturing the two cultural dimensions, results point towards individuals that are more traditional reporting higher categories of PDM. Although the effect of moving towards traditional values on PDM is small (with an odds-ratio indicating that they are just 5.6% more likely to report higher PDM than individuals with secular-rational values), it is a statistically significant result. Given the lack of empirical research on this front, this finding needs to be examined in the context of theoretical studies. Inglehart and Baker (2000) make arguments in the opposite direction to this particular result, as they contend that values which are of a secular-rational nature should include rising demands for participation in decision making in economic and political life. They also argue that individuals with traditional values favour respect for authority and that there is a clear distinction between superiors, whose role is to think, and subordinates, whose role it is to do. In contrast, the theoretical model of culture and PDM developed by Sagie and Aycan (2003) supports our result. They suggest that collectivistic cultures are more likely to engage in PDM practices, as joint effort (through collaboration between manager and

subordinate) is perceived as the only way to bring about meaningful change. Although not yet empirically tested, traditional and collectivistic values share many similar traits, such as group conformity (Inglehart and Baker, 2000) and the prioritisation of collective goals (Triandis, 1989).

In terms of the impact of survival values of PDM, there is a small though highly statistically significant, negative effect. Individuals with such cultural values are around 6% less likely to have PDM when compared to those with greater self-expression values. This result seems logical given that characteristics associated with self-expression include being more tolerant of others, more trusting, less favourable of authoritarian roles, and believing that individuals should have free choice/control over their life.

At this stage of the discussion, it is important to make note of a caveat that accompanies our empirical findings; this research does not relate to how much an employee participates in job-related decisions, but rather how much freedom an employee perceives he/she is granted for PDM.

5 Conclusion and Recommendations

This study contributes to the current body of organisational research by investigating whether diversity in cultural beliefs or values differentially affect job satisfaction and the freedom for individuals to participate in job-related decisions. Although the former has been previously empirically examined, this study has added two new dimensions to this subject area: making use of recent data from the 4th EVS wave, and using principal component analysis to produce singular variables aimed at capturing each cultural aspect.

The job satisfaction model provided support for the positive relationship between PDM and job satisfaction and indicated that employees who are orientated towards the traditional and self-expression values were more likely to report higher categories of job satisfaction. These outcomes appear to be in line with the arguments that: (i) traditional values advocate the importance of work in an individual's life, and (ii) employees with self-expression values prefer jobs that provide a feeling of accomplishment and working with people they like.

The results from the participatory decision making model were of particular interest given the absence to date of any empirical research linking culture and PDM. The results suggest that both traditional and self-expression values resulted in higher levels of PDM.

The results presented in this paper are important for organisational management and policy formation, as asymmetries in culture are important in the workplace. Managers

working within a multi-cultural environment should not be culture-blind to human resource practices. The generally accepted belief that PDM will automatically increase employee job satisfaction must be called into question. Perhaps more open communication throughout the organisation can facilitate further understanding of the influence of culture on job satisfaction and PDM. Greater understanding of the culture effect may assist in the development of effective strategies aimed at increasing job satisfaction, such as by acknowledging potential barriers to successful design and implementation of PDM programmes.

Future research should employ alternative measures of PDM to identify greater external validity and consistency; data availability on this issue may prove problematic. In this study, we made use of a variable relating to how much freedom an employee perceives he/she has in making job-related decisions, an alternative measure could encompass an employee's willingness to participate in these decisions.

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Table 1: Cultural Variables

| Value Domains | Variables | Loadings ^a |
|--------------------------------------|--|-----------------------|
| (1) Traditional vs. Secular-rational | • Work is important | 0.120 |
| | • Religion is important | 0.592 |
| | • Would never sign a petition | 0.478 |
| | • Love and respect ones parents regardless | 0.638 |
| (2) Survival vs. Self-expression | • Homosexuality is never justifiable | 0.616 |
| | • Tolerance and respect are not the most important things to teach a child | 0.509 |
| | • Have to be careful when trusting people | 0.406 |
| | • A woman has to have children to be fulfilled | 0.308 |

^a Equivalent to the correlations between a component and a variable which estimates the information they share (Abdi and Williams, 2010).

Table 2: Predictors of Job Satisfaction

| Variable | Job Satisfaction | |
|----------------------------------|------------------|------------|
| | B | Std. Error |
| PDM | 0.365*** | 0.018 |
| Traditional vs. Secular-rational | 0.104*** | 0.022 |
| Survival vs. Self-expression | -0.028*** | 0.019 |
| Use initiative | -0.060 | 0.040 |
| Achieve something | 0.115*** | 0.038 |
| Abilities met | 0.129*** | 0.043 |
| Skilled | -0.030 | 0.038 |
| Less skilled | -0.144*** | 0.055 |
| Manual | -0.163*** | 0.062 |
| Male | -0.080** | 0.034 |
| Age | -0.024* | 0.013 |
| Age ² | 0.0003** | 0.000 |
| Higher education | -0.368*** | 0.089 |
| Middle education | -0.178** | 0.077 |
| Widowed | -0.067 | 0.103 |
| Separated/divorced | -0.108** | 0.049 |
| Part-time | -0.192** | 0.085 |
| Middle household income | 0.194*** | 0.072 |
| Higher household income | 0.323*** | 0.098 |
| Number in household | -0.016 | 0.017 |
| <i>Cuts</i> | | |
| When job satisfaction | = 1 | -2.672*** |
| | = 2 | -2.072*** |
| | = 3 | -1.310*** |
| | = 4 | -0.750*** |
| | = 5 | 0.100 |
| | = 6 | 0.710*** |
| | = 7 | 1.583*** |
| | = 8 | 2.816*** |
| | = 9 | 3.790*** |
| Pseudo R-square | .060 | |
| <i>Test of Parallel Lines</i> | | |
| Chi-square | 1528.88*** | |

N = 15,140. Standard errors adjusted for clusters of 39 country affiliations.

Control variables: Professionals, low education, married, full-time, low household income.

***, **, and * denotes significance at 1%, 5%, and 10% levels, respectively.

Table 3: Predictors of PDM

| Variable | PDM | |
|----------------------------------|------------|------------|
| | B | Std. Error |
| Traditional vs. Secular-rational | 0.054*** | 0.016 |
| Survival vs. Self-expression | -0.062*** | 0.014 |
| Use initiative | 0.286*** | 0.042 |
| Achieve something | 0.092** | 0.037 |
| Abilities met | -0.033 | 0.035 |
| Skilled | -0.437*** | 0.049 |
| Less skilled | -0.608*** | 0.059 |
| Manual | -0.937*** | 0.086 |
| Male | 0.222*** | 0.036 |
| Age | 0.008 | 0.012 |
| Age ² | -0.000 | 0.000 |
| Higher education | 0.248* | 0.144 |
| Middle education | 0.079 | 0.123 |
| Widowed | -0.094 | 0.082 |
| Separated/divorced | 0.032 | 0.045 |
| Part-time | 0.036 | 0.070 |
| Middle household income | 0.410*** | 0.063 |
| Higher household income | 0.623*** | 0.091 |
| Number in household | 0.033*** | 0.011 |
| <i>Cuts</i> | | |
| When PDM | = 1 | -2.243*** |
| | = 2 | -1.648*** |
| | = 3 | -1.026*** |
| | = 4 | -0.605*** |
| | = 5 | 0.017 |
| | = 6 | 0.506 |
| | = 7 | 1.148*** |
| | = 8 | 2.120*** |
| | = 9 | 2.924*** |
| Pseudo R-square | .022 | |
| <i>Test of Parallel Lines</i> | | |
| Chi-square | 1046.89*** | |

N = 15,210. Standard errors adjusted for clusters of 39 country affiliations.

Control variables: Professionals, low education, married, full-time, low household income.

***, **, and * denotes significance at 1%, 5%, and 10% levels, respectively.

Figure 1: Cultural Map of Europe

