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The Influence of Performance Orientation on Job Satisfaction

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Tekst jest udostępniony do wykorzystania w ramach dozwolonego użytku.
The Influence of Performance Orientation on Job Satisfaction

Introduction

Culture is a fascinating aspect of human life which influences the way people think and act, what they value and believe and thus this area attracts scientists of many different fields including psychology, anthropology, sociology and management sciences. Culture is shared between groups of individuals and can be identified in nations, organizations and other societal groups. Numerous attempts have been made to describe and quantify culture, of which Hofstede's (1980; 2001) approach was the most popular also due to the fact that it offered quantified cultural dimensions for a large sample of 50 countries. In a similar but more recent approach the GLOBE study (House et al. 2004) attracted high attention by its sheer numbers alone: over 170 scientists investigated culture in 62 societies. A particularly interesting cultural dimension of the GLOBE study is „Performance Orientation” (PO) which describes the degree to which a society values constant improvement and innovation. This has not been covered that clearly by Hofstede (2001), since performance oriented aspects are only subsumed in his masculinity/femininity dimension. Thus, the GLOBE PO dimension allows for a new perspective when making cross-cultural research efforts.

This paper investigates the extent to which PO influences the determinants of job satisfaction, an aspect of satisfaction research that has hardly been covered so far. In addition, the paper contributes to the ongoing debate on the methodology of the GLOBE project concerning the applicability of the ‚values‘ and ‚practices‘ dimension in cross-cultural research.

The nature of job satisfaction

Having satisfied employees appears to be a management target worth pursuing. Beyond the author’s belief that satisfaction of the employees should represent an ethical value in itself for the management of any organization, satisfied employees may be also economically beneficial for a company. Satisfied employees show higher levels of per-
formance in the job\(^1\) (Judge, Thoresen, et al. 2001) and are of better physical and mental health. In particular, the strong connection to the increasingly diagnosed burnout syndrome seems to emphasize the importance of job satisfaction nowadays (Faragher et al. 2005). Furthermore, high levels of satisfaction correlate positively with organizational citizenship behaviour (Organ & Ryan 1995) and negatively with the intention to leave the company (Randall et al. 1999) resulting in lower turnover.

The theories that explain the nature of job satisfaction can be roughly divided into two groups: situational theories which see the reason for satisfaction in the employee’s work situation, and dispositional theories which see satisfaction rooted within persons themselves. Dispositional models assume that, independently from the work environment, individuals have a certain way of perceiving their work as more or less satisfying — satisfaction as such is rooted in the psychological nature of each individual (Judge, Parker, et al. 2001). This view is supported by studies that e.g. showed that employees had a stable level of satisfaction over a 5-year period of time although having been working in different jobs. Another study showed that identical twins had similar levels of job satisfaction. This indicates that personality might play an important role in the evaluation of job satisfaction (Staw & Ross 1985; Arvey et al. 1989).

The article focuses on situational approaches because they form the basis of the idea to make satisfaction manageable. Situational theories assume that the work experiences contribute to the satisfaction of an employee. One of the classic situational definitions of job satisfaction goes back to Locke (1976) who described job satisfaction as the „pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from an appraisal of one’s job or job experiences” (p.1300). Cranny and colleagues (1992) state accordingly that there was a consensus in research that job satisfaction is „an affective (that is, emotional) reaction to one’s job resulting from the incumbent’s comparison of actual outcomes with those that are desired” (p.1). Locke (1976) builds the Value-Percept-Model on his definition, which has been one of the most influential approaches explaining individual differences in job satisfaction. The model assumes that satisfaction is driven by the perception of different work experiences that one makes. Employees evaluate different aspects of work by comparing what they receive with what they think they should have received or deserve similar to the approach of Lawler (1973). In the Value-Percept-Model, however, only those aspects of work that are valued by the employee contribute significantly to the satisfaction or dissatisfaction at work. More clearly, this can be expressed as follows:

\[
S = (V_c - P) \cdot V_i
\]

in which \(S\) describes the degree of satisfaction with a certain aspect of work, \(V_c\) the desired amount, \(P\) the perceived amount received, and \(V_i\) the individual importance of the value (Judge, Parker, et al. 2001). The aspect of value importance is supported by many researchers who believe that individuals have an internal hierarchy in their value system (Ravlin & Meglino 1989; Rokeach 1973). This hierarchy is for example required when people take
decisions under conflicting values: the values of higher importance outweigh the values of lower importance. Similarly, it is the importance of work values that determines the strength of the relationship between work experience and job satisfaction.

When it comes to measuring value importance, scientists can choose to take direct or indirect measurement. Most straightforward is probably the direct approach, asking people to indicate the extent to which they value certain aspects of work. This method assumes, however, that the respondents are consciously aware of their values (Hofstede 1980; Mumford et al. 2002), which is questioned by some researchers (Locke 1976; Maio & Olson 1998). In addition, direct ratings rather reflect espoused values that include the individual’s interpretations about what preferences and behaviours are socially desirable. These might differ from those values that are actually ‘in use’ (Argyris & Schön 1978). Alternatively, work values can be measured indirectly. Hereby, the importance of a value is reflected by the strength of the relationship between job satisfaction and the respective aspect of work applying the mechanism of the Value-Percept-Model. Hofstede (2001) emphasized that both approaches measure slightly different things. The direct approach „can be called a ‘sociological’ measure because the answers reflect the respondents’ social frames of reference and feelings of social desirability. The other measure … is a ‘psychological’ measure because it is unconscious and unaffected by social desirability.” (Hofstede 2001, pp. 291–292). Hattrup et al. (2007) compared both methods and found that cross-cultural differences in value importance are much larger when using direct ratings compared to the indirect measurement.

Performance orientation as dimension of culture

It is the values that create the link between job satisfaction and culture. As previously shown, value importance is the central concept of satisfaction research. It is also impossible to talk about culture without talking about values. Although there is no consensus in the definition of culture – Kroeber and Kluckhohn (1985) already have found 164 different definitions at that time – most of them have in common that culture is something which is shared among its members and which is relatively stable over time (Gelfand et al. 2007). In his ‘onion model’ Hofstede describes that it is the shared values and beliefs that are building the core of culture (Hofstede 1980). Theorists believe that values to a large extent result from the socialization and thus they are the product of culture and the social system (Bem 1973; Rokeach 1973). These values represent more or less explicitly, what is good or bad, desirable or undesirable in a society (Williams 1970), and they subsequently influence what people do and how people evaluate certain aspects or situations (Kluckhohn 1951). This aspect of culture has been popularly described as a „patterned ways of thinking” (Kluckhohn 1951, p. 86) or the „collective programming of the mind” (Hofstede 2001, p. 9).
Several attempts have been made to identify and quantify the underlying values of culture. Taras et al. (2009) found in an extensive literature review 121 different instruments measuring culture (see Taras 2008 for a complete list of instruments). The most comprehensive ones might be the above mentioned studies of Hofstede (1980; 2001) and GLOBE (House et al. 2004). The latter is the largest project of its kind in respect to the country sample, but also the number of scientists involved. By surveying more than 17,000 middle managers from 951 organizations they have developed scales for nine cultural dimensions. Especially the newly developed dimension of performance orientation (PO) seems to enable a new perspective on cultural influence in this context. The PO dimension measures the degree to which a society values performance improvement and challenging goals (Javidan 2004). This dimension has not been covered explicitly by Hofstede's (1980, 2001) work. When he characterized masculine societies he ascribed a high achievement orientation indeed, but his masculinity-femininity dimension is measuring the predominance of soft versus tough values in a more general context. GLOBE’s attempt tried to isolate achievement orientation as a distinct value and developed the PO dimension, which had also been a distinct cultural dimension in the work of Trompenaars (1993) before. The PO dimension is theoretically related to concepts like the Protestant Ethic (Weber 1904) and the need for achievement (McClelland 1961). It also relates to Parsons and Shils (1951) criterion whether social status is ascribed or achieved in a society, the latter being an indicator for high PO. The GLOBE researchers characterized countries with higher PO as valuating competitiveness and materialism. In these countries, training and personal development are of high importance, feedback is seen as required for improvement. Bonuses and financial rewards are important and are connected to performance rather than age. In contrast, people in countries with a lower degree of PO rather value relationships and loyalty. Feedback is rather regarded as judgmental and competition and merit pay as a source of inconvenience and disharmony (Javidan 2004).

The GLOBE project also made the first attempt in distinguishing between values and practices. In the surveys the respondents were asked to respond evaluating the practices in their society (describing the society, as it is) and what they would desire (the society as it should be) for each of which they created their own dimension. Surprisingly, in seven of the nine dimensions, values and practices were significantly negative correlated (this is also the fact for PO). This finding was unexpected and is in contrast to the beliefs of cross-cultural researchers so far, who assumed (e.g. in the earlier mentioned onion-model) that values build the core of culture which accordingly influences beliefs, conventions, and behaviour (Kluckhohn 1951; Rokeach 1973; Schwartz 1999). These findings have triggered an intensive academic debate about what the GLOBE project has actually measured (Hofstede 2006; Javidan et al. 2006). Several researchers questioned the validity of the approach to measure practices and values simultaneously: the survey asked the respondents to first describe the country or organization, as it is, and afterwards
as it ‘should be’, which might have created an anchoring effect which led the respondents rating their values in relation to the anchor (Taras, Steel, et al. 2010). In addition, the possibility that the evaluations were subject to decreasing marginal utility is discussed (Maseland & van Hoorn 2008; Brewer & Venaik 2010).

Whether the practices or values dimension is more useful in this paper’s context also cannot be derived from triangulation with existing measures of performance orientation. Against expectations, neither the values nor the practices dimension correlated with the NAch dimension of McClelland (1961). The values correlation with Trompenaars’ (1993) PO scale was contrary to the expectations significantly negative.

Overall, the GLOBE’s PO dimensions have a relatively high score and low standard deviation. The practices dimension scored a mean value of 4.1 (SD=0.41) measured on a 7-point scale and the values dimension even had a mean value of 5.9 (SD=0.34) (Javidan 2004). This clearly shows that countries cannot be divided into performance oriented and not performance oriented. PO seems to be practiced and appreciated in all countries, however, to a varying degree. Interestingly, the PO values dimension is the highest scoring of all 18 GLOBE dimensions. The authors argue that this high value might reflect a general human need to belong to a high-performing society. On the other hand, they argue that this value might be biased by social desirability (Javidan 2004).

Cross-country differences in value importance under the influence of culture

Although the influence of PO on job satisfaction has not been researched to the knowledge of the author, cross-country comparisons of values have been made in a couple of attempts. Elizur et al. (1991) measured the value importance in samples from eight countries using a direct method. Their research gave an interesting overview of the rank order of the single assessed values. They have found many values to be equally important in all countries. ‘Achievement’ ranked first or second in all countries except Germany (ninth) and ‘having an interesting job’ was also among the top 10 of all countries. Other values showed some remarkable differences: the value ‘contribution to society’ has for example been ranked fourth in China whereas it did not rank higher than 20 in the seven other countries. The authors argue that this might reflect the more collectivistic nature of the Chinese society but due to the small number of countries in the sample, the effect could not be further investigated. Sousa-Poza and Sousa-Poza (2000) used the indirect method in assessing cultural values of 20 countries. One of the differences they found between the countries was that in Eastern Europe pay is much higher valued than in other countries. This result is in line with the results of Elizur et al. (1991) who found
Hungary (the only country from CEE in the sample) being the only country having pay in the top 10. Also here the authors did not investigate further whether national culture can help explaining these findings (or whether economic prosperity might do the explanation).

There have also been research attempts identifying cultural influences on job satisfaction. The assessment of cultural influence is usually done in two ways: either direct associations between cultural values and outcomes are investigated (Type I study) or culture is treated as a moderator (Type II) (Lytle et al. 1995). Type I investigations have been conducted several times for job satisfaction: A meta analysis by Taras and colleagues (Taras, Kirkman, et al. 2010) listed 22 studies investigating the relationship of job satisfaction and Hofstede’s (1980) individualism scale and 16 studies investigating the relationship with power distance. In both cases, the corrected meta-analytic effect size is significant and positive ($\rho = 0.21$, significant at $p < 0.05$). However, there is hardly any theoretical foundation for the argument why the level of satisfaction should be explained by individualism or power distance.

In the area of work values Type II studies assume that people emphasize certain elements of work higher since these values are supported in their national culture. Cultural dimensions moderate the effect of work experiences and job satisfaction on the individual level. However, the results in this area are diverse. Huang and Van de Vliert (2003) explicitly assessed the moderating influence of cultural dimensions on value importance. They showed that in intrinsic job characteristics (recognition, use of skills and abilities) are of higher importance in countries of higher individualism and smaller power distance. Extrinsic job characteristics (pay, working conditions, and peers) on the other hand showed strong relationship in all countries. Interestingly, these results are contrary to those of Souza-Poza and Souza-Poza (2000) who found that it is the intrinsic job characteristics (having an interesting job, good relations with management) that are important among all countries. Although there seems to be a cultural effect on the country level, Hattrup et al. (2007) found, also using an indirect approach, that these differences in value importance between the countries play a minor role, the most important part of the variance is explained on the individual level. The present study tries to make a contribution in this field investigating cross-cultural differences in value importance and under the influence of performance orientation as cultural value.

**Performance orientation and job satisfaction**

Performance orientation and development seems to be generally appreciated among the different countries, as the high PO dimension values of the GLOBE project suggest. Accordingly, the expected result in the analysis is a generally positive correlation of performance oriented work experiences and job satisfaction. This appreciation,
however, will not be the same among all countries. The GLOBE dimensions might help to explain these differences since the authors claim that their PO dimensions „clearly and explicitly contrast societies and organizations on the extent to which they facilitate and reward their people for wanting to meet higher standards and achieve higher goals.” (Javidan et al. 2006, p.248). Thus, it is expected that work experiences which support performance orientation and personal development are more strongly related to job satisfaction in high PO countries than in low PO countries. These work experiences, which are explicitly investigated, include a) if poor performance is sanctioned in the company, b) if performance is encouraged in the organization, especially if the compensation system rewards performance, c) if attractive career opportunities exist, d) if the respondent receives useful feedback, support to grow and a good mentorship for personal development.

GLOBE offers two dimensions, values and practices, for performance orientation and these are negatively correlated so that a positive relationship will be possible only with one of both. This paper hereby follows the established view of many researchers that the practices in a society are an artefact of the underlying cultural values; meaning people generally act in accordance with their value system. Thus, it is the PO practices dimension ('as is') which should describe best the dominant values of what people in a society personally desire. Accordingly, a positive relationship between the strength of the indirectly measured performance orientation and the PO practices dimension is expected. However, since the values versus practices debate on potential interpretations is still ongoing, also the values dimension will be tested for completeness.

Sample and Measures

The author was able to use data covering 312,396 respondents from 47 countries, which were collected by The Boston Consulting Group, a globally active management consulting company, in a standardized survey between 2008 and 2011 in more than 300 corporations. For the analysis only countries were included which had more than 50 respondents in the sample, which limited the number of countries to 37.

In this survey, the respondents replied to 35 items describing different work experiences on a 5-point Likert-Scale anchored with 1 = „I disagree” and 5 = „I agree”. The items were translated into 8 languages by native speakers. The survey has been conducted in the language regarded as most suitable for each country. From the 35 items, nine were used for the analysis in this article. It included one item measuring the overall satisfaction with the job and further eight items describing work experiences, which are expected to be influenced by performance orientation. These items are shown in table 1.

To analyze the influence of Performance Orientation the PO values scores and practices scores of House et al. (2004) were used, both in the bias corrected version.
The Influence of Performance Orientation on Job Satisfaction

TABLE 1. Overview of items

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th># of item</th>
<th>English item text</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>v_01</td>
<td>Poor individual performance is not tolerated in this company</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>v_02</td>
<td>At this company compensation is clearly tied to performance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>v_03</td>
<td>The career opportunities here are attractive to me</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>v_04</td>
<td>The compensation/rewards at this company encourages people to do their best</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>v_05</td>
<td>I receive useful and timely feedback on my performance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>v_06</td>
<td>I receive the help I need to learn and grow professionally</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>v_07</td>
<td>My manager is a good teacher/mentor to me</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>v_08</td>
<td>My manager recognizes and comments when I do good work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>v_09</td>
<td>Overall, I am satisfied working here</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Analysis and Results

The first step of analysis established a measure of the strength of the relationship between selected work experiences (v_01 to v_08) and job satisfaction (v_09). Therefore, 2-sided Pearson correlations were calculated for each country and variable. In order to provide an average value for the strength of correlation by variable and country, the Pearson correlation coefficients that were significant on the 0.01-level were then converted into normal distributed figures using Fisher’s z-Transformation

\[
z' = \frac{1}{2} \ln \left( \frac{1 + r}{1 - r} \right)
\]

de in which ln is the natural logarithm and \( r \) the Pearson coefficient (Fisher 1915). These z-values have a known standard error and allow calculating mean average values since all correlation coefficients have approximately interval scale level after transformation. The mean average of \( z' \) of the eight investigated variables was then back-transformed to a Pearson coefficient using the inverse function of Fisher’s z-Transformation. A ranking of the countries is shown in table 2 with \( \bar{z}' \) being the average Pearson correlation coefficient by country.

Generally, in all countries the relationship between job satisfaction and performance encouraging work experiences is positive. Its strength varies widely between the 37 countries. Whereas the highest average Pearson coefficient of 0.60 for South Africa indicates a strong relationship, the correlation coefficient of 0.33 for Greece suggests this relationship being very weak.
### TABLE 2. Country ranking according to average strength of correlation with job satisfaction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>$\hat{z}'$</th>
<th>$\hat{r}'$</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>$\hat{z}'$</th>
<th>$\hat{r}'$</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>$\hat{z}'$</th>
<th>$\hat{r}'$</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>South Africa</td>
<td>0.69</td>
<td>0.60</td>
<td>148</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>Portugal</td>
<td>0.47</td>
<td>0.44</td>
<td>262</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>Netherlands</td>
<td>0.40</td>
<td>0.38</td>
<td>3009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Hong Kong</td>
<td>0.64</td>
<td>0.57</td>
<td>321</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>0.47</td>
<td>0.44</td>
<td>7234</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>Vietnam</td>
<td>0.39</td>
<td>0.37</td>
<td>823</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Taiwan</td>
<td>0.63</td>
<td>0.56</td>
<td>176</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>China</td>
<td>0.47</td>
<td>0.44</td>
<td>3038</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>0.39</td>
<td>0.37</td>
<td>7337</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>India</td>
<td>0.56</td>
<td>0.50</td>
<td>8228</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>Switzerland</td>
<td>0.46</td>
<td>0.43</td>
<td>856</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>Qatar</td>
<td>0.39</td>
<td>0.37</td>
<td>223</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Indonesia</td>
<td>0.52</td>
<td>0.48</td>
<td>4057</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>0.46</td>
<td>0.43</td>
<td>741</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>Russia</td>
<td>0.38</td>
<td>0.37</td>
<td>14231</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Turkey</td>
<td>0.52</td>
<td>0.48</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>0.45</td>
<td>0.43</td>
<td>1338</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>0.38</td>
<td>0.37</td>
<td>407</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Malaysia</td>
<td>0.52</td>
<td>0.48</td>
<td>386</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>0.45</td>
<td>0.42</td>
<td>26930</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>Mexico</td>
<td>0.37</td>
<td>0.36</td>
<td>3108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>0.51</td>
<td>0.47</td>
<td>232</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>Argentina</td>
<td>0.45</td>
<td>0.42</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>France</td>
<td>0.35</td>
<td>0.34</td>
<td>4477</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>US</td>
<td>0.51</td>
<td>0.47</td>
<td>82001</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>Belgium</td>
<td>0.43</td>
<td>0.41</td>
<td>1763</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>Finland</td>
<td>0.35</td>
<td>0.34</td>
<td>206</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>South Korea</td>
<td>0.49</td>
<td>0.46</td>
<td>48561</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>Hungary</td>
<td>0.42</td>
<td>0.39</td>
<td>155</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>Chile</td>
<td>0.35</td>
<td>0.33</td>
<td>847</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Singapore</td>
<td>0.49</td>
<td>0.46</td>
<td>661</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>0.41</td>
<td>0.38</td>
<td>688</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>Greece</td>
<td>0.33</td>
<td>0.32</td>
<td>2200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>UK</td>
<td>0.49</td>
<td>0.46</td>
<td>5680</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>Thailand</td>
<td>0.40</td>
<td>0.38</td>
<td>4692</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Brazil</td>
<td>0.48</td>
<td>0.45</td>
<td>692</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>Philippines</td>
<td>0.40</td>
<td>0.38</td>
<td>364</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Values represent average Fishers-$\hat{z}'$ and Pearson correlation of v_01 to v_08 with v_09 (all significant on 0.01-level)
The twelve highest ranking countries show a $r'$-value of 0.46 or higher. Interestingly, with Hong Kong, Taiwan, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, South Korea, and Singapore more than half of these are Asian countries. The US and the UK are also among this top 12 group. In the lowest ranks three Mediterranean countries can be found (Greece, France, Spain), two South American countries (Mexico, Chile) and Finland. In the middle of the scale, no clear regional trend is observable. Countries from Europe and Asia are almost evenly distributed together with Canada, Australia and Argentina.

The second step of the analysis evaluates whether the PO measures of GLOBE can explain why in some countries the analyzed work experiences are more strongly associated with job satisfaction than in others. Moreover, Pearson correlations were used here, correlating the $z'$ values (since these have normal distribution) with the GLOBE measures for values and practices. The results are displayed in table 3. For most of the work experiences the relationship with job satisfaction seems to be in not influenced by either PO values or PO practices of the GLOBE project with exception of v_06. This variable describes to which extent an employee perceives support to grow professionally in the organization. The $z'$-values of the relationship between the support to grow and job satisfaction are significantly positive correlated with GLOBE’s PO practices dimension with $r=0.35$. This means that in countries which were described by the respondents of the GLOBE to have high standards as far as constant improvement and innovation is concerned, people respond to support in personal development more strongly with job satisfaction.

### TABLE 3. Correlation with GLOBE PO dimensions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th># of item</th>
<th>GLOBE PO Values</th>
<th>GLOBE PO Practices</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>v_01</td>
<td>0.15</td>
<td>0.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>v_02</td>
<td>-0.05</td>
<td>0.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>v_03</td>
<td>-0.22</td>
<td>0.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>v_04</td>
<td>0.15</td>
<td>0.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>v_05</td>
<td>0.11</td>
<td>0.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>v_06</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.35*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>v_07</td>
<td>0.16</td>
<td>0.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>v_08</td>
<td>0.27</td>
<td>0.11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2-sided Pearson correlations; * indicates sign. on 0.05-level
Discussion

As expected, the relationship between performance encouraging work experiences and job satisfaction is positive in all countries. As the high values of the GLOBE scales for PO orientation suggested, striving for constant improvement and development has once been confirmed being a universal human need. This is an important finding since Javidan and colleagues (2004) could not disqualify acquiescence as potential explanation for their high PO scores. The indirect method applied in this paper is, however, believed to be free from such bias.

The explanatory value of GLOBE’s PO dimensions as far as the degree of performance orientation is concerned is, however, disappointing. Three of the items directly assess whether the respondent perceives that performance is encouraged in the organization: by sanctioning low performance \(v \_01\), by tying compensation to performance \(v \_02\), and by the more general statement that the compensation system encourages performance \(v \_04\). However, all these variables have no stronger relationship to job satisfaction in high PO countries compared to low PO countries, although this has been expected. The GLOBE researchers specifically pointed out that individuals from high PO countries tend to value feedback, whereas it may be perceived negatively in low PO countries (Javian 2004). Item \(v \_05\) directly assessed the perception of the individual of receiving useful feedback but also here the relationship to job satisfaction is unrelated to the PO dimensions of the GLOBE. The picture slightly changes when looking at the relationship of job satisfaction and personal development opportunities. Having attractive career opportunities \(v \_03\) and a supportive manager \(v \_07\) and \(v \_08\) also seems to be unrelated to PO, although the conceptual relatedness to achievement versus ascription (Parsons & Shils 1951) suggests otherwise. However, the perceived support to grow professionally \(v \_06\) shows a significant positive correlation with PO practices. This finding seems to support the core definition of the GLOBE’s PO dimension, the appreciation of constant improvement. In sum, these results suggest that the GLOBE’s PO dimension does not measure a construct which describes a general appreciation of performance, it rather describes the very narrow fact if constant improvement is generally valued in the society or not. Furthermore, the correlation is only significant for the practices dimension, which according to the author’s expectation, adds to the aforementioned critic that the practices dimension actually represents the society’s underlying values.

The reason why the GLOBE’s PO measures do hardly explain country differences in the appreciation of performance oriented practices might also be rooted in the way these dimensions are measured. As discussed before, both, the practices and values dimensions are the result of a direct measurement method in which the respondents rated their countries in several categories. Since these direct measures are rather of sociological than of psychological nature (Hofstede 2001) these dimensions might reflect rather the espoused values of the respective society. However, the espoused values do not have to
be congruent with the intrinsic value systems of the respondents. This would be the case in a country where for example performance orientation is socially regarded as unethical whereas the individuals still appreciate improvement and individual development and vice versa. This is why the $z'$-values published in the country ranking of this article can serve as a ranking of the psychological appreciation of performance encouragement within its limitations.

It can be summarized that generally individuals among all countries respond positively to performance encouragement and personal improvement. The PO dimensions of the GLOBE, however, do not help to distinguish in which countries this response is stronger and in which it is weaker. The GLOBE PO practices dimension seems to reflect only to which extent personal improvement is valued. Therefore, the country ranking in this paper provides a psychological rather than sociological order of performance orientation on country basis which can help management practitioners to understand employees' psychological needs in order to find ways to influence well being in the work place. More research is needed, however, to understand the reasons behind these differing needs. The large number of high-ranking Asian countries might be influenced by Confucianism or what Hofstede later called 'long term orientation' (Hofstede & Bond 1988). Moreover, the influence of the economic situation in the country is possibly resulting in a strong appreciation of improvement led by the will to increase the standard of living.

**Limitations**

This study suffers from a number of limitations mainly due to the fact that for this research attempt the survey has not been planned from scratch. The author took advantage from the opportunity to exploit the already existing data source which was not designed for the purpose of this investigation.

This is for example reflected in the fact that a single item is used for the measurement of job satisfaction which is not ideal for cross-cultural investigations. It has, however, been shown that single items in case of job satisfaction have a good reliability in general (Wanous et al. 1997), but differences in the understanding of a specific wording cannot be averaged out. In addition, the fact that not all countries could be surveyed in native language might have an influence on the result.

Another important limitation is caused by the sample of companies that was used in this study. The sample is comprised of employees in organizations being in a client relationship with the Boston Consulting Group. These organizations are often large multinational companies and by this it can be assumed that the sample does not represent the entire working population of the respective countries. Although research on such a sample is widely accepted in cross-cultural studies (e.g. Hofstede's research was based on employees from IBM only), it cannot be ignored that the lack of influence of perfor-
mance orientation on job satisfaction may be mainly true for workers in international corporations. However, it is often claimed that results of cross-cultural research are especially important for practitioners in a multinational working environment. At least this target group should be very well reflected in this research.

Notes

1 The satisfaction-performance relationship has been investigated numerous times with very mixed results. One of the most influential meta-analyses based on 74 studies has found this relationship to be hardly existing (Iaffaldano & Muchinsky 1985) and has been quoted with this result extensively. Judge and colleagues (2001) claimed several limitations of this work and reexamined the satisfaction-performance relationship in a much larger meta-analysis of 312 samples. They found a moderate correlation of 0.30 after correction for unreliability of measures.

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