The Relationship between Needs, Job Involvement, and Organizational Commitment in South Korea and Germany

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1. Introduction

*Job Involvement* (JI) and *Organizational Commitment* (OC) have enriched the scientific discussion since the 1970s (Porter et al., 1974; Rabinowitz and Hall, 1977; Steers, 1977; Kanungo, 1979, 1982). JI reflects the employee’s identification with his job and OC denotes his attachment to the organization. Hence, both constructs refer to an employee’s most salient attitudinal objects (i.e., job and social collective). Research shows that OC and JI are positively related to job performance (Allen and Meyer, 1996) and organizational citizenship behavior (Organ, 1988, Meyer et al., 2002), as well as negatively related to absenteeism and turnover (Porter et al., 1974; Williams and Hazer, 1986; Huselid and Day, 1991; Brown, 1996; Sjöberg and Sverke, 2000).

Whereas traditional research mostly considered contextual predictors of JI and OC (e.g., job characteristics), the first aim of the present study is to analyze the predictive value of an employee’s dispositions (i.e., needs) for JI and OC. This focus is similar to research on job satisfaction which analyzed genetic or dispositional antecedents (Arvey et al., 1991). Based on a need-based theoretical framework (McClelland, 1985), we investigate the relationship between three basic human needs - *need for achievement, need for affiliation*, and *need for power* - and JI and OC.

As a second aim, our study investigates whether the relationship between needs and JI/OC is moderated by culture. In the face of globalization, organizations face cross-cultural differences in factors that motivate and commit people as well as cross-culturally differences in the functioning of these factors (i.e., moderation). Whereas traditional research on JI and OC addressed mostly single cultures, cross-cultural comparisons enhance our understanding of the universality of determinants of JI and OC. We investigate whether culture moderates the relationship between needs and JI/OC by comparing a German and a South Korean sample as representatives of Western and Eastern countries (Riordan and Vandenbeng, 1994).
2. The role of needs for JI and OC

Kanungo (1979, 1982) described JI as a “generalized cognitive (or belief) state of psychological identification with work insofar as work is perceived to have the potentiality to satisfy one’s salient needs and expectations” (p. 131). Similarly, Lawler and Hall (1970) regard JI as "the degree to which the job situation is central to the person and his [or her] identity" (p. 310). OC, in contrast, reflects the identification of an individual with the organization (Mowday, et al., 1979). OC results from a belief in organizational goals and values and implies the willingness to exert effort on behalf of the organization and the desire to remain in the organization (Porter et al., 1974).

Whereas past research focused on the outcomes of JI and OC, research on possible antecedents is insufficient (Mathieu and Zajac, 1990). One question is whether JI und OC are only affected by contextual factors (e.g., job characteristics, leadership) or, additionally, by an employee’s dispositions (e.g., needs, personality). The question of contextual vs. dispositional antecedents is analogous to research on dispositional influences on job satisfaction (Staw and Ross, 1985; Arvey et al., 1991; Judge and Larsen, 2001). An indication of dispositional sources of JI are studies which show that JI is stable under varying contexts (e.g., Lodahl and Kejner, 1965; Hall and Mansfield, 1971). Thus, research on dispositional sources of JI and OC enrich understanding of these two constructs.

As JI and OC can be regarded as consequences of fulfilling the employee’s needs (Kanungo, 1979), we argue that needs or motives – that is, the individual's dispositions to strive for certain classes of goals – should be related to JI and OC. Research investigating the role of need for achievement for OC supports this perspective (Brown, 1969; Hall et al., 1970; Buchanan, 1974; Steers, 1977; Steers and Spencer, 1977; Morris and Snyder, 1979; Bateman and Strasser, 1984; Mathieu, 1988). Similarly, Kanungo (1979) presents a general motivational framework that highlights the role of individual characteristics for JI. He argues
that JI results from the person’s belief that the job is able to satisfy his or her salient needs. As the job provides opportunities for satisfying a variety of needs, motives which focus on job-related needs should be related to JI. For instance, an individual with a strong need for achievement should develop a high JI as the job provides opportunities to satisfy achievement-related needs. In the present study, we focus on highly educated employees working to assure that the investigated individuals work in jobs with a high amount of motivating job conditions.

As a theoretical framework, we draw on McClelland’s (1985) need theory which differentiates three important needs: need for achievement, need for affiliation, and need for power. For instance, achievement motivated individuals are ambitious, have high standards and strive to meet challenges (Brunstein and Heckhausen, 2006; Murray, 1938). As the job offers opportunities to satisfy those needs, the job role should be a central part in the employee’s identity.

Further, need for affiliation should be related to JI. Need for affiliation implies striving for social relationships and appreciation. Working offers a variety of opportunities for social interaction (e.g., talking, working together in projects, altruistic behavior). Hence, the job offers the opportunities to fulfil those needs that are important for affiliation motivated individuals. Similarly, social interaction provides the opportunity to satisfy power motives by generating situations that allow the individual to influence others and engage in formal or informal leader roles. Need for power implies the desire to influence and control others and to gather social prestige (Winter, 1988). We think the job enables satisfying power needs even if the individual has no formal leadership role (e.g., influencing colleagues). Therefore, power motivated individuals should find opportunities to satisfy their salient needs which in turn should lead to JI. In summary, we expect relationships between the three needs and JI.

H1a: Need for achievement will be positively related to JI
H1b: Need for affiliation will be positively related to JI
H1c: Need for power will be positively related to JI

We furthermore expect relationships between the three needs and OC. Drawing on social exchange theory (Blau, 1964), we regard OC as a result of an exchange process between the organization and the employee. In this regard, employees with strong needs should develop a higher OC as reaction to a positive exchange for the provided opportunities for need satisfaction (Angle and Perry, 1983). Motivated employees should also develop a higher OC in anticipation of future opportunities for need satisfaction. Consequently, commitment results from the employee’s view that investing resources is reasonable and secure as need satisfaction is also likely in the future.

H2a: Need for achievement will be positively related to OC
H2b: Need for affiliation will be positively related to OC
H2c: Need for power will be positively related to OC

3. Culture as a moderator of the relationship between individual needs and JI and OC

Although the aforementioned arguments suggest positive relationships between needs and JI/OC, we expect cross-cultural differences in these relationships. In this regard, our study concurs with the literature on cross-cultural research in general and comparisons of western and eastern countries in particular (e.g., Luthans et al., 1985, Sommer et al., 1996). However, most cross-cultural studies focus on mean differences of constructs across cultures, whereas our study focuses on culture as a moderator of relationships. For instance, Pang and Schultheiss (2005) investigated differences between need for achievement, need for affiliation, and need for power across three US subsamples (i.e., Whites, Afro-Americans, and Asian Americans) and found a higher need for affiliation in the Asian subsample and a higher
need for achievement in the Afro-American sub samples. The authors also compared the total US sample to a German sample and found a higher need for power in the German sample but a lower need for achievement. Kirkman and Shapiro (2001) investigated OC in four countries (US, Belgium, Finland, and the Philippines) and found that OC was higher in the Philippines and the US compared with both European countries. By measuring cultural values, the authors found relationships between power distance as well as collectivism and OC (see also Triandis, 2004). On the other hand, Park, Gowan, and Hwang (2002) did not find differences in OC between US and South Korean employees although these countries differ substantially in their collectivism values. Hence, most of the research addressed mean differences in OC (and not JI or needs) and found mostly a higher OC in collectivistic countries.

The present study expects that the relationships between the three motives and JI and OC are moderated by a country’s cultural orientation, thus, leading to a different predictive value of needs for JI and OC. Although we argue that organizations generally provide opportunities for need satisfaction, organisations will cross-culturally differ in the amount of provided possibilities, the expectations about respective behaviours and the extend of reward of such behaviour. Because organizational and national culture are related (Javidan et al., 2004), the relationship between a need and JI/OC should be stronger in organizations that are located in a country that places high value in the respective behaviour. As an OC-specific mechanism, the fit between an individual’s and the organization’s values are intensively discussed in the literature on OC (Porter et al., 1974). Consequently, an individual with a strong need should develop a higher OC in a country with a similar cultural orientation.

We chose to compare Germany and South Korea because these countries differ in those cultural dimensions that should moderate the relationship between needs and JI/OC. Although comparing two countries is only an indirect analysis of the moderator effects of dimensions,
the relationship between a need and JI/OC should be higher in a country with a high position on the relevant cultural dimension.

We regarded the cultural dimensions *performance orientation, humane orientation, and power distance* as relevant moderators as they closely correspond to the content of the three needs (House and Javidan, 2004). Additionally, we consider differences in institutional and in-group *collectivism* as relevant because cultures in which collectivism is emphasized promote social interaction, which should result in a stronger relationship between need for affiliation and JI/OC. Because of the emphasis on social integration, collectivism can be regarded as an expression of these individual needs on the cultural level. That is, whereas need for affiliation reflects the individual’s disposition to strive for close relationships, collectivism signifies the culture’s tendency to value social integration. Table 1 describes the cultural dimensions and depicts the values of the dimensions for both countries. They constitute the foundations of the hypotheses that will be presented in the next section. As Table 1 shows, South Korea can be mainly characterized by a high power distance, high performance orientation and a high ingroup and institutional collectivism compared with Germany. Germany, on the other hand, is a highly individualistic country with low humane and power orientation (Brodbeck *et al.*, 2002).

We expect that the relationship between need for achievement, JI and OC is moderated by *performance orientation*. Countries with a high performance orientation reward performance and value challenges and competition. Furthermore, individuals in these countries strive for high performance standards and show a higher amount of personal initiative (Gupta and Hanges, 2004). The performance orientation in South Korea and Germany is founded in religious convictions and values (Javidan, 2004; Kanungo, 1979), that is; both Confucianism as well as the Protestant work ethic value ambition and hard work. The job is perceived as an important aspect of a person’s identity and as an optimal life domain to
satisfy performance needs. As South Korea shows a higher performance orientation than Germany (Javidan, 2004), South Korean organizations should establish possibilities to show high performance to a higher degree. Thus, although we expect a positive relationship between need for achievement and JI/OC in both countries (cf. H1a and H1b), we hypothesize a stronger relationship in South Korea.

\[ H3a: \text{The relationship between need for achievement and JI will be stronger in South Korea than in Germany.} \]

\[ H3b: \text{The relationship between need for achievement and OC will be stronger in South Korea than in Germany.} \]

Further, we expect that the relationship between need for affiliation and JI/OC is moderated by collectivism and humane orientation. According to Gelfand et al. (2004), collectivistic cultures can be characterized by individuals integrated in cohesive groups with strong relationships. In addition, expectations are higher regarding the extent to which an individual should contribute to group performance. Tasks are routinely organized as team tasks and performance is conceptualized as team performance (Javidan et al., 2004). Because need for affiliation fosters desire for social interactions, conformity, and appreciation by others, collectivistic cultures provide the work environment that satisfies these desires. Thus, work should be an important life domain for affiliation motivated individuals especially in collectivistic countries. Regarding the effect on OC, affiliation oriented persons should perceive a closer person-organization fit in collectivistic cultures compared to individualistic cultures, where social interactions are less valued. In addition, social behaviour is especially rewarded in collectivistic cultures which should influence OC as result of an exchange process. Although, as argued before, workplaces in individualistic cultures also provide opportunities for satisfaction of affiliation needs, we expect that these opportunities are more prevalent in collectivistic cultures.
As a second relevant cultural dimension, humane orientation can be expected to influence the work environment in such a way that it values social support, consideration, friendliness, and cohesion (Kabasakal and Bodur, 2004). Such an environment should match with the needs of affiliation motivated individuals. Humane orientation is even conceptualized as cultural correspondent to need for affiliation (House and Javidan, 2004).

As South Korea shows a higher institutional collectivism and in-group collectivism as well as humane orientation than Germany (Gelfand, et al., 2004, Kabasakal and Bodur, 2004), we expect that the relationship between need for affiliation and JI/OC is stronger in South Korea than in Germany.

*H4a: The relationship between need for affiliation and JI will be stronger in South Korea than in Germany.*

*H4b: The relationship between need for affiliation and OC will be stronger in South Korea than in Germany.*

Finally, we expect the relationship between need for power and JI/OC to depend on the level of power distance of the country. Power distance implies the approval of authority, hierarchy, and privileges for individuals with higher status (Hofstede, 1980; Carl et al., 2004). Organizations in high power distance cultures provide more opportunities for leadership which is associated with high appreciation and status. For instance, Dorfman and Howell (1988) showed that the relationship between directive leadership, contingent reward, and punishment on one side and job satisfaction and OC on the other side was moderated by individual power distance. Therefore, organizations in high power distance cultures should provide more opportunities for need satisfaction as they exert power, and approve and support power to a higher extant than organizations in low power distance cultures. As South Korea shows a higher degree in power distance than Germany (Carl *et al.*., 2004; Den Hartog, 2004), the relationship between need for power and JI / OC should be stronger in South Korea.
H5a: The relationship between need for power and JII will be stronger in South Korea than in Germany.

H5b: The relationship between need for power and OC will be stronger in South Korea than in Germany.

4. Method

4.1 Sample

Our overall sample consisted of a South Korean (N = 209) and German (N = 198) sample of Executive MBA students and alumni of the MBA program. The South Korean subsample consisted of 30% women and 70% men with mean age $M = 36.6$ years (SD = 7.2). The German subsample consisted of 40% women and 60% men with mean age $M = 38$ years (SD = 9.48). South Korean respondents had a mean job experience of 8.8 years (SD = 7.4), worked on average 44 hours per week (SD = 9.77). The tenure was on average 8.0 years (SD = 6.8) and pay was 2121.51 Euro per month (SD = 1113.53). German participants’ job experience was 14.3 years on average (SD = 10.3) and their work hours were 48.2 hours per week (SD = 10.3). Their tenure was 7.5 years on average (SD = 7.8) and they earned 5126.86 Euros (SD = 3014.30) on average per month. Although the earnings of the German sample were twice as high as the earnings of the South Korean sample, the ratio fits well with the differences in the purchase power in these countries (which is double as high in South Korea compared to Germany). The respondents worked in a variety of industries, namely (percentages for the South Korean and German sample): Education and research (11%; 9%), service sector (31%; 28%), production (12%; 28%); information technology (21%; 21%); public sector (6%; 7%), and sales and distribution (8%; 6%). Differences were only significant in the production sector. The areas of employment were primarily counselling,
research and education, leadership, administration, human resource management, and project management.

4.2 Measures

Motives. We used three items from a scale by Park and colleagues (2006, 2008) to measure need for achievement. The scale was adapted from Spencer and Spencer (1993) and Stewart et al. (1981). All motives were measured on 5-point rating scales ranging from 0 (“totally disagree”) to 4 (“totally agree”). An example is “I set realistic goals and do my best to achieve them.” Cronbach’s alpha was .66 in the South Korean sample and .60 in the German Korean sample. We will discuss treatment of measures with moderate reliability in detail later. Need for affiliation was measured with four items from the Personality Research Form (Stumpf et al., 1985). An example is “I prefer working with other people than alone.” Cronbach’s alpha was .75 and .67. Need for power was measured with three items from the Personality Research Form. An example is “I like telling other people what they have to do.” Cronbach’s alpha was .63 and .72.

JI. We measured JI with three items of a scale by Park and colleagues (2006, 2008) which match with the concept of JI as psychological identification with the job (Kanungo, 1982). JI was measured on a 5-point rating scale ranging from 0 (“totally disagree”) to 4 (“totally agree”). An example is “I am happier at work than at home.” Cronbach’s alpha was .77 and .69.

OC. We measured OC with three items from a scale by Park and colleagues (2006, 2008) which have a similar content compared with the scales by Mowday et al. (1979) and Meyer and Allen (1997). OC was measured on a 5-point rating scale ranging from 0 (“totally disagree”) to 4 (“totally agree”). An example is “It is important for me to work for my company.” Cronbach’s alpha was .83 in both samples. The measures were translated into
German, back-translated and compared to the original version (translation-back-translation; Brislin, 1970). The cross-cultural equivalence of the items was finally tested in a sequence of nested structural equation models (Steenkamp and Baumgartner, 1998).

Cultural dimensions. We measured GLOBE-dimensions relevant for our study (see Table 1) – namely power distance, humane orientation, institutional and in-group collectivism, and performance orientation – to replicate GLOBE results in different samples and to reassure the empirical foundation of our moderator hypotheses. The measures stem from House et al. (2004). Each dimension was measured with two to three items either on a 7-point rating scale ranging from 1 (“totally disagree”) to 7 (“totally agree”) or on a bipolar scale with labelled extreme points. Examples are “in this society, followers are expected to obey their leader without question vs. ...question their leaders when in disagreement” (power distance), “in this society, people are generally very concerned about others vs. ...not at all concerned about others” (humane orientation), “the economic system in this society is designed to maximize individual interests vs. ...collective interests” (institutional collectivism), “In this society, children take pride in the individual accomplishments of their parents” (ingroup collectivism), and “In this society, students are encouraged to strive for continuously improved performance” (performance orientation).

Control variables. We included the respondents’ job experience in years, work hours in the past week and pay per month in Euro as control variables.

4.3 Procedure

We tested the hypotheses with structural equation modeling (Bollen, 1989; Bollen and Long, 1993). One advantages of this approach is that it incorporates latent variables which are free of measurement error. As some of our measures had reliabilities below commonly accepted standards, the use of latent variables avoids downward bias of regression effects
resulting from low reliabilities. Furthermore, structural equation modeling provides a model fit that allows testing for convergent and discriminant validity of the measures as well as the adequacy of the tested model structure. Finally, it is possible to test for measurement equivalence (Steenkamp and Baumgartner, 1998), an important prerequisite for comparing constructs and statistical parameters (e.g., regression coefficients) across cultures.

Measurement equivalence is tested within a sequence of nested multi-group models. The first step tests for configural invariance, which assumes an equal measurement structure (i.e., pattern of factor loadings) by specifying the same factor structure in both groups. The next step (metric invariance) constrains the factor loadings to be equal across both groups, which should not increase the chi-square value significantly. Metric invariance is a prerequisite for making quantitative comparisons across groups. At least two of the factor loadings of each latent variable should be invariant (partial invariance) to draw meaningful conclusions (Steenkamp and Baumgartner, 1998). The final step constrains the regression coefficients of the latent variables to be equal across groups. This step is relevant for our moderator hypotheses. If these constraints lead to a significantly worse fit compared to the metrically invariant model, at least one of the regression coefficients differs across the groups. Post-hoc analyses investigate which of the regression coefficients differ across the groups.

Data input. We used the covariance matrix of the indicators as input and applied the Satorra-Bentler correction of the chi-square value (hereafter SBY^2) and the standard errors for non-normality of the indicators (Satorra and Bentler, 1990; Curran et al., 1996). The models were estimated using the software LISREL 8.7.

Evaluation of the model. Model fit was evaluated using the chi-square test, the Tucker-Lewis-Index (TLI; Tucker and Lewis, 1973), the Comparative Fit Index (CFI; Bentler, 1990), the Root-Mean-Square-Error of Approximation (RMSEA; Browne and Cudeck, 1993) and the Akaike-Information Criterion (AIC; Akaike, 1987). Following Hu and Bentler (1999), we
considered a TLI/CFI close to or above .95 as an index of acceptable fit, as well as an RMSEA < .06. Regarding the AIC, there is no fixed value. The AIC evaluates model fit as well as the complexity of the model. Thus, in a comparison of alternative models, the model with the lower AIC is preferred as it has a better fit-to-parsimony ratio (Burnham and Anderson, 2004). The chi-square test is a statistical test of the null hypothesis of a perfectly fitting model. Usually, practical research relies on the aforementioned fit indexes to evaluate if the model is a reasonable approximation to the true model.

Incorporation of control variables. We followed Hayduk et al. (1997) and estimated all covariances among control and independent variables but fixed the regression coefficients of the control variables on JI and OC to zero. This procedure signifies a challenge for the model to fit the data. A fitting model with present control variables would demonstrate that control variables have effects on the dependent variables. If, contrary to our expectations, the control variables are related to the dependent variables, the result will be a model with a poor fit and the respective coefficients will have to be estimated.

As all control variables were measured with single indicators, we fixed the error variance of each indicator to a reasonable portion of the indicators’ variances to separate the measure from the latent variable (see Hayduk, 1990, 1996, for a discussion of this approach). For job experience and work hours, we regarded 10% measurement error as reasonable; for pay, we fixed the error part of the indicator to 20% of its variance to acknowledge that – in addition to random error – some respondents may be unwilling to report their true pay.

5. Results
5.1 Descriptive statistics

Table 1 shows the means of the cultural dimensions found in our study and those from the GLOBE study. Overall, our results match those from the GLOBE study. A strong
difference occurs regarding power distance where our study found a substantially lower mean than the GLOBE study. Most noteworthy, however, is that the mean differences between South Korea and Germany are in the same direction as those in the GLOBE study. The only deviation, was a higher mean of humane orientation in Germany in our study, whereas GLOBE found a higher mean in South Korea. Table 2 depicts the means, standard deviations and correlations of all study variables for the German sample. Table 3 depicts these statistics for the South Korean sample. All of the correlations were significant and substantial. Tables 2 and 3 further show that there were only small to moderate differences in the means of the needs, JI, and OC. JI had a higher mean in the German sample whereas OC had a higher mean in the South Korean sample. Need for achievement had a higher mean in the German sample whereas need for affiliation and need for power were higher on average in the South Korean sample.

5.2 Cross-cultural measurement invariance

The initial model consisted of need for achievement, need for affiliation, need for power as independent variables and job experience, pay, and work hours as control variables. According to H1a-b (relationships between JI/OC and need for achievement), H2a-b (relationships with affiliation), and H3a-b (relationship with need for power), JI and OC were regressed on the three needs. We specified a residual covariance between JI and OC that represented omitted further common causes (e.g., job conditions). Figure 1 shows the model; Table 4 depicts the fit indexes of all tested models. The fit of the initial model was $SB\chi^2 (266) = 413.14$, RMSEA = .052, CFI = .95, TLI = .94, AIC = 641.14). As can be seen, the chi-square was significant and indicated a significant departure of the covariance matrix from the implied covariance matrix. The reason may be a misspecification of the model which could be serious (i.e., biases the regression coefficients of the three independent variables) or trivial.
(i.e., summation of small specification errors without serious implication). The modification indices provided for the fixed effects of the control variables did not suggest that estimating their regression coefficients would increase model fit (in fact, a model estimating coefficients of all control variables had a similar fit and did not change any of the coefficients of the independent variables). In the same way, the standardized residuals (differences between the empirical covariances and the model implied covariances) did not suggest any systematic reason for the misfit. Because the fit indexes (RMSEA, CFI, and TLI) were acceptable, we accepted this model as a baseline model.

The next step tested for cross-cultural equivalence. First, we constrained the factor loadings to be equal across both samples. The significant increase of the chi-square value ($\Delta S_{B} \chi^2 (11) = 43.66, p < .001$) indicated that at least one loading significantly differed across the samples. The modification indexes (Byrne et al., 1989) suggested freeing the loadings of one JI indicator, one need for affiliation indicator, and one need for power indicator. The resulting model had only marginal difference to the baseline model ($\Delta S_{B} \chi^2 (8) = 12.48, p > .05$) and signified partial metric invariance of the used measures.

5.3 Test of the hypotheses

In the final step, we constrained the regression coefficients to be equal across both samples. This step increased the chi-square value only non-significantly ($\Delta S_{B} \chi^2 (6) = 4.07, p > .05$), indicating that all six regression coefficients did not differ significantly across the South-Korean and German sample. In this regard, H 3-5 postulating that the relationships between the needs and JI/OC are moderated by culture were rejected. The model fit of the final model was acceptable ($S_{B} \chi^2 (280) = 429.75$, RMSEA = .051, CFI = .95, TLI = .94, AIC = 629.75. In addition, the AIC was the lowest of all tested models. Figure 1 shows the unstandardized (i.e., B) and standardized regression coefficients (i.e., $\beta$).
According to Figure 1, the main effect hypotheses for need for achievement (H1a-b) were fully supported. The relationship with JI (B = .27, p < .05, β = .20 and .17 for South Korea and Germany, respectively) and OC (B = .33, p < .01, βSouth Korea = .23; βGermany = .19) were significant. In contrast, the hypotheses for need for affiliation (H2a-b) were rejected. Its relationship with JI (B = .19, p > .05, βSouth Korea = .12; βGermany = .12) as well as its relationship with OC (B = .17, p > .05, βSouth Korea = .10; βGermany = .10) slightly failed to reach the significance level. Need for power was significantly related to JI (B = .36, p < .01, βSouth Korea = .40; βGermany = .36); whereas the coefficient on OC was not significant (B = .09, p > .05, βSouth Korea = .10; βGermany = .08). Thus, hypothesis 3a was supported whereas hypothesis 3b was rejected.

6. Discussion

6.1 Relationship between the three motives and JI and OC in South Korea and Germany

The present study investigated the relationship between needs, JI, and OC. Further, the study investigated cross-cultural differences in these relationships between South Korea and Germany. Results revealed significant relationships primarily between the three needs and JI. This implies that the job satisfies needs related to achieving ambitious goals, social interaction, and influence which leads to a higher importance of the job for individuals with stronger dispositions regarding these needs. In contrast, OC was only related to the need for achievement. The non-significant relationship between OC and need for power, in particular, could imply that expression of power is restricted to formal leadership roles, which are limited in an organization. As a consequence, not every power motivated employee can become a leader which may restrict feelings of identification with the organization.
A further result of the study is the lack of cross-cultural differences. This finding is in accordance with similar studies comparing antecedents of organizational commitment (e.g., Sommer, et al., 1996) and has a high practical significance as it highlights the equal importance of need satisfaction across cultures. Theoretically, our findings support the universal role of determinants of job attitudes like JI and OC.

The relationships between the three needs and JI/OC should not, however, be interpreted to suggest that contextual factors like job conditions, quality of relationship between the subordinate and the superior, or organizational justice are unimportant. As expected from McClelland’s theory, these factors should function as situational cues to activate the needs. As an implication for future research, dispositional and contextual factors should not be regarded as alternative explanations but investigated as interactively operating predictors.

6.2 Practical implications

The most important practical implication of our results is that considering motivational dispositions is fruitful – for instance in recruitment, design of HRM practices, and job design. Motivation measures can be used to gather information that help to consider individual needs when designing jobs or trainings (McElroy, 2001). Furthermore, as social relationships are important, creating and supporting opportunities to form relationships can be valuable for the organization. For firms with international subsidiaries, our results confirm that dispositional factors seem to be valid predictors for JI and OC across cultures. Leadership in culturally diverse settings can profit by recognizing that needs are equally important to motivate employees, to keep them responsible and to increase individual performance.

This study focused on the fit between the person and the organization. That means that although considering personal factors (e.g., needs, interests, values) and contextual factors
(e.g., possibilities for need satisfaction) separately revealed ways to increase JI and OC, it should be reasonable to focus on the fit between both (Tinsley, 2000). Consequently, tailoring organizational practices to personal views and needs should create such a fit. An analogous conclusion can be drawn regarding the behavioral style of the leader and highlights the importance of a contingency between employee needs and leadership behaviour. In this regard, the results of this study can be connected with theories on leadership that focus on the relationship between the leader and the subordinate – for instance, LMX theory (Graen and Uhl-Bien, 1995), the individual consideration facet of transformational leadership theory (Avolio and Bass, 1995) or the path-goal theory (House and Dessler, 1974).

6.3 Societal implications

With JI and OC, the study focused on two constructs that reflect the sense of purpose and belonging that people can experience. Because research in work psychology is often concerned with predicting job performance, these two constructs have been investigated as a means to an end. However, having a sense of belonging and a positive identification with one’s job are goals in themselves that reflect a society’s success in creating work environments that are enjoyable and meaningful. Our study suggests that JI and OC are products of a firm meeting an individual’s needs, with the latter signifying a healthy interrelationship between the individual and institutions (e.g., organizations) of the society. The cross-cultural equality of the relationships between needs and JI or OC reflect a potential universal validity of this connection.

6.4 Limitations of the study

The first limitation of this study was that we focused on highly educated employees in order to assess jobs that provide opportunities for need satisfaction. This focus was necessary
to investigate the role of needs. Although we argued for a dispositional role of needs, the
activation of needs should be suppressed in jobs with few opportunities for need satisfaction.
Hence, we would not want to generalize our results to other populations (e.g., blue collar
workers). Hence, when assessing more heterogeneous populations, job conditions should be
investigated as moderators of the relationship between needs and outcomes.

Second, our arguments regarding cultural differences focused on cultural dimensions
whereas our analyses consisted in comparing two countries. The rationale was that we
regarded country differences on the cultural dimensions as a proxy for the cultural dimensions
themselves. Although this approach is typical for cross-cultural research (according to a
review by Schaffer and Riordan, 2003, 79% of studies applied such a design) and it is the
only design which is practicable in most studies, such an approach has been criticized (e.g.,
Schaffer and Riordan). The lack of differences across both countries does not mean that our
arguments about the moderating effects of cultural dimensions are invalid. Instead, it is
possible that the differences between both countries on the cultural dimensions are too small
to reveal their moderating effects. Thus, when possible, research should investigate more
countries or countries that are more disparate, and hence less culturally similar. We argue,
however, that evidence about the equality of relationships between two countries like
Germany and South-Korea (which would be regarded as substantially different by
practitioners) is astonishing and practically important.

Third, we used differences on the national level to argue that organizations in the
countries should differ in the amount of provided possibilities for need satisfaction. The
reasonableness of this argumentation requires that the organizational cultures in which the
surveyed individuals work are similar to their national culture (Javidan et al., 2004).
However, it is not necessary that each organization has the same culture as the country in
which it is located, but that a average of organizations in the country provide a valid
approximation of the national culture. This would imply that, for instance, South Korean organizations should be more collectivistic than German cultures on average.
References


Table 1: Values of South Korea and Germany on cultural dimensions (House et al., 2004)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cultural dimension</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Globe-study</th>
<th>Present study</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>South Korea</td>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>South Korea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Power distance</td>
<td>The degree to which members of an organization or society expect and agree that power should be unequally shared.</td>
<td>5.61</td>
<td>5.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humane orientation</td>
<td>The degree to which individuals in organizations or societies encourage and reward individuals for being fair, altruistic, friendly, generous, caring and kinds of others.</td>
<td>3.81</td>
<td>3.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institutional collectivism</td>
<td>The degree to which organizational and societal institutional practices encourage and reward collective distribution of resources and collective action.</td>
<td>5.20</td>
<td>3.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In group collectivism</td>
<td>The degree to which individuals express pride, loyalty and cohesiveness in their organizations or families.</td>
<td>5.54</td>
<td>4.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performance orientation</td>
<td>The extent to which an organization or society encourages and rewards group members for performance improvement and excellence.</td>
<td>4.55</td>
<td>4.25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: The scales ranged from 1 (low) to 7 (high). The descriptions are cited from House et al. (2002, pp. 5 and 6)
Table 2: Means, standard deviations, and correlations of the study variables for the South Korean sample

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>(1)</th>
<th>(2)</th>
<th>(3)</th>
<th>(4)</th>
<th>(5)</th>
<th>(6)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(1) Need for achievement</td>
<td>2.73</td>
<td>.52</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2) Need for affiliation</td>
<td>2.72</td>
<td>.64</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3) Need for power</td>
<td>2.53</td>
<td>.64</td>
<td>.43**</td>
<td>.28*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(4) JI</td>
<td>2.06</td>
<td>.78</td>
<td>.41**</td>
<td>.23*</td>
<td>.50**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(5) OC</td>
<td>2.53</td>
<td>.84</td>
<td>.30**</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>.17</td>
<td>.70**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(6) Job experience</td>
<td>8.85</td>
<td>7.37</td>
<td>.30**</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>.15</td>
<td>.26**</td>
<td>.30**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(7) Pay</td>
<td>2121.58</td>
<td>1112.63</td>
<td>.31**</td>
<td>-.07</td>
<td>.12</td>
<td>.30**</td>
<td>.24**</td>
<td>.63**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(8) Work hours</td>
<td>44.18</td>
<td>9.76</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>-.04</td>
<td>-.08</td>
<td>-.22*</td>
<td>-.16*</td>
<td>-.09</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. n = 208; * p < .05; ** p < .01; M = Mean; SD = standard deviation; JI = Job involvement; OC = Organizational commitment; the means and standard deviations were computed with composite scores resulting from averages of the indicators; the correlations rely on the latent variable models.
Table 3: Means, standard deviations, and correlations of the study variables for the German sample

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>(1)</th>
<th>(2)</th>
<th>(3)</th>
<th>(4)</th>
<th>(5)</th>
<th>(6)</th>
<th>(7)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(1) Need for achievement</td>
<td>2.93</td>
<td>.56</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2) Need for affiliation</td>
<td>2.46</td>
<td>.65</td>
<td>.17</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3) Need for power</td>
<td>2.15</td>
<td>.70</td>
<td>.31**</td>
<td>-.02</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(4) JI</td>
<td>2.36</td>
<td>.73</td>
<td>.23*</td>
<td>.16</td>
<td>.37**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(5) OC</td>
<td>2.11</td>
<td>.93</td>
<td>.19*</td>
<td>.18</td>
<td>.17</td>
<td>.67**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(6) Job experience</td>
<td>14.34</td>
<td>10.31</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>-.21*</td>
<td>-.05</td>
<td>-.03</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(7) Pay</td>
<td>5126.86</td>
<td>3014.30</td>
<td>.18</td>
<td>-.38**</td>
<td>.31**</td>
<td>.12</td>
<td>-.04</td>
<td>.45**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(8) Work hours</td>
<td>48.23</td>
<td>10.34</td>
<td>.17</td>
<td>-.13</td>
<td>.28**</td>
<td>.33**</td>
<td>.13</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.51</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: n = 198; * p < .05; ** p < .01; M = Mean; SD = Standard deviation; JI = Job involvement;
OC = Organizational commitment; the means and standard deviations were computed with
composite scores resulting from averages of the indicators; the correlations rely on the latent
variable models.
Table 4: Fit indexes of the analyzed models

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>$SB\chi^2$ (df)</th>
<th>$\Delta SB\chi^2 (\Delta df)^a$</th>
<th>Comparison</th>
<th>RMSEA</th>
<th>CFI</th>
<th>TLI</th>
<th>AIC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Baseline model (configural invariance)</td>
<td>413.14 (266)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.052</td>
<td>.95</td>
<td>.94</td>
<td>641.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Metric invariance</td>
<td>460.19 (277)</td>
<td>43.66 (11)**</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>.057</td>
<td>.94</td>
<td>.92</td>
<td>666.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Partially metric invariance</td>
<td>425.62 (274)</td>
<td>12.48 (8)^n.s.</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>.052</td>
<td>.95</td>
<td>.94</td>
<td>637.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>Invariance of the regression effects</td>
<td>429.75 (280)</td>
<td>4.07 (6)^n.s.</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>.051</td>
<td>.95</td>
<td>.94</td>
<td>629.75</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.** p < .01; $SB\chi^2$ = Satorra-Bentler-corrected chi-square-value; df = degrees of freedom; RMSEA = Root mean square error of approximation; CFI = Comparative Fit Index; TLI = Tucker-Lewis-Index; AIC = Akaike Information Criterion; $^a \Delta SB\chi^2$ is the result of a correction formula; not the simple difference between two SB-qui-square-values
Fig. 1: Final model including measurement structure (configural invariance). *Note:* The loadings of every first indicator is fixed to one in order to scale the latent variable; the * indicates fixed measurement error.
Fig. 2: Unstandardized und standardized (in parentheses) regression effects of the South Korean (upper part) and German sample (lower part) (Note: JI = Job involvement, OC = Organizational commitment, ** p < .01, * p < .05)