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Abstract

There is no doubt that employment and organizational commitment are widely endorsed social policy and organizational goals. However, there are few comparative studies that analyze how dimensions of national culture, in addition to individual characteristics, might relate to employment and organizational commitment. This paper compares employment and organizational commitment among employees from Finland, Germany, Great-Britain, Spain and Sweden. Finland and Spain have seldom been included in these kinds of comparative studies. Individual-level data comes from International Social Survey Program (ISSP), Work Orientation module III that was collected in 2005–2006. Employment commitment was highest in Sweden and organizational commitment highest among German employees. The most striking finding was that Finnish employees were last but one in employment commitment. Low subjective job insecurity among employees increased organizational commitment in all five countries. Schwartz’s (2007) cultural dimensions accounted for a significant share of the variance in employment commitment. The data was mainly analyzed by multiple regression analysis and hierarchical multiple regression analysis.

Keywords: Employment commitment, organizational commitment, comparative research, national culture, Europe.

Introduction

European Union and its Member States try to combat the economic challenge caused by deteriorating economic dependency ratio by, for example, increasing employment rate of its citizens (Työvoima 2025-työryhmä 2007; Council of the European Union 2008). Attaining and maintaining high employment rates requires that individuals display strong commitment to (paid) work. Employees' commitment to their organizations is also vital for organizations. It has been suggested that organizational commitment is related to many key areas important for organization's actions and success. High organizational commitment has been reported to, for example, decrease employee turnover and absenteeism. It has also been shown that strong organizational commitment may be linked to better work performances of the employees. (Meyer *et al.* 2002; Hult 2004: 10–13; Rubin and Brody 2005.)

Hence, high employment and organizational commitment are up to a certain point¹ desirable goals for western societies that build on work and productivity. However, this article asks if there are differences between selected European societies in employment and organizational commitment. Previous comparative studies on employment and organizational commitment do certainly exist, but there are still some gaps to be filled with new research. In this article, employment and organizational commitment is compared in Finland, Germany, Great Britain, Spain and Sweden. These countries represent, on the one hand, advanced western societies, but on the other hand it has been suggested that these countries still represent (mostly) different types of capitalism. Germany stands for conservative, Great Britain for liberal, Spain for Southern European and Finland and Sweden for social democratic model. (cf. Ferrera 1996; Esping-Andersen 1999; Arts and Gelissen 2002; Karamessini 2008; Bosch *et al.* 2009.) Social democratic model is represented by two countries, because Finland has seldom, if ever to my knowledge, been included in these kinds of studies. The same applies also for Spain.

¹ From organizations' point of view, a low employee turnover caused by strong organizational commitment is not entirely a positive outcome. A low employee turnover can stagnate an organization. (Mamia and Koivumäki 2006: 155–162.) Also, an individual's pathological commitment to his/her organization may occur at the cost of other life areas and lead to burn-out. Unemployment may be an individual tragedy for someone with a strong employment commitment. (Hult 2005a: 42–43; Mamia and Koivumäki 2006: 155–162.)

Different definitions and measures of employment and organizational commitment abound in previous studies. 'Employment commitment' refers here to employees' non-financial commitment to paid work in a general sense (Warr *et al.* 1979; Esser 2009). 'Organizational commitment' is measured in this article with so-called 'Porter scale' (Porter *et al.* 1974). Organizational commitment denotes here employees' commitment and loyalty to their current organization. 'Work orientation' is used in this article as an umbrella concept that covers different aspects of attitudes to work. High employment and organizational commitment being mostly desirable goals for western societies, it is important to know which factors increase these types of commitments. In addition to examining national scores and group differences within and between five countries in commitment, also the possible role of cultural factors (Schwartz 2007; Smith *et al.* 1996; 2002) in commitment is studied in this article. The role of national culture has been studied less than the role of national institutional factors in accounting for commitment to work and organization.

The paper is organized as follows. At first individual determinants of employment and organizational commitment in previous research are reviewed. Then the possible role of national culture in accounting for these types of commitments is discussed. Thirdly data, methods and aims of the paper are presented. Finally, posed research questions are answered with the empirical data.

Individual determinants of employment and organizational commitment

According to previous research, it cannot be presumed that employment and organizational commitment permeates individuals' social positions equally. It may also be that different individual characteristics have an effect on employment commitment than organizational commitment (and vice versa). However, in previous studies there has been a tendency to examine how *the same* individual determinants influence both employment and organizational commitment (e.g. Svallfors *et al.* 2001; Hult and Svallfors 2002). We can also presuppose that organization-level factors, for example organizational culture, may affect, especially, organizational commitment. However, organization-level factors are not, unfortunately, included in the current data.

Meyer's *et al.* (2002) meta-analytical study provides a good overview of individual determinants of organizational commitment. He divides these individual determinants into four groups: demographic variables, variables relating to individual differences, variables relating to individuals' work experiences and alternatives/investments². This general grouping of variables seems also suitable for studying individual determinants of employment commitment. However, what is most important from the point of view of this article, is that are the effects of individual determinants on employment and organizational commitment different or the same in the comparison countries? More specifically, are the effects universal or nation-specific? Chosen demographic and work experience variables are used in the empirical analyses of this paper. Used independent variables are *age*, *gender*, *occupational class* and *subjective job insecurity*.

In recent studies, comparing advanced western societies, women have been more committed to employment than men (Svallfors *et al.* 2001; Hult and Svallfors 2002; Esser 2009). However, Finland and Spain were not included in these studies. Also, in Hult and Svallfors's (2002) and Esser's (2009) studies the results pertain to individuals resident in former West Germany. A study of Finnish wage earners refers, however, to same kind of gender difference among Finnish people: women are more committed to employment than men (Lehto and Sutela 2008: 20–21). In recent studies there have been no gender differences in organizational commitment (Svallfors *et al.* 2001; Hult and Svallfors 2002; Lehto and Sutela 2008: 205–208).

In Felstead's (2009) study, organizational commitment of 50–60-year-old British employees decreased clearly in 1992–2006. As a result of this, age-group differences in organizational commitment were almost negligible in the latest survey (2006). However, aging decreased employment commitment in that study (for the similar results see also Lehto and Sutela 2008: 20–21; Esser 2009 for men). In Mamia's and Koivumäki's study of Finnish employees higher age increased organizational commitment. Higher age especially increased employment commitment in that study. (Mamia and Koivumäki 2006: 120–121.)³ In

² By alternatives/investments Meyer *et al.* (*Ibid.*) refer, for example, to transferability of individual's education and skills.

³ The difference in Mamia and Koivumäki's (*ibid.*) and Lehto and Sutela's (2008: 20–21) results are maybe due to differences in the dependent variables.

European Union, temporary employment rate was at the highest level in Spain in the mid-2000s (Jouhette and Romans 2006). In addition to this, fixed-term contracts concentrate especially on the young people in Spain (Banyuls *et al.* 2009). Despite the fact that “in this context it can be said that job insecurity is coming to be regarded as “normal” among young people” in Spain (*ibid.*, 257), it is to be expected that young people may differ from their elders in their employment and organizational commitment in the Spanish context. On the whole, based on previous studies discussed above, we can presume some national differences on the effects of age on employment and organizational commitment in this study.

An employee’s position in the organization’s hierarchy has systematically been related to commitment. Higher occupational classes have been more committed to their current organization and employment *per se* than lower classes in West Germany, Great-Britain and Sweden (Svallfors *et al.* 2001; Hult and Svallfors 2002; Hult 2005; Esser 2009.) In the Finnish study it was detected that salary earners displayed higher organizational commitment than workers (Melin 2009: 70–74). The data on Spain is not unfortunately available here.

A number of employees regarding their current work as insecure increased in many European countries in the 1990s (Green 2006: 126–149). However, there are few, if any, *comparative* studies that examine how perceived security of one’s current job affects one’s commitment to current organization and employment in general. Nonetheless, there are studies on the national scale on this. Subjective insecurity of the continuity of one’s current job decreased organizational commitment in the Belgian study. This held true, however, only for the permanent employees. (De Cuyper and De Witte 2006.) It has been detected in cross-cultural comparisons that avoidance of uncertainties might be stronger in Spain, Germany and Finland than in the other comparison countries here (Hofstede and Hofstede 2005: 166–170; for the Finnish case, see also Ylöstalo 2007). With a low acceptance of uncertainties Hofstede and Hofstede (*ibid.*) denote, for example, employees’ preference for long employment relationships at their present employer. Drawing from this, we can postulate that relationship between subjective job insecurity and especially organizational commitment is more pronounced in Spain, Germany and Finland than in the other comparison countries.

National culture and commitment to employment and organization

In addition to individual characteristics, employment and organizational commitment may also be affected by characteristics of national culture. Some researchers argue that the role of cultural factors on individuals' behaviour and preferences have been studied less than the role of national institutional factors. On the other hand, it is also acknowledged at the same time that cultural and institutional factors are interrelated, for example, within one country. (Pfau-Effinger 2004; 2005; see also van Oorschot *et al.* 2008.) This general observation of the partial neglect of cultural factors is, however, valid in the case of comparative studies of work life, and comparative studies of work orientations in particular. That is not to say, however, that cultural factors have not been included at all in previous comparative studies of work orientations (see e.g. Hult 2008; Lück and Hofäcker 2008; Warr 2008). Here I use Schwartz's (2007) and Smith's *et al.* (1996; 2002) country means on cultural dimensions that might be related to employment and organizational commitment. Scores for cultural dimensions described in Smith *et al.* (Ibid.) were kindly provided by Peter Smith via e-mail.

Schwartz specifies three bipolar, ideal-typical dimensions of culture that represent alternative resolutions to three basic problems that confront all societies according to Schwartz: *autonomy versus embeddedness, egalitarianism versus hierarchy, and harmony versus mastery*. Country means on these cultural dimensions are based on survey responses from over 70 countries⁴. Schwartz has also made hypotheses of possible relationships between his cultural dimensions and work centrality, which he defines as an importance of work in a person's total life (Schwartz 1999: 40–42). As we can see, Schwartz's concept of work centrality comes satisfactorily close to our concept of employment commitment. Schwartz's *first* societal problem discusses the nature of the relation between the person and the group: to what extent are individuals autonomous versus embedded in their groups. He also makes a distinction between intellectual autonomy (ideas, thoughts) and affective autonomy (experiences). He has proposed that especially in the postindustrial societies, level of national intellectual autonomy might correlate positively with work centrality⁵. (Schwartz 1999: 40–42; 2006; 2007; of Schwartz's theory, see also Helkama and Seppälä 2006.)

⁴ On the measurement of these dimensions, see Schwartz 2006.

⁵ There were no data on Great Britain and Sweden regarding affective autonomy. Hence, in autonomy vs. embeddedness-variable autonomy refers to *intellectual autonomy*. (Schwartz 1994; 2007.)

Schwartz's *second* problem is to guarantee that individuals behave in a responsible and predictable manner that preserves the social fabric. In egalitarian cultures people are socialized to internalize a commitment to consider the welfare of others. In hierarchical cultures individuals are socialized to take the unequal distribution of power, roles and resources for granted. Schwartz has hypothesized that a high degree of hierarchy in the national culture correlates positively with work centrality. Because unequal distribution of resources is legitimate in hierarchical cultures, it is also justified to try to increase one's power and wealth within the system. Hence, hierarchical cultures encourage people to devote themselves to work through which such goals can be attained. (Ibid.)

The *third* societal problem is to control how people manage their relations to the surrounding world. In harmonic cultures the world is taken as it is rather than to change or exploit it. In cultures, where mastery values are prevalent, it is encouraged to change the environment to attain group or personal goals. Schwartz has suggested that in cultures where mastery values are salient also work is regarded as salient. The justification for this is that mastery values emphasise active and self-assertive shaping of one's surroundings. Work life is in most societies the most legitimate arena for this kind of action. (Ibid.)

Schwartz does not have hypotheses of how his cultural dimensions may relate to organizational commitment. There is also no empirical evidence of that relationship (see Gelade *et al.* 2006). Smith *et al.* (1996; 2002) has sorted out two ideal-typical cultural dimensions that may relate to organizational commitment. His results are based on survey responses from 8,841 managers and organization employees from 43 countries. *First*, he differentiates between conservative cultures and cultures based on egalitarian commitment. In the latter cultures, for example, the achieved status is valued over ascribed status. In conservative cultures, it is believed that jobs should be filled on the basis of personal criteria, not on the basis of qualifications. Of the comparison countries here, Spain is clearly the most conservative and Great-Britain the most egalitarian (see Appendix).

Smith's (Ibid.) *second* bipolar dimension of culture is called loyal involvement vs. utilitarian involvement. In loyal cultures, commitment to organization is long-lasting and organization's goals are internalized as one's own goals. In utilitarian cultures commitment to organization may be more short-lived. Essential for attachment to organization is also, are the personal

goals materialized within the organization. Of the research countries here, Spain is the most loyal and Sweden the most utilitarian (see Appendix). Earlier study has shown that organizational commitment, more precisely affective organizational commitment, was higher in egalitarian than conservative cultures. Smith's second dimension of culture was not related, quite unexpectedly, to organizational commitment in that same study. (Gelade *et al.* 2006.)

Hofstede's (especially 2001) theory of cultural dimensions is perhaps the most cited theory of national cultures developed in cross-cultural psychology. Also Schwartz's and Smith's theories build on Hofstede's ideas, but also reformulate them. However, many critics of Hofstede apply also to Schwartz and Smith. First, Schwartz's and Smith's theories, as well as Hofstede's, are based on individuals' survey responses. Ensuing concept of "culture" can be regarded quite limited, narrow and also overconscious (cf. Fiske 2002; McSweeney 2002). Secondly, it can be criticized that these theories assume that national culture permeates all the nationals similarly. We result in this because the effects of other cultures, for example subcultures', is not taken into account. Also, non-cultural factors are left out of the analysis. (McSweeney 2002: 109–111.) One can, however, defend oneself against the latter critic by reminding that also individual determinants of employment and organizational commitment are analyzed in this article. It is also good to bear in mind that the concept of national culture does not pay attention to regional differences within countries (cf. West and East Germany). Thirdly, one may ask is it plausible to presume that cultures follow national borders in this age of globalization? Despite the criticism of national cultures, Schwartz's and Smith's country means are utilized here. In short: national culture refers here, as in most attitudinal studies, to a set of collective constructions of meaning: a system of ideas, values, norms and beliefs common to the *majority* of [national] population [italics by author] (Lepianka *et al.* 2010: 58).

Aims, data and methods

The following specific research questions are posed in this article:

- How is Finnish working population ranked in employment and organizational commitment, when compared to four other advanced western societies?

- Are the individual determinants of employment and organizational commitment similar or different in the research countries?
- Are Schwartz's (2007) and Smith's *et al.* (1996; 2002) cultural dimensions related to employment and organizational commitment in the research countries after the individual determinants have been controlled for?

Individual-level data comes from *International Social Survey Program (ISSP)*, Work Orientation module III. Data has been collected in all research countries, except in Germany, in 2005. Data has been collected in Germany in 2006 (for more on the ISSP-study, see Melin *et al.* 2007: 57–59). All the following results pertain to 18–64-year old respondents working for a pay in the current data. The data is cross-sectional, which sets clear limits on causal argument (Alkula *et al.* 1994: 157–163, 166–174).

Previous literature suggests that employment and organizational commitment may be a multidimensional phenomenon (e.g. Freund and Carmeli 2003). However, with current data we cannot capture all the possible dimensions of commitment(s). A principal component analysis was thus applied to five propositions (see below) measuring employment and organizational commitment in previous studies with ISSP-data. As expected, the analysis produced two principal components with eigenvalues greater than 1 in each country⁶. With support from these analyses, it was decided to build two summated indices, which are used as dependent variables in the following analyses. These dependent variables measure employment and organizational commitment in our study. Summated indices were built with the so-called MEAN-operation (see Metsämuuronen 2006: 541–546; Jokivuori and Hietala 2007: 116–118). As a result of this, each respondent's score on these both indices varies from one to five, the greater score meaning stronger commitment and lower score weaker commitment.

Our *first* dependent variable measures employment commitment with the following propositions:

1 ”A job is just a way of earning money - no more”

⁶ PASW-runs are available from the author on request.

2 *“I would enjoy having a paid job even if I did not need the money?”*

As already noted, employment commitment refers here to a degree to which a person wants to be engaged in paid employment in general, and especially regardless of financial need (Warr *et al.* 1979; Esser 2009). As such, high employment commitment is opposed to instrumental work orientation. (Non-financial) employment commitment has been measured with similar variables in several previous studies (Svallfors *et al.* 2001; Hult and Svallfors 2002; Hult and Edlund 2008; Hult 2008; Esser 2009).

Organizational commitment is operationalized here with the following three survey questions:

3 *“I would turn down another job that offered quite a bit more pay in order to stay with this organization.”*

4 *“I am proud to be working for my firm or organization.”*

5 *“I am willing to work harder than I have to in order to help the firm or organization I work for succeed.”*

The variable varies also here between one and five, from low commitment to high commitment. This variable is also known as ‘Porter scale’ (Porter *et al.* 1974) and has been used, with slight modifications, in many studies (Hult 2005; Feldstead 2009). We can see that organizational commitment refers here to employee’s (3) desire to maintain organizational membership, (4) belief in and acceptance of the organization’s objectives and values and (5) a willingness to exert effort on the organization’s behalf (Porter *et al.* 1974). As such, this measure comes quite close to Meyer *et al.*’s (2002) ‘affective commitment’. Means, dispersion and reliability measures for the indices are displayed in Table 1. While our reliability measure (i.e. Cronbach’s Alpha) is quite low for Germany and Spain for employment commitment, Cronbach’s Alphas are not problematically low when compared to other comparative studies with similar variables (Svallfors *et al.* 2001; Hult and Svallfors 2002).

(Table 1 approximately here.)

The distributions of dependent variables are studied by four independent variables: *gender*, *age*, *occupational class* and *subjective job insecurity*. Age was recoded to three classes to capture the possible age differences in commitment. Respondents' occupation has been classified in the data according to ISCO 1988- classification (International Standard Classification of Occupations). This variable reflects mainly required skill level of the present job and was categorized into three classes. Plant and machine operators, assemblers and elementary occupations are included to the lowest occupational class. Middle occupational class consist mainly of clerks, service workers and craft and related trades workers. Legislators, senior officials, managers, professionals, technicians and associate professionals are included to the highest occupational class. Required skill level decreases when moving from the highest class to the lower classes (see Tilastokeskus 2001).

Respondents were asked in the data whether they agreed with the statement, "My job is secure", using a five-point scale ((1) strongly agree, (2) agree, (3) neither agree nor disagree, (4) disagree, (5) strongly disagree). Following Green (2006: 140–142), those employees were defined as 'insecure' who "disagreed" or "strongly disagreed" with the previous statement. Those employees were defined as 'secure' (or having "low insecurity") who scored 1–3 to this statement. We can expect that this survey question leads respondents to consider the stability of their current job but also the stability of their employment conditions in general (cf. *ibid.*). Main methods used in the following sections are standard multiple regression and hierarchical multiple regression.

Country differences and similarities in employment and organizational commitment

First of all, we can detect that employment commitment is highest in Sweden and lowest in Spain (Tables 1–2). The high ranking of Sweden is not surprising compared to the other studies in this area of research (Hult and Svallfors 2002; Gallie 2007). However, only the Spanish employees displayed lower employment commitment than the Finns. This is somewhat surprising considering that in Gallie's (2007) study the Danish, the Swedish and

the Finnish employees valued more intrinsic job goals than employees in Germany and Great Britain. Conceptually, these non-financial, intrinsic job goals come quite close to our definition of (non-financial) employment commitment. However, Gallie's data were collected already in 1996 and in 2001.

(Table 2 approximately here.)

Country positions in employment commitment are not fully supportive of Schwartz's (1999) hypotheses. However, there is some support for Schwartz's hypotheses. Sweden scored highest on Schwartz's cultural dimension of autonomy vs. embeddedness (see Appendix). The Swedish employees displayed also highest employment commitment, which supports Schwartz's hypothesis. Spain scored highest on egalitarianism vs. hierarchy-dimension and lowest in employment commitment, which is also consistent with Schwartz's (ibid.) hypotheses.

Organizational commitment is strongest in Germany and Great Britain. The other three countries share similar, but lower levels of organizational commitment. Also in ISSP's Work Orientation module II, that was collected in 1997, organizational commitment was higher in (West) Germany and Great Britain than in Sweden. The differences were, however, then not statistically significant. (Hult and Svallfors 2002; Hult 2005). Great Britain and Germany scored highest on Smith's cultural dimension of egalitarian commitment vs. conservatism (see Appendix). In these countries, as already noted, organizational commitment was also strongest. However, country positions in organizational commitment were not suggestive of Smith's other cultural dimension. On the whole, we can then conclude that cultural dimensions, at least those defined by Schwartz and Smith, do not "determine" level of employment and organizational commitment of the national population. Other factors, for example institutional differences and individual characteristics, influence also commitment.

(Table 3 approximately here.)

Next I study individual determinants of employment and organizational commitment in the comparison countries. The statistical method used is standard multiple regression. Here, the effects of all individual determinants within a country are taken into account simultaneously.

Age group differences are slightly more pronounced in organizational than employment commitment (Tables 3–4). The effect of age is, however, not quite strong. There are also some interesting country differences. Only in included Nordic countries – Finland and Sweden – there were statistically significant age differences in organizational commitment. When other individual determinants were held constant, 35–49-year old Finnish employees were still less committed to their current organization than 50–64-year old employees (reference category). 18–34-year-old Finnish employees were also less committed to their organization than the reference category, but the effect was not statistically significant. The finding is essentially in line with earlier studies (Mamia and Koivumäki 2006: 120–121). In Sweden, the youngest employees were less committed to their current employer than the oldest employees. In the other countries there were no such age differences, which supports Felstead’s (2009) earlier findings concerning British employees. We can detect statistically significant age differences in employment commitment only in Spain. The youngest age group displayed stronger commitment to employment than the oldest age group. This finding can be interpreted in at least two, perhaps not conflicting ways. Either the youngest Spanish employees genuinely value other than financial goals in work or either they commit themselves to employment and work *per se* to secure a living in the face of job insecurity also in the Spanish context (Banyuls *et al.* 2009).

(Table 4 approximately here.)

Women displayed stronger employment commitment than men in all comparison countries. However, this effect was statistically significant only in Finland, Germany and Sweden. Similar findings have also been reported earlier (Svallfors *et al.* 2001; Hult and Svallfors 2002; Lehto and Sutela 2008: 20–21; Esser 2009). More unexpected is the finding that men were slightly more committed to their current organization than women in Finland, Sweden and Germany. In previous national and cross-national studies there has not been detected such a gender difference (Svallfors *et al.* 2001; Hult and Svallfors 2002; Lehto and Sutela 2008: 205–208). On the whole, there are quite clear class differences in employment and organizational commitment in all countries, but some exceptions also do exist. Class differences are more pronounced in the case of employment commitment. As could be expected (cf. earlier individual determinants of employment and organizational commitment-section) highest occupational class showed strongest employment commitment in all five

countries. However, there was no statistically significant difference between the middle and the highest occupational class in Spain. This is quite surprising considering the proposed deep segmentation of the Spanish labour market (Banyuls *et al.* 2009). In all countries, but Germany and Sweden, employment commitment systematically decreased when moving from the highest to the lower classes. Only in Finland there were no statistically significant class differences in organizational commitment, which deviates from Melin's (2009: 70–74) results concerning Finnish employees. In all the other countries at least the lowest occupational class displayed lower organizational commitment than the highest class.

Especially Spanish employees with low subjective job insecurity, but also German employees to a lesser extent, displayed stronger employment commitment than those with high subjective job insecurity. The relationships of perceived job insecurity to commitment were, however, stronger in the case of organizational commitment. Particularly Finnish and Spanish employees with low subjective job insecurity showed greater commitment to their current organization than those employees high on job insecurity. Drawing on Hofstede's and Hofstede's (2005: 166–170) cross-cultural comparisons this situation is not unexpected, except that among German employees the relationship was not as strong as could have been expected on the basis of Hofstede's and Hofstede's findings. The Spaniards, the Germans and the Finns scored higher on Hofstede's and Hofstede's uncertainty avoidance index than the other research countries here.

Finally, this section is concluded by examining if there are still country differences in employment and organizational commitment after controlling for the above-mentioned individual characteristics. Columns 7 in tables 3 and 4 show joint regression models including all the five countries. The main attention is paid here to the country dummy variables. Table 3 shows the exact same order of countries in employment commitment scale as in table 2, with the Swedes displaying the strongest employment commitment of the five countries in both tables. The German and the British employees show also highest organizational commitment even when age, gender, occupational class and subjective job insecurity are held constant. The ranking of the other three countries in organizational commitment remains practically the same, when comparing table 4 to table 2.

Are cultural dimensions related to employment and organizational commitment?

Finally, hierarchical multiple regression was used to assess the ability of Schwartz's and Smith's cultural dimensions to predict employment and organizational commitment in the research countries, after controlling for the influence of individual determinants. Each member of a given nation was assigned the national mean score for his country for each cultural dimension (cf. Fischer *et al.* 2007). Two models were constructed for both dependent variables, the first one including individual determinants and the second one including individual determinants and cultural dimensions in question (Tables 5–6). The focus is here on these models 2 and the data pertains to all the five countries. First of all, cultural dimensions were more important in predicting employment than organizational commitment. Table 6 shows that individual determinants (model 1) explained 8 % of the variance in employment commitment. Schwartz's two cultural dimensions explained an *additional* 7 % of this variance ($p < .001$), after controlling for these individual determinants⁷. In table 5 we can detect that individual determinants (model 1) accounted for 4 % of the variance in organizational commitment. Inclusion of Smith's cultural dimensions explained only an additional 2 % of the variance in organizational commitment ($p < .001$). The fact that cultural dimensions explained more employment than organizational commitment may be understandable from "the nature" and point of view of the dependent variables. Cultural factors may be more important in accounting for commitment to employment than commitment to current organization, because employment commitment displays more a generic orientation to work and employment *per se*, whereas organizational commitment displays perhaps more a situational orientation to the current employer easily influenced more, for example, by organization-level factors.

(Table 5 approximately here.)

The greater level of intellectual autonomy and hierarchy in the national culture increased employment commitment, which fits Schwartz's (1999) hypotheses (Table 6). More

⁷The final model 2 in table 6 included Schwartz's autonomy vs. embeddedness and egalitarianism vs. hierarchy-cultural dimensions, because the initial model including all Schwartz's three cultural dimensions produced a notable multicollinearity problem between these three variables. Strongest multicollinearity emerged between harmony vs. mastery and egalitarianism vs. hierarchy-variables. The final model was chosen on the basis of predicting best the variance in employment commitment.

egalitarian and loyal cultures showed also stronger organizational commitment than conservative and utilitarian cultures (Table 5). Egalitarian commitment has also correlated positively with organizational commitment in previous research, whereas there has not been such a relationship – quite surprisingly – with loyal involvement and organizational commitment (Gelade *et al.* 2006). We can conclude this section by stating that national culture indeed accounts for some variance in employment and organizational commitment. However, there is still much variance left to be accounted for (see R^2 s in tables 5 and 6). An educated guess is that country-specific institutional factors, which are surely linked to cultural factors, may also explain some of this unexplained variance.

(Table 6 approximately here.)

Conclusions

Finnish work culture has been characterized as a hardworking, committed, even crazy. A mother advised her daughter, who was setting off for harvesting a field in the Finnish countryside probably in the early 1900s: “Harvest as much as you ever can, and still 50 percent more and then it will be enough” [“Niin leikkaa, kun ikänä jaksat ja siihen vielä puolen pykää, niin sitten on hyvä”] (Parikka 1999: 7–8). Surely work has changed a lot for the most of the people since, but, still, this article shows, by using ISSP-data from 2005–2006, that only the Spanish employees displayed lower employment commitment than their Finnish counterparts. The other comparison countries, thus showing stronger employment commitment than Finnish and Spanish employees, included in this study were Germany, Great Britain and Sweden. This held true even after controlling for individual determinants of employment commitment. Finland and Sweden being that different in employment commitment questions also partially existing typologies of capitalism(s). However, Finland and Sweden showed similar levels of organizational commitment.

A justified question in present work life is to what employees finally commit themselves primarily to: to their organization, employment or work *per se*, to their career, to their occupation or perhaps to their colleagues? An educated guess is that in empirical reality employees commit themselves to all of these, albeit in different degrees. It has, however,

been suggested that career commitment or employment commitment may be on the rise at the expense of organizational commitment, since commitment to the current employer may be not reasonable from the point of view of the employees in this era of labour market insecurities. Also organizations, at least in contemporary Finland, try increasingly to commit their manpower by giving them opportunities to develop their skills and by advancing positive work experiences, not offering them stability of their employment relationship (Rubin *et al.* 2005; Mamia and Koivumäki 2006; Lehto and Sutela 2008: 205–208.) However, the article shows that low subjective job insecurity increased organizational commitment in all of the studied five countries. The same kind of relationship was detected also in Germany and Spain regarding low subjective job insecurity and employment commitment. Proffering employees at least promises of the stability of their employment, if possible, would then be a sensible strategy for organizations if we adopt a view that high organizational commitment is a desirable goal.

Characteristics of national culture, as identified by Schwartz (2007) and Smith *et al.* (1996; 2002), accounted also for some variance in employment and organizational commitment in the research countries. This was the case especially regarding Schwartz's cultural dimensions and employment commitment. However, further research is warranted here. Especially, that kind of research is welcomed that combines individual, institutional and cultural factors when studying commitment to work and organization. Qualitative material would also enrich the picture given here.

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Table 1. Employment and organizational commitment in the research countries in 2005–2006.

	Spain	Great Britain	Sweden	Germany	Finland
Employment commitment					
(means)	2.83	3.28	3.64	3.52	3.10
Standard deviation	0.93	0.98	0.89	0.94	1.06
Cronbach's alpha	0.34	0.54	0.62	0.39	0.70
(n)	554	479	834	902	722
Organizational commitment					
(means)	3.03	3.38	3.09	3.42	3.12
Standard deviation	0.89	0.75	0.77	0.80	0.89
Cronbach's alpha	0.65	0.70	0.65	0.61	0.74
(n)	553	469	837	885	697

Table 2. The country differences in employment and organizational commitment (standardized regression coefficients from standard multiple regression).

Employment commitment	
Finland (r)	0.00
Germany	0.19***
Great-Britain	0.06**
Spain	-0.10***
Sweden	0.23***
R ²	0.08
(n)	3490
Organizational commitment	
Finland (r)	0.00
Germany	0.16***
Great-Britain	0.11***
Spain	-0.04
Sweden	-0.02
R ²	0.04
(n)	3440

Notes. *** p < 0,001; ** p < 0,01; * p < 0,05; r= reference category.

Table 3. Determinants of employment commitment (standardized regression coefficients from standard multiple regression).

	Finland	Germany	Great-Britain	Spain	Sweden	All countries
Age						
50–64 yrs. (r)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
18–34 yrs.	–0.00	0.01	0.03	0.12*	0.07	0.03
35–49 yrs.	–0.05	–0.04	0.03	0.03	0.02	–0.01
Gender						
women (r)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
men	–0.15***	–0.10**	–0.08	–0.02	–0.10**	–0.09***
Occupational class						
high (r)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
middle	–0.21***	–0.19***	–0.17***	–0.05	–0.27***	–0.18***
low	–0.25***	–0.19***	–0.34***	–0.20***	–0.23***	–0.24***
Subjective job insecurity						
high						
insecurity (r)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
low insecurity	0.05	0.07*	–0.00	0.17***	0.03	0.05**
Country						
Finland (r)						0.00
Germany						0.22***
Great Britain						0.07***
Spain						–0.05*
Sweden						0.24***
R ²	0.10	0.07	0.11	0.07	0.10	0.15
(n)	606	807	469	547	775	3213

Notes. *** $p < 0,001$; ** $p < 0,01$; * $p < 0,05$; r= reference category.

Table 4. Determinants of organizational commitment (standardized regression coefficients from standard multiple regression).

	Finland	Germany	Great-Britain	Spain	Sweden	All countries
Age						
50–64 yrs. (r)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
18–34 yrs.	–0.09	–0.05	–0.09	–0.03	–0.10*	–0.07**
35–49 yrs.	–0.14**	–0.05	–0.04	–0.07	–0.02	–0.06**
Gender						
women (r)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
men	0.09*	0.05	–0.07	–0.01	0.08*	0.04*
Occupational class						
high (r)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
middle	–0.01	0.00	–0.06	–0.23***	–0.12**	–0.07***
low	–0.01	–0.12**	–0.16**	–0.25***	–0.10**	–0.11***
Subjective job insecurity						
high						
insecurity (r)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
low insecurity	0.22***	0.12**	0.12**	0.22***	0.11**	0.16***
Country						
Finland (r)						0.00
Germany						0.17***
Great Britain						0.11***
Spain						–0.02
Sweden						–0.03
R ²	0.07	0.04	0.05	0.11	0.05	0.08
(n)	606	807	461	546	775	3213

Notes. *** $p < 0,001$; ** $p < 0,01$; * $p < 0,05$; r= reference category.

Table 5. The effects of individual determinants and Smith's [et al.] cultural dimensions on organizational commitment, all comparison countries (standardized regression coefficients from hierarchical multiple regression).

	Model 1	Model 2
Age		
50–64 yrs. (r)	0.00	0.00
18–34 yrs.	–0.07**	–0.06**
35–49 yrs.	–0.05*	–0.05*
Gender		
women (r)	0.00	0.00
men	0.04*	0.05**
Occupational class		
high (r)	0.00	0.00
middle	–0.05**	–0.05*
low	–0.11***	–0.10***
Subjective job insecurity		
high insecurity (r)	0.00	0.00
low insecurity	0.15***	0.15***
Smith's cultural dimensions		
egalitarian commitment vs. conservatism		0.23***
loyal involvement vs. utilitarian involvement		0.16***
R ²	0.04	0.06
(n)	3213	3213

Notes. *** p < 0,001; ** p < 0,01; * p < 0,05; r= reference category.

Table 6. The effects of individual determinants and Schwartz's cultural dimensions on employment commitment, all comparison countries (standardized regression coefficients from hierarchical multiple regression).

	Model 1	Model 2
Age		
50–64 yrs. (r)	0.00	0.00
18–34 yrs.	0.00	0.03
35–49 yrs.	–0.02	–0.01
Gender		
women (r)	0.00	0.00
men	–0.10***	–0.09***
Occupational class		
high (r)	0.00	0.00
middle	–0.18***	–0.18***
low	–0.25***	–0.24***
Subjective job insecurity		
high insecurity (r)	0.00	0.00
low insecurity	0.06***	0.05**
Schwartz's cultural dimensions		
autonomy vs. embeddedness		0.31***
egalitarianism vs. hierarchy		–0.23***
R ²	0.08	0.15
(n)	3213	3213

Notes. *** p < 0,001; ** p < 0,01; * p < 0,05; r= reference category.

Appendix. Research countries on Schwartz's and Smith's^a cultural dimensions.

Schwartz's cultural dimensions^b		Smith's cultural dimensions^c	
egalitarianism vs. hierarchy	Spain, 3,39; Germany, 3,19; Finland, 3,10; Sweden, 3,07; Great Britain, 2,59	loyal involvement vs. utilitarian involvement	Spain, 0,53; Great Britain, -0,05; Finland, -0,20; Germany, -0,54; Sweden, -0,94
autonomy vs. embeddedness	Sweden, 1,97; Germany, 1,85; Spain, 1,68; Finland, 1,56; Great Britain, 1,28	egalitarian commitment vs. conservatism	Great Britain, 1,42; Germany, 1,38; Sweden, 1,29; Finland, 1,09; Spain, 0,03
harmony vs. mastery	Germany, 0,68; Finland, 0,68; Spain, 0,67; Sweden, 0,65; Great Britain, -0,10		

^a For reasons of simplicity, I speak here of Smith's cultural dimensions, although the cited articles have several authors (Smith *et al.* 1996; 2002).

^b Reading instructions for Schwartz's dimensions: the greater the number of cultural dimension the greater, for example, the nation-level egalitarianism there is in a given country. Respectively, in this example, the smaller the number, the more the opposite pole of egalitarianism, hierarchy, is emphasized in a given country.

^c Reading instructions for Smith's dimensions: the greater the number the greater, for example, the nation-level loyal involvement there is in a given country. Respectively, in this example, the smaller the number, the more the opposite pole of loyal involvement, utilitarian involvement, is emphasized in a given country.