

Work-Related Attitudes in Asia and Europe: Institutional Approach

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The differences in attitudes and values in countries with similar cultural roots but different institutional backgrounds were found in a study conducted in three European countries (Alas and Edwards 2007). The differences in work-related attitudes in the three Finno-Ugrian countries, Estonia, Finland and Hungary, are influenced by the respective countries' historical legacy, in particular differences in levels of institutional development (ibid). In order to test this result and to advise companies doing business on different continents, the authors enlarged the sample by adding countries from Europe and Asia. Countries on both continents have been divided into two groups according to their institutional backgrounds. Europe has been divided into two parts according to recent history and developmental level: East European and West European countries. The former group has undergone a transition from planned command economy over the last 20 years, the latter has a long tradition of capitalism and the market economy. Similarly, in Asia Japan, South Korea and Hong Kong have well established market systems, while China has been developing a socialist market economy since the late 1970s (Warner et al., 2005). Managers in Eastern Europe and China have had similar challenges: to focus on organisational efficiency and to change competitive strategies (Alas et al 2009b; Wang, 2007).

The main research question is: are there differences in work-related attitudes between employees from countries with different institutional background on two continents and, if so, what are the reasons for these differences?

The paper begins with hypotheses development. This is followed by description of the empirical study and finally data collected from empirical studies in four regions (China; Japan, South Korea and Hong Kong [Asia]; formerly socialist Eastern Europe; and Western Europe) are analysed and the results discussed. An institutional model of differences in attitudes toward society, organisations and work has been developed.

The findings indicate both similarities and differences between work-related attitudes in Asia and Europe. Even between East and West European respondents who share a similar culture, there were in certain instances substantial differences in attitudes. The same is true in Asia: attitudes of Chinese respondents differ from

attitudes of the three other Asian countries in the survey. At the same time the findings indicate that the institutional framework influences work-related attitudes, as evidenced by the similarities in some of the responses from Chinese and East European respondents.

The main conclusion from this study is that the differences in attitudes held toward society, organisations and work by people in Asia and Europe are influenced both by institutional context and cultural background. Both factors, and combinations of both factors, should be considered by owners and managers of multinational corporations. These results may help managers of multinational companies to achieve better work-related attitudes among employees working in plants on different continents.

Keywords: China, Asia, Europe, institutionalism, attitudes.

Introduction

The differences in attitudes and values in countries with similar cultural roots but different institutional backgrounds were found in a study conducted in three European countries (Alas and Edwards 2007). The differences in work-related attitudes in the three Finno-Ugrian countries, Estonia, Finland and Hungary, are influenced by the respective countries' historical legacy, in particular differences in levels of institutional development (ibid). In order to test this result and to advise companies doing business on different continents, the authors enlarged the sample by adding countries from Europe and Asia. Countries on both continents have been divided into two groups according to their institutional backgrounds. Europe has been divided into two parts according to recent history and developmental level: East European and West European countries. The former group has undergone a transition from planned command economy over the last 20 years, the latter has a long tradition of capitalism and the market economy. Similarly, in Asia Japan, South Korea and Hong Kong have well established market systems, while China has been developing a socialist market economy since the late 1970s (Warner et al., 2005). Managers in Eastern Europe and China have had similar challenges: to focus on organisational efficiency and to change competitive strategies (Alas et al 2009b; Wang, 2007).

The main research question is: are there differences in work-related attitudes between employees from countries with different institutional background on two continents and, if so, what are the reasons for these differences?

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Impact of Institutions on Values and Attitudes

Previous studies have shown that values and attitudes have been impacted by institutional settings (Alas et al 2006; Alas 2006; Alas and Rees 2006; Alas and Sun 2008; Alas et al 2009a; Alas and Tuulik 2007; Tafel and Alas 2007; Tafel-Viia and Alas 2009; Übius and Alas 2009).

Institutions include both a structural and social component and socio-economic transition could be understood as institutional change from both the structural and social perspective (Clark and Soulsby 1999). A structural component is connected with institutions as institutionalised forms of ‘external social constraints’. A social component may take the form of ‘cultural rules’. Culture consists of shared motives, values, beliefs, identities and interpretations or meanings of significant events that result from common experiences among members of collectives that are transmitted across generations (House et al, 2004). Understanding values is the fundamental attribute for managing today (Clegg et al 2008). According to Cooper and Croyle (1984), a person’s attitudes influence a person to act in a certain way instead of another. A positive attitude toward one’s job is job satisfaction (Daft 2006) and it may consist of attitudes toward different facets of the job (Spector, 1997). Satisfaction and commitment have both been considered as indicators of whether individuals are effectively connected to an institution or might quit (Holton and Russell 1999; Randall et al. 1990).

Alas and Edwards (2007) found in three European countries with similar cultural background, that the differences in attitudes held toward society, organisations and work by people in Estonia, Hungary and Finland are influenced by different levels of institutional development. Hypotheses for current study are developed based on the result of the previous study.

Hypothesis 1: People from the countries with a socialist heritage put more emphasis on material standards of living than people from traditional capitalist countries.

Hypothesis 2: People from the countries with a socialist background do not see work as a way to serve society.

Hypothesis 3: General Job satisfaction is higher in the countries which have not experienced socialism.

Hypothesis 4: Considering company performance as a pay determinant is not common among respondents from the countries with socialist background.

For empirical testing of propositions countries were selected from two continents: Asia and Europe. Europe is divided into Western and Eastern Europe in order to capture institutional differences in a similar cultural space. East European post-communist countries are compared

with West European countries, that have not experienced a communist order. The aim is to identify the impact of socialism on work-related attitudes. Similarly in Asia China is compared with Japan, Hong Kong and South Korea (‘Asia’ later in text), in order to find differences which may stem from institutional differences. There have been enormous institutional changes in formerly communist Eastern European countries compared to Western Europe (Alas, 2008; Alas and Edwards, 2007) and in China, whereas the other three Asian countries have enjoyed relative stability.

Empirical Study Methodology and Sample

The survey was conducted in 14 countries in Asia and Europe before 2004, when former communist countries entered EU. From Asia China, Japan, Hong Kong and South Korea participated. From Western Europe France, Italy, Finland and Spain participated and from former socialist Eastern Europe Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Slovenia, Hungary and Estonia. In each country the survey was conducted in two plants of the electronics industry: one produces telecommunications equipment and the other electrical goods for household use. 43% of respondents were blue collar, 15% of respondents belonged to administrative staff, 14% were technicians, 12% engineers, 6% supervisors and 5% managers. 54% were male, 30% were younger than 30 years and 35% over 40 years. 26% had university level education.

The current attitude survey was conducted on three levels: individual, organisational and societal. Job satisfaction and pay determinants were surveyed on the individual level. Commitment to the company was captured on the organisational level. Values and the meaning of work were studied on the societal level.

A questionnaire was developed by the Denki Ringo research group (Ishikawa et al., 2006) and translated from English into the language of each country. In order to ensure the quality of this survey, the questionnaire was retranslated into English.

There were 5174 respondents in the sample. Data from each of the four groups were compared by means of the ANOVA Test. The factors influencing organisational commitment were identified using Linear Regression analysis.

Results Attitudes toward Society

Table 1 shows the kind of society people prefer. There are statistically significant differences in all eight items between China and the three other Asian countries ($p < .05$). Between Eastern and Western Europe there was no statistically significant difference in two items: ‘People can live with a peaceful mind’ and ‘People can acquire all the results of their own work’.

Table 1

Table 2

Preferred society according to respondents from Asia and Europe

Region	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Asia N=1647	Mean 1,72	1,57	1,88	1,79	1,58	1,34	1,49	1,56
	SD ,69	,61	,82	,74	,61	,56	,66	,64
China N=446	Mean 1,27	1,97	1,51	2,04	1,70	1,18	1,25	1,39
	SD ,51	,75	,59	,88	,72	,46	,51	,61
Eastern Europe N=2161	Mean 1,23	1,81	1,51	1,92	1,62	1,21	1,28	1,38
	SD ,50	,75	,63	,84	,73	,49	,58	,64
Western Europe N=935	Mean 1,60	1,66	1,82	1,76	1,49	1,29	1,30	1,38
	SD ,63	,64	,76	,73	,59	,52	,51	,55
Total N=5174	Mean 1,46	1,67	1,67	1,79	1,56	1,26	1,35	1,47
	SD ,63	,69	,74	,79	,66	,52	,60	,67

- 1 - People are provided with a good material standard of living
 - 2 - Everyone cooperates with each other in solidarity
 - 3 - People live life by observing well-established values and ethics
 - 4 - Social equality among people is highly developed
 - 5 - Individuals can develop their lives with great opportunities
 - 6 - Social order is well maintained with few criminal offences
 - 7 - People can live with a peaceful mind
 - 8 - People can acquire all the results of their own work
- Notes: A 4-point scale was used where '1' signifies 'very important' and '4' 'not important'.

The rankings of values in Table 2 also differ between regions.

Hypothesis 1 was supported: Respondents from Eastern Europe and China put more emphasis on their material standard of living compared to people from Asia and Western Europe. At the same time people from Asia emphasised cooperation more than the two European groups of respondents and China. Well-established values and ethics are more important for Eastern European and Chinese respondents than for respondents from countries which have not experienced the socialist order.

Meaning of Work

There are statistically significant differences between China and the three other Asian countries in five out of six items on the meaning of work ($p < .05$). There was no difference in 'Work provides you with an income that is needed' (Table 3). In Europe there was no difference in 'Work permits you to have interesting contacts with other people'.

Work enjoys most prestige in China and Eastern Europe. Work has least prestige in Asia. Similar results apply to the item 'Work keeps you occupied'.

Hypothesis 2 was supported only in Europe, not in Asia: Western European respondents found work to be a more useful way to serve society than respondents from Eastern Europe, but Chinese respondents did not find work to be less useful for serving society than respondents from Asia.

European respondents found work to be a more useful way to serve society compared to other respondents. Western European and Asian respondents evaluated work as a source of income more highly and found work more interesting than Chinese and East European respondents. Asian respondents regarded work as a provider of interesting contacts with other people more highly than Chinese and European respondents.

Rankings of society level values in different regions

	Asia		China		Eastern Europe		Western Europe	
1	Social order is well maintained with few criminal offences	1,34	Social order is well maintained with few criminal offences	1,18	Social order is well maintained with few criminal offences	1,21	Social order is well maintained with few criminal offences	1,29
2	People can live with a peaceful mind	1,49	People can live with a peaceful mind	1,25	People are provided with a good material standard of living	1,23	People can live with a peaceful mind	1,30
3	People can acquire all the results of their own work	1,56	People are provided with a good material standard of living	1,27	People can live with a peaceful mind	1,28	People can acquire all the results of their own work	1,38
4	Everyone cooperates with each other in solidarity	1,57	People can acquire all the results of their own work	1,39	People can acquire all the results of their own work	1,38	Individuals can develop their lives with great opportunities	1,49
5	Individuals can develop their lives with great opportunities	1,58	People live life by observing well-established values and ethics	1,51	People live life by observing well-established values and ethics	1,51	People are provided with a good material standard of living	1,60
6	People are provided with a good material standard of living	1,72	Individuals can develop their lives with great opportunities	1,70	Individuals can develop their lives with great opportunities	1,62	Everyone cooperates with each other in solidarity	1,66
7	Social equality among people is highly developed	1,79	Everyone cooperates with each other in solidarity	1,97	Everyone cooperates with each other in solidarity	1,81	Social equality among people is highly developed	1,76
8	People live life by observing well-established values and ethics	1,88	Social equality among people is highly developed	2,04	Social equality among people is highly developed	1,92	People live life by observing well-established values and ethics	1,82

Rankings in Table 4 indicate similarities and differences between the four regions in respect of the meaning of work. Respondents from Western Europe find work itself more interesting and satisfying than respondents from Eastern Europe, who put this item last. 'Work keeps you occupied' is ranked first in Eastern Europe, but among the last three in China, Asia and Western Europe.

Table 3

The opinions of respondents about the meaning of work

Region		1	2	3	4	5	6
Asia N=1647	Mean	2,70	4,12	3,28	3,81	3,40	3,40
	SD	1,11	,94	1,08	,90	1,01	1,03
China N=446	Mean	3,51	4,03	3,95	3,35	4,00	3,98
	SD	1,10	1,18	1,14	1,28	1,29	1,07
Eastern Europe N=2161	Mean	3,51	3,75	3,83	3,56	3,62	3,47
	SD	1,28	1,40	1,25	1,22	1,32	1,20
Western Europe N=935	Mean	3,10	4,29	3,50	3,62	3,51	3,67
	SD	1,14	1,02	1,17	1,04	1,11	1,09
Total N=5174	Mean	3,10	4,00	3,52	3,65	3,56	3,50
	SD	1,26	1,22	1,22	1,11	1,20	1,14

1 – Work gives us status and prestige
 2 – Work provides you with an income that is needed
 3 – Work keeps you occupied
 4 – Work permits you to have interesting contacts with other people
 5 – Work is a useful way to serve society
 6 – Work itself is basically interesting and satisfying
 A 5-point scale was used, where '1' signifies 'entirely disagree' and '5' 'completely agree'.
 Bold notes statistically significantly different between China and the 3 other Asian countries according to the T test, $p < .05$. Bold also notes statistically significant differences between West and East European countries.

Table 4

Rankings of factors in respect of the meaning of work in different regions

	Asia	China	Eastern Europe	Western Europe
1 Work provides you with an income that is needed	4,12	Work provides you with an income that is needed	4,03	Work keeps you occupied
2 Work permits you to have interesting contacts with other people	3,81	Work is a useful way to serve society	4,00	Work provides you with an income that is needed
3 Work is a useful way to serve society	3,40	Work itself is basically interesting and satisfying	3,98	Work is a useful way to serve society
4 Work itself is basically interesting and satisfying	3,40	Work keeps you occupied	3,95	Work permits you to have interesting contacts with other people
5 Work keeps you occupied	3,28	Work gives us status and prestige	3,51	Work gives us status and prestige
6 Work gives us status and prestige	2,70	Work permits you to have interesting contacts with other people	3,35	Work itself is basically interesting and satisfying

Job Satisfaction and Commitment to the Company

Hypothesis 3 was supported: general job satisfaction was higher in Asia than in China and higher in Western Europe than in Eastern Europe. Statistically significant differences between China and the three other Asian countries ($p < .05$) were in all items except: 'Working conditions', 'Trust between managers and employees', 'Competence of management' and 'Training and re-training'. Between Eastern and Western Europe there were statistically significant differences in all items except: 'Trust between managers and employees', 'Length of

working time' and 'Business information provided by management' (Table 5).

The Western European and Asian respondents appeared to enjoy the highest and the Chinese and Eastern Europeans the lowest job satisfaction. Commitment to their company was highest in Western Europe.

Table 5

Facets of job satisfaction, employee feelings toward the organisation they work for and general satisfaction with work life

Region	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	F	GS
Asia N=1651	2,82	2,82	2,92	2,93	2,92	2,93	2,30	2,30	2,82	2,92	2,82	2,72	2,22	2,63	0,71	82,79	
China N=451	2,82	2,82	2,72	2,43	2,63	2,33	2,33	2,13	2,22	2,83	2,02	3,19	2,33	2,21	2,63	33	
Eastern Europe N=2161	2,72	2,72	2,72	2,36	2,52	2,73	2,43	1,63	2,02	2,83	1,22	1,92	2,32	2,81	1,72	70	
Western Europe N=935	2,16	1,02	2,95	2,89	1,02	2,96	1,04	0,71	1,11	0,10	0,91	0,76	0,91	1,16	1,68	95	
Total N=5171	2,72	2,72	2,62	2,33	2,02	2,73	2,22	2,92	2,32	2,42	2,52	1,11	1,72	1,02	2,81	52	17
	2,95	2,96	1,11	1,11	1,11	1,11	1,11	1,11	1,11	1,11	1,11	1,11	1,11	1,11	1,11	1,11	1,11
	2,72	2,82	2,53	2,32	2,83	2,33	2,02	2,82	2,82	2,92	2,32	2,02	2,42	2,91	1,72	65	
	2,02	2,98	2,96	1,01	1,01	1,01	1,01	1,01	1,01	1,01	1,01	1,01	1,01	1,01	1,01	1,01	1,01

1 - Working conditions
 2 - Trust between managers and employees
 3 - Work load
 4 - Length of working time
 5 - Pay and fringe benefits
 6 - Competence of management
 7 - Promotion opportunities
 8 - Training and re-training
 9 - Security of employment protection
 10 - Equal opportunities for women and men
 11 - Welfare provision
 12 - Relationship with the boss
 13 - Relationship with co-workers
 14 - The extent to which work is interesting
 15 - Business information provided by management
 GS - General satisfaction
 F - Commitment to the company
 Satisfaction was evaluated on a 5-point scale, where '1' signifies 'very satisfied' and '5' 'very dissatisfied'.
 'Feelings towards the company' were evaluated on a 4-point scale, where:
 1 – I would like to put my best effort towards the company's success
 2 – I would like to give as much effort to the company as the company gives to me as reward
 3 – I do not have much feeling towards the company
 4 – I am indifferent to any matters concerning the company.
 Bold notes statistically significantly different between China and the 3 other Asian countries according to the T test, $p < .05$. Bold also notes statistically significant differences between West and East European countries.

The results in Table 6 indicate differences in rankings of facets of job satisfaction between regions. Trust between managers and employees was the highest in Asia and the lowest in Western Europe. Satisfaction with security of employment protection was higher in Western Europe and Asia than in Eastern Europe and China. Satisfaction with work load was highest in Eastern Europe and China and equally lower in Asia and Western Europe. Satisfaction with welfare provision was higher in Asia and Western Europe and lower in China and Eastern Europe.

Table 6

Table 7

Rankings of facets of job satisfaction in different regions

	Asia		China		Eastern Europe		Western Europe	
1	Relationship with co-workers	2,28	Relationship with co-workers	1,94	Relationship with co-workers	1,90	Relationship with co-workers	1,74
2	The extent to which work is interesting	2,69	The extent to which work is interesting	2,33	Relationship with the boss	2,25	Relationship with the boss	2,13
3	Relationship with the boss	2,70	Relationship with the boss	2,35	Length of working time	2,36	The extent to which work is interesting	2,16
4	Welfare provision	2,83	Length of working time	2,40	The extent to which work is interesting	2,39	Security of employment protection	2,31
5	Trust between managers and employees	2,84	Work load	2,70	Work load	2,74	Length of working time	2,33
6	Security of employment protection	2,84	Working conditions	2,81	Trust between managers and employees	2,75	Equal opportunities for women and men	2,44
7	Working conditions	2,85	Equal opportunities for women and men	2,83	Working conditions	2,77	Working conditions	2,51
8	Length of working time	2,95	Trust between managers and employees	2,84	Competence of management	2,79	Welfare provision	2,57
9	Equal opportunities for women and men	2,96	Competence of management	3,04	Equal opportunities for women and men	2,86	Work load	2,64
10	Competence of management	2,98	Welfare provision	3,09	Business information provided by management	2,88	Competence of management	2,70
11	Work load	2,99	Training and re-training	3,15	Security of employment protection	3,04	Trust between managers and employees	2,73
12	Business information provided by management	3,07	Security of employment protection	3,21	Training and re-training	3,10	Business information provided by management	2,80
13	Training and re-training	3,08	Business information provided by management	3,22	Welfare provision	3,16	Training and re-training	2,92
14	Promotion opportunities	3,24	Promotion opportunities	3,36	Promotion opportunities	3,44	Pay and fringe benefits	3,03
15	Pay and fringe benefits	3,26	Pay and fringe benefits	3,69	Pay and fringe benefits	3,56	Promotion opportunities	3,24

The Linear Regression analysis reveals the differences in predictive value of different facets of the job satisfaction construct on employees' commitment to the company between regions (Table 7). In the analysis employees' commitment to the company was taken as a dependent variable and 15 facets of job satisfaction were taken as independent variables. The standardised Beta (B) coefficient, enabling prediction of how the facets forecast commitment, was calculated. In China 12.9 percent of the variability in commitment to the company can be explained by reference to the 15 facets of job satisfaction presented in the current study, in other Asian countries 13.4 percent, in Western Europe 37.5 percent and in Eastern Europe only 13.8 percent.

Factors predicting employees' commitment to the company

Facets of job satisfaction	China	Asia (3)	East-Europe	West-Europe
Working conditions				+
Trust between managers and employees	+	+		
Work load				
Length of working time		+		+
Pay and fringe benefits	+		+	+
Competence of management	+			+
Promotion opportunities				
Training and retraining				
Security of employment	+			
Equal opportunities for women and men				
Welfare provision			+	
Relationship with your boss			+	
Relationship with your co-workers			+	
The extent to which your work is interesting	+	+	+	+
Business information provided by management		+	+	

The results indicate that in all four groups of countries the extent to which work is interesting predicts commitment to the company. In European countries and China, furthermore, pay and fringe benefits are important predictors. In the Asian countries and East European countries business information provided by management also predicts commitment to the company. In China and Western Europe competence of management is a predictor and in Western Europe and the three Asian countries length of working time is an important predictor. In Asia trust between managers and employees is also important, while security of employment plays an important role in China. In Western Europe working conditions and in Eastern Europe relationship with the boss and with co-workers and welfare provision influence commitment. To summarise, the 15 facets therefore seem to reflect the situation in Western Europe to a greater degree than elsewhere.

Attitude to Pay Determinants

Statistically significant differences between China and the three other Asian countries according to the ANOVA test ($p < .05$) were in all items except: level of education, age and mental load. In Europe there was no difference in unpleasant working conditions and achievement of tasks (Table 8).

Respondents from Asia, including China, found level of education, achievement of task, skills required for the job and responsibility on the job less important than both European samples. At the same time Asians found size of family the employee supports, age and gender more important than East and West Europeans.

Table 8

The opinions of workers about determinants of pay

Region	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
Asia N=207	2,42	1,83	1,63	2,31	1,73	2,26	2,53	3,05	2,09	1,84	2,02	1,97	1,84	2,39	2,12
China N=451	2,40	2,57	2,42	1,96	1,57	1,44	2,51	1,89	2,00	2,45	3,03	1,92	1,76	1,86	1,73
Eastern Europe N=216	1,76	1,77	1,45	2,58	1,43	1,93	2,76	3,10	2,03	1,89	2,08	1,83	1,44	2,02	1,93
Western Europe N=935	1,95	1,76	1,43	2,81	1,50	2,27	3,03	3,41	2,23	1,71	1,98	2,04	1,51	2,43	2,05
Total N=517	2,01	1,76	1,49	2,50	1,53	2,11	2,72	3,13	2,08	1,83	2,02	1,91	1,57	2,22	1,99

1 – Level of education
 2 - Unpleasant working conditions
 3- Achievement of tasks
 4 - Size of family the employee supports
 5 - Skills required for the job
 6 - Length of service
 7 – Age
 8 – Gender
 9 - Group or team performance
 10 - Company performance
 11 - Physical load
 12 - Mental load
 13 - Responsibility on the job
 14 - Language abilities
 15 - Special personal characteristics required for the job
 Note: a 4-point scale was used, where ‘1’ means ‘very important’ and ‘4’ ‘not important’.
 Bold notes statistically significantly different between China and the 3 other Asian countries according to the T test, p< .05. Bold also notes statistically significant differences between West and East European countries.

Language abilities were considered more important in China than in other regions. Level of education was more important for Eastern and Western Europeans than for Asian and Chinese respondents. Physical load was ranked more highly in Asia and Western Europe than in China and Eastern Europe.

Table 9

Rankings of pay determinants in different regions

	Asia		China		Eastern Europe		Western Europe	
1	Achievement of tasks	1,63	Length of service	1,44	Skills required for the job	1,43	Achievement of tasks	1,43
2	Skills required for the job	1,73	Skills required for the job	1,57	Responsibility on the job	1,44	Skills required for the job	1,50
3	Unpleasant working conditions	1,83	Special personal characteristics required for the job	1,73	Achievement of tasks	1,45	Responsibility on the job	1,51
4	Responsibility on the job	1,84	Responsibility on the job	1,76	Level of education	1,76	Company performance	1,71
5	Company performance	1,84	Language abilities	1,86	Unpleasant working conditions	1,77	Unpleasant working conditions	1,76

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6	Mental load	1,97	Gender	1,89	Mental load	1,83	Level of education	1,95
7	Physical load	2,02	Mental load	1,92	Company performance	1,89	Physical load	1,98
8	Group or team performance	2,09	Size of family the employee supports	1,96	Special personal characteristics required for the job	1,93	Mental load	2,04
9	Special personal characteristics required for the job	2,12	Group or team performance	2,00	Length of service	1,93	Special personal characteristics required for the job	2,05
10	Length of service	2,26	Level of education	2,40	Language abilities	2,02	Group or team performance	2,23
11	Size of family the employee supports	2,31	Achievement of tasks	2,42	Group or team performance	2,03	Length of service	2,27
12	Language abilities	2,39	Company performance	2,45	Physical load	2,08	Language abilities	2,43
13	Level of education	2,42	Age	2,51	Size of family the employee supports	2,58	Size of family the employee supports	2,81
14	Age	2,53	Unpleasant working conditions	2,57	Age	2,76	Age	3,03
15	Gender	3,05	Physical load	3,03	Gender	3,10	Gender	3,41

Hypothesis 4 was supported according to ranking of pay determinants: respondents from the countries with socialist background ranked company performance as pay determinant as less important than others. The hypothesis was supported according to mean values only in Asia, not in Europe.

Conclusions

The findings indicate both similarities and differences between work-related attitudes in Asia and Europe. Even between East and West European respondents who share a similar culture, there were in certain instances substantial differences in attitudes. The same is true in Asia: attitudes of Chinese respondents differ from those of the three other Asian countries in the survey. At the same time the findings indicate that the institutional framework influences work-related attitudes, as evidenced by the similarities in some of the responses from Chinese and East European respondents.

The main conclusion from this study is that the differences in attitudes held toward society, organisations and work by people in Asia and Europe are influenced both by institutional context and cultural background. Both factors, and combinations of both factors, should be considered by owners and managers of multinational corporations. These results may help managers of multinational companies to achieve better work-related attitudes among employees working in plants on different continents.

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Ruth Alas, Vincent Edwards

Darbo santykiai Azijoje ir Europoje: institucinis požiūris

Santrauka

Požiūrių į vertybes skirtumai šalyse, kurių su panašios kultūros šaknys, bet skirtingas institucinis pagrindas, buvo ištirti trijose Europos šalyse (Alas ir Edwards, 2007). Su darbu susiję skirtumai trijose Suomų ir Ugrų šalyse (Estija, Suomija ir Vengrija) yra veikiami atitinkamų tų šalių istorinių ypatumų, ypač pastebimi skirtumai institucinio plėtojimo lygmenimis. Norint patikrinti šiuos rezultatus ir patarti kompanijoms, kaip organizuoti verslą įvairiose šalyse, šio straipsnio autoriai ištyrė nemažai Europos ir Azijos šalių. Abiejų kontinentų šalys buvo suskirstytos į dvi grupes pagal jų institucinį pagrindą. Europa buvo padalyta į dvi grupes pagal dabartinę istoriją ir plėtojimosi lygį: Rytų Europos ir Vakarų Europos šalys. Pirmosios grupės šalys per pastaruosius 20 metų patyrė perėjimą iš planinės komandinės ekonomikos. Kitos grupės šalys turi gana galias kapitalizmo tradicijas ir rinkos ekonomikos patirtį. Taigi Azijoje, Japonijoje, Pietų Korėjoje ir Honkonge veikia išvirtinusi rinkos sistema, o Kinijoje nuo 1970 m. pabaigos plėtojamas socialistinis ūkis ir rinka (Warner ir kiti, 2005). Vadybininkai Rytų Europoje ir Kinijoje patyrė panašius iššūkius: sutelkti dėmesį į organizacinį našumą ir keisti konkurencijos strategijas (Alas ir kiti, 2009; Wang, 2007).

Pagrindinis tyrimų klausimas yra šis: ar skiriasi darbuotojų darbo santykių požiūriai šalyse, turinčiose skirtingas institucines tradicijas abiejuose žemynuose? Jei skiriasi, kokios šių skirtumų priežastys.

Straipsnis pradamas hipotezių kūrimu. Po to aprašomas empirinis tyrimas, tiriami ir aptariami keturių šalių (Kinijos, Japonijos, Pietų Korėjos, Honkongo; buvusios socialistinės Rytų Europos ir Vakarų Europos šalys) duomenys. Sukurtas požiūrių skirtumo institucinis modelis. Šio tyrimo hipotezės yra šios:

Pirmoji hipotezė: žmonės šalyse, turinčiose socialistinę patirtį, daugiau pabrėžia materialius pragyvenimo lygius.

Antroji hipotezė: žmonės šalyse, turinčiose socialistinę patirtį, netraktuoja darbo kaip būdo išgelbėti visuomenę.

Trečioji hipotezė: bendras pasitenkinimas darbu yra didesnis šalyse, kuriose nebuvo socializmo.

Ketvirtoji hipotezė: buvusių socialistinių šalių respondentų požiūris į kompanijos veiklą kaip į mokėjimo objektą nėra bendras.

Tyrimas buvo vykdomas 14 Azijos ir Europos šalių prieš 2004 metus, t. y. tada, kai buvusios komunistinės šalys įstojo į Europos Sąjungą. Iš Azijos žemyno dalyvavo Kinija, Japonija, Honkongas ir Pietų Korėja. Iš Vakarų Europos dalyvavo Prancūzija, Italija, Suomija ir Ispanija, o iš buvusių socialistinių šalių – Lenkija, Čekijos respublika, Slovakija, Slovėnija, Vengrija ir Estija. Tyrimas buvo vykdomas dviejose elektroninės pramonės gamyklose (viena iš jų gamina telekomunikacijų įrenginius, o kita – buitines elektros prietaisus. 43 % dalyvių buvo tarnautojai, 15 % apklaustųjų priklausė administracijai, 14 % buvo techniniai darbuotojai, 12 % – inžinieriai, 6 % – žemesnio lygio administratoriai, 5 % – vadybininkai. Tarp tiriamųjų 54 % – vyrai, 30 % – jaunesni nei 30 metų, o 35 % – per 40 metų, 26 % – baigę universitetą.

Šis tyrimas vyko trimis lygiais: individualiu, organizacijos ir visuomenės požiūriu. Darbo pasitenkinimas ir apmokėjimo veiksniai buvo vertinami individualiai. Ištikimybė kompanijai buvo vertinama organizacijos lygmeniu. Vertybės ir darbo prasmė buvo tiriama socialiniu lygmeniu.

Tiriamąjį darbo anketą sukūrė Denki Ringo tyrimo grupė (Ishikawa ir kt., 2006), kuri buvo išversta iš anglų kalbos į kiekvienos šalies kalbą. Dalyvių skaičius siekė 5 174. Visų keturių grupių duomenys buvo lyginami t-testu. Šis testas taikomas skirtumams nustatyti. Linijinės regresijos analizė buvo naudojama veiksniams, susijusiems su lojalumu organizacijai, tirti.

Gauti rezultatai rodo įvairių požiūrių į darbą tiek panašumus, tiek skirtumus Azijos ir Europos šalyse. Pastebėta, kad net tarp Rytų ir Vakarų Europos šalių tiriamųjų, kurių kultūra ta pati, buvo tam tikrų skirtumų. Tą patį galima pasakyti ir apie Azijos šalis.

Rezultatai rodo, kad tarptautinės sąlygos veikia darbo santykius ir darbuotojų požiūrius. Pagrindinė išvada yra ta, kad požiūrių skirtumai yra veikiami pačios organizacijos konteksto ir kultūrinio pagrindo. Abu faktoriai turi būti įvertinti, o ypač į tai turi atkreipti dėmesį tiek savininkai tiek vadybininkai. Gauti tyrimo duomenys gali būti naudingi daugiatautinių kompanijų vadovams siekiant geresnių darbo santykių ir ieškant būdų kaip išspręsti kai kurias problemas.

Raktažodžiai: *Kinija, Azija, Europa, institucija, požiūris*.

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