

The motivation of prospective professional careers and the success attributes of Chinese and Russian University students

La motivación de las posibles carreras profesionales y los atributos de éxito de los estudiantes universitarios chinos y rusos

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ABSTRACT:

The purpose is to examine how students are being motivated by their prospective Jobs and how this motivation is linked with the success attributes. With the use of 5 questionnaire-type methodologies we conducted the study with 120 respondents, 60 from China and 60 from Russia, finishing their last year of undergraduate studies, RUDN University (Moscow, Russia). For Chinese students, success was internal and procedural, for Russians – more external and efficacious. Chinese students, as representatives of a masculine culture, are characterized by their drive to achieve future career success, that they may achieve internal harmony which does not require the others' recognition. Success as an internal mental state can be seen in their low level of uncertainty avoidance. For the Russian students, a high level of uncertainty avoidance is reflected in risk-avoidance and a strong determination to be victorious when competing as well as their determination to help others. Being feminist culture members the Russian students seek the others' recognition on a larger scale than they do internal satisfaction of personal success. Differences

RESUMEN:

El propósito es examinar cómo los estudiantes están siendo motivados por su potencial. Con el uso de metodologías de tipo 5 cuestionario se realizó el estudio con 120 encuestados, 60 de China y 60 de Rusia, terminando su último año de estudios de grado de la Universidad RUDN (Moscú, Rusia). Para los estudiantes chinos, el éxito fue interno y de procedimiento, para los rusos, más externo y eficaz. Los estudiantes chinos, como representantes de una cultura masculina, se caracterizan por su impulso para lograr el éxito en el futuro. El éxito como un estado mental interno se puede ver en su bajo nivel de incertidumbre. Para los estudiantes rusos, un alto nivel de incertidumbre y evitación se refleja en la evitación de riesgos y una fuerte determinación de salir victoriosos al competir, así como su determinación de ayudar a los demás. Al ser miembros de la cultura feminista, los estudiantes rusos buscan el reconocimiento de los demás en mayor escala que ellos. Las diferencias en los atributos de éxito entre los estudiantes chinos y rusos se pueden considerar mediante la construcción del

in success attributes among Chinese and Russian students can be considered by the building of a program on motivation in Russo-Chinese companies with the goals of increasing the level of involvement among young employees within the organizational process.

Keywords: Chinese students; cross-cultural differences; Russian students; success as a result and a process; success attribution, professional motivation

programa de motivación en las empresas ruso-chinas.
Palabras clave: Estudiantes chinos; diferencias interculturales; Estudiantes rusos; el éxito como resultado y un proceso; atribución de éxito, motivación profesional

1. Introduction

Today's multicultural business world dictates harsh conditions for the establishment of integrated success criteria within the professional sector for all workers in their respective companies, no matter where they are located (Herzberg, 1987). In the face of the strongest competition, the principle of being active in the business sector should be grounded with a firm understanding of success and achievement (Latham & Budworth, 2014). Nevertheless, psychological studies have proven the existence of differences in how persons from different ethno-cultural groups conceptualize achievement and success (Maercker et al., 2015). In forming a structure that manages how the professional sector motivates workers, consideration should be made of ethno-cultural differences and success-attributes that contribute to the increase of workers' involvement in the companies goals as well as his own personal success (Osin, Ivanova & Goedeveva, 2013).

1.1. Theoretical review

McClelland's Human Motivation Theory is based on the idea that the foundation of human behavior lies in the need for power, affiliation and the need for achievement (McClelland, 1987). The last need is understood as the planning of and striving for big goals, taking risks, and the desire to have feedback relating to one's successes. To some degree, this need corresponds with the Self-Determination Theory, which is based on the individual's autonomy (Deci & Ryan, 1985). In organizational psychology, Knouse (1989) noted the importance of the attribution process in working with young professionals. Scientists have showed the connection between external attributes when workers rely on luck and early stages of disappointment at work. However, workers who operate on internal attributes find great pleasure in their work (Parsons, Herold & Leatherwood, 1985). The partial mediation effects of attributional style and achievement motivation on the relationship between perfectionism and subjective well-being has been known to exist (Li, Lan & Ju, 2015).

Literature has an extended comparative analysis of cross-cultural differences in motivation from representatives of individually and socially directed motivation towards success (Hofstede, 2016). Nevertheless, insufficient studies have been focused on the specifics of the motivation that is linked to professional activities and opportunities within non-western countries (Wang, 2015), or the so-called collectivist cultures. Research has revealed that, non-western countries hold significant differences in success-attributes that are connected to the achievement of personal and societal (known as vertical) goals (Chen, Wang, Wei, Fwu & Hwang, 2009).

The significance of the social surroundings in valuing self for students coming from the collectivist group (Markus & Kitayama, 1991). On the other hand, it has been shown that, for example, Chinese students' socially oriented goals are connected with performance goals, mastery goal, and competitive motive (Chang & Wong, 2008). Besides this, perceived autonomy supports predicted job satisfaction directly and indirectly through the mediating roles of intrinsic motivation among Chinese (Nie, Chua, Yeung, Ryan & Chan, 2015). It was found that Russian workers place importance on reinforcing the feeling of success in the work process, to strengthen their interest and intrinsic motivation towards their job (Lobanova, 2015).

Consequently, the theoretical significance of this research focuses on the characteristics of motivation in the professional world and how this motivation is perceived by people who represent non-western countries. The above mentioned factors have been considered as

socially-motivating where success is concerned. However, the question remains, "What determines the success attributes that exist in different cultures and how is this linked to the motivation from professional jobs?"

According to G. Hofstede, both ethno-cultural groups that were chosen are high power distanced, collectivistic, long term orientated and restrained. These groups only differ by 1) masculinity (China) / femininity (Russia); 2) uncertainty avoidance (Russia has significantly higher scores in comparison to China) (Hofstede, 2016). These differences may also play a part in how people are motivated by their professional jobs since their motivation may be guided by different success attributes. There are grounds to believe that the success attributes of Chinese students are more connected with the privilege of serving using their acquired skills while the success attributes of Russian students are possibly closely linked to horizontal communication and competition.

Hypothetically, if Chinese students will be encouraged by situations of uncertainty unguaranteed success for Russian students may give rise to the motivation to avoid. Practically, the significance of this study allows for the opportunity of developing a more flexible motivational program for international business organizations that include both Russia and China. As was mentioned, the involvement of workers on their jobs bears a connection with the activation of their resources, which are activated by a sense of coherence (Vogt, Hakanen, Gregor & Bauer, 2016). The purpose of the current study is to examine the characteristics of motivation in the professional sector and the connection they bear in view of two collectivist cultures' conceptualization of success-attributes.

The hypothesis proposed in this study were as follow: a) the conceptualization and implementation of success-attributes differ among a) Russian and b) Chinese students who represent a) a feminine culture with high level of uncertainty avoidance; b) a masculine culture with low level of uncertainty avoidance; b) Due to the different success-attributes among Russian and Chinese students, motivation in their professional life is viewed differently.

2. Methodology

2.1. Participants

A convenient sample of 120 participants was selected from RUDN University. The sample contained 30 men and 30 women from Russia; 30 men and 30 women from China, and the age range: 22-25 years, $M = 23.22$, $SD = 1.93$ the students were completing their fourth year in the philological department, which prepares students to work as translators in the area of professional communication. In order to measure the possible gender differences within the Russian and Chinese student group the test by Mann-Whitney U-test was unutilized. It was shown that there are not significant differences within the group.

2.2. Instruments

The participants were asked to answer the following self-report questionnaires.

Jackson's RTF (for this research only the Russian language scale of the motivational-needs were used). We used 110 questions that correlates with the following questionnaire scale: The need for achievement; aggression; self-restraint; the need for attention; the need to avoid risks; the need to have a willingness to help; the need for order or a regime; the need for orientation towards a game; the need for social recognition; the need for support; the need to have general interests. The respondent had to answer every point using a scale ranging from 1- "totally disagree" to 3-"totally agree".

Pakulina's Students Achievement Motivation. This test consist of 36 questions and was designed to define the success-attributes of students studying in the university with the goal of developing structure that depicts the type of motivation that leads to achieving success [18]. Every point is valued on a scale ranging from 5- "most important" to 1- "least important". The questionnaire includes the following subscales: I. Exteriorization of success

(a) success-luck; (b) success defined by material aspirations; (c) success-recognition; (d) success-authority II. Interiorization of success (a) success by means of one's own actions; (b) personal success; c) success as a mental state; d) success interpreted as overcoming of obstacles; e) success - one's calling.

Ehlers' Achievement Motivation Questionnaire. In answering the 41st question, the respondent is asked to express his agreement or disagreement with every statement in the questionnaire. As a result, the respondent's level of motivation in being successful is determined on a scale from the highest to the lowest.

Raigorodskiy's Achievement Motivation Definition. The respondent is asked to rate his own motives for achievement using a nine-point scale with the following indexes: activeness, tendency to take risks, taking initiatives, tendency to be responsible, the ability to act without delay, insisting on solving problems as they arise. As a result, the extent of his motivation towards success and avoiding failure is analyzed.

Herzberg's Work Motivation Test. The participants are required to express the extent to which they agree with the motives influencing their intended job by responding to 56 points. Each point has a five (5) point scale on which they can answer. The questionnaire includes the following scales: financial motives, recognition and rewards, responsibility, having a relationship with the boss, promotion in one's line of work, achievement of goals, maintaining your job, cooperation among colleagues. These types of questionnaires have been chosen because they focus mainly on the variables which are being examined: success-attributes and motives that influence choices in professional careers.

2.3. Procedure

All of the respondents who took part in the research were invited to the psychological support center at RUDN University and individually filled out questionnaires in the order mentioned above. On average, the questionnaires were completed in 50 minutes. The Chinese and Russian respondents completed the questionnaires in Russian. The Chinese respondents did not experience any difficulty in completing the questionnaires. All of the methods used were adapted and meet the requirements for validity. For processing of the obtained data Mann — Whitney U-test, factorial analysis (Varimax roundation) were used. The calculations were done using the SPSS 22.0 computer program.

3. Results

3.1. Descriptive Statistics

The results from the descriptive statistics show that Chinese students, on average, express more motivation towards the achievement of success ($M = 19.96$) than Russian students ($M = 15.58$). Using the Raigorodskiy's questionnaire, it was found that, on average Russian students are more motivated to avoid failure ($M = 23.50$); and Chinese students harnessed motivation towards success ($M = 36.70$). The externalization of success for Russian students ($M = 12.78$) is higher than the internalization of success ($M = 9.71$). Among Chinese students, the internalization of success ($M = 17.48$) is higher than the externalization of success ($M = 15.21$). In relation to the different motives that influence the choices in one's future professional career, the Chinese students are guided by their need to achieve success ($M = 19.2$); the Russian students are influenced by their orientation towards playing games ($M = 15.9$).

3.2. Comparisons Among Groups

A Mann-Whitney test indicated that the drive for success is greater for Chinese students ($Mdn = 86$) than for Russian students ($Mdn = 35$), $U = 262.0$, $p = 0.001$. In comparison with Chinese students ($Mdn = 35$), Russian students are more motivated to avoid failure ($Mdn = 86$), $U = 284.0$; $p = 0.001$.

Financial motives are higher among Russian students ($Mdn = 91$), than they are among

Chinese students (Mdn=30), $U = 200.0$; $p = 0.001$. Motives that encourage the giving of services are higher among Chinese students (Mdn = 91), than among their Russian counterparts (Mdn = 31), $U = 292.0$, $p = 0.001$. Motives of recognition and reward are higher among Chinese students (Mdn = 88), in comparison with their Russian counterparts (Mdn = 29), $U = 204.0$, $p = 0.001$. Motives that advocate achievement are higher among Chinese students (Mdn = 89), than they are among Russian students (Mdn = 30), $U = 174.0$, $p = 0.001$. Motives that prescribe responsibility are higher among Chinese students (Mdn = 90), than among Russian students (Mdn = 29), $U = 254.0$, $p = 0.001$. Motives that encourage the security of one's Job is higher among Chinese students (Mdn = 87), than they are among Russian students (Mdn = 28), $U = 284.0$, $p = 0.001$. The need to have a relationship with the executive figures are higher among Chinese students (Mdn = 88), than among their Russian counterparts (Mdn = 28), $U = 292.0$, $p = 0.001$. The motives that encourage service-oriented activities to others are higher among Chinese students (Mdn = 92), than they are among Russian students (Mdn = 30), $U = 264.0$, $p = 0.001$.

In looking at success attributes, Russian students more frequently value success as good luck (Mdn = 89) than Chinese students (Mdn = 32), $U = 68.0$, $p = 0.001$. Success is frequently described as a materialistic standard of living for Chinese students (Mdn = 88) when compared to Russian students (Mdn = 34), $U = 206.0$, $p = 0.001$. It is more customary for Chinese students to conceptualize success as recognition (Mdn = 90) than it is for Russian students (Mdn = 32), $U = 84.0$, $p = 0.001$. Interpreting success as authority is more prevalent among Chinese students (Mdn = 86), than among Russian students (Mdn = 35), $U = 256.0$, $p = 0.001$. The perception of success in view of accomplishing one's own task or goal is seen more in Chinese students (Mdn = 89) than it is seen in Russian students (Mdn = 33), $U = 120.0$, $p = 0.001$. Success as personal achievement is more prevalent among Chinese students (Mdn = 90) than Russian students (Mdn = 31), $U = 40.0$, $p = 0.001$. It is more customary for Chinese students (Mdn = 90) to regard success as a mental state in comparison to Russian students (Mdn = 31), $U = 140.0$, $p = 0.001$. Viewing success as triumph over one's obstacles is more prevalent among Chinese students (Mdn = 90) than it is among Russian students (Mdn = 29), $U = 101.0$, $p = 0.001$. The idea of success as one's calling is more prevalent among Chinese students (Mdn = 89) than it is among Russian students (Mdn = 32), $U = 74.0$, $p = 0.001$.

Motivation of aggression among Russian students (Mdn = 81) is higher than among Chinese students (Mdn = 40), $U = 582.0$, $p = 0.001$. The need for attention is higher among Russian students (Mdn = 81), than it is among Chinese students (Mdn = 39), $U = 558.0$, $p = 0.001$. Risk-avoidance is more prevalent among Russian students (Mdn = 87), than it is among Chinese students (Mdn = 33), $U = 168.0$, $p = 0.001$. The need for social support is higher among Russians than it is among Chinese students (Mdn = 30), $U = 118.0$, $p = 0.001$. Orientation to games is higher among Russian students (Mdn = 91), in comparison to Chinese students (Mdn = 30), $U = 150.0$, $p = 0.001$. Self-restraint is more prevalent among Chinese students, (Mdn = 81) in comparison to their Russian counterparts (Mdn = 35), $U = 292.0$, $p = 0.001$. The need for organization and order is observed more among Chinese students (Mdn = 87) in comparison to Russian students (Mdn = 33), $U = 176.0$, $p = 0.001$. The need for social recognition is higher among Chinese students (Mdn = 90), than it is among Russian students (Mdn = 31), $U = 180.0$, $p = 0.001$. General interest in different activities is higher among Chinese students (Mdn = 90), than it is among Russian student (Mdn = 30), $U = 120.0$, $p = 0.001$. Here was no observation of a statistically significant difference concerning the readiness to help among the Russian students (Mdn = 59), or the Chinese students (Mdn = 59), $U = 1724.0$, $p = .68$.

3.3. Factor Analysis

Using the Varimax rotation, the factor analysis on the types of motivation that influence one's professional choices and the types of success attributes that are prevalent in the two groups of respondents revealed the following differences in the factorial structure of both groups.

The factorial structure of success motivation and success attributes for Chinese students are

represented by the following 3 ways: the first factor explains 39% of dispersion and includes motivation towards success (0.81); success as luck (-0.79); success as recognition (-0.73); a state of readiness to help (0.67). This factor represented as motivation towards internal feelings of success with an active readiness to help without aggression or the need for recognition. The second factor highlights 21% of dispersion and includes success as the result of one's goals (0.79); the need for organization (0.70); success as authority or power (0.70); success as a calling (0.68); general interest in one's Job (0.60). The factor here is emphasized as internal sources of success-authority used to attain organization and order in one's activity. This is done by having a general interest in one's job coupled with the need for social support. The third factor explains 13% of dispersion and includes the need for achievement (0.83); motivation towards success (0.77); the need for attention (-0.69). The factor was highlighted as an authentic internal need for achievement in order to attain success in one's activities when there is little need for the attention of those in one's surroundings.

The factorial structure of motivation and success attributes for Russian students are expressed in the following ways: the first factor explains 41% of dispersion and includes success as one's calling (0.88); success as the overcoming of obstacles (0.85); helping others (0.83); avoiding of risks (-0.81); success defined by material aspirations (-0.61). The factor is represented as a deep-founded aspiration towards success in games, success in helping others or success in avoiding risks. The second factor explains 23% of dispersion and includes the desire for attention (0.82); success as a result of one's efforts (0.81); the need to achieve (-0.72); success as authority (-0.71); the need to receive recognition from society (0.64). Factor is interpreted as success in activities that have been randomly directed towards the withdrawal from objective aspirations and authorities owing to the recognition and aspiration to have a sense of order. The third factor explains 11% of dispersion and includes success as a mental state (0.67); success as recognition (0.57); motivation towards success (-0.55); need for social support (-0.55); personal success (0.51). Factor was interpreted as a success that bears little motivation from the internal satisfaction of one's calling in light of a small need for support.

4. Discussion

The results of the study support our hypotheses. There are differences in how success is motivated in view of differing attributes held by Russian and Chinese students. The Russian students compare "success" to someone else's prosperity and values this "success" negatively. This explains the low levels of motivation for success and correlates with the understanding of a feminine culture (Hofstede, 2016). This has confirmed the results of our earlier study on the value system of Russians, Germans, and Chinese (Maercker et al., 2015). To some degree, a slight value on the scale of achievement, hedonism, and self-adjustment for the Russians was highlighted and from the Germans high scores were revealed on the scales representing authority, and stimulation. Despite this, achievement for the Russians and Chinese in contrast to the Germans correlates with mental health level.

Some discrepancy was observed among Russian students where, on the one hand financial motive as a stimulating factor in choosing a future career was more vivid, and on the other hand, there is no correlation in relation to success in professional activities with a high level in materialism. In a definite way, these findings correspond with the results from Osin E., Ivanova T., Gordeeva T. research (2013). Their results suggest that people in Russia who are working primarily for the sake of money can be both satisfied and unsatisfied with himself and with his job. In addition, the results that were found confirms the existence of low tolerance towards uncertainty (Hofstede, 2016).

As representatives of a feminine culture, the Russian students appear to be more motivated to do jobs that avoid risks. They often have a need for attention; they were noted to be more aggressive than the Chinese students were when competing in games. In contrast to the Chinese students who have a moderate to high level of motivation for success, the Russians have a reduced to moderate level for success. The comparative analysis of success attributes reveal that the Russian students that were studied understand success, first of all,

as luck and authority. In light of this and the correlation with restudies conducted before, we can see the possible discontent and eventually the departure from one's job due to the following success attributes (Parsons et al., 1985).

Russian students externalize success and link it to external oriented activities instead of its self-determined process. In the minds of Russian students, success is conceptualized as the unstable, situational result of activities as well as domination due to the observed external achievement and over control. A slight value was found among the Russian students on the scale "success as a mental state". Owing to this, success as the Russian students see it is significantly incoherent with the position of D. McClelland (1987) who understands success as the personal aspiration due to active participation in one's field of work and not the compliments or recognition received from colleagues.

As representatives of a masculine society, Chinese students conceptualize success as recognition, material aspirations, the results of one's own efforts, the overcoming of obstacles. These findings were confirmed in earlier cross cultural studies which revealed that more efforts is utilized in attaining success specifically after failure (Cheng, Shu, Zhou & Lam, 2016). Owing to this and according to D. McClelland, the group internalizes success and links it to the process of one's own active personality, which, to a great extent correlates to their understanding of success at work (McClelland & Boyatzis, 1982). A small value was found on the scales "success as good luck". Chinese students relate success to an internal need for order instead of coincidence and the recognition of other people. From the point of view of professional motivation, the basic similarity includes the preparedness to give help to the representatives of both groups. The last similarity is most likely related to the socio-motivational relationship to success in collectivist cultures of Russia and China.

The differences in the types of motivation that influence the choice in future careers can be seen in the high levels of motivation that Chinese students have based on each scale except the scale pertaining to finances. This fact also coincides with studies conducted on Russian and Chinese workers living in Russia (Vovchemis, 2014). This means that the following is valued more by the Chinese students than the Russian students: promotion, recognition, rewards, goals and responsibility for keeping one's job, one's relationship with the manager, teamwork within the organization. Progress among the Russians pertaining to the aim (working only for the sake of a salary) has been observed (Leontiev, 1975).

However, the other is mostly likely understood as a competitor, claiming the same success but independently of objective aspirations. In this way, the motivation of Chinese graduates from higher learning institutions can be based on the involvement of the group, an understanding of success as the result of the intensive internal effort of every employee. The findings that were collected agree with the position of Hofstede (2016) on the masculinity of China and the femininity of Russia. In the first case, from the standpoint of the management of workers, the difficult work process is the strongest (Zhou & Urhahne, 2013), and in the second case, negotiations and compromises as well as informal settings are all encouraged during work and when problems are being resolved (Hofstede, 2016).

Profits without the guarantee of a prospective stable social position does not constitute a motivating resource for Chinese students. In regards to young Russian employees, success is not seen as self-motivation, as such, an adjustment in the concept of success should be changed (joining success with the active internal locus). A second suggestion regards involving employees in activities with the help of game motives that are infused in a battle setting with competitors that are able to guide aggressive behavior into constructive participation. This is helpful because having autonomy as the main internal locus for success becomes principal for the subjective wellbeing of the young worker (Heidemeier & Wiese, 2014).

Some study limitations merit comment. It would have been desirable to include more participants. The correlational nature of the study forbids making causal inferences. In comparing the self-reported data, that were applied in this study a prototypical analysis of the categories of success would have allowed for more substantial characteristics that are attributable to ethno-cultural groups. Moreover, additional measurements on the scales of masculinity and tolerance towards uncertainty were not conducted. However, the individual

characteristics of the respondents may not coincide with the cultural measuring system of Hofstede (2016).

Future research efforts with the application of experimental studies done with qualitative analysis on a larger sample are needed to overcome the aforementioned limitations for to provide the best understanding of the possible cause and effect relationship between success-attributes and the motivation that influences one's future career in collectivist cultures.

5. Conclusion

There are differences in the understanding of the different categories of success among Russian and Chinese students. Chinese students conceptualize success as an internally motivated journey. Russian students perceive success as the result of externally given fortuitous conditions.

The motivation to achieve success is inherent in the Chinese students as representatives of a masculine culture. Average or moderately high levels of motivation were found among the Russian students. Motivation in avoiding unfortunate instances is attributable to Russian students who represent a culture of low tolerance to avoidance in comparison to the Chinese students. Differences in success attributes among Chinese and Russian students can be considered by the building of a program on motivation in Russo-Chinese companies with the goals of increasing the level of involvement among young employees within the organizational process. In addition, this program can aid in the betterment of their professional and personal lives. With the subjective wellbeing of employees being an advantageous factor for the life of any organization, studying success-attributes and the types of motivations that influence the professional life of employees is pertinent area of study that requires deeper study from the standpoint of ethno-cultural differences.

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