══ ESTUDIOS ══

THE EFFECTS OF CROSS-CULTURAL DIFFERENCES ON CAREER DEVELOPMENT AND VOCATIONAL COUNSELLING: AN EMPIRICAL STUDY OF THE FACTORS INFLUENCING MOTIVATION OF IRISH AND SPANISH WORKERS

EFECTOS DE LAS DIFERENCIAS INTERCULTUALES SOBRE EL DESARROLLO DE LA CARRERA Y LA ORIENTACIÓN VOCACIONAL: UN ESTUDIO EMPÍRICO DE LOS FACTORES QUE INFLUYEN EN LA MOTIVACIÓN HACIA EL TRABAJO DE TRABAJADORES IRLANDESES Y ESPAÑOLES

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ABSTRACT

In age of globalisation, when career opportunities are increasingly sought across national boundaries, cross-national differences may provide valuable insight both for researchers and counsellors practising in a multi-cultural context. This paper gathers empirical evidence of the cross-cultural differences between two samples of Irish and Spanish workers, supporting the culturalist claim that much of the literature in career development and vocational counselling is underpinned by naïve believes about the homogeneity of work related values around the world. A motivation scale was distributed to a random sample of 110 full-time employees of different companies and backgrounds (57 Irish and 53 Spanish). The results indicate that Irish workers are more motivated by social recognition, self-concept maintenance and power than their Spanish counterparts. These work-related values conform to Hofstede's dimensions of masculinity and individualism, and to Schwartz's concept of mastery. The implications of these findings for career development and vocational counselling are discussed.

Key words: cross-cultural differences, work motivation, values, career development, career counselling.

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RESUMEN EN CASTELLANO

En una era marcada por la globalización y en la que cada vez es más común buscar oportunidades laborales fuera de las fronteras nacionales, las diferencias interculturales pueden proporcionar información muy relevante a investigadores y orientadores involucrados en un contexto multicultural. Este artículo reúne evidencia empírica sobre las diferencias en motivación laboral entre dos muestras de trabajadores irlandeses y españoles; y apoya el argumento culturalista de que gran parte de la literatura sobre desarrollo de la carrera y orientación vocacional está fundamentada en creencias ingenuas acerca de la homogeneidad de los valores relacionados con el trabajo alrededor del mundo.

Se han utilizado varios modelos teóricos para interpretar las actitudes de los trabajadores: las dimensiones culturales propuestas por Hofstede (1980) (distancia con la autoridad, evitación de la incertidumbre, individualismo versus colectivismo y masculinidad-feminidad); el concepto de Schwartz de "sociedades de dominio" (1997); los hallazgos de Super en su estudio de la importancia del trabajo (1979) y la teoría de motivación de valor-expectativa (Porter & Lawlar, 1968).

Se distribuyó una escala de motivación a una muestra aleatoria de 110 empleados a tiempo completo de diferentes organizaciones y diferentes características (57 irlandeses y 53 españoles). Los resultados indican que los trabajadores irlandeses muestran mayores niveles de motivación respecto a las variables de reconocimiento social, mantenimiento del auto-concepto y poder; en comparación con la muestra de trabajadores españoles. Estos tres valores laborales se ajustan a las dimensiones de masculinidad e individualismo de Hofstede, y al concepto de dominio propuesto por Schwartz. En otras palabras, las respuestas de los trabajadores irlandeses que participaron en este estudio se ajustan al concepto de "ética del trabajo", es decir, la noción de que el trabajo no es solo respetable sino también virtuoso, y que la ocupación juega un papel muy importante en la identidad personal del individuo (Ferraro, 1990). En contraste, los trabajadores españoles pueden tener mayor tendencia a percibir su trabajo como un medio de supervivencia más que una fuente de dignidad o valía personal, mientras que buscan otras fuentes de identidad y de aprobación externas a este.

Las implicaciones de estos hallazgos en cuestiones relacionadas con el desarrollo de la carrera y la orientación vocacional son múltiples, y están relacionadas con: (a) el uso potencial del instrumento para provocar una discusión más profunda del impacto de las diferencias interculturales; (b) la necesidad de promover prácticas flexibles y centradas en el cliente, y de formar a profesionales culturalmente competentes; y (c) un nuevo paradigma que se aleje de la concepción tradicional de desarrollo de la carrera para acercarse a un concepto más integral de "desarrollo personal a través del trabajo y otros roles vitales", con todas las implicaciones prácticas que ello conlleva.

Background

The globalisation of business is forcing managers and career counsellors to deal with the complexity involved in operating in different countries and with individuals of different nationalities. Managers seek to gain or maintain a competitive advantage, while counsellors attempt to meet the needs and demands of clients in the educational system and the labour market. The question of convergence or divergence in national cultures has puzzled international researchers for many years. It may be that convergence is occurring in relation to the macro-level issues (such as the structure of technology and organisations), whilst diversity remains strong at the level of individual behaviour (Sparrow & Hiltrop, 1994). However, blindness or even hostility to the diversity brought by cultural differences are common attitudes in organisational settings, and by extension, in career development and counselling practices, in spite of the need for integration of differences in the new global scene. In many other cases, when ethnocentrism is not made obvious, differences are accepted only in the shallowest and most token of terms (Moore, 1999: 213).

A vital discourse has appeared in a burgeoning body of professional literature as a result of the criticism of the ethnocentric and stereotypical views of career development and vocational counselling, concerning the relevance of career development, choice and counselling to a culturally diverse workforce. Although career theory and practice have long emphasised person variables, newer career theories and counselling models are emerging to stress contextual, cultural and historical conditions (Hartung, 2002; Schmitt-Rodermund and Silbereisen, 1998). For example, the recent initiative of the IAEVG to create international counsellor qualification standards (Repetto et al., 2003) identifies awareness and appreciation of client cultural differences as a core competency that all practitioners need regardless of their work setting.

It is in light of this culturalist perspective that this research is presented. This paper contributes to the cultural validity of theory and practice across Europe by gathering empirical evidence and reinterpreting work motivation in two samples of Irish and Spanish workers. In the spirit of theory convergence and interdisciplinary knowledge synthesis, the basic tenets of motivational theory are integrated with the growing body of research in cross-cultural differences in order to highlight that much of the literature in career development and vocational counselling is underpinned by naïve believes about the homogeneity of work related values around the world.

Values, expectancies and work motivation

Millions of years of evolution and striving for survival have developed a natural disposition in human beings to be effective and functional in their environments. The ultimate expression of this development is the thesis of the effective motivation approach: People want to be capable members of society, so they are anxious to grasp the aspects of society that are valued (Morley et al., 1998: 58). Most motivation theories, whether need- or content-oriented, are based on this assumption. In a similar vein, Jackson and Carter (2000), grounded in a psychodynamic perspective, claimed that motivation stems from the search for identity on one hand, and the need for positive evaluation from others on the other. Two main implications emerge from this proposed relation between motivation and the self. First, motivation to work is not about the desire to work but about the desire to gain the incentives that working provides. Second, theories of motivation that assume the satisfaction of innate needs are misled, because all needs are social constructions, and therefore, they cannot be universally generalised.

The last decades have seen the growing recognition of expectancies and incentives as the results of the criticism of the mechanistic concepts of habit and drive, and also as attempts to avoid the sweeping generalisations that the content theories tend to use. Breaking with the Darwinian conception of motivation, the process theories of motivation consider that behaviour is more a function of culture and learning than it is fixed by inborn factors (Weiner, 1992: 352). From this perspective, individuals differ vastly in the value they place on variety, responsibility and competence, just as they vary in their need for independence or security.

> *"Values, as broad goals of varying importance… can account for both the initiation and the direction of action. The importance of the values pursued though an action influences the*

> *intensity with which it is carried out and the persistence of action in the face of obstacles. Expectancy-value theories explicate these connections between values and motivation as applied to individual decision making"* (Schwartz, 1997: 71)

Porter and Lawler (1968) presented the most popular version of the valence-incentive-expectancy theory (VIE), drawing from the model conceptualised by Vroom (Pinder, 1998). Their model was based on three key variables: *incentive value* –anticipated satisfaction from an outcome-; *expectancy of performance*– perceived probability that effort will lead to effective performance, or belief in one's capability to perform a task-; and *effort* deployed. There have been few advances in expectancy theory research in the 1990s, although this likely reflects the maturity of the theory (Ambrose, 1999). The substantial testing of the expectancy model with office and factory workers, male and female employees, and employees of different national cultures gives evidence that the model has general applicability to employees in domestic and global work situations (Davis, 1977: 63). The value-expectancy model of motivation has been adopted as the theoretical framework underpinning this piece of research and the instrument used to collect data, and will serve as a heuristic devise to convey the results in a structured and meaningful way.

Cross-cultural effects on work motivation: the cultural theory

Hartung (2002) recently noted that extant theoretical perspectives on career largely continue to incorporate constructs that reflect predominantly person rather than environment variables; including congruence, correspondence, self-concept, learning and cognition, vocational personality style, decision making approach, etc. Despite this continued emphasis on personal variables, recent emerging career theories, along with counselling innovations, demonstrate needed progress in attending to issues of culture and context both conceptually and practically. Cross-cultural psychology increasingly acknowledges that culture imperceptibly, yet powerfully and pervasively, influences human behaviour and interaction; and overcomes simplistic views on *culture* as a synonym for *nation* without any further conceptual grounding.

Two themes in the multicultural career literature underscore and resonate with the prospects for theory-practice enrichment. One theme deals with increasing the cultural validity of theory and practice by reinterpreting career choice and development to mean work as situated within a constellation of human life roles, and a second theme concerns values as a culturally situated variable that is crucial for fully comprehending the meaning of work and career in the contexts of people's lives (Hartung, 2002). Many career theories and counselling approaches converge on values as an important person variable that influences career choice, satisfaction and adjustment. As the most commonly quoted example of a cultural framework, Hofstede's work on cultural dimensions, and its links with other cultural models, will be exposed next.

Based on extensive surveys of employees around the world, Geert Hofstede's (1980, 1984) work represents some of the most extensive research on national cultural differences conducted to date and is a challenge to the conventional wisdom of the Western management theory and practice. He defined four dimensions of core values, in an attempt to explain the general similarities and differences in cultures around the world.

Individualism: Refers to the degree of independence a society maintains among individuals: i.e. the extent to which individuals are expected to care for themselves. A low score in the individualism index corresponds to a collectivist society, in which the need for personal ties is in competition with the desire for personal freedom.

Uncertainty avoidance: Relates to the degree to which society feels uncomfortable with ambiguity and an uncertain future, and as a result prefers rigid and specific codes and rules.

*Power distance*: Refers to the acceptance of hierarchy and unequal power distribution.

Masculinity/femininity: Is the extent to which traditional masculine values of performance, competition and visible achievement are emphasised relative to traditional feminine values such as attaining a higher quality of life and searching for emotional support.

Whilst empirical validation of these dimensions is not complete, the dimensions provide insight into values that may have influence on motivation at work. Hofstede (1992) found that employees did not abandon their culturally specific ways of working when placed within a multinational organisation. Far from reducing national differences, the pressures to conform to a strong organisational culture appeared to maintain and enhance them. For the purpose of the cross-cultural comparison that this study develops, table 1 presents below the scores of Ireland and Spain together with those of Great Britain and the United States:

**TABLE 1: Scores of some countries on each of the cultural dimensions.
Adapted from Hofstede (1984).**

Country	Individualism vs. Collectivism	Uncertainty Avoidance	Power distance	Masculinity vs. Feminity
Great Britain	89	35	35	66
Ireland	70	35	28	68
Spain	51	86	57	42
United States	91	46	40	62

Gupta (2002), who is currently carrying out an ambitious attempt to validate these cultural dimensions and classify countries in clusters accordingly, asserted that in Latin European countries there is a perceived need for collectivism, whilst the "Anglo Cluster" members (i.e., Australia, Canada, England, Ireland and the United States of America) seem to be content with individualistic practices. According to Hofstede (1980: 53), the combination of high uncertainty avoidance with high power distance is commonly found in all Mediterranean countries and favours the perception of a powerful supervisor whom an employee can both praise and blame. Quadrant 1 of figure 1 (upper right-hand corner, in which Ireland appears together with other "Anglo cluster" members such as USA, Great Britain, Canada, Australia and New Zealand) stands for achievement motivation, combining performance plus risk. The countries in the feminine side of the figure distinguish themselves by their focus on quality of life rather than performance, and on relationships between people rather than money and things (Hofstede, 1980: 55). This means social motivation (quality of life plus security) is important to the nations listed in Quadrant 3, where Spain is located together with France, Turkey and Israel, among others.
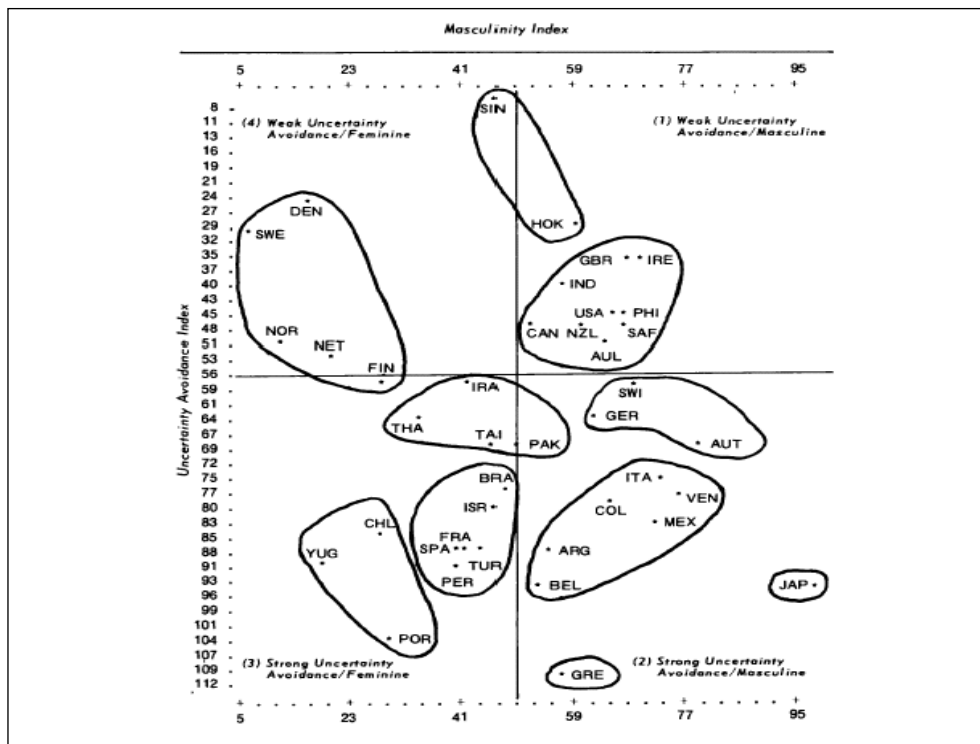
FIGURE 1.
The position of 40 countries on the Uncertainty Avoidance and Masculinity scales
(IRE = Ireland; SPA = Spain). Source: adapted from Hofstede (1984).

Launched in 1979, Super's Work Importance Study (WIS) provides a rich cross-cultural exploration of the life roles and values that people seek in their careers and life in general. Its results have been widely acknowledged for their relevance in career guidance and coun-selling (Sverko, 2001). Super's construct of roles and values make life-span, life-space the-ory and the counselling model it contains more relevant to diverse cultural and ethnic groups (Hartung, 2002). WIS intended to clarify the constructs of work salience (job invol-vement, career commitment, etc.), and to relate them to work values and work motivation (Sverko, 2001). Five value orientations were identified ? utilitarian, self-actualising, indivi-dualistic, social and adventurous ? which are not restricted to a single culture, but seem to be pertinent to human behaviour in general. According to Sverko (2001: 123), the evidence of cross-national universality also has a heuristic significance: the demonstration of facto-rial invariance is a methodological prerequisite for the comparison of the importance levels of the variables. This comparison grouped Canada, USA, South Africa and Australia in a single cluster characterised by a drive for upward mobility; material success and prestige; less emphasis on the less worldly aspects of life; and by role salience stressing the impor-tance of work, as shown by participation, commitment and value expectation (Sverko,

2001: 126). Ireland was not included in the countries sampled in the WIS, but the similarity between Super's cluster and the "Anglo cluster" represented in Quadrant 1 of figure 1, of which Ireland forms part, is outstanding.

Schwartz (1997) also provided with a theoretical framework that has potential for enriching the cultural validity of career theory and practice. Supported by research on samples from 41 countries, he identified 10 value types that evolve around the individualistic-collectivistic dimension. Schwartz introduced the concept of "mastery" in relation to Hofstede's dimensions of masculinity, individuality and low uncertainty avoidance. Mastery cultures encourage people to "bend the world to their will": to assert control through ambition, success, daring and competence. The author stated that the pattern of the English-speaking nations differ substantially from the rest of Western Europe in the importance they attribute to mastery values at the expense of community and commitment to everyone's welfare (1997: 79-80). To some extent, mastery is connected to the concept of work ethic: i.e., the notion that work is not only respectable but also virtuous, and that one's occupation plays a powerful force in shaping an individual's personal identity (Ferraro, 1990). In cultures that attach to mastery and work ethic, work tends to be central in people's lives, whilst high career centrality is not that common in cultures that do not stress mastery.

The vast amount of literature supporting the argument of the cultural theory leads us to expect that the results of this research will reflect those dissimilar assumptions about the ultimate goal of work. In order to operationalise the study, six psychosocial motivating factors have been considered –resulting from the principal components analysis carried out by Fernández (1987)– for comparison purposes: social acceptance, social recognition, self-esteem, self-development, power and security. The relevant hypotheses that are prompted are the following:

H_1: There are differences between Irish and Spanish workers in their expectancy of performance regarding social acceptance, social recognition, self-esteem, self-development, power and security

H_2: There are differences between Irish and Spanish workers in the importance they attach to social acceptance, social recognition, self-esteem, self-development, power and security

H_3: There are differences between Irish and Spanish workers in the effort they deploy to obtain social acceptance, social recognition, self-esteem, self-development, power and security

H_4: There are differences between Irish and Spanish workers in the satisfaction they gain from social acceptance, social recognition, self-esteem, self-development, power and security

Methodology

Measure

The Fernández Seara's Psychosocial Motivation Scale was collected at one point in time for each participant during a five-week period. The instrument, published by TEA in 1987, is made up of 173 items, divided into three sections. The first section (Item 1 to Item 126)

requires a true/false response, depending on whether the subject is in agreement with the statement. The second part focuses on work-related aspects (Items 127 to 147) and is evaluated on an one-dimensional Likert scale with four response categories: not important to me (0), important to me (1), very important to me (2) and extremely important to me (3). The third section evaluates satisfaction with matters related to the subject's life in general, using a scale of five response levels: not satisfied with it (0), slightly satisfied with it (1), satisfied with it (2), very satisfied with it (3) and extremely satisfied with it (4). In the scale, six basic psychosocial motivators are defined:

Social acceptance: Related to integration, affiliation and group membership.

Social recognition: Striving for personal and professional prestige related to a high level of achievement.

Self-esteem: Search for self-concept and self-confidence.

*Self-development: C*oncerns the development of capacities, completion of projects, setting of new objectives, creative expression and initiative. A high interest for self-development is usually connected to positive response to competitiveness and difficult tasks (Fernández Seara, 1987).

Power: Search for means to influence others and attain status, prestige and professional success.

Security: Attachment to stability and status quo.

These motivators are measured in each of the four components defined in VIE theory: subject's cognitive anticipation of to the probability of success or failure in a given task –level of *expectations*–; the importance the subject places on these psychosocial factors –value of *incentives*–; the level of *effort* the individual makes in order to achieve goals; and the degree to which the incentives obtained exceed what the subject considers to be fair or insufficient –level of *satisfaction* (see table 2 about the statistical support for the instrument).

TABLE 2: Statistical description of the Psychosocial Motivational Scale (Fernández Seara, 1987).

The choice of the six psychosocial motivators was done through the principal components analysis technique. Reliability and validity rates were found in a sample of 847 workers. Reliability was demonstrated by the correlations found by the repeated tests technique. The highest correlation was obtained in self-development (.83), and the lowest in satisfaction (.53). Validity was examined through a factorial procedure. The criterion of decision to select the items that compose each factor was saturation higher than .30 in each item.

Research sample

The Psychosocial Motivation Scale was completed by a random sample of 110 full-time employees from different companies and backgrounds on the assumption that the use of a relatively large sample would minimise sampling effects. From a methodological perspective the selection of participants from varying companies can be defended, since it should lead to a decrease in possible contamination of specific organisational factors. Approximately 65% of the administration of the questionnaire took place in the presence of the resear-

cher, who was able to clarify the purpose of the research and explain any doubts. The other 35% of the questionnaires were distributed via e-mail, however each contained a short introduction outlining the purpose of the research and emphasising confidentiality of responses. In the Spanish sample all the administrations took place on an individual basis or were distributed via e-mail –two contacts in the human resources departments of a public hospital and an IT consultancy company were utilised to achieve this. The completion of the questionnaire amongst the Irish sample took place in two group settings through the collaboration of workers enrolled in two part-time postgraduate programmes within the Business School at the University of Limerick (Ireland), who completed the questionnaire and also distributed it among other workers in their respective companies. Given that the researcher availed of the collaboration of a social network for the distribution and administration of the questionnaire, it is difficult to specify the exact response rate, but it is estimated to be between 70 and 80%. The administration of the questionnaire on a one-to-one basis and in a class setting had the advantage of controlling for the self-selection factor that mail responses tend to elicit. Answering the questionnaire took between 20 and 30 minutes. The demographic characteristics –gender, nationality, age, occupation and level of formal studies– are summarised in the appendix. Reasonable care was taken that these demographic characteristics would be equally represented in both national samples.

Data analysis

All the statistical analyses were preceded by rigorous data screening, and all the variables were checked for normality. In order to do so, histograms and Q-Q Plots were examined and Kolmogorov-Smirnov was run to examine goodness of fit. The null hypothesis of normality of the sample distribution was not refused in any case. Although the data yielded by the Psychosocial Motivation Scale may be considered ordinal in nature, it was decided that the analysis of the data would be carried out with parametric tests given the normality of all the variables, the relatively large size of the sample and the fact that mean difference tests carried out with non-parametric test rendered very similar results. The analyses that will be reported next have been conducted with *t* tests to check for statistically significant differences among the Irish and Spanish samples. Linear regression analyses through dummy coding method were carried out to evaluate the effect sizes: i.e., how well the nationality factor predicts the worker's scores on the six psychosocial motivators for each dimension of motivation.

Results and discussion

The analysis of the participants' responses shows that the Irish workers have an overwhelming tendency to score higher in almost all the components of motivation for almost all the variables provided by the scale. In the few cases where differences are not found significant, the means are lower for Spanish workers as well. Figure 2 shows the means for both groups of workers in each of the psychosocial motivators for the four components of motivation, as conceptualised by the VIE theory. The results of each of the hypotheses and the *t* tests and regressions analysis are presented in the appendix.
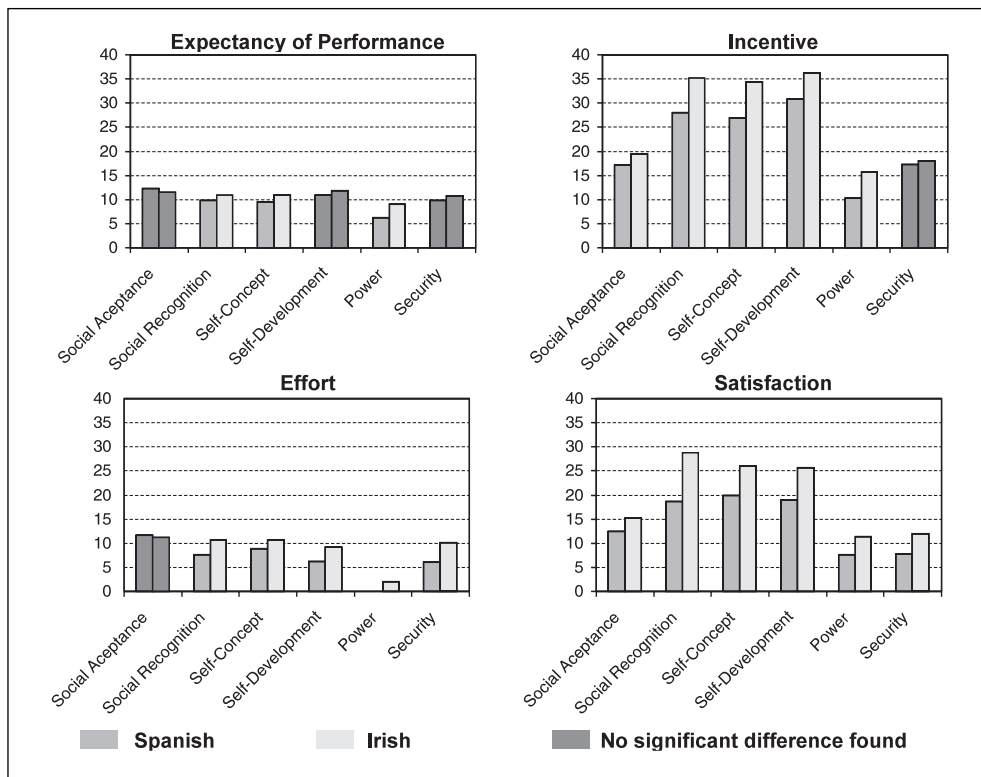
FIGURE 2.
Significantly different means for Irish and Spanish workers.

Although the cultural models previously exposed are far from being completely valida-ted, they may serve as potentially informative frameworks to explain the difference in atti-tudes and values towards work that has been observed between the two national samples as-sessed. The pattern shown by Irish workers –scoring significantly higher on all the motiva-tional dimensions related to social recognition, self-concept maintenance and power than their Spanish counterparts– seems to conform to Hofstede's dimensions of individualism and masculinity (in both, Hofstede found that Ireland scores higher than Spain and other Latin European countries); to Super's cluster of countries characterised by role salience of work (Sverko, 2001); and to Schwartz's concept of mastery. In the individualistic, masculi-ne and mastery cultures individuals are expected to care for themselves and assert control over their environment. As a consequence, values related to performance, assertiveness and ambition are overemphasised.

In comparison, Spanish workers may be willing to work as a means of survival more than to derive dignity or self-worth from it, whilst looking for other sources of identity and acceptance by others beyond work. Their focus could be on quality of life and relationships between people rather than on performance, which confirms Hofstede's (1980) prediction. Also, it is interesting to note that the expectancy of obtaining power is significantly lower

for the Spanish sample of workers, and that nationality in itself can account for 15% of that difference, which matches what is expected from a higher power distance-culture. In order words, the Spanish workers may be more likely to lack of a strong interest on achieving power or challenging the status quo, and even may perceive they are not responsible for –or perhaps capable of– doing so. The existence of a strong hierarchy and unequal distribution of power may contribute to this perception.

However, Irish workers show a contradictory response to what would be expected according to its classification as a low-uncertainty avoidance country. They seem to deploy more effort in the attainment of security, they tend to value it more than their Spanish counterparts, and they appear to be more satisfied with the level of security attained. This concern for security could be interpreted, on one hand, as an indication of the attachment to one's occupation as a source for identity. On the other hand, it highlights the fact that although the findings exposed here may present an informative cross-sectional snapshot of the differences in the various dimensions of work motivation for both groups, they require extensive replication and the use of a phenomenological approach.

Limitations and cautionary points

In defining the research problem, a series of restrictions have been assumed in order to delimitate the scope of the study, while being conscious that the analyses we have reported here only begins to scratch the surface of a very complex reality. Also, extensive replication is desirable, as is further exploration, through richer and contextualised data, of underlying dynamics affecting motivation cross-culturally. These limitations concern the following issues:

A local and simplistic picture of motivational factors?

A case could be made that, in the absence of statistical validation of the Psychosocial Motivational Scale in an Irish context; the six motivational factors provided by the instrument may be relevant only to the specific cultural context in which they were identified. However, comprehensive cross-cultural studies have observed that value orientations are not restricted to a single culture, but seem to be pertinent to human behaviour in general. For example, the factorial invariance of the five value orientations identified in the Work Importance Study (Super, 1995) have been supported by samples in numerous countries numbering over 30,000 subjects (Sverko, 2001).

It could also be argued that the six factors of motivation that are provided by the scale may represent a limited picture of the whole range of possible constituents of the motivational force; yet developing cumbersome lists of motivational factors would hardly contribute to shedding any further light on the dynamics concerning worker motivation among multinational employees.

Delimitation of the scope of the study

The cultural dimensions proposed by Hofstede and Schwartz emerge as potentially useful frameworks to interpret the nature of the differences on motivation observed, but theirs

is not the only theory that could be applied; moreover, theirs is possibly not sufficient on its own. Although the distribution of the sample is reasonably homogeneous regarding occupation, educational level, gender, age and working experience, other variables that are beyond the scope of this study could account for the large remaining unexplained variance in the differences in motivation observed. Industrial relations systems; people management styles; working status; family responsibilities; characteristics of the labour markets; diverse sources of socialisation –such as family, educational system and advertising– and the impact of the management practices and productivity demands brought by American-based multinational companies to the Irish context in the last fifteen or twenty years are some examples. In this sense, Altman's (1993) allusion to culture as a cooking recipe is a colourful allusion to the complexity and multidimensionality of the concept:

> *For training purposes, I often employ the following definition, an allusion to baking a soufflé:*
>
> *"Recipe for culture". Ingredients: One core cultural model (one basic assumption)*
> *Two generations (min.) of industrial relations*
> *Three to four major economic sectors*
> *Half a dozen popular attitudes to key social questions*
>
> *... serve while hot: results are valid for only a decade!* (Altman, 1993)

Avoid sweeping generalisations

Every effort must be made not to pigeonhole isolated individuals, nor draw predictions of behaviour without consideration of the wider context –for example, assuming that Spaniards are not industrious in comparison to the Irish sample. Instead, the differences found should be interpreted as an indication that culture has an important bearing on the perception of work outcomes. In fact, the Spanish participants of this study may engage in more hard work per day than their Irish counterparts as a result of organisational or macro-level factors– we should take into account that the Spanish job market is one of the most unstable in Europe, the rate of unemployment is higher and precarious and temporary labour is widespread. The extent to which attitudes towards work and even the level of motivation will be reflected in behaviours among employees cannot be certain, but it seems clear that an attempt to introduce a global and generic approach to career development and career counselling is likely to fail.

Implications for human resource development practices

Potential uses of the instrument

The scale used in this study is a potentially useful springboard for a broader discussion of cross-cultural differences and their impact on career development and career counselling practices. Peters and Lippitt (1978) noted that motivation instruments, translated for a particular culture, might have many advantages, such as (a) increase of people's involvement in the learning/action process; (b) efficiency of administration and economic value, in comparison with the utilisation of consultants or lengthy interviews; (c) variety of utilisation –instruments can be used to provide a trend that can be diagnostic; availability of immediate fe-

edback; raise awareness about assumptions, feelings or beliefs; educate; offer direction and serve as an stimulus for corrective action; and (d) a degree of objectivity and opportunity for comparison between individuals.

However, in using any self-report measure an uncritical endorsement of instruments should be avoided as much as possible. The scale used in this study has been preceded by statistical tests on validity and reliability, and every effort has been made to translate the concepts accurately, but this does not necessarily mean that the scale reveals scientifically valid results concerning deep-seated, profound differences in motivation among different countries. However, the instrument should be considered an "enabler" in offering insight in cross-cultural differences on motivation that reflect cultural, political and economic dynamics.

Need for flexible practices and culturally competent professionals

Career development theories may contain cultural bias themselves, but researchers and practitioners have also long held a basic philosophical mind-set of monoculturalism. "Cultural encapsulation" is common because the culture to which we belong is such a part of our functioning that we seldom are conscious of it. Yet, in an age of globalisation, when career opportunities are more than ever sought across national boundaries, this is not a valid stance any more. For example, Carter (1991: 170) noted that because of the conflicts in cultural values, culturally different individuals may perceive professional counselling as another form of institutionalised control aimed at forcing the client to conform to the social and psychological values of the dominant culture. Also, previous studies in cross-cultural differences (Malach, 2003) have indicated that in individualistic and small power-distance cultures, people are more likely to turn to professional career counsellors.

As a result, there is a growing need to move away from a counsellor-centred approach, to a client-centred one to ensure cognitive involvement. The focus should not be only on sensitising professionals to cultural difference, but also on assessing their own cultural values and attitudes. Yet, the training of professional psychologists, counsellors and educators typically does not include didactic or practical instruction in cross-cultural education or counselling that provides positive and useful knowledge of their own cultures so that they are able to recognise the potential conflicts. In relation to this, the APA Division 17 position paper on cross-cultural counselling competencies outlined three areas of capability of the culturally skilled counselling psychologist (Sue et al., 1982). The first area, which concerns beliefs and attitudes, requires that the counsellor be culturally aware, in touch with his or her won biases about minority or foreign clients, comfortable with such differences, and sensitive to circumstances that may require the referral of minority clients to a same-culture counsellor. The second area consists of knowledge, including understanding of the effects of the socio-political system, culture-specific knowledge about the particular group being counselled and knowledge of institutional barriers to minorities. Finally, the culturally skilled counsellor should have a wide repertoire of verbal and nonverbal responses and the ability to send messages accurately. In this sense, D'Andrea and Daniels (1991) outlined a developmental framework that describes the types of training available to counselling students (see table 3):

The authors note that competent cross-cultural trainers in programs at Stage 3 of this model must be (p. 82):

TABLE 3: Levels of multicultural counselling training: a developmental perspective. Adapted from D'Andrea and Daniels (1991).

Level	Characteristics	Stages	Characteristics
Level 1: the Cultural Encapsulation Level	• Transmission of knowledge based on the trainers' social stereotypes • Ignorance of cultural differences • Ethnocentric definition of career success • Traditional professional role focusing on the intrapsychic sources of problems	**Stage 1: the Culturally Entrenched Stage**	• Culturally diverse perspectives are rarely incorporated • Trainers encourage trainees to be like themselves
		Stage 2: the Cross-Cultural Awakening Stage	• Instructors agree that traditional counselling approaches are general and simplistic, but are unable to elaborate upon differences in any systematic or substantial manner • Poorly prepared to deal with the barriers inherent in intercultural interactions
Level 2: the Conscientious Level	• Institutional changes are made to guarantee that students receive multicultural counselling training in a systematic manner	**Stage 3: the Cultural Integrity Stage**	• Inclusion of a cross-cultural counselling course in the core curriculum, which emphasise: (a) the acquisition of cross-cultural communication skills; (b) the need to become more aware of one's attitudes toward other cultures and (c) the importance of increasing counsellor's knowledge about diverse cultural populations
		Stage 4: the Infusion Stage	• Further advancement and support for multiculturalism, multicultural training is placed at the core of the counselling curriculum • Infusing the total program with attention to the unique needs of special populations

- Aware of their own values and biases;
- Aware of how their own values may affect clients from diverse cultural backgrounds and comfortable with the differences;
- Sensitive to circumstances that may dictate referral of the client to a member of is or her own culture;

- Informed about particular cultural-racial and socioeconomic groups and cognizant of how the socio-political system operate in different countries;
- Aware of the institutional barriers that non nationals or minorities may be facing;
- Effective in demonstrating ways in which counsellors may send and receive verbal and nonverbal messages accurately

Two training techniques have gained prominence in organisational psychology in an attempt to sensitise counsellors to cultural difference (McRae & Johnson, 1991): the *Intercultural Sensitizer*, previously known as the *Cultural Assimilator* –which prepares individuals to react to specific cultural situations or that involve *critical incidents* with a focal cultural group–; and the *Contrast American Method* –which stresses the role of behaviour and values in interpersonal interactions and provides a format to understand the therapist-client relationship. The development of similar techniques in a European context, which is quite different both within and between countries from the American perspective, would be desirable to help counsellors to examine their own cultural values, promote self-awareness and knowledge that helps them to listen and gather information without imposing their own cultural assumptions. It seems that the next step is to develop models for counsellor training that include four basic components (see figure 3):
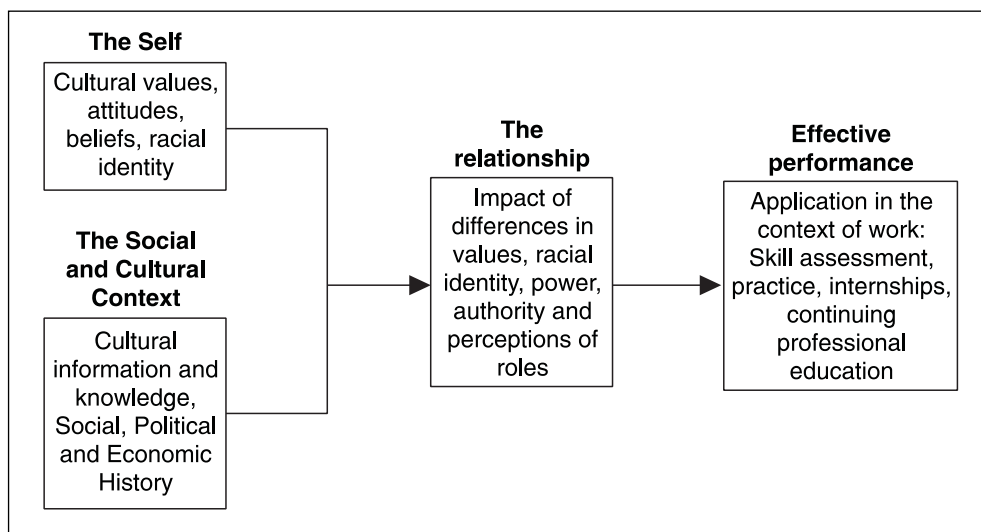
FIGURE 2.
Dimensions of competence in Multicultural Counselling. McRae & Johnson (1991: 134).

Career planning and career management

Cross-cultural differences may influence career development across a wide range of practices related both to career planning and career management. With regard to career planning, the implications revolve around the need to raise awareness of motivations and

address expectations. Some approaches to career planning focus primary attention on the achievement of financial and employment outcomes only, such as promotions and financial wealth. To be effectual, career plans should address the key life goals that we have learnt by socialisation. In line with Garavan's (1990) recommendations, the findings of this study could mean that Irish workers should broaden their concept of a career and begin to recognise that advancement is not always possible. Also, Spanish workers may need to realise that they should be involved in career development decisions, and that if this does not occur they may feel that career activities are imposed, especially if they are unrelated to personal aspirations.

With reference to career management, the issues affected by cross-cultural differences are various. One example is career advancement: intensive fast-track oriented approaches are likely to better suit cultures where individuals tend to focus their lives around their professional careers than in cultures where the priority tend to be focused on the quality of life and the relationships between people. International assignments are another example: cross-cultural differences have logical impacts in the effective adjustment of sojourners, yet the managerial literature generally acknowledges that expatriates are regularly assigned to all parts of the world without any cross-cultural preparation (Selmer, 2000; Morley and Flynn, 2003). Garavan (1990) raised an interesting question about the potential degree of motivation and commitment of an employee towards career development activities provided by the organisations that do not meet personal needs. From the perspective of the influence of cultural values on work motivation, it is fundamental that the individual be actively involved in decisions about career development –development contracts could prove useful in this sense. Paths imposed by the organisation that are incompatible with culturally bound motivations are likely to fail. As Hartung (2002: 16) has recently noted, this new perspective calls for a paradigm shift from talking about *career development*, with its socioeconomic status, educational, and privilege implications, to *development through work and other life roles*, which may be more relevant to people from diverse social statuses and cultural backgrounds.

Conclusion

Motivation models, which revolve around theories mostly American in origin, have been criticised for being a form of ideological neocolonialism that ignores that theories are social constructs, and that other realities also exist (Johnson, 1991). In the US, from where a great deal of this models emanate, the strongest form of motivation is the internal need to gain self-respect, to climb the organisational ladder –to "make it" (Johnson, 1991:15). This value system is typically individualistic in orientation, is embodied in autonomous, "agentic" individuals who construe the self as independent. This differs qualitatively from a collectivist value orientation in which dependent, communal and in-group oriented individuals construe the self as interdependent (Hartung, 2002). In these societies, motivation may be more externally directed; people feel obligations to the groups to which they belong, such as their family, and seek status within groups rather than self-realisation. An uncritical application of human resource development practices worldwide could be ignoring deep assumptions regarding the traditional relation each national culture has with authority, control systems and cultural expectations and how these factors affect a given culture's ap-

prehension of career development and career counselling practices. It may be more useful for professionals to develop local approaches instead of attempting to treat workers or clients based on the values and norms acceptable to the "coloniser" (McKenna, 1998). Yet, the particular lens of our own culture, and of our position in it, imparts a bias from which there is no escape. The first implication, therefore, is that we must accept that we are not objective; and second, that there is a direct relationship between the depth of understanding of our –conscious and unconscious– biases and our ability to unimposingly hear and help those who do not share our culturally derived views (Hoare, 1991). It is possible that, in this era of globalisation, Shewder's (1991) statement is more valid than ever: *When people live in the world differently, it may be that they live in different worlds.*

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APPENDIX

Demographic details of the participants

Demographic characteristic		Frequency	%
Gender	Male	39	35.5
	Female	71	64.5
Nationality	Irish	57	51.8
	Spanish	53	48.2
Age	20 to 29	64	58.2
	30 to 39	27	24.5
	40 to 49	13	11.8
	50 to 59	6	5.5
Occupation	Managers, professionals and technical staff	46	41.8
	Blue collar, clerical and unskilled workers	61	55.5
Educational level	Primary School	18	16.4
	Second Level	28	25.5
	Third Level	64	58.2

Acceptance or rejection of individual hypothesis tested

Hypothesis derived		Support
H_1: There are differences between Irish and Spanish workers in their expectancy of performance regarding:	Social acceptance Social recognition Self-esteem Self-development Power Security	Rejected **Accepted** **Accepted** Rejected **Accepted** Rejected
H_2: There are differences between Irish and Spanish workers in the importance they attach to:	Social acceptance Social recognition Self-esteem Self-development Power Security	**Accepted** **Accepted** **Accepted** **Accepted** **Accepted** Rejected
H_3: There are differences between Irish and Spanish workers in the effort they deploy to obtain:	Social acceptance Social recognition Self-esteem Self-development Power Security	Rejected **Accepted** **Accepted** **Accepted** **Accepted** **Accepted**
H_4: There are differences between Irish and Spanish workers in the satisfaction they gain from:	Social acceptance Social recognition Self-esteem Self-development Power Security	**Accepted** **Accepted** **Accepted** **Accepted** **Accepted** **Accepted**

Significantly different means by nationality (p < .05), and percentage of the variance of the six psychosocial motivators for each dimension of motivation that can be accounted by nationality (R^2)

Dimension	Motivator	Mean Irish	Mean Spanish	F	t	p	R2
Expectancy of performance	Social acceptance	12.26	11.54	/	/	/	/
	Social recognition	9.77	10.94	3.90	−1.97	.050	4
	Self-concept	9.45	10.96	5.65	−2.37	.019	5
	Self-development	10.94	11.86	/	/	/	/
	Power	6.15	8.98	19.05	−4.36	<.001	15
	Security	9.81	10.70	/	/	/	/
Valence attributed or Incentive	Social acceptance	17.16	19.45	13.65	−3.69	< .001	11
	Social recognition	28.01	35.15	24.74	−4.97	< .001	19
	Self-concept	26.90	34.33	26.26	−5.12	< .001	20
	Self-development	30.77	36.19	17.72	−4.21	< .001	14
	Power	10.2	15.70	34.30	−5.85	< .001	24
	Security	17.20	18.01	/	/	/	/
Effort deployed	Social acceptance	11.69	11.28	/	/	/	/
	Social recognition	7.60	10.68	10.56	−3.25	.002	9
	Self-concept	8.86	10.77	5.12	−2.26	.026	5
	Self-development	6.22	9.24	8.97	−2.10	.003	8
	Power	0.05	2.03	15.02	−3.87	< .001	12
	Security	6.13	10.17	16.32	−4.04	< .001	13
Satisfaction experienced	Social acceptance	12.49	15.26	11.70	−3.42	.001	10
	Social recognition	18.60	28.87	14.87	−3.87	< .001	12
	Self-concept	19.92	26.00	14.22	−3.77	< .001	12
	Self-development	18.96	25.73	15.56	−3.94	< .001	13
	Power	7.66	11.31	19.69	−4.43	< .001	15
	Security	7.83	12.05	22.90	−4.78	< .001	17

Percentages of variance of each dimension of motivation as conceptualised in expectancy theory of motivation for each of the six psychosocial motivators considered on the scale