
T. BRANDT • DR. SC. (IN ECON.) SENIOR RESEARCHER • UNIVERSITY OF VAASA, DEPARTMENT OF MANAGEMENT AND ORGANIZATION

JORGE F.S. GOMES • Dr. Sc. (IN BUSINESS) SENIOR LECTURER • CIS/ISCTE-LUI and ISEG/TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY OF LISBON

D. BOYANOVA • PH.D IN PSYCHOLOGY • BULGARIAN ACADEMY OF SCIENCES INSTITUTE OF PSYCHOLOGY, DEPARTMENT OF COGNITIVE PSYCHOLOGY AND PSYCHOLOGICAL MEASUREMENT

Personality and psychological capital as indicators of future job success?

A multicultural comparison between three European countries

The study presented here is focused on psychological capital and personality characteristics in three different European cultures. The aim is to combine psychological capital with

personality in order to offer a new, refreshing approach to work performance and job success. The relationships between personality and psychological capital, as well as the specifics of psychological capital in terms of different cultures have been somewhat addressed in previous studies, but a research over the interrelations between psychological capital, cultural differences and personality is still in its very initial stage.

A quantitative method of research was applied. The participating countries were selected as representatives of three European regions – Latin/Southern (Portugal), Nordic/Northern (Finland), and Slavic/Eastern (Bulgaria). The sample consisted of students in psychology and economics courses. Two instruments were employed – Myers-Briggs Type Indicator and a Psychological capital questionnaire. In the first case, three different versions of the test were used (depending on the availability in the corresponding country). In the second case the psychometric qualities of the measures were reported, revealing that the theoretical components of psychological capital are in general appropriately captured.

Results showed some differences between the three cultures. Students from Bulgaria and Portugal favored more iNtuition, whereas students from Finland were predominantly Sensing ones. Bulgarian students differed from others with regard to the Extraversion-Introversion and Judging-Perceiving axes: they are more Introverted and Judging than Finnish and Portuguese students. Considering psychological capital, data suggested that the three countries differ in all variables except self-efficacy. More precisely, Finnish respondents rated themselves lowest in every dimension. The highest difference is shown on the Optimism scale, with the Portu-

EXECUTIVE SUMMARIES

guese scoring markedly higher than the Finnish.

When personality type was linked to psychological capital, it was revealed that personality preferences had shown similar tendencies related to psychological capital, especially in Finland and Portugal. In both countries Extraverted, iNtuitive, Thinking and Perceiving types had higher values in psychological capital than their counterparts (Introverted, Sensing, Feeling and Judging types). More precisely, Portuguese Perceiving types have the highest psychological capital (Bulgarian sensing types were also high in their psychological capital but the sample is too small to make a general conclusion). The Finnish introverted types scored the lowest in all psychological capital dimensions.

The results suggest that there is relationship between personality and psychological type in different cultural contexts, which prompts for further investigation. Also, an important practical implication is that personalities from cultures with low psychological capital may experience difficulties being expatriates in high psychological capital cultures. Thus, future studies might focus on adaptability of psychological capital qualities and some strategies that could be learned from different cultures and personalities in economic context. ■