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Karin Khouri, B.Sc.

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Univ.-Prof. Mag. Dr. Bernhard Kittel

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List of abbreviations

EJC	Extrinsic Job Characteristics
FEACO	Fédération Européenne des Associations de Conseils en Organisation (European Federation of Management Consultancies Associations)
GNI	Gross National Income
HRM	Human Resource Management
IJC	Intrinsic Job Characteristics
ILO	International Labour Organization
M&A	Mergers and Acquisitions
MAS	Management Advisory Services
MBA	Master of Business Administration
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development

1. Introduction

Although the beginnings of consulting services can be traced back to the mid-nineteenth century, it was not until after the second world war that the demand rose for consulting services focusing on more than the enhancement of efficiency. Ever since, new firms providing management advisory services (MAS) emerged, and firms from other industries have incorporated advisory services into their offer (Ferguson, 2002). For example, since the late 1970s, MAS have increasingly become important separate units with broad service portfolios within Certified Public Accounting (CPA) firms (Rahman & Zanzi, 1995).

Today, numerous firms are offering consulting services. The top 20 large and larger medium-sized firms, which dominate the market, are “almost exclusively international players in the full sense of the word: not only do they export their services from one country to another, but they also have offices with local employees in several countries” (Dickmann, Graubner, & Richter, 2006, p. 53). Thus, most regions in the world are affected by the internationalization of the consulting industry (Dickmann et al., 2006, p. 57).

As the industry grows, employment in MAS is rising. In Europe, for example, employment in management consulting reached a growth rate of 5.2% in 2018 (FEACO, 2019, p. 19). For highly educated and skilled candidates with various experiences and academic backgrounds, consulting companies offer increasingly relevant entry points to formal employment (Ruef, 2002). Consequently, consultancies play a critical role in shaping the career perspectives, expectations and skills of young professionals. These persons often become part of managerial elites in businesses or public spheres (Kipping & Engwall, 2002).

Still, little is known about human resource management (HRM) practices in consulting. “Most of what has become public information about consulting firms is based on anecdotal evidence. Both theoretical approaches that would explain variations in HRM approaches and reliable empirical evidence on this issue are largely lacking” (Richter, Dickmann, & Graubner, 2008, p. 185). Moreover, Mohe (2008) points out that the new publications on management consulting lack sensibility towards intercultural aspects in particular.

Similarly, little is known about employee motivation in MAS jobs. It is noteworthy that, in general, the development of work motivation theories slowed down towards the end of the 20th century.

This might be surprising, considering that the beginning of the 21st century was marked by great changes in the workplace, which include technological developments and increasingly globalized economic activities (Steers, Mowday, & Shapiro, 2004, pp. 383–384). In addition to that, understanding whether and how national context shapes employees' views becomes crucial as more and more companies become internationally active (Wharton & Blair-Loy, 2002). Thus, methods to attract, motivate and retain employees urgently need to be revised in the new work context. After all, a motivated workforce is central to generating and sustaining a competitive advantage (Steers et al., 2004).

In light of the previously presented scale and societal role of management consulting, this study is interested in examining employee motivation in consulting jobs in their cultural and socio-economic context. This thesis is particularly relevant to researchers, consulting companies, multinational firms as well as to people pursuing a career in consulting. First, organizational researchers are interested in the topic to construct useful management practice theories (Steers et al., 2004). Second, this thesis can help advisory companies – as part of a sector with high employee turnover (Dickmann et al., 2006) –, to understand better how their employees are motivated and retained. This understanding is important, since the success of advisory firms depends on the successful management of human resources (Teece, 2003). Furthermore, the matter is relevant to further multinational professional service firms offering MAS, which want to improve their performance incentive systems. As motivation is considered by managers as explanatory for performance (Steers et al., 2004), they might have a high interest in the topic at hand. Lastly, it might be of interest to those who want to pursue a career in consulting, as it sheds a better light on the working conditions in this profession.

Before diving into the topic, the concept of motivation must be understood. While many definitions of motivation exist, they are united by their interest in elements that “energize, channel, and sustain human behavior over time” (Steers et al., 2004, p. 379). In the work context, motivation “is a set of energetic forces that originate both within as well as beyond an individual's being, to initiate work-related behavior, and to determine its form, direction, intensity, and duration” (Pinder, 2008, p. 11). In order to investigate the research topic, this thesis will draw on theories that attempt to explain human needs, the processes related to their satisfaction as well as the implications for work design. Furthermore, a framework by Huang and van de Vliert (2003) is presented, which permits to systematically integrate socio-economic and cultural factors into existing research on work

motivation. Although Huang and van de Vliert's work focuses on explaining cross-national variations of job satisfaction, and not explicitly of job motivation, this thesis argues that their research is also of practical use in the explanation of work motivation.

In an article fully dedicated to the understanding of job satisfaction, Locke defines this term as “the pleasurable emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job as achieving or facilitating the achievement of one's job values”, whereas job dissatisfaction is “the unpleasurable emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job as frustrating or blocking the attainment of one's job values or as entailing disvalues” (1969, p. 316).

We can see that while the definition of job satisfaction refers to an emotional state, the definition of work motivation is interested in behavioral outcomes. Empirical evidence, which will be presented in the following chapter, points to the link between job satisfaction and job commitment, which can be understood as entailing both attitudinal and behavioral elements (Mowday, Porter, & Steers, 1982, p. 26). Therefore, it seems logical to argue that the knowledge of job satisfaction levels is useful in drawing conclusions on commitment, and implicitly on motivation levels as well.

The research question “*What determines employee motivation in management advisory jobs in different nations?*” will be investigated in consideration of Huang and van de Vliert's study (2003). Their research was interested in explaining how national factors influence workers' satisfaction with intrinsic and extrinsic job characteristics. According to their findings, intrinsic job characteristics have a positive effect on job satisfaction and this effect is moderated by national variables, namely national wealth, social security, cultural power distance and cultural individualism. Moreover, the study indicates that in countries with both low social security and low power distance, intrinsic rewards might not work well in producing satisfaction. The first hypothesis respects these findings:

H1: Intrinsic job characteristics contribute stronger to the job motivation of management advisors in countries with lower power distance as well as higher national wealth, social security and individualism.

Furthermore, Huang and van de Vliert's results show that the positive effect of extrinsic job characteristics on job satisfaction does not vary significantly across countries, which is reflected in the second hypothesis:

H2: Extrinsic job characteristics contribute equally to the job motivation of management advisors across countries.

In order to understand whether and how the results of Huang and van de Vliert's quantitative study apply to the case of job motivation in management consulting jobs, an exploratory approach is chosen. The research question will be investigated qualitatively by evaluating interviews on the motivations of Mexicans and Germans employed in consulting jobs. The countries were chosen because of their clearly distinct national characteristics in terms of the four moderator variables mentioned above. Being the wealthier country, Germany has a more elaborated social protection system than Mexico (ILO, 2017). Moreover, Germany's culture is marked by higher individualism and lower power distance than the Mexican culture (Hofstede, Hofstede, & Minkov, 2010). Therefore, comparative research related to these two countries is likely to allow deeper insight into if and how the hypotheses on cross-national motivation can be supported.

The thesis is structured as follows. First, popular theories on work motivation – which were chosen for their usefulness in providing frameworks to answering the research question – will be presented. Second, it will be shown that the theories relate to another and to what extent the theories are supported by empirical research. Then, research on socio-economic and cultural factors will be integrated into work motivation theories, leading to the development of hypotheses for the research case at hand. Next, the qualitative research design and evaluation methodology is explained in detail. Descriptions of socio-economic and cultural indicators for both Germany and Mexico follow and help to analyze and interpret the qualitative material in its context. Then, findings are analyzed and interpreted along categories that were derived deductively from preliminary research as well as inductively from the analyzed material (Mayring, 2010). Lastly, a brief summary of the conducted research and a conclusion are provided.

2. Theoretical framework and relevant preliminary research

2.1. Theories on work motivation

The purpose of the theories presented in this chapter is two-fold. On the one hand, evidence on the theories permits the formulation of expectations on work motivation in cross-national settings. On the other hand, the theories are used to interpret research results based on concepts that are established in scientific literature.

Latham and Pinder (2005) provide a review of work motivation theories, grouping the theories into need-based and cognitive theories, amongst others. In the following, the emergence of these two groups of theories will be briefly traced back. In addition to that, work design theories will complement the understanding of motivation in the work context.

Need theories are content theories which emerged in the 1950s and that intend to identify human needs that explain work motivation. The need theories of Maslow (1943) and McClelland (1961) can be assigned to this group of theories. Both theories are concerned with individual variations of motivation levels (Steers et al., 2004, p. 381).

In the following years research emerged, which approached work motivation from another perspective, seeking to understand how the nature of a person's work and the work context affect motivation and performance levels (Steers et al., 2004, p. 381). With motivation-hygiene theory, Herzberg (Herzberg, Mausner, & Snyderman, 1959; Herzberg, 1966) laid the foundation of job design as a key driver of work motivation and attitudes (Steers et al., 2004, p. 381). Hackman and Oldham (1976) took up Herzberg's line of research with the aim of extending and refining the explanation of internal motivation.

The 1960s marked beginning of a "golden age" of motivation theories, in which process theories, that approached work motivation from a significantly more dynamic perspective than previously published theories, were developed. Process theories include a range of cognitive theories, of which expectancy theory is probably the most known and was first systematically presented by Vroom (Vroom, 1964; Steers et al., 2004, p. 382). Another theory that first emerged in in the 60s is goal-setting theory (Locke, 1968). Ever since, the theory has been extended, thereby integrating complementary research (Locke & Latham, 1990a).

Since Maslow's need theory, Vroom's expectancy theory as well as Locke and Latham's goal-setting theory can be considered the most influential theories related to work motivation (Latham & Pinder, 2005, p. 507), they will be presented in the following. In addition to that, the three further theories were selected according to their prominence in the literature on work motivation as well as their practicability in answering the research question. As this chapter will show, McClelland's theory is not only popular in work motivation research (Steers et al., 2004, p. 381), but can also provide a useful concept for the description of consultants' motivation in particular. Moreover, the previously mentioned theories of Herzberg as well as Hackman and Oldham are included due to

their practical approaches that explain job satisfaction starting from job characteristics. Both theories have been highly influential in the field of work design research (e.g. Hackman & Oldham, 1976; Ferris & Fried, 1987).

After a brief description the theories, the relationships between them will be discussed and the most relevant evidence in support of them will be laid out. Evidence is considered relevant as far as it is related to the theoretical framework the hypotheses are built upon.

2.1.1. Maslow's need theory

Central to Maslow's theory of human motivation (1943) is the concept that there are five basic human needs that are arranged in a hierarchical order. Maslow suggests that humans first thrive for the satisfaction of physiological needs, followed by safety, love, esteem and self-actualization goals. The first three needs in the hierarchy represent deficiency needs, which must be addressed in order to enable the development of a healthy personality. The last two needs are growth needs that refer to individual development and achievement. Maslow states that the main motivators for human behavior are not the needs that have already been satisfied to large parts. Instead, the human mind tends to be occupied by the first need on the hierarchical ladder that could not be sufficiently served yet. Once satisfaction is reached, the human focus moves on to the need that is next in the hierarchical order (Steers et al., 2004). The man, concludes Maslow, is therefore "a perpetually wanting animal" (Maslow, 1943, p. 395).

2.1.2. McClelland's need for achievement theory

McClelland's need theory represents one of the earliest works on work motivation and individual differences (Lundberg, Gudmundson, & Andersson, 2009, p. 892). McClelland (1961) believed that all humans have three dominant needs, namely the needs for achievement, growth and affiliation. Further, he explains that the perceived importance of those needs differs between individuals and cultures: a person's experiences and cultures shape the strength of each need. McClelland states that these needs motivate a person, inducing behavior to satisfy them.

2.1.3. Herzberg's motivation-hygiene theory

In a practical approach, motivation-hygiene theory was originally developed based on an extensive review of job satisfaction studies and was tested through the examination of themes in interviews on events causing job satisfaction or dissatisfaction (Herzberg et al., 1959). On this basis, motivation-hygiene theory argues that the variables causing satisfaction are different from those

causing dissatisfaction (see also Herzberg, 1966). On the one hand, so-called motivators are responsible for the sensation of satisfaction and motivation. Examples of motivators include interesting tasks, learnings, achievement, responsibility or recognition. On the other hand, hygiene factors are necessary to prevent dissatisfaction but cannot cause satisfaction. Here, pay levels, job security, working conditions or company policies (such as the reward system) can be listed as examples. Both motivators and hygiene factors must be respected in order to promote employees' satisfaction.

The underlying idea of the theory is that persons' needs can be classified into two different sets, which can be addressed by elements of the work situation (Wright, 1989 as cited in Lundberg et al., 2009, p. 891). First, hygiene factors address survival needs. They are concerned with the conditions in which a job is performed. Second, growth needs are addressed by motivator factors such as work content, responsibility or recognition (Herzberg, 1966).

2.1.4. Hackman and Oldham's job characteristics theory

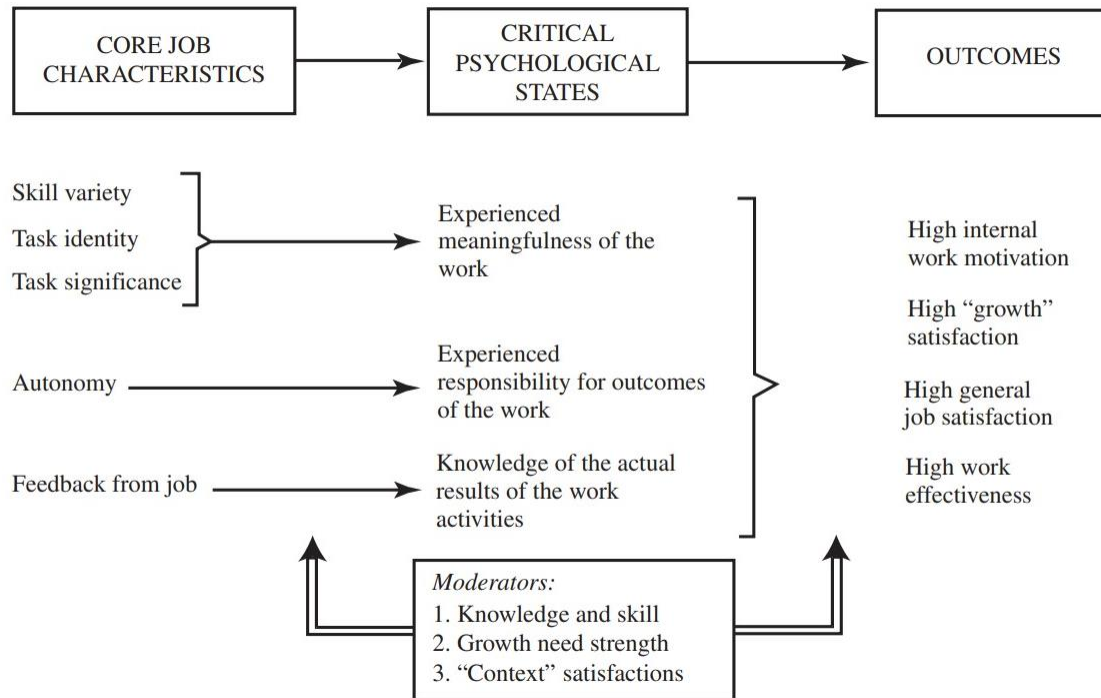
Hackman and Oldham's theory on work design (e.g. 1974; 1976; 1980) suggests that job characteristics are responsible for employees' reactions to work situations. The main argument is that increased challenge and complexity of jobs result in higher job satisfaction, motivation and work performance. The theory as well as the complementary job diagnostics survey (Hackman & Oldham, 1974) suggest assessing job characteristics along five core job dimensions (Figure 1):

- skill variety, i.e. the variety of tasks and the need to use different skills in their fulfillment;
- task identity, i.e. the degree to which work outcomes can be assessed;
- task significance, i.e. the impact the work has on lives inside or outside the organization;
- autonomy, i.e. the independence and freedom employees have in choosing strategies to organize and fulfil their tasks;
- feedback, i.e. the employees' knowledge of the quality of their performance.

Job characteristics theory argues that these five factors induce three critical psychological states: experienced meaningfulness of work, experienced responsibility for work outcomes and knowledge of the results of work-related activities. The psychological states have consequences for satisfaction related to personal and growth outcomes. This means that they affect internal work motivation, work performance, satisfaction and absenteeism. The exact relationship between job characteristics and the psychological states on the one hand, and the psychological states with work

outcomes on the other hand, are moderated by three factors: knowledge and skill, growth need strength, and context satisfaction.

Figure 1: The complete job characteristics model



Source: Hackman & Oldham, 1980, p. 90, as shown in Miner, 2005, p. 78

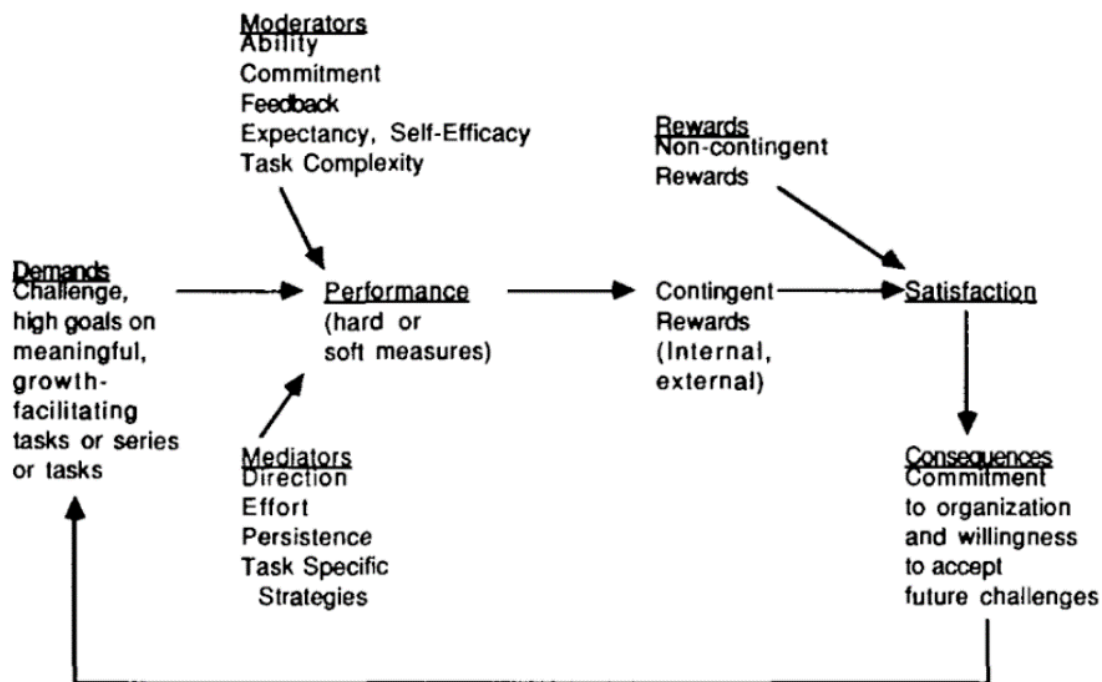
2.1.5. Vroom's expectancy theory

As opposed to Maslow or McClelland, Vroom finds needs and desires insufficient to explain motivation. Instead, he stresses the role of expectancies and their influence on chosen paths of action. Considering motivation an important concept in any attempt to explain human behavior, he defines it as "a process governing choices made by persons or lower organisms among alternative forms of voluntary activity" (Vroom, 1964, p. 6). In his expectancy theory, he states that the valence (i.e. the anticipated value) of an outcome j , which depends on situational variables, multiplied by the expectancy that a certain act i will lead to outcome j explain the motivation, or the "force to perform" act i (Vroom, 1964, p. 27). This means that the motivational force is determined by both the (subjective) expectancy that an action will lead to a desired outcome the attractiveness of the outcome itself. For example, occupational choice is not explained only by job preference, but also by an individual's subjective assessment of the likelihood of attaining the job and the cost of doing so (Vroom, 1964, p. 94).

2.1.6. Locke and Latham's goal-setting theory

At the end of the 20th century, two scholars made an attempt to provide a holistic concept that would combine the increasing research on human motivation. After examining goal-setting as a technique to achieve higher motivation (Latham & Locke, 1984), Locke and Latham presented their first holistic view of goal-setting theory (Locke & Latham, 1990a). Building on their findings, they suggested the high performance cycle, a model that integrated previous research on work motivation and work satisfaction (Locke & Latham, 1990b).

Figure 2: The high performance cycle



Source: E. A. Locke & Latham, 1990b, p. 4

In the cycle (Figure 2), job demands are the starting point for job performance. Through direction, effort, persistence and specific task strategies, a certain performance will result in response to job demands. How good or bad the performance is depends on the moderator variables ability, commitment, feedback, expectancy, self-efficacy and task complexity. When a good performance is rewarded, we speak of a contingent, i.e. performance-related reward. Contingent rewards can be internal, for example feelings of responsibility and competence, or external, for example pay and (external) recognition. Additionally, non-contingent rewards such as fringe benefits and office equipment are rewarded independent of employee performance. Both kinds of rewards affect job

satisfaction, which is in turn decisive for organizational commitment and the willingness to face future demands.

2.2. Discussion and empirical evidence

In the following, the previously described theories are analyzed, dividing them into three groups. In addition to the two groups of work motivation theories, namely content and process theories (e.g. Steers et al., 2004), work design theories are analyzed as a further, distinct group. Although Steers et al. (2004) classify motivation-hygiene theory as a content theory, in this thesis, it is assigned to the group of work design theories. After all, motivation-hygiene theory belongs to precedents of work design theory (Grant & Parker, 2009). The grouping of theories into three sections will prove valuable for a clear presentation of the findings.

The following pages uncover the most important relationships between the theories and briefly address the criticism that emerged in empirical investigations related to them.

2.2.1. Content theories

The presented theories by Maslow (1943) and McClelland (1961) are both centered around needs. Need theories assume that needs incite people to take action towards their fulfilment. They focus on the emotional aspects of motivation and assume that the identification and fulfilment of needs can motivate people in the workplace (Wright, 1989 and Pinder, 1998, as cited in Lundberg et al., 2009, p. 891).

Still, the theories differ with regard to several aspects. First, McClelland's need for achievement theory is not interested in Maslow's lower order needs, but focuses on socially acquired needs (Pardee, 1990, pp. 15–16). Second, McClelland's need theory, as opposed to Maslow's, does not include the concept of a hierarchy. Rather, McClelland states that needs of individuals compete at any given time (Steers et al., 2004, p. 381).

Although Maslow's need hierarchy is popular and widely accepted, there is poor evidence for its applicability in the explanation of work motivation. In the field of organizational and industrial psychology, neither the categorization of needs nor the concept of a hierarchical order could be fully supported. In this context, it has been criticized that the concept of needs as well as the need categories were too vague and difficult to test. However, Maslow's need theory was useful as an orientation in the development of other motivation theories (Wahba & Bridwell, 1976).

McClelland focused on several clearly defined needs related to achievement and power. As opposed to Maslow's abstract approach to needs, McClelland's clear conceptualization proved valuable to researchers. Consequently, it became popular in research on work motivation and on individual factors explaining it (Steers et al., 2004, p. 381). Furthermore, the theory has potential for explaining job satisfaction. For example, an empirical investigation found indications that McClelland's trichotomy of needs might explain varying degrees of job satisfaction in CPA firms (Harrell & Stahl, 1984).

Nevertheless, need theories are generally criticized for not sufficiently explaining human behavior. For example, it has been argued that needs are only likely to explain behavior as long as they are not satisfied (McGregor, 1960). To illustrate, it could be derived that the need for social affiliation can only be a main factor in the explanation of work motivation as far as it cannot be satisfied outside the work context. Similarly, needs alone cannot predict and influence human behavior, because contextual factors such as feedback on one's performance can limit or give more freedom to human behavior. This, in turn, affects motivation levels and actual performance outcomes (Wright, 1991).

Lastly, it has been pointed out that need theories do not specify the effect of job characteristics on employee motivation with regard to individual differences, for example personality traits such as extroversion or introversion (Latham & Pinder, 2005, p. 488).

2.2.2. Work design theories

Differences in needs lead to different valuations of job characteristics (e.g. Lundberg et al., 2009). For example, employees with a high need to grow respond stronger to enriched jobs than employees with low growth need strength (Hackman & Lawler, 1971). Enriched jobs can be understood as those which score high in the five job dimensions suggested by job characteristics theory (e.g. Hackman & Oldham, 1976).

Putting motivation-hygiene theory in relation with the previously discussed need theories, connections between Maslow and Herzberg can be found by arguing that the lower levels of the hierarchy of needs are related to hygiene factors. Motivation-hygiene theory can also be related to McClelland's achievement motivation theory by arguing that high achievement motivation leads to a high interest in motivators (Pardee, 1990). Thus, Herzberg's two-factor theory and its

explanation of work motivation can be seen as dependent on the satisfaction of ‘higher’ needs or ‘self-fulfillment needs’ (Pinder, 1998 as cited in Lundberg et al., 2009, p. 896).

It is also possible to detect connections between job characteristics theory and McClelland’s need theory. For example, relationships presented in job characteristics theory are supposed to hold to the degree that employees have:

- the necessary knowledge and skills,
- moderate levels of satisfaction with the work context, and
- strong needs to grow (Oldham et al., 1976).

Considering the last point, job characteristics theory builds a bridge between the concepts of job characteristics, needs and job motivation.

Comparing motivation-hygiene theory with Hackman and Oldham’s job characteristics model as two work design theories, they seem similar in the thought that intrinsic job characteristics are crucial for generating job satisfaction. In addition to that, both theories agree that the work context – that refers to elements such as pay or job security – affects job satisfaction (e.g. Herzberg et al., 1959; Oldham et al., 1976). However, in the case of job characteristics theory, work context is a moderator in the relationship between job characteristics and work motivation or satisfaction, rather than just a set of elements that can prevent dissatisfaction.

Moreover, Hackman and Oldham distance themselves from the dichotomy of motivators and hygiene factors due to a lack of empirical evidence, which will be explained in following sections of this chapter. Furthermore, they point out that Herzberg’s theory does not provide explanations for variations of responses to job characteristics among different individuals (Hackman & Oldham, 1976, pp. 251–252).

The distinction between intrinsic and extrinsic job characteristics

Before diving into the empirical research backing the work design theories, it is important to understand the concept of intrinsic and extrinsic job characteristics. Intrinsic job characteristics (IJC) are often related to tasks that enhance self-expression and self-actualization, while extrinsic job characteristics (EJC) are related to the job context or to job features that are determined by external events or other people (Voydanoff, 1978). Huang and van de Vliert (2003, pp. 166–167) criticize this definition by pointing out that:

1. external events or people can cause intrinsic motivation (Lindenberg, 2001). For example, recognition for one's work has been seen as an intrinsic job factor by classical theories such as job characteristics theory by Hackman & Oldham (e.g. 1976) or Herzberg's motivation-hygiene theory (e.g. Herzberg et al., 1959). Many researchers agree with this classification of recognition as part of IJC (Simonett & Weitz, 1972; Wernimont, 1966), although it involves another person giving the praise. In addition to that, psychologists support the view that elements of recognition and respect can be considered of intrinsic nature (Dyer & Parker, 1975 as cited in Huang & van de Vliert, 2003, p. 173).
2. job characteristics may contribute to both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation depending on workers' perceptions (Lindenberg, 2001, p. 321). For example, Mottaz considers promotion to be an extrinsic reward, as is it visible to others. He argues that as an organizational reward, promotion can facilitate or motivate task performance (1988, p. 470). As opposed to that, Herzberg et al. relate promotions to the intrinsic factors of growth, recognition, achievement and responsibility, thereby generating job satisfaction (1959, p. 62). Similarly, it has been shown that money can relate not only to extrinsic, but also to intrinsic job satisfaction when it is related to attitudes of freedom or power (Tang & Gilbert, 1995).

The lack of consent around the definition and effect of intrinsic and extrinsic job characteristics is reflected in critiques of Herzberg's motivation-hygiene theory. Many studies on Herzberg's theory use the term motivators as a substitute for intrinsic job characteristics and consider hygiene factors extrinsic job characteristics (e.g. Hackman & Oldham, 1976; Maidani, 1991; Ambrose, 1999). Motivation-hygiene theory has been criticized for its distinction between motivators and hygiene factors. Already in 1967, House and Wigdor pointed out that the claim that only motivators can lead to job satisfaction is not in line with many studies. For example, Dunnette, Campbell, and Hakel (1967) tested motivation-hygiene theory, finding that satisfaction or dissatisfaction can be caused by job content, job context, or both. Decades later, Pinder took up these thoughts and stressed once more that motivation-hygiene theory has been oversimplified and even misinterpreted ever since its emergence. After all, the original findings that led to the development of motivation-hygiene theory had already sparked doubts on the possibility of a clear distinction

between motivators and hygiene factors. Depending on methods of measurement, the extent of supportive evidence for Herzberg's theory might vary (Pinder, 2008, p. 38).

Consequently, neither a distinction between intrinsic and extrinsic job characteristics, nor between motivators and hygiene factors can be easily made. Thierry (1990) goes even further by calling a clear distinction between the two job characteristics delusional. Nevertheless, this thesis argues that there is sufficient evidence that a – even if slightly “rough” – classification of job characteristics as intrinsic or extrinsic is possible, useful and allows for interesting insights into work motivation, as the next sections show.

Evidence on intrinsic and extrinsic job characteristics

While both IJC and EJC can be related to both job satisfaction and dissatisfaction, they seem to differ in their impact. For example, achievement, responsibility and recognition have a greater impact on both job satisfaction and dissatisfaction than working conditions, job security and company policies and practices (Dunnette et al., 1967). Thus, intrinsic rewards have been considered as more important in producing job satisfaction in “almost every concept of modern management ideas” (Huang & van de Vliert, 2003, p. 174, referring to Steers, Porter, & Bigley, 1996, p. 19 and Thierry, 1998, p. 263). Similarly, Mottaz' study (1988) points out that intrinsic rewards, i.e. the content of the work itself has become increasingly important to the workforce. Although extrinsic rewards are still crucial, they have become less salient over time. Mottaz concludes that apart from traditional rewards of good pay, comfortable working conditions and opportunities for advancement, workers are looking for autonomy, meaning, and challenge in work.

The agreement on the primacy of intrinsic rewards suggests that although the precise classification of factors as intrinsic or extrinsic is debated, job elements that are tendentially considered of intrinsic nature are more important for job satisfaction than job characteristics that are mostly considered of extrinsic nature.

Evidence on work design theories

Further evidence on Herzberg's motivation-hygiene theory is in line with the statements above. For example, Maidani (1991) could explain job satisfaction in the public and the private sector with intrinsic job characteristics. Ewen, Smith, Hulin, and Locke (1966) support the crucial role of intrinsic job characteristics. However, they could not agree with the idea of motivators and hygiene

factors. Rather, they suggest that satisfaction with extrinsic job characteristics might depend on satisfaction with intrinsic job characteristics.

Considering the presented studies, it comes by no surprise that there is moderate evidence for Hackman and Oldham's job characteristics theory. In a review of almost 200 studies on the job characteristics model, Ferris and Fried (1987) conclude that the five job characteristics indeed determine both psychological and personal behavior outcomes, while the first mediate the latter. Generally, however, job characteristics are related more to psychological than to behavioral outcomes. This is in line with Aldag, Barr, and Brief's (1981) findings, who detected weak relationships between job characteristics and objective performance.

Ferris and Fried (1987) emphasize that the relationship between job characteristics and behavioral outcomes might be strongly influenced by contextual factors such as economic conditions, marital status or performance norms of peers. They conclude that more research is needed on the moderating effect of context satisfaction in the relationship between job characteristics and behavioral outcomes. Similarly, Grant and Parker (2009) find lacks in the explanatory power of the job characteristics model. They suggest extending the five core job characteristics with regard to technological and social developments in the workplace.

Like job characteristics theory, motivation-hygiene theory has been criticized for neglecting relevant factors in its explanation of work motivation. For example, it disregards the role of individual characteristics: the explanation of individual differences like gender, culture, age as well as socio-cultural differences is largely absent in Herzberg's theory (Furnham, Forde, & Ferrari, 1999, p. 1036).

In short, the evidence on and the limitations of motivation-hygiene theory as well as Hackman and Oldham's job characteristics theory point not only to the primacy of IJC, but also to the non-neglectable role of EJC in explaining behavioral outcomes. Therefore, taking into consideration all discussed points, this thesis supports the usefulness of analyzing job characteristics along the two categories of IJC and EJC. According to Huang and van de Vliert's (2003, p. 166) suggestion, IJC could be defined as job features that are more likely to enhance self-expression and self-actualization, whereas EJC are job features that tend to meet workers' lower-order needs, such as security needs and social affiliation needs (Maslow, 1943).

2.2.3. Process theories

Expectancy theory further complements the understanding of work motivation by addressing the influence of workers' expectancies on their performances. Vroom does not oppose content theories – for example, he agrees that motivational aspects in the workplace include monetary remuneration, social interaction or social status (Vroom, 1964, pp. 29–30). However, the interest of his model is to add a new perspective to work motivation theory by pointing out that the probability of attaining a work outcome through a certain action is decisive for the motivation to take action.

Both expectancy theory and goal-setting theory provide explanations of performance. The high performance cycle, as a product of goal-setting theory (Locke & Latham, 1990b), provides a framework to explain performance in the work setting, with job demands as a starting point. Already on first sight, the cycle (Figure 2) respects Vroom's theory by stating that expectancy is a moderator of performance. According to Locke and Latham, Vroom's expectancy theory (1964) and goal-setting theory can even “be fully reconciled” (1990b, p. 5).

Indeed, connections between expectancy and goal-setting theories reoccur in scientific literature. For example, Lewin, Dembo, Festinger, and Sears (1944, according to Valsiner, 2009, p. 240) discussed goals and presented a model in which attractiveness (i.e. valences) and likelihoods (i.e. probabilities) determine aspiration levels (i.e. goals that are set). Further, Tolman, Hall, and Bretnall already suggested in 1932 that action is impulsed by both the expectancy and demand of a goal. Significant relationships between expectancy theory and goal-choice, commitment and performance have also been found by Klein (1991).

Lastly, it is noteworthy that the high performance cycle goes further than Vroom's expectancy theory, explaining not merely a motivational force to perform, but rather performance and its consequences. These consequences are job performance, received rewards, job satisfaction, commitment and the goals that are accepted in future (Locke & Latham, 1990b).

As the aim of this research is to examine job motivation based on job satisfaction and, related to that, on job commitment and the acceptance of future goals, the following sections of this chapter will shed further light on these concepts and their link.

A definition of commitment

Many approaches to the measurement and conceptualization of organizational commitment have emerged in the past century, making commitment an extensively studied subject (Meyer & Allen,

1984, 1991). In their longitudinal study on job satisfaction, commitment and turnover, Porter, Steers, Mowday, and Boulian (1974) developed the understanding of commitment. They concluded that commitment refers to the extent to which an individual identifies with and is involved in an organization. It is denoted by “(a) a strong belief in and acceptance of the organization's goals and values; (b) a willingness to exert considerable effort on behalf of the organization; (c) a definite desire to maintain organizational membership” (1974, p. 604).

Referring to job satisfaction as defined by Locke in 1969 (as mentioned in the introduction) and job commitment according to Porter et al. (1974), it can be said “that commitment and satisfaction are related yet distinguishable attitudes” (Porter et al., 1974, p. 608). More precisely, job commitment, as opposed to satisfaction, incorporates a behavioral element. A traditional approach to describing commitment is the distinction between attitudinal and behavioral commitment. The two closely related concepts can be defined as follows: “attitudinal commitment focuses on the process by which people come to think about their relationship with the organization. In many ways, it can be thought of as a mindset in which individuals consider the extent to which their own values and goals are congruent with those of the organization. Behavioral commitment, on the other hand, relates to the process by which individuals become locked into a certain organization and how they deal with this problem” (Mowday et al., 1982, p. 26).

Evidence on Locke and Latham's link between job satisfaction and commitment

Several publications, which support the link between satisfaction and commitment, can be found. For example, O'Driscoll and Randall (1999), found that satisfaction with rewards of predominantly intrinsic nature (e.g. task variety, job challenges, and the freedom to choose how to perform tasks) to be a predictor of affective commitment.

Furthermore, Mobley (1982b) finds that dissatisfaction can be followed by thoughts of quitting, the search of alternative jobs and the generation of a specific intention to quit, for example (Mobley, 1982a, as in Henne & Locke, 1985, p. 228). Correspondingly, job satisfaction has been found to have a direct negative impact on employee's propensity to leave an organization (e.g. Klenke-Hamel & Mathieu, 1990).

It can be derived that both satisfaction and commitment are decisive for the "energetic forces" that are central to Pinder's definition of work motivation as a “set of energetic forces that originate both within as well as beyond an individual's being, to initiate work-related behavior, and to determine

its form, direction, intensity, and duration" (Pinder, 2008, p. 11). This becomes even clearer when examining consequences of commitment.

Consequences of commitment

The numerous concepts of commitment in scientific literature are united by their link of commitment to employee turnover (Cho, Johanson, & Guchait, 2009, p. 376). For example, Mowday et al. (1982) considered low turnover rates to be the most predictable consequence of high commitment. Furthermore, the impact of commitment on absenteeism has been supported by researchers such as Koch and Steers (1978) or Larson and Fukami (1984).

It is important to mention that research has not uniformly regarded organizational commitment as a result of job satisfaction, but also as an antecedent. Based on the results of a longitudinal study, Bateman and Strasser (1984) suggested that organizational commitment may cause job satisfaction, rather than result from it. Thus, the precise link between job satisfaction and organizational commitment, as well as the direction of causality, has been debated in scientific literature.

Differences in the evaluation of the relationship between job satisfaction and commitment have been attributed to differences in the satisfaction-commitment measures, on the one hand, and the varying ranges of examined independent variables, on the other hand (Martin & Bennett, 1996). However, based on the evidence listed before, it is plausible to assume a relationship between satisfaction and commitment as depicted in Locke and Latham's model (1990b). After all, the concept of a cycle permits commitment to be both antecedent and consequence of job satisfaction.

Criticism of goal-setting theory

With goal-setting theory, Locke and Latham claim to have presented a close-to-action approach that is valuable in the explanation of human behavior. They argue that whereas Maslow's theory (1943) "works forward to action" by stressing universal, subconscious wants, values and motives, goal setting theory works backwards from goals and intentions that are close to action (Locke & Latham, 1990b, p. 6). While the frame of this thesis does not permit to present all evidence and follow-up research related to goal-setting theory, the previous pages show that elements of goal-setting theory, and the high performance cycle in particular, can indeed be supported by empirical studies.

Still, there is room for improvement for the high performance cycle. For example, demographic variables, such as gender, age, job level, and tenure, also affect the job satisfaction responses of

individuals (e.g., Locke, 1976). Like the theories mentioned before, the high performance cycle does not respect such individual differences.

Furthermore, the function of work values is not explained by the high performance cycle (Locke & Latham, 1990b, p. 4). Hence, in a re-examination of the high-performance cycle, Latham, Locke, and Fassina (2002, p. 221) point out that “unlike the external validity of goal-setting across countries (Locke & Latham, 1990a), culture may be a moderator variable of the [findings on the link between job satisfaction and organizational commitment]”.

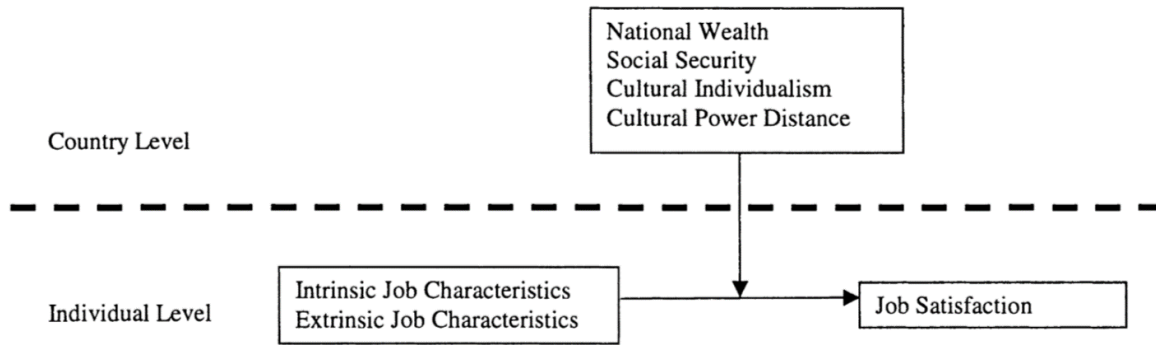
Although culture and values are not central elements in goal-setting theory, Locke, Sirota, and Wolfson (1976) mention that work rewards cannot effectively result in job satisfaction when they do not correspond to an individual’s values. Work values, next to work rewards, are central elements in Mottaz’ (1988) explanation of organizational commitment. In the frame of an empirical study, Mottaz could explain approximately 60% of the variance in organizational commitment with a set of work rewards and work values. He further concluded that, whereas rewards seem to be positively correlated with commitment, the values related to work have a rather negative effect on commitment, since they make it harder and less likely for companies to meet the employees’ standards.

Finally, we have seen how content, work design and process theories contribute to the understanding of work motivation. We will now explore attempts to integrate socio-economic and cultural variables into our current knowledge of the topic.

2.3. Cultural and socio-economic considerations

In their publication “Where Intrinsic Job Satisfaction Fails to Work: National Moderators of Intrinsic Motivation”, Huang and van de Vliert (2003) propose a model (Figure 3) that specifies the influence of national characteristics on employee satisfaction. According to the model, cultural and socioeconomic variables moderate the relationship between job characteristics and job satisfaction on an individual level. In the following, the research backing Huang and van de Vliert’s model as well as the results of their empirical study will be presented and discussed, drawing on complementary research.

Figure 3: Country-level moderators of job satisfaction



Source: Huang & van de Vliert, 2003, p. 161

What determines societal values? On the one hand, Marxists focus on economic development and improvements of productivity (i.e. materialistic variables) in their explanation of the social system, assigning to culture only a secondary function (e.g. Marx, 1859). On the other hand, Weber tends to take culture or religion as the starting point for the explanation of social and economic development (Weber, 1930). Criticizing both Weberian and Marxist approaches, Inglehart (1997) states that deterministic approaches do not serve to gain a full understanding of societal development. Huang and van de Vliert's (2003) arguments are based on the work of Inglehart, who argues that values in societies change alongside with both socio-economic and cultural factors. As the findings of Huang and van de Vliert (2003) will show, socio-economic and cultural factors can also explain a large fraction of cross-national differences in work-related attitudes. The researchers focused on the "four most commonly used country-level predictors [of job satisfaction]" (2003, p. 163), namely national wealth, national social security, cultural individualism and cultural power distance, to investigate their moderating effect in the relationship between job characteristics and job satisfaction. Considering the previously discussed consequences of job satisfaction and commitment, Huang and van de Vliert's study is highly relevant for the explanation of varying work motivation levels across nations.

2.3.1. Socio-economic factors

Referring to Maslow's need hierarchy, it might be expected that lower needs can more effectively explain happiness in poor countries rather than in rich countries (Veenhoven, 1991; Veenhoven & Ehrhardt, 1995). The underlying idea is that survival is taken for granted in economically developed countries, because economic development is accompanied by value changes. A more advanced stage of economic development goes hand in hand with a lower valuation of economic achievement

and a higher perceived importance of opportunities for self-expression (Inglehart, 1997, pp. 31–33).

Another socio-economic aspect that is closely linked to the concept of needs is social welfare. A good conception of human needs is indispensable for the definition of any socialist vision of the future, as it defines human welfare and suffering (Doyal & Gough, 1984). If implemented effectively, social security systems can enable the attainment of basic human needs (Taylor-Gooby, 1991). Moreover, the welfare state can be seen as a social organization freeing individuals from the “constraints of private property” (Weale, 1983, p.viii). Thus, it sets or expands boundaries of individual autonomy (Weale, 1983).

As persons in rich and/or high social security countries are more likely to meet needs of social security, they might be expected to react stronger to intrinsic job characteristics related to Maslow’s higher order needs, as lower needs are already gratified (Huang & van de Vliert, 2003).

2.3.2. Cultural factors

Culture can be defined as “the collective programming of the mind which distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from another” (Hofstede & Hofstede, 1991, p. 5). A review of empirical studies that examine organizational behavior across nations and cultures shows that, although there are no large variations in the understanding of culture, approaches to its measurement have been largely heterogeneous. While culture is often referred to and measured on the level of the nation, which encompasses various national characteristics, other approaches focus on specific cultural values (Tsui, Nifadkar, & Ou, 2007, p. 430).

In an attempt to describe differences in cultural values, researchers have defined a variety of cultural dimensions (e.g. Hofstede, 1984; Hofstede & Hofstede, 1991; Trompenaars, 1993; Schwartz, 1999; Hofstede et al., 2010). A popular set of cultural dimensions is provided by Hofstede (e.g. 1984). These dimensions have been found to be as robust as demographic and personal characteristics variables in explaining individual outcomes such as organizational commitment (Taras, Kirkman, & Steel, 2010). The interest in the cultural value measures of individualism, collectivism as well as power distance has been particularly strong (Earley & Stubblebine, 1989; Kanungo, 1990; Tsui et al., 2007). Therefore, the focus will lie on these dimensions in the following.

Individualism versus collectivism

In his proposed cultural model, Hofstede treats individualism and collectivism as two extremes of a cultural dimension. The individualism versus collectivism dimension describes the extent to which bonds between individuals are loose or tight. Moreover, it indicates the extent to which the interest of an individual rules over the interest of the group – or the opposite (Hofstede et al., 2010, pp. 91–92).

Individualist or collectivist traits can surface in several ways in the work context. For example, collectivist societies are marked by:

- a lower occupational mobility than individualist societies, i.e. sons are more likely to follow their fathers' occupation;
- family relationships in the workplace, whereas employment is seen as a business transaction in individualist societies;
- a prevalence of personal relationships over the tasks that need to be performed, whereas the opposite can be observed in individualist societies;
- a preference of performing as a group, whereas individualists prefer to be measured by their individual performance;
- an importance of family reputation.

The examples above are given by Hofstede et al. as general patterns of individualism and collectivism, to which exceptions may exist (2010, pp. 119–123).

The individualism versus collectivism dimension can explain different valuations of autonomy in the workplace. Taking up Hofstede's work (1984), Kanungo (1990) argues that in collectivistic societies, as opposed to individualistic societies, intrinsic rewards contribute to a lower extent to work involvement, and individual achievement as well as self-determination are valued less. Instead, economic and social security, along with social solidarity and equality, are considered more important than individual freedom. Differing salient values and needs can be explained by socialization processes. For example, in many Western countries, protestant faith promotes individualism and the value of work in achieving autonomy (Weber, 1930). As opposed to that, in developing societies, work is a means to promote brotherhood and sharing in life. Placing high value on loyalty, reciprocity and the family, persons in collectivist societies tend to sacrifice their

self-interest (Kanungo, 1990, pp. 799–801). The needs of the society are hence placed before the needs of the individual (Nevis, 1983, p. 257).

Furthermore, the individualism versus collectivism dimension can explain differing attitudes towards feedback. In individualist countries, confrontation and the open exchange of opinions is seen as a virtue, as it communicates honesty and sincerity (Hofstede et al., 2010, p. 107). As opposed to that, harmony is important to collectivist societies and an open performance feedback might be perceived by a subordinate as a “loss of face”. Therefore, feedback is communicated more subtly and indirectly in collectivist societies (Hofstede et al., 2010, p. 122).

Power distance

Power distance can be defined as “the extent to which the less powerful members of institutions and organizations within a country expect and accept that power is distributed unequally”, while institutions are “the basic elements of society, such as the family, the school, and the community” and organizations are “the places where people work” (Hofstede et al., 2010, p. 61).

The work sphere in high power distance countries may differ from low power distance countries with regard to several aspects:

- power is centralized in organizations, whereas organizations tend to be decentralized in low power distance countries;
- salary gaps between high and low positions in organizations are wider;
- manual work has a much lower status than office work, whereas this is not necessarily the case in low power distance countries;
- relationships between workers and their superiors are emotional;
- younger bosses are less appreciated than older bosses;
- visible signs of status of bosses contribute to their authority, whereas they are seen as suspect and are negatively commented in low power distance countries;
- workers’ discipline is considered more important than their initiative (Hofstede et al., 2010, pp. 73–75).

Moreover, the performance of workers is more strongly related to feedback provided by supervisors in low power distance cultures, as opposed to high power distance cultures. High power distance might hence imply that feedback from superiors is less accepted, as workers perceive themselves

as different from managers. Thus, while frequent feedback and recognition are valued in small power distance countries, employees in large power distance countries do not consider them important rewards (Earley & Stubblebine, 1989).

Summing up it can be said that research on culture points to differences in societal values that are mostly unrecognized in management models or psychological and sociological literature (Hofstede et al., 2010, p. 75; Kanungo, 1990). As we can see, the definition of cultural values has shown that the importance of different job characteristics differs from culture to culture. More precisely, the previously presented literature suggests that the relationship between IJC (e.g. autonomy and feedback) and job satisfaction is stronger in individualistic and/or low power distance countries (Huang & van de Vliert, 2003).

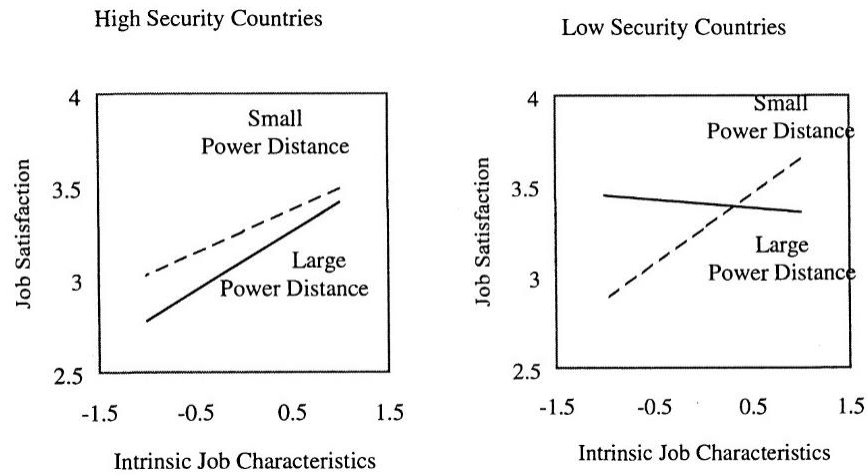
2.4. Understanding consultants' work motivation in different national settings

As mentioned before, in their quantitative study, Huang and van de Vliert (2003) analyzed cross-country differences in the link between IJC or EJC and job satisfaction. As expected, they found evidence for a moderating effect of socio-economic and cultural variables. Their results suggest that the positive effect of IJC on job satisfaction is stronger the higher national wealth, social security and/or individualism, and the lower power distance in a country. For EJC, however, the moderating effect could not be observed: EJC seemed to contribute similarly to job satisfaction across nations. The insignificance of the country-level moderators in the link between EJC and job satisfaction is barely discussed by Huang and van de Vliert (2003) and must be investigated by further research.

Another finding of Huang and van de Vliert (2003) refers to the role of social security (Figure 4). A high level of social security supposedly enables satisfaction with IJC regardless of the degree of power distance in a country. In low social security countries, however, large power distance hinders positive responses to IJC. Huang and van de Vliert conclude that “management intervention techniques that overemphasize the intrinsic rewards for workers in countries with poor social security systems and a large power distance culture could be ineffective” (2003, p. 175).

Do these findings hold for the case of management consultants? Before formulating expectations, the research case will be explained.

Figure 4: Intrinsic job characteristics and social security as moderators of job satisfaction



Source: Huang & van de Vliert, 2003, p. 171

2.4.1. Research case: management consultants in international companies

This thesis is interested in examining the motivation of management consultants employed in large, international firms that offer advisory services. Therefore, this section offers a short insight into the context, management consultants might find themselves in.

Dickmann et al. (2006) investigated global human resource management objectives and processes in consultancies and found that large, international management advisory firms exhibit certain common characteristics across nations. Their findings include the following points.

- As opposed to multinational companies, which hire from a broad range of good schools, consultancies select their candidates from a few top schools or a medium range of very good and top schools (Dickmann et al., 2006, p. 63).
- A congruence of the values or goals of candidates with those of the consultancies is highly desired and an important criterion for employee selection processes (Dickmann et al., 2006, p. 67).
- The same performance management processes tend to be applied globally to consultants in any specific level. Striving for highly focused work, commitment and flexibility (Dickmann et al., 2006, p. 73), consulting firms' promotion policies follow an "up-or-out" or "grow-or-go" principle (Dickmann et al., 2006, p. 64).

It is important to remark that Dickmann et al.'s definition of "consultancies" encompasses not only firms that mainly offer consulting services, but also firms in related professional services industries

(e.g. accounting or audit firms) and IT firms (e.g. providers of hard- and software) that incorporated MAS into their portfolio towards the end of the 20th century (Dickmann et al., 2006, p. 56). This definition of consulting firms will be adopted in this thesis.

The above-listed characteristics indicate that firms' advisory departments could be selective in their employee hiring and placing high value on growth and performance of their workers. Furthermore, consultants' ability to perform under pressure could be important, because consulting is known as an interactive and hectic profession (Jong & van Eekelen, 1999). Particularly firms headquartered in the United States might display a "culture of overtime work" and high performance that is a characteristic of some American firms and which can be found in finance professions in particular (Wharton & Blair-Loy, 2002). Findings on a global overtime culture in business professions are supported by Ruiz Castro (2012), who investigated time demands in a large, international accounting company in Mexico and the way they shape the employees' lives. She found that her interviewees related long working hours to commitment and career progression, concluding that "accounting firms' organizational culture and accountants' professional identity [may] predominate in different cultural contexts" (Ruiz Castro, 2012, p. 532). As accounting firms are providers of consultancy services (Rahman & Zanzi, 1995) and are included in our definition of consultancies, findings related to them might prove valid for other companies that offer MAS.

The evidence on consulting companies grants insights into cultural elements and values that might be relevant for persons working in consulting. Hence, this information serves as an orientation in the following formulation of expected research results.

2.4.2. Hypotheses development: consultants' work motivation across nations

As we have seen, attempts to explain work motivation have been made starting from needs, job characteristics, expectations or goal-setting. This thesis intends to explain job motivation starting from job characteristics, arguing that the extent to which job characteristics correspond to an individual's values and needs explains the generation of job satisfaction (e.g. Locke, 1969, p. 316; Lundberg et al., 2009). Job satisfaction, in turn, has consequences for the acceptance of future job challenges and job commitment (e.g. Locke & Latham, 1990b), i.e. the attitudinal and behavioral responses that are central to the concept of job motivation (Mowday et al., 1982; Pinder, 2008, p. 11). Thus, an approach to explain job motivation starting from job characteristics seems

practical, as it permits to examine employee perceptions of concrete job aspects, thereby giving insight into the values and personal goals that explain different motivational responses.

The research question is formulated as follows:

What determines employee motivation in management advisory jobs in different nations?

As mentioned before, job motivation will be explained starting from job characteristics. According to the literature, job characteristics can be divided into two groups. For example, motivation-hygiene theory explains job satisfaction and motivation by two sets of needs, namely survival and growth needs, which can be addressed by two corresponding sets of factors (Herzberg, 1966). As the concept of Herzberg's motivators and hygiene factors is debated (e.g. House & Wigdor, 1967), job characteristics will be instead classified as either intrinsic or extrinsic (as done by Hackman & Oldham, 1976 or Maidani, 1991, for example).

As suggested by Huang and van de Vliert (2003), IJC will be considered job features that are more likely to enhance self-expression and self-actualization, whereas EJC are job features that tend to meet workers' lower-order needs, such as security needs and social affiliation needs (Maslow, 1943).

Since consultancies are known as environments that stress growth and professional achievement (Dickmann et al., 2006, p. 64), consultants are likely to have high needs to grow. This would be congruent with McClelland's findings (1961), which show that persons with a high level of achievement motivation tend to be attracted to business occupations. Employees with a high need to grow – as opposed to employees with low growth need strength – respond stronger to jobs with high skill variety, task identity, task significance, feedback and autonomy (Hackman & Lawler, 1971). Hence, it could be expected that consultants generally respond strongly to IJC.

Nevertheless, the previously presented research on socio-economic and cultural factors gives reason to believe that consultants' responses to concrete job dimensions vary across nations. The points below illustrate the potential impact of cultural values on the perception of IJC.

- Autonomy: in collectivistic societies, work is not primarily a means to satisfy needs of individual achievement and persons tend to sacrifice their self-interest (Kanungo, 1990).

- Feedback and recognition: while valued in small power distance countries, employees in large power distance countries do not consider feedback and recognition important rewards (Earley & Stubblebine, 1989).

Moreover, the welfare state plays a role in setting the boundaries of individual autonomy. For example, it can free individuals from the “constraints of private property” (Weale, 1983, p.viii). Similarly, an advanced stage of economic development increases opportunities of self-expression (Inglehart, 1997, pp. 31–33). As a result, socio-economic variables can increase the perceived importance of job characteristics that meet needs of growth and self-expression (Huang & van de Vliert, 2003).

To summarize, the link between IJC and job motivation in consulting jobs is likely to be higher in countries with higher individualism, lower power distance, higher social security and higher national wealth. This expectation is supported by Huang and van de Vliert’s findings (2003), which were presented at the beginning of this chapter. Therefore, the first hypothesis is formulated as follows:

H1: Intrinsic job characteristics contribute stronger to the job motivation of management advisors in countries with lower power distance as well as higher national wealth, social security and individualism.

The second hypothesis is concerned with the effect of EJC on job motivation in MAS jobs. As mentioned before, according to motivation-hygiene theory as well as job characteristics theory, contextual factors such as pay or relationships with colleagues cannot be neglected in the explanation of work motivation (Herzberg, 1966; Oldham et al., 1976). Huang and van de Vliert’s study results (2003) suggest that such EJC are valued equally across nations. The second hypothesis respects these findings:

H2: Extrinsic job characteristics contribute equally to the job motivation of management advisors across countries.

One goal of this thesis’ research will be not only to explore *whether* this second hypothesis can be supported, but also *why*. After all, sufficient explanations for this finding have not been provided by Huang and van de Vliert (2003). In general, considering that person-to-organization fit is highly desired by consultancies and an important criterion for employee selection processes (Dickmann

et al., 2006, p. 67), social aspects might be particularly relevant for the explanation of job motivation in consulting jobs. Moreover, other EJC such as pay could be very important, as white-collar workers have been found to value monetary rewards more than blue-collar workers (Cohen & Lowenberg, 1990, p. 1026).

As concrete evidence on consultants' valuation of job characteristics is lacking, further speculations will not be made. Instead, consultants' motivations are left to be uncovered in the following practical part. The next chapter presents how the hypotheses will be explored.

3. Method

3.1. Data collection

The research design is supposed to allow insights into which job characteristics are valued most by consultants, which needs explain the perceived importance of job characteristics, and which patterns in motivational responses to job characteristics can be detected in different countries. Since the aim of this thesis is to investigate values, points of view and motives for action, an exploratory, qualitative research design has been chosen. The focus of qualitative work lies on individual cases and their subjective impressions and opinions as fragments of social realities. Thereby, new aspects to a topic can be discovered (Reuber & Pfaffenbach, 2005, pp. 107–108). It can help in the understanding of special cases as well as in the explanation of larger patterns in social structures (Lune & Berg, 2017).

In concrete, the basis for analysis is provided by interviews which were personally conducted with both German and Mexican management consultants in the period of September 2019 to January 2020. As a brief description of secondary data on national characteristics will show, Germany and Mexico differ remarkably with regard to national wealth, social security, cultural individualism and cultural power distance. Therefore, cross-national differences in the relationship between job characteristics and job motivation should be detectable, if the hypotheses prove supportable in the examined setting. Nevertheless, this research design poses one important limitation: while it permits finding arguments for *whether* responses on job motivation are moderated by national characteristics, it cannot uncover *how high the impact* of each of the national moderator variables is. Still, in the frame of a thesis, it is considered sufficient to adopt an exploratory approach to provide insights into the widely untapped field of work motivation in advisory jobs. The results provided hereby can serve as an orientation for future studies of a larger scale.

The hypotheses are mainly used as an orientation for answering the research question “*What determines employee motivation in management advisory jobs in different nations?*”. Thus, a hypotheses-guided, semi-structured interview has been designed in a way that allows insights into the salient motivational factors as well as into opinions on specific job characteristics through an attempted natural dialogue between the interviewer and the interviewees (Flick, 2011, p. 140). The duration of an interview depended on the respondent’s willingness to provide detailed answers. On average, an interview lasted 30 minutes. All participants were guaranteed anonymity, permitting them to express possibly critical views on job-related matters. Moreover, they were introduced to the topic of this thesis and were permitted to ask questions previous to the interview. After registering the socio-statistic characteristics of an interviewee (e.g. age, nationality), the consultant was invited to provide information on his profession, his perception of specific job characteristics, job satisfaction levels and future professional plans.

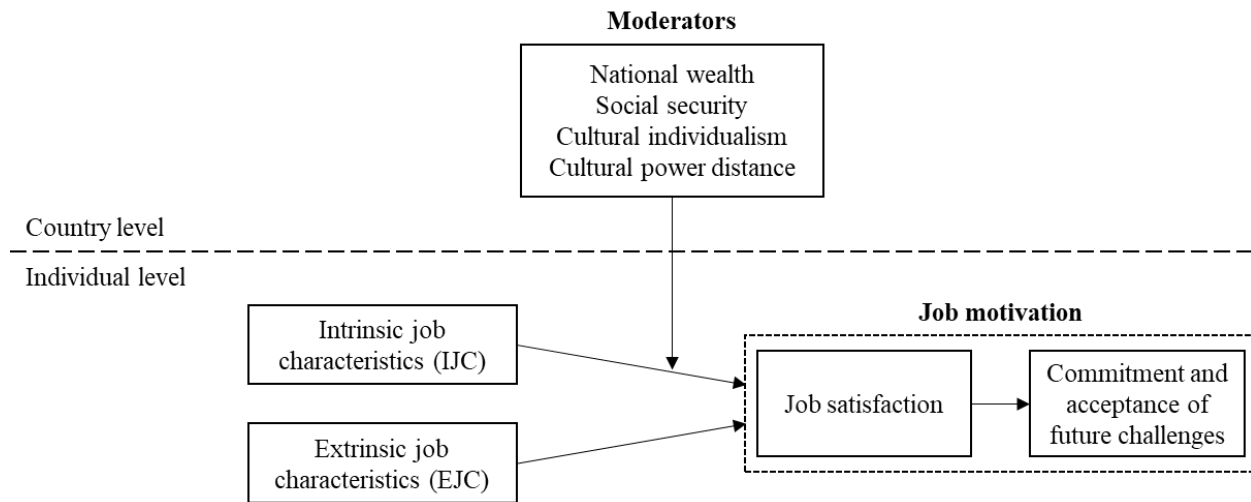
Most questions are formulated openly, so that salient motivational aspects can be identified before posing specific questions on job characteristics (Appendix 2). The first question intends to assess the context the interview participant finds himself in, for example current job stress or further matters of concern. Then, the interviewee is asked for a general description of his job, which provides first indications on the interviewee’s job-related views. This is followed by more specific questions on IJC and EJC. The questions related to EJC include a question related to working hours or work-life-balance, since the examination of the research case has pointed to the possibility of high time demands in consulting jobs. Next, the interviewee is asked about his overall job satisfaction as well as his intention to stay in the firm or in the position he is currently occupying. Lastly, the slightly teasing question “If you were fired, how would you finance your expenses?” asks the interviewee to imagine the case of a job loss. Answers related to this question are speculated to trigger interesting emotional responses related to job commitment and the valuation of monetary rewards.

3.2. Operationalization

As explained in the previous chapter, this study uses elements of work design as a starting point of the analysis of work motivation, dividing them into IJC and EJC. Hence, job characteristics are the independent variables in this analysis. They explain the dependent variable job motivation and are moderated by four country-level variables. In a practical approach, job motivation levels are assessed through the investigation of responses on job satisfaction, commitment and intentions

regarding future professional development, resulting in the model shown in Figure 5. The model is inspired by the research of Huang and van de Vliert (2003) and complemented by Locke and Latham's (1990b) link of job satisfaction to commitment and the acceptance of future job challenges. The explanation of preliminary motivation and commitment to the consulting profession, which might have existed before entering the job, and the investigation of events that led to the job choice are neglected for reasons of simplicity and beyond the scope of this study.

Figure 5: Examined model



Source: Own illustration

As suggested by Huang and van de Vliert (2003), IJC will be considered job features that are more likely to enhance self-expression and self-actualization, whereas EJC are job features that tend to meet workers' lower-order needs, such as security needs and social affiliation needs (Maslow, 1943).

As Hackman and Oldham's (1974) five core job dimensions have been thoroughly tested and could be supported (Ferris & Fried, 1987), IJC will be assessed along these clearly defined dimensions (Table 1). This will permit to clearly examine the expectations on autonomy and feedback, that are inherent in the first hypothesis. In a generalization of aspects that have been assigned to EJC in work design theories (e.g. Herzberg et al., 1959; Oldham et al., 1976) or Huang and van de Vliert's study, EJC will be more loosely defined as including pay, company benefits or perks, working conditions and social ambiance (e.g. relationships between colleagues and social life at a company). In addition to that, working hours, as elements of working conditions, will be given special attention in the examination of EJC.

The national moderators are measured using data provided by the World Bank, the International Labour Organization (ILO) as well as Hofstede et al. (2010). Based on this data, the countries of interest Germany and Mexico are classified as either richer or poorer, high or low social security, individualistic or collectivistic, and high or low power distance. Doubtlessly, this categorization is a rough generalization of national realities. Nevertheless, the following chapter will show that national differences regarding the four country-level moderators are very pronounced, so that the results of this research are still likely to include interesting findings on the role of national aspects in the explanation of job motivation.

Table 1: Definition of dependent, independent and moderator variables

Variable	Definition according to literature	Case-related meaning
DEPENDENT VARIABLE		
Job motivation	"A set of energetic forces that originate both within as well as beyond an individual's being, to initiate work-related behavior, and to determine its form, direction, intensity, and duration" (Pinder, 2008, p. 11).	Job motivation levels are estimated using statements on job satisfaction, job commitment as well as employees' intentions to continue working in the consulting profession.
INDEPENDENT VARIABLES		
Intrinsic job characteristics	Job features that are more likely to enhance self-expression and self-actualization (Huang & van de Vliert, 2003, p. 166). These features include: • skill variety, i.e. the variety of tasks and the need to use different skills in their fulfillment; • task identity, i.e. the degree to which work outcomes can be assessed; • task significance, i.e. the impact the work has on lives inside or outside the organization; • autonomy, i.e. the independence and freedom employees have in choosing strategies to organize and fulfil their tasks; • feedback, i.e. the employees' knowledge on their performance (e.g. Hackman & Oldham, 1974).	The degree to which consultants enjoy a variety of tasks, understand their contribution to the projects, perceive their activities as meaningful or important, can organize their tasks autonomously and obtain feedback on their performance from colleagues, team leads or superiors.
Extrinsic job characteristics	Job features that tend to meet workers' lower-order needs, such as security needs and social affiliation needs (Maslow, 1943; Huang & van de Vliert, 2003, p. 166) as	Pay, company benefits or perks, working conditions (including working hours) and social ambiance (e.g.

	well as further working conditions that potentially influence job (dis)satisfaction (e.g. Herzberg, 1966).	relationships between colleagues).
MODERATOR VARIABLES		
National wealth	Gross national income (GNI) (as defined by Huang & van de Vliert, 2003).	GNI of Germany and Mexico.
Social security	The degree of development of national social welfare programs (Huang & van de Vliert, 2003, p. 162).	Classification of Germany and Mexico as either high or low security countries.
Cultural individualism	The extent to which the interest of an individual rules over the interest of the group (Hofstede et al., 2010, pp. 91–92).	Cultural individualism indices of Germany and Mexico as provided by Hofstede et al. (2010).
Cultural power distance	“The extent to which the less powerful members of institutions and organizations within a country expect and accept that power is distributed unequally” (Hofstede et al., 2010, p. 61).	Cultural power distance indices of Germany and Mexico as provided by Hofstede et al. (2010).

The interview design addresses general satisfaction and commitment levels as well as satisfaction with different job characteristics but does not include direct questions related to national moderators. Rather, the goal lies in analyzing the valuation of different job characteristics across the sample, thereby deducting if and why the link between job characteristics and job motivation in Germany from the link of the variables in Mexico. The participants were only invited to provide details on subjects related to the national moderators, when they mentioned relevant aspects. For example, their opinion on unemployment benefits was only requested, when they brought up the subject. The reason for this approach is that it avoids biasing the interviewees’ responses in favor of (or against) the expected results, which are expressed through the hypotheses.

The order of interview questions was adapted individually in order to allow for a rather natural flow of conversation (Flick, 2011, p. 140). With the consent of the interviewees, the interviews were recorded and transcribed. For reasons of anonymity, the transcribed material is not attached to this thesis.

3.3. Sample

Interview subjects were reached out to through personal contacts. The sample consists of 8 persons working in consulting and specializing in different areas (Table 2). Their professional focus ranges from financial advisory over technology consulting to general strategy consulting services. All interviewees are employed at large, international firms offering consulting services. As the scope

of qualitative studies conducted in the frame of master's theses is small, the sample cannot be representative.

Table 2: Sample Characteristics

Interviewee ID	Nationality	Sex	Age	Occupational focus
G1	German	Female	26	Financial advisory
G2	German	Female	26	Financial advisory
G3	German	Male	28	Strategy consulting
G4	German	Male	26	Technology consulting
M1	Mexican	Male	28	Technology consulting
M2	Mexican	Male	29	Strategy consulting
M3	Mexican	Male	27	Financial advisory
M4	Mexican	Male	29	Financial advisory

Four of the selected persons are German nationals employed in different German cities and four are Mexican nationals working in Mexico City. Since demographic variables affect the job satisfaction responses of individuals (e.g., Locke, 1976), the interviewees were selected according to their adherence to the same age group and their marital status. Therefore, all persons were between 26 and 30 years old and unmarried at the time they were interviewed. Since they are of similar age, the participants are comparable in terms of their work experience. While in the case of Germans several internships preceded their actual employment, some of the Mexican sample subjects gathered experience in other companies as permanent employees, before switching to their actual employer. They all have completed a higher education, namely a master's degree (5 years after the obtention of A levels, i.e. the German Abitur) or a Mexican "Licenciatura" (duration of 4 years). Neither of the interviewed persons lived in his parents' households at the time of the interview. However, the latter aspect was not a sampling criterion. The information presented above is a result of conversations with sample subjects that took place before the interviews.

It is worth mentioning that, due to the lack of female Mexican respondents, this study is *not* sensitive to gender issues. Those who are interested in the role of women in professional service firms in Mexico are advised to read Ruiz Castro's (2012) extensive study on gender roles and time demands in an international audit and advisory company.

3.4. Analysis and interpretation: methodical approach

As suggested by Mayring's (1991) qualitative content analysis, the content provided by the transcribed interviews is structured along categories for both independent and dependent variables. The initial set of categories is constructed deductively, based on findings presented in the literature

review. Sections of the interviews are then allocated to the categories. After a test run of the categories with four interviews, additional inductive categories are formed and added where needed. Lastly, all of the interview sections are allocated to categories, and the findings are summarized for each aspect of a category (Mayring, 1991, p. 211). The adapted coding manual with categories and sub-categories is attached to this thesis (Appendix 3).

The findings are presented in the analysis chapter. It is structured as follows. First, insights on national wealth, national social security, cultural individualism and cultural power distance are provided for both Germany and Mexico. Then, the concrete intrinsic and extrinsic job characteristics mentioned by the participants are presented. The goal hereby lies less in enlisting job characteristics than in assessing the perceived importance of different job characteristics from the consultants' points of view. By focusing on subjective statements on job characteristics, their influence on job satisfaction is examined, exploring to what extent the formulated hypotheses can be supported. Then, statements on overall job satisfaction and commitment levels are analyzed with special regards to the job characteristics that are most valued by the consultants. Throughout the analysis, potentially emerging patterns of responses among Germans or Mexicans are addressed. In the following interpretation, the personal values and the national context influencing responses to job characteristics are discussed. The hypotheses will be examined systematically, concluding to what extent they are supported by this research.

The analysis and the interpretation present commonalities of participants' answers as well as responses that stand-out or address new aspects related to cross-national work motivation. They aim to shed light on the following questions:

- To what extent are the motivational responses to IJC similar among management consultants?
- Is the valuation of IJC higher among Germans than among Mexicans? If yes, how could the national context explain this finding?
- To what extent are the motivational responses to EJC similar among management consultants?
- Are these answers consistent with the expectations derived from literature and expressed by the hypotheses?

As a qualitative approach is chosen, the interpretation of the results cannot be completely objective and is shaped by my lived experiences. However, it is intended to keep the analysis and interpretation as free from my own subjective judgements as possible.

4. Preliminary analysis: perspective on Germany and Mexico

This short overview of national data related to the four country-level moderators precedes the evaluation of interviews, as it is important for the interpretation of the results. A section on working hours has been added considering the previously mentioned relevance of the aspect in consulting jobs.

4.1. National wealth

While Mexico's national wealth in terms of gross national income (GNI) is below the world average of 11,124 U.S. dollars per capita in the year 2018, Germany's GNI per capita strikes as over five times higher than the Mexican value (Table 3). Considering differences in purchasing parities, however, this gap becomes smaller: Germany depicts a GNI per capita of 54,560 international dollars, and Mexico almost reaches 20,000 international dollars per capita.

Table 3: Wealth of Germany, Mexico, and the world in the year 2018

Indicator	Germany	Mexico	World
GNI per capita, Atlas method¹ (current US dollars)	47 090	9 180	11 124
GNI per capita, PPP (current international dollars)	54 560	19 340	17 896

Source: World Bank, 2020b, 2020a

The International Labour Organization classifies Mexico as an upper-middle income country and Germany as a high income country (ILO, 2017, p. 206), which can be aligned with the World Bank data on GNI. Considering that the German national wealth is far above the world average, while Mexico's wealth is close to it, it seems plausible to classify Germany as a rich country. Compared to Germany, Mexico is a poorer country.

¹ A method used by the World Bank to make the relative size of different economies more comparable (World Bank, 2020a).

4.2. National social security

In 2017, the International Labour Organization published the World Social Protection Report 2017-19, which provides an analysis of systems of social protection, their beneficiaries, as well as expenditures on social protection (ILO, 2017). In the following, a short overview of insights on Germany and Mexico contained in this report will be provided.

Social protection encompasses nine areas, namely “child and family benefits, maternity protection, unemployment support, employment injury benefits, sickness benefits, health protection (medical care), old-age benefits, invalidity/disability benefits, and survivors’ benefits” (ILO, 2017, p. 194). The areas on which data is available on Mexico and Germany are summarized in Table 4.

While only unemployment benefits are not effectively enforced in Mexico, Germany’s social protection system successfully covers all areas (ILO, 2017, pp. 233–236). In 2015, 50.3 % of the Mexican population was effectively covered in at least one area of social protection, while this percentage amounted to 99.5% in Germany (ILO, 2017, pp. 242–245).

Table 4: Social protection in Germany and Mexico

Social protection area/ indicator	Effective coverage (%)		Data year
	Germany	Mexico	
Child and family ¹	100	25	2015
Unemployed receiving unemployment benefits ¹	100	n.a.	2015
Employment injury (covered labor force) ¹	89.2	58.2	2015/ 2013
Old-age pensions (estimate of legal coverage as percentage of working-age population) ^{1,3}	100	19	2017/ 2015
Non-contributory pension schemes, population above 65 ¹	3.1 (“Grundsicherung”)	62.1 (“Pension para adultos”)	2013/ 2015
Old-age effective coverage: old-age pension beneficiaries ¹	100 (of over 65.5 year-olds)	64.1 (of over 65 year-olds)	2009/ 2015
Legal health coverage deficit, % of population without legal coverage ¹	0	14.4	2010
Public social protection expenditure (% of GDP) ²	25.1	7.5	2018

Sources: ¹ILO (2017), ²OECD (2020b), ³ ILO (2015b)

The biggest differences in social protection, for which data was available to the ILO, can be found in the areas of child and family, health protection and unemployment support. First, family benefits

are distributed universally in Germany, while only a quarter of Mexican families and children are covered by social protection. Second, the ILO remarks that 14.4% of the Mexican population are not legally covered in terms of health. As opposed to that, there is no legal health coverage deficit in Germany (sources indicated in Table 4).

As indicated before, another noticeable finding is the difference in unemployment benefits. On the one hand, unemployed Germans can benefit from a mandatory public social insurance scheme. On the other hand, Mexicans are mainly entitled to a severance payment when they lose their job (ILO, 2017, p. 46). An unemployment benefit scheme exists only in Mexico City, where unemployed persons can receive unemployment benefits for a maximum period of six months (ILO, 2015a).

It comes by no surprise that public social protection expenditure relative to country GDP in Mexico is lower than in Germany. More precisely, in 2015, it amounted to 25.1% of GDP in Germany and merely to 7.5% in Mexico. It can be hence concluded that social protection in Germany is higher than in Mexico (sources indicated in Table 4).

The previously presented description does not dive into details of social security systems. Still, it seems sufficient to support Huang and van de Vliert's (2003, p. 178) classification of Germany as a high social security country, as opposed to Mexico as a lower social security nation.

4.3. Individualism versus collectivism

With an Individualism Index of 67, with the index ranging between 0 and 100, Germany's score is clearly higher than the Mexican index of 30. Thus, Germany is categorized as an individualist country and Mexico as a collectivist country (Hofstede et al., 2010, 56, 95-97, 103).

4.4. Power distance

The Power Distance Index permits another clear categorical distinction of the countries. Germany scores rather low with an index of 35. Mexico, however, reaches 81 points, with the index ranging again between 0 and 100. These numbers translate into a small power distance in Germany, while Mexico is considered a nation with large power distance (Hofstede et al., 2010, 56-59, 103).

4.5. Working hours

With an average of 2148 hours worked per Mexican worker² in the year 2018, Mexico depicts the highest number of hours worked amongst all OECD members. The number seems striking when

² Employees as well as self-employed workers.

compared to Germany's average of 1363 hours per worker in the year 2018. However, one should be careful when comparing such statistics: as to a note below the definition of hours worked by the OECD, it is remarked that considering different sources and methods of calculation, it is not appropriate to directly compare these numbers (OECD, 2020a). Still, the difference in working hours seems high enough to conclude that working hours in Germany might be lower than in Mexico.

All in all, data on national characteristics display clear differences between Germany and Mexico. While national wealth, social security and individualism are higher in Germany, Mexico scores higher in power distance and working hours.

5. Main analysis: work motivation in consulting professions

In this chapter, findings from the interviews will be presented in a structured manner. Any discussion or interpretation of results will be left to the next chapter of this thesis.

5.1. Intrinsic job characteristics

5.1.1. Skill variety and skill growth

A frequently mentioned aspect related to skill variety is the nature of consulting as project-based work. It comes along with the possibility to work for clients that are active in different industries, so that a consultant might be confronted with a variety of topics, tasks and clients. Consequently, even when tasks are similar – for example, when a certain evaluation must be performed for every project –, they need to be adapted to the case at hand. Hence, satisfaction results from engaging in a variety of industries (Interview G1, 2019, lines 58-60; Interview G2, 2020, lines 31-33; Interview G4, 2020, lines 16-19; Interview M1, 2020, lines 43-44 and 90-91).

When asked about what makes up for the long working hours, a German interviewee says: “*Vor allem glaube ich auch, dass die Aufgaben nicht so redundant und repetitiv sind. Von Projekt zu Projekt gibt es neue Themen, neue Menschen, mit denen man zusammenarbeitet, neue Herausforderungen sozusagen und halt vor allem neue Lerneffekte. Ich glaub, das wäre niemals möglich so lange zu arbeiten, wenn du langweilige Aufgaben hättest*“ (Interview G3, 2019, lines 34-37). This means that his tasks are not redundant or repetitive and that from project to project there are new topics, new persons to collaborate with, new challenges and new learnings. In the

interviewee's opinion, it would be never possible to work that much when confronted with boring tasks. This citation underlines the motivating effect of task variety.

The answers of two consultants stand out, as they mention a specialization in certain topics. Answering the question on whether his job permits him to fully use his skills and abilities, a Mexican says: *“No, maybe my skills from ... no, not all of them. For example, I do a lot of discounted cash flows and there are also many other things to do, talking about finance, like evaluations of real estate or infrastructure projects, that's way different. It's private finance and we don't do these things a lot [...]. There are many topics I haven't developed here. The same goes for personal skills”* (Interview M3, 2019, lines 40-44). He explains that instead of engaging in a broad range of topics, he is developing the knowledge he acquired at university with a focus on evaluations and getting to know “things you only see at work”, such as the sales process of companies and the documents and exact mathematics related to them. Thereby, he is learning shortcuts and how to work faster (Interview M3, 2019, lines 46-48, 126-131). Similarly, another Mexican consultant stresses the practical value of work and how it permits him to specialize in certain topics (Interview M2, 2020, lines 18-19). This means that although they enjoy the dynamics that come along with working in different industries (Interview M2, 2020, lines 23-26; Interview M3, 2019, lines 18-20), they seem to deal with a lower variety of tasks and topics than the other interviewees.

Although the project-based work creates certain dynamics in the day-to-day life of consultants, they still occasionally must perform repetitive, generic or administrative tasks that are perceived as less interesting: *“Aber es ist halt auch normal, dass man am Anfang viel repetitiven Scheiß machen muss. [...] Und da kannst du auch einen Schimpansen hinsetzen“* (Interview G1, 2019, lines 109-112). This means that it is normal to have to do a lot of “repetitive shit” at the beginning, which even a chimp could do. Similarly, boring tasks and paperwork are disliked. Still, the interviewees agree that even uninteresting tasks must be done and that it is normal that a share of tasks is less interesting than others (Interview G2, 2020, lines 96-97; Interview M2, 2020, lines 27-28; Interview M4, 2019, line 76). This could be understood as an acceptance of a share of uninteresting tasks at the beginning of the professional career.

On the following pages, differences in experienced job challenges and learnings will be presented, as these topics are addressed by many interviewees in their descriptions of skill variety.

Challenges

Taking a closer look at the interviewees' statements, it is notable that the German interviewees elaborate more on job challenges than the Mexican interviewees. For example, it is mentioned that an employee's skills are sometimes insufficient to solve the tasks, so that new skills are acquired (Interview G2, 2020, lines 38-39). As tasks are unknown or unfamiliar, calling for individual problem-solving, their cognitive demands can be very high (Interview G3, 2019, lines 57-59). Similarly, an interviewee mentions that he finds himself in many unexpected situations in which personal takeaways are generated and new skills are acquired. Overall, he rates his tasks as demanding, but not impossible to complete (Interview G4, 2020, lines 41-48).

A further challenge results from the high workload, which requires consultants to organize and structure their work well. Even when tasks seem easy, they must use their time efficiently and "optimize everything" (Interview G1, 2019, lines 113-116).

Learnings

As a result of job challenges and the variety of working in different industries, consultants learn how to work under pressure, organize themselves well, handle difficult situations and solve them efficiently. These qualities result in an image of consultants that is generally an asset on the labor market. For example, they have a reputation for being ambitious and able to dive into new topics quickly. This improves their prospects of finding alternative jobs and further opportunities to grow. Other companies might even "welcome them with open arms" (Interview G3, 2019, lines 181-185; Interview M2, 2020, lines 94-96; Interview M3, 2019, lines 167-17; Interview M4, 2019, lines 44-47).

Learning effects even result from engaging with firm technology and processes: *"About the technology, we are working on worldwide platforms and it's impressive to see how they work. The way that my company works is overwhelming sometimes, but also great. When you learn to work that way... it gives you a structure in your life, completely. It helps you to grow personally as well as professionally. When I imagine leaving my current job and going back to my previous employer, I expect my life to be totally different. I would be more efficient, more proactive, less lazy, much less. But also in private, I understood that you need to be structured, otherwise everything will be a mess"* (Interview M4, 2019, lines 145-152).

Apart from learnings on the job, consultants can benefit from trainings offered by their employers. For example, a consultant points out that he is being trained in data engineering, and that his company places high value on skill development (Interview G4, 2020, lines 43-44). Furthermore, a lot of research must be done at the beginning of the career, so that like at university, a consultant keeps educating himself (Interview G1, 2019, lines 55-57).

In general, learnings result in satisfaction, as consultants wish to learn, develop and advance in their careers (Interview G4, 2020, lines 24-28).

5.1.2. Task identity

Only one interviewee stresses the importance of task identity. *„Es ist auch so, aber nicht immer nur so, dass du von oben runter irgendwas diktiert bekommst, ohne Sinn und ohne Zusammenhang und das dann umsetzen musst. Das würde mich halt glaub‘ bisschen frustrieren. Das macht mir Spaß daran, dass es nicht so ist, zumindest nicht immer“* (Interview G1, 2019, lines 217-220). This means that occasionally, something that is dictated from above without sense or context must be implemented. She enjoys that this is not always the case, because otherwise, she would expect to be rather frustrated.

Further aspects related to task identity cannot be found in the transcribed interview material.

5.1.3. Task significance

The first indications of perceived task significance can be found in the consultants' descriptions of their jobs. The following points are mentioned:

- calculation of the buy or sell price, which an enterprise cannot do itself, because it doesn't have the necessary capacities or the expert knowledge (Interview G1, 2019, lines 72-74);
- support of companies in the handling of large transactions (Interview G2, 2020, line 22);
- offer of solutions to companies' problems, helping them to improve their processes or to create new opportunities (Interview M2, 2020, lines 5-7);
- transfer of education to other companies, thereby reaching individuals (Interview M4, 2019, lines 51-53);
- being like a doctor for companies (Interview G3, 2019, lines 44-45);
- being an advisor for products that can help to control the whole company (Interview M1, 2020, lines 24-26);

- helping people to sell companies (Interview M3, 2019, line 24).

The descriptions present consultants as experts, supporters, educators, providers of solutions, and even compare management advisors to doctors. Consultants' work is valuable as it affects high-level decisions of client companies (Interviewee G3, 2019, lines 61-65). The work is conducted in the frame of partly big projects with companies that are widely known (Interviewee G1, 2019, lines 54-55). In their position, the advisors can hence influence the prospects of success of large companies, which makes their work interesting (e.g. Interviewee G3, 2019, lines 61-65; Interviewee G1, 2019, lines 54-55). Additionally, the "exposure to important people" is highly appreciated, as it comes along with future employment opportunities at current client companies (Interview M4, 2019, lines 141-145).

The concrete task significance, i.e. the potential impact of the work on lives of other people, is likely to differ from consultant to consultant, depending on concrete tasks and responsibilities. For example, some German interviewees state that they can build operating models for companies, assign tasks to interns, occupy functions as project managers or even be staffed on projects alone. Consequences are experienced joy as projects grow and clients are satisfied or even the motivation to work on Sundays to fulfil job responsibilities (Interview G1, 2019, lines 121-125 and 214-217; Interview G2, 2020, line 119; Interview G4, 2020, lines 31-34).

5.1.4. Autonomy

Individual freedom in the carry-out of tasks is positively perceived throughout the sample, although Germans tend to be more expressive in descriptions of their autonomy at work. They mention several aspects of autonomy:

- the ability to organize work and structure tasks according to own preferences, which is comfortable, fun and permits the use of skills and abilities (Interview G1, 2019, lines 34-37 and 107-109);
- the ability to decide when to travel to the client's site, which permits learnings on self-organization as well as on how to work strategically well without guidance, and which is experienced positively, considering that these decisions affect the company's travel expenses (Interview G2, 2020, lines 119-122; Interview G4, 2020, lines 178-181);

- the ability to work from home without having to justify this choice, which permits doing other things at home, when work is not too stressful (Interview G3, 2019, lines 29-31; Interview G4, 2020, lines 94-97).

Three interviewees speak of a generally high degree of autonomy, saying they are “100%” autonomous (Interview G2, 2020, line 81), having a total ability to act and appreciating their autonomous development and the trust in them (Interview G4, 2020, lines 86-89) or being very surprised by the autonomy and freedom they are getting in their personal development (Interview G3, 2019, lines 161-162).

While some Mexicans simply confirm that they are allowed to work autonomously (Interview M1, 2020, line 55; Interview M2, 2020, line 38), only one of them speaks of a very high degree of autonomy. He elaborates that his company stands out among other firms in the way it pushes flexibility, which he appreciates. For example, he can work at home up to three times a month, which allows him to work more efficiently, as he cannot be distracted by other persons (Interview M3, 2019, lines 73-82). Moreover, he stresses that his job is special due to the task ownership he experiences (Interview M3, 2019, lines 16-18). As opposed to that, another Mexican consultant conveys his disappointment due to his inability to express and realize his ideas for growing his company’s business in Mexico (Interview M4, 2019, lines 177-181). Thus, autonomy affects job satisfaction in both Germany and Mexico. However, the findings indicate that the impact of autonomy on job satisfaction might differ in the two countries.

5.1.5. Feedback

The German interviewees’ experiences regarding feedback are highly varied. Thus, the experiences will be analyzed individually and later compared to the Mexicans’ experiences.

The first German interviewee does not get any feedback, neither negative nor positive. She states that before she started working, her main fear was becoming a “constant underperformer”. However, she currently does not know about the performance of others, so that “at least” she doesn’t know if she is really underperforming (Interview G1, 2019, lines 168-171 and 203-206).

The second German receives varying amounts of feedback. When working in the office, she can always ask her superiors for help, when they are present (Interview G2, 2020, lines 78-79). However, she notes that the concrete feedback she receives is always of positive nature, which she considers weird (Interview G2, 2020, lines 83-90). She explains it as follows: “*Ich habe das Gefühl,*

das ist so, weil sie sich nicht damit auseinandersetzen wollen. Und manchmal habe ich das Gefühl, man macht die Arbeit doch recht gut und dann wird man auch alleine gelassen. Es ist gut, die Sachen alleine machen zu können. Aber wenn die Vorgesetzten sagen 'da läuft's schon, das passt schon', und sie sind nicht da, dann geht die Entwicklung auch nicht mehr weiter, weil man fachlich nichts lernen kann, wenn keiner da ist. Man will mehr wachsen, aber man braucht dazu einfach jemanden“ (Interview G2, 2020, lines 124-129). This means that the lack of negative feedback might be related that to an unwillingness of “dealing with it”. Further, she explains that although she appreciates her autonomy and although it occasionally gives her the impression of performing well, she feels left alone and hindered in her personal development because of her inability to expand her professional knowledge. She concludes that to meet the wish to grow, another person is needed.

The third German interviewee states that while his superior shows gratitude and occasionally voices recognition, his feedback comes mainly in form of higher responsibility. To the consultant, this feels amazing and induces him to give his best. However, he also recounts a bad experience with another superior, who gave him very emotional and quick-tempered feedback, which he considers unprofessional (Interview G3, 2019, 108-109, 113-117 and 206-209). Thus, the consultant currently does not mind the lack of explicit (verbal) feedback and prefers it to the emotional feedback he once received.

The fourth German stresses that recognition is an important topic at the company he is working at. Nevertheless, getting feedback can be difficult, as he works remotely with his superiors. He says that it is important to him to have more face-to-face interaction with his superiors, since phone calls and emails are more distanced (Interview G4, 2020, lines 76-83).

Analyzing the statements of the Mexican interviewees, it is interesting to see that most of them mention to actively ask for feedback, while none of the Germans raises this possibility. A respondent said: *“I usually know when I'm working well, and I also like to ask. Sometimes I tell a manager to go to eat and say, 'tell me if I'm doing right or not'. If you don't know, just ask”* (Interview M3, 2019, lines 66-67). This statement shows how, in the Mexican's opinion, the problem of a lack of feedback can simply be solved by asking. As mentioned, other Mexicans also ask for feedback. The received feedback can include negative points, but also recognition

(Interview M1, 2020, lines 50-53; Interview M2, 2020, lines 32-34, Interview M3, 2020, lines 70-71).

A Mexican's elaboration on received feedbacks stands out from the responses of his peers. Stating that his firm is "really tough with the things you are not good at", he considers the negative feedback a part of his company's culture. This feedback can even get verbally aggressive, which can infuriate the consultant. One week later, however, he can laugh about such situations (Interview M4, 2019, lines 83-90 and 119-120). Apart from that, he recalls getting feedback once, which was more positive than expected, including even recognition (Interview M4, 2019, lines 112-118).

Generally, although concrete experiences with feedback differ, it seems important to most consultants.

5.2. Extrinsic job characteristics

5.2.1. Company benefits

Most consultants are able to name certain company benefits or perks offered by their employers, for example public transport tickets, vacation days, stock purchase options, pension plans, or health programs. The benefits are positively experienced. However, it is interesting that some consultants – to be precise, two Germans – say that they are not aware of all benefits or that they never investigated them at all. Thus, some Germans base their ratings of their company benefits on guesses (Interview G2, 2020, lines 47-49; Interview G3, 127-128; Interview G4, 2020, lines 97-100). As opposed to that, most Mexican consultants seem more confident in their responses, rating their company benefits as better, or even "much better", than the ones offered by other Mexican companies. In addition to the benefits listed above, a Mexican consultant mentions cultural elements in support of diversity or women, who want to advance in their careers (Interview M1, 2020, lines 58-60; Interview M2, 2020, lines 42-45; Interview M3, 2019, lines 96-105).

Only one consultant rates her benefits as miserable and a rip-off and cannot name any company perks (Interview G1, 2019, lines 128-129). Overall, findings on consultants' valuation of company benefits cannot be generalized but seem to differ from country to country.

5.2.2. Pay

The satisfaction with the salary varies across the sample. Some consultants describe their salary as "good money", "competitive" or "above average". While most of those persons are enjoying getting paid well or even name it as a major reason for their job choice, a Mexican emphasizes that

while his firm pays well to attract talented candidates, people do not apply to his firm because of the money, but because they want to advance in their careers and grow professionally and personally (Interview G1, 2019, lines 220-221; Interview G3, 2019, line 129; Interview G4, 2020, lines 102-105; Interview M1, 2020, lines 62; Interview M4, 2019, lines 152-155).

Other consultants in the sample perceive their pay as insufficient. A German consultant says that the salary - that she generally considers good money – is rather bad once working hours are considered and that to do her job, you “have to want it” (Interview G1, 2019, lines 129-130 and 220-221). Another German is even very unhappy with her salary, pointing out that it is possible to earn more money elsewhere (Interview G2, 2020, lines 51-53). Similarly, two Mexican consultants perceive their pay as rather a bit below average or generally a bit low. However, the salary is likely to increase significantly in just a few years (Interview M2, 2020, lines 49-50; Interview M3, 2019, lines 81-83). A Mexican names the increasing salary as the major reason for becoming a technology consultant, saying that while little is earned at the beginning, the salary increases after only 2.5 to 4 years of experience (Interview M1, 2020, lines 94-96). In addition to that, another Mexican consultant points out the possibility of earning more money by switching from financial advisory to banking, which he considers a motive of some of his colleagues to start careers as financial advisors (Interview M3, 2019, lines 119-120).

For a better understanding of the perceived value of the salary, the responses to the hypothetical question “*If you were fired, how would you finance your expenses?*” will be analyzed in the following.

The importance of monetary work rewards – German consultants

The responses of the German interviewees range from emotional to factual. A German answers: “*Woah, fuck. Mach mir keine Angst. Gar nicht, ich wäre halt pleite. Ja, keine Ahnung, ich werde mir gezwungenermaßen einen Job suchen. Aber ich wüsste jetzt so spontan nicht, wo ich mich bewerben sollte [Difficulty of finding a job that corresponds to her interests:] Ja, es wäre für mich einfach nur eine totale Vollkatastrophe. [...] das wäre schon übel, weil ich wirklich nicht wüsste, was ich sonst tun könnte.*“. This means that the consultant asks me not to make her afraid. She would be broke and would have to look for another job. However, she does not have an idea where to apply for another job that corresponds to her interests, which is why losing her job would be a total disaster to her (Interview G1, 2019, lines 251-260). Thus, although the salary is important to

her, she seems unwilling to accept a job that does not correspond to her interests for the sake of monetary rewards.

The other female German consultant says that if she hadn't a successful fiancé, “[d]ann wäre das ganz schlimm und sehr, sehr scheiße. Dann wäre es wahrscheinlich ein bisschen stressiger“, meaning that it would be terrible and probably a little bit more stressful. However, she adds that she has some savings, so that she wouldn't stress out too much about temporarily not having an income. In the worst case, if she really depended on the money, she would accept a job that does not correspond to her interests (Interview G2, 2020, lines 145-156).

Both male German interviewees point to the possibility of receiving unemployment benefits that might be sufficient to cover their expenditures. A consultant elaborates: “*Ich glaube, das sind 70% des Gehalts. Ist okay. Dafür, dass ich halt nicht arbeiten muss. Für das Nichtstun 70% meines Gehalts... Da würde ich erstmal in Urlaub gehen*“, meaning that to his knowledge, he would receive unemployment benefits that amount to 70% of his current salary, which is acceptable, considering that he would not have to work. If he received this fraction of his salary for doing nothing, he would go on a vacation (Interview G3, 2019, lines 196-198; Interview G4, 2020, lines 133-143).

The importance of monetary work rewards – Mexican consultants

While none of the Germans mentions the possibility of being financially supported by parents, it is a popular response among Mexicans. While a consultant states that he would have to restrict his spending behavior and feel bad due to it, he still says that his parents would support him (Interview M1, 2020, lines 119-122). Similarly, another consultant would feel bad if he got fired, but would not worry too much about it, as he is “lucky” enough to have parents that are able to support him and to whose house he could move while looking for a job (Interview M2, 2020, lines 111-113). The response of yet another Mexican is even completely free of worries. Since he received a large inheritance, he would be able to look for another job without the pressure of needing it. Furthermore, the redundancy payment he would receive after getting fired as well as the possibility to stay at his parents' house for several months would ease the situation. He speculates: “*I would sit down and think about what business I could start, put a lot of effort into it. I could make it happen*” (Interview M4, 2019, lines 201-203). Only one Mexican does not refer to his parents, saying that he has some savings that could get him through temporary unemployment, which is

why he would not worry (Interview M3, 2019, line 162). Still, Mexicans' and Germans' coping mechanisms in the event of a job loss clearly differ.

5.2.3. Working conditions

As expected, the consultants report excessive working hours and, related to that, exhaustion. Dissatisfaction results from work on Friday nights, weekends and during vacations. Thus, the planning and realization of leisure activities are hindered, making it difficult to achieve a work-life-balance. However, working hours and the time for leisure activities vary depending on the nature of a project and the phase of a project, which is why some periods are less intense than others (Interview G1, 2019, lines 6-7 and 30-31; Interview G2, 2020, lines 2-7 and 143-144; Interview G3, 2019, lines 22-27; Interview M1, 2020, lines 2-5, 10 and 15-19; Interview M4, 2019, lines 26-28).

Consequences of the workload include stress, nervousness, the sensation of being under pressure, annoyance, a lack of time for having food, difficulties in getting enough sleep, feelings of sluggishness, difficulties in realizing non-work-activities due to tiredness and difficulties in maintaining (romantic) relationships. The intrusion of work into the private sphere seems even more extreme, when business trips and dinners with colleagues are considered. Nevertheless, it is mentioned that it is possible to get “a little bit” used to the time demands and their consequences (Interview G1, 2019, lines 11-22; Interview G2, 2020, lines 9-10 and 132-134; Interview M4, 2019, lines 18-21).

The importance of a work-life-balance

Despite their clearly compromised time for leisure activities, it is interesting that many consultants consider it important, or even very important, to have a work-life-balance (Interview G2, 2020, line 15; Interview G3, 2019, line 22; Interview M1, 2020, line 10; Interview M3, 2019, line 13; Interview M4, 2019, line 25). What seems to be a contradiction can be explained as follows: “*You know, everything in life requires a sacrifice. I had some hard times, but I try to eat healthy and sleep enough and do sport regularly, that gives me energy. So, it’s okay. I see it as an investment in the future. And I really like my job, I don’t do it, because I have to. No-one forces me to do it*” (Interview M2, 2020, lines 70-72). This means that the lack of a work-life-balance is accepted and can be coped with in turn for future rewards. Other consultants seem to support this view, saying that they can accept working these hours or are willing to work overtime at the beginning of their

careers as a means of learning a lot in a short time (Interview M3, 2019, lines 133-135; Interview G4, 2020, lines 167-171). Other motives for working overtime include loyalty towards colleagues and feelings of obligation or the desire not to “let them down” (Interview G2, 2020, lines 2-7, Interview G3, 2019, line 27).

Differences between the experiences of Germans and Mexicans

All in all, experiences related to time demands do not seem to differ remarkably between Germans and Mexicans. A Mexican working in financial advisory remarks that in terms of time demands, his company is stricter than other corporate finance firms, with probably only banks being more stressful (Interview M3, 2019, lines 107-108). Another Mexican working in technology consulting states that in “calm” weeks, he works 55 hours (Interview M1, 2020, line 8). As opposed to that, 50 to 60 hours are usual working hours for a German (Interview G3, 2019, line 15). This indicates that the consultants use their national average working hours as a reference to what constitutes a usual or calm week. In both countries, working hours in consulting or financial advisory might be higher than the respective average national working hours.

Moreover, having a work-life-balance might be generally more difficult in Mexico than in Germany, when consultants have to travel and are hindered by traffic from getting quickly from site to site. Therefore, they must work until even later at night, as they cannot work on their tasks at daytime (Interview M4, 2019, lines 29-33).

Other working conditions

The offices are positively mentioned, for example as very nice, comfortable and equipped with “everything you might need”. Moreover, a central location is advantageous as it comes along with good options for having dinner, which is important as consultants have to find something to eat in the evening. Not having a canteen can be perceived badly, as it means that consultants have to fully pay for their lunch, which can get relatively expensive. Nevertheless, physical working conditions do not appear too relevant for consultants’ job motivation. For example, a consultant considers her good physical working conditions a “standard” in her city, implying that they are not aspects that set her employer apart from other companies (Interview G1, 2020, lines 130-132; Interview G2, 2020, line 55-57, Interview G3, 2019, lines 133-136).

5.2.4. Company reputation

To consultants, the company name or reputation is an important factor that is considered for the job choice. Rejecting the opportunity to work at the interviewees' employer companies seems "stupid", especially after going through the candidate selection process (Interview G1, 2019, lines 189-190; Interview G2, 2020, lines 99-103; Interview G4, 2020, lines 121-122; Interview M4, 2019, lines 163-165).

To a Mexican, the company reputation even makes up for the long working hours. He specifies: *"Think about it. You are working in the top company. It's even one of the best companies in the field, when you are looking for other opportunities in the future. I'm going to give you an example. When you play soccer, and you arrive to Real Madrid, there is nothing else. But after Real Madrid, you can go wherever you want with a very good payment and very good appreciation and recognition"* (Interview M4, 2019, lines 41-44). Thus, working at a company with a good reputation is considered crucial for future success. Another Mexican supports this view. Knowing that he finished his bachelor's degree at a well-known university and that he is now working in a known company, he would expect it to be not too hard to find another job, adding that *"for people with other types of profiles it might be harder to move"* (Interview M3, 2019, lines 164-167). Furthermore, he recounts: *"I remember this professor at my university, who told us: 'If you want to do an MBA or go to another country' – which is part of my plans, to go abroad for maybe two years and do an MBA – 'it helps a lot if you work for a bit in a known company. When it's in your curriculum that you worked at this bank, or this consulting firm ...'. That was one of the reasons why I chose to work here"* (Interview M3, 2019, 110–114). This means that working at a known firm increases the consultants' value on the labor market.

Another effect of company reputation is external recognition from private social circles such as the family: *"My sister and my father really like to know that I am working for this kind of company"* (Interview M4, 2019, line 166). Hence, this could be a further factor that increases work motivation.

5.2.5. Social ambiance

Collaboration

Generally, interviewees report that colleagues are collaborative and willing to help each other (Interview G2, 2020, line 60; Interview M1, 2020, lines 70-72). The willingness to help is sometimes attributed to analysts, i.e. young professionals, in particular (Interview M2, 2020, line

36; Interview M3, 2019, line 55). Dealing with persons of the same age group is perceived as pleasant (Interview G1, 2019, lines 158-159).

Some perceive the collaborative atmosphere as specific to their company, explaining that:

- the tone of conversation is very nice, making it pleasant to work at the company, as even in stressful situations, no one would beat another person up psychologically (Interview G1, 2019, lines 135-141);
- the atmosphere is collegial, not the dog-eat-dog mentality (“*ellbogenmäßig*”) that could be expected from other consultancies, and people are willing to help each other even without being recompensated in any form (Interview G3, 2019, lines 69-70 and 72-80);
- the high willingness to help each other is a core characteristic of their employer company (Interview G4, 2020, lines 48-57).

Colleagues and team members are decisive for experienced fun at work. At best, collaboration with colleagues can be diverting and friendly, thus making “dealing with boring things easier” (Interview G2, 2020, lines 41-42; Interview G3, 2019, line 61; Interview M3, 2019, lines 51-53). Moreover, an interviewee names the interaction and collaborative work with clients as particularly fun (Interview G4, 2020, lines 30-31). Hence, collaborative behavior in the workplace clearly appears to influence consultants’ affective and motivational states.

Competition between employees

Competitive tendencies between employees are observed by all consultants. The experiences can be roughly divided into two groups.

1. Subtle competition

No open manifestations of rivalry can be found, when there is no lack of opportunities and promotions are negotiated on an individual level, i.e. independent of the performance of others. Alternatively, open competition is avoided through company policies that hinder employees to compare themselves with others. Consultants employed in companies without open competition think of the atmosphere as “more humane” than in other companies and appreciate the cohesion between employees (Interview G1, 2019, lines 147-151; Interview G3, 2019, lines 91-98). Another consultant reports that while people see themselves in a competitive position when it comes to promotions, they try to be subtle about it (Interview G2, 2020, lines 74-76).

2. Open competition

Competition is seen as normal, as employees' performance determines their prospects of getting promoted (Interview M1, 2020, lines 83-84). The possibility of reaching high positions in few years can make the competition in consultancies hard and add to the exhaustion caused by high time demands (Interview M4, 2019, lines 131-133). Nevertheless, competition can also be "healthy", when decisions on promotions seem objective. It motivates consultants, as the performance of colleagues influences own aspirations. Therefore, the consultants working in competitive environments report experiencing it positively or even enjoying working alongside ambitious persons, who push them to get better and grow professionally (Interview G4, 2020, lines 59-63; Interview M2, 2020, lines 55-59; Interview M3, 2019, lines 59-62).

This means that reported attitudes towards competitive behavior differ. Overall, open competition seems more common in Mexican than in German consultancies.

Relationships between colleagues and social activities

Some consultants enjoy meeting their colleagues outside of working hours and even consider them friends, whereas others do not engage in activities with their colleagues in their free time. The interviewees' experiences can be divided into 3 groups:

1. Friendships and privately organized common activities

Through the participation in events organized by the company, for example bowling nights, affections arise between colleagues. Consequently, colleagues start meeting in private, such as by having drinks every weekend. Colleagues are seen as friends and the social life at the company is considered very good (Interview G1, 2019, lines 42-51, and 144; Interview G3, 2019, lines 85-87; Interview G4, 2020, lines 67-69).

2. Common activities in frame of events organized by the company

Consultants participate in company-organized activities with their colleagues. For example, they frequently take part in dinners with their consulting division, have drinks with their colleagues, picnics or runs on Sundays. Nevertheless, feelings of friendship are not (explicitly) mentioned. Instead, such events are rather seen as "part of the job" or as possibilities to "involve the company in your life" (Interview G2, 2020, lines 63-72; Interview M4, 2019, lines 155-159).

3. No common activities

“We are friends at work – but we don’t meet outside of work” (Interview M3, 2019, lines 55-56). While consultants might have good relationships with their colleagues and enjoy being surrounded by persons of similar age, they do not participate in common activities apart from common lunch breaks. One of the reasons for that is a lack of time and the desire to spend weekends with friends, family or travels rather than with colleagues. A consultant even mentions that having friends in the company is “always difficult”, which contrasts with the affections many other consultants have for their co-workers (Interview M1, 2020, lines 89-90; Interview M2, 2020, lines 52-53 and 61-62).

Consequently, consultants separate their work sphere from their private sphere to differing extents.

Firm culture

Although the previous pages provide indications on firm cultures, some comments on cultural elements need to be listed separately. For example, the interviewees note:

- an open-mindedness that stands out from other firms, especially in the field of M&A advisory, as well as many young employees working at the company;
- a serious work atmosphere with few disruptions and focused employees;
- being surrounded by intelligent and ambitious persons, which creates a stimulating atmosphere.

The above-mentioned aspects are thoroughly positively perceived (Interview G3, 2019, lines 153-155; Interview M2, 2020, lines 38-39; Interview M3, 2019, lines 86-95).

Only one consultant experiences the atmosphere at his company slightly negatively. In his company, talking to colleagues during working hours is badly seen and interpreted as a sign of laziness. As he likes to tell stories and share his experiences (Interview M4, 2019, lines 92-95 and 123-128), he would probably prefer a more social environment. He describes his firm culture as “very American”, adding that one of his superiors, with whom he has a “tough” relationship, is representative of the company culture (Interview M4, 2019, lines 97-109). Thus, it can be concluded that the extent to which company values correspond to an individual’s values is important for the explanation of job satisfaction.

5.3. Overall satisfaction, commitment and career plans

On the previous pages, different intrinsic and extrinsic job characteristics in consulting professions have been explored. The aim of the following pages is to analyze the statements on overall satisfaction and commitment levels of the consultants as well as their future goals in order to identify which job characteristics are most explanatory for their job motivation. The statements will be presented for every consultant to gain a holistic understanding of individual points view.

5.3.1. German consultants

Interview G1

“Voll zufrieden, ich bin schon richtig happy damit. Also nicht nur mit dem Job, sondern weil ich mein eigenes Geld hab“, meaning that she is fully satisfied and really happy with her job and with having her own money. To clarify, she explains her satisfaction with the autonomy and ownership she is experiencing both in the carry-out of her tasks at work as well as in financing her expenditures on her own. The latter used to worry her as a student, as she took up a loan (2019, lines 208-214). Her salary is now a means to share a lifestyle with her young colleagues, who like to spend money, on designer clothes and pricy dinners, for example. What might be judged or looked at badly in other companies, is accepted at her place of work, which she considers cool (2019, lines 223-230). Lastly, she adds a new perspective to the meaning of high working hours: to her, working is a preferable alternative to otherwise unproductive weekday evenings, as it permits her to “use her brain” and educate herself while simultaneously enjoying the company of her colleagues (2019, lines 268-274). Another advantage of the high workload is her higher appreciation and more efficient use of her free time. She concludes: *“Und ich bin jeden Samstag der glücklichste Mensch auf Erden, als ob ich von meinem Gefängnisturm entlassen wurde. Das ist einfach geil”* (2019, lines 277-280). This means that every Saturday, she is the happiest person on earth, as if she had been released from her prison tower, which is simply awesome.

While she is very interested in the topics she deals with, enjoys her quantitative tasks and currently probably wouldn't want to have any other job (2019, lines 57-58, 60-63 and 235), her plans for the future include:

1. surviving the probatory period,
2. surviving the first year to get her bonus,
3. looking in the mirror and deciding whether she wants to continue working in her position,

4. and switching to private equity at some point, in case her appearance remains unaffected.

She explains that she does not mind looking exhausted, but that she would have a problem with her job, if the working hours started to show on her – also, because everyone she knows in her industry makes jokes about girls not looking the way they started after just one year. Thus, her professional future depends completely on the evolution of her physical appearance (2019, lines 235-245).

Interview G2

„Ich bin eigentlich ganz happy“, meaning that she is quite happy. The freedom that is granted to her both in the conceptual tasks as well as in the communication with the clients are particularly satisfying to her. Although the effort she puts into her work is not compensated by any of the job characteristics, she generally enjoys the carry-out of her tasks and cannot think of a job she would rather do. She particularly enjoys her finance topics, travels and being involved in many industries (2020, lines 92-94 and 141-143). Still, she finds herself dissatisfied with not receiving any negative feedback (2020, lines 17-18, 116-119, 124, 141 and 214). As explained in the in section on feedback, she perceives the lack of negative feedback as an obstacle in her professional growth.

At the time being, she is not looking for another job position (2020, line 114). In future, however, she expects to switch jobs for the sake of a higher salary. After a certain amount of experience, she will be able to sell her knowledge to a higher price in the industrial sector, as opposed to the consulting sector (2020, lines 137-139).

Interview G3

„Insgesamt auf jeden Fall sehr zufrieden. Das einzige, was ein bisschen fehlt, ist die auf idealistischer Ebene persönliche Befriedigung dessen, was man macht. Also, man hat nicht unbedingt den Eindruck, man würde die Welt verbessern mit dem, was man hier tut“ (2019, lines 164-168). This means that overall, he is very satisfied. The only thing he is missing on an idealistic level is the personal satisfaction with his doings: he doesn't have the impression of improving the world by what he is doing at work. However, considering his student debt, he feels urged to “gain a lot of money”. As jobs that appeal to his idealism (e.g. development aid) do not pay well, he prefers working in consulting (2019, lines 175-179). Although he would not use the word “fun” to describe his tasks (2019, lines 65-66), he is satisfied and explains that this job satisfaction results from the salary, the internationality, the variety and the job demands (2019, lines 164-171). He remarks that having a demanding job in which you can learn a lot in a short time along with nice

colleagues is a nice mix, so that he often looks forward to going to work (2019, lines 201-203). Moreover, he enjoys the international travels and the international team (2019, lines 68-69)

If the consultant would switch jobs, then probably just to start at another consultancy with a different focus. His precise plans depend on promotions he might get, the market performance of the firm and on whether he still enjoys his job after a year (2019, 185-190).

Interview G4

The fourth German states that he is very satisfied and highly enjoying the flexibility he has in his life. This is followed by the interesting topics he is working on and the salary, which he rates as equally important (2020, lines 153-156). His job corresponds to his family's expectation of him financing his life and being autonomous (2020, lines 127-130).

His satisfaction can also be explained by an emotional attachment to the company: *“Also, die Themen interessieren mich, und wenn man sieht, was die Firma in der letzten Zeit an Veränderungen für die Menschheit gebracht hat, dann macht es mir schon sehr viel Spaß und ich bin auch stolz darauf, dass ich hier arbeiten darf“* (2020, lines 109-112). This means that he is interested in the company's topics, and that he really enjoys seeing what changes the company brought to humanity in the past and is very proud that he can work there. Moreover, he specifies that it was his wish to work in the department he now works in, as he is highly interested in its specific topics (2020, lines 112-115). A reason for his job choice is that he wanted to work on an exciting topic whose importance would grow in the years to come (2020, lines 147-148).

The consultant will reconsider his career options after completing one more career level, i.e. in 2 to 3 years. He stresses that in consulting, it is normal to gain new perspectives by switching companies, which is also the best way to increase the personal skill-level (2020, lines 160-165).

5.3.2. Mexican consultants

Interview M1

To the Mexican consultant, the experienced variety is an argument in favor of his job: *“I am happy. You are always learning different things and seeing many different industries. [...] You always have different colleagues and different clients. That's good, it's nothing monotonous”* (2020, lines 86-88). Asked about factors he doesn't like, he names the lack of time for his social life and that sometimes, he has too much stress. He wishes for more time for his social life (2020, lines 91-92 and 131).

Although he would rather be a sports commentator (2020, line 108), he chose to study engineering, expecting to find many job opportunities with a good salary. In the end, he did not like his studies and did not find his expectations fulfilled (2020, lines 115-116). Thus, he chose to pursue a career in technology consulting. Now, he appreciates working with a known company with large international clients. Thereby, he is acquiring knowledge that is “useful everywhere” (2020, lines 96-98).

In future, he would like to get to know different companies, but his concrete plans are dependent on the job opportunities he might find. As important criteria in his job search, he names company benefits, the salary, working hours and promotion opportunities (2020, lines 102-106).

Interview M2

“I am happy. It’s a great place to grow professionally, and with time, I will get more responsibility and can do more things than now. It makes sense” (2020, lines 74-75). As professional growth is important to this consultant, he is enjoying the opportunities that come along with working in a global firm, for example the trainings and knowledge provided on internal digital platforms, the collaboration with important clients, networking opportunities and the work on large projects. Furthermore, he likes the firm’s topics as well as the atmosphere in the company, which is a bit more disciplined than in other firms. Consequently, he prefers his job to other positions in smaller, Mexican companies, although he could even earn more money there (2020, lines 45-47, 77-82 and 92). As a negative point, he mentions that his tasks can be boring, which is however normal at the beginning of the career. Lastly, he points out that stress can be dissatisfying. However, it is possible to “learn to deal with it” (2020, lines 84-85).

Currently, the consultant cannot imagine doing another job and expects to stay at his company for some more years, before considering the option to switch jobs. For now, he is not thinking about it, as he is happy and able to develop. Potentially, he might switch to inhouse consulting in the industrial sector (2020, lines 87-90 and 96-98).

Interview M3

“In general, I am happy with what I have done in the past two years. I can say that I learned a lot, and even that my colleagues have learned from me. I would say it’s okay” (2019, lines 137-139). Emphasizing learnings, the consultant values his employer as “a good company” that is a good place to learn and start a professional career (2019, lines 21-22).

His job corresponds to his interest in mathematics. However, he would prefer to work in renewable energies. As in his family many are “businesspersons”, they did not encourage him to specialize in renewable energies, so that instead, he chose to specialize in financial consulting. He concludes that the family is one of many drivers in the career choice (2019, lines 89 and 148-157).

The consultant plans to stay employed at the company for at least 2 years more and is open to any jobs that are related to investments or financial advisory. His aim is to move to a firm similar to the one he is employed at, but where he could do similar things with less working hours and a better work-life-balance (2019, lines 137-145). His wish to move to a position where he could also “do more stuff” (2019, line 133) gives reason to believe that he wishes to deal with similar topics while enjoying a higher task variety.

Interview M4

“Taken into consideration that I have been working for this company only for one year, I am satisfied. I am not satisfied considering I have been working for some years and I’m still in this position. In terms of salary, it’s good. In terms of responsibility, I would like more” (2019, lines 186-188). However, he adds that his low position might be related to his previous employer, who “did not help him to advance”. Nowadays, however, he is totally satisfied (2019, lines 188-190), saying that his job is *“what you would hope to get when you finish a bachelor’s degree”* and the job he always wanted to do (2019, lines 74 and 166-167).

Thus, the effort he is putting into his work is not a reason to quit but to look for better positions at his current company (2019, lines 197-198).

In the following, the individual points of view presented on the previous pages will be related to the statements on concrete job characteristics. Thereby, the importance of different job characteristics will be deducted and interpreted with regard to country-level differences and commonalities.

6. Interpretation

In this chapter, the results presented in the analysis will be briefly summarized and interpreted with reference to previous research on work motivation as well as the developed hypotheses on work motivation in consulting jobs across nations. As the following pages describe general patterns that

are derived from the conducted interviews, references to interview sections will not be provided, unless the interpretation elaborates on details of a specific statement of an individual.

6.1. Hypothesis 1: intrinsic job characteristics and consultants' job motivation

6.1.1. Similarities in the motivational responses to IJC

The first question, that this thesis intends to answer, is: *“To what extent are the motivational responses to IJC similar among management consultants?”*. Considering the findings presented in the analysis, certain commonalities can be found in statements on skill variety and skill growth, task significance as well as feedback.

Skill variety and skill growth

Two task characteristics might be given in consulting jobs in different nations:

- the variety of consulting as project-based work, which comes along with working for different clients in different industries;
- the obligation to perform a share of boring/repetitive/generic/administrative tasks at the beginning of the career.

While a share of uninteresting tasks is accepted at the beginning of the career, the variety of topics is related to learnings. Further learnings can result from:

- work on large, worldwide technological platforms that inspire consultants to adopt a certain structure in their lives, thus becoming more efficient and proactive;
- the high workload that results in learnings on how to work under pressure, organize tasks well, handle difficult situations and solve them efficiently;
- trainings provided by the companies that place high value on skill development.

The third point is related to characteristics of consulting companies, which – as Dickmann et al. (2006) suggest – seem to value the skill growth of their employees. Growth is an underlying theme of all conducted interviews, as the consultants frequently mention wishes to learn, develop and advance in their careers. In Locke's (1969) terms, it could be said that they place high value on skill growth and that they are satisfied with their job, when it is perceived as facilitating or achieving this value. As visible in the consultants' statements on overall job satisfaction and commitment, consulting firms seem to address growth needs successfully.

Another positive effect of learnings is a reputation of consultants for being ambitious and able to dive into new topics quickly, which increases their value on the labor market and thus their future growth opportunities. Thereby, satisfaction with professional growth is increased.

Task significance

Recalling the results of the analysis, consultants are described as experts, supporters, educators, providers of solutions or even doctors for companies. These descriptions indicate that the consulting profession is experienced as meaningful. Moreover, work at international consulting companies is characterized by:

- work on big projects with large, known companies;
- influence on high-level-decisions of these companies;
- exposure to “important” people.

The perceived importance of the work makes the job interesting to consultants. Moreover, satisfaction arises due to job opportunities that might result from networking with managers of client companies. Hence, satisfaction with growth opportunities is increased through the participation in large projects as well as the future career prospects resulting from networking.

Feedback

Feedback tends to be desired, because it provides guidance in solving tasks and is therefore related to learnings and personal growth. As opposed to the expectations formulated in the development of the hypotheses, there are no indications for a higher need for feedback in Germany as a low power distance country. Rather, it can be found that the interviewees generally desire feedback on their performance. While two Germans voiced dissatisfaction arising from a lack of negative feedback or little face-to-face interaction with superiors, most Mexican consultants stated to actively request feedback on their performance. It seems like Mexican interviewees do not expect to receive feedback without their own initiative, whereas German consultants do.

Possibly, giving feedback is generally less common in Mexico, since collectivism and higher cultural power distance lead to subtle communication styles and a lower acceptance of feedback by subordinates (Earley & Stubblebine, 1989; Hofstede et al., 2010, p. 122). These cultural traits might explain why Mexican consultants are less likely to expect to receive feedback. Consultants could represent a professional group whose attitudes towards feedback stand out in Mexico. As growth need strength moderates the effect of feedback on job characteristics (Hackman & Oldham,

1980), the high wish to grow of consultants can explain a higher valuation of feedback. Hence, although feedback mechanisms do not appear to be established in consultancies in Mexico, consultants take the initiative and demand feedback for the sake of their growth.

Conclusions on common motivational responses among management consultants

It can be concluded that growth needs (Hackman & Oldham, 1980; Herzberg, 1966) are very explanatory for the job satisfaction of consultants, who seem to have a high level of achievement motivation. This is in line with McClelland (1961), who related a high achievement motivation to business professions. Overall, professional growth is facilitated by the variety that comes along with working in different industries, learning opportunities, the scale of the projects as well as feedback received. Thus, these factors contribute to job satisfaction across nations.

6.1.2. Differences in the motivational responses to IJC

The second question, that this thesis intends to answer, is: “*Is the valuation of intrinsic job characteristics higher among Germans than among Mexicans?*”. Furthermore, possible explanations of findings related to the national context are supposed to be presented.

In the following interpretation, the frequency of mentioned aspects is occasionally used to assess their importance in the different nations. Although this is an approach that should rather be used in a quantitative analysis, it can provide indications on which job characteristics might be most interesting for future studies on work motivation.

Skill variety

The interviews give reason to believe that skill variety may be higher for Germans than for Mexicans, as two different patterns in learnings could be detected:

- learnings from specialization, e.g. concentrating on certain topics or tasks, learning how to perform tasks faster;
- learnings through new challenges in form of numerous unexpected situations and unfamiliar tasks that need to be solved individually.

To be precise, two Mexican consultants elaborated on learnings through specialization, whereas most German consultants described the second pattern. The statements of the other interviewees could not be clearly assigned to a pattern. However, it is noteworthy that only German consultants

spoke of challenges resulting from a task variety, which lead to the acquisition of new skills and takeaways, which in turn enable satisfaction with professional growth.

Consequently, it could be expected that German interviewees, more than Mexicans, mentioned task variety or skill variety as a major reason for their job satisfaction. Interestingly, the contrary is the case. When asked about which job aspects they are most satisfied with, Mexicans, more than Germans, elaborated on their satisfaction with variety and learnings on the job (see analysis of overall satisfaction and commitment). The descriptions of the Mexican consultants were marked by an emphasis on professional growth, the wish to acquire useful knowledge and to increase their skill level. Even those, who reported specialized learnings and a wish for a higher task variety, named variety and learnings as major reasons for their job satisfaction.

Although variety is a major reason for job satisfaction among Mexican interviewees, it does not necessarily imply that Mexicans are more satisfied with task variety than Germans. After all, it is possible that Germans are simply even more satisfied with other job aspects. Hence, consultants' perception of skill variety in different nations needs to be investigated more closely in future research.

Task significance

Although consultants generally seem to perceive their job as important, German interviewees elaborate more on the responsibility they experience as they build operating models, assign tasks to interns, occupy functions as project managers or even are staffed on projects alone. This experienced responsibility increases their job satisfaction, as Hackman and Oldham's job characteristics model (e.g. 1980) suggests. For example, the satisfaction with growing projects and happy clients as well as the motivation to work overtime have been reported in the context of task ownership and responsibility.

Autonomy

Germans' descriptions of intrinsic job characteristics are marked by an emphasis on autonomy and experienced trust. For example, consultants can decide when to travel to the clients or work from home without having to justify this choice. Autonomy is related to:

- the use of skills;
- learnings, e.g. on how to organize tasks and work strategically well without guidance;
- a feeling of freedom.

By addressing growth needs, the above-listed factors lead to job satisfaction. Moreover, the satisfaction with the feeling of freedom supports Hofstede's model of cultural dimensions, according to which the German culture is marked by individualist traits (Hofstede et al., 2010, 56, 95-97, 103). In harmony with Hofstede's assessment of cultural individualism in Germany, most German consultants name autonomy, ownership and freedom in the carry-out of tasks as well as in the communication with clients as major reasons for their job satisfaction.

One Mexican mentioned satisfaction with the possibility of working from home three times a month, concluding that his job is special due to the task ownership he experienced (Interview M3, 2019, lines 73-82). While his level of autonomy seems lower than most of the Germans', his statement indicates that autonomy levels might be lower in Mexico for consultants, who – like the interviewees in the observed sample – have only few years of professional experience. Such lower levels of autonomy might be accepted, if it is expected to have more responsibility in future (Interview M2, 2020, lines 74-75).

Conclusions on differing motivational responses among management consultants

All in all, skill variety and task significance seem lower for Mexican interviewees than for Germans. At first sight, Mexican consultants still seem satisfied with these IJC, although they elaborate less on job challenges related to skill variety or the significance of their tasks. However, statements on overall satisfaction and future goals show that some Mexicans wish for a higher responsibility. Concretely, one Mexican consultant mentioned he was dissatisfied due to a lack of experienced responsibility (Interview M4, 2019, lines 186-188), while another consultant stated that he was satisfied with his job, but wished to switch to a job in future in which he could do “more stuff” (Interview M3, 2019, line 133). As opposed to that, Germans highlighted their experienced responsibility positively.

The findings support Hackman and Oldham's job characteristics model (1980), according to which skill variety and task significance are two of three dimensions that determine the experienced meaningfulness of the work: lower skill variety and task significance seem to lead to a lower perceived meaningfulness of work in Mexico and to a wish for more responsibilities.

Furthermore, it has been shown that autonomy levels are higher among German interviewees. In their statements on overall job satisfaction, they stress the important role autonomy plays in the generation of job motivation, satisfaction and commitment. The effects of autonomy on job

motivation further support Hackman and Oldham's job characteristics model (1980). Moreover, the findings underline the importance of autonomy as a cultural value in Germany as an individualist country (Hofstede et al., 2010; Kanungo, 1990; Nevis, 1983).

Lower skill variety, task significance and autonomy in Mexico can also be explained with cultural power distance. Since Mexico is a country with high power distance, it is likely to be marked by rather centralized power in organizations (Hofstede et al., 2010, pp. 73–103). Therefore, young professionals in consulting might not experience high responsibility, autonomy and/or variety in Mexico.

6.1.3. Conclusions on the support of hypothesis 1

The question “*Are these answers consistent with the expectations derived from literature and expressed by the hypotheses?*” can now be answered with respect to the first hypothesis.

As shown in the analysis and the interpretation, IJC are positively related to job satisfaction and motivation across the sample. Furthermore, consultants generally place a high value on learnings, skill growth and professional development. According to the job characteristics model, employees with a high need to grow – as opposed to employees with low growth need – respond stronger to jobs with high skill variety, task identity, task significance, feedback and autonomy (Hackman & Lawler, 1971). Indeed, the conducted interviews provide clear evidence on the positive effect of most of these job dimensions. Only the evidence on task identity is too little to allow for an interpretation of its relationship with job motivation across nations.

Skill variety, task significance and autonomy seem lower among Mexican interviewees than among Germans. It cannot be said whether Mexicans would elaborate more on their satisfaction with IJC, if they would enjoy as many responsibilities or be faced with similar challenges as German consultants. The strong growth need of consultants suggests that differences in the relationship between IJC and job motivation might be less pronounced across nations than it could be the case for other occupational groups. Thus, it is not possible to find clear evidence in support of the first hypothesis. In the case of IJC, employees' professional identities seem predominant in different cultural settings. These findings are similar to tendencies observed in accounting firms (Ruiz Castro, 2012). Hence, the suggestion that low social security and high power distance might make management methods that focus on intrinsic rewards ineffective (Huang & van de Vliert, 2003, p. 175) cannot be supported.

6.2. Hypothesis 2: extrinsic job characteristics and consultants' job motivation

6.2.1. Similarities in the motivational responses to EJC

This section aims to answer the following question: “*To what extent are the motivational responses to EJC similar among management consultants?*”. As many differences in motivational responses were detected, they will be interpreted separately after the description and interpretation of commonalities related to EJC.

Pay

The salary granted to consultants can vary between firms. However, even high salaries were rated as bad, once working hours were considered. Therefore, the statements of the consultants imply that pay cannot be a main motivation for working in consulting. As described in the analysis, a Mexican emphasized that while his firm paid well to attract talented candidates, people did not apply to his firm because of the money, but because they wanted to advance in their careers and grow professionally and personally (Interview M4, 2019, lines 152-155). Still, this does not mean that consultants have little interest in monetary rewards. On the contrary: many pointed to the possibility of sharp increases of salaries after few years in consulting.

A main takeaway of the findings described above is that the satisfaction with pay is likely to be dependent on the satisfaction with other job characteristics such as working hours or growth opportunities.

Working conditions

Working hours, although dependent on projects, appear to be tendentially high in consulting, i.e. higher than national average working hours. The interviewees report that this results in stress, nervousness or difficulties in realizing non-work-activities, for example. Despite the negative impact of high time demands, it is interesting that they are rarely mentioned as reasons for overall job dissatisfaction. Instead, it has been said that it would be possible to get used to the working hours and that the lack of a work-life-balance could be accepted in expectancy of future rewards. In a remarkable statement, working hours were even perceived as an opportunity to remain efficient in evenings and as resulting in a higher appreciation of free time (Interview 2019, lines 277-280). Only one consultant clearly mentioned working hours and stress as a reason for dissatisfaction as well as a wish for more time for his social life (Interview M1, 2020, lines 91-92 and 131). Thus, it

seems like the satisfaction with working hours can be influenced by other rewarding job characteristics.

Apart from working hours, other working conditions were mentioned, without having a seemingly significant impact on job satisfaction (e.g. comfortable office).

Conclusions on common motivational responses among management consultants

As suggested by the literature (e.g. Dunnette et al., 1967), pay and working conditions have the potential to affect job motivation responses. While a higher pay can result in higher job satisfaction, high working hours can negatively affect mental and physical states of consultants. However, growth opportunities can mitigate negative effects of low salaries or high working hours on job motivation. This finding supports the predominance of IJC in the explanation of job satisfaction that can be found in scientific literature (e.g. Dunnette et al., 1967).

6.2.2. Differences in the motivational responses to EJC

Company benefits

The interviewed Mexican consultants were tendentially aware of the benefits offered to them by their employers, with one consultant even mentioning that company benefits are an important criterion for his job choice (Interview M1, 2020, lines 102-106). In the perception of the consultants, large, international consulting companies in Mexico stand out from other firms due to their offer of benefits. As opposed to that, two Germans say that they are not aware of all company benefits or that they never investigated them, thus implying that benefits are not among the job characteristics that mainly motivate them to work. Thus, the relationship between company benefits and job satisfaction is likely to be stronger in Mexico than in Germany.

Assuming that company benefits such as health programs or pension plans appeal to physiological and safety needs, the findings on company benefits support Huang and van de Vliert's original model (2003, Figure 3) that connected higher stages of economic development and more elaborated social security systems (as found in Germany) with a lower salience of basic needs related to such EJC.

Pay

As explained before, the salary can increase consultants' job motivation. However, the wish for a good pay can be explained differently for Germans and Mexicans. To Germans, money is a means to achieve autonomy. The fact that some of the interviewed Germans consultants are concerned

with paying back their student loans suggests that they could not rely on the financial means of their parents during their studies. Nowadays, in their early professional careers, many seem satisfied with earning their own money. As they desire to be self-sufficient, Germans seem more concerned than Mexicans about financial issues and rate the pay as an important job characteristic. Two German consultants even mention that the pay was one of their main motivations to choose their current job. Hence, as suggested by Hofstede et al. (2010), the hereby presented study supports the individualism of German culture. Furthermore, the findings support previous studies, which show that money can relate not only to predominantly extrinsic, but also to intrinsic job satisfaction (Tang & Gilbert, 1995).

It is interesting to see that only two persons mentioned unemployment benefits when imagining getting fired. The other two German consultants either said they would be broke or relying on savings and financial resources of their partners. A reason for not mentioning the social system might be that employment benefits are perceived as insufficient to finance the lifestyle consultants might be currently living. As survival is taken for granted and opportunities for self-expression are highly valued in economically developed countries (Inglehart, 1997, pp. 31–33), even effective social security systems that enable the attainment of basic human needs (Taylor-Gooby, 1991) might not address all needs of the beneficiaries. Therefore, German consultants might perceive their job as crucial to maintaining their lifestyle and satisfying their wish to grow, which they are unwilling to give up.

Mexicans mostly said that they would get financially supported by their parents or could move to their house in case of a job loss. This could be an example of social solidarity in Mexico as a collectivist country (Hofstede et al., 2010; Kanungo, 1990).

Furthermore, the interviews show that the lack of an elaborated social protection system in Mexico does not leave the consultants too worried about having a steady income: although Mexican consultants were not happy with the thought of losing their jobs, they didn't voice concerns about financial issues, either. Thus, their parents' wealth seems sufficient to address their financial needs. In order to better understand the relationship between pay and job motivation in Mexico, it might be important to investigate questions on consultants' individual socio-economic background:

- Do consultants that work in large, international firms in Mexico generally come from wealthy families?

- If not, are the consultants that do not have wealthy parents more concerned about a having steady income?

Based on the results of this study, a stronger relationship between pay and job motivation is assessed for Germans.

Company reputation

Company reputation seems valuable in the generation of future job opportunities of consultants and is emphasized more strongly by Mexican than my German consultants. For example, a Mexican consultant compared his employer to the soccer team of Real Madrid (Interview M4, 2019, lines 41-44), which demonstrates the prestige he assigns to his company. In addition to that, another Mexican mentioned that studying and working at known institutions is important not only for job opportunities, but also for doing an MBA abroad (Interview M3, 2019, 110–114). This implies that institutions offering MBA (Master of Business Administration) programs select their candidates according to the applicants' experience and education at known companies or universities.

Another favorable effect of company reputation is the external recognition and social proof that consultants might experience. After all, a Mexican interviewee mentioned that his family liked to know that he was working “at this kind of company” (Interview M4, 2019, line 166).

Although feelings of pride related to the job were also mentioned by a German consultant (Interview G4, 2020, lines 112-115), the examples above support a tendentially higher importance of status in high power distance countries. Moreover, they are in harmony with suggestions on the importance of social relationships in collectivist countries (Hofstede et al., 2010).

Social ambiance

The most interesting findings on the relationship between social aspects and job motivation are related to competitive behavior in companies as well as the relationships between colleagues.

First, the results described in the analysis propose that consultants generally tend to compare their performance to the performances of their peers. However, the interviewed consultants react differently to competition between employees. While some prefer competition to be subtle, others feel comfortable with openly competitive behavior. It is notable that descriptions of open

competition are more common among Mexican respondents and that many German consultants prefer competition to be more subtle.

Second, several Germans highlighted the positive ambiances at their companies, stressing that their companies were special in their collaborative and friendly atmospheres and that other consultancies tended to have stricter ambiances or even a dog-eat-dog mentality. It is also remarkable that most Germans see the company as a social place, where friendships can be created. In this way, colleagues shape even the private social sphere of many German consultants. Mexicans, however, seemed to separate their private life more clearly from work.

Consequently, a harmonic and social work environment seems more important to German interviewees than to Mexicans. This finding could be explained with cultural individualism and power distance (Hofstede et al., 2010). In the collectivist Mexican society, consultants might be more likely to meet their basic need for social affiliation (e.g. Maslow, 1943) outside the workplace. As opposed to that, in Germany, social needs might be occasionally satisfied by the work environment. Furthermore, the low power distance in Germany might support amicable work relationships, whereas high power distance could hinder them in Mexico. There, the work environment might be predominantly a sphere in which individuals thrive to achieve a higher status in society and therefore compete with their colleagues.

6.2.3. Conclusions on the support of hypothesis 2

Lastly, the question “*Are these answers consistent with the expectations derived from literature and expressed by the hypotheses?*” can be answered with respect to the second hypothesis.

First, it should be noted that consultants’ attitude towards pay and working conditions might differ from the attitude of other occupational groups. To be precise, the satisfaction with pay could be increased through the satisfaction with IJC, and the dissatisfaction with long hours might be mitigated through the satisfaction with IJC. This applies to consultants in both examined countries.

All in all, it has been shown that all examined EJC can influence consultants’ job motivation. However, the importance of certain job characteristics varies in different nations:

- company benefits seem more important in Mexico;
- company reputation seems important to all interviewees, but appears to be more strongly related to job satisfaction in Mexico;

- a social ambiance and an amicable work environment seem more important to German interviewees;
- pay seems more important to Germans.

It is important to keep in mind that these results might apply only to unmarried consultants in their first professional years. For example, the importance of pay might increase for Mexican consultants, once they have to support a family financially.

Although it is unknown to what extent the different EJC contribute to job satisfaction and motivation, it is plausible to conclude from the findings listed above that EJC as a group are equally important in Germany and Mexico. However, the study conducted in the frame of this thesis has shown that different EJC fulfill different functions in different countries. On the one hand, this means that the impact of particular EJC varies in different countries (e.g. the impact of social job characteristics). On the other hand, it means that while a job characteristic might be equally important to individuals in different countries, this importance might have to be explained differently. For example, pay might be important to Mexican consultants for the sake of meeting basic needs, whereas in Germany, the salary is a means to achieve autonomy.

Thus, the second hypothesis can be supported by our study. Still, it is important to emphasize that although EJC *as a group* could be equally important to consultants in Germany and Mexico, a moderating effect of national variables can *still* be detected. Therefore, it is crucial to remark that EJC as a group might not be equally important in countries that do not differ with regards to all four country-level variables in the same way that Germany and Mexico do.

7. Summary

As large gaps exist in research on consulting firms, their HRM practices and their employees' job motivation (e.g. Mohe, 2008; Richter et al., 2008), this thesis aims to contribute to the scientific research in this field. The relevance of the research topic can be underlined by several arguments:

- the growth of the consulting industry and rising employment in MAS (FEACO, 2019; Ferguson, 2002);
- consultancies' function as entrance points into formal employment (Ruef, 2002);

- consultancies' role in shaping the career perspectives, expectations and skills of young professionals, who often move on to occupying important positions in public spheres (Kipping & Engwall, 2002).

As consultancies are highly international players (Dickmann et al., 2006), this thesis examines consultants' work motivation with special regard to the role national characteristics by investigating the research question “*What determines employee motivation in management advisory jobs in different nations?*”.

In the literature review, six theories on work motivation have been presented and assigned to three distinct groups that were partly deducted from Steers et al. (2004):

- content theories, namely Maslow's need hierarchy (1943) and McClelland's need for achievement theory (1961);
- work design theories, namely Herzberg's motivation-hygiene theory (e.g. 1959) and Hackman and Oldham's job characteristics theory (e.g. 1976);
- process theories, namely Vroom's expectancy theory (1964) and Locke and Latham's goal-setting theory (1990a).

In the discussion, it has been shown that content theories help to understand different individual needs, and that work design theories define job characteristics that are relevant for the satisfaction of those needs. Moreover, it was discussed how process theories contribute to the understanding of work motivation by explaining performance levels as well as their consequences for job rewards, satisfaction and commitment. A thorough examination of evidence backing process theories was important to explain why job satisfaction can be used as a proxy for job motivation. Moreover, the discussion lead to a better understanding of the concepts of job satisfaction, job commitment and job motivation.

The general applicability of the above-listed theories to different cultures has been doubted (Furnham et al., 1999; Latham et al., 2002). For example, Western work design theories have been criticized for being biased by traits of Western nations (e.g. Kanungo, 1990). Therefore, Huang and van de Vliert (2003) suggest analyzing responses to job characteristics with respect to socio-economic and cultural variables that determine societal values (Inglehart, 1997). More precisely, Huang and van de Vliert's their study suggests that the relationship between IJC and job

satisfaction is moderated by the cultural variables individualism and power distance (Hofstede, 1984) as well as the socio-economic variables national wealth and social security.

This thesis picks up Huang and van de Vliert's (2003) findings to explain job motivation in consulting jobs. It argues that findings on job satisfaction are useful for the explanation of motivation, as job satisfaction has consequences for job commitment and employee behavior (e.g. Locke & Latham, 1990a).

Considering that consulting firms value their employees' growth (Dickmann et al., 2006, p. 64), it was expected that consultants have high needs to grow. Due to their growth need strength, they are likely to respond strongly to IJC (Hackman & Lawler, 1971). Moreover, cultural values were expected to affect the responses to certain job characteristics. On the one hand, autonomy in the carry-out of tasks was expected to be more important in individualistic societies (Kanungo, 1990). On the other hand, feedback was expected to be valued less in high power distance countries (Earley & Stubblebine, 1989). Moreover, social security as well as national wealth were supposed to promote the pursue of IJC related growth needs (Huang & van de Vliert, 2003; Veenhoven, 1991; Veenhoven & Ehrhardt, 1995; Weale, 1983). Therefore, the first hypothesis was formulated as follows:

H1: Intrinsic job characteristics contribute stronger to the job motivation of management advisors in countries with lower power distance as well as higher national wealth, social security and individualism.

The second hypothesis is used as an orientation to explore Huang and van de Vliert's (2003) findings, which could not support a moderating effect of national-level variables in the relationship between EJC and job satisfaction:

H2: Extrinsic job characteristics contribute equally to the job motivation of management advisors across countries.

A qualitative approach has been chosen to explore the hypotheses. Therefore, 8 interviews have been conducted with 4 German consultants as well as 4 Mexican consultants. The interviews were designed in a way that grants insights into how job characteristics are perceived, and which are most valued by the consultants in different nations. The interviewed persons were unmarried young professionals that were between 26 and 30 years old at the time they were interviewed.

A preliminary analysis showed that Germany and Mexico differ remarkably with regard to cultural and socio-economic characteristics. More precisely, Germany is wealthier than Mexico and has a more elaborated system of social protection (ILO, 2017; World Bank, 2020b, 2020a). Moreover, Germany scores higher in cultural individualism and lower in cultural power distance (Hofstede et al., 2010). Therefore, the analysis of job motivation of consultants in these two countries is likely to yield interesting insights into cross-national job motivation.

The description of the results has uncovered a positive relationship between IJC – namely skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy and feedback – and job satisfaction. Although the evidence on task identity is scarce, the findings generally support Hackman and Oldham's job characteristics model (1980). Furthermore, it has been shown that the interviewed consultants place high value on learnings, skill growth and professional development. Generally, German interviewees seemed more satisfied with IJC than Mexican interviewees. Since the findings suggest that consultants tendentially have a high need to grow and that Mexican consultants might enjoy fewer responsibilities, it was however not possible to find sufficient support the first hypothesis. After all, it is possible that Mexican consultants would have showed more excitement with IJC, if they were given as much responsibility as the German consultants.

The role of socio-economic and cultural variables was more evident in the examination of the relationship between EJC and job satisfaction. The positive relationship between EJC and job satisfaction can be supported based on the results. However, the perceived value of different EJC varies across countries:

- company benefits seem more important in Mexico;
- company reputation seems important to all interviewees, but appears to be more strongly related to job satisfaction in Mexico;
- a social ambiance and an amicable work environment seem more important to German interviewees;
- pay seems more important to Germans.

Consequently, EJC as a group might contribute equally to job motivation in consulting jobs across nations, *if* these nations differ with regards to *all* country-level moderators like in the case of Germany and Mexico.

All in all, the results of this study support the important role of cultural individualism and power distance. Moreover, the relevance of the welfare state to German interviewees was evident. However, the role of national wealth and social protection must to be examined more closely in future with regard to individuals' socio-economic background, for example their parents' wealth. As the analysis and interpretation indicate, this would be particularly useful in the understanding of the relationship between pay and job motivation.

8. Conclusion

This thesis has examined consultants' job motivation in two countries, aiming to detect common patterns as well as differences in motivational responses related to different job characteristics. It has shown that the interviewed consultants in both examined nations have a high need to grow and advance professionally, which is why their valuation of IJC might not differ remarkably. As opposed to that, the responses to EJC seemed marked by the national context.

Limitations

Doubtlessly, the conducted study has several limitations. Most importantly, the frame of a thesis rarely permits for a sample size that enables the generalization of research findings to larger populations. Therefore, the results might be biased by the views of few individuals.

Another limitation arises from the chosen qualitative research design, which is not suitable to quantify the exact impact of different country-level moderators on the relationship between job characteristics and employee motivation in consulting jobs. Interviews have been conducted only with consultants of two nations with highly different socio-economic and cultural characteristics. Therefore, the importance of specific national-level variables was difficult to assess. Furthermore, the descriptions of job characteristics provided in this thesis are based on simplified perceptions of the consultants' work environments. This means that IJC and EJC were analyzed using brief subjective statements on job characteristics, which hinders the assessment of the precise impact of job characteristics on job motivation.

Moreover, other socio-economic characteristics or cultural dimensions (e.g. cultural uncertainty avoidance, Hofstede et al., 2010) might be relevant to answering the research question. This study focused only on the most used national-level predictors of job satisfaction (Huang & van de Vliert, 2003, p. 163)

Lastly, findings that suggest that commitment may cause job satisfaction, rather than result from it (Bateman & Strasser, 1984), have not been considered in the research design. Thus, this thesis has barely provided explanations for the job choice of consultants.

Directions for future research

Nevertheless, the results point to interesting directions for future research and thereby fulfil this thesis' main aim of exploration of job motivation in MAS. Findings suggest that in the case of EJC, the moderating effect of country-level variables should be investigated separately for every extrinsic job characteristic, instead of assigning them to a single group. Thus, the moderating effect of national variables in the relationship between specific IJC/EJC and job motivation must be tested in quantitative studies to better understand consultants' job motivation and the impact of different job characteristics. Thereby, the herewith presented research results can be reevaluated by a study of a larger scale, which examines consultants' work motivation in various countries. Such a quantitative study should include questions on the socio-economic situation of consultants' parents. In this way, potential correlations between the parents' wealth and the valuation of monetary rewards can be assessed, for example.

Apart from the quantitative study suggested above, it would be interesting to investigate in an experimental study whether the intrinsic motivation of Mexican consultants could be increased by allowing for a higher task variety, task significance and autonomy. In this context, the relationship between job motivation and job performance can also be examined.

In any future investigations on job motivation, researchers are advised to keep the following point in mind: it is too simplified to define IJC as factors that contribute only to internal motivation and EJC as factors that contribute only to external motivation. As explained in the literature review, the distinction between job characteristics that lead to intrinsic or extrinsic motivation is debated (e.g. Thierry, 1990). This is demonstrated by this study's findings on the motivating role of pay, which can be sometimes related to autonomy needs. Hence, in this thesis, the approach of Huang and van de Vliert (2003) was used to distinguish between IJC and EJC. This means that IJC were defined as job characteristics that *rather* enable self-expression and self-actualization, whereas EJC were defined as *rather* meeting physiological and social affiliation needs (Maslow, 1943).

Relevance of the research field

Further research on work motivation in consulting jobs is relevant not only to consulting firms, but also to other multinational companies that are interested in implementing high-performance work systems that support employee growth and retention. After all, the systematic integration of national variables into work motivation theories might help companies in decisions on global standardization or adaptation of HRM processes. At best, optimized processes can help in increasing employee commitment, which reduces turnover rates and absenteeism (Koch & Steers, 1978; Larson & Fukami, 1984; Mowday et al., 1982).

Naturally, this thesis also intends to appeal to scientists, who might be motivated to continue the research on job motivation in consulting. Lastly, this study is valuable to graduates, who are interested in careers in management advisory firms.

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Appendix

Appendix 1: Abstract

German

Die Arbeit von Unternehmensberatern gilt als hektisch und leistungsintensiv, jedoch ist wenig über die Arbeitsmotivation in dieser Branche bekannt. Diese Masterarbeit beabsichtigt, zu der Forschung in diesem Feld beizutragen, indem sie die Arbeitsmotivation von Unternehmensberatern, die in großen, internationalen Unternehmen arbeiten, erforscht. Ihr Ziel ist es einerseits, jene Faktoren zu identifizieren, die länderübergreifend zur Arbeitsmotivation von Unternehmensberatern beitragen. Andererseits wird ein Schwerpunkt auf die Erforschung des Einflusses von Ländercharakteristika auf die Arbeitsmotivation gelegt. Ein explorativer Forschungsansatz wurde gewählt, um die Gültigkeit eines theoretischen Modells zu erforschen, das Arbeitsmotivation ausgehend von intrinsischen und extrinsischen Jobcharakteristika erklärt und dabei sozio-ökonomische und kulturelle Variablen integriert. Die Forschungsergebnisse deuten auf eine tendenziell hohe Wertschätzung von intrinsischen Jobcharakteristika unter den deutschen und mexikanischen Befragten. Dahingegen scheint die Erklärung der Motivation durch extrinsische Jobcharakteristika komplexer und vom nationalen Kontext geprägt.

English

The consulting profession is known for being hectic and demanding a high performance of employees. However, little is known about work motivation in consulting jobs. Thus, this master's thesis intends to contribute to the research in this field by examining the motivation of consultants working at large, international consulting firms. Its aim is to identify motivational factors that induce consultants in different countries to work. Moreover, the thesis is concerned with the examination of the extent to which motivational responses are influenced by national variables. Thus, a qualitative approach has been chosen to explore the validity of a theoretical model that explains job motivation starting from job characteristics, thereby integrating socio-economic and cultural variables. The results of the study point to a rather high valuation of intrinsic job characteristics among the German and Mexican interviewees. As opposed to that, the explanation of work motivation stemming from extrinsic job characteristics appears to be more complex and marked by the national context.

Appendix 2: Interview manual

Records

- Age of the interviewee:
- Nationality:
- Occupational specialization:
- Date of the interview:
- Duration of the interview:

Introduction

Thank you for taking the time to participate in my research. I am writing my master's thesis about work motivation in consulting jobs in different national contexts. In particular, I am interested in the aspects of your job that you value the most, your overall satisfaction and plans for the future. Your opinions will be treated with high confidentiality, meaning that any statements that might point to your person will be anonymized. Would it be fine for you, if I record the interview? If yes, the material would be deleted after its transcription. Do you have any questions before we start?

General questions

- How are you / how was your week?
- How would you explain your job to a person without a business education?

Job characteristics

- Intrinsic job characteristics
 - o Could you describe your tasks on a rather usual workday? (Skill variety, task identity)
 - o Do you have the feeling that you can fully use your skills and abilities? (Skill variety)
 - o How interesting and “fun” would you say are your tasks? (Insights into most valued IJC and task significance)
 - o How is your relationship with your superiors? (Autonomy, feedback and recognition)
- Extrinsic job characteristics
 - o What do you do in your free time? (Working hours, work-life-balance)

- How would you rate your company benefits in comparison with benefits offered by other companies of your industry? (Pay, physical working conditions, other perks)
- How is your relationship to your colleagues? (Teamwork, social life, competition)

Job satisfaction, commitment and career plans

- How satisfied are you with your job? What are you especially satisfied / unsatisfied with?
- How long do you want to stay at your organization? Which job would you rather do?
(Commitment, future goals)

Concluding questions

- If you were fired, how would you finance your expenses? (Importance of monetary rewards, emotional attachment to the company)
- Is there anything else you wish to say?

Appendix 3: Definition of categories and coding rules

Table 5: Coding manual

Category	Definition according to literature	Subcategory	Definition of Sub-Category	Common example	Coding rules
Intrinsic Job Characteristics	Job features that are more likely to enhance self-expression and self-actualization (Huang & van de Vliert, 2003, p. 166). The sub-categories are defined based on Hackman and Oldham's five core job dimensions (1974).	Skill variety	The variety of tasks and the need to use different skills in their fulfillment.	„Also, ich würde sagen, dass ich schon auf jeden Fall die Fähigkeiten, die ich mir über die Jahre durch das Studium oder über Praktika angeeignet habe, einsetzen kann. Aber ich lern auch immer viel neues dazu. Und das ist gerade das Thema, dass ich mich auch in vielen unvorbereiteten Situationen wiederfinde, gerade jetzt im Berufsanfang, und dass ich da immer viel mitnehme und neue Skills lerne“ (Interview G4, 2020, lines 39-43)	Assign an interview section to this category, if it contains information on task variety, skill use, and their consequences or implications.
		Task identity	The degree to which work outcomes can be assessed.	„Es ist auch so, aber nicht immer nur so, dass du von oben runter irgendwas diktiert bekommst, ohne Sinn und ohne Zusammenhang und das dann umsetzen musst. Das würde mich halt glaub' bisschen frustrieren. Das macht mir Spaß daran, dass es nicht so ist, zumindest nicht immer“ (Interview G1, 2019, lines 217-220).	Assign an interview section to this category, if it contains information on the degree to which task outcomes can be assessed, and their consequences or implications.
		Task significance	The impact the work has on lives inside or outside the organization.	„Und interessant ist es halt, weil es einen relativ hohen Stellenwert hat, gerade die Strategieberatung. Bei unserem letzten Projekt haben wir dem jeweiligen CEO direkt unsere Ergebnisse präsentiert. Insofern ist das	Assign an interview section to this category, if it contains information on the perceived importance and impact of tasks on

				schon interessant, weil du merkst, dass deine Arbeit wirklich Entscheidungen beeinflusst, und zwar Entscheidungen auf dem höchsten Level“ (Interview G3, 2019, lines 61-65).	lives inside or outside of the organization, and workers' affective states related to that.
		Autonomy	The independence and freedom employees have in choosing strategies to organize and fulfil their tasks.	„Von Tag 1 darf man mit den Kunden sprechen und muss auch Aufgaben lösen – natürlich alles in Zusammenarbeit mit dem Kunden und auch mit dem Vorgesetzten. Aber allgemein wird einem schon viel Freiraum gelassen in der Kommunikation und auch in der konzeptionellen eigenen Arbeit. Ich bin jetzt zum Beispiel allein auf einem Projekt, und wenn ich meine, ich muss irgendwo hinfliegen – klar, stimme ich das kurz ab –, dann mach ich das einfach aus Eigeninitiative“ (Interview G2, 2020, lines 116-121).	Assign an interview section to this category, if it contains information on consultants' autonomy in the carry-out of their tasks as well as its influence on the affective states of the employees.
		Feedback	The employees' knowledge of the quality of their performance.	“I usually know when I'm working well, and I also like to ask. Sometimes I tell a manager to go to eat and say, “tell me if I'm doing right or not”. If you don't know, just ask. Normally, they tell me how I'm doing” (Interview M3, 2019, lines 66-68).	Assign an interview section to this category, if it contains information on received feedback or its perceived importance.
Extrinsic Job Characteristics	Job features that tend to meet workers' lower-order needs, such as security needs and social affiliation needs (Maslow, 1943;	Company benefits	Non-contingent rewards or perks that are granted by	“But here, there is a lot of support for diversity and support for women, who want to make a career. The company thinks about offering work models that allow mothers to be flexible. There is also a push for health. We	Assign an interview section to this category, if it contains information on company benefits received by

	Huang & van de Vliert, 2003, p. 166).		companies to employees.	have internal competitions, exercises, meditations” (Interview M3, 2019, lines 96-99).	consultants, and their effect on employees’ affective states.
		Pay	Monetary remuneration received for labor.	“It’s not great but for now, it’s okay. I think, it’s always a bit low at the beginning. So, if you look at the hours you are working, of course it’s not so much. But after a few years it gets much higher” (Interview M2, 2020, lines 49-50).	Assign an interview section to this category, if it contains information on the salary or its effect on employee satisfaction or motivation.
		Working conditions	Time demands (e.g. work on weekends or during vacations) as well as other working conditions.	“Schwierig war’s zum Beispiel jetzt im Urlaub, weil ich fast jeden Tag im Urlaub in irgendwelchen Calls war, und teilweise auch gearbeitet habe. Und ich habe mich schon sehr darüber aufgeregt. Das hat nicht mehr meinem Anspruch an Work-Life-Balance entsprochen“ (Interview G3, 2019, lines 24-26).	Assign an interview section to this category, if it contains information on working conditions and their effect on affective states of employees.
		Company reputation	Beliefs held about the company, e.g. related to its prestige.	“Think about it. You are working in the top company. It’s even one of the best companies in the field, when you are looking for other opportunities in the future. I’m going to give you an example. When you play soccer, and you arrive to Real Madrid, there is nothing else” (Interview M4, 2019, lines 41-43).	Assign an interview section to this category, if it contains information on the company reputation or its implications for consultants’ job motivation.
		Social ambiance	Relationships between colleagues and/or superiors,	„[Willingness to help each other:] Ja, auf jeden Fall. Ich glaube, das ist auch ein bisschen firmenspezifisch. Ich habe da schon ganz andere Sachen erlebt und gehört. Der Umgangston ist	Assign an interview section to this category, if it contains information on consultants’

			willingness to help and general social ambiance.	echt mega nett. Alle sind super lieb, keiner macht dich dumm an, keiner wird hysterisch, aggressiv, unverschämt, sonst irgendwas, was man schon teilweise so hört. Und das macht es so super angenehm. Selbst wenn du Stress hast, du hast keinen emotionalen Stress [...]“ (Interview G1, 2019, lines 135-139).	relationships with their co-workers, the social atmosphere at the company or the interviewees' valuation of social aspects in the work context.
Job motivation	"A set of energetic forces that originate both within as well as beyond an individual's being, to initiate work-related behavior, and to determine its form, direction, intensity, and duration" (Pinder, 2008, p. 11).	Job satisfaction	“The pleasurable emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job as achieving or facilitating the achievement of one's job values” (Locke, 1969, p. 316).	„Insgesamt auf jeden Fall sehr zufrieden. Das einzige, was ein bisschen fehlt, ist die auf idealistischer Ebene persönliche Befriedigung dessen, was man macht. Also, man hat nicht unbedingt den Eindruck, man würde die Welt verbessern mit dem, was man hier tut. [...] Aber ansonsten, abgesehen von dem Faktor, bin ich schon sehr zufrieden“ (Interview G3, 2019, lines 164-169).	Assign an interview section to this category, if it contains information on consultants' satisfaction with the job as a whole. Moreover, statements on job aspects that are particularly liked or disliked should be assigned to this category.
		Career plans and commitment	Future goals and commitment as entailing “a definite desire to maintain organizational membership” (Porter et al., 1974, p. 604).	„Ich glaube, irgendwann der Wechsel kommen, wegen dem Geld, glaube ich. Ab einem gewissen Erfahrungsgrad kann man das Knowhow viel teurer am Markt verkaufen, in der Industrie, als man das in der Beratung kann. Ich glaube, dann endet das Ganze” (Interview G2, 2020, lines 137-139).	Assign an interview section to this category, if it contains information on future goals of consultants or factors that will determine their professional future.