

Cultural values and definitions of career success

George S. Benson¹  | Cheryl K. McIntosh² | Maritza Salazar³ |
Hoda Vaziri⁴ 

¹College of Business Administration,
University of Texas at Arlington, U.S.A

²Craig School of Business, Missouri Western
State University, U.S.A

³The Paul Merage School of Business,
University of California, Irvine, U.S.A

⁴Department of Management, University of
North Texas, U.S.A

Correspondence

George S. Benson, College of Business
Administration, University of Texas at
Arlington, 701 S. West Street Box 19467,
Arlington, TX 76019-0377.
Email: benson@uta.edu

Funding information

Center for Effective Organizations at the
University of Southern California

Abstract

This paper examines how national culture relates to the ways that individuals define career success. Data are drawn from interviews with 269 professional services employees in 15 countries. Interviews are content coded and linked with country-level Global Leadership and Organizational Behavior Effectiveness measures of cultural values. We test our hypotheses using a multilevel multinomial logit model. The results demonstrate that the ways in which employees define career success vary across countries, due in part to differences in cultural values after controlling for gender, occupation, job level, and national economic development. We find that employees from countries high in future orientation, uncertainty avoidance, and performance orientation are more likely to define career success in terms of interpersonal outcomes, and those from countries high in collectivism (institutional and in-group), humane orientation, and gender egalitarianism are more likely to prefer intrapersonal outcomes. We find that employees from countries that are high in assertiveness, uncertainty avoidance, and performance orientation are more likely to define career success in terms of achievement-oriented outcomes. Finally, we find that employees from countries high in power distance report career success definitions in terms of safety and security outcomes. We discuss the implications of these findings for theories of cultural differences in careers across countries.

KEYWORDS

career success, cross-cultural, cross-cultural career success values, mixed-method

1 | INTRODUCTION

Career success is defined as positive work-related outcomes associated with career experiences over time (Arthur, Khapova, & Wilderom, 2005; Judge, Cable, Boudreau, & Bretz, 1995). It is subjectively determined, and qualitative research shows that individuals provide a wide range of responses when asked to define career success (Dries, Pepermans, & Carlier, 2008; Ng, Ng, Eby, Sorensen, & Feldman, 2005). A number of interview studies demonstrate that perceptions of career success vary widely around the world (Demel, Shen, Las Heras, Hall, & Unite, 2011; Granrose, 2007; Ituma, Simpson, Ovadjie, Cornelius, & Mordi, 2011; Lirio et al., 2007; Mayrhofer et al., 2016; Shen et al., 2015; Visagie & Koekomoer, 2014; Zhou, Sun, Guan, Li, & Pan, 2013). Despite this research suggesting that cultural values and norms shape variation in how individuals evaluate career success, research testing the direct effects of national culture on career success perceptions remains relatively sparse (Spurk, Hirschi, & Dries, 2018).

This is a crucial omission because the ways in which cultural values drive perceptions of career success is a key link in understanding how individuals around the world make career choices, navigate organisations, and react to career outcomes (Javidan, House, Dorfman, Hanges, & Sully de Luque, 2006). Given that perceptions of career success can lead to higher job and life satisfaction, it remains critical for scholars and organisations to understand the career success criteria that matter most for employees (Erdogan, Bauer, Truxillo, & Mansfield, 2012). Previous research on culture and career success either tends to examine the moderating effects of national culture on career success with surveys (e.g., Smale et al., 2018) or relies on an inductive approach using interviews to develop taxonomies of career success that are linked to cultural differences by country (e.g., Briscoe, Chudzikowski, & Unite, 2011; Chudzikowski et al., 2011). This study examines the direct effect of cultural values on definitions of career success while controlling for individual, professional, and national economic development differences. We propose and test a theoretical model that connects cultural values identified by the Global Leadership and Organizational Behavior Effectiveness (GLOBE) project (House, Hanges, Javidan, Dorfman, & Gupta, 2004) with different definitions of career success that vary along the dimensions of achievement versus affect and interpersonal versus intrapersonal career success (Dries, Pepermans, & Carlier, 2008).

Culture is theorised and investigated most often as a direct effect on career attitudes and career strategies. Hofstede (1980) argues that quality of life and work are relative constructs determined in part by cultural values. On the other hand, culture is also believed to affect careers indirectly through differences in employment systems and human resource (HR) practices around the world (Alas, Kaarelson, & Niglas, 2008; Gerhart & Fang, 2005; Kats, Van Emmerik, Blenkinsopp, & Khapova, 2010; Shen et al., 2015). Previous research on the ways in which culture shapes career success has tended to confound societal culture and these contextual differences in occupation and organisation-level HR practices by drawing participants from multiple organisations and industries (e.g., Briscoe, Hall, & Mayrhofer, 2011; Chudzikowski et al., 2009; Granrose, 2007; Mayrhofer et al., 2016; Shen et al., 2015). To address this limitation, this study includes participants from only one industry—professional services—who work in organisations with identical HR practices. We analyse a unique dataset of coded interviews from employees working for a network of professional services around the world. This allows us to isolate the relationship between cultural values and conceptions of career success to ensure that differences observed cannot be attributed to differences in occupational context or organisational HR practices.

This study is based on coded structured interviews with 269 participants in 15 countries about the way that they define career success. The interviews identify 592 unique expressions of career success. We apply a mixed method approach that combines coded interview data with a multilevel model that overcomes some of the inherent limitations of previous qualitative studies. We first categorise individual definitions of career success to contrast categories of affect versus achievement outcomes and interpersonal versus intrapersonal outcomes (Dries, Pepermans, & Carlier, 2008). Our multi-level multinomial logit model then predicts the categories that employees use to define career success, based on national-level cultural values drawn from the GLOBE project (House, Javidan, & Dorfman, 2001). This allows us to examine the relationship between culture and definitions of career success while controlling for individual characteristics including profession, career stage, and gender as well as national differences in economic development.

2 | CULTURAL VALUES AND CAREER SUCCESS RESEARCH

Over the past decade, there has been a proliferation of global research on careers and career success. The majority of this work has been qualitative work in a single country or small-sample cross-country comparisons. Researchers have documented differences in perceptions of career success around the world from South Africa (Visagie & Koekomoer, 2014), to China (Granrose, 2007; Zhou et al., 2013), to Russia (Khapova & Korotov, 2007), and Nigeria (Ituma et al., 2011) among others. The exception to the small sample studies is the benchmark "5C" project. This work includes an edited volume and set of published studies based primarily on semistructured interviews of more than 200 people conducted in 11 countries representative of different cultural values worldwide (Briscoe, Hall, & Mayrhofer, 2011; Burke, 2010; Claes & Ruiz-Quintanilla, 1998; Lirio et al., 2007; Mayrhofer et al., 2016; Shen et al., 2015). The 5C project has compared expressions of career success from different regional/cultural clusters (Shen et al., 2015) and countries associated with different Schwartz values (Chudzikowski et al., 2011). Although people have individual differences, research by the 5C group and others suggest that the definitions of career success differ around the world (Chudzikowski et al., 2009; Chudzikowski et al., 2011; Hall & Heras, 2010).

There is good reason to believe that outcomes that people desire for their careers reflect cultural differences in the values that people in each country share (Hofstede, 2001; Mayrhofer et al., 2016; Shen et al., 2015; Taras, Kirkman, & Steel, 2010). Cultural values have been demonstrated to frame how individuals view their work environment (Gelfand, Erez, & Aycan, 2007; House et al., 2001; Tsui, Nifadkar, & Ou, 2007). Culture has been shown to affect career choices, motivation, and attitudes of students across multiple countries (Gunkel, Schlaegel, Langella, Peluchette, & Reshetnyak, 2013; Ozbilgin, Kusku, & Erdogmus, 2004). Research also shows that cultural differences shape individual views of career success. Visagie and Koekomoer (2014) interviewed 24 senior managers at a firm in South Africa and found that participants value subjective measures of success such as making a valuable contribution, receiving recognition for their work, and achieving personal development goals. Granrose (2007) finds that managers in China value the ability to contribute to the family unit. Managers in Nigeria, by contrast, prefer quantifiable measures of career success, such as money, status, and advancement (Ituma et al., 2011).

Several taxonomies for conceptualising career success have also been developed from the 5C project drawing on a cross-cultural perspective. Chudzikowski et al. (2011) compared definitions of career success across eight countries and concluded that objective career success outcomes were more likely to be expressed in countries that value embeddedness, hierarchy, and mastery, whereas subjective career outcomes were more likely to be expressed in countries that value autonomy, egalitarianism, and harmony. Chudzikowski et al. (2009) and Briscoe, Chudzikowski, and Unite (2011) find that perceptions of career transitions tend towards internal attributions in countries high in mastery and external attribution in countries that value hierarchy and embeddedness. Finally, Demel et al. (2011) divide career success into three categories: person-centred, job-

centred, and environment-centred. They find that person-centred outcomes of satisfaction and achievement are nearly universal across countries (Demel et al., 2011). Job-centred outcomes of responsibility and challenge are most common in countries such as Japan and Israel (Demel et al., 2011), which value mastery (Sagiv & Schwartz, 2000). Individuals in countries that value egalitarianism, such as Austria and Spain (Sagiv & Schwartz, 2000), express environment-centred definitions (Demel et al., 2011). Though people have individual differences, this body of inductive research suggests that societal-level culture plays a role in shaping individual career-oriented values (Chudzikowski et al., 2009; Chudzikowski et al., 2011; Hall & Heras, 2010).

We define national culture as common values, behaviours, attitudes, and expectations shared by individuals who live together in a society (Thomas & Peterson, 2015). Hofstede called culture "the collective programming of the mind" (Hofstede, 2001, p. 9). This collective programming, through national origin and cultural values, is believed to have a direct influence on how individuals conceptualise career success. Work is integral both to peoples' lives and to the societies in which they live. Career values and attitudes towards work have always been included as examples of cultural differences cross-cultural research (Hofstede, 1980; Rokeach, 1973; Schwartz, 1994). In fact, Schwartz (1994, 1999) argued that individual work values, including expressions of successful careers, are really an extension of their cultural values.

Cultural values are the over-arching beliefs that most people in a society feel are important because of learning from shared experiences in the same social environment (Hofstede, 1980; Rokeach, 1973). According to the cultural expertise and personal values proposition (Peterson & Barreto, 2014), individuals within a society develop cultural expertise and shared personal values through social learning. Repeated interactions with others in similar situations create cognitive structures that lead to similar ways of thinking and behaving (Peterson & Wood, 2008). Societal characteristics are believed to emerge over time and influence individuals' generalised preferences by shaping how people think and interpret information and situational cues. Culture provides a template for cognitive processing by promoting scripts, schemas, and cognitive structures that create natural cultural expertise in individuals (Gibson, Maznevski, & Kirkman, 2009; Peterson & Wood, 2008). Although the degree of acceptance of cultural values varies within individuals, the cultural values that the members of a society ascribe to in general influence the cognitive structures and schemas of those socialised within the society (Peterson & Barreto, 2014) and are therefore likely to have direct influence on how individuals conceptualise career success.

For this study, we use country-level data on cultural values from the GLOBE project. The GLOBE project identified nine dimensions of cultural values and measured them using mean values from large-scale individual surveys across 62 countries. The nine cultural values identified include three that match the cultural values identified by Hofstede (2001): power distance, uncertainty avoidance, and future orientation. The GLOBE project then identifies six others: assertiveness, humane orientation, institutional collectivism, in-group collectivism, performance orientation, and gender egalitarianism. The GLOBE project values of assertiveness and humane orientation describe whether the behaviour of members of a society tends towards aggression or cooperation (House et al., 2004). The GLOBE project distinguishes between institutional collectivism, which is a measure of a society's orientation towards large-scale cooperation, and in-group collectivism, which is the extent to which individual members of a culture feel attached to the groups to which they belong (House et al., 2004). Finally, the GLOBE project includes performance orientation, which is the degree to which a culture values high-quality results, and gender egalitarianism, which is the extent to which a culture emphasises gender equality (House et al., 2004).

Although not without criticism (Hofstede, 2006, 2010; Maseland & Van Hoorn, 2009), GLOBE values are widely used in cross-cultural research and are well-suited to predict the ways in which employees define career success for two reasons. First is that the GLOBE dimensions are particularly suitable when examining cultural values at the societal level. The GLOBE values have been used to address cultural differences in career-related topics such as work-to-family conflict (Masuda et al., 2012), mobility (Stavrou & Kilaniotis, 2010), entrepreneurship (Pathak & Muralidharan, 2016), and attitudes towards money (Tung & Baumann, 2009) among others. More recently, a comprehensive survey study uses GLOBE values to examine the ways in which cultural values moderate the effect of proactive career behaviours on career success around the world (Smale et al., 2018).

The second reason is that the GLOBE values can be grouped together to contrast country values along two dimensions for performance-based cultures and socially supportive cultures (Stephan & Uhlaner, 2010). Based on the work of Peterson and Castro (2006), Stephan and Uhlaner (2010) find that performance-based cultures are those with high future orientation, uncertainty avoidance, and performance orientation and those with low power distance and collectivism (in-group and institutional). They describe performance-based cultures as those that reward high achievement and individual accomplishments. Socially supportive cultures, on the other hand, are those that are high in humane orientation and gender egalitarianism and low in assertiveness. Socially supportive cultures are those that promote helpfulness and community in interactions among individuals (Stephan & Uhlander, 2010). We use these groupings of GLOBE values to contrast cultures to predict the relationship between cultural values and career success.

To investigate the role of cultural values in definitions of career success, we examine definitions of career success along two dimensions drawn from Dries, Pepermans, and Carlier (2008). Dries, Pepermans, and Carlier (2008) used structured interviews to gather expressions of career success from 22 Belgian managers from different industries. They then used Q-sort and multidimensional scaling to create a two-dimensional graphic representation of the conceptual similarity of statements of career success. Dries, Pepermans, and Carlier (2008) then interpreted the summary dimensions of achievement versus affect and interpersonal versus intrapersonal career success in a 2×2 model creating four unique quadrants of career success. In the first summary dimension, achievement-related outcomes are defined as “factual accomplishments” (Dries, Pepermans, & Carlier, 2008, p. 259) that allow individuals to consider themselves as more or less successful such as achievement and self-development. This contrasts with affect-related outcomes as the “feelings and perceptions people may have ... that cause them to evaluate their career success as high or low” (Dries, Pepermans, & Carlier, 2008, p. 259). These include satisfaction and security. The second dimension is interpersonal versus intrapersonal outcomes. Interpersonal career success outcomes are defined as those in which “the world external to the career actor’s ‘self’ acts as the source of validation” (Dries, Pepermans, & Carlier, 2008, p. 260). These include achievement, advancement, and contribution to an organisation. Finally, intrapersonal outcomes are those in which the individual assesses or validates success internally, such as self-development, satisfaction, and security.

The resulting 2×2 and explanatory dimensions are particularly useful for understanding the ways in which national cultural values relate to definitions of career success for multiple reasons. First is that subjective career success is a complex multidimensional phenomenon (Shockley, Ureksoy, Rodopman, & Poteat, 2016; Spurk et al., 2018). These two dimensions capture the variation in career success definitions throughout the literature and various taxonomies for career success that have been developed from qualitative work on career success (e.g., Demel et al., 2011; Ituma et al., 2011; Van et al., 2017). We develop an original coding scheme to categorise expressions of career success from 269 interviews and categorise them into the four quadrants. This allows us to analyse their relationship to cultural values using a theoretically driven multilevel multinomial logit model. Second is that the Dries, Pepermans, and Carlier (2008) dimensions contrast career success definitions in ways that are likely to capture variation in cultural values. Specifically, we predict that performance-based and socially supportive GLOBE values (Stephan & Uhlaner, 2010) are related to expressions of career success defined by achievement versus affect and interpersonal versus intrapersonal success.

3 | HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT

We develop four hypotheses to predict the ways in which cultural values at the national level are related to tendencies to define career success along dimensions of achievement versus affect and interpersonal versus intrapersonal career success. Together the two dimensions categorise elements of career success into one of the four quadrants. The first quadrant is labelled “Q1 Performance and Advancement” and includes career success outcomes characterised by interpersonal achievement. This type of success includes outcomes such as salary, advancement,

and reputation (Dries, Pepermans, & Carlier, 2008). The second quadrant is also achievement-oriented but intrapersonally focused and labelled, “Q2 Self-development and Creativity.” Intrapersonal achievement outcomes include personal growth, creativity, and challenge (Dries, Pepermans, & Carlier, 2008). The third quadrant, intrapersonal affect, is labelled “Q3 Satisfaction and Security” and includes job satisfaction, work–life balance, and autonomy (Dries, Pepermans, & Carlier, 2008). Finally, the last category of career success definitions is the quadrant labelled “Q4 Cooperation and Contribution,” which are interpersonal affect-oriented outcomes. These include career outcomes such as contribution to an organisation or society (Dries, Pepermans, & Carlier, 2008). Figure 1 summarises the hypotheses of our study.

4 | ACHIEVEMENT-ORIENTED CAREER SUCCESS

Achievement-oriented outcomes are subjective perceptions of factual accomplishments that allow individuals to assess their career success (Dries, Pepermans, & Carlier, 2008). Achievement-oriented definitions of career success fall into two groups. The first are interpersonal outcomes in which others outside the “self” can validate including pay, promotion, and social status. The second group are intrapersonal outcomes that are judged by the individual and include self-development, creativity, and individual agency or control over work. We predict that employees who come from countries with more performance-based cultures (i.e., high in uncertainty avoidance, performance orientation, and future orientation) are more likely to define career success in terms of achievement-oriented outcomes including Q1 Performance and Advancement and Q2 Self-development and Creativity.

4.1.1. | Uncertainty avoidance

Uncertainty avoidance refers to the degree to which people in a society seek “orderliness, consistency and formalized procedures” (de Luque, M., & Javidan, 2004, p. 63). Baker and Carson (2011) and Stephan and Uhlander

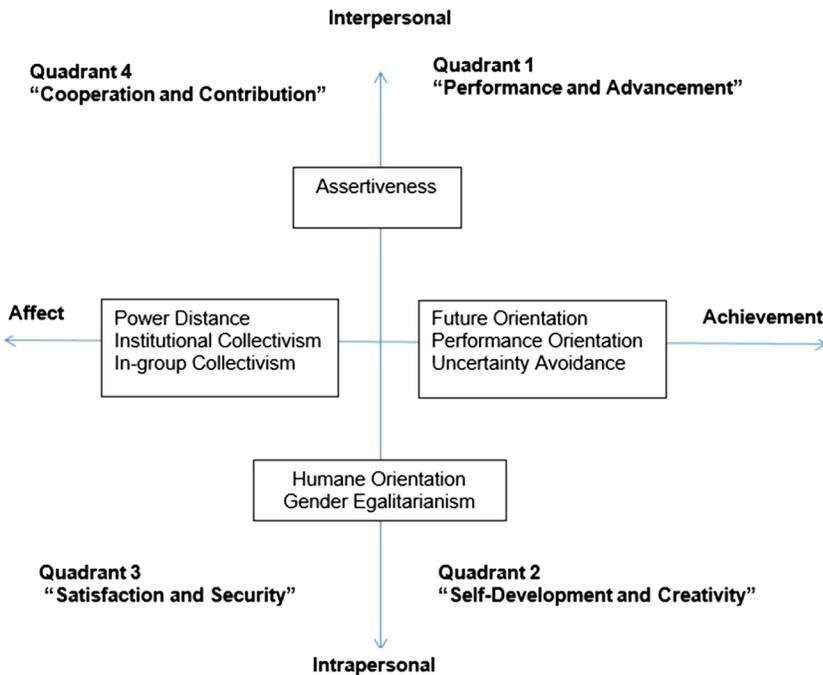


FIGURE 1 Summary of hypotheses [Colour figure can be viewed at wileyonlinelibrary.com]

(2010) argue that high uncertainty avoidance relates to a preference for performance-based values. This appears counterintuitive, as Hofstede associates high need for achievement with low uncertainty avoidance: When people from high uncertainty avoidance countries do achieve something, they are more likely to attribute it to external causes (Hofstede & Minkov, 2010). However, high uncertainty avoidance cultures also prefer regulations and rules to reduce instability and the predictability of future events (House et al., 2004). Therefore, people in countries with high uncertainty avoidance are more likely to value hard work, clear organisational structure, security, predictability, and consensus. An important group of achievement-oriented definitions in the Dries, Pepermans, and Carlier (2008) model includes control, autonomy, and doing what you want in your career.

4.1.2. | Performance orientation

Performance orientation is defined as “the degree to which a ... society encourages and rewards ... group members for performance improvement, innovation, and excellence” (House, Quigley, & Sully de Luque, 2010, p. 118). GLOBE researchers drew from McClelland's (1961) theory of the need for achievement and demonstrated that societies differ in terms of the ways in which members relate to goals and the need for high performance in the workplace. They argue that societies high in performance orientation value achieving results and are more comfortable with evaluation and meritocracy at work (House et al., 2004). We predict that employees from countries high in performance orientation will express this value by using achievement-oriented definitions of career success compared with employees from low performance orientation countries.

4.1.3. | Future orientation

Future orientation is the degree to which individuals engage in planning and investing in future-oriented behaviours (House et al., 2001). Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck (1961) described past, present, and future orientation as a dimension of culture. Attaining achievement in one's career as validated by others is a future-oriented endeavour requiring planning and investment. Career achievement, whether in the form of increased pay or promotion or self-development, requires that employees weigh distal consequences of their actions and delay the gratification of more immediate impulses. We predict that individuals with a future orientation would be more likely to sacrifice immediate interests for the distal benefit of the pay or promotion that could be attained for performing high-quality work.

H1: Employees from countries high in performance-based cultural values (future orientation, uncertainty avoidance, performance orientation) are more likely to define career success by achievement-oriented outcomes (Q1 Performance and Advancement and Q2 Self-development and Creativity) compared with employees from countries low in performance-based cultural values.

5 | AFFECT-ORIENTED CAREER SUCCESS

In contrast to achievement-oriented outcomes are a set of career success definitions that emphasise affect-related outcomes. Affect-related outcomes are those in which the feelings or perceptions of individuals allow them to assess whether their careers have been successful (Dries, Pepermans, & Carlier, 2008). These outcomes include feelings of life satisfaction, work-life balance, and perceived contribution to society. Stephan and Uhlaner (2010) find GLOBE power distance and in-group collectivism values to be on the same performance-based factor but negatively related. We predict that employees who come from cultures who are high in power distance and collectivism (in-group and institutional) are more likely to define career success in terms of affect-oriented outcomes including Q3 Satisfaction and Security and Q4 Cooperation and Contribution.

5.1.1. | Power distance

Power distance is the amount of societal acceptance of unequal distributions of power between people (Hofstede, 1980, 1993). Countries with high power distance are tolerant of large power inequalities between people, whereas countries with low power distance expect minimal inequalities between people (Hofstede, 1980). Predicting that power distance is more strongly related to affect-oriented career success definitions appears to contradict the importance of tangible rewards, such as pay and promotion in these countries (Huang & Van de Vliert, 2003). However, individuals in high power distance countries tend to accept inequality of outcomes in society and organisations and are therefore less likely to focus on career success related to achievement of opportunities they do not have. For this reason, we predict that employees from countries high in power distance will be more likely to define career success in terms of satisfaction and cooperation outcomes.

5.1.2. | Collectivism (in-group and institutional)

Over the last 40 years, the most widely investigated cultural value is individualism/collectivism (Oyserman, Coon, & Kemmelmeier, 2002). Collectivism refers to an orientation towards the self as embedded in a variety of social relationships (Hofstede, 1980). Norms such as harmony, group interests, and teamwork are valued and prioritised more among those with a collectivistic orientation. To strengthen group cohesiveness, a collectivism orientation strongly emphasises placing value on the group's needs and achievement, whereas individualism encourages individuals to pursue their own goals and interests (Ramamoorthy & Flood, 2002).

GLOBE includes two types of collectivism: institutional and in-group. Institutional collectivism measures the tendency of organisations and societies to reward group-oriented behaviour, such as sharing resources and working as a group (House et al., 2001). In-group collectivism measures individual commitment to social groups, such as family, peers, and coworkers (House et al., 2001). Together, these two forms of collectivist values should lead affect-oriented satisfaction, such that individuals are interested in achieving a balance between their work and social groups, while also gaining a sense of accomplishment from cooperating and contributing to their work groups. Employees in collectivist countries are more likely to value job security, loyalty, and longer tenure (Gomez-Mejia & Welbourne, 1991; Parkes, Bochner, & Schneider, 2001). As such, individuals from more collectivist societies will be more likely to define career success in terms of affect-oriented success including satisfaction and security.

H2: Employees from countries low in performance-based cultural values (power distance, institutional collectivism, and in-group collectivism) are more likely to define career success by affect-oriented outcomes (Q3 Satisfaction and Security and Q4 Cooperation and Contribution) compared with employees from countries high in performance-based cultural values.

6 | INTERPERSONAL-ORIENTED CAREER SUCCESS

The second major contrast of the Dries, Pepermans, and Carlier (2008) model is interpersonal versus intrapersonal outcomes. Interpersonal outcomes are those in which others act as the source of validation for career success. These are career success outcomes that can be observed and understood by others. Interpersonal outcomes include Q1 Performance and Advancement and Q4 Cooperation and Contribution. Q1 Performance and Advancement includes interpersonal achievement outcomes such as pay, status, and recognition. Q4 Cooperation and Contribution focuses on being seen as making a contribution and difference in society. We expect that employees in low socially supportive countries (high in assertiveness) will be more likely to define career success in terms of how others validate their success.

6.1.1. | Assertiveness

Assertiveness is defined in GLOBE research as the extent to which aggressive or confrontational behaviour is accepted between people in a society (House et al., 2001; House, Quigley, & Sully de Luque, 2010; Stephan & Uhlaner, 2010). We expect that these values play a role in the way in which people define what it means to be successful in their career. Societies that value assertiveness encourage direct communication, strength, and independent action (House et al., 2010; Stephan & Uhlaner, 2010). Assertiveness as an individual trait is associated with higher levels of visible career achievement (Boudreau, Boswell, & Judge, 2001). We predict that employees in countries that place a high value on assertiveness will be more likely to define career success according to social interactions and status in relation to other people at work and in society. Therefore, employees in countries high in assertiveness will be more likely to define career success in terms of how they are seen by others.

H3: Employees from countries with low socially supportive cultural values (assertiveness) are more likely to define career success by interpersonal-oriented outcomes (Q1 Performance and Advancement and Q4 Cooperation and Contribution) compared with employees from countries with high socially supportive values.

7 | INTRAPERSONAL-ORIENTED CAREER SUCCESS

In contrast to interpersonal outcomes, intrapersonal outcomes are a set of career success definitions in which “the career actor's ‘self’ acts as the source of validation” (Dries, Pepermans, & Carlier, 2008, p. 260). These types of career success definitions focus either on self-directed achievement-oriented outcomes such as personal growth, creativity, and challenge, or affect-oriented such as life satisfaction and work–life balance. We expect that employees in high socially supportive countries (high in humane orientation and gender egalitarianism) will be more likely to define career success in terms of self-referent or intrapersonal outcomes directed at their own satisfaction, security, and growth.

7.1.1. | Humane orientation

Humane orientation is the degree to which individuals are friendly, generous, and tolerant of others (House et al., 2001). We predict that workers from countries high in humane orientation will define career success in more intrapersonal or self-oriented terms, such as safety and security. Individuals socialised in cultures high in humane orientation are less motivated by power and material possessions and therefore are more likely to use themselves as the source of validation as opposed to the world external to them (Grove, 2005). This is consistent with the intrapersonal dimension of career success proposed by Dries, Pepermans, and Carlier (2008). Accordingly, we expect that employees in countries with high humane orientation will be less likely to compare their performance with that of others in terms of financial attainment, performance, and advancement when determining whether they have achieved career success. Rather, they are more likely to define career success in terms of their quality of life, development, and growth (House et al., 2004).

7.1.2. | Gender egalitarianism

Gender egalitarianism is defined as the degree to which cultures minimise gender inequality (Emrich, Denmark, & Den Hartog, 2004). Societies high in gender egalitarianism tend to have more women in leadership roles and fewer tendencies to segregate men and women in traditional-gendered divisions of labour (House et al., 2004). More importantly, countries that are high in gender egalitarianism strive to minimise the difference in gender

roles (House et al., 2004) and tend to have higher recognition of balance between work and nonwork roles for both men and women (Lyness & Judiesch, 2014). The literature on Hofstede's masculinity/femininity dimension of culture, which has considerable conceptual overlap with GLOBE gender egalitarianism, also supports this idea. Specifically, people in masculine countries (i.e., low in gender egalitarianism) tend to value hard work (Hofstede, 1980) and therefore are more likely to compare their performance with that of others in terms of financial attainment and advancement when determining whether career success has been achieved. On the other hand, feminine countries (i.e., high in gender egalitarianism) value equality, work–life balance, and caring for others (Hofstede, 1980) and therefore are more likely to use themselves as the source of validation as opposed to the world external to them when considering their career success. Although the underlying theory linking gender egalitarianism to work–life balance is clear, the links are less strong with self-development and creativity. Nonetheless, we suggest that both men and women from countries with high gender egalitarianism will be more likely define career success in terms of intrapersonal outcomes including both personal fulfilment and work–life balance.

H4: Employees from countries with high socially supportive cultural values (humane orientation and gender egalitarianism) are more likely to define career success by intrapersonal-oriented outcomes (Q2 Self-development and Creativity and Q3 Satisfaction and Security) compared with employees from countries with low socially supportive values.

8 | RESEARCH METHODS

8.1 | Study background

We analyse 269 interviews conducted with employees of a network of professional services firms around the world as part of a larger study of management practices across the firms. Our study includes participants from 15 countries: Brazil, Canada, China, France, Germany, Poland, Mexico, India, Italy, Japan, Singapore, Spain, Switzerland, South Africa, and the United Kingdom. Local human resources staff recruited participants in order to include individuals at different career stages and job functions within the firm using a stratified sampling approach. Participants ranged from first-year associates to senior partners within the firms. All participants were volunteers.

Although each firm is independently incorporated within each country, HR practices and career ladders are very similar, with only minor variation in recruiting and junior level job duties due to country differences in education systems, local licencing requirements, and business conditions. The firms largely share common job descriptions and titles across their global locations. The employees interviewed perform very similar work in client service roles for local and multinational clients in the fields of accounting, tax, finance, and consulting. Employees are typically well-educated and licenced to do highly technical professional services work. Employees are recruited out of university and progress through a series of promotions from associate, senior associate, manager, senior manager, and then partner. Employees serve local and international clients doing audit, tax, and consulting work in highly organised engagements. All participants were born and raised in the country where they were working.

8.2 | Interviews and coding

Structured interviews were conducted by university researchers in English, the language of business across the firms, either in person or on the phone. The interviews were recorded and transcribed. Each interviewee was

asked “How do you define career success?” Following a well-established methodology within the international literature on career success (e.g., Demel et al., 2011; Ituma et al., 2011; Shen et al., 2015; Visagie & Koekomoer, 2014), we developed an original qualitative coding scheme to categorise the individual statements of career success. Transcripts of the responses were analysed using a process of open coding in order to identify broad concepts of career success. We then engaged in a systematic process of axial coding in order to identify subcategories associated with each broad concept identified. Two researchers each coded all of the interviews using AtlasTi.

The quotations identified by the coders were combined, which resulted in 592 separate quotations and 43 initial codes. The first two researchers merged codes if there was little conceptual distinction between them and reached consensus on 24 final codes. When the coding dictionary was finalised, two additional members of the research team coded the quotations identified in the previous phases into the 24 codes. The final sample included 592 quotations within 269 interviews. To establish accuracy in representation across reviewers (Armstrong, Gosling, Weinman, & Marteau, 1997), interrater agreement was calculated with kappa of .87. Difference between the coders was reconciled so that full agreement was established prior to analysing the data. Table 1 indicates the complete list of final codes along with their definition, and representative quotations.

8.3 | Measures

8.3.1 | Dependent variable

To test our hypotheses, two researchers categorised the 24 codes that emerged from our coding process into the two-by-two model of definitions of career success using the quadrant definitions provided by Dries, Pepermans, and Carlier (2008). Interrater agreement was initially calculated with a kappa of .76. Differences between the coders were reconciled so that full agreement was established prior to analysing the data. The resulting placement of the codes into Dries, Pepermans, and Carlier (2008) quadrants is reported in Figure 2. To test hypotheses related to specific quadrants in the Dries, Pepermans, and Carlier (2008) model, we coded a categorical variable 1 through 4 to represent the quadrants as follows: 1 = performance and advancement, 2 = self-development and creativity, 3 = satisfaction and security, and 4 = cooperation and contribution. The percentages of career success quotations coded into the Dries, Pepermans, and Carlier (2008) quadrants for each country are summarised in Table 2.

8.3.2 | Country-level measures of cultural values

Culture can be conceptualised and measured in multiple levels of analysis, and we follow previous research in careers and focus on cultural values at the national level. The proper conceptualisation and measurement of culture even at the national level has been debated at length in the literature (Hofstede, 2006; Hofstede, 2010; Javidan, House, Dorfman, Hanges, & Sully de Luque, 2006; Maseland & Van Hoorn, 2009; Tung & Verbeke, 2010). We have used GLOBE values primarily due to the richness of the theory and useful application to understanding career success. The GLOBE project's measures demonstrate satisfactory internal consistency, agreement within countries, and confirmatory factor structures, which indicate reliability and discriminant validity appropriate for country-level analyses (House et al., 2004). The nine GLOBE values have been used together elsewhere in cross-cultural studies (e.g., Peretz, Fried, & Levi, 2018). GLOBE data were matched to each quotation by the country of origin for each of the interviewees. We used country-level mean data reported from the GLOBE research for the “should be” measures of uncertainty avoidance, future orientation, performance orientation, power distance, institutional collectivism, in-group collectivism, humane orientation, gender egalitarianism, and

TABLE 1 Code definitions and number of quotations

Code	Definition	Representative quotations	Keywords
Quadrant 1: Performance and Advancement			
Continuous progression	Success is a process of continuous advancement in job level and salary.	"It's important to progress, become a manager, keep progressing." "I do want to move up the formal ladder and, of course, a raise in time."	promotion, progression
Leadership position	Success is achieving a high level position such as a corporate executive or partner.	"So definitely some of the-again, that end goal, somewhere, a CEO, global CEO, just something big that I can be proud of. So that's where I want to end up."	leader, partner, executive
Money	Success is demonstrated by making a lot of money.	"Then another point to know if my career is successful is money." "But it totally does all come back to financial remuneration." "Obviously pay is a big indication of career progression."	money, remuneration, finances
Recognition	Success is being recognised by others, formally or informally, for accomplishments at work.	"Getting the recognition for actually doing your job well." "It is important that you feel that your work has been acknowledged."	recognition
Social status and respect	Success is being held in high regard by others and being seen as a role model.	"It's about being valued, being respected." "To be able to gain respect on what you do from clients and from colleagues."	status, respect
Quadrant 2: Self-development and Creativity			
Achieving personal goals	Success is an ongoing process of setting and achieving well defined long-term and short-term goals.	"Doing well for me means that I have achieved a lot of things I set out to do." "Career success would be achieving the goals that I set	goals, achievement

(Continues)

TABLE 1 (Continued)

Code	Definition	Representative quotations	Keywords
Delivering results	Success is delivering measurable, positive business results.	<p>for myself in terms of a career."</p> <p>"I would define success as being able to deliver what I'm supposed to deliver, being able to perform my task as I'm supposed to." "The career success for me is to deliver the results and then, to also achieve the result of that performance."</p>	results
Being good at what you do	Success is one's own perception of performing well and working to the best of one's abilities.	"Career success means, to me, that I am doing my work very well." "Well, I think having a successful career is what you are doing, being good at it."	good results, performance
Challenging work	Success is the opportunity to do interesting work that stretches one's abilities.	"Always a new challenge ahead. So like I would need to be somewhat stimulated." "I'm challenging myself with some new tasks, new projects, that's a success."	challenging, interesting
Doing what you love	Success is the opportunity to do work that one enjoys and is passionate about.	"One would be to be in a role where you are happy with your work. I mean you are doing something that you really want to and not necessarily because of reasons like maybe family pressure, geographical preferences, or maybe money conservation, etc. but really doing something that you love doing." "You can manage to make a career out of your	love, like, passion

(Continues)

TABLE 1 (Continued)

Code	Definition	Representative quotations	Keywords
		interests, out of things that you enjoy doing."	
Doing what you want	Success is the ability to control your work assignments and the methods used to complete them.	"Career success means being able to shape what you do in terms of content, team, and then flexibility of working styles." "To have some kind of determination of you own work."	do what you want, control
Gaining expertise	Success is feeling like one has developed and applied the human capital necessary to become an expert.	"So for me, I want to know more. I want to be an expert in what I'm doing." "Develop myself; get expertise, more technical knowledge."	expert, knowledge
Personal growth and development	Success is a process of continuous development and learning in order to reach the full potential of one's human capital and innate abilities.	"It means that I can develop myself." "To get a lot of competence like I got - be able to each year look back and see that I developed in some ways."	growth, development, learning
Variety at work	Success is the opportunity to do new, novel or different work.	"To be able to do different thing every day" "Try a different role or a different location, I think if I could do something different and excel outside of my comfort zone."	variety, boredom
Working internationally	Success is the opportunity to work in one or more countries other than one's country of origin.	"To really have an international exposure." "I'd like to go overseas to work for a company."	international, overseas, other country
Quadrant 3: Satisfaction and Security			
Feeling valuable	Success is feeling like a contributing member of a good team or organisation.	"Show your value, feel like you have contributed." "I think it's do your work giving another value, not just do what you have to do. Always	valuable, value added

(Continues)

TABLE 1 (Continued)

Code	Definition	Representative quotations	Keywords
		try to do better and give something better to the client and to the people working with you."	
Personal fulfilment	Success is doing work that one feels is meaningful and that makes one feel happy and satisfied.	"Personal to me is my internal feeling how I actually feel comfortable with my job." "Well, I think in a nutshell, career success is when you are happy to come into work every day." "My happiness in whatever job I'm doing."	fulfilment, happy, content, satisfied
Work/life balance	Success is being able to balance work demands with one's personal life and family time.	"Be able to juggle between my family and my work at the same time." "It's good balance between time you spent for working and free time." "Achieving balance between work and life, and still being the best professional."	balance, family, personal life
Working for a good organisation	Success is the opportunity to work for a good quality employer in a positive work environment.	"Having a good work environment." "I have to work in a very good company."	organisation, firm, company
Quadrant 4: Cooperation and Contribution			
Good relationships and networks	Success is having high quality connections with friends, colleagues and clients.	"Have great relationships with our team members and partners or any other colleagues."	relationships, network, colleagues
Being a good leader	Success is feeling like you are a good leader.	"Motivating yourself, and motivating others as well, promote your field to others without lying to them." "I think that you need to make some	leader

(Continues)

TABLE 1 (Continued)

Code	Definition	Representative quotations	Keywords
		realizations like you can be a top position or working with a group of excellent people, excellent team, and you are the leader of this team."	
Doing good for others at work	Success is the feeling that one is helping colleagues, developing others, and/or being a good teammate.	"I guess growth development of the people I work with. They learn from me and, you know, they want to work with me so that they can, you know, be successful as well."	developing, teaching
Doing good for society	Success is feeling that one is making a positive contribution to the profession, society, or larger world.	"So I would say the most important thing is that I like it and then it's good for the country, for the planet." "I also believe in something bigger, that I can be useful to the firm, do good things, and do something useful for my country."	society, environment
Success of my organisation	Success is measured by the success of one's team, organisation or clients.	"Have a big impact on my clients." "Serve clients to make them successful."	clients

assertiveness (Brewer & Veniak, 2010). To examine whether multicollinearity was a concern, we computed variance inflation factors for the nine GLOBE value using ordinary least squares regression and all variance inflation factors were below the guideline of 10 (Chatterjee & Price, 1991).

8.3.3 | Control variables

Ng et al. (2005) demonstrated that the value that employees place on objective versus subjective career outcomes varies according to demographic factors, such as gender and career stage. Research shows gender differences related to the attainment of both objective and subjective career success around the world (Burke, 2010; Greenhaus, Parasuraman, & Wormley, 1990; Hewlett & Rashid, 2010; Lirio et al., 2007; Ng et al., 2005). Sturges (1999) found that

FIGURE 2 Codes placed into Dries, Pepermans, and Carlier (2008) quadrants [Colour figure can be viewed at wileyonlinelibrary.com]

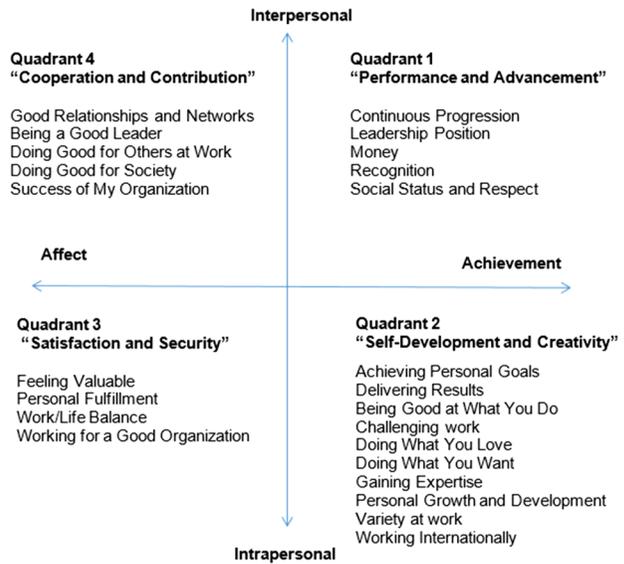


TABLE 2 Percentage of codes placed career success quadrants by country

	Q1 Performance and Advancement	Q2 Self-development and Creativity	Q3 Satisfaction and Security	Q4 Cooperation and Contribution
Brazil	45%	23%	23%	9%
Canada	42%	28%	28%	2%
China	43%	25%	18%	14%
France	26%	31%	31%	11%
Germany	40%	40%	10%	10%
India	47%	27%	10%	15%
Italy	41%	30%	15%	15%
Japan	41%	25%	16%	19%
Mexico	43%	32%	21%	4%
Poland	20%	45%	20%	15%
Singapore	38%	48%	14%	0%
South Africa	39%	35%	15%	11%
Spain	46%	38%	13%	4%
Switzerland	48%	32%	10%	10%
United Kingdom	54%	42%	4%	0%

men are more likely than women to define success in terms of extrinsic outcomes like pay and advancement, whereas women are more likely define career success in terms of intrinsic outcomes such as becoming an expert or other types of self-development. We control for gender using a dummy variable for female. The interviewees reflected the general composition of the organisation worldwide with 61% men.

Previous research suggests that perceptions of career success likely differ across career stage and generation (Dries, Pepermans, & De Kerpel, 2008; McDonald & Hite, 2008). However, at these firms, age, and career stage are very strongly correlated. Employees are recruited out of university and progress through regular promotions. We control for career stage within the firm with a control variable measured as 1 (associate) through 5 (partner).

Research on career success generally assumes differences in perceptions of career success across occupations (Hennequin, 2007; Lucas & Buzzanell, 2004; Thomas, 1989). Although all of the interviewees performed on similar types of jobs, we also controlled for business unit as a proxy for occupation. We included dummy variables for whether employees worked in tax and advisory with audit unit at the referent.

Finally, we included country gross national product as an indicator of national economic development. Research suggests that national context beyond cultural values including economic development is likely influences perceptions of career success. For example, managers in less-developed Nigeria prefer quantifiable measures of career success, like money, status, and advancement (Ituma et al., 2011), and Russian views of career success have evolved as the country moved out of Soviet era deprivations (Khapova & Korotov, 2007).

8.4 | Findings

We used multilevel multinomial logit in MPlus to test the hypotheses. We nested individuals' quotes coded into four career success quadrants within countries and used GLOBE (House, Javidan & Dorfman, 2001) cultural measures as second-level between variables. To examine the goodness-of-fit of the model, the full model's log likelihood was compared with that of the baseline model. The results indicated that the full model with all predictors against an intercept-only model was statistically significant ($\chi^2(42) = 70.80, p < .001$), indicating that a significant amount of variance was accounted for by all of the predictors.

Table 3 presents findings for all pairwise comparisons of the four quadrants. The model estimates are log-odds ratios, and the converted odds ratio can be interpreted as the probability that an interviewee defined career success in this category compared with the referent category. For example, Table 3 reports that gender (1 = female) was significant in Q1 Performance and Advancement ($-.75, p < .01$) with Q4 Cooperation and Contribution as the referent category. This estimate translates to an odds ratio of .47, which means that women are 53% less likely to define career success in terms of Q1 Performance and Advancement than Q4 Cooperation and Contribution controlling for career stage, national GNP, and national cultural values. The opposite is therefore also true that women are twice as likely to define career success in terms of Q4 Cooperation and Contribution than Q1 Performance and Advancement. Additional pairwise comparisons then show that women were also 42% less likely to define career success in terms of Q1 Performance and Advancement than Q3 Satisfaction and Security outcomes.

8.5 | Achievement-oriented outcomes

The first set of career success definitions we investigate were achievement outcomes found in Q1 Performance and Advancement and Q2 Self-development and Creativity. Hypothesis 1 predicted that individuals from countries with performance-oriented cultural values that are high in uncertainty avoidance, future orientation, and performance orientation would be more likely to define career success in terms of achievement-oriented outcomes found in Q1 Performance and Advancement and Q2 Self-development and Creativity.

8.5.1 | Uncertainty avoidance

In support of Hypothesis 1, pairwise comparison of quadrants indicated that employees from high uncertainty avoidance countries were more likely to define career success based on Q1 Performance and Advancement (2.11, $p < .05$)

TABLE 3 Results of multilevel multinomial logit regression predicting career success quadrants

Variables	Q#4 as Referent			Q#3 as Referent			Q#2 as Referent					
	Q#1		Q#2	Q#3		Q#4	Q#1		Q#2	Q#3		
	Est.	Odds ratio	Est.	Odds ratio	Est.	Odds ratio	Est.	Odds ratio	Est.	Odds ratio	Est.	Odds ratio
Intercept	3.22*		3.08*		2.45*		.77*		.63		.14	
<i>Control Variables</i>												
Level	.05	1.05	-.10	.91	-.03	.97	.08	1.08	-.07	.93	.14	1.15
Female	-.75*	.47	-.44	.64	-.21	.81	-.54*	.58	-.23	.79	-.31	.74
Audit	-.87	.42	-.83	.44	-.91	.40	.04	1.04	.08	1.08	-.04	.96
Advisory	-.93*	.39	-.78*	.46	-1.01*	.36	.08	1.09	.24	1.26	-.15	.86
GNP per capita	-.77	.46	-.98	.38	-2.73*	.07	1.96*	7.11	1.75*	5.78	.21	1.23
<i>Performance-based culture (PBC)</i>												
Uncertainty avoidance ^a	-1.17	.31	-1.33	.27	-3.29*	.04	2.11*	8.26	1.96*	7.08	.15	1.17
Future orientation ^a	-3.23*	.04	-3.67*	.03	-4.21*	.01	.98	2.66	.54	1.71	.44*	1.56
Performance orientation ^a	-1.04	.35	-1.75	.17	-6.26*	.00	5.22*	185.30	4.51*	90.92	.71	2.04
Power distance ^b	3.69	40.04	4.16	63.88	8.85*	6974.39	-5.16*	.01	-4.69*	.01	-.47	.63
Institutional collectivism ^b	3.39*	29.78	3.38*	29.25	5.97*	392.68	-2.58*	.08	-2.60*	.07	.02	1.02
In-group collectivism ^b	3.90*	49.35	4.76*	116.40	7.21*	1346.14	-3.31*	.04	-2.45*	.09	-.86*	.42
<i>Socially supportive culture (SSC)</i>												
Humane orientation ^a	4.08*	58.85	3.82*	45.42	6.47*	645.48	-2.40*	.09	-2.65*	.07	.26	1.30
Gender egalitarianism ^a	4.64*	103.34	4.61*	100.08	7.32*	1505.68	-2.68*	.07	-2.71*	.07	.03	1.03
Assertiveness ^b	1.91*	6.77	1.43*	4.18	1.86*	6.40	.06	1.06	-.43	.65	.48*	1.62

Note. Q#1 = performance and advancement; Q#2 = self-development and creativity; Q#3 = satisfaction and security; Q#4 = cooperation and contribution. Level 1 N = 592 quotes; Level 2 N = 15 countries; model likelihood ratio chi square ($df = 42$) = 70.80, $p < .00$.

^aCultural value loaded positively on the cluster (Stephan & Uhlaner, 2010)

^bCultural value loaded negatively on the cluster (Stephan & Uhlaner, 2010)

* $p < .05$.

and Q2 Self-development and Creativity ($1.96, p < .05$) than Q3 Satisfaction and Security but not significantly more likely than Q4 Cooperation and Contribution. Compared with Q3 Satisfaction and Security, these professional services employees were 8.26 times more likely to define career success in terms of Q1 Performance and Advancement and 7.08 times more likely to define career success in terms of Q2 Self-development for each unit increase in uncertainty avoidance.

8.5.2 | Performance orientation

In support of Hypothesis 1, pairwise comparisons show that employees from countries high in performance orientation were significantly more likely to define career success in terms of achievement-orientated outcomes of Q1 Performance and Advancement ($5.22, p < .05$) and Q2 Self-development and Creativity ($4.51, p < .05$) than Q3 Satisfaction and Security. On the other hand, there was no significant preference for achievement-oriented outcomes (Q1 and Q2) than Q4 Cooperation and Contribution.

8.5.3 | Future orientation

Contrary to Hypothesis 1, we find that future orientation is not associated with achievement-oriented outcomes found in Q1 Performance and Advancement and Q2 Self-development and Creativity. Pairwise comparisons indicate that although employees from countries with high future orientation are more likely ($.44, p < .05$) to define career success in terms of Q1 Performance and Advancement than Q2 Self-development and Creativity, they are more likely to prefer Q4 Cooperation and Contribution over all other quadrants. For example, employees from countries high in future orientation were 96% less likely to define career success in terms of Q1 Performance and Advancement than for Q4 Cooperation and Contribution.

8.6 | Affect-oriented outcomes

The next set of career success definitions examined is defined by affect-oriented success captured in Q3 Satisfaction and Security and Q4 Cooperation and Contribution. Hypothesis 2 predicted that employees from countries with nonperformance-based cultural values of power distance and collectivism (institutional and in-group) would be more likely to define career success in terms of affect-oriented outcomes.

8.6.1 | Power distance

In support for Hypothesis 2, pairwise comparisons show that employees from countries high in power distance were significantly more likely to define career success in terms of affect-oriented outcomes of Q3 Satisfaction and Security than Q1 Performance and Advancement ($-5.16, p < .05$)¹ and Q2 Self-development and Creativity ($-4.69, p < .05$).² However, no significant preference was found for Q4 Cooperation and Contribution over either Q1 Performance and Advancement or Q2 Self-development and Creativity.

8.6.2 | Collectivism (institutional and in-group)

We found mixed support for Hypothesis 2 with regard to both institutional and in-group collectivism. Specifically, pairwise comparisons show that employees from countries high in institutional and in-group collectivism were

significantly more likely to define career success in terms of affect-oriented outcomes of Q3 Satisfaction and Security than Q1 Performance and Advancement (institutional: $-2.58, p < .05$; in-group: $-3.31, p < .05$)³ and Q2 Self-development and Creativity (institutional: $-2.60, p < .05$; in-group: $-2.45, p < .05$).⁴ Contrary to the hypothesis, however, employees from countries high in institutional and in-group collectivism were significantly less likely to define career success in terms of affect-oriented outcomes of Q4 Cooperation and Contribution, than Q1 Performance and Advancement (institutional: $3.39, p < .05$; in-group: $3.90, p < .05$)⁵ and Q2 Self-development and Creativity (institutional: $3.38, p < .05$; in-group: $4.76, p < .05$).⁶

8.7 | Interpersonal Outcomes

The third set of career success outcomes tested is defined as interpersonal outcomes spanning both affect and achievement labelled as Q1 Performance and Advancement and Q4 Cooperation and Contribution. Hypothesis 3 predicts that employees from countries with nonsocially supportive values (high in the value of assertiveness) are likely to articulate career success interpersonal outcomes or those outcomes that can be judged or validated by others.

8.7.1 | Assertiveness

We found mixed support for this hypothesis. Specifically, pairwise comparisons shown in Table 3 show that employees in countries high in assertiveness were significantly more likely to define career success based on Q1 Performance and Advancement than Q2 Self-development and Creativity ($.48, p < .05$). However, they were significantly less likely to define career success based on Q4 Cooperation and Contribution than Q2 Self-development and Creativity ($1.43, p < .05$)⁷ and Q3 Satisfaction and Security ($1.86, p < .05$).⁸

8.8 | Intrapersonal outcomes

Our final hypothesis predicted that individuals in countries with more socially supportive cultures high in humane orientation and gender egalitarianism would be more likely to have definitions of career success in Q2 Self-development and Creativity and Q3 Satisfaction and Security.

8.8.1 | Humane orientation

As expected, employees in countries with more humane orientation were significantly more likely to define career success based on Q3 Satisfaction and Security than Q1 Performance and Advancement ($-2.40, p < .05$)⁹ and Q4 Cooperation and Contribution ($6.47, p < .05$). However, pairwise comparisons show that there was no significant preference for Q2 Self-development and Creativity over Q1 Performance and Advancement for employees in countries with more humane orientation, and employees in these countries were significantly more likely to define career success based on Q2 Self-development and Creativity over Q4 Cooperation and Contribution ($3.82, p < .05$).

8.8.2 | Gender egalitarianism

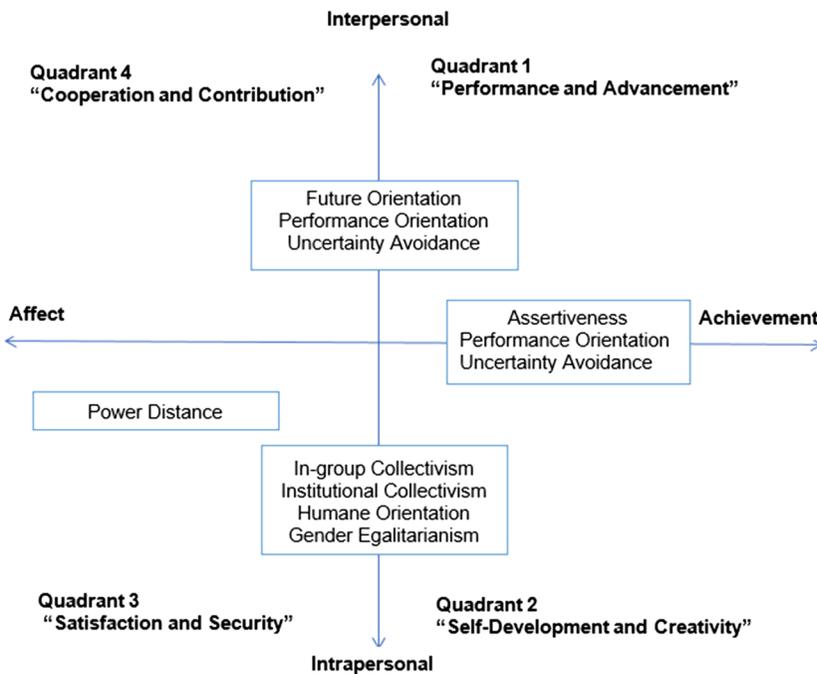
Gender egalitarianism shows a similar pattern. Pairwise comparisons show that although there was no significant preference for Q2 Self-development and Creativity over Q1 Performance and Advancement for employees in countries high in gender egalitarianism, employees in these countries were significantly more likely to define career success based on Q2 Self-development and Creativity over Q4 Cooperation and Contribution ($4.61, p < .05$). As

expected, employees in countries high in gender egalitarianism were significantly more likely to define career success based on Q3 Satisfaction and Security than Q1 Performance and Advancement ($-2.68, p < .05$)¹⁰ and Q4 Cooperation and Contribution ($7.32, p < .05$).

9 | DISCUSSION

There is a growing interest in understanding the ways in which national culture and context affect careers, and scholars have started to address how cultural differences affect individual career expectations around the world (Briscoe Hall, & Mayrhofer, 2011 ; Tams & Arthur, 2007). We contribute to this research by taking a macro contextual perspective to understand the role of national culture on career success perceptions (Spurk et al., 2018). This study looks at how employees located across 15 countries with different cultural values define career success, while controlling for individual differences, organisational practices, and national economic development. Using the GLOBE cultural values, our results show that cultural values predict the ways in which employees conceptualise career success. We add to the growing body of research showing that cultural values are expressed through the kinds of outcomes that employees use to define career success. Figure 3 summarises the findings of our study.

As predicted, we find that Q1 Performance and Advancement conceptions of career success are more prevalent in countries high in future orientation, uncertainty avoidance, performance orientation, and assertiveness. In line with previous work including Demel et al. (2011) and Shen et al. (2015), we find achievement-oriented definitions of career success to be more prevalent across these countries. Our finding suggests that employees in countries that value order, planning, interpersonal dominance, and assertiveness will tend to see career success in terms of money, advancement, and reputation.



Note. All values are significant at $p < .05$ or less.

FIGURE 3 Summary of findings [Colour figure can be viewed at wileyonlinelibrary.com]

We find that Q2 Self-development and Creativity outcomes were associated with the same cultural values (minus future orientation) but also coupled with values of collectivism, humane orientation, and gender egalitarianism. This was largely consistent with our predictions with a couple of exceptions. Future orientation did not predict Q2 Self-development and Creativity, whereas collectivism (in-group and institutional) did. This group of career success definitions includes different elements of personal agency and actualisation such as doing what you want and delivering results. These findings align with Chudzikowski et al. (2011) who concluded that subjective career outcomes are more common in countries that value autonomy. Our results also suggest that collectivist values promote intrinsic rewards such as doing interesting work and personal development. This along with the results of Shen et al. (2015) suggests that collectivism may lead people away from competition-based career success definitions even if those are more individually oriented.

Some of the strongest support for our hypotheses were found among those who expressed career success in terms of Q3 Satisfaction and Security. Employees from countries high in collectivism (in-group and institutional) were significantly more likely to define career success as Q3 Satisfaction and Security, which supports prior findings that a collective orientation is linked to higher levels of firm loyalty in exchange for job security. We also found these definitions were more common in countries with more humane values and countries with high gender egalitarianism. Employees working in countries with high gender egalitarianism were far more likely to define career success in terms of outcomes that included work–life balance and personal fulfilment. We also found that employees in countries high in power distance consistently reported more definitions of career success based on Q3 Satisfaction and Security. Although counterintuitive, these findings are consistent with studies by Chudzikowski et al. (2009) and Mayrhofer et al. (2016), finding that security was more important in countries that emphasise hierarchy. All of these findings were in line with our predictions.

Finally, we found that the career success definitions in Q4 Cooperation and Contribution were predicted by the same values that predicted career success in Q1 Performance and Advancement minus assertiveness. That is, contribution to organisations and society as definitions of career success were more likely in countries high in future orientation, uncertainty avoidance, and performance orientation. Taken together, these results suggest that interpersonal outcomes in terms of both achievement- (Q1 Performance and Advancement) and affect-oriented (Q4 Cooperation and Contribution) career outcomes are a manifestation of cultures that value certainty, rewards, and competition. The difference between interpersonal outcomes that are more achievement-based rather than affect-based is that these forms of career success appear to be particularly meaningful to those from cultures that value assertiveness.

Previous studies of professional careers begin with the assumption that they care primarily about career advancement and other indicators of objective success (e.g., Almer, Lightbody, & Single, 2012; Stumpf, 2009). A notable exception is Anderson-Gough, Grey, and Robson (2000), which proposes that professionals prioritise doing good for the client and company. The results of our study suggest that culture is a moderator that perhaps explains the differences across these previous studies and adds to the literature on subjective career success among career professionals.

Although many of the GLOBE cultural values were related to the definitions of career success that we hypothesised, it is important to note those predictions that were not supported. In general, our hypotheses organised around GLOBE values grouped into performance-oriented and socially supportive cultures received mixed support. Although the GLOBE values substantially covary within a higher order factor (Stephan & Uhlaner, 2010), we show that there are important differences across the values within the groupings, and the relationship between culture and career success is better understood at the level of individual cultural values.

The most notable unsupported prediction was that employees from countries high in collectivism (in-group and institutional) were not found to be significantly more likely to define career success as defined in Q4 Cooperation and Contribution. From a theoretical perspective, these results are unexpected. Compared with more individualistic societies, collectivists are likely to distinguish between in-groups and outgroups during situations of joint collaboration (Imai & Gelfand, 2009) and to be motivated to help achieve in-group goals (Hofstede, 1980). Other researchers have reported similar counterintuitive results, including a negative association between society-

level collectivistic orientation and cooperative behaviour (e.g., Marcus & Le, 2013; Nguyen, Le, & Boles, 2010). The failure to define career success in terms of cooperation and contribution suggests that perhaps work-related group members are not conceptualised as “in-group” members as much as other important social groups (e.g., family and friends).

Another possibility is that some cultural values may not be relevant to career success. An alternative theoretical explanation is the complementary person–culture fit approach (Holtzschlag, Morales, Masuda, & Maydeu-Olivares, 2013), which suggests that success may be related to holding values that differ from those held by the dominant culture.¹¹ Though our study is about how people define success, rather than how they achieve it, this theory may warrant exploration in future studies. We encourage other researchers to further investigate this relationship between collectivism and subjective career success in terms of cooperation and collaboration.

Although the goal of this research was not to develop an original taxonomy of career success definitions, the set of coded interviews confirms and extends the existing qualitative work detailing definitions of career success (e.g., Demel et al., 2011; Dries, Pepermans, & Carlier, 2008; Ituma et al., 2011; Shen et al., 2015; Visagie & Koekomoer, 2014). A comparison of our codes and definitions of career success across these different qualitative studies, in general, shows considerable consistency in the possible ways in which workers define career success. The codes in some cases carry different labels across the studies but are quite similar in their definitions. For example, we coded “continuous progression in position and salary,” which is very similar to codes for “advancement” in the Dries, Pepermans, and Carlier (2008), Ituma et al. (2011), and Visagie and Koekomoer (2014) papers and “achievement” in the Demel et al. (2011) study. At the same time, important differences between the coding schemes should also be noted. Our coding scheme captured some additional variations in expressions of career success. For example, we found expressions of career success for “money,” “social status,” and “gaining expertise,” which were not included in the Dries, Pepermans, and Carlier (2008) definitions. On the other hand, we did not find expressions of “survival” and “security” such as reported by Shen et al. (2015). These differences perhaps reflect the educated and professional nature of our sample.

This study uses a theory-driven deductive approach to empirically test differences in career success definitions across a wide range of cultures. We make a number of empirical contributions to an existing literature that has relied almost exclusively on inductive qualitative work. Multiple studies have indicated differences in the definitions of career success across occupations (Hennequin, 2007; Lucas & Buzzanell, 2004; Thomas, 1989), which we controlled for in this study. The size of our interview sample also allowed us to control for differences in gender and age/career stage. Although research has demonstrated that each of these individual characteristics likely influences perceptions of career success, previous studies of culture and career success have not accounted for these differences.

Our research also considers the role of multiple cultural values as simultaneous predictors of how individuals perceive career success. The multilevel cross-cultural approach used in this paper, which examines the national cultural values in which individual are embedded as predictors of how employees conceptualise career success, provides additional explanation for variation in career success beyond models that examine either individual factors or national culture alone. Given that we controlled for the other factors theoretically related to definitions of career success, these findings indicate that cultural values are at least as strong, if not stronger, than the profession, individual characteristics, and organisation HR practices, in perceptions of career success.

In addition to contributing to our understanding of the way career success is perceived across cultures, this research also has important implications for HR practitioners. The literature on multinational corporations emphasises a preference for the use of centralised HR practices (Bjorkman, Fey, & Park, 2007; Bjorkman & Lervik, 2007; Minbaeva, Pederson, Bjorkman, Fey, & Park, 2003) while searching for strategies to improve adaptation and adherence to standardised policies. This study suggests the need to customise career and reward systems to meet expectations in each culture where a corporation employs people, rather than adopting a uniform approach.

Understanding how employees in different cultures define career success may help leaders of global companies to develop targeted strategies for motivating employees. It also helps researchers to better understand how

these differences might influence career choices and perceptions of successful careers. An understanding of the differences in meaning that people associate with their careers across cultures is useful for human resources practitioners as they seek to recruit, motivate, and retain the best employees. Understanding, for example, that in one culture, employees value opportunities for personal learning above other outcomes, whereas in another culture, employees value financial attainment above other outcomes has implications for customising management systems for each culture. At the heart of this modern approach to career success is the question of how managers can create working relationships with employees so that the demands of the job and the outcomes people experience from their contributions match their individual preferences. The findings provide a guide for human resource professionals in multinational corporations to develop practices that meet the expectations of employees across the globe.

This research also has some limitations that need to be considered. First is that although the overall sample is large, the number of interviews conducted in each country ranges from 10 in Italy and the UK to 28 in India and 26 in Canada. The samples within each country might limit the generalisability of the findings. Although each interviewee lived and worked in their country of origin, we did not capture whether the employee had lived or worked in another country, which may influence an individual's cultural values and career outlook. We also did not measure each respondent's values for comparison with the expected cultural values. Second, our study is limited to 15 countries around the world representing a variety of cultural values. Although Franke and Richey (2010) find that a minimum of 10 countries supports credible international generalisations, this research could be extended to additional countries. Third, the coders were from the United States and Iran, which share many cultural values in common (House, Dorfman, Javidan, Hanges, & Sully de Luque, 2013). Although this similarity may have enhanced interrater agreement, it is possible that a more diverse group of coders could have disagreed more on categorisation of career success statements given by interviewees. The use of clear definitions in the Dries, Pepermans, and Carlier (2008) study for categorisation reduces this likelihood. Fourth, we interviewed employees who perform very similar jobs. This has both benefits and limitations. In terms of occupation, this particular sample consists of accountants, consultants, and tax lawyers. This limits our sample to relatively well-educated professionals in comparison with the total population of workers in each of these countries. On the other hand, it allows us to control for background, career path, education, and training of the individuals to isolate the effects of national culture on definitions of career success. We were careful to gather data from a sample within each country that was representative of the organisation's demography in terms of gender, rank, and age.

Finally, these findings should also be interpreted in light of the fact that all employees worked for a network of professional services firms that had identical career systems and HR practices around the world. Given that we know that HR practices are influenced in part by national culture, the homogenous HR practices across the firms suggest that the management practices of the firms were a better fit for some cultural values than others across our sample. For example, these firms all use an "up or out" career system that is common in professional services. This may be a better fit for individuals who value advancement and recognition as measures of career success. Because HR practices and occupation play a role in perceptions of career success, it is likely that the influence of cultural values may be somewhat diminished in this sample relative to a broader cross section of occupations and organisations within countries. The fact that we find significant relationships with our predicted model suggests that the underlying phenomenon is perhaps stronger than we estimate. For example, the outcomes in Q3 Satisfaction and Security are less relevant to the firms used in this study than values in Q1 Performance and Advancement, yet employees from cultures that are high in power distance, institutional and individual collectivism, humane orientation, and gender egalitarianism all expressed a significantly greater preference for career success outcomes in Q3 Satisfaction and Security compared with Q1 Performance and Advancement. Among employees whose career success definitions relate to satisfaction and security, culture may be more closely linked to perceptions of career success than HR practices.

These findings suggest a number of avenues for future research. First is that research on culture and career success might move to individual measures of cultural values to better understand individual-level variation in

cultural values within countries. Second is the need to extend this work to additional countries and cultural contexts around the world. Workers from smaller developing countries, Africa and the Middle East could be included in more comprehensive future work. In addition to extending this work to more countries, future research might also investigate other culturally based factors, such as the political and historical context of the country, in relation to perceptions of career success. For example, future research might address the ways in which national labour policy and employment practices affect careers in these countries in addition to cultural values.

Although career success is inherently individual, this research complements existing work showing that career success definitions likely stem from deep-rooted assumptions garnered from years of social interaction with others from the same culture about the value and meaning of success at work (Briscoe, Hall, & Mayrhofer, 2011; Smale et al., 2018). When seeking to attain career success, cultural values may serve as motivation, which shapes goals and efforts. This research demonstrates that GLOBE cultural values shape how employees define success at work in predictable and testable ways. This framework provides a foundation for future research of cultural values as antecedents of career success conceptualisations across countries.

FUNDING INFORMATION

This research was funded by the Center for Effective Organizations at the University of Southern California.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare that they have no conflict of interest.

ORCID

George S. Benson  <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3587-5136>

Hoda Vaziri  <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6010-4950>

ENDNOTES

- ¹ The direction of the sign in a multinomial logit is related to the excluded or referent category. The model is comparing Q1 to Q3 which means that Q1 is significantly less likely than Q3. The reverse is also true. We report the signs as in Table 3 for all results.
- ² Sign reversed based on referent category.
- ³ Sign reversed based on referent category.
- ⁴ Sign reversed based on referent category.
- ⁵ Sign reversed based on referent category.
- ⁶ Sign reversed based on referent category.
- ⁷ Sign reversed based on referent category.
- ⁸ Sign reversed based on referent category.
- ⁹ Sign reversed based on referent category.
- ¹⁰ Sign reversed based on referent category.
- ¹¹ We thank an anonymous reviewer for this suggestion.

REFERENCES

- Alas, R., Kaarelson, T., & Niglas, K. (2008). Human resource management in cultural context: Empirical study of 11 countries. *EBS Review*, 24, 49–61.
- Almer, E. D., Lightbody, M. G., & Single, L. E. (2012). Successful promotion or segregation from partnership? An examination of the “post-senior manager” position in public accounting and the implications for women’s careers. *Accounting Forum*, 36, 122–133.

- Anderson-Gough, F., Grey, C., & Robson, K. (2000). In the name of the client: The service ethic in two professional services firms. *Human Relations*, 53(9), 1151–1174.
- Armstrong, D., Gosling, A., Weinman, J., & Marteau, T. (1997). The place of inter-rater reliability in qualitative research: An empirical study. *Sociology*, 31(3), 597–606.
- Arthur, M., Khapova, S., & Wilderom, C. (2005). Career success in a boundary less career world. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 26, 177–202.
- Baker, D. S., & Carson, K. D. (2011). The two faces of uncertainty avoidance: Attachment and adaptation. *Journal of Behavioral and Applied Management*, 12(2), 128–141.
- Bjorkman, I., Fey, C. F., & Park, H. J. (2007). Institutional theory and MNC subsidiary HRM practices: Evidence from a three-country study. *Journal of International Business Studies*, 38(3), 430–446.
- Bjorkman, I., & Lervik, J. E. (2007). Transferring HR practices within multinational corporations. *Human Resource Management Journal*, 17(4), 320–335.
- Boudreau, J. W., Boswell, W. R., & Judge, T. A. (2001). Effects of personality on executive career success in the United States and Europe. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 58(1), 53–81.
- Brewer, P., & Veniak, S. (2010). GLOBE practices and values: A case of diminishing marginal utility? *Journal of International Business Studies*, 41, 1316–1324.
- Briscoe, J. P., Chudzikowski, K., & Unite, J. (2011). Career transitions: Windows into the career experience in 11 country contexts. In J. P. Briscoe, D. T. Hall, & W. Mayrhofer (Eds.), *Careers around the world: Individual and contextual perspectives* (pp. 88–117). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Briscoe, J. P., Hall, D. T., & Mayrhofer, W. (Eds.) (2011). *Careers around the world: Individual and contextual perspectives*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Burke, R. J. (2010). Reflections: Managers, balance, and fulfilling lives. *Gender in Management: An International Journal*, 25, 86–90.
- Chatterjee, S., & Price, B. (1991). *Regression analysis by example* (2nd ed.). New York, NY: Wiley.
- Chudzikowski, K., Demel, B., Mayrhofer, W., Briscoe, J. P., Unite, J., Milikic, B. B., Hall D. T., Heras M. L., Shen Y. & Zikic J. (2009). Career transitions and their causes: A country-comparative perspective. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*, 82: 825–849.
- Chudzikowski, K., Ogliastris, E., Briscoe, J. P., Ituma, A., Reichel, A., Mayrhofer, W., & Khapova, S. (2011). Culture and context: Understanding their influence upon careers. In J. P. Briscoe, D. T. Hall, & W. Mayrhofer (Eds.), *Careers around the world: Individual and contextual perspectives* (pp. 147–165). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Claes, R., & Ruiz-Quintanilla, S. A. (1998). Influences of early career experiences, occupational group, and national culture on proactive career behavior. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 52, 357–378.
- de Luque, M., S., & Javidan, M. (2004). Uncertainty avoidance. *Culture, leadership, and organizations: The GLOBE study of 62 Societies*, 602–653.
- Demel, B., Shen, Y., Las Heras, M., Hall, D. T., & Unite, J. (2011). Career success around the world: Its meaning and perceived influences in eleven countries. In J. P. Briscoe, D. T. Hall, & W. Mayrhofer (Eds.), *Careers around the world: Individual and contextual perspectives* (pp. 147–165). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Dries, N., Pepermans, R., & Carlier, O. (2008). Career success: Constructing a multidimensional model. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 73, 254–267.
- Dries, N., Pepermans, R., & De Kerpel, E. (2008). Exploring four generations' beliefs about career: Is "satisfied" the new "successful"? *Journal of Managerial Psychology*, 23(8), 907–928.
- Emrich, C. G., Denmark, F. L., & Den Hartog, D. N. (2004). Cross-cultural differences in gender egalitarianism: Implications for societies, organizations, and leaders. In R. J. House, P. J. Hanges, M. Javidan, P. W. Dorfman, & V. J. Gupta (Eds.), *Culture, leadership, and organizations: The GLOBE study of 62 societies*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Erdogan, B., Bauer, T. N., Truxillo, D. M., & Mansfield, L. R. (2012). Whistle while you work: A review of the life satisfaction literature. *Journal of Management*, 38(4), 1038–1083.
- Franke, G. R., & Richey, R. G. Jr. (2010). Improving generalizations from multi-country comparisons in international business research. *Journal of International Business Studies*, 41, 1275–1293.
- Gelfand, M. J., Erez, M., & Aycan, Z. (2007). Cross-cultural organizational behavior. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 58, 479–514. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.psych.58.110405.085559>
- Gerhart, B., & Fang, M. (2005). National culture and human resource management: Assumptions and evidence. *International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 16, 971–986.
- Gibson, C. B., Maznevski, M. L., & Kirkman, B. L. (2009). When does culture matter? In *Cambridge handbook of culture, organizations, and work* (pp. 46–68).
- Gomez-Mejia, L. R., & Welbourne, T. (1991). Compensation strategies in a global context. *Human Resource Planning*, 14, 29–41.

- Granrose, C. S. (2007). Gender differences in career perceptions in the People's Republic of China. *Career Development International*, 12, 9–27.
- Greenhaus, J. H., Parasuraman, S., & Wormley, W. M. (1990). Effects of race on organizational experiences, job performance evaluations, and career outcomes. *Academy of Management Journal*, 33, 64–86.
- Gunkel, M., Schlaegel, C., Langella, I. M., Peluchette, J. V., & Reshetnyak, E. (2013). The influence of national culture on business students' career attitudes – an analysis of eight countries. *Zeitschrift für Personalforschung*, 27, 47–68.
- Hall, D. T., & Heras, M. L. (2010). Reintegrating job design and career theory: Creating not just good jobs but smart jobs. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 31, 448–462.
- Hennequin, E. (2007). What “career success” means to blue-collar workers. *Career Development International*, 12(6), 565–581.
- Hewlett, S. A., & Rashid, R. (2010). The battle for female talent in emerging markets. *Harvard Business Review*, 88, 101–106.
- Hofstede, G. (1980). *Culture's consequences: International differences in work-related values*. Beverly Hills CA: Sage Publications.
- Hofstede, G. (1993). Cultural constraints in management theories. *Academy of Management Executive*, 7, 81–94.
- Hofstede, G. (2001). *Culture's consequences: Comparing values, behaviors, institutions and organizations across nations*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Hofstede, G. (2006). What did GLOBE really measure? Researchers' minds versus respondents' minds. *Journal of International Business Studies*, 37, 882–896.
- Hofstede, G. (2010). The GLOBE debate: Back to relevance. *Journal of International Business Studies*, 41, 1339–1346.
- Hofstede, G., & Minkov, M. (2010). Long-versus short-term orientation: New perspectives. *Asia Pacific Business Review*, 16(4), 493–504.
- Holtschlag, C., Morales, C. E., Masuda, A. D., & Maydeu-Olivares, A. (2013). Complementary person–culture values fit and hierarchical career status. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 82(2), 144–153.
- House, J. R., Dorfman, P. W., Javidan, M., Hanges, P. J., & Sully de Luque, M. F. (2013). *Strategic leadership across cultures: GLOBE study of CEO leadership and effectiveness in 24 countries*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- House, R. J., Hanges, P. J., Javidan, M., Dorfman, P. W., & Gupta, V. (2004). *Culture, leadership, and organizations*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- House, R. J., Javidan, M., & Dorfman, P. W. (2001). Project GLOBE: An introduction. *Applied Psychology-an International Review*, 50, 489–505.
- House, R. J., Quigley, N. R., & Sully de Luque, M. (2010). Insights from project GLOBE. *International Journal of Advertising*, 29, 111–139.
- Huang, X., & Van de Vliert, E. (2003). Where intrinsic job satisfaction fails to work: National moderators of intrinsic motivation. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 24(2), 159–179.
- Imai, L., & Gelfand, M. J. (2009). Interdisciplinary perspectives on culture, conflict, and negotiation. In R. S. Bhagat, & R. M. Steers (Eds.), *Handbook of culture, organization, and work* (pp. 334–372). Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press.
- Ituma, A., Simpson, R., Ovadje, F., Cornelius, N., & Mordi, C. (2011). Four domains of career success: How managers in Nigeria evaluate career outcomes. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 22, 3638–3660.
- Javidan, M., House, R. J., Dorfman, P. W., Hanges, P. J., & Sully de Luque, M. (2006). Conceptualizing and measuring cultures and their consequences: a comparative review of GLOBE's and Hofstede's approaches. *Journal of International Business Studies*, 37, 897–914.
- Judge, T. A., Cable, D. M., Boudreau, J. W., & Bretz, R. D. Jr. (1995). An empirical investigation of the predictors of executive career success. *Personnel Psychology*, 48, 485–519.
- Kats, M. M. S., Van Emmerik, I. J. H., Blenkinsopp, J., & Khapova, S. N. (2010). Exploring the associations of culture with careers and the mediating role of HR practices. *Career Development International*, 15, 401–418.
- Khapova, S. N., & Korotov, K. (2007). Dynamics of Western career attributes in the Russian context. *Career Development International*, 12, 68–85.
- Kluckhohn, F. R., & Strodtbeck, F. L. (1961). *Variations in value orientations*. New York: Harper Collins.
- Lirio, P., Lituchy, T. R., Monserrat, S. I., Lujan, M. R. O., Duffy, J. A., Fox, S., ... Santos, N. (2007). Exploring career-life success and family social support of successful women in Canada, Argentina and Mexico. *Career Development International*, 12, 28–50.
- Lucas, K., & Buzzanell, P. M. (2004). Blue-collar work, career, and success: Occupational narratives of Sisú. *Journal of Applied Communication Research*, 32(4), 273–292.
- Lyness, K., & Judiesch, M. (2014). Gender egalitarianism and work-life balance for managers: Multisource perspectives in 36 Countries. *Applied Psychology. An International Review*, 63(1), 96–129.
- Marcus, J., & Le, A. H. (2013). Interactive effects of levels of individualism-collectivism on cooperation: A meta-analysis. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 34, 813–834.

- Maseland, R., & Van Hoorn, A. (2009). Explaining the negative correlation between values and practices: A note on the Hofstede–GLOBE debate. *Journal of International Business Studies*, 40, 527–532.
- Masuda, A. D., Poelmans, S. A. Y., Allen, T. D., Spector, P. E., Lapiere, L. M., Cooper, C. L., ... Moreno-Velasquez, I. (2012). Flexible work arrangements availability and their relationship with work-to-family conflict, job satisfaction, and turnover intentions: A comparison of three country clusters. *Applied Psychology: An International Review*, 61, 1–29.
- Mayrhofer, W., Briscoe, J. P., Hall, D. T., Dickmann, M., Dries, N., Dysvik, R. K., ... Unite, J. (2016). Career success across the globe: Insights from the 5C project. *Organizational Dynamics*, 45(3), 197–205.
- McClelland, D. C. (1961). *The achieving society*. New York, NY: Free Press.
- McDonald, K. S., & Hite, L. M. (2008). The next generation of career success: Implications for HRD. *Advances in Developing Human Resources*, 10(1), 86–103.
- Minbaeva, D., Pederson, T., Bjorkman, I., Fey, C. F., & Park, H. J. (2003). MNC knowledge transfer, subsidiary absorptive capacity, and HRM. *Journal of International Business Studies*, 34(6), 586–599.
- Ng, T. W. H., Eby, L. T., Sorensen, K. L., & Feldman, D. C. (2005). Predictors of objective and subjective career success: A meta-analysis. *Personnel Psychology*, 58, 367–408.
- Nguyen, H. H. D., Le, H., & Boles, T. (2010). Individualism–collectivism and co-operation: A cross-society and cross-level examination. *Negotiation and Conflict Management Research*, 3(3), 179–204.
- Oyserman, D., Coon, H. M., & Kemmelmeier, M. (2002). Rethinking individualism and collectivism: Evaluation of theoretical assumptions and meta-analyses. *Psychological Bulletin*, 128, 3–72.
- Ozbilgin, M., Kusu, F., & Erdogan, N. (2004). Explaining influences on career 'choice': The case of MBA students in comparative perspective. In *Paper presented at the 112th annual convention of the American Psychological Association*. Honolulu: HI.
- Parkes, L. P., Bochner, S., & Schneider, S. K. (2001). Person-organisation fit across cultures: An empirical investigation of individualism and collectivism. *Applied Psychology: An International Review*, 50(1), 81–108.
- Pathak, S., & Muralidharan, E. (2016). Informal institutions and their comparative influences on social and commercial entrepreneurship: The role of in-group collectivism and interpersonal trust. *Journal of Small Business Management*, 54, 168–188.
- Peretz, H., Fried, Y., & Levi, A. (2018). Flexible work arrangements, national culture, organizational characteristics, and organizational outcomes: A study across 21 countries. *Human Resource Management Journal*, 28, 182–200.
- Peterson, M. F., & Barreto, T. S. (2014). The like it or not proposition: Implications of societal characteristics for the cultural expertise and personal values of organization members. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 35(8), 1134–1152. <http://doi.org/10.1002/job.1977>
- Peterson, M. F., & Castro, S. L. (2006). Measurement metrics at aggregate levels of analysis: Implications for organization culture research and the GLOBE project. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 17(5), 506–521.
- Peterson, M. F., & Wood, R. (2008). Cognitive structures and processes in cross-cultural management. In P. B. Smith, M. F. Peterson, & D. C. Thomas (Eds.), *The handbook of cross-cultural management research* (pp. 15–34). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Ramamoorthy, N., & Flood, P. C. (2002). Employee attitudes and behavioral intentions: A test of the main and moderating effects of individualism–collectivism orientations. *Human Relations*, 2002, 55(9), 1071–1096.
- Rokeach, M. (1973). *The nature of human values*. New York, NY: Free Press.
- Sagiv, L., & Schwartz, S. H. (2000). A new look at national culture: Illustrative applications to role stress and managerial behavior. In N. N. Ashkanasy, C. Wilderom, & M. F. Peterson (Eds.), *The handbook of organizational culture and climate* (pp. 417–436). Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Schwartz, S. H. (1994). Are there universal aspects in the structure and contents of human values? *Journal of Social Issues*, 50(4), 19–45.
- Schwartz, S. H. (1999). A theory of cultural values and some implications for work. *Applied Psychology: An International Review*, 48(1), 23–47.
- Shen, Y., Demel, B., Unite, J., Briscoe, J. P., Hall, D. T., Chuzikowski, K., ... Zikic, J. (2015). Career success across 11 countries: Implications for international human resource management. *International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 26(13), 1753–1778.
- Shockley, K.M., Ureksoy, H.M., Rodopman, O.B., Poteat, L.F., & Dullaghan, T. R (2016). Re-conceptualizing subjective career success: A mixed methods study. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 37(1), 128–153.
- Smale, A., Bagdadli, S., Cotton, R., Dello Russo, S., Dickmann, M., Dysvik, A., ... Verbruggen, M. (2018). Proactive career behaviors and subjective career success: The moderating role of national culture. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 40, 105–122. <https://doi.org/10.1002/job.2316>
- Spurk, D., Hirschi, A., & Dries, N. (2018). Antecedents and outcomes of objective versus subjective career success: Competing perspectives and future directions. *Journal of Management*, 45(1), 35–69.

- Stavrou, E., & Kilaniotis, C. (2010). Flexible work and turnover: An empirical investigation across cultures. *British Journal of Management*, 21, 541–554.
- Stephan, U., & Uhlaner, L. M. (2010). Performance-based vs socially-supportive culture: A cross-national study of descriptive norms and entrepreneurship. *Journal of International Business Studies*, 41, 1347–1364.
- Stumpf, S. A. (2009). Promotion to partner: The importance of relationship competencies and interpersonal style. *Career Development International*, 14(5), 428–440.
- Sturges, J. (1999). What it means to succeed: Personal conceptions of career success held by male and female managers at different ages. *British Journal of Management*, 10, 239–252.
- Tams, S., & Arthur, M. B. (2007). Studying careers across cultures: Distinguishing international, cross-cultural, and globalization perspectives. *Career Development International*, 12, 86–98.
- Taras, V., Kirkman, B., & Steel, P. (2010). Examining the impact of *Culture's Consequences*: A three-decade, multi-level, meta-analytic review of Hofstede's cultural value dimensions. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 95, 405–439. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0018938>
- Thomas, D. C., & Peterson, M. B. (2015). *Cross-cultural management: Essential concepts*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Thomas, R. J. (1989). Blue-collar careers: meaning and choice in a world of constraints. In M. B. Arthur, D. T. Hall, & B. S. Lawrence (Eds.), *Handbook of career theory*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Tsui, A. S., Nifadkar, S. S., & Ou, A. Y. (2007). Cross-national, cross-cultural organizational behavior research: Advances, gaps, and recommendations. *Journal of Management*, 33, 426–478.
- Tung, R. L., & Baumann, C. (2009). Comparing the attitudes toward money, material possessions, and savings of overseas Chinese vis-à-vis Chinese in China: Convergence, divergence, or cross-vergence, vis-à-vis 'one size fits all' human resource management policies and practices. *International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 20, 2382–2401.
- Tung, R. L., & Verbeke, A. (2010). Beyond Hofstede and GLOBE: Improving the quality of cross-cultural research. *Journal of International Business Studies*, 41, 1259–1274.
- Visagie, S., & Koekomoer, E. (2014). What is means to succeed: Personal perceptions of career success held by senior managers. *South African Journal of Business Management*, 43–54.
- Zhou, W., Sun, J., Guan, Y., Li, Y., & Pan, J. (2013). Criteria of career success among Chinese employees: Developing a multi-dimensional scale with qualitative and quantitative approaches. *Journal of Career Assessment*, 21, 265–277.

How to cite this article: Benson GS, McIntosh CK, Salazar M, Vaziri H. Cultural values and definitions of career success. *Hum Resour Manag J*. 2020;30:392–421. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1748-8583.12266>