

Confucian and Protestant Work Ethics Among Polish and Korean Employees and Small Business Owners

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Abstract

In this research we investigated Confucian and Protestant work ethics (CWE and PWE) among 160 Polish and Korean respondents, distributed into balanced groups with regard to region, occupational status, and gender. We found that Koreans revealed higher levels of PWE than did Poles. CWE turned out to be not exclusive to Asian cultures, as Poles scored higher than did Koreans. The results support the necessity of reconciling cultural differences. We think that values, which are believed to support economic development, are not related to one particular work ethic.

Keywords: Protestant work ethic, Confucian work ethic, cultural values, economic development, entrepreneurship

Work ethics and economic growth

A vast scope of ethical research has examined the relation between work ethic and economic growth. Max Weber (1904-1905/1958) argued that Protestantism was one of the reasons why capitalism succeeded in the West. According to Weber (1904-1905/1958), Catholicism and Islam were not the bases for capitalism. The idea that people could express their love and devotion to God through work was present in Protestantism and stimulated labor productivity (Tilgher, 1930); this idea was absent in Catholicism and Islam. In Catholicism, people did not work in order to create wealth, as the only justification for wealth was charity, and work was mainly aimed to supply means to survive (Tilgher, 1930). Moreover, work was believed to be "a curse devised by God explicitly to punish the disobedience and ingratitude of Adam and Eve" (Rose, 1985, p. 28) and hard work was a way in which people could obtain God's forgiveness. In the case of Islam, Weber (1904-1905/1958) argued that its ideas prevent the development of capitalism. He believed that with an other-worldly approach to life Sufi scholars created a fatalistic way of life. Additionally, the idea of conquest present in Islam was opposed to the productive capitalistic spirit. Finally, property rights and capital accumulation more generally should be restricted due to a very strong hierarchy and unequal distribution of goods in a society led by empires (Arslan, 2000).

Weber's thesis was empirically verified in many studies. According to Arslan's literature review (2000), more studies supported Weber's thesis than had inconclusive results or negated it. However, there is research showing that although the Protestant work ethic (PWE) is culturally based (Furnham et al., 1993) it is not exclusive to Protestant countries (Barbalet, 2006; Chalcraft, Harrington & Shields, 2001; Jones, 1997; Lehman, 2005; Mulyadi, 2006). For instance, PWE beliefs were found to be present in Japanese society (Bellah, 1963), Barbados adolescents turned out to have higher PWE scores than adolescents from developed countries (Furnham, 1991), and Turkish managers were characterized by higher level of PWE values than were Protestant and Catholic ones (Arslan, 2001).

Nowadays, there are non-Protestant countries that have achieved success in economic development. They are exemplified by East European countries that experienced a transition from a command to a market economy, e.g. Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Hungary. The economic system transformation in these countries resulted in social change: it prompted activity focussed on seeking economic opportunities, entrepreneurial behaviours, and pro-capitalistic thinking (Osborn & Slomeczynski, 2005). Other examples of dynamically developing countries are the "Asian Tigers": Hong Kong, Taiwan,

Singapore and South Korea. Common to the last four countries are various elements of Chinese culture, among which Confucianism seems to be very important in its positive effect on economic development (Kahn, 1979, 2003; Redding & Ng, 1983).

Social norms and values arise from social interactions (Mandler, 1993). Even if there is truth to the secularization thesis, stating that religion, as a remnant of man's primitive past, will disappear through the development of science and the human race, and that modernization diminishes the social significance of religion (Hughey, 1983; Giddens, 1997), some religion-derived values may still be highly valued by society. If this is true, PWE and CWE values may emerge in countries with small or with non-Protestant or non-Confucian heritage. Indeed, some studies show that PWE and religious affiliation turn out to be unrelated (Furnham & Reilly, 1991; Ma, 1986; Ray, 1982). PWE beliefs are rather culturally based (Furnham et al., 1993), and societies with higher level of power distance, uncertainty avoidance and individualism support PWE beliefs (Hofstede, 2001). By analogy, one could expect that CWE is also not limited to Asian countries and that its elements may appear in non-Asian countries with cultural backgrounds corresponding to Confucian values, such as collectivism, hierarchy, or working for the common wealth. As CWE has been investigated only in relation to Asian countries so far (e.g. Lam, 2003; Lee & Yoshihara, 1997), it is unknown whether values traditionally associated with Confucianism are common in non-Asian countries.

Economic Performance and Culture Dimensions of Poland and Korea

Because PWE and CWE consist of facets that are believed to be crucial for economic development (Ornatowski, 1996), we wanted to explore them in non-Protestant and in non-Confucians cultures, similar in economic circumstances but dissimilar in cultural ones. Korea and Poland were chosen for this investigation as both countries have experienced remarkable economic growth during the last fifty years (Figure 1).

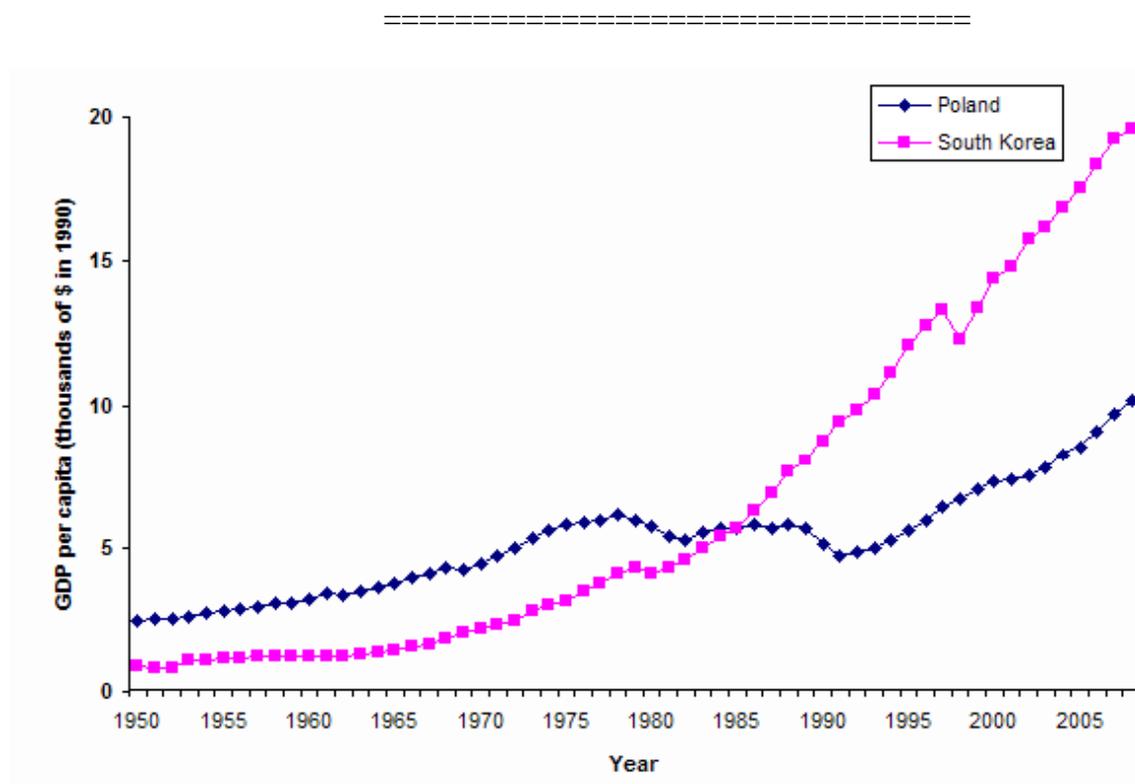


Figure 1. Total GDP in Poland and South Korea.

Source: The Conference Board and Groningen Growth and Development Centre, Total Economy Database, June 2009.

Korea's GDP grew by 67% between 1998 and 2008, compared to 26% on average in Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) countries. Similarly, GDP grew by 51% in the same period in Poland, compared to 24% observed in the 15 "old" European Union countries. Such tendencies are also present in productivity dynamics: there is a salient ascending trend in both countries; however, Koreans significantly outperform Poles (see Figure 2).

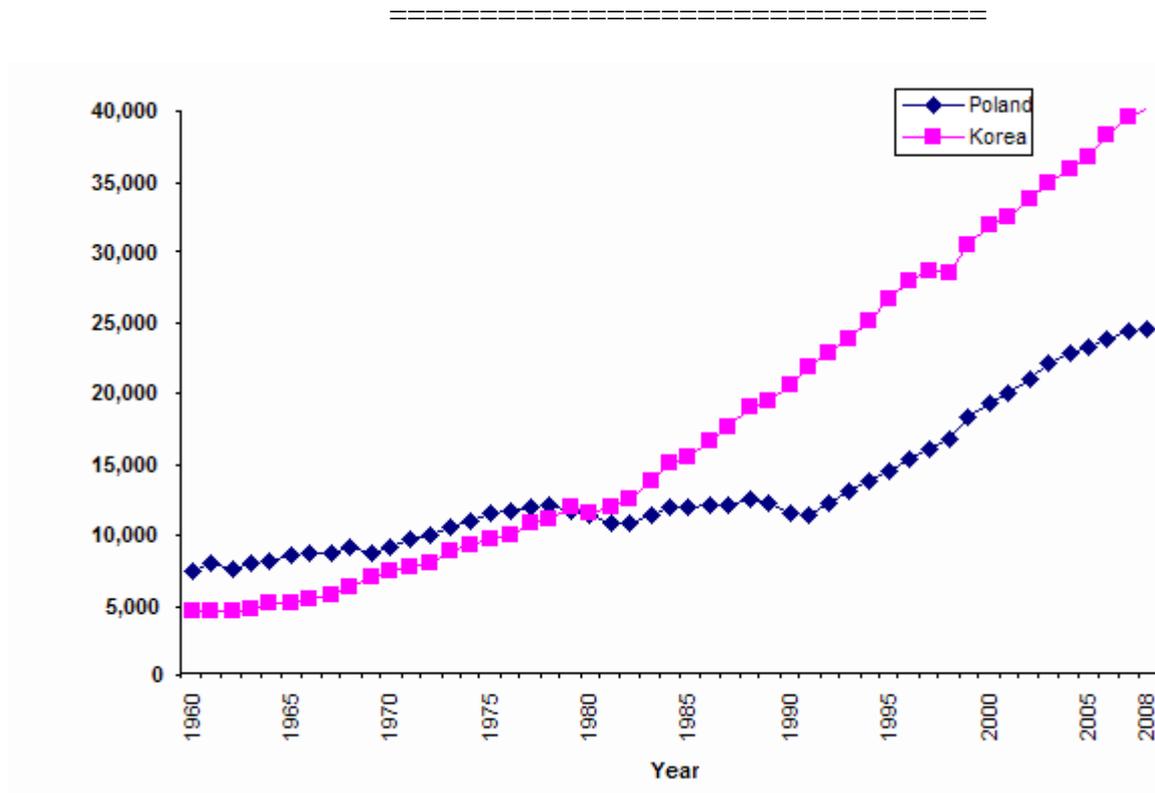


Figure 2. Labour productivity in Poland and South Korea in 1960-2008.

Source: The Conference Board and Groningen Growth and Development Centre, Total Economy Database, June 2009.

In Korea, an average employee works longer hours than an employee in Poland. Nonetheless, there has been a declining trend in Korea during the thirty years, whereas in Poland the figures are rather stable (see Figure 3).

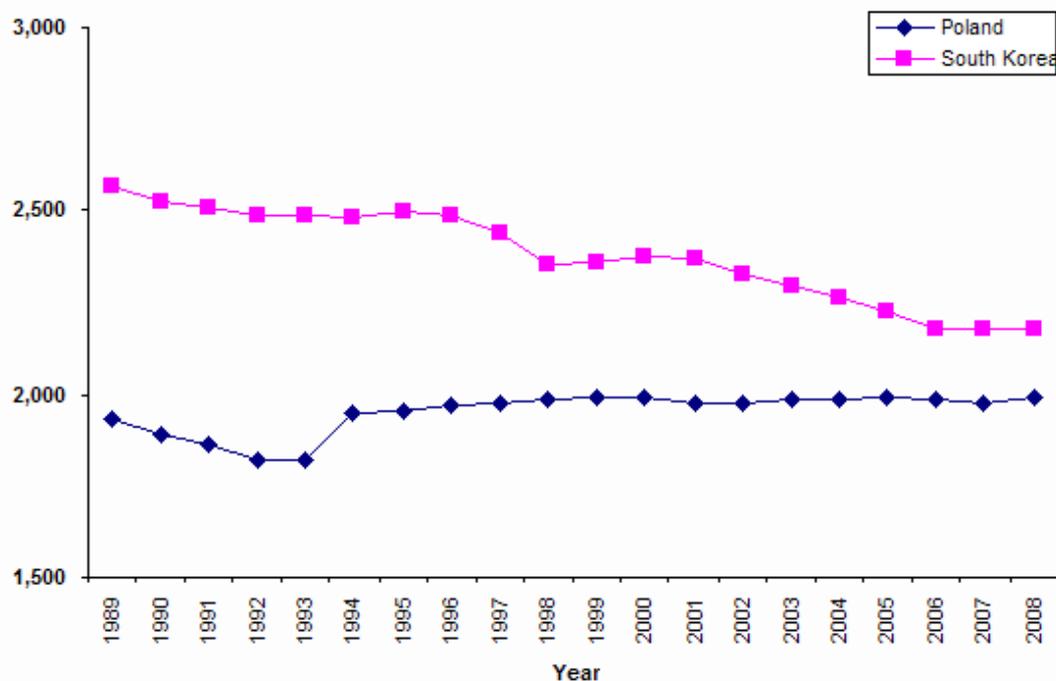


Figure 3. Annual hours worked per employee in Poland and South Korea.

Source: The Conference Board and Groningen Growth and Development Centre, Total Economy Database, June 2009.

Poland and Korea show great similarity in industrial development but have distinct religious affiliations and differ culturally. The dominant religion in Poland is Catholicism, with 88.2% adherents in the Polish population (Concise Statistical Yearbook of Poland, 2010). In Korea, the issue of religious affiliation is a complicated one. Catholicism was introduced in 1784, following the arrival of Protestant missionaries in 1884 and Christianity has proceeded to become second largest religion in the country after Buddhism (Gallup Korea, 1985). However, Confucianism, understood as an ethical system, has shaped the mentality of the society (Cheng, 1989; Goldberg, 1979, Keum, 2000; Kwang-ok, 1996; Park & Cho, 1995).

When Poland and Korea are compared in terms of cultural differences, the greatest dissimilarity is on the individualism dimension. Individualism (IDV) is defined in opposition to collectivism and represents the degree to which people in a society are integrated into communities (Hofstede, 2001). IDV is related to level of commitment among group members: the more an individual is integrated into a group, the more committed he or she is to the group, and the less individualistic he or she is said to be. In the national culture classification, Poland ranks higher in terms of individualism than Korea (Hofstede, 2001; Kolman, Noorderhaven, Hofstede & Dienes, 1999; Nasierowski & Mikula, 1998).

Another dimension that differentiates Poland and Korea is masculinity (MAS), which refers to the distribution of roles between genders. In a masculine society, emotional gender roles are distinct, with men attaching greater importance to having an opportunity for high earnings, challenging work, recognition for a job well done, and possibility for advancement. However, women aim to have a good working relationship with their direct superiors, stress the importance of cooperation, value ergonomics of the working place, and care about employment security. In feminine societies, emotional gender roles overlap, with men and women attaching importance to both the "masculine" and "feminine" aforementioned goals. In the national culture classification, Poland ranks higher in terms of masculinity than Korea (Hofstede, 2001; Kolman et al., 1999; Nasierowski & Mikula, 1998).

Schwartz's cultural value orientations theory (2006) suggests, however, that individuals with a Confucian heritage strongly emphasize mastery, which encourages an active approach, involving a change of the natural and social environment in order to achieve group or personal goals. It is associated with values

such as ambition and competence, which are present among Koreans. In contrast, Poland rates higher than Korea on harmony, emphasizing a world at peace, unity with nature, and protecting the environment (Schwartz, 2006). It was worth pointing here that Korea rates higher on mastery in regard to Hofstede's theory and Poland higher on masculinity in regard to Schwartz's theory. It could be interpreted that for Koreans internal factors like fulfilling ambitions, mastering abilities are more important than external factors like salary or promotion, which are vital in more masculine societies like Poland.

There is no substantial difference between Poland and Korea in terms of power distance index (PDI), which is the level of hierarchy and unequal distribution of goods among people that society accepts. According to Schwartz (2006), Poland is higher on egalitarianism, which emphasize regulation of behavior based on equality rather than complying with existing hierarchies, as is the case in Korea.

Moreover, the countries do not differ in terms of uncertainty avoidance index (UAI), which describes the extent to which a society tolerates uncertain and ambiguous situations. Uncertainty avoiding cultures reveal a strong belief in one absolute Truth. One could expect that the higher the uncertainty avoidance in a country, the higher the religious engagement. The relationship between religion and UAI appear to be related, but not in such a straightforward way. A study revealed that while in general Catholic countries are high on UAI, for example, Poland, there are exceptions, such as Catholic Ireland or the Philippines (Hofstede, 2001). Hofstede (2001, p. 177) argues that: "both the adaptation of a certain religion and the national norm for uncertainty avoidance should rather be seen as results of a common cause; an established religion reinforces the values that led to its adaptation, however, confirming either strong or weak uncertainty avoidance."

The cultural analysis of both countries shows that apart from individualism and collectivism, there is no consensus concerning differences with regard to values surrounding achieving success, appreciating challenge and hierarchy.

PWE and CWE in Poland and South Korea: Study Aim and Predictions

As both PWE and CWE relate to economic prosperity, we wanted to find out if work values traditionally associated with Confucianism might be found in non-Asian countries, and in turn with Protestantism in Asian countries. According to the Hofstede analyses described above, the cultural dimensions differentiating Poland and Korea were mainly individualism-collectivism and masculinity, with Koreans being higher on the collectivism dimension and lower on the masculinity dimension than Poles.

However, these data was gathered mainly in the 1970's and 80's, and Korean society is now much more individualistic than in the past (Lee & McNulty, 2003). There was a growing conflict between traditional cooperativism/collectivism and the individualism of the global marketplace in late 1990's in Asia. An analysis of PWE in 13 countries done by Furnham et al. (1993) revealed that PWE indeed is positively related to power distance, uncertainty avoidance, and masculinity, and negatively to individualism. People from richer and from more liberal countries (vs. conservative or authoritarian ones) tend to have lower scores than those from much poorer countries when compared on PWE (Furnham et al., 1993). Initially, with an export-and-manufacturing oriented economy led by "chaebols", or conglomerates, Korea was re-balancing towards a knowledge- and high technology-based economy led by small and medium enterprises. This created a new employment space, in which a performance-based salary system was introduced, in opposition to the seniority-based salary system typical for collectivistic societies (Lee & McNulty, 2003). This change created a more individualistic approach to work among employees and entrepreneurs. Based on these considerations, we expected that:

H1: Koreans exhibit a higher level of PWE than Poles.

Poland's communist past shows some similarities with Confucian assumptions with regard to the idea of working for the common wealth and people's attention to interdependence among social classes. What is carried over from the communist past in Poland is the ideology that the workers and managers should have the same rights, because what they produce belongs to all of the employees. However, the Communist system fostered centralized control and decision-making process, and the actual power and decision force belonged to "nomenklatura system" of positions arranged in order of seniority, with defined office duties in the bureaucratic environment (Harasymiw, 1969; Osborn & Slomczynski, 2005, p. 76). The same concepts of hierarchy and interdependence are the basis of Confucianism, which

Drucker (1981) calls a "situational ethics" (Romar, 2004). Therefore, Poland's historical background, its experience of socialism, seems to have elements corresponding to Confucian values in terms of hierarchy, collectivism and interdependence. Moreover, as Poland is less economically developed than Korea, but both countries in their regions show great economic growth, one could expect more dynamic economic development in Poland than in already well-developed Korea. This led us to hypothesise that:

H2: Poles exhibit higher level of CWE than Koreans.

PWE and CWE among entrepreneurs. People with high PWE are highly engaged and satisfied with their work and have a strong need of achievement (Blood, 1969; Furnham, 1984; Kidron, 1978). PWE elicits a need of achievement, a striving for independence, a need for excellence, and an ability to postpone gratification (McClelland, 1962). A person who has strong beliefs in PWE could be characterized as one having high internal locus of control beliefs (Furnham, 1987; Mirels & Garrett, 1971), high need for achievement (Feather, 1982; Furnham, 1982) and somebody who manifests work-related behaviors (Abdalla, 1997).

A portrait of a person with high level of PWE corresponds to a portrait of an entrepreneur. The personal attributes that are proven to characterize entrepreneurs include high levels of achievement motivation (Johnson, 1990), internal locus of control (Hansemark, 2003; Kroeck, Bullough & Reynolds, 2010; Mueller & Thomas, 2001) and self-efficacy (Chen, Greene & Creek, 1998; Tyszka, Cieslik, Domurat & Macko, 2011). Therefore, when studying differences in work ethics, it is worth taking into account occupational status. There are studies showing that PWE is positively associated with entrepreneurship. Together with technical development, the Protestant affiliation turns out to be one of most important factors supporting an individual's tendency to start up a business (Carrol & Mosakowski, 1987; Shane, 1996). Following those considerations, we expected that:

H3: Entrepreneurs exhibit higher levels of PWE than do non-entrepreneurs (e.g. employees).

According to Macaulay (1986), Confucianism contributes to entrepreneurial activity by stressing the importance of individual responsibility and limited government. Moreover, high Confucian dynamics characterize individuals who place more importance on values associated with Confucian teachings that are future-oriented (Hofstede, 1991; Hofstede & Bond, 1988). There are differences between PWE and CWE such as the individualism-collectivism dimension, with Protestantism stressing individual responsibility more, and individualism is positively correlated to the need of achievement (Hofstede, 2001). However, there are two other components of CWE, which in contradiction to collectivism, are entrepreneurially-oriented analogous to PWE. The first one is striving for the creation of dedicated, motivated, responsible, and educated individuals. The second one is an enhanced sense of commitment, organizational identity, and loyalty to various institutions (Kahn, 2003). Moreover, active approach and achievement motivation characterize individuals with a Confucian heritage, according to aforementioned Schwartz's theory and they are also found to characterize entrepreneurs (Johnson, 1990; Hansemark, 2003). Therefore we predicted that:

H4: Entrepreneurs exhibit higher levels of CWE than do non-entrepreneurs.

We must, however, admit that hypothesis H4 has an exploratory character, because studies on CWE among entrepreneurs were not as numerous as PWE.

Method

Procedure, Participants, and Experimental Design

A convenience sample of 160 Korean (in Seoul, Korea) and Polish (Warsaw, Poland) adults volunteered to complete a questionnaire including CWE and PWE measures. A person, who conducted the study, individually and randomly approached both entrepreneurs and employees and asked them if they wanted to participate.

The study was carried out in the summer of 2007 in the form of individual interviews in the participants' place of work or residence. After filling out questionnaires, participants were financially rewarded with a guaranteed payment of 10PLN or 5000 Won (worth ca. 3 \$USD) or an option to take part in a lottery or

simple quiz where they could win 20 PLN or 10000 Won. The study followed a 2 (region: Warsaw-Poland vs. Seoul-Korea) × 2 (occupational status: entrepreneurs vs. employees) × 2 (gender: male vs. female) between-subjects factorial design with balanced cells, of 20 participants each.

The group of entrepreneurs consisted of business owners who declared establishing their business, managing it, and employing at least one person outside of their own families. Defining entrepreneurship in this way, we avoided including so-called "reluctant entrepreneurs", people who have their own businesses for formal, legal or financial reasons, but who do not in fact work for their own sake (Boyle, 1994; Tyszka et al., 2011). Employees were those who worked full-time in large companies and were not in possession of their own businesses.

Entrepreneurs were older than employees. 72% of them were from the 41-50 and over-50 years old age ranges, while 83% employees below 30 or 31-40 years old ($\chi^2(3)=52.49, p<0.001$). This age difference is consistent with the observation that typical entrepreneurs establish their businesses at age 30-35 (Wärneryd, 1988). No age differences were found between female and male participants or between Koreans and Poles.

Additionally we decided to control gender because of differences reported between men and women in terms of work ethics (Meriac, Poling & Woehr, 2009; Petty & Hill, 1994) and characteristics related to entrepreneurial activity and career choices. Women have higher risk aversion than men (Byrnes, Miller & Schafer, 1997), have different management styles (Sexton & Bowman-Upton, 1990), differ from men in achievement motivation (Elizur & Beck, 1994), and in work motivation, paying less attention to innovativeness and financial success (Carter, Gartner, Shaver & Gatewood, 2003).

CWE and PWE Measures

CWE. As there was no appropriate tool available to measure CWE, we decided to construct a scale for the purpose of the study. Based on individual open-ended structured interviews among Polish and Korean employees working in Korean companies in Poland and Korea (Wasiela, 2010), we generated 25 items expressing three main aspects of CWE: work for the common wealth, respect for authority and hierarchy, and collectivism at work. The items' meaning was adjusted through a back-translation procedure, accompanied by Polish and Korean native speakers. Answers were given on a 5-point scale where 1 indicated "I strongly disagree", 2 – "I disagree", 3 – "I have no opinion", 4 – "I agree", and 5 – "I strongly agree". A PCA analysis performed on the 12 chosen scale positions showed the three expected dimensions (see Appendix). The whole CWE scale had acceptable internal consistency (Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.703$). Its subscales resembled the three main aspects of CWE and were: a 4-item scale of *Collectivism*; a 5-item scale of *Hierarchy and authority*; and a 4-item scale of *Work for common wealth*. They had moderate reliabilities (α s: 0.666, 0.615, and 0.641, respectively).

PWE. There are a few available measures of PWE described in the literature (Miller, Woehr & Hudspeth, 2002). We decided to use Mirels and Garret's (1971) Protestant Ethic Scale (PES) because of its high popularity in worldwide research. The scale's internal consistency neared adequacy ($\alpha = 0.653$). Instead of the original 6-point answering format (from - 3: "I strongly disagree" to + 3: "I strongly agree" with no 0 -point, see: Mirels & Garret, 1971, p. 41), we applied a 5-point scale (from 1: "I strongly disagree" to 5 "I strongly agree"), as with the CWE scale described above. Such a format complied with other measures used in the study (not reported here) and was therefore less confusing for participants. In the subsequent analyses, answers were averaged, thus group statistics may be interpreted in terms of a 1 to 5 range of agreement.

PWE is a multidimensional construct, and there is empirical evidence that PES covers semantically different aspects. For example, McHoskey's (1994) four-factor solution consisted of the dimensions: success, asceticism, hard work, and anti-leisure. The three dimensions of hard work, asceticism and anti-leisure emerged in four-factor solutions in factor analyses performed later by Mudrack (1997), Tang (1993), and Hassall, Muller and Hassall (2005). These solutions differed in the remaining factor. While Hassall and colleagues (2005) interpreted their fourth factor as "work regard", Mudrack (1997) proposed "negative views of the work absence" and Tang (1993) obtained "internal motive". Although different authors have interpreted factor structures similarly, their analyses revealed quite different item sets interpreted in the same way. For example, the asceticism dimension loaded high on items 2, 6, 7, 8, 11,

12, & 19 in the analysis performed by Hassall and colleagues (2005), 1, 2, 3, 7, 8, & 14 by Mudrack (1997), 1, 3, 8, & 17 by Tang (1993), and partially overlapped with Arslan's (2000) "money and time saving" factor (1, 3, & 14; numeration established in the cited papers).

We believe that the observed differences emerge mainly because PES items are ambiguous. For instance, the item "Most people spend too much time in unprofitable amusements" refers simultaneously to profit making, time spending and work absence issues. Perhaps there is no point in searching for separable subscales, because items carry multi-faceted meanings. Therefore, we decided to build sub-scales, combining the sets proposed in the four aforementioned studies because of their occupational, business-oriented and intercultural context of analyses, removing some items when needed to improve reliability. Finally, we constructed four subscales of PES: *Hard work* (consisting of items: 4, 5, 6, 7, 10, 11, 12, 13 reverse scored, 16, 17, 18, & 19; Cronbach's α s=0.628, 0.589, 0.711 in the whole sample, Warsaw and Seoul respectively), *Asceticism* (items: 1, 2, 3, 6, 7, 8, 11, 12, 14, 17, & 19; α s=0.654, 0.661, 0.665), *Anti-leisure* (two reversed items: 9 & 15; α s=0.604, 0.662, 0.598), and finally *Internal locus of control* (items: 6, 11, 18, & 19; α s=0.579, 0.627, 0.535). It is worth noticing that the latter scale turned out to be a subscale of *Hard work* and three out of its four items belong to *Asceticism*, which additionally demonstrates the multi-facetedness of PWE.

Results

To test the hypotheses, a series of 2 (region: Seoul vs. Warsaw) \times 2 (occupational status: entrepreneurs vs. employees) \times 2 (gender: male vs. female) ANOVAs was performed on CWE and PWE indices. Group descriptive statistics are presented in Table 1. Because no significant interaction effects emerged in the all ANOVAs, the main groups' statistics are displayed only, and cell statistics are omitted.

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The analysis revealed a significant effect of region on the CWE and PWE scales, $F(1,152)=13.15$, $p<0.001$, $h^2=0.077$ and $F(1,152)=4.04$, $p<0.05$, $h^2=0.025$ respectively. Consistent with Hypotheses 1 and 2, Koreans scored higher on PWE ($M=3.07$, $SD=0.38$) and lower on CWE ($M=2.94$, $SD=0.41$) than did Poles ($M=2.94$, $SD=0.43$, and $M=3.19$, $SD=0.46$, respectively). The first difference stemmed mainly from Koreans' greater tendency ($M=3.29$, $SD=0.50$, as compared to Poles' $M=3.15$, $SD=0.47$) to agree with beliefs from the *Hard work* dimension; $F(1,152)=3.46$, $p=0.065$, $h^2=0.022$. The second difference resulted from Poles' greater support of beliefs from *Collectivism* ($M=3.92$, $SD=0.60$ vs. Koreans' $M=3.53$, $SD=0.55$) and *Work for common wealth* ($M=3.62$, $SD=0.57$ vs. Koreans' $M=3.01$, $SD=0.62$); $F(1,152)=18.17$, $p<0.001$, $h^2=0.104$, and $F(1,152)=43.55$, $p<0.001$, $h^2=0.213$, respectively.

We found no significant effect of occupational status on either CWE or PWE ($F(1,152)=1.28$, $p=0.259$ and $F(1,152)=2.61$, $p=0.108$, respectively). The only significant differences were entrepreneurs' higher scores on *Internal locus of control* ($M=3.16$, $SD=0.74$, as compared to employees' $M=2.91$, $SD=0.69$; $F(1,152)=5.00$, $p<0.05$, $h^2=0.031$), and a statistical tendency for higher scores on the *Anti-leisure* subscale ($M=2.58$, $SD=0.94$ vs. employees' $M=2.31$, $SD=0.80$), $F(1,152)=3.54$, $p=0.062$, $h^2=0.022$. Thus, Hypothesis 3 was supported partially and Hypothesis 4 was not supported.

Additionally, male participants scored higher on the whole CWE scale than did females ($M=3.13$, $SD=0.41$ for men vs. $M=2.99$, $SD=0.48$ for women; $F(1,152)=4.39$, $p<0.05$, $h^2=0.026$). Men revealed greater acceptance of the *Work for common wealth* subscale ($M=3.43$, $SD=0.65$ vs. $M=3.19$, $SD=0.67$ among women; $F(1,152)=6.65$, $p<0.05$, $h^2=0.032$). The result justifies taking gender into account as a controlled variable.

The weak positive correlation between PWE and CWE is worth noting, $r(160)=0.288$, $p<0.001$ (see Table 2). This correlation resulted mainly from the interdependence of pairs of subscales: *Collectivism*

related to *Hard work*, $r(160)=0.229$, $p<0.01$, while *Hierarchy and authority* related to *Hard work*, $r(160)=0.228$, $p<0.01$, *Internal locus of control* and $r(160)=0.247$, $p<0.01$, and *Asceticism*, $r(160)=0.276$, $p<0.001$. Additional one-way ANOVAs, with between-subjects factor of age (four ranges: below 30, 31-40, 41-50, over-50 years old), revealed no impact of age on PWE and CWE indices, except for positive effect (the scores increasing with age) on two sub-scales: Hierarchy and authority, $F(3; 155)=3.837$, $p<0.05$, and Anti-leisure, $F(3; 155)=3.018$, $p<0.05$ (similarly significant age effect emerged in two-way ANOVAs with region or occupational status added to age, respectively).

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Discussion

Our study offered some insight into work ethic differences between Polish and Korean small business owners and wage-earners. However, there are limitations imposed by some methodological issues influencing study reliability, suggesting that the findings should be interpreted with care. First, the study was performed on non-representative convenient sample, biased to specific occupational groups. The CWE scale was developed for the purpose of the study with no presence of other occupational, social or demographic groups. Conclusions regarding the populations need further research on more representative samples. Second, the CWE scale was an ad-hoc tool with rather unstable sub-scales and moderate psychometric properties (internal consistency, factor loadings in exploratory factor analyses, shortness of the scales). As in the PWE scale, it is likely that their multi-facetedness of the items resulted in items loading on more than one factor, thus the question of CWE structure stability and intercultural resemblance remains unanswered.

Nevertheless, we believe that our study is a good starting point for studying CWE and PWE differences, as it proposed some initial exploration and direction in developing a tool for measuring CWE. Our study showed that the level of PWE was higher in Korea than in Poland, and that CWE was not exclusive to Asian cultures, as Polish respondents scored higher than did Koreans. We interpret this result as indicating that Polish employees and entrepreneurs value collective behaviors and work for the common wealth more than Korean ones do. Although this result contradicts to some extent findings on collectivism in Asian cultures (Markus i Kitayama, 1991; Nisbett, 2003), it is consistent with a Catholic perspective on work and material issues, emphasizing the religion's communitarian aspects. The results may also suggest that values that are believed to support or hinder economic growth are not assigned exclusively to one particular work ethic.

It is believed that the level of individualism increases when a country becomes richer. Our results might lead to the conclusion that, as a country develops economically, values like collectivism and work for common wealth have a positive impact on the development dynamic, but after a certain level of "richness" is attained, individualism becomes more significant. In this context, it is important to mention that the aspect of work for common wealth from the CWE embraces a strong devotion to work, but in contradiction to hard work from the PWE, work is more for the sake of the group than for individual profit.

Although it would seem that acceptance of the facets of CWE (hierarchy and authority, work for common wealth, and collective matters) would facilitate launching new businesses or organizational structures, no differences were observed between entrepreneurs and employees on the CWE. We found that entrepreneurs demonstrated higher levels of PWE with respect to the internal locus of control and anti-leisure dimensions. This is consistent with results from investigations showing that entrepreneurship is affected by internal locus of control (Hansemark, 2003; Kroeck et al., 2010; Mueller & Thomas, 2001).

When considering work ethics in organizational contexts, understanding cultural differences is the first step to making the most of diversity. A helpful methodology discussed in this context, mainly in business applications, is cultural due diligence (e.g. Seo & Hill, 2005; Zander & Zander, 2010). As Trompenaars and his colleagues point out, cultural due diligence helps to make cultural differences tangible and their

consequences easier to understand and to reconcile (Bickerstaffe, 2002; Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 1997). According to this methodology, the first step is to recognize the differences. The second step is to show that different perceptions of the world are not right or wrong but simply different. This leads to the conclusion that reconciling values can create wealth. Our study describes differences in work ethics. However, at the same time, the weak positive or no correlations between our CWE and PWE measures show that different aspects of both Protestant and Confucian work ethics permeate each other and may emerge in various cultures.

For multinational companies (MNE's) globalization has created an opportunity to open subsidiaries all over the world, implicating intercultural experiences for employees. In order to avoid problems in communication, recognizing and understanding intercultural differences is necessary. Our study showed that, although on the surface Korea and Poland differ in terms of cultural dimensions, a closer examination of the differences demonstrates that collective behaviors also exist in Poland in the work-context. Therefore, when reconciling cultural differences, finding similarities may be as important as uncovering dissimilarities. Our results revealed differences in work ethics between Poles and Koreans but, what is more interesting, they challenged the stereotypical view of cultural differences. The results support the necessity of reconciling cultural differences, and the significance and the need of revision of stereotypic assumptions about work ethics in various regions of the world (Phuong-Mai, Terlouw & Pilot, 2005). Confucianism and communitarian work behaviors turn out to be not exclusive to Asian societies.

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Table 1

Group Means of PWE and CWE Indices

Dependent variables	Region		Occupational status		Gender		Total
	Warsaw	Seoul	Employees	Business owners	Female	Male	
CWE	3.19 (0.46)	2.94 (0.41)	3.02 (0.43)	3.10 (0.47)	2.99 (0.48)	3.13 (0.41)	3.06 (0.45)

CWE - collectivism	3.92 (0.60)	3.53 (0.55)	3.69 (0.60)	3.76 (0.61)	3.67 (0.65)	3.79 (0.55)	3.73 (0.61)
CWE - hierarchy and authority	2.37 (0.68)	2.45 (0.53)	2.34 (0.62)	2.48 (0.59)	2.36 (0.60)	2.46 (0.62)	2.41 (0.61)
CWE - work for common wealth	3.62 (0.57)	3.01 (0.62)	3.32 (0.61)	3.31 (0.73)	3.19 (0.67)	3.43 (0.65)	3.31 (0.67)
PWE	2.94 (0.43)	3.07 (0.38)	2.95 (0.34)	3.06 (0.46)	2.96 (0.40)	3.05 (0.41)	3.00 (0.41)
PWE - hard work	3.15 (0.47)	3.29 (0.50)	3.18 (0.43)	3.26 (0.54)	3.18 (0.49)	3.26 (0.49)	3.22 (0.49)
PWE - internal locus of control	2.96 (0.77)	3.10 (0.68)	2.91 (0.69)	3.16 (0.74)	2.98 (0.71)	3.08 (0.74)	3.03 (0.73)
PWE - asceticism	2.88 (0.53)	2.94 (0.49)	2.84 (0.42)	2.98 (0.58)	2.84 (0.50)	2.98 (0.51)	2.91 (0.51)
PWE - anti-leisure	2.45 (0.97)	2.44 (0.79)	2.31 (0.80)	2.58 (0.94)	2.47 (0.90)	2.42 (0.86)	2.44 (0.88)

Note. Standard deviations are in parentheses.

Table 2

Correlations between PWE and CWE Scales

PWE scales	Region	CWE scales			
		CWE-general	Collectivism	Hierarchy and authority	Work for common wealth
PWE-general	whole sample	0.288***	0.182*	0.300***	0.124
	Seoul	0.339**	0.234*	0.314**	0.216 [†]
	Warsaw	0.357**	0.262*	0.283*	0.235*
Hard work	whole sample	0.270**	0.229**	0.228**	0.150 [†]
	Seoul	0.372**	0.312**	0.331**	0.214 [†]
	Warsaw	0.287**	0.281*	0.138	0.286**
Internal locus of control	whole sample	0.209**	0.101	0.247**	0.098
	Seoul	0.237*	0.149	0.245*	0.146
	Warsaw	0.254*	0.134	0.242*	0.178
Asceticism	whole sample	0.282***	0.151 [†]	0.276***	0.154
	Seoul	0.215 [†]	0.117	0.195	0.177
	Warsaw	0.392***	0.234*	0.330**	0.237*
Anti-leisure	whole sample	0.034	0.000	0.085	-0.026
	Seoul	0.048	-0.006	0.109	-0.047
	Warsaw	0.023	0.001	0.071	-0.020

[†] p<0.06; * p<0.05; ** p<0.01; *** p<0.001.

Appendix

Principal component analysis for CWE items, varimax rotation

Items	Group	CWE factors		
		Collectivism	Hierarchy and authority	Work for common wealth
1. Elder people are smarter than younger peopl.	Whole sample	0.451	0.530	
	Seoul	0.372	0.489	-0.388
	Warsaw		0.498	
2. Elder people are always right.	Whole sample	0.361	0.570	
	Seoul	0.378	0.447	-0.513
	Warsaw		0.473	0.425
3. A boss at work is like a father in a family.	Whole sample		0.657	0.313
	Seoul		0.676	
	Warsaw		0.641	0.392
4. If the boss asks one to work during weekends or holidays (on free days) one should not say no.	Whole sample		0.735	
	Seoul		0.711	
	Warsaw		0.766	
5. Even if one does not agree with one's superior, one should do what one was asked to do.	Whole sample		0.603	
	Seoul		0.543	
	Warsaw		0.765	
6. Being loyal to the company is very important.	Whole sample	0.326		0.590
	Seoul		0.390	0.572
	Warsaw	0.309		0.484
7. If the company grows and develops, the employee also grows and develops.	Whole sample			0.641
	Seoul			0.610
	Warsaw	0.449		0.557
8. Success means that one is useful for the company.	Whole sample	0.507		0.472
	Seoul	0.535	0.311	
	Warsaw			0.757
9. Each individual employee is important for the whole company.	Whole sample			0.668
	Seoul			0.606
	Warsaw			0.680
10. It is better to work in a group than alone.	Whole sample	0.679		
	Seoul	0.682		
	Warsaw	0.669		
11. Lunch at work should be eaten in a group, not alone.	Whole sample	0.764		
	Seoul	0.675		
	Warsaw	0.631		
12. Group work develops individual employees.	Whole sample	0.552		0.315
	Seoul	0.744		0.306
	Warsaw	0.752		
Total variance explained (%)	Whole sample	17.7	16.7	15.3
	Seoul	17.6	16.4	14.8

	Warsaw	15.4	18.5	18.1
Cronbach a	Whole sample	0.666	0.615	0.641
	Seoul	0.645	0.560	0.550
	Warsaw	0.536	0.672	0.668
Statistics	Group	K-M-O	Bartlett c^2 ($df=66$; $p<0.001$)	Cronbach a (total)
	All sample	0.722	313.7	0.703
	Seoul	0.599	171.2	0.685
	Warsaw	0.694	178.2	0.710

Note. Loadings >0.3 are shown, factor loadings >0.4 in the whole sample are bolded.

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