

## RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN TYPES OF WORK MOTIVATION AND WORKER PROFILE IN UK HOSPITALITY WORKERS

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### **Abstract**

#### *Objectives*

The UK hospitality industry employs more than two million workers and accounts for 7% of the country's workforce. However, despite the number of people employed, work-related mental health issues are a cause for concern in this worker population. While our previous research in UK hospitality workers identified that work motivation was a predictor of mental health, the relationship between types of work motivation and worker profile (e.g. demography, work experience, position) has not been explored to date. This study aimed to i) identify the primary type of work motivation, and ii) explore relationships between worker profile and types of work motivation in UK hospitality workers.

#### *Methodology*

103 UK hospitality workers completed a worker profile questionnaire and work motivation measure. Descriptive statistics were yielded to compare each type of motivation, and correlation analyses were conducted between worker profile and motivation type.

#### *Findings*

Levels of internal motivation were found to be significantly higher than external motivation. Male and longer time served in the industry were associated with amotivation, the lowest form of external motivation. A higher position in the organisation was associated with external regulation, the second lowest form of external motivation.

#### *Future research*

Research evaluating the effectiveness of interventions to enhance intrinsic motivation, particularly among male experienced workers or managers/owners is warranted. Furthermore, male hospitality workers' high levels of external motivation may highlight the UK's strong masculine culture as described in Hofstede's cultural dimension theory. This echoes with our previous research finding that shame concerning mental health issues is a problem among UK hospitality workers. Cross-cultural comparisons of work motivation and mental health would be an important future direction to help place these findings in a global context.

**Keywords:** internal motivation; external motivation; UK hospitality workers; worker profile

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## **Introduction**

### ***Mental health of UK hospitality workers***

The UK hospitality industry offers food and accommodation services (Rook, 2011), and employs more than two million workers (7% of the total UK workforce). Relative to other areas of employment, workers in this industry suffer from poor mental health (Kotera, Adhikari & Van Gordon, 2017). Indeed, more than 70% of UK hospitality workers are emotionally exhausted from work, and almost half of the individuals included in this figure take absence due to mental health at some point in their career (Davis, 2015). The 'emotional labor' (Hochschild, 1985) of working in hospitality arises from (i) remaining efficient yet having to provide quality customer service (Dann, 1990), (ii) maintaining a professional emotional display while sometimes dealing with thoughtless or rude behaviour on the part of customers (Harris & Reynolds, 2004), and working long and anti-social hours (Kotera et al., 2017). All of these factors increase the risk for depression and other occupational mental health issues (Constanti & Gibbs, 2005; Gilmour & Patten, 2007).

The problems that mentally distressed workers experience are diverse. In addition to creativity and productivity (Dunnagan, Peterson, & Haynes, 2001), work effectiveness can also suffer (Gilmour & Patten, 2007). Depression is known to inhibit work productivity leading to disability, absenteeism, and premature early retirement (Blackmore et al., 2007). Furthermore, a workplace with distressed workers can incur significant turnover (i.e., of employees) and financial costs to the organisation (International Labour Organization, 2010; Villanueva & Djurkovic, 2009). A high turnover is a serious problem in the UK hospitality industry where the average rate among bar staff is 180%, and more than 30% among managers (Badger & Lashley, 2000). Replacing one member of customer-facing staff costs approximately £1,000 or approximately £5,000 for replacing a hospitality manager (Lashley & Best, 2002).

### ***Relationship between worker profile and mental health***

Studies demonstrate that worker profile is related to mental health problems (e.g., Jones & Bright, 2001; Lazarus & Folkman, 1984;). For example, female workers are more likely to report their stress-related health concerns, whereas men are more likely to report stressful situations (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). Furthermore, women report more psychological distress than men (Jones & Bright, 2001) which might be due to them having relatively more demands in the home, and having less control over work processes compared to men (Dollard, 2001).

In addition to gender, the age of workers is also related to mental health (Jones & Bright, 2001). For example, Wall et al. (1997) showed that younger workers can be in better psychological health than older workers, and that middle-aged workers report lower levels of enthusiasm and contentment compared to younger and older workers (Wall et al., 1997). This may be explained by job strain; negative anxiety caused by high psychological demands with low decision scope (Kambayashi et al., 2013). A study specifically investigating this condition showed that older workers perceive greater job strain than younger workers (Vanagas & Axelsson, 2004).

Position in the organisation is also known to affect employee levels of mental health. More specifically, it is generally understood that workers in a higher position have more

control over work, which can lead to greater capacity to moderate stress levels versus workers in a lower position (i.e., that have less control over work tasks and demands) (Burrow, 2000). This relationship can also be observed socio-economically; workers in lower socio-economic groups tend to have jobs with less control, which can increase the risk of stress-related mental health problems (Bright, 2001; Dollard, 2001). However, managers in certain roles, such as those in the hotel industry, have been identified as experiencing more stressors than lower-ranking hourly-paid employees (O'Neil & Davis, 2011). Thus, regardless of the correlational direction, it appears that the impact of one's position on mental health is salient.

Finally, working hours also are associated with mental health. For example, a study showed that people who work more than 50 hours per week report more stress than those who do not (O'Neil & Davis, 2011). This is consistent with findings from a large-scale (n=2187) longitudinal study conducted in Japan (Kuroda & Yamamoto, 2016). Furthermore, studies demonstrate that working excessively long hours increases the risk of mental illness and suicidal ideations (Bunting 2004; Gershuny 2000; Trades Union Council, 2015).

### ***Significant impact of motivation on mental health***

Work motivation, the psychological force driving workers to engage in work-related activities (Pinder, 1998), has been researched in depth by organisational psychologists, because a highly-motivated workforce is deemed to be a key asset to organisations (Kanfer, Chen, & Pritchard, 2008). Likewise, low levels of work health and motivation are detrimental to organisations and cost £6 billion per year to the UK economy, equivalent to 0.4% of UK GDP in 2012 (Centre for Economics and Business Research, 2013).

One of the most prominent theories concerning work motivation is self-determination theory (SDT), which supports our natural proclivity to use psychological energy to create an integrated sense of self with social structure (Deci & Ryan, 1985). SDT categorises motivation into intrinsic motivation and extrinsic motivation. Intrinsic motivation underlies activities undertaken because they are inherently interesting and satisfying, whilst extrinsic motivation underlies activities undertaken for an instrumental reason such as money and/or status (Kotera et al., 2017). Ryan's model (1995) further categorises work motivation into six types, which in order of least autonomous and internalised to the most autonomous and internalised, are as follows:

1. Amotivation: where workers have no intention to be engaged in work.
2. External regulation: where workers do an activity only to obtain a reward (e.g., I work only because I get paid).
3. Introjected regulation: where workers are motivated by self-worth and related factors (e.g., I work because I want people to think of me in a certain way).
4. Identified regulation: where workers recognise the value of the activity, and perceive it as their own (e.g., I work because I understand that it is important to me).
5. Integrated regulation: where the value of the activity is part of a worker's identity (e.g., I work because it's part of who I am).
6. Intrinsic motivation: where worker find the task inherently enjoyable, challenging, and/or a means for their self-actualisation (Deci & Ryan, 2000; Kotera et al., 2017).

The three less autonomous and internalised forms of motivation (i.e., amotivation, external regulation and introjected regulation) are denoted as *controlled motivation*, while the three more autonomous and internalised forms of motivation (i.e. identified regulation, integrated regulation and intrinsic motivation) constitute *autonomous motivation* (Gagne & Forest, 2011).

Autonomous motivation relates to various positive organisational outcomes (Gagne & Forest, 2011) including high-engagement with information searching (Koestner & Losier, 2002), outcome attainment (Sheldon & Elliot, 1999), higher work productivity (Baard, Deci, & Ryan, 2004; Miller, 2002), well-being (Ilardi, Leone, Kasser, & Ryan, 1993), work-life satisfaction (Locke & Latham, 2004), and prosocial behaviour including volunteering (Gagne, 2003). Studies report that satisfying the three psychological needs of competence, autonomy, and relatedness coupled with a cooperative organisational culture can help to cultivate autonomous motivation (Deci & Ryan, 2000; Gagne & Deci, 2005). On the other hand, controlled motivation relates to negative consequences (Vallerand & Ratelle, 2002) such as burnout, as well as physical and mental health problems (Houkes, Jassen, de Jonge, & Bakker, 2003) such as depression (Blais, et al., 1993), turnover intentions (Quast & Kleinbeck, 1990), unplanned effort to achieve goals (Koestner, Losier, Vallerand & Carducci, 1996), unstable communication (Koestner & Losier, 2002), and limited performance for low attention and memory (Vallerand, 1997).

To date, the relationships between these types of work motivation and their impacts on mental health in the hospitality workers worldwide have not been thoroughly investigated (Kotera et al., 2017). However, in Northern Cyprus, autonomous motivation was positively related to job satisfaction and organisational attachment, and negatively related to emotional burnout among hotel workers (Karatepe & Uludag, 2007). Among Turkish hotel employees, autonomous motivation and job resources were also reported to reduce emotional burnout (Babakus, Yavas, & Karatepe, 2008). Additionally, a Nigerian study (Karatepe & Aleshinloye, 2009) reported autonomous motivation was positively related to work performance, and negatively related to burnout, emotional incongruence and turnover intentions.

Prior studies have observed that some hospitality workers experience challenges relating to work motivation (Martin, Mactaggart, & Bowden, 2006) and that there exists a significant relationship between work motivation and job performance (Jayaveera, 2015) in UK hospitality workers. Furthermore, our previous research identified that work motivation was significantly related to, and a significant predictor of, mental health problems (Kotera et al., 2017). However, to date, no study has investigated the relationship between types of work motivation and worker profile in UK hospitality workers.

### **Objectives**

Given the aforementioned gap in understanding the relationship between work motivation and worker profile in UK hospitality workers, this study aimed to i) identify the primary type of work motivation in a sample of UK hospitality workers, and ii) explore relationships between worker profile and types of work motivation in the same population group.

### **Methodology**

## ***Participants***

UK hospitality workers were recruited using the authors' professional networks. A total of 116 workers agreed to participate of which 103 (47 male, 56 female) completed the worker profile questionnaire and motivation measure. Participants were included in the study if they were aged 18 years or older and had been working for at least for one year in the UK hospitality industry. Due to the prevalence of part-time work in the UK hospitality industry (People 1st, 2013b), both full-time and part-time workers were included (55 full-time, 48 part-time). The age range of participants was 18-55 years ( $M=28.2$ ,  $SD=8.6$ ) with 40% working in a hotel, 36% in a restaurant, and the remaining 24% in other hospitality outlets. The average number of hours worked each week was 46.4 hours for full-time workers ( $SD=8.3$ ) and 20.7 hours for part-time workers ( $SD=6.9$ ). In terms of length of service, 39% of participants had been working in hospitality for more than five years, 33% for two to five years, and the remaining 28% for less than two years. The same participants were also included in a parallel study by the same authors that focussed on mental health-related outcomes (Kotera et al., 2017).

## ***Procedure***

Ethical approval was obtained from the authors' University research ethics committee. After providing informed consent, participants were sent links to a worker profile questionnaire as well as the work motivation measure detailed below. Descriptive statistics were yielded, and levels of each type of work motivation were identified. Correlation analyses were then performed to investigate relationships between work motivation subscales and worker profile. All analyses were conducted using IBM SPSS version 24.0.

## ***Measures***

### ***Worker Profile Questionnaire***

The worker profile questionnaire was devised by the authors and elicited information relating to (i) gender, (ii) age, (iii) years of experience working in the hospitality industry, (iv) average weekly working hours, (v) work setting (e.g. restaurant, hotel), (vi) position in the organisation, and (vii) geographic location of work.

### ***Work Extrinsic and Intrinsic Motivation Scale (WEIMS)***

The 18-item Work Extrinsic and Intrinsic Motivation Scale (WEIMS) self-report instrument is based on SDT theory and assesses levels of different types of work motivation (Tremblay, Blanchard, Taylor, Pelletier, & Villeneuve, 2009). The 18 items comprise three questions for each of the following six forms of motivation: (i) amotivation, (ii) external regulation, (iii) introjected regulation, (iv) identified regulation, (v) integrated regulation, and (vi) intrinsic motivation. Each item is scored on a seven-point Likert scale (from 1 = 'Does not correspond at all' to 7 = 'Corresponds exactly'). All of the subscales have adequate Cronbach's alphas of between .64 and .83 (Tremblay et al., 2009).

## **Results**

### ***Descriptive Statistics and T-Test***

Table 1 shows the descriptive statistics for worker profile and work motivation. Three scores in WEIMS were identified as outliers using the outlier labelling rule (Hoaglin & Iglewicz, 1987) (i.e., and were thus winsorised; Turkey, 1962).

**Table 1: Descriptive statistics of UK hospitality workers' profile and work motivation (n=103)**

	<b>M</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>Skewness</b>	<b>Kurtosis</b>
Age	28.18	8.63	1.45	1.72
WE	5.93	5.56	2.02	5.28
WWH	34.81	14.61	0.12	-0.83
IM	17.38	2.86	-1.17	1.19
ITR	17.54	3.22	-1.44	2.00
IDR	17.06	2.93	-1.09	1.09
IJR	17.48	3.02	-1.25	1.48
ER	16.26	2.76	-0.59	0.03
AM	15.75	5.45	-1.24	0.31

WE = Work Experience (years); WWH = Weekly Working Hours; IM = Intrinsic Motivation; ITR = Integrated Regulation; IDR = Identified Regulation; IJR = Introjected Regulation; ER = External Regulation; AM = Amotivation

UK hospitality workers' integrated regulation (ITR) was the highest type of work motivation, while amotivation (AM) was the lowest. Overall, autonomous motivation (IM, ITR, and IDR) was higher than controlled motivation (IJR, ER, and AM). A total score for autonomous motivation and controlled motivation was calculated (i.e., by combining the relevant subscales) and a t-test was then conducted (Table 2).

**Table 2: T-test for autonomous motivation and controlled motivation (n=103)**

<b>Autonomous motivation</b>		<b>Controlled motivation</b>	
<b>M</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>SD</b>
17.31*	2.64	16.47*	2.97

\* There was significant difference between the two.

As shown in Table 2, UK hospitality workers' autonomous motivation was significantly higher than controlled motivation ( $P < .05$ ).

### **Correlations**

Kendall's tau-b correlations were used to examine relationships between work motivation and worker profile (Table 3).

**Table 3: Correlations between worker profile and work motivation**

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
GN	.19*	.32**	.26**	.24*	.14	-.001	.02	.06	.10	.06	.26**
1. Age	-	.56**	.41**	.47**	.12	-.04	.03	.03	-.08	-.08	-.04
2. WE		-	.60**	.43**	.19*	.06	.13	.16*	.06	.03	.24**
3. WWH			-	.44**	.17*	.15*	.18*	.23**	.10	.03	.15*
4. Posi				-	.06	.08	.05	.02	-.05	-.16*	.06
5. PWC					-	.01	.02	-.02	.05	-.07	-.09
6. IM						-	.46**	.48**	.29**	.22**	.15*
7. ITR							-	.53**	.45**	.25**	.30**
8. IDR								-	.38**	.36**	.30**
9. IJR									-	.19*	.37**
10. ER										-	.19**
11. AM											-

\*. Correlation is significant at the .05 level (2-tailed).

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the .01 level (2-tailed).

WE = Work Experience (years); WWH = Weekly Working Hours; Posi = Position in the Organisation; PWC = Population of the Working City; IM = Intrinsic Motivation; ITR = Integrated Regulation; IDR = Identified Regulation; IJR = Introjected Regulation; ER = External Regulation; AM = Amotivation

There were significant correlations between worker profile and work motivation. These included a significantly association between (i) gender and amotivation, (ii) work experience and amotivation, (iii) weekly working hours and all three autonomous motivation measures, and (iv) position in the organisation and external regulation.

## Discussion

This study evaluated the levels of different types of work motivation in UK hospitality workers, and then explored the relationship between worker profile and work motivation. The current sample of UK hospitality workers scored highest on integrated regulation, while amotivation was the lowest scoring of all the six types of work motivation. A t-test revealed that autonomous motivation was significantly higher than controlled motivation. This suggests that overall, UK hospitality workers are engaged in their services for internal satisfaction rather than external rewards such as money and status. This may be related to the fact that many of the jobs in the hospitality industry are classified amongst the lowest paid occupations in the UK (Office for National Statistics, 2013; Wildes, 2005). Another potential explanation is that to be considered eligible for the study, the current sample of UK hospitality workers had to have more than one year of work experience. This is

relevant because if an employee was highly motivated externally, s/he might not be committed to working for long periods of time on relatively low wages. In the future, it would be worthwhile to explore specifically what stimulates the internal motivation of UK hospitality workers whilst undertaking daily job activities. Qualitative studies are likely to be a useful means of exploring such a research question.

There are several implications associated with the mild correlations between gender and work motivation, particularly the fact that male workers tended to have higher levels of amotivation compared to female workers. Indeed, this appears to be supportive of the view that the UK has a masculine culture, as described by Hofstede and Minkov's (2010) cultural dimension theory (Kotera et al., 2017). Cultural dimension theory evaluates cultures according to six indices: i) power distance, ii) individualism versus collectivism, iii) uncertainty avoidance, iv) masculinity versus femininity, v) long-term orientation versus short-term orientation, and vi) indulgence versus restraint. A masculine culture values success, and people are ambitious and live in order to work, while a feminine culture values relationships and quality of life, and people are drawn toward doing what they love, rather than climbing up the socioeconomic ladder. In other words, people in a masculine culture are driven by external motivation, while people in a feminine culture are inspired by internal motivation. The outcome is relevant given that the UK's level of masculinity ranked 11<sup>th</sup> among 76 countries (Hofstede & Minkov, 2010). Future research could investigate the relationship between work motivation and masculine/feminine culture. For example, UK workers could be compared with Dutch workers, as the Netherlands has a similar culture and socio-economic status to the UK but with a much lower level of masculinity.

External motivation was significantly related to work experience and the position in the organisation. More specifically, the longer participants had worked in the hospitality industry, and the higher their position in the organisation, the more likely they were to have higher levels of external motivation. This gives rise to a concern in terms of the future health and development of the industry, as experienced managers/owners are the key players in terms of influencing the future direction of the industry. Accordingly, initiatives to improve employee levels of internal motivation are likely to be warranted, as high internal motivation is associated with health and work-related positive outcomes (Gagne & Forest, 2011; Ilardi et al., 1993). An example of such an initiative might be the Disney strategy, a Neuro-Linguistic Programming intervention (Dilts, 1998) deemed to enhance internal motivation by making use of active physical movements and exploring dreams and future plans (Kotera & Sheffield, 2017). This is different from psychological approaches such as cognitive behavioural therapy that arguably rely too heavily on clients applying logical thinking and verbalisation of their delicate feelings (National Health Services, 2016). By accessing the 'dreamer', 'realist', and 'spoiler' aspects of creativity, the Disney strategy could help identify what hospitality managers and owners want internally from their lives and career. Another example is the izakaya (Japanese pub) industry of Japan where it has become common to have a daily staff meeting where employees share their dreams and aspirations with each other (e.g., Teppen, 2012).

There were several limitations to the present study. In particular, participant recruitment was conducted via opportunity sampling, which compromises the generalisability of the study findings. Also, although this study identified the levels of each type of work motivation, what affects them has not yet been investigated. Future studies could investigate



the factors that contribute to the different types of work motivation in UK hospitality workers.

Employees in the fast-growing UK hospitality industry suffer from high levels of psychological distress and mental illness. While other studies have investigated the relationship between mental health and work motivation, this is the first study to explore the relationship between work motivation and worker profile in UK hospitality workers. The study showed that internal motivation was higher than external motivation overall, and that external motivation was significantly correlated with gender, work experience, and position in the organisation. Initiatives focussing on augmenting internal motivation of male experienced manager/owners may be an effective step for improving levels of work motivation in the UK hospitality industry.



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