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Job stress and work well-being in Hong Kong and Beijing : the direct and moderating effects of organizational commitment and Chinese work values

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1 **Job Stress and Work Well-being in Hong Kong and Beijing: The Direct and**
2 **Moderating Effects of Organizational Commitment and Chinese Work Values¹**

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1 ***Abstract***

2

3 This study investigates the direct and moderating effects of organizational commitment
4 and Chinese work values on the stress - well-being relationship. A self-administered
5 questionnaire survey collected data from 386 (197 males, 179 females) and 306 (127
6 males, 179 females) employees in Hong Kong and Beijing respectively. In general,
7 employees who perceived higher levels of stress reported worse work well-being (job
8 satisfaction, mental and physical well-being). Furthermore, employees who scored high
9 in organizational commitment and Chinese work values reported higher job satisfaction.
10 A series of hierarchical regressions while controlling for age, tenure, and job level,
11 revealed that only Chinese work values were significant moderator of some of the stress -
12 well-being relationship for both samples. For the Beijing sample, Chinese work values
13 were significant moderator of the stress-job satisfaction relationship, whereas
14 organizational commitment was found to be a significant moderator of the stress – mental
15 well-being relationship. For the Hong Kong sample, Chinese work values were found to
16 be significant moderator of the relationship between total stress and physical well-being.

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22 Key Words: Job Stress, Mental well-being, Physical Well-being, Job Satisfaction,
23 Organizational Commitment, Chinese Work values

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1 ***Introduction***

2 Job stress has been noted as an increasing and costly problem for employees in Western
3 industrialized societies, particularly the U.S. (e.g., Sauter & Murphy, 1995). Workplace
4 stress can lead to increased health and medical costs (Cartwright & Cooper, 1997). It has
5 been argued that almost all job stress research and theories were developed and
6 empirically tested in Western industrialized countries (Jamal, 1999; Xie, 1996). However,
7 the problem of occupational stress should also be particularly relevant for countries
8 undergoing enormous economic and social changes. It is therefore important to extend
9 job stress research in Chinese societies in order to test the generalizability of Western
10 organizational theories.

11 Furthermore, it was consistently found that managers in Hong Kong and the PRC
12 reported higher levels of stress than UK managers (Siu, Cooper, & Donald, 1997; Yu,
13 Sparks, & Cooper, 1998). It has been estimated that 12 per cent of the US's GNP and 10
14 per cent of the UK's GNP is lost due to stress-related absenteeism and turnover (e.g.,
15 Cartwright & Cooper, 1997). If the estimated \$billion costs of managerial stress
16 estimated for other countries such as the UK and US is equally high among employees in
17 Hong Kong and Beijing, it represents a considerable loss of resources. It further
18 emphasizes the need to examine the stress factors and processes in these two large
19 Chinese societies. A systematic exploration of work stress and work well-being of
20 employees in Hong Kong and China would be rather valuable to international
21 management and improvement of productivity.

22

1 *A Conceptual Model Relating Job Stress and Employee Work Well-being*

2 It is demonstrated in the structure of the Occupational Stress Indicator (OSI) that stressful
3 transactions are seen as a product of two intervening systems: people both exert impact
4 on and respond to their environments (Cooper, Sloan, & Williams, 1988). In other words,
5 the process of stress depends on the person's appraisal of the situation which is what
6 determines whether the situation is stressful or not. Stress occurs when the magnitude of
7 the stressor exceeds the individual's capacity to cope. The OSI basically identifies three
8 key elements of the stress process: stress elements (sources of pressure), strain effects
9 (job satisfaction, and current state of health – mental and physical), and individual
10 differences (Type A behavioural pattern, perceived locus of control, and coping with
11 stress). In the transactional model of the OSI, Cooper et al. (1988) argued that well-being
12 and job satisfaction are the perception of stress outcomes as they are related to
13 individual's turnover and absenteeism. Furthermore, the experience of stress is moderated
14 by individual characteristics of personality (perceived locus of control and Type A
15 behavioural pattern), demographic factors and coping strategies. Many studies based on
16 the OSI conducted in Western and Chinese societies have demonstrated that sources of
17 stress at work are negatively related to employee well-being (e.g. Robertson, Cooper, &
18 Williams, 1990; Siu et al., 1997; Yu et al., 1998).

19 Warr (1987) categorized those concepts such as job satisfaction, organizational
20 commitment, job-related tension, job-related depression, job-related burnout, and morale
21 as job-related well-being. The variables measuring employee work well-being in the
22 present study include job satisfaction, mental and physical well-being. The present study
23 adopted a modified OSI model as the theoretical framework with total stress (an

1 aggregate level of perceived stress) forming the independent variable, Chinese work
2 values and organizational commitment being the individual difference variables, and
3 employees' job satisfaction, mental and physical well-being constituting the dependent
4 variables. It is hypothesised that:

5

6 *H1:* Total stress will be negatively related to employees' work well-being (job
7 satisfaction, mental and physical well-being)

8

9 ***Direct Effects of Organizational Commitment on Employee Work Well-being***

10 The importance of organizational commitment has been widely discussed in recent years
11 (Aryee & Heng, 1990; Mathieu & Zajac, 1990; Mowday, Porter, & Steers, 1982; Somers,
12 1995). Organizational commitment is defined as "the relative strength of an individual's
13 identification with and involvement in an organization" (Mowday, Porter, & Steers, 1982,
14 p.26). Recently, a three-component conception of commitment has been developed,
15 including affective, continuous, and normative commitment (Meyer & Allen, 1991).
16 Affective commitment arises from favourable experiences on the job. Continuous
17 commitment is produced by the investment in the job and the difficulty in finding another
18 job. Normative commitment derives from a sense of obligation either because of the
19 person's values or from favours done for the person by the organization. This three-
20 component model of organizational commitment has recently been found to be
21 generalizable to a non-Western culture using data from South Korea (Lee, Allen, Meyer,
22 & Rhee, 2001).

1 Aryee and Heng (1990) claimed that commitment has become more important
2 than job satisfaction in understanding employee work-related behaviour, because it is
3 more stable and less subject to the daily fluctuations of job satisfaction (Mowday, Steers,
4 & Porter, 1979). Sommer, Bae, and Luthans (1996) also contended that organizational
5 commitment is one of the important variables in the study of employee behavior since it
6 is inversely related to employee tardiness and absence. Leong, Furham, and Cooper
7 (1996) reported that organizational commitment was positively related to job satisfaction,
8 and negatively related to mental and physical ill-health, using a Singaporean sample. The
9 significant positive relationship between organizational commitment and job satisfaction
10 was also demonstrated among employees in Hong Kong firms (Siu & Cooper, 1998). We
11 therefore hypothesize that:

12

13 *H2: Organizational commitment will be positively related to employees' work*
14 *well-being (job satisfaction, mental and physical well-being).*

15

16 ***The Moderating Role of Organizational Commitment***

17 There are variations among stress - well-being relationships from study to study. Such
18 variations may be due to stress moderator variables. A stress moderator is a variable that
19 "affects the direction and/or strength of the relation between an independent or predictor
20 variable and a dependent or criterion variable" (Baron & Kenny, 1996, p.1174). The
21 current study investigates the moderating role of organizational commitment on stress -
22 well-being relationships.

1 Organizational commitment has been found to be a significant stress moderator in
2 job stress research in Western and Chinese societies (Begley & Czajka, 1993; Donald &
3 Siu, 2001; Mathieu & Zajac, 1990; Siu, 2002; Siu & Cooper, 1998). For instance, Donald
4 and Siu (2001) demonstrated that organizational commitment moderated some of the
5 relationships between environmental conditions (a source of stress) and employee health
6 (job satisfaction, mental and physical well-being) in Chinese white and blue collar
7 samples. As reported by Donald et al. (2001), organizational commitment interacted
8 statistically significantly with environmental conditions to determine job satisfaction for
9 the white-collar workers. Furthermore, the mean centred multiplicative composite of
10 environmental conditions and organizational commitment contributed statistically
11 significantly to the predictor of mental well-being among blue-collar workers. It is
12 therefore hypothesized that:

13

14 *H3: Organizational commitment will interact with total stress to determine work*
15 *well-being, in that the negative effects of total stress on well-being will be*
16 *greater when organizational commitment is low than when it is high.*

17

18 ***Direct Effects of Chinese Work Values on Employee Work Well-being***

19 Chiu and Kosinski (1995) argued that the perception of work stress is influenced by
20 cultural and social variables such as values and attitudes. For them, job satisfaction and
21 work strain as perceived and felt by individual workers may vary among cultures since
22 these stress outcomes are manifestations of the cognitive, emotional, and motivational

1 processes developed through the socialization process in the unique culture of the
2 individual worker.

3 However, there are different types of work values. Several content-oriented work
4 values have been identified among employees in the United States, including
5 achievement, hardworking, concern for others, honesty and so on (Ravlin & Meglino,
6 1987). As summarized by Hui (1992), employees who are high on these work values
7 would focus on the content of their work. They will then be intrinsically motivated,
8 achievement-oriented, and hardworking. Furthermore, these content-oriented work values
9 tend to associate with higher organizational commitment (e.g., Oliver, 1990).

10 In a cross-cultural study of cultural values and work, Schwartz (1999) reported
11 that Hong Kong, China, and Taiwan have strong cultural value emphasis on “hierarchy”
12 (which emphasizes power and ranking in social affairs and distribution of resources)
13 where work is likely to be experienced as central to life. In Chinese traditional philosophy
14 such as Confucianism (with an emphasis on harmonious social relationship [guanxi],
15 reciprocity and loyalty), work value was strongly emphasized and taken as the base of
16 social order and management. Chao (1990) suggested that the Confucian values of trust,
17 subtlety, guanxi, protecting “face”, and loyalty are still prevalent in organizations in
18 Chinese societies. It has been found that employees who subscribe to these Confucian
19 values are higher in organizational commitment and work performance (Yang & Cheng,
20 1986).

21 Chinese work values in this study are conceptualized as a general indicator of
22 content-oriented work-related Confucian values that are commonly agreed in Chinese
23 societies, including collectivism (predominant values adopted in collectivist cultures in

1 which group goals are more important than personal goals), hardworking, endurance, and
2 guanxi. The relationship between work values and well-being has been demonstrated. For
3 instance, collectivist employees are more satisfied with various aspects of their work, and
4 are higher in general job satisfaction, than are individualists (Hui, Eastman, & Yee,
5 1995). Based on previous research findings, it is therefore hypothesized that respondents
6 who score higher on Chinese work values will report higher level of work well-being.

7

8 *H4: Chinese work values will be positively related to work well-being (job*
9 *satisfaction, mental and physical well-being).*

10

11 ***The Moderating Role of Chinese Work Values***

12 As summarized by Hunt (1991), work values combine with other factors
13 (objective/perceived socio-technical working conditions) to generate psychological and
14 other reactions (health and well-being) among workers. Work values or personal work
15 goals are found to be significant moderators in predicting organizational commitment and
16 job satisfaction (Maier & Brunstein, 2001). Chinese work values in this study can be
17 envisaged as some sorts of Chinese specific content-oriented work values, employees
18 who are high on these Chinese work values would focus on the content of their work, and
19 will then be intrinsically motivated, achievement-oriented, and hardworking. Hence, they
20 will be less affected by stress. Furthermore, Chinese work values can be considered as
21 some sorts of coping resources (such as social support) for tackling job stress. In addition,
22 Chinese work values of loyalty, guanxi, and reciprocity (doing good to those who treat
23 you well) are beneficial to organizations. Therefore, Chinese work values - a general

1 indicator of work-related Confucian values, are hypothesized to moderate stress-strain
2 relationships.

3

4 *H5: Chinese work values will interact with total stress to determine work*
5 *well-being, in that the negative effects of total stress on well-being will be*
6 *greater when Chinese work values are low than when they are high.*

7

8 ***Method***

9 A self-administered questionnaire survey method using structured questions was used to
10 collect data from employees in two Chinese societies, Hong Kong and Beijing in order to
11 expand the generalizability of the findings.

12

13 *Sample and Procedures*

14 A purposive sampling method was adopted to select various types of finance/accounting,
15 marketing, transport, catering, and personnel from enterprises in the public and private
16 service sectors in Hong Kong and Beijing. These industries are chosen because
17 heterogeneous samples of employees in the service sectors are more likely to be sought
18 there. Once a firm was selected, a quota sampling method was used to recruit equivalent
19 numbers of employees from both genders, and from various ranks of various departments
20 to participate in the survey. Employed part-time students were also targeted to get a broad
21 sample of employees working in public and private sectors. Telephone contacts were
22 conducted to make appointments with chosen participants before the survey in order to
23 ensure a higher response rate.

1 The data collection was undertaken from a Hong Kong sample from February to
2 May in 2001, and from a Beijing sample from April to June in 2001. For the sample
3 recruited in Hong Kong, a total of 595 questionnaires were distributed to employed
4 students and employees in various service industry settings. A total of 424 questionnaires
5 were returned, making a response rate of 71.3%. Because 38 questionnaires were
6 incomplete and they were discarded, the final sample size was 386. The Hong Kong
7 sample consists of 197 male and 179 female² employees of various ranks from various
8 private and public sectors, including finance and insurance, medical and health care, the
9 postal service and the civil service. There were 57.8% of the respondents who were
10 married, and 35.8% were single. About one-third of the respondents were 35 years old or
11 below, 40% between 36 and 45, and the rest were 46 years old or above (with mean age =
12 38.31 years, SD = 8.24). The average years of working experience was 9.55 (SD = 8.96).

13 For the sample recruited in Beijing, a total of 429 questionnaires were distributed
14 to employees working in similar public and private sectors, and 326 were returned (20
15 incomplete questionnaires were discarded), making a response rate of 76% and a final
16 sample of 306. For the Beijing sample, 306 (127 males, 179 females) employees were
17 recruited from private and public sectors, including marketing research organizations,
18 schools, medical and health care and the civil service. Concerning marital status, 67.3%
19 were married and 31.4% were single. 64.1% of the respondents were 35 years old or
20 below, 26.1% between 36 and 45, and the rest were 46 years old or above (with mean age
21 = 33.33, SD = 8.29). The average years of working experience was 7.50 (SD = 7.55).

² There were ten respondents who failed to fill in their gender

1

2 *Instrument*

3 *Total Stress.* Six items extracted from the OSI which have been proved reliable
4 (Evers, Frese & Cooper, 2000) to measure “intrinsic to the job”, “organizational role”,
5 “relationships with others”, “organizational structure and climate”, “home/work
6 interface”, and “career and achievement”. Each item was rated from “It is definitely not a
7 source of pressure” (1) to “It is definitely a source of pressure” (6). An aggregate score of
8 these 6 items represents level of perceived stress.

9 *Work Well-being:* Three scales of the OSI were used and their construct validity is
10 good (Lyne, Barrett, Williams, & Coaley, 2000): (a) *Job satisfaction scale* (2 items):
11 measuring "Satisfaction towards the job itself" and "Satisfaction towards the
12 organization".(b) *Physical well-being scale* (6 items): two subscales measuring "Physical
13 symptoms" and "Energy level". (c) *Mental well-being scale* (12 items): three subscales
14 measuring "State of mind", "Resilience" and "Confidence level". Each item was rated on
15 a 6-point scale with respective high score denoting higher job satisfaction, better
16 physical and mental well-being.

17 *Organizational Commitment:* The 6-item Meyer, Allen and Smith (1993)
18 Affective, Continuance and Normative Commitment Scale was used. The psychometric
19 properties of this 6-item version yielded from a Korean sample has been found similar to
20 those found in North America (Lee, Allen, Meyer, & Rhee, 2001). However, the scoring
21 procedure was modified, instead of the original 7-point Likert Scale, each item was rated
22 from “Strongly disagree” (1) to “Strongly agree” (6).

1 *Chinese work values*. Lu's *et al.* (2001) scale (16 items) measuring commonly
2 agreed work-related Confucian values in Chinese societies was used. This scale was used
3 because it has demonstrated its high reliability ($\alpha = 0.85$) in Lu's *et al.* study. This
4 scale was constructed based on work of Huang, Eveleth, and Huo (1998), consisting of
5 eight conceptual dimensions: functionalism, long-term orientation, collectivism,
6 hardworking, endurance, authoritarianism, credentialism, and guanxi. Each item was
7 rated from "Strongly disagree" (1) to "Strongly agree" (6).

8 Demographic information was also collected including age, gender, education
9 (primary, junior secondary, senior secondary, degree level, postgraduate level), marital
10 status, occupation, tenure (years in the current job), and job level (position in the current
11 organization including junior manager, middle manager, senior manager, top executives,
12 with high score denoting high position).

13

14 **Results**

15 Table 1 presents the means, standard deviations, and coefficient alphas of the variables
16 for the two samples. Hong Kong respondents statistically significantly experienced more
17 stress than Beijing respondents. However, the aim of our paper was not to compare the
18 Hong Kong and Beijing samples, and hence, we would not comment on the mean
19 differences between the two places. The reliabilities of variables ranged from .62 to .82.
20 Table 2 presents the intercorrelations among variables. Many relationships between job
21 stress and work well-being are significant and are in expected direction. Specifically,
22 total stress was negatively related to job satisfaction, mental and physical well-being for
23 the Beijing sample; whereas total stress was negatively related to mental and physical

1 well-being for the Hong Kong sample. Therefore, Hypothesis 1 is partially supported.
2 Table 2 also shows that, for both samples, organizational commitment was positively
3 related to job satisfaction but not related to mental or physical well-being. Therefore,
4 Hypothesis 2 is partially supported. Furthermore, Chinese work values did not correlate
5 with mental or physical well-being in both the Hong Kong and Beijing samples; yet
6 Chinese work values were positively related to job satisfaction for the Hong Kong sample
7 only. Therefore, Hypothesis 4 is only partially supported. As far as demographic
8 variables are concerned, age, tenure, and job level were positively correlated with well-
9 being for both samples, with older, more experienced, and higher rank employees
10 reported better work well-being.

11

12 [Insert Tables1 & 2 About Here]

13

14 A series of hierarchical regression analyses (Cohen & Cohen, 1983) were
15 conducted to test the moderating effects of organizational commitment and Chinese work
16 values when job satisfaction, physical well-being and mental well-being were regressed
17 on in separate regression analysis. Prior to performing the hierarchical regression analysis,
18 demographic variables were examined to test for any confounding effects. Only age,
19 tenure, and job level were found to be statistically significant in predicting the outcome
20 variables, therefore these variables were controlled for in the regression analysis. By
21 regressing the dependent variables (i.e., job satisfaction, physical well-being and mental
22 well-being) on the independent variables separately in a hierarchical manner, three steps
23 were conducted: the demographic variables were entered first and, in the second step,

1 total stress (TS), organizational commitment (OC), Chinese work values (CWV) and
 2 interaction terms that were not tested were entered. In the third step, the interaction term
 3 associated with the testing hypotheses were entered. Hence, the interaction terms tested
 4 included TS \times CWV and TS \times OC. For each of the dependent variables to be regressed on
 5 (i.e., Job Satisfaction, Mental Well-Being, & Physical Well-Being), if TS \times CWV is
 6 being tested, then TS \times OC is inputted in the second step of the regression model (and
 7 vice versa for TS \times OC)³. The variables were centred before the derivation of the
 8 interaction terms (Aiken & West, 1991).

9 . The results depicted in Table 3, 4 and 5 show that Chinese work values moderated
 10 the relationship between total stress and job satisfaction significantly for the Beijing
 11 sample only ($\beta = .14$, $F = 5.94$, $p < .05$). For the Hong Kong sample, Chinese work
 12 values significantly moderated the relationship between total stress and physical well-
 13 being ($\beta = -.15$, $F = 5.32$, $p < .05$). With regard to organizational commitment, the results
 14 show that employees who are less committed are more adversely affected by stress (β
 15 $= .12$, $F = 4.14$, $p < .05$). Therefore, H3 and H5 can only be partially supported.

16 [Insert Table 3, 4, 5 About Here]

17
 18 Following Cohen and Cohen (1983), the beta value and constant of the moderated
 19 regression equation obtained at Step 3 were used to plot the regression of job satisfaction
 20 on Chinese work values at two levels of stress for the Beijing sample: high stress (+1 SD

³ We tested one interaction term at a time. As a result, the third step for each of the hierarchical regression analysis (in Table 3, 4, & 5) included either TS \times CWV or TS \times OC and not both. If the term of interest is to test the former, the latter is included in the second step of the regression model Conversely, if the latter (i.e., TS \times OC) is being tested, then the former is included in the second step. We did not include both of the interaction terms in third step because we intended to test the unique variance attributable to the term of interest (i.e., either TS \times CWV or TS \times OC).

1 above the sample mean), and low stress (-1 SD below the sample mean) (see Figure 1).
2 Similar procedures were conducted to plot the moderating effect of Chinese work values
3 on the relationship between total stress and physical well-being for the Hong Kong
4 sample (see Figure 2), and the moderating effect of organizational commitment on the
5 relationship between total stress and mental well-being for the Beijing sample (see Figure
6 3).

7 Figures 1 shows that, irrespective of their work values, Beijing employees
8 reported a higher level of job satisfaction when the total stress level was low. An
9 increase in stress lowered job satisfaction for respondents with low Chinese work values.
10 However, a high level of Chinese work values could buffer the negative effect of stress
11 on job satisfaction. Respondents with strong Chinese work values could maintain a
12 relatively high level of job satisfaction even when stress levels were high. Hence, Chinese
13 work values buffered the effect of stress on job satisfaction.

14 Regardless of stress levels, physical well-being of Hong Kong respondents were
15 relatively low for respondents with low levels of Chinese work values. However, a high
16 level of Chinese work values could enhance physical well-being when stress was low (see
17 Figure 2).

18 Figure 3 shows that for Beijing employees, organizational commitment buffered
19 the adverse effect of stress on mental well-being. While stress contributed to the
20 deterioration of mental well-being, the effect was dampen for respondents who are highly
21 committed to the organization. Those who are less committed are more adversely affected
22 than their counterparts.

23

1 *Discussion*

2 The inverse relationships found between total stress and employee well-being in the two
3 samples corroborate previous studies conducted in Western and Chinese societies using
4 the OSI (e.g. Robertson et al., 1990; Siu et al., 1997). The direct effect of organizational
5 commitment on job satisfaction was demonstrated across the two samples. This result
6 corroborates previous studies (e.g. Leong et al., 1996; Mathieu & Zajac, 1992; Siu &
7 Cooper, 1998).

8 As found in previous studies (e.g. Siu & Cooper, 1998), the moderating effect of
9 organizational commitment on stress – well-being was found in the measure of mental
10 well-being in the Beijing sample. As argued by Mathieu et al. (1990), employee's level of
11 commitment makes them more eligible to receive psychological rewards such as intrinsic
12 job satisfaction. What this means is, employee's level of commitment to an organization
13 may make them more eligible to receive both extrinsic (e.g. wages and benefits) and
14 psychological (e.g. intrinsic job satisfaction and relationship with coworkers) rewards
15 associated with membership [see Mathieu et al. (1990), p.171]. Perhaps work from
16 Kobasa (1982) can be applied here. It could be argued that commitment, like hardiness,
17 protects employees from negative effects of stressors.

18 However, the moderating effect of organizational commitment was rather weak.
19 One possible reason is that Hong Kong has experienced the Asian financial crisis, and
20 China has entered the World Trade Organization, there have been more rapid structural
21 economic changes in Hong Kong and China. It is therefore expected that employees in
22 Hong Kong and Beijing perceive high stress at work nowadays. The higher perception of
23 stressors at work, including job insecurity and retrenchment, led to very low levels of

1 organizational commitment among all respondents, and therefore organizational
2 commitment hardly exert much moderating effects. As can be found in Table 1,
3 organizational commitment was indeed quite low in the absolutely sense. Another
4 possible explanation for this is that the reliability of the scale for measuring
5 organizational commitment is relatively lower than other scales. Future research is
6 needed to replicate similar studies in other Chinese societies using a longer version to
7 measure commitment.

8 Unlike previous studies (e.g. Hui et al., 1995), Chinese work values were only
9 related to job satisfaction for the Hong Kong sample. The main effect of Chinese work
10 values on well-being was not consistently found significant, because we found significant
11 interactions of Chinese work values and total stress. Chinese work values were found to
12 be moderator of some of the stress – well-being relationship for both samples. It can be
13 argued that Chinese work values –a general indicator of content-oriented work-related
14 Confucian values that are commonly agreed in Chinese societies (specifically
15 hardworking and endurance) has overlapped between internal locus of control, hardiness
16 or self-efficacy, therefore it mitigates the potentially unhealthy effects of stress. As
17 analysed by Chao (1990), the work-related Confucian values of loyalty and cohesion of
18 employees may motivate them to develop higher commitment, which leads to higher
19 work well-being. Therefore, Chinese work values are potential stress moderators, which
20 need further investigations in future.

21 However, the present study did not consistently provide support for the positive
22 buffering effects of Chinese work values under very high stress. It would be logical to
23 assume that employees who have the traditional work-related Confucian values would

1 find adverse work situations more endurable and are able to tackle stress. It seems that, if
2 nothing drastic happen (when work stress is low or moderately high), Chinese work
3 values may serve to safeguard one's job satisfaction. However, if work stress is very
4 high, individuals who adopt the traditional Confucian values as their philosophy of work
5 life would be more conscientious at work, so they perhaps work too hard that their
6 physical health is affected.

7

8 ***Limitations***

9 It should be kept in mind that these data all came from a cross-sectional survey. One
10 cannot draw causal conclusions, and there is the concern about possible percept-percept
11 bias. As the data were collected from two samples of Chinese service employees, the
12 sample population might lack generalizability to other professions. It is hard to generalize
13 the results to a wider population of workforce in Hong Kong and Beijing. The limitations
14 of the study also include the fact that we did not manage to recruit representative
15 samples. Future research in this area should adopt a longitudinal design using a random
16 sample drawn from different professions.

17

18 ***Conclusion***

19 The results of the study support most of the hypotheses. To a certain extent, evidence of
20 generalizability of research findings was demonstrated as similar results were obtained
21 from two samples of Chinese employees. Even though the results are marginally
22 demonstrated, Chinese work values are potential moderator in the stress processes. Most
23 important of all, because this stress moderator variable was found to be significant in the

1 stress processes in Hong Kong and Mainland, the results of the study will contribute to
2 the well-being among employees there, which in turn enhance their job performance and
3 productivity.

4 It is suggested that, under the present adverse economic situations, executives and
5 managers in Hong Kong and Mainland should try to cultivate their employees' work
6 values, and to encourage employees to develop stronger commitment and involvement
7 towards their organizations, in order to cope with this hard time. It seems that Chinese
8 work values, Chinese specific dispositional characteristics, deserve investigation in future
9 research in Chinese societies. Those values should also be promoted in Western owned
10 firms and Western societies in order to enhance employee well-being and productivity in
11 this globalization era.

12

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3 private sector in Hong Kong.

4

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1 組織承諾與中國工作價值觀對京港兩地工作壓力與
2 工作幸福感的直接與調節效應

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21 摘要:

22 本文調查組織承諾與中國工作價值觀在工作壓力與工作幸福感關係的直接與調節效應。

23 研究採用自行填寫問卷方法，分別向 386 位(197 男，179 女)香港與 306 位(127 男，179 女)
24 北京員工調查。一般來說，一些感受到較高工作壓力的員工報告較差的工作幸福感(包括工
25 作滿意與身心健康)。再者，一些有較高的組織承諾與中國工作價值觀的員工報告較高的工
26 作滿意。一系列的 hierarchical 回歸分析，對年齡、年資與職位加以控制，發現中國價值觀
27 是兩地工作壓力與幸福感關係的調節因素。中國工作價值觀在北京對象中是工作壓力與工
28 作滿意關係的調節因素，而組織承諾是工作壓力與心理健康關係的調節因素。中國價值觀
29 在 香港對象中是工作壓力與身體健康關係的調節因素。

Table 1. Means, Standard Deviations, and Coefficient Alphas of Main Variables for the Hong Kong and Beijing Samples

	Hong Kong				Beijing				Mean Hong Kong – Mean Beijing			
	Mean	S.D.	Min	Max	Cronbach α	Mean	S.D.	Min	Max	Cronbach α	F	Sig.
TS	23.75	5.38	6	36	.82	21.95	5.74	6	36	.81	8.03 ^{***}	0.001
JS	8.14	2.03	2	12	.80	8.02	2.10	2	12	.82	5.76 ^{***}	0.001
MW	43.55	8.25	17	72	.80	37.93	6.49	21	57	.71	26.98 ^{***}	0.001
PW	23.08	5.45	8	36	.80	24.24	5.79	6	36	.78	7.70 ^{***}	0.001
OC	21.30	3.61	6	36	.62	21.16	3.57	6	36	.70	9.80 ^{***}	0.001
CWV	66.26	6.99	41	91	.77	64.75	7.68	32	90	.78	2.28	0.06

Note. TS – total stress, JS – job satisfaction, MW – mental well-being

PW – physical well-being, OC – organizational commitment, CWV – Chinese work values

N = 386 and 306 for Hong Kong sample and Beijing sample respectively

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

*** Correlation is significant at the 0.001 level (2-tailed).

Table 2. Inter-correlations among Variables for the Hong Kong and Beijing Samples

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1.TS	--	-.18**	-.28**	-.28**	-.10	.01	-.23**	-.20**	-.11
2. JS	-.05	--	.17**	.14*	.34**	.06	.11	.03	-.01
3.MW	-.31**	.25**	--	.46**	.03	-.10	.07	.04	.07
4. PW	-.25**	.24**	.57**	--	.02	-.02	.11*	.16**	.06
5. OC	.03	.42**	.07	-.03	--	.17**	.11*	.09	-.01
6. CWV	.12*	.27**	-.03	.00	.29**	--	-.06	-.09	.01
7.AGE	-.12*	.30**	.26**	.27*	.25**	.01	--	.71**	.30**
8.TENURE	-.01	.23**	.16**	.16**	.35**	.14*	.65**	--	.14*
9. JOB LEVEL	-.09	.06	.14*	.17**	-.00	.02	.09	-.01	--

Note. The values above diagonal were obtained from Beijing sample, and those below the diagonal were obtained from Hong Kong sample.

TS – total stress, JS – job satisfaction, MW – mental well-being, PW – physical well-being, OC –organizational commitment, CWV – Chinese work values.

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed). ** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 3. Hierarchical Regression Analyses Predicting Employee Job Satisfaction for the Beijing Sample

	Independent variables	Standardized Coefficients - β		
Model 1	Age	.19*	.12	.11
	Tenure	-.10	-.12	-.11
	Job Level	.05	.04	.05
Model 2	TS	--	-.15**	-.13*
	OC	--	.33***	.34***
	CWV	--	.01	.05
	TS x OC	--	.01	-.02
Model 3	TS x CWV	--	--	.14*
	Adjust R ²	.01	.13	.14
	Overall F	1.66	11.58***	5.94*
	df	3, 300	4, 296	1, 295

Note. TS: Total stress, OC: Organizational Commitment, CWV: Chinese Work Values

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

*** Correlation is significant at the 0.001 level (2-tailed).

Table 4. Hierarchical Regression Analyses Predicting Employee Physical well-being for the Hong Kong Sample

	Independent variables	Standardized Coefficients - β		
Model 1	Age	.24 ^{***}	.23 ^{**}	.23 ^{**}
	Tenure	.01	.05	.05
	Job Level	-.11 [*]	-.10	-.10 [*]
Model 2	TS	--	-.20 ^{***}	-.15 [*]
	OC	--	-.11	-.12 [*]
	CWV	--	.07	.09
	TS x OC	--	.01	.06
Model 3	TS x CWV	--	--	-.15 [*]
	Adjust R ²	.07	.11	.13
	Overall F	8.77 ^{***}	4.13 ^{**}	5.32 [*]
	df	3, 290	4, 286	1, 285

Note. TS: Total stress, OC: Organizational Commitment, CWV: Chinese Work Values

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

*** Correlation is significant at the 0.001 level (2-tailed).

Table 5. Hierarchical Regression Analyses Predicting Employee Mental well-being for the Beijing Sample

	Independent variables	Standardized Coefficients – β		
Model 1	Age	.06	.01	.01
	Tenure	-.01	-.04	-.03
	Job Level	-.05	-.04	-.04
Model 2	TS	--	-.27***	-.28***
	OC	--	.02	.01
	CWV	--	-.07	-.06
	TS x CWV	--	.06	.04
Model 3	TS x OC	--	--	.12*
	Adjust R ²	.01	.07	.08
	Overall F	.70	6.88***	4.14*
	df	3, 300	4, 296	1, 295

Note. TS: Total stress, OC: Organizational Commitment, CWV: Chinese Work Values

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

*** Correlation is significant at the 0.001 level (2-tailed).

Figure 1 Moderating effect of Chinese Work Values (CWV) on the relationship between Total Stress (TS) on Job Satisfaction for the Beijing sample

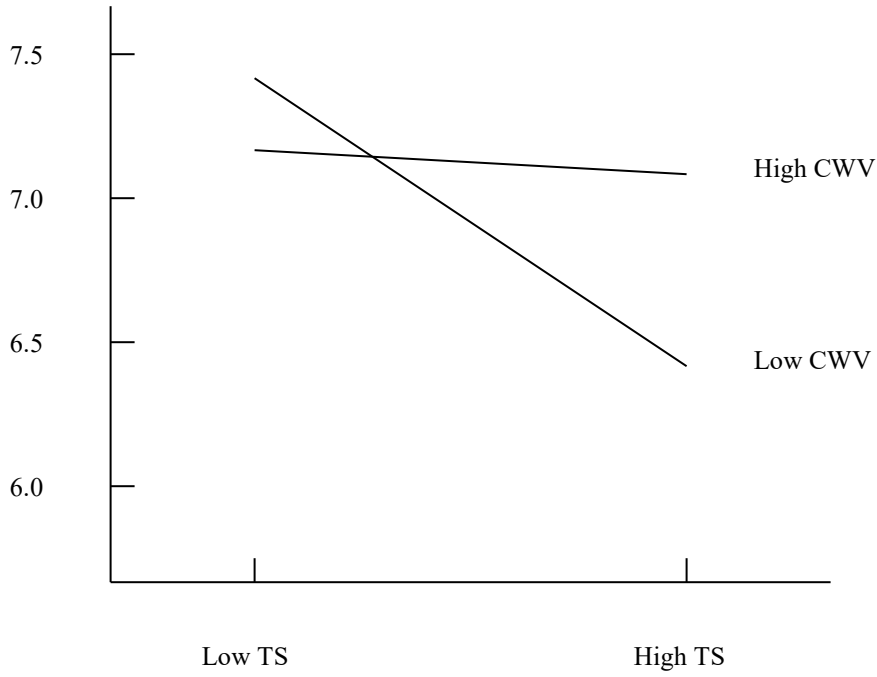


Figure 2 Moderating effect of Chinese Work Values (CWV) on the relationship between Total Stress (TS) on Physical Well-Being for the Hong Kong sample

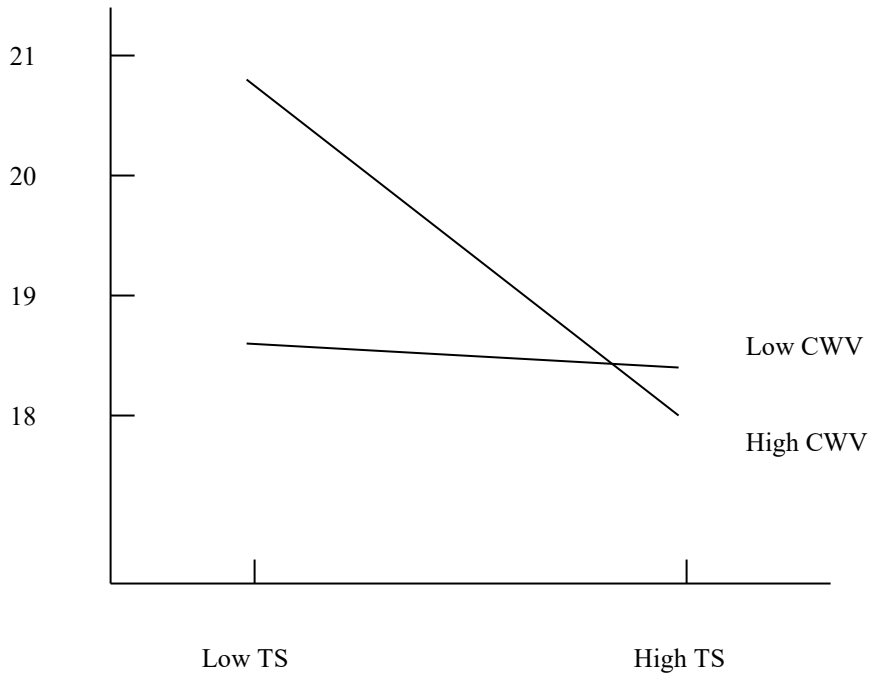


Figure 3 Moderating effect of Organizational Commitment (OC) on the relationship between Total Stress (TS) on Mental Well-Being for the Beijing sample

