



**The Role of Work Centrality in Complicated Grief Symptoms Following Job Loss in  
Individualistic and Collectivistic Cultures**

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## **Abstract**

Culture influences the importance people attribute to their work, also known as work centrality. Additionally, involuntary job loss has been associated with negative mental health effects, such as job loss complicated grief symptoms (JLCG). To this day, little is known about the role of culture on JLCG and work centrality. To address this research gap, this study explored the relationship between JLCG and work centrality within a cultural context, examining a collectivistic group of 138 Greek participants and an individualistic sample of 123 Dutch participants. Results revealed a positive association between work centrality and JLCG, in addition to higher work centrality scores in the individualistic culture. The moderation analysis, however, did not confirm a moderation role of culture in the relationship between JLCG and work centrality. The implications of this study allow identification of individuals at risk of developing JLCG. Findings pave the way for the implementation of preventative measures and employee dismissal strategies in the case of job loss.

*Keywords:* work centrality, culture, individualism, collectivism, complicated grief, job loss

On average, people can spend up to one third of their waking hours at work (Thompson, 2016). Beliefs about work differ from one individual to another (Buchholz, 1978). Work as we know it today is the result of a long historical process described by Lucassen (2014) in his paper on the history of work and labor. Work occupies both a societal and individual function. Work is necessary for organization purposes and promoting social cohesion, while the individual role of work incorporates intangible aspects of a person's life (Lucassen, 2014). Work fulfills a primal economic function, necessary for daily life, in addition to a more personal need to establish oneself in society, through acquirement of social and personal benefits associated with one's job (England & Misumi, 1986). Given the range of needs and roles work allows an individual to fulfill, it is expected work occupies a large place in people's lives and impacts personal development. In their study about work experiences, Roberts et al. (2003) highlighted the influential role of work on personality changes through adulthood, hinting towards the important function and effects of work on a more personal level.

The significance individuals attach to their work and how much they value work is referred to as work centrality (Kanungo, 1982). Work centrality as described by Paullay et al. (1994) refers to individual beliefs people have about the importance of work in their lives. Work here, is contrasted with the importance of leisure and other activities in the individual's life. Work centrality has been shown to evolve with age, with higher levels of work centrality observed in older individuals (Anthun & Innstrand, 2015). If one's job is deemed very important and central to their lives, work centrality is high. Conversely, if work is not perceived as crucial and central, work centrality will be lower.

### **Job loss, Mental Health, and Complicated Grief**

Work and having a stable job have been discussed as essential factors of psychological health and individual wellbeing (Blustein, 2008). Studies about unemployment and mental

health revealed job loss to be correlated to poorer mental health and increases of psychological distress and disorders (Bartelink et al., 2019; Paul & Moser, 2009; Warr et al., 1988). Indeed, job loss has been associated with an increased risk of depression, anxiety, and decrease of overall life satisfaction (Brand, 2015). Additionally, job loss had been discussed as a factor of identity disruption where the sense of self throughout time is not maintained (Papa & Lancaster, 2015).

When talking about job loss, it is important to differentiate between job loss and unemployment. In this paper, job loss refers to the involuntary loss of employment, which in turn can lead to unemployment, unemployment being the result of job loss (Wanberg et al., 2002). While the general reaction to job loss is a healthy psychological functioning, a minority of individuals suffer greatly following involuntary job loss, showing symptoms strongly resembling grief (van Eersel et al., 2021). It is this imbalance in distress levels, between individuals, associated with job loss that has caught the attention of the scientific community. This psychological reaction known as job loss complicated grief (JLCG) was first described by Papa and Maitoza (2013). In their article on JLCG symptoms, they describe a type of grief experienced beyond bereavement, focusing on losses such as job loss. This paper built the foundation of what is now known as JLCG, that they found to be distinct from depression and anxiety symptoms. The notion of complicated grief itself was described by Shear (2015) as an intense grieving process, beyond a time frame considered adaptive. It is characterized by yearning, emotional pain, denial, disbelief about the loss and difficulty finding meaning in one's life after the loss. In their article on "normal grief", Arizmendi and O'Connor (2015) describe a normal grieving process as characterized by intense longing after the loss, that eventually lessens as the individual comes to term with and integrates the loss in their lives. The difference between normal grief and complicated grief lies on what grieving reaction is expected according to social and cultural contexts (Shear, 2015).

Given societal and cultural cues serve as relevant criteria to distinguish pathological complicated grief from normal adaptive grief, the study of grief within a cultural framework is imperative.

### **Work Centrality and Culture**

Culture as defined by Marsella et al. (2000) refers to a “lens or template used in constructing, defining and interpreting reality”. Culture encapsulates shared norms, customs, and ideas a group of individuals use to interpret their internal and external environment. The concept of culture has been described as being represented both externally through architecture, or art and internally through values, norms, and behaviors (Marsella & Yamada, 2010). In this paper, the internal aspect of culture and cultural differences will be considered.

Culture, as a schema, can be categorized as either individualistic or collectivistic (Oyserman & Lee, 2008). According to Oyserman & Lee (2008) individualistic and collectivistic cultures differ on the nature of the relationship between the individual and society. Collectivistic cultures tend to promote social cohesion, with society being devoted to maintaining that sense of cohesion and interdependence within the culture. Opposite to this notion is that of individualistic cultures, they place the individual at the center of society, praise independence and make individual needs a priority (Oyserman & Lee, 2008). Therefore, culture impacts individuals’ thought processes, beliefs, and sense of priorities.

The differences in mentalities between individualistic and collectivistic cultures can be illustrated through differences in individuals’ approach to work. In their study on individualism and work centrality Ali et al. (1991) uncovered individualism promotes and rewards individual hard work and being proud of one’s work, insinuating high work centrality in individualistic cultures. Individualism was found to be related to higher levels of work centrality overall with a tendency towards longer working hours and higher levels of organizational commitment

(Parboteeah & Cullen, 2003). However, contradicting evidence has shown that people who feel part of a community, resembling qualities of collectivism, tend to feel more responsible for their work and also have high work centrality (Hattrup et al., 2007). The divergence in findings on work centrality in individualistic and collectivistic cultures illustrates the need to study this concept within a cultural context, while relating it to JLCG, to understand the mechanisms underlying the development of JLCG and identify symptoms early on.

### **Culture, work centrality, and JLCG**

Implications of involuntary job loss are numerous and vary amongst individuals and cultural backgrounds. Cultural constructs, specifically individualism and collectivism has been shown to play a role in the importance people attribute to their work and how much they consider work as a central part of their lives (Ali et al., 1991). In their study on workaholism across culture, Snir and Harpaz (2006) uncovered significant cultural differences in work centrality where countries with higher work centrality tended to work longer hours per week than those with lower work centrality. This study also revealed significant work centrality differences between specific countries, with Japan, demonstrating the highest work centrality, reinforcing the idea culture influences the importance attributed to work.

As previously mentioned, job loss in some cases can lead to JLCG (Papa & Maitoza, 2013). While culture influences work centrality, culture also influences grieving reactions and expected societal grieving norms. In their article on culture and grief, Stroebe and Schut (1998), exposed how grief varied across cultures, specifically in the manifestation, expression and duration of grief reactions.

JLCG, while rare yet still significantly impairing is also expected to be influenced by cultural perceptions of grief and the centrality of work in an individual's life. Indeed, in their study on non-work related activities in JLCG, van Eersel et al. (2022) found that undertaking

useful daily non-work related activities could reduce the level of JLCG. This finding implies that JLCG symptoms can be influenced by work centrality, specifically through the reduction of work centrality and focus on daily activities. Thus, work centrality impacts JLCG, and culture, through its influence on work centrality and differences in grieving processes and norms, impacts reactions to job loss. Considering these variables, the relationship between work centrality and JLCG is expected to be moderated by culture.

### **Present Study**

The aim of the present study is to analyze how the relationship between work centrality and JLCG differs from one culture to another. In order to do so, samples from both individualistic and collectivistic countries were compared in regards to their individualism scores on Hofstede Insights (2023) website. Dutch and Greek samples will be used within a collectivistic and individualistic framework to study culture as a moderator in the relationship between JLCG and work centrality. The Dutch culture, ranking high on individualism with a score of 80 on Hofstede's country comparison scale (2023), will be used as the individualistic representative, while the Greek culture scoring low, 35 on the individualism dimension of the scale, will be considered a representative of the collectivistic culture.

The importance of studying JLCG and work centrality within a cultural framework is relevant as culture defines and shapes reactions to loss and the importance of work. An integrative view of the relationship between culture, work centrality and JLCG allows a better understanding of JLCG and early identification of symptoms, through the identification of specific at risk populations. Identification of cultural differences in JLCG and work centrality prevents misdiagnoses and ameliorates the possibility of tailored cultural interventions when first JLCG signs are detected.

In an attempt to fulfill this goal, the following research question of “how the relationship between work centrality and JLCG varies in different cultures, specifically in individualistic and collectivistic cultures” will be answered in this paper. The following hypotheses will be answered.

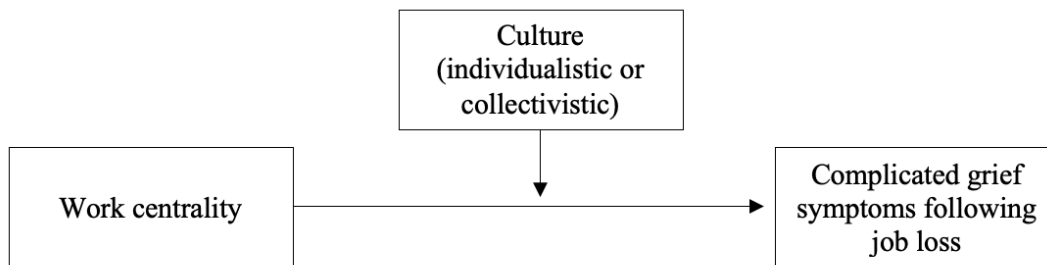
Firstly, high work centrality implies work plays a crucial role in an individual’s life (Kanungo, 1982). When work centrality is high, people attach more importance to their work. Subsequently, it was first hypothesized that individuals with high work centrality might be more distressed when faced with involuntary job loss. Thus, work centrality scores and JLCG scores will be positively associated, where high work centrality scores will be associated with higher JLCG scores.

Secondly, individualistic, and collectivistic cultures differ in conceptualization of work and how important they view work, with individualistic cultures according more importance to their jobs (Ali et al., 1991). Considering the scope of cultural differences between individualistic and collectivistic cultures, it was hypothesized that participants from the individualistic sample would obtain higher work centrality scores than those from the collectivistic sample.

Finally, culture and its far reaching influence on various life domains has been shown to influence work centrality (Parboteeah & Cullen, 2003). In addition to its role on work centrality, culture also shapes the reactions to loss and grief (Stroebe & Schut, 1998). Thus, the relationship between work centrality and JLCG is expected to be moderated by culture, where higher work centrality in the individualistic sample, will lead to higher JLCG scores and vis versa for the collectivistic sample.



### *Conceptual model of moderation*



## **Method**

### **Procedure**

The present study was approved by the Ethical Review Board of the Faculty of Social Sciences of Utrecht University (FETC 21-0075). Both Greek and Dutch Participants were recruited through the researchers' social networks as well as through the use of social media (e.g. Instagram, Facebook, WhatsApp, LinkedIn). The study was conducted online using "Qualtrics", where participants were provided a link to access the study. Participation in this study was voluntary and anonymous. After clicking on the link, participants had access to an information letter providing all essential study information. The questionnaire lasted around 20 minutes. After filling in the surveys, participants were given the opportunity to view a psychoeducative video about complicated grief following job loss.

### **Participants**

In total there were 123 Dutch participants and 138 Greek (N = 261) participants who took part in this study. A criterion for inclusion was that all participants had to have previously lost their jobs involuntarily before the study started. Seven Greek participants were not included after failing to meet job loss circumstance criteria. The majority of participants had lost their

jobs due to labor conflict and company reorganization. Table 1 shows further information about participant demographics.

**Table 1**

*Sociodemographic characteristics of the population*

Sample characteristics	Dutch				Greek			
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>n</i>	%	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Gender								
Male	27	22			46	33.3		
Female	95	77.2			84	60.9		
Other	1	0.8			8	5.8		
Age			46.8	14.7			33.9	11.7
Education								
Primary	5	4.1			3	2.2		
Secondary	45	36.6			24	17.4		
Higher	73	59.3			111	80.4		
Job loss causes								
Reorganization	36	29.3			24	17.4		
Bankruptcy	4	3.3			11	8		
Health issues	13	10.6			17	12.3		
Labor conflict	33	26.8			33	23.9		
Temporary contract	15	12.2			31	22.5		
Company economics	7	5.7			8	5.6		
COVID-19	15	12.2			14	10.1		

Time in last position (years)	8.4	9.6	4.8	7
Weekly work hours	28.3	11.3	35.8	14.7
Time since job loss (months)	19.9	19.9	21.1	28.5
Marital Status				
Single	54	43.9	153	58.6
Married	69	56.1	108	41.4
JLCG scores	72.9	28.4	79.8	27.1
Work centrality scores	8.3	2.3	7.5	2.2

## Instruments

***Socio-demographics and work characteristics.*** Information about the participants' age, gender, nationality, education level, marital status, duration of last employment, time since job loss, weekly working hours and job loss cause was collected.

***Hofstede's insights.*** Given this study aims to investigate differences between two generally collectivistic and individualistic cultures, Hofstede's insights country comparison scale was used to score countries based on six dimensions, focusing on individualism in this paper. In their VSM 13 study Hofstede and Minkov (2013) found that the individualism index demonstrated good internal consistency, with a Cronbach's Alpha of  $\alpha = .77$  for their sample. According to Hofstede Insights (2023) the country comparison "cutoff" score is 50. A score below 50 on either of the six dimensions, indicates a low score on that dimension. A country with a score below 50 on individualism will be considered a more collectivistic country than the one with a score above 50. In this study, Greece scored 35 out of 100 on individualism making it a country with collectivistic tendencies, while the Netherlands scored 80 out of 100, making it a more individualistic country than Greece (Hofstede Insights, 2023).

***Job Loss Grief Scale.*** The Job Loss Grief Scale (JLGS) was created by Van Eersel et. al. (2019) to measure complicated grief symptoms following job loss. In their initial study on the elaboration of this scale, Van Eersel et. al. (2019) found high levels of internal consistency with a Cronbach's Alpha of  $\alpha = .99$ , in addition to strong discriminant validity where the scale could differentiate between JLCG symptoms, depression and anxiety. For the Dutch participants, the questionnaire was given in Dutch and was translated to Greek for the Greek participants through forward-back translation (Ozolins et al., 2020). This scale contains 33 statements that the participants answered on a Likert-scale ranging from 1 to 5 where 1 was strongly disagree and 5 strongly agree. Sample items are: "I feel a strong longing for my job" or "I barely believe I lost my job". Scores can range from 33 to 165, a high score implying more JLCG symptoms. The internal consistency of the JLGS for this current sample was high with a Cronbach's Alpha of  $\alpha = .97$  for both the Dutch and Greek sample.

***Work Centrality Scale.*** The work centrality scale was used to measure how central work is to each participant (Hirschfeld and Field, 2000). This scale is a shortened version of Paullay et al.'s (1994) scale, which showed high internal consistency, with a Cronbach's Alpha of  $\alpha = .76$  in Hirschfeld and Field's (2000) study. This three-item scale aims to measure how satisfied a person is with their job and how important their work is as opposed to other activities. The participants were asked to rate statements about centrality of their work following a Likert-scale ranging from 1 to 5 where 1 was strongly disagree and 5 strongly agree. Sample items are: "The major satisfaction in my life comes from my job" or "I have other activities more important than my work". The internal consistency of the work centrality scale was proven to be relatively high in this study with a Cronbach's Alpha of  $\alpha = .58$  for the Dutch sample and  $\alpha = .56$  for the Greek sample.

## **Statistical Analysis**

An a priori power analysis was conducted using G\*Power (Faul et al., 2007). For this study  $N = 128$  participants were needed to achieve 80% power for detecting a medium effect at a significance of  $\alpha = .05$ . Thus, the obtained sample size for this study was sufficient  $N = 261$ . All the analyses procedures were conducted in IBM SPSS version 28. Before diving into the main analysis of this paper, the data and assumptions were checked through preliminary analyses. In order to answer the first hypothesis regarding the relationship between work centrality and JLCG scores, a simple linear regression was conducted. The second hypothesis aiming to study the cultural differences between Dutch and Greek samples in work centrality was answered by conducting an independent sample t-test. Finally, a moderation analysis was conducted using the PROCESS tool based on Hayes' (2013) Model 1 in order to uncover the moderation effect of culture in the relationship between work centrality and JLCG symptoms. Age was studied as a covariate to control for the effects of age on work centrality and JLCG.

## **Results**

### **Preliminary results**

The assumptions of normality, homogeneity of variance, linearity, outliers, skewness, and multicollinearity were checked and met prior further statistical analyses. Analysis of standardized histograms showed the data was slightly skewed, specifically for complicated grief scores that showed a slight right-skewness. Observation of Q-Q plots for both JLCG scores and work centrality, showed a slight departure from the line, yet they remained relatively close to it. The Kolmogorov-Smirnov test demonstrated a deviation from normality at  $p < .05$  yet the conclusion of these preliminary results showed no major violation of the normality assumptions.

## Main findings

The first hypothesis claimed JLCG scores, and work centrality scores would be positively associated. Results of the simple linear regression found ( $F(1, 259) = 29.08, p < .001$ ) with  $R^2 = .10$  at the  $p < .05$  level. The results of this simple linear regression suggest work centrality and JLCG are positively associated with work centrality explaining 10% of the variance in JLCG scores. Work centrality levels was significantly associated complicated grief levels,  $\beta = 3.92, t = 5.39, p < .001$ , where higher levels of work centrality in participants were associated with more JLCG symptoms, thus the first hypothesis was confirmed.

The second hypothesis supposed participants from the individualistic culture would have a higher work centrality than individuals within the collectivistic cultures. Results of the independent samples t-test confirmed this hypothesis, indicating a significant difference in work centrality scores at the  $p < .05$  level, between Dutch ( $M = 8.29, SD = 2.26$ ) and Greek ( $M = 7.48, SD = 2.20$ ) participants  $t(259) = 2.95, p = .004$ . The effect size was relatively small, with a Cohen's  $d$  of .36. Thus, there were significant differences in work centrality scores between both cultures, the Dutch sample scoring higher on average than the Greeks on work centrality. However, it is worth noting the significant age difference between Dutch ( $M = 46.76, SD = 14.7$ ) and Greek ( $M = 33.9, SD = 11.73$ ) participants  $t(259) = 7.76, p < .001$  that could have influenced their work centrality scores.

The final hypothesis expected culture to be a moderator in the relationship between work centrality and JLCG. The moderation analysis did not confirm this hypothesis. Results of the model without the use of age as a covariate revealed the overall model was significant ( $F(3, 257) = 13.35, p < .001, R^2 = .13$ ). This indicated work centrality, culture and their interaction explained 13% of the variance in JLCG scores. However, table 2 shows culture alone did not contribute to this model  $t(257) = .75, p = .45$  while work centrality did  $t(257) = 2.51, p = .01$ .

Additionally, the interaction effect of culture and work centrality was insignificant ( $b = .09$ ,  $t(257) = .13$ ,  $p = .90$ ).

**Table 2**

*Moderation Model 1*

	<i>b</i>	<i>SE B</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Constant	33.32	14.03	2.37	.02
Work centrality	4.14	1.65	2.51	.01
Culture	4.48	5.98	.75	.45
Work centrality x Culture	.09	.73	.13	.90

When controlling for age, results remained consistent, with an overall significant model ( $F(4, 256) = 11.62$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $R^2 = .15$ ). Here the model explained 15% of the variance in JLCG scores. However, as shown in Table 3, the interaction between work centrality and culture remained non-significant ( $b = .25$ ,  $t(256) = .35$ ,  $p = .73$ ). While culture still was an insignificant contributor to the model  $t(256) = .85$ ,  $p = .40$ , work centrality remained significant  $t(256) = 2.17$ ,  $p = .03$  and the covariate age, was also significant  $t(256) = 2.39$ ,  $p = .02$ ).

**Table 3**

*Moderation Model 1 using age as a covariate*

	<i>b</i>	<i>SE B</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Constant	22.35	14.64	1.53	.13
Work centrality	3.57	1.65	2.17	.03
Culture	5.03	5.93	.85	.40
Work centrality x Culture	.25	.72	.35	.73
Age	.29	.12	2.39	.02

## Discussion

The purpose of this study was to uncover cultural differences in JLCG symptoms. In order to do so, JLCG symptoms and work centrality were studied in a cultural context, through individualism and collectivism.

The first confirmed hypothesis suggested work centrality scores and higher JLCG scores would be positively associated. Results were in line with previous research on work centrality. Berntsen and Rubin's (2006) describe event-centrality as the individual's perception of the extent to which a negative event is viewed as a reference point in their identity formation. Bereavement research has shown that event-centrality increased risks of developing psychological problems (Boelen, 2011; Boelen, 2021). Papa and Lancaster (2015) subsequently extended event-centrality to job loss and found job loss to be a major aversive life event associated with identity disruption. The concept of identity disruption refers to a discontinuity in the sense of self and social role that can happen following a major life event such as job loss, which in time can lead to complicated grief (Papa & Lancaster, 2015). Given the importance of work in the construction of social and personal identity, higher identity disruption levels could be associated with higher work centrality. Our results are in line with the findings that higher work centrality would lead to a higher sense of loss, explaining the positive relationship between JLCG and work centrality.

The second hypothesis claimed individualistic cultures would be related to higher work centrality scores than collectivistic cultures. The hypothesis was confirmed and significant differences in work centrality between cultures were uncovered, with the individualistic Dutch culture scoring higher on work centrality than the collectivistic Greek culture. These results were in line with previous studies on individualism and collectivism, within the scope of work ethic and work importance. Indeed, in his paper on work engagement in Europe, Schaufeli (2018) reported work centrality to be influenced by



individualism. Here, amongst all cultural dimensions, individualism was the most important cultural factor related to work engagement. Additionally, a study on Norwegian teenagers revealed beliefs about work importance revolved around individualistic concepts, such as realizing individual potential, and pursuing personal interests (Bårdsdatter Bakke, 2021). Although such findings support this study's results that work centrality is higher in individualistic cultures, the significant age difference between Greek and Dutch participants could have influenced work centrality scores. In this study, Dutch participants were much older than the Greek participants. According to Hajdu and Sik (2018), perceived importance of work increases with age, which could explain why the older Dutch participants scored higher on work centrality than younger Greek individuals.

Finally the main hypothesis expected the relationship between work centrality and JLCG to be moderated by culture. This hypothesis was not confirmed, results showed a non-significant interaction effect between work centrality and culture, even after age was controlled for. In other words, the relationship between work centrality & JLCG does not differ depending on cultural background. Work centrality remained significant even after age was controlled for, indicating work centrality play a more important role in JLCG, than culture or age. Age as a covariate was significant, meaning that age does influence JLCG, however less than work centrality does. These results are in line with previous findings where work centrality and work involvement have a significant negative impact in individual's mental health in addition to lower life satisfaction overall (McKee-Ryan et al., 2005). Similarly, Gowan (2014) consolidated the notion that the importance of work influences responses to job loss. These findings combined with the moderation analysis results imply work centrality variations could explain differences in JLCG scores more than the individualism and collectivism cultural constructs, thus explaining an insignificant moderation effect of culture on the work centrality and JLCG relationship.

## **Limitations**

Despite encouraging findings, this study contains several limitations. The first and main relevant limitation is the cross-sectional nature of this study design. Indeed, the data from this study was collected at one point in time with no ability to manipulate variables which limits our interpretation of the results. Cross-sectional designs limit the ability to establish causality, which in the case of work centrality and JLCG limits generalizability and causal implications (Taris et al., 2021).

A second limitation of this study is the difficulty to classify one culture as either collectivistic or individualistic. Indeed, classification of a sample as collectivistic or individualistic was based on Hofstede's Insights which may not fully convey the complexity and multifaceted aspect of individualism and collectivism. Hofstede classifies culture along six dimensions, one of them being individualism. Although this model provides a good basis to categorize and classify culture, it may not be sensitive enough to cultural nuances and differences. This model may not account for specific subgroups and regional differences within a specific culture (Beugelsdijk et al., 2016).

A final shortcoming of the study regards the important group differences between the Dutch and the Greek samples, which might have influenced the relationships between JLCG, work centrality and culture. Indeed, the significant age difference, as mentioned previously, might have inflated work centrality scores in the older Dutch sample. Additionally, the Dutch participants overall, spent more time in their last position than the Greeks, which could also explain their higher work centrality scores.

## **Implications**

This study provides insight into the complicated grieving process that occurs following job loss. Indeed, this is the first study to incorporate JLCG symptoms and work

centrality within a cultural context. Given positive associations between work centrality and JLCG, it is important to consider work centrality as a potential risk factor in the development of JLCG. The finding that individualism is related to higher work centrality narrows down at risk populations. Preventative measures can be taken by employers and managers by identifying employees with individualistic tendencies, who highly value their work. Identification allows for employers to support such employees through job loss by conducting clear exit interviews, providing career counseling, and involving the employee in the dismissal process as early as possible to promote transparency.

### **Future research**

Further research is needed to fully understand the relationship between culture, work centrality and JLCG. Future research should focus on including more nuance in what is considered a collectivistic and individualistic culture. The need to consider individual differences in participants belonging to either a collectivistic or individualistic culture would make such a study more relevant and generalizable. The level of individualism or collectivism of a culture might not reflect that of the individual (Brewer & Chen, 2007). Conducting semi-formal interviews with participants would help understand their cultural background (if they have moved, where they were raised, what culture they identify with) to get a better sense of their levels of individualism and collectivism. In addition to the inclusion of culture as a moderator, future research should aim to study age as a moderator in the relationship between work centrality and JLCG as age, seemed to heighten work centrality (Hajdu & Sik, 2018).

### **Conclusions**

Results of this study indicated a clear relationship between work centrality and JLCG. Additionally, cultural differences were revealed between the individualistic oriented Dutch

culture and the collectivistic oriented Greek culture, where higher work centrality levels were found in the individualistic culture. However, while the relationship between work centrality and JLCG symptoms was expected to be moderated by culture, this moderation effect proved to be insignificant. Thus, culture does impact work centrality levels, however, within the scope of this study and job loss, it did not moderate the relationship between work centrality and JLCG symptoms .

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