Relationship of Work Values to Preferences of Job Characteristics among School and University Youths

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Abstract: The social contexts of youths in different levels of the education system contain differences and they are exposed to different elements of influence. This study attempts to examine differences in youth's work values and how this affects their preference of job characteristics in two different contexts: the upper secondary school and the university 0.581 upper secondary school students and 711 undergraduates in four zones of Peninsular Malaysia were randomly chosen from cluster samples of schools and universities as per zone. Survey questionnaires were sent out to respondents. The main findings showed that there were significant differences in the work values aspired by upper secondary school students and undergraduates, except for the importance of having authority at the work place. The preference of selected job characteristics amongst school students and university undergraduates were also significantly different, except for jobs with collegial work environment and jobs that are characterized by authoritative power. Correlation tests for both groups of samples confirmed that most work values had significant relationships to the preferred job characteristic. All eight regression models predicting work values for each of the job characteristic were significant and ranged from moderately strong to strong, thus, confirming the research hypothesis that work values significantly predicted types of job characteristics preferred by school students and university undergraduates.

Key words: Job attributes, job characteristics, job decisions, work choices, work values

INTRODUCTION

Adolescence The age of values and identity formation: Adolescence phase between ages 15-24 (Twenge *et al.*, 2010; Schunk and Meece, 2005) is deemed as value development period (Flanagan, 2003a; Porfeli, 2007). Values provide adolescents with a schema to make sense of their experiences with situations and other people (Flanagan, 2003b) and shape their thoughts on important life decisions such as career decisions (Shanahan, 2000; Schulenberg *et al.*, 1993). They begin to see work as a source of their future identity formation and they anticipate their future careers that figure with their emerging sense of work values (Arnett, 2004; Twenge *et al.*, 2010; Porfeli, 2007) and self-identity (Hamilton and Hamilton, 2006). It has been purported that the developmental period between adolescence and young adulthood has become increasingly blended (Arnett, 2000). Indeed, Arnett (2004) classified the years from age 18-24 as "the emerging adulthood". The sharp distinction between the two developmental phases is increasingly blurred by overwhelming conditions of the social context that youths live in.

The context of formation of work values: The shrinking job market has pushed up demands for highly qualified and skilled labor force and together with the relative ease of access to tertiary level education have persuaded young people to remain in school longer. More and more youths combine education and work (Frone, 1999; Barling *et al.*, 2002; Wray-Lake *et al.*, 2009) to support their expenses, but many still have to be relatively dependent on family resources. Many young adults remain in their parents' home as they struggle to cope with school expenses, limited jobs and cost of living. The home and family will likely continue to be an important major socialization routine throughout the stage of late adolescence into young adulthood (Marcia, 1980; Fussell and Furstenberg Jr., 2005).

In Malaysia as in many Asian homes, family orientation is a strong root. Values and life orientations are influenced by sibling and parental-offspring interactions. In a broader scenario, the sectors of rapid economic growth in Malaysia are likely to influence the schema of work values and career orientations of youths in Malaysia. In 2010, it was reported by the Malaysian Economic Planning Unit (EPU) that service sectors

contributed to 49.3% of the national GDP in Malaysia, 41.6% by industries sector and 9.1 by the agricultural sector. By 2013, 53.3% of the labor force was engaged in Services sector, Industry sector 35.9% comprising Mining 0.3%, manufacturing 29.4% and construction 6.2% and Agriculture sector 10.8%. Society and the environment in which youth live have a very significant impact on how they develop and use their talents and develop their work values and career aspirations. If the trend of the labor sector so predominantly inclined to the Services and Industry sectors, the natural tendency of youths should, hypothetically, reflect intentions to join those sectors and support the work values of those sectors.

Global research suggests that teenage or late adolescence have been engaged in at least some part time work either to earn some pocket money or to save for their future education. This part-time work is largely routine in kind, mostly occurring in the lower level service industries, for example, cashiers, sales clerks, food and beverage services and janitorial jobs (Busacca *et al.*, 2010; Van Ness *et al.*, 2010). Teenagers also tend to work alone, or on irregular shifts that interfere with the development and maintenance of close personal relationships in the workplace. These young workers are affected by the quality of their work experiences and this would relate to the development of their work values, work-related attitudes and life values (Frone, 1999; Hamilton and Hamilton, 2006; Barling *et al.*, 1998). In Malaysia, teenagers also have some temporary or part-time work experience, especially during school vacation or in the interim while waiting to start on their college or university education. A number of teenagers in late adolescence who work in family-owned businesses as unpaid or paid labor is also increasing. In more recent times, young adults especially those with some IT background also experience episodic work engagement (Wray-Lake *et al.*, 2009; Bluestone and Rose, 1997; Flanagan, 2008) such as work offered in time-limited contracts or work assigned in a specific function such as data entry. Thus, young adults are drawn into the experience of part-time or disenfranchised work package that shapes their career orientation and work values.

The technological revolution has literally obscured knowledge and work boundaries. Today, technology has made self-improvement a matter of personal choice and individual differences. Web site technology and on-line sharing enable quick access and sharing of information. Youth learns to quickly acquire knowledge in various areas, thus becoming instantly aware of related knowledge in their work and other fields of interest. These on-line transactions and exchanges develop new sets of work values that place a high premium on good social networks. Social networks are valuable resources. New

sets of work values have emerged amongst the younger generation, that demand autonomy at work, space to seek, share and create knowledge and access to connectivity.

In the western context, Wray-Lake *et al.* (2009) also reported that from 1990-2000 there is an increase in high school seniors in the values of materialism and extrinsic work characteristics, such as work that provides status and money as opposed to opportunities to help others. Putnam (2001) similarly noted since the early 1990s, high school seniors have placed decreasing value on intrinsic rewards of work (which included for example, the importance of acquiring and maintaining a useful set of skills, seeing the results of one's work and having a job that is interesting) while maintaining or increasing desires for extrinsic and materialistic rewards (Putnam, 2001). Wray-Lake *et al.* (2009) also reported that adolescents preferred work that allowed them a better percentage of personal time including vacation time.

Twenge *et al.* (2012) compared the work values of GenY (born in the late 1980's) to those of GenX (born in the 1970's) and Boomers (born in the 1950's) and found that GenY was much more likely than previous generations to say they wanted a job with an easy pace and lots of vacation time and less likely to want to work overtime. They also saw work as less central to their lives and were more likely to agree that "work is just making a living". At the same time, they placed more importance on salary and status.

In line with the protracted phase of young adulthood, we hypothesize in this study that the formulation of work values would have an effect on the kind of job characteristics that youths would likely opt for. Viewed alongside the declining trends for intrinsic work values and stable appreciation of extrinsic work values and increasing preference for work that allows time for leisure, would this scenario of work values and job characteristics preference also hold true for Malaysian youths? Moreover, since the traditional distinctive phases of adolescence and young adults have blurred, we anticipate that the work values and preferences for specific job characteristics would bear greater similarities rather than differences between adolescent youth in schools (ages 15-18) and youths at the university (ages 19-24). Any differences in their work values and job characteristic preferences could hypothetically be attributed to the individual characteristic (which is not tested for in this present study), or contextual organizational level socialization in school or at the faculty.

Job characteristics: Hackman and Oldham's proposed a job characteristics model or JCM to measure the job characteristics that would most likely appeal to adolescents. Hackman and Oldham theory proposed that

job characteristic that induced positive psychological states would, in turn, lead to greater work satisfaction and motivation to remain in a job. These psychological states comprise: belief in the meaningfulness of one's work (hackman's category: meaningfulness of work); responsibility for self-improvement in order to attain successful outcomes (category: responsibility) and learning from the outcomes of one's work in order to improve and add greater value to one's work and purpose in the job (category: knowledge of outcomes). Each of these critical psychological states is derived from certain characteristics of the job:

Meaningfulness of work: The work must be experienced as meaningful. This is derived from jobs that offer:

Skill variety: Different skills and talents required of a person in the job.

Task identity: Being able to identify with the work at hand as a whole and complete in contrast to dissected pieces of tasks.

Task significance: Being able to identify the task as contributing to something wider, to society or a group over and beyond the self.

Responsibility: Responsibility is derived from the substantial freedom, independence and discretion given to the individual in scheduling the work and in determining its procedures.

Knowledge of outcomes: This comes from feedback to enable the individual to become aware of how effective he/she is converting his/her effort into performance. Faturochman defined Job Characteristics Theory as describing "the relationship between job characteristics and individual responses to work. The theory specifies the task condition in which individuals are predicted to prosper in their work". Faturochman described five job characteristics as follows which were also quite similar to Hackman and Oldham's theory:

- Skill variety: How many different skills and talents do the job require a person?
- Task identity: Is there a clearly defined beginning, middle and end to a given task? Does a worker know what he or she is supposed to do and when he or she has successfully completed the task?
- Task significance: Does the job have "a substantial impact?" (Faturochman)? Will it matter to people, either within the organization or to society? Is this job/given task meaningful?

- Autonomy: How much freedom does an individual have to accomplish his or her tasks? This freedom includes the ability to schedule work as well as figuring out how to get the tasks done.
- Job feedback: Is an employee kept in the loop about their performance Are the being told when they are doing well and when they are not?

One of the critics of The Job Characteristics Model (JCM) point to the fact that while job characteristics (skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy and feedback) predicted job satisfaction via the motivational and psychological dynamics inspirited within the job characteristics, it nevertheless neglects or overlooks the social aspects of the work context. As pointed out by Freeney and Fellenz, social and relational factors can facilitate motivation, work engagement and work performance. Batson for example posited that positive social contributions through work increase the experience of positive emotions and contribute to intrinsic motivation and thus facilitate work engagement. Conversely negative social interactions and anti-social behavior in workplaces can be destructive in impact. It must be noted however that these critics reviewed the pro-social influence of job characteristics on individuals who already have jobs and are presently at work, hence job satisfaction is measured in terms of the degree of match between job characteristics and the satisfaction it entails. However, hypothetically it is possible to presume a priori that youths today may be persuaded to seek for certain job characteristics that they believe would induce motivation to remain on the job and from which they could derive satisfaction. This presumption is mainly rooted in the match between the dimensions of individual work values and the characteristics within the job that support those values.

Research objectives: This study aims to examine the work values of youths in the 16-24 years old age bracket in Malaysia in two different settings: the school and the university and to establish if any relationship exists between their work values and preferred job characteristics.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Population and sampling: The population of this study was undergraduates from public universities and senior secondary school students in government schools in Malaysia. Random cluster sampling was carried out to select four public universities and four secondary schools from the north, south, east and west zones of Peninsular Malaysia. Two hundred questionnaires were distributed

to undergraduates in each public university, summing up to 800 questionnaires. Only 764 were returned but 711 (88.87%) was deemed fit to be used for analysis. Of these, 564 were female (79%) and 147 male (21%) respondents.

The secondary school sample size was however, more limited. The target sample of students was at the upper secondary level (Form 4 and above) hence only 610 questionnaires were distributed. All 610 response were collected back but 29 was then discarded due to missing values, leaving only 581 fit for analysis (95.25%). The respondents from secondary schools comprised 308 males (53%) and 273 females (47%). Data collection in schools were conducted in a sit-in session in the school hall for a period ranging from twenty to thirty-minute session, with prior permission from the school principals. The same sit-in procedure in randomly selected lectures was followed for the most part of the university respondents while a few questionnaires were given randomly to respondents at public places in the university premise.

Instrumentation: The instrument we developed comprised is: work values and preferred job characteristics. Personal profile of the respondents such as a program of study, gender and work experience was also captured.

Measurement for work values: Previous literature defines work values as principles individuals held in high esteem and it determines choices, attitudes and action in work (Wollack *et al.*, 1971). In line with this, an individual's work values play a paramount role in influencing individual's necessities in their workplace. A number of domains had been established to measure work values by different researchers but many researchers use the dichotomy between intrinsic and extrinsic work values (Hirschi, 2010). Hirschi (2010) developed five intrinsic work value items (variety at work, helping other people, independence at work, leadership and responsibility and interesting work) and another five extrinsic work value items (high income, job security, fast and easy entry to job, leisure time besides work and prestigious work). Ryan and Deci (2000) in their study defined extrinsic work values as values that focus on the consequences or outcomes of work, or the tangible rewards such as income, advancement and status. Intrinsic work values, on the other hand, focus on the process of work or the intangible rewards that reflect the inherent interest in the work, the learning potential, the opportunity to be creative.

There is research that explores the dimensionality of work values which incorporates the cognitive and affective attributes of the job. Cassar distinguished between material and instrumental and cognitive and affective work values. Wang, Chen, Hyde and Hsieh identified people-related factors, job outcome and the job itself as factors. Duffy (2010) dealt with influence, service and meaning dimensions of work values. Zhang *et al.* (2007) created five work value dimensions: challenge, personal worth, equitable opportunity, social status and personal development. Hagstrom and Kjellberg (2007) considered six work value dimensions: social relations, self-realization, work condition, altruism, benefit/career and influence. Hattrup *et al.* (2007a, b) identified seven categories of work values: job security, high income, advancement opportunity, interesting work, autonomy in work, helpfulness to other people and usefulness to society. Van Ness *et al.* (2010) proposed another seven dimensions of work values: self-reliance, morality/ethics, leisure, hard work, the centrality of work, wasted time and delay of gratification. Clearly, there is no consensus on the dimensionality of work values across different studies.

There is no single measurement of work values. Hence we followed the norm of using intrinsic and extrinsic work values whereby the former comprises commitment to one's job, pride in work, authentic liking of job and working hard to achieve success in the job. Extrinsic values included high pay, the social status of job, importance in having autonomy in the job and importance in having authority in the job.

Measurement for preference of job characteristics: We proposed an integrated framework of preferred job characteristics that combined Hackman and Oldham's category: meaningfulness of work; responsibility for successful outcome; and knowledge of outcomes to learn and improve), Freeney and Felenz prosocial support and relational framework and Herzberg Motivational-Hygiene framework. The job characteristics dimensions in our instrument were: from the prosocial and relational perspective: jobs that are collegial in nature that places emphasis on team work and collaborative decision making and works process.

From Hackman and Oldham's category: Jobs that are meaningful since they are close to the personal values and interests of the individual. Jobs that created key role positions within its hierarchical structure to recognize that knowledge, social capital, experience and skills of individuals are important. Leadership tends to be informal as different qualified individuals lead the work process Jobs that are success oriented are output driven and these jobs typically have fluid and dynamic work processes, encourage creativity and are productivity focused. Jobs that offer individual autonomy as a work resource to encourage each individual to show leadership, initiative and accountability in one's work.

From the motivational hierarchy:

- Jobs that offer recognition/reward to the achievement and contribution of its staff members. The recognition includes incentives, open career paths and direct contact with top level management to the workers
- Jobs that are associated with authoritative power. Power is a form of social recognition and structural reward (Hatrup *et al.*, 2007)
- Jobs that offer salary equivalence in relation to experience, knowledge and skills and sometimes social and professional clout.

All items for work values and job characteristics were measured on a Likert-Type 5-point scale that ranged from 1 = "Strongly Disagree to 5 = "Strongly Agree." These items were at first reviewed by colleagues for content validity and subsequently piloted with 30 undergraduates and 30 upper secondary school students. The alpha of the pilot tests were all in an acceptable range.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The mean scores were tabulated as low (1-1.99); moderate (2-2.99); high moderate (3-3.99) and high (4-4.99). In Table 1, it is shown that the mean of work values of school and university students were high in most aspects of work values except in two extrinsic ones: "importance of having authority in job" and "importance of having high pay". These two values showed moderate mean scores. Thus, the initial findings indicate

the possibility that Malaysian youths in schools and universities tend to have overall a higher appreciation for intrinsic work values rather than extrinsic ones.

The mean scores of work values were also generally higher for university students, suggesting a greater maturity as a result of their broader context of socialization in the faculty and college which in turn cultivated more earnestness in work values. t-tests confirmed the mean scores of the majority of work values of university students were indeed significantly higher than the school students, except for the value of "importance in having authority in job". The importance of authority is not a coveted item. As for job characteristics in Table 2, undergraduates and school students rated high mean preference for all job characteristics with an exception for jobs whose predominant characteristic was "authoritative power" and "salary equivalence (for school students). t-tests again indicated that undergraduates were significantly more keenly aware of the kinds of jobs they would prefer to pursue in future, except in two kinds of jobs: jobs with authoritative power and jobs that emphasized collegial spirit. Undergraduates and school youths did not significantly differ in their moderate liking for jobs with authoritative power; nor did they significantly differ in their high preference for jobs with collegial work setting.

In general, most work values were significantly related to the preference of job characteristics (Table 3). The exceptions were: the work value of work commitment was not significantly related to preference for jobs that offered authoritative power (in the case of university students) and preference for jobs that gave recognition

Table 1: Comparison of work values and preferred job characteristics between school students and university undergraduates

Work values/Level	n	Mean	SD	F-values	t-values	df	Sig. (2-tail)
Commitment							
UNIV	711	4.54	0.56	69.13	7.99	1012.73	0.00
SCH	581	4.23	0.79				
Pride in work							
UNIV	711	4.47	0.54	33.47	8.74	1079.84	0.00
SCH	581	4.16	0.69				
Work hard for success							
UNIV	711	4.36	0.51	52.06	6.22	1007.38	0.00
SCH	581	4.14	0.73				
Authentic liking for job							
UNIV	711	4.38	0.74	31.39	7.84	1074.39	0.00
SCH	581	4.00	0.96				
Importance of autonomy in job							
UNIV	711	4.30	0.61	36.63	6.85	1046.41	0.00
SCH	581	4.02	0.82				
Importance of authority in job							
UNIV	711	3.74	0.76	6.58	.10	1203.73	0.92
SCH	581	3.73	0.82				
Job social status							
UNIV	711	4.12	0.75	12.11	2.69	1150.43	0.01
SCH	581	4.00	0.87				
Importance of high pay							
UNIV	711	3.74	0.80	16.29	3.34	1158.70	0.00
SCH	581	3.58	0.91				

Table 2: Job characteristics

Work values/Level	n	Mean	SD	F-values	t-values	df	Sig. (2-tail)
Collegiallity							
UNIV	711	4.10	0.57	12.33	1.65	1162.60	0.10
SCH	581	4.04	0.66				
Meaningfulness							
UNIV	711	4.42	0.48	71.15	7.89	992.09	0.00
SCH	581	4.15	0.70				
Key role							
UNIV	711	4.13	0.57	25.09	3.50	1106.80	0.00
SCH	581	4.00	0.71				
Success orientation							
UNIV	711	4.29	0.57	52.51	6.62	1012.86	0.00
SCH	581	4.03	0.80				
Reward/recognition							
UNIV	711	4.26	0.53	43.22	5.82	1035.62	0.00
SCH	581	4.05	0.73				
Autonomy as work resource							
UNIV	711	4.30	0.56	43.29	7.38	1042.10	0.00
SCH	581	4.02	0.76				
Authoritative power							
UNIV	711	3.59	0.87	4.760	-0.54	1219.12	0.59
SCH	581	3.62	0.90				
Salary equivalence							
UNIV	711	4.03	0.58	35.77	5.47	1088.18	0.00
SCH	581	3.82	0.74				

Table 3: Correlations between work values and preferred job characteristics

	Intrinsic work values				Extrinsic work values			
Job characteristics	Commit	Pride	Success Achv	Authentic	Autonomy	Authority	SocStat	HiPay
UNIV								
Collegial	0.27**	0.36**	0.66**	0.18**	0.49**	0.63**	0.32**	0.18**
Meaningful	0.53**	0.69**	0.74**	0.43**	0.53**	0.22**	0.30**	0.12**
KeyRole	0.27**	0.36**	0.66**	0.18**	0.49**	0.63**	0.32**	0.18**
Succ orient	0.40**	0.42**	0.76**	0.34**	0.51**	0.26**	0.22**	0.16**
Recognition	0.37**	0.43**	0.87**	0.21**	0.55**	0.42**	0.32**	0.30**
Autonomy	0.37**	0.38**	0.64**	0.28**	0.95**	0.40**	0.26**	0.22**
AuthPowr	-0.01	0.12**	0.28**	0.03	0.30**	0.96**	0.27**	0.27**
SalaryEqui	0.14**	0.29**	0.51**	0.07	0.32**	0.31**	0.29**	0.91**
SCH								
Collegial	0.47**	0.53**	0.70**	0.40**	0.61**	0.55**	0.36**	0.39**
Meaningful	0.67**	0.80**	0.82**	0.42**	0.64**	0.40**	0.44**	0.32**
Key role	0.48**	0.54**	0.71**	0.38**	0.62**	0.70**	0.36**	0.35**
Succ orient	0.60**	0.62**	0.83**	0.38**	0.64**	0.40**	0.38**	0.33**
Recognition	0.54	0.59**	0.89**	0.40**	0.66**	0.51**	0.42**	0.45**
Autonomy	0.54**	0.55**	0.70**	0.38**	0.96**	0.50**	0.33**	0.39**
AuthPow	0.20**	0.28**	0.36**	0.14**	0.38**	0.94**	0.27**	0.34**
SalaryEqui	0.42**	0.50**	0.67**	0.26**	0.48**	0.41**	0.44**	0.89**

for one's achievement and contributions (in the case of school students) and the work value of authentic liking for job was not significantly related to preference for jobs that offered authoritative power and salary equivalence (in the case of university students).

The patterns of relationships were also basically similar, shown in Fig. 1. It was interesting to note that three of the four extrinsic work values (the exception being 'appreciation for high pay') and three of the four intrinsic work values (the exception being 'having authentic liking for the job') generally had better, that is, moderate to high relationships with preference of most types of job characteristics. Amongst the intrinsic work values, the work value of working hard to achieve success

in job regularly showed consistent high moderate to high relationships with all types of job characteristics, with the exception of jobs that offered authoritative power. This suggests that having the determination to be successful in one's job off-sets fears to attempt multiple sets of job characteristics.

The similar patterns of the relationships in Fig. 1 seem to lend some truth to the assumption that adolescence to early adulthood may be a protracted phase (Barling *et al.*, 2002) whereby organizational level contexts might add to the intensity of relationships but did not break the overall pattern of relationship between work values and preference of job characteristics. Linear Regression was next executed to determine which work values predicted
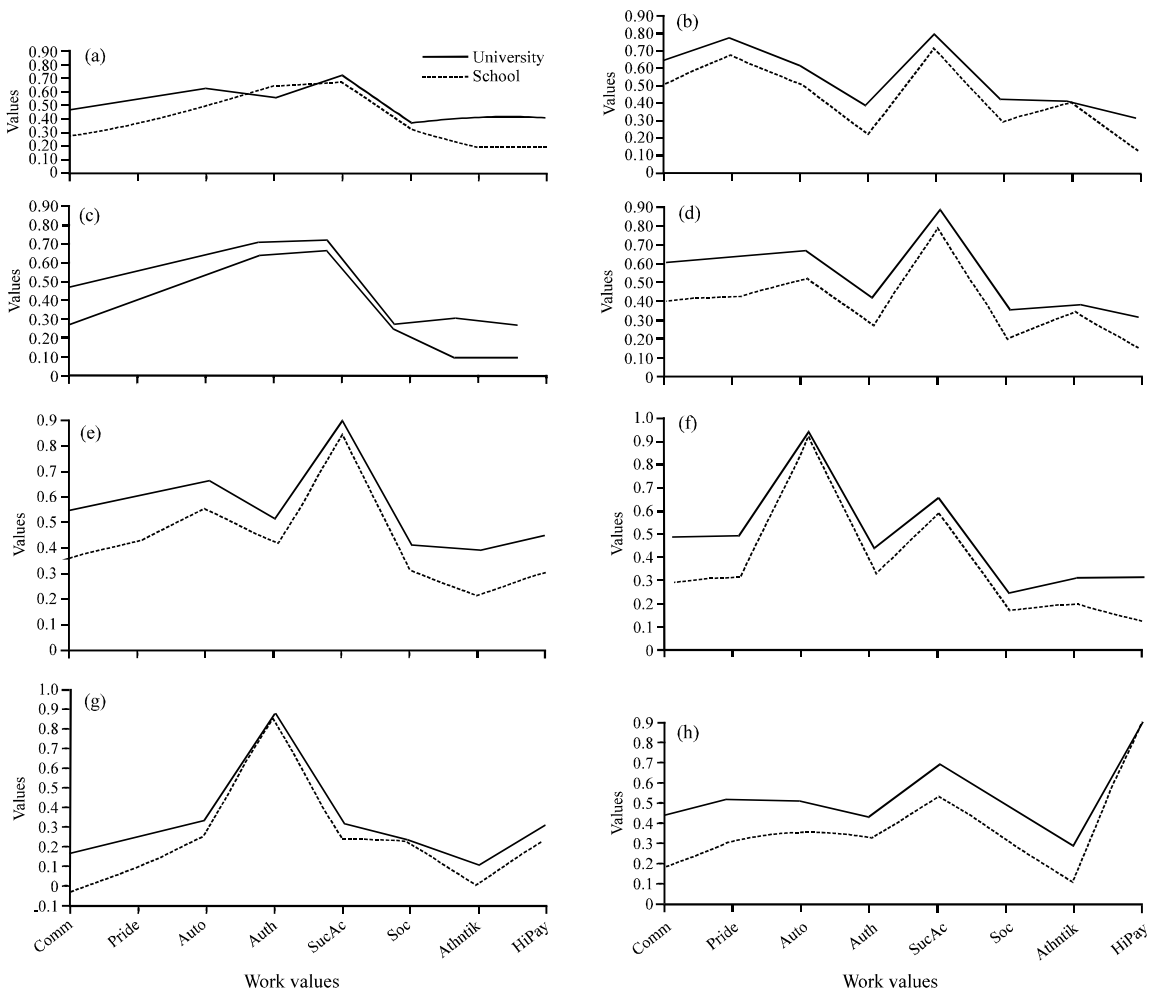
Fig. 1: Comparison of relationships of job characteristics with all eight work values; a) collegiality with all work values; b) meaningfulness with all work values; c) key role with all work values; d) success orientation with all work values; e) reognition with all work values; f) job autonomy-flexibility with all work values; g) authoritative power-structure with all work values and h) salary equivalence with all work values

preferences of selected job characteristics. Each of the job characteristics was made the dependent variable in eight regression models. No demographic variable was entered into the regression equation since school student and undergraduates were treated in a separate analysis. The model summaries for school students and undergraduates are shown in Table 4. The regression models of all job characteristics were moderate to strong (Adj. R^2 ranging from 0.60-0.93) thus confirming that work values do collectively explain the variance in people's preferred job characteristics. The four strongest regression models on job characteristics for both university and school samples were: job that gave recognition and reward for achievement/contribution; jobs that offered autonomy as a work resource; jobs that had authoritative power and jobs that paid salary

equivalence for skills and experience (Adj. R^2 of all were at least 0.80). In addition, for school students, the regression model for meaningful jobs was high at Adj. R^2 0.81. The significant coefficients of work value predictors ($p < 0.05$) are as follows for these models:

- Recognition UNI = -0.05+0.79 (work hard for success, t = 32.99)+...-0.05(Authentic liking for job, t =-2.63)+ 0.09 (importance of authority, t = 4.58)+0.13 (importance of high pay, t = 7.11)+e
- Recognition SCH = -0.06+0.73 (work hard for success, t = 26.54)+0.04 (authentic liking for job, t = 2.19)+ 0.07 (importance of authority, t = 3.38)+0.10 (importance of autonomy, t = 4.22)+0.12 (importance of high pay, t = 5.80)+e

Table 4: Regression model summary of job characteristics (dependent variable) for university and school students

	University undergraduates						Upper secondary school students					
Model 1	Sum of Sq.	df	F-values	Sig.	R	Adj. R^2	Sum of Sq.	df	F-values	Sig.	R	Adj. R^2
Collegial job	145.99	8.702	145.26	0.00[b]	0.79[a]	0.61	148.55	8.572	105.77	0.00[c]	0.77[b]	0.60
Meaningful job	120.91	8.702	239.15	0.00[b]	0.85[a]	0.72	234.92	8.572	323.53	0.00[c]	0.90[b]	0.81
Jobs that create key person role	145.99	8.702	145.26	0.00[b]	0.79[a]	0.61	203.42	8.572	162.57	0.00[c]	0.83[b]	0.69
Job with success orientation	134.77	8.702	128.56	0.00[b]	0.77[a]	0.60	269.49	8.572	191.18	0.00[c]	0.85b	0.72
Jobs that offer reward/recognition	158.57	8.702	339.22	0.00[b]	0.89[a]	0.80	251.41	8.572	333.77	0.00[c]	0.90[b]	0.82
Jobs that gave autonomy as a work resource	207.50	8.702	1026.26	0.00[b]	0.96[a]	0.92	316.95	8.572	1066.85	0.00[c]	0.96[b]	0.93
Jobs that have authoritative power	495.41	8.702	1106.13	0.00b	0.96[a]	0.92	424.64	8.572	637.06	0.00[c]	0.94[b]	0.90
Jobs that paid salary equivalence	222.22	8.702	1187.45	0.00b	0.96[a]	0.93	294.51	8.572	1048.73	0.00[c]	0.96[b]	0.93

[a]Dependent variable: preferred job attribute (characteristic); [b]Predictors: constant, work commitment, pride in work, work hard for success, authentic liking for job, high pay, appreciation for authority, social status of job, appreciation for autonomy; work commitment , pride in work, work hard for success, authentic liking for job is intrinsic work values. The rest are extrinsic values

- Autonomy resrce UNI = -0.02+0.08 (work hard for success, t = 5.61)+0.03(authentic liking for job, t = 2.70)+0.03 (importance of authority, t = 2.65)+0.87(importance of autonomy, t = 63.76) = 0.06 (importance of high pay, t = 5.57)+e

- Autonomy resrce SCH = 0.02+0.09 (work hard for success, t = 5.42)+0.04(authentic liking for job, t = 3.16)+0.86 (importance of autonomy, t = 57.96)+0.07(importance of high pay, t = 5.85)+e

- AuthoritativePowr UNI = -0.09+-0.06 (work hard for success, t = -4.11)+ 0.98 (importance of authority, t = 83.12 +0 .03(importance of high pay, t = 2.51)+e

- Authoritative powr SCH = 0 .09+-0.04 (pride in work, t = -2.14)+-0.08 (work hard for success, t = -3.67)+0.98 (importance of authority, t = 62.21)+0.06 (importance of high pay, t = 3.66) + e

- Salary Equiv. UNI = 0.08+0.32(work hard for success, t = 22.99)+-0.03(importance of authority, t = -2.19)+0.85 (importance of high pay, t = 79.68)+e

- Salary Equiv. SCH = 0.09+0. 43 (work hard for success, t = 25.80)+-0.04(importance of authority, t = -2.88)+0.77 (importance of high pay, t = 63.27)+e

For all of the above types of job characteristics in the equations, the intrinsic value of 'working hard for succes's and extrinsic value of 'importance of High Pay' were significant stable and consistent predictors throughout in both groups of samples of youths. High Pay was also found a significant predictor of preference for collegial types of jobs. Extrinsic value of 'importance of having authority' was also a consistent predictor for all types of job characteristics in the above models, except for jobs that offered autonomy as work resource (in the case of school students sample only). Based on significant levels of p<.05, the predictor coefficients in the regression equations for the other models (Adj. R^2 between 0.60 and 0.72) are as follows:

- Collegial UNI = 0.22 + 0.07 (pride in work, t = 2.41)+0.45(work hard for success, t = 13.83)+ 0.45 (importance of authority, t = 16.89)+-0.06 (importance of high pay, t = -2.26)+e

- Collegial SCH = 0.67+0 .38 (work hard for success, t = 9.14) +0.13 (authentic liking for job, t = 4.30)+0.23 (importance of authority, t = 7.31)+0.15 (importance of autonomy, t = 4.15) +0.08 (importance of high pay, t = 2.73)+e

- Meaningful UNI = 0.27+0.41 (pride in work, t = 16.40)+ 0.47 (work hard for success, t = 17.36)+0.12(authentic liking for job, t = 5.12)+0.09 (importance of autonomy, t = 3.42)+e

- Meaningful SCH =-0.03 + 10 (work commitment, t = 4.16) +0.42 (pride in work, t = 16.52)+0.46 (work hard for success, t = 16.72)+0.07 (importance of autonomy, t = 2.97)+e

- Key Person Role UNI = 0.22+0.07 (pride in work, t =2.41)+0 .45 (work hard for success, t = 13.83)+0.45 (importance of authority, t =16.89)+-0.06 (importance of high pay, t = -2.26)+e

- Key Person Role SCH = 0.15+07(Pride in work, t = 2.10)+ 0.34 (work hard for success, t = 9.33)+0.10 (authentic liking for job, t = 3.70)+0.43(importance of authority, t = 15.67)+0. 12 (importance of autonomy, t = 3.83)+e

- Success orientation UNI = 0.21+0.66 (work hard for success, t =19.60) +0 .11 (authentic liking for job, t =4.09) 0.08 (importance of autonomy, t = 2.69)+e

- Success orientation SCH -0.24+0.07 (work commitment, t = 2.55)+0.11(pride in work, t = 3.56)+0.64 (work hard for success, t = 18.68)+0.12(importance of autonomy, t = 4.11)+e

Again, the intrinsic value of working hard to achieve success was a consistent and strong predictor to all types of job characteristics. These findings held true for both the university and the school samples. The other intrinsic values of 'having pride in one's work', 'work hard to

achieve success' and 'having an authentic liking for one's job' were active significant predictors of various job characteristics. For university students, however, the intrinsic work value of 'to have a commitment in one's job' turned out to be a non-significant predictor of preference to all job characteristics.

The extrinsic work values of 'The importance of authority' and 'The importance of high pay' were significant predictors for all job characteristics except for meaningful jobs and jobs with success orientation. On the other hand, the value of 'importance for autonomy' was indeed significant in predicting both meaningful jobs and jobs with success orientation, as well as jobs that prized autonomy as an empowering work resource to employees. These pattern of results was the same for both undergraduates and secondary school students. The extrinsic value of the 'importance of the social status of the job' was also not a significant predictor of all job characteristics for both undergraduate and school samples.

Our findings indicated the mean scores for intrinsic values were generally high and consistent for intrinsic work values but less consistent with extrinsic work values. The relationships between the work values espoused by youths to their preference of selected job characteristics were mostly proven true for university undergraduates and upper secondary school students. All the regression models to predict preference of job attribute or characteristics were from moderate to high (Adj. R^2 from 0.60-0.93), thus indicating that most of these work values in this study were robust enough to predict types of job attributes youths were likely to search for.

The intrinsic work value of working hard to achieve success was consistently the strongest predictor of all eight type of job characteristics for both groups of samples in university and school. In this sense, Malaysian youths from the ages of 16-24 have proven that their belief in the intrinsic value of working hard to achieve success in jobs would sustain any limitation they might encounter, given the dominant characteristics of the eight types of jobs in the study. This is a rewarding insight as it reveals the internal motivation that appears to be the driving force of future job seekers in Malaysia. Pride in work, authentic liking for the job and work commitment (this latter only for school samples) were also present as active predictors but in separate dispersions in all of the equations, thus suggesting that intrinsic work values are still a dominant core in the choice of preference of jobs. Strangely, work commitment for undergraduates did not predict any of the job attributes which seems to echo Twenge *et al.* (2010)'s assertion that generation Y youths were less likely to serve in their jobs in the blind binding fashion as their parents did. Instead, our findings showed that quality work principles such as having pride and authentic liking for one's work and working hard to achieve success were more symptomatic of the Gen Y's predilection with their internal quest for self-esteem, self-image and self-fulfilment. Indeed, the intrinsic value of working hard to achieve success has been classified by some researchers as a more dynamic and positive dimension of work commitment (Blau, 1987; Zuboff and Maxmin, 2002). In our research, we had offered the traditional concept of work commitment and therefore we strongly suggest that future research in work values should attempt to assimilate these new dimensions of work commitment.

The work values of "The importance of authority" and "The importance of high pay" were significant predictors for all job characteristics except for meaningful jobs and jobs with success orientation. We can, therefore, assume that although the mean score values of the importance of having the authority and high pay were only moderate between undergraduates and school students, yet in the overall picture of job decision making, it featured as a significant and an important element. Authority is associated with having some amount of voice or say in one's job and a platform to do so and high pay is associated with job retention. It is important for employers to recognize that jobs need to be structured in such a way to recognize these needs. Jobs that are meaningful and success oriented, on the other hand, required autonomy as its underpinning source of motivation. These types of jobs require people who not only believe that they should be given autonomy but they should also use that autonomy to create job outcomes that are meaningful and creative and are successful.

The extrinsic value of the importance of having jobs with good social status was not a significant predictor to any job characteristic preference. In Malaysia, the ideology of having an honest job prevails, no matter how unsophisticated the job stature is. In today's consumer-driven society, it is a well-known fact that even a school dropout has the potential to earn good money from a small business selling fruits. Hence, the value of seeking jobs with high pay outcomes overrides the value of seeking for jobs with high social status. Yet it is premature to judge that youths in Malaysian schools and universities expressed dominant materialistic tendencies in their career choices. Pride in one's work and authentic liking for one's work were both significant and strong predictors of various jobs.

The literature on job characteristics themselves is not entirely perceived as sharply divisive between the intrinsic and extrinsic values driven. Many jobs today

reflect a blended mode of organizational and social objectives, with rooms for individual development and creativity. In this light of current job characteristics which appear protean and blended. Nonetheless, this research has contributed to our knowledge as to what values, in particular, are persuasive of the preference for certain types of job characteristics.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Very few studies have attempted to compare work values of youths in secondary schools and youths who are at college or university to determine whether they differed significantly in their work values and preference of job characteristics. Some studies have noted the difference of work values amongst varying generations (Payne *et al.*, 1973) but more studies are needed to discover the work values of youths within the same generation but who socialize in different levels of the contextual environment. The context of this study has focused on schools and universities. We would recommend more in depth study of the effect of program characteristics, institutional socialization and organizational culture to shed some light on how work values are transformed and how perceptions of job characteristics are transliterated and cognitively transfigured to complement those work values. In addition, a time-based study is also suggested as a plausible research design to capture how the transformation and the transfiguration of work values and perceptions of job characteristics evolve over time and as a result of socialization that takes place in varying contexts.

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