

WORK VALUES AND ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT IN PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTOR INDUSTRIES

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The study has examined the work values and their relationship to job satisfaction and the level of commitment among the employees of public and private sector industry. It was assumed that the employees of the private sector industry will be more committed to their job and will show higher job satisfaction as compared to the employees of the public sector industry. The sample included 60 middle level employees from a public sector industry and 30 employees each from two private sector industries. The instrument used were: Survey of Work Values (Wollack, Goodale, Wijting, & Smith, 1971), the Commitment Scale (Porter, Steers, Mowday, & Boulian, 1974), and the Job Feeling Scale ((Wysocki & Kromm, 1986). The results showed a significant difference between the employees of public and private sector industry on job involvement. The employees of private sector industry had significantly high mean scores on job involvement. There was a significant correlation between intrinsic work values and commitment for the employees of public sector industry. The differences on work values and commitment between public and private sector employees were not significant. The instrument used showed high internal consistency. Moreover, the correlations between the sub-scales of these measures and the total scores were also high. The results have been discussed in the context of prevailing social values in the Pakistani society.

People at work hold a set of opinions and attitudes toward their jobs. The job related attitudes reveal the positive or negative evaluation employees hold about various aspects of their work environment. Researches in organizational psychology have focused on three specific attitudes, namely: Job satisfaction, job involvement, and organizational commitment. Organizational commitment can be defined as a state in which an employee identifies with a particular organization and its goals, and wishes to maintain membership in the organization as reciprocal to achieving his work values within that organization. Organizational commitment has been studied both as a consequence and as an antecedent of other work related variables. As a consequence, organizational commitment has been linked to several personal variables such as satisfaction, motivation and devotion, role states, and aspects of the work

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environment ranging from job characteristics to dimensions of organizational structure. As an antecedent, organizational commitment has been used to predict employees' absenteeism, performance, turnover, and other behaviours.

Organizational commitment is regarded as a bond or link between the individual and the organization. The nature and qualitative aspect of this bond determines the type of commitment an individual develops towards his organization. An individual's acceptance of organization's goals and its values and his desire to maintain the membership in the organization characterize his attitudinal organizational commitment (Mowday, Porter, & Steers, 1982). An individual's transaction and his investment over time in an organization pertain to his calculated commitment (Becker, 1960). In the process of organizational actions, such as selection and socialization; and individual's predispositions, such as his loyalty and sense of duty, one develops a normative commitment. Any type of organizational commitment is crucial in determining the adherence of an individual to his organization and his interest and involvement in achieving its goals and objectives regarding efficiency, productivity, and competitiveness.

Work values characterize the expectations of an individual toward the work. These are the normative predispositions of an individual in the work environment and are motivational in nature called as intrinsic and extrinsic values. An individual's likes/dislikes, his orientation towards work and the work environment play a considerable role in determining the salience of various work values to the individual. Hence, the individuals may be intrinsically or extrinsically motivated and the nature of these values will determine the degree of work morale of an individual and his relationship with the organization.

In the Pakistani society, the intrinsic values have mattered very little in the context of work. A lack of emphasis of the society in motivating individuals to hard work, efficiency, and independence negatively influence the intrinsic motivation of the majority of persons. The disintegration of the moral fabric of the society in the form of rampant corruption, nepotism, favouritism, and undue advantages to the politically like minded individuals has caused much damage to the work values and integrity of an individual. An excessive demonstration of wealth and power in the society has brought the personal monetary gains in the focus of attention of the majority of its people. Majority of the people desire to achieve these in a shortest possible time with little struggle and hardwork. A cross-cultural study (Karim, 1993) of value preferences using Rokeach Value Survey of instrumental and terminal values (Rokeach, 1973) indicated that the three most preferred values of Pakistani students were the terminal ones. This shows that

Pakistanis are easy going and they value the goals and outcomes more than the means to goal.

The white collar government jobs, especially, the central superior services have become more attractive even for the medical and engineering professionals because of the exercise of the authority and corruption with relative impunity. The government as well as public sector organizations are plagued by indifference and lack of commitment to the organizational causes by their employees. The security of the job and a non-contingency of reward and punishment on upward movement of persons are the major factors in the inculcation of work values.

The situation in private sector organizations is slightly different. The criteria of reward and punishment are not only transparent but also applied consequently. A competitive atmosphere and the maintenance of status in the society foster the job involvement and commitment in the employees of the private sector organizations.

Considerable research evidence has revealed the importance of individual differences in work values that determine which rewards individuals consider important and are thus commitment producing. Werkmeister (1967) provides a theoretical rationale for a relationship between work values and commitment which suggests that the act of commitment is a manifestation of the individual's own self, and the value consideration leading to commitment reflects value standards that are basic to the individual's existence as a person. Kidron (1978) found a moderate relationship between protestant work ethic and commitment. It has also been found that work values were related more to moral than to calculative commitment (Putti, Aryee, & Liang, 1989). Investigation of work values and organizational commitment in the Asian context revealed that work values had a moderately strong association with organizational commitment, however, the intrinsic values (pride in work, job involvement, and activity preference) had stronger relationship than the extrinsic values (social status and attitude towards earning). These findings show that value expectancies of the employees strongly influence the levels of employee commitment.

The present study was undertaken to investigate the nature of work values and the extent to which they determine job satisfaction and the level of commitment among the employees in the public and private sector industries in Pakistan.

The main objectives of the study were:

- (i) To investigate the relationship between work values (intrinsic and extrinsic) and organizational commitment.

- (ii) To investigate whether the public and private sector executives differ in their work values.
- (iii) To know whether the public and private sector executives differ in their job satisfaction.

METHOD

Sample

The sample included 120 middle level executives. Half of the executives were selected from a public sector industry: Telephone Industries of Pakistan (Haripur), and another half from two private sector industries: Kohinoor Textile Mills, Rawalpindi and Colony Sarhad Textile Mills, Nowshera.

Instruments

Three questionnaires were used in the study:

- i. Survey of Work Values (Wollack, Goodale, Wijting, & Smith, 1971)
- ii. The Commitment Scale (Porter, Steers, Mowday, & Boulian, 1974)
- iii. The Job Feeling Scale (Wysocki & Kromm, 1986).

Survey of Work Values

The Survey of Work Values (SWV) is designed to measure attitudes towards work, especially those aspects that deal with the meaning that an individual attaches to his role at the workplace. It consists of six subscales namely:

- (a) Social Status of the Job (The effect the job has on individual's social standing among his friends, relatives, co-workers, and in his own eyes),
- (b) Activity Preference (The preference of the individual to keep himself active and busy on the job),
- (c) Upward Striving (The desire to seek continually a higher level job and a better standard of living),
- (d) Attitude towards Earning (The value an individual places in making money on the job),
- (e) Pride in Work (The satisfaction and enjoyment an individual derives from doing his job well),

- (f) Job Involvement (The degree to which an individual takes an active interest in co-workers, company functions, and desires to contribute to job).

The Commitment Scale

The scale consists of 15 items designed to measure three dimensions of commitment, namely employee loyalty or desire to remain in the organization; his devotion and willingness to exert effort on behalf of the organization, and his belief in and acceptance of the values and goals of the organization. However, the scale measures a single underlying construct (Ferries & Aranya, 1983; Mowday, et al., 1982). The responses to the items are measured on a 5-point scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. The responses to each item are summed and averaged to yield a score for organizational commitment.

The Job Feeling Scale

The scale is a semantic differential measure of the attitudes of individuals towards various facets of the job, such as nature of work, colleagues or co-workers, supervision, pay and promotion opportunities. The scale can be scored for each category as well as for the overall job satisfaction score. The scale has been widely used on various categories of professionals. In addition, some personal information about age, education, income, and experience of the managers were also taken.

RESULTS

t-tests were performed on various variables related to work values, job satisfaction, extrinsic intrinsic values, and commitment between the employees of public and private sector industry.

The mean for extrinsic values have been derived from the variables Social Status of the Job and Attitude toward Earning, whereas, the mean for intrinsic values consist of variables, Activity Preference, Upward Striving, Pride in Work, and Job Involvement.

The results of *t*-test in Table 1 indicate a significant difference between the public and private sector employees on job involvement, $t(118) = 3.58, p < .001$. The employees of private sector had high *mean* scores on Job Involvement as compared to the employees of the public sector. All other differences were not significant.

Table 1

Means, standard deviations, and t-values on variables of work values between public and private sector executives

Variables	Public (n= 60)		Private (n= 60)		t
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
Social Status of the Job	29.76	4.32	30.61	3.78	1.14
Activity Preference	34.81	3.88	35.88	3.47	1.59
Upward Striving	34.43	2.97	33.78	3.35	1.12
Attitude toward Earnings	27.31	4.07	27.48	5.52	0.18
Pride in Work	35.05	4.07	35.28	3.61	0.33
Job Involvement	31.61	4.12	33.88	3.17	3.88**
Extrinsic Values	57.08	6.86	58.10	7.27	0.79
Intrinsic Values	135.91	10.76	138.83	9.37	1.58

d.f.= 118; ** *p*< .001

Table 2

Means, standard deviations, and t-values on variables of job satisfaction between public and private sector executives

Variables	Public (n= 60)		Private (n= 60)		t
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
Work	3.48	0.81	3.47	0.67	.11
Supervision	3.52	1.01	3.50	0.64	.11
Co-workers	3.39	0.93	3.44	0.71	.34
Promotion	2.84	1.12	2.96	0.84	.63
Salary	2.91	0.84	2.96	0.89	.33
Job Satisfaction (Overall)	16.15	3.82	16.33	3.21	.29
Commitment	3.72	0.35	3.74	0.60	.23

d.f.= 118

The data in Table 2 show that there are no significant differences between the executives of public and private sector industry on any of the variables of job satisfaction and on overall job satisfaction. The executives from two sectors also did not show any significant difference on commitment. However, the mean scores of private sector executives are slightly higher than the public sector executives on overall job satisfaction,

on co-workers, promotion and salary variables of job satisfaction. There are also no significant differences between the executives of public and private industry on commitment.

Correlations were computed between intrinsic and extrinsic values and commitment for public and private sector executives separately and for the total sample.

Table 3

Correlation between intrinsic and extrinsic values and commitment of Pakistani, Indian, and Singapore Studies

	<i>N</i>	Intrinsic	Extrinsic
<i>Pakistani Study</i>			
Total Sample	120	.15	.16
Public Sector	60	.30*	.20
Private Sector	60	.06	.14
<i>Singapore Study</i>	140	.37*	.07
<i>Indian Study</i>	100	.34*	.26*

* $p < .01$

The results in Table 3 show a significant correlation between intrinsic values and commitment for public sector executives $r = .30$, $p < .01$, whereas, other correlations were not significant. For the purpose of comparison the results of two similar studies conducted in Singapore (Putti, Aryee, & Liang, 1989), and India (Kaur & Singh, 1993) have also been mentioned.

The results indicated high internal consistency of the measure of Survey of Work Values. The subscales of Social Status ($r = .69$, $p < .001$), and Attitude toward Earning ($r = .82$, $p < .001$) were significantly correlated with the total score on the measure of extrinsic values. The measure of intrinsic values also had highly significant correlations with the subscales of Activity Preference ($r = .79$, $p < .001$), Upward Striving ($r = .56$, $p < .001$), Pride in Work ($r = .79$, $p < .001$), and Job Involvement ($r = .62$, $p < .001$).

The results also showed high consistency of work feeling scale. The overall job satisfaction significantly correlated with nature of the Work ($r = .87$, $p < .001$), Supervision ($r = .8$, $p < .001$), Co-workers ($r = .77$, $p < .001$), Promotion ($r = .82$, $p < .001$), and Salary ($r = .82$; $p < .001$), respectively.

DISCUSSION

The internal consistency analysis of Survey of Work Values (Wollack et al., 1971), and the Job Feeling Scale (Wysochi & Kromm, 1986) indicate the internal consistency reliability of the measures in Pakistani work environment. As the scales were administered to educated executives, it was not difficult for them to reply to the items of these measures. The relevance of the items of the scales to the work situation in the public and private organization is also demonstrated.

The results of the study show that private sector executives were significantly higher on job involvement as compared to public sector executives. As job involvement is one of the intrinsic work values, it indicates the interest and seriousness of the employees with which they perform their duties. The higher job involvement of private sector employees indicates two major aspects which determine the differences in job involvement of private and public sector executives.

First, the meaning of work in the context of an organization, and second, the reward and punishment associated with the quantity and quality of work an employee delivers in any organization.

The first aspect is a collective one and it relates to the joint efforts and responsibilities of the workers to make the organization efficient and effective. This aspect directly relates to the survival of an organization and its work force. If a particular organization is competitive and it gets good returns for its output then it not only flourishes but the benefits are also shared by the employees. The public and private organizations differ very much in this aspect of work. The concept of efficiency and productivity and the competitiveness of the organization has little relevance in the public as compared to the private sector. If a public sector organization runs in loss, it is overcome or compensated by the government. The losses in the private sector can lead to its bankruptcy and closure. Moreover, the management in the public sector organizations are not so concerned in maintaining the competitiveness and profitability of the organization as compared to the private sector organization. This is, to more extent, related to mismanagement, over employment, and corruption in the public sector organizations.

The second aspect of job involvement involves the expectations of the employees toward the job. Certain values play a significant role in determining job involvement. The prestige of the job, the degree of responsibility, the social status attached with it, the chances of upward movement, creativity, monetary benefits, etc., are associated with the

degree of involvement of an employee in the job. Moreover, the placement of an employee may also affect his job involvement.

The private and public sector organizations greatly differ in these characteristics of job involvement. In the public sector organizations, there is mostly, no well defined system of rewards based upon performance as compared to the private sector organization. However, other characteristics, such as security of the job, status, and in some cases, monetary benefits (mostly through corruption) may signify some professions in the public sector organizations. Nevertheless, their non-contingency on one's own striving may lessen their impact on the job involvement of an individual. As compared to the private sector organizations, one finds more cases of employees misplacement on their jobs in the public sector organizations. A person misplaced or unsuitable for a job will tend to show low job involvement.

As regards relationship of work values and commitment, the results were not significant in the combined sample of public and private sector employees.

However, separate correlational analyses for public and private sector organizations show a significant relationship between commitment and intrinsic values for the public sector employees. These findings are against our expectations. We expected a significant relationship between the intrinsic values and commitment for the private sector employees. Studies conducted elsewhere, e.g., Putti, Aryee, and Liang (1989) in Singapore, show a significant relationship between intrinsic work values and commitment, whereas, significant relationships were found between intrinsic and extrinsic values and commitment in a study conducted by Kaur and Singh (1993) in India. However, these two studies did not differentiate between public and private sector organizations. The lack of relationship between the work values and organizational commitment in the combined sample in our study may be because of the heterogeneity of the sample. This is confirmed to some extent in separate analyses for public and private sector organizations. However, we expected stronger relationships in the case of private sector organizations than the public sector organization.

This lack of consistency in our findings may be due to various reasons. The change in the government's economic policy, especially, related to the privatization process, may have put greater strains on the public sector employees which may have resulted in a changed work environment in the public sector organizations. The social desirability seems to have played some role in contributing toward this result. The notoriety of the public sector for its corruption and inefficiency may be a

factor to project one's image in a desirable manner. To certain extent monetary gains through corruption may be in itself intrinsically motivating the individuals to show efficiency in order to maintain their position in the organization. The reluctance on the part of the private sector employees to participate in the study and to provide the data may have influenced the outcome. Another possible reason might be related to the lack of co-operation on the part of the management of private sector organization to provide facilities for data collection.

The growing influence and pressures of workers' union may have changed the environment of the private sector industry. The politicization of the unions in big private sector industry may have weakened the administrative hold of the management to a considerable extent in exercising the reward and punishment criteria for the efficiency of the workers. If this argument is valid, then there would be little difference in the work environments of the public and private sector industry. As no independent measure of quality of differences in the work environment of the two industries was taken, it is difficult to assume with confidence that there were differences in the work environment of the two industries.

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