

Gender Differences in the Work Values of Filipino College Students

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ABSTRACT

One way to understand future workforce behavior is to examine the work values. Work values imply individual career development and work performance. In this study, the effect of gender on the work values of college students has been examined. Using the Filipino Work Values Scale, 400 full-time college students (200 male, 200 female), aged 18 to 26 years old, enrolled in engineering, teacher education, business education, and information technology education degree programs were randomly selected in the study. Independent samples Mann-Whitney U test was utilized to compare gender and work values. Results showed that college students have moderate to weak work values among the ten work values subscales. Gender differences in work values were noted on intellectual-achievement, material, and variety. This study generates helpful insights for developing gender-sensitive career counseling services.

Keywords: work values, gender, employability, career counseling, college students.

INTRODUCTION

Changes in work conditions continue to raise questions for employers, educators, and policymakers about the generic and specific skills and competencies that college students need to succeed in their profession. Evidence for essential skills needs from employer surveys revealed, digital skills, teamwork, presentation skills, analytical skills, critical thinking skills, professional competence, and ability to meet the deadline (Australia, 2018; Niemelä, 2016).

As a result, many recent efforts have begun to reconceptualize skills in ways that potentially expand the content and range of learning experiences in higher education. The Commission on Higher Education (CHED) develops and

implements job-skills matching projects, relevant and responsive research, development and extension (RDE), and gender and development program as its long-term strategy to ensure quality education and employability of graduates (Licuanan, 2017).

Higher education institutions (HEI) across the Philippines develop academic and non-academic programs that will support the development of skills and competencies of students (Custodio, Espita, & Siy, 2017; Ejercito & Cadosales, 2009). For example, educators redesign curriculum, strict implementation of the academic retention policy, upgrading and utilization of technology required in the practice of the profession, service learning or volunteer work, in-house review (for board courses) and strengthening of industry

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linkage and partnership (for student internship and practicum). School counselors, career advisors, and psychologist tailor-fit guidance programs align with the wellbeing and career and vocational needs of students.

The school counselor, career advisors, and school psychologist guide students to realize their potentials and future career occupations. According to Rohan (2000) and Rounds and Armstrong (2005), students should reflect and examine themselves regarding the purpose and importance of work in their lives, including how one's personality, interest, and circumstances will fit job roles congruent with their life in general. Understanding one's personal work values system helps the individual answer the fundamental question about work. Thus, guidance and career advising assist students in learning about themselves, academic and occupational options, and decision-making skills so they can implement satisfying and rewarding academic and career plans (Gordon, 2006; Carlstrom & Hughey, 2014) and therefore, guidance counselors, career advisors, and psychologist must address issues career-related, for instance, the work values of students.

Work values and motivational theory

Work values are defined as employees' wants, values, and expectations of the actual job (Dajani, 2018; Zytowski, 1970). This includes job characteristics such as work environment, pay, job security, work hours, recognition, and self-fulfillment needs (Dose, 1997; Ros, Schwartz, & Surkiss, 1999). In other words, work values answer the basic question of what people perceived important in their jobs.

Work values are linked to work motivation and satisfaction (Aamodt, 2012). The disparity between employees want and what the job offers affect their job motivation and satisfaction.

Interestingly, the work values of Filipino workers can be understood through their motivation (Cervera, 1999; Ilagan, Hechanova, Co, & Pleyto, 2014).

Ilagan et al. (2014) posit that Filipino workers have specific needs. The four motivating needs are job-related, organization needs, career, and family-related needs. Job-related needs reflect five job characteristics: skill, variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy, job feedback, specifically from a co-worker. The organizational needs refer to collective identity and social acceptance, for instance, concerns for co-worker's loyalty and sense of responsibility to the organization. Career-related needs to reflect on achievement, affiliation, and power, for example, promotion, acquiring personal possession, and leaving a legacy. Lastly, family needs, such as time to attend family activities and provide economic needs. Job-related needs and organization-related needs are driving factors of work engagement of Filipino workers. In contrast, family and career needs were a potential influence on organizational citizenship behavior and life satisfaction.

The theory of basic human values suggests that ten universal values influence employee motivation (Schwartz, 2012). These ten universal values are self-direction and stimulation (openness to change needs), hedonism, achievement and power (self-enhancement needs), security, conformity, tradition (conservation needs), and benevolence and universalism (self-transcendence needs). According to Schwartz (2012), individuals should follow personal choices and actions parallel to individual values and priorities. However, individuals and groups have different priorities in the workplace. A compatible value expressed resulted in employee job satisfaction and work engagement, for instance, employee pursuit for power (e.g., social status and prestige) is congruent with achievement (e.g., highly competence). Consequently, seeking

power is a conflict with benevolence (helping others). Incompatibility among values resulted in psychological dissonance and dissatisfaction.

Correlates of work values

The family and socio-economic profile (Kirkpatrick- Johnson, 2005; Llenares, 2017; Team, 1987) contribute to the distinctive values priorities of the individual. The employment conditions of parents shape work values that then shape parenting values and behavior and, eventually, child outcomes (Kirkpatrick-Johnson, 2005). It was observed in the Philippines, more fathers with 97% reported in the workforce compared with 61% mothers (Abrigo & Francisco-Abrigo, 2019). Married women entry in the labor force is affected by their parenting role, specifically if the child is still young. There is no alternative for maternal care which made them prioritize jobs that promote work-life balance (Abrigo & Francisco-Abrigo, 2019).

Gender was found to shape individual orientation on work values (Dajani, 2018; Hüttges & Fay, 2015). Men tend to give more importance on extrinsic reward-oriented values like salary, career advancement, prestige, and authority while women preferred accessibility of workplace, feedback, job security, and work hours (Dajani, 2018; Duffy & Sedlacek, 2007; Hüttges & Fay, 2015; Konrad, Ritchie Jr, Lieb, & Corrigall, 2000). According to Elizur (1994), women prefer affective work values (social relationships) while men consider instrumental pay and cognitive work values (influence, independence, and responsibility).

The sets of literature provide evidence on the role of family, socio-economic, and gender on explaining work values. However, there is a dearth of information that supports gender differences in the work values of Filipino college students. Most of the studies on work values focus on Filipino

workers as study samples, for instance, the study of (Ilagan et al., 2014) in conceptualizing indigenous Filipino needs theory of motivation and (Ayap & Macalalad, 2016) among Filipino seafarers.

Purpose of the Research

The primary goal of the study is to find out the effect of gender on the work values of college students. Understanding college students' work values generate helpful insights for employers (Aygün, Arslan, & Güney, 2008; Cortés-Pascual, Cano-Escoriaza, & Orejudo, 2014; Haberman, 1997; Zupan, Kaše, Raškovi, Yao, & Wang, 2015) such as keeping a healthy and proactive workforce. Since work values are known to have an impact on job satisfaction, job involvement, organizational values, organizational commitment and work engagement (Elizur & Koslowsky, 2001; Ho, Oldenburg, Day, & Sun, 2012; Ilagan et al., 2014; Sousa & Porto, 2016).

This study specifically aimed to; a) determine the level of work values b) determine the effect of gender on work values of sampled college students.

In this study, we hypothesized that:

- a) there are differences in work values between male and female college students

METHODOLOGY

Respondents and Sampling

There were 400 full-time 3rd year to 4th year college students, aged 21 + 2.53 (range: 18-26) enrolled in architecture (n = 64), business administration (n = 58), civil engineering (n = 67), computer engineering (n = 48), computer science (n = 38), education (n = 33), electronics engineering (n = 67), and information technology

(n = 25) degree programs were randomly selected as respondents in selected private Higher Education Institution (HEI) in Metro Manila.

Before the administration of the survey, an orientation was conducted regarding the goal of the study. Consenting respondents were handed the pen-and-paper survey instrument. The respondents were informed that; a) they can participate, decline, and or withdraw their support to the study anytime; b) they will not receive any money or incentives for joining; c) there were no right or wrong answers; d) all items are needed to be answered, and e) confidentiality of data.

Instruments

The Filipino Work Values Scale (FWVS) Cronbach $\alpha = 0.90$, a standardized instrument developed by (Cervera, 1999) was used as the tool for the study. FWVS was utilized to assess the ten work values of respondents in terms of environmental, Cronbach $\alpha = 0.88$, familial, Cronbach $\alpha = 0.89$, intellectual-achievement orientation Cronbach $\alpha = 0.85$, interpersonal, Cronbach $\alpha = 0.88$, managerial, Cronbach $\alpha = 0.85$, material, Cronbach $\alpha = 0.88$, occupational, Cronbach $\alpha = 0.87$, organizational, Cronbach $\alpha = 0.84$, religious, Cronbach $\alpha = 0.89$, and variety, Cronbach $\alpha = 0.89$ work values. The FWVS consists of 80 items and rated using a

Table 1. *The definition of work values and sample items* (Cervera, 1999)

Work Values Scale	Definition	Sample Items
Environmental	associates with pleasant physical working conditions: not too hot, cold, noisy, dirty, crowded, or too far from where one lives	<i>'A place of work which is not far from where you live'</i>
Family-Oriented	relates to family values: cohesion, unity, emotional closeness and security, respect for parents and family image	<i>'Work assignments which do not pull you away from your family much of the time'</i>
Intellectual-Achievement	associates with the opportunity for independent and critical thinking and with the feeling of accomplishment in doing a job well	<i>'A job, which maximizes your potential'</i>
Interpersonal	relates to traits such as 'amor propio' (self-esteem), 'hiya' (coyness), 'utang na loob' (indebtedness), use of intermediaries or go-betweens, loyalty, hospitality, 'pakikisama,' emotional closeness, respect for authority	<i>'Working with people who have — pakikisama i.e., who are yielding to the will of the leader or majority to make the group completely agree in decisions'</i>
Managerial	relates to the coordination of human and material resources to accomplish the objectives of a work organization	<i>'A work organization which gives you the freedom to decide on matters of which you are responsible'</i>
Material	associates with aspects of work that enables one to gain prestige, security and economic returns	<i>'A high salary/pay'</i>
Occupational	relates to the exercise of one's skills and competencies; subsumed in this are the following traits: fairness, competence, altruism, self-regulation, professional autonomy, and public service	<i>'A job of which you are fully knowledgeable'</i>
Organizational	relates to a feeling of membership in the work organization; the knowledge and acceptance of organizational goals and willingness of the organization to help reach these goals	<i>'A work organization which you are proud of being a member'</i>
Religious	relates to the exercise of faith and other spiritual conviction	<i>'A place of work where you are allowed to exercise your religious facilities'</i>
Variety	associates with work that provides an opportunity to do different types of job in contrast with routine work	<i>'Varied work assignments'</i>

5-point Likert scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

Statistical Analysis

Shapiro Wilk test was used to report the normality of data at $p > 0.05$. Since the work values data are non-normally distributed or free distributed data, an Independent sample Mann-Whitney U test was computed (Field, 2013; Rahi, 2017). Independent samples Mann-Whitney U test was used to compare a group of students (men and women) (categorical and independent variable) on the dependent continuous variables (work values) at $p < 0.05$ using SPSS version 21.0. Median was used to substitute mean on *non-symmetrical* data (Field, 2013).

RESULTS

The primary purpose of the study was to determine the effect of gender on work values. Table 2 illustrates the level of work values of the respondents. Based on the survey, generally, the respondents have weak work values. Among the ten work values, interpersonal (Med score = 54.00), intellectual achievement orientation (Med score = 50.00), occupation (Med score = 45.50) were the three dominant work values of study respondents. These three work values were categorized as average work values. Our respondents were in the boundary of prioritizing or neglecting job characteristics that motivate them. College students may consider '*pakikisama*' or (interpersonal), the opportunity for autonomy and career growth (intellectual-achievement oriented value) and aligned with educational training and experience (occupational) as important. Consequently, if these job characteristics perceived as important were violated in the actual job, they may likely to endure changes (Cervera,

1999). For example, an IT graduate may consider reporting on his at work and sustain motivated if he observed that colleagues are not friendly and approachable (interpersonal), autonomy and career advancement (intellectual-achievement oriented value) and competency, and training (occupational) are conceded.

The three lowest work values were organizational (Med score = 26.00), familial (Med score = 21.00) and variety (Med score = 17.00). These three work values were considered the least work values. The result suggests that the respondents may neglect job-related and non-job-related characteristics in exchange for satisfying a perceived stronger value. For example, an engineer may compromise his organizational identity (organizational), time for family activities (familial), and chances to handle varied work assignments (variety) in exchange for higher salary and benefits (material) or align with competency (occupational).

Table 2. *Work Values of College Students*

Work Values Subscale	Median Score	Dsscription
Environmental values	39.00	<i>Weak</i>
Familial values	21.00	<i>Weak</i>
Intellectual-achievement values	50.00	<i>Average</i>
Interpersonal values	54.00	<i>Average</i>
Managerial values	29.00	<i>Weak</i>
Material values	35.00	<i>Weak</i>
Occupational values	45.50	<i>Average</i>
Organizational values	26.00	<i>Weak</i>
Religious values	29.00	<i>Weak</i>
Variety	17.00	<i>Very weak</i>
Overall	34.20	<i>Weak</i>

Effects of Gender on Work Values

In this research, we hypothesized that gender affects the ten work values. Table 3 illustrates

the effect of gender on work values. Gender has significant effect on selected work values specifically, intellectual-achievement orientation, $U = 16,099$, $p < 0.001$, material, $U = 17,173$, $p < 0.01$, and variety, $U = 15,720$, $p < 0.001$. This suggests that gender affects the work values orientation of respondents. Women tend to be more attracted to jobs that are challenging and promote professional growth than men (intellectual-achievement orientation). Female respondents give more premium on occupational growth. Besides, women are more attracted to jobs that offer high salaries and benefits compare with the male counterpart (material). Women prefer jobs that provide the opportunity to do a different types of jobs than their men.

There was no significant difference between gender and the seven remaining work values:

environmental, family, interpersonal, managerial, occupational, organizational and religious work values. Men and women do have similar work values orientation on the rest of the work values subscales.

DISCUSSION

Work values act as a cognitive and affective compass on what an individual should prioritize in actual jobs. College students are expected to be the future workforce. College years are the time for students to clarify and reflect value prioritization in work and life, in general. In this study, we assessed the work values and determine the effect of gender on work values.

The ten work values of college students range from very weak to moderate level. In our

Table 3. *Work Values of College Students*

Work Values Subscales	Gender	Mean Rank	U-Statistics	p-value	Remarks
Environmental	Male	196.03	19,105	0.44	Not significant
	Female	204.97			
Familial	Male	197.49	19,397	0.60	Not significant
	Female	203.51			
Intellectual-achievement orientation	Male	181.00	16,099	0.00	Significant
	Female	220.00			
Interpersonal	Male	207.57	21,414	0.22	Not significant
	Female	193.43			
Managerial	Male	194.53	18,806	0.30	Not significant
	Female	206.47			
Material	Male	186.36	17,173	0.01	Significant
	Female	214.64			
Occupational	Male	194.22	18,745	0.28	Not significant
	Female	206.78			
Organizational	Male	191.05	18,111	0.10	Not significant
	Female	209.95			
Religious	Male	191.03	18,107	0.10	Not significant
	Female	209.97			
Variety	Male	178.99	15,720	0.00	Significant
	Female	220.90			

opinion, some college students have realistic job expectations. Realistic job expectations and value priorities were observed for the three moderate work values, namely, interpersonal, intellectual-achievement oriented value, and occupational. In our opinion, there is a plausibility that college students with realistic job expectations when failed are likely to flourish in their careers. However, if respondents have very strong or very weak work values, these may impair job preferences, motivation, and satisfaction at work. In other words, unrealistic job expectation is associated with negative work behavior, such as disengagement and quitting from their jobs.

This study provides evidence for the effect of gender on selected work values such as intellectual-achievement orientation, material, and variety. Women provide premium on jobs that provide autonomy, high paying jobs, and variation on work assignments. According to Hüttges and Fay (2015), gender appraisal processes affect career-related outcomes.

Of interest, the result of analysis concerning the effect of gender on work values and its contribution to work values theory is not straightforward. There may be other explanations affecting the work values of college students (e.g., parental influence, self-esteem, personality, and so on). Although, work values are seen as a higher-order psychological construct emerging from the interactions among needs, culture, and experience, and thus, capable of explaining a wider range of phenomena (Murdoch & Rounds, 2014). In this research, it is expected that individual differs in their work values. According to Hofmans, De Gieter, and Pepermans (2013), and Malka and Chatman (2003), people will differently perceive their work situations, resulting in diverse career outcomes.

It is noteworthy to study the influence of gender on work values. Work values are associated with career development and human resource

practices. Gender appraisal on work values guides them on career decisions and job entry (Judge & Bretz, 1992). Men and women would likely be happier, motivated, and satisfied when work values possessed are congruent with their social (Ali & Panatik, 2015; Cheung & Scherling, 1999) and organizational commitment (Xiao & Froese, 2008). Secondly, work values guide employers on recruiting the right candidate for the job. According to Sousa and Porto (2016), individual work values must be compatible with the organizational values.

Future research should focus on mixed methods to get an in-depth perspective on the work values of Filipinos. It is also recommended that other variables (personality traits, self-concept, so on) are essential to fully understand how work values were conceptualized. Moreover, the future researcher may strengthen the FWVS instrument developed by Cervera (1999). An updated version of the instrument should provide norms and validity, aside from reliability.

CONCLUSION

Gender partially affects some work values. Gender appraisal on work values generates insight for understanding their job expectation and potentially affect work behavior. It is recommended that collaboration from the student development and leadership office and guidance counseling center to develop a gender-sensitive career service to help students develop a good work-life. The school counselor or psychologist may consider providing work value instruments together with other instruments applicable to assists students plan his or her career life.

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