



Employee Relations

What determines the work values of employees in a Middle Eastern cultural context? Evidences from Jordanian organizations
Khaled Aladwan Ramudu Bhanugopan Alan Fish

Article information:

To cite this document:

Khaled Aladwan Ramudu Bhanugopan Alan Fish , (2016), "What determines the work values of employees in a Middle Eastern cultural context? Evidences from Jordanian organizations", *Employee Relations*, Vol. 38 Iss 4 pp. 505 - 520

Permanent link to this document:

<http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/ER-03-2014-0034>

Downloaded on: 07 November 2016, At: 01:21 (PT)

References: this document contains references to 68 other documents.

To copy this document: permissions@emeraldinsight.com

The fulltext of this document has been downloaded 183 times since 2016*

Users who downloaded this article also downloaded:

(2016), "Influence of organizational rewards on organizational commitment and turnover intentions", *Employee Relations*, Vol. 38 Iss 4 pp. 596-619 <http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/ER-12-2014-0150>

(2016), "The link between high performance work practices and organizational performance: Empirically validating the conceptualization of HPWP according to the AMO model", *Employee Relations*, Vol. 38 Iss 4 pp. 578-595 <http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/ER-08-2015-0163>

Access to this document was granted through an Emerald subscription provided by emerald-srm:563821 []

For Authors

If you would like to write for this, or any other Emerald publication, then please use our Emerald for Authors service information about how to choose which publication to write for and submission guidelines are available for all. Please visit www.emeraldinsight.com/authors for more information.

About Emerald www.emeraldinsight.com

Emerald is a global publisher linking research and practice to the benefit of society. The company manages a portfolio of more than 290 journals and over 2,350 books and book series volumes, as well as providing an extensive range of online products and additional customer resources and services.

Emerald is both COUNTER 4 and TRANSFER compliant. The organization is a partner of the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE) and also works with Portico and the LOCKSS initiative for digital archive preservation.

*Related content and download information correct at time of download.

What determines the work values of employees in a Middle Eastern cultural context? Evidences from Jordanian organizations

Work values
of employees

505

Khaled Aladwan

*Department of Business Administration, Petra University,
Amman, Jordan*

Ramudu Bhanugopan

*School of Management and Marketing, Charles Sturt University,
Wagga Wagga, Australia, and*

Alan Fish

Faculty of Business and Law, London Metropolitan University, London, UK

Received 28 March 2014

Revised 14 April 2015

23 April 2015

20 February 2016

Accepted 22 February 2016

Abstract

Purpose – The purpose of this paper is to examine the importance of work values in Jordan; as well as to demonstrate empirically, the nature of work values.

Design/methodology/approach – The study reported in this paper tested the factor structure of work values among a group of 493 employees in Jordanian organizations using exploratory factor analysis and confirmatory factor analysis.

Findings – The results established a three-factor solution (job accomplishment, work nature, and job advancement) which was found to be appropriate to test employees' work values. The results from this study revealed interesting relationships between organizational variables (sector and type of business) and work values. The findings also demonstrated a significant relationship between demographic variables (educational background and work experience) and work values.

Research limitations/implications – The research surveyed frontline employees in the Jordanian organizations. Further research is required to confirm the generalizability of the findings in other Middle Eastern countries. Importantly, results suggest that caution should be exercised in different contexts, job levels, and sub-cultural settings.

Originality/value – The work-values construct represents a little-researched area of recent times and even less so in Islamic countries. The findings of the study offer new perspectives on the work values in the Middle Eastern settings and support the overall validity of the nomological network of work value factors.

Keywords Jordan, Work values

Paper type Research paper

Introduction

Henderson and Thompson (2003) and McDonald and Wilson (2011) defined values as the preferences and priorities which provide meaning and motivation to a person. This view was also addressed by Hirsch and Fischer (2013) in a recent study to establish differences in work values among German students with respect to entrepreneurial activity. In this sense, values are the basis for the behaviors that guide decision making and are intrinsic, ingrained, and tend to be stable frameworks of perception. For example, Whetton and Cameron (1998, p. 53) suggest that, "values are among the most stable [...] characteristics of individuals. They are the foundation upon which attitudes and personal preferences are formed."



Employee Relations

Vol. 38 No. 4, 2016

pp. 505-520

© Emerald Group Publishing Limited

0142-5455

DOI 10.1108/ER-03-2014-0034

From the perspective of “work values,” and the theory of work adjustment more specifically, Lofquist and Dawis (1978) argued that the values people bring to work (work values) were unlinked to the social environment of the organization. In this sense, employees’ work values can be the reference point for the definition of a person’s needs and objectives, and inform the basic motives and modes of conduct that are socially or personally preferred over the opposite conduct (Ferrell and Hartline, 2011). Gahan and Abeysekera (2009) addressed these concerns in their analysis of issues that shape work values within and between national cultures and self-construal. Work values can also be seen as cultural norms which advocate personal accountability and responsibility for a person’s work (McLeish, 2010). Values in this sense are bound to the assumption that work has intrinsic meaning (Mazzocchi, 2008). Work values are also used in the workplace to evaluate professional conduct and the performance of a worker, as a reflection of the organizational culture. Henderson and Thompson (2003) argued for a company to be successful, the organizational values and the values of the workers have to be aligned. This creates potential problems especially at the point of staff selection. Equally, it is unreasonable to expect that all “workers” will necessarily possess and maintain the same values as those held by the organization as a whole. Nevertheless Posner (2010) established a significant relationship between personal values congruence and organizational value clarity associated with commitment, satisfaction, motivation, anxiety, work stress, and ethics. A mismatch between the expectations of managerial behavior demanded by an organization’s culture, and the behavior that is actually required and/or occurs can arise from a lack of awareness of values, potentially resulting in an inappropriate fit between the organizational culture and the appointee in any particular business environment, including the behavior the manager believes to be appropriate. Hence, this research examines the potential influence of work values within the business environment. Posner (2010, p. 457) supports this argument indicating that organizational values are important because they:

Provide the foundation for the purpose and the goals of the enterprise. They silently give direction to the hundreds of decisions made at all levels of the organization every day. They are at the heart of the culture of an organization.

According to Johnson and Elder (2002) work values also inform the importance of work rewards. Values can also have a long-lasting influence on an individual’s career development and can also determine a worker’s degree of job satisfaction and self-fulfillment (Ferrell and Hartline, 2011). In addition, Sabir (1980) argued that intentional work adjustment depends largely on the work values of the person. Super (1970) lists the following desirable characteristics of the workplace: achievement, aesthetics, prestige, altruism, intellectual stimulation, security, independence, respect for others, way of life, supervisory relationships, variety, and creativity.

The current research has been set in Jordan which is a small, mostly arid, and lower middle-income country, located at a strategic point in the Middle East. It possesses a limited supply of petrol, gas and other natural resources, and depends more on human capital, which has shaped, developed, and improved the country’s organizations (Afana, 2004). Little is known about work environment in either Jordan or other Arab countries (Altarawneh, 2009; Al-Athari and Zairi, 2002; Abdalla and Al-Homoud, 1995). Further, the organizational development literature indicates that some Arab organizations rarely evaluate their work practices as it is not an investment to be improved upon (Al-Athari and Zairi, 2002; Abdalla and Al-Homoud, 1995). It indicates

that employment practices in many Jordanian organizations are not systematically planned, implemented or evaluated (Al Fayyad, 2005; Melham, 2004; Afana, 2004; Syed and Ali, 2010).

The general objective of this paper is to investigate employees' work values in the Middle East setting, particularly in Jordan. A review of literature leads to the proposal of three hypotheses, and is followed by the research methodology and a presentation of the results and analysis techniques (test of reliability, exploratory factor analysis (EFA), confirmatory factor analysis (CFA), and linear regression analysis). A discussion of the results includes the contribution to theory. Limitations and directions for future research conclude the paper.

Literature review and hypotheses development

This study was grounded in the theory of work adjustment (Dawis and Lofquist, 1984). Hersenson (1996) asserts work success hinges on work personality which further enhances work values. The structure of work values has been comprehensively researched (Kerin *et al.*, 2011) and some of these studies are briefly described below. The impact and influence of values on organizational behavior has been seen as important in understanding both individual and organizational activity (Posner and Munson, 1979). At an individual level Tung and Miller (1990) observed that awareness of the values of the people, with whom one is engaged in international business, is an important step in building good cross-national working relationships. Ralston *et al.* suggest that, "understanding managers' values, is critical in a global economy, since the philosophy of, and the practices pursued in a given country, by a given organization, will depend to a large extent, upon the values held by those in management." Indeed, Herbst and Houmanfar (2009) and Posner (2010) supported the notion that understanding values was important for understanding organizational behavior. Posner (2010, p. 457), for example, argued that:

Values are at the core of who people are. They influence the choices they make, the people they trust, the appeals they respond to, and the ways people invest their time and energy. In turbulent times they provide a source of direction amid conflicting views and demands.

Henderson and Thompson (2003) classify work values into control, ethical, and development values. Control values refer to planning, efficiency, administration, responsibility, and productivity. Ethical values enable effective communication when working with others. Ethical values include personal authority, listening, trust, and sharing. People believe ethical values should be upheld when dealing with others (Farber, 2006; Forsyth, 2009). Development values are related to concepts or ideas about discovering new things or improving individuals. Development values include creativity, intellectual stimulation, research, and growth (Moore and Pareek, 2010).

Nevertheless, Grojean *et al.* (2004, pp. 223-241) posited that values are the key motivating influence on behavior consistency. They highlight five perspectives in terms of how people align their values with their behavior: how we think and piece things together – our cognitive structures; the direction of our behavior – the emotional intensity of our behavior; justifications of and for our behavior – the standards we employ to judge our behavior; learning over time – the various socialization experiences we encounter; and the sources of our learning – personal, organizational, or societal.

In a longitudinal survey of MBA students over 15 years, work values were found to change. Some work values (e.g. job accomplishment and nature of work) were found to be related to working long hours and high salaries. Importantly though; the study

also demonstrated that work values can be related to decisions to change companies (Frieze *et al.*, 2006). In a further US study conducted over the last three decades, Farber (2006) showed that employers no longer value job stability as time-limited job contracts have increased and workers are constantly changing companies.

Lu and Lin (2002) also conducted a study in Taiwan, to determine the link between satisfaction in the job and work values. They found that Chinese employees' work values included creativity, assisting others, challenging work, autonomy, leadership, sense of achievement, fulfillment of ideals, respect from others, good company welfare, and leading a healthy life. They established that job turnover intentions were significantly related to work values and more specifically job accomplishment and the nature of the work. The study concluded that the most important work value dimension for job satisfaction was personal capability. It was also shown that employees' attitudes to work had shifted from jobs being just a source of income toward jobs being a means of achieving self-actualization. Lu and Lin (2002) recommend that managers use job enrichment, job enlargement, job re-design, and to also introduce performance evaluation systems designed to challenge the workers and allow for self-actualization, in order to improve worker performance.

In addition, research suggests recent graduates view the importance of work, the intrinsic rewards of work and the value of job security as being less important than previous generations (Wray-Lake *et al.*, 2009). This study followed high school seniors (from 1976 to 2005) to determine their perception of work values and the rewards from work during their transition from young employees into adulthood. Differences in adolescents' various work-related values (such as job stability and materialism) across gender, race, and career aspirations while in college were explored. The study concluded that work values changed across time due to economic and social experiences during adolescence and adulthood. Other studies have produced similar findings (Settersten *et al.*, 2005). On the basis of the studies covered in this section, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H1. Job accomplishment, nature of the work, and job advancement have positive influence on employees' work values.

Mazzocchi (2008) argued that few studies have been conducted on the relationship between work values and work behavior and outcomes. Nevertheless, Posner (2010) concluded that the association between work values, work behavior and outcomes were explained by years of experience (expressed by age, managerial experience, and hierarchical level), but greater experience did not necessarily result in congruence between personal and organizational values. McDonald and Wilson (2011) also argued that the most valuable asset that an employer can have was workers with good work values. These authors referred to "good work values" as the values that offers an employer someone who has a strong work ethic, is dependable, reliable, honest, and possesses a positive attitude.

So-called "good work values" are considered by employers when selecting employees for their company. But what might be considered "good" or positive at one organization, will not necessarily be valued elsewhere. Researchers in organizational psychology have identified practical methods of understanding, measuring, and improving employee attitudes (Kraut, 1996). Surveys of workers and their jobs demonstrated two points. First, work was not merely a source of upkeep; it was also a means of self-gratification. Second, most workers wanted to change their job (Kraut, 1996), although, Lu and Lin (2002) observed that these surveys were related to job

dissatisfaction and to high turnover rates. Thus a more informed understanding of positive work values, is needed which focusses on, employees' personal values as they relate to work turnover and job adjustment. More informed conclusions could then be drawn about the ideal work values that employers should look for when recruiting and how to elicit them from employees. In this respect, Lu and Lin (2002) argued that, research on the relationship between employee work values and organizational success would be useful for human resource managers who want to nurture and retain workers with desired work values, and whose prime concern is work value adjustments. While searching for employment and training, and addressing organizational responsibilities depend on work values, there is also a need for attention to personal values (Roe and Ester, 1999; McDonald and Wilson, 2011). Nevertheless, Ferrell and Hartline (2011) argued there was also a research gap between psychological perspectives and sociological perspectives as to understanding work values, as well as between general personal values and work values, which should also be evaluated against work activity.

Further research on how work values derive or are related to individual values; include studies by Ros *et al.* (1999) and Saari and Judge (2004). In a Spanish study of experienced teachers and education students Ros *et al.* (1999) researched "work" as a vehicle for reaching cherished goals. They concluded that career choice was more important than job experience in determining work value importance. In a similar German study, Hirsch and Fischer (2013) established linear relationship among German students as to values linked to "self-enhancement" and "openness to change," including the impact of emotional intelligence. Therefore, the following hypothesis is posited:

H2. The latent factors of work values are optimal predictors.

Hogarth (2001) focussed on teachers' work values, effective methods of gauging values, and the influence of values on the teacher's job satisfaction and professional behavior. The study concluded that work values among the teachers consisted of material reward, the nature of the work, prestige status, professional development, stability and security, and management of the organization. Hogarth found there was a direct relationship between the values of devotion and altruism, prestige, security and stability, and the degree of job performance exhibited.

Askun *et al.*'s (2010) Turkish study found no relationship between managers work values and educational background, nor between their work values and work experience. The three dominant work values held by the managers' were integrity, doing work with care, and achievement. Khasawneh (2010) reported that Jordanian university students possessed significant and fundamental work values which would help them in their future careers. Moreover, the results indicated that male and female university students placed particularly great importance on job accomplishment and advancement. Therefore, the following hypothesis was posited:

H3. There is a significant relationship between organizational (business sector and types of business and demographic (gender, age, education, and work experience) variables and work values.

In another cross-cultural study, this time in Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and Oman, Robertson *et al.* (2001) conducted a study to determine whether changes and modifications to work values was occurring among managers. The findings demonstrated that Saudi Arabia's work values are highly confined and steadfast

and different from the non-western context business environment and work values, While Kuwait and Oman were more susceptible to external influences. Consequently, the current study is designed to test a conceptual model founded on the theoretical background discussed above, and to evaluate the latent factor structure of work values among frontline employees in Jordanian organizations. The specific aim of the study is to explore and emphasize employees' work values within the Jordanian context.

Research method

Sampling design

According to Amman Stock Exchange (2010) databases there are 276 organizations in Amman, the capital of Jordan, in industries such as insurance, finance, accounting, and agriculture. Questionnaires were delivered to Jordanian citizens who worked as employees in the 276 Jordanian organizations listed. Although Arabic is the official language of Jordan, English is most commonly used in educational institutions and companies. Therefore, the questionnaire was administered in English.

The possibility of cross-cultural invariance might exist because English, while being the universal business language, can be employed differently in and across different cultures. Prior to the actual data collection, a draft version of the questionnaire was tested using a sample of 55 employees. On the basis of the comments received from this pilot test, the wording and formatting of the questionnaire was modified. Following the pilot test, questionnaires were delivered to specific contacts at each company to distribute to three randomly selected employees in each company. Anonymity was guaranteed as no data were collected that could identify respondents. A postage-paid return envelope was attached to each questionnaire. Of the 828 questionnaires delivered, 501 were returned and collected of which 493 were useable, yielding a response rate of 59 percent. The gender of respondents were evenly dispersed, with 53.5 percent being male ($n=264$) and 46.5 percent being female ($n=229$). Most respondents were between the ages of 20 and 30 years (43.6 percent) and 31 and 40 years (36.4 percent), leaving only 3 percent of the respondents over the age of 51 and 17 percent between the ages of 41 and 50 years. The educational accomplishment for the vast majority of respondents was a bachelor degree 79.9 percent ($n=394$) with only 20.1 percent holding a university diploma ($n=99$). The sample included three different sectors (service, industry, and agriculture). More specifically by industry respondents were: 10 percent in finance (e.g. commercial analyst, sales and marketing support assistant) ($n=57$), 14 percent in accounting (e.g. accountant, sales consultant) ($n=71$), 7 percent in insurance (e.g. customer service assistant, service associate) ($n=36$), 11 percent in other service (HR assistant, security officer) ($n=59$), 7 percent in an industrial setting (e.g. project service assistant, apprentices) ($n=35$), and 3 percent in agricultural (e.g. technical officer, agronomists) ($n=18$). Finally, the participants' years of experience were: 8 percent ($n=41$) less than one year; 35.6 percent ($n=174$) one to three years; 51.4 percent ($n=251$) three to five years; and 5 percent ($n=27$) five to seven years.

Research instrument

The current study employed Matic's (2008) scale (ten items) to measure the employees' work values which ascertains the implications for organizations necessarily on individual work values and organization attributes. The work value scale consists of three sub-scales. The participants were asked to think of their work values, and then to

indicate whether that value was “1 = very important,” “2 = somewhat important,” or “3 = not important.” The three sub-scales were:

- (1) job accomplishment (four items): for example having interesting work to do, from which one can get a personal sense of achievement;
- (2) work nature (three items): for example having little stress on the job; and
- (3) job advancement (three items): for example having an opportunity for advancement to higher level jobs.

Data analytic plan

A two-step approach recommended by Anderson and Gerbing (1988) was adopted to test the fit between the theoretical model and the empirical findings. First, the measurement model was tested on the complete data set using EFA employing SPSS 20.0. Second, CFA and structural equation modeling (SEM) were employed using LISREL 8.80 (Joreskog and Sorbom, 1996). SEM supports the concurrent estimation of coefficients of endogenous variables and underlying linkages between them and exogenous variables to be assessed (Joreskog and Sorbom, 1996). SEM also divulges the nomological network of latent variables in a model, and evaluates its robustness to the data provided (Mulaik and Millsap, 2000). The application of SEM demonstrates advantages of measurement and prediction (Kelloway, 1998, p. 2) over standard multiple regression methods. Also, “variation of variables is more accurately represented by SEM as path analysis is subsumed in the model” (Eriksson *et al.*, 2000). In order to determine whether the work-values scale had a valid factor structure, EFA and CFA were employed. EFA was applied to examine the employees’ work-values factorial structure according to the data collected from respondents within the Jordanian organizations, and CFA was performed to confirm the original work-values structure in Jordanian culture.

Results

As suggested by Leeflang *et al.* (2000) factor analysis was performed to check for multicollinearity. In order to determine the underlying dimensions, factors based on the latent root orientation (eigenvalue), total variance explained, and correlation matrix were determined using SPSS 20. Given the indeterminate nature of the factor structure, this study employed principal component analysis as a well-established technique for dimensionality reduction using varimax rotation to extract factors. This technique has also been well accepted and widely used as a means of finding underlying dimensions in variable sets (e.g. Hair *et al.*, 2006; Jolliffe, 1986; Velicer, 1976). Cronbach’s (1951) α coefficients were also employed to determine the reliability of the instrument. Following the recommendation of Hair *et al.* (1998) a factor loadings equal to 0.40 or greater was considered significant. Table I presents the results of factor structure for the three sub-scales of work values, the factor loadings for each item, their respective reliability, coefficient, and their subjective interrelations. The three sub-scales that emerged from the analysis demonstrated a high Cronbach’s α ($\alpha = 0.90$) and high-factor loading and correlation values. The first factor (job accomplishment) showed a high-factor loading on items associated with the study. The Bartlett test of sphericity $\chi^2 = 4,810.877$ showed significant correlation among a number of variables at $p < 0.00$.

Having found the valid factor structure for employees’ work-values variables, CFA was employed to further investigate the latent structure of the factors. CFA was

Table I.

Factor structure for work-values variable

Factor constructs	Scale items	Factor loading	Mean	SD
Job accomplishment (JAC)	JAC1 interesting work	0.883	1.32	0.518
	JAC2 job is secure	0.847	1.37	0.540
	JAC3 earn money	0.629	1.35	0.533
	JAC5 own approach	0.771	1.34	0.541
Work nature (WN)	WN4 little stress	0.871	1.42	0.548
	WN9 company concern	0.879	1.43	0.667
	WN10 good relationship	0.697	1.42	0.591
Job advancement (JAD)	JAD6 cooperation	0.806	1.26	0.505
	JAD7 decision making	0.869	1.43	0.561
	JAD8 job advancement	0.714	1.28	0.520

Notes: $n = 493$. Extraction method: PCA, principle component analysis; rotation method: varimax; KMO 0.900; Bartlett test (χ^2) 4,810.87; $\alpha = 0.90$

performed to confirm the original scale structure in the Jordanian setting and to evaluate the distinctiveness of the three factors according to the data collected from the employees.

In total, ten items were used to express the respondents' perceptions. Four items measured job accomplishment, three items reflected work nature, and three items measured job advancement. Absolute fit indices determine how well the model fits the sample data and which model represents the superior fit (Hooper *et al.*, 2008). Based on the overall goodness-of-fit (GFI) statistics, the three-factor model for work values yielded perfect-fit statistics after removing the items with the lowest coefficient values.

Table II shows the iteration process to achieve the perfect-fit model for the three variables. Hair *et al.* (2006) suggested that to be considered as having an adequate fit, all the indices must be measured against the following criteria: $\chi^2/df < 3.00$; GFI, comparative fit index (CFI), and NFI > 0.90 ; and root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) < 0.08 . The first model (M_1), consisting of all ten items measuring the three constructs, proposed an acceptable GFI and CFI.

RMSEA was high, representing the possibility of improvement to the measurement model (GFI = 0.90, CFI = 0.97, RMSEA = 0.12). According to Hooper *et al.* (2008)

Structural path	M_1		M_2	
	Std. loadings	t -values	Std. loadings	t -values
WV→JAC1	0.97	27.90**	0.99	29.96**
WV→JAC2	0.77	23.33**	0.78	23.86**
WV→JAC3	0.65	19.45**	–	–
WV→JAC5	0.96	27.98**	0.97	28.18**
WV→WN4	0.79	24.78**	0.80	24.98**
WV→WN9	0.73	22.44**	0.75	23.14**
WV→WN10	0.69	19.84**	–	–
WV→JAD6	0.75	22.94**	0.75	22.99**
WV→JAD7	0.75	23.12**	0.78	23.78**
WV→JAD8	0.66	19.82**	–	–

Table II.
Latent path coefficients for models

Notes: JAD, job accomplishment; WN, work nature; JAD, job advancement; M_1 , Model 1; M_2 , Model 2. ** $p \leq 0.05$

RMSEA cutoff points below 0.05 represent a perfect fit and the range of 0.05-0.10 is considered as an indication of fair fit. Therefore, a re-specification was conducted to find a better fit model. All non-significant paths – one item belonging to job accomplishment (JAC3), one item from work nature (WN10), and one item pertaining to job advancement (JAD8) were dropped from M₁.

The second model (M₂) consisted of seven items indicating a better fit and a perfect fit model ($\chi^2 = 32.64$, $p < 0.00$, CFI = 0.99, IFI = 0.99, NFI = 0.99, GFI = 0.99, and RMSEA = 0.06). Table III indicates the structural parameter estimates for the structural models, and Figure 1 displays the path diagram for the final model. The results of the final model (M₂) support H1 and H2.

In recent times, a few studies found a relationship between work values and demographic and organizational variables (Farber, 2006; Wray-Lake *et al.*, 2009). Regression analysis was used to investigate the value of dependent variables based on the linear relationship with one or more predictors. The linear regression analysis was performed between the three latent factor scores and the predictor variables (organizational factors and demographic variables) to examine their influence on employees' work values. The three latent factors were job accomplishment, work nature, and job advancement. The organizational variables represented sector, type of business, and number of employees, while the demographic variables represented age, gender, educational background, and years of experience.

Table IV shows that the latent factor of job accomplishment has a positive and significant relationship with educational background ($\beta = 0.091$, $p < 0.01$), sector ($\beta = 0.022$, $p < 0.01$) and type of business (0.004, $p < 0.01$), and a negative relationship with work experience ($\beta = -0.19$, $p < 0.01$). The adjusted R^2 was 0.017. The second factor (work nature) has a positive relationship with educational background ($\beta = 0.068$, $p < 0.01$), work experience ($\beta = 0.010$, $p < 0.01$), and type of business (0.017, $p < 0.01$), while a negative relationship appears between work nature and sector ($\beta = -0.45$, $p < 0.01$), with the adjusted R^2 being 0.009. The adjusted R^2 for the final factor (job advancement) is 0.001. This factor has a positive relationships with educational background ($\beta = 0.000$, $p < 0.01$), sector ($\beta = 0.017$, $p < 0.01$), work experience ($\beta = 0.047$, $p < 0.01$), and type of business (0.072, $p < 0.01$). The results emerged from the multiple regression analysis supported H3.

Goodness-of-fit results	M ₁	M ₂
<i>Absolute predictive fit</i>		
χ^2	265.04 ($p = 0.0$)	32.64 ($p = 0.000$)
df	32	11
Expected cross-validation index (ECVI)	0.63	0.14
<i>Comparative fit</i>		
NFI	0.97	0.99
NNFI	0.96	0.99
CFI	0.97	0.99
IFI	0.97	0.99
GFI	0.90	0.98
RMR	0.018	0.006
SRMR	0.061	0.020
RMSEA	0.12	0.06

Table III.
Summary of
goodness-of-fit
indices

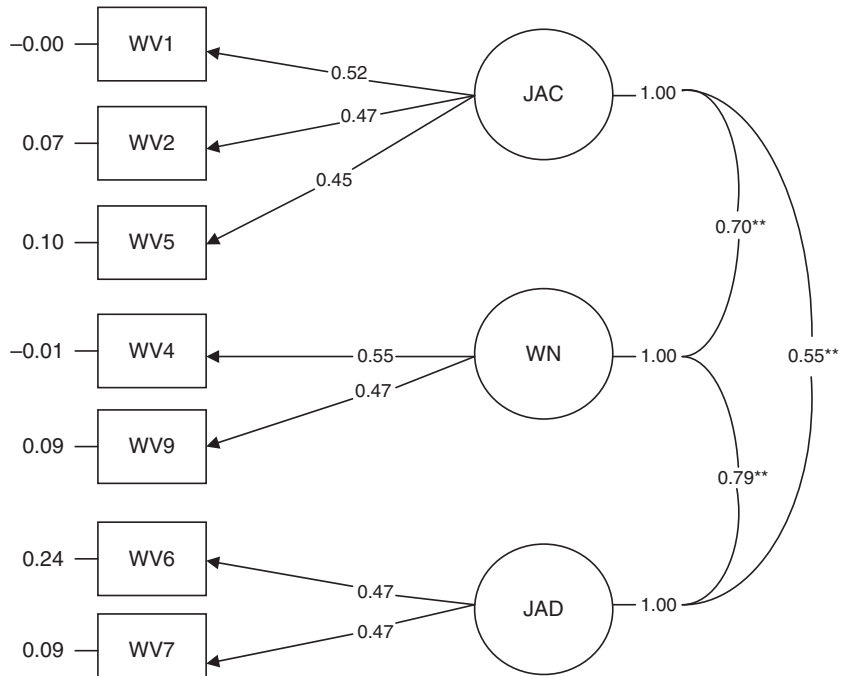


Figure 1.
Structural model
(M₂) for work values

Notes: JAC, job accomplishment; WN, work nature; JAD, job advancement.
 $\chi^2=32.64$; $df=11$; p -value=0.00060; RMSEA=0.063. ** $p \leq 0.05$

Model	Job accomplishment		Work nature		Job advancement	
	β	t	β	t	β	t
1 (Constant)		-2.449		-1.787		-1.017
Gender	0.180	0.188	0.104	2.319	0.124	2.525
Age	0.134	2.96	0.103	2.262	0.046*	1.005
Education	0.091*	2.03	0.068*	1.500	0.000*	0.005
Business sector	0.022*	0.491	-0.045*	-0.981	0.017*	0.362
Work experience	-0.019**	-0.417	0.010*	0.221	0.047**	1.024
Type of business	0.004*	0.097	0.017*	0.373	0.072*	1.555

Table IV.
Regression analysis
for work values

Notes: The adjusted R^2 for job accomplishment, work nature and job advancement was 0.017, 0.009, 0.001, respectively. * $p < 0.01$; ** $p < 0.05$

Discussion

The findings of this study demonstrate that the three latent factors within the work value scale (job accomplishment, work nature, and job advancement) are highly correlated. In line with the theoretical framework, the current study aimed to test the work values among Jordanian employees. In general, the two models pointed to significant and non-significant correlations between the items within the three latent factors. Performing EFA showed that three items among the three latent factors scored the lowest factor loadings (earn money (JAC3), job advancement (JAD8), and good

relationship (WN10) and three items scored the highest factor loading (interesting work (JAC1), decision making (JAD7), and company concern (WN4)).

The first model (M_1), consisting of all ten items measuring the three constructs, proposed an acceptable GFI and CFI but a high RMSEA. In order to achieve the exact-fit model, a final model was generated after removing the lowest significant path yielded from the first model. This second model (M_2) consisted of seven items indicating a better fit and a perfect-fit model revealing positive and significant correlations between the three factors (job accomplishment, work nature, and job advancement). These results generated from the two models support *H1* and *H2*. The findings provide significant evidence in support of these hypotheses and strong evidence to support the structure of work values among employees in Jordan.

The findings of the current study show that employees in Jordan relate their work values to individual goal attainments at work and place great importance on job accomplishment and advancement, and work nature. However, when Khasawneh (2010) examined the work values among university students in Jordan he found that a majority of the students were concerned about the values. In the current study employees working in various industries agreed on the three managerial work value factors (job accomplishment, work nature, and job advancement) in accord with most of the current work value literature. Alternatively, Askun *et al.* (2010) concluded that Turkish managers most frequently held work values were integrity, doing work with care and discipline, and achievement, and that cliquishness, laziness, and hypocrisy were least held.

Furthermore, the results demonstrated negative and positive significant linear relationships between the three work value factors (job accomplishment, work nature, and job advancement) and work experience, educational background, type of business, and sector. In contrast, Askun *et al.* (2010) found that work experience and educational background among managers had no significant relationship to work values. Whereas, in a Taiwanese study, Ho (2006) found that the educational background of nurses had a partial relationship to their work values. In a study in the Middle East, Robertson *et al.* (2001) found that Kuwait Oman and Lebanon appeared to be more susceptible to influences by internal and external sources while Saudi Arabia was more persistent and committed to their own values (and see, Tlaiss, 2013). Interestingly, the findings of the current study show that Jordanian employees are concerned about their work values.

The findings from the current study highlight the necessity for the implementation of a practical approach to investigate employees' work values in different work settings. For example, the current three-factor solution model could be used in other work-values-related studies. The research reported in this paper was undertaken using a sample of employees working in different sectors in Jordan. To enhance the model's value in various managerial contexts, revisions of the model informed by future research in differing contexts may be required.

Theoretical and practical implications

The current study provides significant theoretical implications for managing employees in Jordanian organizations with regard to their values. The study adds to Middle Eastern work-values literature by emphasizing its importance and providing a guide for future empirical research on work values. The findings of this study provide practitioners and scholars with considerable understanding about employees' work values through three factors (job accomplishment, work nature, and job advancement) which are derived from SEM, and have several implications for theory and practices.

The results from this study exposed interesting relationships between organizational variables (sector and type of business) and work values. The findings also demonstrated in significant relationships between demographic variables (educational background and work experience) and work values. Thus, this study contributes to the application and understanding of employees' work values in a significant non-western context. The findings also provide preliminary evidence regarding the relationships between demographic and organizational variables and work values within a non-western context.

The most essential contribution of this study, however, is that it builds on the findings of the latest studies in work-values literature (Ferrell and Hartline, 2011; McDonald and Wilson, 2011). The three important factors of work values derived in this study represent crucial knowledge and contribute to the theoretical base. Little theoretical or empirical attention has been given to employees' work values across different cultural settings. The current study goes some way to addressing that omission. The study covers employees' work values in various industries in Jordan. The findings have a degree of concurrence with previous research findings (e.g. Ho, 2006) but differ from other studies (e.g. Askun *et al.*, 2010). Moreover, this study contributes to the theory and literature with respect to employees' values, satisfaction, and commitment. The results offer empirical information about employees' values and culture relevant to employees in Jordan. As a consequence, an appropriate and effective work climate may be created by organizations to motivate employees. As the findings could be applied to other countries in the Middle East with similar work and cultural settings, this study also contributes generally to the knowledge and literature regarding management of employees' behavior and attitudes.

Limitations and direction for future research

Even though the current study provides significant explanation and contribution to employees' work values in Jordanian organizations, a number of limitations should be taken into consideration suggesting directions and opportunities for future researchers.

The first potential limitation stems from the population and the context that limits the generalizability of the current study. All participants were employees working in Jordanian organizations in Amman. As a consequence, the findings yielded may not be representative of employees working in different areas in Jordan. This may also be the case for different cultural settings. Cultural differences in employees' organizational commitment (Davenport, 2010), job satisfaction (Back *et al.*, 2011), and work values (Khasawneh, 2010) have been observed. Another potential limitation is that common method variance may be a concern as this study used a self-report questionnaire to collect data from the same group at the same time. Furthermore, this concern becomes strongest when both the dependent and focal explanatory variables are perceptual measures derived from the same group (Podsakoff *et al.*, 2003). Moreover, the limited amount of research available on work values in general and particularly in the Jordanian context limited the opportunity to gather content-rich information from previous research. Regardless of these limitations, the findings from the current study contribute significantly to the limited literature on employees' work values in Jordanian organizations.

Future research could concentrate on the limitations of this current study. Future studies may extend the investigation to different areas of Jordan and different countries in the Middle East to ascertain the generalizability of the findings. Second, more empirical studies are required to further investigate the temporal dynamics of the

work-values models and strengthen the nomological network of the latent variables. Third, the effect of work values on different employees needs to be examined. Work value dissimilarities are significant in an organization's environment. Managers and practitioners need to respond to employees' changing values as these are influenced by generational differences, which in turn affect human resource schemes and the organization's programs and plans.

Conclusion

The current study investigated the nature of work values among Jordanian employees. Employees' work values are a little-researched yet essential area and more focus is required on employees' attitudes and behaviors. Generally, this study was intended to stimulate the need for research on work values, and to draw scholarly attention and demonstrate empirically the nature of work values among frontline employees in Middle Eastern, and particularly Jordanian, organizations. The findings indicated that the causal model of work values is consistent with the data and contributes to a fuller understanding of how attitudes of frontline employees are associated with commitment and satisfaction in a cross-cultural environment.

The results of the current study contribute significantly to the literature and tend to be different from previous studies, as the model focussed more on the employees' work values within three factors (job accomplishment, work nature, and job advancement). Also, this model could provide the basis for further research in work values in different sectors and different countries with shared culture and work settings. The findings of this study offer new perspectives on work values. The result establishes a three-factor solution model which is appropriate for testing employees' work values in Jordan.

References

- Abdalla, I. and Al-Homoud, M. (1995), "A survey of management training and development practices in the state of Kuwait", *Journal of Management Development*, Vol. 14 No. 3, pp. 14-25.
- Afana, G. (2004), "Valuation of employees job satisfaction in Jordanian banking sector and performance", *Al-Manarh*, Vol. 7 No. 1, pp. 13-30.
- Al-Athari, A. and Zairi, M. (2002), "Training evaluation: an empirical study in Kuwait", *Journal of European Industrial Training*, Vol. 26 No. 5, pp. 241-251.
- Al Fayyad, L. (2005), "Recruitment as managerial approach and impact on competitiveness", unpublished thesis, The University of Jordan, Amman.
- Altarawneh, I. (2009), "Training and development evaluation in Jordanian banking organisations", *Research and Practice in Human Resource Management*, Vol. 17 No. 1, pp. 1-23.
- Amman Stock Exchange (2010), "Company guide", available at: www.ammanchamber.org/misc/business.asp (accessed October 15, 2009).
- Anderson, J.C. and Gerbing, D.W. (1988), "Structural modeling in practice: a review and recommended two-step approach", *Psychological Bulletin*, Vol. 103 No. 3, pp. 411-423.
- Askun, D., Oz, E. and Askun, O. (2010), "Understanding managerial work values in Turkey", *Journal of Business Ethics*, Vol. 93 No. 1, pp. 103-114.
- Back, K., Lee, C. and Abbott, J. (2011), "Internal relationship marketing: Korean casino employees' job satisfaction and organizational commitment", *Cornell Hospitality Quarterly*, Vol. 52 No. 2, pp. 111-124.

- Cronbach, L.J. (1951), "Coefficient alpha and the internal structure of tests", *Psychometrika*, Vol. 16 No. 3, pp. 297-334.
- Davenport, J. (2010), "Leadership style and organizational commitment: the moderating effect of locus of control", *ASBBS*, Vol. 17 No. 1, pp. 277-290.
- Dawis, R.V. and Lofquist, L.H. (1984), *A Psychological Theory of Work Adjustment: An Individual-Differences Model and its Applications*, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis, MN.
- Eriksson, K., Majkgard, A. and Sharma, D.D. (2000), "Path dependence and knowledge development in the internationalization process", *Management International Review*, Vol. 40 No. 4, pp. 307-328.
- Farber, H.S. (2006), "Is the company man an anachronism? Trends in the long-term employment in the US between 1973 and 2005", Network on Transitions to Adulthood Policy Brief No. 38, MacArthur Foundation Network on Transition to Adulthood and Public Policy, Philadelphia, PA.
- Ferrell, O.C. and Hartline, M.D. (2011), *Working Strategy*, South-Western Cengage Learning, Mason, OH.
- Forsyth, P. (2009), *Ethics: A Guide to the Fundamentals*, Bloomberg Press, New York, NY.
- Frieze, I.H., Olson, J.E., Murrell, A.J. and Selvan, M.S. (2006), "Work values and their effect on work behavior and work outcomes in female and male managers", *Sex Roles*, Vol. 54 Nos 1-2, pp. 83-93.
- Gahan, P. and Abeysekera, L. (2009), "What shapes an individual's work values? An integrated model of the relationship between work values, national culture and self-construal", *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, Vol. 20 No. 1, pp. 126-147.
- Grojean, M.W., Resick, C.J., Dickson, M.W. and Brent Smith, D. (2004), "Leaders, values, and organizational climate: examining leadership strategies for establishing an organizational climate regarding ethics", *Journal of Business Ethics*, Vol. 55 No. 3, pp. 223-241.
- Hair, J., Black, W., Babin, B., Anderson, R. and Tatham, R. (2006), *Multivariate Data Analysis*, Pearson Prentice Hall, Upper Saddle River, NJ.
- Hair, J.F.J., Anderson, R.E., Tatham, R.L. and Black, W.C. (1998), *Multivariate Data Analysis*, Maxwell Macmillan International, New York, NY.
- Henderson, M. and Thompson, D. (2003), *Values at Work: The Invisible Threads Between People Performance and Profit*, HarperCollins Business, Auckland, pp. 183-186, 193-208.
- Herbst, S.A. and Houmanfar, R. (2009), "Psychological approaches to values in organizations and organizational behaviour management", *Journal of Organizational Behaviour Management*, Vol. 29 No. 1, pp. 47-68.
- Hershenson, D.B. (1996), "Work adjustment: a neglected area in career counseling", *Journal of Counseling and Development*, Vol. 74 No. 5, pp. 442-446.
- Hirsch, A. and Fischer, S. (2013), "Work values as predictors of entrepreneurial career intentions", *Career Development International*, Vol. 18 No. 3, pp. 216-231.
- Ho, C. (2006), "A study of the relationships between work values, job involvement and organisational commitment among Taiwanese nurses", PhD thesis, Queensland University of Technology, Brisbane.
- Hogarth, R.M. (2001), *Educating Values*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, IL.
- Hooper, D., Coughian, J. and Mullen, M. (2008), "Structural equation modeling: guidelines for determining model fit", *Electronic Journal of Business Research Methods*, Vol. 6 No. 1, pp. 53-60.
- Johnson, M.K. and Elder, G.H. (2002), "Educational pathways and work value trajectories", *Sociological Perspectives*, Vol. 45 No. 2, pp. 113-138.

- Jolliffe, I.T. (1986), *Principal Component Analysis*, Springer-Verlag, New York, NY.
- Joreskog, K.G. and Sorbom, D. (1996), *LISREL 8: Users' Reference Guide*, Scientific Software International, Chicago, IL.
- Kelloway, E.K. (1998), *Using LISREL for Structural Equation Modeling: A Researcher's Guide*, Sage, London.
- Kerin, R.A., Hartley, S.W. and Rudelius, W. (2011), *Work*, 4th ed., McGraw-Hill Irwin, New York, NY.
- Khasawneh, S. (2010), "Work values of human resources in Jordan: a vocational approach for predicting student success in the workplace", *International Journal for Research in Education*, Vol. 27, pp. 15-36.
- Kraut, A.I. (1996), *Organizational Surveys: Tools for Assessment and Change*, Jossey-Bass, San Francisco, CA.
- Leeflang, P., Wittink, D., Wedel, M. and Naert, P. (2000), *Building Models for Marketing Decisions*, Kluwer Academic Publishers, Boston, MA.
- Lofquist, L.H. and Dawis, R.V. (1978), "Values as second-order needs in the theory of work adjustment", *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, Vol. 12 No. 1, pp. 12-19.
- Lu, L. and Lin, G.C. (2002), "Work values and job adjustment of Taiwanese workers", *Research and Practice in Human Resource Management*, Vol. 10 No. 2, pp. 70-76.
- McDonald, M. and Wilson, H. (2011), *Employment: How to Use Them*, Wiley, Hoboken, NJ.
- McLeish, B. (2010), *Successful Values for Nonprofit Organizations: Winning in the Age of the Elusive Donor*, Wiley, New York, NY.
- Matic, J. (2008), "Cultural differences in employee work values and their implications for management", *Management*, Vol. 13 No. 2, pp. 93-104.
- Mazzocchi, M. (2008), "Statistics for employee values", Sage, Los Angeles, CA.
- Melham, Z. (2004), "Significant conditions of employees recruitment: the case of Jordanian four star hotels", unpublished thesis, The University of Jordan, Amman.
- Moore, K. and Pareek, N. (2010), "Work values: the basics", Routledge, London.
- Mulaik, S.A. and Millsap, K.S. (2000), "Doing the four-step right", *Structural Equation Modeling*, Vol. 7 No. 1, pp. 36-73.
- Podsakoff, P.M., MacKenzie, S.B., Lee, J.Y. and Podsakoff, N.P. (2003), "Common method biases in behavioral research: a critical review of the literature and recommended remedies", *Journal of Applied Psychology*, Vol. 88 No. 5, pp. 879-903.
- Posner, B.Z. (2010), "Another look at the impact of personal and organizational values congruency", *Journal of Business Ethics*, Vol. 97 No. 4, pp. 535-541.
- Posner, B.Z. and Munson, J.M. (1979), "The importance of values in understanding organizational behaviour", *Human Resource Management*, Vol. 18 No. 3, pp. 9-14.
- Robertson, C., Al-Habib, M., Al-Khatib, J. and Lanoue, D. (2001), "Beliefs about work in the Middle East and the convergence versus divergence of values", *Journal of World Business*, Vol. 36 No. 3, pp. 223-244.
- Roe, R.A. and Ester, P. (1999), "Values and work: findings and theoretical perspective: in values and work", *Applied Psychology: An international Review*, Vol. 48 No. 1, pp. 1-21.
- Ros, M., Schwartz, S.H. and Surkiss, S. (1999), "Basic individual values, work values, and the meaning of work", *Applied Psychology: An International Review*, Vol. 48 No. 1, pp. 49-71.
- Saari, L.A. and Judge, T.A. (2004), "Employee attitudes and job satisfaction", *Human Resource Management*, Vol. 43 No. 4, pp. 395-407.

- Sabir, A. (1980), "Work values and attitudes: a review of recent research and its implications", *Interchange*, Vol. 11 No. 3, pp. 1980-1981.
- Settersten, R.A., Furstenberg, F.F. and Rumbaut, R.G. (2005), *On the Frontier of Adulthood: Theory, Research, and Policy*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, IL.
- Super, D.E. (1970), *Manual for the Work Value Inventory*, Houghton Mifflin, Boston, MA.
- Syed, J. and Ali, A.J. (2010), "Principles of employment relations in Islam: a normative view", *Employee Relations*, Vol. 32 No. 5, pp. 454-469.
- Tlaiss, H.A. (2013), "Determinants of job satisfaction in the banking sector: the case of Lebanese managers", *Employee Relations*, Vol. 35 No. 4, pp. 377-395.
- Tung, R.L. and Miller, E.L. (1990), "Managing in the twenty first century: the need for global orientation", *Management International Review*, Vol. 30 No. 1, pp. 5-18.
- Velicer, W.F. (1976), "Determining the number of components from the matrix of partial correlations", *Psychometrika*, Vol. 41 No. 3, pp. 321-327.
- Whetten, D.A. and Cameron, K. (1998), *Developing Management Skills*, 4th ed., Addison-Wesley, Reading, MA.
- Wray-Lake, L., Syvertsen, A., Briddell, L., Flanagan, C. and Osgood, W. (2009), "Exploring the changing meaning of work for American high school seniors from 1976 to 2005", Network on Transitions to Adulthood Research Network Working Paper, The Pennsylvania State University, Pennsylvania, PA, available at: www.transad.pop.upenn.edu/downloads/views%20on%20work.pdf (accessed July 10, 2011).

Further reading

- Aghazadeh, S.M. (2003), "The future of human resource management", *Work Study*, Vol. 52 No. 4, pp. 201-207.
- Browne, M.W. and Cudeck, R. (1992), "Alternative ways of assessing model fit", *Sociological Methods and Research*, Vol. 21 No. 2, pp. 230-258.
- Ellickson, M.C. (2002), "Determinants of job satisfaction of municipal government employees", *Public Personnel Management*, Vol. 31, pp. 343-358.
- Hu, L. and Bentler, P.M. (1999), "Cutoff criteria for fit indexes in covariance structure analysis: conventional criteria versus new alternatives", *Structural Equation Modeling*, Vol. 6 No. 1, pp. 1-55.
- Marsh, H.W., Balla, J.R. and McDonald, R.P. (1988), "Goodness of fit indexes in confirmatory factor analysis: the effect of sample size", *Psychological Bulletin*, Vol. 3 No. 103, pp. 391-410.
- Ralston, D.A., Gustafson, D.J., Cheung, F.M. and Terpstra, R.H. (1993), "Differences in managerial values: a study of US, Hong Kong, and PRC managers", *Journal of International Business Studies*, Vol. 24 No. 2, pp. 249-275.
- Rokeach, M. (1973), *The Nature of Human Values*, Free Press, New York, NY.

Corresponding author

Ramudu Bhanugopan can be contacted at: bramudu@csu.edu.au

For instructions on how to order reprints of this article, please visit our website:

www.emeraldgroupublishing.com/licensing/reprints.htm

Or contact us for further details: permissions@emeraldinsight.com