

## Work Values in Pakistan: A Comparative Prospective for Worker's Characteristics

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*Work values impact individuals' behavior. This paper aims to study work values from three angles. First, to understand the effects of worker characteristics, such as gender, age, marital status, and dependents. Second, it seeks to determine the impact of generational differences on work values. Last, it attempts to explore the impact of culture by comparing the study results with previous studies using the same work values. Employees of private sector organizations in Pakistan's service and manufacturing industry are the target population. Initially, a pilot study was done to ensure consistency and unambiguity in the questionnaire. For the main study, random snowball sampling uses the self-administered questionnaire. It results in a usable sample of 172 employees. Various statistical techniques such as descriptive statistics, bi-variate correlations, and independent sample tests are used to analyze data. The study results show that age does not influence employees' work values. In contrast, the individual effect of gender and dependents is present on only one work value (moral importance of work), and the effect of marital status is also on only one work value (desirability of work outcomes). Lastly, the comparative analysis shows that the importance of work values varies in different countries, although the ratings are not uniformly different. The study's findings have been analyzed regarding their practical and theoretical implications. Future research directions are also provided.*

**Keywords:** *work values, no-leisure, craftsmanship, asceticism, desirability, generational differences.*

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### Introduction

“Values are the most distinctive property or defining characteristic of an organization.”  
Rokeach

In today's competitive business environment, employees have become a tool for providing an organization with a competitive edge makes them the most important asset (Raub et al., 2024). The workplace in post-COVID-19 is more complex and stable as the employees are constantly bombarded with new challenges and issues, be it a pandemic or the rise of artificial

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intelligence. They need to relentlessly struggle to find innovative solutions, make decisions, prioritize, resolve problems, and manage them more humanely than an artificial intelligence bot if they are to retain their jobs. Due to the continuous changes occurring at work, organizations constantly seek ways to motivate their employees and gain their cooperation and commitment to work effectively and efficiently in dynamic environments. Obtaining employee commitment is integral in ensuring maximum employee potential utilization at work. In such a scenario, work values have taken a center seat in organizations as they influence an employee's work commitment considerably (Rawwas et al., 2013; Nauman et al., 2024). Since values have been known to be relatively stable (Ravlin & Meglino, 1989), organizations need to understand what they are and how they develop. Therefore, there is a need to study work values as they will eventually determine the work climate of organizations.

Work values have been a subject of interest for many decades since the work of Weber (1958) on the Protestant Work Ethics, which is a concept that emphasizes hard work, frugality, and diligence as part of Christian beliefs (Furnham, 2021). Researchers have given special attention to work values in many areas, such as industrial psychology and comparative management (Ali & Al-Kazemi, 2005). Work values are an essential factor in understanding an individual's motivation at work (Locke, 1991), and they have been defined as beliefs and personal standards that guide individuals so they can function in society (Rokeach, 1973). Multiple studies have indicated outcomes that are a result of work values such as their decision-making processes (Rounds & Armstrong, 2005), job satisfaction and tenure (Dawis & Lofquist, 1984; Locke, 1986), work expectations, and willingness to invest cognitively in work roles (Neil & Snizek, 1988), showing initiative in one's work (Pizam et al., 1980) and job choice decisions (Judge & Bretz, 1991).

The professional world has become very progressive and competitive with time. Organizations need confident and self-driven employees to survive today's cut-throat, competitive business world. Organizations spend millions in training employees, putting much effort into making the best compensation plans to motivate their employees fully. To get maximum productivity out of these employees, these organizations must understand their employees' motivating factors. What drives employees? HRM practitioners need to understand their employees. They need to know what type of work environment can provide employees with mental peace and, hence, work devotedly in their organizations. Therefore, this study has been conducted on employees working in private-sector organizations in Pakistan. The private sector organizations provide the right platform to carry out this study because these organizations put special effort into being equal-opportunity employers and hiring diverse employees.

The workplace is increasingly becoming age-diverse. It is essential to understand the values younger employees bring to work. Are the work values of younger employees the same as those of the older employees, or has there been a significant change due to changes in the value system? There is an increase in the incidences in the workplace where older employees are reporting to younger employees for various reasons. Understanding whether any value gap exists is crucial since this gap may result in employee misunderstanding, leading to workplace conflict. From an HRM perspective, if there are differences in work values due to age, the HRM practices used to motivate and engage older employees may not bring the same positive result for younger employees.

Similarly, more women have started working in previously male-dominated areas, and organizations encourage female employees to enter the workforce. Females are also occupying many top-level positions. This considers whether the work values of women and men are similar or whether HRM practitioners need to adopt different motivators for the two genders. Moving forward to marital status and dependents, due to the inflationary demands, it has become financially difficult to maintain a good standard of living with the addition of dependent family members such as spouses, parents, and children. This study also aims to study whether the values

held by employees differ due to the effect of marriage and having dependents. This will allow researchers to answer questions about the types of practices that can be aimed at attracting and retaining married employees and employees who have dependent responsibilities.

It is pertinent to mention here that since there has been very little work done in the area of HRM in Pakistan, most of the management practices have either been developed through trial and error or adopted from Western cultures and organizations. This leads to a need for answers when it comes to explaining whether the research done on work values and HRM practices of the West can apply to a country like Pakistan, which has a very distinct culture. This study also hopes to lessen this gap by comparing the results of this study to similar studies (Cherrington, 1979; Cugin, 2012; Smola & Sutton, 2002) done in the West to determine the applicability of the results.

## Literature Review

Values are one of the forces that tend to influence the behavior of individuals (Rokeach, 1973) or what people believe to be right or wrong (Smola & Sutton, 2002). Work values have been classified as a subset of social values that suggest general patterns of behavior that individuals should demonstrate (Fallding, 1965; Rokeach, 1973). They are seen as valuable by society because individuals in a society must behave in a certain way that is generally acceptable to the masses (Judge & Bretz, 1991).

Work values have been defined in several ways. For example, George and Jones (2002) explain it as a worker's attitude toward achieving expectations in the workplace. It is also defined as the outcomes people feel they should attain through work (Cherrington, 1980; Twenge et al., 2010). Similarly, Dose (1997) explains them as evaluative standards relating to work or the work environment by which individuals discern what is right or assess the importance of preferences. Likewise, Lyons et al. (2006) define them as generalized beliefs about the desirability of specific attributes of work (e.g., pay, autonomy, and working conditions) and work-related outcomes (e.g., accomplishment, fulfillment, prestige).

Work values are generally derived from broader general values people hold (George & Jones, 1997; Roe & Ester, 1999). Dawis and Lofquist (1984) define work values as second-order needs and proposed six value dimensions, which were categorized into three sources of work environment reinforcers: self (achievement and autonomy), social (altruism and status), and environment (safety and comfort). Alternately, Hardings and Hikspoors (1995) categorize work value according to the function the work has to fulfill for individuals, which are personal meaning (self-development, self-actualization, etc.), exchange (security, money, and benefits), social contact (relationship aspect), and status (prestige, power, and authority).

Despite the different ways work values have been categorized, there has been consensus on at least two types of work values: intrinsic and extrinsic. Extrinsic work values tend to focus on the outcome of work or the material aspects of work, such as pay, benefits, status, and job security. Intrinsic work values are the opposite and refer to the psychological satisfaction of an individual or the intangible rewards an individual may get from working, such as the learning potential, challenge, opportunity to be creative, or the variety of tasks (Deci & Ryan, 1985; Degenais, 1998; Elizur, 1984; Porter & Lawler, 1968; Ryan & Deci, 2000). Some other categories of work values that researchers have come up with are social work values, which relate to the relationships at work, i.e., with co-workers, supervisors, and other people (Elizur, 1984; Johnson, 2002; Miller et al., 2002; Super, 1970); altruistic work values, which involves helping others or making a contribution to the society (Dawis & Lofquist, 1984; Johnson, 2002; Miller et al., 2002); and prestige values, which relate to power, status, and influence (Super, 1970).

Work values tend to form an employee's perception (Ravlin & Meglino, 1987) about his choices at the workplace (Dose, 1997; Judge & Bretz, 1992; Lofquist & Dawis, 1971; Young,

1984; Zytowski, 1994;). They tend to influence employee's job satisfaction (Bizot & Goldman, 1993; Dawis, 2002; Rounds, 1990), commitment (Dawis & Lofquist, 1984; Gursoy et al., 2008; Zytowski, 1994), general attitude towards work (Chu, 2007), rationalization towards individual's past behavior (Nord et al., 1988; Williams, 1979), work performance (Swenson & Herche, 1994), predict vocational interests (Berings et al., 2004), and job retention (Hesketh et al., 1992). Alternately, there could also be negative consequences such as dissatisfaction (Mitra et al., 1992), jealousy, and envy (Salovey & Rodin, 1991), which may occur when employees cannot use their work values.

The congruence theory suggests that work values significantly impact the effectiveness of HRM practices. According to the congruence theory, the greater the degree of congruence or fit between various components, the greater the effectiveness of the organization as a whole. If the components are not aligned properly, they will not work well with each other (Nadler & Tushman, 1980) and reduce organizational functioning.

### *Gender and Work Values*

Gender is probably the most popular demographic variable in work values studies (Priyadarshi & Kumar, 2009). Within the traditional family roles, men, being the breadwinners, value higher pay, prestige, and career success, while women in the helping role place less value on income and are less inclined to take jobs that will interfere with their role as homemakers (Elizur's;1984; Gottfredson, 1981; Harris & Earle, 1986). Likewise, Beutell and Brenner (1986) find some differences that are consistent with the traditional male and female inclination (e.g., pleasant associates and comfortable work environment for women and risk-taking and advancement for men) while others are in contrast (e.g., development of knowledge/skill for women and leisure time and security for men).

Men generally tend to be more concerned about economic rewards, independence, mastery, dominance (Mannheim's, 1993), competitiveness (Centers & Bugenthal; 1966) and long-term career goals (Singer & Streffle, 1954b; Betz & O'Connell, 1989; Li et al., 2008), while women tend to be concerned with internal rewards like job affiliation, social approval and shorter-term career goals (Abu-Saad & Isralowitz's, 2010; Elizur, 1994; Lynn, 1993; Taveggia & Ziemba, 1978). Alternately, Herzberg et al. (1957) report that women place greater importance on extrinsic work values, such as pay and working conditions, while men emphasize intrinsic work values, such as overall job satisfaction and the opportunity to use one's abilities.

Similarly, Walker et al. (1982) find that women value the convenience aspect of work more than men. Research on work values (Ali & Al-Kazeemi's 2005; Azam & Brauchle, 2003; Hill, 1997) of Kuwaiti managers reports that female managers score higher than male managers on work value questionnaire (Elizur, 1984) due to women developing an understanding that it is their work involvement and commitment to their organizations that secure their place in the workplace. Rowe and Snizek (1995), Harris and Earle (1986), and Wright et al. (2021), who studied five fundamental work values, did not give any noticeable gender differences between working adults.

Traditionally, two broad approaches explain the differences between gender socialization and social structural models. Supporters of the gender socialization model state that the observed gender differences in work values reflect traditional patterns of gender socialization. On the other hand, supporters of the social structural model argue that observed differences in work values are present due to the different positions occupied by men and women in the workplace hierarchy and their differential access to the reward structures (Rowe & Snizek, 1995).

### *Age and Work Values*

Work values are acquired partially through socialization, similar to how other moral behaviors develop in people (Cherrington et al., 1979). Lyons et al. (2007; Rockeach, 1973)

explain that values are learned during an individual's formative years and remain consistent throughout life. However, the importance of some values may change compared to others, but it does not change the importance of the value for the individual. Lubinski et al. (1996) support this claim in their study on adolescents whose values remain unchanged over 20 years. Hence, age does not always affect work values (Taylor & Thompson, 1976; Whiteoak et al., 2006)

Alternately, in a survey conducted by Burke (2005) in the West, it is seen that 58% of HRM professionals state that there are conflicts between older and younger employees, and these are primarily due to dissimilarities in their perception of work ethics (De Clercq et al., 2019) and in work-life balance requirements. Li et al. (2008) explain that younger employees (under 30) are significantly different from older employees. For example, Singer and Steffle (1954) report that adolescents place more importance on having an enjoyable, highly-paid job where they could make a name for themselves, compared to adults who place more importance on having independence in their jobs. Similarly, Susman (1973) finds that older workers report more incredible pride in job accomplishment than younger workers.

### *Marital Status and Work Values*

Harris and Earle (1986) state that marital status influences the degree of importance people attach to work values. When comparing respondents on intrinsic/extrinsic values they consider essential, results show that formerly married women (separated or divorced) and married men select more intrinsic/extrinsic work values than married women and single adults. Similarly, in Johnson's (2005) research on the marital status of men and women and its effect on work values, she finds that married women place less importance on extrinsic rewards than single women, but this is not the case for married men. Tanaka's recent generalized cross-cultural study (2011) finds that marriage negatively influences employees' work values in Pakistan, Italy, and Germany. Tanaka (2011) further explains that school education, religion, gender, marital status, and age significantly influence employees' work values.

### *Dependents and Work Values*

The effect of having dependents on work values is another area of interest when studying work values. Witt (1988) has found that the family situation of employees is an essential factor to consider when determining differences in work values. This variable is a step further than marital status since marital status only adds a spouse to one's life. Dependents can be spouses, children, or parents. However, most of the research on determining the effects of dependents on employees' work values categorically considers children as dependent only. It does not consider the responsibility of spouses or parents. This may be attributed to the fact that in Western cultures (Shi et al., 2023; Sullivan, 2018), only children below a certain age are considered dependent on their parents.

Walker et al. (1982) and Adler and Brayfield, (1997) explain that women with children experience reduced work involvement. Furthermore, Harris and Earle (1986) add that parenting has almost no impact on men but a significant effect on women, with intrinsic values being less important to women who have no children. According to Johnson's (2005) research, men with children are likely to attach greater importance to extrinsic rewards than men who have not become parents.

### *Generational Differences and Work Values*

People who have grown up in similar times are likely to have similar values and beliefs that shape how they behave in the workplace (Glass, 2007; Inglehart, 1997). A generation is a group that shares a particular span of birth years and a set of worldviews grounded in defining social or historical events during the generation's formative developing years (Cogin, 2012;

Kupperschmidt, 2000). Generational groups also referred to as generational cohorts, differentiate one generation from another and tend to leave effects that remain relatively stable throughout the life of individuals (Jurkiewicz & Brown, 1998). Generational differences are considered as a factor distinct from age.

Workplace researches (e.g., Smola & Sutton, 2002; Seifert et al., 2023) include at least four generations covering more than 60 years: Silent Generation, Veteran, Traditionalists, Baby Boomers, Generation X, and Generation Y (Cogin, 2012; Queiri et al., 2014). Chen and Choi (2008) state that Baby Boomers value altruism and intellectual stimulation more than Generation X or Y. They value personal growth more than the younger generations. Generation X values security and independence more than the other generations, while Generation Y ranks higher in economic returns than the other two generations. Lyons et al. (2005; Schwartz, 1992) found generational differences in four of the five work values they studied. Altruistic work values are found to be decreasing in importance with each generation. Younger generations place more importance on social work values, such as interacting with others, than older generations. Similarly, Cennamo and Gardener (2008) reveal that younger groups place more importance on status and freedom of work values than the older group. However, no significant differences are found in extrinsic, intrinsic, altruistic, or social values. Twenge et al. (2010) further add that leisure and extrinsic values increase steadily over the generations, and work centrality declines. Social values and intrinsic values are rated lower by Generation Y than by Baby Boomers.

On the other hand, researchers (Jurkiewicz & Brown, 1998; Parker & Chusmir, 1990) find that the Veterans, Baby Boomers, and Generation X hold similar values. Employees generally want to progress in income, responsibility, and influence within the organization. In his study, Kunreuther (2003) finds that the three generational cohorts share similar qualities. However, some differences between Baby Boomers and Generation X are present in their concern about work-life balance, their motivation to work, and their views about the future. Parry and Urwin (2011) also review that generational differences in work values, even those studies that have found significant differences, are inconsistent with some popular stereotypes about each generational cohort. There is also the issue of how much the results can be relied on since most studies have used cross-sectional rather than longitudinal data. Due to this, the differences found in the studies may be due to age effect, period effect, or life stage effect rather than generational effect. Another aspect that needs attention is how little agreement each researcher has when defining a generation regarding birth years. There are some commonly used boundaries, but as such, there is no clear demarcation.

### *Work Values in Pakistan and other countries*

Looking at it from a cultural point of view, many studies have been conducted on work values worldwide. For example, Cherrington et al. (1979) explore the relationship between age and six work values in the USA. Their findings show that older workers place greater importance on the moral importance of work and pride in craftsmanship. In contrast, the younger group of workers place more value on money, colleagues, and the acceptability of welfare as an alternative to work. Similarly, Li et al. (2008) and McIntosh and Zhang (2012) on the Chinese workforce to determine the demographic effect of four variables, age, position, education, and gender, on work values. Their results imply that higher work values are experienced by older workers, managers, educated, and, to some extent, male employees.

A study conducted in Germany by Adler and Brayfield (1997) on the work values of women with and without children shows mixed results. Women's attitudes towards work remained the same either way. Cennamo and Gardener's (2008) multi-industry study of generational differences in New Zealand on work values finds few differences in work values while comparing Baby Boomers, Generation X, and Generation Y. Interestingly, Abu Saad and Isralowitz (2010) research in Israel shows that the work value patterns are not consistent with

the traditional Western theories of gender-based work value differences. In their study, the work values of men and women incline towards 'androgynization' – men and women either not showing any differences at all or crossing gender lines on the traditional male and female values. Whiteoak et al. (2006) studied the relationship between age and Islamic work ethics in the Arab culture. Their research reveals that age does not affect the work values of employees. They suggest the results may be due to intense social pressures to conform to cultural expectations.

### *Research Gap*

As reviewed above, it can be seen that work values are a vast research topic. It has been studied for many years, but no consensus has been reached regarding the effects of different variables on work values since there may be many unexplored factors. Its implications for organizations must be recognized since the workplace has become increasingly dynamic, and there is a need to thoroughly understand the factors that can be used to increase the productivity of human resources at work. Moreover, the research regarding work values in Pakistan is still in its elementary stages. Since it has been established that the effect of culture on work values is present, there is a need to carry out a detailed empirical investigation so that the organizations operating in Pakistan and those planning on opening/expanding their businesses in the country can gain the insight needed to manage the Pakistani employees effectively.

## **Method**

### *Research Design*

This research aims to examine the impact of some socio-demographic variables on the work values of employees in Pakistan. Work values are essential to study when determining how employees will behave since values individuals hold tend to influence behavior (Nord et al., 1988). Therefore, it is equally important to understand the factors affecting work values. This research is descriptive and analytical. The respondents are employees who are sent questionnaires at their offices or homes, so the study settings in our case are non-contrived and have minimal researcher interference. The unit of analysis in this study is individual employees working in Pakistan's service and manufacturing sector private organizations. The time horizon for this study is cross-sectional, and the data collection was completed in about one month.

### *Sample and Data Collection*

The target population is all employees working in the manufacturing or service sector in any private organization in Pakistan. All employees of varying ages, designations, hierarchical levels, marital status, gender, and religion are included. Diversity is desired since the effects of sociodemographic variables have to be examined. The employees are randomly selected from manufacturing and service sector organizations in wide-ranging departments.

Data is collected from offices and also sent to employees via email. It is personally given to employees in their offices and either filled on the spot or collected back at a specified time. Email is used in some instances because this facility is available in every organization and allows employees to send back their filled responses immediately. It is also a better medium where employees are based in other cities, and it is impossible to collect the questionnaires physically. This allows a greater response rate from out-of-city employees, which may not have been possible if the questionnaires were couriered. Participation in the survey is entirely voluntary, and no incentives are offered to complete it.

Before carrying out the main study, a pilot study determines how well employees can understand the questionnaire. The result is satisfactory, due to which the main study is carried out. To examine the effect of different variables on work values, a total of 250 questionnaires

were distributed, of which 172 completed questionnaires were received. This shows a response rate of approximately 69%.

### *Measurements*

This study uses a self-administered questionnaire-based survey. It is designed in English since it is the official language used in all workplaces. Since the wording used in the survey is relatively simple, employees are expected to understand the meaning of each statement. The questionnaire length is kept short since employees are expected to be busy with work and may not fill out a lengthy questionnaire. Each question is also precise to allow easy understanding so that less time is taken to complete the questionnaire. Various demographic items are requested, such as age, gender, mother tongue, marital status, and background characteristics (i.e., whether parents are alive, if they are living with their parents, etc.).

Work values are measured through seven variables: Hard work, non-leisure, independence, asceticism, desirability of work outcomes, pride in craftsmanship, and moral importance of work (Cogin, 2012). Four dimensions have been taken from the Blau and Ryan (1997) Protestant Work Ethic scale: hard work, non-leisure, independence, and asceticism. Each is measured through three items on a six-point Likert scale (1 is for 'very strongly disagree' and 6 is for 'very strongly agree').

The other three variables use the work value measure by Cherrington (1980). The desirability of work outcomes is measured using a nine-item scale. This was initially developed using a scale of 0-100, but this scale was modified for consistency by Smola and Sutton (2002) to 0-10. Cogin (2012) subsequently used this scale modification, forming our survey's basis. Respondents are asked to rate each statement on how important it is to them, with a rating of 0 as unimportant and 10 as very important.

Similarly, Pride in Craftsmanship is measured by a six-item scale using a six-point Likert scale (where 1 is for 'Very Strong Disagree' and 6 is for 'Very Strongly Agree'). One of the items in this is reverse-coded for confirmation. The moral Importance of Work variable consists of five items. It is also rated using a six-point Likert scale, where 1 is for 'Very Strongly Disagree' and 6 stands for 'Very Strongly Agree'. The worker characteristics are the factors which can impact the employees' work values. The variables used in our study are gender, age, marital status, and having dependents.

## **Results**

### *Respondent Characteristics*

The data of the 172 respondents reveals that about 46% are below 30 years old, while approximately 53% are above 30 years old or less. Moving towards marital status, about 59% of the respondents in this study are married. Another category of living with parents shows that nearly 74% of the respondents live with their parents or their spouse's parents. Lastly, about 63% of the respondents have dependents. Dependents include parents, spouses, and children.

Regarding the linguistic characteristics of the respondents, the data shows that the majority, about 67 %, report Urdu as their mother tongue, while 33% report Punjabi as their mother tongue. None of the respondents mentions any other language. Concerning the language of instruction used at school, about 66% of the respondents use English as their medium of instruction. This percentage for Urdu and more than one language is about 17% each.

The data shows that about 58% of the respondents are service sector employees, while about 42% work in the manufacturing sector. This is their current employment status, and they do not consider whether there are any sector shifts in their careers. Hierarchically, the majority of the respondents, about 69%, are occupying middle-level positions. In comparison, almost 17% of



the respondents are in upper-level positions, and the remaining are in lower-level jobs in their respective organizations.

**Table 4.1**  
**Respondent Characteristics**

Variables	Category	Gender (%)		Total
		Male	Female	
Age	Up to 30	41.6	55.9	46.5
	Above 30	58.4	44.1	53.5
Marital status	Single	30.1	61	40.7
	Married	69.9	39	59.3
Living with parents	No	24.8	28.8	26.2
	Yes	75.2	71.2	73.8
Dependents	No	26.5	55.9	36.6
	Yes	73.5	44.1	63.4
Mother tongue	Urdu	65.5	69.5	66.9
	Punjabi	34.5	30.5	33.1
Medium of instruction at school	Urdu	19.5	11.9	16.9
	English	61.1	74.6	65.7
	Mixed	19.5	13.6	17.4
Sector	Service	61.1	50.8	57.6
	Manufacturing	38.9	49.2	42.4
	Upper	19.5	11.9	16.9
Hierarchal level	Middle	69.9	67.8	69.2
	Lower	10.6	20.3	14

### *Descriptive Statistics*

Table 4.2 presents the descriptive statistics of the seven work values. All the values are measured on a scale of 1 to 6 except for the desirability of work outcome, rated on a scale of 0 to 10. Of the six work values, non-leisure has the lowest mean (3.33), whereas pride in craftsmanship has the highest mean (4.78).

**Table 4.2**  
**Descriptive Statistics**

Scales	Min	Max	Mean	SD
1. Hard work	1.33	5.67	4.51	0.80
2. Non-Leisure	1.33	5.67	3.33	0.81
3. Independence	2.00	5.67	3.95	0.74
4. Asceticism	1.67	5.67	3.96	0.80
5. Desirability of work outcome	2.89	9.89	7.75	1.31
6. Pride in Craftsmanship	1.67	5.83	4.78	0.65
7. Moral Importance of Work	1.25	6.00	4.40	0.83

### *Bi-Variate Correlations*

The Bi-variate Pearson Correlation among the seven work values is presented in Table 4.3. It may be noted that asceticism has significant correlations with all the other six work values. In contrast, the moral importance of work and pride in craftsmanship have significant correlations

with all work values except one (i.e., nonleisure). Independence is significantly correlated with five variables, i.e., hard work (as mentioned above), asceticism, non-leisure, pride in craftsmanship, and moral importance of work. Hard work is positively correlated with four work values, i.e., asceticism, independence, pride in craftsmanship, and moral importance of work. Non-leisure significantly correlates with two work values, i.e., independence and asceticism.

**Table 4.3**  
**Bi-variate Pearson Correlation**

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Hard work	1					
2. Non-Leisure	0.036	1				
3. Independence	0.306**	0.186*	1			
4. Asceticism	0.221**	0.246**	0.352**	1		
5. Desirability of work outcome	0.097	0.068	0.114	0.175*	1	
6. Pride in Craftsmanship	0.396**	-0.014	0.394**	0.392**	0.291**	1
7. Moral Importance of Work	0.561**	0.134	0.464**	0.325**	0.259**	0.507**

Notes: \* P < 0.05; \*\* P < 0.01

Overall, none of the correlation coefficients is too high, and the highest value is for the correlation between hard work and the moral importance of work (coefficient = 0.561, p < 0.01). This indicates that our data is accessible from the problem of multi-collinearity.

*Work Values Comparison with Other Studies*

The mean scores of the variables are compared to the work value variables used in the current study and three previous studies. It should be noted that only those researchers who have used the same work value variables are used for comparative analysis. Moreover, two of the research studies were conducted in the USA (Blau & Ryan, 1997; Smola & Sutton, 2002), while the third one (Cogin, 2012) was conducted using samples from five countries. It is worth mentioning that the present study is the only one done in Pakistan. For realistic comparison, the score of the other three studies has been transformed to the highest scale point of the current study (i.e., 6 for six values and 10 for the desirability of work outcome).

**Table 4.4**  
**Comparison of Studies**

Reference	Current	Cogin (2012)	Smola and Sutton (2002)	Blau and Ryan (1997)
Data Collection Year	2023	2008	1999	1995
Countries	Pakistan	Five*	USA	USA
Sample Size	172	407	301	543
Work Value			Mean	
1 Hard work	4.51	3.31	-	4.55
2 Non Leisure	3.33	2.14	-	3.15
3 Independence	3.95	1.80	-	3.03
4 Asceticism	3.96	2.67	-	3.80
5 Desirability of work outcome	7.75	8.20	8.50	-
6 Pride in Craftsmanship	4.78	6.23	5.18	-
7 Moral Importance of Work	4.40	4.33	5.10	-

\* Australia, China, Germany, Singapore, USA

Looking at Table 4.4, the first four work values are part of the work ethics and have been compared with Cugin's (2012) study and Blau and Ryan's (1997) study. It can be seen that the mean scores of three out of the four work ethics variables are relatively high in the current study as compared to the previous two studies. Non-leisure has a mean score of 3.33 in the current study, while Cugin's (2012) study gave a mean score of 2.14, and that of Blau and Ryan (1997) has a mean score of 3.15. Likewise, independence has a mean score of 3.95 in the current study compared to Cugin's study (1.80) and Blau and Ryan's Study (3.03). Asceticism also shows a similar result with a mean score of 3.96 (current study), 2.67 (Cugin's study), and 3.80 (Blau and Ryan's study). The mean score for hard work in the current study is 4.51, which lies between Cugin's 2012 study (3.31) and Blau and Ryan's 1997 study (4.55).

A comparison of the remaining three work value variables in Table 4.4 is carried out with Cugin's (2012) study and Smola and Sutton's (2002) study. The results in this case are somewhat different. For desirability of work outcome, the mean score of the current study is the lowest (7.75) as compared to Cugin's (2012) study (8.20) and Smola and Sutton's (2002) study (8.50). The mean score for the variable pride in craftsmanship is also the lowest for the current study (4.78), while Cugin's (2012) study has a mean score of 6.23, and Smola and Sutton (2002) have a mean score of 5.18. For the variable moral importance of work, the mean score of the current study is 4.40, which is higher than Cugin's (2012) study (4.33) but lower than Smola and Sutton's (2002) study (5.10).

## Discussion

The current study aims to determine the independent effect of socio-demographic variables, namely age, gender, marital status, dependents, and generational differences, on the work values of employees in Pakistan. Moreover, it attempts to determine whether culture impacts employees' work values in different countries. For this study, seven work values have been reviewed (hard work, non-leisure, independence, asceticism, desirability of work outcomes, pride in craftsmanship, and moral importance of work). The respondents of this study are employees working in manufacturing and service sector organizations in Pakistan. The 172 respondents filled out the self-administered questionnaire, which generated primary data for this study. The data has been analyzed using recognized statistical techniques such as correlation and t-tests. The data collected in the study has resulted in five significant results. These results are subsequently discussed.

The first finding of the current study is that age does not affect employees' work values. For data analysis purposes, the respondents in the study are divided into two groups, i.e., one group is above 30 years, and the second is age 30 and below. The respondents in both groups gave similar responses to each work value, showing that the employees in Pakistani private sector organizations have similar work values regardless of their age. Given the literature on the study variables (Lyons & Kuron, 2014), our findings are consistent with those researchers who have found no relationship between age and work values. It is particularly more congruent with the study done by Whiteoak et al. (2006) in the Arab culture.

The reason for the findings being similar could be cultural similarity. There are intense social pressures to conform to certain cultural expectations in Pakistan, due to which there can be an impact of social desirability bias. According to Lanyon and Goodstein (1997), social desirability biases are generally reflected as a conscious or unconscious attempt to create a particular impression on the respondent. This impression may not necessarily reflect the respondent's true feelings but may be created to conform to society's expectations. Another factor that must be addressed is religion's impact on the values people hold. Since Pakistan is predominantly a Muslim country, values are tied to religious beliefs, deeply held, and passed on to children. As a result, from the perspective of this study, younger employees tend to have work

values that are very similar to those of older employees. This has been reflected in the findings since the work values of younger and older employees are similar.

The second finding of this study is that gender has a significant effect on one out of the seven work values. In comparison, there are no significant differences in the remaining six work values based on gender. Pakistani men and women feel the same way about hard work, leisure, independence, asceticism, desirability of work outcome, and pride in craftsmanship. However, they differ in how they value the moral importance of work. Males place more value on the moral importance of work. We can infer that males feel more responsibility towards work due to general societal pressures about being a breadwinner and facing the family's financial responsibility. Researchers have found both similarities and differences between genders when studying work values. Still, our findings align with those studies that have found little differences in work values. For example, Rowe and Snizek (1995) stress an overemphasis on the differences and under-emphasis on similarities in gender-based research mainly due to the perception that women's work values should be different from men's as they are fundamentally different. They have concluded that gender is mostly not relevant to the preference of individuals for particular work values. Similarly, it can be inferred from our results that although differences are observed, more remarkable similarities exist between men and women in terms of work values and that the characteristics of an individual are more important than the gender of an individual at the workplace.

The third finding of our study is that the effect of marital status on work values is present in one work value, while no significant differences have been observed in six of the work values. Employees, regardless of their marital status, place similar values on hard work, leisure, independence, asceticism, pride in craftsmanship, and the moral importance of work. However, there are significant differences in the importance of desirability in work outcomes for single and married employees. Married employees have rated desirability in work outcomes higher than unmarried employees. This may be because marriage increases responsibility, and as a result, married people expect more out of work in terms of rewards and other outcomes. They come to expect more in return for working than when unmarried and have fewer responsibilities. As Rockeach (1973) states, a person's values remain relatively stable throughout life. The results imply that regardless of the change in marital status, employees' values do not change, even if life-changing events such as marriage occur.

The fourth result of the study is that there are significant differences in the responses of employees who have dependents and those who do not have dependents on the moral importance of work. In contrast, no significant differences have been observed for the remaining six work values. Employees who have dependents and those who do not have dependents feel similarly towards hard work, non-leisure, asceticism, independence, pride in craftsmanship, and desirability in work outcomes. The moral importance of work is rated more by employees with dependents. Again, this can be attributed to the effect of an increase in responsibility due to having dependents. As the sense of responsibility increases, the moral importance of work to the employee also increases.

Much of the literature points towards spouses and children as dependents and, in many cases, just the effect of parenting on work values. This research is different since it has considered the effect of having dependents on work values, where dependents include parents, spouses, children, and other possible family members living together. From the results, we can infer that employees' work values are primarily not affected by the responsibility of dependents. This again can be because since values are relatively stable and do not change drastically in an individual's life, work values also remain more or less the same even if changes occur in an individual's life.

The fifth result of this study is based on its comparison with previous studies (Blau & Ryan, 1997; Cugin, 2012; Smola & Sutton, 2002), which used the same work values but were carried

out in different countries. The general finding is that employees give work values different importance in each study, which shows that the effect of culture must be addressed when studying work values. However, although the values differed in each study, the difference was not very large. It can be said that due to globalization, the working environment is becoming very similar globally, and employees are experiencing the exact change in their work values. Even though individual values are very much linked to national culture, work values are becoming more similar since people from diverse backgrounds come together to work and adapt to their work environment and the people with whom they are associating.

The relationship between generational differences and employees' work values is an area that has recently captured the interest of researchers when studying the effects of different socio-demographic variables on these values. Differences in generations are present since members of a generation share life experiences that are different from those of other generations and tend to have a lasting impact on the individuals (Jurkiewicz & Brown, 1998). Since the life experiences of individuals in Western countries may differ from those of individuals in Pakistan, the established generational cohorts of the West cannot be applied in Pakistan. Due to the non-availability of data on generational cohorts in Pakistan, this study cannot determine the impact of generational differences on work values. However, this can be an exciting area to consider in future studies on work values in Pakistan.

### *Implications*

This study is one of the very few studies conducted on the work values of Pakistani employees and adds further insight into the subject. It provides an empirical contribution to the relationship between work values and four socio-demographic variables for employees working in Pakistani organizations. It also supports the idea that culture is decisive in any work value study. Moreover, it predicts that a conceptual understanding of work values as a whole needs to be explored further since there are many work values on which the effect of socio-demographic variables has yet to be studied.

This research has many practical implications for international businesses and managers. Given the limited knowledge of work values in Pakistan, this study can provide helpful knowledge to international businesses planning to open their setup there. It can help prepare potential expatriate managers to deal with the employees in this part of the world due to cultural differences. Although small, the differences in work values in the West and those in Pakistan are present and can be seen in this study since this study compared the same work values (Cherrington, 1979; Cugin, 2012; Smola & Sutton, 2002).

This study also has valuable implications for local managers. It will help them understand which work values are essential for Pakistani employees. This is an important factor to consider since an employee's motivation and satisfaction are largely dependent upon whether their values are congruent with the organization's offerings. An employee is more satisfied in an organization where the work practices align with the values and beliefs held by the employee.

### *Limitations and Future Directions*

As with other research, the current study has some limitations. Using our sampling method, we can get respondents from many different organizations. However, this is not a representative sample since many areas are overrepresented, and others need to be more represented. An overwhelming majority of the respondents occupy middle-tiered positions in the hierarchy at their workplace, while very few are in top or lower positions.

Similarly, the majority of the respondents have listed Urdu as their mother tongue, while very few have Punjabi and none of any other language such as Pushto or Seraiki, even though people having these as mother tongues inhabit many areas of Pakistan. So, even though we

hoped to have diversity, it is not the case in actuality. The lack of funds limited our ability to get a diverse sample since this study was done on an individual scale with limited sources.

Due to relatively little research done in this area, our research is exploratory. Our study has taken seven work values that have shown differences in previous studies (Cherrington, 1979; Cogin, 2012; Smola & Sutton, 2002) conducted in Western countries. Now that we see that the effect of socio-demographic variables such as gender, marital status, and dependents on some work values show significant differences, we can conduct further research by taking more work values to generalize the findings on work values in Pakistan. This can provide a better picture of the work values, which are essential from an employee's viewpoint. Moreover, based on the differences we have found in the current study, further research can also build on these findings, exploring the cause and effect of the differences.

Recently, researchers have started focussing on various aspects of values in the Pakistani context and various fields, e.g., communal values (Shahzadi et al., 2024), competing values in the public sector (Rukh & Qadeer, 2018), cultural values in advertising (Khalid et al., 2023), and value-based brand betrayal (Sameeni et al., 2023). Future research should continue this trend to generate more critical mass in South Asia.

The present study does not cover all the sociodemographic variables that can possibly affect work values. Future studies can determine the effects of education and religion, amongst other variables. Additionally, in this study, we are able to theoretically discuss the impact of generational differences on work values but cannot give any empirical evidence due to the lack of data on generational groupings. Further research can move a step further by providing empirical evidence from Pakistan.

Another factor is that in our study, we did not separately analyze the responses given by male and female employees when considering the impact of age, marital status, and dependency. As a result, our findings give an overall picture. This result may differ when considering the gender-specific effect of these variables, so further research can be conducted in this area.

Since this study is exploratory, snowball sampling is conducted to get a general understanding of work values. Future studies can use a more stratified sampling method to cover organizations from all sectors of Pakistan, not just the manufacturing and service sectors. Those results can give a more generalized picture of the work values important to the Pakistani workforce.

## Conclusions

Employees are the most critical asset for any organization. The competition in the market has become very intense, and organizations need an efficient and motivated workforce to compete aggressively. It is pertinent for organizations to understand the factors that can motivate their employees for maximum efficiency and effectiveness and reduced turnover. The values held by its employees are one such factor. A thorough understanding of employees' work values is a step ahead for organizations aiming to create a healthy and competitive environment for their employees. Therefore, more research is being conducted to bring forth the necessary understanding to benefit the organization and its employees.

The current study is undertaken to determine the impact of socio-demographic variables on the work values of employees in Pakistan and to determine similarities/differences in these values compared to employees in other countries. This study empirically utilizes only four socio-demographic variables—age, gender, marital status, and having dependents—to find their impact on seven work values. The seven work values selected are those previously tested (Cherrington, 1979; Cogin, 2012; Smola & Sutton, 2002) in other research.

The findings of this study give empirical evidence to show that age differences do not impact the work values of employees in Pakistan. In contrast, the effect of gender and having dependents is significant for one work value (moral importance of work), and the effect of

marital status is significant for the desirability of work outcome. Moreover, the findings show that the effect of culture on work values is present, but differences are small, and there is no clear pattern. Overall, the current study proves to be an addition to the current research conducted on work values due to its applicability to the Pakistani workforce. It can be used as a starting point for future research on work values in Pakistan.

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