

A Comparative study of managers, supervisors and workers values in Algeria

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A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF MANAGERS, SUPERVISORS AND WORKERS VALUES IN ALGERIA

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Considerable research has been invested in discovering the effects of work experience and status on individual values. Literature findings indicate that there is an increasing similarity between the values that the work place espouses and the values of the individual (Tallman, 1977 ; Vanmaanen, 1976). Individuals are motivated to achieve congruity between personal values and occupational requirements to maximise rewards and improve feelings of self-confidence (Trimmer and Kahle, 1983).

The idea behind the congruity theory is that people may unconsciously assimilate work characteristics into more general cognitive functioning such as their ability to deal with novel situations (Kahle, 1983). Findings of this research showed the power of socialising forces in the work role and its potential for influencing the way people interpret the world, possibly including values in their work and in other roles (Kahle, 1983) and of course, values also influence career selection (Holland, 1973).

It should be noted that job experience and organizational socialisation do shape individual values by either omitting the old values or internalizing new values. In general there are several overlapping factors that may influence one's values:

1. The work roles a person is intitled to carry out impose a preference of certain values over another.
2. Educational level is usually closely tied to the position or to the role one plays. Managers usually have a higher level of education than the other groups.

3. Experience in the firm or in the job. Workers usually have less length of service than supervisors and supervisors may have less length of service than managers.

4. Age. The ages of the three groups are usually different.

5. Background factors such as social class and type of socialisation.

Purpose of the study.

The purpose of this study is to survey the individual values of manager supervisors and workers in industrial sector in Algeria, and to gain some understanding of how the three positions differ from each other.

Definition of values :

Before proceeding a definition of individual values as used here is given.

Following Rokeach's conception; a value is an enduring belief that a specific mode of conduct or end-states of existence is personally or socially preferable to an opposite mode of conduct or end-states of existence (Rokeach, 1973).

Values which are the principal components of culture are considered by social scientists (e.g.: Rokeach, 1973, Smith, 1969, Williams, 1979) as standards that guide action. Values as standards serve various important functions in our daily lives. Values are also considered as the representation of needs. This implies that values do motivate and direct one's behavior to achieve certain objectives. Values can be expressed in various ways through one's attitudes, intentions and behavior, and can be measure in different ways, most importantly the ranking and rating methods, paired comparison, and content analysis.

nature of the sample.

The sample for this study is consisted of 338 respondents surveyed from different industrial enterprises throughout the country. The sample is composed of 18 %, of managers, 21.6 % of supervisors and 55.6 % of production workers. 67,5 % of the whole sample are male and 32.5 are female. The mean age of the sample is 34.4 years.

Data collection.

The present study used the individual value survey (IVS) which is a modification of the Rokeach value survey (1973). The IVS consists of two lists of 11 values each. The first list is composed of terminal values which are the goals or the end-states of existence. The following are the terminal value concepts and their definition.

Table 1 : Terminal values

RANKING	VALUES
-----	ACTIVE LIFE (meaningful work to keep me active and busy).
-----	ADVANCEMENT (chance for advancement in my work).
-----	COMFORTABLE LIFE (good standard of living and a good amount of money).
-----	EQUALITY (same chances for all, equity at work).
-----	SENSE OF ACCOMPLISHMENT (feeling of success and contribution to do other useful things).
-----	FREEDOM (freedom of expression and choice being independent).
-----	FUTURE SECURITY (stable job and regular income).
-----	GOOD RELATIONS (cooperation with others).
-----	PLEASURE (an enjoyable, leisurely life).
-----	SELF RESPECT (feeling of being useful, important and worthy).
-----	SOCIAL RESPECT (respectable, the value accorded by others at work).

The second list is composed of instrumental values which are the modes of behavior that serve as means for achieving the terminal values. The following are instrumental value concepts and their definition.

Table 2 : Instrumental values

RANKING	VALUES
-----	AMBITIOUS (works hard to achieve his aspirations).
-----	ASSIDUOUS (assiduous at work, self-disciplined).
-----	CAPABLE (competent at work).
-----	cheerful (Lighthearted, joyful).
-----	CREATIVE (discovers new techniques at work).
-----	FORGIVING (willing to pardon others).
-----	HELPFUL (works for the welfare of others, aids those in need).
-----	HONEST (behaves sincerely with others).
-----	INDEPENDENT (self-reliant), self-sufficient).
-----	OBEDIENT (respects the law and work procedures).
-----	RESPONSIBLE (dependable, reliable).

The two lists are arranged alphabetically. The instructions to the respondents are to arrange them in order of importance to you, as guiding principles in your life. The RVS has been used in variety of situations, and is generally considered to be reliable and valid. Test-retest reliability of the ranking of each list by the spearman rank correlation coefficient over 3 to 7 weeks ranged from 0.72 for instrumental values to 0.80 for terminal values (Cohen 1978).

RESULTS

1 - Description of values of the whole sample.

Table 3 presents the terminal and instrumental value means and composite rank orders for the present sample. Since the research sample is a national probability sample, one can assume that the value rankings reflect values choices of the Algerians in our sampling frame. The table shows with respect to terminal values that future security, self-respect and freedom seem to be predominant values, followed by social respect, good relations, accomplishment and comfortable life. Advancement, equality, active life and pleasure are ranked least important. The table also shows that the pattern of instrumental values that seems to be predominant is being honest, competent and obedient followed by ambitious, assiduous, independent and creative. The pattern that ranked lowest was that of being forgiving, helpful and cheerful.

Table 3
Terminal and instrumental means and rank order
for the general sample

Terminal values	Means	Ranks	Instrumental values	Means	Ranks
Accomplishment	5.96	6	Ambitious	5.55	4
Advancement	6.09	8	Assiduous	5.94	5
Future Security	4.60	1	Independent	6.24	6
Good relations	5.78	5	Competent	4.73	2
Equality	6.49	9	Creative	6.45	7
Freedom	5.24	3	Honest	2.95	1
Pleasure	7.85	11	Cheerful	7.91	11
Self-respect	5.14	2	Obedient	5.11	3
Social Respect	5.68	4	Forgiving	6.57	9
Active Life	6.84	10	Responsible	6.47	8
Comfortable Life	5.98	7	Helpful	6.83	10

It is worth noting at the outset that, in Algeria, we are nowadays confronted with rapid changes in values, the observations made at one point in time are often quickly outdated. Nevertheless, the findings reported herein provide strong evidence that values are good indicators of actual economic political and social conditions in Algeria. If we assess

our findings from the stand point of maslow's theory of lower-and-higher order needs, it becomes apparent that the findings are telling us that the majority of our sample is still striving for lower order needs. Endorsement of the future security, self-respect and freedom indicate a deficiency in the standard of living and political stability. Meanwhile, endorsement of instrumental values of being honest, competent and obedient indicate contradictions between what is considered morally good and what one has to practise in daily life. For example, the socialisation process attempts to bring up competent children by the use of material, social and psychological incentives and/or moral punishment. In the meantime, the process of socialisation requests absolute obedience of those children. Similarly, being honest is morally and religiously good at all times and on all occasions, but in daily life the reverse is true. Dishonesty is perhaps a feature of any developing country because of the bureaucratic problems and the scarcity of the resources satisfying the basic needs. These findings therefore reflect the actual problems in the country. Problems which led eventually to a state of siege on 5th of October 1988 following the violent demonstration by huge groups of youths in several towns in the country. (Mokadem, 1991).

2. Differences Between Managers, Supervisors And Workers.

With the knowledge that work almost certainly affects some aspects of an individual's intellectual functioning, we turn to the present study's finding to examine the differences and similarities in values patterns between the three hierarchical positions, namely managers, supervisors and workers. Table 4 illustrates that there are 6 terminal values out of 11 which discriminate significantly between the three positions. (see also figure 1).

Table 4
Terminal value mean and composite rank orders
for hierarchical level

Values	Total n = 291	Managers n = 59		Supervis. n = 63		Workers n = 169		P
		Mean	Rank	Mean	Rank	Mean	Rank	
Accomplishment		4.88	3	6.53	8	6.09	7	.01
Advancement		6.84	9	5.41	4	6.13	8	.02
Future Security		4.36	1	4.42	1	4.77	1	.47
Good Relations		5.07	4	6.48	7	5.96	6	.02
Equality		6.24	7	6.34	6	6.66	9	.68
Freedom		5.28	5	5.32	3	5.27	2	.97
Pleasure		8.67	11	7.13	11	7.80	11	.01
Self-respect		4.51	2	5.56	5	5.33	3	.10
Social Respect		5.62	6	6.73	9	5.33	3	.00
Active Life		6.83	8	6.94	10	6.90	10	.89
Comfortable Life		7.71	10	5.14	2	5.76	5	.00

Managers appear to give their highest priorities in order to the terminal values of future security, self-respect and accomplishment; on the other hand, they place least emphasis on the terminal values of pleasure, a comfortable life and advancement. Concerning the means (instrumental values) by which to obtain the end-states, the managers appeared to place highest importance on being honest, competent and assiduous; they were ranked 1, 2 and 3 respectively. Meanwhile they seem not to care much about being helpful, forgiving and cheerful. They ranked them 9, 10 and 11 respectively.

On the other hand, supervisors also appear to have their own typical value profile. The first three values that appeared of highest importance were future security, a comfortable life and freedom. They seem also to be concerned about advancement which was ranked 4. Meanwhile they preferred least values such as social respect, an active life and pleasure.

The profile of instrumental values that characterises supervisors shows that the three values that ranked highest were being competent, honest and obedient. Meanwhile the three values that ranked least important were being assiduous, helpful and cheerful.

The terminal values profile that appeared to be typical of workers, places much concern on future security, freedom, self-respect and social

respect. However, the profile shows that workers do not care much about equality, and active life and pleasure.

The instrumental values that are considered of top priority by workers were being honest, obedient and ambitious (table 5).

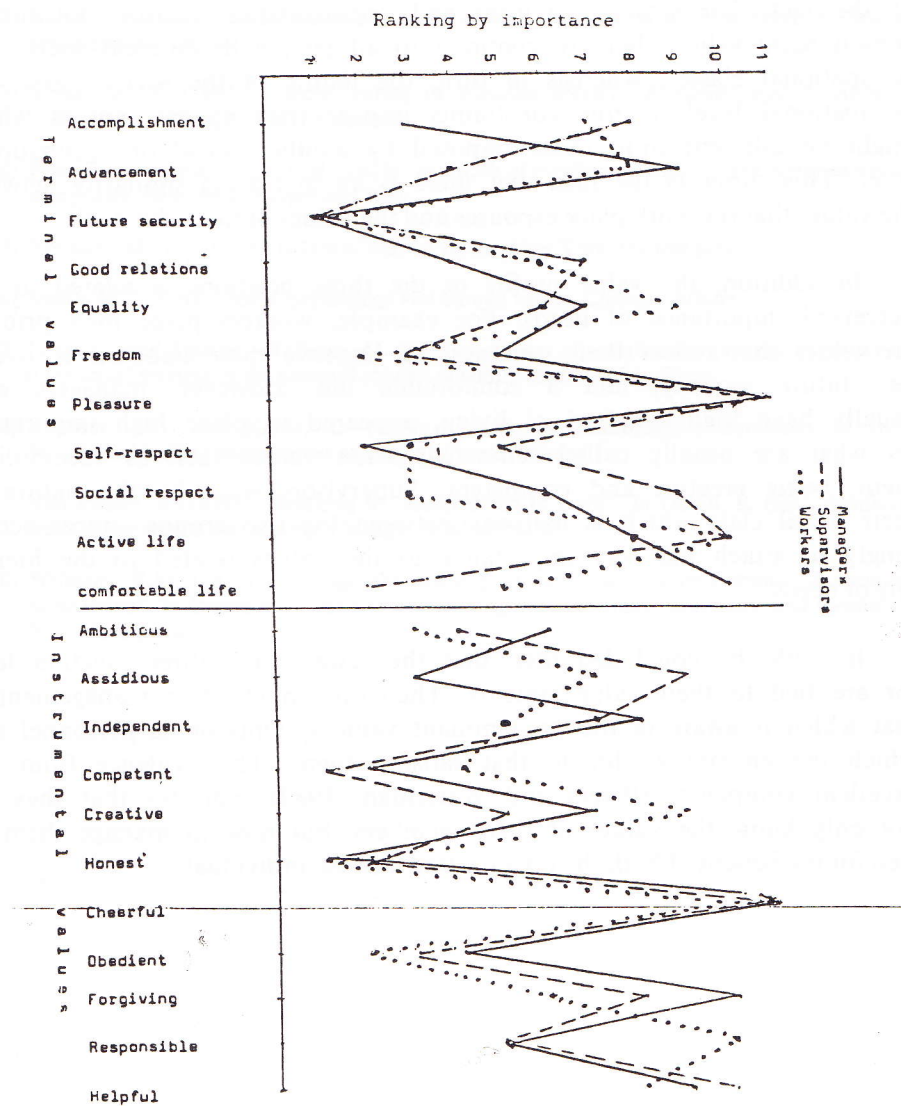
Table 5
Instrumental means and composite rank orders
according to management level

Values	Total n = 282	Managers n = 58		Supervis. n = 61		Workers n = 163		P
		Mean	Rank	Mean	Rank	Mean	Rank	
Ambitious		5.74	6	5.85	4	5.25	3	.68
Assiduous		4.66	3	6.61	9	6.17	7	.01
Independent		6.45	8	6.51	7	6.04	5	.55
Competent		4.45	2	3.61	1	5.30	4	.00
Creative		6.10	7	6.25	5	6.83	9	.20
Honest		2.92	1	4.21	2	4.21	1	.00
Cheerful		9.45	11	8.00	11	7.40	11	.00
Obedient		5.28	4	4.98	3	5.06	2	.72
Forgiving		7.91	10	6.60	8	6.14	6	.00
Responsible		5.60	5	6.25	5	7.04	10	.01
Helpful		7.45	9	7.14	10	6.58	8	.07

It is clear from the three profiles that the three hierarchical positions do share some values in common and differ significantly in others. This is a result of the fact that society's culture and organizational culture do impose certain values that are common to all people in different social classes and occupational levels, whereas in turn, the nature of the social class and the nature of occupational level and role constraints impose their specific values that might be different from those imposed by other social and occupational statuses. Taking the three groups together, all seem to value at the same degree of importance the terminal value of future security. That value is important to all people whatever their social class and occupational position. Also the three groups do not differ in the importance they attach to equality, freedom and an active life. The instrumental values that appear to be similar to the three groups, or at least do not differ significantly between them are being obedient, ambitious and independent ($P = 0.72, 0.68, 0.55$) for the three values respectively).

As can be seen in the tables the three groups differ significantly from each other. These differences are partly due to occupational level and role constraints. For example, when contrasting managers with workers, we find that managers by the nature of their task which seeks to achieve organizational objectives, attach higher priority on accomplishment, being competent and assiduous.

Figure 1 : Graphical comparison between hierarchical levels on terminal and instrumental values.



Conversely, workers as they seek to improve their standard of living attach higher priority to a comfortable life than managers who feel that they do not lack such a luxury life. Also, the nature of their job and the constraints and restrictions imposed on them, made them place a higher priority on being forgiving and helpful than managers.

CONCLUSIONS :

The value profile of the three hierarchical position appear to have some values in common, but differ significantly in others. This is a result of the fact that society's culture and organizational culture do impose certain basic values that are common to all people in different social and occupational classes, whereas in turn, the nature of the social classe and occupational level or role constraints impose their specific values which might be different from those imposed by another social or occupational level. This supports the idea that there is an increasing similarity between the values that the work place espouses and the values of the individual.

In addition, the value profile of the three positions is related to the perceived importance of needs. For example, workers place high priority on values that reflect their eagerness to improve their standard of living. i.e.; future security, and a comfortable life. However, managers who usually have high standard of living, appeared to place high importance on what are usually called self-actualization values such as accomplishment, being creative and competent. Supervisors who, by the nature of their social class which is half-way between the two groups appear accordingly to attach half-way importance to the values related to the hierarchy of needs.

It could be concluded then that the rewards the three position look for are tied to their value systems. Therefore an effective management is that which is aware of the predominant value systems of its personnel and which cangenerate a climate that satisfies them. The evidence from the excellent companies (Peters and Waterman, 1982) indicates that they do not only know the values of their members, but how to manage them as well for the benefit of both the organization and the individual.

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