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LABOUR VALUES OF THE MACEDONIAN POPULATION

INTRODUCTION

Changes in the Macedonian business environment in the last two decades are significant and complex. The change of the economic and political system had an impact on all aspects of life, especially the manner of doing business, but also meant a change of values in general. The importance of cultural values and the relationship they have with the manner of performing the managerial practice is emphasised by many researchers in this field.

Hofstede (1980) states that all spheres of life in national cultures are mutually related: family, work, religion, economic behaviour, health, crime, punishment, science, art, literature, management, leadership. However, one can not set aside one separate national managerial or leadership culture, but it is important that management and leadership can be understood only as part of a larger (national) culture.

The research seeks to answer the questions: “Are there unique Macedonian labour values”, “Which values are preferred in the workplace by employees,” “Is there a difference between the value preferences of the population in Macedonia by gender, age, education “, “ Which values are of particular importance. “

Consequently, in this research there is an attempt to identify the preferences of the working population in Macedonia regarding the work, that is, the labour context. The fact is that Macedonia faces a specific paradox. On the one hand, there is a high unemployment rate, which has been around 30% for years, but on the other hand the comments of employers that they can not find quality employees and retain the best are becoming louder. Refraining from the educational system of the country and the management system of business entities, which certainly contribute to this paradox, this study focuses on labour values. Values are important because they characterise individuals, as well as, societies, show changes over time and explain the motivation base of attitudes and behaviour. When we talk about values, we talk about what we think is important for us in our lives. Everyone of us possesses many values (value of accomplishment, security, belonging, love towards the humankind ..), but with varying degrees of importance. Even though values as type of motivation are universal and common to people and separate them from other species, individuals and groups still differ in terms of the importance they give to values. Individuals and groups have different value priorities or hierarchy of values. Hence, it is expected that the values are the basis for action and an instrument used to increase workplace performance, that is, productivity or efficiency. In the context of organisational sciences, values are an expression of human intention, presented in the form of behaviour.

It is important to note that for the purposes of this study the term value is used in respect of what the individual wants and/or prefers as a feature of the work context or the job, so that the term value in this meaning is used more as a verb than as a noun. That is, what is more valued (preferred) by the respondent in the work context.

VALUES AND WORK: REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The concept of values is a subject of great interest in the social sciences. Values play an important role not only in sociology, but also in psychology, anthropology, organisational sciences and other related disciplines. In social psychology (Argyris and Schoen, 1978; Furnham, 1997; Rocheach, 1973; Rocheach and Ball-Rocheach, 1989), in the area of ethics (Taylor, 1989), social anthropology (Hofstede, 1980;

Inglehart, 1997) and in organisational sciences (Argyris and Schoen, 1978; Gilliland et al., 2003; Meglino and Ravlin, 1998; Schein, 1985).

Values by Rokeach (1973) are defined as lasting beliefs and specific ways of behaviour that are preferred. There are final values and instrumental values. The final values are personal beliefs about lifelong goals. Instrumental values are personal beliefs about ways of behaviour or how to reach the final values (Rokeach, 1973). Values have a significant impact on future actions and decisions by the individual. They determine the belief of people in what is fundamentally correct or incorrect.

Labour values can be defined as views of employees about what can be expected from the work and how to act to achieve these expectations. These are generalised expectations about different aspects of the work (salary, autonomy, working conditions), and the results related to performance (achievement, accomplishment, prestige) (Dose, 1997; George & Jones 1999; Ros, Schwartz & Surkiss, 1999). Labour values are hierarchically arranged in terms of their importance to the individual. Labour values give the answer to the question as to what is important for the individual's work or his/her life, including the issue of money, social interaction, intellectual stimulation, status, fulfilment, achievement. They provide the foundation for the judgment of the world around him/her.

On the other hand, the analysis of the early theories of organisation (Murray, 1938; Lewin, 1943, Holland 1966) and later theories of organisational culture (Schein 1985), shows that employee behaviour is influenced by the specific characteristics of the work environment, or organisational culture. Employees who will fit into the work environment will be more enthusiastic in terms of work and will enjoy it. Conversely, for those who do not fit work may cause negative results, such as boredom, poor job performance, lack of satisfaction (Westerman, Yamamura, 2007).

Work organisations should understand that each employee, performers, as well as Managers, are guided and motivated by a hierarchy of their own unique personal values. Organisations need to allow employees to connect personal values with organisational values. The building of this connection will affect the increase of their commitment and their remaining in the organisation, the employee engagement, which will lead to higher achievements.

“The values contain a large number of social attitudes, by allowing them to better describe social behaviour” (McNeil EB and Rubin Z, 1977: 537). Values are created when a number of individual views are linked in a common position, which concerns many social phenomena, and include all relations contained in each of the integrated views.

USED METHODOLOGY

Data for this study were collected through a survey of public opinion conducted in September 2012 on a sample of 1,000 respondents. The sample was structured by gender: 50.7% men and 49.3% women. According to their age, respondents were over 18 years old, grouped into 4 categories: from 18 to 29 years of age 25.2%, from 30 to 49 years of age 40.5%, from 50 to 65 years of age 21.5% and over 65 years of age 12.8%. The educational level was as follows: incomplete primary education 2.7%, primary education 13.3%, secondary education 53.9%; higher and university education 30.1%. 25.8% of them were unemployed, and 46.2% were employed (30.7% in the private sector and 15.5% in the public sector), 12.5% retired, 4.4% housewives, 4.3% farmers, 4.6% students and 2.2% others. According to their religion: Orthodox 61.8%, Muslim 31.6%, Catholic 1.7%, other religion 1.6%, non-affiliation to any religion 3.3%. 37.5% were from a village and 62.5% lived in a city. All data were collected face to face. Besides demographic data, survey respondents were asked to state the extent to which they The Likert type of scale was used with verbal description from 1 to 6, where 1 is not important and 6 is very important.

The survey used the instrument built by a group of researchers (Scott. W. Lester. Rhetta L. Standifer, Nicole J. Schultz and James M. Windsor 2012), which is the result of extensive research of relevant literature (Lester, Standifer, Nicole, Schultz, Windsor, 2012; Anetzberger, Teaster, 2010) and a test of their grouping. 15 specific aspects of work and employment context were included. These are:

- 1) Teamwork (working in a team / group);
- 2) Autonomy at work (or the extent to which you may individually decide how to organise and perform work);
- 3) Secure job (without fear of dismissal);
- 4) Professionalism (or vocational training and knowledge of the work);
- 5) Flexibility of working hours (possibility of arrival / departure to / from work earlier / later and use of working holidays of their choice);
- 6) Existence of formal authority (existence of strictly defined managerial positions followed with responsibility for decision-making and use of organisational resources);
- 7) Technology (availability and advancement of labour technology, which involves using a combination of tools, machines, computers, skills, information and knowledge in the production of goods and services);
- 8) Communicating face to face (direct communication);
- 9) e-mail communication (communication via the Internet);

- 10) Communicating through social media (like facebook, twitter, skype, linkedin);
- 11) The structure of the work (or clear definition of all positions of the work and the working process);
- 12) Participation in decision-making (respect of your opinion when making decisions);
- 13) Continuous learning (support by the employer in learning while performing tasks, attendance at conferences, seminars, training, formal education);
- 14) Fun at work (entertainment, humour and friendship in the workplace);
- 15) Recognition for the performed work (praise and reward by supervisors for the performed work).

VALIDITY OF THE INSTRUMENT

Initially the reliability of the instrument scale has been checked based on the Cronbach alpha coefficient, the value of which is as follows: Alpha = 880. This instrument has satisfactory metric characteristics needed for analysis of the results. Double-alternative correlation was made to determine the coefficients of simple correlation between a number of variables. Pearson's correlation coefficient was used.

RESULTS FROM THE RESEARCH

In order to discover what participants really value in the workplace and in the labour context, they were allowed to indicate the values in accordance with their importance. Table 1 presents the values and frequencies according to which they were ordered. Taking the social context into consideration, particularly the economic one, in which the country is found, it is not surprising that "secure job without fear of dismissal" is something that they valued as most significant. The second place was given to "professionalism or vocational training and knowledge of the work." The third place was shared between "recognition for the performed work or praise and reward by supervisors for the performed work" and "technology or availability and advancement of labour technology, which involves using a combination of tools, machines, computers, skills, information and knowledge in the production of goods and services."

Table 1: *Priority in values*

		M	SD	%
1.	Stable job position	5.4910	1.02614	85%
2.	Professionalism	5.3920	1.04280	82%
3.	Technology	5.2300	1.17409	75%
4.	Recognition for the performed work	5.1740	1.20714	75%
5.	Communicating face to face	5.1170	1.25255	73%
6.	Continuous learning	5.1020	1.25266	71%
7.	Participation in decision-making	5.0540	1.21514	70%
8.	Teamwork	5.0260	1.30730	69%
9.	Structure of work	4.9160	1.29020	64%
10.	Autonomy at work	4.7980	1.28095	63%
11.	Formal authority	4.6470	1.37996	57%
12.	Flexible working hours	4.5200	1.56782	56%
13.	E-mail communication	4.2410	1.67742	47%
14.	Fun at work	4.1420	1.57554	43%
15.	Communicating through social media	3.6840	1.77744	33%

The endeavour was to discover whether there are dependencies in the evaluation of aspects of work by gender, age and education.

H0 = evaluation of aspects of the work are independent of gender.

H1 = evaluation of aspects of the work is dependent on gender.

For all variables the level of dependence was tested with the level of significance of $\alpha = 0.05$ and $\alpha = 0.01$. The obtained results indicate that statistically significant are the correlations between gender and formal authority (0.080) at significance level $\alpha = 0.05$ and between gender and face to face communication (0.063) at significance level $\alpha = 0.05$. Regarding gender and formal authority, as can be seen from Table 3, for women existence of formal authority is more important than for men, 36% of women decided that formal authority is very important, while 30% of the men considered it as very important.

Table 2. *Priority in values according to the gender*

Women	Men
1. Stable job position	1. Stable job position
2. Professionalism	2. Professionalism

2. Technology	3. Technology
4. Communicating face to face	4. Teamwork
5. Acknowledgements	5. Acknowledgements
6. Continuous learning	6. Continuous learning
7. Teamwork	7. Communicating face to face
8. Participation in decision-making	8. Participation in decision-making
9. Structure	9. Structure
10. Flexible working hours	10. Autonomy
11. Autonomy	11. Flexible working hours
12. Formal authority	12. E-mail communication
13. E-mail communication	13. Formal authority
14. Fun at work	14. Communicating through social media
15. Communicating through social media	15. Fun at work

Table 3: *Formal authority (existence of strictly defined managerial positions followed with responsibility for decision-making and use of organisational resources)*

	Gender		Total
	Male	Female	
Not important	3,7%	2,2%	3,0%
2	4,9%	3,9%	4,4%
3	14,2%	12,8%	13,5%
4	21,9%	18,5%	20,2%
5	23,1%	24,3%	23,7%
Very important	30,4%	36,3%	33,3%
No answer	1,8%	2,0%	1,9%
Total	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%

With regard to gender, communication face to face, as can be seen from Table 4, is more important to women than to men, where 56.4% of the women chose very important and 48.9% of the men. From the results of the cross-tabulation of the evaluation of work and gender and the correlation coefficients, it can be concluded that there is no difference in the valuation aspects of work between men and women, except for the aspect of formal authority and communicate face to face.

Table 4: *Communication face to face (direct communication)*

	Gender		Total
	Male	Female	
Not important	2,4%	1,4%	1,9%
2	2,0%	3,4%	2,7%
3	9,5%	6,5%	8,0%
4	13,4%	11,4%	12,4%
5	22,5%	19,1%	20,8%
Very important	48,9%	56,4%	52,6%
No answer	1,4%	1,8%	1,6%
Total	total	100,0%	100,0%

Hypothesis of the existence of dependency between evaluation of work aspects in relation to age.

H0 = evaluation of aspects of the work are independent of age.

H1 = evaluation of aspects of the work is dependent on age.

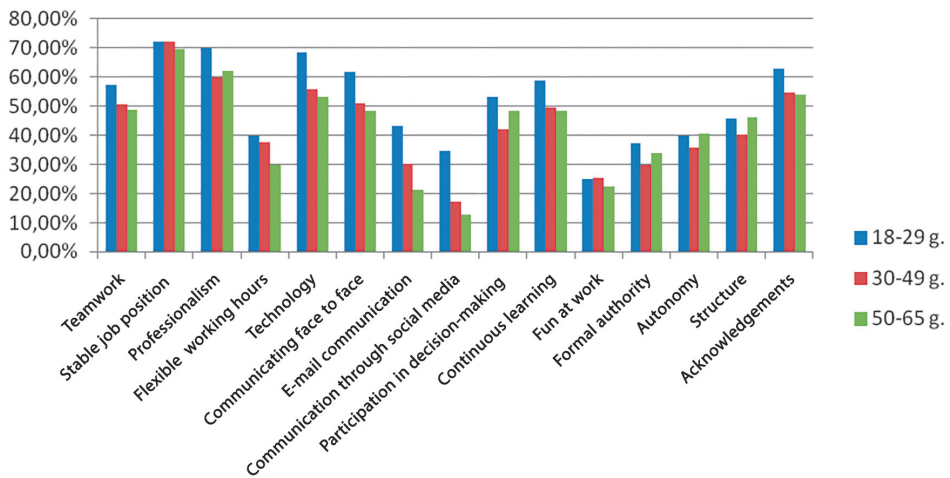
For all variables the level of dependence was tested with the level of significance of $\alpha = 0.05$ and $\alpha=0.01$. The results indicate that at significance level of 0.01 there is a negative correlation between age and: teamwork (-0.89); stable job position (-0.096); professionalism (-0.099); flexibility of working hours (-0.099); technology (-0.114) face to face communication (-0.085); E-mail communication (-0.232); communication through social media (-0.185); fun at work (-0.84). At significance level of 0.05 statistically significant is the correlation of age with continuous learning (-0.062). The negative correlation indicates that with the increasing of age the significance of the selected variables is reduced. Independent of age are: autonomy at work, formal authority, structure of work and recognition for the performed work.

Table 5: *Percentage determination by age*

	18-29	30-49	50-65	above 65
Teamwork	57.1%	50.4%	48.8%	41.4%
Stable job position	72.2%	72.1%	69.3%	57.8%
Professionalism	69.8%	59.7%	61.9%	57.8%
Flexible working hours	39.7%	37.5%	29.8%	28.9%
Technology	68.3%	55.8%	53.0%	53.1%
Communicating face to face	61.5%	50.8%	48.4%	47.7%

E-mail communication	43.3%	30.3%	21.4%	23.4%
Communication through social media	34.5%	17.3%	12.6%	19.5%
Participation in decision-making	53.2%	42%	48.4%	43.8%
Continuous learning	58.7%	49.4%	48.4%	50.8%
Fun at work	25.0%	25.2%	22.3%	20.3%
Formal authority	37.3%	29.6%	34.0%	35.9%
Autonomy	39.7%	35.8%	40.5%	32%
Structure	45.6%	40.2%	46%	43%
Acknowledgements	62.7%	54.6%	54%	50%

Figure 1: Age and percentage determination on values regarding the workplace



There is also a priority of values in accordance with age groups as shown in Table 6.

Table 6: Priority of values in accordance with age

18-29 years of age	30-49 years of age	50-65 years of age	Above 65 years of age
1. Stable job position	1. Stable job position	1. Stable job position	1. Stable job position
2. Professionalism	2. Professionalism	2. Professionalism	2. Professionalism

3. Technology	3. Technology	3. Acknowledgements	3. Technology
4. Acknowledgements	4. Acknowledgements	4. Technology	4. Continuous learning
5. Communicating face to face	5. Communicating face to face	5. Teamwork	5. Acknowledgements
6. Continuous learning	6. Teamwork	6. Communicating face to face	6. Communicating face to face
7. Teamwork	7. Continuous learning	7. Participation in decision-making	7. Participation in decision-making
8. Participation in decision-making	8. Participation in decision-making	8. Continuous learning	8. Structure
9. Structure	9. Structure	9. Structure	9. Teamwork
10. E-mail communication	10. Flexible working hours	10. Autonomy	10. Formal authority
11. Autonomy	11. Autonomy	11. Formal authority	11. Autonomy
12. Flexible working hours	12. E-mail communication	12. Flexible working hours	12. Flexible working hours
13. Formal authority	13. Formal authority	13. Fun at work	13. E-mail communication
14. Communicating through social media	14. Fun at work	14. E-mail communication	14. Fun at work
15. Fun at work	15. Communicating through social media	15. Communicating through social media	15. Communicating through social media

From the table which represents the priority of values by age it can be seen that all age groups ranked “stable job position” as first and “professionalism” as second, while “technology” was ranked as third for the age groups from 18 to 29, from 30 to 49 and for the age group of above 65 years. For the age group from 50 to 65 years “acknowledgements” were ranked third.

The hypothesis of the existence of dependence between evaluation of the aspects of work in relation to education.

H0 = evaluation of aspects of the work as independent from education.

H1 = evaluation of aspects of the work as dependent on education.

For all variables the dependence level was tested according to the significance level of $\alpha = 0.05$ and $\alpha = 0.01$. The results indicate that at the level of significance of 0.01 all variables with education positively correlate: teamwork (0.142), autonomy (0.157), stable job position (0.186), professionalism (0.205), flexibility (0.104), technology (0.205), face to face communication (0.125), e-mail communication (0.231), social media (0.099), the structure of work (0.183), involvement in decision-making

(0.147), continuous learning (0.226), fun at work (0.134) and acknowledgements (0.102). At significance level of 0.05 is authority (0.077).

Table 7: *Percentage determination in accordance with education*

	Incomplete primary education	Primary education	High school education	Higher and university education
Teamwork	40,7%	36,8%	50,1%	58,5%
Stable job position	33,3%	51,9%	61,0%	72,4%
Professionalism	33,3%	51,9%	61,0%	72,4%
Flexible working hours	22,2%	24,8%	35,6%	40,5%
Technology	37,0%	49,6%	55,7%	67,8%
Communicating face to face	40,7%	39,8%	53,1%	58,5%
E-mail communication	25,9%	19,5%	28,2%	40,9%
Communicating through social media	11,1%	18,0%	21,3%	24,3%
Participation in decision-making	37,0%	37,6%	45,3%	53,2%
Continuous learning	33,3%	36,1%	48,8%	65,4%
Fun at work		13,5%	23,7%	30,9%
Formal authority	25,9%	27,1%	32,5%	38,2%
Autonomy	14,8%	31,6%	36,2%	43,9%
Structure	29,6%	31,6%	42,9%	50,2%
Acknowledgements	40,7%	45,9%	51,9%	62,1%

Figure 2: *Education and percentage determination on values regarding the workplace*

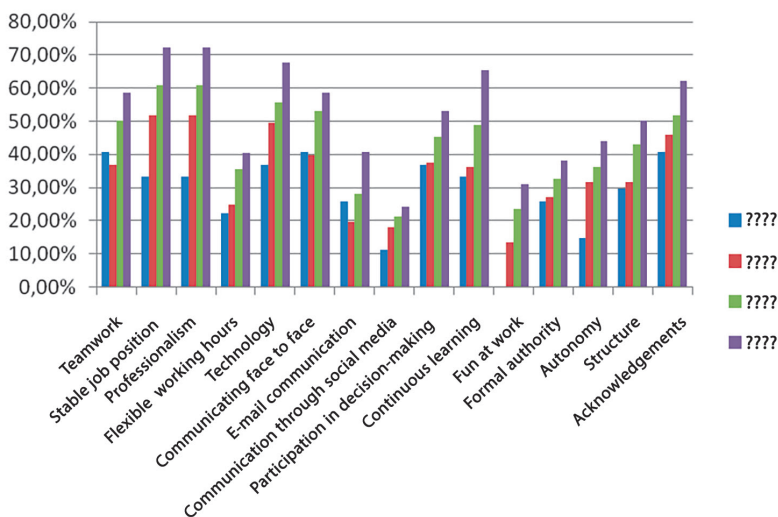


Table 8: *Priority of values in accordance with education*

Incomplete primary education	Primary education	High school education	Higher and university education
1. Acknowledgements	1. Stable job position	1. Stable job position	1. Stable job position
2. Teamwork	2. Professionalism	2. Professionalism	2. Professionalism
3. Communicating face to face	3. Technology	3. Technology	3. Technology
4. Technology	4. Acknowledgements	4. Communicating face to face	4. Continuous learning
5. Participation in decision-making	5. Communicating face to face	5. Acknowledgements	5. Acknowledgements
6. Stable job position	6. Participation in decision-making	6. Teamwork	6. Teamwork
7. Professionalism	7. Teamwork	7. Continuous learning	7. Communicating face to face
8. Continuous learning	8. Continuous learning	8. Participation in decision-making	8. Participation in decision-making
9. Structure	9. Autonomy	9. Structure	9. Structure
10. E-mail communication	10. Structure	10. Autonomy	10. Autonomy
11. Formal authority	11. Formal authority	11. Flexibility of working hours	11. E-mail communication
12. Flexible working hours	12. Flexibility of working hours	12. Formal authority	12. Flexibility of working hours
13. Autonomy	13. E-mail communication	13. E-mail communication	13. Formal authority
14. Communicating through social media	14. Communicating through social media	14. Fun at work	14. Fun at work
15. Fun at work	15. Fun at work	15. Communicating through social media	15. Communicating through social media

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to examine what respondents value, desire or prefer as a feature of the work context or work, that is, what the respondent values more (prefers) in employment context. We checked the reliability of the instrument scale based on Cronbach alpha coefficient that is of the following value $\text{Alpha} = .880$. This instrument has satisfactory metric characteristics needed for analysis of results. The conducted double-alternative correlation showed coefficients of simple correlation between a number of variables. We used Pearson's correlation coefficient.

In terms of priority of evaluation, it was revealed that the first places were occupied by: stable job position, professionalism and technology and recognition for the performed work. Despite the economic uncertainty that is present in the Macedonian business environment and that is certainly the reason for the decision of all participants to give high rating to the option "stable job position" without fear of dismissal and in order to interpret the displayed order of values in the context of the workplace defined in Table 1, they may be connected with the theory of hierarchy of needs of Abraham Maslov. There are 5 levels of personal needs: physiological, safety needs, love and belonging, respect and self-realisation (Jones, George, 2008). In this case, the stable job position is the one that will ensure the realisation of physiological needs (need for food ..) , as well as, the need for safety and it is not peculiar that it was ranked first. Consequently, in this respect, is also the recognition for accomplishments that includes praise (or something that will allow them to keep their job, but also to be respected) and reward for the work done (money or benefits that will ensure satisfaction of physiological needs, also satisfying the need for recognition, respect). The choice of professionalism is also in the same line, that is, it is expected that professional education and knowledge of the work will help them to retain their job, or it will provide a level of salary that will allow them to buy food and clothing, but also to meet the need for respect and self-fulfilment. In order to have a motivated workforce, managers/employers must determine which needs employees in organisations try to meet. Consequently, they need to provide conditions and rewards that will contribute to boost employee performance.

In terms of internal connection between the evaluation of specific aspects of work (15 items) and gender, it was shown that there is correlation for only two items (formal authority and communicate face to face). This finding suggests that the priority of valuing specific aspects of work is the same in men and women, except for formal authority and communication. Women gave a higher value to formal authority and communication face to face, as opposed to men.

We also examine the connection between the evaluation of specific aspects of work (15 items) and age. The following items proved to be independent of age: autonomy in work, formal authority, structure of the work, and recognition for the achievements. For all other items there is a negative correlation, indicating that as age increases, the importance of evaluation of specific items decreases.

For all ages the first two places are reserved for the items: stable job position and professionalism. For the other ones (18-29, 30-49 and over 65) the third position was given to professionalism, whereas for the age group of 50-65 acknowledgements were in the third place. For this age group (50-65), unlike other age groups: participation in decision-making, autonomy and fun at work is also important. For the age group 18-29 years as expected higher significance was given to continuous learning, e-mail communication and communication through social media. In this age group fun at work was valued as the least important. Most likely, this age group has enough fun out of their work.

We also examined the dependence between the evaluation of specific aspects of work (15 items) and education. It was found that all items are positively correlated with education. It was established that the educational categories: incomplete primary and primary education ranked participation in decision-making at a very high level, whereas the educational categories high school and university education gave high ratings to acknowledgements and continuous learning. By the educational category higher and university education, as it was predicted, higher rating was given to continuous learning, then to acknowledgements, while for the category of high school education the order is reversed - acknowledgements and then continuous learning.

CONCLUSION

Values affect perceptions and behaviour and have implications for interpersonal interactions, as well. When employees have similar value systems, they tend to perceive external stimuli in a similar way. Among other things, this similarity in interpreting and classifying the environment serves to clarify their mutual communications. Individuals with similar value systems behave similarly. Value similarity facilitates the interaction of individuals to achieve common goals, because it will reduce the ambiguity of information and conflict. Hence, individuals with similar values will be more satisfied with their interpersonal relationships (Meglino & Ravlin, 1998). Because the culture of organisation is in the function of shared values, the overlapping of individual and organisational values provides access to the measurement of organisational culture and understanding its effect

(Posner, 1993). Several studies have found that the overlapping of the individual and organisational values have: greater commitment, job satisfaction, organisational commitment as a result (Meglino, Ravlin, & Adkins, 1989; Chatman, 1989; Posner & Schmidt, 1993; McDonald, 1993; Cable & Judge, 1996).

Research focused on values and work attracts great attention in the organisational sciences. The relation of values or evaluation of aspects of work with the area of human resources management is very important and can contribute to the proper structuring and implementation of all functions of human resources. Thus, the concept of values can be important in structuring job positions, which includes appropriate working conditions which will be acceptable for certain categories of employees. Thus, for example, as can be seen from the results that young employees with higher education despite stable job position, professionalism and technology highly valued continuous learning, e-mail communication and communication through social media, while for the category of 50-65 years of age, with university education, besides stable job position, and professionalism, acknowledgements and participation in decision-making have high ratings based on their significance. The results can also be used in the recruitment process, selection, professional and career development, especially in the process of retention of employees. Values of employees should be taken into consideration in building a successful motivational system that will allow the organisation to increase its competitive advantage. Since values indicate the general direction of the activities of individuals, it is quite obvious that organisational values have some effect on individual values, and vice versa, so that their mutual compliance should be created.

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