



## ROLE OF WORK VALUES IN PREDICTING CAREER ADAPTABILITY: A STUDY OF UNIVERSITY STUDENTS OF THE STATE OF HIMACHAL PRADESH

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### Abstract

The present study aims to examine the relationship between work values and career adaptability of university students. The data was collected from students of private universities located in Shimla and Solan districts of Himachal Pradesh. Questionnaires were distributed among 225 students out of which 129 questionnaires were returned by the respondents yielding a response rate of 57%. The participants consisted of graduate and post graduate students. Data thus collected have been analyzed with the help of SPSS 17. The various statistical tools viz. principal components analysis, correlation analysis and regression analysis were used to examine the data. Exploratory factor analysis using PCA with varimax rotation was used to analyze the dimensional structure of participants work values. The results of the study showed a positive relationship between the work values of students and their career adaptability. Further, the results of the study indicated the intrinsic values as more influential factors in predicting the career adaptability of the university students as compared to extrinsic values.

**Keywords:** *work values, career adaptability, work values of students, principal component analysis.*

### Introduction

*Career adaptability* has been defined as “the readiness to cope with the predictable tasks of preparing for and participating in the work role and with the unpredictable adjustments prompted by changes in the work and working conditions” (Savickas, 1997, p. 254). Career adaptability involves having the skills and abilities you need so you can best respond to your environment. Hilary Lindsay in her research proposed five attributes of career adaptability- engaging, exploring, experimenting, positive attitude and self- belief (Lindsay, 2013). According to Savickas (1997), career adaptability consists of four dimensions viz: (a) concern-the ability to consider and prepare for future possibilities; (b) control-the ability to make deliberate decisions and take conscious action; (c) curiosity-the strength to explore various situations and roles; and (d) confidence- the positive belief in one’s problem solving skills across different situations. These dimensions of career adaptability enable individuals to adjust their behaviours to the changing needs and demands of the environment. Researchers have demonstrated the impact of career adaptability on various work related outcomes like job success, job satisfaction, tenure and engagement (Klehe *et al*, 2011). Researchers have also demonstrated the variables influencing career adaptability such as personality traits, age, gender (Rossier *et al*, 2012). Work values are the values that individuals’ “desired end state” of their participation at work (Brown, 2002). Work values play an important role in the career of an individual. It shapes the career development of an individual. According to Rokeach (1973), values relate to the human needs and desire towards any situation that happen in their life. These work values assist in defining career paths and goals of individuals (Brown, 2002).

### Review of Literature

Lot of research has been conducted on work values including work value among different generations, and also its effect on job satisfaction, job development, career choices, organisational commitment etc. However, little attention has been received in the area of *work values* as an antecedent of career adaptability. One of the few published studies on the relationship between work values and career adaptability was by Ye (2015). The author conducted a survey on work values and career adaptability of Chinese university students and found intrinsic and extrinsic work values as predictors of career adaptability.

Researchers have their own understanding and definition to explain work values among employees in organization. According to Super (1970) work values are that goals that motivate people to work. Super identified 15 work values and defined them as follows: altruism, i.e., present in the work that enables one to contribute to the welfare of others; esthetic, i.e., inherent in work that permits one to make beautiful things and contribute beauty to

work; creativity, i.e., associated with work that that permits one to invent new things, design new products, or develop new ideas; intellectual stimulation, i.e., associated with work that provides opportunities for individual thinking and for learning how and why things work; achievement, i.e., associated with work that gives one a feeling of accomplishment in doing a job well; independence, i.e., associated with work that permits one to work in his or her own way as fast or as slowly as desired; prestige, i.e., associated with work that gives one standing in the eyes of others and evokes respect; management, i.e., associated with work that permits one to plan and layout work for others to do; economic returns, i.e., associated with work which pays and enables one to have the things he or she wants; security, i.e., associated with work that provides one certainty of having a job even in hard times; surroundings, i.e., associated with work that is carried out under unpleasant conditions; supervisory relations, i.e., associated with work that is carried out under a supervisor who is fair and with one can get along; associates, i.e., associated with work which brings one into contact with compatible fellow workers; way of life, i.e., associated with work that permits one to live the kind of life he or she chooses; variety, i.e., associated with work that provides an opportunity to do different types of jobs. Robinson and Betz (2008) divided these fifteen values into three viz. intrinsic (terminal), extrinsic (instrumental) and concomitant values.

The study conducted by Ho (2006) has it simply divided into intrinsic and extrinsic work values. For the purpose of this study we have taken Ho (2006) perspective of work values: intrinsic and extrinsic. *Intrinsic work values* refer to the individual internal factor or self-actualization gained from working, contributing to society and having meaningful work (Parboteeah, Paik, & Cullen, 2009). One might also seek out challenging tasks that allow them to develop new skills and enhance values that satisfying their need and desire (Ali & Panatik, 2013). *Extrinsic work values* are work related materialistic rewards such as economic returns, security and working conditions (Ye, 2015).

## Need for the Study

An individual enter into their first jobs with a lot of expectations. However, they may have to make adjustments in their personal as well as professional life so as to meet the demands of the jobs/organizations. Values play an important role which reflects how well an individual might adapt to his/her job requirements in the organisation. An individual joining an organisation will be affected by their work values and will use these values to guide how they should function (Ho, 2006). Work values are one of the subset of overall human values (Liu & Lei, 2012). The impact of work values on work-related attitudes has become an interesting topic among researchers (Ho, 2006). Therefore, the present study is an attempt to understand the intrinsic and extrinsic work values of the students of Indian Universities. Furthermore, the study will be examining the relationship between work values and career adaptability i.e., how these values help students to cope up in their career and the roles associated with it.

## Hypotheses

On the basis of available literature, the following hypothesis were formulated to conduct the present study

H1: There is a significant correlation between intrinsic work values and career adaptability.

H2: There is a significant correlation between extrinsic work values and career adaptability.

## Research Methodology

### Participants and Procedure

The study is mainly based on primary data which was collected through the respondents consisting of students from private universities of Himachal Pradesh. The data was collected from students of private universities located in Shimla and Solan districts of Himachal Pradesh. In order to get the required information a well designed questionnaire on work values and career adaptability was prepared and administered among respondents. Questionnaires were distributed among 225 students out of which 129 questionnaires were returned by the respondents yielding a response rate of 57%. The participants consisted of graduate and post graduate students.

### Measures

**Work Values-** Work Values were assessed using 32 items of Super's Work Values Inventory (Super, 1970), The respondents were asked to indicate their work values on a scale ranging from 1 (*extremely unimportant*) to 7 (*extremely important*).

**Career Adaptability-** Career Adapt-Abilities Scale (CAAS) (Savickas & Porfeli, 2012) was used to measure career adaptability. The reliable and well validated 24-item scale consists of four dimensions measured with six items each. The four dimensions are: concern, control, curiosity and confidence. Each item is rated on a scale from 1 (*not at all strong*) to 5 (*very strong*).

### Data Analysis

The data thus collected have been analyzed with the help of SPSS 17. The various statistical tools viz. principal components analysis, correlation analysis and regression analysis were used to examine the data.

## Results and Discussion

### Principal Component Analysis

Exploratory factor analysis using PCA with varimax rotation was used to analyze the dimensional structure of participants work values. 11 items that did not meet minimum factor loading criterion of .30 were eliminated. The remaining 21 items were used for further analyses. The component matrix of work values is worked out in Table 1. The tables show that the final component matrix explained 31% of the total matrix variance. The first factor which composed of 12 items accounted for 24% of the total variance. This factor was labelled as intrinsic work values with items such as creativity, freedom, prestige, and respect. The second factor which comprised of 8 items accounted for 7% of the total variance. This factor was labelled as extrinsic work values with items such as friendly relations, work environment, work life balance, lifestyle, welfare, and promotion opportunities. Cronbach alpha for intrinsic work values was .93 and for extrinsic work values was .54 respectively.

Table 1: Component Matrix of Work Values

		Component Matrix	
		Component	
Items		1	2
1.	Solutions to problems	.838	
2.	Own choices and decisions	.827	
3.	Try new opportunities	.845	
4.	Work which benefits others	.420	
5.	World a better place	.840	
6.	Freedom in work style	.525	
7.	Prestige through work	.822	
8.	Work that help society	.808	
9.	Challenging work	.729	
10.	Creativity in work	.837	
11.	Respect through work	.889	
12.	Confidence	.671	
13.	Impartial boss		.450
14.	Friendly relations		.317
15.	Stable work environment		.302
16.	Work life balance		.453
17.	Pleasant lifestyle		.704
18.	Welfare benefits		.352
19.	High income		.428
20.	Good career prospects		.609
21.	Promotion opportunities		.321

Note: Loadings over .30 are shown

### Relationship between intrinsic and extrinsic values and career adaptability

Table 2 shows the results of correlation coefficient between intrinsic and extrinsic work values and the four dimensions of career adaptability. As shown in table control and curiosity were found to be correlated with intrinsic work values. Concern was found to be correlated with extrinsic work values. Confidence was correlated with both intrinsic and extrinsic work values. Career adaptability was positively related to both intrinsic and extrinsic work values. Thus hypotheses H1 and H2 were supported by the analysis. Hence, it can be inferred that presence of intrinsic and extrinsic work values among students have a significant contribution in their career adaptability.

Table 2: Correlation coefficients between work values and career adaptability

	Intrinsic Work Values	Extrinsic Work Values
Concern	-.005	.380**
Control	.460**	-.100
Curiosity	.185*	.119
Confidence	.382*	.181*
Career adaptability	.434**	.241**

\*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level

To examine the relationship between intrinsic and extrinsic work values and career adaptability, more stringent test of hypothesis was conducted using multiple regression technique. The results are shown in Table 3. According to the results of regression analysis, both intrinsic and extrinsic values were found to be related with career adaptability. As noted in Table 3, *Intrinsic values* ( $\beta=.47$ ) was more influential in explaining the career adaptability of students as compared to *extrinsic values* ( $\beta=.30$ ).  $R^2$  for career adaptability as dependent variable was .28, which indicated that approximately 28% of the variation in career adaptability could be explained by intrinsic and extrinsic work values. Thus the results supported hypotheses H1 and H2.

Table 3: Predicting career adaptability: using multiple regression analysis

	Beta ( $\beta$ )	T	Sig.
Intrinsic work values	.477	6.24	.000
Extrinsic work values	.308	4.03	.000
R Square	.28		

## Conclusion

The main objective of the study was to examine the intrinsic-extrinsic work values of students of private universities. The results of the study showed that both intrinsic and extrinsic values predicted career adaptability of students. Factors like creativity, prestige, independence, supervisory relationships, relationships with associates, income, welfare benefits and other extrinsic factors were considered as important factors while choosing a job. The result of the study further indicates a positive relationship between the work values of students and their career adaptability. The results of the study by Ye (2015) corroborate the findings of the present study. Ye (2015) also reported positive correlation between the students' work values and their career adaptability. Furthermore, from the results of the study the intrinsic values were found to be more influential in predicting the career adaptability of the university students as compared to extrinsic values. The results are supported by the findings of the study by Hamid and D'Silva (2015). The researchers in their study on Malaysian youth reported stronger emphasis on intrinsic work values.

Since the study was conducted only among the students of universities in Himachal Pradesh, it is not possible to generalize the findings. Therefore, further research can be undertaken in understanding the relationship between work values and their role in predicting the career adaptability of students among other universities. Also the research used cross sectional data for analysis, therefore further researches can use longitudinal data for predicting the relationship between values and career adaptability.

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