



THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN WORK VALUES AND EMPLOYEE VOICE

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ABSTRACT

Purpose- Values are “conceptions of the desirable that guide the way social actors to select actions, evaluate people and events and explain their actions” (Schwartz, 1999, 124). People re motivated by the values they hold, and who have values receive stronger work outcomes (Tevrüz et al., 2015). The purpose of the current study is to understand the effect of work values on different types of employee voice.

Methodology- The questionnaires were distributed to randomly selected companies located in Istanbul. Some of them were personally given to respondents and some were sent by e-mail. In total, 300 questionnaires were distributed of which 244 were returned (%81,3 return rate).

Findings- Employee voice is determined by work values using “work goals” scale of Tevrüz et al. (2010) and “employee voice” scale of Maynes and Podsakoff (2014), and help to determine the motivational source of promotive or prohibitive voice.

Conclusion- Research exploring the employee voice and work values relationship is scant. The present study will contribute to the existing area by considering different point of view. Why people voice or not can be understood with the held work values.

Keywords: Growth values, normative values, extrinsic values, promotive voice, prohibitive voice

JEL Codes: M10, M19, M14

1. INTRODUCTION

Employee voice is critical for the development and sustainability of organizations. Voice is defined as “any attempt at all to change rather than to escape from an objectionable state of affairs” (Hirschman, 1970, 30). Voice was firstly conceptualized by Hirschman (1970) as voting behavior. Freeman and Medoff (1984), and Farrell (1983) analyzed the term in work settings and defined as “sharing constructive ideas and opinions with managers and coworkers which might contribute company’s growth and development” (Morrison, 2011, 374). The term voice is based on the idea that; managers are not able to cope with every work issue by themselves, they will need the support and help from their coworkers.

Maynes and Podsakoff (2014) asserted that, voice does not necessarily have to be constructive but might also be destructive in its nature. They developed a new voice framework covering both positive and negative aspects of the term (promotive vs. prohibitive, active vs. passive) to expand the domain and clarify what types of behaviors should be considered voice. They validated a new scale including four types (supportive, constructive, defensive, and destructive) of voice behavior along with two axes (preservation-challenge and promotive-prohibitive). *Supportive voice* includes voluntary behavior which support current policies and procedures of the company or business unit. *Constructive voice* is expressing constructive opinions and ideas for the sake of the company. The purpose of this type of voice is contribute to the company in handling change process and development. *Defensive voice* includes behavior which express objections about possible changes in the organization even they are needed and verbally indicate negative attitude towards work policies. *Destructive voice* is voluntarily manifesting counterproductive actions to damage company well-being.

Motivation is “the processes that account for an individual’s intensity, direction, and persistence of the effort toward attaining a goal” (Robins and Judge, 2013, 202). Held values have significant impact on individuals’ judgments, decisions and attitudes. What is desired by the person is shaped by the held values. Elizur and Sagie (1999) state that, life values

correspond with work values. Work values are aroused with the drive to satisfy some relevant needs (Super, 1969). Hogan and Hogan (1996) evaluate work values as facilitators in motivating employees. That is why work values have a significant role in motivating people. Therefore, the way people develop their attitudes are related with these values (Ueda and Ohzono, 2012). In classifying work values there are different approaches. The most and frequently used classification is intrinsic and extrinsic work value groups (Ueda and Ohzono, 2012). *Intrinsic work values* cover helping others, freedom at work and task variety; *extrinsic values* on the other hand include high salary, having prestigious job and work-life balance.

Additional to these two groups, social and environmental values are identified (Ginzberg et al., 1951; Manhardt, 1972; Elizur et al., 1991). Current study is applied for Turkish employees. Specifically, for this context a Turkish originated scale which is developed by Tevrüz and her friends (2004) is used. Therefore, the study is an emic approach Tevrüz and Turgut (2004) started a longitudinal value research which tried to conceptualize Turkish work values. Their research found three group of work values, namely growth, normative and extrinsic function of work values (Tevrüz et al., 2015). *Growth or individualistic* function includes intrinsic values such as “to perform the desired profession”, “to be enriched in knowledge and to use it” and “to have a meaningful life”. *Normative* function includes “to contribute to society”, “to avoid missteps” and “to fulfill religious duties”. *Extrinsic or worldly* function covers “to ensure livelihood” and “to gain status”.

Research results are generally evaluated and justified based on intrinsic versus extrinsic value groupings. For example, Wang, Chen, Hyde and Hsieh (2010) found positive effect of intrinsic values on pay satisfaction and negative effect on turnover intention. Vansteenkiste et al. (2007) implied that, extrinsic work values have comparatively more negative effects on some job outcomes than intrinsic values.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

In the present study, we aim to understand the relationships among work values people have and kind of voice they use.

2.1. Work Values and Employee Voice

Based on Tevrüz et al.'s (2015) classification of work values, *growth values* reinforce employees' career satisfaction and success, and when they are utilized, individuals' commitment and productivity are fostered (Erdoğan, Kraimer, and Lidan, 2004). When *growth work values* are held by employee, they are predisposed to work for the sake of the company which might constructive and supportive voice more possible than other voice types. People who care about their job and career might try to contribute to their work processes more than others who do not. They might find possible improvement with *constructive* and *supportive* opinions and ideas in achieving organizational objectives or sustainability. Moreover, people with growth work values help their coworker in handling overload and work for the sustainability of their company (Liang, 2012). Intrinsically motivated people want to use their full potential and look for novelties and challenges (Tevruz et al., 2015). When considered from this point of view, constructive and supportive voice might be increased by growth work values.

People with *extrinsic* work values are motivated by external factors such as salary, promotion or job security (Ueda and Ohzono, 2012). Because employee voice is aroused as a voluntary act without considering rewards, extrinsic work values might not predict employee voice. *Normative* work values are related with values regarding the harmony of each employee for the sake of society (Tevrüz et. al., 2015). If the individuals perceive their job as a way to reach their normative obligations, they will object any changes in the organization that will increase *defensive* voice in case of change (Maynes and Podsakoff, 2014).

Since researches regarding the relationship between work values and employee voice is not sufficient enough to propose a hypothesis, our research question is to understand *How work values (extrinsic, growth and normative) effect employee voice (supportive, constructive, destructive, defensive)?*

3. DATA AND METHODOLOGY

3.1. Sampling

In the study, 400 questionnaires are distributed and 244 (*N*) of them are answered (the rate of return is 61%). There are 152 females and 92 male participants, and there are 11 high school graduates, 123 university graduates, 91 master and 19 PhD graduates. The mean age is 33,45 (*SD*= 6,44), and the mean of work experience is 10,47 years (*SD*= 6,43). In terms of participants' company size, 112 of them work in a company with 10-250 employees, and 132 of them work in a company with more than 250 employees.

3.2. Data Collection

Surveys are collected by sending an online form to the employees of small to big-scale range of companies which are in service in Istanbul. The surveys are collected within two months (May-June 2017) by convenience sampling method.

3.3. Instruments

Work values scale- “Work goals” survey of Tevrüz, Turgut and Çinko (2010) has been used. CFA gave 12 items in total (62% variance), and items’ factor loading ranges from ,57 to ,84. Three value types (extrinsic, growth, and normative) are occurred. There are items such as “work to perform the desired work with pleasure”, and “work to spend time, keep the mind busy, and make use of the spare time”, and participants were asked how important these are in their lives. Participants responded to each item on a 6-Likert scale (from 1=Not important at all to 6=Extremely important).

Employee Voice Scale- “Employee voice” scale of Maynes ve Podsakoff (2014) has been used in the study. Turkish version of (Unler and Caliskan, in press) the survey is used. CF gave 19 items in total (67% variance). Four voice types (supportive ($\alpha = ,82$), constructive ($\alpha = ,87$), destructive ($\alpha = ,86$), and destructive voice ($\alpha = ,86$)) are occurred. The scale involves items such as “I defend useful organizational policies when other employees unfairly criticize the policies”, “I vocally argue against changing work practices, even when making the changes is necessary”, “I often suggest changes to work projects in order to make them better”, and it has been asked in what degree they agree with these items. Participants answered every item on a 6-Likert scale (from 1=Strongly disagree to 6=Strongly agree).

3.4. Data Analysis

Reliability and factor analysis are practiced for each scale. The effect of independent variable (work values) on different forms of employee voice is practiced through regression analysis.

4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1. Factor Analysis

Principal component analysis and Varimax rotation are practiced for two scales we used. Two scales diverged into sub factors, their KMO values are higher than ,50 and Bartlett’ test is significant. Here is the factor analysis of the scales.

Work Values- Four factors have been found with factor analysis of Work Values survey. Item 11 is removed since it has similar factor loadings under two factors. Factors explain 64,52 % of the variance, which is more than Tevrüz et al. (2010). The reliability values of the factors in order are ,75; ,56; ,68; ,52. The factor “Extrinsic” and “Normative” of work values protected their place as in Tevrüz et al. (2010). Factor 2 covered some items of two dimensions “Growth” (two items) and “Normative” (one item) together, and named as “Achievement” by the authors. Table 1 shows how items are dispersed along with factor and reliability results.

Table 1: Factor Table of Work Values

Factors	Factor Loadings	Factor Variance (%)	α
Factor 1: Growth Values		19,97	,75
To be busy	,76		
To have an active life	,74		
To have a pleasant life	,73		
To have a meaningful life	,57		
Factor 2: Achievement Values		17,54	,68
To perform the desired profession	,75		
To contribute to society	,74		
To be enriched in knowledge and to use it	,73		
Factor 3: Extrinsic Values		13,75	,52
To ensure livelihood	,84		
To gain status	,73		
Factor 4: Normative Values		13,27	,56
To fulfill religious duties	,87		

To avoid missteps	,61			
	Total	64,52		
	KMO	,77		
Bartlett Test of Sphericity Test Chi-Square	725,273	df	66	p ,000

Employee Voice- Employee voice scale's factor analysis showed four factors. Factors explain 69,92% of the variance. The reliability values of the factors in order are ,77; ,88; ,90; ,90. Factors are in coherence with four factors (supportive, constructive, defensive and destructive voice) found before. Table 2 shows factor and reliability analysis results.

Table 2: Factor Table of Employee Voice

Factors	Factor Loadings	Factor Variance (%)	α
Factor 1: Supportive Voice		12,92	,77
I express support for productive work procedures when others express uncalled for criticisms of the procedures	,76		
I defend useful organizational policies when other employees unfairly criticize the policies	,78		
I defend organizational programs that are worthwhile when others unfairly criticize the programs	,74		
I speak up in support of organizational policies that have merit when others raise unjustified concerns about the policies	,78		
Factor 2: Constructive Voice		18,24	,88
I frequently make suggestions about how to do things in new or more effective ways at work	,84		
I often suggest changes to work projects in order to make them better	,78		
I often speak up with recommendations about how to fix work-related problems	,75		
I frequently make suggestions about how to improve work methods or practices	,86		
I regularly propose ideas for new or more effective work methods	,83		
Factor 3: Defensive Voice		21,45	,90
I stubbornly argue against changing work methods, even when the proposed changes have merit	,78		
I speak out against changing work policies, even when making changes would be for the best	,80		
I vocally oppose changing how things are done, even when changing is inevitable	,83		
I rigidly argue against changing work procedures, even when implementing the changes makes sense	,82		
I vocally argue against changing work practices, even when making the changes is necessary	,80		
Factor 4: Destructive Voice		17,31	,90
I often bad-mouth the organization's policies or objectives	,66		
I often make insulting comments about work-related programs or initiatives	,70		
I frequently make overly critical comments regarding how things are done in the organization	,90		
I often make overly critical comments about the organization's work practices or methods	,87		
I harshly criticize the organization's policies, even though the criticism is unfounded	,60		

	Total	69,92			
	KMO	,84			
Bartlett Test of Sphericity Test Chi-Square	2550,855	df	171	p	,000

4.2. Descriptive and Correlation Analysis

Based on factor analysis, descriptive and correlations between sub-factors among scales are analyzed as shown in Table 3. Based on the correlation levels between employee voice and work values, highest relationship is between “achievement values” and employee voice factors which are “supportive voice” ($r = ,25$), “constructive voice” ($r = ,27$), “defensive voice” ($r = -,18$), and “destructive voice” ($r = -,28$). Also, “growth values” have significant correlation with “supportive voice” ($r = ,24$), and destructive voice ($r = -,16$). Extrinsic values are not correlated.

Table 3: Correlation Table of the Variables

Variables	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1.Growth	4,20	0,96	-							
2.Normative	3,30	1,35	,33**	-						
3.Achievement	5,00	0,83	,42**	,34**	-					
4.Extrinsic	4,65	0,93	,18**	,16*	,02	-				
5.Supportive	4,26	0,93	,24**	,03	,25**	,04	-			
6.Constructive	4,79	0,81	,09	,11	,27**	,13	,26**	-		
7.Defensive	1,89	0,96	-0,33	0,12	-,18*	,07	-,01	-,03	-	
8.Destructive	1,86	0,89	-,16*	-,02	-,28**	-,00	-,11	-,14*	,67**	-

* $p < ,05$, ** $p < ,01$

4.3. The Relationship of Work Values and Employee Voice

The relationship is analyzed with linear regression. As a result, there is a significant relationship between “achievement values” and all voice subscales (supportive, constructive, defensive, destructive) ($\beta = ,21$; $p = ,007$; $\beta = ,29$; $p = ,000$; $\beta = -,24$; $p = ,002$; $\beta = -,29$; $p = ,000$), and there is significant relationship between “growth values” and “supportive voice”; and “normative values” and “defensive voice”. Thus having “achievement work values” contribute to giving ideas and comments for the sake of the organization and prevent negative voices. Table 4 presents multiple linear regression results.

Table 4: Work Values and Employee Voice

Dependent variable: Supportive voice			
Independent Variables	Beta	t	p
Growth	,18	2,35	,020
Normative	-,10	-1,33	,185
Achievement	,21	2,75	,007
Extrinsic	,02	,30	,768
R2 = ,09; Adj. R2= ,07; F = 5,187; p = ,001			
Dependent variable: Constructive voice			
Independent Variables	Beta	t	p
Growth	-,06	-,76	,450
Normative	,01	,16	,872
Achievement	,29	3,84	,000
Extrinsic	,13	1,90	,059
R2 = ,09; Adj. R2= ,07; F = 5,185; p = ,001			
Dependent variable: Defensive voice			
Independent Variables	Beta	t	p
Growth	-,00	-,02	,983
Normative	,20	2,70	,008
Achievement	-,24	-3,17	,002
Extrinsic	,04	,50	,616

R2 = ,07; Adj. R2= ,05; F = 3,830; p = ,005

Dependent variable: Destructive voice			
Independent Variables	Beta	t	p
Growth	-,07	-,87	,388
Normative	,10	1,39	,165
Achievement	-,29	-3,86	,000
Extrinsic	-,01	-,07	,946

R2 = ,09; Adj. R2= ,07; F = 5,165; p = ,001

5. CONCLUSION

Present study aims to explore the effect of work values on different forms of employee voice. According to the results, "achievement work values" predict supportive and constructive voice positively, defensive and destructive voice negatively. Additionally, it is found that, normative work values effects defensive voice positively.

The factor structure of working values scale could not be found similar with the original scale. Although original scale is composed of three factors, present study factor results delivered four scale. Normative, growth and extrinsic values are corresponded but the third factor covers both normative and growth value items. The authors named it as "achievement" because the items imply individuals achieved results and contribution in work settings. The reason of different factor result might be because of the sample characteristics. Future research should analyze different sample types with same value scale.

The relationship between employee voice and work values can be explained based on *Conservation Resource Theory (COR)*. COR states that individuals are motivated to obtain, sustain and foster their resources (Hobfoll, 1989). They fight for or approach to satisfaction or pleasure and flight from uncomfortable environments to keep their individual resources. COR has basic two principles as resource conservation which motivates people to keep silent for retaining the resources and resource accumulation which guides people to share their opinions for impressing others for the purpose of expanding their networks (Gorgievski and Hobfoll, 2008). From this point of view, people having work values like "to perform the desired profession" and "to be enriched in knowledge and to use it" might predispose to obtain resources and act for the sake of company. Their constructive voice might be increased to help others and the company. Throughout the way they will be able to foster and sustain their resources. The negative effect of these work values on defensive and destructive voice might be explained with the *flight approach* (Hobfoll, 1989). People avoid situations that can cause loss of resources. In both destructive and constructive voice, individuals prefer to voice not to protect the company but to damage it. Negative effect of these values imply loss aversion approach of employees. We can see "growth values" with items like "to have a meaningful life" work the same way with supportive voice (positively) and destructive voice (negatively) but we see that new factor "achievement values" have more explanation over four types of employee voices.

The last but not the least result that normative values covering "fulfillment of religious duties" and "avoiding missteps" have positive effect on defensive voice. Defensive voice is speaking out against company practices despite their utility. This result might be explained by "*the level of risk aversion*" employees have. People with normative work values are predisposed to keep their stability and might perceive any change as a risk for their situation (Tevrüz et al., 2015). That is why, they might not accept any change not to lose their position or resources without questioning its outcomes.

Finding out the positive and negative effect of work values on different forms of employee voice is critical and useful information for the companies. During recruitment process, person-job fit is an important match to deliver positive organizational results. Having "achievement" and "growth" work values might provide significant insights in identifying this fit. For instance, having such values related to constructive and supportive voice might be valuable in jobs where creative thinking is vital. To build fairness and democracy in organizational settings can be built upon the level of employee voice.

The employee voice scale of Maynes and Podsakoff (2014) delivered consistency with the original factors which might be interpreted as a source of scale validation for Turkish sample, adding to Unler and Caliskan (in press). Voice literature is needed to be enriched with different kinds of variables. Specifically, Turkish employees are predisposed to keep silent rather than speaking out. For example, employees who offers new way of doing a task is said to be constructive, but if they publicly complaint their company as a deliberate act it is destructive one. But we have scant knowledge about the types of voice exercised specifically in Turkey. It is recommended to increase number of studies in relation with different forms of voice in future.

According to Unler and Caliskan (in press) employees who trust their managers voice constructively more than who do not trust. Additionally, managers' attitude towards voice has a positive impact on employees' level of psychological safety

which results higher speaking up behaviors. Individuals who care conservation based values more than new experiences might look for higher psychological safety levels that make them comfortable in voicing towards their managers.

The present study has some limitations. First of all, the sample scope should be increased covering other regions of Turkey to understand the difference between regions in holding work values. Also, the way individuals voice might be varied depending on environmental contingencies. Secondly, additional variables should be added to expand the scope of the study.

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