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Culture and Career Values: What matters to who?

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Abstract

Information is presented on differences related to gender/sex and race/ethnicity on factors considered important in career decisions.

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Culture and Career Values: What matters to who?

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Introduction

- We were interested in a deeper understanding of career values.
- According to Person-Environment-Correspondence Theory (Dawis, 2002), career values are a major part of career choice and career satisfaction.

Introduction

- Our question was whether there are clear demographic differences in what people value in relation to their career path.
- We sought an answer to that question by using Knowdell's (2005) Career Values Card Sort.

Methods

- Participants were 118 students recruited through the General Psychology course at a small university.
- The sample was 39.8% male with a mean age of 19.64 with a minimum age of 18 and a maximum age of 43.
- Freshmen (64.4%) were the majority of the sample with sophomores (25.4%), juniors (6.8%), and seniors (1.7%) all represented.

Methods Cont.

- European Americans (76.3%) were the largest group followed by African American (7.6%), Native American (5.1%), Mexican American (4.2%), Latino/a and Multiracial (2.5% each), and Asian/Pacific Islander (1.7%).
- Some participants chose not to report age (.8%) or academic status (1.7%).

Instruments

- This study consisted of a demographic questionnaire, the Career Values Card Sort (Knowdell, 2005), a response record sheet, and coding sheets for organizing the data.

Procedure

- Participants completed the demographic questionnaire and then completed the Career Values Card Sort.
- After sorting value cards into five categories from always valued to never valued, participants listed their top 20 highest values and their 10 lowest values.
- We compiled percentages for the total sample, for men, and women.

Results

- The top 2 highest values, “Honesty & Integrity” and “Family”, were the same for men and women, but after that the top ten lists show differences in both order and content.
- Men and women had very little agreement related to the least important values.

Results Cont.

- The only value to show up as both most and least valued was “High Earnings Anticipated” which was the 9th most valued for males and tied for 10th least valued for males.
- “High Earnings Anticipated” did not rank on either of the totals lists or either of the female lists.

Discussion

- Having an idea of how men and women differ in what matters for career decisions can help career counselors in their work with clients.
- The main limitations of this study are low representation of non-European American individuals and over representation of freshmen.

Discussion Cont.

- It is likely that there are differences in values for different racial and ethnic groups and that more life experience shifts priorities.
- Therefore, data here should be viewed as a starting point for discussions as opposed to a definitive statement about any individual client.