

Sketching A Relationship between Work Values, Upward Influence Behavior and Need Satisfaction

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Extended Abstract

This paper sketches out the framework of extrinsic and intrinsic work values and employees upward influence behavior from the perspective of self-determination theory. We begin by introducing the concepts of extrinsic and intrinsic work value orientation and upward influence behavior as appeared in organizational research. Later, we theorized the relationship between work value orientations (extrinsic and intrinsic) and upward influence behavior at work. Further, we discussed how an employee's upward influence behavior as a function of his/her extrinsic, relative to intrinsic, work value orientation can undermine the satisfaction of basic psychological needs, derived from self-determination theory.

Extrinsic and intrinsic work value orientations

Research suggests that employees hold different preferences and value particular incentives in the work environment [e.g. 1]. In the field of organizational psychology, we can study such individual preferences and tendencies with the conception of work value orientations. In the literature, there are number of frameworks capturing different foci's of work values [e.g. 2], however, the most expressive and distinctive types of work value orientations observed are intrinsic and extrinsic work value orientations [1, 3]. It has been suggested that employees holding intrinsic work value orientations focus on self-development and self-acceptance. Such individuals view their job as an avenue of self-expression and self-actualization, pursue their personal interests and make healthy contributions to the society overall. Contrary, employees with extrinsic work value orientations derive their sense of worth by attaining external or materialistic rewards or resources such as financial success, social recognition, control or influence over others, or attaining a prestigious position at work.

Kasser [4] suggested that value orientations are more general and abstract but typically endure across time and situations. Moreover, intrinsic and extrinsic value orientations formulates and incline individuals to pursue intrinsic or extrinsic goals pertaining to life in general, or work in particular. Thus, intrinsic and extrinsic values are the higher order construct that manifests more specific and distinctive goals to be pursued [e.g. 5]. In the similar pattern, researchers suggest that value orientations as guiding principles of life also organize people's attitudes, emotions and behaviors [4, 6, 7]. According to Emmons [6], values influence individual's behavior through the goals they organize. Carver and Scheier [8] suggests that goals activate

specific action systems that lead individuals to engage in goal-relevant (and eventually value-relevant) behavior.

In an organizational setting, interpersonal influence behavior of an employee is one of the pillars of its social fabric. Employee's influence behavior is a goal directed behavior targeting individuals of interest at work place. In particular, research demonstrates that employees influencing behavior towards their supervisor is as important to comprehend as supervisors influence towards their employees. The following section presents brief explanation of employees upward influence behavior.

Upward influence behavior

Porter, Allen and Angel [9] defined upward influence as “attempts to influence someone higher in the formal hierarchy or authority in the organization”. This type of influence behavior is appealing and challenging as the agent (influencer) has no legitimate power/authority over the target (influencee). Thus, individuals are inclined to rely more on personal power to change supervisor's behavior, beliefs, decisions or actions. Influence strategies or tactics are tools or processes individuals use to get the supervisors to act or comply with their desired responses. Frequently identified influence tactics include: ingratiation, exchange, rationality, assertiveness, coalition, and upward appeal [10, 11, 12]. These tactics are further grouped into higher order classification based on the nature of their directness or assertiveness, i.e. hard tactics (carrying the elements of authority, force, or coercion), soft tactics (more subtle tactics), and rational tactics (involves presenting logic, facts, or information etc).

Research demonstrates that number of factors involve in the origin of upward influence behavior, i.e. to attain idiographic or organizational goals, characteristics of individuals, and organizational environment (e.g. 10, 13, 14). Kipnis and Schmidt [10] presented a number of personal and organizational reasons/objectives of engaging in upward influence behavior, such as obtaining: increased pay, assistance on one's own job, favorable performance evaluations, personal benefits, persuading superior to think well of the agent, getting others to do one's own work, initiating changes at work and gaining acceptance for new ideas or work project. Yukl, Guinan and Soitolano [15] argued that agents use different patterns of influence tactics for each type of influence objective.

Research postulates that effective use of influence tactics at workplace help individuals gain increase access to tangible and intangible resources [10, 16]. Falbe and Yukl [11] classified outcomes of influence behavior as commitment, compliance or resistance from the target. Moreover, research regarding ultimate consequences of upward influence tactics signifies the vitality of the behavior in the contemporary organizations. Such outcomes includes e.g. promotion, salary progression, enhanced career success, job performance evaluations, hiring recommendations, manager's perceptions of attractiveness, likability and similarity, helping behavior and leader-member exchange (LMX) quality, and interpersonal trust [e.g. 14, 15, 17].

Employee's intrinsic and extrinsic work value orientations and upward influence behavior

Schwartz [5] stated that, “values represent in the form of conscious goals”, and such goals influence individual's behavior [6]. Kasser [4] suggested that values are cognitive/affective tools that orient individuals towards certain behaviors in order to attain certain aims or self-growth [8]. At workplace, employees proactively or reactively engage in upward influence behavior mainly to promote, protect or sustain self-interests or organizational objectives [10, 11, 18]. Franklin [19] suggests that in an organizational setting, manager is a focal person because of

position power and network centrality and thus is an important source of information and work-related resources. In this context, we can suggest that employees' value orientations serves as the guiding principles to direct their influence behavior towards their supervisor, i.e. to persuade their supervisor to help them achieve what they aspire for. Employees having natural desire to actualize, develop and grow at workplace, to exercise their skills and competencies to their full potential, or desired to establish meaningful relationship with their supervisors and colleagues, and to help them if in need, will interact and persuade their supervisors using upward influence strategies/tactics to facilitate them in achieving such aspirations at work. Similarly, employees valuing materialistic rewards such as high income, status, and praise at work will also interact with their supervisors using upward influence tactics, in expectation of their support to attain such instrumental aspirations. In general, we can propose that employees' intrinsic and extrinsic work value orientations are positively related with their upward influence behavior at work.

Existing research investigating the goals and reasons of upward influence behavior, however, largely demonstrate that employees stated extrinsic or materialistic goals as the motivating mechanism. Researchers found that mostly employees engage in upward influence behavior to achieve personal interests or to obtain benefits such as salary increase, promotion, or improved work schedule [10, 11]. Moreover, in the literature of upward influence behavior's consequences, researcher largely focused on the materialistic outcomes (such as promotion, performance evaluations, salary progression, supervisor's liking), also exploring the intermediary mechanisms to effectively employ upward influence tactics to achieve desirable outcomes [e.g. 14, 17]. In this context, we express such materialistic goals or desired outcomes as manifestations of employee's extrinsic values. Employees holding extrinsic value orientations relative to intrinsic value orientations would assume that the achievement of desired aspirations is contingent to and are in control of the external forces (in this case supervisors). Thus, we suggest that employees holding extrinsic, relative to intrinsic, work values are prone to use upward influence strategies/tactics more aggressively and frequently at workplace to achieve such extrinsic overarching aims.

Employee's work value orientations x upward influence behavior and need satisfaction

To our knowledge, no previous study has examined the impact of employees' upward influence behavior and their well-being using the mechanism of self-determination theory (SDT). We aim to fill this gap by relying on the SDT conceptualization of basic need satisfaction. SDT assumes that naturally individuals are inclined towards growth and integration. Ryan [20] suggests that individuals inherently possess three basic "nutrients or conditions" of growth, i.e. need for autonomy (desire to be "the perceived origin or source of one's own behavior") [21], need for competence (desire to feel effective and skillful in one's actions and behaviors), and need for relatedness (desire to experience a sense of belonging or connectedness) [21]. Self-determination theory suggests that the extent to which these innate and universal psychological needs are satisfied in returns effects an individual's sense of well-being and satisfaction, and intrinsic motivation [22]. Various studies have found that basic psychological need satisfaction at work predicted many positive job outcomes (such as self-esteem, job commitment, job attitude, creativity), however, need thwartedness result in negative job outcomes (such as stress, emotional exhaustion) [e.g.23]. Since, we have already established in the previous section that employees hold varied work value orientations, and that the employee's behavior is not always the representation of the true self. Employees with aspirations of self-development and self-actualization relative to extrinsic work aspirations may employ influence tactics to persuade

their supervisors with the expectations of satisfying their needs of autonomy, competence and relatedness. That is, the essence of the satisfaction would lie in the very process of influence behavior, as employee focus would be to develop true relationship and personal growth aimed at intrinsic possible future.

However, employees perhaps too frequently engage in upward influence behavior that doesn't arise from the authentic strivings of the self [4]. This is the case when employee's extrinsic value orientation are stronger than their intrinsic value orientation. That is employees' holding extrinsic, relative to intrinsic, work value orientation would feel that their influence behavior arises from the feelings of control, coercion, or pressure. Employees would persuade or influence their supervisors in order to obtain extrinsic rewards or praise. Self-determination theory alienates the behaviors inspired by materialistic values from self and its needs. Vansteenkiste et al. [3] found that holding extrinsic, relative to intrinsic, work value orientation was detrimental to employees' job outcomes because these orientations thwart the satisfaction of basic psychological needs of autonomy, competence and relatedness. Thus holding an extrinsic work value orientation would reflect coercive process to engage in upward influence behavior, as an employee is occupied in attaining materialistic possessions. Moreover, Vansteenkiste et al. [3] found that the effect of extrinsic or intrinsic value pursuits doesn't depend on the extent to which employees feel they are able to attain their goals. Thus, we suggest that an upward influence behavior as a function of extrinsic, relative to intrinsic, work value orientation will thwart the satisfaction of basic psychological needs, because the allure of satisfaction wouldn't lie in the process of proactive influencing behavior, rather in attaining the presumed extrinsic outcomes or goals.

With regard to the need of autonomy, Kasser and Ryan [24] found that people who valued extrinsic aspirations of financial success scored relatively low on autonomy orientations, similarly, Sheldon and Kasser [25] found that people with extrinsically oriented goals reported more controlled reasons (rather autonomous reasons) to pursue their goals. Moreover, Kasser and Ryan [26] suggested that the feelings of insecurity are associated with extrinsic goals. Thus we can propose that employees engaging in upward influence behavior as a function of extrinsic work value orientation would feel controlled, pressured, and insecure, thus dis-satisfying their need for autonomy. In the case of need of relatedness, Sheldon and Kasser [25] people with extrinsic goals were less empathetic, and Richins and Dawson [27] showed that materialists places less emphasis on having intimate, close relationship with others. Thus, employees trying to interact and persuade their supervisors with extrinsic aspirations wouldn't establish true or empathetic relationship with their supervisor, rather maneuver them to attain their desired extrinsic goals, thus thwarting their need of relatedness. Lastly, in context of need for competence, research illustrates mixed results as per the satisfaction of need of competence is concerned with regard to extrinsic and intrinsic aspirations. Some research indicate that feelings of competence may decline when one pursues extrinsic goals [e.g. 26]. However, when upward influence behavior emerges as the function of extrinsic work value orientation, employees feeling of competence would decline. This is because employee's feeling of competency will be entirely contingent on the success of upward influence attempts and the acquisition of desired outcomes. Also, compromised autonomy and artificial work relationship would decline the feelings of confidence.

Conclusion

This paper presents the theoretical framework of the relationship between extrinsic and intrinsic work value orientations, derived upward influence behavior and employees psychological need satisfaction. To summarize, we have suggested that employees work value orientations, through the goals they organize, direct employees to engage in upward influence behavior at work. Such that, extrinsic and intrinsic work value orientation are positively related with the use of upward influence tactics. However, employees holding extrinsic, relative to intrinsic, work value orientation would be inclined to use upward influence strategies/tactics more aggressively and frequently at workplace to achieve extrinsic overarching aims. Furthermore, we suggested that upward influence behavior as a function of extrinsic, relative to intrinsic, value orientation thwarts the satisfaction of basic psychological needs of autonomy, relatedness and competency. Organizational research categorizes that upward influence behavior represents employee politics, however, we have established that employee's upward influence behavior can be positive and beneficial if it is goal focused and represents intrinsic value orientation.

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