

Effects of Work Values on Job Choice Decisions

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Work values have been receiving increased research attention. Ravlin, Meglino, and their associates have recently conceptualized and provided measurement of work values. Although the effects of work values on job satisfaction, commitment, and individual decision making have been studied, work values have not been explicitly linked to job choice decisions. Using a sample of professional degree students and a policy-capturing design, we examined the influence of organizational work values on job choice in the context of job attributes that have been shown to affect this decision process. Organizational work values significantly affected job choice decisions. Individuals were more likely to choose jobs whose value content was similar to their own value orientation.

Values are intrinsic, enduring perspectives of what is fundamentally right or wrong (Rokeach, 1973). Work values represent these perspectives as applied to work settings. England (1967) suggested that individual value orientations affect how people behave on their jobs by demonstrating that managers with strong value orientations tended to act in accordance with what they thought was "right," whereas managers with more pragmatic orientations tended to behave in ways that they thought were "successful." Among individual work values, the work ethic (the belief that work is desirable and rewarding in its own right; Weber, 1958) has received considerable research attention (e.g., Wollack, Goodale, Wijting, & Smith, 1971), and some have suggested that a deteriorating work ethic has negatively affected both the way people feel about their jobs and their commitment to their organizations (Spence, 1985). However, in addition to the work ethic, other individual value orientations have been applied to work settings. For example, Cornelius, Ullman, Meglino, Czajka, and McNeely (1985) used a critical incident technique to elicit the work values of almost 1,000 employees in a variety of organizations. Subsequent work by Ravlin and Meglino (1987) revealed that achievement, concern for others, honesty, and fairness were the most salient work values to individuals.

Achievement is descriptive of concern for the advancement of one's career and might be operationalized by willingness to work hard, seeking opportunities to learn new skills, taking on additional responsibilities, or sacrificing personal gratification for work-related objectives. Concern for others is descriptive of a caring, compassionate demeanor and might be operationalized by helping others perform difficult jobs, encouraging

someone who is having a bad day, or sharing information or resources others need to do their job. Honesty is descriptive of accurate transmittal of information or refusing to mislead others for personal gain, and might be operationalized by acting in accordance with one's true feelings, admitting an error and accepting the consequences, or refusing to take credit for the ideas of others. Fairness is descriptive of a state of impartiality and might be operationalized by considering different points of view before acting, judging disagreements in an impartial fashion, or judging people on the basis of their abilities rather than their personalities (Meglino, Ravlin, & Adkins, 1989; Ravlin & Meglino, 1987, 1989). On the basis of their categorization of values, Ravlin and Meglino (1987) demonstrated the efficacy of these four work values in influencing perceptions and decisions.

Specifically, Ravlin and Meglino (1987) investigated the effect of work values on perception by flashing consciously unrecognizable "nonsense" words on a screen and telling the subjects that their minds would absorb the subliminal message. When individuals were asked to indicate which of the four values the word represented, individuals tended to evaluate the nonsense words in frequencies corresponding to their own work value orientation. Furthermore, the authors investigated the effect of work values on decision making by manipulating the four values as indicators of a hypothetical subordinate's job performance and then asking subjects to rate the performance. The results indicated that the emphasis a subject placed on subordinate demonstration of each of the four values depended on the subject's own value orientation.

It is generally accepted that individuals establish relatively stable values through life experiences and that organizational socialization is unlikely to alter the basic value structure an individual brings to the organization (Lusk & Oliver, 1974). Moreover, it has been shown that individuals make job choices consistent with their work goals (Vroom, 1966). Because some of these goals may be value laden (e.g., the chance to benefit society or the opportunity to advance), individuals may make job decisions based, in part, on their work values. Therefore, if values are relatively stable (Ravlin & Meglino, 1989), it is impor-

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tant to examine their role in the selection process because the selection process would be the primary means through which person-organization value congruence is achieved.

Locke (1976) suggested that job satisfaction is partially determined by the degree to which the work environment allowed or encouraged value attainment. This suggests that organizational work values, the work values emphasized within an organization, may influence the attractiveness of work environments to individuals. More recently, Meglino et al. (1989) used the Comparative Emphasis Scale, a revised version of the measure used by Ravlin and Meglino (1987), to examine the relationships among job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and value orientations of workers and their supervisors. They reported greater job satisfaction and commitment when worker values were congruent with the values of their supervisors. If satisfaction is derived from a match between individuals' values and those emphasized in the organization (Meglino et al., 1989), presumably each individual will make job choices to maximize his or her anticipated affect (Naylor, Pritchard, & Ilgen, 1980). In other words, individuals may seek jobs where their values fit the organizational environment. Although there appears to be little agreement in the literature regarding the definition, application, or measurement of fit (Baird & Meshoulam, 1988; Blau, 1987; Caldwell & O'Reilly, 1990; Gresov, 1989; Rynes & Gerhart, 1990; Venkatraman, 1989), Chatman (1989) has suggested that values are an appropriate means of conceptualizing fit, because individual and organizational values can be evaluated similarly. Thus, beyond the possible main effect of organizational values on job choices, it is relevant to examine whether the attractiveness of particular values in jobs depends on individuals' own values.

On the basis of the effect of values on perception and decision making, Ravlin and Meglino (1987) suggested that "values are hierarchically organized in memory, and . . . that people will find opportunities, within the context of their duties, to apply their dominant value in uncertain situations" (p. 672). Consistent with Schneider's (1983, 1987) interactionist perspective, they indicated that entry of individuals with particular dominant values might, in the long term, influence the value orientation of the organization. Ravlin and Meglino (1987) correctly pointed out that their results may be overstated because they were obtained in the absence of other contextual information. They called for additional research regarding the impact of values on individual processes, particularly their influence on choice behavior. However, in addition to individual value orientations, the organizational context of work values also is important, because values emphasized within an organization may influence choice processes. In the present study, we attempted to provide that context by examining the impact of values in the job choice decision-making process. One way to test whether values actually are important is to empirically examine their magnitude and significance relative to variables (such as pay level and promotional opportunity) that are known to influence job choices.

Past Research on Job Choice

A decade ago, Wanous (1980) lamented that although thousands of studies had been conducted regarding occupational

choice decisions, very little was known about how job choices were made. Since then, we have substantially increased our understanding of the job choice process, using a variety of methods and including a variety of variables. Direct attribute-rating and policy-capturing designs have been particularly instrumental in enhancing our understanding of job choice decision making. For example, Jurgensen's (1978) study of attribute importance found that individuals tended to report job security, type of work, advancement opportunity, and company characteristics as the most important attributes in their own job choice decisions, but they believed that pay was the most important attribute for others' decisions.

Priming artifacts, created by supplying subjects with a predetermined list of "important" job attributes, and social desirability effects, such as the tendency to rate pay as less important than it really might be, are deficiencies in direct estimation designs. Priming has not been an issue affecting values in job choice because values have not been included in researcher-supplied attribute lists. However, because of the highly desirable nature of work values, social desirability effects may be particularly problematic in attribute-rating job choice studies that include organizational values. Work values are a subset of social values that suggest general patterns of behavior that individuals ought to exhibit (Fallding, 1965; Rokeach, 1973). Therefore, most members of society interpret social values as positive and endorse behaving in accordance with them. From a job choice perspective, this suggests that attempts to ascertain the relative importance of organizational or individual values vis-à-vis other determinants using direct estimation processes is quite difficult.

Priming artifacts and social desirability effects led to the use of policy-capturing designs in job choice research. With the introduction of values into the equation, this seems even more appropriate. Policy-capturing designs (see Method section) have been used by many researchers to investigate the relative effects of a variety of independent variables on job preference and choice. For example, Feldman and Arnold (1978) reported that pay and benefits had greater influence on job choices than did opportunity to use important skills and abilities, autonomy and independence, responsibility, provision of essential services and products, or flexibility in setting work schedules. Zedeck (1977) found that advancement opportunity emerged as the most important attribute, followed by salary, flexibility, and assignment duration. Rynes, Schwab, and Heneman (1983) examined the role of pay and market pay variability in job choice decisions. In their examination of salary, location, promotional opportunities, and type of work, they noted that pay was an important determinant of job attractiveness but concluded that greater pay variability increased the importance of pay in the decision-making process.

These types of studies have greatly enhanced our understanding of how job and organizational attributes (particularly pay and promotional opportunity) affect job choice decisions. However, our knowledge of how important organizational values are in influencing job choice decisions remains limited because values have not been studied in the context of other variables that are known to influence job preference and choice. Because people choose alternatives for a variety of reasons, it is important to study the effects of organizational values

on decision making, using research designs that incorporate realistic levels of other contextual variables. Although values may have an independent impact on decision making in some settings (Ravlin & Meglino, 1987), Rynes et al. (1983) found evidence of noncompensatory processes in job choice decision making. Specifically, individuals identify certain necessary and sufficient conditions required for job acceptance. For instance, an individual may accept the first job that offers a particular salary level. Rynes et al. (1983) interpreted this to mean that nonpecuniary attributes may affect job choice only when pecuniary attributes are within the relevant range. Therefore, researchers must accurately specify the pay level (and perhaps other important attributes) that subjects are likely to encounter in the actual job market and subsequent choice process to interpret the relative effects of other independent variables, such as organizational work values.

Hypotheses

On the basis of pilot study results (see Method section) that generally confirmed past research (e.g., Rynes et al., 1983; Schwab, 1982), salary, promotion opportunities, and type of work were chosen as the most important job attributes to include in the study. Consistent with prior research, we expected salary and promotional opportunities to be positively related to an individual's preference for particular jobs. We also expected individuals who preferred generalist (or specialist) work to be more likely to accept a generalist (or specialist) position.

The values (achievement, concern for others, honesty, and fairness) described by Ravlin and Meglino (1987) were used to study the effect of organizational work values on job choice decisions. As is explained later, work by Ravlin, Meglino, and others suggests that these four work values are the most prominent for individuals. Given the high level of social desirability of each of these values (England, 1975; Locke, 1976; Ravlin & Meglino, 1987, 1989; Rokeach, 1973), it was hypothesized that the presence of these values in an organization would make the job appear more desirable. Specifically, our hypotheses were as follows:

Hypothesis 1. The extent to which concern for others is emphasized in an organization is positively related to individuals' decision to accept a given job offer.

Hypothesis 2. The extent to which achievement is emphasized in an organization is positively related to individuals' decision to accept a given job offer.

Hypothesis 3. The extent to which honesty is emphasized in an organization is positively related to individuals' decision to accept a given job offer.

Hypothesis 4. The extent to which fairness is emphasized in an organization is positively related to individuals' decision to accept a given job offer.

Several individual differences might affect acceptance of an offer. These variables were not central to the purposes of this study, but it was important to control for all relevant influences on the dependent variable in order to avoid biased results due to omitted variables. Particularly, it was expected that additional financial responsibilities, such as those perceived by married job seekers, would increase the likelihood of accepting any

given job offer. It was also expected that perceived alternative employment opportunities would affect the decision-making process. Furthermore, individuals with lower grade point averages should be more likely to accept a given job offer. Alternatively, within a sample of student job seekers, older and more experienced individuals, perhaps having experienced the dissatisfaction of accepting a job offer in haste, should be less likely to accept a given job offer.

Some research has demonstrated that individuals make job or vocational choices on the basis of their personality characteristics (Holland, 1985; Martin & Bartol, 1986; Monahan & Muchinsky, 1985; Tom, 1971). This research has suggested that individuals match their personality to the organization or vocation through the job or vocational choices they make. What is to be gained from learning whether individuals match themselves to jobs on the basis of values? First, values clearly are not the same as needs or traits (Locke, 1976). Accordingly, it is interesting to see if choices and matching processes are affected by work values. Second, because values are important to individuals and organizations, it is relevant to consider their effects on job choices, especially in determining whether individuals attempt to match their values to organizational values as a means of achieving person-environment fit (Chatman, 1989). Finally, given research suggesting that values are stable (Ravlin & Meglino, 1989) and influence job satisfaction (Meglino et al., 1989), if fit based on values is not achieved at organizational entry, lower satisfaction may result. This may induce employee withdrawal behaviors, such as turnover, which obviously have important consequences for organizations.

On the basis of the preceding review, we believe that the valence of a particular value in a job depends on how important that value is to individuals. In other words, in the present study we hypothesized that individuals would make choices between jobs possessing different value characteristics on the basis of their own individual values. Specifically, our hypotheses were as follows:

Hypothesis 5. Individuals whose primary value orientation is fairness are more likely than others to accept a job in an organization in which fairness is emphasized.

Hypothesis 6. Individuals whose primary value orientation is concern for others are more likely than others to accept a job in an organization in which concern for others is emphasized.

Hypothesis 7. Individuals whose primary value orientation is honesty are more likely than others to accept a job in an organization in which honesty is emphasized.

Hypothesis 8. Individuals whose primary value orientation is achievement are more likely than others to accept a job in an organization in which achievement is emphasized.

Method

Pilot Study

To identify the nonvalue factors most important in individuals' job choice decisions, we asked students interviewing for jobs to rank from 1 (*most important*) to 5 (*least important*) five different characteristics of jobs that had been identified by past research (Rynes & Lawler, 1983; Rynes et al., 1983; Schwab, Rynes, & Aldag, 1987) as influential in job choice decisions. The five factors were salary level, advancement po-

tential, geographic location, type of work, and type of organization. Twenty-eight students completed surveys. To control for social desirability bias (Jurgensen, 1978), we asked individuals to rank the importance of these factors according to how they thought others perceived them. The mean and standard deviation of the ranks for the five factors were as follows: For type of work, $M = 1.96$, $SD = 1.29$; for salary level, $M = 2.50$, $SD = 1.11$; for advancement potential, $M = 2.86$, $SD = 0.85$; for type of organization, $M = 3.29$, $SD = 1.54$; and for geographic location, $M = 4.29$, $SD = 1.01$. The mean ranks for geographic location and type of organization were significantly lower than those for all other factors, except that the difference between advancement potential and type of organization was not significant. Therefore, salary, type of work, and promotion opportunities were chosen as the non-value factors most important to individuals in their job choice decisions.

Setting, Subjects, and Procedure

Surveys were administered to students enrolled in four professional degree classes at a university in the northeastern United States and to students enrolled in several graduate classes at a large midwestern university. Participation was voluntary, and confidentiality was assured in advance. In order to induce student participation, subjects completing surveys were eligible to win five lottery prizes of \$25. Eighty-seven students were eligible to participate. Sixty-seven students completed usable surveys, for a response rate of 77%. Of the 87 surveys distributed, 18 were given out to students at the midwestern university, and 14 were returned. The response rates between the two university samples were not significantly different.

Respondents' ages ranged from 20 to 49 years, with the average age 26.2 years. Previous job experience ranged from no prior experience to 17 years of experience, with an average of 3.1 years. Sixteen percent of respondents were married. Respondents from the northeastern university came from several degree programs and broadly consisted of graduate human resource majors (42%), undergraduate human resource majors (21%), and non-human-resource graduate students (including general management majors, 37%). All students at the midwestern university were graduate human resource majors. Grade point average (GPA) of respondents ranged from 2.7 to 4.0, with an average of 3.51. Seventy-nine percent of the respondents were White, and 64% were women. Half of the respondents were currently interviewing for jobs, and the rest of the students expected to interview within a year. Sixty-nine percent of the respondents perceived acceptable employment opportunities, and 32% perceived limited employment opportunities. Forty-five percent of respondents expressed a preference for a generalist human resource position, 32% preferred a specialist human resource position, and 23% expressed a preference for some other type of position, such as general management.

Some differences were detected between the students at the two universities. Respondents at the midwestern university were significantly ($p < .01$) younger and less experienced, were more likely to be male, and had significantly higher GPAs than respondents at the northeastern university. On the other hand, no significant differences were detected on the following variables: marital status, type of work preferred, perceived employment alternatives, and beginning job search. The proportion of individuals possessing each particular value orientation was not significantly different between subjects from the two universities (e.g., 23% of individuals at the northeastern university had achievement as their primary value orientation vs. 20% at the midwestern university, and these proportions were not significantly different). Thus, although in most ways respondents at the two universities were similar, the diversity of the groups on some characteristics reinforces the advantage of collecting data from subjects at two sites.

Research Design and Measures

A mixed experimental design (Keppel, 1982), incorporating both within-subject and between-subjects components, was used. The within-subject design permits researchers to infer the relative importance of particular variables that are related to an individual's decision making. When the research question is focused on decision making, this design is known as "policy capturing" and has been used to study a variety of decision-making processes within the organizational context, including disciplinary decisions (Klaas & Wheeler, 1990); judgments of task importance (Sanchez & Levine, 1989); managerial pay raise decisions (Sherer, Schwab, & Heneman, 1987); judgments of sexual harassment (York, 1989); and, of course, job choice decisions (Arnold, 1981; Feldman & Arnold, 1978; Rynes & Lawler, 1983; Rynes et al., 1983; Zedeck, 1977).

In the present study, seven within-subject variables (characteristics of job alternatives) were manipulated: pay, promotion opportunities, type of work (all identified from the pilot study), and the four value variables derived from Ravlin and Meglino's (1987) value classification. The levels of the pay and promotion figures were derived from data from the schools' career placement offices. Because average salary offers differed significantly between graduates and undergraduates, separate salary figures were provided in the graduate and undergraduate surveys. For graduate students at the northeastern university, an offer of \$42,000 represented the low offer (roughly the 25th percentile of offers accepted during the prior year), and \$46,000 represented the high offer (roughly the 75th percentile of offers accepted during the prior year). For the undergraduates at the northeastern university, these figures were \$29,000 and \$33,000, respectively. At the midwestern university, an offer of \$38,000 represented the low offer and \$42,000 represented the high offer (again roughly the 25th and 75th percentiles, respectively). Few promotion opportunities were indicated for all groups by one promotion in 5 years on the job. High promotion opportunities were indicated by two promotions in 5 years. These levels were determined through discussions with the schools' placement directors.

Descriptions of the values were derived from Ravlin and Meglino's (1987) survey, which is explained later. Levels of achievement, fairness, and concern for others values were manipulated by indicating in the scenario either that the value was emphasized in the organization or that it was not of central importance. Thus, rather than stating that there was either total concern or no concern for others, it was stated that there was an emphasis on helping others or that there was not an emphasis on helping others. For achievement, rather than stating that all employees work hard or no employee works hard, it was stated that the typical employee works very hard or that the typical employee does not work especially hard. For fairness, rather than stating that fairness was always considered or never considered, descriptions were based on whether fairness was an important consideration or not. These manipulations were considered to facilitate a realistic treatment in the experiment and to be consistent with the ipsative nature of the values (cf. Ravlin & Meglino, 1987). On the other hand, honesty was manipulated by indicating that when one makes a mistake, it is best to be honest (high honesty). Conversely, low honesty was indicated by stating that it is best to keep mistakes to oneself and do one's best to correct the situation. The manipulation of honesty may explain the results concerning this factor (see Discussion section).

The seven within-subject independent variables were completely crossed, permitting assessment of the independent effects of each factor on job choice decisions. Crossing the factors resulted in 128 scenarios (2^7) that contained all possible combinations of the independent variables. The scenarios were presented in the survey in random order to minimize order effects. Participants were asked to assume that they were offered a job possessing the characteristics included in the de-

scription. The following is an example of a scenario; the independent variable each description represents is in brackets.

The typical employee works very hard to fulfill work role obligations [achievement]. The starting salary for this job is \$46,000 [pay]. The emphasis is on helping others [concern for others]. By the fifth year, the average graduate receives one promotion [promotion opportunities]. It is best to keep mistakes to yourself and do your best to correct the situation [honesty]. This is a specialist position in your area of interest [type of work]. Fairness is an important consideration in organizational activities [fairness].

The dependent variable—the probability of accepting a job offer with the preceding characteristics—was measured by a question using a 7-point Likert scale. It was operationalized in the following manner: "Indicate the extent to which you would accept an offer possessing the above characteristics." The response scale was anchored by *highly unlikely* and *highly likely*. Collapsed across all scenarios and subjects, overall mean offer acceptance was 3.87, close to the midpoint of the scale. The mean offer acceptance for subjects from the northeastern university was 3.83. For subjects from the midwestern university, this figure was 4.02. (These means were not significantly different.)

The between-subjects part of the design permitted assessment of interindividual differences based on individual attributes. Work values were assessed by the Comparative Emphasis Scale (CES), a survey developed and tested by Ravlin and Meglino (1987). Development of the CES was reported by DeNisi, Cornelius, and McNeely (1987) and is further reviewed by Ravlin and Meglino (1987, 1989) and Meglino et al. (1989). The specific work values represented in the CES were chosen from a pool of many possible work values. Therefore, we were confident that in general the work values assessed by the CES were the most salient and important to individuals. The CES presents 12 statements describing each of the four values. These 48 statements are divided into pairs such that a statement representing each of the four values is paired with each other value four times. For each pair, individuals are asked to check which value they feel should be emphasized most in their own behavior. Each of the four comparison replications was randomized in order and in the value that appeared first in each pair. The emphasis on what the individual ought to display is consistent with most conceptualizations of social values (Rokeach, 1973). The result yields a purely ipsative measure of values (i.e., which values are most important to each individual relative to other values he or she considers).¹ The CES was administered before individuals responded to the job scenarios (see the Discussion section for an explanation of this). Questions concerning marital status, gender, the university and degree program in which the subject was enrolled, GPA, age, number of years of work experience, perceived labor market alternatives (from *no alternatives* [1] to *many alternatives* [5]), estimated time to beginning their job search (from *currently interviewing* [1] to *will not interview for more than a year* [5]), and type of work preferred (generalist or specialist position) were assessed from individual questions on the survey.

Primary value orientation was defined as the value preferred over the other values. For example, an individual who chose fairness over the other values nine times, chose honesty over the other values seven times, chose achievement (working hard) over the other values five times, and chose concern for others over the other values three times would be identified as having a fairness orientation. Five of the 67 subjects tied for most often selected value. For example, two individuals chose fairness and achievement (working hard) an equal number of times (nine) over the other values. These individuals were considered not to have a dominant value preference and therefore were the excluded group. Primary value orientation was coded as 1 if the particular value was chosen more often than all others and 0 if it was not. Interactions between value orientation and value factors present in each job description were computed by multiplying the job factor by the relevant individual value orientation.

Analyses

Within-subject analysis. Multiple regression analysis was used to assess the effects of the linear combination of the seven independent factors related to a subject's choice between job offers. Orthogonal contrast coding was used (Cohen & Cohen, 1983). One regression equation was calculated for each participant.

Between-subjects analysis. Multiple regression was used to estimate the effect of the combination of job factors (within-subject variables), personal characteristics (between-subjects variables), and person and job value interactions on the probability of accepting an offer in an overall regression equation. With each of the 67 subjects making 128 job choice decisions, 8,576 (67 × 128) observations were available for the analysis (less cases deleted because of missing data). Because individuals in different degree programs may face somewhat different labor markets, the degree program of the respondent might affect the perceived attractiveness of an offer. Therefore, the degree program of the respondent was controlled for in the analysis. Three dummy variables were formed from the four classifications of degree programs. For example, the midwestern university variable was coded 1 if the respondent was a student at the midwestern university and 0 otherwise. Undergraduates at the northeastern university served as the excluded group in the analysis. Estimated time from the present that the respondent intended to begin his or her job search (ranging from *currently interviewing to will not interview for more than a year*) was also used as a control to account for the possibility that the attractiveness of certain offers depended on whether the individual was currently interviewing or on when they would begin interviewing.

Results

The correlation matrix of the between-subjects variables used in the analysis is reported in Table 1. Because the within-subject manipulations were orthogonal, the correlations among the within-subject variables and between the within- and between-subjects variables are zero. Furthermore, because an individual could have only one primary value orientation, correlations between value orientations are not reported. All between-subjects variables were dummy coded (e.g., generalist position was coded 1 if the respondent preferred a generalist position and 0 if the respondent preferred a specialist position; male was coded 1 if the respondent was male and 0 if the respondent was female), with the following exceptions: GPA, age, work experience, perceived labor market alternatives, and time to beginning job search. These variables were treated as interval or ordinal level.

¹ Rather than classify subjects ipsatively according to value preference, we thought it would be useful to be able to classify them on a rating scale, facilitating comparisons between subjects. However, the value subscales possessed very poor discriminant validity from one another. Reliabilities composed of random ordering of the values yielded equally high reliabilities (α between .93 and .99) as those classified by each of the four values. Furthermore, the scales correlated very highly with each other (the average correlation between the value scales was .98). This may have been due in part to the socially desirable nature of these values (Ravlin & Meglino, 1987). Ravlin and Meglino suggested that despite the fact that Likert-type scales are more amenable to between-subjects comparisons, ipsative scales appear to yield a more accurate and useful classification of value preferences. Our results appear to confirm this. Therefore, the ipsative scale was used.

Table 1
Correlations of Between-Subjects Variables

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
1. Married	—	.09	-.13	.24	.03	.13	.02	-.10	-.13	.04	-.09	.01	-.07	-.09	.03	-.05	.32	.38	.35	.34	.01
2. Male		—	.31	-.08	.01	.30	.09	-.16	-.08	.21	-.14	.05	-.11	-.05	.14	-.08	-.10	-.05	.08	-.15	.07
3. Midwestern university			—	-.34	.36	.30	.05	-.11	-.08	.09	-.05	.03	-.08	-.06	.06	-.03	-.23	-.29	-.10	-.01	.04
4. Non-human-resources major				—	—	.00	.04	-.14	.07	.00	.06	.02	-.10	.04	.00	.03	.43	.39	.06	.38	-.03
5. Graduate human resources major					—	.12	.16	.16	-.12	-.11	-.14	.09	.11	-.08	-.08	-.08	.01	-.00	.10	-.34	.02
6. Grade point average						—	-.07	-.11	-.01	.11	-.07	-.04	-.08	-.00	.07	-.04	.02	-.09	.07	.03	-.07
7. Value fairness							—	—	—	—	-.32	.57	-.16	-.36	-.30	-.18	.11	.03	.04	-.12	.02
8. Value concern for others								—	—	—	-.10	-.13	.70	-.07	-.06	-.05	-.13	-.14	-.19	-.06	.00
9. Value achievement									—	—	.32	-.31	-.08	.66	-.15	.18	-.03	.15	-.02	.01	.04
10. Value honesty										—	.04	-.25	-.06	-.14	.68	.02	-.07	-.11	.04	.08	-.05
11. Value generalist position											—	-.18	-.07	.21	.03	.56	.06	.11	-.11	.09	.02
12. Fairness interaction												—	-.09	-.20	-.17	-.10	.07	.02	.02	-.07	.28
13. Concern for others interaction													—	-.05	-.04	-.04	-.09	-.10	-.13	-.04	.09
14. Achievement interaction														—	-.10	.12	-.02	.10	-.01	.00	.14
15. Honesty interaction															—	.02	-.05	-.07	.02	.05	.00
16. Type of work interaction																—	.03	.06	-.06	.05	.06
17. Age																	—	.79	.02	.47	-.15
18. Work experience																		—	.17	.37	-.16
19. Labor market alternatives																			—	.03	-.08
20. Begin job search																				—	-.06
21. Probability of offer acceptance																					—

Note. Variables 7 through 11 indicate the individual's primary value orientation. Variables 12 through 16 indicate interactions between the individual's primary value orientation and the emphasis of that value in the job. On Variables 3 through 5, undergraduates are the excluded group. On Variables 7 through 10, individuals with ties between value preferences are the excluded group.

Within-Subjects Analysis

Within-subject regression analysis was conducted for each participant. This yielded 67 equations. The results are summarized here.² There was wide variation in the extent to which the linear combination of within-subject factors predicted offer acceptance decisions for each participant (R^2 ranged from .05 to .99). The average squared multiple correlation for the 67 participants was .67 ($SD = .16$).

Because each individual responded to 128 scenarios, it is possible that respondent fatigue affected the results. Such an effect might be detected by examining the variance explained in offer acceptance for the first 64 versus the last 64 scenarios. If the respondents, as they became fatigued, simply evaluated each scenario about the same (i.e., used a response set), there would be decreased variation in the dependent variable, and the squared multiple correlation would decrease. However, the difference in the squared multiple correlation between the first 64 and last 64 scenarios was only .009. Thus, individuals' responses to the scenarios did not appear to be affected by fatigue.

For the 67 individuals, the percentage of coefficients that were statistically significant ($p < .01$) for each within-subject factor was as follows: pay, 57%; promotion opportunities, 58%; type of work, 28%; achievement, 81%; concern for others, 94%; honesty, 55%; and fairness, 92%. The absolute values of the coefficients' ranges were as follows: fairness, .02 to .86; achievement, .01 to .70; honesty, .01 to .58; concern for others, .03 to .82; promotion opportunities, .00 to .69; pay, .00 to .50. For type of work, 46% of the significant coefficients were negative (specialist position) and 54% were positive (generalist position).

In a few cases, some coefficients were negative. For example, with one subject the coefficient on concern for others was negative and significant ($\beta = -.13$). With another subject, the coefficient on promotion opportunities was negative and significant ($\beta = -.63$). Coupled with the wide variance in the absolute value of factor coefficients (ranging from .00 to .82), this suggests that the attractiveness of job attributes varies considerably by individual. This underscores the importance of designs that enable evaluation of within-subject effects. For one individual, concern for others may be viewed as undesirable, perhaps being a sign of a Machiavellian orientation (Ferris & Judge, 1991). For another, promotion opportunities may have been viewed as undesirable because they may be seen as evidence of pressures to perform. For the purposes of this investigation, the particular reasons why a very few individuals may view certain job characteristics in an opposite manner to most may not be as important as the recognition that the valence of job attributes depends to a large extent on the individual. Purely between-subjects investigations are not capable of detecting these individual differences in preferences.

Table 2 provides the regression results for the probability of accepting an offer for the pooled sample. To be conservative given the large sample size, we used relatively low alpha levels (.01 and .001) for tests of statistical significance. Pay, promotion opportunities, and all four organizational value factors significantly influenced offer acceptance decisions. The effect of the organizational value factors on job choices was generally

stronger than the effect of pay and promotion. Thus, Hypotheses 1 through 4 were supported by the results.

Between-Subjects Analysis

The data set used for analyses that contained between-subjects factors was constructed by duplicating between-subjects variables (e.g., GPA, age, and experience) and then adding these to the within-subject manipulations and job choice decisions (128 for each individual). Statistically, this is appropriate because each reaction to a job scenario is an independent event; each event becomes a dependent variable (Hays, 1981). Conceptually, duplicating between-subjects factors was appropriate because a between-subjects factor can affect the respondent's reaction to each scenario. For example, GPA may influence offer acceptance each time an individual is presented with a hypothetical offer, much like GPA could influence offer acceptance over time (e.g., each time an individual is presented with a real offer when on the job market). In fact, stable characteristics are usually duplicated in time series and policy-capturing designs in the same way it was done in the present study (Feuille & Delaney, 1986; Rynes, Weber, & Milkovich, 1989).

The problem created when one is duplicating variables is that observations are no longer independent from one another. This means that there will likely be a positive correlation between error terms (autocorrelation), violating an assumption of ordinary least squares (OLS) regression (Kennedy, 1985). The consequences of this violation are that although OLS is still an unbiased estimator of regression coefficients, it is no longer the maximum efficiency estimator or an unbiased estimator of the variance of regression coefficients (standard errors). Thus, standard statistical tests of regression coefficients may be biased.

The degree of autocorrelation can be estimated by the Durbin-Watson statistic, which has an expected value of 2 under the hypothesis of no autocorrelation. In the present case the statistic was 1.42, which means that at a significance level of .05, one rejects the hypothesis of no autocorrelation. The estimated Durbin-Watson statistic indicates that the average serial correlation was .29, indicating some degree of autocorrelation, although not strong in magnitude (Hanushek & Jackson, 1977).

Given the autocorrelation, OLS estimation of standard errors is not appropriate. Therefore, generalized least squares (GLS) was used to estimate the effect of the independent variables on job choice decisions. GLS produces unbiased estimates of regression parameters and error terms and thus is well suited to deal with autocorrelated errors (Hanushek & Jackson, 1977). As the sample size increases and the degree of autocorrelation decreases, the differences between OLS and GLS decrease (Hanushek & Jackson, 1977). Because in the present study the sample size was very large and the degree of autocorrelation modest, the differences between OLS and GLS estimates were slight. Nevertheless, because the GLS estimator is the correct one, it was used in the analysis to generate standard error terms.

² A table that lists the 67 individual within-subject regression equations is available on request.

Table 2
Generalized Least Squares Estimates of Factors
Influencing Job Choice Decisions

Independent variable	β	SE
Within subjects		
Pay	.106**	.029
Promotion opportunities	.121**	.029
Generalist position	-.030*	.043
Concern for others	.275**	.030
Achievement	.173**	.033
Honesty	.102**	.032
Fairness	.320**	.042
Between subjects		
Married	.127**	.049
Male	.057**	.036
Midwestern university	-.014	.062
Non-human-resource major	.053**	.058
Graduate human-resource major	.046*	.058
Grade point average	-.041*	.001
Age	-.087**	.005
Work experience	-.182**	.007
Labor market alternatives	-.103**	.018
Begin job search	.024	.011
Value fairness	.061*	.072
Value concern for others	-.042*	.118
Value achievement	.073**	.077
Value honesty	-.021	.082
Value generalist work	.001	.044
Fit interactions		
Value Fairness \times Fairness	.106**	.058
Value Concern for Others \times Concern for Others	.086**	.141
Value Achievement \times Achievement	.093**	.072
Value Honesty \times Honesty	.017	.082
Value Generalist Work \times Generalist Position	.097**	.059
R^2	.390	

Note. $N = 8,562$.

* $p < .01$. ** $p < .001$.

Another means of dealing with correlated errors in this context is to estimate an OLS equation including a dummy variable for each subject (Rynes et al., 1989). This controls for each subject's idiosyncratic contribution to the overall regression and thus should yield accurate standard error estimates. This was done and did not change the significance of any coefficient in the model.

In addition to reporting the within-subject results for the pooled sample, Table 2 indicates that married individuals, those with low GPAs, younger and less experienced individuals, and those with few perceived alternative employment opportunities were more likely to accept a given job offer. As for the control variables, men were slightly more likely to accept a given job offer. Furthermore, those who were either non-human-resource or graduate human resource majors at the northeastern university were also somewhat more likely to accept a job offer. Finally, some of the value orientations exerted main effects on offer acceptance. Hypotheses were not made for individual value orientations because they were included in the equation to enable interpretation of the Value Orientation \times Organizational Value interactions. Table 2 shows that the R^2 for the pooled sample was .39. This is less than the average squared multiple correlation for the individual equations (.67), which is

to be expected because the pooled analysis collapses across unmeasured individual differences and differences in the valence of job attributes become part of the error term.

Interaction Analysis

Table 2 reveals that four of the five fit interactions were statistically significant. Analysis of variance yielded equivalent results. Inspection of the means revealed that all interactions were in the predicted direction. That is, mean offer acceptance was highest when there was a match between respondent value orientation and value present in the job. Thus, Hypotheses 5, 6, and 8 were supported by the results.

Table 3 provides a more detailed examination of the differing effects of organizational value characteristics on offer acceptance for the different value-dominant groups. The results confirm the interactions reported in Table 2. Value factors present in a job best predicted offer acceptance when the value emphasized matched the individual's primary value orientation. Table 3 demonstrates that across both individual value orientations (columnwise) and the value content of jobs (rowwise), work values predicted job choices best when there was a match between individual and job values. This pattern held for all values except honesty.

Chow (1960; Kennedy, 1985) tests confirmed these findings.

Table 3
Within-Subject Job Choice Regressions, Broken Down by Value Preference (Generalized Least Squares)

Within-subject variable	Individual value preference			
	A	C	F	H
Generalist position				
β	.025	-.014	.005	.157**
SE	.073	.121	.041	.081
Pay				
β	.099**	.046	.124**	.087**
SE	.073	.121	.041	.081
Promotion opportunities				
β	.093**	.083*	.127**	.132**
SE	.073	.121	.041	.081
Concern for others				
β	.192**	.537**	.333**	.179**
SE	.073	.121	.041	.081
Fairness				
β	.278**	.494**	.436**	.290**
SE	.073	.121	.041	.081
Honesty				
β	.039*	.118**	.111**	.142**
SE	.073	.121	.041	.081
Achievement				
β	.320**	.144**	.185**	.157**
SE	.073	.121	.041	.081
R^2	.233	.575	.380	.210
No. of observations	1,792	384	4,480	1,280
No. of individuals	14	3	35	10

Note. A = achievement is most important, C = concern for others is most important, F = fairness in dealing with others is most important, and H = honesty is most important.

* $p < .01$. ** $p < .001$.

Chow tests allow one to determine if the effect of one or more independent variables differs between two or more groups. This is done by determining whether pooling groups together (in this case, pooling different value-dominant groups) results in a significant increase in error sum of squares over separate estimation. In all cases other than honesty, pooling value orientations resulted in a significant increase in error sum of squares using the corresponding job value factor in predicting offer acceptance. Finally, the relations between the hypothesized influences on offer acceptance did not differ between the respondents of the midwestern and northeastern universities. This supports the generalizability of the results.

Discussion

The present results suggest that organizational work values have an important influence on job seekers' decisions when information about organizational value systems is known. The within-subject analyses found that concern for others, achievement, and fairness all tended to exert more influence in the decision-making process than did pay and promotional opportunities. The power of organizational values relative to pay and promotional opportunities warrants comment. Pay and advancement potential have been shown to be important determinants of job attractiveness. In fact, in both direct-inquiry and policy-capturing studies of the job choice process, these variables tend to emerge as very important attributes (e.g., Feldman & Arnold, 1978; Jurgensen, 1978; Rynes et al., 1983; Zedeck, 1977). Although these variables did achieve statistical significance in the current study, they emerged as somewhat less important than three of the four organizational values.

Rynes et al. (1983) very clearly demonstrated that pay increases in importance as it becomes more variable. They also concluded that the effects of nonpecuniary attributes were interpretable only when pecuniary attributes were specified within the relevant range that subjects might expect in actual job choices. Special care was taken in the current study to ensure that appropriate pay and promotion levels were used and that their variability was sufficient to indicate differences but not so great as to be unrealistic. The study could easily be replicated with greater variability in pay to both test the veracity of Rynes et al.'s (1983) arguments and ascertain whether the limited effect of pay found in the current study was idiosyncratic to the sample.

Of course, it also is true that because the within-subject variables were orthogonal, the effect of findings concerning values in the sample is statistically unrelated to the effect of pay. However, in actual job choices, the factors used in this study may not be orthogonal. For example, public-sector jobs or those in not-for-profit organizations (e.g., the Peace Corps) may be perceived as possessing higher levels of particular values but may also offer lower pay. Therefore, because it always is true with experimental designs that the effects observed depend on the realism of the experimental treatments, it also would be useful, although difficult, to replicate the results on the basis of characteristics of actual versus hypothetical job offers.

That values rather strongly influenced job choice decisions supports the efficacy of work values, as argued by Ravlin and Meglino (1987, 1989). Because values are often seen to be a

central part of corporate culture (Meglino et al., 1989), the results of this study may provide indirect reinforcement of the importance of cultural factors to individuals choosing between organizations. This suggests that organizations may want to consider the messages they convey in the recruiting process. Because these values, as defined here, are almost universally viewed as highly desirable, organizations that present an image of emphasizing these values may more successfully attract workers. Thus, although pay and mobility systems are important to individuals as they weigh job alternatives, value systems in organizations appear to be important as well.

The assessment of work values using the CES also was supported by the results. The hierarchical nature of values has driven considerable discussion regarding the work value construct and the appropriate manner in which to assess work values (England, 1975; Locke, 1976; Ravlin & Meglino, 1987, 1989; Rokeach, 1973). Specifically, it is argued that although it may be difficult to preference order values because they tend to be highly socially desirable, it is exactly because they are highly socially desirable that preference ordering is requisite (Ravlin & Meglino, 1987, 1989). Furthermore, because the four values were significant predictors of offer acceptance, the efficacy of the specific values assessed by the CES was supported by the results. Therefore, we encourage future researchers interested in work value assessment to use preference-ordering techniques such as the CES.

These results also support hypotheses that values are an important determinant of person-organization fit. Chatman (1989) and others have argued that many conceptualizations of fit are deficient because they do not consider contextual variables and organizational value systems that are likely to exert strong influence over individuals' behavior. In addition, Chatman has argued convincingly that person-organization fit is best determined by scales that can be used to measure both individual and organizational characteristics. In the current study we attempted to address this measurement issue by assessing individual values with the scale suggested by Ravlin and Meglino (1987) and indicating organizational value orientations with summary statements of the values expressed in that scale. Moreover, the values were presented within the context of one another and other important variables such as type of work, salary, and promotional opportunity.

For all values except honesty, the values present in a job best predicted offer acceptance when the value emphasized matched the primary value orientation of the individual. It is not clear from the results why the value interaction did not hold for honesty. One explanation may be that the way honesty was manipulated (although done in a way that was perfectly consistent with Ravlin and Meglino, 1987) was not valid. For example, some individuals might see keeping mistakes to themselves and doing their best to correct the situation (low honesty) as virtuous. Although we would argue that such behavior is not honest, it may reflect a high degree of diligence, autonomy, or integrity, which are socially desirable attributes. Thus, the manipulation may in part reflect honesty but may be contaminated by other values. Conclusions about experimental treatments depend on the validity of the manipulations, and therefore caution is probably warranted in interpreting the results concerning honesty. Furthermore, the idea of keeping mistakes

to oneself appeared in one fourth of the honesty statements in the CES. Thus, because the manipulation of honesty was only one of several types of honesty statements in the CES, the measure of fit may be relatively weak.

Another possible explanation concerning the weakness of the honesty interaction might be the weakness of the honesty variable relative to the other value variables in predicting job choice decisions. If the degree to which honesty is emphasized makes a relatively minor difference to individuals in their choice of jobs, then it may be less important, in this case, that the value orientation matches the value present in the job. In other words, the influence of fit on job choice may depend on the importance of the value to the individual.

A limitation in the present study is that the CES was administered before individuals responded to the job scenarios. This raises the possibility of priming or consistency effects (Salancik & Pfeffer, 1978) explaining the fit interactions. The individuals reacted to 128 scenarios in the present study; if such artifacts were pervasive, one would expect them to exert weaker effects over time. However, the fit interactions were not stronger for the first 64 scenarios than the last 64 (average difference = .001). This is not conclusive proof that priming or consistency effects are irrelevant, but it does suggest their influence may not be particularly strong.

Given the results of this study suggesting that value congruence predicts job choice, more work is clearly called for in this area. For example, while job matching based on value congruence may operate when values present in the job are salient, our study is not informative with respect to how often information about organizational value orientation is available to job seekers, or how often values present in the job or organization actually are salient to the individual. Work values can only influence decisions when they are perceived. Further research needs to address the extent to which value salience exists in job choice situations and the implications of value salience for job choices. For example, because values tend to be both stable and socially desirable, the accuracy of information about organizational values could have implications for subsequent satisfaction and commitment. The realistic job preview literature may be particularly informative regarding the effects of unmet value expectations (Wanous, 1980).

Future research should also consider how people obtain information about organizational values, which sources provide which type of information, and what assumptions job applicants make about organizational values on the basis of observed organizational characteristics. For example, it is possible that job seekers' perceptions of organizational values may be influenced by the organization's environmental protection policy or by how it reacts to environmental disasters (e.g., the Exxon Valdez incident). Considering that the present results suggest that value information has significant influence on applicants' job choice decisions, how that information is acquired seems to be an important research question. Furthermore, the literature on person-organization fit suggests that individuals who match job or organization values to their own are more satisfied and less likely to leave the organization. It would be useful for future research to follow job choices through to issues of perceived fit and the consequences of value congruence and perceived fit on individuals once in the organization.

Although this study contributes to our understanding of the role of values in both the job choice process and person-organization fit, replication of the results in different populations is necessary, particularly populations with different education levels and opportunity wages. The similar results observed in the two university samples, despite some important differences between the groups, suggests that the results may generalize to several types of workers and job seekers. Nevertheless, we are more confident that the results generalize to graduate and undergraduate job seekers (an increasing segment of the work force) than to those less educated. Also, because the majority of our subjects were interested in human resource positions, it would be interesting to see if the results generalize to occupations in which human values may not be as strongly emphasized. Future studies of values with regard to job choice and person-organization fit that include samples drawn from diverse populations would build on these results and answer generalizability questions that may exist.

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