

〈論文〉

Is There Gender Difference in Work Value Orientation?

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Abstract

Do work values differ by gender? Some survey results indicate that women have more intrinsic work values than men's counterparts. This paper sought to find out whether or not Japanese women had more intrinsic work values. As the result of cross-tabulation and multiple regression analysis, I concluded that it was not gender that came into play directly, but employment form. Because women are typically in irregular employment, whilst men are in regular employment, they cannot expect extrinsic rewards such as higher income or promotion and thus seek more intrinsic work values than men. Similarly, less education might lead one to more intrinsic job preference orientation.

Introduction

Work values vary from age to age, and from society to society, depending on one's social attributions and social conditions. Do its orientations also differ by gender? If so, how can we explain the difference? The Survey of Japanese Values Orientations conducted by NHK Broadcasting Research Institute every 5 year since 1973, reported that women sought more intrinsic work values than men (NHK Broadcasting Research Institute 2015). In this paper,

I argue that it is because female workers are more likely to work as atypical employees who would have more intrinsic values than male workers are, rather than attributing the value difference to the sex, like essentialists would do.

In sociology related to labour, study of work value is considered important because it is in-between social structures such as employment policies and work environments, and people's psychological aspects (Tanabiki and Miyata 2015). Workers seek values in their work environment and outcomes, and make choices to obtain what they value. For employers and administrators, it is also important to know what people's work value orientations are in order to implement effective work environments and policies to motivate people. As such, the purpose of this study is to explain women's work values from a sociological viewpoint. This is important in addition to the general importance I have just introduced, because firstly attributing the work value difference to gender does not explain anything given that gender itself is socially constructed (West and Zimmerman 1987), secondly an unexplained gender difference might reinforce and reproduce gender stereotypes, such as women are emotional and men are rational.

In the following, I will seek to figure out whether or not females really have more intrinsic job preference orientation than males in Japan. If they do, why do they seek more intrinsic work values than men? Sociologists would say it is not because they are women, but because of social conditions they are in. There must be some proxy that makes it seem women have more intrinsic job preference orientation than men. In the rest of this paper, I will firstly review previous studies, secondly present my hypothesis, then introduce the data and methodology employed in the current paper and present the results of analysis, lastly interpret the results.

Previous Studies

Work values are defined as 'beliefs pertaining to desirable end-states (e.g., high pay) or behaviour (e.g., working with people)' according to Ros et al. (1999:54). People evaluate their work conditions such as pay and

environment at the workplace, and choose a job based on their work values (Ros et al. 1999). Ross et al. (1999) argue that work values pertain to general individual values. Work values are generally thought to be composed of two factors. One is intrinsic work values; another is extrinsic work values (Johnson et al. 2007). The former includes, but is not limited to being able to use special ability or knowledge, being relied on, and having autonomy in one's job. The latter is, for example, wage, job prestige, and employment stability.

Work value orientations shift. Inglehart argues that people's values change from materialist values to postmaterialist values along with economic growth and development of the welfare state (Inglehart 1977, 1990). This is applicable to work value change too (Miyata and Tanabiki 2016). Theoretically, the wealthier a society is, the more intrinsic work values people seek (scarcity hypothesis), and people who grow up in a wealthy period would seek more intrinsic work values than those who grow up in an impoverished period (socialisation hypothesis). Goldthorpe et al. found that blue-collar workers who were more affluent than before had a different work value from white-collar workers in the UK (Goldthorpe et al 1968a, 1968b, 1969). According to them, the blue-collar workers considered their work merely as a way to live by earning a wage (extrinsic rewards), whilst the white-collar workers primarily viewed it as contributions to society and organizations they belonged to in exchange for a salary. Many studies on work values and its shift have been carried out in Japan too. For instance, recent ones include Tanabiki (2017a) and Miyata and Tanabiki (2015). Miyata and Tanabiki (2015) found that people who benefited from Japan's high economic growth in 1955-1972 tended to seek intrinsic work values rather than extrinsic ones, whilst extrinsic job preference orientation rose amongst young generations after Japan's bubble economy collapsed in the 1990s. Tanabiki (2017a) argues that most general work values used to be intrinsic work values that emphasised on the importance of having colleagues and specialty, but since Japan entered recession and employment stability collapsed in the 2000s, it has turned into more extrinsic ones that put more importance on external rewards like income and job security.

Focusing on contemporary work values, rather than its dynamics, many studies about how individuals' work value orientations are formulated have been carried out. Gallie (2007) found that longer years of education, work environment where the high quality of both private and work lives are guaranteed, positively affected the intrinsic work values. Gesthuizen and Verbakel (2011) addressed both individual and national level determinants of work values. They concluded that at the individual level, higher educational attainment, a high income, working in managerial and highly professional jobs, and having autonomy in one's job had significant effects on intrinsic job preference orientation. At the national level, high human capital investment, a high quality of labour market are associated with lower levels of extrinsic work values, and socio-economic features that reduce the risk of economic deprivation are positively associated with having intrinsic work values. In Japan, Yoneta (2008) confirmed the trend found in other countries that a higher social stratification is related to more intrinsic job preference orientation. In terms of educational attainment, university degree holders tend to seek special skills more than non-university degree holders (Miyata and Tanabiki 2015), and the former is less likely to put importance on colleges than the latter (Tanabiki 2017b).

However, there are some recent studies that are inconsistent with the previous findings above. Yoneta (2011) found that intrinsic work values had risen amongst the people in low social stratification. He interprets this result as that people in lower social stratifications cannot expect extrinsic rewards, so they instead seek a sort of intrinsic work values, meaningfulness (Yoneta 2011). In fact, male workers in atypical (irregular) employment compared with male workers in typical (regular) employment, and female workers compared with male's counterparts show more intrinsic job preference orientation (NHK Broadcasting Culture Research Institute 2015). In Japan, male atypical employees earned about 68.5% of what male workers in typical employment earned and female workers earned 74.3% of what male workers in 2020 earned (Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare 2021).

Another example is that female workers show more intrinsic work value orientations than men (NHK Broadcasting Culture Research Institute

2015), but the gender difference is inconsistent in previous studies. Morinaga (1995) studied Japanese national university students in their 1st and 2nd year and found that female students showed higher scores in most of both intrinsic and extrinsic values, than male students. Ismael and Richard (1997) argue that, at an Israeli university, amongst the single students there were no gender differences in work values, but amongst the married students there were some. They concluded that although some gender differences in work values were seen according to specialisation of studies, overall, no consistent gender difference pattern was found (Ismael & Richard 1997). In the 9th Survey on Japanese Value Orientations by the NHK Broadcasting Culture Research Institute (2015) found that more women (48%) emphasised on enjoying working with one's colleagues as an ideal job condition than men (36%). In addition, amongst regular employees, slightly more women (35%) than men (31%) answered 'a job that requires specialist knowledge and skills' to the same question. On the other hand, Tanabiki (2017a) argues that the women have emphasised on enjoying working with one's colleagues more than men at least since 1973, but there has been no gender difference in putting the importance on being required specialist knowledge and skills over the time. He also found that people in their 20s and 30s chose colleagues as a condition of an ideal job, and specialist and managerial workers think special skills are important more than salespersons and business owners do (Tanabiki 2017b).

Studies of gender difference in work value orientations are insufficient. Firstly, many of them are limited in data and, thus, are likely to have biased results. Morinaga (1995) only studied university students, who had not started their careers yet. The findings are hardly applicable to people who do not have a university degree, and who already work, because work values should be intertwined with actual work experiences. The same criticisms can be applied to Ismael & Richard (1997), which surveyed only university students. Secondly, causal relationships between gender and work values orientations have not been examined. Yet, presenting gender differences would mislead people. The results of NHK Broadcasting Culture Research Institute (2015) only presented the percentages of women and men who

answered questions regarding job preference orientations. Presenting only such a superficial result might bring a simplistic understanding that women, as sex, are more intrinsic job preference oriented than men. This might also reinforce gender stereotypes, men are the breadwinners because they have less intrinsic job preference orientation and can sacrifice themselves for family at work, and women's work is still supplementary because they prioritise intrinsic work values to extrinsic ones such as salary.

Hypothesis

Given the shortcomings and lack of previous research on gender difference in work values, it is meaningful to examine it and elaborate an explanation on it. Applying Yoneta's (2011) logic, I hypothesise that because females' social status is lower than that of males in Japan, they have more intrinsic job preference orientation than male counterparts. For example, the percentage of females in managerial positions was merely 13.2% in 2017, 40.2% of female workers were in typical employment whereas 63.2% of male workers were so (Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications 2021), and the ratio of females' income in typical employment to the comparable value of men (=100) was 74.3 (Gender Equality Bureau Cabinet Office 2021). With regard to education, the percentage of men who go to university has always exceeded the analogous value of women, and it is only the past ten years that the difference is relatively small. For instance, men's percentage was 34.2%, 41.9%, 52.1%, 55.6% and women's was 12.5%, 24.6%, 38.5%, 48.2% in 1986, 1996, 2006 and 2016 respectively (e-Stat Portal Site of Official Statistics of Japan 2021). In this paper, I use employment forms as an index for one's social status. Thus, I specifically hypothesise that women have more intrinsic work values than men because they are usually in atypical employment whilst most men are in typical employment. Although women seem to have more intrinsic values on the surface, the effect of being women on the intrinsic work values should disappear if employment forms are considered.

Following the previous studies, I also expect positive effects of educational attainment (Gallie 2007, Gesthuizen and Verbakel 2011, Miyata

and Tanabiki 2015), income (Gesthuizen and Verbakel 2011), and marital status (Ismael and Richard 1997) on the intrinsic work values. In addition, I consider gender role attitude and human relationships at work. This is because the former reflects one's general values which might pertain to one's work values (Ros et al. 1999) and the latter might encourage people to appreciate such intrinsic value. I expect both liberal gender role attitudes and a better human relationship at work to have positive effects on intrinsic work values.

Data and Methodology

In the present paper, I use the 'Survey about locality and publicity in Sapporo'. The survey was conducted as a part of the class 'Quantitative research plan/ seminar', and 'Social survey seminar (2nd semester)' at the Faculty of Social Information at Sapporo Gakuin University in 2017. The details of the survey are summarised in Table 1. In the following analysis, the sample size is 218 of which 132 are females and 86 are males.

Table 1. Summary of the 'Survey about locality and publicity in Sapporo'.

Survey method	: Mail survey
Subject	: Randomly selected 589 voters in Sapporo city Toyohira Ward
Sampling method	: One-stage systematic random sampling
Pre survey letters sent	: 600 (11 of them did not find the address)
Date of sending the survey	: 2017. Dec. 12
Survey letters sent	: 589
Responses	: 218
Response rate	: 37.0%

Table 2. Descriptive findings about the dependent variable (I prefer a job that is meaningful rather than a job that has a good wage and welfare).

	Frequency	Valid %	
Number of valid responses	I agree	53	24.7
	I slightly agree	106	49.3
	I slightly disagree	46	21.4
	I disagree	10	4.7
	Sum	215	100.0
Average		2.94	
Standard Error		0.804	

In the analysis, I ran a multiple regression. The dependent variable in the analysis is the degree of intrinsic work values. I use the answers to the question ‘Q26 Do you agree or disagree with the statements about work and private life below?’...‘c. I prefer a job that is meaningful rather than a job that has a good wage and welfare’. Respondents were asked to choose from ‘4. I agree’, ‘3. I slightly agree’, ‘2. I slightly disagree’, ‘1. I disagree’. Table 2 illustrates the descriptive finding about the dependent variable. When I cross-tabulated, I combined ‘4. I agree’ and ‘3. I slightly agree’ into ‘I agree’, and ‘2. I slightly disagree’ and ‘1. I disagree’ into ‘I disagree’.

The independent variables are, female dummy (female=1, male=0), atypical employment dummy (atypical employment=1, typical employment=0), age, academic qualifications (secondary school, high school, 2-year college or above), yearly household income (0. Zero, 1. under 1,000,000 yen, 2. above 1,000,000 and under 2,000,000 yen, 3. above 2,000,000 and under 4,000,000 yen, 4. above 4,000,000 and under 6,000,000 yen, 5. above 6,000,000 and under 8,000,000 yen, 6. above 8,000,000 and under 10,000,000 yen, 7. above 10,000,000 and under 12,000,000 yen, 8. above 12,000,000 yen, 9. I don’t know), gender role attitude, trust relationship with one’s boss, married dummy. In the analysis, respondents who answered that their income was ‘9. I don’t know’ were excluded. Gender role attitude

was measured by the answer to the question 'Men should work outside home and women should take care of home': '4. I agree', '3. I slightly agree', '2. I slightly disagree', '1. I disagree'. Trust relationship with one's boss was added to measure human relationship at the workplace and was measured by the answer to the question 'Do you feel like you have built a trust relationship with your boss?': '5. I feel like so', '4. I slightly feel like so', '3. I am not sure', '2. I slightly don't feel like so', '1. I don't feel like so'.

Results

I first cross-tabulated the degree of intrinsic work values and gender, adding a layer of employment statuses (Table 3). As a result, only the row of atypical employment was significant in the two-tail test ($p < 0.05$). This indicates that women seek intrinsic reward more than men when they are in atypical employment. Regardless of employment statuses (in the sum row), women and men did not show much difference, though the significance level was 10.3% in the one-tail test. We may infer that employment statuses play a bigger role in determining the degree of intrinsic work values than gender. Therefore, I shall run a multiple regression to find out how much each independent variable explains the degree of intrinsic work values.

Table 4 shows the result of the multiple regression analysis. All the models presented were significant at 5% level. Model 1 indicates that being a female affects having intrinsic work values ($p < 0.05$), but both its effect and reliability decreases as atypical employment is taken into consideration in model 2. Here, the atypical employment dummy is significant at 5% level and has a greater effect on the degree of intrinsic work values than the female dummy which is significant at 10% level.

Model 3 suggests that being female is still significant ($p < 0.05$) and educational attainment has a negative effect ($p < 0.1$) on the intrinsic work values. There was no influence of age. It is interesting that the higher one's educational attainment is the lower the said individual's intrinsic work values are, because this is against what literature says.

Table 3. Intrinsic work values by employment statuses and gender.

Employment status		Intrinsic work values		Sum	
		I agree	I disagree		
Unemployed	Male	Frequency	5	17	22
		Gender %	22.70%	77.30%	100.0%
	Female	Frequency	18	44	62
		Gender %	29.00%	71.00%	100.0%
Typical employment	Male	Frequency	15	26	41
		Gender %	36.60%	63.40%	100.0%
	Female	Frequency	7	18	25
		Gender %	28.00%	72.00%	100.0%
Atypical employment**	Male	Frequency	4	8	12
		Gender %	33.30%	66.70%	100.0%
	Female	Frequency	2	30	32
		Gender %	6.30%	93.80%	100.0%
Sum	Male	Frequency	24	51	75
		Gender %	32.00%	68.00%	100.0%
	Female	Frequency	27	92	119
		Gender %	22.70%	77.30%	100.0%

* $p < 0.1$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

In model 4, atypical employment and household income were considered in addition to what we had in model 3. It turned out that the female dummy lost its significance again, but instead the atypical employment dummy ($p < 0.1$) and the academic attainment ($p < 0.1$) were significant in the same way as the previous models. I was not able to detect any effect of either age and household income.

Lastly, I tested all the independent variables in model 5. As a result,

the atypical employment dummy had the greatest significance at 5% level and the greatest coefficient ($r=0.223$). The gender role attitude, the trust relationship with one's boss indicate a negative effect on the intrinsic work values at 10% level. The married dummy also positively affects the dependent variable. However, all the other independent variables including the academic attainment which is significant in the previous models are not statistically reliable anymore.

Table 4. Multiple regression analysis: Intrinsic work values.

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5
Constant	2.765	2.757	3.046	3.060	3.621
Female dummy	0.176**	0.130*	0.153**	0.085	0.113
Atypical employment dummy		0.142**		0.147*	0.223**
Age			0.042	0.096	0.146
Educational attainment			-0.121*	-0.132*	-0.051
Household income				-0.038	-0.143
Gender role attitude					-0.193*
Trust relationship with one's boss					-0.187*
Married dummy					0.192*
Adjusted R squared	0.027	0.032	0.034	0.043	0.124
N	215	194	212	175	93

* $p < 0.1$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

Discussion

From the statistical analysis in the previous section, we can say five things. Firstly and most importantly, my hypothesis that women have more intrinsic

work values than men because they are in atypical employment, has been supported. Atypical employment status mediates being a female and affects the formulation of the intrinsic work values, as shown both in the cross-tabulation and the multiple regression analysis. Yoneta (2011) argues that intrinsic job preference orientation has been rising amongst the people in lower social stratifications, because they cannot expect extrinsic rewards in their job. Likewise, women have more intrinsic work values than men because more of them are in atypical employment than men and cannot expect higher income or promotion.

Secondly, educational attainment and yearly household income, which are suggested to have a positive effect on intrinsic work values in previous studies, do not affect one's intrinsic job preference orientation directly. Perhaps yearly household income is mediated by the atypical employment dummy too. Educational attainment shows a negative effect in all the models. This is against previous studies, but we may apply Yoneta's (2011) interpretation again that people with less education have more intrinsic work values than men because more of them are in atypical employment than men and cannot expect higher income or promotion. How educational attainment loses its significance is not detectable from the models presented.

Thirdly, gender role attitude negatively affects the intrinsic work values, though it is at 10% significance level. The more liberal one's gender role attitude is, the more likely the said individual has more intrinsic job preference orientation. It is not because young people who are materially satisfied and thus have more intrinsic values (scarcity hypothesis or socialisation hypothesis) have a more liberal gender role attitude, as age is considered in the analysis. Then, a possible interpretation is a direct relationship between the value regarding gender norm and work values. People who have more liberal ideology in terms of gender may have more liberal and progressive work values too, that is intrinsic job preference orientation.

Fourthly, the trust relationship with one's boss is significant in the opposite direction to what I expected. The result suggests that the more trustable relationship one has built with his or her boss, the less intrinsic

values the said individual seeks in a job. This is hard to interpret.

Lastly, being married encourages people to have more intrinsic job preference orientation. Self-selection bias (Becker 1981, Nakosteen and Zimmer 1987, Keeley 1997), that only couples with higher income would marry and thus they are already materially satisfied, is not applicable here because the yearly household income is controlled in model 5. Married people perhaps have a stronger sense of belonging to the society as they have formulated a family, in turn, they may seek contributions to the society through their job.

Shortcomings of the current research are that, firstly it was limited in data. Intrinsic work values should have been composed of several factors and one needs to be careful to apply the findings to the whole population in Japan. Secondly, it was not able to explain how and why the effect of educational attainment diminishes in model 5. Thirdly, it was unable to introduce a reasonable interpretation of the negative effect of the trust relationship with one's boss on intrinsic work values.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the present paper sought to find out whether or not Japanese women had more intrinsic work values. As the result of cross-tabulation and multiple regression analysis, I concluded that it was not gender that came into play directly, but employment form. Because women are typically in irregular employment, whilst men are in regular employment, they cannot expect extrinsic rewards such as higher income or promotion and thus seek more intrinsic work values than men. Similarly, less education might lead one to more intrinsic job preference orientation.

Some parts can be improved in further studies. Due to the data restriction, validity of the dependent variable was not high. Also, I was not able to give a clear explanation about how educational attainment and trust relationship with one's boss affected the intrinsic work values.

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