

AN ANALYSIS OF WORK VALUES,
ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT, AND
WORKCENTRALITY OF

TURKISH EMPLOYEES FROM AN AGE DIVERSITY PERSPECTIVE

SIRMA SONMEZER

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Turkish Employees from an Age Diversity Perspective

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Preface

The main purpose of this study is to understand the impact of age on work values, organizational commitment and work centrality. In this respect, it is hypothesized that there are differences in work values, organizational commitment, and work centrality among age groups. In addition, the relationship of organizational commitment with work values, and work centrality in different age groups is explored. The study was conducted in Istanbul, Turkey with the participation of 935 university graduate, corporate white-collar employees of large companies in Istanbul. In-depth interviews were conducted for the qualitative stage and a web-based survey was administered for the quantitative stage of data collection. An important contribution of this study is the emic items identified for the Turkish work context. These emic items are suggested to be incorporated to work values inventory for future research. The results indicated differences in work values, and organizational commitment levels among different age groups as well as changes among age groups in the level of importance of work. It was confirmed that there is a relationship between work values and organizational commitment, and between work centrality and organizational commitment. The results of the study also showed that work values differ according to gender.

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Introduction

This book aims to analyze work values, organizational commitment, and work centrality of white-collar Turkish employees from an age diversity perspective. Work values are defined as the importance individuals attribute to a particular outcome obtained in the context of a work setting (Elizur, 1984). As one of the major work-related attitudes, organizational commitment is defined as a psychological state that describes an employee's relationship with the organization and affects one's decisions to continue or discontinue membership in the organization (Meyer & Allen, 1991). Work centrality, which is derived from basic values, indicates the value of work in one's life and the level of importance one attaches to work at any given time (Kanungo, 1982; Paullay *et. al.*, 1994). Work values, organizational commitment, and work centrality are important variables in understanding the work behaviors and attitudes of employees in organizations. However, these subjects are not new to the literature. The novelty that this thesis aims to bring is the adoption of a new perspective by evaluating the above-mentioned variables through age diversity. Age variable has been accepted as one of the main predictors of these selected variables. Today's business world is composed of different age groups, each of which has different needs, values, and expectations. Thus, it is assumed that if these differences are clearly identified, organizations may efficiently construct their management and human resources strategies to enhance employee's work lives and form long-term relationships with their workforce. As companies respond to changing work values, commitment levels, and the degree of importance of work for different age groups, they can

efficiently create successful human resources initiatives, new areas of employee skill development, career development programs, and training programs, and construct long-standing corporate cultures. Furthermore, through this approach, companies can also create preferred jobs, and more productive environments that satisfy their employees in the long-term.

Age diversity can be analyzed from both a psychological and/or a sociological perspective. In general, sociological perspective tries to understand age diversity via 'generation' concept and the analysis of how socio-historical events, developments, experiences affect generation members in a certain characteristic mode of thought, and influence their world views, beliefs, and values (Mannheim, 1952; Kupperschmidt, 2000). Most sociological studies need a longitudinal approach and/or back-data to provide empirical findings in order to compare generations. In this respect, lack of back-data in Turkey is one of the barriers in studying generations. This thesis looks at age diversity through psychological perspective and evaluates age differences by life/career stage referenced by individual experiences and events rather than socio-historical milestones. The study adopts a cross-sectional study design to understand age diversity. Regarding the psychological perspective taken, the thesis uses life cycle/career development theories (Levinson, 1986; Super, 1980) as the main reference point. According to the life cycle model (Levinson *et. al.*, 1978), life is a process consisting of long, stable and short, transitional periods during which change remains constant and development continues throughout life. The thesis utilizes this model to understand individuals' experiences, key life events, tasks, and challenges during each of the life stages. The career development model (Super 1957; 1980) contributes to the theoretical structure of this thesis by evaluating life stages through career concerns and psychological tasks such as exploration, establishment, and maintenance. In the thesis, these developmental and career stages are also used to demarcate age groups for the analysis. The most productive periods in an individual's life are the moments when important choices and commitments on marriage, family, and work are made. Levinson (1986) claims that these are the early adulthood period (age 17-40) and the first period of middle adulthood (ends with 50 transition period) whereas Super (1980) defines these periods as exploration, establishment and maintenance stages. In order to operationalize this cross-sectional study, this research has categorized respondents as the 20's, 30's, and 40's age groups. The thesis takes these stages as a roadmap to analyze the level of work values, organizational commitment, and

work centrality of white-collar employees of different age groups in Turkey.

The review of relevant literature has revealed that studies investigating the role of age on work values, organizational commitment, and work centrality among white-collar Turkish employees do not exist. The study consists of respondents who are white-collar, university graduate, Turkish employees, who have been working in corporate companies for at least 2 years. In this thesis, it is assumed that members of different age groups in Turkey display diversity in work values, the level of organizational commitment, and the degree of importance of work in their lives. Thus, this thesis gains importance and aims to compensate for the gap in the literature in explaining the above variables from an age diversity approach in Turkey.

In the first section of the thesis, a detailed literature review, including the relation between age and career development, and the importance of the age variable in organizational studies, is presented. In the literature review, work values, organizational commitment, and work centrality concepts are introduced in detail, and their relationship with the age variable is précised. The second section presents the methodology including the sampling, measures that have been used, and the procedure of the field study. The third section displays data findings and the fourth section concludes the thesis with the discussion part.

1. Literature Review

This book has divided the vast literature into four parts: age and career development; work values; organizational commitment and work centrality in the literature.

Age and Career Development

Organizations need to consider environmental and demographic factors, when they are planning the management and organizational career programs of their workforce. By and large, environmental factors reflect the changes in the society, cultural settings, and technology, which generate different levels of experiences that influence employee's perceptions and expectations. In addition, demographic factors such as age, gender, education, and other variables like tenure and position are indicated as important antecedents of work behaviors and attitudes (Li *et. al.*, 2008). For instance, the study of Cherrington *et. al.*, (1979) reported that age, education, and tenure correlate with work values. In today's business world, there is a work force of different age structure, within which diverse age groups interact with each other and have to work together.

Of all demographic variables, age has been a major variable in predicting work attitudes and behaviors (Rhodes, 1983; Palmore, 1978) and it has been positively related with work outcomes such as job satisfaction (Kalleberg, 1977; Kalleberg & Loscocco, 1983; Gould & Hawkins, 1978), job involvement (Rabinowitz & Hall, 1977; 1981), work ethics, work values (Rhodes, 1983; Cherrington

et. al., 1979), and organizational commitment (Steers, 1977; Morrow & McElroy, 1987; Meyer *et. al.*, 1993).

The thesis explicitly focuses on the age variable and its influence on work values, organizational commitment, and work centrality. In order to understand these variables, this empirical research is grounded in two of the most prominent theories of adult development; life span (Levinson 1978; 1986) and career stage (Super 1957; 1980) theories, which are interested in how individuals develop and change through their life cycles and accumulate experiences that accompany them in their journey of life. Both theories have served as the basis of career development studies by predicting individual's adjustments and reactions to their careers. While the former approach is based on the impact of life tasks, the latter approach conveys explanations in terms of career concerns.

According to Levinson (1978; 1986), development continues throughout life. In the theory, adult development is presented within eight sequential stages and each one of these stages emphasizes different social roles, crucial activities, and psychological adjustments. Factors such as family, work, social status, religion, and race contribute to the development process of adults. Levinson (1978; 1986) conceives life as a sequence of eras in which each era contributes to the whole, and is determined by age and chronological order. Life-Span model draws a parallel between the life course and the seasons. Each era is divided into developmental periods and key life events that are considered as tasks and challenges of the stages of life. Even though not everyone experiences the same kind of tasks at the same stage, still some of these tasks such as entry to the labor force, marriage, parenting, and education are accepted as universal. Levinson (1978; 1986) has identified four major life eras (Figure 1) during which an individual makes crucial choices that shape his or her following life during these periods; 'Pre-adulthood (0-22)', 'Early-adulthood (17-40)', 'Middle-adulthood (40-65)' and 'Late-adulthood (60+)'. Each era is also divided into sub-periods and transition periods during which individuals seek different levels of growth, pursue goals, values, and related activities. Transition periods are stages to reappraise the previous structure and provide opportunity to modify, make choices, and create the basis for the next phase (Levinson, 1986).

As the thesis aims to study the group that has the highest proportion in the work force within an organization, the respondents are selected from early adulthood and from middle adulthood era. In Levinson's model, early adulthood (age 17-40) is

identified as the most productive time of a person's life. 20's and 30's are peak years both biologically, socially and psychologically. It is the period of high physical energy, and the era of forming occupation, family life, realizing goals, pursuing aspirations, passions, and the period of complex contradictions, choices, and stress.

Individuals aim to develop an identity, and explore their goals in their work and non-work life. Thus, they keep their options open in their 20's - 'novice phase'. It is an era of developing personal identity at work, in family, and community. Individuals in this phase have less work experience, are less committed, less satisfied with their work, and more inclined to make different attempts to explore life and career.

The age 30 transition is a period of instability and change. In the beginning of 30's, individuals evaluate their accomplishments in their 20's, and move towards re-establishing their professional and personal achievements. Mid-late 30s are the settling down period in which individuals are more concerned with stability and settling down in the society. They strongly continue to struggle for their professional and personal goals during this period. Compared to 20s, they are more inclined to make strong commitments to work, family, and community, and realize their aspirations both in work, and in non-work life, experience higher satisfaction and show greater performance (Levinson 1986; Ornstein *et. al.*, 1989). Thus, they intend to attain promotions, improvement, and professional accomplishment.

In mid-life transition period, which is the beginning of 40's, individuals review their accomplishments and adopted life structure of their 30's. They care less about external demands, and care more about individual needs. They start to recognize that life is short and begin to question the importance of work. The middle adulthood stage, covering the 40's, is a period where people become more interested in personal life rather than work life and more prone to sustain their achievements, to deal with particular individuality and avoid taking risks. They place greater emphasis on security and conformity. In terms of work, it is a period of tranquility, in which individuals generally reach a senior level, and become more responsible for their work and other's work.

Late adulthood is, generally, the period of reflecting upon successes and failures of past stages and preparing one's self for retirement. Since they are at the end phase of their work life and/ or already left the workforce, this group is not included in the analysis.

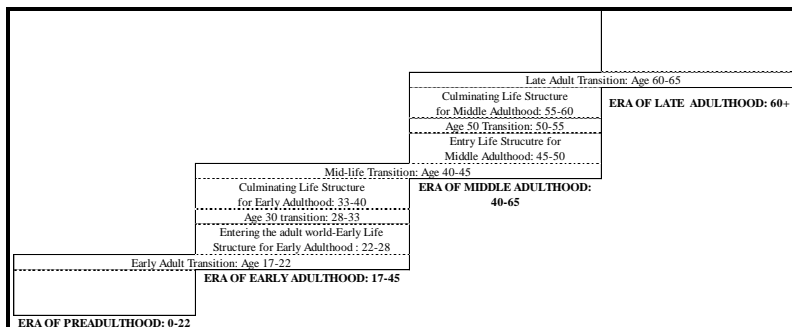


Figure 1. Developmental Periods

Developmental Periods in the Eras of Early and Middle Adulthood.
Levinson (1986).

While Levinson's model is formed in a well-ordered sequence and by age, Super's career stage model is grounded on individual's circumstances and perceptions. According to Super's model, individuals move through four career stages. Each stage is characterized by psychological tasks. First one is the, 'exploration' stage where individuals explore their interests, capabilities, professional self-image. They identify relationships between work and non-work; build skills, and develop competencies. People are more concerned about building new social relationships. In general, it is a period of uncertainty and instability during which personal goals become salient (Slocum & Cron, 1985). In this trial stage, individuals identify alternative actions and various possible outcomes (Super, 1980). Individuals are concerned with finding a job that matches with their abilities. Second phase is the 'establishment' stage where individuals make choices about their professional and personal lives, and pursue their major plans. People at the establishment stage aim to develop stable work and personal lives. Thus, they show a higher level of commitment, and are more concerned with career advancement and growth. They tend to develop expectations regarding earning of promotions much sooner than people in other stages. Gradually, they become more proficient in their work and more concerned about mastering tasks (Slocum & Cron, 1985; Ornstein *et. al.*, 1989). They are concerned with reappraising and maintaining their accomplishments (Super 1980). In the third 'maintenance' stage, individuals focus on maintaining their achievements in work and non-work life and self-concepts. They are generally settled in their professional and personal life. Finally, in the 'decline' stage,

people begin to leave the workforce and become independent of work-related self-image.

While Levinson (1978; 1986) proposes a linear model of development, Super (1980) suggests that individuals can be at any one of the stages regardless of what point they are in their lives. However, Super (1980), like Levinson, also notes that the model expects individuals to move through the stages sequentially. These models contribute to understanding the attitudes and behaviors of individuals towards work in terms of life and career developmental stages. Most of the researchers studying these developmental stages have used the age variable to measure work related attitudes and work values among people in different stages (Gould 1979; Slocum & Cron 1985; Cron & Slocum 1986; Ornstein *et. al.*, 1989; Rabinowitz & Hall 1981).

Based on both Levinson's (1978; 1986) and Super's (1980) models, age has been operationalized in chronological terms and employees have been categorized within age groups of 20's (23-30), 30's (31-40) and 40's (41-50) identical to those used by Gould (1979); Slocum & Cron (1985); Cron & Slocum (1986); Ornstein *et. al.*, (1989); Morrow & McElroy (1987); Meyer *et. al.*, (1993); Weng *et. al.*, (2010). The thesis aims to understand age differences between these groups, which represent a large segment of today's working population.

Age Factor in Organizational Studies

In the last decades, organizational researchers have been examining the age related differences in work values, work attitudes, and behaviors. Age related differences are mainly derived from the changes in social roles, expectations, needs, accumulated experiences and inevitable chronological aging (Rhodes, 1983). Individuals reflect these changes to their different life domains such as work as well as to their values and attitudes (Roe & Ester, 1999). Respectively, regarding work attitudes and values, age is positively related with job involvement (Hall & Mansfield, 1975; Rabinowitz & Hall, 1977; 1981), job satisfaction (Wright & Hamilton, 1978; Kalleberg & Loscocco, 1983; Glenn *et. al.*, 1977; Gould 1979; Mottaz, 1987), motivation (Freund, 2006), organizational commitment (Meyer & Allen, 1987; 1988; Meyer *et. al.*, 1993; Morrow & McElroy 1987), work centrality (Bal *et. al.*, 2011) and work values (Cherrington *et. al.*, 1979; Rowe & Snizek, 1995). On the other hand, it is negatively associated with turnover intention (Mobley *et. al.*, 1978; Mobley *et. al.*, 1979). This thesis aims to provide evidences that age matters in work values, organizational commitment, and work centrality.

Work Values

In the literature, values play an important part in understanding and determining an individual's actions and attitudes in life, and in other life domains such as work (Roe & Ester, 1999). Values, in general, simply show what is important to a person in life, and have different weight or priority for each individual.

A much-cited definition of value is “an enduring belief that a specific mode of conduct or end-state of existence is personally or socially preferable to an opposite or converse mode of conduct or end-state of existence” (Rokeach 1973, p.5). Rokeach (1979) defines beliefs about desirable mode of conduct ‘instrumental or means values’ such as behaving honestly or obedience, ambitious, and beliefs about desirable end-states of existence ‘terminal or ends values’ such as happiness or comfortable life, wisdom and equality. Rokeach’s study (1973; 1979) on values has inspired researchers to further examine the concept in order to have a deeper understanding of human behavior.

According to Super (1980), a value is an objective that one seeks to achieve a material condition or psychological state. Additional to its formal features, Schwartz has given a more elaborate definition of values. Schwartz (1992) defines values as concepts or beliefs that concern desirable states, objects, goals, or behaviors, act as a guide to select behaviors and events in people’s lives, and they are ordered by their relative importance. Thus, values are one of the most important constructs in determining people’s attitude, behaviors, and personal goals (Rokeach, 1973; Roe & Ester, 1999), and are considered as an essential component at the organizational level as well (Ravlin & Meglino, 1987; Meglino & Ravlin, 1998).

Researchers have made a distinction between general life values and values related to specific life domainssuch as work (Roe & Ester, 1999). One approach is that work values are developed from general values (Schwartz, 1992). Accordingly, work values are reflections of general values in the work context (Ros *et. al.*, 1999). Another approach is that work values have a structural similarity with general values, but also bear a more specific meaning compared to general values (Elizur & Sagie, 1999). In their study on 165 Israeli managers and workers, Elizur & Sagie (1999) have found that people give different rank of importance to similar values in life and work context. Thus, life values differ in the work domain, which has a distinct set of beliefs, and work values have a more specific meaning compared to life values in a work context (Elizur & Sagie, 1999; Sagie *et. al.*, 1996; Roe & Ester, 1999).

In the literature, researchers give different definitions of work values. According to Elizur (1984), people assign importance to particular outcomes in a work context and these desirable outcomes generate their work values. They are desirable end-states, outcomes, or behaviors (Schwartz 1992; Ros *et. al.*, 1999). People have different goals, and the importance ascribed to these goals in the work setting guides their choices, actions and decisions.

Research studies have classified work values into different types. The most widely used classification is the intrinsic vs. extrinsic work values distinction (Nord *et. al.*, 1990). Intrinsic work values are the end-states that occur in the process and actual content of work and emphasize personal development, achievement, and autonomy. Extrinsic work values, on the other hand, refer to the outcomes of work as rewards or external outcomes that, an individual can attain, such as salary (George & Jones, 1997). Most researchers have categorized work values in two or three types. The first category is named intrinsic or self-actualization values; the second category is called extrinsic or security or material values; the third category is called social or relational values (Elizur, 1984; Mottaz, 1985).

Elizur (1984) has proposed a 'trichotomous' classification and defined work values as the degree of importance that an individual gives to an outcome achieved at the work environment (Elizur, 1984; Sagie *et. al.*, 1996). Elizur describes two aspects of work values, the first being the 'modality of outcome'. There are three classifications of work values based on the 'modality of work outcomes'; instrumental - material (i.e. work conditions, benefits, payment); cognitive - psychological (i.e. achievement, responsibility, independence and interest); and affective - social (i.e. social relations with colleagues). Elizur *et. al.*, (1991) have designed a 24-item Work Values Questionnaire to represent these classifications. The second aspect of work values is defined as the 'system performance contingency', which is concerned with the relationship between outcome and performance. It is important for organizations to motivate their employees to attend to work, and to provide conditions for continuous and increasing performance of the employees. Therefore, organizations provide benefit plans, rewards, various services, and resources. There are two defined classes: rewards and resources. Resources refer to the incentives that are given regardless of performance outcome, such as benefit plans, work conditions etc. On the other hand, rewards, depend on task performance are distributed in exchange for status, recognition, salary (Elizur *et. al.*, 1991).

According to Ros *et. al.*, (1999), work values are particular expressions of general values in the work environment and can be defined as beliefs, which are associated with a desirable end-state, outcome, or behavior. The relative importance of the different goals people have in the work setting guide people's choices (Schwartz 1992; Ros *et. al.*, 1999). Ros *et. al.*, (1999), who have constructed their work value perception on Schwartz's basic values, have classified work values into three types. These are 'intrinsic' (independence in work, interesting work, achievement in work, advancement in work, and creativity in work), 'extrinsic' (job security, material values, keeping the order in their lives), and 'social' (interpersonal and/ or social relations such as contribution to society) work values. Additional to these general three categories, they also have proposed a fourth type of work value known as 'self-enhancement' (prestige, status, recognition, authority, power, and achievement in work). Elizur *et. al.*, . (1991) have supported this fourth dimension of work value in their cross-cultural study, and stated that, cognitive values which are; 'proud to work for', 'advancement', 'influence in the organization', and 'influence in work' have shifted to prestige values. This fourth dimension has been classified as 'extrinsic' (Herzberg, Mausner & Snyderman, 1959; Rosenberg 1957: in Ros *et. al.*, 1999) or 'intrinsic' (Borg, 1990; Crites, 1961: in Ros *et. al.*, 1999) by different researchers.

Super (1970) has studied the concept of work values through the lenses of occupation theories and stated that work values are the end-values such as satisfaction, quality or reward that individuals seek from their work and are different from job attitudes. Super (1973) has introduced a five dimensional work value structure covering the three main dimensions mentioned above: 'Orientation towards Self-Actualization' (intrinsic or self-actualization values; 'Utilitarian Orientation' (extrinsic values); 'Social Orientation' (social relations values); 'Individualistic Orientation' (autonomous way of life and lifestyle); 'Adventurous Orientation' (risk aspect of work values).

Tevruz & Turgut (2004) have constructed a work values measurement, referring 'functions of work goals' for the Turkish context. Their measurement includes 12 factors aggregated on 'trichotomous' classification. First are 'individualistic' work values; 'being knowledgeable', 'independence', 'being active', 'meaningful life', and 'keeping oneself busy'. Second are 'normative' work values; 'fulfilling religious duties', 'contribute to society', 'creating order', and 'avoiding missteps'. Third, 'worldly' work values; 'to ensure livelihood', 'to enjoy life',

and ‘to gain status’. In general, these classifications are in parallel with the studies in the western culture. However, only ‘avoiding missteps’ has emerged as a different *sui generis* variable for Turkish context. Even though Turgut & Tevruz (2004) created a work values measurement for Turkish work context, Elizur’s work values survey is used in the thesis because Elizur’s questionnaire covers a more general concept of work values including Turgut and Tevruz’s measurement together with different perspectives such as work environment, expectations, instrumental and material variables (income, working hours etc.)

Based on previous studies, it can be stated that there are diversities in the prominent work values in Turkey. However, achievement, status, and power seem to emerge as evident work values. Tinaz (1996) conducted a study on work values on Turkish employees and found that honesty, using one’s time efficiently, and being successful held the greatest importance among work values for Turkish employees. Achievement, status, and power hold a prominent place in the importance attached to work. It is highlighted that, the rapid liberalism oriented socio-economic changes since the 1980s can be responsible for the increase in self-enhancement values among Turkish society (Karakitapoglu & Imamoglu, 2002; Karakitapoglu Aygun *et. al.*, 2008).

In their cross-cultural comparative study, Karakitapoglu *et. al.*, (2008) have discovered that ‘entrepreneurial’ (opportunities for advancement, making decisions independently, helping one’s organization get ahead) and ‘masculine’ (gaining personal power, prestige, having high income and status) work values have greater importance among Turkish respondents compared to their American counterparts.

In their managerial work values study, Askun *et. al.*, (2010) have reported that in Turkey the most prominently recognized work values are integrity, doing work with care and discipline, and achievement. Whereas, the least important work values are cliquishness, laziness, and hypocrisy. Eventhough, recent studies have shown that there is shift towards individualistic values in Turkish society; Yapiıcı *et. al.*, (2012) stated that success, power, and hedonistic values could also exist side by side with collectivist and traditional values.

As previously defined, values are beliefs guiding individuals’ attitudes in life (Rokeach, 1973) and in its subdomains such as work (Elizur & Sagie, 1999). People assess work activities, outcomes, and attitudes by their work values. Thus, work values have an effect on individual behavior at work and are central

aspects in understanding the individual work experience, meaning attributed to the organization, job, and conditions, and determining desirable work attitudes such as commitment (George & Jones, 1997; Roe & Ester, 1999).

In the literature, empirical research on work values has reported that work values are also important antecedents of job satisfaction (Kalleberg, 1977; Rounds, 1990; Locke, 1976), and they predict career choices (Kalleberg & Stark, 1993), performance (Adkins & Naumann, 2001; Siu, 2003), organizational citizenship behavior (Feather & Rauter, 2004), job choice decisions (Ravlin & Meglino, 1987; Judge & Bretz, 1992; Ros *et al.*, 1999; Swaney *et al.*, 2012), and organizational commitment (Elizur, 1996; Elizur & Koslowsky, 2001). According to the study of Vansteenkiste *et al.*, (2007), employees that value extrinsic and materialistic work values more, have a high tendency to leave the company and have a lower job and life satisfaction.

Age and Work Values

Empirical studies have reported a significant, but conflicting relationship between work values and age. Rhodes (1983) has stated that work values change as individuals proceed through their career stages. One reason for this change is the age effect such that as individuals age, they accumulate experiences and the importance attributed to needs, preferences and expectations changes with age. For instance, while importance of extrinsic values, security and affiliation increase with age, personal growth decreases with age (Rhodes, 1983).

Some studies have shown that extrinsic work values such as job security (Porter, 1963; Warr, 2008), benefits and working hours (Hall & Mansfield, 1975), payment and promotion (Wright & Hamilton, 1978; Kalleberg & Loscocco, 1983) and intrinsic work values such as affiliation (Porter, 1963) and preferences for meaningful work, and sense of accomplishment (Aldag & Brief, 1975; Tolbert & Moen, 1998) escalate with age.

Other studies have shown that extrinsic work values such as payment (Cherrington *et al.*, 1979; Tolbert & Moen, 1998), opportunities for promotion and advancement (Marini *et al.*, 1996; Tolbert & Moen 1998), and social work values such as friendship in the work place (Cherrington *et al.*, 1979), and intrinsic work values such as gaining resources, learning new things, and personal growth (Ebner *et al.*, 2006; Freund, 2006) tend to decrease with age.

According to Levinson's (1986) life cycle and Super's (1980) career development models, individuals are likely to make different attempts to explore their identities and goals in S. Sonmezer, (2018). *An Analysis of Work Values...*

professional life before their 30s. As Johnson & Monseraud (2012) have stated 'wanting it all' is seen as a characteristic of today's ambitious young people, thus, it could be expected of these young people to give higher importance to most of work values before deciding on their niche sphere in work life. When people reach their 30s, they aim to attain promotion, accomplishment, and professional improvement and this is followed by the need for more stability, orientation towards conformity, risk avoidance, and being more prone to take responsibility during 40s. In this respect, even though there are conflicting results in the literature, the abovementioned development models suggest that work value differences among age groups can be expected.

Taking these into consideration, the first hypothesis in the research is stated as below:

H1: There are significant differences in work values among the 20s, 30s and 40s age group.

Organizational Commitment

Organizational commitment is one of the most widely studied research topics in management and organizational psychology in the last two decades. In general, organizational commitment is defined as an emotional, psychological, and functional attachment of an individual to an organization (Becker, 1960; O'Reilly & Chatman, 1986; Meyer & Allen, 1991). In the literature, the definition of organizational commitment varies and it has been studied from several perspectives. While some views have considered commitment as a function of rewards and costs (Becker 1960), others have described it as the level of congruence between individual and organizational goals and values (Porter *et al.*, 1974; Mowday *et al.*, 1979), and a psychological state (Meyer & Allen, 1991).

Becker (1960) has regarded commitment as being engaged in a consistent line of activities (maintaining membership) and to accumulate the 'side bets' - certain rewards or payments accordingly. Therefore, people seriously consider the consequences of costs when they are about to leave an organization. Employees are committed because of the investments they have made in an organization and what they will receive in return. Thus, people attach themselves to the organization because of this exchange relationship.

Based on Becker's theory, Porter *et al.*, (1974) have developed a more psychological approach. While Becker (1960) is more concerned about tangible attachments, Porter *et al.*, (1974) are more concerned with psychological attachments, and have defined S. Sonmezer, (2018). *An Analysis of Work Values...*

commitment as the level that an individual identifies herself or himself with and gets involved in the organization. They have characterized factors of commitment as “strong belief in and acceptance of the organization’s goals and values; strength of involvement in an organization; desire to maintain the membership in an organization” (Porter *et. al.*, 1974, p.604). Unlike Becker, they have claimed that commitment is not passive loyalty, but reflects an active relationship with the organization (Mowday *et. al.*, 1979). Based on this approach, they have designed the Organizational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ), which aims to measure the level of an individual’s loyalty towards an organization, willingness to achieve organizational goals and acceptance of organizations’ values (Porter *et. al.*, 1974).

In addition, Meyer & Allen (1984) and O’Reilly & Chatman (1986) have proposed the multi-dimensional approach model, which has gained popularity in the literature. Like Porter *et. al.*, (1974), they have considered commitment as the attitude towards the organization. O’Reilly & Chatman (1986) have defined commitment as “...the psychological attachment felt by the person for the organization; it will reflect the degree to which the individual internalizes or adopts characteristics or perceptive of the organization” (O’Reilly & Chatman 1986, p. 493). Three factors are predicted reflecting this attachment; first, ‘compliance’ – instrumental attachment to gain specific, extrinsic rewards; second, ‘identification’ – a desire to establish a relationship with the organization; and third, ‘internalization’ – incorporate due to the similarity between individual and organizational values (O’Reilly & Chatman, 1986; Caldwell *et. al.*, 1990). They have highlighted that deeper attachment results from psychological attachment (identification and internalization) and have concluded that sharing an organization’s goals and values can encourage employees to act in the benefit of that organization (O’Reilly & Chatman, 1986).

The most widely recognized conceptualization of organizational commitment is developed by Meyer & Allen (1991). They have viewed organizational commitment as a ‘psychological state’ that describes an employee’s relationship with the organization and implies the continuity of the membership relationship with the organization. They have measured organizational commitment through a 3-component model: ‘affective commitment’, ‘continuance commitment’ and ‘normative commitment’. These three components of commitment can be experienced in varying degrees and characterize an employee’s relationship with an organization (Meyer & Allen, 1991; Powell & Meyer, 2004). Each

commitment reflects a psychological state, and has different antecedents and implications in a work context.

‘Affective Commitment’ is an individual’s positive feelings of identification with an organization, her/his emotional attachment to and involvement with an organization (Meyer & Allen, 1984; Meyer & Allen, 1991). Thus, it is a psychological attachment to an organization. This is both similar to Porter *et. al.*,’s (1974) strong belief in and acceptance of an organization’s goals and values, and strength of involvement in an organization as well as Caldwell *et. al.*, (1990)’s identification and internalization factors. An employee is affectively committed when she/he identifies herself/himself with the goals of an organization, wants to be involved and be part of the organization. It is considered that when employees have strong affective commitment, they are more prone to remain in an organization (Meyer & Allen, 1991; Meyer *et. al.*, 1993). Affective commitment mainly derives from personal characteristics (Meyer & Allen 1991; Meyer *et. al.*, 1998; Meyer *et. al.*, 2002), work experiences (Brooke *et. al.*, 1988; Mathieu & Zajac, 1990; Mathieu & Farr, 1991; Meyer *et. al.*, 1998; Wasti, 2002), satisfaction with co-workers, supervisors, work itself, and work values (Meyer & Allen 1991; Meyer *et. al.*, 1998; Oliver 1990; Meyer *et. al.*, 2002). Affective commitment is positively related to one’s supervisor’s ratings of job performance (Meyer *et. al.*, . 1989; Meyer *et. al.*, 2002), and organizational citizenship behavior (Meyer *et. al.*, 2002; Wasti, 2002); it is negatively correlated with employee turnover, absenteeism, stress and work-family concept (Meyer *et. al.*, 2002), and satisfaction with life and work withdrawal (Wasti, 2002).

‘Continuance commitment’, as an improvement over OCQ, is considered as the willingness to remain in an organization because of the needs and costs associated with leaving the organization (Meyer & Allen, 1984; Meyer & Allen, 1991). It is based on a tangible exchange relationship with the organization, and employees with a strong continuance commitment remain with the organization because they need to (Meyer *et. al.*, 1993). The available literature has identified main antecedents as lack of job alternatives, investments, personal sacrifice, and organizational tenure (Mowday *et. al.*, 1979; Dunham *et. al.*, 1994; Hackett *et. al.*, 1994; Meyer *et. al.*, 1993). These antecedents all increase the cost of quitting (side-bets) and subsequently have an impact on commitment levels. Thus, continuance commitment is influenced by one’s organizational experiences. In addition to the abovementioned antecedents, Wasti (2002) has indicated that, as an influence of collectivist values, generalized norms for loyalty, the approval of the in-group approval, and the informal recruitment

increases continuance commitment for Turkish employees. Considering the implications, continuance commitment is negatively correlated with likelihood of a promotion and supervisor's ratings with job performance (Meyer *et. al.*, 1989; Meyer *et. al.*, 2002).

'Normative commitment' is the sense of moral obligation that an employee feels to remain with an organization (Meyer *et. al.*, 1990). It is the obligatory relationship between an individual and an organization and is either pre-entry (through familial and cultural socialization) or post-entry (through organizational socialization) commitment propensity. Employees with high normative commitment remain with the organization because they feel that they have to (Meyer *et. al.*, 1993). Individuals generally show normative commitment because they think it is the right thing to do, is a reflection of morality, and a kind of internalized pressure. The level of this commitment may also be influenced by socialization experiences, personal characteristics, organizational investments, external rewards such as planned future trainings, material gains, promotion, and the consideration of special needs due to personal occasions. In other words, normative commitment is interpreted as a reciprocity for a benefit (Meyer *et. al.*, 2002; Wasti, 2003). Even though these positive effects would lead individuals to an extra effort, they are subject to change in the circumstances (Meyer & Allen, 1991). Normative commitment has positive implications for employee health and well-being, organizational citizenship behavior, and absenteeism, and it is negatively correlated with employee turnover (Meyer *et. al.*, 2002).

In Turkey, Wasti (1999) has studied organizational commitment from a collectivist society perspective and measured some culture specific items additional to Meyer and Allen's model. The results in the Turkish context have indicated that there are significant differences in how individual and collectivist values influence organizational commitment and turnover. Concerning the intention to stay, affective commitment is most effective for employees with individualist values whereas affective and normative commitments are equally important for the employees with collectivist values. Wasti has also underlined the role of family approval as a social factor, which has effect on the intentions to stay with the organization in the Turkish context.

Age and Organizational Commitment

The available literature accepts age as one of the important antecedents of organizational commitment (Hrebiniak & Alutto, 1972; Steers, 1977; Morris & Sherman, 1981; Mathieu & Zajac, 1990). Researches have indicated that age is positively associated

with organizational commitment (Hrebiniak & Alutto, 1972; Steers, 1977; Morris & Sherman 1981; Mathieu & Zajac, 1990) and have reported that, in general, organizational commitment level increases with age. Some studies have analyzed the relationship of age with forms of organizational commitment in detail. According to Rhodes (1983), age is positively related to affective commitment. According to Ng & Feldman (2010), age is moderately related to affective commitment, weakly related to normative commitment and continuance commitment. In addition, the results of their study provide specific evidences that normative commitment is lower in younger groups.

According to Meyer *et. al.*, (1993), during the career stages, while affective commitment and normative commitment positively correlated with age, increase in continuance commitment is more related to the increase in positional and organizational tenure and has no relation with age. In the first years of their careers, younger employees experience a decrease in affective commitment as a consequence of their high expectations from work life (Meyer & Allen, 1987; 1988). In line with this finding, it is also stated that affective commitment accelerates with the increase of work experience (Morrow & McElroy, 1987; Meyer *et. al.*, 1993; Weng *et. al.*, 2010). Normative commitment, like affective commitment, also has a linear relationship with the age variable (Meyer *et. al.*, 1993; Weng *et. al.*, 2010).

In the work context of Turkey, like Meyer & Allen (1984), Yalçın & Iplik (2005) have also stated that the level of organizational commitment increases with age. In their Turkish case study, Durna & Eren (2005) have found that affective, and normative commitment of employees are closely related to the age variable as opposed to continuance commitment, which has no significant relationship with age.

Taking into account, Levinson's life cycle and Super's career development model, it can be expected that older adults will be more committed to the organizations that they work for compared to young adults. Due to instability, uncertainty, and change, it is hypothesized that young employees, will be less committed to their organizations compared to other age groups thanks to their explorative nature. On the other hand, since it is assumed that people in their 30's aim to accomplish and establish their professional and personal achievements, they are predicted to show higher commitment and stability. It is also expected for people in their 40's to show a higher commitment level compared to other age groups. Taking these into consideration, the hypothesis on organizational commitment in this research is stated as below:

H2: The organizational commitment level of older adults is higher than the commitment level of younger adults.

Work Centrality

Work has important implications like completing a significant role in an individual's life. In general, 'work centrality' or 'work involvement' is the degree of importance of work in one's life (Paullay *et. al.*, 1994) and the degree of psychological identification with work in general (Gorn & Kanungo, 1980). According to Kanungo "work centrality is a normative belief about the value of work in one's life, and it is more a function of one's past cultural conditioning or socialization" (Kanungo, 1982, p.342).

The concept stems from Dubin's formulation of work as a central life interest stressing the role of working in one's life compared to other life roles and spheres (Dubin *et. al.*, 1975). According to this notion, people that regard work as a central life interest, have a strong identification with their work roles, and believe that work is a main component in their lives (Dubin *et. al.*, 1975; Diefendorff *et. al.*, 2002).

Work has a relatively high importance when compared to other spheres of life such as community, leisure, religion, and family (England, 1991; Ruiz-Quintanilla & Wilbert, 1991; Harpaz, 1999). It is generally agreed that the degree of work centrality is a stable attitude regardless of conditions of a particular work environment (Kanungo, 1982; Paullay *et. al.*, 1994; Hirschfeld & Feild, 2000).

In the earlier studies, job involvement, and work centrality used to be measured within the same instruments (Lodahl & Kejner, 1965; Saleh & Hosek, 1976). However, recent research has made a clear conceptual distinction between work centrality and job involvement (Gorn & Kanungo, 1980; Kanungo, 1982; Paullay *et. al.*, 1994; Diefendorff *et. al.*, 2002). Work centrality and job involvement are different because each concept represents a different construct. While the former refers to individuals' involvement and identification with work in general, the latter refers to cognitive engagement of individuals in their present job (Gorn & Kanungo, 1980; Kanungo, 1982; Paullay *et. al.*, 1994). According to Kanungo (1982: p.342), "Job involvement is a descriptive belief that is contemporaneously caused whereas work involvement is a normative belief that is historically caused." Thus, work centrality has a broader scope compared to job involvement, which is more situationally determined (Gorn & Kanungo, 1980).

In order to demarcate the distinction between these two constructs, Kanungo (1982) has developed two measures that have pointed to significant differences between job involvement and work centrality. Paullay *et. al.*, (1994) have also provided evidences that there is a significant difference between the construct of job involvement and work centrality. Thus, work centrality can be described as normative beliefs reflecting the degree of the importance of work in people's lives (Kanungo, 1982; Brooke *et. al.*, 1988).

The Meaning of Work International Research Team (1987) has developed 'Relative Work Centrality' measure to understand the major domains of people's lives; work, leisure, community, religion, and family. The study has evaluated several countries aiming to understand the meanings that each country attaches to work, and has stated that the meaning of work is mainly determined by the choices of individuals and the related environmental context in which individuals live and work. Accordingly, work has been ranked second in importance after family. Moreover, work has turned out to have a high importance compared to leisure, community, and religion (Kuchinke *et. al.*, 2011).

Some studies have underlined the effect of financial needs on work centrality. Gould & Werbel (1983) have stated that if there are needs for financial requirement, the degree of work centrality will be higher. On the contrary, some other studies have suggested that people will continue to work regardless of financial needs (Warr, 1982; Harpaz & Fu, 2002), pointing to the absolute importance of work. Arvey *et. al.*, (2004) have measured the importance of work by investigating whether individuals would continue to work if they win the lottery. According to the results, the discontinuance of work is highly related with the amount that is won. Thus, if work is important in individual's lives, it is highly that they would continue to work.

In their six-year period study, Ruzi-Quintanilla & Wilpert, (1991) have stated that while the importance of work role decreases, the importance of leisure escalates, and expressive work goals increases, and obligatory work goals are deprioritized. Moreover, England (1991) has also mentioned that there is a decrease in work centrality level, and people care more about economic work goals.

The most common antecedents of work centrality have been identified as gender, age, education (Lorence, 1987; Mannheim *et. al.*, 1997; Mannheim, 1993; Harpaz & Fu, 2002; Mannheim & Cohen, 1978), need for achievement (Mannheim & Cohen, 1978; Mannheim *et. al.*, 1997), occupation (Lorence, 1987;

Mannheim, 1975), and rewards (Mannheim & Cohen, 1978). Mannheim (1993) and Mannheim *et. al.*, (1997) have also stated that job satisfaction is one of the variables that increase the degree of work centrality because of the upregulating effect of positive feedback on work experiences.

‘Work centrality’ is positively related to organizational variables such as job tenure (Dubin *et. al.*, 1975), organizational citizenship behaviors (Diefendorff *et. al.*, 2002), organizational tenure and relational contract (Bal *et. al.*, 2011), hours worked (Snir & Harpaz 2005), job involvement (Paullay *et. al.*, 1994; Diefendorff *et. al.*, 2002), and organizational commitment (Brooke *et. al.*, 1988; Mannheim *et. al.*, 1997; Witt *et. al.*, 2002).

In conclusion, the interest in work centrality has increased substantially in organization studies literature and a significant amount of research has been executed to understand the antecedents and outcomes of work centrality. The aim of this thesis is to understand the effect of the age variable on work centrality by measuring the degree of importance of work among different age groups.

Age and Work Centrality

There are empirical findings on the relationship between age and work centrality in the literature. Mannheim & Rein (1981) have indicated that there is an inverse relationship between age and work centrality, such that as people age, their work role becomes less important compared to their other roles. However, contrary to these findings other studies have indicated that there is a positive relation between age and work centrality (Mannheim *et. al.*, 1997; Smola & Sutton 2002; Arvey *et. al.*, 2004; Schmidt & Lee, 2008). In reference to career and life development perspectives, work centrality is viewed as an important factor for older employees in their relationship with organizations (Bal *et. al.*, 2011).

Kalleberg & Loscocco (1983) have indicated that the salience of work decreases after middle age. In addition, Lorence (1987) has stated that the nature of developmental aging process effects general work role in one’s life. According to developmental literature, the importance of work increases until about the age of 40 and afterwards decreases due to upward surging emphasis on family and non-work life (Levinson, 1986; Super, 1980). In view of these findings, the thesis aims to measure the effect of age on work centrality. Accordingly, the final hypothesis is as stated as below:

H3: There is a significant difference in the level of work centrality among 20s, 30s and 40s age group.

The research model is based on age diversity perspectives to define the effect of age the variable as the independent variable on work values, organizational commitment, and work centrality as dependent variables.

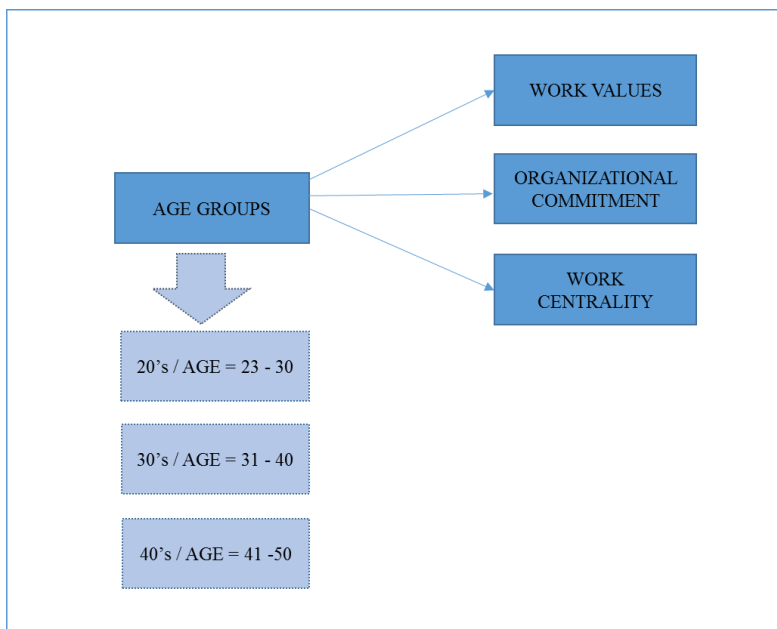


Figure 2. *Research Model*

The Relationship of Organizational Commitment with Work Values and Work Centrality

The main purpose of the thesis is to understand whether there is a difference in work values, organizational commitment, and work centrality among 20s, 30s, and 40s age group. Additionally, the study also investigates, whether the degree of relationship of organizational commitment with work values and work centrality fluctuate between different age group.

Published literature has revealed that there is a relationship between work values and organizational commitment. Regarding the relationship between these variables, work values, which have an important role in work related processes and outcomes, are considered as one of the antecedents of organizational commitment (Knoop, 1994; Elizur, 1996; Elizur & Koslowsky, 2001; Dose, 1997; Meglino & Ravlin, 1998; Roe & Ester, 1999; Oliver, 1990). A general assumption is that when the individual's values are

congruent with an organization's values, she/he is more committed. Thus, compatibility between the values of people and organizations has a positive effect on organizational commitment (O'Reilly *et al.*, 1991; Meglino *et al.*, 1989) and that, commitment is the reflection of one's self, and her/his own set of values (Elizur & Koslowsky, 2001). Existing studies have empirically supported this relationship between work values and organizational commitment (Elizur, 1996; Kidron, 1978; Putti *et al.*, 1989; Elizur & Koslowsky, 2001).

According to Kidron (1978), work values have a stronger relationship with 'moral' commitment, which focuses on the identification and internalization of an individual's identity with the goals and values of an organization, similar to 'affective' commitment. Work values are not related with 'calculative' commitment, which is benefits that employee receives from the organization, mostly similar to 'continuance' commitment of Meyer & Allen (1991).

Putti *et al.*, (1989) have noted that there is an evident relationship between 'intrinsic' work values such as pride in work, being busy on the job, attitudes toward earning, and interest in job activities, rather than 'extrinsic' work values, which are related with status and advancement in the job, and organizational commitment.

Oliver (1990) has indicated that 'participatory' values, such as good relations with management, co-workers, participation in decision-making, influence in company, and democratic approach in the work environment, and 'instrumental' values, such as working conditions, benefits, jobsecurity, working hours, and income have significant impact on the level of commitment.

Elizur (1996) has found that there is a high correlation between 'cognitive' work values and commitment especially for independence, job interest, and use of abilities. The amount of money that is obtained, as an aspect of 'instrumental' work values, has been considered as an effective instrument for commitment as well. Elizur & Koslowsky (2001) have stated that work values are positively related with organizational commitment. Their results have indicated that cognitive work values such as achievement, status, and advancement are strongly related with commitment.

Meyer *et al.*, (1998) have shown the moderating effect of work values on commitment and stated that work experience, which is one of the main antecedents of commitment, is effected by the plethora of ways individuals perceive their work experiences in accordance with their different values.

Regarding the relation between work centrality and organizational commitment, Brooke *et. al.*, (1988) and Mannheim *et. al.*, (1997) have indicated that work involvement is positively correlated with organizational commitment. The study of Hirschfeld & Feild (2000) has shown that people with high levels of commitment also have high level of identification with work.

Taking Levinson's life cycle and Super's career development models into consideration, it is hypothesized that there are differences in work values, organizational commitment and level of importance attributed to work among 20s, 30s and 40s age group. Regarding this hypothesis, it is safe to inquire whether there are differences in the relation between work values and organizational commitment, and work centrality and organizational commitment due to age. Thus, the thesis presents the following research questions for further inquiry.

RQ1: Does the relationship between work values and organizational commitment change due to age?

RQ2: Does the relationship between work centrality and organizational commitment change due to age?

2. Methodology

This section summarizes the methodology that is adopted in the study including sample, procedure, measures, and the statistical tools used for the analysis of the data.

Sample

A total of 935 employees participated in the study. Purposive sampling is applied and participants are selected due to their willingness to participate in the research and their professional profiles. The study is completed by the online contribution of white-collar employees who work in corporate companies at least 2 years, and are minimum college/ university graduates.

All of the respondents participated from Istanbul, Turkey. 498 (53.3 %) of the participants are female, and 437 (46.7 %) are male. The average age of the participants is 34.9(SD= 5,8).226 (24.2 %) of participants are between the ages 23-30; 532 (56.9 %) of them are between the ages 31-40; 177 (18.9 %) of them are between the ages 41-50. 42 (4.5 %) of the respondents are 2 year college graduates; 515 (55.2 %) of them hold university degrees; 340 (36.4 %) of them hold masters degrees; and 38 (4.1 %) of them hold a Ph.D degree. 89 (9.5 %) of participants are at upper middle manager level; 364 (38.9 %) are middle manager level; 89 (9.5 %) are manager candidates; 360 (38.5 %) are specialists and 33 (3.5 %) of them are first level employees.

Procedure

The questionnaire has been prepared in Survey Monkey. The participants are requested to fill an online questionnaire, which is sent with a cover letter explaining the purpose of the study and assuring the anonymity of the respondents (see Appendix B). The online link was sent via e-mail to the LinkedIn and personal e-mail addresses of more than ten thousand employees. The average time for the completion of the questionnaire is estimated to be seven minutes. The study began on March 3, 2014 and concluded on March 18, 2014.

1,327 employees has participated the research. After a review of the responses, it has been indicated that some of the respondent's profiles are not suitable for the targeted group, and some of the questionnaires were not completely filled, so, were not appropriate for statistical analysis. These surveys are excluded from the study and final sample size of the study is reduced to 935 respondents.

Measures

The survey is designed to test the three variables studied in this thesis. Demographic information of the participants including age, gender, marital status of the participants, and education, length of employee status are also covered respectively. Following section explains each selected measure to test the variables; work values, organizational commitment, and work centrality.

Work Values

Qualitative Stage - Perception of Work Concept among Age Groups: 13 in-depth interviews with people from different age ranges are conducted to capture the perception and the meaning of 'work' among Turkish employees, and to understand each age group's expectations from work and the place of work in their lives. Emic items are explored because it is assumed that there are different sui generis attitudes of Turkish employees due to their age groups. Discussion flow (Appendix A) covers respondent's general demographic information, general perception of 'work', and their approach to 'work' concept.

In the qualitative stage, snowball sampling is applied. Participants are selected due to their willingness to participate in the research, and their professional profile, which are white-collar employees working in corporate companies at least 2 years and are university graduates. Of thirteen participants, seven of them are male, and six of them are female. Five of them are aged below 30, and eight of them are aged above 30. Each in-depth interview has lasted around 60 minutes on average. As a result, 14 emic items are

identified for Turkish work context, and they are combined with Elizur's work values questionnaire in the quantitative stage. These emic items are tested in a pilot study before the quantitative stage. The pilot study is conducted with 126 respondents similar to the sample profile of this thesis. The alpha coefficient for 14 emic items is $\alpha = .912$, suggesting that it has a relatively high internal consistency and is acceptable for this study.

Quantitative Stage

In the thesis, final work values are measured by 38-item questionnaire. 24-item Work Values questionnaire are developed by Elizur *et. al.*, (1991) and 14-item emic work values are derived from in-depth interviews. These 14 emic items involve both developmental and some additional materialistic work values such as to value one's time, to have spiritual satisfaction, to realize one's dreams, and to have life and work balance, stable life-style, financial independence and fun working environment and so on. Since these work values are not covered by Elizur's study, they are included to the final survey because they reflect rather Turkish employees' approach to work and their expectations from work.

Elizur *et. al.*, (1991) 24-item work values are loaded on three factors;

'Affective' (5-item) work values involve expressions of feelings such as love, esteem from co-workers, fair supervisor etc.

'Cognitive' (14-item) work values involve opinions, beliefs, and considerations such as interesting work, achievement, responsibility etc.

'Instrumental' (5-item) work values involve materialistic face of values such as security, pay, and work conditions etc.

Identified 14 emic work values are presented below;

Emic Items – Turkish Work Context

Yeni şeyler öğrenmek/ Learning new things

Düzenli bir hayat sürmemi sağlaması/ Provide me a stable life-style

Hayallerimi gerçekleştirmemi sağlaması/ Realize my dreams

Bedenimi ve zihnimi meşgul etmek, zamanımı değerlendirmek/

To engage my mind and body, to value my time

Manevi tatmin elde etmek/ To achieve spiritual satisfaction

İş ve hayat dengesinin olması/ Life and work balance

İşime değer katabilmek/ Add value to my work

İşimde değişim yaratabilmek, üretken olabilmek/ To create change, be productive

Eğitim imkânlarının sunulması/ Providing training opportunities

Şirketin imajı/ Company image
Çalışma ortamının eğlenceli olması/ Fun working environment
Yöneticilerimin koçluk ve mentorluk desteği sağlaması/
Coaching and mentoring support from managers
Çalıştığım kurumun çok uluslu (multi-national) yapıya sahip
olması/ Multinational – Corporate company structure
Ekonomik özgürlük sağlaması/ Providing financial
independence

The original 6-point scale is used in the survey. The participants were asked to rate each item on a scale ranging from (1) ‘very unimportant’ to (6) ‘very important’. The original questionnaire of Elizur’s Work Values (1991) has been translated into Turkish by the researcher. The reliability analysis of 24 item is resulted in a 0.912 alpha score. The reliability analysis of 14 item is resulted in a 0.889 alpha score. The reliability analysis of total 38-item work values questionnaire is resulted in 0.943 alpha score.

Organizational Commitment

Organizational commitment is measured by 18-items test (revised version of Meyer & Allen (1990) developed by Meyer *et al.*, (1993)). 18-item is loaded on three factors; ‘Affective’ (6-item), ‘Continuance’ (6-item) and ‘Normative’ (6-item) commitment. Affective Commitment statements show the degree of how strong does an individual want to stay in the organization such as “I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career with this organization.”, “I really feel as if this organization's problems are my own.” Continuance Commitment statements show the degree of how strong does an individual need to stay in the organization such as “Right now, staying with my organization is a matter of necessity as much as desire.”, “It would be very hard for me to leave my organization right now, even if I wanted to”. Normative Commitment statements show the degree of how strong does an individual have to stay in the organization such as “I do not feel any obligation to remain with my current employer.”, “Even if it were to my advantage, I do not feel it would be right to leave my organization now.”

The Turkish version has been adapted by Wasti (1999). The original version of the scale is 7-point Likert scale ((1) ‘strongly disagree’ to (7) ‘strongly agree’). However, the original scale is changed to 5-point scale because the usage of 5-point scale is more common. In addition, it is easier for the respondents to answer the questions and to differentiate response options clearly in 5-point scale. Thus, the participants are asked to rate each item

on a scale ranging from (1) ‘definitely do not agree’ to (5) ‘definitely agree’. The reliabilities of dimension are 0.87 for affective commitment (6 items), 0.79 for continuance commitment (6 items), and 0.73 for normative commitment (6 items) (Meyer *et al.*, 1993). In the thesis, reliabilities of the resulting dimensions are as follows: an alpha score of 0.872 for affective commitment (6 items), 0.658 for continuance commitment (6 items), and 0.775 for normative commitment (6 items). The alpha score of total organizational commitment is 0.819.

Work Centrality

Work centrality is measured by Kanungo’s (1982) 5-item Work Involvement questionnaire; “Most important things that happen in life involve work”; “Work should be only a small part of one’s life”; “Work should be considered central to life”; “In my view, an individual’s personal life goals should be work-oriented”; “Life is worth living only when people get absorbed in work”. Respondents specified their agreements with six-point Likert scale ((1) ‘strongly disagree’ to (6) ‘strongly agree’). The reliability coefficients of original scale ranged from .67 to .89 (Kanungo, 1982). The scale has been translated into Turkish by Uçanok (2008). The reliability analysis resulted in a 0.809 alpha score in this study.

Data Analysis

SPSS 16.0 statistical package is used to examine the relations among variables in the research model. Cronbach alpha scores are calculated for each test for the reliability level. Research hypotheses and research questions are tested by one way ANOVA and correlation analyses. Additionally, t-tests are used to examine the demographic data.

3. Findings

Reliability Analysis of the Scales

All of the variables included in the analysis have shown high reliability scores which are above generally accepted low limit of 0.70. Table 1 below summarizes the results of the reliability analysis;

Table 1. *Reliability Analysis*

Tests	Cronbach Alpha
Work values	,943
Organizational Commitment	,819
Work centrality	,809

Factor Analysis of the Scales

Factor Analysis of Work Values

The first factor analysis involved seven factors (KMO = .942 and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity significant at .001 level) explaining 60 per cent of the total variance. However, five work values are removed from the analysis due to their low and double loadings. The removed items are; 'Influence in work (Elizur)', 'Multinational – Corporate company structure (Emic)', 'Coaching and mentoring support from managers (Emic)', 'Supervisor, a fair and considerate boss (Elizur)', and 'Company image (Emic)'. Two of the items are from Elizur's work values list and three items are emic values. After the new loading, the number of total factors reduced to six, which materialized into clusters that are more

meaningful. The thesis has used these six factors for the further analysis.

Subsequently, the factor analysis of the 'Work Values' (WV) reveals six factors (KMO = .937 and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity significant at .001 level) explaining 59 per cent of the total variance. After varimax rotation, the first factor occurs as a factor covering for a vast 34 per cent of the variance. The factor is named as 'Development' since it includes items that an individual seeks personal growth and expects to be more involved into the work itself ($\alpha = .900$). The second factor, explaining 8.277 per cent of total variance, is named 'Instrumental' ($\alpha = .866$) since it covers the materialistic items such as importance of income, working conditions and so on. The third factor represents expected accomplishments and success such as promotion, gaining status and so forth. It is called 'Achievement' ($\alpha = .825$) and represents 5,823 per cent of total variance. The forth factor, explaining 4.493 per cent of total variance, is named 'Intrinsic' ($\alpha = .692$). The factor reflects items such as whether the work is interested and/ or it is meaningful and so on. The fifth factor, explaining 3.778 per cent of total variance, is named 'Social' ($\alpha = .654$). It explains items related to social relations and importance of social environment in the work context. The sixth factor, explaining 3.332 per cent of the total variance, is named 'Normative' ($\alpha = .712$) representing the importance of contribution to society and of being part of a company.

Seven of the defined 14-emic items have been loaded in the 'Development' dimension, three of them have been loaded in the 'Instrumental' dimension, and one of them has been loaded in the 'Social' dimension.

Table 2. Factor Analysis of Work Values

	WORK VALUES	Factor Variance (%)	Loading	Alpha (α)
F1	DEVELOPMENT To create change, be productive Add value to my work To achieve spiritual satisfaction Learning new things Providing training opportunities Realize my dreams To engage my mind and body, to value my time Feedback concerning the results of your work Opportunity for personal growth Use of ability and knowledge in your work	33,614	,795 ,770 ,707 ,690 ,632 ,625 ,620 ,496 ,490 ,473	.900
F2	INSTRUMENTAL Convenient hours of work Job security, permanent job Benefits, vacation, sick leave, pension, insurance. Provide me a stable life-style Work conditions, comfortable and clean Life and work balance Pay, the amount of money you receive Providing financial independence	8,277	,787 ,764 ,724 ,697 ,642 ,632 ,582 ,489	.866
F3	ACHIEVEMENT Advancement, changes for promotion Achievement in work Influence in the organization Job status Responsibility Recognition for doing a good job	5,823	,781 ,701 ,620 ,556 ,537 ,524	.825
F4	INTRINSIC Meaningful work Job interest, to do work which is interesting to you Independence in work	4,493	,734 ,713 ,632	.692
F5	SOCIAL Co-workers, fellow workers who are pleasant and agreeable Esteem, that you are valued as a person Opportunity to meet people and interact with them Fun working environment	3,778	,821 ,605 ,582 ,523	.654
F6	NORMATIVE Contribution to society Company, to be employed by a company for which you are proud to work	3,332	,613 ,564	.712

Factor Analysis of Organizational Commitment

The factor analysis of the ‘Organizational Commitment’ (OC) reveals three factors (KMO = .913 and Bartlett’s Test of Sphericity significant at .001 level) explaining 57 per cent of the total variance. In the factor loading, there has been a slight difference compared to Meyer *et. al.*, (1993) three-factor model. Two continuance items, “Right now, staying with my organization is a matter of necessity as much as desire,” and “If I had not already put so much of myself into this organization, I might consider working elsewhere,” are removed from the analysis, as they are not distinguishable because of dual and low loadings. In addition, three

normative items have been loaded with the affective commitment items.

The first factor is ‘Affective Commitment’(α = .901) which includes emotional attachmentsuch as belongingness and personal meaning. This factor explains 37 per cent of total variance. The second factor, explaining 13 per cent of total variance, is named ‘Normative’(α = .646) coveringfeelings of obligations and obligatory relationships. The third factor, explaining 7 per cent of total variance, reflects cost associated need to stay and is called ‘Continuance Commitment’(α = .620).

Table 3. Factor Analysis of Organizational Commitment

	ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT	Factor Variance (%)	Loading	Alpha (α)
F1	AFFECTIVE COMMITMENT I do not feel 'emotionally attached' to this organization. (R) I do not feel a strong sense of "belonging" to my organization. (R) I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career with this organization. This organization has a great deal of personal meaning for me. I do not feel like 'part of the family' at my organization. (R) I really feel as if this organization's problems are my own. This organization deserves my loyalty. (NC) I do not feel any obligation to remain with my current employer.(R) (NC) I owe a great deal to my organization. (NC)	36,724	,790 ,783 ,778 ,750 ,723 ,709 ,680 ,636 ,603	.901
F2	NORMATIVE COMMITMENT I would not leave my organization right now because I have a sense of obligation to the people in it. I would feel guilty if I left my organization now. Even if it were to my advantage, I do not feel it would be right to leave my organization now.	13,280	,753 ,727 ,674	.646
F3	CONTINUANCE COMMITMENT I feel that I have too few options to consider leaving this organization. Too much in my life would be disrupted if I decided I wanted to leave my organization now. It would be very hard for me to leave my organization right now, even if I wanted to. One of the few serious consequences of leaving this organization would be the scarcity of available alternatives.	7,174	,758 ,652 ,650 ,625	.620

Factor Analysis of Work Centrality

The factor analysis of ‘work centrality’ has revealed that all five items loaded on one factor (KMO = 0.811 and Bartlett’s Test of Sphericitysignificant at .001 level) explaining 57,662 per cent of the total variance. The alpha coefficient for work centrality is α = .811, suggesting that it has a relatively high internal consistency and is acceptable for this study.

Analysis of Variance for Age Work Values - ANOVA for Age

In this section, the variance analyses according to age are conducted for work values. The Levene test conducted indicates that the between group variance is equal for development, achievement, intrinsic, social and Normative work values (p Development = .274; p Instrumental = .046; p Achievement = .532; p Intrinsic = .59; p Social = .305; p Normative = .500). The Levene test did not indicate that there was equal variance between groups for instrumental values, however, welch significance is at 0,002. Among all the variables suited for the ANOVA testing, Development, Achievement, Social, and Normative work values have shown a significant variance for age (see Table 4a). In order to understand which age groups differ for these values, the Scheffe test is run. For the Instrumental dimension Tamhane test is run (see Table 4b).

The results reveal that the 20s age group is significantly different from both the 30s and 40s age group in terms of Achievement, Social, and Instrumental work value dimensions. Regarding Development work values, the 20s age group is only significantly different from the 30s age group. The 30s age group is more similar to the 40s age group. Where as, the 40s age group is only significantly different from the 30s age group in Normative work values.

Table 4a. ANOVA Table of Age Groups & Work Values

	23-30 Age		31-40 Age		41-50 Age		F	p
	M	Sd	M	Sd	M	Sd		
Development	5,062 ^a	0,639	4,852 ^b	0,713	4,894	0,713	7,320	,001
Achievement	5,242 ^a	0,591	5,068 ^b	0,658	5,019 ^b	0,657	7,608	,001
Intrinsic	5,080	0,678	5,029	0,739	5,115	0,690	1,086	,338
Social	5,055 ^a	0,609	4,854 ^b	0,662	4,849 ^b	0,653	8,385	,000
Normative	4,931	0,896	4,776 ^b	0,946	5,079 ^a	0,909	7,709	,000

Note: There is a significant variance among means indicated with different letters (a, b) for $p < 0.05$

Table 4b. Welch Table of Age Groups & Work Values

	23-30 Age		31-40 Age		41-50 Age		W	p
	M	Sd	M	Sd	M	Sd		
Instrumental	5,207 ^a	0,602	5,047 ^b	0,671	5,008 ^b	0,722	6,511	,002

Note: There is a significant variance among means indicated with different letters (a, b) for $p < 0.05$

Additionally, in order to understand the differences in work values among age groups, a detailed analysis is conducted for the composing items that reflected work value dimensions.

Regarding Development work values, the 20s age group gives more importance to these work values compared to the 30s and 40s age group. The notable items for young people are for instance to learn new things, to have opportunity for personal growth, to get feedbacks. The importance of these values is much lower for other age groups. In addition, young people give more importance to realize their dreams. It may be safe to note that these desires weaken as people age.

Concerning instrumental work values, the 20s age group values work conditions, working hours and benefits more than other groups where as the 30s and 40s age group are more similar in terms of these values. The 20s age group gives more importance to financial independence compared to the 30s age group. For the 40s age group, payment is significantly different but is similarly important for both the 20s and 30s age group. Job security, life and work balance, and having a stable life-style is equally important for all age groups.

As to the achievement work values, being influential in the organization is important for the 20s age group compared to other age groups. The 20s age group give more importance to achievement in work and recognition for doing a good job than the 30s age group. There is a significant difference in advancement and promotion between all age groups. All age groups give importance to taking responsibilities.

Even though, there is no significant difference in intrinsic work values among age groups, it should be noted that meaningful work and interesting job values have displayed high means for all ages.

As regards to social relations work values, young employees give significant importance to social environment wanting fun atmosphere and pleasant co-workers compared to people in their 30s and 40s. They all want to be valued by the company but the 20s age group care more than the 30s age group.

Regarding normative work values, people in their 40s give more importance to contributing to the society and working at a company for which they are proud to work for than people in their 30s. Notably, these values are also important for young people in their 20s.

Table 5. Means of Work Values among Age Groups

WORK VALUES		23-30	31-40	41-50 Age
DEVELOPMENT	To create change, be productive	5,09	4,99	5,06
	Add value to my work	5,07	4,95	5,07
	To achieve spiritual satisfaction	4,93	4,77	4,86
	Learning new things	5,33 ^a	5,09 ^b	5,02 ^b
	Providing training opportunities	5,04 ^a	4,70 ^b	4,61 ^b
	Realize my dreams	5,10 ^a	4,78 ^b	4,80 ^b
	To engage my mind and body, to value my time	4,53 ^a	4,26 ^b	4,39
	Feedback concerning the results of your work	5,18 ^a	4,92 ^b	5,02
	Opportunity for personal growth	5,34 ^a	5,15 ^b	5,07 ^b
	Use of ability and knowledge in your work	5,02	4,91	5,04
INSTRUMENTAL	Convenient hours of work	5,19 ^a	4,88 ^b	4,80 ^b
	Job security, permanent job	5,15	5,01	5,07
	Benefits, vacation, sick leave, pension, insurance, etc.	5,14 ^a	4,90 ^b	4,90 ^b
	Provide me a stable life-style	5,10	5,03	5,09
	Work conditions, comfortable and clean	5,20 ^a	4,95 ^b	4,98 ^b
	Life and work balance	5,19	5,11	5,05
ACHIEVEMENT	Pay, the amount of money you receive	5,32 ^b	5,28 ^b	4,94 ^a
	Providing financial independence	5,38 ^a	5,22 ^b	5,23
	Advancement, changes for promotion	5,41 ^a	5,23 ^b	4,96 ^c
	Achievement in work	5,55 ^a	5,36 ^b	5,44
	Influence in the organization	5,06 ^a	4,85 ^b	4,74 ^b
	Job status	4,82	4,64	4,63
INTRINSIC	Responsibility	5,28	5,19	5,20
	Recognition for doing a good job	5,33 ^a	5,13 ^b	5,14
	Meaningful work	5,19	5,06	5,24
	Job interest, to do work which is interesting to you	5,29	5,14	5,21
SOCIAL	Independence in work	4,77	4,89	4,89
	Co-workers, fellow workers who are pleasant and agreeable	5,27 ^a	5,07 ^b	5,06 ^b
	Esteem, that you are valued as a person	5,58 ^a	5,39 ^b	5,40
	Opportunity to meet people and interact with them	4,73	4,62	4,66
NORMATIVE	Fun working environment	4,65 ^a	4,33 ^b	4,27 ^b
	Contribution to society	4,82	4,64 ^b	5,01 ^a
	Company, to be employed by a company for which you are proud to work	5,04	4,92 ^b	5,15 ^a

Note: There is a significant variance among means indicated with different letters (a, b, c) for $p < 0.05$.

In order to understand the changes in the importance of work values among age groups, a detailed ranking analysis is also conducted. Work values were ranked according to their relative importance for each age group; Age 41-50 (G1), Age 31-40 (G2), Age 23-30 (G3). The 20s and 30s age group give more importance to Achievement and Instrumental work values where as the 40s age group value more Intrinsic and Normative work values (Table 6). In the comparison (Table 7), the first two highest-ranking work values items are almost same for all age groups; ‘Achievement in work’ and ‘Esteem, that you are valued as a person’. However, some of the other items in the first top ten change radically for each group. While ‘meaningful work’ is ranked at third place for people at G1, this value ranked at 13th for G2 and 14th for G3. For G2, ‘payment’ is the most valued third value; it has much lower

rank for other groups. ‘Advancement and promotion’ is the most important third value for G3 and ranked as fourth value for G2 but it is less important for G1. It seems like instrumental work values is more important for younger ages. ‘Financial independence’ is an important value for all age groups. ‘Having an interesting work’ is much more important for G1 compared to G2 and G3. ‘Having responsibilities’ is important both for G1 and for G2, where as its rank is lower for G3. ‘Working at a company that is proud of’ is much more valuable for G1, and its rank is quite low for G2 and G3. ‘Opportunity for personal growth’ and ‘learning new things’ is much more important for G3 compared to G2 and G1. ‘Working conditions’ and ‘convenient of work’ hours are much more important for G3 compared to other age groups.

Table 6. *Means and Rankings of Work Value Dimensions*

	23-30 Age		31-40 Age		41-50 Age	
Achievement	5,24		Achievement	5,24	Intrinsic	5,11
Instrumental	5,21		Instrumental	5,21	Normative	5,08
Intrinsic	5,08		Intrinsic	5,08	Achievement	5,02
Development	5,06		Development	5,06	Instrumental	5,01
Social	5,06		Social	5,06	Development	4,89
Normative	4,93		Normative	4,93	Social	4,85

Table 7. *Means and Rankings of Work Values among Age Groups*

Factors	Work Values	Means Age 23-30	Rank Age 23-30	Means Age 31-40	Rank Age 31-40	Means Age 41-50	Rank Age 41-50
Achievement	Achievement in work	5,55	2	5,36	2	5,44	1
Social	Esteem, that you are valued as a person	5,58	1	5,39	1	5,40	2
Intrinsic	Meaningful work	5,19	14	5,06	13	5,24	3
Instrumental	Providing financial independence	5,38	4	5,22	5	5,23	4
Intrinsic	Job interest, to do work which is interesting to you	5,29	9	5,14	8	5,21	5
Achievement	Responsibility	5,28	10	5,19	6	5,20	6
Normative	Company, to be employed by a company for which you are proud to work	5,04	24	4,92	20	5,15	7
Achievement	Recognition for doing a good job	5,33	7	5,13	9	5,14	8
Instrumental	Provide me a stable life-style	5,10	19	5,03	14	5,09	9
Development	Add value to my work	5,07	22	4,95	17	5,07	10
Instrumental	Job security, permanent job	5,15	17	5,01	15	5,07	11
Development	Opportunity for personal growth	5,34	5	5,15	7	5,07	12
Social	Co-workers, fellow workers who are pleasant and agreeable	5,27	11	5,07	12	5,06	13
Development	To create change, be productive	5,09	21	4,99	16	5,06	14
Instrumental	Life and work balance	5,19	13	5,11	10	5,05	15
Development	Use of ability and knowledge in your work	5,02	26	4,91	21	5,04	16
Development	Learning new things	5,33	6	5,09	11	5,02	17

Table 7 cont. Means and Rankings of Work Values among Age Groups

Factors	Work Values	Means Age 23-30	Rank Age 23-30	Means Age 31-40	Rank Age 31-40	Means Age 41-50	Rank Age 41-50
Development	Feedback concerning the results of your work	5,18	16	4,92	19	5,02	18
Normative	Contribution to society	4,82	29	4,64	30	5,01	19
Instrumental	Work conditions, comfortable and clean	5,20	12	4,95	18	4,98	20
Achievement	Advancement, changes for promotion	5,41	3	5,23	4	4,96	21
Instrumental	Pay, the amount of money you receive	5,32	8	5,28	3	4,94	22
Instrumental	Benefits, vacation, sick leave, pension, insurance, etc.	5,14	18	4,90	22	4,90	23
Intrinsic	Independence in work	4,77	30	4,89	23	4,89	24
Development	To achieve spiritual satisfaction	4,93	27	4,77	27	4,86	25
Instrumental	Convenient hours of work	5,19	15	4,88	24	4,80	26
Development	Realize my dreams	5,10	20	4,78	26	4,80	27
Achievement	Influence in the organization	5,06	23	4,85	25	4,74	28
Social	Opportunity to meet people and interact with them	4,73	31	4,62	31	4,66	29
Achievement	Job status	4,82	28	4,64	29	4,63	30
Development	Providing training opportunities	5,04	25	4,70	28	4,61	31
Development	To engage my mind and body, to value my time	4,53	33	4,26	33	4,39	32
Social	Fun working environment	4,65	32	4,33	32	4,27	33

Organizational Commitment – ANOVA for Age

The Levene test conducted indicates that the between group variance is equal for affective, normative and continuance commitment (p Affective =.849; p Normative =.946; p Continuance =.621). Among all the variables suited for the ANOVA testing, affective and normative commitment have shown a significant variance for age (see Table 8). In order to understand which age groups differ for these commitments, the Scheffe test is run.

According to the results, the 40s age group displays significant difference in affective commitment compared to other age groups. Where as, the 20s age group is significantly different from the 30s age group in normative commitment dimension. There is no difference in continuance commitment among all age groups.

Table 8. ANOVA Table of Age Groups & Organizational Commitment

	23-30 Age		31-40 Age		41-50 Age		F	p
	M	Sd	M	Sd	M	Sd		
Affective Comm.	3,089 ^b	0,817	3,097 ^b	0,844	3,348 ^a	0,838	6,602	,001
Normative Comm.	2,817 ^a	0,815	2,623 ^b	0,806	2,787	0,837	5,704	,003
Continuance Comm.	2,698	0,701	2,682	0,734	2,792	0,757	1,542	,215

Note: There is a significant variance among means indicated with different letters (a, b) for $p < 0.05$

Work Centrality – ANOVA Test for Age

The Levene test conducted indicates that the between group variance is equal for work centrality (p Work Centrality = .483). Work centrality has shown a significant variance ($p < 0.01$) for age. In order to understand which age groups differ for work centrality, the Scheffe test is run. The results reveal that, work is significantly more important for people at age 40s compared to other age groups (see Table 9).

Table 9. ANOVA Table of Age Groups & Work Centrality

	23-30 Age		31-40 Age		41-50 Age		F	p
	M	Sd	M	Sd	M	Sd		
Work Centrality	2,780 ^b	0,847	2,818 ^b	0,892	3,056 ^a	0,908	5,876	,003

Note: There is a significant variance among means indicated with different letters (a, b) for $p < 0.05$.

The level of importance of work changes among age groups. Work centrality becomes much more important in older ages. The lives of people in the 40s are shaped by their work since they view work as central to their lives. Even though, the 30s and 20s age groups are more similar in terms of level of work centrality, young people are more prone to see work as a small part of one's life (See also Table 10).

Table 10. Means of Work Centrality among Age Groups

	23-30 Age	31-40 Age	41-50 Age
The most important things that happen in life involve work.	2,48	2,40	2,61
Work should be considered central to life.	2,57 ^b	2,65 ^b	2,91 ^a
In my view, an individual's personal life goals should be work oriented.	2,56	2,53 ^b	2,84 ^a
Life is worth living only when people get absorbed in work.	2,86	2,85 ^b	3,14 ^a
Work should only be a small part of one's life. (R)	3,42 ^a	3,66 ^b	3,78 ^b

Note: There is a significant variance among means indicated with different letters (a, b) for $p < 0.05$

Test of Relations among Work Values, Organizational Commitment and Work Centrality

The correlation analyses are conducted to understand the relations between organizational commitment, work values, and work centrality. Correlation analysis is applied for each age group separately.

Regarding the analysis of 23-30 age group (Table 11), it is observed that 'Affective commitment' is significantly and positively correlated with 'Achievement' and 'Normative' dimensions of work values where as 'Normative commitment' is only and negatively correlated with 'Intrinsic' work values.

The correlation analysis of 31- 40 age group (Table 12) reveals that, 'Affective commitment' and 'Normative commitment' is weakly and positively correlated with 'Development', 'Achievement', 'Social' and 'Normative' dimensions of work values whereas 'Continuance commitment' is positively correlated only with 'Instrumental commitment'.

In the correlation analysis of 41-50 age group (Table 13), 'Affective commitment' is positively correlated with 'Development', 'Achievement', 'Social' and 'Normative' dimensions of work values. 'Normative commitment' has positive correlation with 'Development', 'Intrinsic', 'Social' and 'Normative' dimensions of work values.

According to the analysis, work centrality is moderately correlated with affective and normative commitment for all age groups.

Table 11. Correlation Analysis / Age 23-30

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
DEVELOPMENT	1									
INSTRUMENTAL	,485**	1								
ACHIEVEMENT	,604**	,342**	1							
INTRINSIC	,551**	,253**	,515**	1						
SOCIAL	,426**	,358**	,477**	,387**	1					
NORMATIVE	,616**	,309**	,502**	,420**	,328**	1				
AFFECTIVE COMM.	,074	,007	,140	-,039	,041	,236**	1			
NORMATIVE COMM.	,006	-,048	-,058	-,143*	,004	,122	,452**	1		
CONTINUANCE COMM.	,023	,125	-,020	-,026	,025	,062	,120	,260**	1	
WORK CENTRALITY	,095	-,118	,081	-,025	-,021	,131*	,284**	,181**	,052	1
MEAN	5.062	5.207	5.242	5.080	5.055	4.931	3.089	2.817	2.698	2.780
STD. DEVIANCE	0.639	0.602	0.591	0.678	0.609	0.896	0.817	0.815	0.701	0.847

Notes: **. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed); *. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 12. Correlation Analysis / Age 31-40

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
DEVELOPMENT	1									
INSTRUMENTAL	,498**	1								
ACHIEVEMENT	,610**	,434**	1							
INTRINSIC	,568**	,290**	,518**	1						
SOCIAL	,458**	,397**	,394**	,360**	1					
NORMATIVE	,623**	,346**	,472**	,406**	,372**	1				
AFFECTIVE COMM.	,287**	,065	,151**	,059	,167**	,360**	1			
NORMATIVE COMM.	,194**	,034	,142**	,064	,095*	,225**	,497**	1		
CONTINUANCE COMM.	,032	,222**	,029	-,017	-,003	,075	,002	,177**	1	
WORK CENTRALITY	,203**	-,043	,193**	,004	,014	,169**	,282**	,311**	,039	1
MEAN	4,852	5,047	5,068	5,029	4,854	4,776	3,097	2,623	2,682	2,818
STD. DEVIANCE	0,713	0,671	0,658	0,739	0,662	0,946	0,844	0,806	0,734	0,892

Notes: **. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed); *. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

Table 13. Correlation Analysis / Age 41-50

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
DEVELOPMENT	1									
INSTRUMENTAL	,614**	1								
ACHIEVEMENT	,690**	,488**	1							
INTRINSIC	,595**	,478**	,668**	1						
SOCIAL	,591**	,449**	,508**	,489**	1					
NORMATIVE	,644**	,420**	,578**	,617**	,536**	1				
AFFECTIVE COMM.	,215**	-,068	,208**	,146	,260**	,287**	1			
NORMATIVE COMM.	,179*	-,061	,122	,152	,189*	,205**	,569**	1		
CONTINUANCE COMM.	,007	,136	-,011	-,093	,025	,006	-,047	,213**	1	
WORK CENTRALITY	,064	-,174	,119	,033	,076	,078	,369**	,339**	,072	1
MEAN	4,894	5,008	5,019	5,115	4,849	5,079	3,348	2,787	2,792	3,056
STD. DEVIANCE	0,713	0,722	0,657	0,690	0,653	0,909	0,838	0,837	0,757	0,908

Notes: **. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed); *. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Additional Analysis - Gender Differences in Work Values

The t-test to analyze the differences in gender for work values is given in Table 14. The results of the t-test show that the Development, Instrumental, Achievement, Intrinsic, and Normative values show significant variance according to gender. The results show that women attach greater importance to Development, Instrumental, Achievement, Intrinsic, and Normative work values.

Table 14. Gender Differences in Work Values

WORK VALUES	GENDER	N	Mean	Std. D	t	df	p
Development	Female	498	5,02	0,645	5,062	933	,000
	Male	437	4,79	0,740			
Instrumental	Female	498	5,19	0,618	5,417	933	,000
	Male	437	4,95	0,702			
Achievement	Female	498	5,18	0,640	3,823	933	,000
	Male	437	5,01	0,644			
Intrinsic	Female	498	5,11	0,697	2,471	933	,014
	Male	437	5,00	0,732			
Social	Female	498	4,94	0,658	1,733	933	,083
	Male	437	4,86	0,647			
Normative	Female	498	4,98	0,872	3,902	933	,000
	Male	437	4,74	0,986			

Ranking of Work Values for Gender

Women rank 'Instrumental' work values as the most important dimension where as men place this dimension at the 3rd place. Men rank 'Achievement' work values as the most essential work values whereas women rank this dimension at the second place (Table 15). Women ranked 'esteem, being valued as a person' at 1st place and 'achievement in work' in the 2nd place though it is the reverse order for men (Table 16). Afterwards, 'providing financial independence' is very important for women at 3rd place, whereas it is at the 8th place for men. While 'payment' is at the 3rd rank for men, it is at the 11th place for women. While 'recognition for doing a good job' is ranked 4th by women, and 10th by men and 'Promotion' is at the 4th place for men and 6th place for women. Another interesting result is that women give more value to 'job security' and 'convenient hours'. Men value 'co-workers' relations' and place it on 5th rank while women place it at 20th (Table 16). Thus, both genders emphasizes more or less same values but in different importance.

Table 15. Means and Rankings of Dimensions of Work Values for Gender

Mean	Female	Mean	Male
Instrumental	5,19	Achievement	5,01
Achievement	5,18	Intrinsic	5,00
Intrinsic	5,11	Instrumental	4,95
Development	5,02	Social	4,86
Normative	4,98	Development	4,79
Social	4,94	Normative	4,74

Table 16. Means and Rankings of Work Values for Gender

	Work Values	Female	Rank	Male	Rank
Social	Esteem, that you are valued as a person	5,54	1	5,32	2
Achievement	Achievement in work	5,48	2	5,35	1
Instrumental	Providing financial independence	5,38	3	5,12	8
Achievement	Recognition for doing a good job	5,30	4	5,05	10
Achievement	Responsibility	5,28	5	5,14	6
Achievement	Advancement, changes for promotion	5,27	6	5,16	4
Development	Opportunity for personal growth	5,25	7	5,10	9
Intrinsic	Job interest, to do work which is interesting to you	5,24	8	5,13	7
Development	Learning new things	5,24	9	5,01	12
Instrumental	Life and work balance	5,23	10	4,98	13
Instrumental	Pay, the amount of money you receive	5,20	11	5,24	3
Intrinsic	Meaningful work	5,20	12	5,04	11
Instrumental	Job security, permanent job	5,19	13	4,90	17
Instrumental	Convenient hours of work	5,16	14	4,69	26
Instrumental	Provide me a stable life-style	5,16	15	4,95	14

Table 16 cont. Means and Rankings of Work Values for Gender

	Work Values	Female	Rank	Male	Rank
Development	Feedback concerning the results of your work	5,12	16	4,87	21
Development	Add value to my work	5,11	17	4,89	19
Development	To create change, be productive	5,10	18	4,94	15
Instrumental	Work conditions, comfortable and clean	5,10	19	4,92	16
Social	Co-workers, fellow workers who are pleasant and agreeable	5,09	20	5,15	5
Normative	Company, to be employed by a company for which you are proud to work	5,09	21	4,87	20
Instrumental	Benefits, vacation, sick leave, pension, insurance, etc.	5,07	22	4,83	22
Development	Use of ability and knowledge in your work	5,01	23	4,89	18
Development	To achieve spiritual satisfaction	4,98	24	4,65	27
Development	Realize my dreams	4,95	25	4,77	25
Development	Providing training opportunities	4,94	26	4,56	30
Achievement	Influence in the organization	4,93	27	4,83	23
Intrinsic	Independence in work	4,90	28	4,82	24
Normative	Contribution to society	4,87	29	4,62	29
Achievement	Job status	4,80	30	4,56	31
Social	Opportunity to meet people and interact with them	4,68	31	4,62	28
Development	To engage my mind and body, to value my time	4,48	32	4,20	33
Social	Fun working environment	4,43	33	4,36	32

4. Discussion

This thesis analyzes work values, organizational commitment, and work centrality through the perspective of age diversity, which has been accepted as one of the main predictors of these three variables. It is assumed that these monitored variables vary for different age groups in Turkey. Life span and career development theories are utilized as roadmaps to identify age groups. This section of the thesis discusses how the results support the research model and their consistency with the literature.

Conceptual Structure of Work Values

The work values questionnaire used in this thesis is composed of Elizur's 24 work values (Affective – 5 items, Cognitive – 14 items and Instrumental – 5 items) and 14 emic items independently identified by the author. Although Elizur's work values are generally reflecting the value dimensions derived in the West, it is assumed that Turkish employees may have different *sui generis* attitudes toward work. Thus, emic items, which are not included in Elizur's scale and have been derived from in-depth interviews conducted by the author of this thesis, are included in the survey. Work and life balance, provision of a stable life, financial independence, spiritual satisfaction, training opportunities, fun working environment, realization of one's dreams, adding value to one's work and being productive are some of the emic items that have been incorporated into the survey. These emic items mostly stem from self-developmental and extrinsic values, which are assumed unique for Turkey and are missing in Elizur's work values.

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Following factor analysis, 2 of Elizur's cognitive items and 3 emic items have been removed either because of their low loading or being loaded in two different dimensions and the remaining 33 items have yielded six dimensions: Development, Instrumental, Achievement, Intrinsic, Social, and Normative. This distribution is not in line with Elizur's original work and in the thesis, some of Elizur's items have been blended with emic items and created new dimensions, while some of the original dimensions have been split into 2 or more dimensions, and produced new dimensions.

One dimension that has emerged in the factor analysis is 'Development', which is comprised of 7 of the 11 emic items and 3 of Elizur's cognitive items. This dimension is named 'Development' because of its close relation to personal growth and improvement of job competencies. 'Achievement' is another dimension that has appeared during the analysis and is formed by the combination of Elizur's Cognitive items on success and achievement and the Affective item 'Recognition for doing a good job'. The dimension 'Intrinsic' has also emerged during the factor analysis and is formed by Elizur's cognitive items on meaningfulness and attraction of work, and the independence provided by work.

The 'Social' value dimension, which focuses on social relations, is composed of three affective values of Elizur, and the emic item 'Fun working environment.' The 'Normative' dimension, which includes normative and cultural values and is based on the 2 remaining cognitive items of Elizur, has also been developed as a result of the factor analysis.

The only dimension that has been a part of Elizur's work values and has remained almost intact after the factor analysis is the dimension 'Instrumental', but it has also been combined with the 3-emic items economic freedom, work and life balance and the provision of a stable life-style.

Thus, Elizur's cognitive dimension has not been formed in the thesis as it is in the original scale, and more over it has been divided into several dimensions. These results have raised some questions on the validity of the grouping of the items in Elizur's Cognitive scale. Since the original cognitive scale covers topics such as achievement, meaningful work, contribution to society and feedback concerning the results of your work, it can be suggested that the scale could work more effectively and efficiently if its items were distributed to and/or gathered under related sub-categories.

Age and Work Values

Age groups are the main point of origin for this thesis. It is hypothesized that there is difference in work values among age groups. According to Levinson's life span and Super's career development theories, people go through different stages in work and non-work lives in which they experience different challenges, events, achievements, and commitments. Thus, people's needs, values, attitudes, preferences, commitment levels, and expectations change as they age and go through their life stages. The findings of this thesis are in line with the theory that there are work value differences among different age groups. Similar to the statements of Johnson & Monseraud (2012), the results of this study provide evidence that, people in their 20s significantly attach importance to almost everything. There is a significant difference between the 20s age group and other age groups in terms of Instrumental, Achievement, and Social values. In terms of development values, the 20s age group is significantly different than the 30s age group. The 30s and the 40s age group are more or less similar except for Normative work values, which are significantly more important for the 40s age group. Even though there are no significant differences among age groups for Intrinsic work values, it should be noted that these values score high among other values tested in this thesis for all age groups.

Levinson (1986) and Super's (1980) perspectives on personal and career development claim that young adults are more inclined to explore opportunities for their personal growth and improvement. The results of the thesis agree with both models as the items 'Learning new things', 'opportunity for personal growth', 'Realizing one's dreams', and 'Providing training opportunities' have shown to be significantly more important for the 20s age group compared to other age groups. Young group also values 'getting feedbacks', 'to value one's time' significantly more than the 30s age group and the ranking analysis also supports these differences. To be more precise for instance; the 20s age group has ranked 'Opportunity for personal growth' as the 5th and the 30s age group has ranked it as the 7th most important work value while the 40s age group has ranked it as high as their 12th. The 20s age group has also placed 'Learning new things,' another item from the 'Development' dimension, higher than the 30s and 40s age groups, the ranking by the three age groups goes as 6th, 11th and 17th, respectively.

With regard to 'Instrumental' work values, there is significant difference between the 20s age group and other groups. Individuals in their 20s significantly care more for convenient hours of work, S. Sonmezer, (2018). *An Analysis of Work Values...*

fringe benefits and work conditions than other age groups. Financial independence is also significantly more important for the 20s age group compared to that of 30s. Even though there are no significant differences among age groups, the means of ‘providing stable life’, ‘work and life balance’, and ‘job security’ items are high for all of them. Nevertheless, the 40s age group attributes significantly less value to payment compared to the younger age groups. This is in line with Marini *et. al.*, (1996) who have also indicated that young employees rate work rewards very highly. This becomes even more evident in the importance ratings with the 30s age group rating income as the 3rd and the 20s age group rating it as the 8th compared to the 40s age group that has ranked it as the 22nd most important item. General work rewards also seem to lose their appeal with the coming of age. According to the life span and career developmental theories, the individuals at their 40s should have already attained satisfactory rewards and satiated the ambitious novice appetites they had in their 20s. Parallel to the developmental theories, ‘having a stable life’ is ranked as the 9th, 14th, and 19th most important item for the 40s, 30s, and 20s age groups, respectively. Such a ranking could be attributed to the life stages experienced by different age groups. According to Levinson (1986), people at the mid-adulthood stage tend to avoid risk taking, be more cautious and prone to maintain what they have achieved in previous stages. When it comes to ‘work and life balance’, people in their 20s and 30s seem to prioritize it higher and give more value to additional leisure time than people in the 40s age group. According to an OECD (2013) report, the average annual working time in OECD countries is 1779 hours/worker where as it is 1832 hours/worker in Turkey [Retrieved from] and these heavy working conditions, and particularly the long working hours in Turkey could have contributed to this difference. Contrary to Warr (2008), ‘job security’ is also a crucial value for all employees in Turkey, but it is slightly a bigger priority for the 20s age group. This could have stemmed from the 20s age group’s consecutive early adulthood experiences of economic crises, which hit Turkey both in 2001, and in 2009 and resulted in increased unemployment rates (Acar, 2013). Moreover, the rapid increase in the number of university graduates in the 2000s has led to intense competition for jobs (OECD – Turkey Report, Education at a glance 2014) and could have triggered an additional need for job security within the 20s age group.

Considering ‘Achievement’ work values, ‘Advancement and promotion’ is significantly different for all age groups. The ranking analysis reveals that the 20s and the 30s age groups have a higher

promotion expectation than the 40s group and rank this value at 3rd and 4th rows, respectively. Although the means of ‘Achievement in work’ item is high for all ages, there is a significant difference between the 20s and the 30s age groups. This item has been ranked 1st by 40s, 2nd by both the 30s and 20s age groups. The result for the 40s age group is somewhat contrary to Levinson’s and Super’s theories of development, which stated that the 40s age period is a tranquil stage in which people are associated with the preservation of what they have achieved, and the increase in the importance level of non-work life. However, the additional responsibilities of this age group, such as family, may create the necessity to maintain the financial stability and job security, which in return generates further achievement need in career life. The 20s age group emphasizes significant importance for ‘being influential in the company’ more than older groups, perhaps due to one’s need to prove her/himself at this stage. The lesser interest paid to this value by older adults may be due to these individuals’ existing career stages and their not feeling in need to earn status and be influential as they have already attained certain positions. Lending support to Tolbert & Moen (1998) who have stated that young employees want to be highly recognized at work, the results of this study show that the 20s age group significantly highlights the importance of ‘being recognized for doing a good job’ more than the 30s and 40s age groups, and ranks the value on 7th place. All age groups give significant importance to ‘responsibility’, which is ranked as the 6th important item for the 30s and the 40s age groups, and 10th for the 20s age group.

Compellingly, the difference between age groups for the ‘Intrinsic’ work value dimension is not clear-cut as other dimensions and there are no significant differences among groups. However, all age groups value ‘meaningful work’ and ‘interesting work’. Similar to Wright & Hamilton (1978), the data reveals an important premise that especially the 40s age group wants a meaningful and interesting work. Older employees in this study rank ‘meaningful work’ as their 3rd most important work value.

Regarding ‘Social’ work values, young employees give significant importance to ‘have pleasant and agreeable co-workers’ and ‘fun working environment’ compared to older age groups. Majority of the members of the 20s age group has not been in business life for more than five years. Thus, the 20s age group is not fully embedded into corporate life, which tends to make individuals more professional and serious. As younger people have fewer or no commitments at this stage of their lives, it can be expected that they are more open to having fun and see work as an

extension of their university lives. The mean of ‘Esteem, being valuable as a person’ is high for all age groups, but it is significantly more prominent for the 20s age group compared to the 30s. On the other hand, this value ranks at 1st place both for the 20s and the 30s age groups, at 2nd place for the 40s age group.

Looking at ‘Normative’ work values, it can be concluded that individuals at their 40s significantly care more about ‘contributing to the society’ and ‘working at a company, which they are proud of’ compared to those in their 30s – the former ranking at 7th and the latter 19th respectively. Notably, the 20s age group is more concerned for social issues and wishes to extend its social consciousness and civic-mindedness to the workplace as well. Contrary to popular assumption that Turkish youth is insensitive to social issues, Lüküslü (2010) has noted that the younger members of the Turkish society have an active apolitical attitude and are getting involved with social issues through unconventional tools such as social media, and humor as a means of rebellion.

In conclusion, the thesis provides evidences that there are work value differences among age groups in Turkey. Briefly, young employees at their 20s give importance to many things due to their explorative nature, and aspire to find those career goals that they will pursue in future life stages. The relatively older employees in their 40s are more concerned with normative work values. Surprisingly, there are no specific work value dimensions explicitly highlighted for the 30s age group. Evidently, there are less difference between the 30s and the 40s age groups compared to the difference observed between the 20s and older age groups. A satisfying approach seems to lie in life span and career development theories that 30s and 40s age groups’ theoretical profiles are closer to each other such that both age groups aim to become more proficient at work, have already made their professional choices and made commitments to achieve their career goals.

Conceptual Structure of Organizational Commitment

Factor analysis, which is carried out for organizational commitment, yielded a three-dimensional structure that is different from the original scale used. The thesis utilized Meyer *et. al.*’s (1993) organizational commitment scale consisting of 18 items. Only two items of continuance commitment (‘Right now, staying with my organization is a matter of necessity as much as desire,’ and ‘If I had not already put so much of myself into this organization, I might consider working elsewhere’) were out of scale due to their low and conflicting loadings. The remaining 16

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items have yielded three dimensions; Affective, Continuance and Normative commitment. Except for Affective commitment, other dimensions have remained as they are in the original scale. Three of normative commitment items are loaded under affective commitment; 'This organization deserves my loyalty', 'I do not feel any obligation to remain with my current employer (R)' and 'I owe a great deal to my organization'. In the literature, there is evidence that salient antecedents of affective commitment may also be determinant of normative commitment, and there is a strong correlation between normative and affective commitment (Ko *et. al.*, 1997; Meyer *et. al.*, 1993; Meyer *et. al.*, 2002; Wasti, 2003). In this respect, normative commitment items are expected to blend with affective commitment items.

Age and Organizational Commitment

The results provide evidence that there is a significant difference in affective commitment between the 40s age group and other age groups. Findings lend support to previous studies (Meyer *et. al.*, 1993; Meyer & Allen, 1987; 1988) that show affective commitment is significantly higher in older employees than in younger employees, whose expectation from work life is relatively higher. This may be grounded on the assumption that younger employees are experiencing their first years of career and exploring their opportunities, and they have less work experience. Since work experience has been found strongly correlated with affective commitment (Allen & Meyer 1996; Meyer *et. al.*, 1998), as expected, the 40s age group has demonstrated the highest affective commitment rates. Furthermore, because of their organizational tenure, people in their 40s are expected to show a higher commitment as they would yearn to preserve what they have accomplished in their current organizations (Meyer *et. al.*, 2002).

Contrary to some of the published studies (Meyer *et. al.*, 1993; Weng *et. al.*, 2010; Ng & Feldman, 2010), normative commitment does not yield a linear relationship with age and the results suggest that normative commitment of the 20s age group is significantly higher than 30s age group. The mean of the 40s age group is almost as high as 20s age group. A closer look at the sample profile may provide compelling reasons for this result. This research was conducted in Turkey, which can be described as a developing country exhibiting both rural and urban, agricultural and industrialized, patriarchal and egalitarian characters as well as conservative and modern values (Sunar & Fisek 2005; Wasti, 2003). According to the literature, by and large, strong social ties and obligations are the main components of normative S. Sonmezer, (2018). *An Analysis of Work Values...*

commitments in collectivist societies whereas in individualistic societies satisfaction with the work itself, promotion opportunities, personal needs, material gains, rights, and contracts form the corner stone of normative commitments (Boyacıgiller & Adler, 1991; Triandis *et al.*, 1988). Turkey, on the one hand, has been considered as a predominantly collectivist country but on the other hand, the sample profile of this research is composed of highly educated, urban, modern, and corporate employees, who, in general, could be expected to cherish more westernized, individualistic values. As an additional level of complexity, the 40s age group has experienced the beginning of the transition of Turkey from a closed to an open, liberal, and globalized economy, from conservative to modern values, and from a political to an apolitical society following the coup d'état in 1980. This group witnessed the painful period of developmental transition during which collectivist values can coexist with individualistic values (Dirilen-Gumus & Buyuksahin-Sunal 2012). Thus, this group can have a propensity to show collectivist values in terms of normative values. However, compared to other age groups, the development of the 20s age group overlaps with the post-transition era, which is more progressive, modernized, productive, and can be described as the peak period of development. During their formative years, the 20s age group has experienced high globalization, urbanization, modernization, massive consumerism, excessive branding, advanced technology, and communication paradigms such as internet, smart phones, and have more diverse opportunities in every sphere of life than any other generations. Thus, within this particular context, normative commitment may be high in the 20s age group in the sense that this group exhibits attributes of normative commitment of individualistic societies rather than those of collectivist societies. Accordingly, extrinsic work rewards, promotion plans, achievement, and job content have a bigger impact on the normative commitment of the 20s age group compared to social ties and obligations, and these individualistic values have been found significantly important for this age group. In contrast to the 20s, the 30s age group shows low normative commitment and a further research is definitely needed to understand the reasons of the low-level normative commitment of the 30s age group.

This study also lends support to Meyer *et al.*, (1993), and Durna & Eren (2005) as the findings revealed low means for continuance commitment for all age groups, and showed no significant difference in age groups for continuance commitment.

Age and Work Centrality

The results justify the studies that have shown a linear relationship between work centrality and age (Harpaz, 1999; Smola & Sutton, 2002; Mannheim *et. al.*, 1997; Arvey *et. al.*, 2004; Schmidt & Lee, 2008). The 40's age group attributes significant importance to work centrality compared to other age groups, and significantly considers 'work' as more central to its life more than the two other age groups.

The 40s age group significantly attaches their personal goals with work goals and and associate living with 'getting absorbed in work' more than 30s age group'. Development theories assume that people at this stage of life are at senior levels in their professional lives and have a tendency to preserve what they have already accomplished. However, they also start to question the weight of work in their lives and care more about individual needs. Contrary to Levinson's and Super's development theories, it appears that Turkish employees are still work oriented at this mid stage of their lives. This could also be triggered by the shifts in the concept of and conditions for retirement in Turkey. Under the pre-reform system, the average retirement age in Turkey used to be approximately 45. The calculation of pensionable age was based on 25 years of official contribution requirement that is to earn right to full pension benefits with approximately 5000 days of contribution. However, this system started to change in the 1990s. The post-reform period required the drawing of pension age from 60 (men) / 58 (women) with 7000 days of contributions. After the 2008 reforms, retirement age gradually increased to 60-65 for men and 58-65 for women with 7200 days of contributions (OECD Report, pensions at a Glance, 2013; SGK Emeklilik Şartları). The 40's age group may have entered the work force before the reform period; however, it can be assumed that the concept of retirement may have changed among older employees in Turkey such that people in their 40s now think it is too early to retire from business life. Thus, on these grounds, it could be expected from the 40s age group to exhibit high work centrality levels since retiring at the age of 40 is no longer an option. Due to their life stage, people in their 40s have additional personal responsibilities such as family, which generate the need for financial security. Thus, aiming to maintain financial stability increases the importance of job security, which is also highlighted as an important work value for this age group. They may start to question their work life and may want to be more prone to non-professional life, but might think that it is not the right time to realize this tendency. Contrary to the 40s age group, people in their 20s are the least work oriented group and show the

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lowest level of work centrality. They do not live merely to work and want 'work' to be one and possibly a small part of their lives.

The Relations between Work Values, Organizational Commitment, and Work Centrality

The research questions of this thesis are based on the query that there is a relationship between work values, organizational commitment, and work centrality. The correlation analyses revealed that there is a relationship between work values and organizational commitment, and work centrality and organizational commitment variables and that these relationships change due to age.

In the literature, work values have been considered as one of the antecedents of organizational commitment (Elizur, 1996; Elizur & Koslowsky, 2001). The correlation analyses revealed that there is a relationship between work values and organizational commitment as well. Moreover, the relationship between work value dimensions and dimensions of organizational commitment change according to each age group.

In general, the relationship between normative work values and normative commitment and affective commitment stands out for all age groups only excluding the 20s age group for normative commitment. In normative work values, the means of all age groups for one item, which is 'to be employed by a company for which you are proud to work', are high. Thus, it may be safe to state that being proud of one's company is important for all age groups and may effect their affective and normative commitment level to the organization.

Regarding the 20s age group, there is a negative relation between intrinsic work values and normative commitment. The younger group cares about intrinsic values such as meaningful work and interesting job, the less they are normatively committed to the organization. From this perspective, the result can be interpreted as when it comes to a decision between the content of work and the organization, young generation gives more value to the nature of work, and feels less normatively committed to the organization.

In the 30's age group, there is a positive relationship between development dimension and affective commitment to the organization. This correlation could have emerged from these individuals' interest in clarifying their future career paths within their current organizations. The 30's age group could have identified existing developmental opportunities, which are presented by their organizations, as predictors of future career

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opportunities, hence yielding a positive interaction of the development dimension with affective commitment.

Regarding continuance commitment, the analysis has revealed correlation between continuance commitment and instrumental work values only for the 30s age group. There has been no other relation displayed for continuance commitment of any other age group. Instrumental work values have been one of the most important value dimensions for the 30s age group. Lending support to Oliver (1990) and Elizur (1996), the results reveal that values such as working hours, financial independence, and income may cause an interaction with commitment.

For the 40s age group, there is a positive relationship between social work values, and affective commitment. As it was previously discussed, work experience has been identified as one of the antecedents of affective commitment and this age group both has the highest organizational tenure, up to 10 years in average, as well as the highest overall work experience compared to the other age groups. Consequently, it is no surprise to see that in the 40's age group, which consists of individuals with a given level of esteem stemming from organizational seniority and established inter-colleague relationships, social work values have a visible relationship with affective commitment.

Although there has been relatively little research on the relationship between work centrality and organizational commitment (Brooke *et al.*, 1988; Mannheim *et al.*, 1997; Hirschfeld & Feild, 2000), the results of this study provide evidence that there is a moderate relationship between affective commitment and work centrality for all age groups. Additionally, there is a moderate relationship between normative commitment and work centrality for the 30s and 40s age group, and weak relationship for the 20s age group.

Age and Gender

Although no hypotheses were assumed, the findings of this thesis also draw attention to gender differences in work values. In the literature, studies have recorded that there are gender differences in work values (Elizur, 1994; Beutel & Marini, 1995; Marini *et al.*, 1996; Elizur, 1996). Accordingly, men give more value to money and other materialistic rewards (Elizur, 1994; 1996; Beutel & Marini, 1995) whereas women emphasize more affective (Elizur, 1994; 1996), intrinsic, altruistic, and social values (Marini *et al.*, 1996; Beutel & Marini, 1995). Elizur (1994; 1996) also stated that men are more oriented to long-term careers while women are more concerned with shorter-term career goals.

Regarding the Turkish context, Uçanok (2009) has revealed that men attach more value to normative values than women do, whereas women give more importance to individualistic values than men do.

The results of this study reveal that except for social work values, women give significant importance to all work value dimension compared to men. In the ranking analysis of work values' dimensions, while women place instrumental dimension at 1st rank and achievement at 2nd, men place achievement dimension as the most important work values and intrinsic at 2nd place. In more detail, the ranking analysis of all work value items has shown that both women and men, primarily, placed achievement work values within their top ten ranking, but with different importance.

In order to understand this picture, one should portray the gender issue in Turkish society context. As mentioned before, Turkey has been through a modernization period starting with the 1980s. During this period, Turkey has been transformed into a more liberalized society in economic and social spheres. Subsequently, traditional gender roles have transformed, too. Firstly, women have begun to participate more in the professional labor force and started to advance their occupational status. Soon enough, they have become reliant on their own earnings, created their career identities, made their professional careers a permanent part of their lives, and gained their financial independence. In this context, it may be safe to predict that, for women, achievement, and instrumental work values are important because ideas like having a career identity, professionally earning money, career advancement, being financially independent are actually a novel philosophy, which they have adopted recently. Having a career is a part of the movement for women to prove themselves, to create their independence and to acquire their new social identity. On the other hand, men, as gender-role stereotypes, have always been the breadwinners in the household. They have been working for capital accumulation, material reward, and already independent, and had a social status consequently. In her study, conducted among 52 women managers in private sector, Aycan (2004) explored the perceptions of career and business woman identity of highly educated, westernized women in Turkey and indicated two important factors for women's career advancement; personal and situational factors. Regarding individual factors, education, and personal characteristics such as decisiveness, hard work, good time management, high self-confidence, achievement orientation, career orientation, and determination were recorded. Aycan (2004) stated that women see work as a natural, permanent process in their lives

and rather than dedicating themselves to traditional responsibilities like childcare and household work, women prefer to find a balance between their work and non-work lives and coordinate the tasks instead of doing it themselves. Situational factors captured in the study involved parental support and encouragement especially from mothers and spouses. According to Ayca (2004), in the socio-cultural context of Turkey where gender-role stereotypes exist and create a barrier for women, women still needed to prove themselves to their organization that they have capabilities to handle higher responsibilities and try to gain acceptance. These findings by Ayca (2004) could be interpreted as one of the reasons for the more ambitious and high achiever attitudes of women participating in this thesis.

Practical Implications

The findings of this thesis have important practical implications. Firstly, companies should realize that work values, commitment, and importance of work change by age, and thus, they need to adapt their practices and policies to respond these changes. It is crucial for managers in companies to empathize with their employees and to ascertain the congruence between organizational values and employees' work values in order to have a more motivated and satisfied work force. All employees want to be valued as a person and to be successful in their career. Thus, employers should offer opportunities, invest in career paths, and plan trainings and occupational advancement options for their employees based on the interests, needs, and expectations of each age group. On the grounds of age differences, it would be precarious for human resources to treat their employees as one single profile and differences between age groups should be taken into consideration for organizational practices.

The thesis has shown that work values are changing according to age. Particularly, young employees at their 20s have unrealistically high expectations and want everything in the beginning of their career. They are more concerned with good work conditions, having fun at work, benefits, payment, co-workers, and shorter work hours. As a result, employers need to reconsider the working environment and may provide relaxing areas in the office, offer flexible work schedules, extended flexible benefits and other opportunities to satisfy such expectations. Employees at their 20s also care about advancement, getting trainings, learning new things, personal growth, and achievement and want to be treated with respect, to be recognized and to feel as part of the team. It is apparent that human resources should provide

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clear career paths, training and personal development programs, talent development programs, and should offer cross-functional movement opportunities and business development projects to help these young employees in finding their career goals. If companies can implement these modifications into their practices, they may attract and retain talents in the work force.

Since work values are found to be related to organizational commitment, human resources might enhance the commitment of their employees by understanding what their employees value at work.

Managers and human resources departments need to build differential patterns to understand and motivate their employees in different ages. It is apparent that the importance of work is lower among young employees. It may be safe to state that, with the increase in the demand of life and work balance, leisure, and flexibility have become important concepts for the younger generation, who is less willing to work hard, and does not place work at the center of life (Smola & Sutton, 2002; Twenge, 2010).

Limitations and Further Research

Like every other study, this study also has some limitations. In methodological terms, the size of the present sample is appropriate. However, the sample profile of this thesis consists of university graduate, corporate white-collar employees of large companies in Istanbul. Thus, the thesis presents a very selective sample profile, which does not reflect the complete picture in Turkey. In order to map out the general profile of Turkish white-collar employees, further investigations are needed. The future studies may involve a geographically representative sample for all the regions of Turkey, and may recruit white-collar workers from both large and mid-sized companies in order to explore age differences in work values, commitment, and work centrality. The uniqueness of emic items that are identified should be tested for the Turkish context. Finally yet importantly, further research is needed to understand the decrease in work centrality among the younger population, and to find out how the younger population is planning to reconcile their high expectations from life with their desire to work less.

Appendix

Demographics

Age Groups	Frequency	Percent
<30	226	24,2
31-40	532	56,9
41-50	177	18,9
Total	935	100,0

Gender	Frequency	Percent
Female	498	53,3
Male	437	46,7
Total	935	100,0

Education Level	Frequency	Percent
2 Year College Graduate	42	4,5
University Graduate	515	55,1
Masters Graduate	340	36,4
Doctorate Graduate	38	4,1
Total	935	100,0

Degree of Responsibility	Frequency	Percent
Upper Middle Manager	89	9,5
Middle Manager	364	38,9
Manager Candidate	89	9,5
Specialist	360	38,5
First Level	33	3,5
Total	935	100,0

Sector	Frequency	Percent
Telecommunication	43	4,6
IT	77	8,2
Finance/ Banking	138	14,8
Consulting	44	4,7
Health/ Pharmaceuticals	311	33,3
Automotive	9	1,0
FMCG	94	10,1
Other	219	23,4
Total	935	100,0

Marital Status	Frequency	Percent
Single	328	35,1
Married	569	60,9
Divorced/ Widowed	38	4,1
Total	935	100,0

Parenthood	Frequency	Percent
Yes	393	42,0
20s Age	10	3%
30s Age	248	63%
40s Age	135	34%
No	542	58,0
Total	935	100,0

Tenure in the Company	40s Age Gr.	30s Age Gr.	20s Age Gr.
<5	74	304	209
6-10	31	172	16
11-15	35	53	1
16-20	26	3	
21-25	11		

Employment Status – Years	Frequency	Percent
<5	174	19
6-10	337	36
11-15	222	24
16-20	128	14
21-25	60	6
26<	14	1
Total	935	100

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