

Workplace Through a Global Management Framework: An Investigation of Ubuntu Values.

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To effectively maneuver the quick revolutions in the changing world of work and promote sustainability, a specific mindset towards work must be cultivated. Recognizing global interconnectedness involves establishing worldwide values that acknowledge workplace diversity. Ubuntu philosophy from Africa strengthens values like solidarity and sustainability in the international system. This study is investigating Ubuntu values in Indian workplaces. The empirical survey of 276 employees from rural and urban areas confirmed a moderate level of Ubuntu values. Interventions based on these global workplace values can help to create a healthy global work culture.

Keywords: Survival, Sustainability, Solidarity, Compassion, Respect and Dignity, Collectivism, Workplace, Psycho-social values.

The workplace is constructed through work culture, attitude, beliefs, norms, customs, and practices (Rozhkov, et al. 2017). People dedicate a significant amount of time to work, but the workplace and work conditions are changing rapidly, which presents new challenges. To deal with these challenges and for survival, global competence is imperative. (Spivey & Thomas, 1991).

Sustainability is at risk because of rapid changes caused by globalization and technology. As Tomlinson (1999) noted, the globalization of culture has adverse implications for society, as it embodies a particular culture rather than a universal one. Insecurity and identification issues cause cultural clashes that harm democracy, politics, and national culture (Tomlinson, 1999). The pursuit of competence in the globalized world involves strengthening organizational culture (Jhunjunwala, 2010), leading to workplace challenges such as diversity conflict and ideological differences (Zajda, 2005). According to Jackson and Joshi (2004), organizational diversity is associated with reduced social cohesion,

increased conflict, and turnover, as it leads to subgroup categorization, which creates interpersonal tension and hinders communication (Homan et al., 2007). We can handle globalization changes better by promoting human values and reducing conflicts. According to Gwagwa (2022), the global acceptance of the Ubuntu philosophy is attributed to its adherence to fundamental values.

Ubuntu

According to Battle (1996), the Ubuntu concept, which can be found in Zulu-Xhosa literature, conveys the notion that an individual's humanity is demonstrated through their interactions with others, as expressed in the phrase "umntu-
ngumtungabantu. Ubuntu espouses the belief that 'I am because we are', which encompasses several values. Mbigi (1997) propounded the five essential values of Ubuntu, popularly known as the five-finger theory, which encompass solidarity, survival, compassion, respect, dignity, and collectivism. Survival is the primary value caused by natural disasters and certain man-

made occurrences such as war. The second value is solidarity; it derives from the Latin word *solidare* which means to combine parts, to form a strong whole, and to make firm (Komter, 2004). Compassion is the third value, which entails showing friendliness and care for others and a willingness to leave their interests for the benefit of others (Muchiri, 2011). The fourth value pertains to the act of showing respect and honor towards others, acknowledging the value of individuals or groups, and safeguarding their self-esteem. The fifth principle is collectivism, which stands in contrast to the Western culture of individualism. According to Petr Kropotkin's (1902) assertion, the Ubuntu philosophy advocates psychosocial values that possess the potential to positively affect the world. Kropotkin says that remarkable cooperation is necessary for species to survive in an unfavorable environment. (Refer. In Glassman, 2000). During difficult times, people often contemplate assisting. Certain personality characteristics result in altruistic behavior. (2020). Ubuntu is a South African practice that values survival and serving the worldwide community. (Mangaliso, 2001)

All values of ubuntu can create cooperation and bond between group members. Ubuntu philosophy acknowledges that human beings are human only in the company of other humans. It can aid ethical global management (Lutz, 2009). The significance of solidarity in sustainable development was identified by Torbjornsson and Molin (2014) while examining the role of value education. Seltzer-Kelly, et al. (2010) say solidarity doesn't focus on the identification of similarities but respects the apparent differences between various groups. As per Dutton & Workman (2014) compassion, respect and dignity are foundational factors of professional and ethical care. Addressing the current significant challenges, including climate change, poverty, social exclusion, inequality,

and unemployment, can be achieved through the utilization of a social and solidarity economy (Lee, 2019). Innovation is essential in handling such affairs, and compassion can foster the creation of innovative ideas (Lefebvre, 2020).

Ubuntu social values are widespread and applied everywhere in South Africa. The Constitution of South Africa headed its values with human dignity, achievement of equality, non-racialism, non-sexism, and advancement of human rights and freedom. Various researchers criticize it, considering the application of ubuntu values in other social contexts and fields (Hailey, 2008). But, Etieyibo (2017) has evidenced that practicing ubuntu values is helpful for overall environmental sustainability; it is also helpful in bridging the gap between two different groups (Oviawe, 2016).

Matolino and Kwindigwi (2013) claim that ubuntu's practice is confined to African communities and is often used for political purposes, leading to exclusion and a focus on blood relations. Another side it gets proved that ubuntu positively contributes to the development of human rights and creates hope (Swanson, 2007). Van Norren (2014) has shown that ubuntu is not a destination to reach, but a guide to foster self-actualization within a collective. Koenane and Olatunji (2017) stated that ubuntu is a belief system, a way of living, and it characterizes humans, and it is not specific to African or African-American people.

Ubuntu value has more emphasis on interconnection; it plays an important role in creating connectedness between social members (Balestrery, 2023). As Nelson Mandela said, promoting social understanding and reconciliation between different constituents is required for communal transformation (Hailey, 2008). Poovan (2006) gauged that Africans have become adept at enduring through

interdependence, help, and joint effort. South Africans have implemented a process in which self-interest is minimized and collective interconnectivity is maximized. Ramose (1999) accentuated that ubuntu is a way of looking at the world that includes cultural customs and laws. It focuses on values like honesty, respect, tolerance, care, compassion, empathy, and hospitality.

Ubuntu value relevance in the era of globalisation

It is widely accepted that the development of values is a critical component of managing organizational operations (Khazanchi, et al. 2018). The presence of diverse religions is challenging in the workplace, it can create value conflicts between different groups (Prieto, et al. 2009). Identifying shared values is imperative in order to prevent conflicts. The preamble of the nation is indicative of its national values. The preamble of India focuses on justice, liberty, equality, and fraternity, which are required to succeed in the Constitution (Government of India, 1993). The United States preamble focuses on justice and the welfare of citizens, unity of the nation, and political stability (Government of the USA, 1800). Japan's preamble is more concerned about peace in society, security, existence, justice, and the well-being of citizens (Emperor, 1947). The preamble of South Africa is focusing on diversity in the nation, justice, liberty, respect, equality, and quality of life (Sauter, 2015). Overall, the preambles of various nations are commonly concerned with the sustainability and survival of citizens, which are fundamental to ubuntu philosophy. Despite sharing the common goal of well-being for humanity, differences in behavior and attitude due to geographical and cultural disparities often lead to conflict when individuals from diverse backgrounds interact. Cletus et al. (2018) identified the importance of diversity and the need for diversity management in an apt way to reduce workplace conflicts.

Workplace Values and Conflict Management

Multinational organizations have increased workplace diversity, leading to a cacophony of cultural perspectives in the workplace. In India, workplace managers 40% of their time are devoted to resolving conflicts that arise from misunderstandings and poor behavior (Desikan, 2018). As the report says, employees in the United States spend 2.8 hours each week in conflict management, in the U.K. 38% of employees experience interpersonal conflicts in an average year. In 2021, 61,331 workplace discrimination charges were there in the USA. According to Mitchel (2017), companies in the United States have a 10.5% of chance to being hit with employment lawsuits, which affects productivity and the work environment. To deal with this, managers need to be more competent in multiple cultures, According to Brahm (1999), American CEOs and executives use religious texts such as the Bible, Bhagwatgita, and Thalmud to motivate their employees. It is crucial to acknowledge cultural values that exist in diverse societies and leverage them to establish universal workplace values that promote workplace harmony and productivity. The increase of globalization has made it necessary to acknowledge the potential religious diversity that may negatively affect the workplace. It is imperative to utilize the advantages of cultural diversity in an organization (Rao, 2012).

Workplace -values direct significant behaviour in the workplace (McEwan, 2001). Workplace values enhance management effectiveness through attitude, beliefs, and personal disposition (Corney & Rechards, 2001). Lack of workplace values results in psychological distress which creates negative consequences such as reduced cooperation, communication, and job satisfaction (Sharma & Mohapatra, 2009). Rana et al., (2016) conducted a study to understand the role of

workplace values in managerial effectiveness and reveals that workplace values are positively associated with managerial effectiveness. India was part of various cross-cultural studies, but very few studies have focused on workplace values solely in Indian contexts (Rana et al., 2016). Being a diverse country, by considering increased globalization Indian research needs to focus on workplace values.

Global workplaces have created challenges; first is deployment, regardless of geographical differences, requiring skilled employees. Second, knowledge & innovation circulation is required to spread knowledge. Third is identifying and developing talent based on global requirements (Roberts, et al. 1998). Alas (2011) identified the differences in work-related attitudes towards society, work, and organization; and this attitude is influenced by cultural background and institutional context. Change in managerial assumptions and values is not demanding a shift in traditional ethics and values (Chakraborty, 1998), it should arise from deeply rooted traditional ethical practices which are visible in daily lives. Therefore, it is necessary to identify visible and practiced values in the workplace (Chakraborty, 1998). Thakur & Singh (2016) studied the application of workplace spirituality in the Indian context, and according to them experience of spirituality at the workplace improves employees' overall productivity; and spirituality contains values such as honesty, trust, loyalty, innovation, appreciation, respect, and care.

Workplace Values in Global Management

The first president of independent South Africa, Nelson Mandela was an embodiment of the ubuntu philosophy, which is also reflected in his leadership (Garba & Akuva, 2020). Leadership becomes highly

challenging and complex in this global era because of diversity and rapid change in the market (Martin, 2007). To deal with this, it is required to develop effective management strategies, such as inclusion practice and diversity management. Values and ethics play a vital role in the organization's culture and development. MBO and MBI are two management strategies, which are based on objectives and instructions given in the organization. Values are indispensable for the constitution of any organization. These values reflect in organizational behavior, organizational culture, procedure, and structure (Schein, 1992).

The role of values is to regulate employee behaviour to achieve superior performance. According to Jaakson (2010), survival, ethics, and well-being are three major dimensions of values. Values differ from the mission and vision of the organization. Success does not depend on what you want to achieve, but on how you plan to achieve it. The organization originally aimed for economic success through value-based management (VBM), but it proved ineffective and led to the need for strategic management. The concept of management by value (MBV) is one of those instruments (Krzakiewicz, 2012). Management by values referred in strategic management forms an organization's loyalty process (Rokeach, 1973). As Krzakiewicz (2012) concluded in research, the process of management by values includes identification, formation, and consolidation of values, which contribute to strategic development and ensure consistency of human resources required in development. According to Dolan & Garcia (2003), management of value is managing the culture of an organization, strengthening the organization, and revitalizing it to attend to the unknown and challenging future. Consequently, this research aims to

comprehend the global values in Indian workplaces to mitigate religious conflicts and enhance productivity through the effective utilization of existing diversity.

Method

Participants

The investigation was carried out on a representative pool of 276 staff, which included 71 persons from rural regions and 205 from urban areas. The data was gathered using a representative sampling method. Individuals between the ages of 21 and 25 were included in the age range, and those with 2-5 years of work experience had an average of 2.6 years.

Tool

Ubuntu Measurement Scale: The 26-item Ubuntu measurement scale is a 5-point Likert-type scale designed to measure Ubuntu values in the general working population. It has a reliability coefficient of 0.87, and the alpha coefficient of the whole Ubuntu scale was 0.93 (Molose, 2019). Within the study, Cronbach's alpha value was 0.908. Ubuntu scale consists of five dimensions: survival (contains four items), solidarity (contains four items), compassion (contains six items), respect & dignity (contains six items), and collectivism (contains six items).

Procedure

Data was collected online using the snowball technique, contacting participants through WhatsApp and email. A Google Form was created for the administration of the Ubuntu scale, and a link was shared with the participants. Required demographic details, such as age, work experience, location, and job title, were asked in the survey. Participants were informed about the research objectives, confidentiality policy, and anonymity before giving their consent.

Results

Descriptive statistics were used in this study to comprehend the existence of Ubuntu values among the participants. The Mann-Whitney U test was employed to examine the variation between the Rural and Urban participants in terms of the presence of ubuntu values. A non-parametric test for statistical analysis was used due to the positive skewness exhibited in the research data, the majority of participants scored above average.

This research has analysed social values considering the Ubuntu philosophy. The research investigated workplace values and found that moderate psychosocial values exist in India. This study showed that workplace values existed uniformly across all locations except for their impact on survival.

Table. 1 Descriptive Statistics of Ubuntu Value Dimensions.

Ubuntu Dimensions	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Survival	276	13.9746	3.00110
Respect & Dignity		15.2899	3.29893
Group Solidarity		22.8841	4.67500
Compassion		22.3055	4.85420
Collectivism		22.3514	5.14195
Total		96.80	18.306

Table 1 shows descriptive statistics. Ubuntu value score is moderate, most of the participants score average on Ubuntu values. The standard deviation score of total Ubuntu values is 18.306, which shows value variation.

Table 2 shows a geographical difference in psychosocial values. Except for survival values, which display a significant difference in rural and urban populations, the scores of ubuntu values between rural and urban youth are not significantly different.

Table 2. Geographical differences in Ubuntu values.

	Survival	Respect & Dignity	Group Solidarity	Compassion	Collectivism	Total
Rural (Mean)	107.74	140.06	140.44	141.19	141.73	137.13
Urban (Mean)	149.15	137.96	137.83	136.89	137.38	138.98
Mann	5093.50	7166.50	7140.00	7015.50	7048.00	7180.00
Whitney U Wilcoxon W	7649.50	28281.50	28255.00	27925.50	28163.00	9736.00
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.847	.812	.694	.691	.866

a. Grouping Variable: Rural and Urban

The Significance level is 0.01.

Discussion

This study provides insight into the prevalence of ubuntu psycho-social values in Indian workplaces. The aim is to comprehend the presence of social values in employed youth from rural and urban regions. Moderate social values were identified in rural and urban employees, and no difference was observed between these two groups except for values of survival. The study conducted by Nussbaum (2003) has also identified no differences in ubuntu values between rural Africans and Africans in an urban area.

Globalization and development in technology have reduced the distance between urban and rural areas. The availability of the internet, social media, and social mobility promote social awareness, and it is progressively entering the lives of youth in India (Saini, et al. 2020). As per Patwari (2020), this has been a compelling force in the social transformation of both rural and urban youth in India. As a result, socialization of rural and urban populations is largely similar. But because of limited exposure to educational, medical, and occupational fields, survival is stressful in rural parts of India (Bhadra, 2021).

Helping behavior fosters survival values, and the most helpful individuals in society have a greater chance of survival (Luca et al. 2016). Research conducted by Mishra & Rath (2020) has also proved that social solidarity plays a significant role in developing collective consciousness which benefits in reducing social distancing and health risk behavior. Research has been conducted on the role of collectivism in using a mask during a covid-19 pandemic situation, the result shows that collectivism positively predicts the use of a mask (Lu, et al. 2021). Encouraging collectivism in the workplace will lead individuals to think about the safety of their co-workers, reducing the risk of accidents.

Compassionate people can effectively manage diversity (Gibbs, 2019). The development of compassion at an early age can help in the reduction of discrimination and improve well-being (Malti, Peplak, & Zhang, 2020). As Ko (2021) has mentioned, compassion is part of the emotion, and the experience of compassion enhances respect toward others and help to reduce workplace incivility .

M.Song's (2015) research with nurses revealed that respect and dignity are the decisive factors in patients' relationships with nurses. Forgas, et al. (2007) identified that

change in social cognition and social behavior is possible with cultural values and religious beliefs because they modulate neural responses. Therefore, in the workplace, it is needed to respect the culture and religion of employees because it decides their attitude towards work (Etherington, 2019).

The results of this research indicate a moderate degree of ubuntu values among both rural and urban employees. The development of all values is uniform across regions, yet survival value manifests differences between urban and rural youth. Compared to their rural peers, urban youth exhibit a higher level of survival skills. The survival of rural youth is dependent on a myriad of factors. Economic development is a profound challenge for rural youth (Umunakwe, 2015). Instead of globalization and technological development due to socio-economic disparity, there is inequality in education and employment, which makes the survival of youth difficult in rural areas (Bhadra, 2021).

Social dimensions like inequality, social discrimination, and justice decide the well-being of society which is one important factor of survival (Ghanbari, 2022). In sustainable development, cooperation is required rather than competition (Shahrier, Kotani, & Kakinaka, 2016). Therefore, multinational, and national organizations need to focus on the development of a cooperative environment in organizations, which is possible through value development.

Supervisors' increased solidarity improves subordinates' job satisfaction, enhances motivation, and reduces burnout in the workplace (MacDonald, et al., 2019). Solidarity is one of the core principles of the global ethic (Kung, et al. 2012, referred in Baker & Lee, 2020). According to Sandelands (2009), business is "a joyful solidarity of the persons for the common

good". Solidarity is positively associated with workplace engagement (Baker & Lee, 2020). According to Aiken (2009), timely appraisal and appreciation play an important role in the development of employee respect and dignity, which motivate them in the workplace. The presence of compassion reduces workplace incivility (Ko, 2021). In a workplace, collectivism fosters trust and safety behaviors (Mayfield, 2016).

Lutz (2009) formulated a theory of global management based on the Ubuntu philosophy. The theory argues that a firm should be viewed as a community rather than a mere collection of individuals and that the achievement of a common goal should be the focus of management. This study highlighted the implementation of Ubuntu values in the workplace and their presence in the Indian workplace context. To manage global workplaces, it is required to understand global values which can help in survival. Further research can be done to investigate the influencing factors in work culture and develop value-based interventions to create globally accepted standards of conduct in the workplace.

Limitations

The current investigation was carried out by taking into account the employed youth or workforce. Value development is relevant in various contexts beyond just working youth or employees. Future research could be directed toward alternative populations or contexts to explore the broader implications of value development. The study focuses on the presence of values in workplaces, future research can initiate to identify factors that influence value development and its effect on the workplace environment.

Social Implications

Diversity management is essential in the 21st century, where need to consider respect, compassion, and civility, because identifying

such values helps to develop an elegant and harmonious environment in the workplace (Ivancevich, 2000). Values, including belief structure and daily practice, develop culture (Higgins & McAllaster, 2002). According to Hofstede, et al. (1990), the culture of an organization is a collection of values, norms, and beliefs shared by members which reflect in an organization's behaviour. Globalization has broadened the area of shared values; it is not specific to any nation it is worldwide. The attainment of global objectives necessitates a focus on global values.

Values are the basis of a good deal of behavior, as per research conducted in rural palliative care development, social values are essential to be available and mutual with elderly people (Pesut, 2011). Which can help in the workplace to reduce ageism. As Shobha & Kala (2015) has identified in their research, value development enhances team spirit and interpersonal relationships. Which can help in conflict management and maintaining a healthy work environment. Value development influences various domains of life, which can help in changing human nature to deal with increased complexities around. The cultivation of Ubuntu values in the workplace is instrumental in managing conflicts and fostering a sense of community.

Conclusion

The influx of a more diverse workforce and the quick pace of changes in the workplace posed a threat to employee survival. Through an exploration of Ubuntu philosophy, this study has discerned specific psychosocial values that could prove beneficial in effectively managing an ever-evolving and diverse workplace. These values show their existence in the Indian context, and it matches the national values of many other countries. Working together is essential to reach sustainable development goals, and these widely

accepted Ubuntu values can help to facilitate the same because African philosophy of ubuntu is accepted as a global value system because it emphasizes values such as solidarity and sustainability which are globally applicable (Gwagwa, 2022). By understanding these shared values, we can appreciate our interconnectedness, leading us to a unified solution for global issues.

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