

**Multicultural Reflective Journal: Nature, Importance, and Assessment of Needs and
Values**

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Nature, Importance, and Assessment of Needs and Values

Summary

What are work values? They are a shared interpretation of what people want and expect from work (Rounds and Leuty, 2020). Values themselves are individual in nature and influence an individual's career choice and work behavior (Round and Leuty, 2020). A career counselor can help an individual find an organization whose values align with their own.

Needs refers to how an individual, feels, behaves, or reacts, and some researchers regard needs as equivalents to values. For example, I know that communication is both my top strength and my strongest need. I value clear and honest communication that helps provide direction and expectation, without micromanagement. I have worked in environments that didn't align with my work values and needs, and I did not thrive because I was not working in my purpose that encouraged my work needs and values.

I appreciate the table of Six Work Values and 21 Needs by Dawis and Lofquist (1984) because it clearly outlines a work value, its corresponding need, and gives a practical illustration. This model also illustrates the three types of rewards: self (achievement, autonomy), social (altruism, status), and environment (comfort, safety) (Round and Leuty, 2020).

Reflections, challenges, and areas for growth

There are several theories that address needs and values in career counseling, and each has specific nuances and approaches to assist individuals in making informed career-related decisions. The main point of applying these career theories is to help individuals assess their individual needs and work values and then find corresponding career choices that align with the assessment. For example, if I was set on joining the military because it had been a childhood

dream or expectation, but I didn't like wearing uniforms, taking orders, or being part of a conforming environment, but I enjoy structure and a safe environment, a career counselor could help me identify my work values and then help me find a career choice that corresponds to those values and needs.

I think a values inventory can be a valuable tool, especially for young adults who are just entering the work force and may be just looking for a job versus a career or a calling. While I believe it's a great idea to get a wide variety of work experiences, I also think utilizing a needs and values inventory can help young adults identify their core values and how to find job and career options that shape and hone their unique needs and values.

One important issue to recognize is how needs, values, and interests are all distinct yet interrelated concepts (Round and Leuty, 2020). It seems that interests involve likes and dislikes, and values involve importance and unimportance, making it easier to distinguish between value and interests. There are skills involved that differentiate between needs, values, and interests, and a career counselor can help tease out individual results using assessments, applying theories, and helping interpret assessment results in a collaborative manner with the client.

Challenges when working with master's students

I think one of the greatest challenges for master's students will be encouraging them to engage in their own self-exploration to avoid bias or confusion when working with career clients. It is important that master's students are solid in their own foundation to effectively help career clients explore their own interests, value, and needs. It's also important to recognize that some master's students that are still young adults themselves, may still be establishing their own intrinsic values, and may need supervision and direction as they begin learning about and using values and needs assessments with clients.

Conclusion

While there is not a great deal of research on the comparison of life values and work values, they are intrinsically tied together and are uniquely applied to everyone. Every person is born with needs, and they influence and help shape values. In turn, individual values seem to influence work values as well. While most theories do not address needs and values as their central constructs, the theory of work adjustment (TWA) uses needs and values as explanatory constructs (Round and Leuty, 2020). Because needs and values are unique to everyone, it is challenging to define values and needs in career counseling. This is where the person-centered counseling skills can be helpful by establishing the needs, wants, and values for the client and then finding career choices that align with their unique assessment results.

References

Brown, S. D., & Lent, R. W. (2020) Career development and counseling: Putting theory and research to work (3rd ed). Wiley ISBN: 978-1-119-58035-5