# Prevalence of Work Values among Universiti Pertahanan Nasional Malaysia (UPNM) cadets

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The rigorous physical demands of military training, the hierarchical structure of the military, and the level of support provided by superiors may significantly impact the psychological well-being of cadets. This research aims to examine the prevalence of work values and the differences of risk factors such as gender, age and academic background on work values among military cadets. A total of 887 trainee cadets were selected through purposive sampling to complete questionnaires adapted from Donald Super's Work Values Inventory (WVI). The results showed that UPNM cadets prioritised the following work values: economic return, surroundings, supervisory relationships, achievement, way of life, associates, altruism, creativity, prestige, and security, with economic return being the most prevalent among 491 cadets. Additionally, there was a significant difference between gender and work values, as male cadets scored higher than female cadets in areas such as creativity, management, achievement, and more. This research highlights the importance of understanding work values among military cadets, particularly the emphasis on economic return. By integrating these insights into training frameworks, military institutions can enhance work values and psychological well-being, ultimately fostering a more supportive training environment and improving on-time graduation rates.

*Keywords*: ork values, work prevalence, military training, cadets

## Introduction

Training is crucial for cultivating a high-performance culture within organisations, necessitating the implementation of targeted development programs that effectively shift employee attitudes and behaviours (Ibrahim et al., 2017). The goal is to ensure individuals can apply what they have learned in a skilled and effective manner, contributing to their overall competence in a given field (Manzoor et al., 2019). A substantial body of research in military training emphasises the importance of physical endurance (Nari & Shamsoddini, 2020), fitness (Klymovych et al., 2020), injury prevention (Schuh-Renner et al., 2017), and military readiness (Bornstein et al., 2019) as essential components for soldier preparedness. Studies frequently focus on improving cardiovascular health (Fraser et al., 2020), muscular strength (Heng et al., 2022), agility (LaCroix et al., 2021), and overall resilience (Sefidan et al., 2021) to ensure that military personnel can withstand the rigorous demands of training and operational environments. These aspects are often seen as the cornerstone of military effectiveness, as they directly relate to a soldier's ability to perform under physically challenging conditions and maintain high levels of performance over extended periods (Flood & Keegan, 2022).

However, while the physical aspects of military training have been extensively studied, there is a noticeable gap in the research when it comes to understanding the role of work values among cadets. Work values—such as surroundings and economic return—are often overlooked in favour of physical attributes. Yet, these extrinsic values can significantly influence a cadet's approach to training, their engagement, and their long-term retention within the military (Basinska & Dåderman, 2019).

At Universiti Pertahanan Nasional Malaysia (UPNM), students are categorised as officer cadets, members of the Reserved Officer Training Unit, and civilians. Alongside their primary programs, all students must complete military-focused courses like Military History, Effective Leadership, and Military Law, underscoring the university's commitment to military education (Nasir et al., 2024). According to UPNM's 2022 annual report, 87.6% of undergraduates completed their studies on time, surpassing the target of 80% for that year. However, this represents a 4.6% decline from 2021, when the completion rate was 92.2%.

Delayed graduations among military cadets can have significant ramifications for the military's operational effectiveness, primarily by reducing the availability of trained personnel for deployment (Lee et al., 2023). The military relies on a steady flow of new officers and cadets to maintain operational readiness; thus, a decline in graduation rates can lead to staffing gaps, increasing workloads for existing personnel and potentially affecting morale (Khoshi et al., 2023). Additionally, delayed graduations can lead to increased costs associated with training programs, as the military may need to allocate more resources to support cadets who are unable to graduate on time (Sandhu et al., 2022). This includes extending training facilities, hiring additional instructors, and providing logistical support (Sandhu et al., 2022). With limited personnel, the military may also have to divert funds to bolster recruitment efforts or enhance training programs, further straining budgets that are essential for other critical operational needs. Together, these challenges underscore the importance of timely graduations in sustaining the military's overall effectiveness and readiness.

Although the UPNM's annual report did not provide a breakdown by student category, this decline suggests the need to better understand the prevalence of work values among UPNM cadets. Previous studies indicate that cadets who prioritise intrinsic work values, such as job satisfaction and personal achievement, tend to have higher retention rates, supporting findings that connect intrinsic values with positive career development and well-being (Vranken & Vandenbosch, 2024). In contrast, an excessive focus on extrinsic values, such as earning potential, may lead to job dissatisfaction, negatively impacting retention (Vranken & Vandenbosch, 2024). Additionally, strong interpersonal relationships and a supportive environment are crucial for retention, as cadets who value social connections report higher satisfaction and commitment (Hattke et al., 2017).

To address this gap, it is essential to investigate the prevalence of work values among UPNM cadets. Understanding these values can inform the development of training programs that not only enhance physical capabilities but also support the psychological and emotional strengths necessary for success in demanding military environments. By focusing on the prevalence of work values, this research aims to contribute to improved training outcomes, increased retention rates, and the preparation of soldiers who are not only physically fit but also deeply committed to their roles.

Work values refer to the qualities and attributes that individuals expect to be fulfilled in their professional roles. These values span several dimensions, such as intrinsic values (e.g., personal job satisfaction), extrinsic values (e.g., financial rewards and earning potential), social values (e.g., maintaining positive relationships with colleagues), and prestige values (e.g., the impact and status associated with a role) (Vranken & Vandenbosch, 2024). These values are shaped not only by personal beliefs but also by broader societal influences, including demographic factors and organisational culture (Pryce, 2016).

Super's theory defines work values as the beliefs and principles that shape individuals' career decisions and work behaviours (Super, 1970). His framework categorises work values into intrinsic and extrinsic dimensions, highlighting their importance in both career growth and personal satisfaction (Zytowski, 1994; Dagenais, 1998). Super's conceptualization of work values is characterised by a dichotomy between intrinsic and extrinsic dimensions. Empirical evidence indicates that intrinsic work values, including creativity and intellectual stimulation, are increasingly prioritised by younger generations, particularly within culturally diverse contexts (Ismail et al., 2016; Caggiano et al., 2017).

Hartung et al. (2010) highlighted intrinsic work values such as creativity, challenge, variety, achievement, lifestyle, aesthetics, autonomy, and altruism, with Ismail et al. (2016) also identifying intellectual stimulation as a key intrinsic value. Among Malaysian marketing students, intrinsic values hold significant importance, reflecting their strong preference for self-expression and innovation in their professional roles (Ismail et al., 2016). These values are closely linked to a desire for intellectually stimulating and challenging work environments, further underscoring the influence of intrinsic motivation on their career aspirations (Ismail et al., 2016). Basinska and Dåderman (2019) categorised supervisory relationships, way of life, and associates as extrinsic values. Similarly, Hartung et al. (2010) proposed that management, workplace, security, prestige,

and income also fall under extrinsic values. In materialistic cultures, extrinsic values such as job security and financial remuneration hold particular significance, as shown by studies on Spanish youth (Caggiano et al., 2017). While intrinsic values are gaining prominence, the importance of extrinsic factors persists, reflecting the complex balance between personal fulfilment and material needs in the modern workplace.

In the current study, the findings will be framed through the framework of person-organisation (P-O) value congruence (Edwards & Cable, 2009), which is essential for enhancing commitment levels by ensuring alignment between individual values and organisational objectives. Research demonstrates a strong positive relationship between P-O fit and organisational commitment, suggesting that when the values of cadets align with those of their organisation, their level of commitment is likely to increase (Fiapshev, 2023). Different aspects of P-O fit, such as values-realisation and needs-fulfilment, play distinct roles in influencing organisational commitment, with values-realisation being particularly crucial for developing a sense of identification with the organisation (Bahat, 2020). A high degree of value congruence not only bolsters commitment but also fosters organisational citizenship behaviour, which is vital for improving work engagement among cadets (Ogunyemi & Babalola, 2019). This highlights the importance of adopting a comprehensive approach to managing organisational culture and enhancing employee engagement.

In conclusion, while extensive research has focused on the physical aspects of military training, such as endurance (Nari & Shamsoddini, 2020) and fitness (Klymovych et al., 2020), there remains a significant gap in understanding the prevalence of work values among cadets. This study aims to assess the prevalence of work values among cadets at UPNM and the significant differences of risk factors such as age, gender and academic background on work values. By integrating the study of work values into existing training frameworks, this research seeks to promote a more holistic approach to military training, ultimately producing soldiers who are not only physically capable but also deeply committed to their roles.

## Research methods

### *Research Design*

The methods section outlines the study's execution, detailing the participants involved and the procedures followed (Gravetter et al., 2021). A cross-sectional survey was conducted with a total of 887 trainee cadets, selected through purposive sampling. The key criterion for participation in the research was full-time enrollment as students undergoing trainee cadets at UPNM. UPNM cadets were chosen to represent a unique group who are in the formative stages of their military careers, making them ideal subjects for examining the prevalence of work values. Before commencing data collection, the research team secured a collaboration approval letter from the Ministry of Defence Malaysia, which authorised access to the military training centre. Ethical approval was obtained from the UKM Research Ethics Committee, referenced as UKM PPI/111/8/JEP-2023-100. The questionnaires were distributed with participants given one hour to complete them, during which they were encouraged to seek clarification and allowed to take breaks as needed.

### *Population and sampling*

This study focuses on a unique cohort of military cadets at UPNM, who engage in intensive military training alongside their

academic pursuits. UPNM's student population includes military cadets, members of the Reserved Officer Training Unit, and civilian students (Nasir et al., 2024). For this research, UPNM's military cadets were selected as the sample. Demographic data provided by UPNM staff indicate that the military graduate population consists of 1,102 individuals, including 988 males and 114 females. By concentrating on this cohort, the study seeks to explore the influence of work values on cadets' learning outcomes within the context of military training.

A key objective in this process is selecting a sample that accurately represents the target population, which requires determining an appropriate sample size. While no single rule defines an ideal sample size, several guidelines are available to guide researchers. One commonly used method is the sample size table developed by Krejcie and Morgan (1970), especially favoured in behavioural and social science research (Memon et al., 2020). According Krejcie and Morgan (1970), the recommended sample size for this study was 285. However, despite using Krejcie and Morgan's (1970) guidelines, the researcher in this study successfully collected data from a total of 887 respondents, significantly enhancing the statistical power and representativeness of the findings.

***Measurements***

*Work values are viewed* as key elements in their work and the satisfaction people typically strive for in their jobs or as an outcome of their work (Super, 1970). Trainee cadets reported their work values adapted from Donald Super's Work Values Inventory (WVI). This measurement evaluates the alignment between an individual and the organisational culture, as well as examining personal motives. The WVI is a self-report inventory consisting of 45 items that measure 15 dimensions such as Creativity (CR), Management (MA), Achievement (AC), Surroundings (SU), Supervisory Relationships (SR), Way of Life (WL), Security (SE), Associates (AS), Aesthetic (AE), Prestige (PR), Independence (IN), Variety (VA), Economic Return (ER), Altruism (AL), and Intellectual Stimulation (IS). The internal consistency, measured by Cronbach's alpha coefficient, was 0.967. The WVI were used in the previous research by Basinska and Dåderman (2019), Wong (2021) and Juhász (2022).

Table 1 presents the WVI cut-off scores as established by Super (1970), based on the WVI dataset he published, which categorises the scores as shown. This categorization serves as a valuable framework for understanding how different work values impact cadets' career satisfaction and decision-making processes.

Table 1

*WVI cut-off score according to WVI; Super (1970)*

| Unimportant | A little important | Moderately important | Important | Very important |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **1 – 3** | 4 – 6 | 7 – 9 | 10 – 12 | 13 – 15 |

***Data Analysis***

The data were analysed using IBM SPSS Statistics 26. In this research, frequencies and percentages were used to describe categorical variables. T-tests were employed to assess the risk factor of gender, while ANOVA was used to evaluate the risk factors of age and academic background, with statistical

significance set at a level of <0.05. A 95% confidence level was maintained, allowing for a margin of error of ±5%.

## Results

### *Demographic information*

The participants consist of 887 trainee cadets, primarily aged 21 to 22 years old (n=512, 57.7%), predominantly male (n=801, 90.3%), and mostly holding a bachelor's degree (n=615, 69.3%). Table 2.0 explained the frequency and percentages on the demographic information.

*Table 2.0*

The results of the descriptive analysis for frequency distribution and percentages based on demographic information categorised by Work Values

| Demographic | n=887 | Percentages |
|---|---|---|
| Age | | |
| 19-20 | 298 | 33.6 |
| 21-22 | 512 | 57.7 |
| 23 and above | 77 | 8.7 |
| Gender | | |
| Male | 801 | 90.3 |
| Female | 86 | 9.7 |
| Academic background | | |
| SPM | 45 | 5.1 |
| Diploma/Certificate | 6 | 0.7 |
| Matriculation/Foundation/STPM/STAM | 221 | 24.9 |
| Bachelor's degree | 615 | 69.3 |

***To assess the prevalence of work values among UPNM cadets***

In evaluating the prevalence of work values among UPNM cadets, age emerged as a significant factor. While most subdimensions were perceived as "very important" across the cohort, management, aesthetics, independence, variety, and intellectual stimulation were rated as "important." Notably, cadets aged 21 and older ranked creativity as "important," and those aged 23 and above also rated security as "important." Table 3.0 provides detailed information on the age factor, with a total mean of 4.229.

Additionally, the gender factor reveals that male cadets rated all subdimensions as "very important," except for management, aesthetics, independence, variety, and intellectual stimulation, which were rated as "important." Female cadets, however, generally rated most subdimensions as "important," while achievement, surroundings, supervisory relationships, way of life, associates, and economic returns were identified as "very important." Table 4.0 presents detailed information on the gender factor, with a total mean score of 4.158.

Table 5.0 offers detailed insights into the education background factor, with a total mean score of 4.064. SPM cadets rated surroundings the highest, while diploma/certificate cadets rated security, variety, and altruism as "important." Matriculation/Foundation and bachelor's degree cadets scored the highest in economic returns.

Meanwhile, Table 6.0 presents the cut-off scores for the WVI. The results indicate that most subdimensions of the WVI were rated as "very important" by cadets, except for management, aesthetics, independence, variety, and intellectual stimulation, which were perceived as "important".

*Table 3.0*
Risk factor for work value (Age)

| | | Unimportant | A little important | Moderately important | Important | Very important | Mean |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Risk factor | Work values | Frequency | Frequency | Frequency | Frequency | Frequency | |
| Age | | | | | | | |
| 19-20 | CR | 1 | 3 | 49 | 118 | 127 | 4.232 |
| | MA | 0 | 8 | 69 | 137 | 84 | 3.997 |
| | AC | 0 | 5 | 47 | 104 | 142 | 4.285 |
| | SU | 1 | 4 | 39 | 101 | 153 | 4.346 |
| | SR | 0 | 3 | 40 | 107 | 49.7 | 4.342 |
| | WL | 0 | 7 | 41 | 108 | 142 | 4.292 |
| | SE | 0 | 4 | 49 | 121 | 124 | 4.225 |

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | AS | 0 | 0 | 46 | 117 | 135 | 4.299 |
| | AE | 0 | 7 | 67 | 126 | 98 | 4.057 |
| | PR | 0 | 4 | 47 | 115 | 132 | 4.258 |
| | IN | 1 | 4 | 53 | 124 | 116 | 4.175 |
| | VA | 0 | 2 | 52 | 127 | 117 | 4.205 |
| | ER | 0 | 2 | 42 | 97 | 157 | 4.373 |
| | AL | 0 | 4 | 40 | 122 | 132 | 4.282 |
| | IS | 0 | 4 | 53 | 138 | 103 | 4.141 |
| 21-22 | CR | 1 | 13 | 73 | 193 | 232 | 4.254 |
| | MA | 1 | 14 | 112 | 229 | 156 | 4.025 |
| | AC | 1 | 6 | 65 | 174 | 266 | 4.363 |
| | SU | 2 | 12 | 64 | 161 | 273 | 4.350 |
| | SR | 1 | 8 | 62 | 173 | 268 | 4.365 |
| | WL | 1 | 10 | 70 | 169 | 262 | 4.330 |
| | SE | 1 | 6 | 84 | 207 | 214 | 4.225 |
| | AS | 0 | 6 | 66 | 186 | 254 | 4.344 |
| | AE | 0 | 19 | 112 | 213 | 168 | 4.035 |
| | PR | 1 | 14 | 78 | 201 | 218 | 4.213 |
| | IN | 0 | 9 | 85 | 218 | 200 | 4.190 |
| | VA | 1 | 10 | 89 | 212 | 200 | 4.172 |
| | ER | 0 | 9 | 54 | 154 | 295 | 4.436 |
| | AL | 1 | 9 | 65 | 187 | 250 | 4.320 |
| | IS | 1 | 9 | 98 | 225 | 179 | 4.117 |
| 23 and above | CR | 0 | 5 | 8 | 33 | 31 | 4.169 |
| | MA | 0 | 3 | 21 | 36 | 17 | 3.870 |
| | AC | 0 | 2 | 8 | 25 | 42 | 4.390 |
| | SU | 0 | 1 | 8 | 26 | 42 | 4.416 |

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | SR | 0 | 1 | 11 | 20 | 45 | 4.416 |
| | WL | 0 | 1 | 10 | 27 | 39 | 4.351 |
| | SE | 0 | 1 | 18 | 33 | 25 | 4.065 |
| | AS | 0 | 1 | 12 | 26 | 38 | 4.312 |
| | AE | 1 | 3 | 18 | 34 | 21 | 3.922 |
| | PR | 0 | 3 | 8 | 32 | 34 | 4.260 |
| | IN | 0 | 2 | 19 | 32 | 24 | 4.013 |
| | VA | 1 | 1 | 12 | 34 | 29 | 4.156 |
| | ER | 0 | 0 | 16 | 22 | 39 | 4.299 |
| | AL | 0 | 2 | 12 | 20 | 43 | 4.351 |
| | IS | 0 | 4 | 8 | 42 | 23 | 4.091 |
| | | | | | | Total mean score | 4.229 |

*Table 4.0*
Risk factor for work value (Gender)

| Risk factor | Work values | Unimportant<br>Frequency | A little important<br>Frequency | Moderately important<br>Frequency | Important<br>Frequency | Very important<br>Frequency | Mean |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Gender | | | | | | | |
| Male | CR | 2 | 18 | 109 | 311 | 361 | 4.262 |
| | MA | 1 | 22 | 172 | 361 | 245 | 4.033 |
| | AC | 1 | 10 | 104 | 271 | 415 | 4.360 |
| | SU | 3 | 16 | 92 | 266 | 424 | 4.363 |
| | SR | 0 | 11 | 99 | 266 | 425 | 4.380 |
| | WL | 1 | 17 | 100 | 275 | 408 | 4.338 |
| | SE | 0 | 11 | 127 | 326 | 337 | 4.235 |
| | AS | 0 | 6 | 107 | 299 | 389 | 4.337 |

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | AE | 1 | 24 | 175 | 335 | 266 | 4.050 |
| | PR | 1 | 19 | 116 | 305 | 360 | 4.253 |
| | IN | 1 | 14 | 136 | 328 | 322 | 4.194 |
| | VA | 1 | 12 | 130 | 337 | 321 | 4.205 |
| | ER | 0 | 10 | 97 | 241 | 453 | 4.420 |
| | AL | 0 | 15 | 97 | 292 | 397 | 4.337 |
| | IS | 0 | 17 | 138 | 365 | 281 | 4.136 |
| Female | CR | 0 | 3 | 21 | 33 | 29 | 4.023 |
| | MA | 0 | 3 | 30 | 41 | 12 | 3.721 |
| | AC | 0 | 3 | 16 | 32 | 35 | 4.151 |
| | SU | 0 | 1 | 19 | 22 | 44 | 4.267 |
| | SR | 1 | 1 | 14 | 34 | 36 | 4.198 |
| | WL | 0 | 1 | 21 | 29 | 35 | 4.140 |
| | SE | 1 | 0 | 24 | 35 | 26 | 3.988 |
| | AS | 0 | 1 | 17 | 30 | 38 | 4.221 |
| | AE | 0 | 5 | 22 | 38 | 21 | 3.872 |
| | PR | 0 | 2 | 17 | 43 | 24 | 4.035 |
| | IN | 0 | 1 | 21 | 46 | 18 | 3.942 |
| | VA | 1 | 1 | 23 | 36 | 25 | 3.965 |
| | ER | 0 | 1 | 15 | 32 | 38 | 4.244 |
| | AL | 1 | 0 | 20 | 37 | 28 | 4.058 |
| | IS | 1 | 0 | 21 | 40 | 24 | 4.000 |
| | | | | | | Total mean score | 4.158 |

*Table 5.0*
Risk factor for work value (Academic background)

| Risk factor | Work values | Unimportant | A little important | Moderately important | Important | Very important | Mean |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Frequency | Frequency | Frequency | Frequency | Frequency | |

| Academic background | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| SPM | CR | 0 | 2 | 10 | 14 | 19 | 4.111 |
| | MA | 0 | 3 | 13 | 19 | 10 | 3.800 |
| | AC | 0 | 2 | 11 | 13 | 19 | 4.089 |
| | SU | 0 | 2 | 9 | 11 | 23 | 4.222 |
| | SR | 1 | 1 | 12 | 12 | 19 | 4.044 |
| | WL | 0 | 5 | 7 | 15 | 18 | 4.022 |
| | SE | 1 | 1 | 13 | 15 | 15 | 3.933 |
| | AS | 0 | 2 | 11 | 13 | 19 | 4.089 |
| | AE | 0 | 4 | 11 | 17 | 13 | 3.867 |
| | PR | 0 | 5 | 8 | 14 | 18 | 4.000 |
| | IN | 0 | 1 | 15 | 14 | 15 | 3.956 |
| | VA | 1 | 1 | 9 | 18 | 16 | 4.044 |
| | ER | 0 | 1 | 12 | 13 | 19 | 4.111 |
| | AL | 1 | 1 | 10 | 15 | 18 | 4.067 |
| | IS | 1 | 1 | 10 | 20 | 13 | 3.956 |
| Diploma/ Certificate | CR | 0 | 0 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 3.667 |
| | MA | 0 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 3.667 |
| | AC | 0 | 0 | 2 | 1 | 3 | 4.167 |
| | SU | 0 | 0 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 4.000 |
| | SR | 0 | 0 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 3.833 |
| | WL | 0 | 0 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 3.833 |
| | SE | 0 | 0 | 2 | 4 | 0 | 3.667 |
| | AS | 0 | 0 | 1 | 3 | 2 | 4.167 |
| | AE | 0 | 0 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 3.667 |
| | PR | 0 | 1 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 3.667 |

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | IN | 0 | 0 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 3.833 |
| | VA | 0 | 1 | 0 | 4 | 1 | 3.833 |
| | ER | 0 | 0 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 4.000 |
| | AL | 0 | 1 | 0 | 4 | 1 | 3.833 |
| | IS | 0 | 0 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 3.667 |
| Matriculation/ Foundation | CR | 1 | 6 | 49 | 86 | 79 | 4.068 |
| | MA | 0 | 7 | 65 | 96 | 53 | 3.882 |
| | AC | 0 | 5 | 42 | 84 | 90 | 4.172 |
| | SU | 1 | 9 | 39 | 71 | 101 | 4.186 |
| | SR | 0 | 7 | 41 | 71 | 102 | 4.213 |
| | WL | 0 | 8 | 46 | 75 | 92 | 4.136 |
| | SE | 0 | 3 | 49 | 86 | 83 | 4.127 |
| | AS | 0 | 1 | 48 | 85 | 87 | 4.167 |
| | AE | 0 | 14 | 58 | 95 | 54 | 3.855 |
| | PR | 0 | 6 | 49 | 87 | 79 | 4.081 |
| | IN | 0 | 8 | 49 | 91 | 73 | 4.036 |
| | VA | 0 | 5 | 60 | 91 | 65 | 3.977 |
| | ER | 0 | 6 | 39 | 70 | 106 | 4.249 |
| | AL | 0 | 5 | 43 | 91 | 82 | 4.131 |
| | IS | 0 | 4 | 53 | 99 | 65 | 4.018 |
| Bachelor's degree | CR | 1 | 13 | 68 | 242 | 291 | 4.315 |
| | MA | 1 | 14 | 122 | 286 | 192 | 4.063 |
| | AC | 1 | 6 | 65 | 205 | 338 | 4.420 |
| | SU | 2 | 6 | 61 | 204 | 342 | 4.428 |
| | SR | 0 | 4 | 58 | 214 | 339 | 4.444 |
| | WL | 1 | 5 | 66 | 211 | 332 | 4.411 |

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| SE | 0 | 7 | 87 | 256 | 265 | 4.267 |
| AS | 0 | 4 | 64 | 228 | 319 | 4.402 |
| AE | 1 | 11 | 125 | 259 | 219 | 4.112 |
| PR | 1 | 9 | 75 | 244 | 286 | 4.309 |
| IN | 1 | 6 | 91 | 266 | 251 | 4.236 |
| VA | 1 | 6 | 84 | 260 | 264 | 4.268 |
| ER | 0 | 4 | 59 | 188 | 364 | 4.483 |
| AL | 0 | 8 | 64 | 219 | 324 | 4.397 |
| IS | 0 | 12 | 93 | 284 | 226 | 4.177 |
| | | | | | Total mean score | 4.064 |

*Table 6.0*
Frequency of work values achieving cut-off score of WVI

| Work values | Unimportant | | A little important | | Moderately important | | Important | | Very Important | | Mean |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Frequency | % | Frequency | % | Frequency | % | Frequency | % | Frequency | % | |
| Creativity | 2 | 0.2 | 21 | 2.4 | 130 | 14.7 | 344 | 38.8 | 390 | 44 | 4.239 |
| Management | 1 | 0.1 | 25 | 2.8 | 202 | 22.8 | 402 | 45.3 | 257 | 29 | 4.002 |
| Achievement | 1 | 0.1 | 13 | 1.5 | 120 | 13.5 | 303 | 34.2 | 450 | 50.7 | 4.339 |
| Surroundings | 3 | 0.3 | 17 | 1.9 | 111 | 12.5 | 288 | 32.5 | 468 | 52.8 | 4.354 |
| Supervisory relationship | 1 | 0.1 | 12 | 1.4 | 113 | 12.7 | 300 | 33.8 | 461 | 52 | 4.362 |
| Way of life | 1 | 0.1 | 18 | 2 | 121 | 13.6 | 304 | 34.3 | 443 | 49.9 | 4.319 |
| Security | 1 | 0.1 | 11 | 1.2 | 151 | 17 | 361 | 40.7 | 363 | 40.9 | 4.211 |
| Associates | 0 | 0 | 7 | 0.8 | 124 | 14 | 329 | 37.1 | 427 | 48.1 | 4.326 |
| Aesthetic | 1 | 0.1 | 29 | 3.3 | 197 | 22.2 | 373 | 42.1 | 287 | 32.4 | 4.033 |
| Prestige | 1 | 0.1 | 21 | 2.4 | 133 | 15 | 348 | 39.2 | 384 | 43.3 | 4.232 |
| Independence | 1 | 0.1 | 15 | 1.7 | 157 | 17.7 | 374 | 42.2 | 340 | 38.3 | 4.169 |
| Variety | 2 | 0.2 | 13 | 1.5 | 153 | 17.2 | 373 | 42.1 | 346 | 39 | 4.182 |
| Economic return | 0 | 0 | 11 | 1.2 | 112 | 12.6 | 273 | 30.8 | 491 | 55.4 | 4.403 |
| Altruism | 1 | 0.1 | 15 | 1.7 | 117 | 13.2 | 329 | 37.1 | 425 | 47.9 | 4.310 |
| Intellectual stimulation | 1 | 0.1 | 17 | 1.9 | 159 | 17.9 | 405 | 45.7 | 305 | 34.4 | 4.123 |
| | | | | | | | | | Total Mean Score | | 4.240 |

***To examine the significant differences of risk factors such as gender, age and academic background on work values***

Table 7.0 reveals the significant differences of gender on most subdimensions of work values, as indicated by the T-test, with the exception of surroundings, associates, aesthetics, and intellectual stimulation. Notably, male cadets exhibited a higher mean score of 4.42, in contrast to female cadets, who recorded a mean score of 4.24. for the value of economic return. Meanwhile, no significant differences were found of age on work values using one-way ANOVA.

*Table 7.0*
The differences between risk factors and work values

| | Gender | Age | Academic background |
|---|---|---|---|
| | t(df), p | F (df_between, df_within) = F-value, p | F (df_between, df_within) = F-value, p |
| CR | 2.631(885), p = 0.009 | F (2,884) = 0.394, p > 0.05 | F (3,883) = 6.728, p = 0.000 |
| MA | 3.45(885), p = 0.001 | F (2,884) = 1.27, p > 0.05 | F (3,883) = 4.202, p = 0.006 |
| AC | 2.383(885), p = 0.017 | F (2,884) = 1.14, p > 0.05 | F (3,883) = 7.504, p = 0.000 |
| SU | 1.06(885), p > 0.05 | F (2,884) = 0.254, p > 0.05 | F (3,883) = 5.944, p = 0.001 |
| SR | 2.106(885), p = 0.035 | F (2,884) = 0.294, p > 0.05 | F (3,883) = 8.996, p = 0.000 |
| WL | 2.219(885), p = 0.027 | F (2,884) = 0.285, p > 0.05 | F (3,883) = 9.899, p = 0.000 |
| SE | 2.824(885), p = 0.005 | F (2,884) = 1.509, p > 0.05 | F (3,883) = 4.949, p = 0.002 |
| AS | 1.384(885), p > 0.05 | F (2,884) = 0.365, p > 0.05 | F (3,883) = 7.315, p = 0.000 |
| AE | 1.895(885), p >0.05 | F (2,884) = 0.817, p > 0.05 | F (3,883) = 6.376, p = 0.000 |
| PR | 2.425(885), p = 0.016 | F (2,884) = 0.357, p > 0.05 | F (3,883) = 6.962, p = 0.000 |
| IN | 2.85(885), p = 0.004 | F (2,884) = 1.721, p > 0.05 | F (3,883) = 5.189, p = 0.001 |
| VA | 2.715(885), p = 0.007 | F (2,884) = 0.212, p > 0.05 | F (3,883) = 8.652, p = 0.000 |
| ER | 2.053(885), p = 0.040 | F (2,884) = 1.460, p > 0.05 | F (3,883) = 8.413, p = 0.000 |
| AL | 3.208(885), p = 0.001 | F (2,884) = 0.351, p > 0.05 | F (3,883) = 9.072, p = 0.000 |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| IS | 1.555(885), p > 0.05 | F (2,884) = 0.161, p > 0.05 | F (3,883) = 3.816, p = 0.010 |

A one-way ANOVA for academic background shows significant differences of groups across all dimensions. Therefore, given the significant ANOVA results and the unequal sample sizes among the groups, Hochberg's GT2 post hoc test was conducted to determine which groups had significant differences. Hochberg's GT2 revealed that the mean score of creativity work values of bachelor's degree cadets (M=4.315) was significantly higher than matriculation/foundation cadets (M=4.068) with mean difference of .25 CI [.08,.41], p=.000. The mean score of management work values of bachelor's degree cadets (M=4.063) was significantly higher than matriculation/foundation cadets (M=3.882) with mean difference of .18 CI [.02,.35], p=.023.

The mean score of achievement work values of bachelor's degree cadets (M=4.420) was significantly higher compared to matriculation/foundation cadets (M=4.172) with mean difference of .25 CI [.09,.41], p=.000 and SPM cadets (M=4.089) with mean difference of .33 CI [.02,.64], p=.031. The mean score of surroundings work values of bachelor's degree cadets (M=4.428) was significantly higher than matriculation/foundation cadets (M=4.186) with mean difference of .24 CI [.08,.41], p=.001. The mean score of supervisory relationships work values of bachelor's degree cadets (M=4.444) was significantly higher compared to matriculation/foundation cadets (M=4.213) with mean difference of .33 CI [.08,.39], p=.001 and SPM cadets (M=4.044) with mean difference of .40 CI [.10,.71], p=.004. The mean score of way of life work values of bachelor's degree cadets (M=4.411) was significantly higher compared to matriculation/foundation cadets (M=4.136) with mean difference of .28 CI [.11,.44], p=.000 and SPM cadets (M=4.022) with mean difference of .39 CI [.07,.71], p=.008. The mean score of security work values of bachelor's degree cadets (M=4.267) was significantly higher than matriculation/foundation cadets (M=3.933) with mean difference of .33 CI [.02,.65], p=.029. The mean score of associates work values of bachelor's degree cadets (M=4.402) was significantly higher compared to matriculation/foundation cadets (M=4.167) with mean difference of .23 CI [.08,.39], p=.000 and SPM cadets (M=4.089) with mean difference of .31 CI [.01,.61], p=.034.

The mean score of aesthetic work values of bachelor's degree cadets (M=4.402) was significantly higher than matriculation/foundation cadets (M=3.855) with mean difference of .26 CI [.09,.43], p=.000. The mean score of prestige work values of bachelor's degree cadets (M=4.309) was significantly higher than matriculation/foundation cadets (M=4.081) with mean difference of .23 CI [.06,.39], p=.001. The mean score of independence work values of bachelor's degree cadets (M=4.236) was significantly higher than matriculation/foundation cadets (M=4.036) with mean difference of .20 CI [.04,.36], p=.006. The mean score of variety work values of bachelor's degree cadets (M=4.268) was significantly higher than matriculation/foundation cadets (M=3.977) with mean difference of .29 CI [.13,.45], p=.000. The mean score of economic return work values of bachelor's degree cadets (M=4.483) was significantly higher compared to matriculation/foundation cadets (M=4.249) with mean difference of .23 CI [.08,.39], p=.000 and SPM cadets (M=4.111) with mean difference of .37 CI [.07,.67], p=.008. The mean score of altruism work

values of bachelor's degree cadets (M=4.397) was significantly higher compared to matriculation/foundation cadets (M=4.131) with mean difference of .27 CI [.11,.42], p=.000 and SPM cadets (M=4.067) with mean difference of .33 CI [.02,.64], p=.030. The mean score of intellectual stimulation work values of bachelor's degree cadets (M=4.177) was significantly higher than matriculation/foundation cadets (M=4.018) with mean difference of .16 CI [.00,.32], p=.049. Bachelor's degree cadets scored significantly higher across all work value dimensions compared to matriculation/foundation and SPM cadets, showing the impact of academic background on work values.

**Discussions**

The results indicated that UPNM cadets ranked the following work values as the most important: economic return (55.4%), surroundings (52.8%), supervisory relationships (52%), achievement (50.7%), way of life (49.9%), associates (48.1%), altruism (47.9%), creativity (44%), prestige (43.3%), and security (40.9%). The most prevalent value was economic return representing a total of 491 cadets. Meanwhile, the findings indicate the significant differences of gender on work values, with male cadets scoring statistically higher than female cadets across dimensions such as creativity, management, achievement, supervisory relationships, way of life, security, prestige, independence, variety, economic returns, and altruism. Following the post hoc analysis, it was found that cadets with a bachelor's degree consistently scored higher than those in other educational background groups across all dimensions.

The high prevalence of economic returns suggests that financial compensation is not just a superficial concern; it is a key motivator that significantly influences career progression, job satisfaction, and is reflected in turnover (Galetić, 2020). In this research, this may be evident in the decline of on-time graduates at UPNM in 2022 compared to 2021. In the context of military service, where potential income can significantly vary based on rank and responsibilities, cadets may prioritise economic stability as a fundamental aspect of their future roles. This finding resonates with wider societal trends, where economic security is increasingly viewed as essential for overall quality of life (Steckermeier, 2020). As young adults, cadets may be particularly attuned to the financial implications of their career choices considering the rising costs of living (Ertreo et al., 2021). While the significance of economic return is understandable, it may overshadow other intrinsic values that are equally vital for long-term fulfilment in military careers (Vranken & Vandenbosch, 2024). Cadets may benefit from a more balanced perspective that includes not just financial incentives but also personal development, job satisfaction, and the sense of purpose that comes from serving their country (Born et al., 2024).

The emphasis on the prevalence of surroundings underscores the critical importance of value congruence in the training environment for military cadets (Edwards & Cable, 2009). When cadets' personal values regarding their surroundings align with the organisational culture and practices (Etzel & Nagy, 2021), they are more likely to experience enhanced collaboration, resilience, and mental well-being—factors vital for effective training and successful military integration. Valuing a supportive environment allows cadets to acknowledge the role of psychological and social factors in their training. This alignment not only fosters positive interactions with

peers and instructors but also creates a physical environment conducive to cadets' training (Nasir et al., 2024). Consequently, when organisational values resonate with cadets, their overall training experience and well-being are significantly improved, leading to higher performance and on-time graduation rates.

However, it is essential to recognize that environmental factors are complex and multifaceted, as cadets may have diverse perceptions of what constitutes a supportive atmosphere. Variations in institutional culture, peer relationships, and geographical context can shape their experiences and influence the perceived impact of their surroundings on training (Alas & Vadi, 2006; Banwo et al., 2022). Thus, understanding and addressing these discrepancies through value congruence is crucial for optimising the training environment and enhancing cadets' outcomes.

The category of economic return implies that male cadets place greater emphasis on financial compensation as a motivating factor in their training and future military careers. This trend may align with broader societal expectations, where traditional gender roles often position men as primary earners (Qing, 2020), thereby it may mirror their values and motivations in professional settings. Although the mean scores indicate a difference between male and female cadets regarding economic return, these figures alone do not fully capture the complexity of cadet motivations. Mean scores can mask the diversity of perspectives within each gender group. For instance, there may be female cadets who prioritise economic return similarly to their male counterparts, yet their average score may not reflect this due to the distribution of responses.

The findings indicate that bachelor's degree cadets consistently scored significantly higher across all work value dimensions compared to matriculation/foundation and SPM cadets, highlighting a notable influence of academic background on the prioritisation of work values. The critical thinking and analytical skills cultivated through a bachelor's degree program may enable these cadets to better align their personal values with the organisational goals of the military (Yang & Chong, 2024).

This alignment is crucial for person-organisation (P-O) value congruence, which suggests that when individuals' values closely match those of their organisation, they are more likely to experience higher job satisfaction and commitment. Bachelor's degree cadets, having spent more time in structured educational settings, may have developed a stronger alignment with the disciplined, goal-oriented culture of the military, thereby scoring higher in work values that reflect this congruence (Dahari et al., 2019).

The study highlights that economic return is the most prevalent work value among UPNM cadets, with the significant differences of gender on work values, where male cadets scored higher across multiple dimensions. Additionally, bachelor's degree cadets consistently scored higher in work value dimensions compared to those with lower academic backgrounds, suggesting that higher education enhances alignment with military values, thereby fostering better person-organisation value congruence. This alignment is crucial not only for promoting job satisfaction and commitment but also for enhancing cadets' psychological well-being, ultimately contributing to improved training outcomes and on-time graduation rates.

## Conclusion

This study provides valuable insights into the work values of UPNM cadets, highlighting the significance of economic return as the most prioritised value, with 55.4% of cadets emphasising its importance. Additionally, the findings reveal that gender influences cadets' work values, with male cadets showing a higher mean score for economic return compared to their female counterparts. The correlation between organisational commitment and work values underscores the need for a supportive training environment that aligns with cadets' personal and professional aspirations. Recognizing the importance of surroundings as a factor that fosters motivation, satisfaction, and retention is critical for enhancing cadet experiences and outcomes.

However, this research has limitations that should be acknowledged. Firstly, it is a cross-sectional study that focuses solely on the prevalence of work values, which may not capture changes over time. Secondly, there is an imbalance in the gender distribution, with a higher number of male cadets compared to female cadets, potentially affecting the generalizability of the findings. Lastly, the study is limited in its exploration of risk factors, highlighting only age and gender. Future research should consider investigating a broader range of risk factors to provide a more comprehensive understanding of cadets' work values.

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