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		TITLE OF THE RESEARCH ARTICLE 	
		Erosion of Work Ethics and Values among Algerian Youth Amid Contemporary Societal Transformations: Cultural Globalization as a Determining Factor	
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Abstract This study examines the observable decline in work values among Algerian youth within the context of rapid cultural, economic, and technological transformations, with a particular focus on the influence of cultural globalization. Using an analytical and interpretive approach, the research identifies major behavioral indicators associated with changing work ethics and professional aspirations among youth. The findings reveal a growing preference for consumerist lifestyles, an inclination toward minimal-effort income generation, and a perceived devaluation of traditional professional and vocational roles. Key manifestations include reduced commitment to time discipline and productivity, reliance on state support systems, weakening of meritocratic principles in employment, and societal tolerance of informal economic practices. These transformations reflect a shifting value hierarchy wherein material aspirations and global cultural influences increasingly overshadow traditional norms associated with diligence, perseverance, and skill development. The study concludes that reinforcing work culture requires integrated educational, socio-cultural, and institutional strategies aligned with current societal realities.			
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Introduction:

The accelerating pace of change, the information revolution, and the explosion of knowledge are among the most prominent features of our present era an age of speed and unprecedented convergence of times and places. Since these transformations are closely linked to the prevailing system of values in society, which serves as the primary source of observable behavioral patterns, analyzing and understanding this duality requires a comprehension of the mechanisms behind behavioral change at both the individual and collective levels, as well as the individual's interaction within the group. If technological progress is the driving force behind the transformations occurring in society—and necessarily leads to broad and comprehensive social change then youth is the most affected and the most targeted group by the creators of technology. The issue of youth today lies at the heart of intellectual, academic, and media discussions, as youth represent the dynamic force of every society in its quest for construction and progress. Therefore, it is only natural that they receive special attention, support, and understanding of their problems and aspirations. With the massive expansion of media and modern social networks, today's youth suffer from a clear contradiction in their priorities, goals, and how they order them, due to a lack of awareness of their capabilities or a misunderstanding of their true inclinations or even a fear of expressing those inclinations lest they be rejected by society. The concept of a future career forms the cornerstone of every young person's concerns, yet in the Arab world in general, and in Algeria in particular, this matter is not confined to the individual alone. Multiple parties influence and shape it, with parents having the lion's share, even though their perspective is often narrow, limited to professions such as medicine, engineering, and law overlooking the ambitions of their children, who have developed new attitudes and mental and behavioral patterns tied to modern, Western-influenced values that merge economic, technical, psychological, and social aspects. This situation inevitably heightens frustration among young people when they fail to meet societal expectations, as they find themselves occupying what may be called the "third place": neither satisfied with their current condition nor able to reach their dreams. Consequently, with the transformation of the social system's structure and function, the traditional values that once prevailed for decades have begun to decline foremost among them the value of work, which is the foundation and measure of a society's progress or backwardness, development or stagnation, prosperity or decline. For this reason, the value of work like other classifications of values has attracted the attention of scholars and researchers since the earliest attempts to understand its intellectual content and essential role in the development of individuals and societies. Efforts to reinforce this value represent a genuine challenge that twenty-first-century organizations seek to meet to ensure survival and continuity. It is observed that today's youth follow the latest trends and fashions, prefer luxury global brands, and are keen to own the newest smartphones and other prestige-related items. However, in contrast, they stay up late at night and refuse to wake before midday. Many with limited education aspire merely to secure positions such as security guards (Agent de Sécurité) or engage in what is locally called "business" (el-beznassa) a term widely used among youth to describe informal, spontaneous buying and selling activities in unregulated spaces lacking the characteristics of real business enterprises. Yet, for many, this remains the most convenient means to achieve quick profit with minimal time and effort. Hence, this research paper seeks to shed light on the decline of the value of work among Algerian individuals, particularly among the youth who form the majority of the population. It aims to discuss the manifestations of this decline and analyze them through real-life examples within a rapidly changing environment characterized by instability and fast-paced transformation in all aspects of life.

Definition of Terms:

Values:

"Values are explicit or implicit dynamic perceptions and concepts that distinguish an individual or group, define what is socially desirable, and guide choices of goals, methods, and means of action. Their manifestations are reflected in the attitudes, behaviors, ideals, beliefs, and social symbols of individuals and groups. They are connected with and influence the structural components of the social system, while also being influenced by them." (Al-Tabi'i, 1993, pp. 55–56)

Work:

The concept of work has many definitions, but the most common relates it to earning a living that is, the return or reward a person receives in exchange for the effort exerted. “Despite the diversity of definitions, they agree in essence that work is a form of activity mental or physical undertaken by humans to achieve a fundamental goal: improving their material and intellectual conditions.” (I’timad Allam, 1995, p. 135)

Work Values:

Work values are “a set of values and standards agreed upon by those belonging to a particular profession, influencing their motivations and serving as a basis for professional conduct, whether desirable or undesirable. They play an active role in satisfying needs and inclinations.” (Al-Shahri, 2005, p. 22)

In this study, **work values** refer to the beliefs and convictions held by individuals (specifically Algerian youth) in the context of work values they believe to be correct and necessary to adhere to, forming a key influence on their behavior. These values emerge from the interaction between **personal values** shaped through various stages of socialization and **organizational values**, which constitute part of an institution’s culture. Creating shared values between organizational and personal ones is the ultimate goal of any institution seeking growth and internal stability.

Youth:

Dabla (2011) states that “the concept of youth is neither fixed nor unified across societies; it varies according to time, culture, and the academic field addressing it, as well as the criteria used to define it.” (p. 95)

Accordingly, in this study, youth refers to the age group ranging from the legal working age (19 years) to the late thirties, by which time individuals are expected to have completed adolescence and become capable of performing a functional role in society through the practice of a known profession.

Social Change:

This term refers to “the set of new changes and transformations affecting the social structure of modern society as a result of various factors most notably the manifestations of globalization and its many dimensions. With its increasing pace, social change has become a tangible reality intertwined with scientific, technological, political, economic, and social fields.”

FIRST: WORK VALUES

1. The Concept of Values

Definitions of *values* vary among scholars and thinkers, a diversity that stems from differences in their research orientations, intellectual backgrounds, and philosophical perspectives. Some of the main definitions are as follows:

Thomas and Znaniecki define values as:

“Any meaning that contains a real content accepted by a given social group and referred to in such a way that it becomes an object directing the activities of its members.” (Al-Busaidi, 2006, p. 245)

This definition laid the groundwork for studying values indirectly through their research on the Polish peasant who migrated to America carrying with him his social values.

Parsons views values as:

“The overall framework that shapes individual behavior and interactions; thus, they are what maintain the stability and continuity of the social structure through the mechanisms of reward and punishment associated with them.” (Allam & Afron, 2007)

Al-Qarni (2008) takes a religious perspective, defining values as:

“A set of standards and judgments derived from the Qur’an and Sunnah that guide an individual in choosing the goals and directions of his life, thereby shaping a well-balanced Islamic personality capable of dealing with society.” (p. 59)

2. The Concept of Work Values

Given the importance of the concept of *work values* and its interdisciplinary nature, researchers have approached it from two main perspectives:

A. The First Approach: Work Values as Sources of Satisfaction

According to this view, work values refer to the satisfactions that work provides.

Amal (1992) defines work values as:

“A set of personal traits more desirable to the individual than others, which he seeks to achieve through his work.” (p. 20)

In the same direction, Saadawi (1998) defines them as:

“Intermediate concepts between the individual’s internal emotional orientation and the external features of the work environment, characterized by the equal degree of satisfaction they provide in the workplace, and representing an expression of the individual’s level of satisfaction.” (p. 11)

Al-Qarni (2008) defines them as:

“A set of desirable emotional and psychological qualities that the individual seeks to embody and realize through his work.” (p. 21)

Thus, from this approach, *work values* represent a set of psychological and emotional principles that can be fulfilled in work situations.

B. The Second Approach: Work Values as Motivational Dispositions Toward Work

This perspective views work values as motivational drives that influence how individuals interact with their work environment.

Ibrahim (1992) defines them as:

“A set of values and standards linked to the determinants governing the individual’s relationship with both the material and human dimensions of the work environment.” (p. 10)

Al-Shahri (2005) defines them as:

“A set of values and standards agreed upon by those belonging to the same profession, influencing their motivations and serving as the basis for their professional behavior, whether desirable or undesirable, and playing an important role in satisfying needs and inclinations.” (p. 22)

Al-Qarni (2008) adds:

“A set of rules and standards that guide the individual’s behavior within his work or professional activity, defining how he should act and what he should avoid.” (p. 62)

From this approach, *work values* refer to the principles, standards, and official regulations that organize an individual's relationships with others in the workplace, distinguishing right from wrong and duty from obligation.

3. The Importance of Work Values

Work values play a major role in organizational components, as they influence employee behavior, decision-making, commitment, and belonging.

According to Putti et al. (1999), faith and conviction in upholding work values, and their influence on employee behavior, strengthen employees' attachment to and commitment within their organizations. These values serve as a solid foundation for desirable organizational behavior and as a framework for guiding future change and reducing resistance, as they are collectively recognized benchmarks.

However, work values are not static they evolve over time. Practices once acceptable or successful twenty or thirty years ago may no longer be valid today. For example, manufacturing companies once ignored social and environmental responsibility when planning future strategies an approach now considered unacceptable.

Some researchers argue that "the remarkable success achieved by certain nations, such as Japan, is largely due to their citizens' adherence to a set of work values fundamentally different from those prevailing in other social systems." (Mikhail, 2003, p. 114)

An individual's performance quality whether marked by diligence or negligence is closely linked to the values they hold toward their work. Thus, work values form the essence of the philosophy of modern organizations seeking success. The closer an individual's values align with those of the organization, the higher the motivation, the greater the effort, and the more meaningful life within the organization becomes.

The importance of work values can be summarized as follows:

A. Importance of Values in the Life of the Individual

As summarized by Al-Shahri (2005):

- 1- Values help predict an individual's behavior in various situations. For example, if a person values honesty, confidentiality, cooperation, and responsibility, it becomes easy to predict how they will act in situations requiring these traits.
- 2- An individual's response to a situation or moral judgment stems directly from the values they hold; values are the basis of human judgment and behavior.
- 3- Values are generally accepted and socially approved standards. Thus, a person who upholds them earns society's respect, while one who violates them faces disapproval or even punishment, depending on the degree of neglect.
- 4- Values guide behavior and serve as standards by which individuals measure their actions, thoughts, and life roles. They ensure consistency and coherence in behavior.
- 5- Values are a **motivating force for work**, encouraging individuals to perform their duties diligently, with excellence and dedication. (Al-Shahri, 2005, p. 16)

B. Importance of Values for the Group and Society

Values are vital to the life of any group or society because they:

- 1- Link the different components of culture together into a coherent whole serving specific social goals.

- 2- Guide the behavior of individuals and groups, protecting society from social deviations; no society can function properly without them, as their absence leads to moral disintegration and social instability.
- 3- Provide the ethical framework for all human activities, directing them toward noble and constructive purposes.
- 4- Play a significant role in **social development**, as values like knowledge, planning, ambition, and diligence form the foundation for progress and prosperity.
- 5- Promote **human solidarity**, as positive values encourage cooperation among societies and reject violence, conflict, and discrimination. Intolerance religious, political, or sectarian—leads to upheavals and social strife that cause economic and social destruction.
- 6- Preserve **social cohesion**, defining the society's ideals, principles, and ultimate goals, thereby ensuring unity and stability in social life. (Aql, 2001, pp. 72-73)

4. Sources of Work Values

Work values are the product of accumulated educational and social experiences that begin within the self, evolve through different life stages, and ultimately connect to the belief system an individual adopts as a life principle. These values continue to develop through one's professional life, influenced by various internal and external forces that guide behavior in one direction or another. The main sources of work values can be identified as follows:

The Self:

A person does not strive to achieve any goal unless it resonates within him and arouses a personal passion. Therefore, a value-driven action must appear appealing and meaningful to the human self for it to be pursued. However, when individuals subject value systems to personal perception and evaluation, this process becomes risky, as it deprives values of their stability and continuity.

The Family:

An individual transfers the behavioral patterns inherited from their family into the organization where they work. These behaviors reflect their living environment and material circumstances. Families that raise their children on religious and moral principles such as honesty, integrity, and respect—tend to instill in them lasting adherence to these values. Conversely, families that neglect or question moral principles pass on this disregard to their children, who in turn carry the same attitudes into their professional settings.

Educational Institutions:

These institutions play a crucial role in preparing students for professional life. Through guidance, awareness programs, and courses in religion, ethics, and public relations, they can cultivate positive attitudes toward responsibility, belonging, and dedication to work.

Society:

A society governed by coherent political, social, or ideological values will inevitably transmit these values to its members, who reflect them in their professional behavior.

If societal values emphasize accountability, discourage unethical practices, and uphold justice equally among all individuals regardless of status or position, they will strongly influence individuals' conduct within organizations. Social norms thus act as moral safeguards, preventing individuals from violating these values, as society's moral authority outweighs that of any individual.

Leadership as a Role Model:

A role-model leader exercises strength without harshness and gentleness without weakness. Such a leader instills ethical virtues in subordinates, fosters team spirit, respects others' rights, and serves the public interest rather than exploiting it. These leaders embody the moral principles learned from their superiors and, in turn, transmit them to their subordinates.

Religion:

When compliance with work values is motivated solely by fear of legal consequences, it remains fragile. Religion, however, represents the broadest and most essential source of work and administrative ethics. It encourages honesty, moderation, integrity, and self-discipline in dealing with others.

Religion also establishes the foundation of personal accountability and self-monitoring, reinforcing trust between superiors, subordinates, and clients.

Civil Service Legislation:

Laws, regulations, and administrative decrees based on national legislation constitute an important source of work values. They regulate the functioning of public administration, defining employees' duties, responsibilities, and prohibitions. Such legal frameworks ensure discipline, fairness, and alignment with the goals and policies of the state. (Mulleh, 1994; Al-Qarni, 2008)

Some scholars further classify work values according to their origin:

- **Material values:** Human-made and derived from the environment and living conditions.
- **Spiritual values:** Those revealed by divine messages and religions, encouraging virtuous actions and prohibiting wrongdoing.

5. Factors Influencing the Reinforcement of Work Values

Al-Kubaisi (2001) summarizes these factors as follows (p. 23):

- **Decisions:** Selecting desirable values and establishing absolute commitment to align employees with them.
- **Organizational Structure:** Defining hierarchical levels, duties, and responsibilities clearly to facilitate the implementation of targeted values.
- **Work Systems:** Designing procedures that ensure performance standards, monitor outcomes, and reinforce correct behavior.
- **Recruitment:** Hiring individuals with personal traits and characteristics aligned with the desired institutional values.
- **Training:** Educating new employees about the importance of work values and equipping them with the necessary skills to uphold them.
- **Coordination:** Aligning interrelated systems with the institution's values to improve performance and eliminate redundancy.
- **Integration:** Unifying activities across upper and lower administrative levels through effective systems that bridge the gap between planning and implementation.

- **Communication:** Informing employees about the new institutional values and ensuring commitment to them.
- **Consistency:** Linking institutional values with employees' personal growth and fulfillment, helping them internalize and apply these values in daily life.

The Value of Work in Islam

Islam commands humankind to work and build the earth as a form of fulfilling their divine stewardship, as stated in the Holy Qur'an:

"وقل اعملوا فسيرى الله عملكم ورسوله والمؤمنون وستردون إلى عالم الغيب والشهادة فينبئكم بما كنتم تعملون" (*Surah At-Tawbah, verse 105*)

The best of creation—the Prophets—served as role models by engaging in various professions and crafts, exemplifying the virtue and dignity of work. Prophet Muhammad ﷺ tended sheep, Adam was a farmer, Noah a carpenter, Idris a tailor, and Dawud (David) crafted armor. The Prophet ﷺ said:

"ما أكل أحد طعاما قط خيرا من أن يأكل من عمل يده" (Al-Bukhari, 2008, p. 246)

Given the esteemed position of work in Islam, the Qur'an and Sunnah emphasize the necessity of performing work with sincerity and seeking lawful sustenance, as in the Prophet's saying ﷺ:

"Indeed, Allah loves that when one of you performs a task, he perfects it."

Conversely, Islam condemns unlawful gain or deceit in trade, as Allah says:

"ويل للمطففين الذين إذا اكتالوا على الناس يستوفون وإذا كالوهم أو وزنوهم يخسرون" (*Surah Al-Mutaffifin, verses 1-3*)

And He warns:

"يا أيها الذين آمنوا لا تأكلوا الربا أضعافا مضاعفة واتقوا الله لعلكم تفلحون" (*Surah Aal 'Imran, verse 130*)

Characteristics of Islamic Values

(Shadia Al-Tal, 1998, p. 49)

- Comprehensive, encompassing all aspects of human life and behavior.
- Balanced, maintaining harmony between material and spiritual dimensions.
- Easy to apply, as Islamic teachings appeal to reason and sound intellect.
- Permanent and unchanging.
- Moderate, avoiding extremes.
- Rooted in faith in Allah Almighty.
- Aimed at fostering harmonious relationships between humans and their Creator, themselves, and society.
- Reward those who adhere to them with Paradise and warn those who deny them of Hellfire.

Secondly: modern societal changes

Globalization:

Globalization is considered a relatively modern concept, whose emergence coincided with the rapid global transformations that marked the last quarter of the twentieth century. Although globalization was initially based on economic dimensions now more complete and mature, as the entire world revolves within a unified global economic system the phenomenon remains surrounded by much ambiguity and uncertainty in other domains. It is still an ongoing process, taking various and shifting dimensions, and continues to provoke debate among scholars and thinkers—between supporters, skeptics, and outright opponents particularly from the cultural standpoint, since culture embodies a society's customs, traditions, and values, along with its standards of acceptance, rejection, normality, and deviation.

From this perspective, globalization can be seen as a value system that seeks to impose a uniform and dominant lifestyle over other values and cultures, aiming ultimately to transform the world into a “global village” in which social relations dissolve and pragmatism and individualism become the prevailing norms.

The globalization of culture or the “manufacturing of culture” are two sides of the same coin, both striving to create uniformity in tastes, ideas, and beliefs. The tremendous technological advances in communication and media have reinforced strategies of control within global media institutions, profoundly shaping media content directed especially toward youth audiences. Young people represent the foundational base for consolidating the achievements of this new culture, commonly referred to as mass culture, characterized by its consumerist nature. It transmits a complex set of habits, traditions, and values in an artificial manner, subject to market standards, much like any other form of industrial production.

Third: manifestations of the decline of the value of work among Algerian youth

Naturally, this study focuses on some phenomena that reflect the decline of work values among Algerian youth:

1. The Shift from Socialism to Capitalism

Following the political and economic reforms launched in Algeria after the events of October 1988, the country abandoned the socialist system and adopted a capitalist one based on a market economy and private ownership of the means of production. This shift led to the emergence of a wealthy bourgeois class possessing power and influence and striving to maximize financial returns, in contrast to a working class dependent on wages and salaries.

As a result, this new orientation entrenched the concept of unfair distribution of wealth and power, which contradicts the work values upon which the Algerian individual was raised after independence values founded on rejecting class distinctions and ensuring fair distribution of profits as a complement to wages.

2. The “Social Support” Policy and the “Milking Cow” Mentality

The social welfare policy, often referred to in media and social networks as “sousial” or “the milking cow,” is based on a rentier economy relying almost exclusively on oil revenues. This has generated new and alien values within Algerian society, especially among youth, who have developed a tendency toward quick financial gain without effort.

Such an attitude contradicts Islamic upbringing and the Prophet's guidance ﷺ, as shown by the story of the companion during the Hijra who refused an Ansari's offer to share his wealth, praying instead for blessing and saying: “Show me the market.” He then traded, earned, and maintained his dignity a profound lesson in preferring work over laziness and dependence.

An example of this phenomenon is the ANSEJ loans program, in which the Algerian state allocated substantial funds to support youth employment and reduce unemployment. However, many beneficiaries lacked educational or professional qualifications and had no strategic vision for their projects. Consequently, numerous

projects failed: youth sold their equipment on the black market for far less than its real value and demanded their debts be written off without accountability as if it were a legitimate right.

This reflects a deep-rooted culture of dependency, evasion of responsibility, and misinterpretation of fate and divine decree as excuses for failure, shaped by their social upbringing.

Another problem stemming from this policy is the arrogance toward certain professions, despite their importance in reducing unemployment and supporting the national economy such as agriculture, farming, and manual trades. These jobs provide a dignified living and social usefulness, yet many youths prefer easier positions such as security guard jobs or clerical work, valued mainly for their perceived prestige and minimal effort.

3. Employment Practices

Given Algeria's social and cultural fabric characterized by patriarchal norms, extended family systems, and tribal affiliations nepotism and favoritism play a major role in hiring. Managers or hiring officials often violate regulations to recruit relatives or acquaintances to satisfy certain parties or avoid criticism, regardless of the candidate's qualifications.

This behavior violates work ethics and undermines the merit-based value of work. The "who you know" policy dominates hiring, promotions, and access to privileges, eroding trust within institutions and between managers, subordinates, and clients.

As noted by Melhem (2009), *wasta* (connections) and personal or family relationships are deeply rooted in Arab cultural traditions, making them difficult to eliminate despite modernization and education. These practices have become a socially accepted norm, reinforcing administrative corruption, weakening social justice, and diminishing equal opportunity thereby fostering negative attitudes toward work among youth.

4. The Value of Time as a Reflection of Work Values

Wasting time has become common among employees, particularly in public institutions where oversight is weak. Typical behaviors include arriving late, leaving early, or marking attendance in the morning only to leave and return just before closing time.

Such behavior demonstrates the loss of the value of work. It disrupts workflow, creates disorder among departments that depend on one another, and causes frustration among citizens due to service delays.

This issue is not a result of the absence of laws or regulations but rather a moral crisis that reflects the erosion of work ethics among Algerians, becoming part of the organizational culture absorbed by young employees after hiring.

5. Poor Role Models in the Workplace

Every newly hired employee goes through a probationary period during which they are expected to follow internal regulations and instructions strictly. However, over time, they observe that reality often contradicts written rules. When senior employees or managers themselves break the rules, the new employee naturally imitates them.

Although written regulations and ethics codes guide employee behavior, practical learning from superiors' actions exerts stronger influence. If managers tolerate violations without accountability, new employees will feel emboldened to follow suit.

Hence, poor role modeling erodes the moral foundation of work and leads to widespread misconduct across institutions.

6. Using Work Time for Personal Affairs

Employees often engage in personal tasks during work hours especially with the widespread use of the Internet in public and private institutions. The introduction of smartphones and 3G/4G networks has made it nearly impossible for supervisors to ensure that online activity is work-related. Misuse of the Internet results in lost productivity, as employees browse social media or send jokes instead of serving customers leading to long queues in public offices and post offices.

Other common forms of misuse include gossiping, debating irrelevant topics, discussing products or social rumors, or commenting on management decisions all of which waste valuable work time (Al-Duwaik, 2007, p. 59).

In conclusion, these manifestations collectively illustrate a moral and cultural decline in work values among Algerian youth. The weakening of discipline, accountability, and ethical standards has transformed work from a duty and value into a mere necessity devoid of meaning or commitment.

Ethical Considerations

This research was conducted following established academic ethical guidelines. No personal data, confidential information, or vulnerable population interactions were involved. The study relies solely on publicly available sources and analytical interpretation; therefore, additional ethical approval was not required.

Author Contributions

Bilal Adhimen: Conceptualization, theoretical framework, primary analysis, manuscript drafting.

Bilal Medjider: Literature review, critical revisions, interpretation of findings, final proofing and formatting.

Both authors reviewed and approved the final manuscript.

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Conflict of Interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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