

## Fate or Face: Which Shapes Work Values?

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### Abstract:

This study examines how two traditional Chinese cultural constructs, Fate (belief in predetermined destiny or external control) and Personal Reputation (concern for one's social image or "face"), predict individual work values. The primary purpose was to integrate these culturally significant factors into work values research and to assess their explanatory power within Chinese organizational contexts. A survey was conducted with 621 valid participants, comprising working professionals across diverse industries. Participants completed structured questionnaires measuring their Fate orientation, Personal Reputation concerns, and the importance placed on intrinsic fulfillment, extrinsic rewards, social relationships, and prestige values in their work. Hierarchical regression analyses evaluated the predictive contributions of Fate and Personal Reputation beyond traditional demographic and personality variables. The findings indicated that Personal Reputation strongly and consistently predicted all work value dimensions. Specifically, individuals who highly valued their Personal Reputation expressed significantly greater preferences for intrinsic personal growth, tangible extrinsic benefits, social harmony, and particularly prestige-oriented status and recognition. Conversely, Fate beliefs demonstrated minimal influence on work values, exhibiting only a marginally significant positive association with extrinsic rewards and no significant predictive relationship with intrinsic, social, or prestige-oriented work values. These results provide a culturally novel insight: in contemporary Chinese workplaces, concern for Personal Reputation (or "face") substantially shapes employees' work motivations, whereas generalized beliefs in Fate or external control offer limited explanatory benefit. Practically, this underscores the importance of reputation-sensitive reward systems and culturally nuanced management practices. Theoretically, it highlights the necessity of incorporating culturally embedded constructs into organizational behavior research. Keywords: fate, personal reputation, work values, Chinese culture, face.