

## The Stumble of the Tunisian Revolution: A Psychosocial Explanation via the Deciphering of the Professional Values of Civil servants

تعثر الثورة التونسية: تفسير نفسي اجتماعي من خلال فك رموز القيم المهنية لعينة من الموظفين العموميين

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**Abstract:** Starting with very high expectations of a people inspired by previous revolutions, (10) years later, the Tunisian revolution has come to an economic and social dead end. Even the whole democratic process is put on hold. This article tries to give a psychosocial explanation of the failure of the Tunisian revolution. By means of a survey of (200) civil servants, our study revealed important results regarding the impact of the revolution on work values. These findings are deemed crucial in deciphering the failure of the revolution and in identifying future choices and directions. The examination of the values of work after the revolution based on the super model conveys three contrasts: A total reversal of the scale of values, an increased interest in the value of economic advantage and the free fall of the value of creativity and intellectual stimulation

**Keywords:** Professional values, Tunisian revolution, civil service, Model of Super.

**المستخلص:** اندلعت شرارة الثورة التونسية محمّلة بكثير من الآمال من قبل شعب ملهم من الثورات التاريخية الأخرى، لكنّها بعد عشر سنوات تجد هذه الأخيرة نفسها أمام مأزق اقتصادي واجتماعي هذا فضلا عن تعطل مسارها الديمقراطي. يرمي هذا المقال إلى تقديم تفسير نفسي اجتماعي لفشل الثورة التونسية وذلك عبر استبيان موجّه إلى (200) موظّف عمومي. وقد توصّلت الدراسة إلى نتائج مهمّة حول تأثير الثورة على قيمة العمل كعامل أساسي لفهم أسباب التعثر وتصويب الخيارات والتوجّهات المستقبلية. يظهر تحليل قيم العمل بعد الثورة بالاستناد إلى نموذج سوبر ثلاث تناقضات: انعكاس كلي لمقياس القيم وزيادة الاهتمام بقيمة الميزة الاقتصادية والسقوط الحر لقيمة الإبداع والتحفيز الفكري.

**الكلمات المفتاحية:** قيم العمل، الثورة التونسية، الوظيفة العمومية، نموذج سوبر.

## INTRODUCTION:

On December (17, 2010), a young trader set himself on fire, triggering a profound social and political change that subsequently shook the Arab world. The Tunisian revolution united all social classes around an important slogan: "Work - Freedom - Citizen's Dignity".

Throughout ten years, union demands, riots of young unemployed graduates, corporatism... have never lost their intensity. In response to that, the successive governments since (2011) have opted for the "More State" approach. The civil service paid the highest bill in terms of massive recruitment, salary increases and the enactment of special Statutes and sectoral conventions... But this easy and politicized civil option was not fully successful in the end. On the contrary, social tensions are still persisting and worsening, and the expected economic gains were turning into a burden of deficits that risks hampering the entire democratic and even security process in the country.

How then can this paradox be explained? The explanation is both easy and complex. Its easiness lies in the fact that it is obvious that treating the individual coercively in an economic spectrum will no longer be an effective public policy. In other words, the individual is not just an amount of work he has to provide, and his salary is not only a cost or a budget item. And this has been salient in the Tunisian experience for (10) years.

Whereas its complexity is linked to the metabolism that moves the work force physically or mentally given that it embodies complex and deep philosophical, psychological and social dimensions. So, this is where purely economic thinking turns out to be limited and it is up to occupational psychology, among others, to provide explanations.

The general objective of this work is then to observe the evolution of the system of "work values" before and after the social shock (The revolution), to establish comparisons and specially to decipher the changes in order to understand the current distortions.

## Theoretical Frame

Garner and Méda (2006) claim that after family, work is one of the essential components of personal identity. Nevertheless, the degree of importance placed upon it depends very strongly on a person's socioprofessional group and family situation. Managers and freelancers may view work as being of paramount importance and a means to self-improvement, whilst white-collar workers and labourers are less likely to share this viewpoint, particularly the lesser skilled.

In addition, Man is governed by a basis of "values" or motivation (Feertchak, 1996). Value is a modality of variable that can be affectively or cognitively associated to action (Triandis, 1979). It is a source of energy that drives an individual to perform the tasks he needs to perform (Feather, 1982). And if we transpose the notion of value to the social context, it will have the function of guiding and coordinating the actions of society (Kluckhohn, 1951).

The values are most often humanistic or aim to serve the probity of a profession. The values of a profession depend simultaneously on the object of its work, on the social and professional representation, on the attitudes of the consequences of its action on reality transformation and therefore on the ensuing responsibilities (Durand, 2010). "Indeed, the content of the representations is treated as a structured field where all the cognitive (information) and socio-affective (values, beliefs, opinions) constituents of the representation would be structured into a system (fields of representations) by socio-cultural organizers (norms, codes linked to social position...) and/or psychological (attitudes, cognitive schemes..." (Blin, 1997, p.74)

Moreover, Salesses (2005) speaks of "a clear interaction" between the concepts of social representation, attitudes and professional values.

In the field of sociology and psychology, values constitute a coherent, hierarchical whole, part of a system of values. They describe the beliefs and convictions of an individual or a group in a society. We speak about moral values (e.g. respect, forgiveness, altruism) and ethics with ideological values (politics), spiritual values (religion)... (Péoc'h & Ceaux, 2012)

In a relatively homogeneous scientific field such as that of social psychology, the notion of value refers, according to the authors, to concepts such as the need (Maslow, 1954), the ideal (Schwartz, 1992), beliefs (Allport, 1961; Rokeach, 1973), personality traits (Rokeach, 1973; Schwartz et al., 2002), existential judgments (Rokeach 1973), schemas or mental constructs (Cottraux, 2007).

According to Sarchielli (2003), the question of work values is approached by identifying with different approaches such as: Finalism, ethics and the role of motivation.

Merton (1959) proposes an extended sense of value that is not limited to its moral sense but also including a broader sense, i.e. everything that is socially desirable.

Further, Ben Alaya (2014), adds that the values and norms in a society are defined by a collective memory of a group, which the latter will play a key role in the reconstruction of reality.

The literature also does not lack demonstrations as to the factors influencing the concept of "values" and which cause it to evolve over time, as in the case of "revolutions".

The French revolution and the industrial revolution radically transformed the conception of work to become the model of creative activity and this is thanks to the liberation of workers from their increasingly alienating condition of productive activity so that they can find the truth of work as an innovative activity.

As for the German revolution, faced with the uncertainty brought by industrialization and the cyclical crises of economic life, everyone must be granted the right to paid work. And this has led to protecting workers in their very activity (trade unions, strikes, time limits, night work, children, etc.) and more broadly against the risks of life, in particular against work accidents and against unemployment as well

as the implementation of an employment policy, particularly in times of economic crisis (in the (1930)s or in the 1980s.) (Bouvet, 2009).

With regard to the Tunisian revolution, the legacy of the previous era has been heavy on the economic and social level. Socially perceived as the main lever, "The right to work" was throughout 10 years the main object of all the demands, especially since / after this right has been constitutionalized (The Tunisian constitution (2014); articles (36) and (40) . For the new rulers, it was therefore urgent to try to put an end to the fire of the revolution through historic decisions such as the decision of massive recruitment into the civil service. This decision subsequently created a "tsunami" of social and trade union movements. The current pattern is such that there are sit-ins and protests all over the country by the unemployed who have not had the chance to help themselves to the civil service cake. Whereas the hired lucky ones began enormous union pressure to improve their salaries and other various rights.

The seeds of the well-intentioned country's leaders have finally resulted in a bad harvest that was harmful to the whole society. Indeed, work has become a right that justifies all excesses and all aberrations (devaluation of work). Thus raises the need to find answers to the issue of work values. In this context, Nasraoui (2011) points out, that there will be a displacement of social values of the dominant society in a particular context, where certain values considered as adaptive, such as solidarity, fidelity, collaboration, respect for commitments, etc. are deficient in the relationship of a particular social group with its society; other values are perverted from their original meaning even if they keep the same name...

Ben Alaya (2014), working on a "post-revolutionary" Tunisian context, asserted that in the face of this period of high tension, it is necessary to renegotiate the values on which the whole social order should be based.

### A glimpse of public administration in Tunisia

The "success story" of Tunisia after independence is largely dependent on the establishment of civil service, which is a key instrument for economic and social development. Indeed, these establishments are now perceived as being the vectors of the social ladder. The civil service in Tunisia is overwhelmingly managed by civil servants who are almost the DNA of the social middle class in Tunisia. Moreover, the success in the entrance examination was the only way to be a public official. To understand the importance of this "mini society" both in the social and in the economic spheres, here is a focus on some indicators in (2010) and (2020): (OECD, 2017)

Year	Social aspect		Economic aspect		
	Workforce	Workforce*/Tunisia n population	Wage bill/Budget	Wage bill/GDP	Growth rate of the economy
2010	400000	20%	50%	10%	5%
2020	643000	33%	70%	20%	-8%

\*the members of a family in Tunisia are 5 on average, so the number of civil servants is multiplied by 5 to obtain their real weight in society.

Source: Public finance portal in Tunisia and NIS statistics

The figures are clear, the civil service, as a work force, no longer contributes to the creation of wealth in the country. It is becoming a budgetary “disaster”.

The question that arises is: How did things get this far?

In general, three major phases can lead to a change of values in the experience of a civil servant: Recruitment, career development or promotion and retirement.

A very interesting study published in (2020) by the NIS (National Institute of Statistics) showed that the body of the civil service includes around (643,000) employees, all categories combined, whereas it was around (435,000) in (2010), i.e. a (47%) increase, not counting those employed in local authorities and public companies. The new entrants, especially recorded in (2012) and (2013), were unemployed graduates who benefited from waves of exceptional recruitment using candidate file review, as well as contract workers and subcontracted agents who benefited from automatic integration shortly after the revolution. This process continued until the year (2016), from which the authorities opted for a forced cessation of hiring due to the application of the IMF directives, and as a result the protests started again. The average number of hires from (2011) to (2016) fluctuated around (22,000) posts each year, whereas it was around (7,500) posts before the revolution (Tunisian Observatory of the Economy (TOE), 2017).

In a context of an extended economic recession, this hiring policy severely impacted on the budget of the State. In addition, union demands for salary increases and obtaining specific indemnities...have contributed significantly to the increase in the wage bill (Zribi, 2019).

On the promotion side, an archaic general statute governs the civil service in Tunisia, it is law n° (112) of December (12, 1983). Therefore, civil servants are administered by this law which decrees their careers from recruitment until retirement. This promotion system was too rigid before the revolution (minimum of (5) years of seniority and a very limited number of posts each year). But after the revolution, there was a proliferation of special statuses allowing for “grade shifts” (unmerited automatic promotion). This promotion mechanism has caused a reversal of the pyramid of professional categories and a phenomenon of immigration to the top of the pyramid, thus generating an upward pressure on the category of middle managers “A3” and “A2” and especially senior officials “A1” (bac+2, bac+4, bac+6 respectively) (NIS, 2020).

## Research Objectives and Hypothesis

Based on this analysis of the literature and in order to answer the study problem: “How in the transitional period, professional values have evolved among civil service employees?” We will test the following hypotheses:

**H1:** The revolution caused a change in the perception of professional values among the people surveyed.

## 1. Methodology and operationalization of variables:

### • Research design

The design chosen in this research is the **ex post facto design**, this name "ex-post-facto" means "After the facts". Indeed, the researcher cannot produce variables; he can only interpret them after the measurement.

Current search is a cross-sectional research based on the quantitative approach aiming at comparing professional values among Tunisian civil servants before and after the revolution.

### • Population and sample:

Our choice of a sample suitable for the study was influenced by the pioneering study carried out by the National Institute of Statistics of Tunisia entitled "Characteristics of civil servants and their salaries (2013-2017)". This study showed that in terms of stock, (50%) of the total number of civil servants in (2017) belongs to (3) ministries: Education, public health and higher education. And that (30%) of new entrants into the civil service after the revolution, all categories combined, were also from these (3) ministries. Considering these numbers, it was logical for us to look for a sample for study from these (3) ministries while keeping the same characteristics according to age, sex and socio-professional category revealed by the general NIS survey. As a result, our random sample includes (200) civil servants distributed as shown in the following graphs:

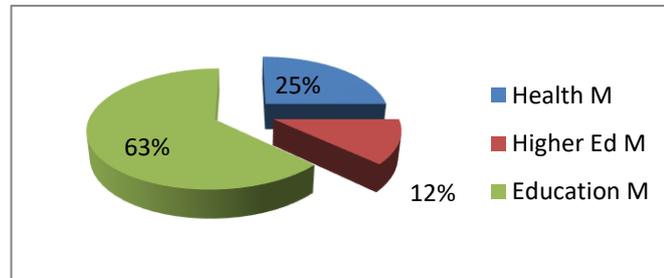


Figure (1). Distribution of the surveyed population according to the (3) departments

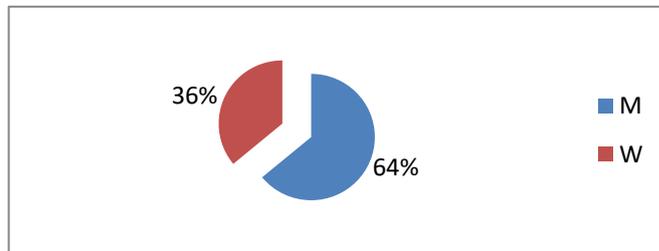


Figure (2). Distribution of the surveyed population by gender

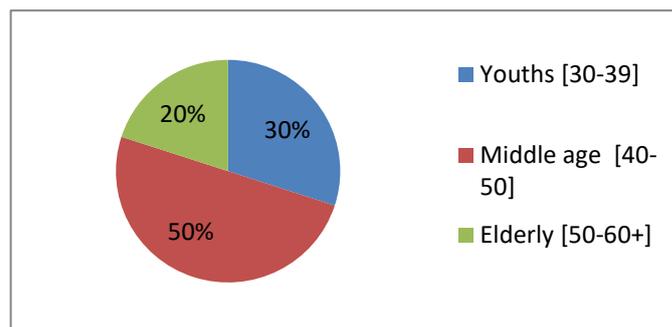


Figure (3). Distribution of the population surveyed by age

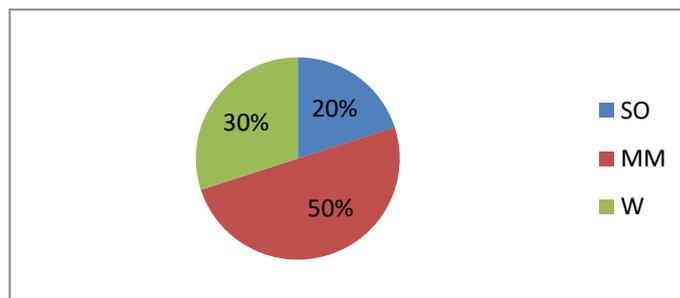


Figure (4). Distribution of the surveyed population according to socio-professional category

The sample is of the random probability type, stratified proportionally. This method consists of dividing the accessible population into relatively homogeneous subgroups called

"Strata" and then randomly taking a sample from each stratum. The random, stratified sample makes it possible to use a smaller sample and obtain the same degree of representativeness. (Fortin, 2010:231)

**• Conduct of the survey.**

Data collection was carried out from January (15) to February (15), (2020).

This questionnaire is carried out in a self-administered way with 200 workers belonging to the central administration of the three ministries indicated above.

It touched two types of data:

- The information sheets
- The QVP (Professional Values Questionnaire of Super E.Donald, 1991).

The duration of the questionnaire is 15 minutes for each participant, and for each test / administering of the questionnaire.

Each participant answered the same questionnaire twice in a row:

For the first administration of the questionnaire, the participant responds spontaneously by reading the instruction without telling him that he will pass it another time (because of the length of the questionnaire).

Regarding the second administration of the questionnaire, the participant is asked to answer the same questionnaire by imagining that he passed it before the Tunisian revolution.

**• Data collection instrument**

In order to describe and better understand the evolution of work values after the Tunisian revolution, the researchers chose " Professional Values Questionnaire" (QVP) (1991) of Donald E Super: It is a questionnaire allowing the assessment of the fundamental values that influence motivations at work. This tool is the most commonly used (compared to that of Evers 1995; Roe and Ester, 1999).

It comes in the form of a self-administered questionnaire consisting of (45) items. This questionnaire is made up of (45) sentences that illustrate the values that people consider important in their work. These values correspond to the satisfactions they usually seek in their professional activities, or as a result of these professional activities.

They are not all of equal importance: a value of great importance for some may be considered of little importance for others.

Level of importance by reporting the number chosen according to the proposed code: **(1): unimportant;** **(2): of little importance;** **(3): Moderately important;** **(4): important;** **(5): Very important.** The (45) items assessing (15) professional values are:

**Table (1) Professional Values**

Value	N° of items
Altruism	2-30-31
Economic advantage	3-22-39
Creativity	15-16-45
Coaching	14-24-37
Environment	12-25-36
Aesthetics	7-20-41
Independence	5-21-40
Prestige	6-28-33
Relationships	8-27-34
Hierarchical relationships	11-18-43
Success	13-17-44
Security	9-19-42
Intellectual stimulation	1-23-38
Lifestyle	10-26-35
Variety	4-29-32

The individual score for each value varies therefore from (3) to (15); the higher the score the more important the value is for the participant.

In this questionnaire, some importance must be given to the three values chosen first, and to those chosen last.

#### • Plan of data analysis

The data are analyzed using Microsoft Excel (2007) software and the software statistical analysis SPSS (11.0.) The analysis is comparative, it concerns socio-demographic data and the degree of professional values by the QVP of Donald Super (1991) which the participants have answered. It concerns the presentation of socio-demographic data and the variables studied in our reference framework. The results are presented in the form of tables and percentages, plus parametric statistical calculations: mean, standard deviation, variance, and test of Student of the differences.

We also used the ANOVA calculation for the analysis of variance, to compare the professional values before and after the revolution according to age and according to professional category.

• **Operationalization of variables:**

For the operational definition of the dependent variable of our research which is “professional values”, we took the empirical definition of each dimension given by Donald Super (1991) himself in his questionnaire as such:

**Table (2) Empirical definition of each dimension given by Donald Super**

<b>Value</b>	<b>Empirical definition</b>
<b>Altruism</b>	A professional value or purpose present in a job that contributes to the well-being of others. Altruism is present in jobs of social nature.
<b>Economic advantage</b>	A value associated with well-paid jobs, bringing material and tangible benefits.
<b>Creativity</b>	A value associated with a job that makes it possible to invent, imagine new products and services or develop new ideas.
<b>Coaching</b>	A value associated with a job that allows planning and directing the work of others. Coaching may also require authority and the use of supervisory skills.
<b>Environment</b>	A value associated with a job carried out in pleasant conditions. The environment, the material framework within which the work is carried out, becomes important for people whose interests lie not in the job itself, but in its environment and its setting.
<b>Aesthetics</b>	A value inherent to work that allows doing beautiful things and contributing to the beauty of the world.
<b>Independence</b>	A value associated with the control of one's job, for example making decisions, deciding on one's work program, giving priorities to be carried out.
<b>Relationships</b>	A value characterized by a job that provides contacts with the collaborators that one appreciates. It consists of good relations allowing friendly bonds and a feeling of belonging to a group.
<b>Prestige</b>	A value associated with a job that brings consideration and respect, but not necessarily power.
<b>Hierarchical relationships</b>	A value associated with a job supervised by a fair-minded superior with whom one gets along well.
<b>Success</b>	A value associated with a job that provides a sense of accomplishment and success. Success is the taste for a job with visible and tangible results.
<b>Security</b>	A value associated with a job that one is sure to keep even in times of economic hardship.
<b>Intellectual stimulation</b>	A value associated with a job that allows thinking and learning how things work. The search for intellectual stimulation exists among individuals who have scientific interests of an abstract type and the desire to use their own abilities and their own judgment.
<b>Lifestyle</b>	A value associated with the type of jobs that allows living as one chooses and to be the kind of person one wants.
<b>Variety</b>	A value associated with the diversity of a job and which can also allow for human contact/ interaction.

With regard to the independent variable which is “The Tunisian revolution”, the most conventional definition for this variable is the end of the regime of former president Zine El-Abidine Ben Ali. His

departure opened up unprecedented opportunities for respect for human rights in the country. But it was also accompanied with a rapid, complete and violent change in values, political institutions, government practices, socio-political leadership, and probably the value of work.

## **2.) Results and Discussions:**

The league table of professional values pre/post revolution shows at first glance an acute, profound and statistically significant change (Table (2)) in the values of the people surveyed. It is a change that conveys (3) important contrasts. The first contrast to decipher is the reversal of the preference of values. Indeed, according to our results, the people surveyed grant supremacy, in a pre-revolution context, to jobs that embody the values "Relation with the hierarchy/ Hierarchical relationships", "Coaching" and "Prestige" neglect in the same context the values "Altruism" and "Independence". The time of the revolution becomes then comparable to the moment of lowering the masks after a long masquerade. It represents a sudden rupture given the strength and speed of change caused by an unexpected departure of an aged regime after a reign that lasted for (23) years.

The second contrast according to our study is the increased interest in the value "Economic advantage" faced with a discipline "salary – civil service" known by a firm menu that does not allow "customizable salaries".

The third contrast in our opinion is the free fall of the value "Creativity + intellectual stimulation" in the era of the liberation from shackles. Revolutionized civil servants becoming today's free citizen have turned their backs on creativity and intellectual stimulation.

The psychological analysis of these contrasts can explain the failure of the Tunisian revolution.

**Table (3) Ranking of Pre/Post revolution values:**

Order	Professional values in pre-revolution	Order	Professional values in post-revolution
1	Relations with the hierarchy	1	Altruism + Independence
2	Coaching	2	Economic advantage
3	Prestige	3	Relationships
4	Aesthetic sense + Environment	4	Environment
5	Lifestyle	5	Success
6	Creativity +intellectual stimulation	6	Prestige
7	Economic Advantages	7	Lifestyle
8	Success	8	Aesthetic sense
9	Security	9	Variety
10	Relationship	10	Security
11	Altruism	11	Coaching
12	Independence	12	Relations with the hierarchy
13	Variety	13	Creativity + Intellectual stimulation

Table (4) Summary table of the results of the student t-test of the studied values

	Significant difference	Non-significant difference	Mean before revolution	Mean after revolution
Creativity		t=1,580	11,1524	11,6857
Economic advantage		t=,182	9,6762	9,7333
Relationship with hierarchy	t=2,152		10,9143	11,6
Creativity + intellectual stimulation	t=-2,971		11,2857	10,2571
Success		t= -,623	10,6381	10,3905
Life style		t= -,381	11,5048	11,3619
Security		t= -,300	10,8667	10,7619
Relationships		t= -,139	11,7143	11,6762
aesthetic sense		t= -,345	11,2857	11,1524
Prestige	t=2,011		10,981	11,4952
Independence	t=3,075		10,6095	11,7143
Variety		t= -,901	11,2476	10,9619
Coaching	t=2,579		10,2857	11,0952
Altruism	t=4,102		10,3048	11,7143
Intellectual stimulation	t=4,246		8,6857	10,181

Our study attempts to understand the failure of the Tunisian revolution by following a path of psychological reflection. And this is based on the model of Super for the structuring of work values applied in the Tunisian context.

First of all, the originality of this study is observed in (3) levels: It is the first study that tests the validity of the model of Super in the Tunisian context. In addition, this study focuses on the analysis of the revolutionary moment in Tunisia and its impact on the chain of professional values which represents, in our opinion, an appropriate path to understand the failure of the revolution. Finally, it is a study that questions the profound societal changes through the observation of the dynamics of values among the most important social stratum - namely the category of civil servants belonging to the middle social class. The results revealed by our study are important and even pertinent.

The first of them concerns the validity of the model of Super related to the structuring of work values. Even if the (15) values identified by Super are ranked by the participants in our sample and the results are statistically significant note that the bi-factorial structuring in intrinsic values and extrinsic values seems validated in the pre/revolution context: The classification is clear between extrinsic values at the top against intrinsic values at the bottom. We consider that this classification is very logical if we project it on the reality of public jobs. It is common knowledge that public jobs are highly law regulated and fully administered jobs where individual will is almost obliterated by the rigidity of their archaic laws that outline wages, promotions as well as working conditions. As a result, the intrinsic variables of work are neglected in the scale of preferences.

Another pertinent result is the centrality of professional values on the individual which is observed in the primacy of the values "Relation with the hierarchy", " Coaching " and "prestige" on one side and the neglect of the values "relationships ", "independence" and "altruism" on the other. The civil service is a strongly hierarchical and vertical "society" where the rank and the functional job have a primordial place in the definition of the interpersonal relations between civil servants. It is also a status job that reflects the stranglehold /domination of the political regime.

So, according to our study, the model of Super is validated in a stable situation. But what about after the revolution?

If we look at the ranking of values after the revolution, we notice that the intrinsic-extrinsic dichotomy seems limited and that revolutionized values they are more complex. Indeed, the same goes for the top and bottom of the ranking, we find a combination of preferences that integrates internal and external dimensions to the work. It turns out then that during periods of great societal change following beaten tracks for explanations becomes obsolete. This is still true if we analyze the other facet of the ranking. According to our study, the revolution has reversed the ranking of values among our target population. The individualistic values "relationship with the hierarchy", "independence" and "prestige" have given way to the collectivist values "altruism", "independence" and "relationship". What is even more remarkable, is that the values which help promote respectful behaviors of attendance and administrative efficiency such as "Coaching", "relationship with the hierarchy", "creativity" and "intellectual stimulation" are sanctioned by the revolutionized civil servants and ranked at the bottom of the table.

Obviously, it is the impact of the context, but the fairest thing to say is that it is the impact of a "Tunisian style revolution ". Indeed, once unleashed, the revolution has disseminated a transcendent movement that shook society and its stable values best translated in the sector of civil service by a satisfactory and prevalent level of assiduity and rigor which are the values of the pre-revolution regime. As a result, the uprising of society against the regime has dynamically generated a reversal of individual values reflecting the orientation of society towards a new societal order which prioritizes horizontal rapprochement ("relation with the hierarchy" Vs " relationship ").

The composite of values at the top of the ranking between instrumental values: "altruism" and "independence" and terminal values: "economic advantage" and "relationship" can be analyzed, in our opinion, by the contributions of Rokeach (1973). For him, values belong to an organized system which ultimately manifests itself through a process of prioritization. Based on this significant contribution of Rokeach, we can say that civil servants prioritize their professional values according to a logic and a dynamic that can be deciphered as follows:

Once triggered, the revolution with its resonating slogans: "Work - Freedom - National Dignity" or "No fear - No horror - authority belongs to the people" which were chanted by citizens of diverse social categories whether civil servants or unemployed, has forged contextual values among the population of civil servants which they have in turn transmitted to a specific organizational space known for precepts and customs nostalgic to the recently disappearing era. In other words, the revolutionized civil servants

socially projected the image of the fleeing of the old regime onto the structured and professional administration. For them, senior officials must also leave, and it is for this reason that they raised the famous slogan "Get out!".

In summary, the revolutionary context dictated a set of values comparable to a radical ideology disseminated by different waves and media, then intercepted by the different dimensions of society. Once deciphered in restricted organizational spaces, it resulted in a reversal of values that manifested itself in hostile behavior that harmed the administration.

The values of 'altruism', 'independence' and 'relationship' have been translated in a very strong unionization of civil servants. This has made the national central trade union the most powerful non-governmental organization during the decade (2011-2020), and raised it to play very important political roles. It is in fact a societal defense mechanism whose goal is to create a hard core of pressure without a balancing counterpart allowing to achieve "gains", expressed in the scale of values by "economic advantage", and this is true for all levels of the civil service.

Among these gains that have damaged Tunisia's economic and financial balance we find:

- Continuous and relentless pressure for wage increases without a parallel increase in productivity;
- The strong movement of corporatism: Lawyers against magistrates, professors against administrators, doctors against paramedical corps...
- Accelerated and unmerited rank promotions.
- Waves of massive recruitment without real need.
- The laxity observed towards the delays and the absenteeism of civil servants.

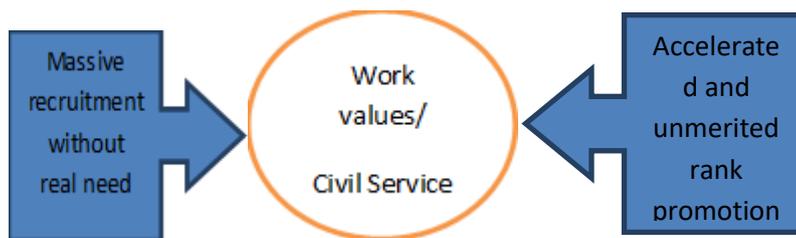


Figure (1): Work Values

Ultimately, the failure of the "Tunisian revolution", in our view, is due to a failure of values or in other words to an incompatibility between the intrinsic values of the revolution and the distorted values transmitted to our target population. It is also a failure of transmission channels. Bereft of a leader, our revolution is coveted by many who want to patronize it and claim its usufructs fruits even before they germinate. The precepts of the revolution ended up summarized in the following motto " **Together**

united against the dictatorship but it's every man for himself for the bribes" and consequently the national revolution turned into a national disorderly experience.

### 3.) Limitations and perspectives of the research:

We mention the following limitations for this exploratory longitudinal study:

- The first one has to do with the data collection instrument: The length of the questionnaire and the fact of having to answer it twice in a row can be a "parasitic factor" for the participant (fatigue and boredom...), and this can distort our results, as this factor was not controlled for in our survey.
- The sample remains limited and does not allow the results to be generalized: Indeed, the civil service currently employs more than (600,000) employees. As a result, a study that aims to establish the order of professional values can only be done within the framework of a national survey which requires a significant mobilization of human, financial and logistical resources.
- The very nature of the sample: This exploratory study concerns a single department based in Tunis the capital. It is then necessary to develop studies which take into consideration the axes of possible heterogeneity: Departmental axes, sectoral axis, territorial axis...
- It will be interesting to devote a separate study to each socio-demographic factor, to better understand their its impact on the new order of professional values.
- In this study we detected germs of nostalgia towards the time before (2011). Are we facing a collective willingness to submit to an appeal for national order?

### CONCLUSION:

The crisis in post-revolution Tunisia is, according to our study, a crisis of incompatible values. These are revolutionary values transferred to the individual level and interacting with organizational values. Current search states that values are a primary determinant in understanding motivations and behaviors.

Its contribution lies in the fact of proving that professional values can be hierarchized / prioritized according to an instrumental logic. That is to say that man can have a constant value surrounded by instrument values.

### RECOMMENDATIONS:

Two salient features engraved the employment policy in the post-revolution civil service. Massive recruitment without real need, and the unmerited rank promotions, new basis of values has been established. The civil service, once recognized as the model of rigor, discipline and merit, has today

become a cluster of opportunism, clientelism and absenteeism (Ayadi , 2016). To remedy this problem there must be a:

- ❖ Reconfiguration of the civil service through:
  - Slowing down recruitment for a reasonable period, without affecting the optimal distribution of ages for the various professional categories. There needs to be a national consensus on this.
  - Detecting the jobs or services that suffer from a structural need for civil servants such as paramedical services, education, security, local authorities... and assisting them via professional trainings, transfers, career conversion programs, in order to achieve a sectoral and territorial redeployment of agents assigned to overstaffed jobs.
  - Encouraging civil servants to leave the civil service within the framework of early retirement programs through a well-designed targeting policy and with attractive incentives. It will always be more profitable.
  - Encouraging talented and creative agents to leave for the private sector or to establish their own businesses and guaranteeing their return to the civil service while keeping their rights and seniority.
- ❖ Restoring order and merit in the civil service is a matter of survival. And this can be achieved through the modernization / upgrading of the texts governing the various aspects.

#### **What role for occupational psychology:**

As for the occupational psychology, here are some necessary and sufficient ingredients to say that the civil service in post-revolution Tunisia has become a space with high psychosocial risk requiring a profound reform to adapt and ultimately/ a profound adjustable reform to ultimately change this new order of professional values. At this stage, therefore, we consider its intervention as decisive on several levels:

- ❖ An essential lever's role in the formulation of the public service reform: The new order of professional values shows that interests are polarized especially between the national central trade union and the various stakeholders. Therefore, the design of the axes of the public service reform requires first of all a sustainable and inclusive system of constructive social dialogue dealing with the subject of the public service and finally the public function. Occupational psychology will have a significant contribution in the establishment of a psychological contract regulating the employment relationship between the State and its agents. It will be a real lever of motivation.
- ❖ An essential downstream role in the actual design of the axes of the reform: A public service in which there is no consideration for merit and performance is undoubtedly an irrational public service, and can no longer be a lever of economic growth. As a result, occupational psychology must provide its vision to careers and skills management at several levels: Recruitment, promotion, remuneration, teamwork, advising and assisting managers, retirement...
- ❖ An active monitoring and precautionary role in the social affairs of civil servants: According to this new order of professional values, public service has become an environment favorable to

stress, professional suffering, toxic relationships... This requires the urgent and permanent intervention of occupational psychologists through listening, counseling and collective therapy, personal development programs...

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