



Establishing a Dignity Scale - Measuring Intrinsic Value within Social Contexts

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Abstract

In this paper we describe the basics of the measurement of human dignity at the individual level, as well as within social contexts such as teams and organizations. In accordance with the prevailing literature, we define human dignity as the unconditional belief in the intrinsic value of life. Based on this, we established a model that understands dignity as a latent construct by evaluating personal sense of worth as well as behaviors that either violate or honor such an intrinsic value in social contexts. We developed and tested a 3-factor measure of dignity. The first factor assessed a personal sense of dignity (individual level), the second the extent to which leadership honors dignity and how work teams themselves express dignity to their members. The third factor assessed the extent to which the organizational culture honors and protects the dignity of its members. We examined the internal reliability, temporal stability, convergent, divergent, and predictive validity of our scales and presented a psychometrically sound assessment tool of intrinsic value for organizations, teams, and individuals.

Keywords Dignity · Organizational culture · Business school training

Dignity is an increasingly relevant concept for leaders aiming to contribute to the common good within an organization. Dignity is the foundational concept of the United Nations and its Sustainable Development Goals. In public discourse the term dignity is gaining currency as it carries explanatory value in terms of political motivations – as the New York times columnist Thomas Friedman argues there is no poverty of money but a poverty of dignity that drives political choices. Francis Fukuyama similarly explains global upheaval with a lack of dignity. Donna Hicks consults companies and governments alike in terms of becoming dignity literate. Crown Prince Haakon of Norway founded an organization with the aim to teach dignity literacy globally.

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Dignity, understood as the core belief that all people hold a special value that is tied solely to their humanity, is an intrinsic value which has been much neglected in a society that focuses on market-based principles for organizing and managing. As Immanuel Kant suggested, all goods that are exchangeable have a price, while human life is priceless, irreplaceable, and has hence to be treated with dignity (Bayles 1978). In current organizations, and society at large, the dominant organizing criterion is price. As a consequence, that which has no price is neglected in the decision-making processes. For example, in modern contexts the value of a healthy environment has no price tag and that of human dignity does not either – arguably they are consistently neglected.

Contemporary research suggests that human dignity can serve as a foundational organizing principle, much like utility has in the past (Pirson et al. 2019). Hicks (2011) suggested that dignity is the highest common denominator that allows for human collaboration and peace. Violations of dignity are at the source of many protracted conflicts in the global political domain and also in the organizational sphere. While the concept of dignity has been relevant in many academic disciplines, such as philosophy and theology, it is most relevant in the domain of legal studies. Dignity is a foundational concept for human rights debates and is the founding principle in several national constitutions (e.g., Germany). The concept of dignity is also the foundation of several political organizations such as the United Nations.

Only recently has the concept and terminology of dignity entered the organizational and psychological literature. In the domain of humanistic psychology as well as humanistic management, dignity is a starting point for theorizing. In the domains of sustainable development and sustainable business, dignity plays an important role challenging the dominance of the price-based system. In sociology and political sciences, the notion of intrinsic values is feeding debates on social minima, social movements, the livable wage, or universal basic income. For this paper we looked specifically at the role and measurement of human dignity as it pertains to the individual self and broadened it to include the relational context of teams and organizations. This paper – and the corresponding scale – aims to contribute to support more rigorous research on the relevance and impact of dignity in organizations overall. It thus enables and supports activities that implement practices that recognize, honor, restore, protect, and promote human dignity.

Conceptual Background

As Pirson (2017) argued, dignity is a pillar of humanistic management and represents a category of everything that has inherent value and cannot be part of an exchange logic. Following Pirson et al. (2016) there are three interpretations of dignity in relation to management theory and business ethics: Dignity as a general category, Human Dignity as Inherent and Universal, and Human Dignity as Earned and Contingent. Hicks (2011) emphasized the importance of human dignity as intrinsic worth and value. She argued that neglect of dignity is at the root of many protracted conflicts and when dignity is restored - the intrinsic value of a human being recognized - a conflict can proceed to resolution. While there are at least three grand strands of conceptualizing dignity: (as a general category; as unconditional and intrinsic dignity; and as conditional and earned dignity), we focused on human dignity as an unconditional, intrinsic, inherent value.

Building on this understanding of human dignity as an unconditional, intrinsic, and inherent value, we developed an approach to measure dignity as a latent construct. Latent

constructs are not directly measurable, only indirectly via assessments of correlated sentiments, attitudes, feelings, and behaviors. Through the process of construct development and validation, a defined pattern of associations between the new scale and its psychological correlates did come to operationalize this latent construct in a manner that is believed to be of most use in an employment context.

Dignity as a Latent Construct

We treat dignity as a latent construct which cannot be observed directly. Dignity like many other psychologically and managerially relevant concepts such as job satisfaction, employee engagement, psychological safety or self-efficacy can be observed only indirectly. As dignity is by definition intrinsic, we can only assess it by interpreting the effect it has on several observable variables. Those variables are responses to questions on a scale inquiring attitudes, sentiments, and behaviors related to experiencing a sense of personal worth (DeVellis and Thorpe 2021).

In prior work we have developed a refined definition of human dignity and center on the universal and unconditional understanding of dignity. With that basis we developed measurement scales that allow us to detect to what extent human dignity is honored, protected, and promoted within organizations. Understanding and defining dignity as an intrinsic value that is universally and unconditionally present in human beings, led us to develop three separate facet scales to assess dignity, which we briefly outline as follows.

The first pathway to evaluate dignity as latent construct was to assess a *personal* sense of dignity, a lived experience in which people sense that they are intrinsically valuable. It assesses the presence of a general sense of dignity and being a human being that is fully alive and present to life. A second pathway to assess dignity in work-related social contexts was to examine the context of the *leadership* in which people are experiencing themselves. We used Hicks' (2011) ten elements of dignity that assesses the sense of how much a person experienced their dignity as being honored by a leader. A third pathway to assess dignity was in *organizational contexts*, again using Hicks' ten elements of dignity. We evaluated, how much a person experienced their dignity being honored within the social context of a team and organization.

Prior research has shown that dignity is truly relevant in the context of workable and functional social relationships (Pirson 2017; Hicks 2018; Sisodia and Gelb 2019). As such, having a comprehensive measure of dignity that captures its experience from diverse sources within an organization will provide an opportunity to assess individuals' sense of how their humanity and intrinsic value is honored, protected, and promoted within an organizational context.

Scale Development

The scale is a composite measure of prior work of Hicks (2011) and Pirson (2017). We used Hicks (2018) assessments, based on the ten dimensions of dignity, and evaluated the psychometric structure of the responses to this 40-item scale, reduced it to ten items as a composite, including one item per dimension. In several waves, we created items for distinct referents (individual dignity, leadership/managerial dignity, and organizational/cultural dignity). These items were first tested for face validity. This was an iterative process in which items were created and global experts selected items that were most resonant with the dignity definition. These items were then tested with a global group of people working

in the field of international conflict resolution and business management and further adjustments were incorporated. We then tested the battery of items in two separate samples to reduce the scale items for the personal sense of dignity, the managerial dignity, and the organizational dignity components. We used samples of 600+ and 1000+ respondents generated via online questionnaires on the MTurk platform. We established internal reliability, factorial structure, and stability, inter-temporal validity, discriminant-, convergent-, and construct validity, and also tested the predictive validity of the scale with well-being related outcomes.

Based on these analyses, we arrived at a 24-item scale of Dignity. Four items measured the personal sense of dignity, which included items such as “I feel like a human being” and “In my work I am treated as a person, not a human resource.” There were ten items that measured managerial dignity, which contained items assessing inclusion, safety, acknowledgement, fairness, and accountability. Items such as “My manager validates others for their talents” and “My manager acknowledges others as people” were included into the managerial dignity facet.

Finally, there were 10-items that assessed organizational dignity, and included items such as “In this organization people treat others fairly” and “In this organization people include others in relevant decisions.” The final list of items for the scale are presented in the [Appendix](#).

The purpose of the current study was to assess the psychometric utility of this scale in a new multi-wave sample. Our aim was to examine the generalizability of the previously obtained factor structure, the stability of scores over time, and to elaborate on the scale’s construct validity by examining it within the context of the Five Factor Model of personality (FFM; Seibert and DeGeest 2017).

Establishing Construct Validity: Personological Correlates of Dignity

To understand the personological significance of dignity, it needs to be evaluated in relation to psychologically meaningful criteria. For this purpose, we chose the Five-Factor Model of Personality, the Worthiness factor of the concept of the Numinous, Depression, Anxiety, and Stress, Well-Being, Psychological Flexibility, Group Commitment and Satisfaction, and Group Trust and Cooperation.

The Five-Factor Model (FFM) of personality represents a comprehensive taxonomy of individual difference constructs. The FFM has been found to be a robust, empirically generalizable model of personality found to be a useful framework for organizing and understanding personality traits (Piedmont 1998). The five domains are: *Neuroticism* (N), which reflects aspects of emotional dysphoria and negative affect; *Extraversion* (E), which assesses interpersonal orientation and positive emotions; *Openness* (O), which represents a general receptiveness to new experiences and diverse emotions, versus a rigid, dogmatic approach that values structure and clarity; *Agreeableness* (A), which assesses compassion, altruism, and a positive image of human nature, versus a more manipulative, self-centered, uncaring style; and *Conscientiousness* (C), which with contrasts personal discipline, achievement strivings, and competence with a more pleasure seeking, self-indulgent, and easy going style.

We hypothesized that individuals’ personal sense of dignity ought to be associated with lower levels of N, higher levels of E (which would be indicative of a self-confidence, positive well-being, and a sense of personal integrity). There were no a priori expectations for the other FFM domains. Regarding both the Management and

Organizational dimensions of dignity, given their interpersonal nature (i.e., relating to the giving and experiencing of dignity in a social context), it was hypothesized that O (representing a personally inclusive attitude towards others and their ways of being) and A (capturing a compassionate, caring, helpful attitude towards others) would be significant correlates. No predictions were made for the other domains.

Another personality dimension within which to evaluate dignity is *the Numinous*, which is considered to be a sixth dimension of personality (Piedmont and Wilkins 2020). The Numinous represents our ultimate style of existential engagement with life, as one understands it. The Numinous represents our species' existential nature, our need to address questions of ultimacy and relevance; our perceived place in the universe. At the heart of the numinous are three basic questions that all people need to address: 1) Is death the end? 2) Does life carry any intrinsic meaning? And, 3) Am I a worthy person? Answers to these questions provide the ultimate schemas that individuals use for directing the flow of their lives. Those high on the numinous have high levels of meaning and purpose which remain resilient and stable despite crisis and flux in life. Those low on the Numinous are more self-oriented and focused mostly on those aspects of living that directly impact their own lives. There are three dimensions to the Numinous: *Infinite* (I), an intrinsic drive to acquire substance and continuity in one's life in the face of one's own mortality; *Meaning* (M), which captures the extent to which individuals have created an ultimate sense of personal meaning that they place their ultimate trust in, and towards which they devote their lives; and *Worthiness* (W), which captures the extent to which individuals experience acceptance and worth, despite personal foibles and imperfections.

Piedmont (2022) has noted that one of the important outcomes of a Numinous orientation is dignity, a belief in the unique value and importance of human life. This perspective emerges most directly from the dimension of Worthiness, which recognizes the positive value of personhood despite weaknesses and personal limitations. It is a belief that each individual has value to give arising from the uniqueness of who they are. As such, it was hypothesized that this aspect of the Numinous would have the strongest associations with all three facets of dignity. No hypotheses were made for the other Numinous scales.

These associations ought to reflect those personal qualities that are inherent to the experience of dignity across the three assessed domains of the construct and represent the psychological orientation that those with high scores on the dignity scale reflect. We also hypothesized that those with higher scores on the Dignity scale would experience higher levels of personal well-being and lower levels of negative affect (e.g., depression, anxiety, and stress). High scores on dignity ought to be associated with higher scores on personal flexibility, and lower scores on Inflexibility. When examining how participants rated their group experiences, those higher on the Dignity scale ought to express greater satisfaction with the group, commitment to the group process, cooperation among members, and trust than those with lower scores. Because dignity was hypothesized to be an intrinsic quality of individuals that they choose to express, we hypothesized that higher dignity scores ought to be associated with stronger feelings of an internal locus of control.

Taken as a whole, these associations would demonstrate that the psychological properties of dignity, as we have defined them in this scale, reflect a psychological sense of personal and emotional maturity, stability, and self-confidence that enables individuals to not be threatened by others but rather capable of extending an inclusive hand of compassion, care, and trust. Emotionally stable with a warm interpersonal style, those high scorers on dignity have a positive impact on group processes and can work to create productive and effective groups.

The above anticipated psychological correlates of the dignity scale represented our conceptualization of a personal sense of dignity and how that style would influence personal wellbeing and experienced group interactions.

Establishing Construct Validity: The Influence of Training on Dignity

This study was based on the development of a new curriculum for an undergraduate course on management. This new curriculum was directed towards training students to create groups that are inclusive, supportive, collaborative, and directed towards enhancing both corporate outcomes and personal growth (see Pirson et al. 2021 for an overview of the course and its impact on students). The modules of this course aimed to address a wide array of personal dispositions of students (e.g., an increased sense of personal flourishing, more complex thinking styles, and better management and group conflict skills). Included in this learning process was a focus on enhancing the experience of dignity, both personally and professionally in the working environment. If this were the case, then we hypothesized two outcomes regarding patterns of scores. First, we expected that scores on all of the dignity scales would increase significantly over the course of the semester. We further expected that any observed gender differences noted at the beginning of the semester ought to be lost at the end of the semester; all students, regardless of gender, would improve and reach a comparable outcome level. Second, while scores may change over time, it was hypothesized that the intrinsic structure of the scale would remain stable, indicating that while individuals have acquired a better sense of dignity, students' understanding of what dignity is, as measured by this scale, remained stable. We also expected that the alpha reliabilities of scores for the three facets of the dignity scale would be acceptable at both assessment periods.

Method

Participants

Participants consisted of 602 undergraduate business students (257 women and 338 men) who were taking the sophomore level course on Principles of Management. The average age was 19 (Range: 18–23; $SD = .60$). Concerning ethnic identity, 60% were Caucasian, 17% were Asian, 11% were Hispanic, 2% were African-American, 1% were Arabic, and 9% were multiethnic. Concerning religious affiliation, 66% were Christian, 3% Jewish, 3% Muslim, 3% Hindi, 2% Buddhist, 16% Atheist/Agnostic, and 7% indicated Other. In completing materials for this course, 598 students completed the dignity scale at Time 2 and 602 completed the dignity scale at Time 3. There were no significant participant differences between the two administrations in terms of the demographic variables.

Measures

Numinous Motivation Inventory (NMI) Developed by Piedmont (2017) this 22-item scale assesses numinous qualities of the individual. There are three facet scales: Infinite (I), an intrinsic drive to acquire substance and continuity in one's life in the face of one's own mortality; Meaning (M), captures the extent to which individuals have created an ultimate sense of personal meaning that they place their ultimate trust in and towards which they

devote their lives; Worthiness (W), the extent to which individuals experience acceptance and worth, despite personal foibles and imperfections, from their perceived understanding of life. Items are responded to on a 1 (*Strongly Disagree*) to 5 (*Strongly Agree*) Likert-type scale. Items are balanced to control for acquiescence effects. Scores are standardized as *T*-scores on a normative sample that controls for gender and age. Piedmont (2017) demonstrated the independence of these scales from established personality dimension (e.g., the Five-Factor Model of Personality [FFM] dimensions), their incremental validity over the FFM in predicting an array of psychosocial outcomes (e.g., Resilience, Self-Compassion, Positive and Negative affect). The alpha reliabilities for scores on the I, M, and W scales were .85, .91, and .78, respectively.

The International Personality Item Pool-50 (IPIP-50) Developed by Goldberg (1992) is a 50-item inventory of the FFM of personality. The scale measures each dimension of the FFM using 10 items, including (a) Emotional Stability (ES), (b) Extraversion (E), (c) Imagination (Openness; O), (d) Agreeableness (A), and (e) Conscientiousness (C). Participants read each statement and respond by indicating how it describes them from very inaccurate (1) to very accurate (5). The IPIP-50 is in the public domain and scores have demonstrated comparable psychometric qualities to commercial inventories of the FFM (Goldberg et al. 2006; Mlačić and Goldberg 2007). Scores were standardized as *T*-scores based on data provided by Robertson, Jangha, Piedmont, & Sherman (2017) that control for gender. This scale was only presented at mid-semester. This decision was based on the belief that personality was not expected to change significantly in such a small time frame and that characterological qualities would also be more robust and stable than the other measures in this study. Alpha reliabilities for the IPIP scales were .83, .88, .77, .80, and .80 for ES, E, O, A, and C, respectively.

The Depression, Anxiety, and Stress Scale-21 (DASS-21) Developed by (Brown et al. 1997; Lovibond and Lovibond 1995), the Depression, Anxiety, and Stress Scale-21 (DASS-21) is a brief measure of symptoms common to psychological distress. The instrument consists of three factors (depression [D], anxiety [A], and stress [S]) comprising seven items emblematic of each form of psychological distress. Participants read through each symptom and respond from “Did not apply to me at all” (0) to “Applied to me very much or most of the time” (3) over the course of the previous week. In a non-clinical sample of the U.S. general population, Sinclair et al. (2012) reported the following means and standard deviations for each scale of the DASS-21: Depression = 5.70 (8.2), Anxiety = 3.99 (6.3), Stress = 8.12 (7.6), and Total Score 17.80 (20.2). Alpha coefficients for the D, A, and S scales were .85, .83, and .88, respectively.

Well-Being Scale Developed by Diener et al. (2009), this eight-item scale captures self-perceived success in important life areas such as relationships, purpose, and optimism. Items are responded to on a seven-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 “strongly disagree” to 7 “strongly agree.” The scale yields one global score. Diener et al. (2009) demonstrated that scores on this measure correlated significantly with an array of well-being and life satisfaction measures. Internal consistency reliability estimate for scores in this study was .92.

Multidimensional Psychological Flexibility Inventory (MPFI) Short Form Developed by Rolffs et al. (2018) this 24-item scale is designed to capture aspects of psychological

flexibility/inflexibility. Psychological flexibility represents an ability to alter the function of internal, negative experiences by flexibly responding to negative thoughts, feelings, and events in ways that can promote well-being. Psychological inflexibility captures tendencies for psychological distress, inaction, and experiential avoidance. These two dimensions are considered to be mostly mutually orthogonal. While the long form contains 12 scales, six that capture the flexible and six that capture the inflexible poles, the short form only provides broad assessments of overall tendencies towards flexibility and rigidity. Items are responded to on a six-point Likert-type scale from 1 “never true” to 6 “always true.” Rolffs et al. (2018) provide evidence of convergent and discriminant validity. Higher levels of flexibility were associated with higher levels of well-being. Reliability estimates for the flexibility and inflexibility scores were .93 and .92, respectively.

Group Commitment and Satisfaction The items for these two scales were taken from Van Der Veegt et al. (2000). These scales examine the extent to which an individual is pleased to be working with a group as well as satisfaction with one’s colleagues in that group. Group commitment contained four items that examined the extent to which an individual felt proud to be part of the group. Items included, “I feel proud to belong to this group,” “I am willing to exert extra effort to help this group succeed,” “I feel very committed to this group,” and “I am glad that I belong to this group and not to another group.” The alpha reliability for scores on this scale in this sample was .87. Group Satisfaction consisted of three items, “I am pleased with the way my colleagues and I work together,” “I am satisfied with my present colleagues,” and, “I am very satisfied with working in this group.” Alpha reliability for scores in this study was .94.

Group Trust and Cooperation The 10-item scale used here was an abbreviated form of the 21-item Trust in Teams scale developed by Costa and Anderson (2011). Included was the entire six item Cooperative Behaviors scale and included the items: “In this group we work in a climate of cooperation,” “In this group we discuss and deal with issues or problems openly,” and, “Most people in this group are open to advice and help from others.” Alpha reliability for scores on this scale was .74. Four items were selected to measure levels of group trust, with items being selected from both the Propensity to Trust and the Perceived Trustworthiness scales. Items included: “Most people in this group do not hesitate to help a person in need,” “The typical person in this group is sincerely concerned about the problems of others,” “In this group people can rely on each other,” and, “There are some hidden agendas in this group” (R). Internal consistency reliability for scores on this scale was .66.

Procedure

This project was reviewed and approved by University IRB. All students provided informed consent before participating in the data collection. There were three data collection periods: Time 1 data were acquired during the first two weeks of the semester and provided the baseline data; Time 2 data were collected in the 7th -8th week of the semester, which included the assessment of personality and the first assessment of the dignity scale; Time 3 data, the outcome data, were obtained in the 13th and 14th weeks of the semester and included the second administration of the dignity scale. All forms were completed on-line through the university-based instructional system. The order of scale presentation varied across the different assessment intervals. For the purposes of this study, only the Time 2

Table 1 Descriptive statistics, alpha reliabilities, and gender differences on the dignity scales at Times 2 and 3

Dignity Scale	Men (<i>n</i> = 337)		Women (<i>n</i> = 256)		<i>t</i>	α (<i>n</i> = 593)
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
Time 2						
Individual	25.40	3.32	25.81	3.03	1.54	.87
Managerial	63.50	7.35	64.95	6.44	2.52*	.95
Organizational	64.11	6.71	65.60	5.95	2.80**	.95
Time 3						
Individual	26.37	2.92	26.41	2.601	.20	.87
Managerial	66.03	5.60	65.86	6.48	-.34	.94
Organizational	66.29	5.61	66.43	5.99	.29	.95

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$, two-tailed**Table 2** Correlated *t*-tests examining change over time and retest reliabilities for the dignity scale

Scale	Time 2		Time 3		<i>t</i>	r_{xx}
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
Dignity Scale						
Individual	25.57	3.21	26.38	2.80	-6.33***	.47***
Managerial	64.13	7.00	65.93	6.00	-6.53***	.47***
Organizational	64.76	6.42	66.35	5.76	-6.24***	.48***

N = 595* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$, two-tailed

and Time 3 data are being considered because the dignity scale was completed at these two time points.

Results

Table 1 presents descriptive statistics and *t*-tests examining gender differences on the dignity scales at both time administrations. As can be seen, internal consistency estimates for scores were quite high for both assessment points. Significant gender differences were found for Managerial [$t(593) = 2.52$, $p < .05$] and Organizational [$t(593) = 2.80$, $p < .01$] scales at Time 2, with women scoring higher on both scales. However, at Time 3, no gender differences were observed. The training experienced over the course of the semester helped to raise all students' awareness and experience of dignity, such that the originally identified gender differences were eliminated by the end of the course. Table 2 provides the results of correlated *t*-tests examining change on the dignity scales over time; significant increases on all scales were observed. In order to understand these effects better a 2 (time of measurement) X 2 (gender) mixed model MANOVA was conducted and a significant time by gender interaction effect was noted [Wilks lambda = .98, multivariate $F(3, 589) = 3.17$, $p < .05$] indicating that the rate of change over time was different for men and women. Inspection of the univariate interaction effects revealed a similar pattern of change for all scales, although only the Managerial [$F(1, 5901) = 8.63$, $p < .01$] and Organizational [$F(1, 591) = 6.84$, $p < .01$] scales were

significant. In each instance, women scored significantly higher at Time 2 on each scale with no gender differences noted at Time 3. Both genders significantly increased their scores over time. This differential rate of change for men and women may explain the low retest reliability coefficients noted for each dignity scale; the rank ordering of students' scores did not all change at the same rate. The retest reliabilities ought to be considered lower bound estimates of the scales' true stability over time.

Scores on the dignity scales at both time points were subjected to a principal components analysis with three factors being extracted and obliquely rotated. The results of these analyses are presented in Table 3. As can be seen, the putative three factor solutions were obtained at both collection points. All items loaded significantly on their intended factors with no cross-loadings. Congruence coefficients (CCs; Gorsuch 1983) were calculated to determine the extent to which the two solutions can be considered

Table 3 Pattern loadings for dignity scale items at Times 2 and 3

Items	Dignity Scales					
	Individual		Managerial		Organizational	
	Time 2	Time 3	Time 2	Time 3	Time 2	Time 3
Individual 1	.83	.80	.00	.05	.03	-.02
Individual 2	.89	.89	.03	-.02	-.11	-.04
Individual 3	.85	.85	-.06	-.01	.09	.04
Individual 4	.69	.71	.10	-.01	.18	.25
Manage 1	.07	.09	.76	.85	-.12	-.25
Manage 2	.00	.00	.86	.87	.02	-.01
Manage 3	.06	-.02	.81	.74	.07	.12
Manage 4	.06	-.04	.88	.74	-.02	.20
Manage 5	-.04	.03	.84	.75	.04	.09
Manage 6	-.01	-.04	.84	.78	.09	.14
Manage 7	-.03	-.01	.87	.63	.07	.27
Manage 8	-.07	-.03	.90	.76	.06	.15
Manage 9	-.04	.03	.74	.72	.15	.08
Manage 10	.07	-.02	.81	.76	-.04	.07
Org 1	.02	.09	-.16	.10	.88	.63
Org 2	.02	-.06	.00	.06	.79	.81
Org 3	.03	.16	.11	.00	.81	.75
Org 4	.01	.05	.17	.12	.73	.74
Org 5	.06	.02	-.02	.18	.83	.69
Org 6	-.03	.00	.00	.05	.89	.85
Org 7	.01	-.03	.15	-.02	.74	.90
Org 8	.08	.07	.14	.04	.71	.79
Org 9	.01	.05	.01	-.05	.86	.80
Org 10	.04	.05	.17	.00	.65	.82
Congruence Coefficient		.99		.98		.98

Loadings greater than or equal to .40 are in bold

N=595

identical. All CCs were above .90, indicating that the two solutions can be considered the same. Despite significant mean score changes, students understood the scale items in similar ways, supporting the generalizability of the scales' factor structure.

Table 4 presents the correlations between the FFM personality domains and the NMI scales with the Dignity scales at Time 1. As can be seen, all the FFM domains are related to the dignity scales, particularly the Personal Dignity scale. On the NMI, the Worthiness scale appears to have the most consistent and strongest associations with all the dignity scales. Meaning appears orthogonal. To better understand these correlational results, a series of three multiple regression analyses, using each of the dignity scales as the outcome, the five personality and three numinous scales were entered using a forward entry. For Personal Dignity, the overall model was significant, $R = .53$, $F(5,516) = 40.43$, $p < .001$. Significant predictors were: Worthiness ($\beta = .27$), Agreeableness ($\beta = .11$), Extraversion ($\beta = .13$), Conscientiousness ($\beta = .16$), and Emotional Stability ($\beta = .10$). With regard to Managerial Dignity, the overall model was significant, $R = .40$, $F(4,518) = 24.92$, $p < .001$. The predictors were: Worthiness ($\beta = .13$), Agreeableness ($\beta = .25$), Conscientiousness ($\beta = .11$), and Openness ($\beta = .11$). Finally, for Organizational Dignity, the overall model was also significant, $R = .44$, $F(4,520) = 31.23$, $p < .001$; the significant predictors were Worthiness ($\beta = .13$), Agreeableness ($\beta = .25$), Conscientiousness ($\beta = .11$), and Openness ($\beta = .11$).

Table 5 presents the correlations between the dignity scales and both the personal and group process variables assessed at the end of the course. Overall, two broad effects are noted. First, with regard to the personal outcomes, Personal Dignity held the strongest associations, with dignity scores being associated with more positive outcomes, including an increased sense of well-being [$r(598) = .60$, $p < .001$], greater cognitive flexibility [$r(598) = .41$, $p < .001$], and lower levels of overall emotional dysphoria [$r(598) = -.29$, $p < .001$]. Second, concerning the group process outcomes, the Organizational Dignity scale had the strongest associations. This pattern provides additional construct validity evidence for these two scales; personal dignity is important for developing better self-esteem

Table 4 Correlations between FFM personality domains, numinous motivations and the dignity scales at Time 2

Scale	Mean	SD	Dignity Scales		
			Pers.	Manage.	Org.
FFM Personality					
Emotional Stability	51.27	10.78	.35***	.18***	.17***
Extraversion	52.73	11.19	.33***	.15***	.15***
Openness	55.54	10.83	.23***	.28***	.30***
Agreeableness	52.70	10.08	.33***	.34***	.39***
Conscientiousness	53.44	11.35	.33***	.29***	.28***
NMI Scales					
Infinitude	53.77	7.47	.24***	.13**	.13**
Meaning	54.82	8.61	.04	.01	.00
Worthiness	50.41	8.28	.43***	.23***	.26***
Total	54.34	7.60	.36***	.19***	.20***

Note. Mean scores are presented having a Mean of 50 and standard deviation of 10 based on the normative data for these scales

Pers. Personal, Manage. Managerial, Org. Organizational Dignity

$N = 521$

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$, two-tailed

Table 5 Time 3 associations between the dignity scales and the personal and group process outcomes

Outcomes	Dignity Scales		
	Individual	Managerial	Organizational
Personal Outcomes			
Well-Being	.60***	.43***	.54***
DASS-Depression	-.36***	-.20***	-.22***
DASS-Anxiety	-.22***	-.14***	-.14***
DASS-Stress	-.25***	-.14***	-.14***
DASS-Total	-.29***	-.17***	-.18***
Flexibility	.41***	.36***	.39***
Inflexibility	-.17***	-.11**	-.09*
Group Processes			
Satisfaction	.54***	.52***	.67***
Commitment	.58***	.51***	.69***
Cooperation	.42***	.49***	.61***
Trust	.46***	.49***	.63***
Internal LOC	.33***	.38***	.39***
External LOC	-.13***	-.07	-.07

$N=600$

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$, two-tailed

and emotional adjustment, while organizational dignity is relevant for individuals becoming more committed and involved in group processes.

Discussion

Overall, the results of this report demonstrated good psychometric qualities for the dignity scale. At both administrations, the three scales evidenced strong internal consistency, although retest reliabilities were less than optimal. This finding is most likely the result of students changing significantly over the course of the semester on this dimension, with men's scores changing significantly more than women's scores. Despite significant shifts in scores over the semester, the factor structure of the scale remained unchanged, indicating that despite score differences, students understood the scale items in identical ways across both administrations.

Correlations with the personality and numinous constructs supported our initial hypotheses: Agreeableness and Worthiness were consistent correlates at both assessment periods. Two important observations regarding these data have to be noted. First, it was surprising to find that all five personality domains were significantly related to the dignity scales. Clearly, the experience of dignity, both personally and within an organizational context, involves all aspects of personality. The experience of dignity entailed a whole person response; it is about who we are as individuals. The dignity scale examined here appears to be a holistic construct which does not seem to represent a specific aspect of the Big 5. Second, concerning the NMI, while Worthiness was the largest predictor for all three facet scales, it was interesting to note the lack of involvement of Meaning. Worthiness represents one's ultimate sense of self as being worthy and of value despite whatever weaknesses, shortcomings, or mistakes one may have made in their lives. Dignity rightly addresses this ultimate existential aspect of self. But

why not Meaning? Meaning represents the essential sense of purpose and direction we have created for our lives. It represents what we are about as people and what we wish to accomplish in our lives. Apparently, the need to create a personal sense of direction and focus for our lives has little to do with our experience of dignity. It may be that the students involved in this study already had a well-developed sense of personal meaning. After all, they had already selected their major (business) and were moving along the road to realizing the goal of receiving a degree in this area. Whether they had feelings of dignity or not, their life choice and personal sense of meaning, at this point in their lives, has already been determined.

Correlations with personal outcomes also demonstrated the value of this construct for promoting well-being, emotional stability, and a more flexible orientation to confronting the world. Higher scores on the Dignity scales were also associated with better group experiences during the semester. Higher dignity scores were associated with greater group satisfaction and commitment; students reported higher levels of trust in peers, as well as more cooperation when working towards group goals. These data indicated that dignity was a quality of the individual that has ties to many aspects of personality. Its association with the included personal and group outcomes in this study underscored the value of personal integrity in business-related performance groups. Feeling valued and important, being taken seriously by colleagues, superiors, and the larger corporate community has important implications for success in the workplace.

The dignity scale also evidences itself to be a useful outcome measure for interventions aimed at developing more positive group dynamics. The Principles of Management course was developed to teach a humanistic perspective of the work environment that focused on creating pro-socially-oriented groups (Atkins et al. 2019) and on fostering positive personal development that centered on flexible thinking, empathic listening skills, and advanced group management techniques. The goal of this training is to help individuals find personal satisfaction and investment in their life and work while also promoting greater corporate efficiency, productivity, and profitability. The value of this new curriculum has already been examined and validated (Pirson et al. 2021), demonstrating that students experienced higher levels of emotional well-being, existential engagement, and improved cognitive skills. These findings add to the value of the course by demonstrating that the experienced emotional and interpersonal growth also allowed for enhanced feelings of dignity and personal worth.

The Dignity scale is a relatively short, psychometrically useful tool that can help assess the climate of groups and the extent to which members feel valued and important. Feelings of dignity are highly related to our ultimate existential engagement with the world. It represents the extent to which individuals can extend feelings of compassion and value to both themselves and others, despite knowing that one is imperfect and flawed. This high level of acceptance has important implications for individuals feeling confident to express and engage themselves in group processes with passion and purpose. Higher scores on the dignity scale are reflective of a non-defensive, open, and accepting attitude that promotes group efficiency and member well-being. A humanistic, compassionate, and pro-social work environment holds immense benefits for employees on all levels of the organization, but also in regard to organizational functioning overall. A healthy organization where all members are treated with dignity and compassion fosters healthy employees, who in turn will produce high quality work outcomes. This makes organizations function better and more seamlessly, and hence in the long run also more profitable. Helping people find personal fulfillment and validation in their work empowers employees to thrive and this empowerment adds to the bottom line of organizations.

Appendix

Personal Sense of Dignity

- 1) I feel like a human being
- 2) I often feel like I am fully alive
- 3) In my work I am treated as a person not a human resource
- 4) I feel respected at work

Managerial dignity

My Manager

- 1) approaches others as neither inferior nor superior
- 2) validates others for their talents, hard work, thoughtfulness, and help
- 3) acknowledges others as people
- 4) includes others in the relevant decisions
- 5) prevents others from feeling humiliated
- 6) treats others fairly
- 7) respects the autonomy of others
- 8) believes that what others think matters
- 9) treats others as trustworthy
- 10) apologizes when they have violated the dignity of others

Organizational Dignity

In this Organization

- 1) People assume others have integrity
- 2) People validate others for their talents, hard work, thoughtfulness, and help
- 3) People acknowledge others as people
- 4) People include others in the relevant decisions
- 5) People prevent others from feeling humiliated
- 6) People treat others fairly
- 7) People respect the autonomy of others
- 8) People believe that what others think matters
- 9) People treat others as trustworthy
- 10) People apologize when they have violated the dignity of others

Declarations

Conflict of Interests RLP receives royalties on the sales of the Numinous Motivation Inventory.

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