Sensitivity of humanity on valuing life

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to discover the intensity of values appreciation. Data are mined using internet databases and subjected to cluster analysis. Around 79 countries were sampled to determine values to the: (1) family; (2) environment; (3) work; (4) home finances; (5) morale; and (6) national identity. Religion was also considered for the analysis to determine direct or indirect relationship with the other variables. The study identified 3 models in valuing life: (1) Ideal model (person-oriented); (2) Transactional model (material-oriented/economic-oriented); and (3) Passing and Asocial model (egocentric). Further, it reveals that the family has the major role in cultivating values. It is the milieu that stands as the individual’s first community, school and government. This is then translated to other human transactions.

Keywords: Valuing, family, environment, work, home, morale, identity

I. INTRODUCTION

This study explored the worldviews of human kind on the value of life. This attempted to establish the link between values to family, environment, work, home finances, morale and national identity. Furthermore, it abstracted the influence of religious affiliation to the formation of valuing. The researchers initially commenced with these variables as components for the substantive framework that served as a tentative theoretical jumpstart in analyzing the phenomenon. This tentative conjectural structure was then deduced statistically and a more theoretical induction further substantiated its components. This retroductive process allowed a more exhaustive depiction of reality (Vasquez, 2013).

Although there are philosophical paradigms making an effort to elucidate this reality, this phenomenon remains empirically understudied. This brought the researchers to undertake this exploration to identify theoretical possibilities by analyzing cluster groups. The theoretical induction was grounded from numerical databases surrogating the variables identified earlier. Since the researchers do not have any a priori conceptualization for group membership, cluster analysis technique allowed exploration to the inter-relatedness of variables identified. Classification of cases into subgroups allowed the researchers to identify characteristics that helped in the exploration of concepts that attempts to explain the sensitivity of humanity on valuing life.

Philosophy Home (2013) defined the standards of good and evil governing the individual’s behavior. This is referred to as moral values. Moreover, synergic inputs of society, government, religion and self may affect the morals of an individual. This brings as to expect changes in the philosophy of a person when there are modifications in the laws and morals of the society. This feasibly explains the sensational divide.
when there are revisions on government policies that are incongruent to the existing morals of the community. The article also mentioned that the best source of moral values is religion. To give a clear example, divergence of viewpoints regarding the implementation of the RH Bill in the Philippines may be attributed to the dominant religious group of the country (Peracullo, 2012). Philosophical arguments claimed different valid points that maybe influenced by several factors on valuing life.

Religion

Religion matters a lot on how an individual responds. Determining which is right or wrong is contingent to how it is understood, most of the time dictated by religion. The recognition between what is veracious or erroneous is then translated to one’s choice preference. All other factors that may influence human choice may also be predisposed directly or indirectly by religion. The synergic experiential learning inputs (amalgamation of all factors) determine the person’s decisions (Vasquez, 2013). The choice brings to either ominous or favorable outcomes.

Societal divide maybe an indicator that each unit in the community are aware of what is currently going on in the community. Each side is just trying to protect their turf usually positioned on what is important to them. One must avoid ethnocentrism by labeling one group as right and the other as wrong. Each one must respect the diversity (Leininger & McFarland, 2005), for each has their own unique experiential awareness. The diversity of perspective may help everyone to appreciate the dynamics of human existence, including how we value our life.

Awareness of what is happening around us can be moved higher to discernment. Discernment is not beyond the ability to decide between what is right and wrong (MacArthur, 2013). Rather, it is the process of making careful distinctions in our thinking about truth and reality.

Orthodox. The first seven ecumenical councils defined “Orthodox” as the right belief (Fairchild, 2013). This was adopted in order to signify the true faith that defines beliefs and practices. It is claimed that Orthodox Christianity is the traditional doctrine of early Christians. It is claimed to be fully preserved without any deviation. Believers strongly ascertain that this is the only true and right believing Christian faith.

Protestant. Westby (2013) has mentioned in his study that Protestant ethic is identified as work ethic which was also defined as the code of morals based on the principle of thrift, discipline, hard work and individualism. These qualities were encouraged by the Protestant religion (especially on those denominations trusting in the tenets of Calvinism).

Catholics. Durkheim, Weber and Marx (n.d.), Catholics, strongly believed that life does not end with death. It is supposed that the bodily form of human is where soul leaves and journeys to heaven, purgatory or hell. It has been the doctrine of the Roman Catholic that there is always life after death. Among Christian, life does not end with death.

Furthermore, it is believe that when the soul leaves its bodily form, the place where God wants everyone to be destined is Heaven. The place in which those who have sinned against God stay for a short time and somehow cleansed their sins is Purgatory. Persons who have not lived God’s life are punished in Hell. Eventually, Roman Catholic people are taught to behave dogmatically to their teaching. This includes loving God and fellow human beings by following the ways of Christ. This is believed to be guided by the Holy Spirit talking in our conscience.

Changes in the Religion as Reference. Religion is an essential allusion masked in culture and location. However, the current dominion of international affairs widens the scope for reference. With new information coming in, another perspective may arise (Vasquez, 2013). It is then speculated that in time, the appeal and influence of religion on the modern mind would lessen.

Family

Although it may be influenced by religion, the family is another factor that molds valuing. Nam (2004) generally regarded it as a major social institution. It is the focus of much of the person’s social activity. As a socially constructed concept, it is modified as a communal unit created by blood, marriage or adoption. It is distinguished as either fissionable (parents and children) or stretched
Family is considered to be the basic cell of the society (Afryka, 2013). This conjecture believes that the foundation of appreciation of life adheres to what has been practiced in the family. Families who conscientiously practice their religion affect their children’s foresight. For example in Islam, the identity nurtured among their young is not mainly focused on the acquisition of knowledge, but rather on the socio-political and moral aspects (Akhtar, 2010). It is understood that knowledge is just an ordinary information which requires the believers to act based on what they have faith in and commit themselves in the attainment of Islamic aims. In short, the theory of knowledge is not just a theory of epistemology. It is an amalgamation of knowledge, insight and social activity.

National Identity and Being with Nature

Another factor attributed to the valuing of life is national identity. According to David (1997), it is also influenced by several factors including the country of origin or residence, ethnicity, religious affiliation and even notions towards national affinity. Moreover, he claimed that a strong connection to nationalism implies the roots of loyalty to the tribe or family. Affiliation with religious denomination is again repeatedly mentioned but now with the soupçon of political movement. Both are identified as an important ingredient transcribed in the history of any region.

National identity can be abstracted to the concept of patriotism which is imperative to the valuing of human life. Primoratz (2009) defined patriotism as the love of and identification with one’s motherland. It is a special concern for the country and its compatriots. This also includes being with the living things and the earth. The word "patriot" is defined as "one who loves loyally and zealously supports one’s own realm. Therefore, patriotism is not only boxed with the concept of national identity but also being with one’s environment.

Multiple influences on values

The term “value” has a wide range of usage in philosophy and science. Edel (1953) indicated that all attitudes for/or against anything a man does is “values”. He identified components of values and these are the following: preferences and avoidances, desire and aversion objects, pleasure and pain tendencies, goals, ideals, interests, and disinterests, right or wrong, good or evil, beautiful and ugly, useful and useless, approvals and disapprovals, criteria and standard of judgments and so forth.

Felce (2007) reflected a scientific concept embracing a wide range of target groups and populations that is increasingly used as the model of Quality of Life. This integrates objective and subjective indicators of individual values across a broad range of life domains. This is categorized in six areas: physical, material, social, productive, emotional and civil well-being.

Values have social and economic implications. Socially, “values” is ultimately good, proper or desirable attributes essential for existence. Economically, it is the degree to which objects are desired. It is measured by how much one is willing to give. The researchers believe that composition of what value is may vary according to the person’s reliance to his environment. A series of regression analyses conducted by Leung & Leung (1992) reflected that life satisfaction is dominated by the relationship with parents. However, this study only covered the social component. This current undertaking will shelter other factors that may be good predictors of valuing life.

Considering all the literature cited above, this study aims to determine how each influences shape the formation of valuing life. Particularly, this aimed to determine the significant role of the family, environment, work, home finances, morale and national identity.

II. THE STUDY

This study aims to discover the intensity of values appreciation across continents. The researchers considered family and religion as the surrogate measurement of values. Using cluster analysis, the following dependent variables were analyzed: environment, work, home finances, morale, and national identity. These enumerations are the surrogate measurement of valuing life. They are measured statistically using cluster analysis. Religion, as a categorical variable, is then identified.
after clustering to aid analysis. To do so, 79 countries were sampled for analysis. The sampling frame attempted to prove that valuing one’s life may differ considering the different localities and culture.

Data for analysis were mined from internet sites. Romesburg (2004) defined “cluster analysis” was a generic name for a variety of mathematical methods, numbering in the hundreds which can be used to find out which objects in a set are similar.

Data mining is a multidisciplinary field, drawing work from areas including database technology, machine learning, statistics, pattern recognition, information retrieval, neural networks, knowledge-based system, artificial intelligence, high-performance computing, and data visualization” (Han & Kamber, 2006).

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Initially, the researchers commence in a substantive theory considering values to family, religion, environment, work, home finances, morale and national identity. These variables are believed to be influences that shape the formation of valuing life. Although the researcher know that each factor influence the phenomenon, less is known about the dynamics when the factors are considered collectively. The tentative conceptualization is summarized in figure 1.

Table 1. Factors affecting the sensitivity of humanity on valuing life.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Cluster 1</th>
<th>Cluster 2</th>
<th>Cluster 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Family</td>
<td>91.43</td>
<td>92.84</td>
<td>88.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environment</td>
<td>7.96</td>
<td>9.90</td>
<td>6.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work</td>
<td>43.05</td>
<td>48.39</td>
<td>43.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home</td>
<td>27.03</td>
<td>25.85</td>
<td>25.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morale</td>
<td>35.95</td>
<td>59.20</td>
<td>39.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identify</td>
<td>61.27</td>
<td>78.83</td>
<td>30.85</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Religion is identified after clustering*

After analyzing the table above, the researchers identified three models: (1) ideal; (2) transaction; and (3) passive-asocial.

Model 1. The Ideal Model.

If you try to focus your attention to the results of cluster 2, you will arrive in this conceptualization. The increased regard to family also increased all other components except home finances. This means that the individual values life in terms of social relation but neutral to the economic aspect.

In this model, social relation is surrogated by the family, social environment, work place, moral responsibility and national identity. The family as the first school of the individual teaches the basic
knowledge of relationships (Vasquez, 2009) – that is being practiced within the individual’s turf and translated in other communal environments (e.g. work and community). They find meaning in anything that is societal in nature. They tend to be more sensitive to affinitive responsibilities.

The family is also the first government of the individual (Vasquez, 2009). This means that the family teaches the basic laws of life – like being good in school, workplace, community and country. This allows the shaping of the individual’s morality – the introjection of parental doctrines translated in social setting (Hall, Lindzey & Campbell, 1998).

Neutrality to the economic aspect does not mean it is not recognized. It is only less prioritized, secondary to the social component. The individual still needs to have stable economic resources to sustain the family and fund social responsibilities. For example, the family needs to buy food and pay taxes. This is demonstrated in the high regard to work. One needs to do hard work to sustain. This is the individual’s motivation to provide for the self and family thru labor and effort (The Sidhevairs, 2013).

Model 2. The Transactional Model.

This model represents the reality in cluster 1. The group depicts neutrality to family. However, this must not be interpreted as a mere neutral regard, but a compromised condition to support existence. One needs to provide to the self and the family. Economic stability is more valued – working hard to provide. Alternatively, involvements to familial affairs by some are only highlighted when there is expectancy of economic return. This economic aspiration of stability, either real or imagined, allows them to see values as an economic enterprise.

Since the motivation is more economic in nature, morality is compromised. This sad reality is being justified with the notion of familial support thru economic stability (the end justifying the means). The familial regard only focuses on sustenance but less affective. Familiar responsibilities may not be exhibited to accommodate the desire to look for means. Since familial responsibilities are not maximized, it is also expected that social responsibilities are less prioritized.

Although economic valuing is high, they value work as transactional. They work as required, but they do not involve themselves passionately. They only deliver what is expected from them and the amount of work is based on their pay. At worst, they expect more than what they can actually give.

There is also neutral regard to national identity and environment. The domino effect brought about by the neutral affective training in the family cascades to the other factors. This group only engages in transactions when they expect economic gain.

Model 3. The Passive and Asocial Model

This model represents the reality in cluster 1. The group depicts neutrality to family. However, this must not be interpreted as a mere neutral regard, but a compromised condition to support existence. One needs to provide to the self and the family. Economic
This model is best seen in cluster 3. Mason (2010) identified three levels defining the meaning to human life. Two of these are legitimate (may be represented by clusters 1 and 2) and the other one is misguided (best depicted in cluster 3). The first legitimate meaning of human life conferred the care for something more than the simple satisfaction of personal desires. The second refers to those satisfactions coming from living with others and acting in the world. This includes the memories and anticipations of daily life, as well as the things with familial and social significance.

The third cluster represents the lower form of valuing life. When there is low regards to family, automatically, there is also low regards to the environment, (both physical and social) and national identity. However, regards to work is neutral. It also expected that one needs to work in order to survive.

When we surrogate all the variables as part of the affective-social domain, we can identify that people in cluster 3 are the robotic type. They function without the heart. What is paradoxically surprising is that they emulate neutral moral regard. Scrutinizing it carefully allows us to implicate that that this type of people has to get along with the norms of society not because they wanted to comply. They observe them because they want to avoid potential communal problems that may arise in the future. The same dynamics is observed in the workplace. To avoid potential conflict with workmates, they put on a mask to show that they are neutrally involved. This is a strategy to avoid work related conflicts.

Clustered Countries with the Dominant Religions. The countries in cluster 1 are dominated by Muslims. Cluster 2 are dominated by Roman Catholics while cluster 3 by Roman Catholics and Orthodox.

Isolating the dominant religion as the clustering variable, it is inferred that Religion does not have a bearing in all of the characteristics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cluster 1</th>
<th>Cluster 2</th>
<th>Cluster 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8 – Muslim</td>
<td>11 – Roman Catholic</td>
<td>11 – Roman Catholic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 – Roman Catholic</td>
<td>8 – Muslim</td>
<td>9 – Orthodox</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 – Protestant</td>
<td>4 – Protestant</td>
<td>4 – Muslim</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 – Buddhist</td>
<td>2 - Christian</td>
<td>2 – Christian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 – Hindu</td>
<td></td>
<td>1 – Buddhist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 – Jewish</td>
<td></td>
<td>1 – Protestant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 – Patriarchate</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 – Orthodox</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 – Angelican</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 – Irreligious</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Intentionally did not enumerate the countries
It was observed that countries in cluster 1 have bipolar distribution in terms of economic stability. Either condition, model 2 can still explain the likelihood for competition. There is money in these countries, but they need to work. Protecting financial stability in home requires one to work transactionally. Poor countries in the other hand push its citizen to keep up with the financial demands of the family. This becomes a motivator for survival.

In all the models, cluster 2 may be influenced by religion. In Roman Catholicism, the teaching of familial closeness is entrenched to all aspects of human life. The teaching of denial to material object does not necessarily mean not obtaining them. They are also needed for survival but not the primary focus. In Islam, they are taught to balance all aspects of humanity (Akhtar, 2010).

Unique to the characteristics of cluster 3 is individualism. The focus of the self may influence their dealings with others.

**IV. CONCLUSION**

How a person value life is influenced most by the family. The family as the first, community, school and government teaches the child’s moral values. It is a *milieu* that facilitates a person’s formative years. How one is nurtured in the family directs their dealings to the social and physical environment. It also influences the person’s dealings in the work place, formation of morale, economic valuing and national identity.

There are 3 general variations in how human race value life:
1. valuing life that is centered by social motivation (person-oriented);
2. economically motivated valuing (materialistic); and
3. dissociative affect that focuses valuing to the self (egocentric).

**REFERENCES**


