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The Chinese Value Survey: An interpretation of value scales and consideration of some preliminary results

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The Chinese Value Survey (CVS) was developed by Bond and his colleagues as a complement to survey instruments constructed by research workers such as Rokeach (1973) and Schwartz (1992). It was designed to be used with people living in geographical regions where Eastern life values are pre-eminent. Preliminary studies have been carried out using this instrument with university students from ethnically Chinese backgrounds studying in three Australian universities. Data were examined using principal components analysis rotated to orthogonal structure. Initial results indicate that of the 40 values measured, 39 neatly form four factors, which are renamed to suit their content. This analysis makes interpretation of the values held by students from an ethnically Chinese background more accessible.

Background literature

The Chinese Value Survey (henceforth referred to as the CVS) was developed by Bond and a group of research workers known collectively as the Chinese Culture Connection in response to their perceived need to measure and evaluate cultural values within the setting of a Chinese social value system that is derived from the Confucian ethos. Value perceptions from those who were ethnically Chinese which were obtained by Bond and his colleagues seemed very different from those obtained in previous studies. This is especially evident in Chinese students' responses in Western value studies by Rokeach (1973) and subsequently Schwartz (1992,1994), when compared to these alternative instruments measuring Eastern life values (Bond, 1983; Bond, 1991; Bond and Cheung, 1983; Bond, Cheung, and Wan, 1982; Bond and Forgas, 1984; Bond, Leung and Schwartz,1992; Bond and Pang, 1991; Chan, 1988; Feast and Churchman, 1997; Leung and Bond, 1989; Slay, 1999a and Slay, 1999b). Interpretations of student responses appear to lack validity when related to Western values. Consequently, Bond and his colleagues have set about designing a questionnaire that is non-Western in nature. The CVS is the result. It contains a decidedly Chinese cultural bias not previously assessed in other Western value surveys.

The underlying human universals measured by Bond and his co-workers do not fit with any extant survey evaluating Western value responses. The values measured by Bond and his colleagues remain universal in nature, but they also include some values which are uniquely Confucian (Hofstede, 1991). Examples are respect for tradition, humility, filial piety, and protecting one's face. This is not to say such values do not exist in Western culture, but rather their implied importance is not as great as in Eastern culture. In Western culture the search is for truth in life values, people from Eastern cultures search for virtue which comes from the teachings central to an understanding of Confucian teachings (Hofstede, 1991).

The Confucian ethos has tended towards the formation of a dedicated and motivated as well as educated population which manifests a responsible and enhanced sense of commitment to its ideals and institutions as well as to the identity and moral fibre of its organisation with the resultant establishment of desirable outcomes (Chang et al.,1997; Chen, Liu and Ennis, 1997; Chinese Culture Connection, 1987; Chiu, 1989 and Ralston et al.,1992). The CVS has been

instrumental in enabling the validity of these constructs to be tested and confirmed. Previously these value constructs lay buried under Western perceptions of their lack of importance in Chinese culture (Bond & King, 1985).

In the CVS consideration is focussed on four dimensions or factors and the components of these factors. This is necessary when it is found that the Western value responses to the Rokeach and Schwartz value questionnaires are markedly different from the responses of students from ethnically Chinese backgrounds among whom Eastern life values are pre-eminent. Separate consideration is needed to be given to those values which are related to the Eastern value system. This examination involved life values empirically designated as oriental or Chinese. The uniqueness of these values emerges as a separate but integral system. Hence the Chinese value system co-exists compatibly with the Western way of thinking but does not become subsumed in that way of thinking. Thus both the Western and Eastern values co-exist without conflict. Therefore, it is those values where there is a divergence of opinion as to their importance within a given society, that are considered in detail. Where overlap with Western thinking, in particular, occurs, little consideration is given as detailed analysis is extant in the literature. Further, as the Chinese value system has been previously invisible using Western instruments of value measurement, greater analytic consideration and thought have been given to this latest set of data from the CVS (Bond, 1991).

The nature of these differences warrants consideration. In the People's Republic of China (henceforth referred to as PRC), a system of *guanxi* or using connections to obtain something, is integral to the very existence of society itself. This is often viewed by Western eyes as a form of corruption but, in fact, it forms a vital network of social relationships essential in a population of 1.3 billion people. Such an enormity of people is beyond comprehension in a small Australian city until it is realised that without such a nexus of intermingling networks, survival would be impossible. Moderation or following the middle way is another value leading to harmony and stability. These values support the collective rather than the individualistic way of thought and strengthen the construct of unity within the extended family unit. The particular value that has raised the greatest controversy because of its overtly contradictory nature is non-competitiveness which is classified here as part of the Confucian ethos. Many perceive ethnic Chinese as one of the most competitive of all peoples. This may, in fact, be true. However, self and other perceptions seem to be very different. It is considered in very poor taste among Chinese people to condone aggressive competition. Such aggression is integral to sport and attainment of goals in a Western individualistic society, as is contributing to the sustenance of the family unit in Eastern societies. Therefore, such outward competition and rivalry is considered a negative influence and manifestly rejected. Yet in business it would appear to be an acceptable course of action. Once again it may well be Western to evaluate an Eastern homeostatic mechanism in this way.

Methods of Analysis

The sample surveyed in this investigation has been derived from students studying at the three universities in South Australia. All members of the sample are sojourners to Australia most of whom plan to return to their home countries on completion of their studies. Their age and length of time in Australia varies and will be analysed as factors in relation to the other data when collection of information is completed late in the year 2000. These data are the initial part of a longitudinal study and represent a departure from previously reported analyses.

Students were asked to respond to the CVS using a Likert type scale of 1 to 9. One (1) represented a value which was '*of no importance to me*' and nine (9) '*of supreme importance to me*.' Students were asked to respond as a pen and paper exercise to each listed value using an

answer sheet. Future data are being collected using the internet and a web site. The questionnaires are presented in both English and Chinese and located in an easily accessible web site which the students are able to locate with a normally configured computer. (A copy of the complete questionnaire may be found in the Appendix.)

The data were analysed using principal component analysis which was rotated orthogonally using SPSS (Version 8). The results obtained are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. CVS factor values and description (N=151)

CVS-I- INTEGRITY &TOLERANCE DEVELOPMENT OF SELF	CVS-II—CONFUCIAN ETHOS RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHERS
1. Filial piety (0.50) 2. Industry –working hard (0.56) 3. Tolerance—of others (0.52) 4. Harmony—with others (0.70) 5. Humbleness (0.42) 9. Kindness (forgiveness, compassion (0.67) 10. Knowledge (education) (0.62) 13. Self-cultivation (0.57) 15. Sense of righteousness (0.48) 18. Personal steadiness & stability (0.61) 21. Sincerity (0.74) 24. Persistence (perseverance) (0.73) 25. Patience(0.77) 28. Adaptability (0.60) 29. Prudence (carefulness) (0.40) 30. Trustworthiness (0.65) 32. Courtesy (0.62)	6. Loyalty to superiors (0.60) 16. Benevolent authority (0.63) 17. Non-competitiveness (0.50) 22. Keeping oneself disinterested and pure (0.43) 33. Contentedness with one's position in life(0.63) 34. Being conservative (0.58) 35. Protecting your 'face' (0.53) 37. Chastity in women (0.55) 38. Having few desires (0.66) 39. Respect for tradition (0.62)
VARIANCE ACCOUNTED FOR BEFORE ROTATION	
8.70	28.70
VARIANCE ACCOUNTED FOR AFTER ROTATION	
11.91	18.91
RELIABILITY	
0.82	0.91
CVS-III-LOYALTY TO IDEALS & HUMANITY SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY	CVS-IV-MODERATION & MORAL DISCIPLINE WORLDLY WISDOM
7. Observation of rites & social rituals (0.42) 8. Reciprocation of greetings, favours (0.53) 11. Solidarity with others (0.65) 12. Moderation-following the middle way (0.47) 14. Ordering relationships by status (0.64) 19. Resistance to corruption (0.54) 20. Patriotism (0.63) 23. Thrift (0.50) 31. Having a sense of shame (0.43)	26. Repayment of good or evil of others(0.53) 27. Sense of cultural superiority (0.67) 40. Wealth (0.69)
VARIANCE ACCOUNTED FOR BEFORE ROTATION	
5.05	4.52
VARIANCE ACCOUNTED FOR AFTER ROTATION	
11.00	5.28
RELIABILITY	
0.82	0.57

Results

This factor structure was tested using principal components analysis. There were 10 Eigenvalues that were greater than one which accounted for 66 per cent of the variance. A scree test was performed to estimate the number of distinct factors. Three factors were clearly evident from the plot and a fourth seemed possible. A varimax rotation of four factors was performed and 39 out

of the 40 values had loadings of greater than 0.40. All loadings were positive. The value statement, 'a close, intimate friend' was excluded from further analysis as its greatest loading on the four rotated factors was found to be less than 0.30.

In the current analysis, the repositioning of value statements is necessary because of the factorial structure arrived at in the analysis. The foci have changed and the position of the values has altered. In light of the realigned content, new and more definitive names for the factors are justified.

The scales are named as follows:CVS I: Integrity and Tolerance, CVS II: Confucian Ethos, CVS III: Loyalty to Ideals and Humanity and CVS IV: Moderation and Moral Discipline. CVS I has 17 value statements, CVS II has 10, CVS III has nine and CVS IV has three value statements.

The reliabilities (Kaiser and Caffrey, 1965) found are respectively: CVS I (Integrity and Tolerance): 0.82, CVS II (Confucian Ethos): 0.91, CVS III (Loyalty to Ideals and Humanity): 0.82 and CVS IV (Moderation and Moral Discipline): 0.57.

In Bond's writing (Bond, 1991) the scale that has caused the greatest discussion is the Confucian Ethos. It differs most from the Western conceptualisation of values. The Confucian values represent cornerstones of Chinese morality. Filial piety, for instance, can be traced directly to Confucius' thinking and is referred to in *Five Cardinal Relations.* This value is still an essential contemporary construct, engendering parental respect as well as respect for tradition, honouring one's ancestors and financial support of parents. The reciprocation of greetings and favours and protecting of 'face' are also still very important in a society which operates from an inner core of close relationships which, in turn, are surrounded by more casual but still significant personal links (Bond, 1991). This is analogous to a series of concentric circles like the layers of an egg with the family represented by the yolk.

The realignment of the value statements is necessary following the factor analyses conducted in this study. Aside from the Confucian factor, the largest number of values is associated with the concept of Integrity and Tolerance. It includes value statements which promote the development of the social person. Social stabilisation acts as the umbrella concept. Therefore, values such as knowledge (education), self cultivation, personal steadiness and stability, patience and adaptability are included. The third factor: Loyalty to Ideals and Humanity in the individual's contact with others is seen as the embodiment of social responsibility. This factor promotes moderation and following the middle way, the ordering of relationships by status, the observation of rites and rituals, resistance to corruption and a solidarity with others. The latter three values reinforce a collectivistic approach to harmonious group maintenance and living in a peace-seeking manner. Acceptance of this grouping of values shifts the meaning of the factor itself toward the importance of group cohesion because of the heightened sense of social responsibility.

The final factor represents both moderation as well as moral discipline. Moderation, including wealth and a sense of cultural superiority promote an aura of worldly wisdom as does the construct of repayment of good or evil to others. Self-discipline is reflected in the self-discipline and implied self-control needed to maintain these values positively.

These factors vary in name and composition from those enumerated by Bond and his colleagues in their original evaluation of the CVS by the Chinese Culture Connection (CCC, 1987). The CCC had identified the scales as follows: CVS I: Integration, CVS II: Confucian Work Dynamism, CVS III: Human-Heartedness and CVS IV: Moral Discipline. CVS I was seen to reflect values which focus on social stability, strong family bonding and chastity in women, all of which indicate the importance of family. Filial piety and patriotism although negatively correlated, were included

in this factor. CVS II contained values which all reflected the Confucian work ethic. In contrast to this hierarchical dynamism were four negatively correlated values: reciprocation of good and evil in others, personal steadiness, protection of face and respect for tradition. These latter values advocated checks and distractions at the personal, interpersonal and social levels (Chinese Culture Connection, 1987). CVS III contained the value statements which embraced ideas suggesting gentleness and compassion as contrasted with a sterner, legalistic approach to life. In CVS IV the positively loaded values reflected a moral restraint, in contrast to the negatively loaded values, adaptability and prudence which implied a position lacking such self-control. In Bond's study moderation was seen to represent a firm and disciplined stance rather than the flexibility normally associated with 'following the middle way' (Chinese Culture Connection, 1987).

Discussion

Comparative Data Analysis

Comparing students in PRC and Taiwan, Yuan & Shen (1998) found many shared values and concerns for the world in which they lived. They found traditional Confucian values still extant in rural societies which today represent 75-80 per cent of the population in PRC compared with Taiwan. However, those young people living in urbanised areas considered these values somewhat antiquated but still acceptable to guide and mould the preferences of young people. Although embracing the new and modern values from Western culture, older, more stable values still pervade in the moral education and training of the young. Once again, the CVS enables a greater understanding of these perceptions in the minds of young Chinese as the CVS measures values relevant to their thinking rather than their evaluation of Western values. It has given credence to the concept of the *tao* or 'the way' which has led, guided and still transcends Chinese culture today. The feudalistic social order espoused by Confucius (Ralston et al., 1992) has merely been replaced by the Communist social order. Therefore, Confucian values remain intact today in spite of, or despite, attempts to discredit his teachings. These values operating in a massive unwieldy bureaucracy have survived and even flourished as they promote the well being of the basic unit of the family and work place alike. The work unit is considered to be both a link and a control over the working men and women in PRC today. Basic Confucian ideals and values have not changed, only altered or adapted to fit the newer model of the political state.

Comparing results in different cultures and their relationship to Confucian values

Bond (CCC, 1987 and Bond, 1988) in the analysis of the data collected was looking for transcultural trends. He analysed data at the collective or country level rather than the individual level with both discriminant analysis and factor analysis with very high factor loadings which he compared to trends in gross national product as a measure of socio-economic status. Such methods of analysis are vulnerable to aggregation bias. In the present study, inter student comparisons are undertaken and a measure of individual change over time is also envisioned. The students used in the sample are sojourners, as already noted, and plan to return to their home country after finishing their studies in Australia. Many have also indicated a desire to do further study after completion of their present degree. Some have even expressed the hope of gaining work experience after finishing their studies but none has contemplated migration at this point in time. It remains to be seen if these ideas will change over time. The results obtained, as with most preliminary study analyses, have raised further issues for consideration and it is hoped that additional questions may satisfactorily resolve some of the issues raised.

Chiu et al. (1998) studied Chinese business people with regard to conflict behaviour, aggression and the acceptance of traditional Confucian values. They found, as has been found in personal

dealings with Chinese teachers and students, that conflict is avoided if at all possible. The Chinese tend to avoid assertive or competitive behaviour as it produces conflict and a lack of harmony and is socially unacceptable. Sublimation of personal goals to the collective whole is helpful in promoting values such as harmony, humility, courtesy, patience, obedience and modesty, so important in the development of self and maintenance of the group collectivist ethic evident in inter-student relationships, especially in a Chinese university situation when six to eight students, on the average share, a single dormitory room. These values have formed the basis of the Confucian ethos which even today, despite political upheaval and social change, has emerged as the dominant cognitive construct in ethnically Chinese societies. The self control and strong self-effacement and discipline required to avoid conflict are difficult for the Western mind set to comprehend much less put into practice (Chiu et al., 1998). Retention of traditional beliefs and cultural values as primal cohesive factors are considered to be essential in countries following collectivistic patterns of life.

It was interesting to note that when interviewing the sample in this study, most students preferred to live in groups with people from the same country or culture rather than alone even though they preferred to study alone rather than in a group. From the demographic questionnaire it was found that 73 per cent preferred to study alone and 49 per cent preferred to study at home where they cannot readily confer with friends or colleagues compared to 40 per cent in the library where they can confer with others. Only 24 per cent have family here in Adelaide but 54 per cent speak their home language when away from their university settings and another five per cent speak a language other than English when outside of the study environment. Chan (1988) found that students adapted to the Australian way of life have values and aspirations closer to those of Australian students than to other, more recently arrived Chinese students. Migrants appear willing to forego their own cultural values in order to avoid conflict in their anxiety to assimilate. This is not found among sojourners where Confucian values and concomitant academic success appear to be a more important mediator of behaviour (Chan 1988). The students would appear to identify with the Chinese rather than the Western ethos even more than Asian migrants and refugees to this country. This is best understood in light of a common cultural heritage even though the actual country of origin may be different.

In consideration of the value factors already mentioned, allusion to Confucian heritage has been made. An elaboration of the dominating cultural structure may be helpful here. In traditional Chinese society, the parent-child, family and neighbour relationships are built on blood and marriage (Chiu 1989). In the past, families lived in the same area of a town or city and formed tight networks that were rarely broken. Traditionally it is difficult to separate self and group identity and the collective is preferred to the individual in parent-family-neighbour interaction. Friendship and work co-operation are voluntary in group formation in that members are not required to relinquish individual identity but co-operation is expected in order to attain social and functional goals. Over the past 30 years modernisation has been perceived as a weakening influence on traditional family relationships. It has also raised the importance of voluntary associations on interpersonal behaviour, making co-operation and self-reliance more important than belonging to involuntary groups like the family where people define their social identity. Such changes tend to enhance the concept of Chinese collectivism as being highly focussed whereby some expectations are enforced and others are not. In Hong Kong and the other 'little dragons' countries of Japan, Korea, Macau Malaysia, Singapore, Taiwan, , as well as PRC, there has been rapid economic development and industrialisation which have tended to reduce the significance of the collective when compared with individual behaviour. These external changes have led to changes in the socialisation process and, in turn, they have produced significant changes in the endorsement and inculcation of traditional Chinese values (Chiu, 1989). There are now many nuclear families living

in large cities and even greater evidence of change with the one child family policy practised out of necessity in PRC. These changes have, in turn, led to the weakening of traditional famialism and the growing importance of the individual and the way in which cultural values are operationalised. This gives a clearer understanding of a personal-cultural identity, an important component of which is a person' self-concept. However, the major component of self-concept is the individual's social group membership which determines social identity.

Bond and King (1985) depict Hong Kong, ethnically 98 per cent Chinese, as it emerged from cultural ruralism and colonisation by the British to its status today as a modern industrialised arm of PRC. For the Chinese, 'China was the world' (*tian xia*). Even today it is often referred to as 'the Middle Kingdom' (*zhong guo)*, the implication being that China is the centre of the world. In the past, educated Chinese have seen no need to go beyond its borders as they, in limited exploration, have found no other civilisation better developed than their own. Any invading idea that might improve their lifestyle has been simply adopted (Bond & King, 1985). The foreigners living there are called in Cantonese *gui lao (*and in Mandarin *yang guizi)* or foreign devils, to be tolerated and worked with but never assimilated. This extends to the Hong Kong and other Chinese interpretations of Westernisation and modernisation. It is modernisation which involves technology, behaviour and material progress whereas Westernisation involves values, thinking or traditions originating in the West. In this way, Hong Kong Chinese can preserve their interior Chinese domain as culturally inviolate by rejecting Westernisation while simultaneously embracing modernisation. This distinction allows modern Chinese to adopt what they wish from the West while still preserving essentially Confucian values such as filial piety, thrift and respect for the individual's teacher (Bond & King, 1985). The bifurcation created by these definitions has allowed technical modernisation to be applauded while condemnation of 'spiritual pollution' of the culture continues. In conversations with local Hong Kong Chinese prior to 1 July 1997, none seemed apprehensive. After all, they said, 'we are all Chinese and that is all that matters.'

Different results using similar measurement instruments at one point in time

Guan and Dodder (1998) have conducted a comparative study looking at Chinese students in American universities and Chinese students in PRC. They have considered the impact of cross-cultural contact on values and identity. Guan and Dodder (1998) have measured values using the CVS and individual interviews to assess the importance of cross-cultural contact. They have found that two principal forces, length of time away from their home culture and age are important influences on change. Two years would seem to be the time barrier for change. Within two years the students tend to retain those values which enable them to maintain personal cultural identity within a Western ambience. However, Guan and Dodder (1998) found that the longer the students were away from PRC, the greater the change in values. Two hypotheses have been advanced for this study. A paraphrasing of these will assist understanding of the investigations being conducted. The first states that overseas Chinese students (sojourners) in Australia staying longer view cultural values as less important than newer arrivals. Secondly, it is hypothesised that Chinese students in Australia tend to maintain certain Chinese values which may help them to sustain their cultural identity in a new cultural milieu.

Guan and Dodder (1998) also used principal components analysis and then rotated the factors and identified value statements with loadings greater than 0.40 orthogonally. Only 18 of their value statements had high enough loadings whereas 39 out of the 40 had high loadings in this study. Guan and Dodder also rearranged and renamed the value structure as was done here for the sake of clarity of meaning and contextual cohesion. It would be of interest to see if length of stay changed the position and/or values obtained for the variables measured here in Australia. The study cited was conducted in the United States and PRC and measured at a single point in time whereas the

present study is a longitudinal one, in order to measure change over time. It remains to be seen if those values which are peculiarly Chinese, those representing what is here called the Confucian ethos, change greatly with the passage of time and whether the change is sufficient to alter the value structure described above.

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Appendix

THE CHINESE VALUE SURVEY

[Adapted from the Chinese Culture Connection, 1987. Chinese values and the search for culture-free dimensions of culture. *Journal of Cross-cultural Psychology,* 18(2):143-164.]

The aim of this study is to find out what matters are important or unimportant to people. You will find below a list of 40 items. Please indicate how important to you is each of the 40 items.

To express your opinions, imagine an Importance Scale that varies from 1 to a maximum of 9. (1) stands for "of no importance to me at all, and (9) stands for "of supreme importance to me." In other words, the larger the number, the greater will be the degree of importance to you. Give one number (either 1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8 or 9) to each item below, in the brackets provided to express the importance of that item to you personally.

You can concentrate better by asking yourself the following question when you rate an item: "How important is this item to me personally?" Repeat the same question when you rate the next item, and so on. THANK YOU.

( ) 1. Filial piety (Obedience to parents, respect for parents, honouring ancestors, financial support of parents)

( ) 2. Industry (Working hard)

( ) 3. Tolerance of others

( ) 4. Harmony with others

( ) 5. Humbleness

( ) 6. Loyalty to superiors

( ) 7. Observation of rites and rituals

( ) 8. Reciprocation of greetings and favours, gifts

( ) 9. Kindness (Forgiveness, compassion)

( ) 10. Knowledge (Education)

( ) 11. Solidarity with others

( ) 12. Moderation, following the middle way

( ) 13. Self-cultivation

( ) 14. Ordering relationships by status and observing this order

( ) 15. Sense of righteousness

( ) 16. Benevolent authority

( ) 17. Non-competitiveness

( ) 18. Personal steadiness and stability

( ) 19. Resistance to corruption

( ) 20. Patriotism

( ) 21. Sincerity

( ) 22. Keeping oneself disinterested and pure

( ) 23. Thrift

( ) 24. Persistence (Perseverance)

( ) 25. Patience

( ) 26. Repayment of both the good and the evil that another person has caused you

( ) 27. A sense of cultural superiority

( ) 28. Adaptability

( ) 29. Prudence (Carefulness)

( ) 30. Trustworthiness

( ) 31. Having a sense of shame

( ) 32. Courtesy

( ) 33. Contentedness with one's position in life

( ) 34. Being conservative

( ) 35. Protecting your "face"

( ) 36. A close, intimate friend

( ) 37. Chastity in women

( ) 38. Having few desires

( ) 39. Respect for tradition

( ) 40. Wealth