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RESEARCH ARTICLE

CONCEPT ANALYSIS OF VALUE

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ABSTRACT

Value is a word that is used in many aspects of the world. Understanding the concept of value helps guide the professional in their daily practice as they perform their daily functions. The review of value as a concept is based on an understanding of what value is through how it is used and its defining attributes. To strengthen this understanding, a model case and a contrary case are provided to guide an application of the concept of value in different settings. To support this, antecedents, consequences, and empirical referents are discussed. Through a discussion of the concept of value, the professional can have a better understanding of how value can be applied.

INTRODUCTION

A concept analysis serves as an organizational method for discussing a word, and it is one step in theory development (Walker and Avant, 2005). The process of conducting a concept analysis aids in defining the concept in a manner that examines uses of the word without regard to discipline specific connotations. It is essential to define the concept of value for initial theory development to aid in the steps of research. Wilson's Concept Model is a valuable tool to serve as the framework in a concept analysis, and it will serve as the structure for the concept analysis of value (Walker and Avant, 2005). Value is a word with many meanings. It can mean a reasonable return for merchandises, services, or currency for something that is exchanged, or it can mean the monetary worth of an item (Value, 2012a). Value can mean the relative price or numerical capacity that is fundamentally desirable as it is allocated or determined by design, principle, or quality (Value, 2012a). Value can also refer to cultural values, which is defined as the commonly thought principles of what is acceptable or unacceptable, or good or bad in a society or organization (Business Dictionary, 2012). In some cases, the word 'value' is interchangeable for the word 'ethics' (National Defense University, 2010). In nursing, value is often associated with ethics (Monnie and Windsor, 2005). Value relates to culture because an individual's culture will shape what they value (Oyserman and Lee, 2008). If an individual's culture teaches the person that they must pray daily or five times daily to go to Heaven, the individual will value a prayer routine.

If a culture teaches that tattoos and piercings are a preferred method of self-expression, the individuals within that culture will value tattoos and piercings. If a culture teaches that mental health problems do not exist, the patient from that culture may value an image that does not project mental health problems, rather the mental health problems may manifest as somatic symptoms. The significance of this concept is that understanding the values an individual holds and accepting those values contributes to the individual's perceived health (Smith *et al.*, 1995). When an individual's values are accepted and acknowledged, health disparities decrease (Betancourt *et al.*, 2005). Therefore, the rationale for conducting this concept analysis is to clarify what is meant by *values* and how this is delineated in various aspects of life.

Uses of the Concept

Etymologically, the word may have originated from the Latin word *valere*, meaning to relate to the word valiant. Another reported early use is circa 1300s as an Old French word to connote worth. In 1918, the word 'value' appeared to describe social principles (Value, 2012b). From the origins of the word to the use of the word today, the word value has received many discipline specific uses. Disciplines such as business, anthropology, medicine, and nursing use 'value' to describe various circumstances that impacts the human condition and world in which we live. In business, value describes a certain benefit or perceived advantage. An example is the Value Chain, a trend in business that described making goods more appealing to customers (Porter, 1985). Also in business, the perception of value is positive when the individual wants something, and an item may hold no value (Hughes *et al.*, 1998).

In anthropology, the word value means that a certain quality is good or held strongly by a cultural group. Values imply there is an inherent good in what is discussed, and value also classifies something as worthwhile (Belshaw, 1959; Nadel, 1951). Values can exist as themes in a cultural group or society, and these themes occur as individuals consistently express a desire for the certain themes, otherwise known as the values, beliefs, or qualities (Kluckholm, 1956). Anthropologically speaking, the teaching and upbringing an individual receives is relevant to prescribed cultural determinants. A professional interacting with someone from this culture would need to understand the specific values held by this person (Roach, 2004). In the discipline of music, value describes the time and length of a musical note. When a vocalist is singing, the value of the note is the duration of the note (Fellowes, 1946). This is also the case for instrumentalists as they play their instrument according to the value stipulated by the notes. History uses the word value to discuss the worth in studying history (Moore *et al.*, 1997). In medicine and nursing, value is a descriptive term to define virtuous principles that reflect qualities of use in evaluating ethical dilemmas (Elahi, 2011). Value is also used to discuss the beliefs and needs of patients and the role of the nurse and other health care team members to meet the patient's needs (Sackett *et al.*, 1996). Values may also mean lab values, which provide the healthcare professional an idea regarding how the patient is doing internally and physiologically (Daneshvar *et al.*, 2009).

Defining Attribute

Walker and Avant (2005) discuss the relevance of defining the attributes of the concept to assist in understanding. In discussing the discipline-specific uses of the word value, certain attributes were prevalent. A common theme apparent across many disciplines is that value implies a certain sense of worth, a benefit, is appealing, and subjective. This means that the individual has a perception of value dependent upon personal culture, experiences, and personality. The individual also determines the relevance of the value. Values are dependent upon life circumstances, and values often appear as a theme in the individual or society.

Defining attributes

- Implied sense of worth
- An appealing, yet subjective, benefit
- Individual perception and relevance based on culture, life experiences, and/or personality
- Individual or societal theme

Model Case

A model case is an example that exhibits all of the defining characteristics of the concept (Wilson and Avant, 2005). The model case provided illustrates the concept perfectly. Patient M is a Catholic, Hispanic woman in the hospital for pancreatitis. She has a strong sense of family and faith. She places a great deal of worth in praying with her rosary and daily visits from nuns. Patient M feels a significant benefit in having pictures of her children and grandchildren present on her over the bed table. She finds that it is very appealing to have bright flowers in her room, as they remind her of growing up in Mexico.

Patient M values are reflective of her Catholic, Mexican culture. Her experiences growing up in Mexico have shaped what she values, and her personality of being quiet and gentle with a love for happy colors have shaped what she values. The values expressed by Patient M share a common value theme with her peers, and her peers' values reflect those typical of other women from her culture.

Contrary Case

A contrary case does not possess the defining attributes of the concept and serves as a sharp divergence from the model case, in which the defining attributes are present (Walker and Avant, 2005). Patient S is a single, White male that was admitted to the hospital for pneumonia. He has depression, is suicidal, and does not value anything. He sees no worth in anything, and he finds life miserable and unappealing. He has turned his back on his loving family upbringing and forgotten all of his ideal life experiences. Patient S is not displaying a value of anything.

Identifying Antecedents and Consequences

Antecedents must occur prior to the occurrence of the concept (Walker and Avant, 2005). Antecedents of the concept of value include growing up in an environment in which the individual is taught to think that there is worth and benefit from certain things. The individual must find certain things appealing. Consequences are the events that may occur as a result of the concept of value (Walker and Avant, 2005). Consequences of value include that the individual will feel strongly about certain things and want these things present. A strong sense of value regarding the power of good health will provide the individual with motivation to take actions to ensure good health (Loeppke, 2008).

Empirical Referents

Empirical referents are the phenomenon that establishes the presence of a concept (Walker and Avant, 2005). Defining attributes must be met to apply the concept of value. The defining attributes of value as it relates to nursing are that patients must express a certain desire or need for something. They must be able to discuss or communicate that which is important to them, and they should be able to have a certain control over stipulating that the things they value be present around them. An accurate values assessment may be conducted by speaking the same oral or written language, or through the use of a translator. This provides a comprehensive understanding of what the patient wants, desires, and holds in value, and it is essential that these empirical referents are satisfied.

Conclusion

The concept analysis of value reveals many discipline specific uses, but it was necessary to enumerate the defining attributes of value. The conceptual analysis of value is the first step in the process of conducting research regarding how values are reflected in daily actions. The goal of a qualitative research study assessing patient's values will aid in understanding of how to further meet the needs of patients in the hospital. Eventually, it is thought that conducting research regarding values will provide healthcare providers with information on how to meet specific patient values.

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