

# 核心價值觀之預期-以東西方博士班學生爲例

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## 摘要

以來自臺灣的亞洲人來看，我們有一些機會注意到如果以促成領導特色的最重要價值觀而言，美國學生和亞洲人比較起來，似乎有些不同的重點。亞洲文化通常對於經驗與年齡的尊重帶有強而有力的忠誠度。然而，美國人把公正與解決問題看得比經驗重要。簡而言之，這篇文章旨在探索一個小團體（在課堂上的博士班學生）如何比較和對照他們的基本價值觀。

在一個小教室的研究中，一群來自兩種不同文化的博士班學生鑑別了他們優先的價值觀。在最優先的五種價值觀中，這群博士班學生意識到被他們共同列爲最優先的就是誠實、容忍與受教育。這個研究讓我們可以重新思考這個發展中的全球社會不可能在來自不同文化的同質團體中建立共同的價值觀。

關鍵詞：Core Value, Leadership.

# Predicting Core Values-East Meets West in a Doctoral Class

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## Abstract

As Asian from Taiwan, we have had several opportunities to observe that American students seem to have somewhat different priorities than we have regarding the most important values that contribute to characteristics of leadership. Asian culture is strongly committed to respect for experience and age, while American's seem to value equity and problem solving over experience. This paper explores briefly, however, how a small group (doctoral students in a course) compared and contrasted in their basic values.

In a small classroom study, a group of doctoral students from two different cultures identified their preferred values. To compare the five top values selected by both groups, we find that both groups preferred three values: namely, be honest, be tolerant, and become educated. This study allow us to rethink about how the developing global society may or may not be building a common set of values between homogeneous groups in different cultures.

**Keywords:** Core Value, Leadership

## Introduction

These students in higher education administration were interested in values associated with leadership in order to build mutual appreciation and understanding between the East and West. The group was surprised, however, after taking a simple value inventory, that neither group could predict the other's most preferred value statements. This paper suggests that other groups may find it very interesting to discuss the use of similar values inventories to build across cultural understanding.

As leaders in Asia and the Western world continue to engage in common problem solving and project development, the need for both societies (let alone among leaders within these cultures) to understand "value roots" will increase. The continuing increase in information technologies and globalism may provide an exciting opportunity for leaders to compare, contrast, and synthesize behaviors and values for mutual benefits.

## Core Values of Leaders

Lord and Brown (2001) presented a model which suggests that values and subordinate identity levels act as constraints on one another and that powerful leadership effects will be realized only when values and self identities form coherent, interrelated patterns. In their prior work they showed that leaders can impact many subordinate processes by influencing the self-concept of others (Lord & Freiberg, 1999). Organizational behavioral patterns and expectations are often re-evaluated by employees when a new top leader is selected. How does the new leader seem to see the future?

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How does the leader engage others in discussion? Is the interaction open, formal, casual, planned, frequent, or infrequent? A leader's view of the world may reflect core values about the nature of organizations, societies, and the purposes of people or life in general. The core values of leaders who come from monocultural contexts may not be in the conscious of these leaders. However, as globalism brings leaders into close dialogue with people from alternative cultural roots, these core values will likely become important in building common understanding and progress.

### The Characteristics of Leaders in the West and East:

The Western vision of ideal organizations and leadership stems from the historical struggle for individual rights and freedom from authoritarian domination (Macoby, 1994). Western leaders may have more awareness of the need for individual initiative that older Eastern cultures that have placed values on experience and wisdom from time-tested societies.

In the ideal Asian organization, leadership is part of a natural hierarchy. The good leader is like a good father who accepts responsibility for the development and well-being of employees (Macoby, 1994). Chinese culture is highly relational and its first virtue is "human heartedness" or concern for humanity (Liu, 1986a, 1986b). Imbued also with a strong sense of duty and hierarchy, Chinese people are expected to see themselves in the context of others and understand the need for reciprocity and obligations (Tjosvold etc. 2001).

Because the culture different in managing an organization, in Chinese culture, a leader should to make the organization more harmony. In addition, the managing style and core values of leader between west and east are different.

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## Significance of Comparative East-West Values Study

Cross-cultural understanding is critical, particularly in the complex global society frustrated by terrorism. Although hard to define and difficult to put a finger on, culture is extremely powerful (Peterson & Deal, 1998). Primary cultural mores affect leadership style and expectations for professional performance. The US and Asia continue to build common understanding and leadership processes, a necessary ingredient for world peace and productivity.

An assessment and analysis of norms, mores, and cultural values most strongly valued by leaders in each of the cultures of the West and the East may lead to opportunities for discussion and mutual understanding of leadership approaches. This is particularly important for educators seeking to build cultural understanding with students from both cultures in the same learning groups.

What do Americans most value in leadership? What do Asian leaders most value and respect in leaders? How do these values and mores compare and contrast? Which values should be included in studies of leadership?

### A Small Classroom Study of How East and West Saw Their Values

This article focuses on an informal action research study of a group of doctoral students from two cultures and their preferred administrative values. A group of 10 American doctoral students and 10 Taiwanese doctoral students in a course in the politics of education at the University of South Dakota in the spring of 2000 participated in an activity to rank each other's values.

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The intention of the activity was to ask each group to rank a list of commonly-held philosophical and administrative values in a list of 25. Secondly, each group was asked to speculate about how the other cultural group would likely rank the list of values. The class activity was to determine the extent to which each group could predict the preferred values of the other group. Each of the groups had taken at least three doctoral classes with each other and were familiar with each other.

Because the University of South Dakota is a relatively smaller research institution, the doctoral classes are usually under 30 students, allowing students and faculty to become well acquainted. Could the Midwestern Americans predict the Taiwanese student most and least preferred values? Or, could the Taiwanese students studying in the US predict the American groups' most and least favored values?

### Results of the Simple Class Survey

Using a traditional American values inventory from Jones and Pfeiffer (1991), the two groups of students were asked from a list of 25 statements to select their top and bottom five most and least preferred values. Then the Americans were asked to predict what the Taiwanese would select and vice versa. The unusual finding from this class experiment was that neither group was able to predict each others most or least preferred values. How can this be? These people knew each other and had taken classes together.

Americans predicted that Taiwanese student would list the following as most preferred values:

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Rank	American Predictions for Taiwanese
1.	Work hard
2.	Win
3.	Honor one's family
4.	Be loyal to your country
5.	Help others

Table 1: American Predictions for Taiwanese Most Preferred Values

## Taiwan Predictions for Americans

## Most Preferred:

Rank	Taiwan Predictions for Americans Most Preferred
1.	Get ahead
2.	Win
3.	Pursue happiness
4.	Find a better way
5.	Build things

Table 2: Taiwan Predictions for Americans Most Preferred

Both groups of students rated each of 25 statements on a Likert-type scale to indicate how much each item was valued (1-5 from not at all to strong preference). While both groups' ratings of the items listed above were above the midpoint, neither group ranked any of the items in their top five preferences. The following top five preferences were listed by each of the groups:

## American Group Top Five Values:

Rank	American Group Top Five Values
1.	Be honest
2.	Become educated
3.	Be productive
4.	Be tolerant
5.	Be loyal to your country

Table 3: American Group Top Five Values

### Taiwanese Top Five Values

Rank	Taiwanese Top Five Values
1.	Be honest
2.	Work hard
3.	Become educated
4.	Be tolerant
5.	Be free

Table 4: Taiwanese Top Five Values

It is interesting to note that among these five top values three were shared by both groups, namely, be honest, be tolerant, and become educated. What was somewhat surprising to the class, however, was that each group did not predict the other's top five values. The class assumed that some national or ethnic stereotyping was yet at work when considering primary values.

The values worksheet by Jones and Pfeiffer included 25 items. It was noteworthy for the bicultural class of Taiwanese and American students that several items were least preferred by either of their groups. These excluded items included the following:

Rank	Least Preferred Items
1.	Be religious
2.	Know the right people
3.	Obey the law
4.	Be partisan
5.	Influence other countries to become democratic

Table 5: Least Preferred Items



The Traditional American Values Worksheet generated significant discussion about how the developing global society may or may not be building a common set of values between the US and Taiwan. This class experience made such a strong impact on the writer that the topic of developing consensus of professionals in the global community about basic values has been selected as a doctoral dissertation topic. The Traditional American Values Worksheet may be very useful for other groups, classes, or organizations interested in building cultural dialogue and understanding.

Many researchers have explored the values and beliefs that individuals and groups seem to hold. Core values appear to change very slowly, even in the developing global community. In 1998 the Kenan-Flagler Business School at Kishwaukee College in Malta, Illinois, surveyed 170 institution employees, 380 new students, and 295 student parents in 1998 (<http://kish.cc.il.us/commitment/corevalues/survey.shtml>)

Common values held by these Americans included the following: Preferred Values of Faculty, New Students, and Parents in the Kishwaukee College Survey:

Rank	Least Preferred Items
1.	Honesty
2.	Respectfulness
3.	Responsibility
4.	Integrity

Table 6: Common values held by Preferred Values in Kishwaukee college.

Honesty and tolerance (respectfulness) are two strong values shared by the American and Taiwanese group with the Kishwaukee group. This type of value surveying has strong potential to generate dialogue and healthy communication, particularly among cultural groups that look forward to building stronger relationships.

## Discussion of Values Development Process

To improve the performance of organizations is a primary goal for a leader of most any organization. How a university, government, or company keeps and motivates its employees and clients becomes the most important task of a leader. A great leader should give followers clear goals that require time for synthesizing vision and behavior. The core values of leader will influence the performance of an organization. The job of a leader in the workplace is to get things done through employees. In order to do this, the manager should be able to motivate employees to maximize their work performance.

Owen (1990) wrote, "To manage is to control; to lead is to liberate." However, in the global and information world, leaders and their followers can communicate through the Internet, E-mail, Voice conference and Satellite. Leaders may have the capability today and into the future to manage their subordinates through virtual reality.

Most definitions of leadership share the common assumption that leaders influence subordinate's task and social behaviors (Yukl, 1992). Therefore, leaders need clear core values to communicate to employees. A leader may need to find time for reflection on the truly basic values that may influence day-to-day behaviors. Organizational behavior, leadership behavior, and personal behavior may all find their roots in values of cultures.

But, what are the basic values of the East and West that may be at work in influencing organizational behavior? How clear are contemporary leaders about how their behaviors and cultural values may compare and contrast to those of other leaders in the highly interactive global society? This paper begins a dialogue on these questions and the paper's purpose is to

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encourage others to use comparative values inventories to stimulate discussion, mutual understanding, and focus on shared values.

Clemmer (2000) advised leaders to ask themselves whether they had "true internal bone deep" beliefs or an external "should" value system. Szabo, Reber; Weibler; Brodbeck. and Wunderer compared findings on values and behavior in leadership studies across three German-speaking countries: Austria, Germany, and Switzerland. Their results showed both similarities and inconsistencies, and suggested that the complexity of situational and contextual factors influencing leadership made cultural value identification difficult.

### Complexity and Subtlety in Core Values

The purpose of this paper was to report a useful educational activity to identify, compare and analyze the differences between western and eastern core values of two respective homogeneous groups of doctoral students. The results of discussion showed that each homogeneous group could not predict the core values of each other even though those students there are over three classes study together. Stereotypes of cultures were not able to predict basic core values.

It appears that even in advanced education settings at the doctoral level, groups assume that the core values of people may be obvious. However, the obviousness may not be so easily found. Core values may or may not be part of general conversation, class discussion, or social interactions. Core values established in childhood and influenced by many complex variables of life experiences and education may not even be evident to individuals themselves.

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Core values may govern behaviors in subtle ways, not necessarily in the conscious of people. Some people who uphold a particular value simply may treat their friends or subordinates in a manner that might be assumed to relate to a core value. A Chinese expression suggests that "it's too narrow to see the world from a hole." People across the world's cultures will likely need to have considerable dialogue to avoid making small "hole" assumptions about such important issues as core values. Cultures are complex, not narrow, and international peace, global cultural development, and rich rewards from across culture communications require a broad and synthetic view of why people behave from bases of core values.

However, American and Taiwanese groups at the University of South Dakota did find many shared topics of values and much opportunity for exploring similarities, as well as differences. But, the surprising aspect of discussion was how imprecise each group appeared to be about guessing the top preferred values of each other. It may be interesting in the future to ask students to consider if the 9-11 New York tragedy may have influenced their values or how other cultures in the world may assume any changes. The writers of this article recommend that students at most any level might enjoy the challenge of discussing how values that may be below the surface of consciousness may be a part of cultural differences and similarities.

## Summary

This article briefly introduced an experience in core values discussion. Literature on the development of preferred core values suggested that values that influence behavior,

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attitudes, politics, and stereotypes may be a fruitful topic for discussion, particularly among students and teachers interested in cultivating the positive values for the emerging global society. The clarity of the core values of tomorrow's global leaders will likely influence the capabilities of these important people to catch the enthusiasm of people from many cultural backgrounds. The Traditional American Values Worksheet of Jones and Pfeiffer generated significant discussion at the University of South Dakota about how the developing global society may or may not be building a common set of values between two homogeneous groups of US and Taiwanese students. Among the five top values doctoral students in one class in the politics of education perceived that each would prefer included namely, be honest, be tolerant, and become educated.

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