A COMPARISON OF THE VALUE SYSTEMS OF MEXICAN AND AMERICAN YOUTH*

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For the past six years, in collaboration with Dr. Rogelio Diaz-Guerrero of the National University of Mexico, work has been progressing on a multi-faceted research known as the Cross-Cultural Study of Values. Nine instruments have been devised, with parallel forms in English and in Spanish, to investigate similarities and differences in the conceptions held by Mexican and American youth about several major aspects of human relationships. The instruments include three questionnaires designed to discover the meaning of the "respect" relationship in the two cultures. Another set of three different questionnaires concerns the concept of "love." Another instrument is designed to elicit conceptions of masculinity and femininity in the two cultures. A One-Word Sentence Completion instrument, especially designed for computer analysis, is part of the battery. Finally, a "value hierarchy" instrument is included.

The present report concerns the results of the value hierarchy instrument, and one of the "respect" questionnaires. "Respect" was chosen for study because, along with love, authority, friendship and duty, it is one of the central motives that bind human society together. Moreover, there was some reason to believe that the relationship of respect takes a somewhat different form—different ways of feeling and acting—in the U.S. and in Latin America. Although the Spanish word "respetar" and the English word "respect" are identical in origin, very similar in form, and similar in dictionary definition, the actual behavior patterns and the conceptual associations surrounding these terms might, we thought, differ significantly in the two cultures.

In order to get a first estimate of the relative importance of various major values in the two cultures, a simple, straightforward questionnaire was devised which asked the people to rank-order fifteen desirable conditions or goals of life. This is the Value Heirarchy instrument.

METHOD

A check-list was constructed, made up of twenty different possible meanings that might be associated with the term "respect." This questionnaire was

composed first in English, then an exact counterpart was prepared in Spanish. We strove for *semantically* identical meaning, which was not always the same as a linguistically literal translation.

The English version was administered to the University of Texas sample. The Spanish version was used at the University of Mexico. The respondent was simply asked to check any of the twenty possible meanings that he or she would attribute to "respect." After all samples were completed, an F test was applied to determine whether any one sample consistently tended to check a larger or smaller total number of items. There was no significant response-bias in any sample, so a direct comparison of percentage response to each item of the questionnaire was possible.

The "value hierarchy" instrument consisted simply of a list of the fifteen desiderata shown in Table 1, with instructions to number them from one to fifteen, in order of their relative importance to the individual. Again, the English form was used with the U.S. sample and the Spanish language form was used with the Mexican sample.

TABLE 1
The Value Hierarchy of Mexican and
American Youth

| | | U. of Mexico | | U. of Texas | |
Rank	Mex. Value	Men	Women	Men	Women
1	+	Career Success	Health	Love	Love
2	+	Health	Career Success	Freedom	Religious Faith
3	+	Knowledge	Honor	Health	Freedom
4	+	Honor	Knowledge	Career Success	Health
5	+	Economic Security	Economic Security	Knowledge	Character
6	−	Freedom	Character	Friendship	Friendship
7	−	Friendship	Freedom	Character	Knowledge
8	+	Respect	Religious Faith	Honor	Honor
9	−	Character	Friendship	Religious Faith	Good Disposition
10	−	Love	Respect	Economic Security	Respect
11	−	Religious Faith	Love	Respect	Economic Security
12		Good Disposition	Good Disposition	Good Disposition	Career Success
13		Humor	Humor	Wealth	Humor
14		Wealth	Power	Humor	Wealth
15		Power	Wealth	Power	Power

For each item in the "respect" questionnaire, an analysis of variance was performed on the CDC 1604 computer at the University of Texas, using a program written especially for this study by Dr. Donald Veldman. An analogous procedure was used with the value hierarchy. Analysis of variance was applied to the average rank assigned to each term in the instrument by four subgroups: U. S. males, U. S. females, Mexican males and Mexican females. Following this, the values could be arrayed in descending order of importance as assigned by the members of each of the four subgroups, and points of significant difference between the two cultures could be identified.

THE SAMPLE POPULATIONS

Partly because they were accessible and cooperative, but also because they represent the future leaders and opinion-makers of their societies, college students were selected for initial study. If anything, similarities in their intellectual orientation and in their social background might be expected, that transcend national differences. Thus, any value differences found are likely to be genuine. Greater differences might be expected if non-college populations were compared. The U. S. sample consisted of 310 arts and science students at the University of Texas and 242 arts and science undergraduates at the National University of Mexico. There were somewhat more men than women in the Mexican sample and somewhat more women than men in the University of Texas sample. These figures pertain to the samples drawn for the value hierarchy study.

Two different samples were used in the "respect" study, consisting of 340 arts and science majors at The University of Texas and 298 arts and science majors at the University of Mexico.

Since the results from the two instruments are derived from two different samples from the general populations of Mexico and the U. S., it cannot be said that the same people showed identical response patterns in the two different instruments. On the other hand, where results from the two different inquiries show similar or psychologically compatible patterns between the two samples from a culture, it might reinforce the idea of generalized traits of "national character."

RESULTS

The Value Hierarchy

The Texas youth, both male and female put *love* at the top of their list of values. This was closely followed by *freedom* and *health,* in both sexes. Thereafter, the next most important thing to men was *career success,* although for the women it was very far down on the list. The Texas coeds, on the other hand,

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gave second highest place to *religious faith,* whereas the male students put it below the middle of the hierarchy. The next three values in order of importance to the American students were *good character, knowledge* and *friendship,* with *character* being significantly more important to the women than to the men. Personal *honor* was given a middle place in the hierarchy, with *economic security* of less than average concern to either sex. The girls favored a *good disposition* significantly more than the men, to whom it was a relatively unimportant value, compared with the other alternatives. Both sexes agreed that a *sense of humor, wealth,* and the *power to shape events* were least important to them.

In considerable contrast to the U. S. picture, the Mexican students put *success* and *health* at the head of their lists. *Success in a career* was almost as important for the Mexican coeds as for the Mexican male students. In both these values, the Mexican students gave much greater importance to these considerations than did the American students, even though *health* stood high for the Americans. Next, and very important to the Mexicans, were *knowledge, honor* and *economic security.* These considerations were much more important to them than to the American students. *The respect of society* was the final value on which the Mexicans placed significantly more importance than did the Americans. Although *freedom* was listed sixth or seventh out of the fifteen by the Mexicans, their concern for this was a great deal less than the Americans demonstrated. Perhaps the most dramatic difference is the low value placed on *love* by the Mexican students, in contrast with the Texans. They also gave somewhat less weight to *friendship, good character* and *religious faith* than did the American sample.

The one area of substantial agreement between the two cultures was the low value given to *humor, wealth* and *power,* by comparison with the other values in life.

In interpreting results such as this, it is extremely important to be aware of the differences in the practical circumstances in which these two groups of students find themselves. While the value pattern of the U. S. students emphasize love, freedom and other non-material considerations, far above such things as economic security, wealth or power, it must be remembered that the majority of the American students can take for granted a reasonable degree of economic security, certainly by contrast with a great many of the Mexican students. Insofar as an instrument such as this reflects their true value system, the American students certainly dispel the picture of rank materialism that is so often leveled at them by people in other countries. They see themselves as much more concerned to achieve personal warmth in their human relationships than to defend personal "honor," or worry about social recognition and respect. If these are attractive qualities, as they well may be, it must be said that most of the American students can rather easily afford to be unmaterialistic in this way.

The young Mexicans greatly stress career success. It must be remembered that in Mexico, university education is almost the only route for social mobility and self-betterment. There may well be a good deal of selection operating to make career-oriented young people the most likely to attend and survive at the National University. In the case of the young women, practical circumstances in Mexico seem likely to cause them a good deal of frustration in the not too distant future, in most cases. There are actually few opportunities, as yet, for professional careers for women in Mexico. If, as may conceivably be the case, their interest in a career is symptomatic of a desire for greater independence and self-realization, this too may be frustrated for many of these female students, before social conditions change enough to permit such realization to occur.

The emphasis on health is understandable in a society where there is still a high mortality rate. It should be noted, of course, that this emphasis was not a great deal more than that given to health by the American students, which must be emphasized by the Americans for quite different psychological reasons, in view of the superior health conditions in the United States.

The Mexican students put great emphasis, also, on knowledge and economic security, again quite probably because both are difficult to come by in their society, at least until recently. Their emphasis on personal honor reflects the Latin pride which is well known in history and literature. The relatively low emphasis given to religious faith undoubtedly reflects the secularization of Mexican society, but it also may reflect even more the self-selection of secular-minded students to attend the University.

The quite low value given to love by both male and female Mexicans is in marked contrast with the Americans. While the results of the other questionnaires on the meaning of "love" remain to be analyzed, it can be said already that the relationship of love between the sexes in Mexico seems to be a somewhat more ambivalent one than is commonly the case in America. Speculation on this, however, is best left to more concrete evidence in later parts of the research.

The Concept of Respect

With the exception of one item, one or another person in every group checked each item in the "respect" instrument. Thus, differences between the groups is a matter of degree, not of total dissimilarity. Nonetheless, the analysis of variance showed that there were significant differences between the two groups on nineteen of the twenty items.

In order to establish a picture of the "core value pattern" in the samples from the two cultures, Table 2 was constructed. It shows that the University of Texas students picked six items significantly more often than did the students

TABLE 2

*"RESPECT": The "Core Culture" Pattern
in Mexico and, in Texas*

U.S. (U. of Texas)	Mexico
1. Look up to with admiration.	
	2. awe
	3. fear
	4. love
5. treat as an equal.	
6. give the other a chance.	
	7. affection
8. admire	9. expect protection from.
	11. feel protective toward.
	12. dislike
	13. don't trespass on rights.
	15. have to obey, like it or not.
	16. duty to obey.
17. consider other's feelings.	
18. consider other's ideas.	20. don't interfere in other's life.

from the University of Mexico. Conversely, the Mexican students checked eleven other items significantly more than the Texas students.

Reading the items in the two halves of Table 2, an interesting contrast is visible in relationship patterns. The American pattern ("Texan" would be a more safely limited term) depicts the respect relationship as one between equals. One can admire and look up to another person, perhaps for some specific attribute, without feeling generally inferior or subordinate. Indeed, there is a suggestion of calmly confident self-assurance in the emphasis on giving the other person "a chance," and being considerate of his feelings and his ideas. Much less often than the Mexicans do Texas students associate "respect" with the idea of obedience or protection; and they rarely connect it with fear or dislike. In fact, in general, the respect relationship is less laden with intense, personal emotion for the Texas students. While the difference is only one of degree, there seems to be a consistent overall pattern of relatively detached, democratic give-and-take among equals, when the Texans picture the respect relationship.

The Mexican pattern looks equally self-consistent, and quite different. It pictures "respect" as an extremely intimate relationship, involving a good deal of strong personal feeling. For some, part of this feeling is negative, in opposition to the very positive emotions of love and affection that are also expressed.

Reciprocal protectiveness is another major theme. Finally, there is considerable concern about not interfering in the other person's life, or trespassing on his rights—perhaps a more immediate danger when life is so close, so emotion-laden, and so intimately bound up, as the Mexican students portray it. The overall pattern tends to be on the authoritarian model. Most of the Mexicans think that respect involves a positive duty to obey; and a third to a half of them, unlike most American students, feel that respect means you *have* to obey the respected person, whether you like it or not. Thus, in contrast to the American pattern, most of the Mexicans portray the respect relationship as an intricate web of reciprocal duties and dependencies, cast in a hierarchical mold, with strong feelings of emotional involvement to support it—and, sometimes, to strain it.

SUMMARY

Results from the two different instruments show highly significant differences in the value patterns of Mexican college students and American college students. There is substantial agreement within each culture on a common array of values. This might well be termed a "core culture pattern." The patterns for the two different cultures are very significantly different. The American pattern portrays life as a relatively secure place, economically, with emphasis on equalitarian friendliness and rather comfortable self-assurance.

The Mexican pattern shows characteristics of a close knit, highly emotionalized, reciprocal dependence and dutifulness, within a firmly authoritarian framework. In addition, the Mexican students seem to be powerfully motivated to strive for career success, knowledge, and economic security, undoubtedly because they are by no means sure of possessing or achieving these without great effort, in many cases.

It seems important to note that the college students in both countries gave lease value to achieving power to influence exents, and to achieving really subsantial wealth. Since the future possessors of both wealth and power in both cultures are almost certain to come from these college populations, in large degree, either these students do not accurately report the true value systems that will guide their future behavior, or these values may be ones which achieve top priority only later in life for most people. For many of the students, of course, perhaps the majority, this may be a simple statement of the truth about their values, that they neither avidly seek power or wealth, nor will they be likely to achieve it to an outstanding degree.

These are just pieces in a larger mosaic of research which we expect to extend to other values, and to a number of other countries. The general method developed for this research does look readily useable both in other regions, and

in other areas of values. It can be used where more complex forms of data gathering are unmanageable; and it is adapted for analysis of large numbers of cases by high-speed computer. As a large scale survey method, therefore, to be supplemented by depth techniques with selected small samples, it offers useful promise for cross cultural studies of several kinds. Within its limitations, it provides a totally objective way in comparing the values of people from two or more cultures, and thus of measuring the similarity or difference of the cultures. In the present instance, it furnished an illuminating initial probe into certain culturally differentiated values, and into certain facets of national character in Mexico and the United States.

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ABSTRACT

The present paper reports findings with two different instruments which are part of the nine-instrument battery used in a multi-faceted research known as the Cross Cultural Study of Values. One is the Values Hierarchy and the other, one of the three Respect Questionnaires.

Parallel forms of the tests in English and in Spanish were administered to two samples of college students; the English version was administered at the

University of Texas and the Spanish version at the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México.

Results from these instruments show highly significant differences in the value patterns of Mexican college students and American college students. The American pattern portrays life as a relatively secure place, economically, with emphasis on equalitarian friendliness and rather comfortable self-assurance. The Mexican pattern shows characteristics of a close knit highly emotionalized, reciprocal dependence and dutifulness, within a firmly authoritarian framework.

There is substantial agreement within each culture on a common array of values. This might well be termed a "core-culture" pattern.

RESUMEN

Este trabajo informa sobre los resultados obtenidos con dos instrumentos diferentes, que forman parte de la batería de nueve usados en una investigación multifacética conocida como el Estudio Transcultural de Valores. Uno es el de Jerarquía de Valores y el otro, uno de los tres cuestionarios sobre el concepto de Respeto.

Idénticos formularios del test en inglés y español fueron administrados a dos muestras de alumnos universitarios; la versión inglesa fué administrada en la Universidad de Texas y la versión española en la Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México.

Los resultados obtenidos con estos instrumentos muestran diferencias muy significativas en los patrones de valores de los universitarios mexicanos norteamericanos. El patrón noteamericano describe la vida como un lugar economicamente seguro, con énfasis en una amistad igualitaria y una muy conveniente seguridad en sí mismo. El Patrón mexicano muestra características de emocionalidad firme y compacta y una dependencia y deber recíproco dentro de un severo marco autoritario.

Hay acuerdo substancial dentro de cada cultura en una ordenación común de valores. Esto puede muy bien llamarse un patrón "nucleo-cultural."

RESUMO

O presente trabalho informa sôbre os resultados obtidos com dois instrumentos que fazem parte de uma bateria de nove instrumentos, usados em uma pesquisa denominada "O Estudo Transcultural de Valôres." Um dêles é a Hierarquia de Valôres e o outro, um de três questionários entitulados Questionário Respeito.

Formas comparáveis dos testes em inglês e espanhol foram administradas a duas amostras de alunos universitários: a versão inglêsa foi usada na Uni-

versidade do Texas e a versão espanhola na Universidade Nacional Autônoma do México.

Os resultados obtidos com êstes instrumentos mostram diferenças significativas nos padrões de valôres dos universitários mexicanos e americanos. O padrão americano descreve a vida como economicamente segura, com ênfase em amizades em têrmos de igualdade, e uma segurança em si mesmos bastante satisfatória. O padrão mexicano mostra características de uma dependência recíproca, alto nível de emocionalidade e firmes deveres dentro de uma estrutura autoritária.

Dentro de cada cultura se pode observar alto nível de acôrdo quanto a uma ordem de valôres. Isto se poderia designar um padrão "núcleocultural."

ESTUDIO CONTROLADO DE ALGUNAS ESCALAS DEL M.M.P.I. Y RENDIMIENTO EN CONDUCTA EN UN GRUPO DE ADOLESCENTES

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La existencia actual de publicaciones, sobre el Inventario Multifacetico de la Personalidad de Minnesota, que excede holgadamente el millar, es una prueba de la importancia que se le asigna y de su difusión en el presente a diferentes campos, tanto en la clínica como en la investigación psicológica en normales.

En nuestro medio desde hace varios años, concita el interés de varios investigadores y su empleo se está haciendo rutina de exploración en diferentes servicios psiquiátricos de Lima.

La presente comunicación, tendrá por objeto mostrar, la relación entre los hallazgos, de puntajes elevados de las 9 escalas clínicas originales y el rendimiento en conducta, en un grupo de adolescentes, cuya edad promedio es de 17 años, pertenecientes a un centro de instrucción de la Marina de Guerra del Perú.

Consideramos de interés el estudio de esta prueba en diferentes medios, por haberse descrito variación en los resultados por factores culturales, ya sea en la comprensión de los items o por las características personales de los examinandos.

MATERIAL Y METODO

Se aplicó la prueba en su versión castellana editada por la Universidad de Puerto Rico, a postulantes a la Escuela Naval del Perú, en febrero de 1965. No se tomó con caracter eliminatorio, sino experimental, para controlar los resultados, con el rendimiento de los sujetos que lograron ingresar. El tiempo de administración no tuvo límite y la corrección se realizó por el sistema de plantillas, por carecer en esas circunstancias de computadora electrónica. El grupo en estudio corresponde a 85 sujetos que lograron ingresar para cumplir con su primer año académico. Se eliminó a cinco de ellos, tres por no haber terminado el año de estudios por diferentes razones y dos por presentar elevados puntajes en la escala (F) que mide la validez de la prueba. Las otras escalas de validez, "question scores" (?), lie scores (L) y Correction scores (K), se encontraron dentro de los límites tolerables.

Para el presente trabajo, se ha tomado en cuenta las pruebas cuyos puntajes

la (D), y (Si) han sido consideradas como inhibidoras y que reducen la probabilidad de una conducta delictiva, es quizás por eso que en nuestro caso hemos encontrado mas frecuencia de (D) en los sujetos con buen rendimiento en conducta.

Los hallazgos de la presente comunicación pese al reducido número de serie, son suficientes para considerar a esta prueba como de evidente valor en nuestro medio, es menester mas bien ahondar su estudio aumentando el número de la muestra y estudiar su correlación clínica para que los resultados reflejen con exactitud las tendencias del grupo humano en estudio.

RESUMEN

Se aplicó el Inventario Multifacético de la Personalidad de Minnesota en su versión castellana editada por la Universidad de Puerto Rico a 85 adolescentes de 17 años de la Escuela Naval del Perú para mostar la relación entre los hallazgos de puntajes elevados de las 9 escalas clínicas originales y el rendimiento en conducta.

Los resultados globales demuestran la existencia de una relación estadísticamente significativa entre adolescentes con mal rendimiento en conducta y presencia de escalas mayores de 70, en una o varias de las 9 escalas clínicas originales. No se pudo realizar una correlación estadística sobre la calidad de las escalas por lo reducido de la muestra.

ABSTRACT

The Spanish version of the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory, edited by The University of Puerto Rico, was given to 85 adolescents of 17 years of age at the Naval Academy in Peru, to show the relationship between deportment and findings of high scores in the nine original scales. General results showed that there is a relationship (a significant one according to statistical terms) between adolescents with poor conduct and scores higher than 70 in one or several of the clinical scales. A statistical correlation on the quality of scales was not possible due to the small N of the sample.

RESUMO

O Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory em sua versío espanhola foi aplicado a 85 adolescentes de 17 anos (estudantes da Escola Naval do Perú) para se verificar a relação entre a ocorrência de pontos altos nas nove escalas clínicas originais e o rendimento de conduta.

Resultados globaes mostram a existência de uma relação (significativa em têrmos estatísticos) entre adolescentes com mau rendimento de conduta e a presença de pontos de mais de 70 em uma, ou várias escalas clínicas. A realização de uma correlação estatística sôbre a qualidade das escalas não foi possível devido ao pequeno N da amostra.