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# DISTANCE AND FACE-TO-FACE LEARNING CULTURE AND VALUES: A CONCEPTUAL ANALYSIS

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*With distance learning increasing in popularity across the country and the world, a review of the extant literature as it relates to distance learning and face-to-face learning is warranted. In particular, this paper examined distance learning, including a historical overview, prevailing themes in past research, and studies relating the importance of the community concept in distance education. Also analyzed were research studies in which the importance of culture and values were addressed. Subsequently, the rationale for the development of instruments to quantify values, including the Schwartz Value Scale (SVS), was provided. Growth in online education has created an environment where educators must meet new challenges while having little practical experience. Research, then, is – and will be – needed to guide future practice and pedagogy. Therefore, to provide institutions with much-needed information about the value profile of the distance-learning student, it is essential that research on student values is performed. This information could aid in the creation and implementation of programs aimed at increasing student success and decreasing student withdrawals. In sociological terms, then, distance-learning courses would meet the criteria set forth for societies: courses are groupings of individuals living or participating in a territorial space. Furthermore, courses contain formal, and develop informal, structures that regulate the allocation of rewards.*

*Keywords: higher education, distance learning, culture, values, conceptual*

In the United States, approximately 20.4 million students are enrolled in higher education (Snyder & Dillow, 2011). However, during the fall 2009 term, 5.6 million students were enrolled in at least one distance learning course, representing an almost one-million-student increase from 2008 (Allen & Seaman, 2010). Considering that in 1994-95, 2- and 4-year institutions had a combined distance-learning enrollment of 756,640 students, it is evident that distance learning is a growing trend (Lewis et al., 1998). In addition, by the end of 2008, over 4% of all undergraduates were enrolled in all-online higher education programs (Aud, et al., 2011). Together, these facts show that distance education is rapidly becoming a force that will change educational systems (Holmberg, 2002), but there is “compelling evidence that the continued robust growth in online enrollments is at its end” (Allen & Seaman, 2010, p. 4). To understand distance education fully and the forces that influence it, an extensive analysis of the extant literature is essential.

Today, distance education plays an important role in American higher education (Emmerson, 2004). Contrary to what one might believe, distance learning is not new. In fact, distance learning has existed in some form since the mid 1800s (Lewis, Snow, Farris, & Levin, 1999; Phipps & Merisotis, 1999). Online learning has opened up the halls of academic pursuit to non-traditional students who otherwise might not be able to seek a postsecondary degree (Lewis et al., 1999). Combined with the technological advances of the last decade and increasing budget pressures at the state and institutional level, it is no wonder that distance learning has greatly expanded during this same time (Phipps & Merisotis, 1999).

It is important to know this information; however, knowledge of why students believe what they do and behave

the way they do is also critical, especially while creating and implementing programs aimed at enticing and helping students perform better. Values, as part of both individual and cultural belief systems, give us the opportunity to gain insights regarding what motivates students. Therefore, to provide institutions with much-needed information about the value profile of the distance-learning student, it is essential that research on student values is performed. This information could aid in the creation and implementation of programs aimed at increasing student success and decreasing student withdrawals.

## RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following descriptive research questions were posed for this research study:

- What is the distance-learning student's value profile?
- What is the face-to-face student's value profile?

The following four inferential research questions, focusing on self-directedness values were posed for this research study:

- Controlling for age, what are the effects of self-directedness values on the instructional format preference of students at a college in South Texas?
- What are the effects of self-directedness values on the instructional format preference of students at a college in South Texas, as a function of student gender?
- What are the effects of self-directedness values on the instructional format preference of students at a college in South Texas, as a function of student learning style?
- What are the effects of self-directedness values on the instructional format preference of students at a college in South Texas, as a function of student ethnicity?

In this conceptual analysis, distance learning, including a historical overview, prevailing themes in past research, and studies relating the importance of the community concept in distance education are covered first. Then we discuss the research studies surrounding culture and values. Subsequently, the rationale for the development of instruments to quantify values, including the Schwartz Value Scale (SVS) is reviewed. Finally, a summary concludes this article.

## HISTORICAL OVERVIEW AND DEFINITION OF DISTANCE LEARNING

Loosely defined, distance education can be seen as any formal approach to teaching in which the majority of the learning process occurs while the teacher and the students are at a distance from each other (Verduin, Jr., & Clark, 1991). Writing about distance learning in higher education, Phipps et al. (1998) defined distance learning by suggesting that all forms of distance education possess four characteristics: (a) the teaching/learning process involves activities where the teacher and learner are separated by a distance; (b) a combination of media, including television, video, audio, and electronic communication may be used; (c) knowledge and content is available through more sources than just the teacher; and (d) delivery of the course material can be done anytime and anyplace, with teacher/learner, learner/learner, and learner/group interaction all able to take place. This definition of distance education allows for more flexibility as technological innovations, from the nineteenth century to the present, have allowed this form of education to evolve. However, most studies regarding distance education today focus on online education. Online courses, then, are defined as those where a minimum of 80% of the course content is delivered through the Internet (Allen & Seaman, 2010).

### Distance Learning in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries

Although distance learning has become a buzzword over the last decade due to the rapid increase in technological



innovations, distance education is not new. In fact, in 1833, a Swedish university advertised distance studies in composition via correspondence (Holmberg, 2002). In the United States, the term distance education appeared in the University of Wisconsin's 1892 catalogue (Rumble, 1986). In fact, distance education had already been in existence since the eighteenth century. The earliest known record of education at a distance comes from an advertisement in the Boston Gazette on March 20th, 1728, for shorthand lessons (Bower & Hardy, 2004). Caleb Phillips offered weekly lessons by post to students who lived in the country (Bower & Hardy, 2004).

Like Phillips, Isaac Pitman began teaching shorthand by correspondence from Bath, England in 1840 (Verduin, Jr. & Clark, 1991). Students, who needed new methods of learning that did not conflict with their work responsibilities, would copy brief Bible passages in shorthand and mail them by the "new penny post system" to Pitman for grading (Verduin, Jr., & Clark, 1991, p. 15). Pitman would then return the graded assignments. Thus, distance education began, with individuals offering academic instruction to persons who could not otherwise attend a physical institution.

## Distance Learning in the Twentieth Century

Subsequently, many correspondence schools offering vocational courses were established between 1890 and 1930 (Emmerson, 2004). The Home Correspondence School of Springfield, Massachusetts, and the American Farmers' School in Minneapolis both offered courses in agriculture and farming (Emmerson, 2004). In the collegiate setting, the University of Wisconsin's Extension division was founded in 1906, and University of Wisconsin professors started an amateur radio station to be used for educational broadcasting in 1919 (Engel, 1936). According to Simonson et al. (2011), during the next decade 200 radio stations in the United States broadcast distance learning education programs. Technology continues to impact distance learning pedagogy even today.

From the 1930s to the 1950s, distance education ceased expanding, probably due to the economic depression in the United States, followed by World War II (Emmerson, 2004). Then, in the 1950s, audio transmission for educational purposes decreased as a new technology, television, began to take its place (Bower & Hardy, 2004). In fact, during the 1950s, Western Reserve University became the first institution in the United States to use television as a method of broadcasting educational material (Bower & Hardy, 2004).

However, it was the satellite technology and the fiber-optic systems of the 1980s that helped expand distance learning by enabling live two-way transmissions to occur (Simonson et al., 2011). During the late 1980s, Mind Extension University offered the first courses and full-degree programs via cable network broadcasting (Emmerson, 2004). Although television technologies and two-way transmissions allowed for greater interactivity, it was not until the 1990s that technology was developed which would globally expand the reach of distance education: the internet.

As Emmerson (2004) wrote, "Online distance education is evolutionary rather than revolutionary, because the Web is simply the latest technology resource in a long history of distance education" (p. 14). During and because of these technological changes, research has been conducted to understand distance-learning students and help improve courses and degree offerings.

## STUDENT CHARACTERISTICS

### Age and Gender

Researchers focusing on the learner have usually concentrated on gender, age, learning styles, or a combination of all of them. For example, Barakzai and Fraser (2005) analyzed the effect of demographic variables on nursing student achievement and satisfaction. Sampling students from three different universities in the Central San Joaquin Valley of California, Barakzai and Fraser (2005) focused on possible relationships between language, gender, and prior computer experience and the students' achievement and feeling of satisfaction. In general, students did well in both their science and medicine courses. In addition, both courses were perceived very favorably (Barakzai & Fraser, 2005). However, some of the researchers' hypotheses were not supported.

It was hypothesized that students for whom English was a second language would experience more difficulty in the online courses and, hence, would not display the achievement scores of their native English-speaking counterparts (Barakzai & Fraser, 2005). No statistical significance was present between the two groups. Previous computer experience was also believed to be important in the success of online learners. Computer experience was measured through computer ownership, experience with certain programs, and experience with the Internet. None of those factors indicated any significant statistical correlation with either achievement or satisfaction (Barakzai & Fraser, 2005). Gender effects were also analyzed in the study. In the resulting data, women consistently scored higher than men, but the difference was not statistically significant for either the science or the medicine classes (Barakzai & Fraser, 2005).

Contrary to Barakzai and Fraser's (2005) results, Cheung and Kan (2002) reported that gender was statistically correlated to student achievement. In their study, Cheung and Kan (2002) evaluated factors related to performance in a distance education business communication course taught at the Open University of Hong Kong. Unlike much other distance learning research, these researchers focused on a course where the language of instruction was Chinese. Among the factors in their study, Cheung and Kan (2002) analyzed three demographic variables: age, gender, and marital status. Of the three variables that they examined, only gender was statistically significantly related with student performance, with women outperforming men. The researchers believed that the difference could be attributed simply to the female students putting more effort into their studies, or that women might generally perform better than men in certain subjects, whereas men may perform better than women in others (Cheung & Kan, 2002). Interestingly, although their sample consisted of students ranging from 18 to 50 years old, no statically significant relationship was revealed between age and achievement (Cheung & Kan, 2002).

In another study at Hong Kong Open University, Taplin and Jegede (2001) analyzed possible factors contributing to gender differences in online learning achievement. Questionnaires were sent to 712 high and low achieving students to identify whether motivation for learning, study habits, social and workplace contexts, self-perceptions and attitudes, previous educational experiences, and need and use for support services differentiated between male and female achievement (Taplin & Jegede, 2001). Taplin and Jegede (2001) demonstrated that high-achieving women were more apt to seek help from others, even for personal problems, than were low-achieving women. Interestingly, some follow-up interviews highlighted that some of the women preferred to seek help from peers than from tutors (Taplin & Jegede, 2001). For males, seeking outside support did not seem to be a distinguishing factor between high and low achievers (Taplin & Jegede, 2001).

Completing assignments and readings according to a schedule creating overviews of materials was also determined to be a distinguishing factor between males and females (Taplin & Jegede, 2001). Men tended to complete assignments according to a schedule, whereas women tended to form strategies that would allow them to create their own overviews of the material and write summaries (Taplin & Jegede, 2001). Ultimately, Taplin and Jegede (2001) made some recommendations, in which they delineated some things that could have been implemented for each gender to enhance their chances of success.

### Learning Preferences and Styles

Aside from age and gender characteristics, researchers have conducted studies in which cognitive functions have been examined. One such study, with a focus on learning preferences, constraints, and their relationship to demographic factors, was initiated at two northeastern universities. Cristensen, Anakwe, and Kessler (2001) surveyed 399 undergraduate and graduate students in a correlational study to determine whether differences were present among factors and the general receptivity students had towards distance learning. Among their hypotheses, the researchers believed that no difference would be present between men's and women's receptivity to distance learning (Cristensen et al., 2001). In addition, they hypothesized that older students would be more receptive to distance learning than their younger counterparts (Cristensen et al., 2001). Cristensen et al. (2001) believed that a negative association would be present between a preference for traditional learning modes and distance learning receptivity.

Their results supported the hypothesis that males and females did not differ in their distance learning receptiveness





(Cristensen et al., 2001). In regard to age and general receptivity, again, no significant relationship was yielded; however, age was negatively related to interactive distance learning (Cristensen et al., 2001). Cristensen et al. (2001) postulated it was possible that older students shunned the more interactive distance learning methods because their technological familiarity was lacking. This data supported the hypothesis that a negative association would be present between a preference for traditional learning modes and receptiveness towards distance learning (Cristensen et al., 2001). Nevertheless, the correlation was not statistically significant for interactive media, possibly because interactive media distance learning may approximate the traditional learning environment (Cristensen et al., 2001). Cristensen et al. (2001) stated that the results indicated that some traditionally held assumptions about distance learning receptiveness may not be valid in today's new high-tech environment and that the predictive value of learning preferences and distance learning receptiveness was likely to decrease.

Although Cristensen et al. (2001) believed that the technologically changing environment might cause learning preferences to lose predictive value in relation to receptiveness to distance learning, their belief did not preclude that learning styles, not preferences, would have a predictive value for student interaction, success, and perceptions. Sabry and Baldwin (2003) explored interaction categories, not as preferences of learning environments, but in relation to either sequential or global learning styles. They delineated three types of learning interaction categories: learner-information (LI), learner-tutor (LT), and learner-learner (LL). Meanwhile, they used two learning style categories, sequential and global, from Solomon's Inventory of Learning Styles (Sabry & Baldwin, 2003).

Results from 169 graduate students specializing in school librarianship were correlated, and most of the students in the sample were converging or assimilating (Simpson & Du, 2004). Interestingly, converging students liked the course the most, whereas the assimilating students liked the course the least (Simpson & Du, 2004). Learning style was statistically significant in explaining the enjoyment level in the course, thus rejecting the initial hypothesis of no difference (Simpson & Du, 2004). In addition, learning style was also statistically significant in explaining the level of student participation in the course (Simpson & Du, 2004). Diverging students participated the most in reading postings, whereas the assimilating students posted the fewest discussion posts (Simpson & Du, 2004). Ultimately, the researchers believed that their conclusions had pedagogical implications: in that course, designers should provide more support for students who learn best through abstract thinking and reflective observation (Simpson & Du, 2004). As with Sabry and Baldwin's (2003) research, Simpson and Du (2004) showed that static student characteristics may have pedagogical implications.

Mupinga et al. (2006) selected undergraduate students taking online courses in the Department of Industrial Technology Education and collected MBTI data from 131 students enrolled in three Web-based sections. Cognitive styles measured by the Myers-Briggs Type Indicators are structured as four dichotomous traits: Extrovert and Introvert, Judging and Perceiving, Sensing and Intuition, and Thinking and Feeling (Mupinga et al., 2006). The researchers did not find any one particular learning style to be significantly more prevalent than the others. The top two cognitive styles in terms of number of students were the ISTJ (Introvert, Sensing, Thinking, Judging) and ISFJ (Introvert, Sensing, Feeling, Judging), each with 16% of the students (Mupinga et al., 2006). The authors did not identify a predominant type (Mupinga et al., 2006). Therefore, according to Mupinga et al. (2006), the design of online instruction should attempt to accommodate students of all learning styles through beforehand identification of student characteristics and interests or providing information in various formats.

Irani, Telg, Sherler, and Harrington (2003) also used the MBTI to assess the personality types of distance learners. However, unlike Mupinga et al.'s (2006) study, Irani et al. (2003) correlated the MBTI individual preferences with the students' course perceptions and performance. In this study, the researchers assessed the cognitive preferences of 39 graduate students taking an agricultural leadership two-way video conferencing course and correlated them with data indicating their course perceptions and archival data of their course performance (Irani et al., 2003). The highest percentages of students fell into the ISTJ, ENFP, ENFJ, and ENTJ types (Irani et al., 2003). For both introverts and judging types, GPA and course grades were strongly correlated with the students' perception of the instructional technique, whereas moderate relationships were yielded between level of social interaction, and GPA and course grade. Intuition was also strongly correlated with perception of instructional technique (Irani et al., 2003). Overall, individual differences such as personality type might be a factor in how students perceive distance learning and how

well they perform (Irani et al., 2003).

As the previous research studies exemplify, the focus has been placed on the innate characteristics of the distance learner. Nevertheless, these characteristics have mainly been those factors that are clearly identifiable either quantitatively or through psychological assessment. This concentration largely ignores other aspects that are brought into the learning environment. However, in traditional classrooms the concept of community has gained acceptance and has even influenced pedagogy. Tinto (1997) argued that as students come together, they form communities. The composition of the community and the strength of the sociological bonds that the student makes within this grouping are keys to student success (Tinto, 1997).

## DEFINITION OF SOCIETY

Wilson and Peterson's (2002) assertion that online communities fit the research purview of anthropology underscores that the social sciences, as a whole, utilize appropriate concepts and methodology useful to understanding online phenomena. To construct a suitable frame of reference in which to study online communities, a thorough understanding of the definitions of culture and society are necessary. Along with his definition of community, Tönnies also delineated what he saw as the main characteristics of society (Thon, 1897; Wirth, 1926). He saw societies as an artificial group of people held together by a common and conscious purpose (Wirth, 1926). Furthermore, Tönnies believed that humanity, as a whole, had passed from a community to a society orientation (Thon, 1897). A contemporary of Tönnies, and long considered one of the fathers of sociology, Herbert Spencer (1906) defined society by comparing it to an organism. He defined it as a group of individuals unlike other objects with which we are acquainted (Spencer, 1906). Further, Spencer (1906) believed that societies, similar to organisms, grow, and their parts multiply and differentiate from each other.

In sociological terms, then, distance-learning courses would meet the criteria set forth for societies. Courses are groupings of individuals living or participating in a territorial space. Furthermore, courses contain formal, and develop informal, structures that regulate the allocation of rewards. As in other societies, individuals (i.e. students) guard the territory, reinforcing the group's norms, through informal punishments and rewards. Like Spencer and Parsons, the anthropologist Ruth Benedict ([1934]1961) believed in a dialectical relationship between individuals and society. In fact, she stated that, "society...is never an entity separable from the individuals who compose it. No individual can arrive even at the threshold of his potentialities without a culture in which he participates" (Benedict, [1934]1961, p. 253). Therefore, if courses are societies, then it follows that they would also have or create a culture, as other, physical, societies do, and a thorough understanding of the term *culture* is warranted if one is to study online societies to learn more about the individuals that compose them.

### Definition of Culture

American anthropology's foundation of the concept of culture can be said to have started with Edward B. Tylor. Tylor ([1871]1920) defined culture as a complex whole encompassing the "knowledge, belief, arts, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society" (p. 1). Furthermore, culture defines societies. That is, societies could be considered unique because their cultures differentiated them from one another (Tylor, [1871]1920). In describing anthropology, Benedict ([1934]1961) offered a similar definition in which culture is composed of the physical characteristics, and conventions and values that distinguish one community from all others. Benedict's ([1934]1961) definition adds values into the discussion of culture, as she believed that values were integral in forming beliefs.

The connection between culture and thinking was then further developed. Kluckhohn (1962) stated that the culture was not just the visible acts, speech, or the products of them, but rather a way of thinking, feeling, and believing. Culture was the stored knowledge and patterns for doing and not doing things (Kluckhohn, 1962). Furthermore, Kluckhohn (1962) believed that culture regulates our lives by pressuring us to follow particular types of behavior. It is also the part of human life that, because we have learned it as a result of belonging to a particular group, allows us to live together in a society by giving us patterns of behavior, solutions to problems, and predicting the behavior of



others in the group (Kluckhohn, 1962).

More recently, the anthropologist Clifford Geertz (1973) refined the definition of culture by stating that, like Max Weber, he believed that humans are an “animal suspended in webs of significance he himself has spun,” and that those webs are culture (p. 5). Placing this into perspective, Geertz’s (1973) assertion that humans are suspended in a web analogizes Benedict’s ([1934]1961) and Kluckhohn’s (1962) belief that culture is a determinant factor in behavior. Moreover, Geertz (1973) also believed in the connection between culture and thinking. While discussing human evolution and its relationship with culture, he stated that “the greater part of human cortical expansion has followed, not preceded, the ‘beginning’ of culture” (1973, p. 64).

## The Connection between Culture and Values

Because cultures influence and/or determine not only behavior, but also the thinking processes of individuals in a society, it follows that among those cultural resources, values need to be considered. Culture includes attitudes, values, and beliefs, and each plays an unquestionable role in human behavior and progress (Porter, 2000). Triandis (1994) pointed out that culture provides traditions that inform people what has and has not worked in the past. These become customs that make the social environment more predictable (Triandis, 1994). Values work in the same way; they direct people to aspects of the social environment “to which they should pay attention and to goals they should reach” (Triandis, 1994, p. 15). Therefore, while studying societies and culture, values should not be ignored, for they hold great importance for the success of the individual in society. To illustrate, Georg Simmel, a leading sociological theorist, believed that a person needed to internalize these cultural values and that individual excellence could only be achieved by absorbing the external values of the group (qtd. in Coser, 2003).

## Definition of Values

Since values should hold a primary interest, specifically for research regarding students, an overview of the concept of value is needed to understand more fully the possible relationships between values and online societies. Kluckhohn (1951) believed that values, as a concept, could be the bridging concept linking diverse specialized studies; therefore, he spent much time refining and defining the concept of values. Kluckhohn (1951) defined a value as “a conception, explicit or implicit, distinctive of an individual or characteristic of a group, of the desirable which influences the selection from available modes, means, and ends of action” (p. 395).

Similarly, Rokeach (1968) viewed values as integral part of a belief system. He proposed that values were a type of belief, located at the core of one’s belief system, about how one should or should not behave. In addition, values were abstract positive or negative ideals that were not tied to any specific attitude, object, or situation (Rokeach, 1968). Further, he believed that once a value becomes internalized, it becomes a standard by which the individual will form opinions, a criterion by which the individual will act, and a standard for developing attitudes towards the world around him or her (Rokeach, 1968). Thus, values can be seen as internalized social standards, which remain somewhat constant once internalized. Therefore, this begs the question as to how people with varying values orientations would progress in different environments. Rokeach (1968) also developed a working definition for an individual’s grouping of values: “a rank-ordering of values along a continuum of importance” (p. 161).

## Definition of Attitude

Even with these definitions regarding values and value systems, the concept sometimes gets confused with the concept of attitudes. Much like the term value, attitude also seems to be ever-present in social science discussions (Lemon, 1973). Similar to values, this widespread use has made it difficult to casually discern the differences between attitudes, values, and beliefs (Lemon, 1973). In fact, even among social scientists, inconsistency has been present in the definition of attitudes, usually because researchers have relied upon their own intuitive notions regarding values (Zimbardo & Ebbesen, 1970). According to Rokeach (1968), “an attitude is a relatively enduring organization of beliefs around an object or situation predisposing one to respond in some preferential manner” (p. 112). Bem (1970) clarified Rokeach’s (1968) explanation by adding that attitudes are our likes and dislikes, “our affinities for and our aversions



to situations, objects, persons, groups, or any other identifiable aspect of our environment" (p. 14). Therefore, to understand further the way students form their attitudes toward a course, subject, and method of study, research into values would seem to be important.

## Values and Axiology

The importance of values and discussion of them has likely existed since humans began to reflect on their conscious experiences (Hart, 1971). Values, as Rokeach (1968) stated, are an integral part of a belief system. However, values do not stand in isolation. Values are rooted in experience; values and experience form a complex gestalt (Brightman, 1943). The study of this system, in contrast to research on isolated value judgments, is relatively new (Hart, 1971). Axiology, a term derived from two Greek words meaning worth and reason, is the discipline created during the twentieth century whose goal it is to study this complex system of decisions based appraisal (Hart, 1971).

Catton (1959) described values in the context of persons and social organizations choosing from among alternative desirable or undesirable options. The appraisal of such options reflects the person's or organization's individual values and value systems (Catton, 1959). Appraisal, though, is largely seen part of a person's cognitive intuition (Hart, 1971). These appraisals both reflect and reinforce people's values. As a result, values are a result of a continuous transaction among people, experiences, and the various environments in which people are in contact (Hart, 1971).

The available literature is not devoid of values or axiological research; values research in education has been conducted sporadically. Often, though, researchers have focused on business and cultural change. Regardless of focus area, a discussion of axiology-related research is merited to gain a substantive overview of the subject. Highlighted in non-education studies have been the importance of values and the methodologies with which to study them, and, during these times, values research in education has been scarce. Studies pertaining to education will be discussed first, followed by a brief discussion of values research in modernization studies and business.

## EDUCATION STUDIES

### 1960s and 1970s

In the late 1960s and early 1970s, interest in values and education rested in finding out the differences among various subgroups. Meier (1970) focused on the value orientations toward higher education. Specifically, he was interested in finding empirical evidence of differences and extent as to how college students differ from their parents in their value orientations towards post-secondary education (Meier, 1970). In addition, Meier (1970) also wanted to determine the effect of social status and sex role differentiation on the value orientations toward higher education. For his study, he undertook systematic standardized interviews of undergraduates from the University of New Mexico. His sample consisted of 295 men and 300 women (Meier, 1970). Younger generation students placed a higher value on self-expression than their parents. This result was especially true for the students' fathers, who tended to be more utilitarian in their value orientations toward higher education (Meier, 1970).

To identify commonalities and differences between ethnic groups, Audrey J. Schwartz (1971) studied the values and achievement of Mexican-American and Anglo secondary school students in California. A. J. Schwartz (1971) stated that, "value orientations are salient to achievement in they determine the desirable [for a person].... they delimit the scope and intensity of his interpersonal relations which, in turn, affect his activities" (pp. 440-441).

### 1990s and 2000s

It seems that during the 1980s, the field of education veered away from an interest in values, not returning to it until the late 1990s. During the 1990s, Claire Planel qualitatively studied the role of national cultural values and their role in learning. Planel (1997) selected two elementary and junior high schools in England and two schools in France to study the effects of national cultural values on the learning process. Two classes from each school were selected, and each class observed one day a week for six weeks. In addition, during 1993-1994, groups of 3-4 pupils were



interviewed, totaling 240 pupil interviews.

In studying how values might change because of a socialization effect in higher education, Robbins (1998) posited that values and attitudes would change as a student proceeded through higher education and that the change would be in the direction of those values and attitudes held by academia. Furthermore, Robbins (1998) believed that females and males would rate values differently upon entering, but ultimately the difference between them would disappear as they progressed through college. To evaluate her hypotheses, Robbins (1998) implemented the Schwartz Value Survey and a social distance scale to 462 participants, comprised of undergraduate, graduate, doctoral students, and non-tenured and tenured faculty.

Robbins' (1998) findings provided partial support for the first hypothesis. Certain values changed significantly as a student progressed through higher education; however, these changes were not always completely linear (Robbins, 1998). In regard to the next hypothesis, the data did not support the idea that females and males would rate values differently at first and then decrease in their differences as they progressed in higher education (Robbins, 1998). She concluded that, because partial support existed for the values changing during a student's academic career, her research supported the concept that students experience socialization and acculturation when immersed in an academic culture (Robbins, 1998).

Kumar and Thibodeaux's (1998) research showed that Anglo-American students "had significantly higher scores than Far Eastern students on [the] Theoretical, Economic, and Political dimensions" (p. 257-258). However, the Far Eastern students were significantly higher on the social and religious dimensions (Kumar & Thibodeaux, 1998). The aesthetic dimension was the only one in which statistical significance was not present (Kumar & Thibodeaux, 1998). As predicted, differences were present between the value patterns held by Anglo-American and Far Eastern students. In regard to Far Eastern students and their length of time in the United States, the longer the students stayed in the United States, the closer their value patterns reflected those of the Anglo-American students (Kumar & Thibodeaux, 1998). This study clearly showed the acculturation and socialization effect of American higher education on foreign students.

To analyze the relationship between values and intentions changes across different situations, Chun Chung Choi (2005) implemented the Schwartz Value Survey, followed by the Conservatism Behavioral Intention Survey, to 109 undergraduate and graduate students enrolled in Midwestern state university. Choi's (2005) study was exploratory in nature, and as such he did not make specific directional hypotheses regarding which values he believed would change in different situations. Furthermore, Choi (2005) also compared two subgroups within his sample: Chinese and White/European Americans. Because of previous research, Choi (2005) believed that differences would be present between the two ethnic groups.

Statistically significant differences were revealed in the conservatism-consistent behavioral indexes (Choi, 2005); specifically, "the intention to display conservatism-consistent behavior was stronger in some setting-psychological combinations than in others" (Choi, 2005, p. 17). However, Choi's (2005) prediction that there would be some difference between ethnic groups was not supported. Due to the results, Choi (2005) deduced that a relationship existed between values and behavior, but that tendency to display particular behaviors consistent with certain values is dependent on the situation.

## GLOBALIZATION AND BUSINESS STUDIES

Values research in the education arena has shown that culture and values play an important role in the socialization and pedagogical understanding of students. However, values research has also been conducted to explain the effects of modernization and the complexities of doing business internationally. For the last 30 years, values have been of interest to researchers studying the effects of globalization and modernization (e.g., Granato, Inglehart, & Leblang, 1996; Inglehart, 1977; Inglehart & Baker, 2000; Inglehart & Welzel, 2005). During economic collapse, the reverse is true (Inglehart & Baker, 2000). However, of prime importance to values research in general is that these research projects have approached the study of culture and values quantitatively and empirically, thus laying the groundwork for

modern quantitative studies of culture and values (Granato, Inglehart, & Leblang, 1996).

In business research, Hofstede's (1980, 2001) research broke ground in its application of social science concepts. Terms such as symbols, heroes, rituals, values, and culture were applied to multinational business to discover those practices, which helped and those that hindered their operations (Hofstede, 1980, 2001). Hofstede (2001) stated that, similar to the other terms, "culture is usually reserved for societies...[but] the word can be applied to any human collectivity of category: an organization, a profession, an age group, an entire gender, or a family" (p. 10).

For his research, Hofstede (1980, 2001) implemented multinational surveys from which he mapped 53 nations or regions along five pan-cultural value dimensions: power distance, uncertainty avoidance, individualism versus collectivism, masculinity versus femininity, and long-term versus short-term orientation. Hofstede's (1980, 2001) research expanded operationalization of traditional social science concepts and has allowed for their application in other fields. For example, Kozan and Ergin (1999) applied values research to ascertain the influence of intra-cultural value differences on conflict management practices, in which they found that problems encountered in conflicts between collectivistic and individualistic value based cultures are likely to occur within the same culture as well. Studies such as these help expand and validate the role and importance of values research.

## SUPPORTING RESEARCH

Following in Parsons's (1951) and Rokeach's (1968) tradition of searching for universal structures in social systems, Shalom Schwartz and Wolfgang Bilsky (1987, 1990) ventured to identify an inventory of values by using the Rokeach Values Survey. Consistent with previous research, they generated a conceptual definition for values, which incorporates the five formal features in the literature (Licht, 2011; Schwartz, 1992; Schwartz & Bilsky, 1987; Schwartz & Bilsky, 1990). Values are regarded as concepts or beliefs, are either desirable end states or behaviors, are applicable to multiple situations, guide the selection and evaluation of behavior, and are in order by relative importance (Licht, 2011; Schwartz, 1992). Schwartz (1994), continuing with Rokeach's (1968) beliefs that there are a limited number of values or value groups, suggested that all values fall under 11 groupings: self-direction, stimulation, hedonism, achievement, power, security, conformity, tradition, spirituality, benevolence, and universalism (Licht, 2011). The spirituality grouping was later incorporated into the other groupings, leaving 10 value orientation groups (Schwartz, 2004). Researchers have supported these groupings (Feather, 1995; Schwartz, 1992; Schwartz, 2004; Schwartz, 2006).

Simpson and Du (2004) and Sabry and Baldwin (2003) asserted that static student characteristics may have implications on pedagogy. Values, although somewhat malleable because of exposure to new societies and cultures, still serve as semi-static characteristics that influence attitudes and behaviors in particular situations. Knowing how groups of students differ in terms of values, would then, like Irani et al.'s (2003) research on personality types, yield information on how values might be a factor in how students perceive and succeed in distance learning. In addition, because values seem to change during the pursuit of a post-secondary degree, as shown by Robbins (1998), and through due to prolonged contact with other values systems as shown by Kumar and Thibodeaux (1998), an exploration of values held by successful online learners should yield important implications for online students' selection and pedagogy.

## SUMMARY

Over 10% of the 20.4 million students currently enrolled in higher education will be taking distance-learning courses (Carnevale, 2005; Snyder & Dillow, 2011). With enrollments rapidly increasing, it is apparent that distance education is becoming an educational force of its own that will change educational systems (Holmberg, 2002). Although distance education is not new, researchers have recently focused on demographic factors such as age, gender, and learning styles in research on distance learning (e.g., Barakzai & Fraser, 2005; Cheung & Kan, 2002; Christensen et al., 2001; Irani et al., 2003; Mupinga et al., 2006; Sabry & Baldwin, 2003; Simpson & Du, 2004; Taplin & Jegede, 2001).

Values, as a field of study, is not devoid of research. Studies focusing in non-educational fields have been implemented for the last 30 years (e.g., Granato et al., 1996; Hofstede, 1980, 2001; Inglehart, 1977; Inglehart & Baker, 2000; Inglehart & Welzel, 2005). Studies regarding values have been performed within education (e.g., Choi, 2005; Kumar &



Thibodeaux, 1998; Meier, 1970; Planel, 1997; Robbins, 1998; A. J. Schwartz, 1971), but none were focused on distance education. Education, and distance learning specifically, lends itself to values research because of the socialization aspect inherent in education. Groups of people, such as students, can develop shared senses of community and society where each individual creates involuntary bonds between themselves and the group as a whole (Wirth, 1926). In societies, then, shared norms and cultures develop among its members, and these norms include values (Geertz, 1973; Klukhohn, 1962; Parsons et al., 1951; Spencer, 1906; Triandis, 1994).

Hence, if groups of people can now both socialize and earn a postsecondary degree at the same time, a student's values become an even more important topic for study. Online students may or may not hold the same values as face-to-face students, and depending on the values they hold, the mode of instruction may become a barrier in the educational process. Schwartz's (1992, 2004, 2006) development and research with the Schwartz Value Scale (SVS) survey has produced substantial data supporting the categorization of 10 motivational orientations or types. Because these groupings are very inclusive, the SVS lends itself for researching the value profiles of untapped groups of people. Explorations into the value systems of online learners should yield important implications, both curricular and pedagogical, that could aid in the creation and modification of online learning in the 21st century.

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