

Human Value Structure and Emotions

William Montgomery

Department of Psychology, 2011

Avhandling för avläggande av filosofie doktorsexamen i psykologi, som med vederbörligt tillstånd av samhällsvetenskapliga fakulteten vid Göteborgs universitet kommer att offentligen försvaras fredagen den 9 september 2011, kl. 10.15, sal F1, Psykologiska institutionen, Haraldsgatan 1, Göteborg.

Fakultetsopponent: Gregory Maio
Department of Psychology, Cardiff University

The thesis is based on the following three studies referred to by their roman numerals:

- I. Montgomery, W. (2008). *A re-conceptualization of value structure I* (Göteborg Psychological Reports No. 37:5). Göteborg, Sweden: University of Gothenburg, Department of Psychology.
- II. Montgomery, W., Montgomery, H., & Gärling, T. (2011). *Purifying the quasi-circumplex structure of human values*. Unpublished manuscript. University of Gothenburg, Department of Psychology.
- III. Montgomery, W., Montgomery, H., & Gärling, T. (2011). *Positive and negative emotions related to a circumplex value structure*. Unpublished manuscript. University of Gothenburg, Department of Psychology.



UNIVERSITY OF GOTHENBURG

DOCTORAL DISSERTATION IN PSYCHOLOGY, 2011

Abstract

Montgomery, W. Human value structure and emotions. Department of Psychology, University of Gothenburg, Göteborg, Sweden.

In this dissertation Shalom Schwartz' theory of the structure of basic human values is developed. A partially new structure is proposed consisting of pairs of contrastive values (Security – Courage, Manage by yourself – Get help, Adaptation – Own will, and Prioritize yourself – Prioritize others) and non-contrastive values (Happiness, Meaningfulness, Love, Enjoyment, To be respected, Deeper understanding of the world, Achievement, and Health). It was hypothesized that the contrastive values form a circumplex structure and that the non-contrastive values are positioned in the middle of this structure. The circumplex structure can be understood in terms of four overlapping dimensions (Independence – Dependence, Person focus – Social focus, Self preservation – Self transcendence, and Comfort – Challenge). Different kinds of value salience (Access, Importance, Positive – Negative evaluation, Ability, and Access) were used to measure the values. It was also assumed that high access to contrastive values leads to specific positive and negative emotions. The positive emotions are experienced as a result of increasing access to the values, and the negative emotions are experienced because the opposite values are losing access. In line with this assumption, it was hypothesized that less negative emotions would be experienced in relation to a given value if its opposite is less salient. Non-contrastive values were supposed to lead to more positive and less negative emotions than the contrastive values. Study I was a first attempt of constructing a structure of contrastive and non-contrastive values. Several deviations from a circumplex structure were found which indicated that the proposed value structure needed further revision. Study II tested the final value structure proposed in this thesis. In Experiment 1 the contrastive values formed a structure which was closer to a pure circumplex than has been found in comparable data testing Schwartz' value structure. This was believed to result from the fact that the contrastive values have clearer opposites than the values in Schwartz' value structure, and that the non-contrastive values are excluded. In Experiment 2 the non-contrastive values were with one exception positioned inside the circumplex. Study III confirmed that almost all contrastive values were related to specific positive and negative emotions. It was also shown that the salience of the opposites affected the negative emotions connected to the contrastive values, and that the non-contrastive values led to more positive and less negative emotions than the contrastive values. This thesis has presented and successfully tested a partially new structure for how human values can be categorized, how they are related to each other, and how they are related to emotions.

Key words: Value structure, emotions, circumplex structure, multivariate statistical methods

William Montgomery, Department of Psychology, University of Gothenburg, Box 500, 40530 Göteborg, Sweden.

Phone: +46708610527 ,

E-mail: william.montgomery@psy.gu.se

ISSN: 1101-718X

ISBN: 978-91-628-8333-1

ISRN: GU/PSYK/AVH--251--SE