

**A STUDY OF AFFECTIVE DOMAIN FACTORS
INFLUENCING THE DECISIONS OF LEADERS WITH
DIFFERENT CULTURAL PERSPECTIVES**

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STATEMENT OF SOURCES

This thesis contains no material published elsewhere in whole or part from a thesis by which I have qualified for, or been awarded, another degree or diploma. No other person's work has been used without due acknowledgement in the main text of the thesis. This thesis has not been submitted for the award of any degree or diploma in any other tertiary institution. All research procedures in this research were conducted with the approval of the Australian Catholic University Human Resources Ethics Committee.



Signed:

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ABSTRACT

“Shame is the most powerful thing that can unbalance a life.”

(A statement heard in a sermon in Bolivia during the data gathering process.)

This thesis contrasts the influence of the culture-linked prioritisation of pairings of guilt and innocence, shame and honour, and fear and power. In this case study, this influence was explored with reference to the decision making of leaders in education and other fields in two different sub-cultures located in Bolivia, South America. The research involved a qualitative study of data from interviews with forty two leaders from a Bolivian city and from rural villages in order to discover worldview and cultural factors that influence the prioritisation of avoidance-pursuit pairs that may affect the ethical decision making of leaders in different sub-cultures. The distinctive sub-cultures are an Hispanic sub-culture in the city and a primarily Quechua sub-culture in the villages.

The affective domain pairs were identified in the literature from work by sociologists, anthropologies and missiologists. In this research the term avoidance-pursuit pair is used and is indicative of the human tendency to avoid the first components (guilt, shame and fear) and pursue the second (justice/innocence, honour and power). The literature suggested that these pairs are ranked differently in contrasting cultures and that this influences the decisions and actions of individuals. This research also investigated worldview and cultural factors that may result in the prioritisation of the avoidance-pursuit pairs.

In order to answer the research question the literature referring to the avoidance-pursuit pairs, leadership, ethical decision making, values and worldview is discussed. In addition, reference is made to the literature pertaining to cross-cultural studies and in particular to shame-honour, or *face* cultures, and Andean animistic cultures and worldviews.

The data from the interviews with participants found that across each cultural group there are differences between the prioritisations of the pairs. Within the Hispanic culture of the city, the research participants placed a higher priority on shame and honour whereas in the village communities the priority was on fear and power and these prioritisations influenced the decisions and actions of the leaders. In general terms the findings support the theory in the literature. In the data there were also several linked

factors such as issues of trust, the values context of the cultures and the relational structures of their communities.

Relationships were found to be a key factor in understanding the influences on the decision making processes and the prioritisation of the avoidance-pursuit pairs. These relationships included interpersonal relationships in the collectivist, Hispanic, culture and strongly influenced perceptions of shame and honour. In the culture of the villages fear and power were linked to the relationships individuals had with the supernatural and the natural environment. The relationship individuals may have with lore, or laws, was found also to be important in terms of perceptions of guilt or innocence.