

ABSTRACT

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Title: THE ROLE OF VALUES IN A NATION'S INNOVATIVENESS AND HOW STORIES MAY SHAPE THEM

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This paper examines the role of culture in incentivizing innovation, focusing especially on how values drive willingness to partake in activities relevant to innovation. To answer this question, culture is divided into three categories: political institutions, economic institutions, and values. This study is interested in innovation in its beginning stages, so only developing countries are included. The effects of culture are analyzed regarding attempts at innovation (number of patent applications). In a multivariate linear regression analysis, a stronger institutional legal enforcement of contracts was associated with higher levels of attempted innovation, while a stronger value of traditions and obedience were associated with lower levels of innovation. Possible explanations for these relationships point to the dangers of restrictive values and the necessity of strong social trust in building or sustaining the innovativeness of a population. To root out likely explanations for why innovation-related values differ between nations, I will conduct a second study examining how value systems may be imparted through history textbooks in countries with high and low levels of innovation, the beginnings of which are included at the end of this paper.