ETHICAL MINDSETS IN THE AUSTRALIAN SERVICES SECTOR

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this paper is to examine the existence of ethical mindsets in the Australian Services Sector and to investigate the role of spirituality and aesthetics in this phenomenon. Employing an interpretive mixed methods approach, data was collected via an online survey followed by focus groups interviews. The respondents to the online survey and the participants in the focus groups were from the Australian Services Sector. The results provide evidence of the existence of ethical mindsets and suggest that spirituality and aesthetics are major elements in those mindsets. Six components emerged from the analysis: aesthetic spirituality, religious spirituality, optimism, contentment, making a difference, and interconnectedness. While the results are limited to the Australian context, this research raises questions about the nature and role of ethical mindsets that are worthy of further research. These questions relate to the complexity and context dependency of ethical mindsets, and the role of intrinsic and extrinsic factors. In addition, these results demonstrate the usefulness of the interpretive mixed methods approach for analysing this complex issue.

Keywords: Aesthetics, mindsets, mixed methods, religiosity, spirituality

INTRODUCTION

Now more than ever, there seems to be an urgent need to heed the calls of different scholars (e.g., Ashar & Lane-Maher 2004; Brand 2009; Ghoshal 2005; Ramirez 2005) for new theories and paradigms to assist organizations in the face of the dramatic and ongoing change in all aspects of organizational life. With this shifting landscape, Jacobides (2010) goes a step further, suggesting the reinvention of businesses and the way they develop their strategies to face the challenges posed by today's business environment which can simply be described as turbulent, unprecedented, unstoppable, and, apparently, unlikely to go away. This is especially important with the recent market meltdown and its global ramifications that have intensified appeals for a re-examination of the ethics that guide individuals in an increasingly uncertain, risky, and ambiguous business environment. Vernon (2010) suspects, the root problem is that the current moral discourse lacks a compelling vision of what it is to be human. In many respects, this reflects the argument that ethics has ceased to be a source of inspiration for business and instead, is often seen as a burden or limiting influence.

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Giacalone (2009) argues that this has spawned a situation in which 'skewed mindsets' and 'professional amnesia' develop leading to a disconnection between professionals, their stakeholders, communities and societies. If left unchecked, such a trend has significant negative implications for business.

Almost forty years ago, Schön (1971) argued that the most threatening changes are the ones that would plunge the system into uncertainty. He contended that these are all experiences in which central elements of the self come into question, they provoke transformation of the system of the self in which a new zone of stability can be attained only by passing through a zone of instability. What Schön argued continues to resonate today. Ozkirmh (2000) suggests addressing this issue through the generation of theoretically informed comparative interaction between the past and the present. Shreeve (2008) sums it up by saying, the key is people, their motivations, their skills, and their ethical and moral underpinning. Understanding this, however, is a vast and difficult task posing a challenge to both academics and practitioners. One approach of going some way to meeting this challenge is to undertake an examination of mindsets, more specifically ethical mindsets, investigating the role of spirituality and aesthetics in this phenomenon.

MINDSETS AND ETHICAL MINDSETS

The significance of mindsets to this research in particular and business in general is illustrated by the work of Gosling and Mintzberg, (2003) who argue that in organizations, it is not uncommon to find a disconnection between 'action' and 'reflection' which they refer to as leading to either 'thoughtlessness' (action without reflection) or 'passivity' (reflection without action). In both cases, this can lead to the compromising of ethics through either deliberate action or inaction. Considering both action and reflection, Gosling and Mintzberg, (2003) propose five different mindsets that apply in a business context: Managing Self: *the reflective mind-set*; Managing Organization: *the analytic mind-set*; Managing Context: *the worldly mind-set*; Managing Relationships: *the collaborative mind-set*; and Managing Change: *the action mind-set*. Whilst Gosling and Mintzberg, (2003) focus on managers, this research concentrates on all employees, not just managers or leaders. Although Gosling and Mintzberg did not directly examine ethical dimensions and did not specify and identify such a mindset, an examination of their descriptions of the reflective and action mindsets reveals that emotions, motives and the inner-life of the person have been considered by them, and might have a positive impact on the individual's mindset.

The concept of 'mindsets' has been widely used in the examination of the business context by different scholars (e.g., Gosling & Mintzberg 2003). Dweck (2006) connects mindset to success in business. In another study on business and mindsets, Melby (2008) examined high achievers and developed nine characteristics of their mindsets; (1) setting and playing by their own rules, (2) easily and effectively overcome obstacles, (3) turning negatives into positives, (4) persistence, (5) ethics, (6) belief and commitment, (7) focus and unstoppable drive, (8) taking risk, and, (8) fearlessness. Fujita, Gollwitzer and Oettingen (2007) posit that there is a relationship between mindsets and goal theories. Deriving from Gollwitzer, 1990's Mindset theory, Fujita, Gollwitzer and Oettingen (2007) propose that deliberative mindsets are marked by more open-minded processing of information, whereas implemental mindsets are characterized by more closed-minded processing. Accordingly, deliberative and implemental mindsets should differ in selective processing of incidental information when performing a central task. They present empirical evidence, revealing that deliberative

mindsets led to superior recognition memory, suggesting increased open-mindedness to processing incidental information.

Gunn and Gullickson (2005) explain that mindsets shape word and action, direction and deed; with repetition, neurons in the brains connect ever more strongly, and channels of consciousness are dug deeper. However, they conclude that mindsets must change, reflecting on changing ways of thinking, thus allowing for a state of mind that enables individuals to act and lead in a dynamic world (Gunn & Gullickson 2005). While, Benson and Dresdow (2003) explore a mental model for decision-making that is focused on discovery and collaboration for the discovery mindset. The model consists of six components: self-awareness, development orientation, system perspective, emotional orientation, complexity dynamics, and generative conversation. These create mental flame that enables the decision maker to achieve greater insight and develop creative opportunities that enhance the ability to see decision-making as a complex process, through the discovery mindset.

Further, Begley and Boyd (2003) propose a definition of the global mindset, as 'the ability to develop and interpret criteria for business performance that are not dependent on the assumptions of a single country, culture or context and to implement those criteria appropriately in different countries, cultures and contexts'. While, Arora et al. (2004), stress on the importance of training for the development of global mindsets and recommend that global corporations should place more emphasis on the training of their managers prior to international assignments. By the same token, Chatterjee (2005), explains the concept of the global mind stating it is a cognitive orientation anchored in any organization and expressed through its values and practices that demonstrate its ability to transcend the boundaries of immediacy.

Concerning Australia, it is rare to find studies that define or indicate any sort of mindsets. One notable exception is Stevenson (2007) who posits that the dominant mindset in Australia is that of modern materialism. This mindset is linear, exclusionary and competitive. It seeks to either take charge of nature's rhythms or ignore them, with an emerging mindset of networking, rather than top-down control, which is a new way of thinking that is organic, inclusionary and collaborative – and certainly aware of longer-term horizons. This might and could replace the buccaneering, conformist mentality with self-responsibility and respect for diversity. Recent attempts to reinvent Australia with long-term vision failed to stand outside the mindset that frames competitive Westminster politics, limited by its institutionalised confrontation and either–or thinking. Australians could well make a 'pledge to future generations' when examining alternative mindsets.

In addition, in an attempt to understand ethical transgressions in business, several scholars, specifically in relation to management, developed different kinds of mindsets to frame the problem. Talke (2007) using Venkatraman's (1989) conceptual model of strategic orientation developed the 'corporate mindset', which is defined as a 'long term, difficult to alter determinant of firm behaviour'. Talke (2007), concludes that the dimensions of the 'corporate mindset' are a pronounced analytical, proactive, aggressive but risk-averse posture towards the market and the technology. These examples outline the importance of mindsets in business. In addition, ethical mindsets have also been studied and researched in other disciplines that have implications on the study of mindsets in business and organizations. Keay (2005) in his study of the mindset of pain assessment came to a conclusion that 'change' is a fundamental feature of modern life and that it is necessary to develop social

systems that can learn and adapt. This argument is supported by Musoke (2007) who contends that it is possible to change attitude which can be achieved through the change of mindsets in organizations.

Though Harrison (2003) has called for the return of ethical mindset(s); to date, scholars have failed to come up with a definition of the ethical mindset(s). It seems that so far scholars tended to argue the case of ethical mindset(s) with reference to religion and religious beliefs. For example Lee and Ruhe (1999) shed some light on what is meant by ethical mindset(s). In their study of ethical mindsets of those believing in Christianity and Confucianism, Lee and Ruhe (1999) found that both share important principles such as virtues, golden rules, moral correctness, loyalty, kindness, the dignity of life as a spiritual journey of change toward perfection. It is clear then that Lee and Ruhe (1999) examination was mainly derived from the religious beliefs of those managers in their study, which might be inappropriate to generalize with the current diversity in beliefs, philosophies and ideologies that are over-sweeping the world including Australia. Australia for example, is a multicultural and secular society, so the need arises to search beyond the findings of Lee and Ruhe (1999) to generate a better understanding of the ethical mindsets. This paper attempts to assist in this endeavour providing evidence of the existence of ethical mindsets in the Australian Services Sector suggesting spirituality and aesthetics as major elements in those mindsets.

METHODOLOGY

The methodology deployed for this paper is a mixed methods interpretive approach. Tashakkori and Teddlie (2003) outline four principles of this approach: (1) Mixing may occur in any stage of a study from purpose/questions to data collection procedure, data analysis techniques, and the final inferences (second principle of mixed methods), (2) Research design determines data collection procedures in mixed methods but is also independent of those procedures. Multiple data collection procedures might be used in both quantitative and qualitative strands of a mixed methods study, (3) Data collection procedures are independent of data analysis techniques. Collected data may be transformed at any point in a mixed methods study and may be analysed both quantitatively and qualitatively, and, (4) Data quality is a necessary condition for inference quality but is not a sufficient condition for it.

Payne (1988) contends that there are various measures related to individual values, ethical attitudes and moral reasoning that are being increasingly applied for research in business and professional ethics. However, it is evident that a suitable research tool for the identification and analysis of ethical mindsets is not available. This is not surprising as spirituality and aesthetics are inner values, and thus difficult to measure especially with the sole use of either quantitative or qualitative techniques. Therefore, in this research, both techniques were deployed commencing with an online survey to collect quantitative and qualitative data and focus group interviews for the collection of qualitative data.

Online Survey

The survey deployed in this research is based on the works of Ashmos and Dunchon (2000), Boudreau (2003), Reave (2005), and Tateosian (2005). Respondents were asked to give their level of agreement to 66 statements in four sections relating to personal development, teamwork, spirituality and aesthetics using a five-point Likert-type scale (i.e. strongly

disagree = 1 to strongly agree = 5). The respondents were also given the opportunity to add comments at the end of each of these four sections, to allow, and as suggested by Burke Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004) for complementarity, seeking enhancement, illustration and clarification from participants. Demographic questions were also included at the end of the survey to generate supporting descriptive statistics.

Hair et al. (1998) recommend a sample size of 200, a figure that would be considered representative of any population under examination (Field, 2005). The number of respondents to this survey was 223, representing 48.37% response rate which is considered high when compared to the literature (e.g., Field 2005). These respondents were recruited from different ranks from the Australian Services Sector. Table 1 provides a breakdown of the general profile of the sample.

TABLE 1
Demographic Data – Online Survey

Demographics - 223 respondents	Percentage
Gender	
Male	42%
Female	58%
Education achievement	
High School	10%
TAFE	5%
University Undergraduate	41%
University Postgraduate	43%
Length of service at the present workplace	
Less than six months	16%
Six months – one year	15%
One – two years	20%
Two – three years	13%
Three years and over	36%
Supervision	
Yes – supervising others	53%
No – not holding a supervisory position	47%
Age	
20-30	30%
31-40	27%
41-50	21%
51-60	18%
Above 60	4%
Where in the Australian Services Sector	
Finance, insurance, communication, property and business	39%
Public (including government agencies and health)	19%
Education and Research	34%
Private	17%

Focus groups

Following the analysis of the data collected through the online survey, questions were designed to share with the focus groups participants. These questions were determined mainly to further triangulate and dimensionalise the results generated from the quantitative

analysis. These questions were developed bearing in mind the fact that there is a need to move from the general to the specific. The questions were: (1) With the financial crisis, people would be thinking of ethics in the corporate world; when the talk is about business ethics - what sorts of things come to your mind?, (2) What does spirituality mean to you?, (3) Therefore, what would be your understanding of the characteristics of a spiritual person?, (4) What does aesthetics mean to you?, (5) Therefore, what would be your understanding of the characteristics of a person who appreciates aesthetics?, (6) How would spirituality and aesthetics influence business people?, (7) What do you think would make up an ethical mindset?, and, (8) Would it be possible to develop an ethical mindset? How?

According to Morgan (1996) the number of participants who should be invited to focus groups is one element of the research design that is clearly under the researcher's control. Using e-mail, invitations were sent to those who expressed interest in the topic when the online survey was first introduced. All those who accepted the invitation were present, and participated actively in the discussions, despite the warning by Bloor et al. (2001) that there is a danger of people not showing up on the day. Efforts exerted prior to the interviews, including reminders sent a day earlier, the detailed directions including free parking might have assisted in the achievement of this number of participants for each of the focus group interviews. Different scholars have different opinions on the ideal number of participants for each group, while some would indicate that most focus groups consist of between 6-12 participants, yet this higher number of participants was accompanied by warnings that not all participants will have their fair share of participation. For example, Lewis (1995) contends that smaller groups (4-6 participants) are preferable, especially when participants have valuable ideas to share about the topic. For this research, the focus group sizes ranged between four and six participants each. The total number of focus group participants was 20 from the Australian Services Sector (65% male and 35% female) and 65 percent of focus groups participants were of the age 25-65.

RESULTS

On-line Survey

In line with Leech, Barrett and Morgan's (2005) suggestion, prior to running inferential statistical analysis, an exploratory analysis was conducted to facilitate description and summarization of the data. This was mainly to identify the sample characteristics and how representative. This procedure also assisted in seeing if there are problems in the data such as, outliers, non-normal distributions, problems with coding, missing values, and/or errors inputting the data and examining the extent to which the assumptions of the statistics that are planned to use are met. In addition, the exploratory data analysis provided basic information regarding participants' demographics and revealed relationships between variables that could be examined further (Leech, Barrett & Morgan 2005, p. 26). Missing data was treated in the way suggested by Coakes, Steed and Price (2008), Field (2005) and Leech, Barrett and Morgan (2005) in that those responses considered unreliable were removed prior to conducting the first run of the analysis. This action reduced the number of online survey respondents, a number that fluctuated depending on the nature of the statements in the four sections of the online survey as outlined in Table 2.

TABLE 2

Composite mean and standard deviation of survey sections

Four sections of the online survey for the examination of ethical mindsets				
Descriptive Statistics	**Personal Dev.**	**Teamwork**	**Spirituality**	**Aesthetics**
Valid n	208	208	208	204
Mean	4.21	3.55	3.90	3.66
Standard Error of Mean	0.34	0.34	0.29	0.34
Median	4.20	3.50	3.92	3.67
Std. Deviation	0.49	0.50	0.42	0.48

Initial examination of the frequencies generated means and standard deviation for the four sections of the survey. As outlined in Table 2 above, the personal development mean is the highest, followed by the spirituality mean, which is higher when compared to that of aesthetic and teamwork sections. The high mean of personal development (4.21) coupled with the low mean of teamwork (3.55) reflects the value placed on individualism in Australian society generally.

Further, both the third (that included items relating to measuring spirituality) and the fourth (that included items relating to measuring aesthetics) sections of the online survey recorded a moderate and even similar means and standard deviations. It was the second section of the online survey, which included statements relating to dealing with, and supporting others, being in teams with others, that recorded the lowest mean and standard deviation amongst all the sections of the online survey. This comes despite the indication in the literature that there is a pressing need to develop harmony amongst individuals to achieve a better ethical standards, and that the use of teams continues to be an important element of many organizations (e.g., Lent 2010; Parekh 2010), as teams are associated with higher performance in organizations (Hoegl & Praveen Parboteah, 2006).

Table 3 provides a sample of the statistical analysis that relate to the first section of the online survey, which recorded the highest mean. This first section of the online survey included statements that mainly related to the individual's responsibility towards own development where the percentage of agree and strongly agree came to 97%. When compared to section three (that contained statements relating to spirituality), 70% of respondents agree and strongly agree that others experience joy as a result of their work, some 89% of respondents consider that they really make a difference to the people they work with. In relation to being aware of what is meaningful for an employee at work, the percentage of agree and strongly agree came to 73%, which is the second lowest in this section. This awareness of what is meaningful, as indicated by Driver (2007) might be considered the first step in the recognition of being spiritual.

TABLE 3

Sample of Descriptives and Frequencies: The first section of the online survey

Frequencies and descriptives of online responses									
Section One of online survey	Item #	Mean	SError of mean	SD	Agree / SA	Neutral	Disagree/ SD	Missing	N =
Items included in Section One of the online survey									
I feel personally responsible for my development as a person	1	4.55	0.044	0.63	97.60%	1.40%	1%		208
I feel personally responsible for my own behavior	2	4.67	0.045	0.65	97.10%	1.40%	1.40%		208
I believe others experience joy as a result of my work	3	3.77	0.051	0.74	69.70%	26.90%	3.30%		208
I feel, I make a difference to the people with whom I work	4	4.04	0.042	0.61	88.90%	9.60%	1.30%		208
I am aware of what is truly meaningful to me at work	5	4.03	0.052	0.75	72.60%	3.40%	1%		208

These results were amplified using multivariate analysis. According to Hair et al. (1998, p 10) interpreting statistical inferences requires the specification of the acceptable levels of statistical error. The common approach is to specify the level of Type I error, which is also known as alpha α. The α calculated for all the sixty-six statements was $\alpha = 0.920$. This compares favourably with other tools in the field of spirituality, for example, Ashmos and Dunchon (2000), Duchon and Plowman (2005) Inner life: $\alpha = 0.804$, Blocks to spirituality: $\alpha = 0.736$, Personal Responsibility: $\alpha = 0.772$, Positive connection with other individuals: $\alpha = 0.737$, Contemplation: $\alpha = 0.689$.

Moreover, there was a need to establish if there is a relationship between the different sections of the survey, thus bivariate correlations were run. Table 4 displays a matrix of correlation coefficient for the four sections in the survey.

TABLE 4
Correlation of online survey four sections

Correlation of the four sections of the online survey		Personal Dev.	Team Orientation	Spirituality	Aesthetics
Online Survey section '1 (Personal Development)	Pearson Correlation	1	.221**	.330**	.260**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.00	0.00	0.00
	Sum of Squares	49.78	11.09	13.92	11.1
	Covariance	0.24	0.05	0.07	0.05
	Number of respondents	208	208	208	208
Online Survey section '2 (Team Orientation)	Pearson Correlation	.221**	1	.244**	.201**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.00		0.00	0.00
	Sum of Squares	11.09	50.64	10.38	9.67
	Covariance	0.05	0.24	0.05	0.05
	Number of respondents	208	208	208	204
Online Survey section '3 (Spirituality)	Pearson Correlation	.330**	.244**	1	.654**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.00	0.00		0.00
	Sum of Squares	13.92	10.38	35.79	25.96
	Covariance	0.07	0.05	0.17	0.13
	Number of respondents	208	208	208	204
Online Survey section '4 (Aesthetics)	Pearson Correlation	.260**	.201**	.654**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.00	0.00	0.00	
	Sum of Squares	11.1	9.67	25.96	47.01
	Covariance	0.05	0.05	0.13	0.23
	Number of respondents	204	204	204	204
**** Correlation is significant at the level of 0.01 (2-tailed)**					

The correlation (2-tailed) in Table 2 reveals a positive relationship between section three, which contains items that relate to 'spirituality' and section one which contains statements that relate to 'individual development' with a Pearson correlation coefficient of $r = .330$. In addition, there is no probability (sig. 000) that a correlation coefficient this size would have occurred by chance in a sample of 208 and the probability of this occurring is non-existent. Further, a significant relationship between the sections on spirituality and aesthetics is evident with $r = .654$, which might indicate the existence of what may be termed an 'aesthetic spirituality'. Hence, it can be established, with confidence, that there is a relationship between individual development, and spirituality, with evidence of a strong statistical relationship between spirituality and aesthetics.

There is a need, however to further explore these relationships which in this research was undertaken by deploying Principal Component Analysis (PCA) with Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) normalisation. Several trials were carried out using diverse number of rotations, extraction methods and normalization. This was conducted in line with Floyd and Widaman (1995) who contend that reporting on this type of analysis, should explore specific areas such as the method of factor extraction, criteria for retaining factors (e.g. eigen values), percentage of variance accounted for by the un-rotated factors, rotation method (and rationale) and variance explained by factors after rotation. The outcome was twelve components with a KMO of .797, which is considered between .7 and .8, and according to Field (2005) this is 'good'. Forty-three items remaining (down from sixty-six) following extraction, with average of communalities of .73, which is much higher than the boundaries entailed in the literature, with non-redundant of 14% that is much lower than the permissible 50% as indicated by Field (2005). All these indications confirm the statistical strength of factors generated.

Nevertheless, upon further examination of the twelve components, it was noticed that four out of the twelve components generated would be identified as minor components. This is mainly in line with the multivariate analysis literature, for example Dunteman, (1989), Granitz (2003), Hair et al. (1998), and Kim and Mueller (1978). Kim and Mueller (1978) define a minor component as having only one or two items attached to it, which is regarded as invalid and insignificant, thus those components that fell into this category were ignored and were not interpreted for the purpose of reporting on. Therefore, the result was the generation of eight components using PCA, using rotation method varimax and a consideration of KMO (see Table 5).

Thus, the remaining items of the online survey once again reduced to thirty-five items. The eight remaining components were named: (1) aesthetic spirituality, (2) religious spirituality, (3) optimism, (4) harmony and balance, (5) truth seeking, (6) pursuit of joy peace and beauty, (7) making a difference, and, (8) professionalism. The statements attached to these eight components were derived from different sections of the online survey. Cronbach alpha α for the eight components was calculated, alpha α generated that ranged between a high of .931 for 'aesthetic spirituality' to a low of .720 to 'professionalism' as outlined in (Table 5). The correlation and alpha α figures (Tables 4 and 5) provide strong evidence of the legitimacy of the quantitative data. These figures indicate the presence of valid and reliable items in the online survey that in turn, allows the generation of valid and reliable components.

TABLE 5
Eight components, items and their alphas

The eight components generated from the quantitative data - (PCA)		
Component	# of items on survey 66 items	alpha
Aesthetic Spirituality	31, 27, 33, 29, 30, 32, 28	0.931
Religious Spirituality	14, 58, 13, 53	0.903
Optimism	51, 52, 46, 50, 47	0.846
Harmony and balance	60, 61, 65, 64	0.853
Truth seeking	36, 35, 37, 66	0.852
Pursuit of joy, peace and beauty	57, 55, 56	0.842
Making a difference	4, 1, 3, 2	0.744
Professionalism	43, 44, 42, 41	0.720

Focus groups

While the quantitative data suggests strong evidence on the existence of ethical mindsets in the Australian Services Sector, this assertion was tested further through focus group interviews. The qualitative data analysis supported the idea of the existence of mindsets but with four changes. The number of components was reduced from eight to six with the dimensions originally under these two components shifted to the first and second components, with changes of names to two of the components (i.e., professionalism to interconnectedness, pursuit of joy, beauty and peace to contentment). Some of the dimensions within the components were adjusted either to provide them with an organizational context or to place a firmer borderline around the concept to establish a more precise meaning in relation to organizations. The dimensions were also re-organised to better reflect the meaning of those dimensions and strengthen the components to which they refer. The six components are: (1) Aesthetic spirituality, (2) Religious spirituality, (3) Optimism, (4) Contentment, (5) Making a difference, and, (6) Interconnectedness.

These six components acknowledge the presence of aesthetics, spirituality and religiosity as elements of ethical mindsets (see Table 6). While these three constructs (i.e. aesthetics, spirituality, and religiosity) are consistent, different perspectives emerged from the data.

> I know what other people mean by it [spirituality] … interpret it [spirituality] in a certain way … but for me it [spirituality] is nothing. It is kind of meaningless … (FG1)

> I am an atheist … and I do not think I am spiritual at all… but I think spiritual is [a] word that is very difficult to define and I said I am not entirely materialist … I will not change the way I thought … (FG2)

> Spirituality is opposite of materialism … on one end there is the materialistic man or person, and on the other spiritual man or person … and there is in between the degrees and there would be the centre toward materialism or the other side … Spirituality in this sense really is … almost a point of lack of the selfishness … to the point you sacrifice yourself, your time your effort, your money, … to somebody else, society,

friends or whatever to that extent … Spirituality again is not inherited, it is probably acquired … it is about bringing about value … values the environment you are raised in … your religion, how religious you are … how really … so that would develop that personality, how to develop your personality … and material completely to that point. (FG3)

In the aesthetic spirituality … sense of fairness – you cannot have a real spirituality if your boss is unfair … Hatred, anger, tension … I do not mind if you do not give me a promotion … but as far as you do not give her or him … a better job than I have … Fairness is important to be added under aesthetic … (FG4)

TABLE 6
Ethical Mindsets' Six components following Focus Groups interviews

	Ethical Mindsets' Six components and their dimensions				
	Component name	FL**	Alpha α	V% ***	Total V% ***
Item # *	**(1) Aesthetic Judgment**		0.931	27.98%	27.98%
31	"INTEGRITY" is a value I care to see apparent in my boss	0.870			
27	"INTEGRITY" is a value I care to see apparent in my co-workers	0.852			
33	"HONESTY" is a value I care to see apparent in my boss	0.822			
29	"HONESTY" is a value I care to see apparent in my co-workers	0.815			
30	"SUPPORT" is a value I care to see apparent in my boss	0.791			
32	"COMPASSION" is a value I care to see apparent in my boss	0.741			
28	"COMPASSION" is a value I care to see apparent in my co-workers	0.707			
60	"HARMONY" is a value I care to see apparent in my co-workers	0.766			
61	"BALANCE" is a value I care to see apparent in my co-workers	0.761			
65	"BALANCE" is a value I care to see apparent in my boss	0.749			
64	"HARMONY" is a value I care to see apparent in my boss	0.729			
	(2) Religious spirituality		0.903	15.29%	43.27%
14	Prayer is an important part of my life	0.913			
58	I am in continuous search for divine truth	0.818			
13	I consider myself a spiritual person	0.814			
53	I believe in miracles	0.798			
36	It is my belief that searching for truth is a virtue that should be appreciated by my boss	0.887			
35	It is my belief that searching for truth is a virtue that should be appreciated by co-workers	0.887			
37	I value knowing truth behind any decision taken by my boss	0.636			
66	"PURSUIT OF TRUTH" is a value I care to see apparent in my boss	0.545			
	(3) Optimism		0.846	7.84%	51.11%
51	I have a belief a self-centred person can grow in compassion for those suffering	0.878			
46	I have a belief that a selfish person can grow out of selfishness with time	0.792			
50	I have a belief a negative person can develop a positive attitude	0.760			
47	I have a belief that a cautious person can, with time, become more adventurous	0.650			
	(4) Contentment		0.842	4.63%	55.74%
57	I am a person searching for joy in life	0.831			
55	I am a person searching for peace in life	0.826			
56	I am a person searching for beauty in life	0.791			
	(5)Making a difference		0.744	4.41%	60.15%
4	I feel, I make a difference to the people with whom I work	0.748			
1	I feel personally responsible for my development as a person	0.736			
3	I believe others experience joy as a result of my work	0.729			
2	I feel personally responsible for my own behaviour	0.715			
	(6) Interconnectedness		0.720	3.60%	63.75%
43	I feel comfortable with the way I treat others at my work place	0.836			
44	I always act in a professional manner towards others in my work place	0.750			
42	I readily acknowledge the contribution of my co-workers	0.684			
41	I do enjoy working in a team	0.445			
	* Item # relates to where this statement appeared in the online survey				
	FL refers to 'Factor Loading - * variation explained				

While this research has confirmed the existence of ethical mindsets, it is clear that it is a diverse phenomenon, which depends on particular individual characteristics. This means it should be recognised that there is likely to be different types of ethical mindsets that depend upon an array of contextual factors. These include those that are extrinsic, for example, family status, cultural background, organizational culture, codes of practice, organizational leadership and the like, and those that are intrinsic, such as motivation, personal belief system, self-perception, etc. Thus, future research should focus on identifying how ethical mindsets vary and determining the concomitant extrinsic and intrinsic variables.

CONCLUSION

Deploying an interpretive mixed methods approach, using data generated from the employment of an online survey and focus groups, this paper has presented empirical evidence that supports the existence of ethical mindsets in the Australian Services Sector. Eight components of ethical mindsets were identified through the quantitative data analysis. These results were further explored and triangulated through the focus groups interviews, ensuing some changes to these eight components. These changes were of names of two of the components, and the shift of some dimensions under two other components to the main two components (i.e. aesthetic spirituality and religious spirituality). This paper concluded with the presentation of six components of ethical mindsets: aesthetic spirituality, religious spirituality, optimism, contentment, making a difference, and, interconnectedness. The data collected revealed a relationship between the two concepts (i.e. spirituality and aesthetics), yet highlighted a different understanding of these two main concepts in the Australian context, which challenges some of the literature that continues to identify spirituality with religion, and aesthetics with art. Nonetheless, these six components signify the strong relationship between spirituality, religiosity, aesthetics and ethics.

The main limitation lies in that this research was conducted only in Australia. This makes generalizing the results difficult. Nevertheless, compelling evidence of the existence of ethical mindsets has been presented in a way that may be replicated in other sectors of Australian industry sector and in different national/cultural contexts. It is clear then that the interpretive mixed methods approach is useful in generating insights into concepts such as aesthetics, spirituality and ethical mindsets. However, researching this topic is a complex issue that necessitates further theoretical and methodological development.

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