Values in future perspectives about life with a basic income

A qualitative study

Master Thesis (10 credits)

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Abstract

An introduction of a universal basic income (UBI) has been widely discussed as a possible solution to various societal problems. However, the discussion has developed a polarizing nature with both strong advocates and opponents. In the introduction, the Schwartz value theory is presented and the values are being connected with various arguments for or against the introduction of a UBI, which have been brought forward by advocated and opponents. The research question of this study was: which values are depicted in the future perspectives by the employed participants from the Netherlands of a world where the UBI is realized? A qualitative analysis of the research method *Letters from the future* has been conducted. Participants were asked to imagine a future, where a universal basic income has been implemented and write a letter from that possible future to the present. 12 letters were collected and analyzed. The majority of the letters (10) represented a "positive perspective" towards the implementation of a UBI and 2 letters represented a "negative perspective". The value theory by Schwartz et al. (2012) was used as coding scheme and it became apparent that the values having the freedom to choose ("Self-Direction - Action"), caring for the welfare of others ("Benevolence - Caring") and preserving nature ("Universalism - Nature") were most prominent in the letters, independent of the letter type.

The interpretation of those values, however, differed with regard to the perspective towards the introduction of a UBI. Accordingly, the overall finding of this study is that advocates and opponents do not per se differ with regard to the values they hold, but rather with regard to the interpretation of those values. When wanting or needing to promote the introduction of a UBI in order to tackle societal issues, it might therefore be wise to not only focus on the values people hold, but on their interpretation of them as well as on their perspective on society and the world in general.

1. Introduction

Due to a rising inequality in the distribution of financial resources, economic uncertainties and technological developments, the idea of introducing a universal basic income (UBI) has been discussed as a possible solution to societal issues in various countries around the globe (Standing, 2013; Van Parijs, 2004). A universal basic income could, for example, mean giving 1000€ to each adult citizen without further requirements every month (Van Parijs, 2004). However, the introduction of a UBI is a controversial issue with both strong advocates and opponents. In order to find out more about the controversial nature of the concept, the focus of this qualitative research will lie on peoples' values and on how those values affect views on the introduction of a UBI. To do that, personal future narratives about the participants' expectations with a universal basic income will be collected and analyzed.

1.1 Values

Values can be defined as principles or standards of behavior. They can be understood as a set of criteria, which are relatively stable over time and situations. The values people hold functions as the basis for evaluation and consequently for the opinions formed and held. According to Schwartz (1992), a vast set of values exists, but each individual ranks the importance of those values for oneself. The more important a value is to someone, the more inclined that person is to think and act according to it. The psychological theory of basic human values, which was first introduced by Schwartz in 1992 but refined in 2012, has extensively been utilized and proven to be universally applicable. Moreover, the discrimination of the 19 basic values, which the theory introduces, has been supported by analysis (Schwartz, Cieciuch, Vecchione, Davidov, Fischer, Beierlein, et al., 2012).

Schwartz et al. (2012) displayed the different values in the Circular Continuum Model (see Figure 1). The outmost circle of the model divides values into two categories, namely values that promote growth and values that promote self-protection. Values encouraging

growth are more likely to be prioritized in an anxiety-free environment, whereas values encouraging self-protection are more likely to be prioritized in situations of anxiety or threat. The second circle differentiates between values that either focus on the individual, a personal focus, or on society, a social focus. The next circle consists of the four higher order values, namely self-transcendence, openness to change, self-enhancement and conservation. These can again be divided into value bundles. Self-transcendence includes tolerating and caring for others and consists of the two basic values benevolence and universalism, whereas self-enhancement stands for achievements and power. Openness to change contains an urge for independence and autonomy (self-direction) as well as interest in novelty (stimulation), whereas conservation is about the opposite, namely tradition, security and conformity. Moreover, there are three more basic values, that each are assigned to two higher order values, namely hedonism, humility and face. The latter, face, can be defined as maintaining and protecting prestige. Furthermore, some of the basic needs just mentioned are divided into more detailed sub-values. As an example, universalism can be referred to in the context of concern, nature or tolerance.

In total, there are 19 basic values at the heart of the model, which are displayed in relationship to each other as well as to the attached higher-order needs. Therefore, the values are based on their compatible and conflicting motivations. For a more detailed description of the values, see Appendix A.

Figure 1. Circular Continuum Model (Schwartz et al., 2012).

1.2 Existing empirical research

The concept of a UBI has been thought about for decades (Van Parijs, 2000), but only little empirical research has been conducted on the topic. This is partly due to difficult feasibility, as those studies tend to be expensive and of broad scale. Few studies, which have been carried out in Canada in the 1970s (Hum & Simpson, 2001), in India in 2011 (Standing, 2013) and in Finland from 2016 to 2018 (Schmiester, 2019), however showed a variety of effects.

In the 1970s, the study 'MINCOME' (minimal income) was carried out in Canada in order to find possible solutions to the countries' significant poverty and inefficient welfare system. Participating families, which were selected due to their lower-income, received a guaranteed annual income (GAI) of 1975$ for five years. One of the results of the study was that only between 1 - 5% of the participants indicated wanting to stop or reduce their work. Therefore, the reduction of work effort can be interpreted as modest (Hum & Simpson, 2001). Furthermore, Forget added further findings about the study in 2011. By using health

administration data from the Mincome study, a reduction in hospitalization rate as well as a reduction in contact to physicians was found. However, no increase in fertility, family dissolution rates or improved birth outcomes could be found. Nonetheless, the study by Forget (2011) suggests that a GAI can improve population health, which in return could even lead to health system savings.

The study in the developmental country India in 2011 was part of a pilot test in order to find out more about the UBI's feasibility as well as about political, economic and social effects. Participants received 200 rupees per month for two years. Due to taking precautions and a better nutrition, the overall health of the participants increased. Also, school attendance as well as performance improved, people could reduce their debts, the housing situation improved and economic activity increased. Particularly women and minorities benefitted, because they were given the opportunity to pursue their dreams and become more independent (Standing, 2013).

As a possible solution for the consequences of the economic crisis in Finland, a study with a basic income was conducted from 2016 to 2018. 2000 unemployed people were given 560€ basic income per month, rather than the regular welfare share. Participants indicated more (financial) security, less stress and better health as outcomes of getting a basic income. According to Schmiester (2009), the well-being of the participants also rose due to more optimism with regard to the future and the ability to have control over the own economic situation. Furthermore, participants expressed that they felt like they were being treated with dignity during the study, whereas they are usually treated like "scum". However, the study had no influence on the employment of the participants. The bottom line is that Finland is thinking about reforming its welfare system, but will not introduce a basic income like it was done in the study, because it turned out to be too expensive.

However, those studies largely focused on including participants with a low income or with no income at all, therefore depending on the support of a welfare system. In this study, the aim is to focus on employed participants in order to gain further knowledge about a possible introduction of a UBI. Moreover, people depending on a welfare system might think and act differently with regard to a UBI than employed people with a sufficient income to live off of.

Besides empirical and naturalistic research, various studies have used narrative futuring as a research method to bypass the difficulties regarding realizability. Narrative futuring is a qualitative approach, which focuses on investigating narratives of individuals, such as written texts (Sools, Murray & Westerhof, 2015). Specifically, *Letters from the Future* is a used instrument by which a letter is written from a possible self in the future to someone in the present. Without the interference of others and through imagination, the future is supposed to be easier to apprehend, which in return reveals peoples' opinions (Sools & Mooren, 2012).

In the study by Giebel (2017), participants with different financial backgrounds and work backgrounds met in a focus group and wrote a letter from the future where a universal basic income has been implemented. The goal of the study was to find out how participants imagined to flourish with a basic income, whereby flourishing was conceptualized as the optimal combination of emotional and psychological well-being. The results showed that the UBI promoted autonomy as well as the fulfillment of the basic needs, which could lead to flourishing. Especially students seemed to profit substantially. Moreover, Stickel (2018) researched how work ethic and leisure take meaning in the imagination of the future with and without a UBI using narrative futuring. Participants were asked to write two letters from the future, one with a UBI and another without, using an online web program. In the letters from a future without a UBI, work was related to success and therefore seen as a way to reach

certain goals. In the letters from a future with a UBI, work ethics were less strict and harsh and work and success were not described as related to each other. Moreover, leisure played a bigger role. Therefore, it was concluded that a UBI could lead to a more complementary interplay of work and leisure. Therefore, narrative futuring has proven to be a useful, insightful and comparably cheap method when researching the universal basic income (Giebel, 2017).

To conclude, studies about various effects of the introduction of a universal basic income have been conducted using different research methods. However, those studies have focused on (possible) consequences of the introduction of a UBI rather than about the discussion about a UBI itself. Therefore this study will focus on the values underlying the different perspectives on a possible introduction of a UBI, trying to shed light on the polarizing nature of the debate. Moreover, finding out the underlying values might also illustrate possible worries or hopes for a future, which an introduction of a UBI might facilitate.

1.3 Universal basic income

There are several terms for the concept of a universal basic income, like "citizen's wage" or "state bonus" (Van Parijs, 2004). The definition, however, remains the same, namely: an income paid by a government to all its citizens, without requirements or conditions. One of the aims of a universal basic income is to tackle social issues like unemployment and poverty (Van Parijs, 2004). Also, the idea of a universal basic income is mostly thought of as being a left-libertarian idea. But when looking at advocates of the UBI from the past, it becomes apparent that it can also be interpreted as something independent of a political direction. As examples, the historian Rutger Bregman (2016) mentions the civil rights activist Martin Luther King, who can in fact be ranged as rather left-wing minded, as

well as the economist Milton Friedman, who avowed to being rather conservative, as advocates of the introduction of a UBI.

<u>1.3.1 Values underlying arguments for the introduction of a UBI</u>

There are at least four arguments for the introduction of a UBI, which are brought forward by advocates. First, the introduction of a universal basic income might tackle poverty and even make it possible for citizens to leave the poverty line behind. Poverty is a lasting problem, with 29.8% of people in the countries of the European Union at risk of poverty in 2017 through income poverty, severe material deprivation, a very low working intensity or a combination of the three (Eurostat, 2019). Besides naming the moral obligation for reducing poverty as a reason to do so, it appears to be important to underline what having sufficient amount of money can be associated with. Researchers found that poverty can be related to bad health, worse school performance as well as criminal actions. Therefore tackling poverty can also be associated with tackling social issues (Mulvale, 2008). Moreover, a potential consequence of poverty is social exclusion, which means that possibilities to participate in social life are weakened due to a lack of financial resources (Böhnke, 2001). The argument of poverty in general, but especially the explanation regarding potential social exclusion can be interpreted in the light of the value "Power - Resources", which implies that poverty might take the chance to control material or social resources. Moreover, it can also be interpreted in the light of the value "Self-Direction - Action", meaning that not having a sufficient amount of money overrules the value of having the freedom to determine one's own actions.

A theory important to mention within the context of poverty is the concept of "scarcity mentality" (Shah, Shafir & Mullainathan, 2014). Scarcity means that people focus on what is rare and through the focus on the immediate lack, the consideration of long-term consequences or benefits is lost. Placed in the context of poverty, it means that the focus is being narrowed down to having to deal with being poor and fulfilling tasks related to it,

indicating that this scarcity mentality might make it extremely difficult to get out of poverty by looking at long-term solutions like finding a job or educating oneself. This also goes along with Maslow's hierarchy of needs (1943), arguing that basic needs need to be fulfilled in order to be motivated to engage in higher order needs, such as self-actualization. Therefore, not being able to fulfill basic needs due to poverty also influences the motivation or even the ability to get out of that poverty, which can again be connected to the values "Power - Resources" and "Self-Direction - Thought". For that reason, poverty can also be seen as a loss of revenue. The reduction of poverty could mean that people would have the capacities to find a job and contribute to society, which in the long run could even make them become tax-paying workers (Mulvale, 2008; Werner, 2018).

It is argued that a reduction of poverty through the introduction of a UBI would make society more equal because everyone would have the right of a fixed basic income (Mulvale, 2008). The value "Universalism-Concern", which per definition includes committing to equality, justice and protection for all people, might underlie the equality argument. Moreover, Wilkinson and Pickett (2009) found that a high-income inequality leads to worse health and social problems, such as life expectancy, child mortality or mental illness.

In sum then, arguments with regard to tackling poverty can be assigned to four values, namely "Universalism - Concern", "Power - Resources", "Self-Direction - Action" and "Self-Direction - Thought". Moreover, I would argue that the overall idea of tackling poverty could also be connected to the value "Benevolence - Caring", meaning that people devote to the welfare of others. To conclude, the higher order values "Self-Transcendence", "Self-Enhancement" and "Openness to Change" become apparent within the argument, which means that the reasoning regarding poverty can be interpreted within the social as well as the personal value focus.

Second, an UBI could tackle problems related to employment**,** such as unemployment, underemployment, low-paid and unpaid employment. As mentioned above, people living in poverty might not be able to find jobs for various reasons, such as the scarcity mentality (Bregman, 2016). Therefore, a long-term consequence of the introduction of a UBI could imply the possibility to find a job. Moreover, the introduction of a UBI could have a positive effect on both low-paying jobs as well as unpaid work. People might be more willing to choose jobs, which are financially less appealing because a UBI could balance that out by providing financial security (Schmiester, 2019). This is especially important for jobs within the social sector. It is necessary for society to have enough employees within that area, but at the same time, those jobs are paid badly - even below the average (Talalini, 2018). Moreover, it can be thought of unpaid jobs, like people who take care of their children or other relatives as well as people who get engaged with voluntary work. A UBI could make the decision to do that easier by, again, providing financial security. Ultimately, it might expand the definition of work by including all kinds of jobs, even unpaid ones (Mulvale, 2008).

Furthermore, it might be necessary to adjust to the technical innovation and automation, because around 40% of the European jobs could be replaced by machines within the next 20 years (Goldin, 2018). According to Bregman (2016), society currently tries to still apply the solutions of the 20th century to challenges of the 21st century with regard to technological development. It can be expected that specific areas of work will be taken over by automated processes, which in return will lead to people loosing their jobs. Therefore, Raf Manji, a politician from New Zealand, (Mulligan, 2016) suggests that income and work should partly be separated in order to prevent technology from disrupting the current system completely, which the introduction of a UBI could be suited for. Moreover, a UBI could provide financial security and thereby eliminate the need for a job (Santens, 2017).

The values "Self-Direction - Thought" and "Self-Direction - Action", which imply "freedom to cultivate one's own ideas and abilities or actions" (Schwartz et al., 2012), can be connected to the arguments regarding employment as a UBI could open up various options for employment while guaranteeing financial security. Moreover, the value "Stimulation", which includes novelty, can be matched with the aspect of having the adapt to the technical changes. Furthermore, the values "Benevolence - Caring" and "Universalism - Concern", which were mentioned before, could also be connected to the arguments mentioned regarding employment. Therefore, the higher-order needs "Openness to Change" and "Self-Transcendence", representing both a personal and a social focus, are being represented (Schwartz et al., 2012).

Third, living with an UBI could make citizens more independent. For one, people might be more prone to follow personal interests, like education, hobbies or spending time with family and friends (Van Parijs, 2000). Additionally, Twenge (2010) found that the value of working decreases in younger generations and that instead leisure is being valued more. Furthermore, it would give people more freedom to exit certain contexts, such as an unsatisfying job situation or an ill family context (Mulvale, 2008). Moreover, people would also get the opportunity to spent money more independently. That buying power would again stabilize the economy; especially since an economy of external power supply is dependent on buying power (Pulkka, 2017; Werner, 2018). Arguments regarding independence can be connected with the values "Self-Direction - Thought" and "Self-Direction - Action" (Schwartz et al., 2012). Moreover, "Stimulation", including excitement, novelty and change, can also be connected to it. Therefore, the higher-order need "Openness to Change" is being displayed (Schwartz et al., 2012).

Fourth, Mulvale (2008) indicates that the introduction of a UBI might be one necessary ingredient to built an economy and society that are environmentally sustainable.

Living with a UBI might establish the general framework to be able to focus more on human relationships and quality of life, rather than consumption and wealth. The "Self-Transcendence" value "Universalism - Nature", implying the preservation of the natural environment, can be applied to this argument (Schwartz et al., 2012). Moreover, since the argument itself aims at shifting the focus of life away from a personal one to a more social one, the other values with a social focus could broadly also be applied here (Schwartz et al., 2012).

Overall, it becomes apparent that the various arguments for the implementation of a UBI especially seem to have arguments from the higher order value "Self-Transcendence" at the bottom of it. Moreover, an implementation of a UBI would be a great change for society and therefore arguments regarding "Openness to Change" are also being mentioned.

1.3.2 Values underlying arguments against the introduction of a UBI

Even though the implementation of an UBI could have various positive effects, at least four counter arguments are being brought forward by the opponents. First, the question about "whether and how a UBI could be implemented in a way that doesn't create more problems than it solves" (2014) has been raised my Michael D. Tanner. He, as well as other opponents, calculated that the costs of the implementation are not realizable. One possible solution, namely the increase of taxes, would ultimately lead to no net effect, according to Hunter (2017). Another solution would be to increase the federal deficit in order to make a UBI possible. Opponents clearly state that taking on debt in order to hopefully get a positive effect out of it would be too risky. Also, the transition to a UBI would be costly itself, because during the transitional period both the UBI and the current welfare systems would need to be paid (Hunter, 2017). Further, a UBI would be much more costly than other kinds of welfare systems, simply because everyone would get it (Goldin, 2018; Hunter, 2017). Moreover, it is stated that anti-poverty programs already exist, but that the economic mobility

of the poor still did not increase (Tanner, 2014). The values "Self-Direction Action", aimed at freedom to determine one's own action, as well as the value "Power - Resources", implying power through control over materials and social resources, seem to be addressed by the arguments due to the lack of money to implement a universal basic income (Schwartz, 2012). Even though both values are classified to different higher order values, namely "Openness to Change" and "Self-Enhancement", respectively, both can be categorized as having a personal focus.

Second, it is hypothesized that the freedom of choice, which the UBI would bring with it, might lead to laziness in citizens (Tanner, 2014; Schroeder, 2001). According to Hunter (2017), the current welfare system works because people are given incentives for their effort, rather than getting money without requirements. Getting rid of those incentives might ultimately lead to a decrease in effort and might even destroy entrepreneurial spirit. More radically, Goldin (2018) even states that people are being rewarded for staying at home rather than having a job. Those arguments can be explained by the protestant work ethic, which can be traced back as far as to Paulus of Taurus, who stated: "He who does not work, neither shall he eat." (2. Thess. 3:10) and is mostly distributed in Europe and the US. The ancient belief is still current today and conceptualizes the belief that hard work is valuable and accounts for a good human being (Furnham, 1982). Therefore, the argument regarding idleness can therefore be connected with the work ethic people hold, which in return can be traced back to the value "Tradition", defined as maintaining and preserving cultural, family or religious traditions, as well as "Security - Societal", implying safety and more importantly stability in the wider society, which might be at risk though laziness (Schwartz et al., 2012). Moreover, the value "Universalism - Tolerance", including the acceptance and understanding of those who are different from oneself, could be directed by that argument since opponents of the implementation of the UBI seem to have a fixed opinion about society, therefore not seeming

to be open-minded towards others. Therefore, the two higher order values "Conservation" and "Self-Transcendence" can match the argument of potential laziness.

Third, a UBI could be the undermining of social cohesion. Delinking income and work, at least to some part, might lead to people loosing their meaning, status and skill, which they had previously gained through their work (Goldin, 2018). The argument of social cohesion can be linked to the value "Face", which implies security and power maintaining and one's public image (Schwartz et al., 2012). Moreover, the values "Tradition" as well as "Stimulation" can also be matched, as people seem not to be ready for change and instead stay with the way it used to be (Schwartz et al., 2012). Therefore, values from various higher order values, namely "Conservation", "Self-Enhancement" and "Openness to Change", might be fitting with regard to the argumentation.

Fourth, the introduction itself is being questioned. Even though a lot is being hypothesized about what positive or negative consequences a UBI could bring with it, there is no exact plan on how to transition into it (Hunter, 2017). Also, it is questioned whether it would be useful to tackle inequality and poverty by giving the same amount of money to everyone (Goldin, 2018). Again, the values "Tradition" and "Stimulation" could be linked to the argument of introduction. Moreover, the safety and stability in the wider society might be seen as endangered through the introduction of a UBI, represented by the value "Security - Societal" (Schwartz et al., 2012). Therefore, the conflicting higher order values "Conservation" and "Openness to Change" crystallize.

To conclude, arguments against the implementation of a UBI seem to have a more personal than societal focus, as displayed in the model by Schwartz et al. (2012). However, all the four different higher values were connected to the arguments, meaning that a broad set of values could be applied. In general, it also becomes apparent that the same values have been mentioned for both argument for and arguments against the implementation of a UBI.

However, these values are being interpreted differently with regard to the different arguments and opinions. As an example, proponents seem to show a high level of "Openness to Change" and therefore also put emphasis on that value. In contrast to that, the value "Openness to Change" is also mentioned in the arguments by the opponents, but in the opposite way.

1.4 Research question

Which values are depicted in the future perspectives by mostly employed participants from the Netherlands of a world where the UBI is realized?

2. Methods

2.1 Design

This study employed a qualitative online survey-based research design consisting of one condition.

2.3 Participants & recruitment

Participants were recruited through convenience sampling as well as through purposive sampling. Acquaintances of the researchers were approached in person and additionally, the project was solicited via presentations, social media and newspapers. The participants were asked to contribute the amount of 10€ per person in order to be able to participate in the study.

Initially, 68 participants took part in the study. However, within the course of the study, several participants dropped out. Accordingly, only 23 people filled in the questionnaires from the third week. Of those 23 participants, 12 also wrote a Letter from the Future. Therefore, the final sample consists of 2 men and 10 women between 39 and 68 years ($M = 52.00$, $SD = 8.60$). Participants differed with regard to educational level, ranging from basic vocational training to academic degrees as well as with regard to employment status. Eight out of the 13 participants indicated pursuing paid work, others indicated being pensioned, a housewife or caring for others as their work status.

2.2 Procedure

The Ethical Committee of the University of Twente approved of this research project. The data for this study was obtained within the context of a journey around the world executed by futurist Leontine Hamer. In order to find out more about the role of time on in peoples' life, Hamer travelled through 24 time zones within 24 days, which equals to around three weeks. While she reported about her experiences on her website and blog (http://bureauleontinehamer.com/en/#participate), participants took part in the study by filling in questionnaires via the online survey platform Qualtrics. The focus of the study lied on mental health, more particularly on job satisfaction and work-related stress in relation to time pressure. Christopher Kempkes executed the data collection in collaboration with the University of Twente and the Vrije Universiteit Brussels, for which he stayed in Belgium.

Just like Hamer's travels, the study lasted three weeks. Each week, the focus was on a different temporal theme, namely on the past, the present and the future, respectively. Moreover, a pretest and a posttest were conducted. For this study, only the information from the first day of the third week is relevant because it includes imagining the future with a UBI. The third week of the study started on December 8th 2018 and took until December 14th 2018. An overview of the design of the study and the progress of the third week, see Figure 1 and Table 1.

Each day of the third week, the participants were asked to fill in an online questionnaire. At the end of each questionnaire, the participants were thanked and encouraged to fill in the questionnaire of the next day as well.
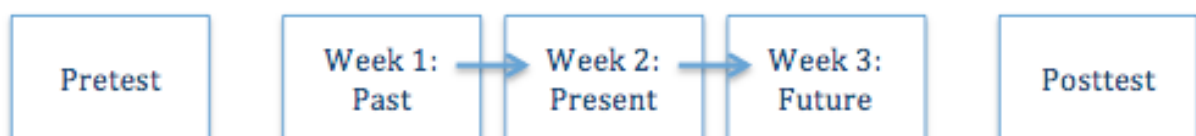

Figure 1. Design of the study

Table 1

Overview over the different days, the theme and the corresponding questions.

Day	Theme	Example question	Response category
17	Letter from the future & opinion about UBI	• Where, When? • For or against UBI?	• Open-ended • Closed-ended
18	Time horizon & expectation about UBI	• Reflection time horizon • How would it be for you if a future with a basic income would come closer?	• Likert-scale • Open-ended
19	Future self continuum scale & use of positive aspects about UBI	• Which positive aspects of your imagined future life with a universal basic income are already present in your current life?	• Closed-ended • Open-ended
20	Reflection imagined future	• Which statement is the most fitting for your future self in your letter?	• Closed-ended
21	Use of time in imagined future	• If you have a look at your letter from the future about your life with a basic income, which statement is the most fitting about that?	• Closed-ended • Open-ended
22	Values	• If you work hard, you will be successful.	• Likert-scale • Open-ended
23	Exchange with others & necessities	• Think together about what would be necessary in order to achieve the formulated goals.	• Open-ended

2.4 Materials

 Since only the information obtained from day 17 are used in this study, only the

relevant questions are presented here. For a more detailed description of the process of the

questionnaires, see Appendix B. An informed consent as well as the demographic

information were obtained within the pretest. On day 17, participants were asked to write a letter from the future (Sools & Mooren, 2012). The analysis of the qualitative research method *Letters from the Future* is a suitable method to explore how people imagine a life with a universal basic income (Sools, Tromp & Mooren, 2015). Participants place themselves into the future with a universal basic income from which they write a letter to a recipient of choice. The participants were supposed to imagine their future with a universal basic income of 1000€ net per month. Different questions were asked in order to give the participants an indication about what they could include in their letter, for example: "Where?" and "To whom?". Moreover, participants were asked to save their letter to be able to access it again. Also, the participants were asked about their opinion about the introduction of a universal basic income (for, against or unsure) at the end of the first questionnaire.

2.5 Analysis

For this study, the data from the original survey was re-analyzed. The qualitative analysis was performed using the software Atlas.Ti Version 8.4.4. The coding was performed on the original Dutch letters and quotations presented in this study were later translated in English.

Steps of analysis.

1) As the first step of the analysis, the letters were read in order to get a general overview, especially with regard to length, context and positive or negative attitude towards the future with and / or the introduction of a UBI.

2) Letter types were developed based on the tone of voice as well as about the described scenarios.

3) The 19 basic values, conceptualized by Schwartz et al. (2012) were used as codes to analyze the data set. Moreover, the basic values were summarized into four code families, namely the correspondent higher order values Self-Transcendence,

Openness to Change, Conservation and Self-Enhancement. Those higher order needs were assigned a social or a personal focus, as explained in the introduction. The letters were coded repeatedly and through that continually re-inventoried and re-structured in order to achieve a consistent set of codes.

4) After the detailed coding, the letters were compared with regard to the different letter types and values coded.

During the coding process, some challenges were encountered. First, it became apparent that the values, which were used as codes, could be interpreted in two ways. Besides the original definition of the values, the opposite of the definitions also appeared in several cases. For that reason, the opposite definition of the codes were added to the coding scheme. To distinct them from one another, the original definition was marked with a "+" and the opposite definition was marked with a "-". Second, after the coding process, it became apparent that not all of the value by Schwartz et al. (2012) were coded. In order to underline that fact, those values will still be mentioned in the following.

3. Results

3.1 Letter types and opinion about the introduction of a UBI

The analysis suggests that two letter types with regard to future perspectives exist. First, there is the letter type "*Positive perspective towards a possible future with a UBI*" (*n*=10). The participants described how a future with a basic income had mostly positive effects for them. Second, there is the letter type "*Negative perspective towards a possible future with a UBI* " (*n*=2). The future is described in a negative way, also including negative effects.

Moreover, the individual perspectives about a future with a UBI retrieved from the letter types were compared with answers to the question "*For or against UBI?*". It became apparent that the retrieved perspective and the answer to the question were in agreement in 5

cases but conflictive in 2 cases. Moreover, 5 participants indicated not knowing whether they were for or against the UBI. In the following table (Table 2), an overview about the consistency per letter will be given.

Table 2.

Overview consistency per letter

Letter No.	Letter type	For, against or unsure about UBI	Consistency
1	positive	for	consistent
2	positive	for	consistent
3	positive	for	consistent
4	positive	for	consistent
5	positive	for	consistent
6	positive	against	inconsistent
7	positive	against	inconsistent
8	negative	unsure	undecided
9	positive	unsure	undecided
10	positive	unsure	undecided
11	negative	unsure	undecided
12	negative	unsure	undecided

3.2 Coding Scheme

The coding scheme is based upon the values conceptualized by Schwartz et al. (2012) and therefore the coding hierarchy is also based upon it (see Table 3). At the beginning of the coding process, the 19 basic values were used as codes. These values were sub-categorized into the actual definition of the values ("+") as well as into the opposite of it ("-") and examples of the corresponding code are given. Furthermore, these codes are assigned to their higher-order values and to the focus of the values, as in the value theory by Schwartz et al. (2012).

Due to the deductive nature of this study, not all codes and therefore not all values were found in the letters, which explains the variety of frequencies of the codes.

Table 3

Hierarchical display of the coding scheme and the frequencies of the codes

Focus	Code family	Code	Definition by Schwartz et al. (2012)	Sub-Category	Number of letters value is coded in	Example
Personal Focus (*n* = 58)	Openness to Change (*n* = 33)	Self-Direction - Thought (*n* = 10)	Freedom to cultivate one's own ideas and abilities	+ (9)	5	*"...you look at it as an opportunity for different creative options to arise." (letter no. 5)*
				-(1)	1	*"I also don't have the feeling that we are living in a democracy." (letter no. 12)*
		Self-Direction - Action (*n* = 23)	Freedom to determine one's own action	+ (19)	9	*"..I can do where my passion is at.." (letter no. 7)*
				- (4)	2	*"Once, go and make real money! So that you really get to spent time like you want to and work less and be less dependent." (letter no. 11)*
		Stimulation (*n* = 10)	Excitement, novelty, and change	+ (6)	4	*"The Netherlands make the move and it worked. I am happy with the choice and also with the risk that was taken." (letter no. 5)*
				-(4)	2	*"Little has changed. We are still talking about change. People think that we are changing with the basic income, but it does not change much as it is the same situation as now but +1000 euro." (letter no. 11)*
	Openness to Change & Self-Enhancement (*n* = 6)	Hedonism (*n* = 6)	Pleasure and sensuous gratification	+ (6)	4	*"What a great life, I am fit and healthy, looking good." (letter no. 6)*
				- (0)	-	-
	Self-Enhancement (*n* = 11)	Achievement (*n* = 9)	Success according to social standards	+ (8)	3	*"I simply got into this situation by working hard." (letter no. 3)*
				- (1)	1	*"My job will go to waste; teaching will maybe be done with robots or with teaching from a distance, which can*

						all be done with technology." (letter no. 12)
		Power - Dominance (*n* = 0)	Power through exercising control over people	+ (0)	-	-
				- (0)	-	-
		Power - Resources (*n* = 2)	Power through control of material and social resources	+ (1)	1	*"Long travels: oeps, let's think, walking, biking, vehicles without using incendiary, but using the natural powers, which do not exhaust the world. It is all here, we are using it now." (letter no. 7)*
				- (1)	1	*"Soon we might have to pay for grasping some air." (letter no. 12)*
	Self-Enhancement & Conservation (*n* = 0)	Face (*n* = 0)	Security and power through maintaining one's public image and avoiding humiliation	+ (0)	-	-
				- (0)	-	-
	Conservation (*n* = 13)	Security - Personal (*n* = 8)	Safety in one's immediate environment	+ (7)	5	*"I am working, but I do not have to worry if I have a permanent job." (letter no. 5)*
				-(1)	1	*"The prices are also rising. Net buying power doesn't change. Just like when we switched from gulden to euro. The gulden prices are euro prices by now." (letter no. 11)*
Social Focus (*n* = 40)		Security - Societal (*n* = 3)	Safety and stability in the wider society	+ (2)	1	*"People are owner of their data again.." (letter no. 1)*
				-(1)	1	*"Sometimes I feel miserable about the fact that big powers decide about our life and the planet." (letter no. 12)*
		Tradition (*n* = 1)	Maintaining and preserving cultural, family or religious traditions	+ (1)	1	*"My dad was always an advocate of "wage after work"." (letter no. 12)*

			-(0)	-	-
	Conformity - Rules (*n* = 1)	Compliance with rules, laws, and formal obligations	+ (0)	-	-
			- (1)	1	*"Earning money besides to it. Maybe illicit work?" (letter no. 12)*
	Conformity - Interpersonal (*n* = 0)	Avoidance of upsetting or harming other people	+ (0)	-	-
			- (0)	-	-
Conservation and Self-Transcendence (*n* = 1)	Humility (*n* = 1)	Recognizing one's insignificance in the larger scheme of things	+ (1)	1	*"I am a wheel in a big whole where these changes have taken place." (letter no. 8)*
			-(0)	-	-
Self-Transcendence (*n* = 34)	Benevolence - Caring (*n* = 12)	Devotion to the welfare of ingroup members	+ (12)	5	*"I am afraid for my son.." (letter no. 12)*
			- (0)	-	-
	Benevolence - Dependability (*n* = 2)	Being a reliable and trustworthy member of the ingroup	+ (1)	1	*"I am doing a lot with friends and family and try to contribute to the living together in different ways." (letter no. 5)*
			- (1)	1	*"You have many talents and potential why DON'T you do it. Hurry make work out of it, you are only getting older, darn it!" (letter no. 11)*
	Universalism - Concern (*n* = 2)	Commitment to equality, justice and protection for all people	+ (2)	2	*"The pressure of life in 2018 is not bearable for many people and the cliff between rich and poor became bigger." (letter no. 5)*
			-(0)	-	-
	Universalism - Nature	Preservation of the natural environment	+ (14)	6	*"The insects are coming back. What a forerunner for eco friendliness. That is also necessary to cool the earth off."*

(*n* = 18)				*(letter no. 1)*
		- (4)	2	*"If we keep wasting like that, our future generation(s) have to wear gasmasks and special "suits" to protect our body." (letter no. 12)*
Universalism - Tolerance (*n* = 0)	Acceptance and understanding of those who are different from oneself	+ (0)	-	-
		- (0)	-	-

3.3 Letter types and codes

In the following I will present an example of the two letter types. On the basis of the example letters, I will show how the coding scheme was applied and I will show which codes were most prominent.

3.3.1 Positive perspective

In total, 10 out of the 12 letters appeared to present a positive perspective with regard to a possible future with a basic income. Letter no. 5 was chosen to be presented because it represents various facets, which were mentioned within the different letters with a positive perspective.

Letter no. 5 - Time for pleasure, volunteer work and nature (female author, 51 years old, employed)

Where, When? NL, 2030
(1)Dear present self,
(2)hereby I sent you a letter. I now live in 2030 and the basic income is introduced. You had frequently thought
(3)about it and talked about it with friends and family. Many around you think it is a too simple idea and are
(4)critical against you and the thought. But I know that you can imagine it and that you see it as a possibility
(5)that creative solutions emerge. And that you think of it as a good starting point that everyone has an income
(6)where you can live off for your basic needs.
(7)And now is the time: I live in 2030 and there is a basic income.
(8)I live in a city now. I live with my partner. Our son moved out and has a basic income. I enjoy the world
(9)around me. Luckily, more green has come to the city. On the roofs, in the streets and also in our house. Life
(10)is more relaxed than in 2018. I am working, but I do not have to worry if I have a permanent job. I have a
(11)basic income, but I like working next to it (I am a person of trust for people within the care and I work as a
(12)coach and I do more volunteer work than in 2018. Besides that I can spent more time on my vegetable
(13)garden to grow food. Besides that I am busy with creative things. I enjoy it.
(14)My husband works less than in 2018. He works at a school and divides his work over 3 days. Besides that
(15)he works out and does volunteer work at different places.
(16)At the moment that I am writing this letter, I sit in my office at home. It is a big room, a lot of light and I
(17)wear a knitted sweater, which I have made myself. I enjoy the room for myself where I can be regularly,
(18)because I have more time. Regularly I read a book, play the piano and am I busy in a creative way. It gives
(19)me pleasure. I spent much time with friends and family and try to make the living together meaningful in
(20)different ways.
(21)How did you came into this situation? Between 2018 and 2030, the government realized that a drastic
(22)change is necessary in order to change the living together. The pressure of life in 2018 is not bearable for
(23)many people and the cliff between rich and poor became bigger. Besides there is worry about the climate.
(24)The Netherlands make a choice and it did well for the people and the country. It was chosen for quality of
(25)life. The Netherlands make the move and it worked. I am happy with the choice and also with the risk that
(26)was taken.
(27)Message to the present: Keep hoping that change is possible, that life can be different, even in a country like
(28)the Netherlands. Keep the trust in new ways and see the opportunities!
(29)Support the new ways that are being gone.
(30)Kind regards for je "self" from 2030!

When coding the letter, several values became apparent. First, the value "Self-Direction - Action" was coded 4 times, in this case representing the choice to spent time as

wished (line 11-15; line 17-20). Second, the value "Universalism - Nature +" was coded twice. The author describes the city as becoming greener (line 8-9) and also mentions worry about the climate (line 23), indicating an interest in preserving the natural environment. Third, "Benevolence - Caring +" was also coded twice, in this case representing commitment to society by engaging in the living together (line 19-20) as well as underpinning frustrating living conditions in the present (line 22-23). The latter can also be interpreted in the light of the value "Universalism - Concern +", as more equality in society is wished for. Moreover, actively engaging in the living together (line 19-20) is also coded as "Benevolence - Dependability +", since the author appears to be a reliable member of society through that engagement. Fourth, the value "Stimulation +" was coded twice in order to represent the excitement about the changes that the introduction of a basic income brings with it (line 21-22; line 24-26). Fifth, "Hedonism +" was represented three times, indicating gratification and pleasure (line 8; line 13; line 18-19). Last, the value "Security - Personal +" was coded in line 10, as the author emphasizes that the basic income took away worries about loosing a job and therefore arranged for more personal safety.

All values coded within the letters representing a positive perspective are presented in Table 4. It becomes apparent that both a personal as well as a social focus are represented. Participants especially seem to expect freedom of both ideas and actions, personal security and preservation of nature in a possible future with a universal basic income. Moreover, the letters are filled with excitement about the novelty and change that a UBI could bring with it, which is represented in the value stimulation, as well as with both pleasure and gratification about it (hedonism). Furthermore, participants indicated caring about the welfare of others and wanting to improve it through or with the support of a basic income. In total, more values with regard to a personal focus rather than a social focus were coded within that letter category.

Table 4

Values coded in the letter category "Positive Perspective"

Focus	Code family	Code	Sub-Category	Number of letters value is coded in
Personal Focus (*n* = 52)	Openness to Change (*n* =34)	Self-Direction - Thought	+ (9)	5
		Self-Direction - Action	+ (19)	9
		Stimulation	+ (6)	4
	Openness to Change & Self-Enhancement (*n* =6)	Hedonism	+ (6)	4
	Self-Enhancement (*n* = 5)	Achievement	+ (4)	2
		Power - Resources	+ (1)	1
	Conservation (*n* = 9)	Security - Personal	+ (7)	5
Social Focus (*n* =27)		Security - Societal	+ (2)	1
	Conservation and Self-Transcendence (*n* = 1)	Humility	+ (1)	1
	Self-Transcendence (*n* = 24)	Benevolence - Caring	+ (7)	4
		Benevolence - Dependability	+ (1)	1
			- (1)	1
		Universalism - Concern	+ (2)	2
		Universalism - Nature	+ (12)	5
			- (1)	1

3.3.2 Negative perspective

Moreover, two out of the 12 letters seemed to represent a negative perspective with regard to an imagined future with a universal basic income. Since letter no. 12 describes that perspective in much detail, it was chosen to give that letter as an example.

Letter no. 12 - Worry, anger and resignation (female author, 48 years old, employed)

Where, when? Europe, 2030
(1)My dad has always been an advocate of "wage after work". He was a hard worker, self-employed and he
(2)literally worked himself buckled. He "retired" at age 75 and had the pension of a self-employed person and
(3)everyone knows how much that is. Besides, he worked during a period called "the golden years", where illicit
(4)work was normal. Of course knowing that some who is self-employed only gets a ridiculous pension. Also:
(5)my father almost never made time for his family or for a different hobby. He simply had NO time.
(6)I actually don't know if a basic income could be the solution. To spent more time on what you enjoy doing,
(7)you need to have the money and with 1000 EUR/month it will for sure not work. Working next to it will be
(8)the norm. Maybe illicit work?
(9)I have to think about my son a lot; how his future will look like (and than comparing it to to the life of my
(10)father a lot). I am really curious how my son will (have to) live like and work while also enjoy? And I really
(11)don't know if a basic income would be sufficient.
(12)According to me, the future it not looking good. I am afraid for my son and against which obstacles he
(13)might have to fight against. I experienced the first computer and it is just scary how fast the technological
(14)evolution takes place. Meanwhile, I cannot follow anymore. My son was born with a tablet in his cradle. A
(15)lot of people cannot follow anymore and I am afraid that this way a lot of people will be off-beat. More

(16)specialized knowledge will be necessary, available for some "nerds" or "smarty pants". How shall other
(17)people get a job without that specialized knowledge? My profession will disappear soon; teaching will
(18)maybe be done with robots or with teaching from a distance, which can all be done with technology. We,
(19)teachers, will be redundant.
(20)I am annoyed by the situation here on earth. I get the feeling that we are destroying our earth. Soon we will
(21)have to pay for grasping some clean air. Sometimes I feel miserable about the fact that big powers decide
(22)about our lives and this planet. Politics are doing badly. I also don't have the feeling that we are living in a
(23)democracy anymore. This often gives me a pessimistic feeling. Decisions are made fast without thinking
(24)about it and I doubt a lot about the quality of our politicians.
(25)I enjoy when I am in (clean) nature; that is yet by far the only thing that makes me happy (unless I
(26)encounter pollution, waste and fly-tipped garbage). I am not alone often, but I feel alone often. Simply
(27)through a world destroyed by others. Through that I also doubt whether the future will be better.. I do not
(28)think so. And that is unfortunate for my son, who still has to make, do, experience everything...
(29)How did you get into this situation? Nothing happened to me, I just endure it. The bad economic
(30)circumstances, the European gap, the world powers who make it all worse..
(31)Message to the present: Your last quote I find suitable for me. I would like it if work was done to clean up
(32)the planet. If we keep wasting like that, our future generation(s) have to wear gasmasks and special "suits"
(33)to protect our body. Or there will be tanks to breathe fresh air. Or people might have to ventilate one
(34)another. Or have to use respirators. My brother is a lung-patient and there will become more of it if we keep
(35)on using the capacities of our earth.
(36)Because I started with the future of my son, I plaid for a healthier live for the future, many work
(37)opportunities within new domains but also possible for everyone and for a justified wage.

Several codes became apparent while coding the letter. First, the code "Achievement +" was coded 3 times (line 1-2; line 5). The author describes her father's working life and his work ethic, with which she seems to agree. Moreover, the value "Tradition" was coded within that context as well (line 1), as the attitude "wage after work" is a traditional one. However, the code "Achievement -" is also used (line 17-19), but when describing her possible employment situation, as she expects her job to become redundant through technology. Moreover, she mentions the option of illicit work, which is coded with the value "Conformity Rules -". Second, the values "Self-Direction - Action -" (line 17-19; line 21-22; line 22-23) and "Self-Direction - Thought -" (line 22-23) were coded. The author described that she expects that she might loose her job, taking away the freedom to choose a career. Moreover, she stated that big powers make the decisions rather than people themselves as well as feeling like not living in a democracy anymore, which might take away both the freedom of actions as well as the freedom of thought. Third, the value "Benevolence - Caring +" (line 9; line 12-13; line 15; line 28) was coded, as the author described being worried about both the future of her son and society in general, expressing an interest in the welfare of people. Fourth, an

interest in the preservation of nature is expressed and coded with the value "Universalism Nature +" (line 25), but also the feeling that the means of that preservation might be insufficient ("Universalism - Nature -"; line 20; line 25). That goes along with the coding of the value "Power - Resources -" (line 20-21), expressing the fear of having to pay for fresh air to breathe in the future. Last, the value "Stimulation -" was coded twice (line 12; line 13-14) as the author names her displeasure about her expectations about the future.

In general, both a personal as well as social focus can be found in the letters expressing a negative perspective towards a possible future with a UBI. As shown in Table 5, participants generally expressed a displeasure about the possible future ("Stimulation -"). Moreover, not being able to freely choose about the own actions and caring for both the welfare of others and the preservation of nature are being mentioned. Furthermore, participants seem to underline their appreciation of being successful according to social norms, as expressed by the value "Achievement" as well as possibly not being able to do so in the future. In total, both values with a personal focus and values with a social focus were coded approximately equally frequent.

Table 5

Values coded in the letter category "Negative Perspective"

Focus	Code family	Code	Sub-Category	Number of letters value is coded in
Personal Focus (*n* = 16)	Openness to Change (*n* = 9)	Self-Direction - Thought	-(1)	1
		Self-Direction - Action	-(4)	2
		Stimulation	-(4)	2
	Self-Enhancement (*n* = 6)	Achievement	+ (4)	1
			- (1)	1
		Power - Resources	- (1)	1
	Conservation (*n* = 4)	Security - Personal	-(1)	1
Social Focus (*n* = 14)		Security - Societal	-(1)	1
		Tradition	+ (1)	1
		Conformity - Rules	-(1)	1
	Self-Transcendence (*n* = 11)	Benevolence - Caring	+ (5)	1

Benevolence - Dependability	- (1)	1
Universalism - Nature	+ (2)	1
	- (3)	1

3.3.3 Comparison letter types

In the following table, the findings from both letter types are being displayed in comparison.

Table 6

Values coded in the two letter categories in comparison

Focus	Code family	Code	Positive perspective	Average number of times coded per letter	Percentage of letters the value was coded in	Negative perspective	Average number of times coded per letter	Percentage of letters the value was coded in
Personal Focus	Openness to Change	Self-Direction - Thought	+ (9)	1.8	50%			
						-(1)	1	50%
		Self-Direction - Action	+ (19)	2.1	90%			
						-(4)	2	100%
		Stimulation	+ (6)	1.5	40%			
						-(4)	2	100%
	Openness to Change & Self-Enhancement	Hedonism	+ (6)	1.5	40%			
	Self-Enhancement	Achievement	+ (4)	2	20%	+(4) -(1)	4	50%
		Power - Resources	+ (1)	1	10%			
						-(1)	1	50%
	Conservation	Security - Personal	+ (7)	1.4	50%			
						-(1)	1	50%
Social Focus		Security - Societal	+ (2)	2	10%			
						-(1)	1	50%

	Tradition				+(1)	1	50%
	Conformity - Rules				-(1)	1	50%
Conservation and Self-Transcendence	Humility	+ (1)	1	10%			
Self-Transcendence	Benevolence - Caring	+ (7)	1.4	40%	+(5)	5	50%
	Benevolence - Dependability	+ (1)	1	10%			
		- (1)	1	10%	-(1)	1	50%
	Universalism - Concern	+ (2)	1	20%			
	Universalism - Nature	+ (12)	2.4	50%	+(2)	2	50%
		- (1)	1	10%	-(3)	3	50%

3.4 Most prominent codes

As shown in the tables above, but especially in Table 3, three of the codes were most prominent in this study, namely "Self-Direction - Action", "Benevolence - Caring" and "Universalism - Nature".

3.4.1 Self-Direction - Action

In total, the value "Self-Direction - Action" was coded 23 times, whereof 19 times the original definition and four times the opposite definition was coded. The original definition, namely "Freedom to determine one's action" (Schwartz et al., 2012) was only coded in the letters belonging to the letter type positive perspective. Moreover, those codes can again be divided into various areas, as freedom of action was described by the participants in different ways. First, the overall opportunity to freely choose one's action as desired was described, as in Letter No. 1: "People give attention to the things they find important..". Moreover, it goes along with following the personal "passion", as described in Letter No. 7: "I can do where my passion is at..". Second, participants described experiencing independence, as in letter No. 6: "After lunch, the day can proceed as it arises. I don't hold on to rituals that much anymore.." or in Letter No. 3, where the author states: "It is up to me..". Third, freedom of action was named in job-related contexts, like in Letter No. 2: "Jw was able to stop working earlier..". Fourth, it was also named in the context of having time for different tasks, as mentioned in Letter No. 5: "I do more volunteer work" or in Letter No. 9: "Besides that, I give marketing advices, I am part of the management of a women's' network and I give trainings and cooking classes." Last, the value was named in combination with nature, as in Letter No. 1: "Through all the options you have now, you can go for it.", which refers to caring well for the earth.

In contrast to that, the opposite definition of the value, which defines as "not having the freedom to determine one's action", was coded only in the letters representing a negative

perspective towards the UBI. However, the code was also represented in different aspects. First, it was named in the context of emerging technological changes in Letter No. 12: "My profession will disappear soon; teaching will maybe be done with robots or with teaching from a distance, which can all be done with technology." Second, not experiencing freedom of one's action was placed in the context of politics twice in Letter No. 12, like " Sometimes I feel miserable about the fact that big powers decide about our life and the planet.". Last, it was also named in a more general context, but also in combination with money and dependence in Letter No. 11: "Once, go and make real money! So that you really get to spent time like you want to and work less and be less dependent!"

3.4.2 Benevolence - Caring

The value "Benevolence - Caring" was coded 12 times, of which 7 times it was coded in letters representing a positive perspective towards the UBI. Five times, the value was coded in letters representing a negative perspective towards the UBI. More precisely, it was only coded in Letter No. 12 and four out of five times it was coded describing worry about the future of the author's son. Moreover, the value was only coded in its original meaning, which is " Devotion to the welfare of ingroup members", and not in its opposite definition. Participants indicated caring for different people, like family members, friends or even society as a whole, in their letters. When indicating caring about the welfare of society as a whole, the topic of equality resonated in the letters as well, like in Letter No. 5: "And that you find it a good starting point that everyone has a basic income where you can live off of for basic needs."

Moreover, the definition of caring for others was named in two different ways. In letters, which were categorized as representing a negative perspective towards the UBI, caring means being worried for someone, like in Letter No. 12, where the author states " I am afraid for my son and against which obstacles he might have to fight against." and " A lot of

people cannot follow anymore and I am afraid that this way a lot of people will be off-beat.".

In contrast to that, caring for others was described as a chance for people in the letters categorized as representing a positive perspective towards the UBI. Participants name various opportunities, which a UBI could offer, that could make society more equal or that might offer prospects. As an example, the author of Letter No. 12 states: "Studying should have become easier for everyone, financially easier in any case because everyone would have the option for a loan.".

3.4.3. Universalism - Nature

In total, the value "Universalism - Nature" was coded 18 times. The original meaning of the value, which is "Preservation of the natural environment" (Schwartz et al., 2012), was coded 14 times. 12 times, it was coded in the letters representing a positive perspective towards the UBI and twice in letters representing a negative perspective. The 14 codes can be divided up to different areas. First, enjoying nature was describes by the participants, like in Letter No. 12: "I enjoy it when I am in (clean) nature...". Second, a changed mind-set with regard to caring for the environment is describes, like in Letter No. 8: "Besides the study subjects at school, more attention was drawn to the nature experience for all children." Third, an intention to actively preserve the environment is named by the participants. As an example, the author of Letter No. 1 states: "Care well for mother earth and use all possible options to realize that.". Moreover, participants also suggest possible solutions, like the author of Letter No. 7, who states: "Long travels, oeps, let's think, by feet, the bike, means of transport without the use of fuel, but with the use of natural powers that don't exhaust the earth.". Fourth, some participants describe how they act more environmentally friendly, like in Letter No. 9: "We live in a energy-saving part...". Last, participants report a "saved earth" or at least positive developments in the future. As an example, the author of Letter No. 1 states: "The insects are coming back. What a precursor for the transition to a less

environmentally harmful state.". Overall, a difference between wanting to preserve nature and an already preserved nature appears. However, all descriptions appear to be of positive and optimistic nature.

In contrast to that, the opposite definition of the value "Universalism - Nature" was coded four times, of which 3 times it was coded in the letters representing a negative perspective towards the UBI and only once in a letter representing a positive perspective. The quotes fall into two categories. On the one hand, there appears to be an overall worry about not being able to stop climate change, as in Letter No. 12: "I have the feeling that we are destroying our earth." On the other hand, possible consequences of climate change are brought forwards. As an example, the author of Letter No. 1 states: "Migration takes place from through climate change overheated places to more moderate areas..." Overall, the author of Letter No. 12 appears to be interested in the preservation of nature as well as in nature as a whole, but seems to feel unable to stop climate change, even in a possible future with a UBI. This also explains why the content of that letter was partially coded with the value "Universalism - Nature +", but also partially with the value "Universalism - Nature -".

4. Discussion

An introduction of a universal basic income has been widely discussed as a possible solution to various problems, such as inequality in the distribution of financial resources, economic uncertainties and technological developments (Standing, 2013). However, the discussion has developed a polarizing nature with both strong advocates and opponents. Therefore, the goal of this study was to take a closer look at the values people hold, which can ultimately lead to the forming of an opinion (Schwartz et al., 2012). More precisely, the research question of this study was: which values are depicted in the future perspectives by mostly employed participants from the Netherlands of a world where the UBI is realized. The overall finding of this study is that advocates and opponents do not per se differ with regard

to the values they hold, but rather with regard to the interpretation of those values. In the following, the individual findings that lead to the overall conclusion are being discussed.

The letters were categorized according to the perspective presented towards the UBI. The majority of the letters, namely 10 out of 12 letters, were classified as representing a "positive perspective". Within that category, the following values were most prominent: "Self-Direction - Thought +", "Self-Direction - Action +", "Security - Personal +", "Benevolence - Caring +" and "Universalism - Nature +". Overall, more personal values than social values were coded. Therefore, my expectations from the introduction, where I connected arguments with values, were only partially confirmed. I had expected a more equal distribution between personal and social values as I had mainly anticipated the two higher order values "Self-Transcendence" and "Openness to Change" to emerge. One possible explanation could be, that I tried to connect values to specific arguments that advocates had stated, whereas the participants seemed to report a possible future with a UBI more broadly. Moreover, participants focused more on their own future with a UBI, whereas the arguments stated by advocates were specified in more societal terms (Böhnke, 2001; Bregman, 2016; Mulvale, 2008; Santens, 2017; Schmiester, 2019; Shah, Shafir & Mullainathan, 2014; Werner, 2018).

Moreover, two out of the 12 letters were categorized as representing a "negative perspective" towards the introduction of a UBI. The following values were most prominent in the two letters: "Self - Direction - Action -", "Stimulation -", "Achievement -", Benevolence - Caring +" and "Universalism - Nature -". Within that letter category, I had not anticipated an even distribution between personal and social values as represented in the sample, but a more personal focus. A possible explanation could be that the arguments brought forwards by the opponents, as described in the introduction, mostly focused on possible economical disadvantages of a UBI (Goldin, 2018; Hunter, 2017; Schroeder, 2001; Tanner, 2014

), whereas participants described their possible future in both personal as well as societal ways. Overall, it becomes apparent that the mostly theoretical approaches and arguments only partially coincide with the expectations of the participants. Therefore, an implication of the findings of this study it to tailor the argumentation about a universal basic income to the values, which people seem to hold when wanting to persuade them. An introduction of a UBI, or something similar, might become inevitable in the future in order to tackle societal issues and being able to dispel peoples' concerns and to be responsive to peoples' values might be an advantage when wanting or needing to introduce it.

As a lot of values were also coded within both of the letter types, it becomes apparent that not the values themselves differ between people with a positive or a negative perspective towards the UBI, but the interpretation of the values. Three of the values were most prominent throughout all the letters. First, the value "Benevolence - Caring" was coded 12 times in its original definition. Overall, participants cared for both friends and family, but also for society as a whole. It did, however, reveal that the interpretation of "caring for others in a possible future with a UBI" was different for participants. Participants holding a positive perspective saw the introduction as a chance for more equality within society, whereas participants holding a negative perspective rather expressed worrying about others.

Second, the value "Self-Direction - Action" was coded in both its original meaning and its opposite meaning. The opposite definition was only coded in letters that represent a negative perspective towards the UBI. Participants saw their freedom limited or even taken away by technological developments, politics or money and the involved dependence. None of those arguments can directly be linked to the UBI itself, but apparently participants did not expect the UBI to resolve these issues either. This is particularly interesting because an introduction of a UBI would at least partially be introduced as a solution for technological developments or financial uncertainties (Standing, 2013; Van Parijs, 2004).

Moreover, the original definition of the value was only coded in the letters expressing a positive perspective. Again, various themes became apparent, such as an overall sense of freedom as well as being able to follow a passion, independence, job-related freedom and time for more tasks. More precisely, participants expected having more time to follow personal interests because they would have to work less in order to make a sufficient living. Last, having different options to freely choose from and act upon was associated with being able to care for the environment.

The latter is in accordance with the prominence of the third and last code, namely "Universalism - Nature". In its original meaning, it appeared within the areas of enjoying nature, a changed mind-set regarding nature preservation, the intention to preserve nature, acting environmentally conscious and a "saved earth". The opposite definition of the value was described in the context of worrying about the environment and climate change as well as in the context of possible consequences of climate change. Letter No. 12 is an interesting example of the coded value. On the one hand, the author states enjoying nature and caring about it, but on the other hand she describes resignation with climate action. As just stated, there might be a connection between feeling able to freely choose how to act and preserving nature. This is also described in the just given example, where the author does not experience freedom of action due to technological developments and political decision-making. This finding can be supported with the finding of a study by Bostrom, Hayes and Crosman (2018), which state that personal self-efficacy beliefs as well as stronger government and collective response efficacy can directly and indirectly be associated with climate action. Therefore, a practical implication of the findings of this study might be that the introduction of a UBI could enforce climate action in citizens by establishing more options to do so, for example through offering more free time to engage in environmentally friendly behaviors. Seeing the need to preserve nature might already be present, at least since Greta Thunberg started the

now omnipresent Fridays For Future movement in the summer of 2018 (Belam, 2019), but acting according to it would be the next step and might be facilitated through a UBI.

As participants do not seem to differ with regard to the values they hold, but their interpretation of those values and the application in a possible future with a UBI, there might be more behind the classification in the two letter types. When reading the arguments of the participants and their tone of voice in the letters, I got the feeling that participants hold different views on people and the world in general. Whereas participants who wrote a letter with a "positive perspective" describe their possible future with a UBI as a chance for improvement, participants holding a "negative perspective" do not seem to estimate that a UBI could be the positive change. Put more broadly, a "positive perspective" seems to be attended by an overall optimistic view towards the future and a "negative perspective" by an overall pessimistic view.

In addition, the value theory chosen as instrument of analysis for this study is based upon psychological research (Schwartz et al., 2012). However, the concept of a universal basic income is a broad topic, which also consists of economical, societal and institutional concepts, which could not be taken into consideration by solely applying a psychological model. Moreover, this might also be an explanation of why the expected values and the values that actually became apparent in the analysis are not concordant. The values behind several arguments and perspectives might be more complex to grasp than one psychological model can explain. As an example, arguments regarding the possible costs of the introduction of a UBI were expected to be connected to values with a personal focus, even though too high costs might also be considered as a societal and economical issue. However, this part of the argument could not be grasped by the psychological model by Schwartz et al. (2012). Nevertheless, applying the model already helped to shed light on the values, which people might find important in the debate about the possible introduction of a UBI. More precisely,

the arrangement of the values in higher order values and personal and social focus are a strength of the model because it made it possible to not only detect the values themselves, but to also put them into perspective and see the bigger implications. Therefore, I would suggest a combination of the psychological Schwartz model and a more societal value model for future research in order to cover more aspects of the discussion.

Moreover, the uneven distribution of the letters in categories can be seen as a limitation of this study. To put it into perspective, Switzerland held a referendum about a possible introduction of a UBI in 2016. 78% of the people voted against it and therefore only 22% were in favor of it ("Grundeinkommen abgelehnt", 2016). Even though the referendum took place under different circumstances and in a different country, it might be possible that the distribution in this study is not representative. Although the distribution itself is not taken into consideration in the findings of this study, only two letters representing a "negative perspective" could be categorized and used, which means that only little insights into the values underlying a negative perspective towards the introduction of a UBI could be collected. As a higher number of letters categorized within the category "negative perspective" might have given more insights, I suggest for future research to generate a more diverse or bigger sample, which might in return lead to a more representative distribution or at least to a bigger sample size for the letter category "negative perspective".

Last, a discrepancy between the perspectives presented in the letters and the answer to the question "*For or against UBI?"* became apparent. More precisely, two participants' answer was inconsistent with the tone of voice presented in the letters and five participants indicated being unsure about the UBI, but wrote a letter with an either positive or negative perspective. It could have been possible that not all of the participants understood the term "universal basic income" as an additional income. Some participants questioned whether 1000 € per month would be enough to live off of and also indicated that 1000€ might not be

worth much anymore when inflation keeps developing. Another possible explanation for the inconsistencies could be that participants in general did not have a fixed opinion or were even against it, hence the answer to the question. But when be put in the position to imagine a future with a UBI, they seemed to adapt to the situation and presented a clear perspective. Therefore, thinking about it and actually living with a UBI might also differ, which can be seen as a limitation of this study. On the other hand it could also be seen as a practical implication of this study, as it might indicate that people might have an opinion about the UBI or might be uncertain about it before the actual introduction, but might adapt to it when it is actually realized - as the majority of the participants did in this study.

To conclude, three values were most prominently depicted in the letters from a possible future with a universal basic income, stating that caring for the welfare of others, having the freedom to choose and preserving nature seems to be most important for the participants. The interpretation of those values, however, differed with regard to the perspective towards the introduction of a UBI. Participants with a negative perspective indicated worrying about others in a possible future, whereas participants with a positive perspective saw the UBI as a chance to improve peoples' welfare. Where people with a positive perspective expected more freedom of action in the future, participants with a negative perspective expected the opposite. Moreover, people with a positive perspective seemed to plan actively engaging in preserving nature, but people with a negative perspective rather felt powerless and resigned. Therefore advocates and opponents might not only differ with regard to the interpretation of the values they hold, but with their view on the nature of people and the world. When wanting or needing to promote the introduction of a UBI in order to tackle societal issues, it might therefore be wise to not only focus on the values people hold, but on their interpretation of them as well as on their perspective on society and the world in general. When addressing fears and worries, it might be able to convince people

if necessary or they might simply adapt to it. Because even though the universal basic income

is a polarizing debate, advocates and opponents do have the focus on the most prominent

values in common after all.

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6. Appendix

A. Overview of the values by Schwartz et al. (2012)

Higher order values	Value	Conceptual Definition by Schwartz et al. (2012)	Examples from Schwartz et al. (2012)
Openness to Change	Self-Direction - Thought	Freedom to cultivate one's own ideas and abilities	creativity/imagination, curious/interested, new ideas/creative
Openness to Change	Self-Direction - Action	Freedom to determine one's own action	choosing own goals/own purpose, independent/self-reliant, own decisions/plan for self, independent/rely on self
Openness to Change	Stimulation	Excitement, novelty, and change	
Openness to Change / Self-Enhancement	Hedonism	Pleasure and sensuous gratification	
Self-Enhancement	Achievement	Success according to social standards	successful/achieving goals, ambitious/aspiring, capable/competent, influential/having an impact on people and events, show abilities/have people admire, successful/impress others, ambitious/show capable, getting ahead/striving to do better
Self-Enhancement	Power - Dominance	Power through exercising control over people	social power/control over others, authority/right to command, decision-maker/leader, in charge/tell others what to do
Self-Enhancement	Power - Resources	Power through control of material and social resources	wealth/material possessions, being rich/having xpensive things
Self-	Face	Security and power	social recognition/respect,

Enhancement/ Conservation		through maintaining one's public image and avoiding humiliation	preserving public image/maintaining face
Conservation	Security - Personal	Safety in one's immediate environment	sense of belonging/feeling others care about me, healthy/not sick, reciprocating favors/avoiding indebtness, clean/neat, tidy, family security/safety for loved ones
Conservation	Security - Societal	Safety and stability in the wider society	national security/nation safe from enemies, social order/societal stability, stable government/social order
Conservation	Tradition	Maintaining and preserving cultural, family or religious traditions	respect tradition/preserve customs, devout/hold religious faith, traditional ways/keep customs, religious belief/do what religion requires
Conservation	Conformity - Rules	Compliance with rules, laws, and formal obligations	conformity with rules, laws and authority
Conservation	Conformity - Interpersonal	Avoidance of upsetting or harming other people	avoiding upsetting others, complying with expectations
Conservation/ Self-Transcendence	Humility	Recognizing one's insignificance in the larger scheme of things	
Self-Transcendence	Benevolence - Dependability	Being a reliable and trustworthy member of the ingroup	(refers more in relations with friends and less to family than caring does)
Self-Transcendence	Benevolence - Caring	Devotion to the welfare of ingroup members	helpful/working for others welfare, honest/genuine, forgiving/willing to pardon
Self-	Universalism - Concern	Commitment to	equality for all, social

Transcendence		equality, justice and protection for all people	justice, world at peace, equal opportunity for all, treat all justly/protect the weak, world peace/harmony
Self-Transcendence	Universalism - Nature	Preservation of the natural environment	protect the environment, unity with nature, world beauty, care for environment, adapt/fit into nature
Self-Transcendence	Universalism - Tolerance	Acceptance and understanding of those who are different from oneself	broadminded/tolerant, wisdom/mature understanding, listen to people who are different/understand those who disagree

B. More detailed description of the materials

The content within the pre and post-test of the study consisted of the MHC-SF (Keyes, 2002), a self-report questionnaire about positive mental health. Moreover, an informed consent as well as the demographic information were obtained within the pretest as well.

The daily questions of the third week (8th to 14th of December 2018), focusing on the future, can be divided into two parts. As all participants indicated speaking Dutch, the questions were presented in Dutch. The first part of the questionnaire was the same throughout the week and consisted of closed-ended questions about daily time use based on list of activities. Afterwards, they were supposed to indicate how satisfied they were with the use of their time on a 5-point Likert-Scale ranging from "totally unconfident" to "totally confident". Lastly, they were asked to specify how they would wish to spend their time on the various activities the next day. More precisely, they were asked if they want to spent more, less or the same amount of time on the different activities.

The second part consisted of different reflective questions each day and included both closed-ended as well as open-ended questions. Table 1 serves as an overview.