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Review of the doctoral dissertation *Personality traits and value preferences at different levels of their hierarchical structure and everyday behavior*, prepared by Ewa Skimina under the supervision of Prof. Jan Cieciuch at the Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University in Warsaw.

It is a great pleasure to review this excellent dissertation. In a series of studies the doctoral candidate (author) takes apart the complex relationships between traits, values and behaviors. These is seemingly a well-studied topic, for example with two meta-analyses on the value-trait associations, but the current work does provide an important, fresh look. Study 2 is characterized by methodological innovation; Study 3 by theoretical innovation. I have read a multitude of papers about values (and written some myself), yet this dissertation made me think about values differently!

The first study included a large sample of adults, who responded over three sessions to questionnaires asking them to describe their personality traits (using two

separate systems), their values and a set of behavioral items. The student specifically sought to look at mundane, leisure time behaviors that did not relate theoretically to specific personality or trait. This choice is well-justified although it limits the ability to detect correlations between values/traits and behavior as the basic behaviors (e.g., using the internet) may constitute very different things for people with different traits or values. Some of this issue is addressed in Study 2. The study showed a meaningful understanding of key theoretical questions in the structure and function of personality, for example whether personality explained or merely described behavior. The author (and I) expected a bandwidth-fidelity pattern, with broader constructs associated with each other better than narrow-level constructs; however, there were some meaningful exceptions to this rule that the author discussed. The results were well analyzed, and presented succinctly. At the same time, the density of the research question (including a multitude of constructs jointly) prevented much discussion of content-based effects (i.e., specific traits and values predicting behaviors based on meaningful relationships.) Overall, the importance of the study lies in setting the ground for a better understanding of the structure of personality, on the one hand, and on the other hand the importance of traits and values to behaviors.

Study 2 improved on the previous one by using experience sampling methods of behaviors (thereby reducing the risk that people's recall of past behaviors is affected by their traits and values, spuriously increasing the value/trait behavior associations). Another improvement was moving away from using exclusively closed-end questionnaire methods – leading to a more diverse set of behaviors than in Study 1. The results are interesting and meaningful, this time with a broader set of behaviors

(due to the improved approach) and thus content-relevant findings such as the association between openness to change values and seemingly unrelated activities of buying cloths, listening to music, and travelling. As both traits and values related to behaviors, it would have been interesting to see if there was an overlap as well as interaction between the two sets of constructs in predicting behavior. An interesting and potentially important finding is that values and traits both related to situational components. For example, openness values related positively to being alone, and integration/disharmony related to feelings of autonomy in the situation. This suggests that values/traits may indirectly affect behaviors by selection of situations, a promising future direction.

It is amazing that although Schwartz has repeatedly argued that one underlying principle of his theory is that “opposed” values were such because the behaviors promoted by these values were incompatible, this idea has not been addressed directly previously. Testing this notion required moving from overall behaviors that may be stably ingrained in people’s lives (such as being religious, or being competitive) to behaviors that are momentary, referred to as “real-time” in this dissertation. This is because it is hard to distinguish (without extensive longitudinal data) trait-like behaviors from values that are also trait-like. Is it the opposition between traits (e.g., competitiveness and cooperativeness) that leads to the incompatibility of values (respectively, self-enhancement and self-transcendence)? Or perhaps the other way around? This concern does not apply to real-time behaviors that are instantiated. Additionally, it is important to remember that many values are important, even if incompatible, to most individuals, as is shown in priming studies for example. Thus values need to be activated to conflict actively

with each other; otherwise they can coexist to some degree in most individuals. This led the author to propose the novel idea of value-traits and value-states. Past work (on values in context, and on domain-specific values such as work values) has already shown that values can vary across time and situation. But the new approach presented here takes it further by proposing that values – like emotions – can be activated in a state-like manner and thus may be relevant to a behavior even if they are not generally highly important to a person. Importantly, these ideas operate only with regards to volitional behaviors, as the study findings show. The associations typically reported (at the global, trait level) are not due only to situational constraints. This further demonstrates the motivational and causal role of values in behaviors.

Study 4 is the only one of the dissertation papers that I was fortunate to read in advance as it was published. Already then I found that it had excellent ideas and some very important findings. It includes participants from two of the earlier papers but with new questions, this time putting more emphasis into content. It also supported the notion that while some behaviors are clearly value-expressive (typically sought after in studies of values and behaviors, such as helping for benevolence values), many real-time behaviors can be seen as value ambivalent. Moreover, as has been theoretically acknowledged (but possibly tested here for the first time), the same behavior has been shown to be instantiated by different values depending on person and context.

The doctoral dissertation has two methodological limitations – mainly relying on what seem to be convenience samples and on self reports. But these downsides are easily outbalanced by the large sample sizes, the theoretical sophistication, and the

depth of thinking and innovation. As such, this dissertation **constitutes an original solution to the scientific problem of values, traits and behaviors**. Specifically, I found the use of event sampling for understanding behaviors as a unique solution to understanding the momentary effect of values on behaviors, and the distinction between value traits and value states as theoretically ground-breaking.

I therefore strongly and enthusiastically declare that the doctoral dissertation *meets* the conditions specified in Article 13 of the Act of 14 March 2003 on academic title and academic degrees, and therefore may be admitted to further stages of the PhD conferment procedure. I propose a magna cum laude distinction for the dissertation.

Sincerely,

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