

ONE STEP FURTHER IN ORGANIZATIONAL BEHAVIOR: THE INFLUENCE OF PERSONALITY TRAITS AND PERSONAL VALUES ON THE USE OF GUIDANCE SOURCES AT WORK

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ABSTRACT

The present article aims at proposing a new theoretical framework of the internal antecedents of the use of guidance sources at work by employees while dealing with different events. The research adopted a qualitative approach based on strong literature evidence involving three main knowledge fields: Organizational Behavior, Personality Psychology, and Social Psychology. The theoretical review enabled the proposition of a framework according to which personality traits and personal values influence each other and both might influence the employees' use of guidance sources at work. Two hypotheses were raised: personal values are expected to be better predictors of work behaviors over which individuals have cognitive control, and personality traits of spontaneous and intuitive ones. The research was limited to constructing a theoretical model, but it has the potential to be used in future primary empirical research. The study shed light on the importance of personal characteristics on the employee's behavior at work. Moreover, the future test of the theoretical model may show administrators which personal characteristics are significantly related to which guidance sources used at work. The novel contribution of the framework, in comparison to relevant prior studies, is to consider personal values and personality traits simultaneously as predictors of the use of sources of guidance at work. Besides, it is the first research to study the possible internal antecedents of the use of guidance sources at work.

KEYWORDS: Organizational behavior. Personality psychology. Social psychology.

1 INTRODUCING THE THEORETICAL GAP

Organization members seek information from different sources in order to interpret and respond to the sequence of events they experience at work. The sources of information on which organization members rely to handle different events at work are known in the literature as 'Sources of Guidance (SOGs)' (Peterson *et al.*, 1990). But what are those work events handled by the employee? Work events include anything that triggers an employee's conscious attention (Smith *et al.*, 2002). The idea of event is frequently found in organization theories, which view social processes as episodes that can be given many meanings (Whitehead, 1929; Russel, 1961; Kahn *et al.*, 1964; Mintzberg, 1973; March and Olsen, 1976; Martinko and Gardner, 1984). So, organizations provide many sources of guidance that members can use to interpret the events they experience and to select their actions (Smircich and Morgan, 1982; Smith and Peterson, 1988).

Classical contingency leadership models (e.g.: House, 1971; Sheridan *et al.*, 1984) consider that some work tasks and work settings are more structured than others, which means that leaders will act according to how structured a task or setting is. Peterson *et al.* (1990), however, proposed something different. According to their alternative hypothesis, the employee's work varies *over time*, according to the event he/she is handling. So, this means that the employee's behavior must change over the course of a day or week to correspond with changes in the events that they are encountering. Peterson *et al.* (1990) highlighted that such variability in behavior in response to changing situations/events is exactly what is found in work organizations. This hypothesis turned out to be known as 'event-based contingency hypothesis', the background of this article.

Many notions similar to the idea of event management by Peterson *et al.* (1990) have been identified in the organizational literature. Galbraith (1973), for instance, proposed that organizations differing in the complexity and uncertainty of work will place different degrees

of emphasis on rules and procedures, hierarchy, and goal setting. However, his proposal assumed certain uniformity in the particular events or circumstances that occur within structures.

Even though there is strong evidence in the literature that the use of sources of guidance to handle work events might be influenced by an individual's psychological profile, its possible internal antecedents have never been deeply investigated. Although previous studies have been conducted to investigate the influence of personality on values (Bilsky and Schwartz, 1994; Furnham, 1984), the study of the simultaneous effect of both on the use of guidance sources at work still constitutes a theoretical gap. So, in this scenario, the present article aims at proposing a theoretical framework of the internal antecedents of the use of guidance sources at work by employees while dealing with different events. The main purpose is to suggest, based on strong literature evidence from the fields of Organization Behavior and Psychology, the directions in which these three variables relate to each other: (1) personal values; (2) personality traits; and (3) sources of guidance. It is a secondary objective of the present article to suggest which of the two predictor variables (personal values and personality traits) might have a stronger influence on the use of guidance sources at work, and also suggest what kind of events at work might be more influenced by each of the two predictor variables.

Beside the theoretical gap highlighted above, what else makes it worth it studying the internal antecedents of the use of guidance sources at work? In practice, why does this subject deserve to be deeper investigated? Since the use of guidance sources at work constitute a behavior and might influence the ultimate performance of the employee, this has implications for organizational administrators, decision makers and psychologists. The development of human resources policies could benefit from knowledge about the influence of personal values and personality traits on the use of guidance sources, especially when it comes to recruiting and selecting processes. If a company, for instance, values formal rules and desires its employees to behave at work relying mostly on standard operating procedures, the future test of the theoretical model might point out which personal characteristics are significantly related to the use of formal rules and this can be assessed in job recruiting and selecting tests.

The objective of investigating the internal antecedents of the use of guidance sources at work naturally leads us to one specific field: Personality Psychology. Personality Psychology is the area of Psychology that has most deeply and broadly influenced organizational behavior, which is defined as the field concerned with attitudes (e.g.: satisfaction and commitment), decision-making, interpersonal processes, and individual and group behavior in work settings (e.g.: SOGs) (Judge *et al.*, 2008). Personality traits and other personal differences, of course, have a long history in organizational behavior. Barrick and Mount (2005, p. 361) state: "Personality traits do matter at work", and indeed, the data from scientific research seem to support their conclusion (Hogan, 2004).

The relationship between personality traits and personal values represents an important topic at the intersection of Personality and Social Psychology. Both personal values and personality traits are broad categories of individual differences important to the study of persons and are, by definition, assumed to be cross-situationally and cross-temporally consistent (Dollinger *et al.*, 1996). Roccas *et al.* (2002) postulated that personal values and personality traits mutually influence each other, however, the causal direction remains unclear (Silfver *et al.*, 2008; Pohling *et al.*, 2016).

So, the novel contribution of the theoretical framework proposed in this study, therefore, in comparison to relevant prior studies, is to consider personal values and personality traits simultaneously as predictors of the use of guidance sources at work, something that has never been done before. Besides, it is important to highlight that this

theoretical discussion is fundamental so that it can be used in future primary empirical research. Figure 1 illustrates the three main fields to which this research dialogues.

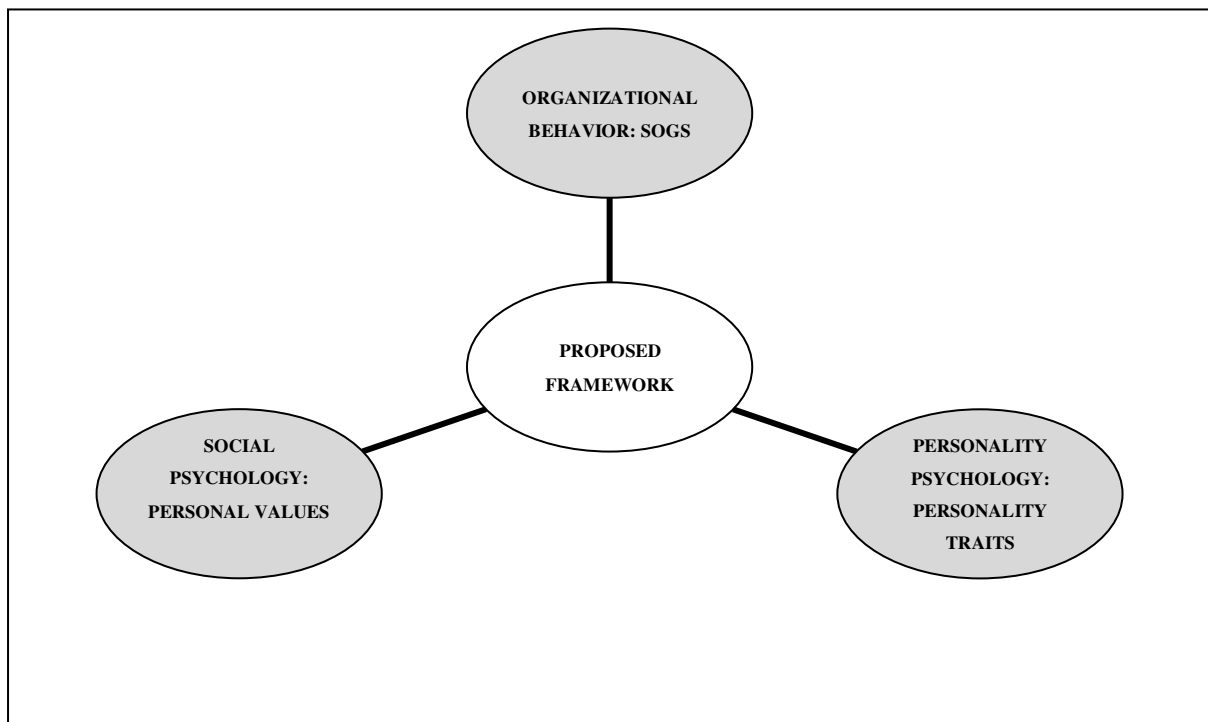


Figure 1. Position of the proposed theoretical framework.

Source: Prepared by the authors.

On the following section, the study variables will be conceptualized and, later, the study rationale will be deepened, culminating in a theoretical framework proposal. The conceptualization of the three study variables does not play only the role of a literature review section, but, while the article describes the main characteristics of the variables, it will get clearer and clearer the directions in which the variables are expected to relate to each other, allowing the ultimate construction of the theoretical model.

2 CONCEPTUALIZING THE STUDY VARIABLES

Values are considered by many theorists as criteria used by people to evaluate their actions, other individuals, and events (Williams, 1968; Kluckhohn, 1951). Values are socially shared conceptions of what is good, right, and desirable (Knafo *et al.*, 2011). They are supposed to affect important choices and pursuits of an individual, interpersonal attraction and social exchanges, norms and standards of behavior (Miceli and Castelfranchi, 1989).

According to Schwartz (1992), values: 1) are beliefs, 2) are desirable goals, 3) transcend specific actions and situations, 4) serve as standards or criteria, 5) are ordered by importance, and 6) the relative importance of multiple values guides action. Each value expresses a distinct motivational goal. Schwartz's theory provides an established and comprehensive taxonomy of guiding principles in people's life and specifies the structure of dynamic relation among the values.

The influence of personal values on other variables has already been confirmed in many studies (Martin *et al.*, 2014, Townsend and Thompson, 2013, Leão and Mello, 2012, Grant and Hofmann, 2011, Bardi and Schwartz, 2003; Sagiv, 2002; Bardi *et al.*, 2008; Hitlin and Piliavin, 2004; Schwartz and Bardi, 2001). Let's now briefly see what personality traits are.

Personality traits are real and present in all individuals. Contributing to behaviors, they are interconnected and can overlap each other. According to the theory of personality traits, they have three functions: 1 - to summarize, predict, and explain one's deeds; 2 - to predict behaviors, and 3 - to suggest that behaviors are formed from an internal process, not from the context (Schultz and Schultz, 2006). According to Cattell (1965), personality is what defines the actions of an individual when he is immersed in a given situation.

Personality traits are enduring characteristics of the individual that summarize trans-situational consistencies in characteristic styles of responding to the environment (Allport, 1937; Costa and McCrae, 1992a; Goldberg, 1993). A growing body of evidence indicates that personality traits are endogenous basic tendencies tied to underlying biophysiological response systems (Costa and McCrae, 1998, 2001; McCrae and Costa, 1996, 1999; Zuckerman, 1998). They are strongly heritable (Bergeman *et al.*, 1993; Jang *et al.*, 1998; Iles *et al.*, 2006), and remarkably stable throughout adulthood (McCrae and Costa, 1990; McCrae *et al.*, 2000).

Over the last three decades, personality traits have emerged as one of the main predictors of work outcomes. Meta-analyses have established the predictive validity of personality traits for performance at work as well as for other work outcomes (Gardner and Quigley, 2014, Sharma *et al.*, 2013, Barrick *et al.*, 2001; Ones *et al.*, 2007).

The personality traits measured through the Big Five Inventory (BFI), as well as its use as a predictor of other variables, represent a very current theme. Authors around the world have researched the relationship between personality traits and performance at work (Aard *et al.*, 2017), organizational behavior and subjective well-being (Burns *et al.*, 2017, Sun *et al.*, 2017), political participation (Weinschenk, 2017), stress (Hengartner *et al.*, 2017), counterproductive behavior in the work environment (Grijalva and Newman, 2015), attitudes regarding the provision of equal opportunities to immigrants (Ackermann and Ackermann, 2015), entrepreneurial characteristics (Antoncic *et al.*, 2013), among other variables. Finally, let's deeper understand what sources of guidance are.

As seen previously at the introductory session, sources of guidance (SOGs) are the sources of information the organization members use to interpret and respond to the work situations they encounter (Peterson *et al.*, 1990). When employees have to deal with work events, they operate within a context of alternative SOGs, many of which extend beyond the individual (Peterson and Smith, 2000; Smith and Peterson, 1988). SOGs may include interpretive structures such as memories, thoughts, and understandings to which new events can be connected, and may also include views on events that would likely to be considered by a manager, employee, subordinate, or friend. In addition, prevailing views in society and organizational documents (e.g.: Standard Operating Procedures) can be used by organization members to verify what guidelines they can offer.

Previous studies have suggested that the possible SOGs within an organization can be divided into four main categories: 1 - the individual's own experience, based on previous experience and training (Peterson *et al.*, 1990); 2 - social sources, based on superiors, subordinates, specialists and co-workers (Smith *et al.*, 1994); 3 - impersonal sources, based on formal rules or informal norms (Smith *et al.*, 2002, Smith and Peterson, 2005); and 4 - beliefs that are spread in a nation as to what is right, based on religion or ideology (Smith *et al.*, 2011). According to Smith *et al.* (2002), the SOGs mentioned above are among the most frequent in a wide variety of cultural contexts and events at work.

Having briefly conceptualized the three study variables and shared their main characteristics, let's now intertwine the three of them and deepen our discussion towards the theoretical model.

3 RATIONALE OF THE PROPOSED THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The present section will explore six different reasons that comprise the foundation upon which the theoretical framework was proposed.

3.1 The importance of studying sources of guidance

First, it is possible to identify the relevance of the present study based on its professional and academic relevance regarding the dependent variable (SOGs). From a professional perspective, the future test of the proposed theoretical framework may show managers and organizational psychologists which individual characteristics are related to which guidance sources used at work. This can be strategic information when it comes to recruitment and selection processes, since the future results will show organizational decision makers the role of personal values and personality traits on the use of desired guidance sources.

Moreover, from an academic perspective, this paper proposes a framework that may collaborate to deepen the study on SOGs and to better understand employees' behavior at work and how the predictor variables complement each other. Even though there might be other internal variables which influence the use of guidance sources at work, this article chose personal values and personality traits according to what has been more relevant in the literature.

3.2 Theoretical gap

The study of personal values has already been applied to many contexts and levels such as cultural values (Hofstede, 1980; Triandis *et al.*, 1988), work values (Tamayo and Porto, 2005) and organizational values (Borges and Tamayo, 2001). Both constructs (personal values and personality traits) have already been researched together predicting many different attitudes and behaviors, but they have never been considered together to explain the use of guidance sources at work.

Through the literature review of the most important empirical studies involving sources of guidance in the last 30 years (Table 1), it was possible to identify two gaps: 1) the lack of a significant amount of research about sources of guidance, as we identified only five important empirical studies about this variable. One of them discussed the use of SOGs isolatedly (Peterson *et al.*, 1990), and the other ones its relationship with other variables (Smith *et al.*, 1994, Smith *et al.*, 2002, Smith and Peterson, 2005; Smith *et al.*, 2011). It is important to highlight that the study of Peterson *et al.* (2016), a more recent one, only updated the data collecting instrument – Managerial Decisions Questionnaire Global (Mdq-GL) -, revising the number of frequent organizational events from eight to six, omitting two events that had shown some method problems. This means that the last published empirical study about SOGs was done more than seven years ago (Smith *et al.*, 2011). Besides, it was possible to identify 2) the absence of research that evaluates specifically the individual antecedents of the use of SOGs at work, such as personal values and personality traits. As we can see on Table 1, where the most important previous empirical studies on SOGs are summarized, none of the models considered the internal antecedents of SOGs. So, in order to help fill these gaps, the present article analyzes the individual antecedents of the use of SOGs at work.


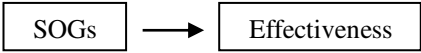
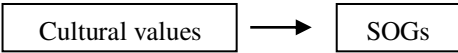

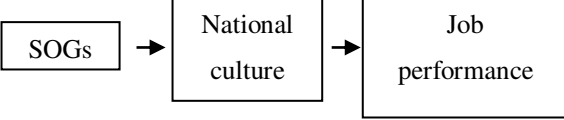
Position of the variable SOG on the research object	Model	Study
To what extent employees used five SOGs to respond to two categories of events: day-to-day situations and unusual problems.		Peterson et al. (1990).
The relationship between the use of SOGs in managing routine and non-routine events and the effectiveness of work teams.		Smith et al. (1994).
The relationship between cultural values and the use of SOGs.		Smith et al. (2002).
The relationship between demographic variables and the use of SOGs.		Smith and Peterson (2005).
National Culture as a moderator of the relationship between manager's use of SOGs and job performance.		Smith et al. (2011).

Table I. Main previous empirical studies on SOGs.

Source: Prepared by the authors

3.3 Both personal values and personality traits might influence attitudes and behavior

Rokeach (1968) affirms that beliefs, attitudes, and values are interconnected, comprising an integrated cognitive system. This means that a change in any part of this system will affect its other parts, which will eventually change behavior. This is one of the reasons why this article considers that there is a relationship between personal values and the use of SOGs (behavior) at work. They definitely have not been chosen randomly.

This article hypothesizes that the inclination for some personal values or the prevalence of a certain personality trait can determine which of the guidance sources the employee will privilege when dealing with work events. People can explain their choices, attitudes, and behavior by referring to their traits ('I helped her because I'm an agreeable person') or as well as their values ('I think it's important to help') (Roccas and Sagiv, 2009). It has been extensively demonstrated the connection between values and emotions, preferences, attitudes, and beliefs (Roccas and Sagiv, 2009; Feather, 1999). Many authors have highlighted that individuals often seek out, create, evoke, or are selected into experiences that are compatible and correlated with their personality (Caspi and Bem, 1990;

Roberts, 2007; Scarr and McCartney, 1983; Snyder and Ickes, 1985; Wille and de Fruyt, 2014).

Judge *et al.* (2008) have successfully proved the effects of the Big Five Model in many work outcomes, such as job performance, work motivation, job attitudes, leadership, among others. It is one more reason to expect that personality traits have an effect on the use of guidance sources at work, since these can be considered job behaviors (Smith *et al.*, 2002). Whether this effect is direct or indirect, is still something to be investigated and could be shown by the test of the theoretical framework proposed hereby.

3.4 Personal values and personality traits complement each other

Although personal values and personality traits are both transsituational and relatively stable structures of individuals, which makes them variables close to each other (individual level), they differ from each other in some aspects. Accumulating evidence shows that personality traits are largely endogenous characteristics, while personal values are learned adaptations strongly influenced by the environment (Olver and Mooradian, 2003).

First, while personal values are directly related to the content of the goals of the individuals, personality traits relate to the way the individual seeks to achieve these goals. As presented by Schwartz (1994), personal values are conflicting, that is, when certain values are prioritized, others are deprecated. On the other hand, personality traits do not conflict with each other. While personality traits are relatively inborn dispositions (Olver and Mooradian, 2003), personal values are learned and reflect the adaptation of an individual's need to what is considered acceptable in a society (Rokeach, 1972).

Personality traits are “dimensions of individual differences in tendencies to show consistent patterns of thoughts, feelings and actions” (McCrae and Costa, 1990, p. 23). Therefore, personality traits are enduring dispositions. On the other hand, personal values are enduring goals. Personality traits describe ‘what people are like’ rather than the intentions behind their behavior. Personal values refer to ‘what people consider important’, the goals they wish to pursue. Personality traits vary in the frequency and intensity of their occurrence, whereas personal values vary in their importance as guiding principles (ranging from at least minimally to supremely important). People believe their values are desirable, at least to a significant reference group, whereas traits may be positive or negative.

People may explain behavior by referring to personality traits or to personal values, but they refer to their values when they wish to justify choices or actions as legitimate or worthy. Finally, personal values — but not personality traits — serve as standards for judging the behavior of self and others. The same word may refer either to a trait or a value, but the meanings are different. For instance, not all individuals who attribute high importance to the personal value ‘competence’ are characterized by the personality trait of competence (Roccas *et al.*, 2002).

Despite these differences, Parks and Guay (2009) point out that the two constructs also have many similarities and both impact on the individual's motivation. Although personality traits and personal values are conceptually distinct, they are empirically related (Haslam *et al.*, 2009).

For those reasons, it is believed that including the two constructs in this model can broaden the understanding of what leads the individual to choose this or that guidance source at work, by differentiating the impact of each construct separately and to investigate the joint impact of these constructs.

3.5 Personal values and personality traits might influence each other

It is important to highlight that personal values and personality traits may mutually influence each other. Personal values may affect personality traits because, other things equal, individuals try to behave in ways consistent with their values (Rokeach, 1973; Schwartz, 1996). For instance, valuing conformity fosters compliant rather than unconventional behavior. Personal values can be considered ideals and, therefore, can be seen as guides for self-regulation. In the opposite direction, personality traits may affect personal values too, since individuals who consistently present a behavioral trait are likely to increase the degree to which they value the goals that trait serves. This allows them to justify the behavior. Following this understanding, Schwartz and Bardi (1997) explained the high value that people living under communist regimes attribute to obedience versus autonomy. Such value priorities justify the behavior required to adapt to a totalitarian regime (Kristiansen and Zanna, 1994). Self-perception theory (Bem, 1972) might suggest that personality traits influence personal values because people infer what is important to them from their consistent (trait-expressive) behavior. Three important studies have already examined relations between personal values and the Five Factor Model (Dollinger *et al.*, 1996; Luk and Bond, 1993; Roccas *et al.*, 2002).

In general, the robust empirical studies suggest that the more intellectual traits relate systematically to personal values. The relationships between the major value dimensions and the more affective traits are generally weaker and less consistent across the studies.

3.6 Personal values and personality traits are relatively stable

An individual's personality is molded by experience, family dynamics, culture, work, and educational experiences. However, many evidences suggest that a great part of personality predispositions, even being present since the individual's first years, are stable over his life (Caspi *et al.*, 2005; Costa and McCrae, 1992b; Gosling *et al.*, 2003).

Even though some studies have shown light value changes (e.g.: Verkasalo *et al.*, 2006), it has been detected that personal values tend to get back to their original baseline level over the time after these changes. Besides, personality traits can be considered as relatively stable over time. Even the few authors that claim changes on personality traits acknowledge that they typically occur at a modest rate and over long-time intervals (Roberts *et al.*, 2003; McCrae and Terracciano, 2005; Roberts and Wood, 2006; Wille and de Fruyt, 2014).

According to Schwartz (2001), personal values and personality traits are transituational and relatively stable structures that precede and influence attitudes and behaviors. This was a strong evidence based on which the model of this paper was proposed.

Having these six rationale pillars in mind, the theoretical framework will be illustrated in the following section.

4 ACCOMPLISHING THE STUDY PRIMARY OBJECTIVE: TO PROPOSE A THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

So far, the present article followed a logical sequence. First, a theoretical gap was identified and presented in the introductory section. Then, the three study variables were presented separately and, in the previous section, they have been intertwined, comprising the rationale of the theoretical model. The robust journey through the study variables allowed the proposition of the way they might relate to each other, including the directions in which this might occur. Even though the six pillars of the rationale have already been presented, let's review three important references that summarize the reason behind the arrows in the model's illustration (Figure 2):

1 – Judge *et al.* (2008) have successfully proved the effects of personality traits in many work outcomes, such as attitudes and behaviors (this leads us to accept the hypothesis that personality traits might influence the use of guidance sources, since the last represent behaviors: personality traits → SOG's);

2 - It has been extensively demonstrated the connection between personal values, attitudes and behaviors (Roccas and Sagiv, 2009; Feather, 1999) (this leads us to accept that personal values might influence the use of guidance sources, since the last represent behaviors: personal values → SOG's);

3 – Roccas *et al.* (2002) postulated that personal values and personality traits mutually influence each other (personal values → ← personality traits).

This theoretical foundation, summarized above, enables us to propose a framework in which personality traits and personal values influence each other and both might influence the employees' use of guidance sources at work (behaviors). Simplified, the proposed theoretical framework, that can be tested in future primary research, is illustrated in Figure 2.

The fact that the three variables considered in the present theoretical model are trans-situational, allows it to be tested in the future through a cross-sectional research.

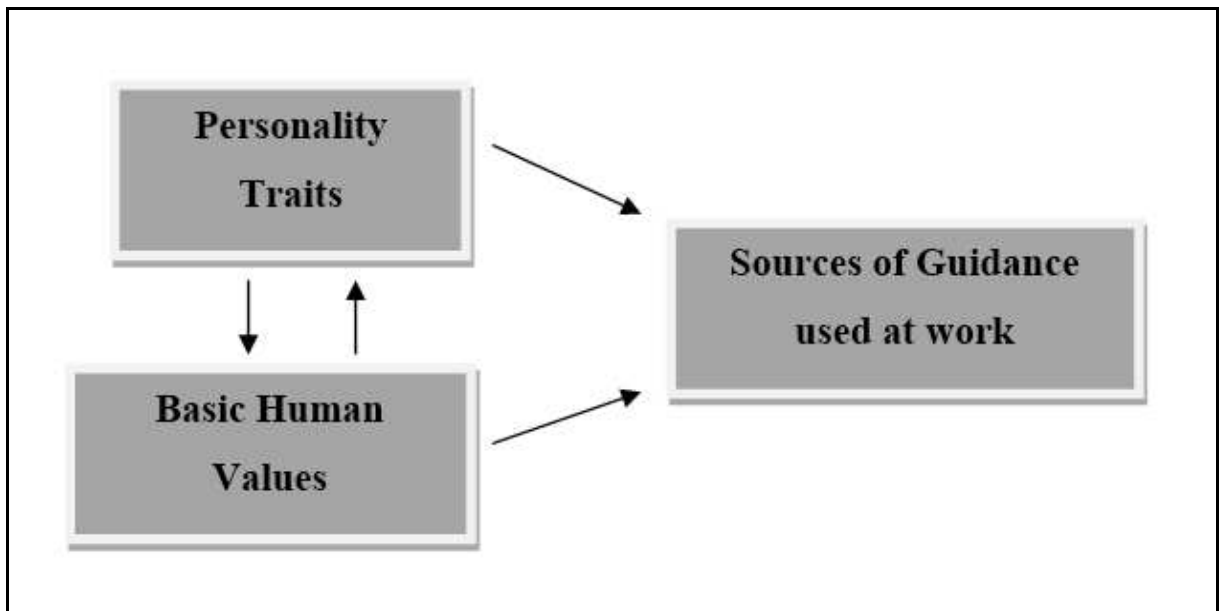


Figure 2. Proposed theoretical framework

Source: Prepared by the authors

4.1 An application of the theoretical framework

The most recent cross-cultural study on the SOGs (Smith *et al.*, 2011) evidenced unhypothesized significant relationships between variables that may or may not have been by chance, so what we know about the SOGs is incomplete. Smith *et al.* (2011) noted that managers perceive the reliance on established rules and procedures and on one's own experience to be effective means of handling work events across *all* cultures. They analyzed relationships between perceptions of effectiveness and national cultural values using the GLOBE (Global Leadership Research Project) study dimensions of culture (House *et al.*, 2004) and the Hofstede (2001) dimensions. They proposed that individuals in countries with higher levels of uncertainty avoidance would rely more on formal rules than their counterparts, while those in countries with smaller levels of power distance would rely more on themselves when handling work events.

Results indicated counterintuitive individual-level effects. Reliance on oneself was weaker in collectivist countries, as the authors had hypothesized. Yet the results further indicated the relationships between the reliance on formal rules and both power distance and uncertainty avoidance were the reverse of what the authors had hypothesized for either the Hofstede measure of the two dimensions or the GLOBE measure. People in societies with larger levels of power distance were less likely to rely on formal rules (using the GLOBE measure), rather than the reverse. Using the Hofstede measure, the relationship was not significant. People in societies with higher levels of uncertainty avoidance were also less likely to rely on formal rules (using the Hofstede measure). Using the GLOBE measure, the relationship was not significant. Both the GLOBE and Hofstede studies have indicated that power distance corresponds to the reliance on persons in authority, while uncertainty avoidance corresponds to a reliance on impersonal rules. Yet Hofstede's (2001) uncertainty avoidance measure differs from the GLOBE measure in that it focuses less on routinization and more on anxiety and either increased risk-taking or increased caution.

Accordingly, to develop a better understanding of the sources of guidance that people draw from when making sense of work events, one should further examine personal values that correspond to power distance and uncertainty avoidance. Values corresponding to power distance include hierarchy and authority. Those corresponding to uncertainty avoidance include risk-taking, conservation, openness to change, and order. Peterson (2017) distinguished between order and chaos, suggesting that people have a desire to maintain order in their lives and to eliminate chaos. Yet what people know they ought to do (e.g., seek order) may vary from what they usually do (c.f., House *et al.*, 2004) so people may be on a continuum of order and chaos. Schwartz (1992; 1994) identified the second order value domains of conservation vs. openness to change and lower level values of conformity, security, tradition, and hierarchy.

Personality traits may further correspond to uncertainty avoidance. For example, order is a facet of the conscientiousness domain and openness to experience is a personality domain of the Five Factor Model of Personality (Costa and McCrae, 1992).

Taken together, we propose the relationships between the aforementioned personality traits, personal values, and the SOGs may be better understood using our proposed theoretical framework. The framework suggests these personal values and personality traits are antecedents in a model explaining the sources of guidance people use to handle work events.

5 ACCOMPLISHING THE STUDY SECONDARY OBJECTIVES: TO ESTABLISH PROPOSITIONS

It was also the objective of this article to suggest which of the two predictor variables (personal values and personality traits) might have a stronger influence on the use of guidance sources at work, and also to suggest what kind of events at work might be more influenced by each of the two predictor variables.

First, Roccas *et al.* (2002) postulated that personal values and personality traits mutually influence each other, however, the causal direction remains unclear (Silfver *et al.*, 2008; Pohling *et al.*, 2016). Nevertheless, this article hypothesizes that the influence of personality traits on personal values is expected to be stronger than in the opposite direction, since personality traits are inborn and personal values are learned, strongly influenced by the environment. Besides, in general, considering the concept of guidance sources (SOGs), as choices which are not considered deliberate, consciously recognized or publicly announced, but refer simply to the way in which individuals direct their actions, this paper hypothesizes that personality traits should be better predictors of the use of guidance sources at work than personal values.

Second, according to the referred model, two main results can be expected when it is tested in future primary studies. First, personal values, as cognitive representations of motivations in the form of goals and objectives, are relevant to goal-directed acts (Roccas *et al.*, 2002). They are, therefore, likely to be better predictors of attitudes and work behaviors over which individuals have cognitive control or choice. On the other hand, personality traits are expected to be better predictors of spontaneous, intuitive, and emotionally driven attitudes and work behaviors over which employees have little cognitive control.

6 CONCLUSIONS

The present paper aimed at discussing profoundly the internal antecedents of a very important work-related variable known as ‘sources of guidance’ and their probable relationships. As it was expected, discussing work behavior would naturally involve different knowledge fields which, in this case, were Organizational Behavior, Personality Psychology, and Social Psychology. Based on strong literature evidence from those fields, the present article achieved successfully its main objective: to culminate in proposing a theoretical framework that can be tested in future primary empirical studies, shedding light on a theoretical gap about the individual antecedents of sources of guidance. Moreover, it was possible to hypothesize which of the two predictor variables (personal values and personality traits) might have a stronger influence on the use of guidance sources at work, and also to suggest what kind of events at work might be more influenced by each of the two predictor variables.

By discussing the relationship among three variables that have never been analyzed simultaneously, the present article has contributed to the advancement of the theory of three main knowledge fields to which it is related: Organizational Behavior, Personality Psychology, and Social Psychology. Even though the study was limited to constructing a theoretical model and to answer theoretical secondary questions, it elaborated a robust ground upon which the internal antecedents of guidance sources can be tested in future primary empirical research for the first time.

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