

Integrating work and basic values into the Spherical Model of Interests[☆]

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ABSTRACT

Two prominent models of values, one in work and the other in life, were examined as they each related to the dimensions underlying the Spherical Model of Interests (Tracey & Rounds, 1996) as measured by the Personal Globe Inventory (PGI; Tracey, 2002). The technique of external property vector fitting was utilized to plot the value constructs onto two- and three-dimensional interest structures in a sample of 206 college students. Results, when compared across both theoretical and empirical definitions of interest space, indicated that all work values and fewer basic values related to two dimensions, but that only the work value of Achievement and the life value of Power related to the Prestige dimension. Implications for research and for assessment that involves integrating the results of values and interest inventories are discussed.

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Integrating values into the Spherical Model of Interests

The assessment of vocational interests and work values is central to the practice of career counseling. Interests are commonly represented by spatial models in two and three dimensions. A prominent two-dimensional model of interests is a circular one (Holland, 1997; Tracey & Rounds, 1993), consisting of two underlying dimensions, typically labeled as Data–Ideas and People–Things (Prediger, 1982). The three-dimensional, or Spherical Model of Interests (Tracey & Rounds, 1996), adds the dimension of Prestige to the above two dimensions. These spatial models of interests have offered a powerful heuristic enabling researchers and counselors to disseminate information about vocational interests, in general, and about research participants' and clients interests specifically. For example, occupations have been mapped onto these two- and three-dimensional models (e.g., Prediger & Vansickle, 1992; Tracey & Rounds, 1996). A leading model of work-related values has been developed out the Theory of Work Adjustment (TWA; Dawis & Lofquist, 1984). From this perspective, work values refer to the underlying dimensions of needs that are, or are not, reinforced within the work environment (Rounds, Henly, Dawis, Lofquist, & Weiss, 1981). Schwartz (1992) proposed a model of basic values, or general motivational types, which together represent a comprehensive model of life values. Values are often assessed in tandem with interests, but despite a wealth of research that has located activities and occupations within interest space, little attempt has been made to formally locate the value constructs within this same space. The focus of this study is on examining the fit of the work and basic values to a two- and three-dimensional model of interests.

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Interests

The two dimensions of Data–Ideas and People–Things are the most commonly used dimensions shown to underlie the circular arrangement of interests (Prediger, 1982; Prediger & Vansickle, 1992; Rounds & Tracey, 1993). The Spherical Model of Interests (Tracey & Rounds, 1996; Tracey, 2002) has gained attention as a viable model of vocational interests in which interests are modeled in three dimensions, instead of two (e.g., Holland's Hexagon). A defining feature of the Spherical Model of Interests (Tracey & Rounds, 1996) is that prestige is viewed as a part of interests and not as a separate content. The Spherical Model thus incorporates a third dimension of Prestige that is orthogonal to the two-dimensional plane formed by Data–Ideas and People–Things. The positive and negative poles of the prestige dimension define the respective north and south poles of the sphere. The two dimensions of Data–Ideas and Things–People lie at the equator of the sphere, which is at the mid-range of prestige (i.e., neither high nor low prestige). However, with higher or lower prestige interests, the more truncated interests will become with respect to the Data–Ideas and People–Things dimensions at either the north or south poles of the sphere, respectively. The Spherical Model of Interests can thus provide a more complete representation of interests for use in assessment and research applications while still retaining the visual appeal of a spatial model. The Spherical Model of Interests is well represented by the Personal Globe Inventory (PGI; Tracey, 2002). See Fig. 1.

Values

A leading model of work-related values has been developed out the Theory of Work Adjustment (TWA; Dawis & Lofquist, 1984), which proposed 21 need or occupational reinforcers that have been shown to comprise six work values (Rounds et al., 1981). The values derived from the TWA (Dawis & Lofquist, 1984) continue to be a highly regarded description of work values (e.g., Rounds & Armstrong, 2005). The need reinforcers and thus the values that underlie them are currently represented by the O*NET Work Importance Profiler (WIP; McCloy et al., 1999).

Armstrong, Day, McVay, and Rounds (2008) have showed that eleven out of the thirteen need reinforcers they utilized could be integrated into a two-dimensional or circular model of interests. Further, six of the thirteen could be integrated into a three-dimensional model of occupations, which added a third dimension the researchers labeled as complexity. Substantive interpretations could then be made about the need reinforcers that were successfully integrated into the interest structures. Although the researchers cautioned that the three-dimensional interest model they employed was not an established one, their work suggests that fitting work values instead of the individual need reinforcers to two- and three-dimensional models of interests would also have utility, particularly when using an established model of interests.

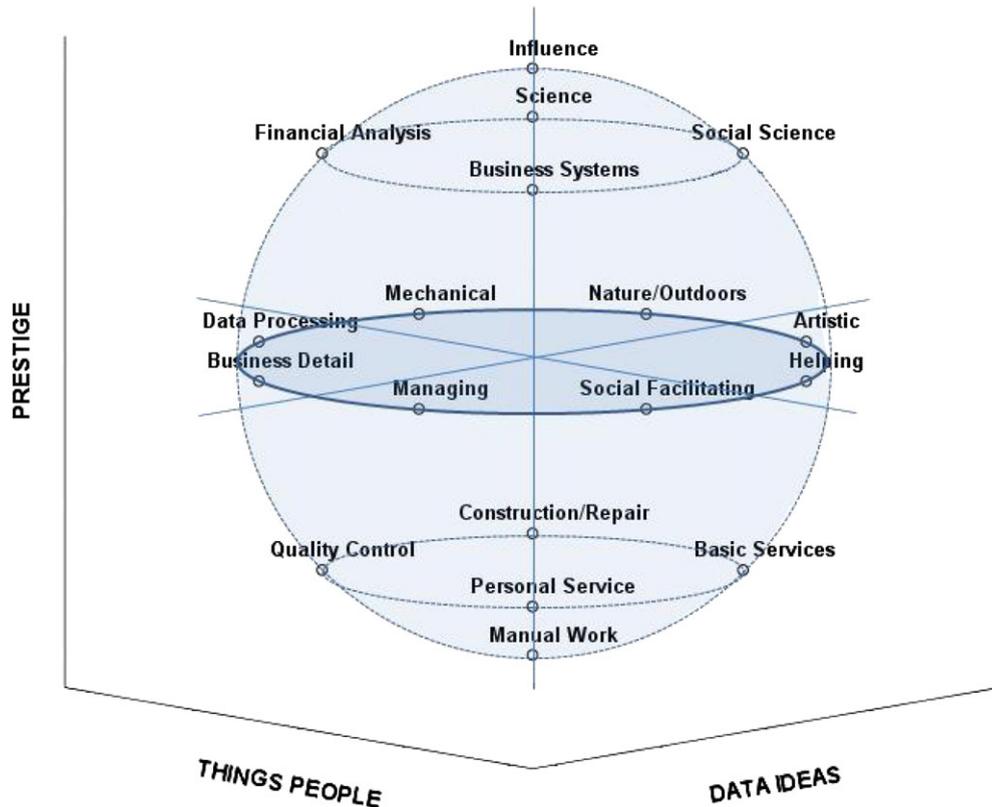


Fig. 1. Theoretical spherical structure of the Personal Globe Inventory.

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