

Presenter Symposium – AOM #12206

**CHARTING YOUR OWN COURSE: EXPLORING HOW VALUES DRIVE CAREER  
DECISION MAKING**

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**Value Affirmation and Future Best Self Interventions' Impact on Graduate Student  
Career Exploration**

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**Beyond Logic and Intuition: Validating a Measure of Career Discernment Styles**

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**Rethinking Values and Career Decision Making: Enriching Protean Career Orientation Theory**

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**Recognizing the Whole Person: Integrating Work/Life at Accenture**

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**Potential Sponsor Divisions:** Careers, Organizational Behavior, Human Resources

*The symposium organizers, Kathryn Doiron and Christopher Chen, have received the statements from all intended participants agreeing to participate in the entire symposium and stating that they are not in violation of the Rule of Three + Three.*

## ABSTRACT

There is a common understanding that personal values play a part in career decision making. Each of the papers in this symposium investigates the role that values play in different stages of career development. The first paper, by Kathryn Doiron, Ague Mae Manongsong, Wenhao Wang, Briana Pisauro, Kristine Powers, and Pooja Sathyanarayanan, investigates the use of two values-based interventions on the early career exploration of graduate students. The second paper, by Jeffrey Yip, Haoxiong Li, Ellen Ensher, and Susan Murphy, validates a scale for a new typology of career decision making styles. The third paper, by Christopher Chen, Kathryn Doiron, Elizabeth Kolokowsky, and Brandon Sorenson, asks participants to recall a critical career-decision making incident and reflect on how values and related factors impacted the decision that was made. The final paper, by Molly Maymar, Shelby Kan, and Jake Gittleson, presents findings from a new performance management initiative at Accenture, where personal values and aspirations are used to evaluate performance. The symposium will conclude with comments by Dr. Douglas T. Hall, from Boston University, who will use his expertise in careers research to comment across all four papers and facilitate questions from the audience.

**Keywords:** Career decision making, personal values, protean career, value affirmation, performance management

## OVERVIEW OF SYMPOSIUM

Understanding how individuals make career decisions is imperative to both organizations and individual employees in the current work environment. A perennial concern for researchers and organizations is how to attract, hire, and retain the most appropriate job candidates (Breugh, 2008; Chapman, Uggerslev, Carroll, Piasentin, & Jones, 2005; Ployhart, 2006; Saks, Uggerslev, & Fassina, 2007). Furthermore, in the workplace today, individual employees are more concerned with making their own career paths instead of relying on paths defined by their employers (Briscoe & Hall, 2006; Hall, 1996). By studying the role of values in career decision making processes, the papers in this symposium add to the understanding of how and why individuals make important career decisions (e.g., applying for a job, accepting a job offer, staying when other opportunities might be available). This knowledge will enable organizations to evolve their talent management strategies to match the changing nature of employee career paths as well as help individuals make sound career decisions.

There is a long history of theory and research about the strategies that individuals use to make decisions (Arroba, 1977; Harren, 1979; Jepsen, 1974), but comparatively little about the role of values in this process. Ravlin and Meglino (1987) found that there is a higher propensity to be guided by their salient personal values during times of uncertainty, such as during important career transitions. In addition, research has found that individuals with a high protean career orientation place a greater emphasis on personal values when making career decisions (Briscoe & Hall, 2006) and that value congruence was predictive of job offer acceptance (Judge & Bretz, 1992). However, the strength of the roles that values play in the career decision making process when compared to other factors such as pay and location still remain largely undefined.

The projects in this symposium are concerned with how and when values play a part in

career decision making. The definition of values that these presentations consider is akin with Rokeach's (1977) definition of personal values: values are enduring perspectives or beliefs that affect the individual's purpose in life and how individuals behave. We have identified three questions that the papers in this symposium address: *(1) How strong of a role do values play in career decision making? (2) What types of values are salient in career decision making? (3) How can organizations help individuals be more aware of their values?*

The symposium will be organized as follows. First the co-organizers will provide a brief introduction to the symposium. Next, the presenters for each project will be allotted 15 minutes to share the background of their studies and present their findings. Finally, the discussant will synthesize the projects and lead an interaction question and answer session with the audience.

In the first presentation, Doiron, Manongsong, Wang, Pisauro, Powers, and Sathyanarayanan will discuss the results of two online career exploration interventions: a values affirmation intervention, where participants were asked to pick their top career-related value and do a written reflection; and a future work-self intervention, where participants were asked to write about their ideal future career. The authors measured several psychological variables (i.e., career-related self-efficacy, imposter feelings, career choice anxiety). The participants were also asked questions about their career exploration processes (i.e., environmental exploration, self-exploration, systematic exploration) and career exploration behaviors (i.e., frequency of exploration, help-seeking from a career counselor).

In the second presentation, Yip, Li, Ensher, and Murphy will present the results of the scale development and validation for a new career decision making styles typology. The Career Discernment Scale assesses four career decision making styles: logical reasoning, intuition, advice taking (in the form of mentorship) and spirituality (drawing from the Jesuit discernment

approaches to making good decisions). The results of this study show that individuals who use a combination of all four decision making styles report greater satisfaction and commitment to career decisions, and that the advice taking decision making style was the strongest predictor of work engagement, career satisfaction, and affective organizational commitment.

In the third presentation, Chen, Doiron, Kolokowsky, and Sorenson will discuss the results of a qualitative research study investigating when, how, and why individuals use personal values when making career decisions. The authors use critical incident technique in asking participants to recall their latest big career-related decision. Participants were asked to recall what personal values and other factors (e.g., salary, benefits, location) played a part in this career decision, as well as how values impacted the decision and about the interplay between personal values and other factors. Though it is understood that values play a part in career decision making, this research attempts to find nuance in how and when values play a part.

In the fourth presentation, Maymar et al., introduce two recent initiatives by Accenture, the Truly Human initiative and the Performance Achievement experience. Truly Human emphasizes self-care, both at work and home, with a goal of employees being able to experience an integration of their authentic selves. The second program, the Performance Achievement experience, is a performance management experience that allows employees to set aspirations based on their own strengths, values, and passions. Achieving steps to meet these aspirations are included in the employee's performance ratings. Maymar et al. will present the research behind these initiatives, their implementation, and findings from quantitative and qualitative employee surveys.

Following these four presentations, the remaining twenty-five minutes of the symposium will be led by the discussant, Douglas T. Hall. Dr. Hall is a leading expert in career research who

introduced the Protean Career concept, which includes two components: self-direction and values orientation. As such, Dr. Hall is uniquely qualified to comment on and discuss implications of the research presented in this symposium. Dr. Hall will lead an interactive question and answer session with session attendees, which will hopefully introduce new lines of inquiry for the presenters and audience.

### **RELEVANCE TO DIVISIONS**

This symposium speaks directly to the All Academy Theme - Improving Lives - in several ways. Encouraging organizations to consider employees and potential employees as individuals with unique values will promote inclusivity of different cultures, values, and beliefs in organizations. In addition, our research may better inform organizations and career counselors to help unemployed and underemployed individuals find jobs that provide meaning and enjoyment. This symposium is directly connected to the interests of the Careers, Organizational Behavior, and Human Resources divisions, as detailed below.

#### **Careers**

This symposium offers a new direction for careers research by incorporating personal values in different aspects of career decision making, which touches on several interests of the Careers Division (e.g., individual career development, career planning, influences of demographics and social changes on work). More specifically, the presentations offer new ideas for research on values in careers. For example, Chen et al. will revisit the values-orientation portion of the Protean Career Orientation; while Doiron et al. investigated the use of a values affirmation intervention on career exploration and development. Together, the findings from these presentations show the importance of values in individual career processes, such as career decision making and exploration, as well as the practical applications of using values to propel

careers within organizations.

### **Organizational Behavior**

One of the major topics of interest for the Organizational Behavior Division is in understanding individual characteristics, such as beliefs and values, through an organizational context. The presentations detail investigations into the role these characteristics play in individual career related decision-making processes. As such, Chen et al. will discuss the role personal values play in career decision making; while Yip et al. developed and validated a scale for career decision making styles, which incorporates individual preferences for rational, intuitive, advice taking, and spiritual styles. These four presentations together will give insight into how individual characteristics impact the process of decision making, both in individual career development and within organizational performance management systems.

### **Human Resources**

The presentations in this symposium investigate personal values and individual career decision making; which directly relates to recruitment, development, and retention, major topics of interest in the Human Resources (HR) division. Doiron et al. will discuss how values affirmation may increase career exploration and reduce career anxiety for those in the recruitment processes. Furthermore, Chen et al.'s presentation on personal values and career decision making can help organizations determine pertinent job-related details to provide during recruitment to facilitate candidates making informed career decisions that benefit both the individual and the organization in the long-term. Finally, Maymar et al. will discuss HR management practices centered around incorporating personal values, beliefs, and aspirations into the employee experience to spur talent development and retention.



## PROPOSED FORMAT OF SYMPOSIUM

Length: 90 minutes

**Minutes 0-5:** Welcome and introduction to the symposium.

- Presenters: Kathryn Doiron, Christopher Chen

**Minutes 5-65:** Paper presentations (15 minutes each)

- Value Affirmation and Future Best Self Interventions' Impact on Graduate Student Career Exploration

*Presented by Kathryn Doiron*

- Beyond Logic and Intuition: Validating a Measure of Career Discernment Styles

*Presented by Jeffrey Yip and Haoxiong Li*

- Rethinking Values and Career Decision Making: Enriching Protean Career Orientation Theory

*Presented by Christopher Chen*

- Recognizing the Whole Person: Integrating Work/Life at Accenture

*Presented by Shelby Kan and Jake Gittleson*

- **Minutes 65-90:** Discussant comments and interactive dialogue with session attendees

*Discussant: Douglas T. Hall*

## **PRESENTATION SUMMARIES**

### **Value Affirmation and Future Best Self Interventions Impact on Graduate Students' Career Exploration**

Kathryn Doiron, Ague Mae Manongsong, Wenhao Wang, Briana Pisauro, Kristine Powers, Pooja Sathyanarayanan

Career exploration is an individual's attempt to better understand the decision making, job entry, and vocational adjustment processes through acquiring information from the external environment and self-assessment (Jordaan, 1963; Stumpf, Colarelli, & Hartman, 1983). The purpose of our study is to examine whether two interventions, a future-focused 'work future-self' intervention and a present-focused 'value affirmation' intervention, will have an impact on the career exploration of graduate students. Successful implementation of our interventions will guide future research and intervention development by providing evidence for a new approach to vocational counseling with graduate students and other early professionals.

Time perspective, as an individual's tendency to focus on the past, present, or future, has been used frequently in careers research to explain differences in career planning, career decidedness, career decision making self-efficacy, vocational identity, and career decision making difficulties (Ginevra, Pallini, Vecchio, Nota, & Soresi, 2016; Janeiro, 2010; Jung, Park, & Rie, 2015; Taber, 2012; Taber & Blankenmeyer, 2015). These tendencies, which include how individuals approach goal-setting and future planning, have a large impact on how individuals approach career exploration. The two interventions in this study are different in that one is future-focused (work future-self) and one is present-focused (value affirmation).

### **VALUES AFFIRMATION INTERVENTION**

Values are "basic convictions" that a person holds about what is, or is not important in

life (Pomeroy, 2005). Students engaging in a values affirmation intervention actively reflect on why certain values are important to them (Cohen & Sherman, 2014). Previous studies have found that low career-related self-efficacy (i.e. perceived capacity of one's abilities, affecting one's career development), especially due to stereotype threat (i.e., fear of conforming to negative stereotypes), can lead to exploring a relatively narrow occupational range (Betz & Hackett, 2006; Witherspoon & Speight, 2007). The values affirmation intervention has demonstrated a reduction in the achievement gap, improving the individual's self-resources (Czech, Katz & Orsillo, 2011; Miyake, Kost-Smith, Finkelstein, Pollock, Cohen, & Ito, 2010; Sousa, Coelho & Guillamon-Saorin, 2012), leading to our first hypothesis:

*Hypothesis 1. Participants assigned to the value affirmation intervention have higher levels of career self-efficacy after completing the intervention.*

Young professionals commonly experience imposter syndrome, where they view their accomplishments as largely due to luck or timing, and anticipate their professional incapability coming to surface (Vergauwe, Wille, Feys, De Fruyt, & Anseel, 2015). Literature shows support for career anxiety borne out of imposter syndrome inhibiting career development and planning (Braslow, Guerrettaz, Arkin & Oleson, 2012). Identifying with one's self-selected values in conjunction with existing self-resources can potentially help students transcend this (e.g., Creswell, Welch, Taylor, Sherman, Gruenewals, & Mann, 2005), allowing us to hypothesize:

*Hypothesis 2. Participants assigned to the value affirmation intervention have lower levels of career-related imposter feelings after completing the intervention.*

*Hypothesis 3. Participants assigned to the value affirmation intervention are more likely to undertake career exploration after completing the intervention.*

## **FUTURE WORK-SELF INTERVENTION**

The salience of future work-self, a reflection of an individual's hopes and aspirations toward their future in work related areas, is developed upon the individual's clarity and

accessibility of his or her representation in the future (Strauss, Griffin & Parker, 2012). It also increases the individual's willingness to change his or herself to meet the needs of future challenges (Guan et al., 2014). Future work-self is significantly related to self-esteem, proactive personality, job search self-efficacy, and employment status (Cai et al, 2015; Guan et al., 2014). A positive, salient future work-self is positively related to career adaptability, and resilience in attaining success when encountering difficulties (Guan et al., 2014; Savickas & Porfeli, 2012). Accordingly, we generated the following hypothesis:

*Hypothesis 4. Participants assigned to the future work-self intervention have higher levels of career self-efficacy after completing the intervention.*

In addition, the future work-self reflects an individual's expectation and hope about his or her career future and potentially develops one's creative thinking about future possibilities (Strauss et al., 2012). Moreover, individuals with positive future selves and life attitudes experience less anxiety because they tend to embrace challenges and focuses on success (Snyder, 2002), and believe that they can perform well in job search activities (Guan et al., 2014).

Therefore, we developed the following hypothesis

*Hypothesis 5. Participants assigned to the future work-self intervention have lower levels of career choice anxiety after completing the intervention.*

*Hypothesis 6. Participants assigned to the future work-self intervention are more likely to undertake career exploration after completing the intervention.*

## **CURRENT STUDY**

### **Method**

Thirty-five graduate students at Claremont Graduate University completed a preliminary study, the results of which are shared below. The full study will be carried out in January of 2018. The researchers used Zytowski's (2006) revision of Super's 1970 Work Values Inventory. The work values were adapted to the context, after speaking to several subject matter experts in

graduate student career development. We deleted three values (achievement, creativity, supervision) and added three (structure/order, meaning/purpose, professional development). Participants were asked to rank order these values and then complete a written reflection on their most important value. The future work-self intervention used Strauss et al. (2012) five-point Likert scale to assess the participants' clarity about their future selves in work-related areas. The participants then completed a written reflection on where they see their career in ten years.

The researchers also measured participants' levels of *career exploration* (Career Exploration Survey; Stumpf et al., 1983), *career-related self-efficacy* (Career-Related Self-Efficacy Scale; Higgins, Dobrow & Chandler's, 2008), *impostor feelings* (Clance Impostor Phenomenon Scale, CIP; Clance, 1986), and *career choice anxiety* (Career Decision Difficulties Questionnaire, CDDQ; Gati, Krausz, & Oispow, 1996). First, participants took the surveys outlined above, as well as a short demographic questionnaire. One month later, they were randomly assigned to receive the value affirmation intervention or the future work-self intervention. After an additional month, participants took the outcomes scales for a final time.

### **Preliminary Results and Discussion**

The primary intention behind the collection of preliminary data was to test the intervention procedures before the complete rollout of the intervention with first-year graduate students, who are just beginning their professional careers. For this process, we collected data from 35 upper year graduate students. As this is not our target population, and upper year graduate students tend to be more invested in career development as they move toward graduation, we were not expecting the intervention to have drastic results on their career exploration behaviors. We did learn several things from this preliminary test of the intervention procedures. First, on average, the participants took just about as much time as we asked to

complete the written reflection (4.5 minutes for the values affirmation intervention; 4.89 minutes for the work future-self intervention), which indicates that the instructions work.

Second, we also noticed a few promising trends in the data, though the small number of participants did not allow for inferential statistical testing. The two career exploration behaviors we measured did show increases across the three time points, even in more established graduate students. The number of participants who clicked on a career development help-seeking website increased from two (6%) in the pre-test to six (17%) immediately post-intervention. In addition, the frequency of job exploration activities the participants reported per week increased from the pre-test to post-test (see Figure 1). Lastly, we also note slight trends in the psychological variables collected (i.e., career-related self-efficacy, imposter feelings, career choice anxiety) between interventions and over time (see Figure 2). We will be interested to see if these potential differences in how the interventions impact these variables continues with the full study.

### **CONCLUSION**

Our proposed interventions allow individuals to better discover their ideal career pathway, and to pursue it. We examined how a temporal perspective impacts a person's capacity to view themselves successfully in a future career through two different interventions. Both interventions prompted individuals to consider pursuing career growth by improving career efficacy, reducing impostor feelings, and promoting career exploration. Our study focused on a student sample, so the generalizability to an actual workforce might need to be considered in future research. Our interventions allow people to examine who they are as a person and a professional, as well as help them to utilize that knowledge in their pursuit of professional growth through better career alignment.

**Beyond Logic and Intuition: Validating a Measure of Career Discernment Styles**

Jeffrey Yip, Haoxiong Li, Ellen Ensher, Susan E. Murphy

What are the different ways people make career decisions? How are these differences consequential to career and organizational outcomes? Prior research on career decision making established that career decisions are made using a bilateral model in which individuals rely on either logic or intuition (Epstein, 1994; Hamilton, Shih, Mohammed, 2017; Kahneman, 2003; Krieshok, Black, & McKay, 2009; Phillips, Fletcher, Marks, & Hine, 2016). In this study, we extend this 2-system model of career decision making and examine the possibility of two additional and distinct decision-making styles – spirituality and advice taking.

Spirituality can be understood as a concern with or connection to a transcendent being and often includes an individual's search for an ultimate purpose in life (Fry, 2003). This approach towards work and decision making is distinct from both rationality and intuition. The role of spirituality in career decision making is evident in practices such as Jesuit discernment (Moberg & Calkins, 2001) and meditation (Vallabh & Singhal, 2014). The role of advice taking in decision making has a well-established literature and one of the primary relational functions in career development (Ensher & Murphy, 2005). Both spirituality and advice taking share a common element of trust and reliance on a source beyond oneself.

In a survey of 321 full-time employees, we examine the role of spirituality and advice taking, in addition to logic and intuition, as four factors in a career discernment scale (CDS). Our research provides evidence of four distinct factors and their differential relationship with career and organizational outcomes. In general, we expected that people who applied appropriate styles to make a career decision gained desired work-related outcomes such as work engagement and

career satisfaction. The following hypotheses were examined in this research:

*Hypothesis 1. The CDS consists of four factors, each representing a different approach to career decision making.*

*Hypothesis 2. Rational style and intuitive style of the CDS are positively associated with, respectively, the logic and intuition subscales of Rational and Intuitive Decision Styles Scale, which is an established measure of decision making styles.*

*Hypothesis 3. Relational self-construal is positively associated with spirituality and advice taking.*

*Hypothesis 4. All four subscales of the CDS are positively associated with work engagement, career satisfaction, with affective commitment, with turnover intention, and with identification with the organization.*

## **METHOD**

### **Item Generation**

To have a better understanding of how employees made career decisions, we interviewed 20 executives who had successfully navigated through multiple career decisions. In addition, we interviewed 20 students (undergraduate and MBA students) who were facing early career decisions. Based upon our qualitative analysis, we developed a scale to measure four career decision making styles. We developed a pool of 60 items, with 15 items for each style.

### **Procedure and Participants**

We surveyed 321 full-time employees who have had their first fulltime job for less than one year through the online survey platform MTurk. We examined the quality of the data by adding five attention checks in the survey. The data of participants ( $N = 32$ ) who failed any one of the attention checks was not included in the analysis. Besides, we screened the data to exclude the data of participants ( $N = 2$ ) who took too short time to finish (less than two minutes) and who provided the same option to every item. Of the 287 participants whose data were used in the current research, the average age was 32.95 ( $SD = 9.57$ ); one hundred five were females and 112



were males; forty-seven had a high school diploma, 44 had an associate degree, 185 had a Bachelor's degree, seven had a Master's degree, and four had a doctoral degree; thirty-seven were African American, 18 were Asian, 206 were Caucasian, 10 were Hispanic, two were native American, and 14 were multiracial.

## **Measures**

To measure four career decision making styles, we used the 60-item CDS (15 items per decision making style). Participants reported the extent to which they used a certain style to make career related decisions within the past one year using a 5-point Likert scale (1 = "Strongly Disagree" to 5 = "Strongly Agree"). We assessed the internal consistency reliability of each subscale using Cronbach's alpha (rationality,  $\alpha = .73$ ; intuition,  $\alpha = .91$ ; advice taking,  $\alpha = .76$ ; spirituality,  $\alpha = .98$ ).

General decision-making styles were measured with the 10-item Rational and Intuitive Decision Styles Scale (Hamilton et al., 2016). Career satisfaction was measured with the 5-item Career Satisfaction Scale (Greenhaus, Parasuraman, & Wormley, 1990). Affective organizational commitment was measured with 5 items (Meyer & Allen, 1997). Work engagement was measured with the 9-item short version of the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (Schaufeli, Bakker, & Salanova, 2006). Identification with the organization was measured with a measure by Postmes, Haslam, & Jans (2013). Turnover intention was measured with the item used by Spector, Dwyer, and Jex (1988).

## **RESULTS**

### **Factor Structure and Reliability**

Exploratory factor analysis supported a four-factor solution. The scale items and factor loadings are shown in Appendix A. We also conducted confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) on

the 60 items of CDS using R. The items with factor loadings lower than .60 were dropped in the model. Three measurement models were developed based on this principle. Model fit indices, including chi-square, RMSEA, SRMR, and CFI, are shown in Table 1. The third model (a four-factor model) fit the data best compared with the first two models.

### **Convergent, Discriminant, and Criterion Validity**

To further evaluate the convergent validity, the discriminant validity, and the criterion validity of CDS, we examined the bivariate relationships among the subscales of the CDS and among CDS and other variables (see Table 2). The results showed that the two rational style subscales were moderately correlated, and the two intuitive style subscales were also moderately correlated. Hypothesis 2 was confirmed. The results showed that spirituality and advice taking were correlated with relational self-construal. Hypothesis 3 was confirmed.

Hypothesis 4 stated that all four subscales of CDS were positively associated with work engagement, career satisfaction, affective commitment, identification with the organization, and negatively associated with turnover intention. The results showed that the four subscales were all correlated with work engagement and affective commitment. Career satisfaction was positively correlated with intuition, advice taking, and rationality. Identification with the organization was positively correlated with intuition, advice taking, and spirituality. Turnover intention was negatively correlated with advice taking.

## **DISCUSSION**

The current research contributes to the study of career decision making styles in three ways. First, the structure of the CDS demonstrates that there are indeed four styles that individuals use to make a career-related decision. Second, we found interesting relationships among the four decision making styles. For example, rationality was moderately associated with

advice giving and intuition was moderately associated with spirituality. With intuition and spirituality, individuals rely on automatic processing of information so that the two styles share common characteristics. With rationality and advice giving, individuals rely on deliberate processing, which is one of the two processes in the mind. Finally, the four career decision-making styles are differentially associated with important career outcomes. These associations indicate that applying the appropriate strategies when making career-related decisions can predict beneficiary outcomes at work later. More importantly, we found that spirituality and advice taking were more strongly associated with career satisfaction and work outcomes (work engagement and affective commitment) than the decision-making styles of rationality and intuition – this suggests that logic and intuition alone may not be the only and optimal ways by which people can make effective and meaningful career decisions.

### **Limitations and Future Directions**

This paper reports the first study in a program of research to develop and measure differences in career discernment styles. We acknowledge that a single study is inadequate and sufficient for validating a new measure – additional studies and samples are required to test the predictive and criterion validity of the measure. These studies are in progress and we value feedback on this study to inform our program of research going forward.

## **Rethinking Values and Career Decision Making: Enriching Protean Career Orientation Theory**

Christopher Chen, Kathryn Doiron, Elizabeth Kolokowsky, Brandon Sorenson

It is widely accepted that values are a part of career decision making (Añaña & Nique, 2010; Feather, 1995; Watchravesringkan, Hodges, Yurchisin, Hegland, Karpova, & Yan, 2013), but how personal values influence the career decision making process has not been extensively researched (Fearon, Nachmias, McLaughlin, & Jackson, 2016; Judge & Bretz, 1991). While there has been research on career decisions in regards to pay and promotional opportunity, knowledge of how values influence career decisions is restricted due to a lack of research on other factors that influence career decision making (Judge & Bretz, 1991). However, research has shown the importance of values in work settings, such as value congruence, which is linked to a variety of positive organizational outcomes (Meglino, Ravlin, & Adkins, 1989; Cable & Edwards 2004; Judge & Bretz, 1991; Steers, 1977). Therefore, understanding how and why job seekers use personal values in career decision making is important to researchers and practitioners. In this research, we use the protean career orientation as a framework for our investigation into how values can impact career decision making.

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **Protean Career Orientation**

Protean career orientation (PCO) is an attitude that individuals take toward their careers, characterized by self-direction (an agentic approach to making career movements) and values orientation (making decisions by following an internal personal value system; Briscoe & Hall, 2006; Hall, 1976, 1996). PCO has been linked to important outcomes for individuals, such as job, career, and life satisfaction (Herrmann, Hirschi, & Baruch, 2015) and to organizational

outcomes such as affective organizational commitment, turnover intentions, and job performance (Baruch, 2014; Rodrigues, Guest, Oliveira, & Alfes, 2015; Supeli & Creed, 2016).

Of the two components of the PCO, values orientation is relatively understudied. In fact, PCO is often operationalized and measured as only self-directed career attitudes, excluding the values orientation component entirely (Hall, Yip, & Doiron., in press). We argue that this is due to psychometric issues that have occurred with the Protean Career Attitudes Scale (PCAS; Briscoe, Hall, & DeMuth, 2006) in past research, where the values component is often subsumed by the self-direction component, especially in non-Western cultures (Chan et al., 2012). We further argue that the reason why the two factors in the PCAS occasionally fail to emerge cleanly is because the values orientation component has not been clearly distinguished from the self-direction component. The purpose of this research project is to clearly define values orientation and generate a theory of how and when values impact career decision making.

### **Values and Career Decision Making**

Schwartz defined values as “(1) belief[s] (2) pertaining to desirable end states or modes of conduct” (1994: 20) that are transsituational, guide our behavior and judgments, and are prioritized by relative importance. As such, values are inherently goal-oriented and pervade major life decisions, including those related to career.

The majority of research on values and career decision making has been viewed through the domain of person-role and person-organization fit, which was found to be correlated with job pursuit intentions and job-organization attraction, but not acceptance intentions or final job decisions (Chapman et al., 2005). When parsed from fit, match between job values and individual value orientation predicts offer acceptance (Judge & Bretz, 1992). Following a calling is another conceptualization related to values and career decision making, in which transcendent

values (helping others, life meaning, impacting society) have a large effect on career decisions (Dik & Duffy, 2009). Career Anchors have also been shown to be a factor in career decision making (Schein & Van Maanen, 2016).

When investigating the process of career decision making, Harren (1979) identified three styles: rational, intuitive, and dependent. The rational decision-making style involves the individual seeking a better self-understanding to make future decisions, whereas the intuitive style utilizes emotional self-awareness to determine if a decision “feels right”. The dependent decision-making style refers to when an individual’s career decision is heavily influenced by those around them. This theory is further refined by Krieshok, Black and McKay (2009), in their trilateral model of adaptive career decision making which argues that rational and intuitive styles as well as occupational engagement all contribute to the decision-making process. In regards to whether values are part of the rational and intuitive processes, research has shown that values are stored hierarchically in a person’s memory by significance, and that individuals have a higher propensity to apply their values when faced with uncertain situations (Ravlin & Meglino, 1987). These findings are of particular relevance for career decisions as these are most often uncertain situations in an individual’s life.

## **OUR RESEARCH**

When individual and societal differences in career decision making are considered, it seems natural that the process will vary on a person to person basis. Factors such as cultural practices, family norms, and boundary conditions must be considered before generalizations about career decision making are made. We propose that the career decision making process may be more dynamic than initially thought. In addition, we would like to further distinguish between a values-driven career and a self-directed career, as they are often treated as synonymous.

**Method**

This project has several research questions: (a) What personal values do people consider when making important career decisions, (b) What part do personal values play in the career decision making process, and (c) What is the interplay between personal values and other factors that guide career decisions? To generate answers to these questions, we created a qualitative survey asking participants to recall a specific incident when they made an important career decision. We first asked whether personal values played a part in how the participant made this decision. For participants who answer affirmatively, we followed with questions about how their most important personal value played a part in the decision-making process, other factors that were also considered in the process, including self-direction, and how values and other factors were considered together. Interviews with working adults, walking through the thought process of critical decision-making incident will follow this study.

**Theoretical Contribution**

The present study will clarify and expound the theoretical grounding of PCO as a value-driven career approach. It will give us individual level data on how people actually engage with personal values, including how decisions are framed in terms of values, how values are prioritized in personal career decisions, and their interaction with other factors. We expect that certain personal values and value types (e.g. intrinsic vs. extrinsic) (Schwartz, 1994) will show up more often and in different ways as participants reflect on the decision-making experience.

Personal values may not be the only aspect that individuals consider when making career decisions. Some cultures may place factors such as financial stability and status above other value-oriented choices (Chow, Galambos, & Krahn, 2017). Taking one's culture into account could be viewed as a value in itself, in which case choosing a career based on cultural values, job

security, and financial rewards could be a combination of values and external factors. Family influence can also come into play in one's career choice. For example, research suggests that Asian Indians put taking care of and spending time with family at the forefront of their career decision making process over personal values (Fouad, Kim, Ghosh, Chang, & Figueiredo, 2016).

Other influences to take into consideration are boundary conditions of the career decision making process. Gender has been shown to influence the personal values used in career decision making such that women are more likely than men to choose careers based around intrinsic values (Gati & Perez, 2014). Socioeconomic status (SES) is another condition which may impact the degree to which individuals use values in their career decision making process (O'Neil, Ohlde, Tollefson, Barke, Piggott, & Watts, 1980). If individuals are operating in a relative poverty experience, basic and biological needs may take precedence over the long-term goals of personal fulfillment. As these types of conditions can affect values in career decision making, they should be taken into consideration.

## **CONCLUSION**

The purpose of this research is to revisit the values orientation component of the PCO. We hope that this project will guide both future research, by encouraging researchers to more closely consider how values impact career decisions, and practice, by helping organizations to have a greater understanding of employee motivation for career movement. Through this understanding, organizations can strategically manage display of values to people inside and outside of the organization to meet specific goals. This research can also help individuals refine their career decision making processes and make more self-aware and rational decisions. In sum, this research develops a theory of how, when, and why personal values play a part in career decision making, by themselves or in conjunction with other factors.



## **Recognizing the Whole Person: Integrating Work/Life at Accenture**

Molly Maymar, Shelby Kan, Jake Gittleson

In a world where adults spend the majority of their waking hours in the workplace and communication is increasingly digitized, work and life are becoming progressively intertwined. With this integration of work and life, it is imperative that organizations be cognizant of factors which impact their employees' physical and psychological well-being. One major issue currently affecting the workforce is the disconnect between the employee's professional and personal identity (Gardner, Avolio, Luthans, May, Walumbwa, 2005). When an employee is unable to bring their authentic selves into the workplace, anxiety, stress, depression can occur (Sheldon, Ryan, Rawsthorne, and Ilardi, 1997), leading up to burnout and turnover (Cable, Lee, Gino, & Staats, 2015). In addressing this issue, Accenture is evolving the employee experience to better integrate work-life balance and account for employees' holistic selves. By help employees express their values and rewarding career decisions within Accenture based on these values, these initiatives bridge the gap between the employee's professional and personal identity and foster authenticity in the workplace.

This presentation will focus on the Truly Human initiative and Performance Achievement initiative at Accenture. Truly Human is a program that aims to create work-life integration for Accenture employees that focuses on the mind, body, heart, and soul. Performance Achievement is a transformational performance experience that rewards self-directed, values-driven careers. This presentation will show how these research-driven initiatives were implemented and the employees' feedback from the first two years, post-implementation.

### **TRULY HUMAN**

Truly Human stems from a desire to create healthy work-life integration for Accenture

employees by rethinking the relationship that both the organization and the work has with individual employees. This initiative takes the form of radical self-care, focusing on body, mind, heart, and soul. For many individuals in the workforce, self-care is separate from work. However, Truly Human acknowledges that self-care, taking care of yourself and encouraging the people around you to do the same, should be integrated into worklife as well. By following steps to make work a natural extension of humanness, this impacts Accenture's approach to inclusion and diversity, as well as performance management.

As part of Truly Human, Accenture focuses on helping employees to find purpose and meaning in what they do, be it at work or at home. Employees are encouraged to find intrinsic motivation in work tasks (Gagné & Vansteenkiste, 2013), create a legacy for future generations (Neville, 2008), engage in work with harmonious passion (Vallerand & Houfort, 2003), and volunteer to help the community. One method for accomplishing these goals is through Performance Achievement, a new performance management experience, which encourages employees to set goals that will induce intrinsic motivation to accomplish them. Employees are encouraged to connect personal values to work tasks and goals while discussing personal motivators with supervisors. Because employee engagement and satisfaction are more strongly related to intrinsic motivation than extrinsic motivation (Cho & Perry, 2012; Deci & Ryan, 2004), this process has potential benefits for both employees and Accenture as an organization.

### **PERFORMANCE ACHIEVEMENT EXPERIENCE**

The second initiative to be presented is Performance Achievement. In 2014, Accenture conducted an employee survey and found that 72% of Accenture employees are from the Millennial generation. These employees indicated that they had a high desire to get more from their work than extrinsic motivators (e.g., paycheck, benefits). They have a desire for purpose,

coaching, and real-time communication with supervisors. This survey was one of the reasons for the implementation of the Performance Achievement - a performance management experience that empowers employees to take actions toward personal growth and self-actualization through their work.

Employees are asked to share their personal values with supervisors and set aspirations, based on these values and passions, for themselves. Steps that the employee takes to reach these aspirations are included as evidence of self- and values-driven performance, which is rewarded in Performance Achievement. There is evidence that when employees' harmonious passions and personal values are applied to their work lives, it leads to better performance in general (Forest, Mageau, Sarrazin, & Morin, 2010; Vallerand, Paquet, Phillippe, & Charest, 2010). By incorporating strengths, personal values, and aspirations into the performance management system, as well as talking with employees to create their individual value-inspired goals, Accenture is hoping to increase personal growth and performance of employees.

### **EMPLOYEE FEEDBACK**

Post-launch employee reception for the program has been generally enthusiastic. Accenture has collected qualitative feedback on the Performance Achievement Experience from both employees and supervisors. Employees appreciate the individualized nature of the initiative, as typified by this comment: "Performance Achievement focuses much more on the individual and my career aspirations rather than generic career objectives based on my role. I like the level of personal touch that is required by everyone – listening, coaching, mentoring, etc." Employees have also acknowledged the difference between the current performance management experience and prior systems. For example, one employee stated "I like the focus on your talents and looking forward vs. the racking and stacking and haggling over ratings in the past...Performance

Management was very demotivating and Performance Achievement is inspiring!” Supervisors have also noted how the new system has changed the relationship between supervisors and employees, as well as the quality of feedback the employees get from reviews. As one supervisor noted, “I do not remember having this many actionable, constructive feedback points for individuals in prior years.”

## **DISCUSSION**

The implications of the feedback regarding Performance Achievement reflect the need for organizations to find the balance between considering individual aspirations and organizational goals when managing performance instead of utilizing a one size fits all model in defining an employee’s career progression. By ensuring that employees are aware of their individual strengths and aspirations, establishing avenues of communication so that these personal identities can be shared with their supervisors, and creating personalized action plans, organizations will be able to generate a holistic, authentic employee experience that promotes both physical and emotional well-being.

The presentation of the Truly Human and Performance Achievement along with key feedback are intended to contribute to the discussion of actions organizations can take to better implement their employees’ personal values into their work lives and provide more autonomy in defining their career paths within the organization.

**Table 1**  
**The Fit Indices and the Comparisons of the Measurement Models of the CDS**

<b>Model</b>	$\chi^2$ (df)	<b>CFI</b>	<b>RMSEA</b>	<b>SRMR</b>	$\Delta\chi^2$ (df)
<b>Model 1</b>	3636.00 <sup>***</sup> (1646)	.85	.06 [.06, .07]	.08	--
<b>Model 2</b>	2673.11 <sup>***</sup> (1218)	.88	.07 [.06, .07]	.07	962.89 <sup>***</sup> (428)
<b>Model 3</b>	1919.86 <sup>***</sup> (896)	.91	.06 [.06, .07]	.06	753.25 <sup>***</sup> (322)
<b>Model 4</b>	2213.46 <sup>***</sup> (1028)	.90	.06 [.06, .07]	.05	-293.60 <sup>***</sup> (-132)

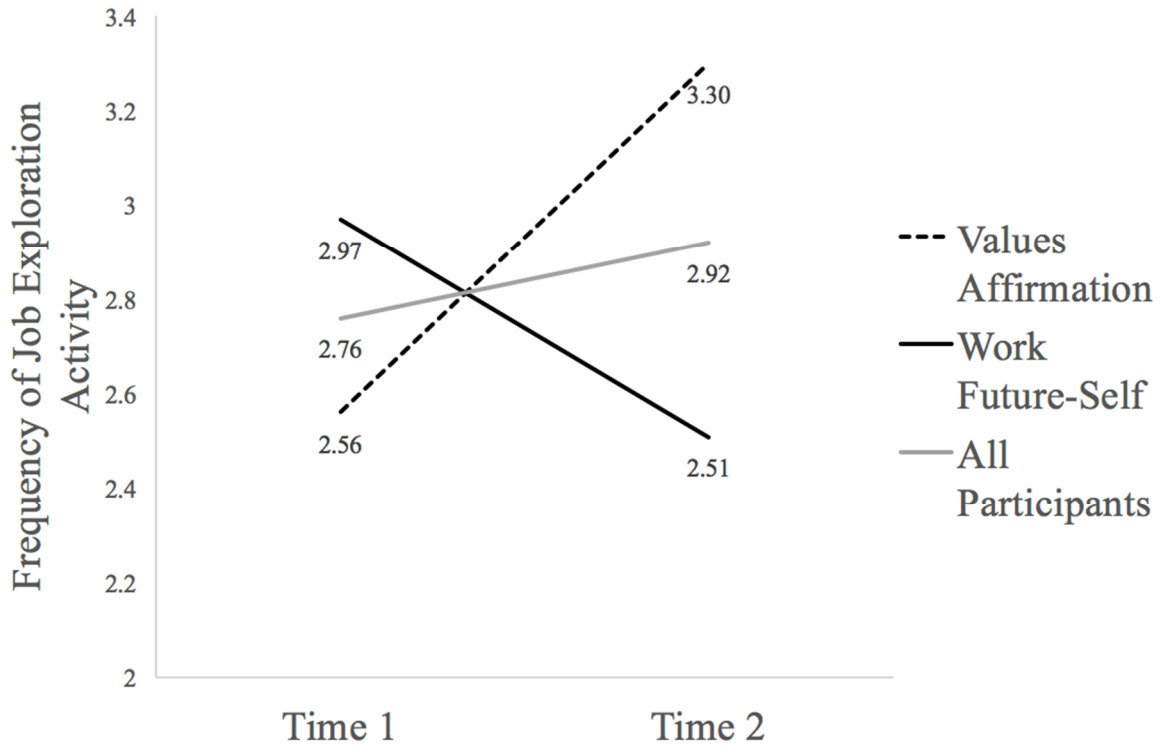
*Note.*  $\Delta\chi^2$  -the chi-square difference - indicates the improvement from of the current model from the last model in the row above the current model. The upper and lower bounds of the 90% confidence intervals of each RMSEA are listed in the bracket: [upper bound, lower bound]. <sup>\*\*\*</sup>  $p < .001$ .

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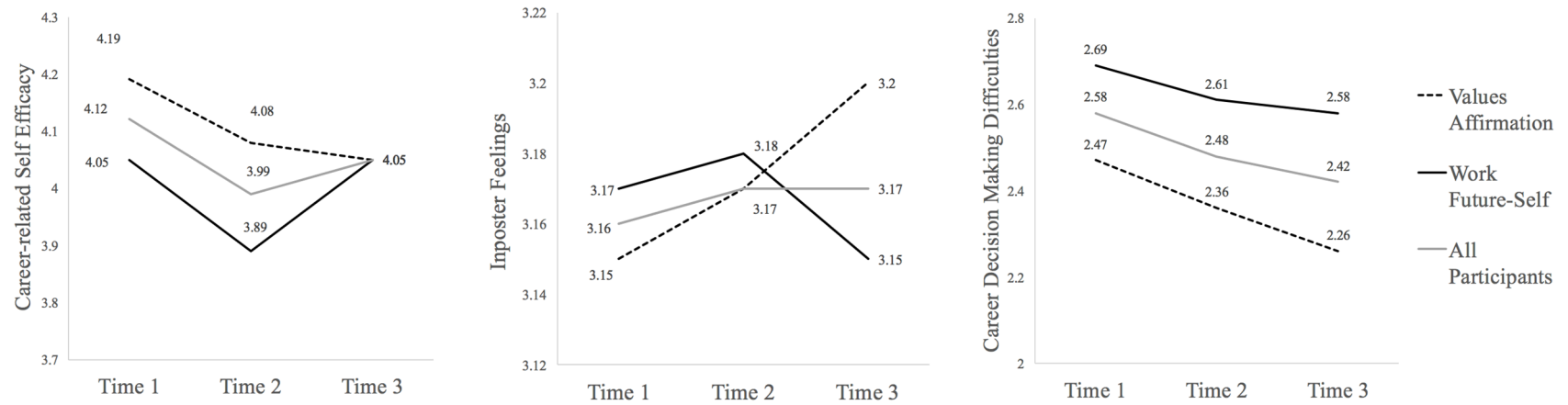
**Table 2**  
**Descriptive Statistics and Variable Inter-correlations**

Variable	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
<b>1 Rationality</b>	9.97	2.08	<b>.73</b>											
<b>2 Intuition</b>	3.34	0.77	.02	<b>.91</b>										
<b>3 Advice Taking</b>	5.70	1.45	.37**	.06	<b>.76</b>									
<b>4 Spirituality</b>	2.66	1.32	.01	.18**	.19**	<b>.98</b>								
<b>5 Work Engagement</b>	3.17	0.97	.14*	.21**	.30**	.31**	<b>.94</b>							
<b>6 Career Satisfaction</b>	3.28	0.99	.08	.15*	.30**	.24**	.57**	<b>.92</b>						
<b>7 Affective Commitment</b>	4.65	1.56	.15*	.20**	.35**	.29**	.75**	.66**	<b>.90</b>					
<b>8 Self-Constraint</b>	3.52	0.68	.26**	.16**	.45**	.13*	.34**	.29**	.40**	<b>.87</b>				
<b>9 General Decision Style, Logic</b>	15.11	5.97	.29**	-.06	.12*	-.02	.05	-.02	.07	.02	<b>.92</b>			
<b>10 General Decision Style, Intuition</b>	3.06	0.83	-.12*	.44**	.00	.24**	.17**	.12*	.15*	.05	-.13*	<b>.85</b>		
<b>11 Organizational Identification</b>	4.99	1.53	.06	.20**	.26**	.25**	.64**	.59**	.80**	.33**	-.07	.14*	--	
<b>12 Turnover Intention</b>	2.68	1.43	-.11	.05	-.22**	-.07	-.48**	-.45**	-.56**	-.16**	-.10	.11	-.51**	--

Note. N = 287. M = mean, and SD = standard deviation. Internal consistency reliabilities (Cronbach's  $\alpha$ ) are in boldface on the diagonal. \*  $P < .05$ . \*\*  $P < .01$ .



**Figure 1: Change in Frequency of Career Exploration Activities Per Week Before and After Intervention**



**Figure 2: Differences in Career-related Self-Efficacy, Imposter Feelings, and Career-Decision Making Difficulties between Intervention Types**



**APPENDIX A. Scale Items and Factor Loadings of CDS**

Items	Factors in EFA				Loadings in CFA
	1	2	3	4	
<b>Rational style</b>					
I consider the good and bad consequences of my choices.	.02	.03	-.06	<b>.63</b>	.63
*I consider my mistakes from the past.	.01	-.05	.12	.45	--
I think in detail about costs and benefits.	.02	.09	-.05	<b>.63</b>	.67
I consider how this decision will impact my financial situation.	.05	-.06	-.14	<b>.62</b>	.56
I analyze situations in making my career decisions.	.03	.05	.01	<b>.68</b>	.70
*I rely on observable evidence.	-.01	.02	.12	.39	--
I collect as much information as I can.	-.03	.09	.02	<b>.73</b>	.75
I conduct my own research.	-.07	.00	.06	<b>.62</b>	.58
*I read books/articles that could help me.	.06	.13	.08	.18	--
*I search for information online.	-.06	-.05	-.04	.56	--
I carefully evaluate the costs and benefits of the decision.	.01	.13	-.02	<b>.65</b>	.72
I balance costs and benefits.	.02	.18	-.04	.51	.62
*I make a list that displays all the costs and benefits to make a decision.	.10	.22	.08	.17	--
I use data to inform my decisions.	-.02	.10	-.06	.56	.63
I try to use my reasoning as much as possible when I make a decision.	-.03	.04	.00	<b>.70</b>	.72
<b>Intuitive style</b>					
I trust my gut instinct.	.12	-.11	<b>.71</b>	.09	.72
*I immediately go with my instincts.	.01	.02	<b>.60</b>	-.20	--
*I rely on my experience.	.04	.06	.27	.44	--
I depend on my feelings.	.03	-.07	<b>.64</b>	.05	.64
*I react quickly and not think too much.	.07	.04	.36	-.32	--
*I go with what I feel is important.	.03	-.02	.52	.25	--
I trust my feelings.	-.04	.01	<b>.73</b>	.08	.76
I use my emotions to guide me.	.03	.05	<b>.71</b>	-.01	.70
I choose the option that I feel right about.	-.05	.01	<b>.66</b>	.23	.70
My mind will quickly tell me what to do.	.00	.01	<b>.70</b>	-.04	.67
I rely on my intuition.	-.02	.01	<b>.81</b>	.04	.82
*I go with the flow.	-.05	-.02	<b>.61</b>	-.23	--
I go with what I sense is right.	-.02	-.04	<b>.73</b>	.14	.76
I trust my first feeling of which option I need to choose.	.00	.03	<b>.75</b>	-.09	.75
I immediately choose the option that feels right.	.02	.00	<b>.72</b>	-.04	.69
<b>Advice Taking Style</b>					
I ask a mentor to give me advice.	.04	<b>.61</b>	.02	.06	.62
I ask family members to give me advice.	.02	<b>.70</b>	.01	.00	.74

I ask friends to give me advice.	-.06	<b>.81</b>	-.04	-.09	.75
I think of someone I respect and consider how they would like to advise me.	-.05	<b>.67</b>	-.03	.08	.69
I turn to people I can talk to.	-.04	<b>.72</b>	-.02	.10	.77
I call people that I can trust.	-.06	<b>.74</b>	.02	.07	.79
I reach out to people for advice.	-.03	<b>.75</b>	-.09	.18	.82
I talk with others about it.	-.08	<b>.69</b>	-.08	.17	.75
*I rely on what other people think.	-.04	<b>.61</b>	.18	-.27	--
I listen to what people I know tell me.	-.03	<b>.73</b>	-.06	.02	.71
*I ask for advice from people who are experts in this field.	.07	.50	-.04	.05	--
I ask people with similar experiences to give suggestions.	.04	.59	-.05	.09	.61
I seek advice from my family members or significant others.	.06	<b>.65</b>	-.02	.05	.66
I see other people's suggestions as really important.	.10	<b>.60</b>	-.03	.02	.59
*I rely on other people's advice.	.09	<b>.66</b>	.04	-.20	--
<b>Spiritual style</b>					
I ask for God to help me make a decision.	<b>.95</b>	-.03	-.07	-.04	.94
I meditate or pray to make a decision.	<b>.87</b>	.03	.01	.03	.87
I pray for guidance.	<b>.94</b>	-.02	-.01	.07	.93
I rely on spiritual discernment.	<b>.83</b>	.06	.12	-.07	.85
I pray to God for insights.	<b>.92</b>	.00	-.07	-.06	.91
I seek advice from God or a higher power.	<b>.97</b>	-.03	-.02	.05	.97
I use spiritual readings such as scripture to decide the right course of action.	<b>.84</b>	.05	.03	-.12	.84
I attend spiritual retreats to aid in my decision making.	<b>.63</b>	.14	.14	-.17	.66
I believe that God or a higher power will guide me.	<b>.96</b>	-.06	-.04	.03	.94
I use spiritual practices to guide me.	<b>.89</b>	-.04	.01	.04	.88
I follow spiritual principles.	<b>.90</b>	-.04	-.01	.00	.88
I lean not on my own wisdom but the wisdom of a higher power.	<b>.86</b>	.08	.03	-.01	.88
I turn to God or a higher spiritual power.	<b>.97</b>	-.04	-.04	.03	.96
I depend on God or a higher power to help me.	<b>.94</b>	-.02	-.02	.08	.94
I ask for divine help from God or a higher power.	<b>.97</b>	-.04	-.06	.06	.95

Note. N = 287. Numbers in boldface indicate dominant factor loadings. Items with \* were dropped in the final CDS.

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