

"What is the Place of "values" among Attitudes, Motives, and Traits?"

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Diverse theories explain important psychological processes by referring to abstract ideals known as personal "values". Yet, values have received much less empirical scrutiny than their important psychological cousins: attitudes, motives, and traits. To help elucidate the place of values among our nomological net of constructs, three programs of research will be summarized. The first program examines systemic effects of values in processes that involve value change, value priming, and attitudinal ambivalence. The second program examines psychological components of values, with an emphasis on the relative contributions of emotional, behavioural, and cognitive information to feelings that any particular value (e.g., freedom) is important. The third program examines effects of generating cognitive arguments for values on behaviour. Together, these programs reveal dynamic effects that illustrate the importance of examining connections between values, attitudes, motives, and traits, among other important psychological constructs.

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