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Furnham, A. (2022). Motivational profiles and safety-related traits. *International Journal of Occupational Safety and Ergonomics*, 28(2), 1198-1203

<https://doi.org/10.1080/10803548.2021.1876394>

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1 **Motivational Profiles and Safety Related Traits**

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4

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12 **Abstract:** This paper was concerned with the relationship between the job motivational and
13 preference profile of individuals and their engagement in safety behaviours. Studies have
14 looked personality trait but not motive and value correlates of risk-related behaviour. Over
15 twenty-five thousand Americans completed a questionnaire on safety-related competencies in
16 the workplace which measured six different, but related, safety-related traits. They also
17 completed a motivational measure of preferences and values used extensively in personnel
18 assessment and selection. The six safety dimensions yielded two factors labelled *Observant* and
19 *Resilient*, which, along with the total score were the criterion variables. Step-wise regressions
20 indicated that those with high needs for Affiliation, Hedonism and Recognition tended to be
21 less safety conscious. The two different factors also showed a different pattern of demographic
22 and motivational correlates. Problems of method invariance are discussed, as well the role of
23 job motivation individual differences in safety-related traits and competencies.

24

25 **Key Words:** Safety behaviours; Bright-side; Dark-side; personality; motivation.

26 **1. Introduction**

27 Individual difference psychologists distinguish between intelligence, motivation and
28 personality. Each has been linked to personal safety-related behaviour, which is the primary
29 focus of this study. There is also important literature on the definition and measurement of
30 safety behaviour and whether it could be considered a stable trait [1-3]. The research problem
31 investigated in this study was one that has essentially been neglected: is that that between
32 workers motives and values, and their safety related behaviour [4].

33 **1.1.Current State of Knowledge**

34 There is an extensive literature over nearly a hundred years of the relationship between
35 personality and accidents, which continues [5,6]. Early studies examined the relationship
36 between Extraversion and car accidents [7,8]. Thirty years ago, Booysen and Erasmus [9]
37 reviewed 43 traits related to accidents and suggested that two factors were relevant:
38 *recklessness* (Extraversion, domineering, aggressive, sensation-seeking) and *anxiety-*
39 *depressive* (instability, Neuroticism). In an important, more recent, meta-analysis on the
40 relationship between personality and workplace safety Beus, Dhanani and McCord [10] found
41 that Agreeableness and Conscientiousness were positively, and Extraversion and Neuroticism
42 negatively, associated with safety-related behavior, with Agreeableness accounting for most,
43 and Openness least, of the variance. More recent research has looked at the relationship
44 between dark-side personality traits and safety behaviour [11].

45 Far fewer studies have looked at the relationship between motivation patterns and safety-
46 related traits and competencies [12]. There are studies going back many years on specifically
47 safety motivation [13-18], but this study is on general work motivation, and its relationship to
48 safety-related competencies [19,20]. Most often motivation is measured by value preferences:
49 the idea is that people are motivated by things (achievement, power) they value most. Values

50 and preferences are often used in vocational guidance to assist people selecting jobs best suited
51 to their fundamental drives, needs and aspirations.

52 The question posed here is: are some values/preferences better indicators of an individual's
53 safety-related traits and competencies than others? For instance, does a need and motivation
54 for autonomy mean that individuals are less likely to be safety-conscious and follow safety
55 guidance "restricting" behaviours [21]? This would suggest that people in some jobs would be
56 much more, and others much less, sensitive to safety-procedures of all kinds. That is, the factors
57 that lead people to select and work in certain jobs, organisations and sectors are also related to
58 their attitudes to, and beliefs about, risk-taking and following safety procedures. This means
59 that in very big organisations with people in different departments and with different expertise
60 (accounting, engineering, Human Relations, Marketing) they may have systematically different
61 attitudes to safety.

62 This study used the *Motives, Values, Preferences Inventory* (MVPI) [22] which is designed
63 to evaluate the fit between an individual and the organisational culture. Culture fit is an
64 important factor to consider as no matter how capable or hard working an individual, if their
65 values do match that of the organisation they are unlikely to perform in that organisation. In
66 some organisations (building, drilling, manufacturing) being safety conscious is essential
67 whereas in others (office work, retail) it is less crucial. The issue of interest is whether the
68 motives of people drawn to particular jobs fits the requisite safety culture. Inevitably, motives
69 are complex and multidimensional and play a part in whether individuals get selected to senior
70 management positions [23]. That is, values associated with safety may play a role in when and
71 whether an individual is considered for promotion.

72 The MVPI can also be used to directly assess and individual's key drives and motivation
73 be that money, security or hedonism/fun. This information can used to ensure that the

74 individual will be suited to the nature of a role. For instance, a high pressure, commission-
75 based sales role is likely to suit an individual that is motivated by financial gains but is unlikely
76 to sit well with someone motivated by security.

77 The ten motives and values assessed by the MVPI are set out in Table 1

78 Insert Table 1 here

79 The measure has been used in a number of studies relating motivation to personality and
80 performance [24-26]. Whilst this is an exploratory study it is possible to derive various
81 hypotheses from the above: for instance, that those motivated by *Hedonism* would be
82 negatively, and those motivated by *Security* positively associated with work-place security

83 **1.2 Work Safety and Hogan Safety Types**

84 There have been many attempts to develop safety tests and measures [27]. This study used
85 the *Hogan Safety Competencies* [28] which were developed to help organisations identify job
86 applicants' engagement in safe behaviours at work. Individual differences in personality
87 predict both safety-related behaviours and on-the-job accidents and injuries (see above). Some
88 individuals are likely to follow organisational rules, effectively handle stress, avoid emotional
89 outbursts, remain attentive while performing mundane tasks, avoid risks, and respond well to
90 training are likely to exhibit safe workplace behaviours: Others are not. Thus, it is argued, that
91 by identifying critical antecedents to safety behaviours and combining results across multiple
92 personality facets, organizations can identify traits that likely to lead to – or prevent – accidents
93 and injuries across industries, organizations, and jobs.

94 They started by identifying the antecedents of safety behavior and suggested six types.
95 They validated the test by using both supervisor ratings and actual safety behavior.

96 The six scales of safety-related behaviours are:

97 *Defiant - Compliant*: This component concerns a person's willingness to follow rules. Low
98 scorers may ignore rules; high scorers follow them effortlessly.

99 *Panicky - Strong*: This component concerns handling stress. Low scorers are stress prone, may
100 panic under pressure and make mistakes; high scorers typically remain steady.

101 *Irritable – Cheerful*: This component concerns anger management. Low scorers may lose their
102 temper easily and make mistakes; high scorers control their temper.

103 *Distractible - Vigilant*: This component concerns focus. Low scorers tend to be easily
104 distracted and may make mistakes; high scorers remain focused.

105 *Reckless - Cautious*: This component concerns risk-taking. Low scorers tend to take
106 unnecessary risks; high scores avoid risky actions.

107 *Arrogant - Trainable*: This component concerns trainability. Low scorers tend to ignore
108 training and feedback; high scorers pay attention to training. The manual of the test gives the
109 usual details of norms, reliability, and validity [28]. It demonstrates concurrent validity with a
110 range of measures including the International Personality Item Pool
111 Representation of the NEO PI-R (IPIP Big 5); Revised NEO Personality Inventory (NEO PI-
112 R); Cattell 16 Personality Factor Test (16PF); California Personality Inventory (CPI);
113 Jackson Personality Inventory-Revised (JPI-R) More importantly scores were logically
114 and significantly related to employability scales measuring Dependability, Composure and
115 Customer Focus. They also report on seven unique case studies where the criterion was nearly
116 always a particular safety behaviour. Although the samples were often small because this kind
117 of data is difficult to obtain, there was good evidence of the scale's predictive validity.

118 It is argued that this analysis can help organizations improve safety by identifying rule-
119 abiding, trainable, controlled and focused individuals who make calculated decisions and
120 remain steady under pressure. Across industries and jobs, the research demonstrates that
121 employees with these characteristics are less likely to engage in unsafe behaviours that lead to

122 expensive on-the-job accidents and injuries. Hiring safe individuals will likely contribute to
123 an organization's safety culture and bottom line results.

124 **The Questions Posed**

125 This study examines the relationship between the safety-related types and a measure of
126 normal job motivation. Motives and values lead to vocational preference as well as safety
127 sensitivity while at work. This study sought to explore this relationship. The aim was three-
128 fold: *First*, to examine the underlying structure of the Hogan Competency Scales. *Second*, to
129 examine motivational correlates and *third*, to examine the incremental validity of motivations
130 traits over demography in predicting the competencies and higher-order factors. Based on
131 previous literature we hypothesised that females more than males (H_1) and older rather than
132 young people (H_2) would be more safety conscious. We also hypothesised that those who
133 valued Security would be highly safety conscious (H_3) while those who valued Hedonism
134 would not (H_4).

135

136 **2. Method**

137

138 **2.1. Participants**

139

140 In all 26,571 people completed the measures: 14,492 Males; 12,079 Females. Their mean age
141 was 36.88 years (SD= 8.90 years). They came from all job sectors. The data was almost
142 exclusively from working adult Americans and collected over many years.

143

144 **2.2 Measures**

145

146 1. *Values*. The Motives, Values, Preferences Inventory (MVPI) [22] measures 10
147 Motives/Preferences. Each scale is composed of five themes: a) *Lifestyles*, which
148 concern the manner in which a person would like to live, b) *Beliefs*, which involve
149 ‘shoulds’, ideals and ultimate life goals, c) *Occupational Preferences*, which include
150 the work an individual would like to do, what constitutes a good job, and preferred work
151 materials, d) *Aversions*, which reflect attitudes and behaviours that are either disliked
152 or distressing, and e) preferred *Associates*, which include the kind of persons desired as
153 co-workers and friends. MVPI scores are quite stable over time, with test-retest
154 reliabilities ranging between 0.64 and 0.88 (mean = 0.79). More than 100 validation
155 studies have been conducted on the MVPI with results indicating that the inventory is
156 effective in predicting

157

158 2. *Safety Competency Scales* [28].

159 These are described above. The manual details evidence of reliability and validity.

160

161 **2.2. Procedure**

162 The data were collected from Hogan Systems over a number of years. All ethical procedures
163 were followed. Data was logged over many years by the organisation and made available to
164 the present author.

165

166 **3. Results**

167

168 Insert Table 2 and 3 here

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170 Table 2 shows the correlations between the six competencies and the Safety total score.
171 Each score correlated $r>0.57$ with the total score except the Strong dimension.

172 Table 3 shows the results of a Varimax Rotated factor analysis which was performed to
173 investigate the underlying pattern in the safety competency data. There were two clear factors
174 which accounted for 71% of the variance: Factor 1 Eigenvalue 2.62; Variance 41.62%; Factor
175 2 Eigenvalue 1.67; Variance 29.84%; Because of the loadings the first factor was labelled
176 *Observant* and the second factor *Resilient*.

177 Three scores were then computed: one for each factor and a total score. These became the
178 criteria variable for step-wise regression where demographics (age and gender) were entered
179 as the first step; then the ten motives in the second. The central question was which of the 10
180 motives/preferences is most closely linked to the safety competencies.

181 Insert Tables 4 here

182 Table 4 shows the regression onto the *Total* factor score which was significant and
183 accounted for just under a third of the total variance. The demographic variables indicated that
184 females more than males, and older rather than younger, participants were more safety-
185 observant though these two variables accounted for less than 2% of the variance. Three of the
186 values were negatively associated with Overall safety: Consciousness (Recognition, Hedonism
187 and Affiliation) while Security was positively associated with Safety. All four hypotheses were
188 thus confirmed.

189 Table 4 also shows the regression onto the *Observant* factor. The demographic variables
190 indicated that females more than males, and older rather than younger, participants were more
191 observant though these two variables accounted for less than 2% of the variance. When the
192 motivational variables were added it was clear only two were positive (Security and Tradition)
193 while three were strongly negative (Recognition, Affiliation, Hedonism). In all these factors
194 accounted for nearly 40% of the variance.

195 Table 4 also shows the regression onto the *Resilient* factor. The demographic variables
196 indicated that females more than males were more resilient though these two variables
197 accounted for less than 2% of the variance. When the Motivational variables were added two
198 were strongly negative (Hedonism and Recognition) while four were strongly positive (Power,
199 Affiliation, Science and Commerce). Together, the motivational factors accounted for around
200 a fifth of the variance. In other words, an individual's motivational profile plays an important
201 role in the way he or she relates to safety issues.

202

203 **4. Discussion**

204 The results of this study confirmed many findings in the literature: males are less safety
205 conscious than females; older people are more safety conscious than younger people. This has
206 been found many times and various explanations are given including evolutionary and
207 socialisation factors. It is reassuring that these findings were established using this particular
208 instrument,

209 The uniqueness of this study, however, lay in the identification of various, but related, “safety
210 types”, based on six dimensions. Thus, rather than having a single, accident-prone trait, like
211 extreme extraversion, or neuroticism, the Hogan measure assesses six related traits that have
212 an identifiable higher order structure. Further, this measure has a meaningful higher order
213 structure with Compliant, Vigilant and Cautious people being highly safety conscious and
214 *Observant* and Strong, Stable and Trainable people being *Resilient*. This offers a more nuanced
215 way of dividing people between those who are risk-taking and not safety conscious from those
216 that are.

217 Without doubt the most interesting findings in this study lay in the regressions (see Table
218 4) and the very different loadings for the two factors. The data for the first factor showed those
219 who valued Security and Tradition being more “conservative” in their outlook tended to be

220 more safety observant as one may expect. However, all of the other factors especially
221 Recognition, Hedonism and Affiliation were negatively associated with this factor. It has been
222 observed that fun-loving, sociable and narcissistic people tend to be less interested in, and
223 obedience to, rule following of every sort. The converse is therefore also true that introverted,
224 “kill-joys” are the more safety conscious which may give them a poor reputation with many of
225 their more outgoing colleagues.

226 However, the results of the regression onto the second factor showed some dramatic
227 differences. The second factor was labelled *Resilient* because the safety behaviours reflected
228 emotional stability and willingness to learn from experience. On this factor Power, Commerce
229 and Science loaded highly, suggesting that those interested in work-success were likely to
230 understand the role of safety in the workplace and therefore likely both to follow guidelines
231 and get others to do likewise. These two factors suggest that rather than seeing safety beliefs
232 and behaviours on a single obedient/rule-following and disobedient/rule breaking dimension it
233 may be more useful to consider the above dimensions

234 The MVPI used in this study is, like many related measures, used primarily in management
235 assessment and development. The aim is matching people to jobs: achieving fit. Clearly the
236 issue of being safety-conscious and rule following is much more important in some industries
237 compared to others (manufacturing, medicine, mining, transportation vs education, sales and
238 marketing, journalism) though it should be recognised that all jobs have safety issues, though
239 they differ in quality and quality.

240 A major problem arises when a motivational trait (that leads people to access particular
241 jobs) seems to be opposed to safety rule following. Thus, in this study, one of the *strongest* and
242 most *consistent* value/motive negatively associated with safety was Recognition. The MVPI
243 manual notes that Recognition motives reflect responsiveness to attention, approval, praise, a
244 need to be recognized, and an appreciation for the role of recognition in human motivation.

245 Recognition motives are associated with a desire to be known, recognized, visible, even
246 famous, and with a lifestyle guided by opportunities for self-display and dreams of
247 achievement—whether or not they are actualized. High scorers tend to be interesting,
248 imaginative, self-confident, and dramatic, but also independent and unpredictable. They tend
249 prefer to work in teams, communicate very well with his staff, have lots of ideas, but he may
250 have trouble admitting mistakes. Certainly, this motive is associated with ambition which
251 suggests these individuals “rise in the ranks” which could be very problematic for modelling
252 and encouraging safety behaviours (Furnham, 2018).

253 It was the same pattern for the value/motive Hedonism. Hedonistic motives are associated
254 with a desire for pleasure, excitement, variety, and a lifestyle organized around good food,
255 good drinks, entertaining friends, and fun times. Those motivated by hedonism are expressive,
256 playful, and changeable, and prefer to work in a dynamic and fluid environment. As a manager,
257 they will be colourful and entertaining, but unconcerned with details and he may not learn from
258 his mistakes. It is no wonder that those who enforce safety regulations are thought of a “kill-
259 joys” and dull.

260 **4.1 Practical Advice and Prescriptions**

261 This study demonstrated that an individuals’ values and job motivation profile is related to their
262 safety-related observance. We know that values and motivations are major factors both in job
263 choice but also success in that job. We also know that from a motivational point of view some
264 are more sensitive to reinforcement (promise of reward) while others are particularly sensitive
265 to punishment (threat of punishment) [29]. These two types therefore respond to advice and
266 instructions about safety differently. Thus, those who endorse values like Recognition,
267 Hedonism and Affiliation, and are usually attracted to “people jobs” would be more likely to
268 follow safety instructions if these were linked to particular rewards, while those whose values

269 were associated with Security and Tradition would be more motivated to avoid any
270 punishments associated with not following safety rules and regulations.

271 Large organisations, like exploration and mining, and transportation companies, who are
272 very concerned that *all* staff are safety conscious and observant would do well to ensure that
273 there are both sensitive and appropriate rewards and punishments for adhering or not to
274 company guidelines. These may be usefully have a slightly different emphasis from department
275 to department: reward in sales, punishment in IT. To know both an individual's and their
276 departmental profile could help shape how safety-messages were developed.

277 **4.2. Limitations**

278 Like all others this study has limitations. Whilst we had a very large representative sample
279 completing well established, validated tests, we had the relatively usual problem of common
280 method variance: that is, both dependent and independent samples had self-report data. This
281 often exaggerates the relationship between the variables and could in part account for the very
282 high amounts of variance accounted for. Ideally, we would have liked to have actual accident
283 data (which is often very problematic and skewed) or least the safety scale completed by a
284 knowledgeable peer rather than the participant themselves. Equally, it would have been very
285 desirable to know more about the participants such as their education, work history and self-
286 estimated risk-taking behaviours. Moreover, it would be very desirable to compare tests of
287 actual safety motivation with this general work motivation model

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Table 1. Motives Values and Preferences Inventory Scales

Aesthetics	valuing creative and artistic self-expression, an interest in art, literature, and music, lifestyle guided by imagination, culture and attractive surroundings.
Affiliation	valuing frequent and varied social contact, an interest in working with others, and a lifestyle organised around social interactions.
Altruistic	valuing improving society and actively helping others, an interest in helping those less fortunate and making the world a better place.
Commerce	valuing business activities, money, and financial gain, an interest in realising profits and finding business opportunities.
Hedonism	valuing good company and good times, an interest in pleasure, excitement and variety.
Power	valuing success, being influential, asserting authority and control and outperforming others.
Recognition	valuing fame, being seen, visible, and noticed by others.

Science	valuing learning, an interest in new ideas, technology, and analytical problem solving, and a lifestyle organised around exploring and understanding how things work.
Security	valuing certainty, predictability, and risk-free environments, an interest in structure and order.
Tradition	valuing history and convention, an interest in high standards and appropriate social behaviour, and a life organised around well-established principles of conduct

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Table 2. Correlation between the six types and the overall score

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1.Compliant							
2.Strong	-0.11**						
3.Cheerful	0.59**	0.39**					
4.Vigilant	0.56**	-0.30**	0.19**				
5.Cautious	0.59**	-0.37**	0.20**	0.77**			
6.Trainable	0.20**	0.23**	0.30**	0.17**	0.16**		
7. Safety Tot	0.78**	0.24**	0.73**	0.66**	0.64**	0.58**	

**p<0.01

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Table 3. Factor Analysis of the Six Safety types

Statement	Factor			
	M	SD	1	2
Compliant	48.87	28.69	0.74	0.45
Strong	51.60	29.48	-0.52	0.71
Cheerful	46.58	27.78	0.23	0.84
Vigilant	51.03	28.60	0.88	0.06
Cautious	49.72	28.89	0.91	0.03

Trainable	48.80	48.79	0.13	0.61
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Table 4. Results of the Regression

	<i>Overall Score</i>			<i>DV1</i>			<i>DV2</i>		
	$F(12, 18810) = 725.36$			$F(12,18810) = 1038.50$			$F(12,18810) = 415.88$		
	adj $R^2 = 0.32$			adj $R^2 = 0.40$			adj $R^2 = 0.21$		
	B	β	t	B	β	t	B	β	t
Age	0.05	0.03	4.42	0.32	0.04	6.53	0.01	0.00	.026
Gender	1.77	0.05	7.59	8.85	0.06	9.42	1.73	0.01	1.91
Recognition	-0.02	-0.36	-48.73	-0.74	-0.28	-39.93	-0.60	-0.27	-33.83
Power	0.04	0.07	8.49	-0.17	-0.07	-8.88	0.41	.019	22.40
Hedonism	-0.14	-0.23	-34.35	-0.24	-0.09	-14.16	-0.61	-0.28	-38.47
Altruism	0.01	0.01	1.84	-0.07	-0.03	-4.09	0.12	0.05	7.09
Affiliation	-0.04	-0.02	-11.31	-0.60	-0.23	-36.60	0.32	0.15	20.60
Tradition	0.02	0.04	5.62	0.13	0.05	7.79	0.01	0.01	0.63
Security	0.14	0.22	32.61	0.75	0.28	44.08	0.08	0.03	4.57
Commerce	0.03	0.05	6.13	-0.05	-0.02	-2.43	0.21	0.10	12.03
Aesthetics	-0.04	-0.06	-8.94	-0.21	-0.08	-12.86	-0.01	-0.00	-0.43
Science	0.01	0.02	2.61	-0.22	-0.08	-12.51	0.28	0.13	17.04

B is the unstandardized beta (β)