

# Human values of colombian people. Evidence for the functionalist theory of values

## Valores Humanos de los Colombianos. Evidencia de la Teoría Funcionalista de los Valores

Recibido: Febrero de 2012  
Revisado: Agosto de 2012  
Aceptado: Octubre de 2012

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This paper was supported in part by grant of the *National Council for Scientific and Technological Development* to the second author. Authors are grateful to this agency. Correspondence must be addressed to Rubén Ardila, National University of Colombia.

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### Abstract

The objective of this research work has been to get to know the axiological orientation of Colombians, and gather empirical evidence regarding the suitability of the *functionalist theory of values* in Colombia, testing its *content and structure* hypothesis and the psychometric properties of its measurement (*Basic Values Questionnaire BVQ*). The BVQ evaluates sexuality, success, social support, knowledge, emotion, power, affection, religiosity, health, pleasure, prestige, obedience, personal stability, belonging, beauty, tradition, survival, and maturity. Two hundred and thirty people participated (112 men and 118 women) whose average age was 28.7 years old, from 50 cities and towns of Colombia. They answered the BVQ and demographic questions. The results gave support to the *content* hypothesis (six valorative sub-functions: *excitement, promotion, existence, suprapersonal, interactive* and *normative*) and to *structure* (the values represented in two dimensions: *orientation type* and *motivation type*). Verifying previous research, it was found that Colombians presented a value orientation which was more *social than personal*, and more *idealistic (humanist) than materialistic*. The main values were success, maturity and affection. The least important were power, tradition,

### Resumen

El objetivo de esta investigación ha sido conocer la orientación axiológica de los colombianos, y reunir evidencias empíricas con respecto a la adecuación de la teoría funcionalista de los valores en Colombia, comprobando sus hipótesis de contenido y estructura y las propiedades psicométricas de su medida (el Cuestionario de Valores Básicos, CVB). El CVB evalúa sexualidad, éxito, apoyo social, conocimiento, emoción, poder, afectividad, religiosidad, salud, placer, prestigio, obediencia, estabilidad personal, pertenencia, belleza, tradición, supervivencia y madurez. Participaron 230 personas (112 varones y 118 mujeres) con edad promedio de 28.7 años, provenientes de 50 ciudades y pueblos de Colombia. Contestaron el CVB y preguntas demográficas. Los resultados respaldan las hipótesis de contenido (seis subfunciones valorativas: *experimentación, realización, existencia, suprapersonal, interactiva y normativa*) y estructura (los valores representados en dos dimensiones: *tipo de orientación y tipo de motivador*). Corroborando investigaciones anteriores, se encontró que los colombianos presentan una orientación valorativa más social que personal, y más idealista (humanista) que materialista. Los principales valores fueron éxito, madurez y afectividad. Los menos

beauty and emotion. In conclusion, there is an initial evidence of the suitability about the *functionalist theory of values* in this culture, although it is advisable to conduct new studies, even thinking in an *emic* measurement of the values in this country.

*Key words: Values, Colombia, functionalist theory of values.*

Values are a key element in the cognitive system of people, allowing them to explain their attitudes, opinions and behavior (Rokeach, 1973). Therefore, to know which values are priorities in certain people, groups or cultures, it is important to understand them including their preferences and decisions. See also Akutsu & Torres da Paz (2011), and Navarro-Saldaña et al (2007) Certainly, to identify the axiological priorities of people it is fundamental to recognize the idiosyncrasies of a culture, like the Colombian one (Ardila, 1993, 2011). This study has as its main objective to contribute with the topic of human values in Colombia, evaluating the adaptation of a theoretical model that could be useful when analyzing what the values of its people are and their influence on the Colombian culture and the socioeconomic development of the country. Specifically, this investigation tries to gather evidence in respect to the *Functionalist theory of values* (Gouveia, 2003; Gouveia, Milfont, Fischer, & Santos, 2008; Gouveia et al., 2010), proving the psychometric parameters of its measurement, and the hypotheses stated of *content and structure*. It represents as well, an attempt to know which the valued priorities of the Colombian people are.

Colombia was not included in some of the cross-cultural research studies that have been conducted on the topic of values at the individual level of analysis (for example in Schwartz & Boehnke, 2004; Schwartz & Sagie, 2000; Spini, 2003), even though it was considered in Hofstede's cultural values study (2001). In this case, for example, their scores indicated a high avoidance of uncertainty, eluding risks and prioritizing strict rules, and also low individualism, being a society which attributes importance to one's own group, emphasizing broad relations and the compliance with other people.

In terms of individual values, Schultz & Zelezny (1999) considered a sample of 14 Iberoamerican countries, among them Colombia ( $n = 149$ ; an average age of 24, 80% women), observing that Colombians attributed more

importantes fueron poder, tradición, belleza y emoción. En conclusión, existen evidencias iniciales de la adecuación de la teoría funcionalista de los valores en dicha cultura, aunque se recomienda realizar nuevos estudios, incluso pensando en una medida *emic* de los valores en este país.

*Palabras clave: Valores, Colombia, Teoría funcionalista.*

importance to the values of *hedonism, benevolence* and *self-direction*. These results suggest a more personal than social value orientation, contrary to the previous discoveries presented by Hofstede (2001). They are equally opposed to the ones stated by Schlösser (2006), who observed that Colombia showed high scores in agreeableness, religiosity and authoritarianism, indicators of a social and hierarchical orientation. However, making a precise portrait of the axiological principles in this country even more difficult, Fernández, Páez & González (2005) describe that Colombians presented a more *independent* self-image ( $m = 3.15$ ) than an *interdependent* one ( $m = 2.94$ ).

This set of non-consensual findings requires additional studies on the values of Colombians to be done. This has been precisely the objective of this research work, which also tries to prove the suitability of the *Functionalist theory of values*, which is described below.

### Functionalist theory of human values

Although more widely known theories of values exist (e.g., Inglehart, 1989; Rokeach, 1973; Schwartz, 1992), the theory of Gouveia and his collaborators is presented as a promising alternative (Gouveia, 2003; Gouveia, Fonsêca, Milfont, & Fischer, 2011). This has been demonstrated to be adequate in the diverse countries in which it has been applied, as Brazil (Gouveia, Milfont, Fischer, & Coelho, 2009), Spain (Gouveia et al., 2010), England (Guerra, 2008) and New Zealand (Boer, 2009). This is not a theory contrary to the others which consider the motivational nature of human values (Inglehart, 1989; Schwartz, 1992). It is essentially an integrating model, although a parsimonious one, which assumes four main assumptions (Gouveia, 2003; Gouveia et al., 2008).

**Human nature.** It admits the benevolent or positive nature of human beings, assuming only positive values.

Although some values possess a negative character for certain individuals (e.g., *power, religiosity*), their essence is positive, being possible to integrate them into the values of self-actualized persons (Maslow, 1954).

**Motivational basis.** Some authors define values as transformations of human needs (Rokeach, 1973; Schwartz, 2011), but this process is not obvious and its consideration is avoided in the following definition. On the contrary, the most frequently accepted idea of values as cognitive representations of human needs is assumed (Kluckhohn, 1951; Maslow, 1954).

**Terminal character.** Classification of values into instrumental and terminal seems to be a language problem: terminal values are nouns, while the instrumental ones are adjectives (Rohan, 2000). In this way, in the present model only terminal values have been taken into account, since they are fewer in number and more coherent with the conception of values as something desirable and transcendent. Terminal values are superior cognitive objectives, not limiting them to immediate and biologically urgent objectives (Rokeach, 1973).

**Individual guide-principles.** Even when theoretical approaches exist in respect to cultural values (Hosftede, 2001; Inglehart, 1989), it is in reality values of a group of individuals. Culture incorporates the values which have been useful for the survival of the group, making them desirable. Such values facilitate the continuity of the society, given that they promote harmonious existence among its members. (Merton, 1949 / 1968). Therefore, the values are conceived as general categories of orientation for the individuals.

In accord with the four assumptions described above, the following characteristics in the *definition* of values are accepted: (a) they are concepts or categories; (b) about desirable states of the existence; (c) they transcend specific situations; (d) they assume different degrees of importance; (e) they guide the selection and evaluation of behavior and events; and (f) they cognitively represent human needs (Hitlin & Piliavin, 2004; Inglehart, 1989; Schwartz, 1992). According to Gouveia et al. (2008), values can be formally defined in functional terms as orientation criteria that guide the behavior of persons and cognitively express their necessities.

Gouveia (2003; Gouveia et al., 2008, 2009, 2011) has identified in the literature two main functions of

human values: (1) they guide actions (*orientation type*) and they represent human needs (*motivation type*). In this way, functions of values are defined by this author as psychological aspects that values fulfill when guiding behavior and cognitively represent needs. Such functions are described in the following manner:

**First function of the values: to guide human behavior.** Three types of value orientation are assumed: *personal, central* and *social*. The *personal* types (e.g., *true friendship, a world of peace*) and *social* (e.g., *inner harmony, an exciting life*), identified also by other authors (Mueller & Wornhoff, 1990; Rokeach, 1973), shed light on the emphasis in society and the interpersonal relations in people or intrapersonal attributes, respectively. There still exists a third group of values, which are not completely and exclusively personal or social (Gouveia, 2003). Schwartz (1992) labels such values as *mixed motivational types*, although he does not offer any theoretical explanation as to why these values are located among the personal and social ones. The functionalist theory proposes that the values which are among the personal and the social ones are there because they are relevant to explain or support these values (Gouveia et al., 2008), serving as a reference for them and at the same time are utterly congruent with such values. This is the reason why this third group of values is called *central values*. In this way, the function of values as a guide to human behavior is defined as *orientation type*, existing three possibilities: *personal, central* and *social*.

**Second function of the values: to express human necessities** A perfect correspondence is not observed between human needs and values, although it is possible to identify values in respect to the needs that they cognitively represent. (Maslow, 1954). In fact, values could be classified as *materialistic (pragmatic)* or *idealistic (humanitarian)* (Marks, 1997; Inglehart, 1989; Ronen, 1994). The *materialistic* values are related to practical ideas, and an emphasis in these values indicates an orientation towards specific goals and normative rules. Individuals guided by such values usually think in terms of biological survival, prioritizing their own existence and the conditions that could assure it. In contrast, *idealistic (humanitarian)* values express a universal orientation, based on more abstract ideas and principles. Compared to the materialistic values, the idealistic ones are unspecific, not being directed necessarily toward concrete goals. Therefore, this second function of values is directed to cognitively represent the human needs,

which correspond to the *motivation type* dimension, with two possibilities: *materialistic (pragmatic)* and *idealistic (humanitarian)*.

**Joining the two functions of human values: six valorative sub-functions.** The functionalist theory considers two main functions of values, which correspond to two axes in the representation of its structure (Figure 1). The horizontal axis belongs to the function of the values to

guide human actions, representing the *orientation type* dimension (personal, central and social values), while the vertical axis indicates the function of the values to represent human needs, corresponding to the *motivation type* dimension (materialistic and idealistic values). Joining these two dimensions, that is to say, intersecting the horizontal and vertical axes, there are six sub-functions of values: *excitement, promotion, existence, suprapersonal, interactive* and *normative*.

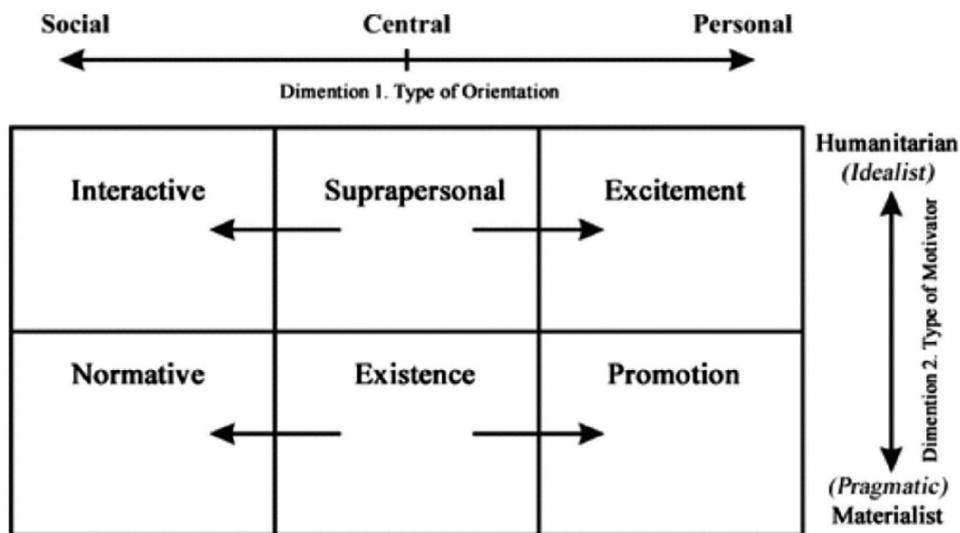


Figure 1. Facets, dimensions and sub-functions of the basic values

As it is observed in figure 1, the three types of orientation are represented by two sub-functions each: *personal* (excitement and promotion), *central* (existence and suprapersonal) and *social* (interactive and normative). Three sub-functions represent each one of the motivation types: *materialistic* (existence, normative and actualization) and *idealistic* (excitement, interactive and suprapersonal). In this way, the sub-functions could be mapped in a design 3 X 2., i.e 3 (*orientation types*: personal, central and social) by 2 (*motivation types*: materialistic and idealistic). The arrows that come from the *central* orientation (that is, from the sub-functions *existence* and *suprapersonal*) indicate that the corresponding values represent the main source or reference of the other values, being compatible to them. Based on this theoretical framework, two major hypotheses resulted, corresponding to *content* and *structure* of the valorative functions.

**Content and structure of the valorative functions.** The two valorative functions are reference frameworks that permit

the derivation of the six sub-functions, conceived as latent structures, which require to be represented through specific values. The *values content* hypothesis takes as reference these values as representation of the sub-functions. Below, the six sub-functions and the selected values that represent them are described. Once the central values constitute the principal source on which the other values are supported, that is to say, they represent the “backbone” of values organization, the description of the sub-functions begins with *existence* and the related sub-functions, and then passes to *suprapersonal* and the corresponding sub-functions.

**Existence sub-function.** It represents the basic physiological needs (e.g. eating, drinking, sleeping) and the need for security (Maslow, 1954; Ronen, 1994). It is compatible with personal and social orientations in the materialistic motivational domain, once the purpose is to guarantee the basic conditions for the biological and psychological survival of the individual. This is the most important sub-function the materialistic motivation represents, being the source of

other two sub-functions that represent such motivation: *normative and actualization*. *Health, survival and stability* are values which could represent this sub-function.

**Promotion sub-function.** The needs of self-esteem are represented by values of this sub-function (Maslow, 1954; Ronen, 1994), which corresponds to a materialistic motivation but with a personal orientation. Its values have origin in a personal principle to guide the life of the individuals, while they place emphasis in material fulfillments; they could be a demand for prosperous social interactions and adequate institutional functioning (Schwartz, 1992). Individuals oriented by these values attribute importance to hierarchy when this is based on the demonstration of personal competence, lending importance to an organized and structured society, being practical in their decisions and behavior. The next three values permit representation of this sub-function: *success, prestige and power*.

**Normative sub-function.** This is the third sub-function with a materialistic motivation, but it has a social orientation. The necessity of control and the indispensable preconditions to satisfy needs (Maslow, 1954; institutional and social demands, according to Schwartz, 1992) are represented by this sub-function; it reflects the importance of preserving the culture and the conventional norms. Prioritizing normative values evidences a vertical orientation, in which compliance to authority is important. The values *tradition, obedience and religiosity* represent this sub-function.

**Suprapersonal sub-function.** This sub-function presents a central orientation, but indicates an idealistic motivation; it represents the aesthetic and cognition needs, as well as the higher need of self-actualization (Maslow, 1954; Ronen, 1994). Its values help categorize the world in a consistent way, strengthening the clarity and stability of a person's cognitive organization, and indicating the importance of abstract ideas, with less emphasis on concrete and material matters (Inglehart, 1989). This sub-function is compatible with the social and personal values in the idealistic motivational type, being the source of other two sub-functions that represent this motivational type: *experimentation and interactive*. The following values can represent it: *beauty, knowledge and maturity*.

**Excitement sub-function.** It represents an idealistic motivation, but with a personal orientation. The physiological

need of satisfaction, in a broad sense, or the inclination towards the pleasure principle (hedonism; Maslow, 1954; Ronen, 1994) is represented by values of this sub-function. It is less pragmatic in the search for social status or to guarantee social harmony and security; its values contribute to the promotion of changes and innovations in the structure of social organizations. The values *emotion, pleasure and sexuality* could represent this sub-function.

**Interactive sub-function.** This is the third sub-function that represents an idealistic motivation, but has a social orientation. The common destiny and the affective experience between individuals are emphasized by values of this sub-function, which represent the needs of belonging, love and affiliation (Maslow, 1954). Their values are essential to establish, regulate and maintain interpersonal relationships. Social contacts are goals in themselves, placing emphasis on more affective and abstract attributes. *Affection, social support and coexistence* are values that can represent it. In summary, *the functionalist theory of values* proposes that the *value content* refers to the set of specific values that serve to represent the valued sub-functions. Therefore, the *content hypothesis* indicates that the 18 specific values previously listed (in the Basic Values Questionnaire, BVQ) can be properly explained by the six sub-functions (*Hypothesis 1*). Nevertheless, the present theory also predicts a defined structure for the functions and sub-functions of values, in accord with Figure 1.

The *structure hypothesis* refers to the spatial representation of the six valued sub-functions (*Hypothesis 2*), results of the intersection (the combination) of the two functional dimensions previously described. The central values are located among personal and social ones, being congruent with both types of orientation. (*Hypothesis 2a*); and the materialistic and idealistic values are represented in different regions in the bi-dimensional space (*Hypothesis 2b*). With the purpose of verifying these hypotheses, the present investigation was carried out with Colombian men and women.

## Method

### Participants

In this investigation 230 Colombians participated, being 112 men and 118 women. Their ages varied between 18 and 66 years old, with an average age of 28.7. They came from 50 different cities and towns of Colombia, the

majority had lived most of the time in the capital, Bogota (57.8%); 32.2% lived in large cities, that is to say, with more than 500,000 inhabitants, and 20% in small towns. Both students (n=130) and nonstudents (n=100) were included.

## Instrument

The participants received a three-part booklet: values, belief in a just world, and demographic information. Considering the objective of the present study, only the results of values were included in this investigation. In this case, participants were given the Basic Values Questionnaire (BVQ; Gouveia, 2003). The BVQ is made up of 18 specific values or markers (sexuality, success, social support, knowledge, emotion, power, affection, religiosity, health, pleasure, prestige, obedience, personal stability, belongingness, beauty, tradition, survival, and maturity), representing six valorative sub-functions: *excitement* (emotion, pleasure and sexuality), *promotion* (success, power and prestige), *existence* (health, survival, stability), *suprapersonal* (beauty, knowledge and maturity), *interactive* (affection, social support and belonging) and *normative* (obedience, tradition and religiosity). Each value is represented by two short phrases (for example, *Pleasure*. "Enjoying life"; "Satisfying everybody's desires"; Obedience. "Accomplishing one's day-to-day duties and obligations"; "Respecting one's parents, superiors and elders"). This is a measurement of self-report studies, and the person must answer each value on a scale that varies from 1 (totally unimportant) to 7 (highest importance).

## Procedure

The participants were selected based on four variables considered relevant (gender, being a student or not, age, and city where they have lived most of the time). Data collection using the BVQ was made in most of the cases collectively and detailed instructions were imparted. The intention was to have wide participation with regard to educational level, geographical distribution, occupations and age. Everyone was informed of the voluntary participation, assuring them that their answers would remain anonymous.

## Data Analysis

The statistical packages used were *PASW* and *AMOS* (versions 19). The *PASW* was used in order to calculate reliability indicators (Alpha of Cronbach, homogeneity; Clark &

Watson, 1995), to compare the averages of the valorative sub-functions (*Manova* for matched measurements) and to verify the *structure hypothesis*; and with the *AMOS* the *content hypothesis* was verified. In this case, it was predicted that the 18 items (value markers) would saturate in their theoretical functions. To verify this hypothesis, a confirmatory factor analysis (*CFA*) was carried out, using the matrix variance – covariance as an entrance among the 18 values and adopting the ML procedure (*Maximum Likelihood*). The following fit indexes were considered (Byrne, 2010; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007): *goodness-of-fit index (GFI)*, *comparative fit index (CFI)*, *root-mean-square error of approximation (RMSEA)* and its corresponding 90% confidence interval (*CI*). Models with values of *GFI* and *CFI* close to a .90 or more indicate a good fitting; on the other hand, the *RMSEA* with a value of about .08 or lower indicates a satisfactory fitting (Kline, 2005; Hu & Bentler, 1999). To compare the alternative models the following indicators have been considered:  $\Delta\chi^2$ , *CAIC (Consistent Akaike information Criterion)* and *ECVI (Expected Cross Validation Index)*. Statistically significant difference of  $\Delta\chi^2$ , penalizing the model with major  $\chi^2$ , and lower coefficients of *CAIC* and *ECVI* suggest a more suitable model.

To verify the *structure hypothesis*, a multidimensional confirmatory scaling (*MDS*, algorithm *PROXSCAL*) was carried out. Scores in the values were transformed in *z* before creating the distance matrix between them. This analysis bore in mind the theoretical structure of Figure 1. The following parameters were specified for the type of orientation: excitement [1.0], promotion [1.0], existence [0.0], suprapersonal [0.0], interactive [-1.0] and normative [-1.0]. For the motivation type, the following parameters were stated: excitement [0.5], promotion [-0.5], existence [-1.0], suprapersonal [1.0], interactive [0.5] and normative [-0.5]. The ordinal-level analysis was used, allowing *break ties*. Tucker's phi coefficient was used as an adjusting measurement of the model, with values near .90 or more indicating an acceptable fitting (van de Vijver & Leung, 1997).

Finally, evidence of *construct validity (convergent validity, discriminant validity and composite reliability)* was gathered, bearing in mind the indicators of *average variance extracted (AVE)* and *composite reliability (CR)* (Fornell and Larcker, 1981). Coefficients equal or higher to 0,50 and 0,60 (preferably 0.70), respectively, suggest the adequacy of the measurement (Hair, Anderson, Tatham & Black, 1998; Škerlavaj & Dimovski, 2009). The *AVE* is considered to be

an indicator of *convergent validity* of every sub-function; in case of the discriminant validity, this one is verified when the square root of the AVE is higher than the correlation coefficient ( $\Phi$ ) between the two evaluated sub-functions. The composite reliability compared with the Alpha of Cronbach, presents the advantage of not demanding that the items be *tau* equivalent, that is to say, that they present equal factorial weight, and the errors of measurement be independent. This way, it is an additional indicator of the reliability of every factor (sub-function).

## Results

### Descriptive Data and Parameters of the Measurement

On the first place, the scores of the participants in the valorative sub-functions study were looked for. A Manova was done for interdependent measurements, verifying differences [*Lambda of Wilks* = 0.40; *F* (5, 225) = 64.74, *p* < 0.001]. The results are presented in the first two columns of Table 1.

Tabla 1  
Descriptive statistics, reliability and construct validity

Sub-functions	<i>m</i>	<i>sd</i>	$\alpha$	<i>rh.i</i>	<i>CR</i>	<i>MEV</i>
Excitement	5.1 (6)	0.96	0.57	0.32	0.73	0.56
Promotion	5.1 (5)	0.99	0.68	0.43	0.82	0.66
Existence	6.0 (1)	0.73	0.44	0.21	0.61	0.45
Suprapersonal	5.6 (3)	0.82	0.50	0.25	0.70	0.50
Interactive	5.6 (2)	0.75	0.46	0.23	0.72	0.48
Normative	5.2 (4)	1.03	0.51	0.28	0.65	0.55

Note: *m* = mean, *sd* = standard deviation,  $\alpha$  = Alpha of Cronbach, *rh.i* = Homogeneity index, *CR* = Composed reliability, *MEV* = Mean extracted variance. Values in parenthesis correspond to the order of importance of the sub-functions.

According to this table, the sub-function *existence* (*m* = 6.0) was considered the most important item, whereas the sub-functions *excitement* and *promotion* were considered to be the two of lesser importance (*m* = 5.1). The Bonferroni *post hoc* test indicated that the following sub-functions did not differ among themselves (*p* > 0.05): *promotion* – *normative*, *interactive* – *suprapersonal*, *normative* – *excitement* and *excitement* – *promotion*. The Cronbach's Alpha average was 0.53, varying from 0.46 (*existence*) to 0.68 (*actualization*); the homogeneity coefficients varied from 0.21 (*existence*) to 0.43 (*promotion*), with an average value 0.29; the *convergent validity* was verified from the *CR* and *AVE*. In the first case all the coefficients were over 0.60, and the *AVEs*, in general, have been higher than 0.50, with the lower values corresponding to the *existence* sub-function (0.45) and the *interactive* one (0.48).

The results in regard to *discriminant validity* are presented in Table 2, which describes the square roots of the *AVEs* of the sub-functions and the matrix of corresponding correlations. Except for the correlation between the *normative* and *excitement* sub-functions (*r* = -0.13), all others have been positive.

According to this table, only the correlations of the *existence* sub-function with *suprapersonal* and *interactive*, *suprapersonal* with *interactive* and *normative* with *interactive* have been higher than the square roots of their respective *AVEs*. Therefore, in general, it seems to suggest evidence of *discriminant validity* of the valued sub-functions.

### Content Hypothesis

Initially, confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was performed to verify the hypothesis that predicts six valued sub-functions, each one represented by three specific values. This model presented acceptable fit indexes (for example,  $\chi^2/g.l = 2.43$ , (RMSEA) = 0.08). In Figure 1 there appear the saturations of the 18 values; these varied from 0.35 (*survival*) to 0.79 (*pleasure*), with an average coefficient of 0.53 (they all have been statistically different from zero; *z* > 1.96, *p* < 0.05).

In order to compare this model with other possible ones, four additional ACRs have been done. The first one verified the possibility that the *existence* and *suprapersonal*

Tabla 2  
Correlaciones between sub-functions and extracted mean variances

$\sqrt{VME}$	Sub-functions	1	2	3	4	5
0.75	1. Excitement	-				
0.81	2. Promotion	0.75	-			
0.67	3. Existence	0.52	0.54	-		
0.71	4. Suprapersonal	0.54	0.51	0.86	-	
0.69	5. Interactive	0.14	0.36	0.87	0.70	-
0.74	6. Normative	-0.13	0.19	0.74	0.34	0.79

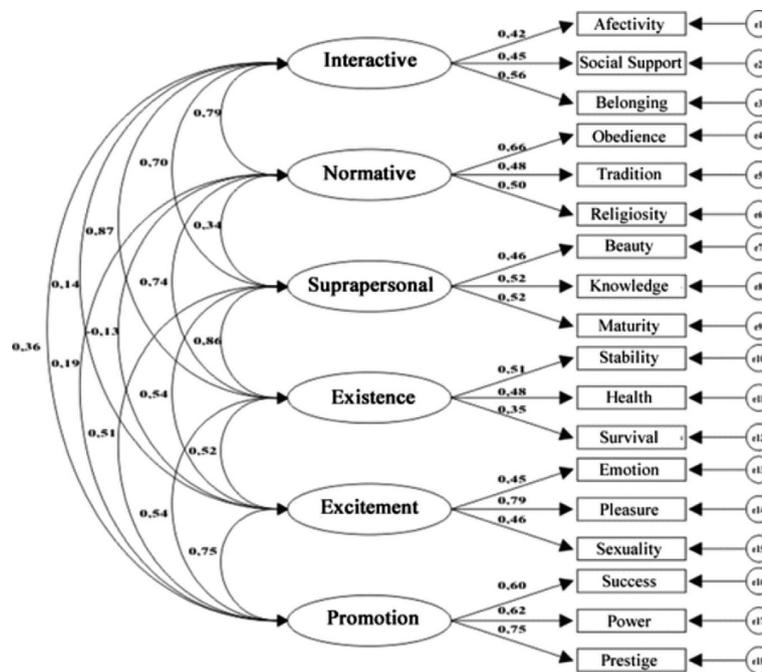


Figure 2. Factorial structure with their respective factorial loads.

sub-functions constitute a single factor (penta-factorial model); the second one evaluated a tri-factorial structure, represented by *three types of orientation* (*personal, central and social*); the third one verified the structure with two factors, admitting that the principal differentiator of the values is the *motivation type* (*idealistic and materialistic*); and, finally, it was verified that all the values could be reunited in a single factor, product of the desirable nature of this construct. The results of these analyses are shown Table 3.

As is observed in this table, the two most suitable models have been the original (hexa-factorial) and the penta-factorial, not existing statistical difference between them ( $\Delta\chi^2, p >$

0.05). This way, it is acceptable to assemble the *existence* and *suprapersonal* sub-functions, defining a wider sub-function termed *central values*. The third most suitable model has been that one with three factors, representing the *orientation types*.

### Hypothesis of Structure

The confirmatory multidimensional scaling MDS (algorithm Proxscal) has been used to verify if the values are established according to two functional principal dimensions: *orientation type* (*personal, central and social*) and *motivation type* (*idealistic and materialistic*). The results in respect to the above are presented in Figure 3.

Tabla 3  
Fit indicators of the factorial models

Models	$\chi^2$	df	GFI	CFI	RMSEA (IC90%)	CAIC	ECVI	$\Delta\chi^2$ (gl)
Six	291,77	120	0,88	0,77	0,08 (0,07-0,09)	620,11	1,72	
Five	300,23	125	0,88	0,77	0,08 (0,07-0,09)	596,38	1,71	8,46 (5)
Three	332,42	132	0,83	0,73	0,08 (0,07-0,09)	583,50	1,79	40,65 (12)*
Two	486,54	134	0,78	0,53	0,11 (0,10-0,12)	724,75	2,45	194,77 (14)*
One	492,49	135	0,78	0,53	0,11 (0,10-0,12)	724,27	2,46	201,72 (15)*

Note:  $n = 230$ . Hexafactorial (original) model, pentafactorial (subfunctions *suprapersonal* and *existence* forming a single subfuncton: *central values*), trifactorial (*personal*, *central* and *social values*), bifactorial (*idealistic* and *materialist values*) and unifactorial (all of the 18 values saturated in a single factor); \*  $p < 0.001$ .

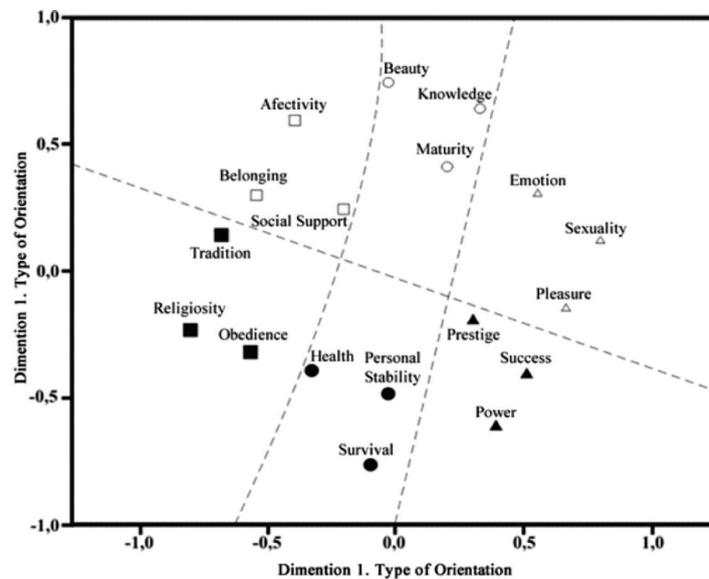


Figure 3. Spatial representation of values in two functional dimensions

As observed in this figure, it seems reasonable to admit that values split according to the *orientation type*. Concretely, the *personal* (triangles) and *social* (squares) values appear on opposite sides separated by the *central* values (circles). The *motivation type* also seems identifiable since the *idealistic* values (empty figures) and the *materialistic* ones (full figures) are presented in different regions of the two-dimensional space. The *Tuck's Phi* coefficient (0.94) corroborates the adequacy of this spatial configuration.

### Discussion

The objectives of this study, as we have previously indicated, have been to know the values of Colombians and to verify the adequacy of the *Functionalist theory of values* in Colombia. These objectives have been met. Nevertheless, it is necessary to indicate one of its potential limitations: the sample. Although it is made up by people with different backgrounds, in respect to age, gender, being student or

not, and the place where they have mostly lived, it was not a probabilistic sample. As a matter of fact, the generalization of the findings must be made with precaution. On the other hand, it is necessary to say that, in statistical terms, the size of the sample can be considered adequate for this analysis carried out (Watkins, 1989), being larger than the size in previous studies (Schultz & Zelezny, 1999).

With regard to the type of value orientation of Colombians, it is clearly more *social* than *personal*, a result that goes in the direction suggested by Hofstede (2001) and Schlösser (2006). In this sense, contradicting Schultz and Zelezny's data (1999), less importance has been given to sub-functions that place emphasis on individualistic attributes, that is to say, *excitement* and *promotion*. Nevertheless, it is not possible to say that Colombian people present a vertical or materialistic orientation. Although the *existence* sub-function was considered the most important, which seems logical for assuring the survival of people, the two most important following sub-functions have been *interactive* and *suprapersonal*, which represent the *idealistic* (humanistic), motivation type who values equal relations among peers, the universal principle of orientation and openness to change (Gouveia et al., 2008, 2009, 2010).

The previously described results seem reliable. At this point it is necessary to indicate the parameters for the measurement used (*BVQ*; Gouveia, 2003). Although alphas near to 0.50 are not ideal, it is necessary to take into account the nature of the construct (human values), which presents less intracultural variability (Schwartz & Sagie, 2000), and the small number of items (three per sub-function). Even employing more items, some of the value motivational types of S. H. Schwartz present equal or inferior coefficients to those reported (Del Junco, Susanibar & Dutschke, 2010). Furthermore, when other indicators of reliability are taking into account, this parameter seems adequate. For example, the homogeneity coefficient is greater than 0.20 (Clark & Watson, 1995) and the composite reliability was always superior than 0.60 (Fornell & Larcker, 1981; Škerlavaj & Dimovski, 2009). Nonetheless, the *mean variance extracted* of two sub-functions (*existence* and *interactive*) was under the recommended 0.50 (Hair et al., 1998), which may require the elaboration of new items to represent them more adequately. Finally, the discriminant validity of the sub-functions seemed evident, with the exception of the *existence* and *suprapersonal* cases. However, as was previously said, these sub-functions are congruent with the others; they

constitute the “backbone” or reference for them (Gouveia et al., 2008, 2009).

With respect to the *content hypothesis*, coherent with what the corresponding theory establishes, the model with six valorative sub-functions was the most adequate, although it did not present statistical difference when compared with the penta-factorial model (joining the *existence* and *suprapersonal* sub-functional values). However, differentiating these two sub-functions seems theoretically fundamental, as they can express different levels of the social and economic development of a culture when they are compared with another. (Fischer, Milfont, & Gouveia, 2011).

The fitting indexes have not been the ideal ones, above all the *CFI*, but others were near or in the expected range, as the *RMSEA* and the ratio  $\chi^2/df$  (Kline, 2005). Besides, it is necessary to insist that all the sub-functions present convergent validity evidence, and the only ones with problems of discriminant validity could be theoretically expected to associate with other sub-functions (*existence* and *suprapersonal*). This does not impede, if it were the case that other items were chosen to represent such valorative sub-functions, producing an alternative instrument to the original *BVQ*, which would respect the *emic* aspects of Colombian culture.

In reference to the *structure hypothesis*, the discoveries were clear. The spatial drawing of the values, reunited in the theorized sub-functions, reproduces Figure 1 almost to perfection. In fact, the *central values* are located between the *personal* and *social* ones, which occupy opposite sides of the space; the *materialistic* and *idealistic* values appear in very distinct regions, corroborating the *Functionalist theory of values* (Gouveia et al., 2009, 2010, 2011). Structure three (*orientation type*) times two (*motivation type*) presented a satisfactory fit index (van der Vijver & Leung, 1997), suggesting that the bi-dimensional configuration, contemplating the perspectives of Schwartz (1992) and Inglehart (1989), respectively, it is appropriate to represent the semantic space of human values.

Finally, the previously described results must be considered among the previous findings on psychology of the Colombians (Ardila, 1993, 2011). See also Gómez, Villegas de Posada, Barrera & Cruz (2007). Great interest has existed in what was initially termed “national character” and has varied as a research field in recent decades. The

differences among cultures, human groups, nations, and even regional differences (see Park & Peterson, 2010; Rentfrow, 2010) continue being a very important field of work in psychology (Hofstede, de Hilal, Malvezzi, Tanure, & Vinken, 2010). Hofstede's conceptualization (2001) based on power distance, uncertainty avoidance, individualism-collectivism, masculinity-femininity, long versus short-term orientation, has awakened great interest among the social scientists (Triandis, 1995), and could indicate a path to understand the psychology of Colombians in comparison to other nationalities. This should be an area of interest, making it possible to gather evidences that permit one to know the way of thinking, feeling and behaving of the inhabitants of Colombia. The theory presented here could contribute to interesting discoveries, above all for not limiting itself to the individualism-collectivism dichotomy, making it possible to consider inter and intra-cultural variations in terms of social and economic indicators (Fischer et al., 2011).

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