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## A Response to Tomáš Urbánek

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As a sociologist, I sincerely welcome the initiation of the scientific discussion on building bridges between psychology and sociology by Tomáš Urbánek. I believe these two scientific disciplines can significantly contribute to each other. Explaining that was original intention when I decided to write the study on the reciprocal relationship between values and personal traits. Sociologists use human values as an explanatory variable predicting attitudes, behaviours, or respondents' actions very often, while not being aware enough of their relations to human personality, and, consequently, of their interdisciplinary crossover. In addition, it seemed to me highly relevant to draw the attention of sociologists to the existence of the fully standardised scale measuring personal traits.

When I immersed myself in reading dozens of (rather psychological) articles devoted to reciprocal relations between values and personal traits, I discovered that the majority of them are stuck in a kind of identical cycle aimed at proving their mutual relationships (or any kind of relationship at all), but only a few of them attempted to open up a sub-theme, use a new approach or method, or simply to focus on critical discussion. The majority of these studies were presented as experimental studies, working with a rather small number of respondents (from a sociological point of view) who represented only a very specific social segment (very often university students willing to participate). In order to test their often very similar hypotheses, these studies used only basic statistical techniques.

I identified two aspects of my potential contribution to the current body of literature dealing with the mutual relationship between values and personal traits. First, owing to the 'Conditions for Success in Work and Life' survey<sup>1</sup> dealing with a related analysis, there were available representative data sets based on a large number of respondents. Second, interesting socio-cultural variables were obtained within the frame of the survey we carried out, and these variables can be successfully used in this type of socio-psychological analyses. On the other hand, it was quite clear that the issue of the causal relationship between values and personal traits is rather a too high-profile psychological topic, and thus perhaps more suited to a different type of research. Psychologists themselves aren't very clear about how this type of causality functions at all; however, this doesn't usually prevent them from trying to solve this problem statistically on a long-term basis (see the meta-analyses by Fischer and Boer [2014] and Parks-Leduc,

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<sup>1</sup> For the data from the follow-up research project named 'Conditions for Success in Work and Life' (2015), see p. 404 in the article by Anýžová in this issue.

Feldman and Bardi [2014]. On the contrary, sociologists tend to avoid causal interpretation as long as they don't have a clear theoretical concept explicating the function of this relationship, and/or if there are no suitable longitudinal data available.

Therefore, instead of inaccurate regression analysis, an alternative solution involving the use of a nonrecursive simplified model was suggested in my treatise. Consequently, this model is interpreted as, for example, the effect of a personal trait on a given human value while controlling the potential reverse relation, measurement errors, and effects of intervening control variables. As such, it should be interpreted by itself, since to date we don't know exactly how the reverse relation (the effect of a value on a personal trait) works, or if it works simultaneously or with some time lag. Urbánek tries to interpret the effects of this model as a cycle, attempting to point out the issue of the reverse relations of ten iterations of simulations. However, we should look at these iterations in a time perspective. At first, they might not occur at all, or in the course of human life only one or two iterations may occur under the influence of both external and internal factors. Over such a very long time period, all the entry conditions may change, or, owing to extreme social changes, the monitored relationship between the specific value and a personal trait may be significantly weakened.

It is obvious that my study does not offer a solution to this problem as that would be virtually impossible. A wise person does not give the right answers but poses the right questions, so my question is why we are trying to statistically solve the given problem in a halfway sense if this kind of research problem probably can't be solved in a complex way given the current state of knowledge. My answer is that we are presently in the stage of searching for answers to very complicated questions. Nevertheless, we can judge the complexity of the issue based on the survey meta-analyses, which thus far involve sixty published studies that used correlations and regression analyses as a halfway solution to this problem. Sociologists might consider it an extreme reaction, but we can decide not to use a statistical approach when trying to explain the causal relationships behind human values and personal traits. Sociologists are less interested in individual life stories and experience explanations; they seek to understand general tendencies in society—for example, to learn whether certain similar or identical value changes occur in a larger social group under particular similar conditions. In such cases, the need to work with a larger number of respondents and statistics is inevitable—at least until it is much more evident from a theoretical point of view how the reverse relations between values and traits operate.

I knew that my study would generate many more questions than answers, and I am grateful for Urbánek's contribution to the discussion because he is directing attention to this issue and arguable solutions to it. But what is most important is that we are both calling for interdisciplinarity in these two disciplines, sociology and psychology, which is the best way forward.

I want to emphasise that anyone who would like to pursue a demanding an-

alytical strategy can use our data, the production of which was publicly funded, and which will be provided on request with the condition that the source of the data be correctly and fully cited. In this way the data are available for reanalyses and possible interpretations from various methodological perspectives. After all, in my opinion it is actually these kinds of discussions that serve to enhance scientific knowledge and raise new and interesting research questions.