An Integrative Framework to Study Wisdom

Le Vy Phan¹, Kai T. Horstmann², & Eranda Jayawickreme³
¹University of Luebeck, ²Humboldt University of Berlin, ³Wake Forest University

Conceptual Problems with Wisdom Research and their Consequences

1. **Inconsistent terminology**: Disagreement on how the construct should be labeled (e.g., wisdom, wise reasoning, self-transcendence, dialectical thinking, sophia, phronesis, etc.). Results in jingle-jangle fallacies.

2. **Lack of consensual definition and multiplicity of wisdom models**: Results in multiplicity of nomological networks and definitions that do not converge.

→ **Directly affects the diagnostic value of wisdom measures and their psychometric criteria.**

→ **Need for integration of different wisdom models to facilitate an effective accumulation and communication of empirical findings.**

The Nomological Lens Model Network (NLMN): a Proposal Framework to Study Wisdom

The NLMN, developed by Rauthmann (2017), is a comprehensive framework to structure and integrate bodies of literature in a meaningful way. Applied properly, this framework can provide an overview of a given field using predefined categories. The NLMN can be used to foster hypothesis generation, theory building, and to gain cumulative insights. Ultimately, the NLMN provides an iterative bottom-up approach to get from multiple working definitions to a consensual definition of psychological wisdom.

Components of the NLMN

**The diagnostic perspective:**

- **Nomological network:**
  - constitutes **construct validity**
  - the focal construct wisdom is represented within the “lens”
  - **Wisdom** is specified through relations between and among the Person, Processes, and the Product component
  - specifies relationships between the focal construct and antecedents, outcomes, correlates, and moderators.

**Lens Model:**
- evaluation of **criterion validity**
- assesses the symmetry and overlap between the Person and the Product component.

**The personality psychological perspective:**

- **The four Ps:**
  - Person(ality): Wise personality traits (e.g., openness to experience, empathy, etc.)
  - Products: Wise behavioral products (e.g., advice giving, mentoring, etc.)
  - Processes: Mechanisms that directly link wise personality to wise products (i.e., mechanisms that cause or explain wise behavior)
  - Presses: Situations that evoke wise behavior.

The four Ps are interrelated and wisdom should be expressed in all of the four Ps.

Benefits for Wisdom Research

1. Identification of common vs. unique components of different conceptualization of wisdom as well as blind spots in wisdom research.

2. Can be used as a framework to categorize and integrate different wisdom models and to get to an agreed-upon nomological network of wisdom.


Graphical Representation of the Nomological Lens Model Network

(Rauthmann, 2017)