

Adaptation and Validation of the Saliency Inventory to Brazilian Adults¹

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Abstract: Role saliency refers to the importance of a role in relation to other roles performed by a person in his/her social context. The purpose of this study was to adapt and validate the Brazilian version of the Saliency Inventory, called Inventário de Saliência (IS). The SI is composed of 170 items, which evaluate saliency through three dimensions: Participation, Commitment and Value expectation in relation to five roles: Study, Work, Community services, Home and Family, and Free Time. The sample was composed of 388 women and 111 men, 21 to 65 years of age with higher education. The results offer evidence supporting the IS construct validity and provide a normative base for an adult sample with higher educational level. Future studies should compare the results of this sample with diverse samples. The results are compared with the original study in terms of means and saliency rates. Finally, study limitations and suggestions for further studies are discussed.

Keywords: Saliency Inventory, psychological assessment, measurements, career counseling, role saliency

Adaptação e Validação do Inventário de Saliência (Saliency Inventory) para Adultos Brasileiros

Resumo: Saliência é a importância que uma pessoa atribui a um papel em relação a outros papéis que desempenha no seu contexto social. O presente estudo teve por objetivo adaptar e validar a versão original do Saliency Inventory denominada Inventário de Saliência (IS) na adaptação brasileira. O instrumento contém 170 itens que avaliam a saliência a partir de três dimensões: Participação, Comprometimento e Expectativa de Valor, para cinco papéis, relativos às atividades de Estudo, Trabalho, Serviço Comunitário, Casa e Família, e Tempo Livre. Participaram do estudo 388 mulheres e 111 homens, entre 21 e 65 anos, com nível superior de escolaridade. O IS apresentou validade de construto e fornece base normativa para a população adulta com nível de educação superior, com a qual se poderá realizar comparações. Os resultados são comparados com os do estudo de validação original em termos de médias e ordem de saliência. Finalmente, discutem-se as limitações deste estudo e possibilidades para pesquisas futuras.

Palavras-chave: Inventário de Saliência, avaliação psicológica, medidas, aconselhamento de carreira, saliência de papel

Adaptación y Validez del Inventario de Predominancia de los Roles (Saliency Inventory) para Adultos Brasileños

Resumen: Predominancia de papel es la importancia que una persona atribuye a un papel con relación a otros papeles que ejerce en su contexto social. Este artículo trata de la adaptación y validez para la versión brasileña del Saliency Inventory, denominado de Inventario de Saliência (IS) en Brasil. Posee 170 itens que evalúan la predominancia en sus tres dimensiones: Participación, Compromiso y Expectativa de valor, para cinco papeles, relativos a las actividades de Estudio, Trabajo, Servicio comunitario, Casa y familia y Tiempo Libre. Participaron 388 mujeres y 111 hombres, de 21 a 65 años, con estudios de nivel superior. El IS presentó validez de constructo y ofrece base normativa para la población adulta con educación superior, con lo cual se podrán realizar comparaciones. Los resultados fueron comparados con los del estudio de validez original, considerando sus promedios y orden de predominancia. Se discuten las limitaciones y las posibilidades de futuros estudios.

Palabras clave: Inventario de Saliencia, evaluación psicológica, medidas, orientación de carrera, predominancia de papel

The Saliency Inventory (SI) (Nevill & Super, 1986b) was created for research and intervention in career counseling and evaluates the relationship between the various roles performed by an individual. The importance that people attach to a role in relation to the others that they perform has

been called role saliency (Super 1980, 1990, for a review of the concept consult Lassance & Sarriera, 2009).

The present study consists of the translation, adaptation and validation of the Saliency Inventory (SI), for an adult sample, filling a gap formed by the historical absence of national instruments for the evaluation of saliency. For Super (1980), “roles structure life and give it meaning” (p. 288). Thus the *life-span/life-space theory* (Super, 1980, 1990; Super, Savickas, & Super, 1996) contextualizes the development - which occurs through stages in which individuals are faced with socially demanded developmental tasks – in the social space through the sequential or simultaneous development of roles, consolidating a lifestyle (Super, 1980). Roles may be centered within a certain period of life and become

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peripheral or absent in others, or may be performed differently in different stages of the life cycle, such as occurs, for example, with the child role in infancy and later in the adult period when the individual may have responsibility for caring for elderly parents (Super, 1980; Super et al., 1996). Roles are organized in a particular way for each individual and for the steps of life, and this organization channels and typifies the insertion of the individual in the social context. The central roles constitute the “core of who the individual is; are fundamental for the identity and essential for life satisfaction” (Savickas, 2002, p. 159). The multiplicity of roles can bring about conflict and distress, as well as fulfillment and life satisfaction (Super, 1980), since it can trigger difficulties of commitment to any of them (Biggs & Brough, 2005; Frone, Russel, & Barnes, 1996; Ng & Feldman, 2007; O’Neil & Greenberger, 1994; Perrone & Civileto, 2004; Super, 1980; Thoits, 1983) or allow the individual to realize to their interests, needs and values through the various roles, as the positive experience in a central role can affect the performance of others (Barnett, 1994; Cool, 1990; Cool et al., 1996). This relationship between the simultaneous performance of roles has been associated with the possibility of managing their demands (Grönlund, 2007; Perrone, AEGisdóttir, Webb, & Blalock, 2006; Possatti & Dias, 2002).

Interest in the study of the role salience appeared concomitantly to the increasing attention paid to the Work role considered central in people’s lives, starting with the work of Greenhaus (1973), who constructed the first measurement scale of salience for the Work role (Career Salience Inventory - CSI). The CSI, through 27 items, evaluates three dimensions: (a) general attitudes toward work, (b) degree of relevant vocationally planning, and (c) the importance of the occupation in relation to other sources of satisfaction. Studies with the CSI associated higher rates of salience of Work role with the highest levels of professional aspirations and a greater likelihood of non-traditional occupational choices in university students (Hackett, Espósito, & O’Halloran, 1989), increased confidence and self-determination (Kush & Cochran, 1993), and greater work-family conflict (Raskin, 2006).

Amatea, Cross, Clark and Bobby (1986) developed the Life Role Salience Scales (LRSS), scales of attitudinal character, which measure value (how important the role is for personal satisfaction or self-definition) and commitment (how much a person demonstrates a desire to commit personal resources to be successful in the role or to develop it) for four life roles: occupational, parental, marital, and homecare. The final scale, with 40 items, is constituted by eight subscales of Likert type responses. Two refer to the occupational role, two the parental role, two the conjugal role and two the homecare role. The LRSS was created to address the need for valid and reliable instruments that can assess the relevance of a role for the individual, the performance standards of the roles and how personal resources (time, money and energy) are invested in their performance, aiming to support the comprehension of the role expectations of men and

women and the effect on the work-family interface. Two validation studies (Amatea et al., 1986; Campbell & Campbell, 1995) showed that the roles evaluated constitute a relevant role set, common to all samples, both in adults who present concrete performance of the roles, and in young people for whom their performance was still a future prospect.

Several studies have used the CSI and the LRSS, especially in research on conflict in the work-family interface, focusing on issues related to gender socialization (Moya, Expósito, & Ruiz, 2000) and their effects on health and well-being (Biggs & Brough, 2005; Chi-Ching, 1995; Fournier, Lachance, & Bujold, 2009).

In the Brazilian context, Possatti and Dias (2001) conducted a validation study of the Role Quality Scale, which evaluates positive (rewards) and negative (concerns) aspects of the roles of mother and worker. The positive aspects of the Work role are subdivided into two factors – power of decision, support and supervision. The negative aspects of work are divided into two factors - working conditions and overload. For the maternal role, however, both the rewards as well as the concerns showed a unifactorial structure for the dimensions development and company of the children, and overload and security. On further investigation, with 132 working women who were also mothers with education above high school level (71.2% with higher education), Possatti and Dias (2002), reaffirmed the good psychometric properties of the scale, allowing the questioning of some social injunctions regarding the traditional role of the woman.

Although consistent, these scales partially evaluate the different routes of social insertion common in adult individuals. With the focus only on the domains of work and family the other possibilities of social insertion are ignored, even though they can interfere directly or indirectly in the performance of the roles due to the multiplicity of social expectations beyond the central domains of work and family.

In this sense, among the transnational studies about the importance of work in relation to the other roles in people’s lives, there is the Work Importance Study (WIS) (Super & Sverko, 1995). Under the international coordination of Donald Super, this consisted of a project that brought together researchers from eleven countries (Australia, Belgium, Canada, Croatia, Israel, Italy, Japan, Poland, Portugal, South Africa and the USA). The WIS, as well as evaluating the importance of working in countries with different levels of development, attempts to measure each of the roles in relation to all the others (Kulenovic & Super, 1995), enabling a broader comprehension of the lifestyle.

From the WIS, two instruments were produced, the Values Scale (VS) (Nevill & Super, 1986a) and the Salience Inventory (SI) (Nevill & Super, 1986b), the object of the present study. The Brazilian adaptation of the SI was named the *Inventário de Saliência*.

To verify the similarity in the factor structures of the national studies, the WIS utilized 28 subsamples (12 samples of high school students and 8 samples of university students

and 8 samples of adults). All 11 national samples individually came to the same solution of five factors, corresponding to the five roles investigated. A principal component analysis with Varimax rotation revealed a structure of five factors that explained between 72.4% and 83.9% of the variance in the national samples.

Information on the validity and reliability (Cronbach's alpha) in the manual (Nevill & Super, 1986b) presented results from studies conducted with adolescents, university students and adults, yielding coefficients above 0.80 for the three populations. Specifically for the adult population, the internal consistency indices were 0.93 for the Participation subscale, 0.92 for the Commitment subscale and 0.87 for the Value Expectation subscale.

Other studies, besides those mentioned in the SI manual (Super & Nevill, 1986b), indicated similar levels of reliability. The study by Civileto and Perrone (2004) evaluated the relationship between salience, role strain, effective coping and life satisfaction in 125 adults, males and females, involved in multiple roles (parental, marital and occupational), and found good internal consistency (Cronbach's alpha) of 0.88 for the Participation subscale, 0.90 for the Commitment subscale and of 0.92 for the Value Expectation subscale. Duarte (1995), when studying salience, career concerns and values in 881 men employed in a Portuguese industry, found good internal consistency indices (Cronbach's alpha) of 0.81 for Participation and 0.95 for Commitment.

Perrone et al. (2006) used the Commitment subscales for the Work, and Home and Family roles when studying the work-family interface and life satisfaction with 154 college students, married and employed full-time, finding good internal consistency indices (Cronbach's alpha) of 0.89 and 0.95 respectively. Other studies, such as Luzzo (1994), Munson (1992), and Watson, Stead and De Jager (1995) presented similar levels of internal consistency.

The present study aimed to adapt and validate the original version of Saliency Inventory for the Brazilian context.

Method

Participants

The study included 499 adults, 111 men and 388 women, aged between 21 and 65 years ($M = 37.14$, $SD = 10.21$), with higher education, and 50.3% having household incomes above R\$ 6,000.00. The participants were from all Brazilian regions (32% from the southern region, 27% from the southeast, 15% from the northeast, 14% from the central-west and 12% from the northern region).

Instrument

The adapted *Inventário de Saliência* (IS) is based on the original Saliency Inventory (Nevill & Super, 1986b). The SI evaluates salience through three dimensions: Participation (degree of concrete involvement in activities in the diverse

roles), Commitment (emotional attachment with the role) and Value Expectation (values that the individual hopes to accomplish in each role), for the five main roles (related to Study, Work, Home and Family, Community Service, and Free Time). Statements are presented that should be evaluated for each of the five roles.

The Study role is defined as taking courses, attending school (day or night classes, lectures or laboratory work); preparing for class, and studying in a library or at home; in addition to independent, formal or informal, study. The Work role is defined as: working in exchange for remuneration or any other benefit, working for someone else or for yourself. The Community Service role includes activities in community organizations or entities, such as recreational groups, Boy Scouts, Red Cross, social service agencies, neighborhood or parent-teacher associations, political parties and trade unions. The Home and Family role comprises activities such as tidying the room, apartment or house; preparing meals or clearing the table and washing the dishes after meals; shopping; and caring for dependents such as children or elderly parents. Finally, the Free Time role refers to activities such as participating in sports, watching TV, doing hobbies, going to the cinema, theater or concerts, reading, relaxing or doing nothing, spending time with family and friends.

The SI contains 170 items divided into the subscales of Participation (10 statements, items 1 to 50), Commitment (10 statements, items 51-100) and Value Expectations (14 values, items 101-170). That is, for the first statement of the Participation subscale, item 1 refers to the Study role, item 2 to the Work role, item 3 to the Community Service role, item 4 to the Home and Family role and item 5 refers to the Free Time role, and so on. For the first statement of the Commitment subscale, item 51 refers to the Study role, item 52 to the Work role, item 53 to the Community Service role, item 54 to the Home and Family role, and item 55 refers to the Free Time role, and so on. For the three subscales the same response grade is used, in which (1) signifies never or rarely and a little or not at all, (2) signifies sometimes or some, (3) signifies frequently or a lot, and (4) signifies nearly always or always and very much.

Procedure

The study consisted of two steps. The first was the translation and adaptation of the items of the inventory and the second was the verification of the psychometric qualities of the SI. Furthermore, the comparative results of this study with the original WIS study are described.

Data collection. The participants were contacted by standard e-mail, which informed them about the study aims and provided a link through which they could access the instruments.

From the North American version of the Saliency Inventory (Nevill & Super, 1986b), a Portuguese version of the instrument was created according to the following procedure: a translation was performed by a Brazilian specialist residing in the U.S.A. and another by an American translator living in

Brazil, in addition to one made by the researcher. The three versions were compared and the best ways to maintain the original meaning for the Brazilian context were found. The translation resulting from this comparison was subjected to a back translation into English by a third professional translator. The translation and backtranslation were compared, leading to the final version adapted from the original North American version.

The first version of the inventory was then subjected to an evaluation of content validity, with the items assessed by three psychologists, specialists in career counseling, one of them being an expert in the construction instruments. The items were evaluated on a scale ranging from (1) does not fit the defined objective, (2) fits the defined objective slightly, (3) fits the defined objective a lot, and (4) fits the defined objective perfectly. An item was considered adequate when at least two experts attributed it to the objective or at least considered it very suitable. All the items were evaluated as (3) or (4). This evaluation generated a second version of the SI.

This version was then subjected to a semantic validation. Eight people responded to the SI, four men and four women, distributed among two educational groups (high school and higher education) and two age groups (25 to 40 years and 41 to 65 years). This procedure evaluated the understanding of the participants regarding the items of the SI; sought a general impression of the situation of respondent; and evaluated potential difficulties in responding to the questions. From this procedure, some terms were altered and a format which was considered more appropriate was arrived at for the table of responses, generating the third version of the SI.

This version was computerized by an expert from the *Secretaria de Educação à Distância* of the *Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Sul*. The first computerized version was submitted to 30 identified respondents, who had to evaluate the language, the organization of the form and the interactivity, as well as the conditions for handling the pages. This procedure generated the final computerized version of the SI.

Data analysis. To evaluate the construct validity of the scales, i.e., the consistency with the original model, a principal components analysis of the items was performed from each of the three subscales to identify latent traits to explain the variability observed in the items (Urbina, 2007). For the study object scales, a five components extraction was expected, corresponding to the five roles (Study, Work, Community Service, Home and Family, and Free Time).

Ethical Considerations

When opening the link of the study, the participants were presented with the Terms of Free Prior Informed Consent. After the indication of being aware of the content of the study and agreeing to participate, the participants had access to the instruments to be completed. This study was approved by the Research Ethics Committee of the *Instituto de Psicologia* of the *Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Sul* (protocol No. 2006-58), according to Resolution 196/96 of the National Health Council - Ministry of Health

Results

The 50 items of the Participation subscale, the 50 items of the Commitment subscale and the 70 items of the Value Expectations subscale were separately subjected to a principal components analysis. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) indices of sample adequacy were 0.91, 0.87 and 0.89 respectively, and the Bartlett's test of sphericity was highly significant ($p < 0.001$) for the three subscales indicating the suitability of the data for this type of analysis. For the Participation subscale, eight components had eigenvalues greater than 1, explaining 66.86% of the total variance, with an examination of the scree plot indicating that the first five components were the most important, explaining 59.6% of the variance. For the Commitment subscale, ten components showed eigenvalues greater than 1, with the first five explaining 51.6% of the variance. For the Value Expectations subscale, 14 components had eigenvalues above 1, explaining 68.9% of the variance, with the first five components explaining 48.9% of the variance.

Given these preliminary results and also the theoretical expectation that there were five principle dimensions underlying the set of items, the analysis was re-performed extracting five components, with Varimax rotation. This new extraction showed a clearer solution with factor loadings between 0.50 and 0.89 for the Participation subscale (i.e. the items relative to each role loaded together in the same single component, while simultaneously they had low loadings - less than .30 - in the other components). For the Commitment subscale, this extraction also presented a good solution, with factor loadings between 0.40 and 0.85. However, the Value Expectations subscale, although it presents a large proportion of the items across the five factors (roles), showed weaker factor loadings, with some items loading in more than one factor with loadings above 0.30. Table 1 displays the factor loadings above 0.30 for each subscale.

It was found that the correlation coefficients (Pearson's r) between the subscales for each role were significant and important (between 0.55 and 0.90, $p < 0.001$), and the correlations between the different roles were low (< 0.40) demonstrating good discrimination between the five roles. However, moderate and significant correlations ($p < 0.01$) were observed between salience in the Work and in the Study ($r = 0.497$) and between the roles of Home and Family and Free Time ($r = 0.417$). This last relationship can be explained by the definition of the role of Free Time, which includes living with family members. A moderate correlation between Work and Study can be explained by the relevance study has today for the permanence and progress in the labor market, especially for people with higher occupational status. Ongoing education has been considered one of the main aspects of employability in the constantly changing labor scenario (Coimbra, Parada, & Imaginário, 2001; Duarte et al., 2010), which, therefore, requires constant updating of the workers.

Table 1

Factor loadings of the Items of the Participation, Commitment and Value Expectations Subscales in the Five Roles of the Salience Inventory

Participation Subscale	1 Study	2 ComS	3 FreeT	4 HFam	5 Work
1 I have dedicated my time to activities related to...	,859	,809	,740	,737	,618
2 I have spoken to people about...		,732	,775	,751	,565
3 I have read about...		,634	,690	,640	,595
4 I have taken advantage of opportunities in...		,809	,822	,776	,696
5 I have been actively working in an organization related to...	,794	,835	,653	,548	,623
6 I've been improving my performance in...		,861	,807	,764	,757
7 I am actively involved in activities related to...	,895	,894	,859	,842	,761
8 I have made achievements in activities related to...	,680	,802	,752	,726	,674
9 Whenever I can. I participate in activities related to...	,791	,793	,719	,722	,694
10 I have some magazines or books related to...	,659	,667	,506	,608	,604
Internal consistency indices (Cronbach's alpha)	0,947	0,937	0,913	0,904	0,869
Commitment Subscale	1 Study	2 ComS	3 FreeT	4 HFam	5 Work
1 It is important to me to be good at activities related to...	,774	,746	,773	,721	,582
2 I would like to get more involved in activities related to...	,693	,659	,425	,400	,537
3 I would like to be remembered for what I did in....	,792	,799	,760	,665	,604
4 I would like to be involved for many years with...	,855	,844	,763	,771	,718
5 I really am committed to being active in activities related to...	,738	,733	,739	,730	,723
6 I am proud to be successful in...	,836	,803	,845	,802	,671
7 I really feel personally involved with...	,721	,712	,658	,684	,634
8 I admire people who are good at...		,624	,588	,661	,576
9 I think it is rewarding to participate in...	,777	,739	,794	,722	,723
10 I would like to have enough time to...	,754	,773	,650	,618	593
Internal consistency indices (Cronbach's alpha)	0,923	0,915	0,895	0,878	0,838
Value Expectations subscale	1 Study	2 ComS	3 FreeT	4 HFam	5 Work
1 To use your skills and knowledge	,675	,633	,744	,656	,649
2 To see your efforts rewarded	,751	,688	,744	,661	,693
3 To make life more beautiful	,780	,677	,664	,681	,405
4 To help people	,757	,647	,686	,667	,508
5 To act independently	,674	,648	,457	,738	,599
6 To discover or create new things	,785	,595	,673	,668	,735
7 To have a good standard of living	,693	,613	,655	,682	,629
8 To live life in your own way	,707	,690	,417	,678	,465
9 To be physically active	,647	,653 ,317	,621 ,318	,342	344
10 To be admired for your knowledge and ability	,742	,634	,687	,664	,699
11 To feel that you can take risks	,749	,714 ,321	,410	,538	,567
12 To do things with other people	,671	,664	,665	,659	,484
13 To do different things	,717	,671	,623	,634	,667
14 To have comfortable conditions to perform the activities	,688	,666	,616	,691	,591
Internal consistency indices (Cronbach's alpha)	0,942	0,917	0,905	0,912	0,884

Note. Study = Study; Work = Work; ComS = Community Service; HFam = Home & Family; FreeT = Free Time

The Value Expectation subscale presented the lowest discrimination between the roles. Apart from moderate and significant correlations already presented between the Work

and Study roles, and between the Home and Family and Free Time roles, there were also significant and moderate correlations in the interactions between other roles. In considering

that the scale asks about the expectation of the realization of values, one might think that some of them, taken as central or highly significant for the individual, can be found in various roles due to their centrality in terms of support for social conduct decision making.

Besides this, a further analysis of components was performed, not with the items, but with the mean scores of Participation, Commitment and Value Expectations in each role. This was performed in order to compare the result with the WIS, which undertook this type of analysis. Regarding this ascertainment, the Kayser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) index of sampling adequacy of 0.59 was obtained, considered as minimally acceptable, and the test of sphericity was significant ($p < 0.01$). Table 2 shows the distribution of componential loadings, considering the means for each role for each of the subscales. The five factors resulting from the analysis again correspond to the five roles, with higher loadings than those obtained in the original study.

Table 2
Distribution of Componential Loadings as a Function of the Means for each Role, for each of the subscales of the Saliency Inventory

	Fator 1	Fator 2	Fator 3	Fator 4	Fator 5
Participation Subscale					
1. Study	0,10	-0,03	0,24	0,97	0,02
2. Work	0,05	0,02	0,97	0,24	0,07
3. Community Service	0,98	0,09	0,05	0,09	0,11
4. Home and Family	0,12	0,21	0,07	0,02	0,97
5. Free Time	0,10	0,97	0,02	-0,03	0,21
Commitment Subscale					
1. Study	0,10	0,22	0,06	0,05	0,97
2. Work	0,03	0,97	0,04	0,07	0,22
3. Community Service	0,99	0,03	0,08	0,11	0,09
4. Home and Family	0,11	0,07	0,15	0,98	0,05
5. Free Time	0,08	0,04	0,98	0,15	0,05
Value Expectations subscale					
1. Study	0,15	0,13	0,94	0,25	0,13
2. Work	0,11	0,13	0,26	0,93	0,18
3. Community Service	0,96	0,15	0,14	0,11	0,17
4. Home and Family	0,19	0,25	0,14	0,19	0,92
5. Free Time	0,16	0,94	0,13	0,13	0,23

Confidence

It was sought to determine the internal consistency for each subscale and for the subscales for each of the five roles, shown in Table 1. The internal consistency indices (Cronbach’s alpha) presented good levels: for the

Participation subscale, 0.92; for the Commitment subscale, 0.91; and for the Value Expectations subscale, 0.95. These indices are similar to those found in the original study of the WIS (0.93, 0.92 and 0.87 respectively). Regarding the indices for the roles, it should be noted that they also presented good levels, indicating the adequacy of the subscales for all five roles.

Comparisons with the original study of the WIS

The results of the WIS (Super & Sverko, 1995) with the adult samples from the 11 participating countries indicated that the most salient role was that of Work, followed by Home and Family, Free Time, Study and Community Service. For this study, the order of salience altered: the role of Work remained the most salient, followed by Home and Family, Study, Free Time and Community Service.

Table 3 shows the order of salience, in the WIS and in the present study, presenting the means and standard deviations for the sum of the scores. It is worth emphasizing that, in the present study, Work is the role of greater participation and the role in which the participants expected to realize more values, and Home and Family the role of greater commitment (with values extremely close to the Work role), and third in participation. The Study role is that which presents greater differences. For the three subscales, while in the WIS the Study role was in fourth place in salience, in the present study it was in second place in Participation and third in Commitment and Value Expectations, with little difference in relation to the Work, and Home and Family roles. However, it should be noted that this comparison refers to a general result for all the samples of the WIS and the national studies showed differences between the various roles in the subscales, these differences are explained by the cultural characteristics (for a more accurate analysis of these patterns, consult Super & Sverko, 1995).

Discussion

This article sought to perform a first adaptation and validation study of the Saliency Inventory (SI) for the Brazilian population, from a sample of adult men and women, workers with higher level education. Saliency was defined (Super, 1980) as the relative importance of one role in relation to the others that the individuals performs. The SI operationalizes the importance of work model used in the Work Importance Study (Super & Sverko, 1995) and conceives salience through three subscales: Participation (which evaluates the time devoted to one role), Commitment (which evaluates attitudes related to a role) and Value Expectations (which assesses how the individual perceives opportunities to realize values in each role) for five central roles relating to study, work, community service, home and family, and free time activities.

Table 3

Means, Standard deviations and Order of Salience for a General Measure of Salience for each Role and for each of the Subscales by Role in the WIS and in the Present Study

	WIS <i>n</i> = 8.581		Brazilian adult sample <i>n</i> = 499	
	Média (<i>DP</i>)	Order of salience	Order of salience	Mean (<i>SD</i>)
General Salience				
Study	–	4	3	103,35 (22,03)
Work	–	1	1	110,51 (15,77)
Community S.	–	5	5	76,37 (22,23)
Home and Family	–	2	2	103,65 (19,52)
Free Time	–	3	4	92,02 (20,04)
Participation				
Study	23,2 (7,49)	4	2	29,1 (7,75)
Work	28,8 (6,13)	1	1	32,5 (5,32)
Community S.	18,0 (7,33)	5	5	17,4 (6,90)
Home and Family	26,8 (6,71)	2	3	26,5 (6,81)
Free Time	26,1 (6,54)	3	4	23,6 (7,01)
Commitment				
Study	25,5 (7,87)	4	3	32,4 (6,10)
Work	33,0 (6,09)	2	2	33,7 (4,85)
Community S.	22,0 (8,05)	5	5	25,3 (7,39)
Home and Family	33,2 (7,32)	1	1	33,9 (6,04)
Free Time	28,4 (6,94)	3	4	29,2 (6,37)
Value Expectations				
Study	33,8 (10,62)	4	3	42,8 (8,96)
Work	42,9 (8,82)	2	1	44,9 (7,66)
Community S.	30,1 (11,18)	5	5	34,4 (10,61)
Home and Family	43,5 (9,25)	1	2	44,0 (8,69)
Free Time	38,9 (9,45)	3	4	40,1 (9,58)

Despite its importance, the concept of salience is absent in career studies in Brazil and the present study aims to provide an instrument for measuring salience for research and counseling. For intervention, the SI was also created with the purpose of its use in counseling, the result being comprehended within the personal context of the client (Nevill & Super, 1986b), and in many previously described intervention techniques for the qualitative evaluation of salience (for a brief description of these techniques, consult Lassance and Sarriera, 2009). Furthermore, valid and reliable research instruments are important to establish comparisons between different contexts and samples, which is recommended when an evaluation of the validity of an instrument is required, as this validation is achieved through continuing research on the issue (Urbina, 2007).

Previous studies have shown that the SI is reliable and valid (Duarte, 1995; Farmer, 1983; Luzzo, 1994; Munson, 1992; Nevill & Super, 1986b; Perrone et al., 2006; Watson et al., 1995). To be considered a useful measure for the Brazilian population, the Brazilian version of the SI should also display adequate reliability and validity and the present study provides evidence of this. The alpha coefficients

obtained indicate that the SI has adequate reliability, the factorial analysis revealed five components, relative to the five roles, as expected, and the items for each subscale generally presented good factor loadings in the components. These pieces of evidence support the use of the SI in the evaluation of salience for purposes of counseling and especially research.

The Participation and Commitment subscales present good discrimination for the five roles, however, the subscale Value Expectations showed wide distribution of factor loadings of the items in relation to the various roles. Values are defined as a general guide for behavior. “General values guide specific personal values related to the world of work, being that, the more the general values are important to the person, the more they will seek these values in the work context” (Porto & Tamayo, 2007, p. 69). Thus, as the subscale uses a list of values which are for the most part general, it can be assumed that they underlie the behavior in more than one role.

The differences between the WIS and the present study, in terms of results obtained in the adult samples, indicates

the sensitivity of the instrument to identify cultural changes. Firstly, the greater salience in the Study role reflects the importance that ongoing education has acquired for Brazilian working adults with higher education in recent years. Studying is now considered an integral part of the Work role, in that career management has become mainly through qualification (Coimbra et al., 2001). The greater participation in Work and Study and lesser participation in Free Time, together with Work as the role in which these adults hope to realize more values, especially the values of material provision ($M = 3.55$, $SD = 0.73$), prestige ($M = 3.54$, $SD = 0.68$) and use of skills ($M = 3.53$, $SD = 0.70$), reflect the centrality of work in their lives. Home and Family, although not being the role of greater participation, remains as the role of greater commitment, which can suggest an increase in the difficulties of dealing with the work-family interface, a theme that is gaining increasing relevance in the literature that intends to comprehend more clearly life styles and their effect on the health conditions and quality of life of the social actors. Specific studies should be conducted in the context of the Brazilian population in order to verify these effects, not only in the work and family interface, but in the multiplicity of roles that individuals are now called upon to perform.

Although there is greater absolute salience in Work, Home and Family, and Study, and it is important to emphasize that the roles of Free Time and Community Service were also identified as important, showing that, for this population, there was a certain balance between the roles. For adults with higher education and good economic conditions, the idea of personal fulfillment through the multiplicity of roles seems pertinent (Super, 1980, 1990), since this population presents a higher possibility of enjoying the goods and services that help them to manage the demands of the central roles, especially Work, and Home and Family, allowing a better distribution of time between roles and therefore a better quality of life.

Final Considerations

The results of the present study require some care in their generalization, since limitations are presented, especially in relation to the characteristics of the sample, comprised by workers with higher level education, with incomes well above the average of the Brazilian population, conditions that favor the possibility of occupational choice, more and better job opportunities, and with the possibility of personal and professional fulfillment. Thus, salience should be evaluated in populations with different characteristics, for example, in those with lower socioeconomic levels, who have difficulty entering and staying in the labor market, and in adults and adolescents with high-school or even elementary education, for whom occupational choice is still a distant alternative and professional achievement a goal that can be disregarded. Different contexts such as these require specific studies.

Role salience is a key concept for both research and intervention in the area of career development, since to

make professional choices or even to construct a professional project, a minimum of salience in the Work role is fundamental (Super, 1980), and, in so much as the contemporary literature of the field presumes the absence of divisions between “life” and work, this role must be seen as part of the construction of the people’s integral life projects (Duarte et al., 2010). Thus, it is hoped that this study will stimulate further studies with the Salience Inventory, aiming to establish higher quality standards in research and intervention in counseling and career development in the Brazilian context.

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