Functional and dysfunctional personality dispositions as antecedents of practical wisdom

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Abstract

Purpose – *This study aims to analyze functional and dysfunctional personality dispositions as antecedents of practical wisdom.*

Design/methodology/approach – *A survey was administered to 204 full-time employees recruited from the CloudResearch Connect crowdsourcing platform, and the data were analyzed by means of correlation analysis, linear regression, and fuzzy-set Qualitative Comparative Analysis (fsQCA).*

Findings – *Practical wisdom is not an esoteric notion, and it may be measured by means of conventional research techniques, including surveys. Practical wisdom is not correlated with age, organizational tenure, or overall work experience. Functional personality dispositions of getting along with and getting ahead of people cultivate practical wisdom, and dysfunctional personality dispositions of moving away from people suppress it. While these personality dispositions are important, wisdom development is a complex process driven by a combination of multiple factors rather than by a single determinant. FsQCA may be successfully used to obtain a more comprehensive picture of the phenomenon of interest.*

Practical implications – *Practitioners should remain open-minded and not automatically discard or renounce the very concept of practical wisdom. Managers should administer the practical wisdom survey used in this study to identify clusters of practical wisdom in their organizations. Organizations should also distribute the Hogan Personality Content Single-Items inventory to all prospective employees during the hiring process and pay attention to all functional personality dispositions, as well as the dysfunctional personality dispositions of moving away from people, because these promote and suppress the development of practical wisdom, respectively.*

Originality/value – *To the best of the author's knowledge, this is the first study to empirically explore personality dispositions as antecedents of practical wisdom in the knowledge management domain.*

Keywords *Practical wisdom, Phronesis, Personality, Dispositions, fsQCA, Knowledge management*

Paper type *Research paper*

1. Introduction

The knowledge-based view of the firm has traditionally been considered one of the most important conceptual frameworks in knowledge management research (Grant, 1996). It posits that employees' knowledge, which is integrated and applied in the production of products and services, represents the principal organizational resource and is the driver of overall organizational performance. While such a paradigmatic stance has significantly contributed to and strengthened the discipline's body of knowledge (Curado and Bontis, 2006), 25 years ago, Bierly *et al.* (2000, p. 595) hypothesized that there is "an important, albeit missing, construct in the knowledge-based theory of the firm": practical wisdom (phronesis). [1]

Bierly *et al.*'s (2000) article has generated much discourse and received more than 1,200 Google Scholar citations. In line with their ideas and motivated by the works of Ikujiro

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Nonaka, an avid promoter of practical wisdom, and his colleagues (Nonaka *et al.*, 2008; Nonaka and Takeuchi, 2011; Nonaka and Zhu, 2012; Nonaka, 2013; Nonaka *et al.*, 2014; Nonaka and Takeuchi, 2019; Nonaka and Takeuchi, 2021), a small yet growing group of knowledge management researchers has realized the potential of this promising idea (Intezari and Pauleen, 2017; Ding *et al.*, 2019; Cugueró-Escofet and Rosanas, 2020; Rocha *et al.*, 2022a). They believe that practical wisdom represents the missing piece of the puzzle to supplement the knowledge-based view of the firm (Pauleen *et al.*, 2010; Rooney *et al.*, 2010; Jakubik and Müürsepp, 2022; Rocha *et al.*, 2022a; Rocha *et al.*, 2022b; Bratianu and Bejinaru, 2023; Jakubik, 2023). Their focus on practical wisdom rather than wisdom in general reflects the applied nature of the knowledge management discipline.

Practical wisdom is a multidimensional concept that represents a "set of unique, admirable characteristics – moral purpose in decision-making, subject matter expertise, workplace pragmatism, emotional intelligence in the workplace, self-reflection in the workplace, external reflection in the workplace, exceeding the bounds of rationality and integrative thinking – that allow a wise employee to act for the betterment of all organizational stakeholders" (Serenko, 2024, pp. 2106–2107). Regrettably, even though a quarter of a century has passed since Bierly *et al.*'s (2000) thought-provoking article appeared in a reputable management journal, empirical inquiries testing their arguments have been virtually nonexistent in knowledge management research. Indeed, except for a few notable empirical studies (Rowley and Slack, 2009; Qayyum *et al.*, 2022; Rocha *et al.*, 2024; Serenko, 2024), previous wisdom publications in the knowledge management discipline have been purely conceptual (Jakubik and Müürsepp, 2022; Rocha *et al.*, 2022b). Moreover, in the knowledge management field, the notion of practical wisdom has many opponents. These detractors – including knowledge management luminaries Dave Snowden and Patrick Lambe – refer to the esoteric nature, conceptual vagueness, and limited empirical evidence supporting practical wisdom, and their views are not without merit (Straits Knowledge, 2008; Teo-Dixon and Sayers, 2011; Solé, 2017; Lambe, 2023). For full disclosure, even the author of this article once found himself in the skeptics' camp, and it is true that a lack of solid empirical evidence on the existence, outcomes, and antecedents of practical wisdom holds back this potentially fruitful line of research.

Practical wisdom is a critical addition to the knowledge-based view of the firm (Grant, 1996) because, first, as the business environment becomes increasingly volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous (VUCA) (Diefenbach and Deelmann, 2016), businesses tend to progress toward the state of organizational isomorphism (DiMaggio and Powell, 1983), in which their structures and decision-making processes grow progressively homogeneous. Knowledge residing with employees becomes insufficient to achieve differentiation and ensure sustainable competitive advantage, because employees develop isomorphic intellectual tendencies, which reduce their creativity, originality, flexibility, and integrative abilities while promoting groupthink (Rooney *et al.*, 2010). As a result, employees' knowledge alone becomes a less valuable resource from a strategic perspective.

Second, the knowledge-based view relies on the notion of technical rationality, which assumes that the exclusive use of firmly bounded, standardized knowledge in decision-making processes (Schon, 1984) ensures the maximization of shareholder value. However, focusing solely on shareholder value represents a short-sighted perspective, because it ignores the interests of a wider audience of stakeholders, including employees, their families, the natural environment, customers, the community, the general public, future generations, and society at large. In fact, the business world is rife with widely publicized instances in which decisions made in the interest of a very narrow group of individuals resulted in scandals of Brobdingnagian proportions, including media backlash, consumer boycotts, and even legal actions. Examples include the Facebook–Cambridge Analytica debacle, where user data were harvested for political purposes without consent (Ur Rehman, 2019); the Enron and WorldCom scandals, which led to the collapse of Arthur

Andersen LLP – then one of the largest auditing firms in the world (Unerman and O'Dwyer, 2004); and the 2007–2009 global financial crisis, triggered by excessive predatory lending (Hudson, 2010). All of these perpetrators had ample knowledge, but they lacked practical wisdom. The reader's professional experience is also likely replete with instances of careless, imprudent, and self-serving decisions, albeit probably on a smaller scale. A key aspect of practical wisdom is one's ability to act in the interests of a broad circle of stakeholders by considering multiple perspectives at once. Consequently, it is essential for knowledge managers to know how they can cultivate the practical wisdom of their employees, but no empirically grounded guidelines on this matter are available.

Recently, Serenko (2024) identified the outcomes of practical wisdom in the context of knowledge behavior and empirically demonstrated that possessing practical wisdom improves knowledge sharing and suppresses knowledge sabotage and knowledge hiding. While Serenko's study shed some light on the outcomes of practical wisdom in the workplace, the antecedents of practical wisdom – the factors that facilitate or inhibit its development – hitherto remain unknown. Identifying the antecedents of practical wisdom is important for two reasons. First, discovering factors that nurture practical wisdom would validate the argument that employees may, in fact, possess and cultivate practical wisdom in their workplace. This would extend and endorse much of the previous conceptual research on this topic. Second, this may lead to the development of practical recommendations for knowledge managers who may eventually join the discourse on this critical issue. Practitioners' buy-in is essential, because they represent a major category of stakeholders who both benefit from and engage in the development of the knowledge management body of knowledge (Lambe, 2011; Lambe, 2023).

To further promote the concept of practical wisdom within the knowledge management discourse, this study contributes to the literature by examining functional and dysfunctional personality dispositions (Hogan and Hogan, 2007; Hogan and Hogan, 2009) as antecedents of practical wisdom. Investigations involving employees' personality factors that lead to various types of knowledge behavior represent an important research direction in the knowledge management domain (Yin *et al.*, 2023; Serenko, 2025), and there is evidence that personality factors are correlated with general wisdom (Dong *et al.*, 2023). Socioanalytic theory, which forms the conceptual foundation for this study, further posits that employees' personality dispositions determine their socialization behavior with co-workers (Hogan and Holland, 2003; Hogan and Blickle, 2018). This study theorizes that inter-worker interactions, in turn, are necessary for the development of practical wisdom, because it is difficult (or even impossible) to cultivate and maintain practical wisdom in isolation. Specifically, this study proposes that employees' personality dispositions serve as a prerequisite for the development of practical wisdom: functional personality dispositions promote practical wisdom, and dysfunctional personality dispositions suppress it. The following research question is proposed:

RQ1. Do employees' personality dispositions affect the development of practical wisdom?

To verify the line of reasoning above and answer the research question, this study developed and tested five hypotheses based on the data collected from 204 full-time employees.

The rest of this article is structured as follows. The next section, Section 2, forms a theoretical foundation and presents the research hypotheses. Section 3 describes the inquiry methods, and Section 4 outlines the results. Section 5 presents theoretical insights and offers practical implications. Section 6 concludes the study.

2. Theoretical background and hypotheses

2.1 Practical wisdom

Practical wisdom is a multidimensional concept that refers to a distinct set of commendable qualities that enable employees to function in ways that advance the interests of all organizational stakeholders (Serenko, 2024). The philosophical foundations for the notion of practical wisdom were first laid in the works of the Greek philosophers Socrates (c. 470 BC–399 BC), Plato (428/427–348/347 BC), and Aristotle (384–322 BC) (Robinson, 1990; Futter, 2013). After that, Christian teachings and various sophists occasionally referred to the concept of wisdom, but Aristotle's views on practical wisdom did not receive due recognition and universal acceptance until the late 20th century, when management researchers realized that it is one of the most coveted employee characteristics (Waters, 1980; Giblin, 1984; Bigelow, 1992). Gradually, more management researchers turned their attention to the value of wisdom, and the volume of wisdom-related management publications began to grow (Rooney and McKenna, 2007; Rooney *et al.*, 2010; Steyl, 2020).

While the knowledge management community was initially reluctant to accept the notion of practical wisdom, a small yet growing group of dedicated scholars initiated the discourse on the role of practical wisdom in knowledge-intensive organizations (Bennet and Bennet, 2008; Rocha *et al.*, 2022a; Bratianu and Bejinaru, 2023; Cegarra-Navarro *et al.*, 2025). In their works, they emphasized the role of practical wisdom in the education of future leaders (Jakubik, 2021), predicted the evolution from the wise employee to the wise leader and then to the wise organization (Nonaka and Takeuchi, 2011; Nonaka, 2013; Nonaka *et al.*, 2014; Nonaka and Takeuchi, 2019; Nonaka and Takeuchi, 2021), argued that wisdom should constitute a central element of knowledge-related policies (Rooney and McKenna, 2005), envisioned a wisdom economy (Murtaza, 2011), and predicted the emergence of wise capitalism (Takeuchi, 2013). Other pioneers proposed that practical wisdom may serve as a complementary approach to knowledge management (Jakubik and Müürsepp, 2022; Jakubik, 2023).

Even though the vast majority of inquiries into the role of practical wisdom in the knowledge management discourse have been conceptual (Jakubik and Müürsepp, 2022), several empirical studies attest to the fruitfulness and potential impact of this concept. Rocha *et al.* (2024) surveyed 365 workers and concluded that organizational spirituality and knowledge sharing cultivate organizational practical wisdom. Rowley and Slack (2009) solicited the opinions of 64 future information professionals and found that while people's views on the definition of wisdom vary considerably, knowledge, experience, and action represent its core attributes, which are consistent with the definition of practical wisdom. Qayyum *et al.* (2022) conducted in-depth interviews with 12 knowledge workers and reported that they approach wisdom from a practical standpoint, including experience and knowledge, emotional intelligence, mentorship, and deliberation and consultation. Serenko (2024) introduced a multidimensional measurement instrument for practical wisdom and showed that practical wisdom guides employees' productive and counterproductive knowledge behavior. He also identified a need to explore various personality factors as potential antecedents of practical wisdom. The present study responds to this challenge by examining employees' functional and dysfunctional personality dispositions in the context of practical wisdom.

2.2 What are personality dispositions?

Human personality is defined as a "system characterizing the individual's typical motivating factors, inner world and defenses, affective proclivities, interpersonal life, reflections of self, thought processes and so on" (Millon *et al.*, 2015, p. 42), and it determines people's behavior in all aspects of life, including the workplace. The role of employee personality in the context of productive and counterproductive knowledge behavior has recently become

a well-established and rapidly expanding line of research (Akbar *et al.*, 2021; Yin *et al.*, 2023; Serenko, 2025). In fact, numerous insightful articles exploring the role of employee personality have been published in the past few years (e.g. see Banagou *et al.*, 2021; Kmieciak, 2022; Boamah *et al.*, 2023; Zhao *et al.*, 2023; Scuotto *et al.*, 2024; Tan *et al.*, 2024). For example, Obrenovic *et al.* (2022) reported that employee conscientiousness has a positive impact on tacit knowledge sharing, Long *et al.* (2024) emphasized the contribution of narcissistic rivalry to employee knowledge hiding, and Serenko and Choo (2020) documented the impact of the Dark Triad traits (narcissism, Machiavellianism, and psychopathy) on employee knowledge sabotage. These findings underscore the importance of exploring employee personality in knowledge management research.

Personality psychology is represented by three major theoretical clusters (Hogan and Blickle, 2018). The first cluster comprises clinical theories of personality, such as psychoanalysis (Freud, 1922), to identify sources of neurosis and find ways to overcome it. The second group includes trait theory (Allport, 1937), which relies on introspection to trace the neurological underpinnings of inter-individual differences. The third category uses socioanalytic theory (Hogan and Holland, 2003) to predict life outcomes and, especially, career successes and failures. While all these theoretical paradigms may be applied to explore the antecedents of practical wisdom, the third cluster presents a very promising avenue because socioanalytic theory and its measurement techniques were created specifically for explaining individual differences in a professional environment (Hogan and Holland, 2003). By contrast, clinical theories of personality and trait theory are more generalized and underemphasize people's workplace-related characteristics.

A key feature of socioanalytic theory is that it focuses on personality dispositions rather than personality traits, which are studied in clinical theories of personality and trait theory. Traits are "dimensions of individual differences in tendencies to show consistent patterns of thoughts, feelings, and actions" (McCrae and Costa, 2003, p. 25). Trait theory pursues a "pure science" agenda to identify and map personality traits in general and is less concerned with practical workplace applications. By contrast, socioanalytic theory focuses on personality dispositions that reflect people's beliefs about themselves, how others view them, and how they may best achieve their personal goals in a professional environment. Its measurement approach is based on the assumption that past behavior is the best predictor of future behavior, especially for predicting most aspects of social performance (Hogan and Blickle, 2018). Instead of studying traits *per se*, socioanalytic theory focuses on people's agendas, goals, and intentions, which are reflected in their behavior.

Socioanalytic theory distinguishes between two types of personality dispositions: functional (i.e. the bright side) and dysfunctional (i.e. the dark side), which positively and negatively contribute to work outcomes, respectively (Hogan and Hogan, 2007; Hogan and Hogan, 2009). This study proposes that functional personality dispositions facilitate the development of practical wisdom, while dysfunctional personality dispositions suppress it. The following subsections elaborate on this point in detail.

2.3 The role of personality dispositions in the development of practical wisdom

By using the key tenets of socioanalytic theory as a lens of analysis (Hogan and Blickle, 2018), this study proposes that personality dispositions influence the development of practical wisdom in the workplace. Socioanalytic theory predicts and explains people's functioning in group settings, including organizations. It posits that all people, including employees, are motivated by two major needs – *getting along* with others (getting attention, approval, and acceptance) and *getting ahead* of others (obtaining status, power, and resources) – and that these needs establish inter-employee social interaction principles (Hogan and Holland, 2003). While these needs are universal, individuals differ in their desire and ability to get along with and get ahead of others, and such differences are explained by their personality dispositions. The needs for getting along and getting ahead are not

mutually exclusive, because some individuals may possess personality dispositions triggering both needs simultaneously. In the workplace, employees rarely intentionally think about these needs and how to achieve them. Their behavior toward or against meeting these needs is automatic, unconscious, and determined – at least to some degree – by their personality dispositions. In other words, workers' personality dispositions influence their pursuit of the key needs for getting along and getting ahead (Hogan and Holland, 2003), which, in turn, determine their interactions with co-workers.

This study suggests that socialization is a prerequisite for the development of practical wisdom. By following the constructivist perspective on wisdom development (Grossmann, 2017), it argues that practical wisdom is not passively transmitted from one employee to another; instead, its gradual accumulation requires employees to proactively immerse themselves in the socio-organizational environment. It is impossible to gain practical wisdom when functioning in full isolation from one's fellow co-workers: employees' practical wisdom is co-created, bestowed, and maintained during frequent, routine socialization episodes taking place both virtually and in person, and such processes are motivated, at least in part, by employees' relevant personality dispositions.

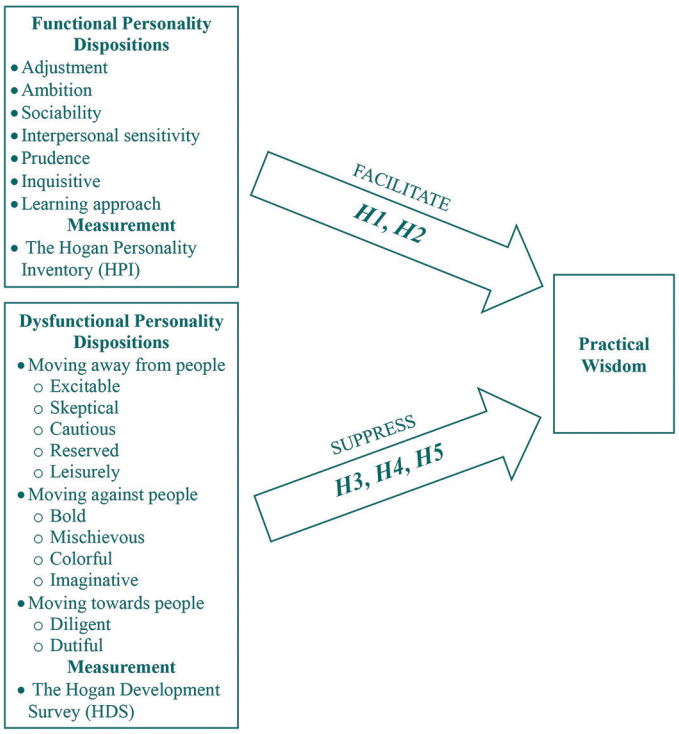
During workplace socialization, employees who tend to get along with others have a chance to create new attributes of practical wisdom and hone previously developed ones. A need for getting ahead of others further promotes socialization, because such employees may appear highly motivated, energetic, and charismatic, which offers them ample opportunities to socialize and cultivate their practical wisdom. During socialization, employees may experience various wisdom-fostering events, such as positive and negative workplace interactions, and become more pragmatic (Munroe and Ferrari, 2022), accumulate subject matter expertise and professional experience (Nonaka *et al.*, 2008; Nonaka and Takeuchi, 2011), and interact with wisdom exemplars (role models possessing a great degree of wisdom), learning their moral qualities and ways of thinking (Grossmann *et al.*, 2020). They may also improve their subject matter expertise through knowledge exchange, learn how to appraise their own emotions by analyzing others' responses to their actions, appraise others' emotions through active observation, and enhance their own emotional self-regulation by accepting informal co-workers' feedback. By contrast, employees who do not get along with or ahead of their co-workers because they possess personality dispositions inhibiting such socio-organizational encounters may miss these opportunities for practical wisdom development.

In other words, personality dispositions determine the employees' core needs for getting along with and getting ahead of their fellow co-workers, which, in turn, influence their social organizational functioning and shape the development of their practical wisdom. Figure 1 visualizes the theoretical model proposed and tested in this study. The following section defines the personality dispositions presented in this model and outlines five research hypotheses.

2.4 Research hypotheses

The previous subsection of this article theorized how personality dispositions may influence the development of practical wisdom. This subsection elaborates on the functional and dysfunctional personality dispositions explored in this study and presents the research hypotheses. In particular, subsection 2.4.1 develops two hypotheses pertaining to the positive effect of functional personality dispositions on practical wisdom. These functional personality dispositions are measured by using the Hogan Personality Inventory (HPI) (Hogan and Hogan, 2007). By contrast, subsection 2.4.2 outlines three hypotheses examining the negative effect of dysfunctional personality dispositions on practical wisdom. These dysfunctional personality dispositions are measured by means of the Hogan Development Survey (HDS) (Hogan and Hogan, 2009).

Figure 1 The theoretical model



Source: Author's own work

The HPI (Hogan and Hogan, 2007) and the HDS (Hogan and Hogan, 2009) are widely used in organizational settings for measuring employees' personality dispositions. In contrast to other instruments measuring peoples' personality – for example, the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory (Ben-Porath and Tellegen, 2008) and the Millon Clinical Multiaxial Inventory (Millon *et al.*, 2015) – the HPI and the HDS were developed and validated for measuring personality dispositions that are particularly salient in employment settings (Boudreaux and Sherman, 2022). Their purpose is not merely to measure personality constructs in general; instead, their objective is to measure personality constructs to predict various workplace-related outcomes. As a result, the HPI and the HDS have been successfully used in more than 11 million individual assessments to predict job suitability and work performance (Hogan Assessments, 2025).

2.4.1 The effect of functional personality dispositions on practical wisdom. Knowledge management investigations have already empirically supported a positive effect of beneficial, constructive, and desirable personality traits on knowledge behavior. For instance, Kim and Kim (2023) showed that employees who possess high learning goal orientation (improving existing and gaining new competencies) are more likely to engage in knowledge sharing. Memon *et al.* (2016) demonstrated that people who score high on agreeableness, conscientiousness, and openness to experience – which are all considered advantageous personality traits – are more likely to share knowledge with others, and Jadin *et al.* (2013) confirmed that prosocial value orientations predict knowledge sharing in virtual communities. In line with these empirical findings, this study proposes that functional personality dispositions facilitate the development of practical wisdom, which is also considered a positive characteristic contributing to productive knowledge behavior.

The HPI (Hogan and Hogan, 2007) allows for the measurement of seven major personality dispositions – adjustment, ambition, sociability, interpersonal sensitivity, prudence, inquisitive, and learning approach – which pertain to the broad needs of getting along and getting ahead and are considered the dispositions of a normal (i.e. non-pathological and non-dysfunctional) personality (see Table 1). This study proposes that these personality dispositions contribute to the cultivation of practical wisdom.

Adjustment contributes to practical wisdom because well-adjusted workers exhibit psychological maturity, instill trust, and evoke positive attitudes toward themselves (Hogan and Hogan, 2007). Their co-workers consider them mature, stable, and self-confident and lean toward them in social and professional encounters, which presents ample socialization and professional growth opportunities and gives them a chance to increase their practical wisdom. *Ambitious* individuals are comfortable in front of their peers, take initiative, succeed at teamwork, and advance their organizations. They formally or informally lead others and gain respect and recognition, and such qualities and behaviors are often associated with practical wisdom (Yang, 2011). *Sociable* employees lean toward their fellow co-workers, make a positive impression on them, and are great at socializing. Individuals exhibiting high *interpersonal sensitivity* are seen in a positive light by others and are considered to hold the moral high ground, which is a necessary characteristic of practical wisdom. *Prudent* workers enjoy positive, productive relationships with others because of their moral qualities, dependability, and strong impulse control, which help them get along with and get ahead of others. *Inquisitive* workers are regarded as curious and open-minded problem solvers who possess subject matter expertise and integrative thinking skills, which are the core components of practical wisdom. This helps them get along with others (e.g. by providing help and advice) and get ahead of others (e.g. by receiving promotions due to their unique organizational knowledge). Employees with a high *learning approach* orientation (Elliot and McGregor, 2001) are knowledgeable and aware of the latest industry trends and technologies, which helps them get ahead of their peers. They are also often approached for training and advice, which offers excellent socialization opportunities and career growth.

To summarize, socioanalytic theory (Hogan and Blickle, 2018) posits that the functional personality dispositions of getting along with and getting ahead of others – adjustment, ambition, sociability, interpersonal sensitivity, prudence, inquisitive, and learning approach – positively affect employees' socialization practices, during which these workers are presented with unique opportunities to cultivate and apply practical wisdom in their organizations. This is consistent with the constructivist perspective on wisdom development (Grossmann, 2017), which argues that practical wisdom may only be

Table 1 The Hogan Personality Inventory functional personality dispositions

Personality disposition	*Description*
The degree to which an employee. . .	
Adjustment	Appears calm, even-tempered, and self-accepting as opposed to anxious, irritable, and moody
Ambition	Appears socially self-confident, energetic, leader-like, driven, persistent, competitive, and results-focused
Sociability	Seems to need and/or enjoy interacting with his/her co-workers
Interpersonal sensitivity	Is seen as perceptive, tactful, and sensitive to his/her co-workers
Prudence	Seems moralistic, conscientious, conforming, and dependable
Inquisitive	Is perceived as bright, creative, and interested in intellectual pursuits
Learning approach	Seems to enjoy scholarly activities and to value academic achievement

Source(s): Hogan and Hogan (2007)

acquired, transferred and practiced during active workplace socialization encounters. Based on the reasoning above, it is proposed that:

H1. Functional personality dispositions of getting along with and getting ahead of others –adjustment, ambition, sociability, interpersonal sensitivity, prudence, inquisitive, and learning approach – facilitate the development of practical wisdom.

According to Hogan and Hogan (2007), it is difficult to accurately classify the HPI personality dispositions into two exclusive groups as either getting along with or getting ahead of co-workers, because each disposition contributes to both needs, at least to some degree. However, through a comprehensive meta-analysis, Hogan and Hogan (2007) showed that adjustment, prudence, and ambition predict both getting along and getting ahead better than the other dispositions. Thus, the following hypothesis is stated:

H2. Functional personality dispositions of adjustment, prudence, and ambition facilitate the development of practical wisdom better than sociability, interpersonal sensitivity, inquisitive, and learning approach.

2.4.2 The effect of dysfunctional personality dispositions on practical wisdom. Whereas the HPI (Hogan and Hogan, 2007) focuses on functional (i.e. normal) personality dispositions, the HDS (Hogan and Hogan, 2009) presents 11 dysfunctional personality dispositions that interfere with employees' capacity to get along with and get ahead of their co-workers, and which, therefore, impede the development of practical wisdom. These 11 dispositions are grouped into three broad categories: moving away from people, moving against people, and moving toward people (see Table 2).

The development of the hypotheses below is inspired by previous studies that support the notion that negative personality traits contribute to employees' counterproductive knowledge behavior. For instance, Wu (2021) and Anaza and Nowlin (2017) found that managers exhibiting neuroticism (a tendency to experience negative emotions) tend to hide their knowledge, and Serenko (2023) reports that personality disorders predict knowledge sabotage. Other negative, empirically supported personality traits that contribute to counterproductive knowledge behavior include personal competitiveness

Table 2 The Hogan Development Survey dysfunctional personality dispositions

Category	*Personality disposition*	*Description*
An employee's tendency to. . .		
Moving away from people	Excitable	Provide unmodulated emotional responding and be easily disappointed. Tending to be moody, inconsistent, hard to please, sensitive to criticism, volatile, and unfulfilled
	Skeptical	View the workplace as hostile and dishonest and remain vigilant against potential exploitation. Tending to be cynical, distrustful, questioning others' intentions, alert, and ready to defend him/herself against mistreatment
	Cautious	Be indecisive, lacking initiative, self-conscious, conservative, careful, and worried about making mistakes for fear of being criticized and/or embarrassed
	Reserved	Keep to oneself, lack interest in his/her co-workers' feelings, dislike meeting new people, and socially withdraw
	Leisurely	Work according to his/her own schedule and performance standards and at his/her own pace
Moving against people	Bold	Be overly self-confident, fearless, and ambitious, which makes him/her unwilling to admit mistakes, accept advice, and learn from experience. Holding unsubstantiated beliefs in one's uniqueness and exceptionality
	Mischievous	Seek excitement, test the limits, ignore commitments, act impulsively, and circumvent organizational policies
	Colorful	Desire to be the center of attention, noticed, and recognized by his/her co-workers
	Imaginative	Behave and think in creative and sometimes unorthodox ways and become preoccupied with unconventional ideas regardless of their practical value
Moving toward people	Diligent	Be conscientious, orderly, precise, careful, and attentive to detail
	Dutiful	Be eager to please others, reliant on others' support, and hesitant to act independently

Source(s): Hogan and Hogan (2009)

(Hernaus *et al.*, 2019), Machiavellianism (Belschak *et al.*, 2018; Kallmuenzer *et al.*, 2025), narcissistic rivalry (Long *et al.*, 2024), psychopathy (Serenko and Choo, 2020), selfishness (Yang and Ribiere, 2020), and psychological entitlement (Karim, 2022). The following arguments extend this line of reasoning.

Moving away from people, which refers to managing one's personal insecurities by avoiding others, comprises five dispositions: excitable, skeptical, cautious, reserved, and leisurely (Hogan and Hogan, 2009). *Excitable* employees pursue acceptance but expect rejection, exploitation, and disappointment, which becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy. *Skeptical* workers expect mistreatment from their co-workers and their organization. They overreact to routine interactions and issues, thereby distancing themselves from others. *Cautious* individuals avoid taking responsibility and initiative because they fear that they are deficient in some way and do not want to give their co-workers an opportunity to observe and criticize their limitations. They reject both positive and negative feedback and are difficult to work with. *Reserved* employees are extreme introverts who have not developed a capacity to identify and respond to the needs and feelings of others. They avoid and contribute little to team efforts and prefer to work in isolation. *Leisurely* workers are difficult to work with due to their tardiness, stubbornness, and procrastination, despite being outwardly pleasant and sociable. They become irritated and defensive if asked to improve or speed up their performance.

Overall, employees who possess the constellation of personality dispositions comprising the moving away from people profile manage their own inadequacies by avoiding the establishment of genuine connections with their co-workers. Based on the discussion above, and consistent with socioanalytic theory (Hogan and Blickle, 2018), this study hypothesizes that moving away from people is antithetical to the development of practical wisdom because individuals who alienate themselves from others may possibly not develop the core wisdom qualities. Thus:

H3. Dysfunctional personality dispositions of moving away from people suppress the development of practical wisdom.

Moving against people, which refers to managing one's personal self-doubts by dominating and intimidating others, includes four personality dispositions: bold, mischievous, colorful, and imaginative (Hogan and Hogan, 2009). *Bold* employees may initially appear visionary and charismatic, while, in fact, they are insensitive and ignorant toward the impact of their behavior on others. They also tend to blame others for their own failures, which is inconsistent with the very definition of practical wisdom. *Mischievous* workers may seem like interesting, engaging, and fun people to interact with, but they dominate others, exploit others' weaknesses, and focus on the present while disregarding the long-term consequences of their actions. This eventually alienates their co-workers and cannot be considered wise behavior. *Colorful* individuals focus on attention and affirmation rather than knowledge, competence, and accomplishments. Their exhibitionistic behavior is often entertaining, but it is very unproductive and distracting from the actual work. Such individuals are unlikely to create and maintain long-lasting relationships with their co-workers. *Imaginative* employees are often so preoccupied with their own ideas that they become insensitive to their co-workers, disregard the practicality of their ideas, and ignore others' feedback. As a result, these individuals are hard to work with.

As such, workers who possess personality dispositions that make them move against people express their internal deficiencies by avoiding true connections with others. Most importantly, they lack the critical qualities of practical wisdom, such as moral purpose in decision-making, emotional appraisal and regulation, self-reflection, and workplace reflection. The following hypothesis is suggested:

H4. Dysfunctional personality dispositions of moving against people suppress the development of practical wisdom.

Moving toward people, which is defined as managing personal insecurities by building alliances with others to minimize the threat of criticism, is represented by two personality dispositions: diligent and dutiful (Hogan and Hogan, 2009). *Diligent* employees, on the one hand, possess highly desirable qualities because they do their best to contribute to organizational objectives. On the other hand, their co-workers often perceive them as picky, perfectionistic, needlessly conservative, and overcritical. They have difficulty delegating tasks and working under uncertainty. In addition to alienating others, diligent individuals may over-rely on rationality and avoid integrative thinking, which is necessary for practical wisdom. *Dutiful* workers, at first blush, appear polite, pleasant, agreeable, and socially appropriate, but, over time, their co-workers may find them problematic to deal with due to these employees' indecisiveness, over-accommodating attitudes toward authority figures, and lack of independent judgment. Most importantly, dutiful individuals can lack professional self-assurance, self-efficacy, and competence – deficiencies which are incompatible with the very notion of practical wisdom. Thus, even though moving toward people may potentially sound like a desirable characteristic, its dysfunctional drivers can suppress employees' development of practical wisdom. Therefore:

H5. Dysfunctional personality dispositions of moving toward people suppress the development of practical wisdom.

In summary, the functional personality dispositions pertaining to *H1* and *H2* are measured by using the HPI (Hogan and Hogan, 2007), while the dysfunctional personality dispositions related to *H3*, *H4,* and *H5* are measured by means of the HDS (Hogan and Hogan, 2009).

3. Methods

This study uses two distinct yet complementary methods for data analysis:

1. a quantitative approach, involving correlations and linear regression; and
2. a qualitative technique, using fuzzy-set Qualitative Comparative Analysis (fsQCA).

3.1 Measures

Practical wisdom was measured with the original instrument developed by Serenko (2024). Functional and dysfunctional personality dispositions were measured with the Hogan Personality Content Single-Items (HPCS) inventory, designed and validated by Wood *et al.* (2024). All items were measured on a nine-point Likert-type scale. This scale was chosen to increase construct variance because responses to negatively valenced items – such as the ones measuring dysfunctional personality dispositions – are generally skewed. A marker variable, "My favorite color is blue," was included to measure common method variance (CMV). Multiple reverse-scored (i.e. negatively worded) items were used as cognitive speedbumps to minimize CMV and identify unreliable entries. The survey included several attention checks and basic demographic questions. Appendix 1 presents the survey instrument. Table 3 summarizes the constructs, measures and their sources.

3.2 Data collection

As suggested by Aguirre-Urreta *et al.* (2024), the required sample size was estimated in advance with *G*Power 3.1* statistical power analysis (Faul *et al.*, 2007). G*Power generated the required sample size of 189. Two hundred and thirty-four respondents from CloudResearch Connect (Hartman *et al.*, 2023) – a popular crowdsourcing platform for online research (https://connect.cloudresearch.com) – were invited to participate in the online survey for compensation of US$2.50, which was a fair reimbursement for their time. On average, the survey took 20 min to complete. The use of data collection platforms has a long-standing tradition in knowledge management research (Peralta and Saldanha, 2014; Andreeva and Zappa, 2023; Duan *et al.*, 2023). Douglas *et al.* (2023), who empirically investigated several

Table 3 Constructs and their sources

Construct	*Source*
Functional personality dispositions (HPI): average of adjustment, ambition, sociability, interpersonal sensitivity, prudence, inquisitive, and learning approach *APA:* Average of adjustment, prudence, and ambition *SIIL:* Average of sociability, interpersonal sensitivity, inquisitive, and learning approach	Wood *et al.* (2024)
Dysfunctional personality dispositions (HDS): average of excitable, skeptical, cautious, reserved, leisurely, bold, mischievous, colorful, imaginative, diligent, and dutiful *Moving away from people:* Average of excitable, skeptical, cautious, reserved, and leisurely *Moving against people:* Average of bold, mischievous, colorful, and imaginative *Moving toward people:* Average of diligent and dutiful	Wood *et al.* (2024)
Practical wisdom: Average of moral purpose in decision-making, subject matter expertise, workplace pragmatism, emotional intelligence – appraisal of self-emotions in the workplace, emotional intelligence – appraisal of others' emotions in the workplace, emotional intelligence – self-regulation of workplace emotions, self-reflection in the workplace, external reflection in the workplace, exceeding the bounds of rationality, and integrative thinking	Serenko (2024)

Note(s): In the survey instrument, each personality disposition and practical wisdom dimension was measured individually
Source(s): Author's own work

major research data collection platforms, concluded that the quality of responses obtained from CloudResearch exceeds that from Amazon's MTurk, SONA, and Qualtrics.

All prospective respondents were pre-screened to ensure that they met the following criteria explicitly stated on the CloudResearch platform:

- were at least 18 years of age;
- had been employed full-time for at least two years in an organization that had ten or more employees; and
- resided in the USA.

The survey was hosted on Qualtrics. The methodological guidelines for the use of online research data platforms proposed by Aguinis et al. (2021) were followed.

Thirty responses were discarded due to poor reliability and validity, resulting in a rejection rate of 12.8%, which falls within the general response rejection range reported by Curran (2016). Thus, the final data set included 204 valid responses, which exceeds the required minimum sample size. The study was approved by the Research Ethics Board of the author's institution.

4. Results

This section presents the results of the empirical testing of this study's hypotheses. It comprises three subsections. The first subsection outlines descriptive statistics as well as reliability and validity assessments. The second subsection reports on hypothesis testing conducted by means of correlations and linear regression, but the findings were inconclusive, warranting additional analysis. Thus, the third subsection documents the application of fsQCA as an additional data analysis technique.

4.1 Descriptive statistics, reliability assessment and validity analysis

About 57% of respondents were men, 40% were women, and 3% did not specify their gender (i.e. they indicated "other/prefer not to answer"). They were 35 years old, on

average, with a range from 18 to 70. The respondents were well-educated: 74% had a university degree; 13%, an associate two-year degree or some college; and 13%, high school or less. On average, they had 14 years of overall full-time work experience (ranging from 2 to 44). They had worked for six years in their current organization (ranging from 2 to 30), which had at least 10 employees (67% were employed in small- and medium-sized organizations, and 33% in large organizations). Sixty-three percent worked in the private sector, and the rest in public organizations.

Appendix 2 presents item statistics and construct reliability assessment. All practical wisdom constructs exhibited a strong level of reliability (Fornell and Larcker, 1981; Nunnally and Bernstein, 1994), and the HPCS constructs also passed the minimum reliability thresholds. No HPCS items were dropped to ensure adequate content validity and to be consistent with the original instrument. Table 4 presents construct correlations and divergent validity assessment. The square root of the average variance extracted exceeded inter-construct correlations in all cases, which further confirmed the validity of the measurement model. CMV was not a threat because, first, the marker variable correlated with only one construct, and one statistically significant correlation out of 29 was most likely spurious. Second, Harman's (1967) one-factor test showed that the first factor captured only 24.6% of the total variance, which is far below the commonly used 50% threshold (Fuller *et al.*, 2016; D'Angelo *et al.*, 2023). Third, a large proportion of the observed correlations were negative, which is extremely unlikely if CMV is present.

4.2 Correlation and linear regression analysis

Consistent with *H1*, all functional personality dispositions (i.e. measured with the HPI, see Table 3) exhibited positive correlations with practical wisdom. Linear regression with the single independent variable that comprised all HPI constructs and with practical wisdom as the dependent variable further supported *H1* ($\beta = 0.61$, $p < 0.001$).

To determine whether adjustment, prudence, and ambition facilitate the development of practical wisdom better than sociability, interpersonal sensitivity, inquisitive, and learning approach (as per *H2*), two new constructs were created based on the combination of the following constructs:

1. adjustment, prudence, and ambition (APA); and
2. sociability, interpersonal sensitivity, inquisitive, and learning approach (SIIL) as per Table 3.

Consistent with *H2*, it was observed that the former (i.e. APA) correlated more strongly with practical wisdom than the latter (i.e. SIIL): $r = 0.60$ and 0.52, $p < 0.001$, respectively. Linear regression was used to compare the impact of APA and SIIL on practical wisdom within the nomological network in which APA and SIIL were independent variables and practical wisdom was the dependent variable. APA had a stronger impact on practical wisdom ($\beta = 0.45$, $p < 0.001$) than SIIL ($\beta = 0.26$, $p < 0.001$), which further confirmed *H2*.

Recall that *H3*, *H4,* and *H5* propose that the dysfunctional personality dispositions of moving away from, against, and toward people suppress the development of practical wisdom, respectively. Further inspection of the correlation table identified some inconsistencies. While all correlations that belong to the moving away from people dispositions were strong and negative, as theoretically expected, those of moving against people were weaker, and some were even nonsignificant. Moreover, in contrast to expectations, one of the moving toward people dispositions (diligent) was positively correlated with practical wisdom ($r = 0.36$, $p < 0.001$), while this correlation was expected to be negative. Linear regression was performed in which moving away from, moving against, and moving toward people were independent variables and practical wisdom was the dependent variable. The results showed that moving away from people had a strong negative impact on practical wisdom ($\beta = -0.51$, $p < 0.001$), which supported *H3*. At the

Table 4 Construct correlations

Construct	*1*	*2*	*3*	*4*	*5*	*6*	*7*	*8*	*9*	*10*	*11*	*12*	*13*	*14*	*15*	*16*	*17*	*18*	*19*	*20*	*21*	*22*	*23*	*24*	*25*	*26*	*27*	*28*	*29*
1. Practical wisdom	–																												
2. MD	0.86	*0.77*																											
3. SME	0.76	0.72	*0.82*																										
4. WP	0.79	0.72	0.65	*0.79*																									
5. EIS	0.73	0.60	0.52	0.59	*0.83*																								
6. EIO	0.58	0.37	0.28	0.34	0.42	*0.87*																							
7. EIR	0.70	0.65	0.57	0.50	0.60	0.25	*0.88*																						
8. SR	0.78	0.68	0.51	0.54	0.42	0.36	0.45	*0.82*																					
9. ER	0.75	0.61	0.48	0.54	0.41	0.35	0.46	0.65	*0.84*																				
10. EBR	0.56	0.36	0.30	0.31	0.35	0.34	0.20	0.41	0.31	*0.85*																			
11. IT	0.77	0.62	0.55	0.61	0.47	0.32	0.50	0.59	0.60	0.34	*0.73*																		
12. ADJ	0.49	0.41	0.37	0.41	0.46	0.22	0.54	0.28	0.39	0.14	0.40	*0.65*																	
13. AMB	0.44	0.37	0.40	0.37	0.32	0.14	0.37	0.30	0.34	0.22	0.43	0.59	*0.74*																
14. SOC	0.24	0.14	0.18	*0.13*	*0.08*	0.22	*0.05*	0.23	0.22	0.25	0.16	0.18	0.57	*0.77*															
15. INS	0.62	0.57	0.52	0.53	0.47	0.31	0.51	0.42	0.46	0.24	0.50	0.56	0.50	0.38	*0.69*														
16. PRU	0.47	0.45	0.38	0.50	0.38	*0.13*	0.43	0.29	0.36	0.17	0.38	0.33	0.28	*−0.04*	0.45	*0.61*													
17. INC	0.50	0.40	0.41	0.30	0.26	0.24	0.35	0.51	0.37	0.33	0.41	0.27	0.49	0.58	0.52	0.19	*0.71*												
18. LAP	0.38	0.34	0.29	0.24	0.19	0.26	0.28	0.36	0.34	*0.13*	0.32	0.33	0.54	0.45	0.42	0.26	0.68	*0.72*											
19. EXC	−0.41	−0.38	−0.35	−0.35	−0.32	*−0.02*	−0.49	−0.30	−0.42	*−0.06*	−0.35	−0.64	−0.43	*−0.03*	−0.41	−0.40	−0.23	−0.30	*0.79*										
20. SKP	−0.37	−0.32	−0.31	−0.21	−0.29	−0.16	−0.44	−0.30	−0.35	*−0.06*	−0.27	−0.69	−0.42	*−0.10*	−0.45	−0.28	−0.27	−0.40	0.67	*0.85*									
21. CAU	−0.28	−0.20	−0.24	−0.18	−0.22	*−0.11*	−0.20	−0.19	−0.20	−0.17	−0.29	−0.54	−0.67	−0.42	−0.38	*−0.10*	−0.35	−0.44	0.48	0.58	*0.86*								
22. RES	−0.38	−0.33	−0.32	−0.31	−0.28	−0.24	−0.26	−0.28	−0.29	−0.16	−0.31	−0.43	−0.53	−0.51	−0.56	*−0.09*	−0.36	−0.36	0.42	0.44	0.65	*0.81*							
23. LEI	−0.48	−0.46	−0.40	−0.38	−0.40	*−0.12*	−0.51	−0.36	−0.39	*−0.13*	−0.38	−0.66	−0.52	−0.18	−0.57	−0.41	−0.30	−0.33	0.63	0.70	0.58	0.51	*0.86*						
24. BLD	*−0.05*	*−0.14*	*−0.10*	*−0.11*	*−0.05*	*−0.04*	−0.15	*0.04*	*0.05*	*0.10*	*−0.04*	*−0.07*	0.28	0.33	*−0.06*	*−0.01*	0.28	0.20	*0.14*	0.15	*0.05*	*0.10*	0.18	*0.78*					
25. MIS	−0.19	−0.22	*−0.12*	−0.25	−0.23	*−0.01*	−0.37	*−0.04*	*−0.07*	*0.05*	−0.21	−0.34	*−0.02*	0.42	−0.17	−0.30	0.18	*0.03*	0.33	0.32	*0.13*	*0.09*	0.39	0.52	*0.76*				
26. COL	−0.20	−0.20	*−0.12*	−0.33	−0.21	*0.05*	−0.31	*−0.12*	*−0.12*	*−0.01*	−0.17	−0.28	*0.05*	0.43	*−0.11*	−0.34	*0.08*	*−0.02*	0.39	0.30	*0.05*	*−0.10*	0.31	0.32	0.54	*0.68*			
27. IMG	*0.05*	*0.00*	*−0.07*	*−0.01*	*0.01*	*0.08*	*−0.07*	0.18	*0.04*	0.18	*−0.03*	*−0.14*	*0.10*	0.25	*0.08*	*−0.10*	0.39	0.23	*0.14*	0.15	*0.12*	*0.05*	0.19	0.51	0.39	0.20	*0.74*		
28. DIL	0.36	0.33	0.29	0.36	0.24	*0.08*	0.22	0.31	0.31	0.23	0.25	0.14	0.44	0.22	0.36	0.34	0.36	0.38	−0.16	*−0.04*	*−0.12*	−0.21	−0.23	0.28	*−0.03*	*0.01*	0.32	*0.81*	
29. DUT	−0.19	*−0.12*	−0.16	−0.16	−0.26	*−0.01*	−0.26	*−0.12*	*−0.08*	*−0.05*	−0.24	−0.47	−0.36	−0.01	−0.23	*−0.12*	−0.16	−0.14	0.39	0.45	0.51	0.26	0.47	0.17	0.32	0.34	0.22	*−0.04*	*0.73*
30. Org. tenure	*0.02*	*0.06*	0.24	*0.13*	*0.08*	*0.03*	*0.12*	−0.17	−0.17	*−0.08*	*0.02*	*0.09*	*0.09*	*−0.04*	*0.06*	*0.05*	*−0.11*	*−0.05*	*−0.07*	*0.04*	*−0.07*	*−0.10*	*0.04*	−0.16	−0.18	*−0.01*	−0.16	*0.05*	*−0.05*
31. Total work exp.	*0.07*	*0.09*	*0.13*	0.18	*0.09*	*0.13*	*0.06*	*−0.07*	*−0.08*	*−0.03*	*0.03*	*0.06*	*−0.05*	−0.16	*0.01*	*−0.01*	−0.16	*−0.12*	*−0.09*	*0.12*	*0.05*	*−0.03*	*0.13*	−0.25	−0.20	*0.02*	*−0.12*	*−0.07*	*0.10*
32. Age	*0.07*	*0.11*	0.15	0.15	*0.11*	*0.09*	*0.10*	*−0.06*	*−0.06*	*−0.03*	*0.01*	*0.08*	*0.01*	*−0.13*	*0.01*	*0.02*	−0.14	*−0.04*	*−0.11*	*0.09*	*0.02*	*−0.04*	*0.08*	−0.20	−0.17	*0.05*	*−0.12*	*−0.05*	*0.10*
33. Marker variable	*0.02*	*0.04*	*−0.04*	*−0.03*	*−0.08*	*0.03*	*0.04*	*0.06*	*0.07*	*0.00*	*0.00*	*0.01*	*−0.03*	*0.00*	*0.07*	*0.00*	*0.09*	*0.12*	*0.01*	*−0.01*	*0.08*	*0.02*	*0.03*	*0.05*	*−0.07*	*0.02*	*0.12*	*0.06*	0.17

Note(s): The values along the diagonal are the square root of the average variance extracted (AVE, in *italic*); All correlations are significant at $p < 0.05$ or lower except the italicized values (i.e. all values in Italics are nonsignificant); MD = moral purpose in decision-making; SME = subject matter expertise; WP = workplace pragmatism; EIS = emotional intelligence – appraisal of self-emotions in the workplace; EIO = emotional intelligence – appraisal of others' emotions in the workplace; EIR = emotional intelligence – self-regulation of workplace emotions; SR = self-reflection in the workplace; ER = external reflection in the workplace; EBR = exceeding the bounds of rationality; IT = integrative thinking; ADJ = adjustment; AMB = ambition; SOC = sociability; INS = interpersonal sensitivity; PRU = prudence; INC = inquisitive; LAP = learning approach; EXC = excitable; SKP = skeptical; CAU = cautious; RES = reserved; LEI = leisurely; BLD = bold; MIS = mischievous; COL = colorful; IMG = imaginative; DIL = diligent; DUT = dutiful

Source(s): Author's own work

same time, moving against people had no effect on practical wisdom (β = –0.09, *n.s.*) because two of its four constructs – bold and imaginative – did not correlate with practical wisdom. Thus, *H4* was rejected. Moving toward people had a positive effect on practical wisdom (β = 0.26, $p < 0.001$), which contradicts *H5*, rejecting it. In fact, moving toward people comprises two dispositions – diligent and dutiful – which were positively and negatively related to practical wisdom, respectively.

4.3 Fuzzy-set qualitative comparative analysis

The unexpected nature of the findings above warranted further analysis. For this, fsQCA was used with *fsQCA Software* version 4 developed by Ragin and Davey (2022). fsQCA is an asymmetric data analysis technique that draws upon set theory to explain the relationship between multiple conditions and an outcome (Ragin, 2009; Pappas and Woodside, 2021; Mattke *et al.*, 2022). It relies on qualitative inductive reasoning in which data are analyzed by cases instead of by variables. The key advantage of fsQCA is that it facilitates a deep understanding of the data through a quantitative analysis while maintaining the characteristics of qualitative techniques. As a result, this method has gained recognition in various research domains, including knowledge management (e.g. see Kusa *et al.*, 2024; Kallmuenzer *et al.*, 2025). In particular, it is often used as a complementary technique to add new theoretical insights to correlation and regression analyses (Naqshbandi *et al.*, 2024). For a detailed description of fsQCA, see Ragin (2009).

Data were calibrated by using the 95th, 50th, and 5th percentiles for the high, middle, and low thresholds, respectively, similar to Naqshbandi *et al.* (2024). The percentiles were selected over the points on the Likert-type scales because the data were skewed. The percentiles were calculated in SPSS by following the guidelines provided by Pappas and Woodside (2021).

Tables 5–8 present the necessary conditions analysis. Because all consistency values, which estimate how well the proposed condition aligns with the observed outcome, were below the 0.90 threshold, it was concluded that none of the normal personality dispositions are necessary for the development of practical wisdom, and none of the dysfunctional personality dispositions necessarily impede the development of practical wisdom.

After testing for necessary conditions, researchers have two options:

1. perform a sufficiency analysis to identify the possible configurations (i.e. combinations of independent variables) that cause the dependent variable; or
2. test for specific hypotheses (Pappas and Woodside, 2021). In this study, the latter option was selected to test *H1*–*H5*.

The two-step process was followed according to the instructions given by Pappas and Woodside (2021). First, for each hypothesis separately, a configuration model was created in fsQCA Software by using the *fuzzyand(x1,x2,…)* function, where *x*1, *x*2, etc. are all input

Table 5 Necessary conditions analysis for all functional personality dispositions – the presence of practical wisdom

Personality disposition	*Consistency*	*Coverage*
Adjustment	0.76	0.76
Ambition	0.77	0.77
Sociability	0.72	0.71
Interpersonal sensitivity	0.82	0.80
Prudence	0.77	0.77
Inquisitive	0.81	0.78
Learning approach	0.78	0.76

Source(s): Author's own work

Table 6 Necessary conditions analysis for the APA and SIIL functional personality dispositions – the presence of practical wisdom

Personality disposition	*Consistency*	*Coverage*
APA	0.79	0.79
SIIL	0.79	0.79

Source(s): Author's own work

Table 7 Necessary conditions analysis for all dysfunctional personality dispositions – the absence of practical wisdom

Personality disposition	*Consistency*	*Coverage*
Excitable	0.70	0.77
Skeptical	0.70	0.73
Cautious	0.73	0.70
Reserved	0.76	0.72
Leisurely	0.75	0.77
Bold	0.64	0.68
Mischievous	0.69	0.71
Colorful	0.66	0.72
Imaginative	0.63	0.64
Diligent	0.60	0.57
Dutiful	0.71	0.71

Source(s): Author's own work

Table 8 Necessary conditions analysis for the moving away from, moving against and moving toward people dysfunctional personality dispositions – the absence of practical wisdom

Personality disposition	*Consistency*	*Coverage*
Moving away from people	0.74	0.77
Moving against people	0.68	0.68
Moving toward people	0.66	0.64

Source(s): Author's own work

variables that are present in the hypothesis. For example, for *H1*, the following function was used: *fuzzyand(ADJ,AMB,SOC,INS,PRU,INC,LAP)*. Second, the new variable (i.e. the condition, the *x* axis) was plotted against practical wisdom (i.e. the outcome, the *y* axis) by using the *Graphs* → *XY Plot* menu option, as recommended by Pappas and Woodside (2021). To test dysfunctional personality dispositions, the practical wisdom outcome variable was negated because these dispositions are expected to suppress practical wisdom.

Figure 2 presents the plot produced by *fsQCA Software* that tests *H1*. A visual inspection of the plot reveals that a vast majority of the functional personality disposition scores (i.e. the condition scores) are less than or equal to their corresponding practical wisdom scores (i.e. the outcome scores), which supports the sufficiency argument (Ragin, 2009). To derive theoretical and practical insights in sufficiency analysis, the consistency threshold of 0.80 is generally acceptable (Pappas and Woodside, 2021). In sufficiency analysis, coverage – which assesses the proportion of the outcome that is explained by the condition and is similar to the *R-squared* value in linear regression – does not have a well-accepted cut-off point. However, lower coverage values are less meaningful in terms of the condition's contribution to the outcome. The consistency and coverage values were 0.94 and 0.44, respectively, which supports *H1*. At the same time, the moderate coverage value shows that

Figure 2 fsQCA *H1* testing

Source: Author's own work

additional factors also contribute to the development of practical wisdom, but these were unaccounted for in this study.

Table 9 summarizes the results of fsQCA hypothesis testing, and Appendix 3 presents the corresponding plots. First, in contrast to the results of correlation analysis and linear regression, *H2* was not supported. In fact, while both combinations of personality dispositions exhibited identical coverage, SIIL had a higher consistency score than APA,

Table 9 fsQCA hypothesis testing

Hypothesis	*Consistency*	*Coverage*	*fsQCA conclusion*	*Correlation and linear regression conclusion*
1. Functional personality dispositions facilitate the development of practical wisdom	0.94	0.44	Supported	Supported
2. Adjustment, prudence and ambition (APA) facilitate the development of practical wisdom better than sociability, interpersonal sensitivity, inquisitive and learning approach (SIIL)	APA: 0.88 SIIL: 0.91	APA: 0.57 SIIL: 0.57	Not supported	Supported
3. Dysfunctional personality dispositions of moving away from people suppress the development of practical wisdom	0.90	0.49	Supported	Supported
4. Dysfunctional personality dispositions of moving against people suppress the development of practical wisdom	0.80	0.41	Supported	Not supported
5. Dysfunctional personality dispositions of moving toward people suppress the development of practical wisdom	0.73	0.49	Not supported	Not supported

Source(s): Author's own work

which contradicts *H2* and the results of correlation and regression testing. Second, consistent with *H3* and the results of the correlation and linear regression analyses, moving away from people (which represents dysfunctional personality dispositions) suppresses the development of practical wisdom. Again, however, the moderate value of coverage attests to the presence of additional factors suppressing the cultivation of practical wisdom. Third, fsQCA analysis concluded that moving against people restrained wisdom development, in contrast to the previous findings. Finally, in line with the prior analysis, moving toward people did not suppress wisdom development.

5. Discussion

5.1 Contribution to theory

Despite previous attempts to introduce the notion of practical wisdom in the knowledge management domain (Rowley and Slack, 2009; Rocha and Pinheiro, 2021; Qayyum *et al.*, 2022; Rocha *et al.*, 2022b), empirical research on this critical issue is still in its embryonic stage (Jakubik and Müürsepp, 2022). To begin filling that void, this study makes several contributions to the literature.

First and foremost, this study empirically confirms that practical wisdom is not an esoteric notion: it can be measured by means of conventional research techniques such as self-administered surveys. This supports previous research in other disciplines where wisdom (but not practical wisdom in an organizational knowledge management setting) has also been measured with similar research techniques (Baltes and Smith, 1990; Ardelt, 2003; Mickler and Staudinger, 2008; Glück *et al.*, 2013; Brienza *et al.*, 2018; Glück, 2018; Rocha *et al.*, 2021; Lin and Wang, 2024). In particular, it supports the validity of self-assessment wisdom scales that require individuals to retrospectively evaluate their life experiences, personal qualities, and behaviors across several dimensions of wisdom (e.g. see Webster, 2003; Webster, 2007).

Second, this study does not undermine the merit of the knowledge-based view of the firm (Grant, 1996), which represents the bedrock of the knowledge management discipline. Instead, consistent with the theoretical arguments made by Bierly *et al.* (2000), it shows that this view may be supplemented with the concept of practical wisdom and recommends that future scholars explore this avenue.

Third, based on the results of two distinct analytical techniques – correlation/linear regression and fsQCA – it is concluded that the functional personality dispositions of getting along with and getting ahead of people cultivate the development of practical wisdom, whereas the dysfunctional personality dispositions of moving away from people suppress it. In line with Igarashi *et al.* (2018), this study supports the role of the social environment as a facilitator of new perspectives that correspond with various aspects of wisdom. Moreover, consistent with prior research (e.g. see Serenko, 2023; Yin *et al.*, 2023), it highlights the importance of human personality in the knowledge management context and demonstrates its far-reaching impact. However, both techniques confirm that the effect of the personality dispositions mentioned above is moderate; therefore, other, non-personality-related factors affect practical wisdom development. The key conclusion is that, while some personality dispositions are important, wisdom development is a complex process driven by a combination of factors rather than by a single determinant. The findings suggesting that the role of the dysfunctional personality dispositions of moving against people remains unclear and that the dysfunctional personality dispositions of moving toward people do not restrain practical wisdom development further support the conclusion above. This is also supported by the Balance Theory of Wisdom (Sternberg, 1998; Sternberg, 2001), which posits that a number of developmental and individual factors represent important sources of wisdom. Moreover, Baltes and Staudinger (2000) argue that no single powerful predictor of wisdom exists.

Fourth, based on the support for *H1* (i.e. supported by linear regression: $\beta = 0.61$, $p < 0.001$; supported by fsQCA: consistency = 0.94, coverage = 0.44), it is concluded that the functional personality dispositions of getting along with and getting ahead of others – adjustment, ambition, sociability, interpersonal sensitivity, prudence, inquisitive, and learning approach – facilitate the development of practical wisdom. However, because *H2* was not fully supported (i.e. supported by linear regression: APA $\beta = 0.45$, $p < 0.001$ vs SIIL $\beta = 0.26$, $p < 0.001$; not supported by fsQCA: consistency APA = 0.88 vs SIIL = 0.91, coverage APA = 0.57 vs SIIL = 0.57), this study does not conclusively confirm the role of adjustment, prudence, and ambition as the leading dispositions for getting along with and getting ahead of others in the context of practical wisdom, which contradicts the arguments made by Hogan and Hogan (2007). Of the seven getting along with other dispositions, interpersonal sensitivity exhibits the strongest correlation with practical wisdom ($r = 0.62$), followed by inquisitive ($r = 0.50$). This finding emphasizes the uniqueness of practical wisdom and shows that previous assumptions about the role of some personality dispositions do not universally apply in the practical wisdom context. In a similar vein, Staudinger *et al.* (1997) empirically tested 33 intelligence- and personality-related predictors of wisdom and concluded that only 10 of them may be considered significant predictors of individuals' wisdom.

Fifth, recall that *H3*, which states that the dysfunctional personality dispositions of moving away from people suppress the development of practical wisdom, was fully supported (i.e. supported by linear regression: $\beta = -0.51$, $p < 0.001$; supported by fsQCA: consistency = 0.90, coverage = 0.49), while *H4*, which proposes that the dysfunctional personality dispositions of moving against people suppress the development of practical wisdom, received only partial support (i.e. not supported by linear regression: $\beta = -0.09$, *n.s.*; supported by fsQCA: consistency = 0.80, coverage = 0.41). Workers who move away from people manage their personal insecurities by avoiding socialization with their co-workers, while those who move against people cope with their self-doubts by dominating and intimidating them. This study shows that the former type of behavior is more detrimental to the cultivation of practical wisdom than the latter. However, the causes of this disparity remain unknown, which warrants future empirical research in this area.

Sixth, this study discovered the puzzling role of the dysfunctional personality dispositions of moving toward people. It comprises two dispositions – diligent and dutiful – which pull practical wisdom in opposite directions: while the former promotes it ($r = 0.36$), the latter suppresses it ($r = -0.19$). Because of this inconsistency, *H5*, which proposes that the dysfunctional personality dispositions of moving toward people suppress the development of practical wisdom, was fully rejected (i.e. not supported by linear regression: $\beta = 0.26$, $p < 0.001$, the relationship is positive whereas it is supposed to be negative; not supported by fsQCA: consistency = 0.73, coverage = 0.49). Hogan and Hogan (2009) argue that overly diligent employees are intolerant of ambiguity, value strict rules over final outcomes, and reject highly innovative solutions. Highly dutiful workers, on the other hand, focus on pleasing others and lack independent judgment. Nevertheless, the results indicate that the diligent personality disposition fosters wisdom. This leaves much room for future research to explore this surprising finding and aligns with Jakubik and Müürsepp's (2022) call for further empirical research in the domain of practical wisdom.

Seventh, Dong *et al.* (2023), in their comprehensive meta-analysis, reported that wisdom and age exhibit no correlation. This study confirms their conclusion and shows that practical wisdom is not correlated with age ($r = 0.07$, n.s.), organizational tenure ($r = 0.02$, n.s.) and overall work experience ($r = 0.07$, n.s.). This contradicts laypeople's assumptions that a wise individual is always an older, senior, and experienced worker and shows that practical wisdom is cultivated by different means. As Sternberg (2005) states, "age is not, in and of itself, a variable that is valid for indexing the development of wisdom" (p. 6). *Eighth*, this study re-validated the instrument for the measurement of practical wisdom recently developed by Serenko (2024). It confirmed that the scale exhibits strong reliability and validity and, therefore, may be fruitfully applied in future investigations. To the best of the author's knowledge, this is also the first study to independently

test and confirm the psychometric properties of the HPCS inventory designed by Wood *et al.* (2024). A key limitation of the original HPI and HDS instruments is that they include 206 and 168 questions, respectively, 374 in total, which makes them impractical in academic research. By contrast, HPCS has only 74 questions yet retains the original instruments' explanatory power. Therefore, this study also contributes to the psychology literature.

Finally, fsQCA has already gained momentum in knowledge management research (e.g. see Kusa *et al.*, 2024; Zhou *et al.*, 2024; Xia *et al.*, 2025), but it is critical to know how consistent its findings are with those reported by other inquiry methods, including correlation analysis and linear regression. As Twumasi Ankrah *et al.* (2025) show, this may be achieved by comparing, contrasting, and integrating fsQCA results with those obtained by other techniques. In the present study, while some of the fsQCA conclusions are in line with those of correlation and linear regression analyses, others portray a different story. A key limitation of correlation analysis and linear regression is that they do not account for asymmetric cases existing in real-world data, while fsQCA overcomes this problem (Gligor and Bozkurt, 2020). Thus, this study contributes to the research methods literature by showing that fsQCA may be successfully used in the knowledge management domain to obtain a more comprehensive picture of the phenomenon of interest.

5.2 Contribution to practice

In addition to the theoretical insights above, this study offers several practical implications. *First*, managers should embrace the fact that practical wisdom is not an esoteric notion limited to philosophical writings. Instead, it represents an important attribute of the contemporary workforce. While empirical research in this area is in its nascent stage, it is likely that future studies will uncover new aspects of this intriguing construct, leading to truly useful, novel, and unexpected practical recommendations. Thus, practitioners should remain open-minded and not automatically discard such future insights or reject the very concept of practical wisdom. *Second*, organizations should administer the practical wisdom survey used in this study to identify clusters of practical wisdom in their workforce. Such surveys should be done anonymously to reduce social desirability bias, but the results may be aggregated at the group, department, or division level. Previous research has shown that practical wisdom promotes knowledge sharing and suppresses knowledge hiding and knowledge sabotage. Thus, managers will be able to identify parts of their organization in which employees' knowledge behavior should be closely monitored. *Third*, it is important to administer the HPCS inventory to all prospective employees during the hiring process. Extra attention should be paid to all functional personality dispositions and to the dysfunctional personality dispositions of moving away from people, because these promote and suppress the development of practical wisdom, respectively. *Fourth*, because practical wisdom and age are unrelated, organizations should review their hiring, promotion, and retention policies to avoid age-based assumptions. For example, when hiring a senior manager, they need to avoid the layperson's assumption that an older individual is inherently wiser than a younger one. *Finally,* to foster the development of a wiser population, people should be exposed to various forms of socialization from childhood onward. To achieve this, policymakers should emphasize activities that foster social connections among people in personal, educational, and professional settings and promote socialization as part of the societal cultural fabric.

5.3 Limitations and future research directions

No empirical study is without limitations, and this investigation is not an exception. *First*, it uses a cross-sectional design. While evidence suggests that personality dispositions (i.e. the antecedent constructs) are formed by the age of 25 and then remain mostly stable (Bleidorn *et al.*, 2022), limited evidence is available about the temporal stability of practical wisdom (i.e. the outcome construct), particularly in the context of knowledge behavior. Thus, future scholars are encouraged to replicate this study by using longitudinal designs.

Second, this investigation did not consider the role of situational cues in one's workplace, which, consistent with the tenets of Trait Activation Theory (Tett and Burnett, 2003; Tett *et al.*, 2013; Tett *et al.*, 2021), may facilitate or suppress the development of practical wisdom. This presents future scholars with another fruitful research direction. *Third*, this study operationalized practical wisdom as a ten-dimensional construct theorized and validated by Serenko (2024). However, Serenko (2024) concluded that "the jury is still out," and additional dimensions of practical wisdom may exist, with their unique antecedents and consequences, which require future empirical studies. *Fourth*, other personality inventories are available, which may also be applied to explore the antecedents of practical wisdom. *Finally,* the data for this study were collected from respondents residing in the USA. However, the world is not flat, and people living in different countries differ in terms of their motivation, cognition, intelligence quotient, structure of personality traits, cultural values, decision-making processes, etc. (Henrich *et al.*, 2010; Apicella *et al.*, 2020). Thus, workers from other countries may rely on different personality dispositions when developing (or suppressing) their practical wisdom, leading to exciting future research opportunities.

6. Conclusion

Despite much wisdom-centric research in various scientific domains, the knowledge management community has been hesitant to embark on the empirical study of practical wisdom, and such reservations are not unwarranted. Knowledge management is an applied field, and its stakeholders are interested in truly useful concepts that may lead to actionable items rather than to abstract discussions devoid of practical value – and this is exactly how the author of this work previously perceived the study of wisdom – until scrutinizing empirical evidence in other scientific domains and realizing that this notion may, in fact, extend the knowledge-based view of the firm. This study sheds light on this fascinating phenomenon and shows the importance of personality dispositions that guide the development of practical wisdom.

The topic of human personality has already attracted the attention of knowledge management researchers. Recently, Serenko (2025) identified 200 empirical peer-reviewed journal articles that focused on the role of employee personality in the context of knowledge behavior and reported numerous theoretical insights and practical implications. A common theme in these works is that personality may potentially drive productive and counterproductive knowledge behavior, and this investigation further contributes to this line of research. However, this study also reveals that personality alone is likely insufficient to become practically wise, and it calls for future investigations into this topic.

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Note

[1.] In their pioneering work, Bierly *et al.* (2000) did not explicitly use the term "practical wisdom." However, they defined this concept from the perspective of practical wisdom as "an action-oriented concept" (p. 601) and "the ability to best use knowledge for establishing and achieving desired goals" (p. 601) in order "to solve practical problems" (p. 597). They also emphasized the notion of "exercising good judgement" (p. 601), which is consistent with the contemporary definition of practical wisdom.

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Appendix 1. The questionnaire

Instructions

You must be currently employed full-time for at least 2 years in an organization that has 10 or more employees.

Please answer all questions below in the context of the organization in which you are currently employed full-time.

Pre-screening

For how many years have you worked in your current organization?

How many employees does your current organization have?

Your current organization is: (public, private, and other).

Practical wisdom. (nine-point Likert-type agree/disagree scale)

Moral purpose in decision making.

When making decisions in my workplace, I

- MD1. act in the best interests of all organizational stakeholders.
- MD2. take into account the common good of all parties involved.
- MD3. focus on the well-being of other employees, customers, community members, members of the general public, and other stakeholders.
- MD4. act in an ethical manner.
- MD5. take into consideration the long-term consequences of my actions.
- MD6. eliminate bad faith, personal biases, and prejudice.

Subject matter expertise.

In my workplace, I

- SME1. possess strong factual, conceptual, and procedural knowledge relevant to my work performance.
- SME2. have accumulated a considerable degree of professional knowledge.
- SME3. have gathered a depth and breadth of subject matter expertise.
- SME4. have experienced and learned from a variety of professional encounters.
- SME5. possess vital organizational knowledge.
- SME6. consider myself a very knowledgeable employee.

Workplace pragmatism.

In my workplace, I

- WP1. always focus on achieving a particular outcome.
- WP2. consistently try to act, perform, and engage rather than avoid, procrastinate, and debate.
- WP3. persistently attempt to accomplish a desirable outcome.
- WP4. consider myself a pragmatic employee.

Emotional intelligence in the workplace – appraisal of self-emotions in the workplace.

In my workplace, I

- EIS1. have an ability to understand my own emotions.
- EIS2. can sense my own feelings.
- EIS3. always know how I feel.
- EIS4. can read my own emotional state.

Emotional intelligence in the workplace – appraisal of others' emotions in the workplace.

In my workplace, I

- EIO1. have an ability to understand my co-workers' emotions.
- EIO2. can sense my co-workers' feelings.
- EIO3. always know how my co-workers feel.
- EIO4. can read my co-workers' emotional state.

Emotional intelligence in the workplace – self-regulation of workplace emotions.

In my workplace, I

- EIR1. am able to control my own emotions.
- EIR2. can manage my own emotional state.
- EIR3. can regulate my own feelings.
- EIR4. can suppress my temper if needed.

Self-reflection in the workplace.

In my workplace, I

- SR1. analyze my own work-related experiences to understand my inner state in order to improve my capacity to function.
- SR2. deliberately practice internal self-reflection to comprehend my inner state.
- SR3. engage in retrospective self-analysis of workplace encounters.
- SR4. attempt to understand my inner self to avoid future mistakes.
- SR5. explore my functioning and initiate corrective actions if necessary.
- SR6. analyze my previous mistakes and learn from them.

External reflection in the workplace.

In my workplace, I

- ER1. explore, analyze, and evaluate my colleagues' work-related experiences.
- ER2. learn from my co-workers to improve my workplace functioning.
- ER3. observe the behavior of my co-workers and learn from it.
- ER4. collect and process my co-workers' experiences.
- ER5. analyze my co-workers' mistakes not to repeat them in the future.
- ER6. evaluate my co-workers' knowledge, skills, and abilities.

Exceeding the bounds of rationality.

When making decisions in my workplace, in addition to a rational assessment of the situation, I rely on my own

- EBR1. intuitions.
- EBR2. personal insights.
- EBR3. hunches.
- EBR4. senses.

Integrative thinking.

When making decisions in my workplace, I

- IT1. feel comfortable facing opposing potential courses of action.
- IT2. develop a good sense of what lies behind a situation before making a decision.
- IT3. look for hidden factors that may affect a decision outcome.
- IT4. keep an open-minded perspective.
- IT5. keep the entire problem in mind while analyzing its individual parts.

Hogan Personality Inventory and Hogan Development Survey (nine-point Likert-type agree/disagree scale)

Please answer each question below with respect to yourself.

I am someone who. . .

Adjustment.

- ADJ1. is Empathetic (concerned for others)
- ADJ2. is Anxious (prone to anxiety or worry) *
- ADJ3. is Guilt-Prone (prone to feeling guilt/regret) *
- ADJ4. is Calm (tranquil, not easily agitated)
- ADJ5. is Even-Tempered (not moody or easily irritated)
- ADJ6. is Dissatisfied easily (has many complaints) *
- ADJ7. is Trusting (unsuspicious of others' intentions)
- ADJ8. is Well-Attached (has good relations with authority figures such as parents or managers)

Ambition.

- AMB1. is Competitive (is ambitious, has a strong desire to win)
- AMB2. is Self-Confident (feels self-assured, believes in one's capacities)
- AMB3. is Well-Accomplished (knows how to reach desired goals)
- AMB4. is Able to Lead (can lead others effectively; comfortable taking charge)
- AMB5. has a Clear Sense of Identity (has a sense of life direction; knows what one wants to be)
- AMB6. is Socially Anxious (reserved/anxious in social situations) *

Sociability.

- SOC1. Likes Parties (enjoys parties, social gatherings)
- SOC2. Likes Crowds (finds large groups/crowds exciting)
- SOC3. is Experience-Seeking (actively pursues variety, challenge, new experiences)
- SOC4. is Exhibitionistic (tends to show off; likes being center of attention)
- SOC5. is Entertaining (is engaging, charming, amusing)

Interpersonal sensitivity.

- INS1. is Easy to Live With (easy-going/tolerant nature; works well with others)
- INS2. is Sensitive (sees other people's point of view, tactful and considerate)
- INS3. is Caring (notices others' moods, appreciates others' needs)
- INS4. Likes People (enjoys social interaction)
- INS5. is Hostile (is critical, harsh toward others) *

Prudence.

- PRU1. is Moralistic (follows moral rules/conventions)
- PRU2. is Mastery-Oriented (is hard-working and diligent)
- PRU3. is Virtuous (makes sure to act in a morally upstanding manner)
- PRU4. is Autonomous (acts independently; unconcerned with others' opinions) *
- PRU5. is Unspontaneous (prefers things to be predictable and well-planned)
- PRU6. is Self-Controlled (has considerable self-discipline, control over impulses)
- PRU7. Avoids Trouble (tends to behave appropriately, avoid risks)

Inquisitive.

- INC1. has Scientific Ability (has interests and abilities in scientific subjects)
- INC2. is Curious (is interested in learning how things work)
- INC3. is Thrill-Seeking (engages in exciting, stimulating activities)
- INC4. Likes Intellectual Games (enjoys intellectual challenges such as riddles, puzzles)
- INC5. is Creative (imaginative, able to come up with new ideas)
- INC6. has Wide-Ranging Interests (interested in many cultures, activities, art forms)

Learning approach.

- LAP1. is School-Oriented (enjoys academics, pursuing education)
- LAP2. has Math Ability (works well with numbers)
- LAP3. has a Good Memory (remembers details easily, unforgetful)
- LAP4. is Reading-Oriented (enjoys reading books, newspapers, etc.; reads regularly)

Excitable.

- EXC1. is Emotionally Volatile (easily angered, annoyed, or upset)
- EXC2. is Easily Disappointed (prone to feeling that others fail to meet one's expectations)
- EXC3. is Directionless (lacks well-defined beliefs or interests)

Skeptical.

- SKP1. is Cynical (doubts others' intentions; assumes secret reasons for others' behavior)
- SKP2. is Mistrusting (mistrusts people/institutions; alert to perceived mistreatment)
- SKP3. Holds Grudges (unforgiving of real or perceived wrongs)

Cautious.

- CAU1. is Avoidant (avoids new people/situations to avoid potential embarrassment)
- CAU2. is Fearful (afraid of being criticized for mistakes)
- CAU3. is Unassertive (unwilling to act assertively; prone to being overlooked/ignored)

Reserved.

- RES1. is Introverted (values one's private time; prefers to work alone)
- RES2. is Unsocial (keeps others at a distance; is generally detached)
- RES3. is Unsympathetic (interpersonally cold; shows little sympathy for others' problems)

Leisurely.

- LEI1. is Passive-Aggressive (acts outwardly pleasant while feeling inwardly resentful)
- LEI2. Feels Unappreciated (believes one's contributions are ignored/undercompensated)
- LEI3. is Irritable (easily irritated by interruptions, requests, or suggestions)

Bold.

- BLD1. Feels Entitled (feels deserving of special treatment)
- BLD2. is Overconfident (believes is capable of accomplishing more than realistically possible)
- BLD3. Feels Uniquely Gifted (believes they possess unique talents/gifts that set them apart from others)

Mischievous.

- MIS1. is Risk-Taking (tests limits; deliberately bends or breaks inconvenient rules)
- MIS2. is Impulsive (often acts rashly; without consideration of long-term consequences)
- MIS3. is Manipulative (enjoys deceiving others in an effort to control them)

Colorful.

- COL1. is Confident in Public (enjoys being the center of attention, prominent in social settings)
- COL2. is Distractible (easily distracted, finds it difficult to focus)
- COL3. is Attention-Seeking (acts dramatically to draw attention to self)

Imaginative.

- IMG1. is Eccentric (expresses and becomes absorbed by unusual/strange ideas)
- IMG2. Feels Uniquely Sensitive (believes one has unique abilities to understand issues/people)
- IMG3. Feels Uniquely Creative (believes one is uniquely creative/imaginative)

Diligent.

- DIL1. has High Standards (holds extremely high standards for performance of oneself and others)
- DIL2. is Perfectionistic (exacting and obsessive about work quality)
- DIL3. is Strictly Organized (inflexibly adheres to schedules, procedures, organization)

Dutiful.

- DUT1. is Indecisive (overly reliant on advice; reluctant to act independently)
- DUT2. is Ingratiating (extremely eager to please others; says what others want to hear)
- DUT3. is Conforming (likely to follow orders regardless of one's personal opinion)

* – Reverse-scored items.

Appendix 2

Item statistics and construct reliability assessment

Table A1 Reliability assessment

Item	*Mean*	*SD*	*ITC*	*Loading*	*Alpha*	*CR*	*AVE*
MD1	7.21	1.61	0.64	0.759	0.86	0.90	0.595
MD2	7.54	1.30	0.75	0.843			
MD3	7.55	1.26	0.67	0.782			
MD4	8.08	1.14	0.53	0.664			
MD5	7.63	1.21	0.70	0.809			
MD6	7.67	1.19	0.64	0.761			
SME1	7.61	1.14	0.72	0.809	0.90	0.92	0.670
SME2	7.66	1.37	0.72	0.812			
SME3	7.57	1.24	0.77	0.849			
SME4	7.60	1.37	0.67	0.769			
SME5	7.49	1.39	0.72	0.809			
SME6	7.63	1.30	0.78	0.859			
WP1	7.44	1.29	0.70	0.852	0.80	0.87	0.623
WP2	7.49	1.34	0.58	0.777			
WP3	7.80	1.15	0.64	0.815			
WP4	7.25	1.43	0.51	0.707			
EIS1	7.85	1.00	0.71	0.850	0.85	0.90	0.693
EIS2	7.86	1.07	0.74	0.873			
EIS3	7.36	1.38	0.67	0.814			
EIS4	7.54	1.31	0.64	0.790			
EIO1	6.93	1.36	0.76	0.883	0.89	0.93	0.758
EIO2	6.85	1.31	0.80	0.898			
EIO3	5.93	1.94	0.67	0.804			
EIO4	6.50	1.54	0.80	0.894			
EIR1	7.59	1.24	0.82	0.905	0.90	0.93	0.777
EIR2	7.60	1.29	0.80	0.893			
EIR3	7.66	1.14	0.82	0.902			
EIR4	7.79	1.22	0.70	0.824			
SR1	7.18	1.40	0.80	0.871	0.90	0.93	0.679
SR2	7.02	1.63	0.76	0.836			
SR3	7.06	1.55	0.80	0.866			
SR4	7.42	1.39	0.72	0.811			
SR5	7.37	1.27	0.81	0.879			
SR6	7.96	1.13	0.55	0.660			
ER1	6.78	1.65	0.73	0.816	0.92	0.93	0.704
ER2	7.30	1.41	0.82	0.884			
ER3	7.24	1.43	0.80	0.867			
ER4	6.83	1.58	0.77	0.844			
ER5	7.17	1.58	0.69	0.784			
ER6	7.20	1.52	0.76	0.836			
EBR1	6.90	1.55	0.79	0.894	0.87	0.910	0.716
EBR2	7.28	1.38	0.70	0.837			
EBR3	6.30	1.64	0.71	0.840			
EBR4	7.04	1.43	0.67	0.812			
IT1	6.50	1.69	0.42	0.607	0.78	0.80	0.536
IT2	7.27	1.28	0.73	0.857			
IT3	7.13	1.48	0.60	0.780			
IT4	7.73	1.14	0.47	0.661			
IT5	7.24	1.35	0.53	0.730			
ADJ1	7.89	1.24	0.35	0.471	0.80	0.85	0.423
ADJ2	5.02	2.62	0.58	0.703			
ADJ3	5.57	2.44	0.54	0.660			

(*continued*)

Table A1

Item	Mean	SD	ITC	Loading	Alpha	CR	AVE
ADJ4	7.02	1.73	0.64	0.766			
ADJ5	6.77	1.95	0.51	0.668			
ADJ6	6.72	2.11	0.61	0.731			
ADJ7	6.19	2.04	0.40	0.536			
ADJ8	6.96	1.68	0.48	0.612			
AMB1	6.14	2.26	0.51	0.679	0.83	0.88	0.551
AMB2	6.90	1.92	0.66	0.792			
AMB3	7.20	1.48	0.70	0.829			
AMB4	6.90	1.91	0.67	0.79			
AMB5	7.28	1.61	0.63	0.776			
AMB6	4.83	2.50	0.41	0.550			
SOC1	4.71	2.36	0.72	0.838	0.83	0.83	0.600
SOC2	4.23	2.31	0.71	0.834			
SOC3	6.50	1.89	0.57	0.732			
SOC4	3.45	2.31	0.52	0.677			
SOC5	6.22	1.90	0.64	0.779			
INS1	7.25	1.45	0.56	0.765	0.72	0.82	0.476
INS2	7.14	1.61	0.37	0.623			
INS3	7.65	1.18	0.62	0.818			
INS4	6.49	1.99	0.40	0.615			
INS5	7.90	1.46	0.38	0.601			
PRU1	6.89	1.75	0.51	0.742	0.70	0.795	0.374
PRU2	7.17	1.62	0.48	0.689			
PRU3	7.19	1.50	0.50	0.742			
PRU4	4.29	2.32	0.17	0.255			
PRU5	5.78	2.25	0.35	0.487			
PRU6	7.18	1.60	0.44	0.675			
PRU7	7.53	1.51	0.35	0.530			
INC1	6.61	2.04	0.47	0.612	0.80	0.86	0.507
INC2	7.57	1.26	0.55	0.718			
INC3	5.68	2.31	0.49	0.632			
INC4	7.12	1.71	0.60	0.750			
INC5	7.05	1.88	0.62	0.773			
INC6	6.93	1.92	0.60	0.770			
LAP1	6.51	2.08	0.57	0.800	0.69	0.81	0.523
LAP2	5.89	2.39	0.41	0.663			
LAP3	6.78	2.03	0.52	0.756			
LAP4	6.93	2.04	0.39	0.663			
EXC1	3.41	2.44	0.47	0.754	0.70	0.83	0.626
EXC2	3.88	2.24	0.56	0.828			
EXC3	2.88	2.02	0.51	0.789			
SKP1	3.95	2.37	0.62	0.829	0.80	0.88	0.717
SKP2	3.71	2.28	0.72	0.890			
SKP3	3.22	2.16	0.60	0.820			
CAU1	4.10	2.48	0.72	0.885	0.82	0.89	0.736
CAU2	3.86	2.40	0.67	0.857			
CAU3	3.51	2.12	0.63	0.830			
RES1	5.64	2.48	0.59	0.828	0.72	0.85	0.651
RES2	4.00	2.46	0.75	0.915			
RES3	2.33	1.71	0.39	0.656			
LEI1	2.91	1.96	0.60	0.807	0.82	0.89	0.732
LEI2	3.61	2.32	0.71	0.879			
LEI3	3.14	2.05	0.71	0.878			
BLD1	2.47	1.71	0.45	0.755	0.69	0.83	0.615
BLD2	2.97	1.99	0.58	0.845			
BLD3	4.53	2.47	0.46	0.748			

(*continued*)

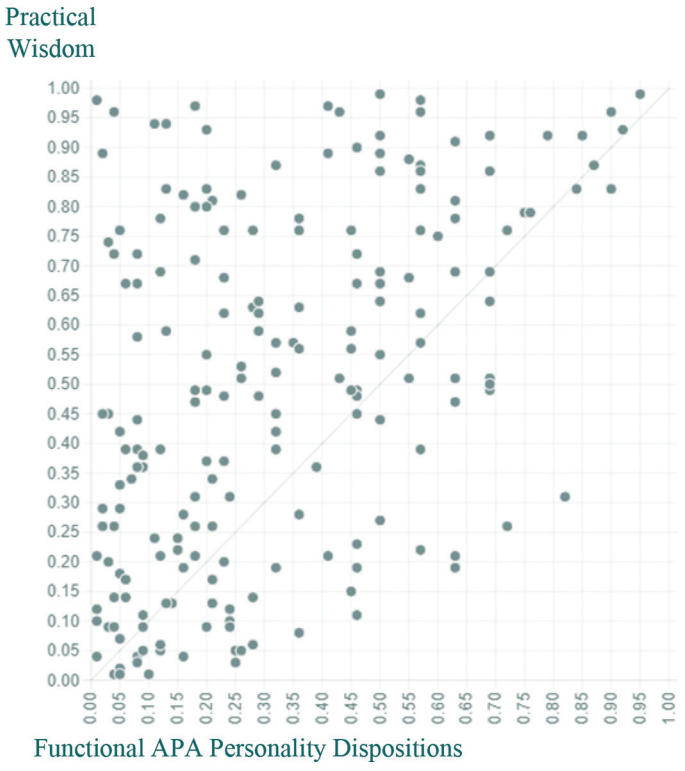
Table A1

Item	*Mean*	*SD*	*ITC*	*Loading*	*Alpha*	*CR*	*AVE*
MIS1	4.15	2.23	0.34	0.640	0.64	0.81	0.584
MIS2	2.86	2.07	0.54	0.851			
MIS3	2.16	1.51	0.45	0.787			
COL1	4.75	2.43	0.03	0.307	0.35	0.69	0.460
COL2	3.47	2.31	0.07	0.706			
COL3	2.55	1.81	0.49	0.888			
IMG1	4.33	2.22	0.22	0.494	0.57	0.78	0.552
IMG2	4.77	2.34	0.52	0.857			
IMG3	5.41	2.32	0.45	0.823			
DIL1	6.57	2.03	0.58	0.825	0.74	0.85	0.655
DIL2	5.78	2.10	0.54	0.792			
DIL3	5.92	2.09	0.56	0.810			
DUT1	3.53	2.20	0.31	0.723	0.54	0.77	0.530
DUT2	3.65	2.10	0.53	0.865			
DUT3	4.83	2.19	0.23	0.565			

Note(s): SD = standard deviation; ITC = corrected item-to-total correlation; Alpha = Cronbach's alpha; CR = composite reliability; AVE = average variance extracted; MD = moral purpose in decision-making; SME = subject matter expertise; WP = workplace pragmatism; EIS = emotional intelligence – appraisal of self-emotions in the workplace; EIO = emotional intelligence – appraisal of others' emotions in the workplace; EIR = emotional intelligence – self-regulation of workplace emotions; SR = self-reflection in the workplace; ER = external reflection in the workplace; EBR = exceeding the bounds of rationality; IT = integrative thinking; ADJ = adjustment; AMB = ambition; SOC = sociability; INS = interpersonal sensitivity; PRU = prudence; INC = inquisitive; LAP = learning approach; EXC = excitable; SKP = skeptical; CAU = cautious; RES = reserved; LEI = leisurely; BLD = bold; MIS = mischievous; COL = colorful; IMG = imaginative; DIL = diligent; DUT = dutiful
Source(s): Author's own work

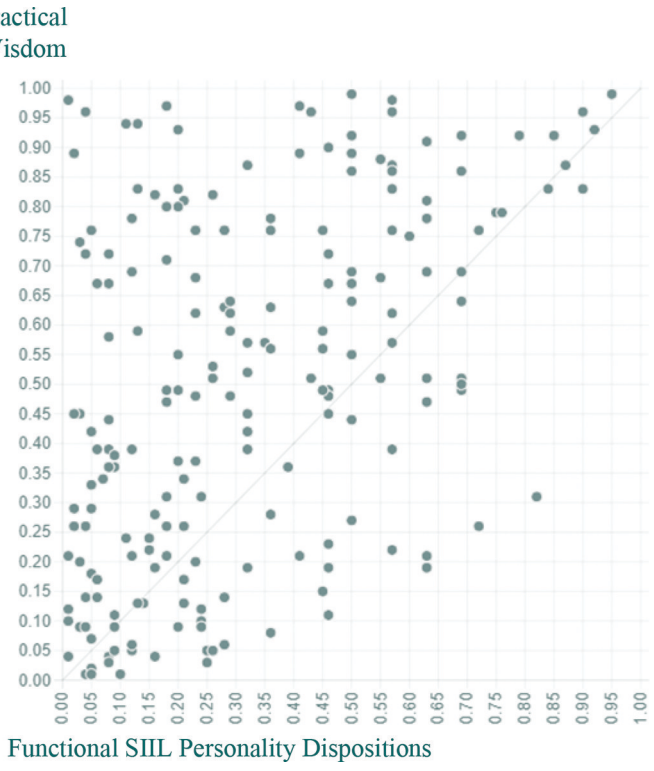
Appendix 3. fsQCA plots

Figure A1 fsQCA *H2* testing – APA (adjustment, prudence and ambition)



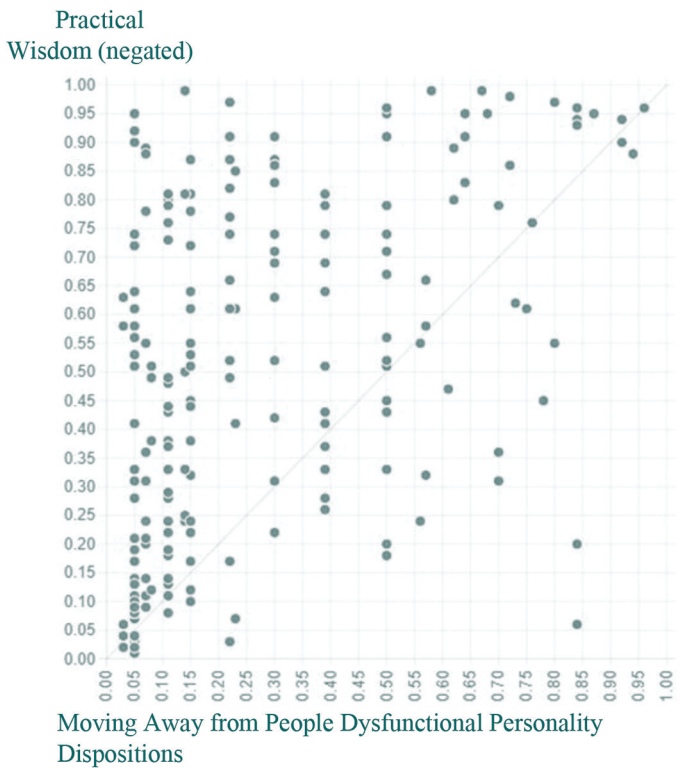
Source: Author's own work

Figure A2 fsQCA *H2* testing – SIIL (sociability, interpersonal sensitivity, inquisitive and learning approach)



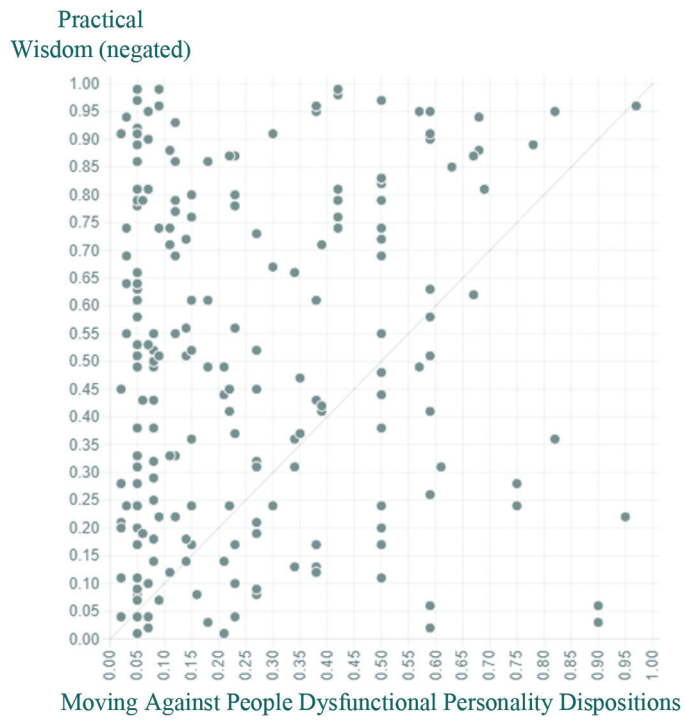
Source: Author's own work

Figure A3 fsQCA *H3* testing – moving away from people



Source: Author's own work

Figure A4 fsQCA *H4* testing – moving against people



Source: Author's own work

Figure A5 fsQCA *H5* testing – moving toward people

Source: Author's own work

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