

Individual Values of the Modern Youth of the North Caucasus: Commitment to Tradition

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Abstract: The study presents the results of empirical research of the individual values of the youth of the North Caucasus according to the Schwarz method. It is shown that in their hierarchical system socially-oriented, collectivist values dominate such as benevolence, universalism, tradition. Less significant are individualistic values, among which the rejected values are achievement and power. At the same time, the importance of collectivist values in traditional society increases as a person grows older and acquires social experience reflecting the socio-cultural pressure. However, there are differences between the ethnically homogeneous and multi-ethnic communities. In a mono-ethnic traditional society the socio-cultural pressure is more evident and the importance of socially oriented values is greater as compared to a multi-ethnic society in which there exists a variability of social behavior and the values of self-transcendence and openness for change are more significant.

Key words: The youth of the North Caucasus, multi-ethnic traditional society, collectivist values, individualistic values, Russia

INTRODUCTION

The North Caucasus is a region most often mentioned in the context of the problem of religious extremism and terrorism in modern Russia. This is a region where the fight takes place between modernism and traditionalism in social life, where the archaic elements of the pre-industrial era and the great influence of religion and customs are preserved. However, one can detect signs of an emerging “mass society” which is characterized by the predominance of a socially passive person-consumer and by the presence of a marginal layer that can be made up in the conditions of permanent changes in all spheres of life. The situation is aggravated by the fact that the North Caucasus is an economically depressed area with a low standard of living and high unemployment rate compared to other parts of Russia, especially among young people.

These processes are reflected in the public consciousness, causing corresponding changes in the worldview and value orientations of people, leading to a sense of instability and insecurity. Continuous social instability and value-meaning disorientation poses a threat to the social and cultural identity. This leads to the growing security needs among young people in the North Caucasus (Dalgatov *et al.*, 2014) as well as to a clearly defined ideological drift in the direction of traditional and religious values, the reference to the history, ethnic

traditions and culture, the attraction to the ethnic and cultural identity (Chernous, 1999). As T.G. Stefanenko notes, “an ethnic group is not the only group which allows a person finding a support in life if he is aware of belonging to this group. Due to the fact that each person has a stable ethnic status and an ethnic group is a stable composition, it makes the reliable support group for a person” (Stefanenko, 2009) “In the conditions of acute social instability an ethnic group often acts as an emergency support group”(Stefanenko, 2009).

It is well-known that individual values reflect the changes in the culture and the personality under the influence of historical and current social changes. Inglehart and Welzel (2011) points out that, “cultural foundations are handed down from generation to generation. However, the fundamental values reflect not only what people have been inspired by the older but also their own experience” (Karandashev, 2004). It is young people who attract particular interest of researchers in this regard, because the youth is most sensitive to social and values changes (Zhuravlev, 2006).

It is obvious that the world in which the modern younger generation integrates has become more unstable, whereas the factors of socialization have become more diverse and complex. At the same time, despite the fact that the socialization process is included into general cultural framework, “its forms, models, methods,

institutions, etc., are rooted in actual cultural traditions of this or that people (Belinskaya and Stefanenko, 2000). Thus, the individual values of youth represent the cultural values, distorting them in the individual consciousness in specific social conditions. On this basis the vital issues are the problem of how young people in the North Caucasus define themselves in relation to the values and goals in life and the problem of how their individual values reflect the ethno-cultural features and mono-and multi-ethnicity.

Main part

Organization of empirical research: This empirical study was conducted between May and September 2016. The sample are the students of 10-11 forms of comprehensive schools in Makhachkala, Dagestan (130 students), Grozny, the Chechen Republic (89 students) including 108 males and 111 females, of whom 122 students are in 10 form, 97 students are in 11 form. The testees from Makhachkala include representatives of all major ethnic groups in Dagestan, representing the approximate ratio in the population of Dagestan. High school students in Grozny have mono-ethnic composition and are presented by Chechen children.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

In recent years cross-cultural research of individual values are increasingly conducted with the use of theoretical approach and methodology of S. Schwartz. The concept by Schwartz and Bilsky (1990) consider values as motivational goals as the guiding principles of life as some (often unconscious) criteria for the selection and evaluation of actions, people and events (Schwartz *et al.*, 2012).

S. Schwartz relies on the fact that all individual values are founded on the basic conditions of human existence which include) the needs of the organism) desire for social interaction) the need for belonging to a group. That is why the values are different by the type of motivational goals that they express. Accordingly, the individual values were grouped in 10 motivationally different types:

- Power (wealth)-social status or prestige, dominance over people and resources
- Achievement-personal success through the manifestation of competence according to social standards
- Hedonism-pleasure or sensual enjoyment
- Stimulation-desire for risk, originality competitiveness and profound experiences

- Self-direction (self-regulation)-independence of thinking and action selecting of creativity and research activity
- Universalism-understanding, tolerance and protection of welfare of all people and nature
- Kindness (benevolence)-maintaining and improving the well-being of members of a group, usefulness, loyalty, forbearance to close people, honesty, responsibility, friendship, mature love
- Tradition-respect, adoption of customs and ideas that exist in the culture and following them
- Conformity-deterrence and prevention of activities, aptitudes and motives to actions that may cause harm to the others or do not correlate with social expectations: obedience, discipline, courtesy, respect for parents and elders
- Security-security of oneself and others, harmony and stability of society and relationships, need for adaptability, predictability of the world, reducing uncertainty

The presented types of values form a structure in which they are connected by dynamic relations (Fig. 1). Figure 1 the types of values are presented as a range of sectors which relative location depends on the degree of proximity or remoteness of motivational goals expressed by them. Thus, Fig. 2 shows the general scheme of conflict and compatibility of value types that make up the theoretical structure of the system of values by S. Schwartz. The competing value types are placed at opposite poles, whereas the compatible types are located nearby, forming the central circle. As the sectors move away from each other the degree of connection of value types decreases. It is assumed that the conflict or harmony between the values eventually determine the strategy of human behavior.

The types of values, in addition, are combined into blocks ("the value of the higher rank") which form two bipolar measurement axes (indicated at the inner circumference quarters):

- Openness to change (values: self-direction (self determination), stimulation, hedonism) as opposed to conservation (values: security, conformity, tradition)
- Self-enhancement (self-exaltation) (values: power, achievement) as opposed to self-transcendence (taking care of people and nature) (values: universalism and benevolence (kindness))

S. Schwartz believes it is possible to combine values into two pairs of "metavalues") values expressing the interests of a person (individualist orientation) and values expressing the interests of a group (social orientation) (in Fig. 3, they occupy the left and right half of the circle) values of avoiding anxiety and values of freedom

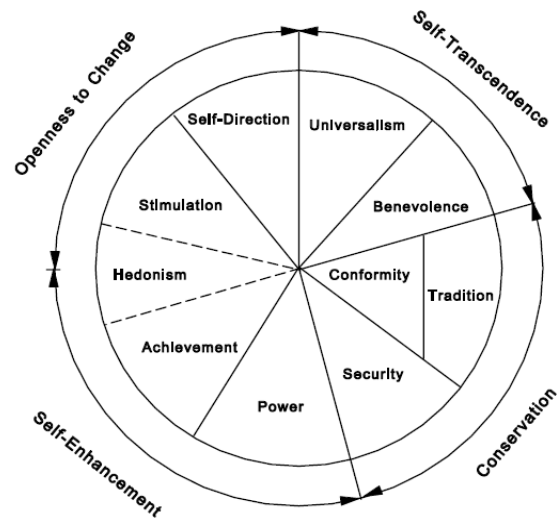


Fig. 1: Dynamic structure of motivational units (Schwartz and Bilsky, 1990)

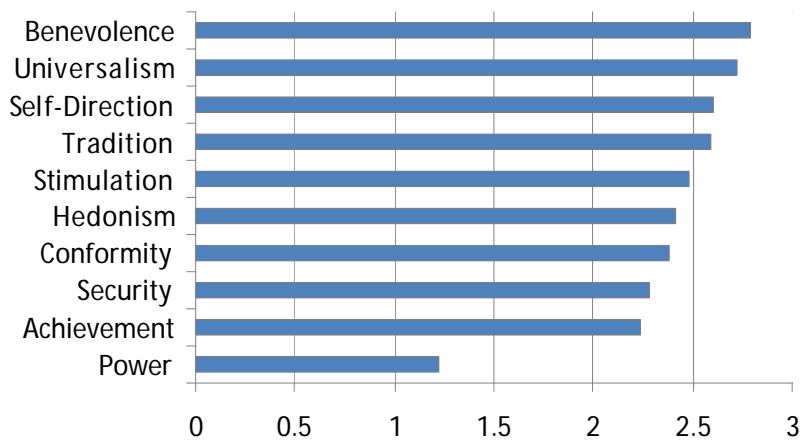


Fig. 2: Diagram of average rate of individual values of high school students

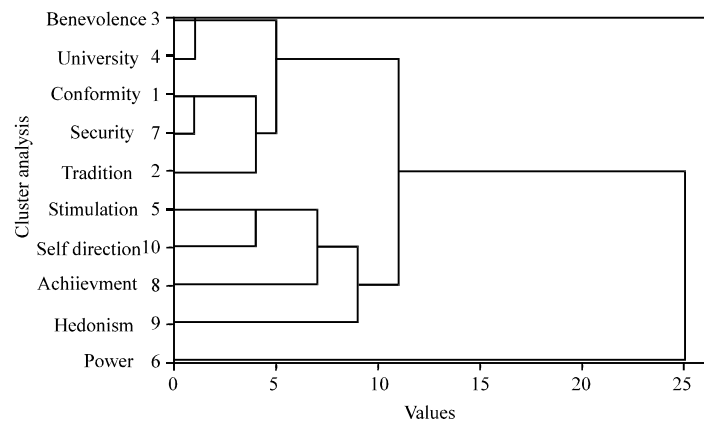


Fig. 3: Results of the cluster analysis of individual values of high school students (dendrogram using the method of inter-group relations)

from anxiety (the lower and upper half of the circle) (Schwartz *et al.*, 2012). This research used a variant of S. Schwarz methods for the study of individual values, adapted to the Russian-speaking population in 2000-2002 by Schwartz *et al.* (2012). Its second part is “personality profile” diagnosing values at the level of individual priorities and preferences manifested in the social behavior of a person.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The descriptive statistics of individual values of high school students on the whole is presented (Fig. 2). The data presented in Fig. 1 and 2 express the hierarchy of individual values of high school students. The dominant values are benevolence, universalism and self-direction. Evidently rejected value is power. Thus, according to the theoretical model of S. Schwartz the dominant values of high school students in the studied region are related to socially oriented pole (benevolence, universalism) and at the same time to the development pole. However, these values are the values of the dominant unit of self-transcendence and the third dominant value self-direction is adjacent to it and expresses openness to change.

The results of the cluster analysis (Fig. 3) carried out with the use of the method of average linkage between the groups of values shows that they are clearly grouped into two large clusters, each of which contains the values of the same block: socially oriented-benevolence, universalism, conformity, tradition, security and person oriented-self-direction, stimulation, hedonism and achievement. The rejected value power is separated from the rest which, on the one hand, may indicate a far distance of authority in a given society by (Hofstede, 2014) on the other hand, its unattractiveness for high school students. Table 1 represent the differences between the hierarchy of values among students of 10 and 11 forms.

The data presented in Table 2 allow comparing the group hierarchy of values of high school students (forms 10 and 11): mean values, standard deviations and ranks. The results of determining the significance of group differences between values of students of 10 and 11 forms are shown in Table 3. The differences are found in such values as conformity, tradition, self-direction, security (in bold). Moreover, all these values are significant for the students of 11 forms in the hierarchy dominate universalism and tradition. Comparison of the hierarchy of values in the groups. Table 3 shows that for the students of 11 form the following values are of greater importance: universalism (the shift from 2-1 place),

tradition (the shift from 4-2 rank), conformity (the shift from 8-6 place), security (the shift from 9-8 place). However, for the students of 11 form the values of lesser importance are benevolence, achievement. In general, socially oriented values are of greater importance for the students of 11 form in comparison with the students of 10 form.

Gender differences are found only in two values: benevolence (more significant for females and dominates in the hierarchy alongside with tradition) and power (more significant for males but rejected by both males and females).

Table 4 and 5 present the differences in individual values of high school students in a multi-ethnic environment (Makhachkala) and a mono-ethnic environment (Grozny). They show that in a mono-ethnic environment the importance of value types expressing social focus is greater. These values are tradition, conformity, security. In a multi-ethnic environment the values of the individual pole are more important: self-direction, hedonism, stimulation.

Results of empirical studies show that the characteristics of the culture of society are clearly reflected in individual values. The youth of the North Caucasus possess values which manifest features of traditional cultures collectivism and closed nature by (Triandis, 2007) distancing from authority, avoidance of uncertainty, masculinity and self-restraint by Hofstede (2014). At the same time, the expression of these values varies greatly in different age groups and in mono- and multi-ethnic society. We consider it justified to conclude that the differences in values between the high school students of Dagestan and Chechnya are determined by the factor of ethnic homogeneity and multi-ethnicity, since cultures of these peoples are quite similar, including the role of religion in society.

The noted differences reflect the regularities of the socialization process, consisting in the fact that as young people grow older and acquire social experience their value system is increasingly approaching to the characteristics of social and cultural environment. Thus, 11-formers, compared to 10-formers are more committed to universalism, tradition and conformity. As they are on the verge of entering an independent life self-direction is also more significant for 11-formers. In addition, self-direction may indicate not only the person's natural desire for independence and autonomy but also the need for self-control and self-management which fits into the traditional up-bringing requirements. This is supported by the remoteness of this motivational type from such individualistic values as hedonism, achievement and power which occupy the last place in the hierarchy.

Table 1: Individual values of high school students. Descriptive statistics

Individual values (S. Schwartz)	N	Rank	Min.	Max.	Mean	SD
Benevolence	1	219	0.25	4.00	2.7874	0.80652
Universalism	2	219	0.50	4.00	2.7218	0.70614
Self-direction	3	219	0.50	4.00	2.6066	0.75434
Tradition	4	219	0.25	5.00	2.5890	0.90130
Stimulation	5	219	-0.33	4.00	2.4776	0.90667
Hedonism	6	219	-0.33	4.00	2.4141	1.09427
Conformity	7	219	0.50	4.00	2.3781	0.89481
Security	8	219	0.00	4.00	2.2793	0.89417
Achievement	9	219	-0.50	4.00	2.2439	0.91300
Power	10	219	-1.00	4.00	1.2282	1.14304

Table 2: Values of students of 10 and 11 forms. Descriptive statistics

Individual values (S. Schwartz)	10 form/11 form	Rank	N-value	Mean	SD
Conformity	10	8	122	2.2552	0.91163
	11	6	97	2.5327	0.85286
Tradition	10	4	122	2.4477	0.97837
	11	2	97	2.7668	0.76216
Benevolence	10	1	122	2.8692	0.77820
	11	4	97	2.6846	0.83347
Universalism	10	2	122	2.6834	0.74061
	11	1	97	2.7702	0.66087
Self-Direction	10	3	122	2.4821	0.80331
	11	3	97	2.7632	0.65905
Stimulation	10	5	122	2.4296	0.98366
	11	5	97	2.5380	0.80035
Hedonism	10	6	122	2.3400	1.16987
	11	7	97	2.5072	0.98916
Achievement	10	7	122	2.2582	1.02261
	11	9	97	2.2260	0.75781
Power	10	10	122	1.1705	1.11996
	11	10	97	1.3008	1.17321
Security	10	9	122	2.1681	0.93616
	11	8	97	2.4191	0.82191

Table 3: Significance of group differences of students of 10 and 11 forms. T-criterion for independent selection

Individual values (S. Schwartz)	Levene's test for equality of variances			t-test for equality of means	
	F-value	Sig.	t-values	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Conformity	1.096	0.296	-2.302	217.000	0.022
			-2.320	211.297	0.021
Tradition	12.935	0.000	-2.638	217.000	0.009
			-2.713	216.920	0.007
Benevolence	0.003	0.954	1.689	217.000	0.093
			1.676	199.253	0.095
Universalism	0.883	0.348	-0.904	217.000	0.367
			-0.916	214.083	0.361
Self-Direction	1.779	0.184	-2.781	217.000	0.006
			-2.844	216.773	0.005
Stimulation	4.666	0.032	-0.879	217.000	0.380
			-0.900	216.875	0.369
Hedonism	2.373	0.125	-1.124	217.000	0.262
			-1.146	216.155	0.253
Achievement	10.812	0.001	0.259	217.000	0.796
			0.268	215.996	0.789
Power	0.154	0.695	-0.838	217.000	0.403
			-0.833	201.559	0.406
Security	1.481	0.225	-2.079	217.000	0.039
			-2.110	214.835	0.036

p-level-0.05

At the same time, the pressure of cultural standards on an individual system of values is most obvious in a mono-ethnic society hence, ethno-cultural socialization proceeds faster. As seen in Table 5, the dominant values of high school students in a mono-ethnic environment are

clearly represented in the social pole while the values of self-enhancement and openness to change are in the background. This confirms the presence of strong socio-cultural pressure in a mono-ethnic environment of a traditional society whereas a multi-ethnic environment

Table 4: Values of high school students in a multi-and mono-ethnic social environment. descriptive statistics

Individual values (S. Schwartz)	1-multi-ethn./2-mono-ethn.	Rank	N	Mean	SD
Conformity	1	8	130	2.1064	0.86170
	2	4	89	2.7749	0.79163
Tradition	1	6	130	2.3446	0.90732
	2	1	89	2.9461	0.76711
Benevolence	1	1	130	2.7237	0.76655
	2	2	89	2.8806	0.85749
Universalism	1	2	130	2.6746	0.73340
	2	3	89	2.7908	0.66233
Self-Direction	1	3	130	2.6441	0.74829
	2	6	89	2.5519	0.76403
Stimulation	1	5	130	2.4747	0.92810
	2	7	89	2.4819	0.87962
Hedonism	1	4	130	2.5848	1.01642
	2	9	89	2.1647	1.16016
Achievement	1	7	130	2.2566	0.95200
	2	8	89	2.2254	0.85782
Power	1	10	130	1.2332	1.15300
	2	10	89	1.2209	1.13482
Security	1	9	130	2.0848	0.92037
	2	5	89	2.5634	0.77550

Table 5: Significance of differences between multi- and mono-ethnic group. t-criterion for independent selection

Individual values (S. Schwartz)	Levene's test for equality of variances		t-test for equality of means		
	F-values	Sig.	t-values	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Conformity	0.684	0.409	-5.827	217.000	0.000
			-5.920	199.238	0.000
Tradition	2.028	0.156	-5.124	217.000	0.000
			-5.286	207.465	0.000
Benevolence	0.672	0.413	-1.417	217.000	0.158
			-1.388	174.915	0.167
Universalism	0.835	0.362	-1.197	217.000	0.233
			-1.220	201.087	0.224
Self-Direction	0.010	0.922	0.888	217.000	0.376
			0.884	186.625	0.378
Stimulation	0.007	0.934	-0.058	217.000	0.954
			-0.058	195.707	0.954
Hedonism	1.705	0.193	2.835	217.000	0.005
			2.765	172.324	0.006
Achievement	0.900	0.344	0.248	217.000	0.804
			0.253	201.325	0.801
Power	0.097	0.756	0.078	217.000	0.938
			0.078	191.193	0.938
Security	2.212	0.138	-4.024	217.000	0.000
			-4.154	207.757	0.000

p-level-0.05

provides a great variation for social behavior and therefore greater independence that is expressed in individual priorities of this group of high school students.

It is noteworthy that the youth of the North Caucasus explicitly reject achievement and power. Obviously, in a traditional society achievement is regarded primarily as a result of belonging to a prestigious group, but not as a manifestation of individual competence. This leads to the importance of universalism and tradition as well as to the preference of group interests to the individual achievements. As to power, its place in the hierarchy of values does not only express such cultural characteristic as a far distance from authority but it may reflect the nature of perception of authority by the youth.

Summary: Individual values of the youth of the North Caucasus testify to their commitment to traditional values. Socially oriented, collectivist values such as benevolence, universalism and tradition dominate. Individualistic values are less significant and the rejected values are achievement and power. The importance of collectivist values for people in a traditional society increases as they grow older and acquire social experience, reflecting the socio-cultural pressure.

In a mono-ethnic traditional society the socio-cultural pressure is more evident and the importance of socially oriented values is greater as compared to a multi-ethnic society in which there is a great variability of social behavior and self-transcendence and openness to change are more significant.

CONCLUSION

The problem of ethnic culture and mentality of the peoples of the North Caucasus is one of central in scientific and public discourse on the processes of inter-ethnic and cross-cultural interaction in modern Russia. The issues of extremism in the region and the commitment of some youth to religious radicalism are especially significant. In this context the study of motivational-value sphere of the youth becomes quite important which will allow learning the social behavior. The results of the conducted research study demonstrate the fact that the value system of the youth of the North Caucasus reflects the traditional nature of the society, young people's commitment to collectivist values and therefore to socially approved behavior. However, a clear rejection by the youth of the motivational type power indicates the absence of a favorable image of the authority which could lead to the alienation from authority's agenda. A problem of social and normative behavior of the youth of the North Caucasus is a valid one for further investigation.

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