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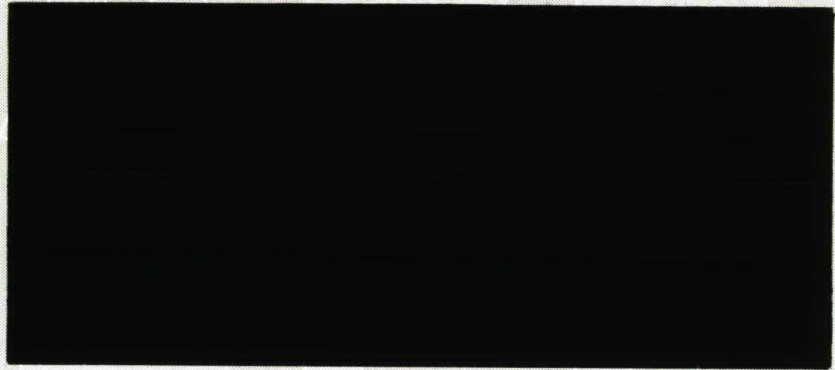
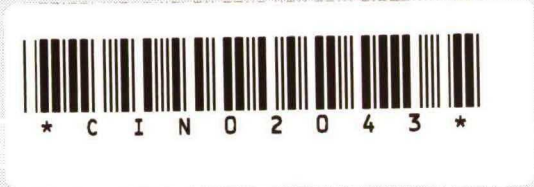
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**Value Priorities and Role Salience in Different Countries:
Some Findings of the Work Importance Study**

Branimir Šverko

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Paper prepared for the Symposium 'Values and Work'
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Value priorities and role salience in different countries:

Some findings of the Work Importance Study

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This paper summarizes some findings of the Work Importance Study (WIS). The purpose of this large-scale, cross-cultural project was twofold: to develop an integrated series of measures for the assessment of values and major life roles, including the work role, and to advance the cross-cultural study of value priorities and life-role salience. A large amount of data has been collected and analyzed, comprising questionnaire responses from over 30,000 respondents from 10 countries (Australia, Belgian Flanders, Canada, Croatia, Italy, Japan, Poland, Portugal, South Africa, and the USA). The paper summarizes the findings concerning the factor structure of values across the countries, value priorities and role importance in different countries, and the clustering of countries based on their value similarity. Some new data from Croatia, examining values change after a 10-year period, are also presented.

Introduction

Work Importance Study (WIS) is a large-scale, cross-cultural project concerned both with values, or rewards which people seek from life, and with importance assigned to work and to several other salient life activities or roles. The project was launched, and for many years well coordinated, by the late professor and distinguished scholar Donald E. Super. Super died in June this year, before he could see the final result of his WIS venture - the multiple-authored, cross-national monograph which I had the privilege to co-edit with him (Super and Šverko, in press). It is this forthcoming volume that I have relied on quite heavily in preparing this presentation.

"The purpose of Work Importance Study was twofold: to develop an integrated series of measures for the systematic assessment of values and the relative importance of major life roles and to advance the cross-cultural study of value priorities and life- role salience. The first

goal is seen as the not only the prerequisite for achieving the second, but is also considered important in its own right: truly cross-national measures of values and life-role importance are needed in both research and practice." (Šverko & Super, in press) That is why so much effort has been spent on the conceptual development and psychometric evaluation of the WIS measures. Rita Claes addressed this issue and explained the steps that were undertaken in order to obtain two truly international, logically and psychometrically sound inventories - the Values Scale and the Salience Inventory.

The development of the WIS instruments was a laborious and long process, partly because WIS was not organized as an unitary, centralized project. It has rather involved an interactive, participative research managing in which that was accomplished was the result of a collective endeavor. All decisions and plans for action had to be agreed at the working conferences, while between the conferences the researchers were busy at home - reviewing literature, preparing inventory items, testing pilot instruments, and so on. Of course, there is a drawback to such research managing: it takes time and resources. But, on the other hand, there are advantages. Perhaps the most important one is a broader perspective resulting from the cooperation of researchers from different countries, both West and East, developed and less developed, capitalist and socialist. And to bring together such different perspectives is indeed important when one investigates values in a cross-cultural perspective. Further, only this cooperative process enables one to obtain instruments that are truly international, and not - as is usual - instruments made in one culture and then translated and used in some different cultures with unknown success. Our instruments have been carefully checked and rechecked in each of the participating countries and their reliability and construct validity are well understood. So they are seen as providing a good groundwork for cross-national analyses undertaken in the so-called Main Study.

A vast amount of data was collected and analyzed in the Main Study. The data came from 10 countries, which included Australia, Belgian Flanders, Canada, Croatia, Italy, Japan, Poland, Portugal, South Africa, and the USA. Most of the countries were represented by three

samples: a secondary-school sample, a higher-education sample, and an adult sample. Different sampling procedures were used (see Super & Šverko, in press) but, in essence, it could be said that the secondary-school samples and most of the higher-education samples were methodologically well founded and mainly representative of the respective populations in most of the countries, while the adult samples were mostly samples of convenience. Altogether, the samples in all the countries numbered over 30,000 subjects. Thus, an impressive data pool was available for the cross-national analyses.

The purpose of this presentation is to communicate some of the cross-national findings, simply summarizing the analyses presented in the forthcoming WIS volume. Additionally, some new data from Croatia, examining the changes in values after a 10- year period, will also be presented.

Factor Structure: Evidence of cross-national universality

The first issue that we considered in our cross-national examination was the factor structure of the variables. Do similar factors underlie value and role-salience variables in different nations? What is the degree of congruence among them? Does the analysis confirm the assumed universality of the factor structure of values?

For the value domain, an early analysis using the Field Trial data from four different countries (Šverko, 1987) suggested positive answers to these questions. Subsequently, a series of extensive factor analyses with the Main Study data corroborated the findings (Šverko, in press). The factor structure of the 18 value scales was analyzed both globally, on the across-the-countries pooled sample, and, for each of the samples from different countries. Differing methods of factor extraction (principal components and principal factors) and differing methods of rotation (both orthogonal and oblique solutions) were considered, yielding essentially similar results. Five significant factors were isolated and interpreted as *value*

orientations.

The first factor, interpreted as *Utilitarian Orientation* (Ut), is defined by five largely extrinsic values (Economics, Advancement, Prestige, Authority, and Achievement), stressing the importance of economic conditions and career progress. The factor was quite constant across all of the samples. The second factor, named *Orientation Towards Self-Actualization*(sA), is defined primarily by Ability Utilization, Personal Development, and Altruism, while Achievement, Aesthetics, and Creativity also have salient loadings in some of the samples. All these values are typical intrinsic, inner-oriented goals important in personal development and self-realization. The third factor, *Individualistic Orientation* (In), defined primarily by Life Style and Autonomy, stresses the importance of an autonomous way of living. In some of the samples Creativity and Variety also appear to be saturated with this factor. The fourth factor is labelled *Social Orientation* (So), because it is defined primarily by Social Interaction and Social Relations, the two group-oriented values. In some of the samples loadings, on this factor include also Variety and Altruism. Finally, the fifth factor was tentatively labelled as *Adventurous Orientation* (Av); it is defined primarily by Risk, with Physical Activity and Authority also having projections on this factor.

In the role salience domain, a perfectly simple structure was found (Kulenović & Super, in press). In the series of analyses of 15 salience measures, five clearly defined factors were isolated in all of the countries. These factors correspond exactly to the five measured life roles.

Thus, visually identical or similar factors were identified in all of the countries. To check for the similarity of factor structure across the countries, we computed the congruence coefficients among the visually matched factors from different countries. This analysis revealed a high degree of factorial similarity or invariance across the countries for both value and role salience measures. The obtained mean congruence coefficients for the value factors and for the role salience factors were above 0.80 and 0.90, respectively. It was concluded that the results provided evidence for the *universality* of the factor structure of values and roles.

This finding is important for two reasons. Firstly, it is important in its own right: it contributes to better understanding of values and roles and proves for the generality of the interrelations of their components. Since most psycho-social studies are done within the framework of western European culture, one can never be certain whether discovered relations are valid for all of mankind. Our study supports the view that the observed value relations are not bound to a single culture, but rather seem to be pertinent to human behavior in general.

The second reason is heuristic: the demonstration of factor invariance is an important methodological step which should precede any comparison of the *importance* levels of the variables. The comparison of importance levels is justified only if the variables share the same meaning across the groups compared. And this is indicated by the similarity of their factor structures, which is usually taken as evidence for what has been termed the dimensional identity (Frijda & Jahoda, 1966) or comparative dimensionality (Eysenck & Eysenck, 1983) of the variables. Since our analyses supported the factor similarity across the national groups studied, the comparison of their value and role importance levels (i.e., of average scores or rankings) seemed warranted.

Values across the countries: Prominence of self-fulfilment

Most definitions and theoretical elaborations of values stress the dimension of *importance* as an essential feature of values (e.g., Locke, 1976; Rokeach, 1973; Schwartz & Bilsky, 1987). In agreement with this, most studies of values seek to compare the importance of different values across different human groups. Two approaches are feasible in these comparison. One is to rank the mean scores of each group on a set of values and compare the obtained hierarchies of values (the "ipsative" approach). In the other approach the mean raw scores obtained by different groups, or their standard scores if norms are available, are compared for each of the value scales (the "normative" approach). Since the results are not

necessarily similar, our cross-national comparisons combined both approaches (Šverko, in press). The comparison of samples from different countries revealed that both similarities and differences exist in their value priorities.

The cross-cultural similarities are most easily observed in the hierarchy of values, which appeared to be rather similar across the countries. Three typical intrinsic values - Personal Development, Ability Utilization, and Achievement - took the top positions in almost all of the samples. On the lower extreme, willingness to risk and the ambition for authority and prestige were declared of little importance everywhere. Economics, the key utilitarian value, occupied the 8th median rank. Thus it seems to be a matter of common consent across all of the nations that the fulfilment of one's potential, or self-realization, is an extremely important life goal for the majority of our subjects.

Highlighting self-actualization is not new in social sciences. It can be traced back to the philosophical ideas of "young" Marx, who regarded human work as a creative activity which should provide an opportunity for the realization of the human "generic essence". This basic notion was later elaborated and technically adopted by the psychologists of the so-called human potential movement. Goldstein (1939) considered *self-actualization*, or the tendency to realize all of one's potential, as the master human motive. The leading theoretician of the human potential movement Abraham Maslow (1970) postulated a hierarchy of needs progressing from the basic biological needs, through important psychological needs, to a culmination in self-actualization.

The importance of self-actualization has been also empirically confirmed by some studies coming from the Western world, mainly Anglo-American. In his review of these studies, the American sociologist Yankelovich (1981) suggests that "searching for self-fulfillment" may be the dominant principle of American culture today. The importance of the WIS findings is that they stress the *generality* of the notion by showing the remarkable pervasiveness of the self-fulfilment orientation: Personal Development and Ability Utilization are found to be prevalent values throughout most of the samples in different countries, both for

young people and for adults.

Of course, the dominant importance of the self-fulfilment values is a *general* finding, based on the average scores, which can mask over marked individual differences. A breakdown of our adult samples by occupational levels showed that for unskilled workers self-fulfilment is not so prominent; they placed more emphasis on the utilitarian and social values.

Role salience: Sizable age-differences

Unlike the analysis of values, the examination of the role salience data revealed significant differences between young people and adults. I will illustrate this with the Croatian data, but the same pattern was observed in the analysis of data from other countries. Figure 1 presents the finding.

The figure shows the average importance that four Croatian groups (two secondary-school groups, university students, and adults) attach to each of the five essential human activities (work, study, community service, homemaking, and leisure). The importance of the roles was assessed by the Participation Scale and the Commitment Scale of the Salience Inventory. As Rita Claes explained, the Participation Scale is behavioral in content: it asks respondents to state how much time and effort they devote to a role, how often they think, read, and talk about it, etc. The Commitment Scale is affective in content: it asks subjects to rate how they feel in relations to a role. In Figure 1, the two measures have been collapsed to produce a combined index of role importance.

The secondary-school students rated leisure as the most important activity in their life. Next in their role hierarchy are three activities which obtained very similar average importance scores: work, homemaking and study. Community service ranks last, with a very low degree of importance. The university students attached slightly less importance to leisure and slightly more to study. But their general pattern was not substantially different from that of the

secondary-school students.

Adults, however, show a quite different pattern of role salience. Clearly, the most important activity in their life is work, closely followed by homemaking. The worker and homemaker roles are clearly given priority. Much less importance is attached to leisure, and then to studying. Community service is the lowest ranked activity again. Of course, all these findings are based on average scores, masking over marked individual differences.

At first sight these results would seem to support the widespread notion of the "crisis of work ethics". The crisis is indicated, so the argument goes, by the values adopted by young people, who increasingly prefer leisure to work. But, early claims about work ethics crisis were made more than twenty years ago, based on the observation of young people of that period. Today, these people belong to the population of our adult subjects and, as mature persons, they now show quite different attitudes: work and homemaking are now their central activities, and leisure is far less important. We believe that the differences in work related values of younger and older people are not necessarily indicative of a *social* change in values. They may more parsimoniously be considered a result of the normal *maturational*, developmental process, reiterated in each generation (Šverko & Super, in press). This is not to deny, however, that some shifts in value priorities in the changing society do in fact occur. But they ought to be established through carefully designed "follow-up" studies. Although such studies are generally lacking, some results will be given later.

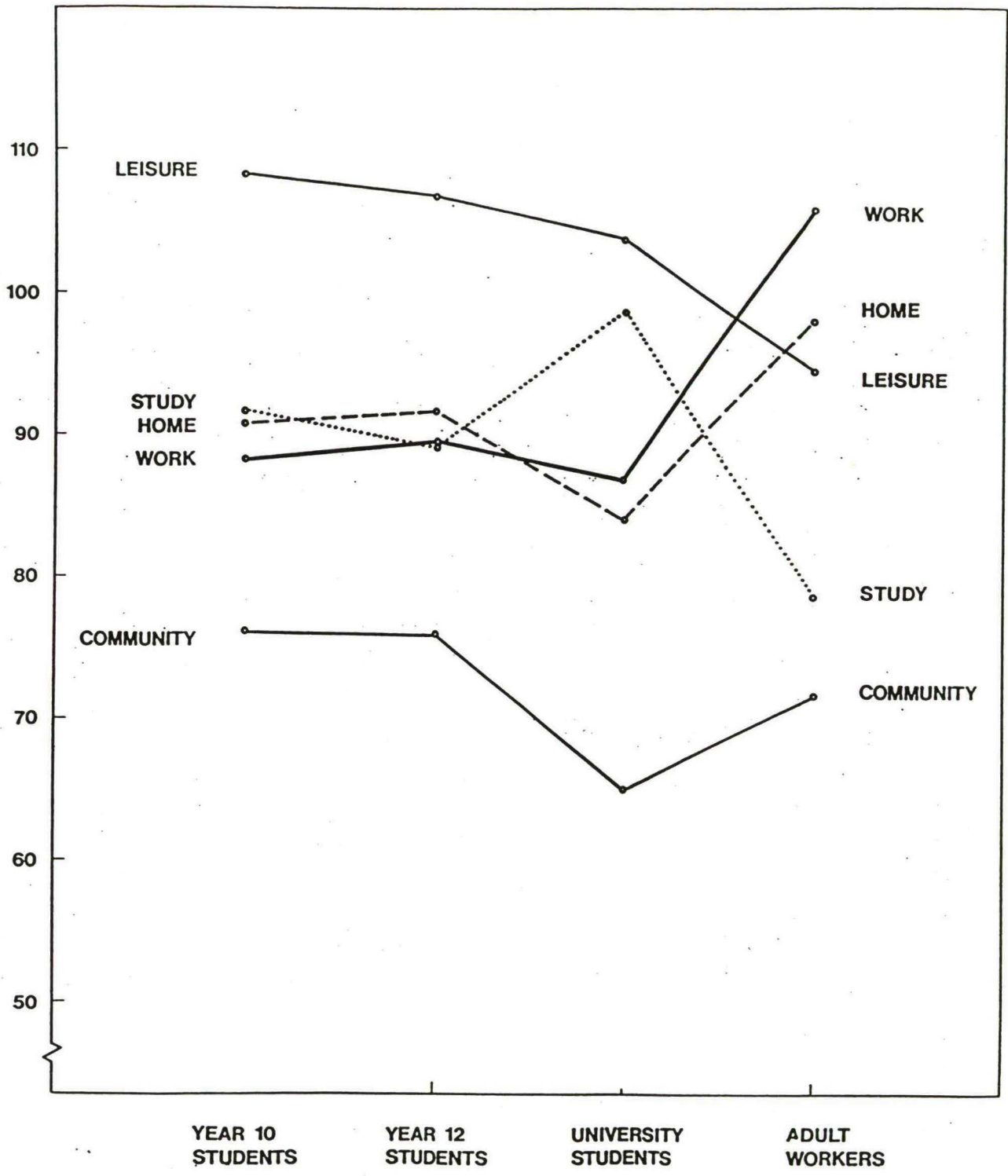


Figure 1. The average role importance for Croatian 10th year students (N=923), 12th year students (N=948), university students (N=348) and adult workers (N=344).

Clustering of countries: emergence of geo-cultural entities

The task of understanding national characteristics is always extremely difficult, if not an impossible one. Yet, in the two chapters of the forthcoming volume we concentrated on cross-national differences in an attempt to identify what may be the unique emphases in each country. As a result, each of the countries has been portrayed with a short description stressing its own, partially unique, pattern of values (Šverko, in press) and role importance (Kulenović & Super, in press).

In these analyses it was quite evident that the degree of (dis)similarity between different national samples varied. Therefore, the question of possible clustering of countries is raised. Is it possible to identify relatively homogeneous groups of national samples which share similar patterns of values or role salience?

The clustering of countries was studied with a hierarchical cluster analysis of the SPSS/PC+ CLUSTER procedure (Norusis/SPSS, 1988). Performed separately for values and roles, the analysis used the matrices of mean scores, with Ward's method of cluster formation and with squared Euclidian distances (the sum of the squared differences over all of the variables) as a measure of sample similarity. For the value-based analysis (Šverko, in press), the resulting process of agglomerative hierarchical clustering is depicted in Figure 2.

The dendrogram shows the clusters being combined and the distances at which they combined. Looking from left to right, the samples which combine earlier (at short distances) are more similar than those which combine later (at greater distances). Consequently, the clusters formed early are more homogeneous than those which merge later, at a higher level of integration.

As Figure 2 reveals, the main determinant of cluster formation seems to be *ethnic kinship*, because almost all of the early formed clusters are nationally homogeneous. Thus, the clustering seems to transcend generational differences: youths and adults within a country seem to be more alike than either age group is across the countries.

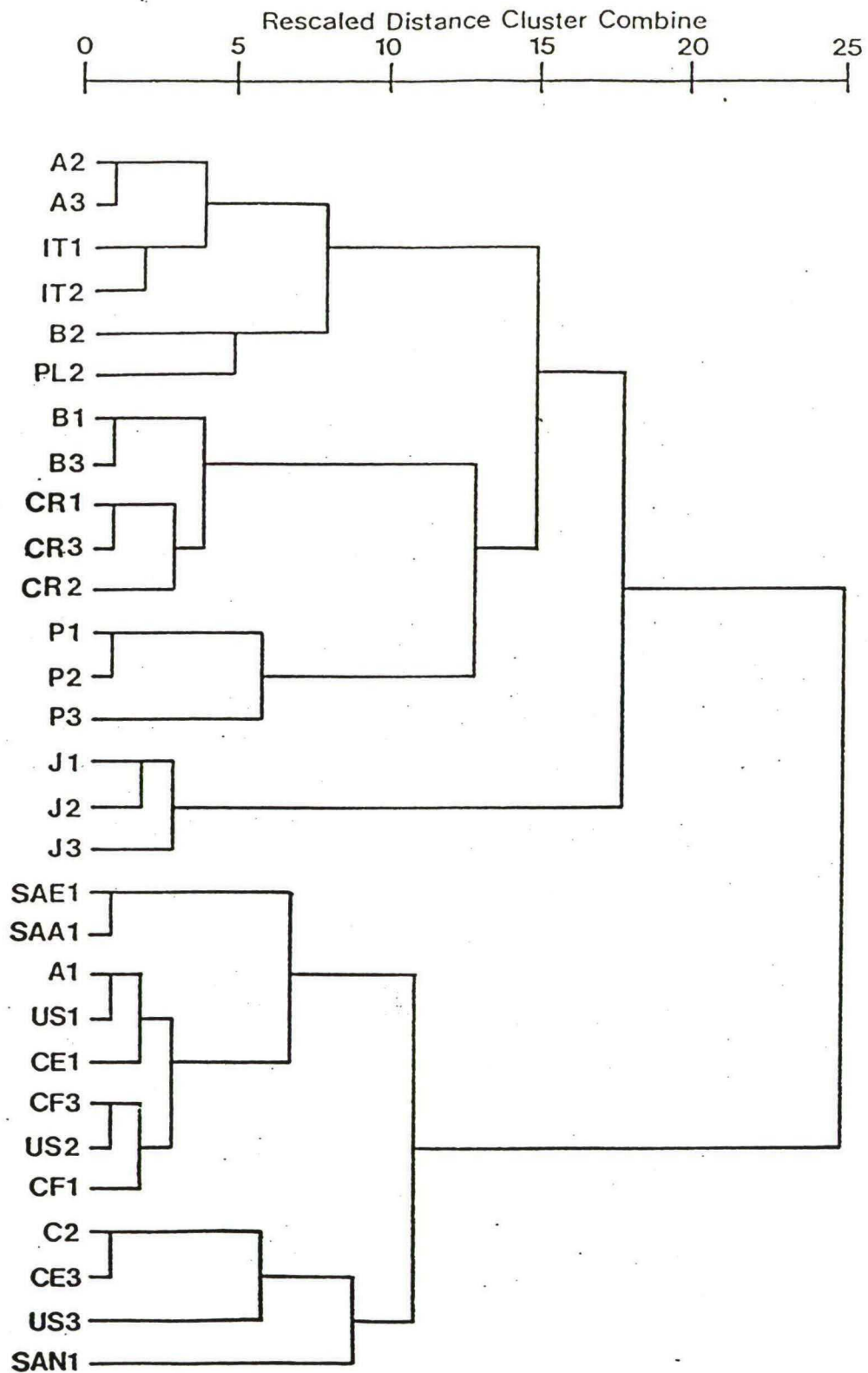


Figure 2. Hierarchical clustering of countries according to their Values Scale mean scores. (From Šverko, in press).

A = Australia, B = Belgian Flanders, CE = English Canadians, CF = French Canadians, CR = Croatia, IT = Italy, J = Japan, P = Portugal, PL = Poland, SA = South Africa (SAE = English speaking, SAA = Afrikaans, SAN = Native SA languages), US = the USA. Numbers 1, 2, 3 denote secondary-school, higher-education, and adult samples, respectively; i.e. A3 = Australian adult sample.

At a higher level of integration, the clusters agglomerate in three higher-order clusters, which correspond to three meaningful geo-cultural regions. In the bottom part of the dendrogram, a cluster is formed which combines all of the Canadian samples, both English and French Canadians, the three US samples, the South African samples, and one Australian sample. It was labelled the North American cluster (also called "New World"). In the middle, there is a small cluster comprising only the three Japanese samples. They merged very early, at a small distance, and remained an independent, nationally homogeneous cluster until the last stages of agglomerative clustering. Finally, the upper part of the dendrogram comprises a cluster aggregating 14 samples: two Australian and 12 European. All the European samples merged together in this cluster, and none joined either of the other two clusters. Thus, the appeal for united Europe works, at least in our dendrogram.

The clustering of the samples based on the role salience data (Kulenović & Super, in press) was somewhat different. In this case, most of the early formed clusters are based on the age-and-status similarity. For example, most of the adult groups tended to merge in a cluster regardless of nationality. Nevertheless, on a higher level of integration, all of these primary clusters tended to agglomerate in three groupings of countries virtually identical with the three clusters shown for values.

What are the essential distinguishing characteristics of the three groups of countries? In an attempt to answer this question, the unweighted mean scores for each value were computed from the means of all the samples making up each cluster. The results are given in Figure 3, which makes it possible to compare the three groups of countries in terms of their value hierarchies and mean importance assigned to each of the values.

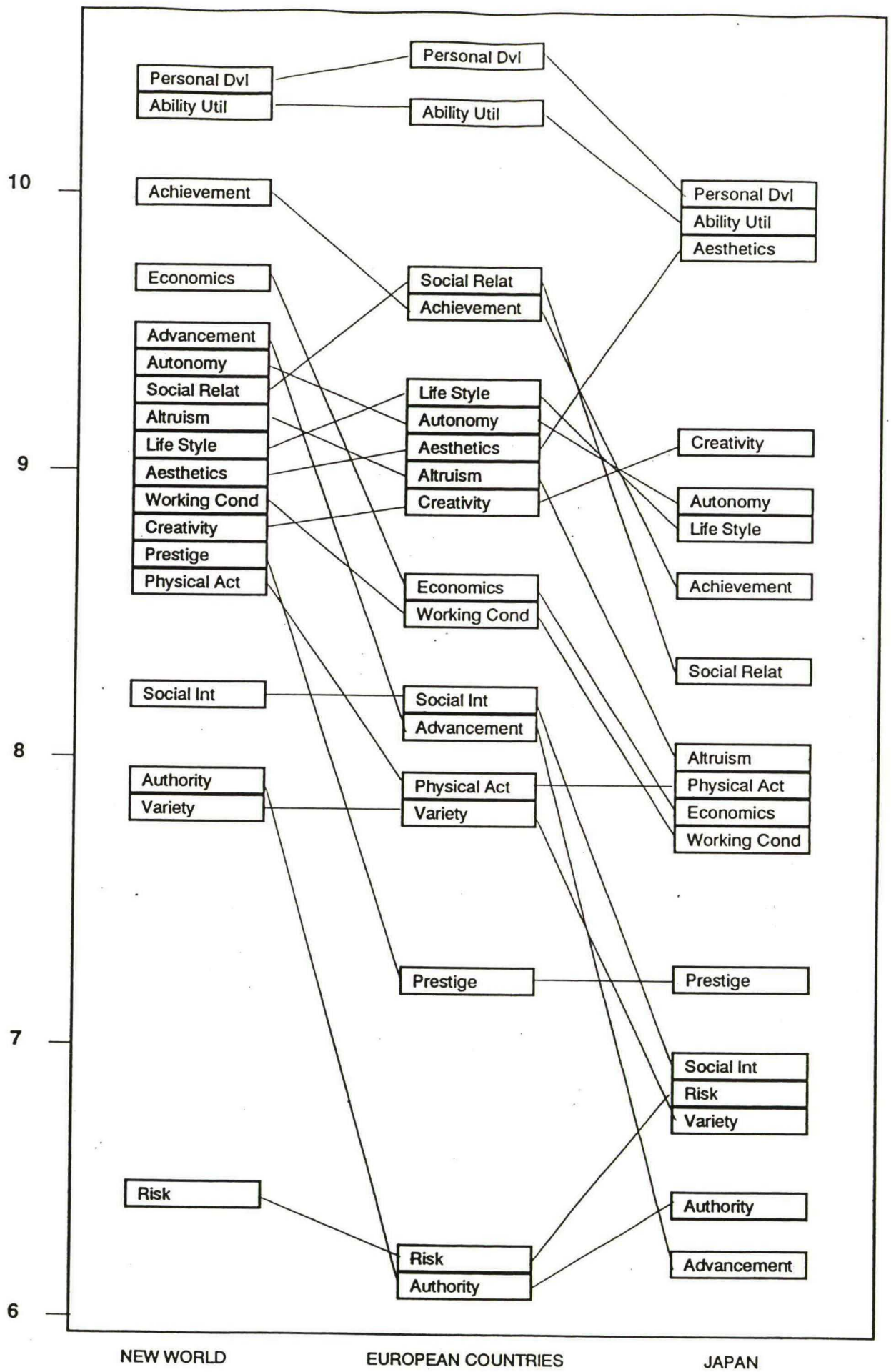


Figure 3. Value importance in the groups of countries belonging to different clusters. (From Šverko, in press).

Similarities are, again, obvious: the top ranked values (Personal Development and Ability Utilization) and low ranked values (Authority, Risk, Variety, and Prestige) occupy similar positions in all three hierarchies. This is congruent with what was said before, namely, that self-realization is an extremely important life goal for the majority of our subjects. On the other hand, differences in importance ratings are seen in a number of values. They are easily recognized by the slopes of the lines connecting identical values in different clusters: the higher the inclination, the greater the difference in the value importance. An analogue analysis has been performed for the role salience data too. As a result of both analyses, a list of the cluster distinguishing characteristics was compiled and is summarized in Table 1. Not many distinguishing features have been found in the analyses of the cluster differences. Our clusters appear, perhaps, more similar than different. But, anyway, how are we to interpret the observed differences?

Of course, this is largely a matter of speculation. A number of cultural, social, and economic factors may interact to shape the values of people of the same nation or cultural unit. What different cultural groups seem to value may be related to differences in their economic growth, degree of industrialization, degree of urbanization, political climate, religious background, historical circumstances, etc. We can only hypothesize which of the factors may have been influential by looking how they relate to the clustering of countries. Only the factors whose appearance, or level of appearance, is idiosyncratic to particular clusters are likely to be the candidates, while the factors with similar appearances in different clusters are less likely to be influential.

By such reasoning we may infer that the degree of economic development and industrialization is not a decisive factor, because the most highly developed countries (Belgium, Canada, Italy, Japan, and the US) are dispersed in all three clusters. A similar conclusion may be reached for the degree of urbanization. The political system does not seem to play an important role either: Poland and Croatia, the only two communist countries (at the time of data collection), though in the same higher-order cluster with the other European countries, did not show any tendency to cluster at lower distances indicating any closer mutual similarity.

Table 1

Groupings of Countries According to Values and Role Salience:
A Cluster Analysis Summary

CLUSTER NAME	NATIONAL SAMPLES MAKING UP CLUSTERS	DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS
New World	All US samples All Canadian* All South African* One Australian	A value pattern implying a drive for upward mobility, material success and prestige, with less emphasis on the less worldly aspects of life. Role salience characterized by the importance attached to work and homemaking: both are considered important as shown by participation, commitment, and value expectations.
Europe	All Belgian Both Italian The one Polish All Portuguese All Croatian Two Australian	High valuation of relationships and understanding among people, a tendency towards an autonomous life style, and strong rejection of authority. A "flat" salience profile with relatively more emphasis attached to studying than in other two geo-cultural units.
Japan	The three Japanese samples	High valuation of aesthetics and creativity; relatively low rating of all other values, especially of values indicative of upward mobility and material success. Low ratings of all life-role activities.

*NOTE: In the values-based clusters all of the Canadian and South African samples joined the New World cluster, while in the role-salience based clusters one Canadian (Francophone secondary-school students) and one South African (African languages respondents) merged with the European cluster. (Source: Šverko & Super, *in press*)

What is, then, common to all countries within a cluster and different across clusters? We have been able to figure out only an attribute loosely identified as "geocultural similarity": it includes both geographical proximity and similar cultural traditions (Šverko & Super, in press). One cluster assembles mostly New World countries with the predominantly Protestant tradition, the next brings together European countries mainly with Roman Catholic tradition, and the third cluster include only the samples from Japan, a country with the Shintoist-Buddhistic tradition. These different cultural traditions account, perhaps, for at least some of the observed value variations.

How stable are the findings? Some recent data from Croatia

In their recent analysis of the articles published in the *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, Öngel and Smith (1994) refer to the difficulty of assembling truly collaborative international research teams. "The development of such teams takes time, tact, and resources, and publication pressures militate against setting them up" (p. 50). The members of the WIS team are well aware of this observation. The volume presenting our findings will be available in mid-1995, fifteen years after the project was launched, and ten years after first data collected. Will the findings be obsolete when they are finally published?

As characteristics which are largely shaped by the early socialization process, values are considered to be relatively stable behavioral dispositions, resistant to change within a short period of time such as a decade. But, there are periods when changes may be enhanced, and some authors suggest that the 1980s, the time of our study, may have been such an period. "The 1980s is a period of widespread social change ... through the world. It is the time when many people are questioning traditional social values." (Hunt & Colander, 1987, p. 133)

Some empirical findings related to this notion came from two large-scale, cross-

national research projects. One of them, the European Values Studies (see Ester, Halman & Ruud de Moor, 1993), surveyed, in 1981, the basic values in a number of Western European countries. In 1990, the survey was replicated. "The changes in work values in the period of 1981-1990 were predominantly in the direction of a growing importance attached to the opportunity for personal development in a job. However, the changes were moderate." (Zanders, 1983, p. 151) Another major project of that period, an eight-country study of the meaning of work (MOW, 1987), was also replicated in some of the participating countries. Originally conducted in 1983/84, the study was replicated in 1989 in Germany (Ruiz Quintanila & Wilpert 1991) and in the USA (England, 1991). Both replication studies report a statistically significant decline in the level of importance attached to working as a life role, but no congruent shifts in the importance of work goals have been established in the two countries. Besides, the decline in the importance of work (0.25 and 0.13 of the standard deviation in Germany and the USA, respectively) has been designated as "moderate to small in size". As Ruiz Quintanila & Wilpert (1991) note "...our data seem to reflect some changes, although terms used in the value debate ('dramatic changes') do not seem to be justified." (p. 102)

The above findings may help to alleviate our concern about the obsolescence of the WIS findings where developed and relatively stable countries are concerned. But what about the countries which have undergone major political, social and economic changes in the intervening years? Croatia is, certainly, one such country. In 1990, the free multiparty elections ended the communist rule in Croatia and inaugurated the process of profound socio-economic transition aiming at the transformation of ownership and establishment of a market-oriented society. At the same time, the dissolution of Yugoslavia took place, a process that brought into the open long suppressed national conflicts which finally resulted in war. Croatia declared its independence in 1991, and subsequently became the victim of a war of aggression in which part of the Croatian territory has been occupied, a number of Croatian towns destroyed or damaged, thousands of civilians killed, and hundreds of thousands displaced. Owing to the war damage and the loss of markets, the economy has been depressed, badly

affecting the living standards of the majority of people. How has this affected their work values?

No systematic replication of the WIS study has been attempted as yet, but some data collected recently by two of our students allow at least for some preliminary comparisons. In November 1993, Susanne Krištofić administered the Values Scale to 446 secondary-school students (year 12) in four different schools in Zagreb. These data will be compared with the 1983 data for 948 secondary-school students (year 12) from the whole of Croatia. In spring 1994, Lolita Cikojević administered the Values Scale to 298 university students from different departments. These data will be compared with the 1983 data for 348 university students of similar departmental composition.

Before any comparison was attempted I asked six of my colleagues, all experienced in the study of values, to predict the outcome of the comparison. For each of the values on the Values Scale, they were to indicate whether they expected that its importance had increased, decreased, or remained unchanged. Although our agreement in the estimates was modest, we were unanimous in one prognosis: we all predicted a considerable increase in importance of the utilitarian values, in particular economic security and advancement. Two accounts accompanied this prediction. One is that the implementation of an economic system promoting entrepreneurship and economic efficiency lays more emphasis on the values stressing upward mobility, material success and prestige. The second explanation relied on the Maslovian needs-reduction notion: diminished living standards, economic insecurity, and war-time austerity are all conducive to the value shift stressing the lower-level needs.

The 1983-1993/4 comparison for secondary-school and university students is presented in Figures 4 and 5, respectively. The national 5-item value scales were used in this study. Their mean scores obtained at two points of time are used to draw the profiles. The horizontal lines divide the values which are, according to the factor analysis, indicative of different value orientations: "self-actualizing" (sA), "individualistic" (In), "social" (So), "utilitarian" (Ut), and "adventurous" (Av). The asterisks denote the values with statistically significant 1983- 1993/4

differences at the *0.01 level* in *t-test* comparisons.

As can be seen, most of the 1983-1993/4 differences attained a statistical significance. But, to reduce the possibility that sampling error is declared as "change", I will limit the discussion to the values which congruently changed their importance in both analyses (i.e., both for secondary-school and university students). Clearly, the two groups of values changed significantly in both groups of students: all of the "utilitarian" values and all of the "individualistic" values *increased* in importance. The increase is substantial: on average it amounts to 0.69 standard deviation units for the five "utilitarian values" and to 0.55 for the three "individualistic" values. The change towards a higher endorsement of the utilitarian values has been clearly predicted and explained above. The increased emphasis on individualistic values is, perhaps, a consequence of the general post- socialist move away from collectivism.

Only two values underwent a decline in valuation: participation in decisions and altruism. The endorsement of the former value might have declined because of the the subjects' tendency to give socially acceptable answers: uncritically promulgated in the former "self-management" system, participation is nowadays relegated to the background in Croatia. The lower endorsement of altruism may be the result of the information overload and feeling of helplessness. When life is constantly filled with the horrors of war and poverty, people may adapt and their concern for the suffering of others may be lessened, in particular when their sense of ability to change the situation is lost.

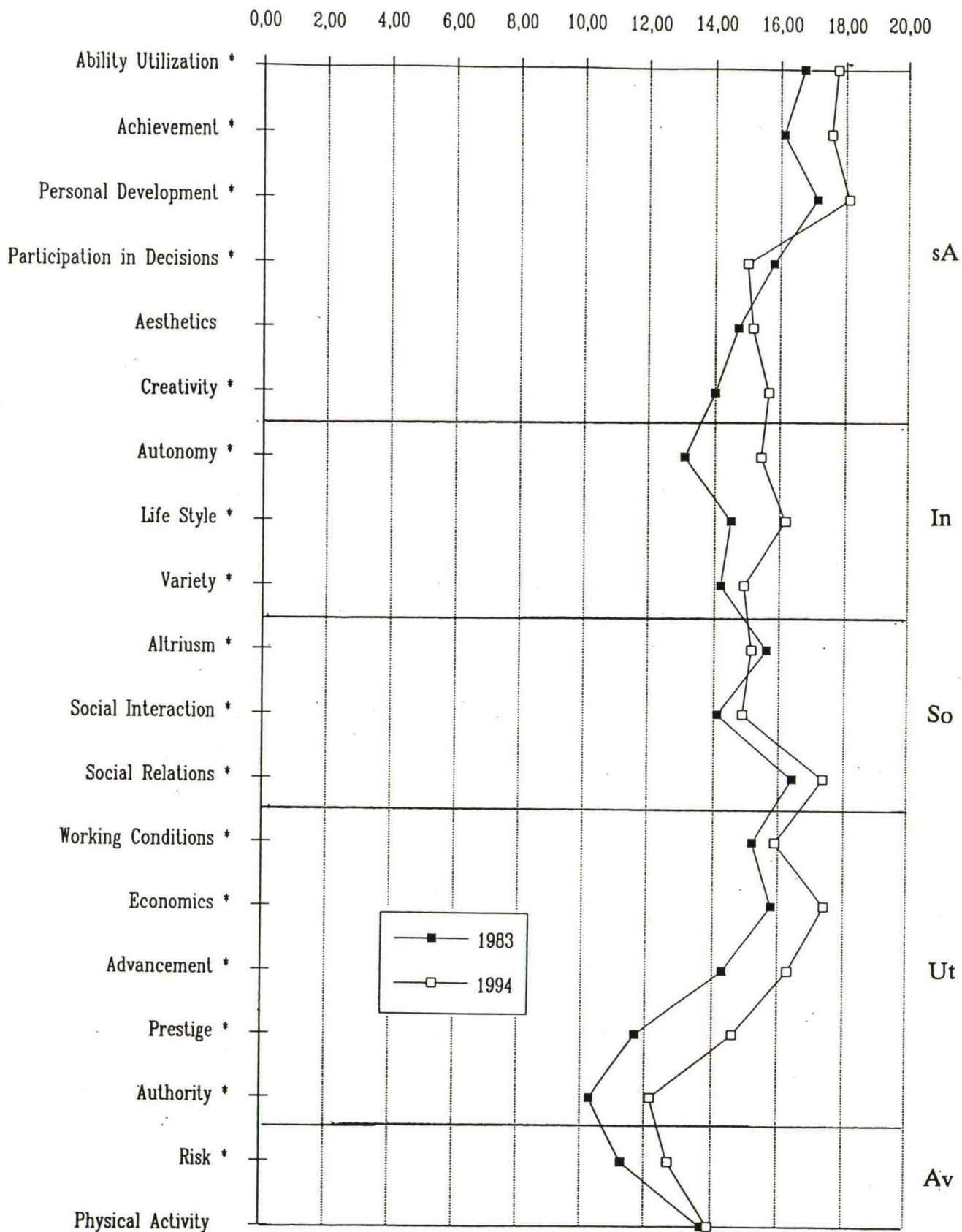


Figure 4. 1983-1993 differences in mean Values Scale scores in Croatia: Secondary-school students.

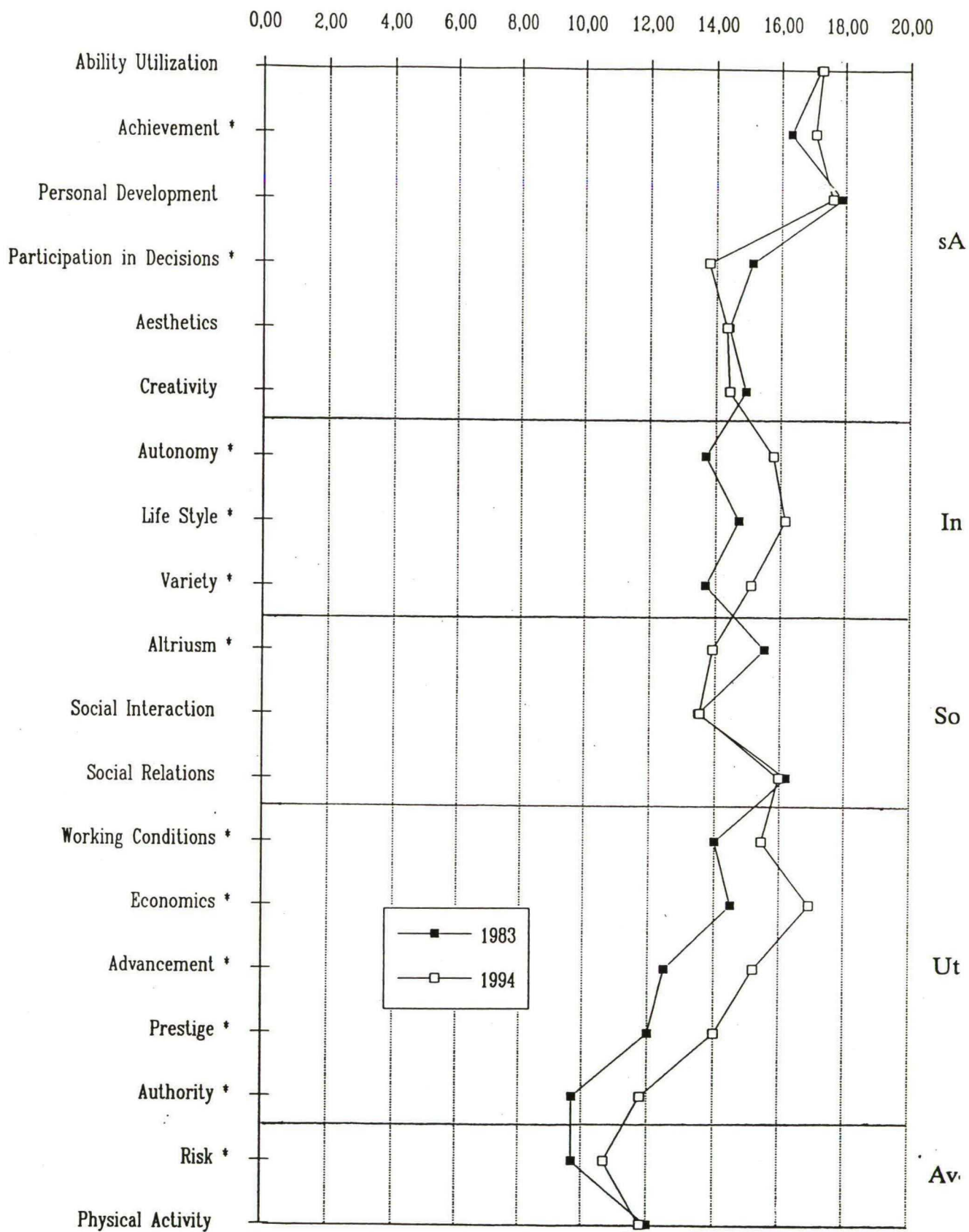


Figure 5. 1983-1994 differences in mean Values Scale scores in Croatia: University students.

Whatever the explanation, the observed changes in values resurrect our concern about the durability of the findings. It has been noted that nations change and that their characteristics established in one period of time may not necessarily persist (e.g. Klineberg, 1954). Therefore, periodical replication studies are needed in order to check on the previous findings and to capture possible changes over time.

But on the other hand, there seem to be some stable components in our findings. Gergen (1973) speaks about "a continuum of historical durability", suggesting that psycho-social phenomena differ in their susceptibility to historical influence. He also suggests that cross-cultural methods might be used to discern the relative durability of phenomena: the similarity of a finding across different cultures would be indicative of its durability across time. As shown above, our cross-cultural analysis indicated a remarkable pervasiveness of the self-fulfilment orientation: Personal Development and Ability Utilization are found to be prevalent values in all of the countries. The 1993/94 data from Croatia do not alter this conclusion: although the utilitarian values came up in importance, Personality Development and Ability Utilization have preserved their topmost importance.

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