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Relationship between adolescents' and parents' life values and attitudes toward future profession

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Abstract

The purpose of the study was to identify similarities and differences in life values in adolescents, their mothers and fathers, and to describe the parents' attitudes to their child's choice of future profession and relationships with parents' life values. Value's differences of generations can lead to misunderstanding; therefore, we wanted to answer the questions: what are the preferred life values of adolescents and their parents, what are the links between the values and attitudes to the future profession in adolescents, their mothers and fathers? Sample: 76 adolescents (mean age 15.78±0.42), and 105 parents: 61 mothers (mean age 42.97 ± 5.33) and 44 fathers (mean age 44.71 ± 6.71). Methods: the questionnaires for adolescents and for parents; techniques for values' studying (Schwartz Value Inventory, (SVI), modified forms). Descriptive, correlation, and comparative analysis were conducted. The study revealed high importance of universalism, security, self-direction, and benevolence values for adolescents and their parents; and different relation to the values of stimulation, hedonism, conformity, and tradition. The study showed intergenerational transmission of life values revealed in various different interrelation of values of adolescents and their fathers and mothers. The data of the parents' involvement, acceptance and support of the adolescent's choice of profession and values of parents with different level of activity in the adolescent's choice of profession can be applied in counseling of parents.

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Keywords: values; adolescents; parents; choice of profession.

1. Introduction

Values as personality convictions in preferable life purposes and means accompanied human actions and guided a person's life have long been studied by many famous psychologists (Allport, 1968; Rokeach, 1973; Bilsky &

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Schwartz, 1978, and others). Besides, values are also the evaluation criteria of behavior that is of great importance in adolescence. Identity and acquiring acceptable values is one the main challenges of teenagers and adolescents; adjusting positive and clear values will protect teenagers against many social traumas (Pulkkinen & Kokko, 2000). Important and stable social institute for learning the values is a family. It, in the light of cultural criteria, determines favorable and unfavorable values for children (Suchulthesis & Blustein, 1994).

Last years the interest to studying of the transmission of values between generations has increased. In many countries, the values of parents and children, and the differences between them were investigated. So, Demir & Kok (2012) using a modification of Schwartz's Portrait Values Questionnaire studied values of parents of primary school students and showed that parents consistently preferred values of Universalism, Security, Benevolence, Conformity, Tradition, that did not significantly differs depending on the age, occupation, education level, and students' grade level. Aşıkuzun & Kildan (2013) have shown that in spite of the current changes in the world's societies and centuries-old habits due to a new circumstances and experiences, some universal and human values are still a priority for many parents in rearing their children as they were centuries ago. Based on special ranking procedure they found that among the values which the parents of pre-school students want their children to acquire the first one was Honesty, the second one was a Respect, and the third one – Self-confidence. Barni, Alfieri, Marta & Rosnati (2013) studied the process of value transmission and the degree of similarity between parents and their children across different child's developmental stages. Their study of a large sample of Italian fathers, mothers and children showed that parent-child value similarity was small in size among families with adolescents, and significantly higher among families with emerging adults. Nevertheless, they found after removing stereotype effects that this difference disappeared, suggesting that the higher parent-emerging adult value similarity was to a great extent socially derived.

In general, the adolescents' values associate with the cultural context, sex, and family characteristics. For example, Tulviste & Tamm (2014) revealed that the value priorities of early adolescents, in terms of the 10 value types defined by Schwartz, differed from the pan-cultural value hierarchy of adults by attributing more importance to Hedonism and Stimulation, and less importance to Benevolence and Conformity. Their results showed that in spite of the fact that Russian-speaking students rated Self-Enhancement and Openness to Change more highly than ethnic Estonians, the value hierarchy of adolescents from these social groups was rather similar. Boys considered Self-Enhancement more important than girls. Asayesh & Bahramizadeh (2011) answering the question, whether a change in values has been created over the past decade conducted a study among male and female students. The results showed a more similar attitude to the religious value, social value, public value, values of aesthetic, economic, knowledge, hedonism, power, and health in the boys and girls than in previous studies; but regarding family credit there was a significant difference between two genders. According to the authors, this is a warning of the reduction of families' power in transferring the appropriate values to each gender.

Rosnati, Barni & Uglia (2014) have examined the impact of family structure on children's value development. Adolescents from separated/divorced families gave more importance to Stimulation (i.e., novelty and challenge in life) and to Hedonism, and less importance to Conservatism than did their peers. Complementary results were obtained in the study of Russian adolescents by Podolsky (2012). He applied the author's methodology of distribution of values by adolescents and revealed that "difficult" adolescents attach more importance to the material and hedonistic values (Wealth, Pleasure), while the "normal" students are more focused on the value of relationships (Friendship, Love).

Thus, the values of adolescents are different from adult values, and their development is significantly influenced by family. How does the value of parents and children manifest in such an important adolescent life decision as choosing a career? Due to the fact that the decision-making process starts quite early on, it modeled by many family influences: family structure and relationships, parents' life values and attitudes, parents' own example of professional development and satisfaction, and their active support of the child or opposition. According Bryant, Zvonkovic & Reynolds (2006) throughout the decision making process, the family represents the financial support that would give access to resources and information gathering a vocational nature, the human support – for developing vocational skills, and also the social support – the parent-child relationships and interactions. The family's knowledge, beliefs and values about work in general, and about certain professions in particular, accompanied by the child's direct observations, are an important source of choice of future profession. Their transmission depends on the parents' availability, the time they can afford to set aside, but also on their communication skills.

Support provided to adolescent by father and mother in matters of career choices is different. Paloú & Drobot

(2010) found that, unlike the father, the mother involves herself more intensely when it comes to career-related plans, by initiating concrete actions, but also by giving psychosocial support. Parents who are affectionate, tolerant, simulative and performance-oriented get more involved in the children's vocational development. Children with a securing attachment are more open to guidance, to vocational exploring. Differentiation of modern fathers and specific role of active type of fathers in supporting the development of their children are described in the study by Bezrukova (2013). Parents actually can greatly help their children in the decision, but their interaction will be successful if the authority and confidence relations with their sons and daughters graduated from school. But, Bezrukova & Samoylova (2015) investigation showed that many parents try to solve questions by the authoritarian imposition of their own decision to the child; authoritarian attitudes are characteristic of low resource families, rather than of families with medium resources.

Thus the problem is that the values of different generations differ, and this fact can lead to the lack of understanding between adolescents and parents in the field of career choice, despite the fact that children need it, and parents want to help but do not know how. Therefore, parents cannot fulfill its role, insist on future profession choice, based on their own values and beliefs, or eliminate the problem away, handing choice to children.

The purpose of the study was to explore the life values in adolescents, and their parents, and to reveal the relationships between parents' life values, and parents' attitudes to their child's profession choice.

Analysis of the problem let us to put the research questions:

What are the preferred life values of adolescents and their mothers and fathers, and are there correlations between them? What are parents' attitudes to their child's profession choice (knowledge, acceptance, and career oriented support)?

Are there the links between mothers and fathers' life values and their attitudes to child's future career choice?

2. Methods

2.1. Sample

Sample consisted of adolescents and their parents. 76 adolescents were examined, including 36 boys and 40 girls (mean age 15.78 ± 0.42). 51 adolescents were students of three classes of the same school, 25 teenagers were students of another school; both schools are situated near St. Petersburg. 105 parents were composed of 61 mothers (mean age 42.97 ± 5.33) and 44 fathers (mean age 44.71 ± 6.71). 64 adolescents grow up in a complete parental family, and 12 adolescents grow up in single-parent family.

2.2. Instruments

Data have been collected by means of two packages of techniques that were offered to adolescents and to their parents.

Adolescents' values were assessed through the modification of Schwartz Value Inventory (SVI), by Schwartz, Butenko, Sedova & Lipatova (2012). This form is based on a refined theory of basic personal values by Schwartz, and was verified for validity on Russian sample. It evaluates 19 values by allocating meaningful subtypes within some of the 10 basic values (Schwartz, 1992) defined with confirmatory factor analysis and multivariate scaling. Generally, it estimates values of Stimulation; Hedonism; Achievement; Tradition; Conformity value includes Conformity - Rules (observance of rules, laws and formal commitments), Interpersonal Conformity (avoidance of harm or distress to other people), and Humility (recognition of insignificance the existence of a single person); Benevolence value includes Benevolence - Care (devotion to the group and the welfare of its members) and Benevolence - Duty (desire to be a reliable and trustworthy member of the group); Universalism involves Universalism - Care of nature, Universalism - Caring of others, and Universalism - Tolerance (acceptance of those who are different from you); Self-Direction value includes Self-Direction in Thoughts and Self-Direction in Actions; Power value includes Power - Dominance (power by means of control over the people) and Power - Resources (power through controlling the material and social resources); Security value includes Reputation (protection and influence by maintaining the public image), Personal Security, and Social Security. Values of adolescents are derived from implicit values of

the people they consider similar to themselves, the questionnaire has forms for boys and girls. The scale of answers ranging from 0 (he (she) does not like me at all) to 5 (he (she) is very similar to me).

To identify adolescents' intentions toward future profession and their readiness for career choice we used the questionnaire which included both open and closed questions. They were asked to note chosen (or preferred) profession in free form, to explain their choice and to describe concrete actions they are taking for their professional development. The data were processed with content analysis.

Parents' values were studied through Schwartz Value Inventory (SVI), adapted form (Karandashev, 2004). The inventory includes 57 points of values, grouped into 10 basic values: Conformity, Tradition, Benevolence, Universalism, Self-Direction, Stimulation, Hedonism, Achievement, Power, and Security. Parents separately have evaluated each of the offered values on a scale from -1 to 7 points.

To identify parents' attitudes toward future profession of their children we use questionnaire which let us to clarify parents' knowledge about adolescents' professional preferences; coherence of representations of parents and children about the future profession; level of activity of parents in preparing children for the profession.

Data were analyzed with SPSS 20.0. Descriptive analysis, Spearman correlation, and Mann-Whitney U test were used to evaluate the study objectives.

3. Results

3.1. Analysis of life values of adolescents and their parents

On average, adolescents evaluated 10 basic values in the following order: Security ($M=38.59\pm6.97$), Universal

Table 1. Adolescents' values hierarchy

Values	Average	Boys	Girls	U test
	Mean± Std. Dev	Mean± Std. Dev	Mean± Std. Dev	p
Universalism - Care of nature	14.91 ±2.68	14.31±2.97	15.45±2.31	
Universalism – Caring of others	14.66 ±2.71	13.78±3.02	15.45±2.14	0.017
Self-Direction in Actions	14.07 ±2.94	14.14±2.98	14.00±2.94	
Achievement	13.53 ±2.64	13.86±2.49	13.23±2.77	
Reputation	13.47 ±3.30	13.08±3.03	13.83±3.54	
Self-Direction in Thoughts	13.38 ±2.17	13.56±2.35	13.23±2.01	
Hedonism	13.00 ±3.22	13.44±2.90	12.60±3.46	
Social Security	12.72 ±2.90	12.47±2.83	12.95±2.97	
Stimulation	12.66 ±2.93	12.56±2.75	12.75±3.12	
Personal Security	12.39 ±2.86	11.92±2.41	12.83±3.19	
Benevolence - Care	12.16 ±3.41	11.14±3.41	13.08±3.19	0.016
Benevolence - Duty	12.00 ±2.69	11.33±2.39	12.60±2.84	
Power - Dominance	10.99 ±3.33	11.97±2.92	10.10±3.45	0.016
Humility	10.50 ±2.84	9.69±2.57	11.23±2.90	0.023
Universalism - Tolerance	10.32 ±2.71	10.08±2.80	10.53±2.64	0.048
Interpersonal Conformity	10.25 ±3.52	9.50±2.92	10.93±3.90	
Conformity - Rules	10.01 ±3.54	10.08±3.52	9.95±3.60	
Tradition	8.91 ±3.34	8.89±3.27	8.93±3.44	
Power - Resources	8.87 ±4.03	10.00±3.82	7.85±3.99	0.026

ism (M=34.47±6.74), Conformity (M=30.76±8.22), Benevolence (M=29.57±4.67), Self-direction (M=27.45±4.22), Power (M=19,86 ±6,39), Achievement (M=13,52±2,64), Hedonism (M=13,00 ±3,21), Stimulation (M=12,66 ±2,93), и Tradition (M=8,91±3,36).

Analysis of the priority of values based on allocating meaningful subtypes within some of the 10 basic values allowed to clarify obtained hierarchy and found significant differences depending on sex (Table 1).

Thus, for adolescents the most important values are universalism, self-direction in developing their own ideas and abilities, achievements, reputation (protection and influence by maintaining the public image; they are also quite highly appreciated values of hedonism, stimulation and security. The lowest scores were given to conformity, tolerance and maintaining of traditions. These results are consistent with study by Tulviste & Tamm (2014), who showed that early adolescents attribute more importance to hedonism and stimulation, and less importance to benevolence and conformity. Boys significantly higher appreciate the opportunity of control over people by means of material and social resources. Girls higher appreciate the quest for justice and protection of all human beings; acceptance and understanding of those who are different from you; well-being of members of the group; humility. These results are partially consistent with the investigation by Podolsky (2012), who established that boys significantly higher evaluate wealth and power, and significantly lower evaluate love, family security and friendship, than girls do.

Our research has also revealed significant differences in the importance of some values of adolescents in different classes of the same school: for adolescents in Class A there were more important values of tradition (p = 0.005), and conformity (interpersonal) (p = 0.030), for adolescents in the class B there were more values of self-direction in actions (p = 0.046), and thoughts (p = 0.029). It can be assumed that the resulting differences are influenced by the educational environment.

In the group of parents (Table 2) the highest average scores were obtained for the values of Universalism (M = 29.80 ± 10.89), Security (M = 21.61 ± 7.99), Benevolence (M = 20.63 ± 8.28), Self-Direction (M = 20.07 ± 7.40) Tradition (M = 17.61 ± 7.78). The lowest estimates were obtained for the values of Hedonism (M = 9.41 ± 5.14) and Stimulation (M = 8.92 ± 4.66). We note that the hierarchies of basic values among adolescents and their parents look similar except the fact that parents find it very important to maintain and preserve the cultural, family and religious traditions and attach less importance to hedonism (the pursuit of sensual pleasure and satisfaction) and stimulation (the need for various activities and new experiences). This result is consistent with results of investigation by Demir & Kok (2012).

Our study revealed no significant differences in the values between the groups of fathers and mothers.

Table 2. Parents' values hierarchy

Values	Mean	Std. Dev
	fathers/mothers	fathers/mothers
Universalism	29.50/30.02	11.72/10.37
Security	21.17/21.92	8.36/7.77
Benevolence	20.79/20.52	8.79/7.97
Self-direction	20.45/19.80	7.83/7.14
Tradition	17.90/17.40	7.40/8.09
Conformity	16.43/15.07	6.51/6.51
Achievement	15.81/15.73	6.35/5.99
Power	13.36/12.28	6.05/5.33
Hedonism	10.17/8.88	5.84/4.57
Simulation	9.76/8.33	4.82/4.50

3.2. The interrelations between the values of adolescents and the values of their parents

Spearman correlation analysis found small number of interrelations between the values of adolescents and the

values of their fathers (3 linkages), and a greater number of interrelations between the values of adolescents and the values of their mothers (9 linkages). As can be seen in Table 3, we found the positive correlations of the adolescents' values with the father's value of Universalism: the importance of this value to a father (understanding, tolerance, the protection of the welfare of all people and nature) is positively correlated with the importance of the same value of universalism for adolescents ($p = 0.002$) as well as with the importance for them of maintenance and preservation of cultural, family and religious traditions (tradition) ($p = 0.046$); and the importance of containment actions and motives that may harm others and do not correspond to social expectations (conformism) ($p = 0.042$).

The importance of Conformity value to a mother (compliance with rules, laws and formal commitments) is strongly positively correlated with the importance of conformity for adolescents ($p = 0.004$). Mother's orientation on values of conformity, tradition, self-direction, and security positively correlated with the importance of preserving the traditions for adolescents ($p = 0.041$; $p = 0.040$; $p = 0.030$; $p = 0.031$, respectively). Mother's orientation on achievements in accordance with social standards (norms) is positively correlated with the value of conformism ($p = 0.042$) and negatively correlated with the value of the power ($p = 0.039$) for the adolescent.

The values of universalism and security of the mother negatively correlate with the importance of the value of stimulation ($p = 0.035$; $p = 0.043$, respectively) for the adolescent.

Table 3. Correlations between values of adolescents and parents

Values of adolescents	Values of parents	Father/ Mother	R (Spearman)	p
Tradition	Universalism	father	0.309	0.046
	Conformity		0.260	0.041
	Tradition	mother	0.261	0.040
	Self-direction		0.271	0.034
Conformity	Security		0.274	0.031
	Universalism	father	0.315	0.042
	Conformity		0.365	0.004
Universalism	Achievements	mother	0.260	0.042
	Universalism	father	0.473	0.002
Stimulation	Universalism		- 0.269	0.035
	Security	mother	- 0.258	0.043
Power	Achievements	mother	- 0.263	0.039

We examined correlations of values of adolescents and their parents, depending on the sex. Analysis revealed multiple mostly negative correlations between the values of boys and the values of their fathers and mothers. Thus, the importance of power value for boys is negatively correlated with the values of the fathers: conformism ($p = 0.001$), hedonism ($p = 0.038$), achievement ($p = 0.031$), security ($p = 0.005$), as well as with the values of the mothers: self-direction ($p = 0.028$), stimulation ($p = 0.029$), achievement ($p = 0.016$). At the same time the importance of conformity for boys correlates positively with the importance of conformity for the mothers ($p = 0.05$).

The values of girls mostly positively correlated with the values of the parents. The importance for girls the values of conformity and universalism positively correlate with the values of conformity and universalism for fathers ($p = 0.050$; $p = 0.005$, respectively). Preservation the traditions for the girls is positively related with the importance of conformism ($p = 0.032$), autonomy ($p = 0.013$), and security ($p = 0.053$) for the mothers; preservation the natural environment for girls is associated with universalism ($p = 0.045$), and security ($p = 0.059$) of their mothers.

3.3. Linkages between the parents' values and their activity in the adolescents' choice of future profession

In our sample, 38% of fathers agree with the adolescent in choosing a future profession, and 62% - disagree (indicate another profession, not the one their child has noted); 16% of mothers agree with the adolescent's choice of profession and 86% of mothers do not agree with this choice. Thus, the mother more often expressed their disagreement with the child in the career choice.

Parents were divided into 4 groups depending on the degree of activity of participation in their child's choice of future profession with following criteria: parent knows and can specify the intention of the adolescent in choosing a future profession; talks about professional development; provides moral support, advice; provides financial support (pays for extra classes and so on):

- low level - the parents do not fulfill a criteria, are not involved in the adolescent's choice of future profession;
- middle level - parents, who perform 2 criteria;
- above average level - parents, who perform 3 criteria;
- high level - the parents, who perform 4 criteria.

Among the fathers the group with a high level of activity included 7%, the group with the above average level of activity - 21%; the group with the average level of activity - 37%, and the group with the low level of activity - 35% of fathers. A group of mothers with a high level of activity has included more respondents compared to a group of fathers - 11.5%, the group with the activity above the average - 29.5%; a group with an average activity - 32.8%. In the group of mothers who do not participate in choosing profession by their child there were less of respondents, compared with the group of fathers - 26%.

We conducted pair wise comparisons of average assessment of values in groups of parents with the different level of participation in adolescents' choice of future profession. The Mann Whitney U test showed significant differences between groups (Table 4).

Among fathers, the average estimates of conformity, benevolence, self-direction, and achievement values were higher in the group with high level of activity than in the groups with middle and low levels of activity; assessment of the value of power was higher than in the group with low level of activity.

Table 4. Comparison of the values of parents with different level of activity in adolescent's career choice

	Values of	Level of activity	Mean	Level of activity	Mean	P
fathers	Conformity	high	24.33	middle	15.25	0.011
				low	16.36	0.019
	Benevolence	high	30.33	middle	19.25	0.049
				low	18.86	0.041
	Self-Direction	high	31.67	middle	20.31	0.015
				low	17.21	0.006
	Achievement	high	24.00	middle	15.81	0.044
				low	13.36	0.017
	Power	high	23.67	low	11.14	0.035
	mothers	Tradition	middle	21.75	high	11.43
low					12.31	0.049
Hedonism		middle	10.85	high	6.29	0.015
				above average	8.39	0.034
Power		above average	11.61	middle	14.55	0.046

Among mothers the average estimate of tradition value was significantly higher in the group with the middle activity level than in the groups both with the high and low activity. The average estimates of the value of hedonism

in the groups with high and above the average levels of activity were significantly lower than in the group with the middle activity level. Assessment of the power value in the group with the middle activity was significantly higher compared to the group with above average level of activity.

Thus, highly active fathers demonstrate high importance of self-direction, benevolence, conformity, achievement, and power values. Among the mothers there were found multidirectional relation to values. The highest appreciation to the value of traditions was given by mothers with middle level of activity, while mothers with low and high activity appreciated tradition much lower. Highly active mothers demonstrate low importance of hedonism and power values.

4. Discussion

The study of values showed both similarities and differences in the values of different generations. There were revealed a similar high importance of Security, Universalism, and Benevolence in values' hierarchy of adolescents and their parents. However, adolescents give a higher appreciation of Independence and Conformism values, and their fathers and mothers give a higher appreciation to the value of Tradition. These results agree with data of other authors from different countries (Podolsky, 2012; Rosnati, Barni&Ugla, 2014; Tulviste&Tamm, 2014), and confirm the age-related differences in values.

The correlation analysis of values within the family allows us to speak about the differences of the fathers' and mothers' role in the translation of values to their children. The high importance of Universalism value for fathers (care of other people, care of nature, tolerance) is strongly correlated with the high importance of Universalism value for their children ($p = 0.002$), as well as preference of Tradition value (maintenance and preservation of cultural, family and religious traditions) and Conformity value (compliance with rules, laws, avoidance of causing grief to others). It can be assumed that a father plays a significant role in the translation of humanistic and family values to adolescents.

The strongest positive correlation between mothers' and children' values was found in the preference of Conformity value ($p = 0.004$), i.e. we can assume a crucial role of mothers in the translation of Conformity value to their children. In addition, multiple and multidirectional linkages between the values of adolescents and values of their mothers confirm the significance the mother's role in the development of value sphere of a adolescent in general. So, adolescents' preference of Tradition value, which is not typical for this age, is associated with orientation of their mothers on Tradition, Conformity, Security, and also to Self-Direction values. Adolescents' orientation on the value of Stimulation (the desire for excitement, novelty and change) comes into the conflict with important mothers' values of Universalism and Security that is probably a form of adolescent protest. We found a negative correlation between Achievement value for mothers and Power value (influencing others) for children: the more the mother is focused on achieving the less important is power for a teenager; the less the mother is focused on achieving the more important is power for a teenager. This interrelation, evidently, indicate a significant influence of the mother's value on the development of the value sphere of their children.

Our study has also revealed significant differences in parents' values in groups with different activity in the adolescent's choice of profession. Active fathers preferred values of self-direction, benevolence, conformity, achievement, and power: the more fathers are focused on these values, the more active they are talking with their children about career choice, and committing active actions for child's support, probably realize these own values in the development of their children. Active mothers gave lower assessment to the value of hedonism, perhaps devoting a lot of effort to her child. Mothers with the highest assessment of traditional value showed the middle activity level of participation in the adolescent's choice of profession, i.e. we can assume that mothers' participation in career choice of a child caused to a greater extent by normative factors.

5. Conclusions.

The study revealed both the similarities and the differences in values of adolescents and their parents: high importance of universalism, security, self-direction, and benevolence values for adolescents and their parents; and different relation to the values of stimulation, hedonism, conformity, and tradition.

The interrelation of values of adolescents and their fathers and mothers confirmed the intergenerational transmission of life values. It is possible to assume the important role of the fathers in transferring humanistic and social values to their children; the important role of mothers in transferring of conformity value to their children, and her significant influence on the development of children's value sphere.

The data of the parents' involvement, acceptance and support of the adolescent's choice of profession and revealed differences in values of parents with different attitudes and activity in the adolescent's choice of profession can be applied in counseling of parents.

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