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SOCIAL AND CULTURAL DETERMINANTS OF FORMATION OF THE SYSTEM OF TEACHERS VALUES

SPOŁECZNE I KULTUROWE UWARUNKOWANIA FORMOWANIA SIĘ SYSTEMU WARTOŚCI NAUCZYCIELI

Abstract

On the basis of the cross-cultural research conducted in four European countries, the general regularities of teachers values system formation in the course of their professional development are described. Influence of specialization, and also gender, ethnic and confessional origin on the process of teachers values system formation is analyzed.

Key words: values, pedagogical activity, teachers, specialization, gender, ethnicity, religion, culture.

Streszczenie

Na podstawie międzykulturowego projektu badawczego przeprowadzonego w czterech europejskich krajach zostały opisane generalne prawidłowości formowania się systemu wartości nauczycieli podczas ich profesjonalnego rozwoju. Realizując badania, dokonano analizy wpływu specjalizacji, płci, pochodzenia etnicznego i wyznaniowego na proces formowania systemu wartości nauczycieli.

Słowa kluczowe: wartości, aktywność pedagogiczna, nauczyciele, specjalizacja, płeć, wyznanie, religia, kultura.

Changes that take place in today's postmodern societies are appropriately accompanied by a significant transformation of value system of the mass consciousness. However, according to R. Inglehart, today the value systems of different societies are constantly changing, so that the nature of these changes

has significant economic, political and social consequences¹. Accordingly, social and cultural changes, which determine the transformation of the value system, are of bilateral nature. It is obvious that this value transformation is evident not only at the level of society, but also at the level of the individual human and refers, first of all, to the personality forming in today's changing society². Nowadays many young people are characterized by the lack of value orientations system or its disintegration, by a certain loss of meaning in life, which significantly complicates the process of socialization and subsequently self-realisation.

Such “value vacuum”, typical for the modern youth, in postmodern societies is the challenge for education which determines the necessity of reviving value approaches to its realization, “axiologization” of educational sphere. Humanistic reorientation of education that is aimed on personality development means, first of all, the development of the student's valuable sphere which is the goal and the result of pedagogical process at the same time.

The influence of educational environment on the formation of personality value orientations is determined both by the features of educational process organization and relationships with teachers. Moreover, regardless of the organization form and content of the educational process, teacher personality remains the most important factor in the development of students' value systems. So, the teachers' value system becomes more and more important. The humanistic nature of the pedagogical activity indicates that humanistic values are considered as the “eternal” orientations of teacher, which determine his life-meaning self-determination³. The abovementioned opinions identify the need and opportunity for the development of value sphere of future teacher personality in the process of training to professional activity.

Specific regularities and techniques of such development are the subject of a number of special researches on the formation of future teachers' life and professional value orientations, psycho-pedagogical aspects of the formation of their value and sense readiness to the profession. The study results formed the basis of a new, practical branch of post-non-classical pedagogical science – axiopedagogy (value-creating pedagogy), which aims to identify new educational strategies that could be an adequate response to modern challenges⁴. First of all, we are talking about the modernization of the educational sphere, in particular, about

¹ R. Inglehart, *Modernization and Postmodernization: Cultural, Economic, and Political Change in 43 Societies* – Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1997, p. 453.

² B. Skoczyńska-Prokopowicz, *Zjawisko wypalenia zawodowego wśród pracowników dydaktycznych uczelni rzeszowskich* [w:] *Kultura – Przemiany – Edukacja*, red. K. Szmyd, A. Garbarz, Z. Frączek, B. Skoczyńska-Prokopowicz, Wyd. UR, Rzeszów 2013, s. 279–300.

³ *Педагогическая аксиология* /Отв. ред. Г.И. Чижакова, В.А. Слостенин. – Красноярск: Изд-во СибГТУ, 2008, с. 294.

⁴ Ю.В. Пелех, *Ціннісно-смысловий концепт професійної підготовки майбутнього педагога*, Рівне: Тетіс, 2009, с. 400.

the change of principles in the future teachers training programmes. The modern teacher acquires the status of a “moderator” of the process of students’ creative comprehending of study material and, at the same time, the teacher is given the task to promote the socially significant, moral principles as a requirement of public health and humanitarian progress.

The implementation of such task is possible under the condition of profound and fundamental changes of the teacher’s personality and his value orientations which, from the teacher’s point of view, are connected with cognitive perception of the information about humanistic (universal), social and professional values. That’s why it is logical that nowadays value orientations acquire the status of an essential component in the structure of teacher’s professionally significant qualities⁵.

All these facts actualize the researches of teachers’ value system and the factors that determine its nature and direction. R. Inglehart developed his own model of value systems typology in which he contrasted the „materialistic” and „postmaterialistic” values of various origin that are formed by means of socialization mechanisms. We should mention that postmaterialistic values in Inglehart’s model are divided into two groups – social values and values of self-actualization, accordingly focused on “joining” or “self-development”. Therefore, in our model there are three types of value systems of various origin⁶. It is explained by the fact that the system of personality’s value orientations is formed by means of three main processes:

- *adaptation*, that means the elimination of anxiety and maintaining the balance in the system “human-environment” through the modification of value orientations;
- *socialization* that reflects internal perception (or rejection) of the values significant for others;
- *individualization* that is aimed at developing of his own autonomous values system.

These processes consistently form a “protective”, “borrowed” and “autonomic” levels or “layers” of personality’s value orientations system during the individual’s development.

Fixation at any stage of individual development determines the predominance of the corresponding level in the individual system of values and generates a similar personality type: “adapting”, “socializing” or “individualizing”. Correspondently valuable structure of the mass consciousness can be presented as a set of personality types focused on the values of adaptation (tendency to physical and economic security); socialization (orientation to the norms and values adopt-

⁵ А.В. Серый, *Ценностные ориентации личности в структуре профессионально значимых качеств школьных практических психологов*, Иркутск 1996, с. 152.

⁶ М.С. Яницкий, *Ценностное измерение массового сознания*, Новосибирск: Изд-во СО РАН, 2012, с. 237.

ed in the society) or individualization (direction to self-development and self-realization). The values system of the adapting type has the lowest level of awareness, and system of values of individualizing type – the highest level of comprehension and internal adoption.

Previously, there has been analyzed the impact of a number of factors on the value structure of the mass consciousness: wellbeing, belonging to different social groups, cultural and environmental aspects of residence, age, level of education, characteristics of parental family and social status of parents⁷. Our research allowed identifying the main socio-demographic and socio-economic determinants of value preferences. It was found that the prevalence of the described value types in the mass consciousness is determined by such factors as age, level of education and income. Younger respondents less focused on the values of adaptation, and paid more attention to the value of socialization and individualization than older people do. Higher level of education was connected with less focus on adaptation values, and vice versa; with the growth of material prosperity there could be mentioned an essential reduction of importance of adaptation values and growth of focusing on the socialization and individualization values.

As a teacher is a mediator between man and culture in the postclassical pedagogy, it is very important to study socio-cultural determinants of his value system formation. We suggested that the peculiarities of teachers' value orientations system formation will be determined by a number of socio-cultural factors, particularly gender, ethnic and religious affiliation. In our opinion, the specialty subjects, which are taught by teachers, can be also referred to the socio-cultural determinants of teachers' value system formation as it defines the professional vision of the world and, thereby, influences teacher's worldview.

So, the general aim of our research was to verify the hypotheses about the influence of the specialty subjects as well as gender, ethnic and religious affiliation on the process of teachers' value system formation. There was used a specially developed questionnaire to collect data. The questionnaire contained closed questions that helped to define the presence of the researching determinants and to assess the nature and extent of their influence on the system of teachers' values in the dynamics, taking into consideration the professional experience. To analyze the teachers' orientations to the values of adaptation (survival and security), socialization (social approval) or individualization (independence and self-development), there were used our own method based on the selection by the respondents the most important values from the proposed list in which there were included the indicators of value orientations⁸. We offered to the respondents a list of 9 values, representing three blocks of three points each:

⁷ Ibidem, s. 237.

⁸ Ibidem, s. 237.

1. Lack of poverty, material prosperity.
2. Family well-being.
3. The possibility of intellectual and creative self-realization.
4. Keeping energy and health.
5. Good, prestigious job.
6. The ability to use democratic rights and freedoms.
7. Maintaining the order and stability in the society.
8. The respect of others and public recognition.
9. Forming more human and tolerant society.

Items 1, 4, 7 are indicators of orientations to the values of adaptation; items 2, 5, 8 – values of socialization; items 3, 6, 9 – values of individualization. The respondents were asked to choose the most important items from the given list (it was possible to choose from 1 to 3 options). When the person choose one option, and two or three options of the same type, the appropriate value type was determined; when selecting three different options the corresponding value type was determined in the case of coincidence of two from three options; when selecting two or three alternate options intermediary value type was determined.

Our research involved 726 teachers and students of pedagogical specialties from Russia, Ukraine, Poland and Italy of different sex, age, working experience and specialization of teaching or studying. Sociological selection was standardized according to the parameters. The survey results were analyzed by comparing the percentage correlation of the described value types in samples according to the pedagogical experience, specialization of teaching, gender, ethnicity and religious affiliation. To identify statistical differences in the correlation of value types we tested the hypothesis of homogeneity of sociological selections using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov criterion (λ_a).

The respondents' choice of the suggested values determined their belonging to one of three value types: "adapting" (order, health, material wealth) – 39%; "socializing" (family, career, social recognition) – 22%; "individualizing" (self-realization, freedom, tolerance) – 8%. The rest of the respondents 31% were classified as intermediary type (table 1). Such correlation of value types testifies a bit higher level of value development in the researching group in comparison with the results on the selections of our previous surveys, in which 45–50% of the respondents focused on the values of adaptation, about 30% – on the values of socialization, and less than 5% – on the values of individualization. So, the proportion of those who orient to higher, humanistic values among teachers and future teachers is predictably higher, thus it meets their core mission – the development of the students' value sphere, in particular, with their own example.

When dividing teachers into groups based on the experience of pedagogical activity (students in this case were considered as a group with "zero" experience) there were found significant differences, indicating a certain transformation of the value system in the process of professional activity. It is well known that attitude to

professional activity is formed on the base personality's value orientations system that has been formed during study at the university; on the other hand, pedagogical activity has an impact on the value system and orient it to professional vision of the world. In our study the correlation of the described value types among students with regard to their age is about normal and reflects the results of the normative process of value system formation during the study at the university. The largest positive features are in the group of "young" teachers with experience of up to 15 years, as they focus on the values of individualization twice as often and much less on the values of adaptation and socialization. Moreover, in this group it is also observed the highest percentage of those respondents who are included into the intermediary type, namely who are undecided in their value orientations. The teachers with experience of more than 15 years have the polar correlation of value types, most of them focused on adaptation values and the least of them – on values of individualization. Such dynamics, demonstrating reverse development of valuable sphere, can be explained by professional "burn out" of teachers, as well as by age peculiarities of this group. According to the concept of R. Inglehart, age (namely, inter-generational) differences are explained by the peculiarities of the socio-economic status of age cohorts during their value system formation. In this regard, the dominance of the "materialistic" values of adaptation, usually related with frustration of the need for economic security among older generation of teachers may be due to the fact that the most significant "formative years" for their value systems development were less successful in economic terms, especially in the transitional societies like Poland, Russia and Ukraine.

Table 1. Correlation of value types in the groups with different pedagogical experience, %

Pedagogical experience		Value types			
		A	S	I	IT
1	0 years (n = 342)	36	27	7	30
2	1–15 years (n = 184)	33	17	12	38
3	more than 15 years (n = 194)	50	20	5	25
Total (n = 720)		39	22	8	31

Note. Differences in the correlation of groups 1 and 2 ($\alpha < 0,05$); 1 and 3 ($\alpha < 0,025$); 2 and 3 ($\alpha < 0,001$). Designations in the tables: A – Adaptation, S – Socialization, I – Individualization, IT – Intermediary Type.

The influence of socio-cultural determinants on these changes was researched for more detailed analysis of the regularities of teachers' value system dynamics. To explore the influence of the specialty subjects on the teachers' value system all respondents were divided into those who teach natural subjects (mathematics, computer science, physics, chemistry, biology, geography); or humanities and social sciences (history, philology, foreign languages, cultural studies, music, choreography, pedagogy and so on). Results of our research show that specialty subject

is a statistically significant factor that determines the differences in the teachers' value system and its development (table 2). The humanities education and professional activity is a positive factor in the formation of value systems, stipulating three times more teachers who focus on the values of individualization, and less – related to adaptation and socialization types. Dynamics of value preferences according to the specialty subjects also varies: among the teachers of “natural disciplines” there was observed a consistent increase of respondents who belong to the adaptation and individualization types due to reducing of those who are focusing on the values of socialization and those who are so called “undecided” in the value orientation; changes in the group of “humanities” are not so linear and, in general, correspond to the related dynamics of the total selection.

Table 2. Correlation of value types in the groups with different pedagogical experience, depending on the specialty subjects (training), %

Specialty subjects (training)		Value types			
		A	S	I	IT
1	Those who teach (study) natural disciplines (n = 241), with the pedagogical experience:	48	25	3	24
	0 years (n = 119)	41	32	2	25
	1–15 years (n = 41)	44	22	2	32
	more than 15 years (n = 81)	62	16	5	17
2	Those who teach (study) humanities and social sciences (n = 432), with the pedagogical experience:	36	23	9	31
	0 years (n = 206)	35	25	10	30
	1–15 years (n = 127)	30	21	13	36
	more than 15 years (n = 99)	45	21	4	29

Note. Differences in the correlation of the groups 1 and 2 ($\alpha < 0,005$).

Table 3. Correlation of value types in the groups with different pedagogical experience, depending on gender, %

Gender identity		Value types			
		A	S	I	IT
1	Men (n = 189), with pedagogical experience:	45	22	4	29
	0 years (n = 103)	45	25	4	26
	1–15 years (n = 37)	38	14	8	40
	more than 15 years (n = 49)	51	20	2	27
2	Women (n = 530) with pedagogical experience:	37	23	8	32
	0 years (n = 239)	32	27	8	32
	1–15 years (n = 147)	31	22	10	37

	more than 15 years (n = 144)	50	19	6	25
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Comparison of correlation of the described value types in gender groups there were testified moderate differences that are not of statistical significance (table 3). With almost the same percentage of those who referred to the socialization and intermediary types, the frequency of respondents focused on the values of adaptation and individualization are substantially different: most of the men are of “adaptation type”, and most of women are of “individualization type”. It can be explained by the fact that pedagogical activity offers women somewhat better conditions for self-realization, and corresponds the traditional social vision of rather “feminine” nature of teacher profession. The dynamics of value types’ correlation depending on experience among men and women is quite similar, submitting the general laws.

Table 4. Correlation of value types in the groups with different pedagogical experience depending on ethnicity, %

Ethnicity		Value types			
		A	S	I	IT
1	Italians (n = 78), with the pedagogical experience:	22	19	6	53
	0 years (n = 19)	16	11	5	68
	1–15 years (n = 18)	28	22	0	50
	more than 15 years (n = 41)	22	22	10	46
2	Poles (n = 197), with the pedagogical experience:	46	26	3	25
	0 years (n = 97)	47	32	1	20
	1–15 years (n = 45)	38	16	9	38
	more than 15 years (n = 55)	49	24	4	24
3	Russians (n = 260) with the pedagogical experience:	48	19	4	28
	0 years (n = 114)	36	25	6	32
	1–15 years (n = 52)	44	17	2	37
	more than 15 years (n = 94)	66	13	3	18
4	Ukrainians (n = 185) with the pedagogical experience:	26	27	15	32
	0 years (n = 112)	29	26	13	31
	1–15 years (n = 69)	22	25	17	36
	more than 15 years (n = 4)	0	100	0	0

Note. Differences in the correlations of groups 1 and 2 ($\alpha < 0,001$); 1 and 3 ($\alpha < 0,001$); 1 and 4 ($\alpha < 0,025$); 2 and 4 ($\alpha < 0,001$); 3 and 4 ($\alpha < 0,001$).

Analysis of the impact of ethnic factors on the system of teachers’ values formation has revealed some significant dependences (table 4). All researching ethnic

groups showed authentic differences; regarding to value system, only the Poles and the Russians are relatively “close”. The greatest identity is in the group of Ukrainian teachers and students of pedagogical specialties – among them orientation to the values of individualization is observed 3–5 times more frequently. There should be noted that such results contradict the findings of our previous surveys of Ukrainian students, as well as similar data from independent surveys, which showed a significantly smaller proportion of individualization type, three times more common among Russian students, and, at the same time, greater prevalence of adaptation type among Ukrainian students. It seems that such a great and rapid transformation of value orientations system is connected with the peculiarities of the current socio-political situation in Ukraine, which is manifested in the growing importance of such values as possibility of democratic rights and freedoms using, more humane and tolerant society building, etc. Notable differences were found out in the study results of Italian teachers and students of pedagogical specialties, among which – none of the respondents marked as significant such value as “more humane and tolerant society building”. More than half of the group were not referred to some particular value type that may indicate some difficulties in the value determination or testify the stochastic process because of relatively small number of people in this group. In terms of value preferences the greatest differences show Russian teachers, among them – the more professional experience the more those who focus on the adaptation values and the less those who belong to the socialization and individualization value types, this tendency can be explained by the intergenerational differences of socio-economic nature. It is obvious that the obtained results are based not only on the ethnic and cultural features of the described groups, but also reflect objective social differences associated with the influence of a number of economic, political, demographic and other latent factors.

There were also analyzed the impact of teachers’ belonging to the confession on the structure and dynamics of their value preferences. The system of value orientations is quite sensitive to religious affiliation because a religion, which is a source of moral and legal norms play traditionally an important role in the formation of social values. However, in our case between the groups of Catholics, Orthodox, atheists and “non-confessional believers” (namely, those who believe in God but do not belong to any particular religion) there was not found statistically significant difference (table 5). Moreover, the greatest differences were between the groups of teachers of the same religion, but different nationalities: Russians and Ukrainians, Poles and Italians. However, there was noticed a certain value differentiation of the research groups. Thus, among those who consider themselves as Orthodox believers there is the largest percentage of representatives of individualization value type (primarily due to ethnic Ukrainians). There was the largest share of those who was not sure in their value orientations among the “non-confessional believers” (primarily among Russian teachers) and Catholics (mostly among Italian teachers). At the

same time, among the “non-confessional believers” there could be observed those who focused on the values of socialization three times less than among all others, this process is related with less importance of communicative needs for them, the satisfaction of which is traditionally considered as the main motive for regular Church visits. The experience dynamics of value types correlation, depending on the belonging to the definite religious group, didn’t reveal any specific features.

Table 5. Correlation of value types in the groups with different pedagogical experience depending on religious affiliation, %

Religious affiliation		Value types			
		A	S	I	IT
1	Orthodox (n = 362), with the pedagogical experience:	38	26	9	28
	0 years (n = 181)	35	27	9	28
	1–15 years (n = 113)	31	21	12	36
	more than 15 years (n = 68)	56	24	4	16
2	Catholics (n = 257) with the pedagogical experience:	40	23	3	34
	0 years (n = 105)	45	25	1	29
	1–15 years (n = 63)	35	17	6	41
	more than 15 years (n = 89)	38	24	4	34
3	“Non-denominational believers” (n = 47), with the pedagogical experience:	47	8	8	36
	0 years (n = 19)	16	11	16	58
	1–15 years (n = 6)	50	17	0	33
	more than 15 years (n = 22)	73	5	5	18
4	Atheists (n = 41), with the pedagogical experience:	39	24	7	29
	0 years (n = 26)	23	38	8	31
	1–15 years (n = 0)	0	0	0	0
	more than 15 years (n = 15)	67	0	7	27

Therefore, teachers’ value orientations being the most important factor in the formation of students’ value system is not constant and is sequentially transformed during their professional activity. Value system of teachers with experience of up to 15 years meets modern humanistic paradigm of education, as it has more conscious, internalized nature and is focused on personal development and self-realization. Students of pedagogical specialties who are still forming their system of personal and professional values, as well as teachers of older age, whose value system was formed before the reorientation of higher pedagogical education to humanistic paradigm, are more often focused on the

“deficit” values (due to dissatisfaction with significant needs) or “socially approved” traditional values. The most important socio-cultural determinant that influences the characteristics and dynamics of the teachers’ value system is the specialty subject, herewith humanities education and professional activity more often has a positive effect on the process of the value system formation. Ethno-cultural identity, which defines teachers’ peculiarities of the ideology and worldview, is also very important, and, thus, the originality of their value systems, but in this case ethnic differentiation of teachers’ values is largely determined by the peculiarities of the current socio-economic and socio-political situation in the societies. Our results can be used within the axioprocesses of professional education, in particular, in the development of cultural specific programs aimed at supporting of the formation of humanistically oriented system of future teachers’ value orientations.

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