Study of Value Orientations among Russian Students

[1]Olga K. Slinkova, [1]Anatoly M. Slinkov, [2]Elena G. Grudistova,
[1]Inna S. Koroleva and [1]Tatiana B. Klimova
[1]Belgorod State University, Belgorod, Russia
[2]Bratsk State University, Belgorod, Russia

Abstract: The study substantiates the need for value orientations study among Russian college students due to the changes in economic and political foundations of Russian society. Theoretical approaches to the classification of values are considered. We considered the researchers approach to the determination of values based on the modification of the classification proposed by M. Rokeach. We presented the results of valuable orientations sociological research among the students studied at the faculty of business and service of the Belgorod National Research University. We revealed the peculiarities of value importance perception based on respondent gender and the length of stay in the student community. It was established that there were changes in the value system of the Russian youth during the years of reforms in the Russian society, lower respondents evaluated the the importance of certain values traditionally attributed to Russian culture decreased and on the contrary, the recognition of value importance corresponding to the modern realities of Russian life increased.

Key words: Russian culture, students, values, value orientations, respondents

INTRODUCTION

Modern Russian students is the generation that grew up during the adjustment period when Russia experienced a complete change in the economic, political and social foundations of society. The national idea of a communist society creation, the society of justice, equality and fraternity failed. A deep crisis hit the value system of the Russian society: the old values were destroyed and the new liberal values often come in deep contradiction with the norms of traditional Russian culture are accompanied by painful processes that undermine the foundations of Russian statehood. The future of Russia depends on the ability of a younger generation to restore the historical continuity of Russian life, to cognize themselves as the successors of their ancestors, the guardians and defenders of Russian culture spiritual treasures. Moreover, we believe that such a long and painful period of transformations in our country is among the main reasons concerning the ignorance of traditional Russian values (Slinkova, 2005). On the other hand, the growing processes of globalization, the internationalization dictates objectively the need to find the ways of Russian integration into the global space (Fey and Denison, 2013). All historical experience demonstrates convincingly about the inadmissibility of Russia isolation from the world community. The solution of Russia integration issues into the global community requires the clarification of Russian national culture traditional traits preservation and the emergence of new features that appeared as the consequence of a new era. This requires special research and especially, the research among modern Russian youth and its most active part, i.e., students.

The aim of this research is to study the value orientations of students and the formation of a consistent view concerning the personality of a modern Russian student on this basis.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The methodological basis of the study was the classical and modern concepts of values. The concept of "value" was used for the first time by the English philosopher Thomas Hobbes (1588-1697), in his research "Leviathan" (Hobbes, 1964). However, the founder of the theory of values is considered to be the German philosopher Rudolf Hermann Lotze (1817-1881). He was the first one who considered the concept of value as a category and created the first classification of values including in it the moral, aesthetic, religious and educational values (Lotze, 1923).

Modern researchers also widely used the classification for a more detailed analysis of values. So, Frankl (2009) distinguishes the values related to human

Corresponding Author: Olga K. Slinkova, Belgorod State University, Belgorod, Russia

activities, the values of experiences and the values of relationships. Erasov (2000) provides the following classification of values:

- Vital values (life, health, safety, welfare, quality of life, natural environment, comfort, etc.)
- Social values (social position, status, industry, diligence, enterprise, risk tolerance, social equality, justice, etc.)
- Political values (human rights, freedom of speech, rule of law, order and civil peace, etc.)
- Moral values (goodness, love, friendship, duty, honor, honesty, integrity, selflessness, etc.)
- Religious values (divine law, faith, salvation, church, etc.)
- Aesthetic values (beauty, harmony, cultural identity, tradition observance or novelty, etc.)

The classification of Rokeach (1973) values became widely known establishing the relationship of values with the objectives of the means of their achievement. The researcher determines the following values related to the goals of activity (terminal values): active life; practical wisdom; health; interesting job; the beauty of nature and art; love; wealth; the availability of good and faithful friends; public acceptance; knowledge; productive life; development; entertainment; freedom; happy family life; creation; the happiness of others; creation; self confidence.

Rokeach (1973) includes the following pertaining to the means of objective achievement (instrumental values): accuracy; education; high demands (claims); cheerfulness; duty; independence; intolerance of shortcomings in themselves and others; education; responsibility; rationalism; self-control; courage in defending one's own opinion and views; firm will; tolerance; open-mindedness; honesty; efficiency in affairs (hard work, operational productivity); sensitivity.

In our opinion, the approach to the classification of values proposed by Rokeach (1973) has a clearly justified methodological framework that provides ample opportunities for its use in practice (Slack *et al.*, 2010; Daft, 2010). In order to perform the study of Russian student value orientations, we used the classification of Rokeach (1973) adapting it to the purposes of our study. The structure of the terminal values for the purposes of our analysis included the following factors.

Material well-being: This value is directly related to the basic needs of a person.

Interesting job: This value is of particular importance for the students who are in the active phase of professional selection.

Health (physical and mental): It is believed that young people do not tend to think about and take care of one's health, so it is interesting to find out the ways of this stereotype revealing among students.

Social position: Status current position, career, social status is directly related to the development of a person to the realized growth potential

Security and stability: The inclusion of this value in the considered list was aimed at finding out the level of anxiety among students under the current social instability.

Friendship (the existence of good and loyal friends): The desire of friendship is just as natural as the satisfaction of physiological needs for most people. At the stage of student life, the processes of socialization, friendship are developed and kept usually lifelong.

Power (the ability to influence other people): The enabling of this value in the study suggested the finding out the relevance concerning the need for the dominance among Russian students and whether the thirst for power is so large as the mass media keep telling.

Self-expression (the possibility of creative activity): This value corresponds to the highest social need. As the researcher of the need hierarchy theory A. Maslow (2013) states, this need may only be found among a small number of any society members. Since, the students, in fact, is a kind of vanguard among the younger generation, we may assume that self-expression as the recognized value has a sufficient manifestation among students.

As we see from the list of values and objectives, they are all very closely related to the concepts of "needs" and "motivation". This is explained by the existence of a certain relationship between a person value orientations which may be designated as "value targets" and the needs which impel them to act (motives). Meanwhile, these concepts have differences: if the system of human needs is characterized by constant dynamism the meet some needs make other needs urgent ones then the system of values is fairly stable (Slinkova, 2005).

Two groups of values were included in the composition of instrumental values for the study performance. The first group is presented by the values corresponding to the professional qualities of a person. We included the following factors in their composition:

- Responsibility, the responsibility for own's actions and their consequences
- Diligence efficiency, diligence, good understanding of the work to the public and oneself, the manifestation of willpower which helps to overcome the obstacles that occur in the course of employment
- Entrepreneurship, initiative an active focus on an action performance, the pursuit for initiatives and innovations, flexibility, risk taking, unconventional approach to problem solulutioon, the ability to generate new ideas
- Independence the ability to act independently, on the basis of their own views and beliefs, independence in decision making and the implementation of specific actions, the ability to stand for yourself
- Commitment the presence of clear life plans, conscious and active orientation of a person to a certain result
- Rationalism the ability to think logically and sensibly, to make well-considered decisions
- Education the breadth of knowledge, high common culture

The second group of instrumental values has a strong moral nature, characterizes the maturity of a person's moral principles. We assigned the following values to this group:

- Decency, spiritual cleanliness, adherence to conscience in any matter
- Tolerance, tolerance to the views and opinions of others, the ability to forgive the mistakes and errors of others and respect the rights, freedoms and dignity of people, the recognition of cultural diversity and multidimensionality of religions
- Kindness, benevolence, willingness to help, sensitivity, caring towards other people
- Justice fair treatment to anything or to anyone, based on strict compliance of a person rights and duties
- Honesty, truthfulness, sincerity
- Patriotism, love for big and small homeland, the realization of national (ethnic) identity, respect for national heritage
- Conscientious performance of public duties

The inclusion of moral vales into an independent subgroup during the performed study was conducted in order to identify among students those traits that are traditionally considered to be Russian ones: responsibility for society, decency, good manners, sensitivity, honesty, patience, kindness, compassion.

To quantify the value structure of the students it is proposed to carry out the ranking of values in terms of recognized importance degree, calculated for each value using the following formula:

$$B_i = \frac{R_1 \times K_1 + R_2 \times K_2 + R_3 \times K_3 + R_4 \times K_4}{R_{обш} - R_5}$$

Where:

B_i = The accepted importance degree of the ith value in the group of respondents

R_{1-4} = The number of respondents who rated the importance of the ith value as "extremely important", "important enough", "not very important", "it does not matter" respectively

$R5$ = The number of respondents who found it difficult to assess the significance of the ith value

K_{1-4} = Weighting coefficients equal to 3, 2, 1, 0, respectively

R_{obsch} = The total number of respondents

The use of accepted importance degree value during the analysis of the survey results allows:

- To quantify the significance of individual values among students
- To rank the values and identify the most important ones
- To analyze the structure of values, relations and the relationship between individual values
- To identify the impact of student typological characteristics (gender, age) on the accepted system of values

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In order to study, the value orientations of Russian students we performed the survey of full-time students at the Faculty of Business and Service of the Belgorod National Research University. During the study in the form of a survey, it is important to ensure a representative sample. To do this, we should sefine the following:

- Sample amount; the number of subjects necessary and sufficient for the study to distribute the obtained results for the entire population
- Sample unit and structure; people who should participate in a study and their necessary number to obtain reliable results

It should be noted that currently, there is no scholarly consensus concerning the ways of a sample

number determination, ensuring its representativeness. Therefore, for this purpose, we used the methods based on the use of numerical methods of mathematical statistics and probability theory.

For the general amount of the final size, the sample amount takes into account the number of units in it (Grudistova, 2011):

$$n = \frac{t^2 \times \sigma^2 \times N}{N \times \Delta^2 + t^2 \times \sigma^2}$$

Where:

t	=	The trust factor, defined according to a predetermined confidence level P according to the table of the standard normal distribution
σ^2	=	Random variable dispersion, at that $\sigma^2 = p \times q$
N	=	Total amount number
p	=	The scope of variation for a sample q = (100-p)
Δ	=	Allowable error in percentage

The number of students at the full-time faculty of business and service made 612 persons at the time of the study. At the determination of the sample amount for the study of the value orientations among students, we proceeded from the security guarantee of 95% and the variation scope of 50% which provides an opportunity to consider the sample a representative one in any values of the structure. At the adopted confidence factor equal to 2 which corresponds to the probability of 0.9545, the sample made 365 men. The representativeness of the sample was also achieved by the compliance sampling structural indicators to the total population structure. The performed study of value orientations inherent to the students revealed their importance and priority (Table 1).

The survey showed that among the most important objective values for students the most significant are health, safety, stability and interesting work. Also, material prosperity and friendship are recognized as significant ones by students. And such values as power, self-expression and social position and status were least important for students. Analyzing the results of the study taking into account the respondent gender, it should be noted that in general, the values of the goals among females is more pronounced (the weighted average of objective importance degree values among females was 2.00 and among the young men it made 1.87). Considering the influence of respondent gender on the acceptance of objective values it should be noted that material well-being, security and friendship are more important for girls, power and self-expression are more important for boys.

The values of objectives achievement corresponding to the professional qualities of students were more

Table 1: The evaluation of goal importance acknowledged by students

Values	The degree of accepted importance (B_i)		
	Total by sampling	Young men	Girls
Purpose values			
Financial well-being	2.02	1.96	2.05
Interesting job	2.16	2.14	2.18
Health	2.52	2.52	2.52
Social position, status	1.65	1.58	1.69
Friendship	2.08	1.83	2.31
Security, stability	2.23	1.96	2.35
Power	1.29	1.35	1.26
Self-expression	1.62	1.64	1.61
The weighted average degree of importance according the objective values	1.95	1.87	2.00
The values of objective achievement means due to personal qualities			
Responsibility	1.72	2.03	1.58
Industriousness	1.83	1.83	1.83
Entrepreneurship, initiative	1.69	1.86	1.60
Independence	1.95	2.12	1.91
Purposefulness	2.11	2.41	1.88
Rationalism	1.90	2.06	1.81
Education	2.08	1.76	2.25
The weighted average degree of importance according to the achievement means values of the 1st group	1.90	2.01	1.84
The values of objective achievement means due to moral norms			
Decency	1.90	1.76	1.94
Tolerance	1.74	1.53	1.82
Kindness	1.95	1.45	2.38
Fairness	2.07	1.75	2.27
Integrity	2.02	1.88	2.12
Patriotism	1.60	1.41	1.72
Obligation for society	1.87	1.64	1.96
The weighted average degree of importance according to the achievement means values of the 2nd group	1.88	1.63	2.03

significant for males (a weighted average of importance degree for this group of values made 2.01 and 1.84 among boys and girls, respectively). It appears that it corresponds to the traditional notions about the features of male and female behavior patterns and means that are focused on the use of all possible means to achieve their goals more likely than women (Lane and Distefano, 1988; Hofstede, 1994). Women are more moderate than men in the choice of means to achieve their goals.

A high degree of such value importance as independence and commitment is common both for male and female representatives. The gender effect is manifested most obviously at the evaluation of such value as education: if the girls put it in first place by importance, the young man put it in the last place. From this group of values girls consider responsibility, initiative and entrepreneurship as less important and young men consider that education is less important as we stated above.

The assessment of moral values that determine the means of objective achievement showed that female representatives give them more preference than with the male ones (the weighted average of the importance degree for this group of values made 1.63 and 2.03 among young

men and girls, respectively). Such results coincide with the generally accepted notions about the features of female and male psychology. Regardless of gender, respondents recognize the importance of such moral values as fairness and honesty. Girls appreciate kindness most of all but it is not typical for young men. Patriotism and tolerance are the least significant values for girls and boys.

The students of the courses 1-5 took part in thi survey and it is possible to trace how the adoption of certain values is influenced by age and the length of stay in a student community. Our study revealed the presence of such a relationship only by four of the considered values (Table 2).

The study showed that there is a clear trend of importance increase by the students from the first to to the last courses concerning the following values: security and stability, friendship, enterprise and initiative, obligation to society.

As is known, the student period is a special period when friendship and mutual aid is valued particularly and the developing student friendship relations impose a significant imprint on the rest of people's lives. In this sense, the increasing importance of friendship in the lives of students from course to course seems quite logical and understandable. The same may be said about such values as the obligation to society: the enhancement of its relevance from course to course demonstrates the positive processes of citizenship development among students. One should also assess positively the importance of the dynamics of entrepreneurship and initiative in life recognized by students. Students who participated in the survey, study in the areas of "Tourism", "Service", "Hospitality", "Trading business" and other areas. As the part of the educational process at the faculty of business and service a great attention is paid not only to the formation of knowledge and skills in a chosen professional field but also to the development of entrepreneurial skills, creativity and initiative. Therefore, by the final year an increasing number of students start to understand that the sine qua non of successful work and career is the enterprise and initiative. While recognizing the importance of a greater entrepreneurial spirit and initiative from course to course, the importance security and stability is increased. This situation carries some controversy as enterprise denies stability in favor of the

development and initiative is not always safe. It seems that there could be at least two approaches to explain this contradiction. The first one is that entrepreneurship and initiative among students is combined with some healthy rationalism that dictates a more balanced approach to decision-making taking into account possible risks. Our study showed that among the values of objective achievement rationalism has a great importance to students, especially for the male audience. The second approach is in recognition of contradictory, duality (binarity) as the special characteristics of Russian culture. This feature was indicated by a famous Russian philosopher Berdyaev, explaining it by the result of "border" geopolitical position of Russia between Europe and Asia and the complex processes of interpenetration of Western and Eastern ways of life. In his research, "Russian idea" he wrote: "two streams of world history meet and come into interaction in Russia the East and the West. The Russian people are not purely European or purely Asian people. Russia is an entire part of the world, a huge East-West, it connects two worlds. Two origins, Eastern and Western one, always fought in a Russian soul" (Berdyaev, 2008). According to scientists who share this attitude, the mentality of Russian people is a contradictory combination of a Western rational transforming and an Eastern spiritual and contemplative mentality.

CONCLUSION

Thus, according to the results of the study it can be concluded that over the years of reforms in our country the system of recognized values among students changed somewhat. Although, the "core" values (the presence of friends, interesting work, fairness, honesty, integrity) remained unchanged, the priorities of the remaining values changed. The reduction of importance within such values as obligation to society, tolerance, patriotism among students causes some anxiety. A significant increase of such student value importance as health, independence and commitment should be noted as a positive change.

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Table 2: Evaluation of value importance by courses recognized by students

Values	Accepted importance degree,Bᵢ according to training courses				
	1	2	3	4	5
Security, stability	1.73	1.85	2.13	2.05	2.46
Friendship	1.88	2.05	2.35	2.37	2.39
Entrepreneurship, initiative	1.49	1.50	1.58	1.69	2.06
Obligation for society	1.45	1.54	2.00	2.05	2.08

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