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**CROSS-CULTURAL RESEARCH OF STUDENTS' VALUE
ORIENTATIONS FROM POLISH AND UKRAINIAN INSTITUTIONS**

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The aim of the present survey was to research the value orientations of the Polish and Ukrainian students. The authors studied the value orientations of the students from two institutions, which could be regarded as a pilot project and a challenge for research with more participants from both countries. The analysis was carried out using the data collected from the interviews with the students of the chosen institutions. The conclusion and recommendations contribute to the enhancement of the academic environment of higher education institutions hosting international students as well as to the empowerment of students' youth in their cross-cultural encounters.

Key words: cross-cultural research, values, value orientations, cultural differences, student youth.

Сікорська І. М., Шульга В. В. Крос-культурні дослідження ціннісних орієнтацій студентів польських та українських вишів/ Донецький державний університет управління, м. Маріуполь, Україна

Метою даної роботи було дослідження ціннісних орієнтацій польських та українських студентів. Автори вивчали ціннісні орієнтації студентів з двох вишів, що можна розглядати в якості пілотного проекту, а також напрямок для подальших досліджень в обох країнах. Аналіз проводився з використанням даних, зібраних під час інтерв'ю студентів обраних установ. Висновок і рекомендації можуть сприяти підвищенню якості академічного середовища вищих навчальних закладів, що приймають іноземних студентів, а також для

розширення можливостей студентської молоді для міжкультурних зустрічей.

Ключові слова: крос-культурні дослідження, цінності, ціннісні орієнтації, культурні відмінності, студентська молодь.

Сикорская И. Н., Шульга В.В. Кросс-культурное исследование ценностных ориентаций студентов польских и украинских вузов/ Донецкий государственный университет управления, Мариуполь, Украина

Целью данной работы было исследование ценностных ориентаций польских и украинских студентов. Авторы изучали ценностные ориентации студентов из двух вузов, что можно рассматривать в качестве пилотного проекта, а также направление для дальнейших исследований в обеих странах. Анализ проводился с использованием данных, собранных во время интервью студентов выбранных учреждений. Заключение и рекомендации могут способствовать повышению качества академической среды высших учебных заведений, принимающих иностранных студентов, а также для расширения возможностей студенческой молодежи для кросс-культурных встреч.

Ключевые слова: кросс-культурные исследования, ценности, ценностные ориентации, культурные различия, студенческая молодежь.

Studying the values of individuals has originated at the beginning of social science emergence. Value orientations are regarded as a structural element of an individual which characterizes motivational readiness to implement certain activities towards meeting his/her needs and interests, as well as to indicate the model of behavior. The increasing interest of the researchers towards the issue of value orientations, is the result of a deeper understanding of the nature of human knowledge and its socio-cultural conditioning and integrity. The value orientations are understood as the content side a person's orientation, reflecting the inner basis of his/her attitude towards reality [Golovaha, 2007].

The evolution of the concept of values has developed a long way, being transformed in the modern concepts in the mid 1950s by the anthropologists [Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck, 1961] followed by the works of social psychologists [Bond, 1988, Rokeach, 1979, Schwartz and Bardi, 2001], sociologists [Inglehart and Flanagan, 1987], cross-cultural researchers [Hall 1976, Hofstede 1983, Brink 1984], organizational theorists [Triandis 1994, Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner 1997, Carter, 2000, Gallagher, 2000].

Cultural values have received significant attention by scholars worldwide. The list of works includes the works of Russian scholars Fantalova (1992), Kagan (1997), Baev&Baeva (2005), Zhuravleva (2006) as well as of Ukrainian researchers Golovakha, Magoon, Rudnev (2007). However, there is always a need for new research that will expand the understanding of values, due to its significant impact on all spheres of the social life of an individual. In the complex process of social change, such studies have become especially important because of the reorganization of individuals' value orientations. It is this that determines the choice of an individual's behavioral strategies, and thus determines the future state of society.

The interest of the researchers in youth value orientations has a strong background, as early adolescence is the period of intensive formation of the system of value orientations, which affect the formation of identity in general [Bogdanova, 2010]. The necessity of researching the indicated subject is determined by the contradictions between modern social conditions, which impose special requirements towards the formation of value orientations of an individual, and a certain deficit of knowledge about the factors and mechanisms of his/her development. At the same time, there is a tendency for increasing the interactions between people of different value orientations in the modern world. More contacts have been established between representatives of different cultures. In the meantime, misunderstandings and conflicts arise on the basis of cultural differences. Studying the basic cultural values and value orientations of two

countries can be an effective tool of creating the mechanisms of cooperation between organizations and individuals and prevention any possible ethnic conflicts. A cross-cultural study of values, which becomes more popular, can help establish contacts and solve conflicts. Discovering the multicultural diversity of the world and understanding the fact that any culture can be understood by being compared with other culture stimulates, and based on the cross-cultural analysis approach [Pochebut, 2012].

Context of the survey

This study was undertaken at two universities in two countries. The respondents of the survey were 50 Polish students from L.Kozminski University (Warsaw, Poland) and 50 Ukrainian students from Donetsk State University of Management (Donetsk, Ukraine) in the period 2013-2014 years. The two mentioned institutions fruitfully cooperate within the students' exchange program. The age of the respondents was 20-22, 64% were females, and 46 % were males.

The purpose of this work is an analysis and comparison of the hierarchical structure of the values of students from different countries, and includes:

- a comparative analysis of the value orientations of the Polish and Ukrainian students from the above mention institutions;
- common and distinctive features of the two cultures represented by the respondents;
- cultural peculiarities selected in the hierarchical structure of value orientations;
- value orientations of the youth as a factor of the regulation of social behavior.

It was hypothesized that there will be a certain match between the value orientations of the respondents from both countries.

Methodology and findings

The empirical tools for the research are based on the methodology "Correlation level of "Value" and " Value Accessibility" in various spheres,"

created by Russian researcher Elena Fantalova in 1992. The core of this methodology is the idea that one of the leading determinants of human behavior is the correlation between awareness of an individual's own life values, and understanding how they can be realized. The result of correlation leads to revealing the values conflicts of an individual. The gap between the attractive value for a person and how easy that value could be realized is a kind of psychological tension that may lead a person either to desire to achieve this value or to the state of frustration and even depression. The content of the methodology is a paired comparison of the twelve proposed terminal values that is based on the Milton Rokeach's value survey. M.Rokeach put forward a theory and an instrument reflecting it which has been widely known as "The Rokeach Study of Values" [Rokeach, 1979] and has proved to be applicable in many different types of study. He distinguished two kinds of values: *instrumental*, referring to modes of conduct and reflecting behavioral characteristics that are seen as socially desirable and *terminal*, referring to end states of existence or ultimate modes of living which have been idealized.

The fact of distinguishing between the terminal and instrumental values reproduces already traditional distinction between the values-goals and the values-achievements, and in general perspective it reflects the most meaningful values of a person who lives and works in a modern society.

However E. Fantalova offered the modified version of a pairwise ranking of a certain number of values adapted for local cultural environment. The basis of the Fantalova's methodology is grounded on the assumption that one of the principal determinants of a personal motivation during his/her life is a moving and unstable relationship between two planes of consciousness: between the plane of a person major life values and a plane that is accessible and linked with achievement of the concrete goals that are accessible. In relation to a particular life sphere the ratio of these two planes is analogous to the relation of psychological parameters such as "Value" (V), and "Accessibility" (A). Therefore, for the optimal assessment of the

individual's state and choice of tactics of the impact on him/her it is important to recognize the nature and degree of dissociation between "valuable" and "accessible" in the main areas of life, not just indicating a particular value for a person.

Thus, an important characteristic of E.Fantalova's psychometric methodology is an indicator "Value-Accessibility" ("V-A"), reflecting the degree of mismatch in the disintegration motivational- personal sphere. If $(V-A > 4)$, then it is noted the existence of the internal conflict of personality, reflecting the degree of dissatisfaction with the current situation in life, blockade of the basic needs of a person, the so-called "internal vacuum", characterized by reducing motives, feeling of inner ballast. In the case if $(V-A < 4)$ it indicates the neutral zone, which contains the actual and realized values. All areas that are placed in the neutral zone, represent a kind of "conflict-free" zone, where the needs for the desired and opportunities of obtaining them basically match.

The present research was organized in two stages. The goal of the first stage was to process the obtained empirical data, which allows to build the hierarchy of values of the Polish and Ukrainian students based on their significance and then enables a comparison. For this reason the respondents were asked to fill in the form choosing the preferable values. The form was designed in English for the Polish students and in Ukrainian for the Ukrainian students. The obtained empirical data are presented in Table 1.

Table 1

The hierarchy of the values orientations distribution based on their greater significance and attractiveness for students in Poland and Ukraine

	Distribution of answers of the Polish students		Distribution of answers of the Ukrainian students	
	place in the hierarchy	average grade	place in the hierarchy	average grade

1. Active life	10	4,22	8	2,96
2. Health	2	6,78	2	6,84
3. Interesting job	5	5,56	6	3,54
4. Beauty of nature and art	11	2,24	11	1,38
5. Love	3	6,72	3	5,28
6. Financially secured life	7	5,28	5	3,94
7. Presence of loyal friends	4	6,06	4	4,50
8. Self-confidence	7	5,28	7	3,22
9. Cognition	8	4,74	10	1,98
10. Freedom as independence in actions	6	5,44	9	2,66
11. Happy family life	1	7,84	1	8,24
12. Creativity	9	4,32	12	1,28

Having compared the obtained data which is presented in Table 1, it is seen that there is no big difference between the hierarchy of the values based on their relevance for students in Poland and Ukraine. This fact is quite understandable. First of all, all the respondents originate from the countries which almost simultaneously overcame the previous socialist socio-political system. Secondly, most of them are the representatives of the first generation of people who were born and grew up in the independent post-socialist societies. World globalization is the reality of our life. People of all the continents are influenced by common world values, and this process will quicken as the elements of different cultures comingle.

National traits, undoubtedly, will remain, but they will not determine the dominant mode of life. The concept of the "world community" is not an abstraction, it is a reality as a global world creates a qualitatively different culture. All these factors have also caused quite a number of similar results in the hierarchy of value orientations of the young students of Poland and Ukraine.

As it can be seen from the Table 1 the value of "happy family" took a leading position in the hierarchy of values for students of Ukraine and Poland. The average grade of the values among Poles is 7, 84 points and among the Ukrainians is 8, 42

points. Perhaps this small gap between the results can be explained by the fact that the Ukrainian respondents were students of senior courses and most of them were females. In this age it is assumed that every young girl thinks about a happy and wealthy family, and some of them may be already married.

Among the widely-recognized family functions, however, there is one important aspect emphasized by authors of this paper: a function to be a shelter of an emotional and psychological nature which helps it to survive in a modern turbulent world. Most likely, the most attractive feature of a modern family for young people, is being a stable place in the changing world, where you are supported despite the whims, prejudices or negative patterns of behavior. This may be even more relevant with those respondents who are from societies under social transformations where the accustomed types and forms of social relations have collapsed. In such situations, the family becomes the place of tranquility, relaxation and its value grows. Talking about the system of values of Poles, it is worth mentioning about their religiousness. Poles are Catholics, and marriage for them is one of the main sacraments. One of the most important qualities of Poles is high respect for the traditions and culture of their country. Family is a bearer of cultural values of society and nation. It is regarded as a socio-cultural and educating environment, which creates a system of values, cultivates family traditions and upbringing for the younger generation, and promotes national culture. Ukraine is also a country with definite religious traditions, which are reflected in the value system of the student youth.

The next value “health” is put on the second place of the value orientations hierarchy (the average grade of the Poles is 7, 68; and the Ukrainians is 6, 84). The idea of a healthy lifestyle dominates in modern society as all the aspects of human life in a wider perspective are determined by the level of healthcare of the nation. Health is a valuable thing for most people, it refers to a category of highest, universal values, as it has an everlasting, comprehensive and timeless significance. At the same time, health is a valuable instrument, because it can not exist by itself,

it is rather a condition for the existence of life - the most meaningful value. By putting health on the top position the respondents showed their understanding that they can reach life goals only by being healthy.

The third chosen value is "love". The period of adolescence causes the formation of new feelings by itself that is why students placed "love" on the third place in the hierarchy of values. Average grade of "love" for the Poles is 6, 2 points; average grade for the Ukrainians is 5, 28. On the fourth place is "friendship", which is quite understandable in the period of student's life. The Polish students put this value on the fourth place with an average grade of 6,01 and the choice of the Ukrainians is 4,50 points. Friendship is a great social and moral value of the majority of people, however many of them consider it as a very exceptional phenomenon today. The modern world is very dynamic and turbulent, it creates doubts and uncertainties in social relations. Under such unstable conditions, an individual is forced to search a support, either in a family or among friends. The age of the respondents apparently foresees a wide range of communication and higher social activity, so it is not surprising that the value of "availability of good and faithful friends" is number one among the hierarchy of values.

The other values were distributed in the following way in the values hierarchy:

"Interesting job" is a goal of any graduate (among the Poles – 5, 54 points; among the Ukrainians – 3, 54 points);

"Independence in actions" - young people tend to be independent and original (the Poles – 5, 44 points; the Ukrainians – 2, 26).

From our point of view the value "cognition" takes one of the lowest positions because respondents are at the age when they study, expand their horizons and mental outlook, and exercise their own intellectual development. Knowledge may be taken for granted. Apparently, an individual can fully understand the value of cognition and knowledge and the fullness of its meaning at a mature age. The

opportunities of “creativity” turned out not to be that valuable either, since students are focused on training, which in general is a productive activity, especially in Ukraine. Most likely that creativity can appear in ingenuity in unexpected situations which are common in a student’s life.

Summarizing this part of the survey it could be mentioned that the most important values for all respondents are happy family life, health and love. In general, such choice of these values corresponds to the age characteristics of the polled students. The following facts also attract attention: firstly, the high degree of coincidence of the average grades of similar values in the two groups of students, and secondly, a high degree of hierarchy identity of the terminal values.

While analyzing the terminal value hierarchy of students from both countries, it should be noted that plans of youth to be healthy, to have faithful friends, happy family life, interesting work in the future, can not fully be called as a life perspective. Young people should not only imagine their future in general, but they should also be aware of the means of achieving these goals [Golovakha, 2009]. Understanding the ways in which young people intend to achieve their important goals, needs further research and consideration of the instrumental values.

Thanks to the applied methodology not only the hierarchy of values can be built, but also an answer to the important question can be found: can a person achieve a desired value? At the second stage of the survey E. Fantalova suggests to rank the values according to their accessibility. In our survey the respondents assess their capabilities in regards of achievement of these values. The values which are top-ranked not always could be accessible which inevitably affect the students’ behavior and their life strategy.

Such assumption makes it possible to formulate a second hypothesis: if the hierarchy of values according to their importance will match in the samples of students in Poland and Ukraine, the proposed terminal values in terms of their accessibility are not fully matched for Ukrainian and Polish students.

These results are presented in Table 2.

Table 2

**The hierarchy of the value distribution of the students in Poland and Ukraine
in terms of their achieving**

Value Distribution	Distribution made by the Polish students		Distribution made by the Ukrainian students	
	place in the hierarchy	Average grade	place in the hierarchy	Average grade
1. Active life	2	6,78	1	6,28
2. Health	8	5,3	2	4,34
3. Interesting work	10	5,00	8	3,24
4. Beauty of nature and art	6	5,46	4	1,38
5. Love	9	5,08	5	3,84
6. Financially secured life	11	3,66	12	1,94
7. Presence of loyal friends	1	7,14	3	4,00
8. Self-confidence	3	5,98	6	3,62
9. Cognition	5	5,64	7	3,26
10. Freedom in actions	7	5,34	11	2,14
11. Happy family life	4	5,72	5	3,06
12. Creativity	9	5,08	10	2,30

Comparing the two hierarchies of values in Table 2, it can be noticed that the distribution of values in terms of their achievement does not coincide for the respondents of two groups. The most easily accessible value for the students of Poland is “presence of loyal friends” (7, 14), for the Ukrainian students the same value is placed in the third place (4, 0). It turns out that Poles are more friendly and hospitable.

Achievement of the value of "active life" for the students of both countries is high (average score among the Polish students is – 6, 78; among the Ukrainians – 6,

28 and it took the first place in the hierarchy). Student's life is active, it is full of vivid emotions, new acquaintances, so this value is easily accessible for students, and not very significant for them.

Health (as a standard, common value which is transmitted from generation to generation) took the second place in the value orientations chart of the Ukrainian students (4, 34), while the Poles have put it on the eighth place (5,30). Nowadays the notion "health" means absence of disease. The boundaries of the state when a person feels him/herself healthy are not concrete. Therefore, the concept of being healthy has an axiological character.

There is a problem of unemployment in both countries - not all students can find jobs according to their specialty. The Polish students put "interesting work" on the tenth place in the hierarchy, with an average grade – 5, 0; the Ukrainian students placed it on the eighth position (3, 24).

"Creativity" occupies one of the lowest position of availability (the Poles – 5, 08, the Ukrainians – 2, 3), thereby emphasizing the extremely minor importance for modern youth. A possible reason of this fact can be a manifestation of pragmatism, which is widely spread among young people. Attention is drawn to the fact that students know and understand the value of creativity in the structure of modern personality and ideals which are dominant in the humanistic sciences. However, the demand of human creative potential in the surrounding reality is not that high, and some innovations especially in Ukrainian society are often not easy to implement.

For the students of both groups "financially secured life" is the value which is not easily achievable, since the problem of shortage of money for students is one of the eternal problems when they have to combine study with work (average grades of the Polish students was - 3.66 points, for the Ukrainian students – 1,94 points).

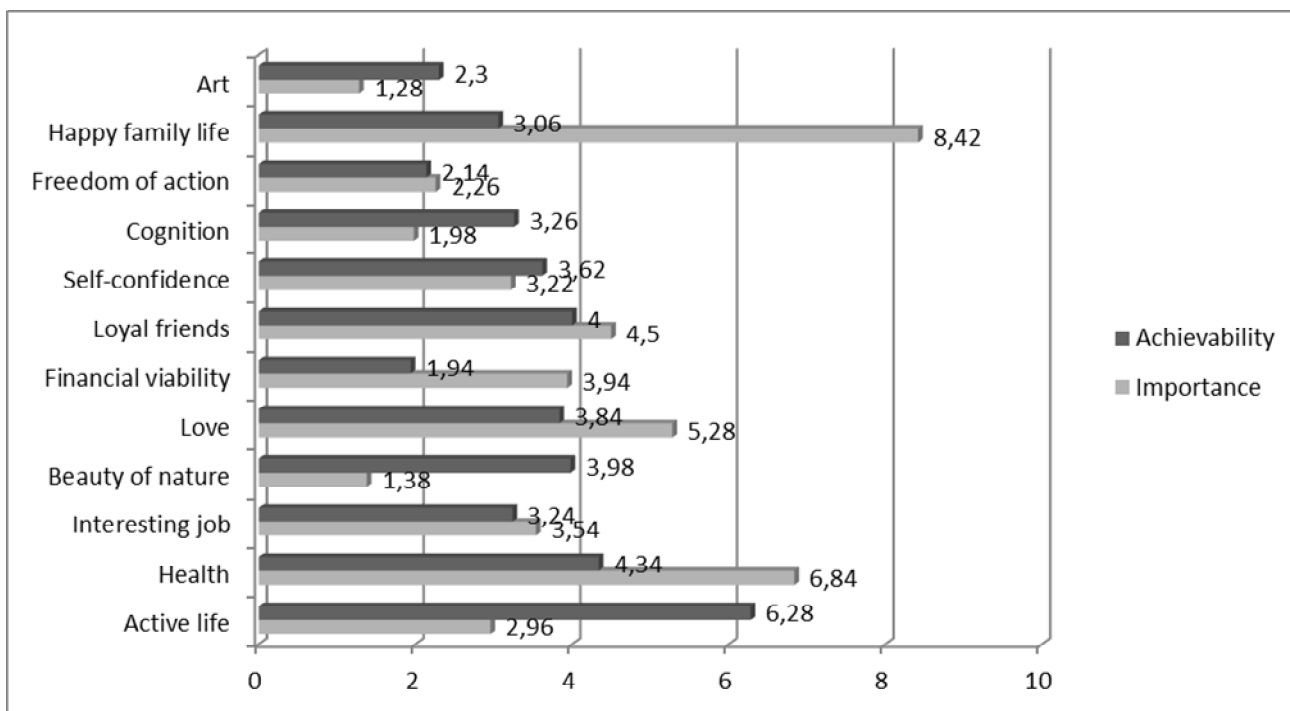
Having obtained two values hierarchies we move to the third stage of the survey. The contradictions between notions "value", and "its accessibility", led to the "internal conflict", "internal vacuum" and "neutral zone" [Fantalova, 2001].

The internal conflict is grounded on the considerable exaggeration of value compared to its accessibility. The difference between value and accessibility will always indicate the degree of discrepancy between "I want" and "I have", and between "I want" and "I can". The external conditions of conflict are based on the fact that satisfaction from any deep and active motives and personal relationships becomes completely impossible or are under threat. The internal conditions of psychological conflict depend on the contradictions between different motives and the relationships of a person, or between his/her capabilities and expectations. Obviously, the internal conditions of conflict of an individual do not appear spontaneously, they are usually caused by the external situation and by the level of personal development. Conflict arises when a person is not able to change objective conditions and/or circumstances which have caused the conflict.

"The inner vacuum" is characterized by the exaggeration of accessibility over value. This condition appears when the available object is not interesting for a person, it is useless and insignificant.

"The neutral zone" is a conflict-free, restful state where "desirable" and "real" fully or partially coincide and are harmoniously balanced in the inner world of a person. Figures 1 and 2 show the correlation between "Values" and their "Accessibility" of the Ukrainian and the Polish students.

Fig. 1 Correlations between "Values" and "Accessibility" of the Ukrainian students



For the Ukrainian students "a happy family life" scored in the zone of "internal conflict" which indicates a degree of dissatisfaction with the current life situation. If we keep in mind that most of the respondents have no marital family yet, an assumption remains factual about their unpreparedness towards building a family in real life. It can be noteworthy that there is a visible tendency for the Ukrainian respondents to have internal conflict relative to those values that are the most meaningful to them: "happy family life", "health", "love".

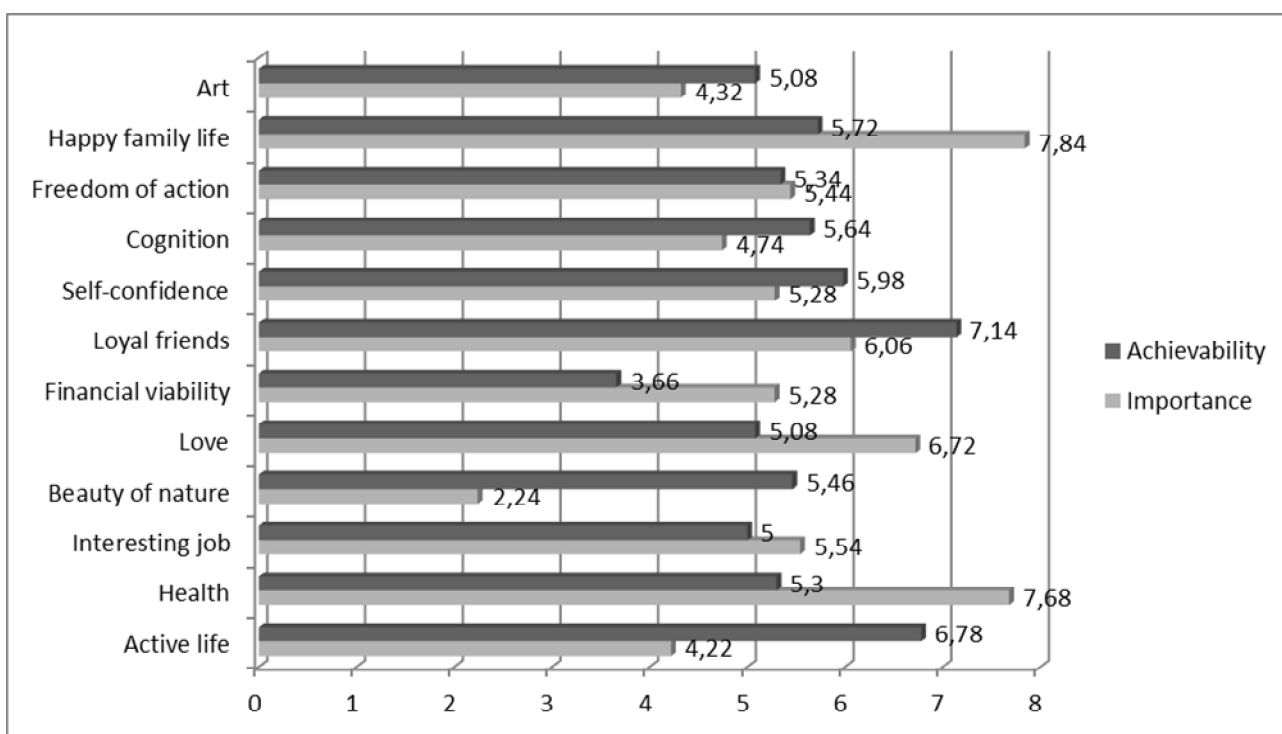
The list of values that can lead to internal conflict is logically connected with the "financially secured life". This fact is not surprising as financial independence is urgent issue for the most students. The state of internal conflict – is, generally, the state of the gap in the "consciousness-existence" system, the difference between the need to achieve significant values and the inability to achieve this in reality. Such psychological conflict can be solved only when a person changes his/her attitude towards the objective situation that generates the conflict. If a person is unable to solve the existing conflicts, it will cause frustration and depression.

Surprisingly for the Ukrainian respondents "active life" scored in the zone of "internal vacuum". It can be assumed that students' life activity for these

respondents is so high that it becomes superfluous due to abundance of various events, meetings and adventures. In general, such values as "active life", "cognition", "nature", "creativity" do not have serious meaning for the Ukrainian students at their age, and make up the totality of the "internal vacuum" zone. The concept of internal vacuum is relevant for the life of modern youth, and it is often used as a synonym for vacuum that generally means devaluation of life and its meaning. As for the Ukrainian students it can be said that the number of values that score in the zone of "internal vacuum" creates certain assumptions about the dependence from the outside world, the emergence of internal emptiness in the sense of unlimited external freedom.

Neutral zone is a conflict-free, calm state, where "desirable" and "real" fully or partly coincide and harmoniously balance in the inner world of the person. It is the state when meaningful demands are mostly satisfied, and values are realized. Such values for the Ukrainian students include the following: "the presence of loyal friends", "self-confidence", "an opportunity to expand their education and the role of "cognition", "interesting work." The Polish students have different situation, which is clearly presented in Figure 2.

Fig. 2 Correlations between "Values" and "Accessibility" of the Polish students



It is obvious that empirical results are calculated for each respondent separately and there are different answers in each sample, and their generalization provides the following data. On the basis of the data presented in Figure 2, we can conclude that the correlation of “Value” and “Accessibility” of the values offered is located in a neutral zone. It can describe the respondents as individuals satisfied with themselves, with their social status for the present moment. However, there is always some discrepancy between their desires and possibilities to satisfy them that is reflected in the behavior and psychological state of the individual. Such values as "Happy family life" and "Health" have showed negative trend for the Polish students.

Conclusions and recommendations

The overall purpose of the article was to give an insight into specific value-orientations field of research, and to contribute towards an in-depth understanding of the values involved in cross-cultural encounters of young people in Poland and Ukraine. Summarizing the obtained data of this survey it could be emphasized that

in general the main benefit of knowing personal values especially at young age is that it will gain tremendous clarity and focus for making consistent decisions and taking committed action. So the whole matter of discovering the respondents' values was to improve the results they get in those areas that are truly most important to them.

The findings of this study show that there is a high degree of hierarchical identity of terminal values for the students of Ukraine and Poland from two chosen institutions, due to the process of globalization and high extent of closeness of the two cultures. It needs to be emphasized that both Poland and Ukraine are countries with a previous socialist socio-political system. As we compare the two groups of students, there are only few differences. One can hardly deny that the most important values for students of both groups appeared to be "happy family life", "health", "love" and "presence of loyal friends". While the values related to the cognitive activity were of less importance for them. Certainly, one study may not qualify for general theoretical conclusions, but it serves as a signal to those cultural processes that occur in societies of both countries.

As the accessibility of the values is concerned it should be pointed out that for the Polish students all the proposed values are placed in the neutral zone, which shows that significant demand is mainly satisfied and the proposed values are reached. This condition does not cause any internal conflict and it reflects some positive development in motivational intentions of an individual in Poland. For the Ukrainian students the important values were those which appeared to be difficult to reach. So we can assume that there is a certain conflict for them within the process of living with integrity to their values. This fact witnesses the internal conflicts linked to their search of identity and the lack of personal harmony and it certainly requires additional and more detailed research.

With regard to the findings and the conclusion of the present paper, the following recommendations can be given to education institutions, and cross-cultural researchers:

- in general our findings can be used in other cross-cultural studies, as well as for prognostic purposes like developing programs and projects focused on the internationalization of higher education of the universities;
- having some understanding about youth social orientations it's possible to use available resources for the education of young people, providing social support in the process of their formation, ensuring the success of self-realization of youth in all spheres of social life;
- universities departments and services could be well advised how to improve the support for the adaptation of international students during the students' exchange programs.

The implementation of these recommendations will contribute to the empowerment of individuals in cross-cultural encounters across the nations. The practical significance of the study is to specify the intensification of the psychological and sociological knowledge in the field of values orientations in Ukrainian and Polish communities.

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