

**PSYRGGU 2019**  
**Psychology of subculture: Phenomenology and Contemporary  
Tendencies of Development**

**TRANSFORMATION OF VALUES IN A MULTICULTURAL  
ENVIRONMENT**

M. Guseltseva (a)\*, O. Grebennikova (b), E. Isotova (c), N. Yurchenko (d)

\*Corresponding author

(a) Psychological Institute RAE, 125009, Mokhovaya 9, Moscow, Russia; mguseltseva@mail.ru, (495) 695-88-76;

(b) Psychological Institute RAE, 125009, Mokhovaya 9, Moscow, Russia; grebennikova577@mail.ru, (495) 695-88-76;

(c) Moscow Pedagogical State University, 119991, M. Pirogovskaya Str 1/1, Moscow, Russia, teoretic@mail.ru, (499) 787-04-85;

(d) Psychological Institute RAE, 125009, Mokhovaya 9, Moscow, Russia, frau.yurchenko@gmail.com, (495) 695-88-76

***Abstract***

Transformation of values is a subject of study both in psychology and in the social sciences and humanities. In a contemporary transitive and multicultural society both the obvious and the latent transformation of the value system of teenagers and young people are taking place. This creates two problems in studying the transformation of values in a transitive and multicultural society: the problem of methodological support of research and the problem of correct interpretation of the data obtained. The solution to this problem is the use of mixed methods and methodologies, reliance on data triangulation and transdisciplinary approach. Expanded conceptual frame, comparison of data from psychology and other sciences allows to more accurately interpret the results of psychological studies. In this study we compared the value orientations of adolescents and young people, revealed the role of both age and socio-cultural factors in the dynamics of values. These studies compare groups of adolescents and young people as well as representatives from Russia and Venezuela. In this study results were obtained indicating similarities and differences in values between adolescents and young people as well as between Russian and Venezuelan respondents. Self-Direction is the leading value for Russian and Venezuelan respondents. Russian young people chose Security while Venezuelan young people chose Benevolence. In general the dynamics of the values of adolescents and youth reflects age-related changes and factors of the socio-cultural context.

© 2019 Published by Future Academy [www.FutureAcademy.org](http://www.FutureAcademy.org) UK

**Keywords:** Methodology, transformation of the values, teenagers and youth, transdisciplinary approach.



## 1. Introduction

The study of values and life-sense orientations in a contemporary transitive and multicultural society is a relevant and sought-after research topic. This allows understanding the sociocultural dynamics of the development of society, to predict and prevent potential national, ethnic, generational, social and civil conflicts. In nowadays value orientations are an important factor in the processes of globalization and local development of territories, in mixing different traditions in the same social space, in the processes of socialization and individualization of a person. Value orientations contribute to the overall development of the personality, the formation of its territorial and civic identity, professional self-determination and creative self-realization of modern adolescents and young people in its transitive and multicultural environment. Value and life-sense orientations underlie the sociocultural dynamics of society and determine the ranges and possibilities of certain positive changes.

In this study the value orientations of contemporary Russian and Venezuelan adolescents were studied. The factors influencing the socio-cultural context and the age dynamics of values from adolescents to youth were considered. This study focused on a comparative and transdisciplinary approach which involves comparing different research series on the one hand and interpreting the obtained psychological data in a broad framework of humanitarian studies on the other hand.

## 2. Problem Statement

Transformation of values is a subject of study both in psychology and in the social sciences and humanities.

In psychology starting with the works of Spranger (1928) it is customary to distinguish 6 types of values regarding the orientation of the individual in different spheres of culture and social environment: theoretical, economic, aesthetic, social, political, religious. In modern psychology values are divided into two main groups: terminal (human dignity, love, friendship, economic prosperity, security, equality of opportunity, etc.) and instrumental (ambitious, open-minded, capable, courageous, helpful, intellectual, loyal, obedient, polite, responsible, etc.). Terminal values are a kind of universal moral standards. They also characterize the goals of the individual being of a person. Instrumental values are ways to act and achieve certain goals (Schwartz, 1992, 2012).

Leontiev (2007) identifies three types of values: social ideals, subject values and personal values. Ideas about personal purpose in life are reflected in the study of life-sense orientations (Leontiev, 2006). According to the theory of Schwartz (2012), personal values exist on two levels: at the level of normative ideals and at the level of individual priorities. The first level is more stable and reflects a person's ideas about how to act, determining his life principles of behavior. The second level is more dependent on the external environment for example on group pressure and correlates with the specific actions of a person.

In turn the studies of Inglehart (2018) (World Values Survey) show that in the contemporary post-industrial world there is a transition from the values of survival and security to the values of development and self-expression. Inglehart's research revealed in all modern advanced post-industrial societies a "cultural shift" that took place with the coming of new generations to the historical scene, socializing under stable democratic regimes namely: moving from "values of survival" to "values of self-

expression". New values are characterized by increasing environmental concerns, the rise of the women's movement and persistent demands for participation in economic and political decision-making. The post-materialistic values include the values of trust, tolerance, creative self-realization, benevolence, humanism and solidarity. These values are inherent in developed post-industrial societies.

It is important to note that in a contemporary transitive and multicultural society both the obvious and the latent transformation of the value system of adolescents and young people are taking place.

We assume that this creates two problems in studying the transformation of values in a transitive and multicultural society:

- the problem of methodological support of research;
- the problem of correct interpretation of the data obtained.

### **2.1. The main obstacles to the study of the transformation of the values of modern adolescents and youth**

We assume that the leading methodological problem of this kind of research is the identification of those processes of transformation of values that proceed imperceptibly and slowly and consequently cannot be detected by familiar research strategies and methods. The solution to this problem is the use of mixed methods and methodologies, reliance on data triangulation and transdisciplinary methodology (Gusetseva, 2018). Collecting a complete picture of the ongoing value transformations by combining a series of individual studies also helps in solving the problem posed.

### **2.2. The role of transdisciplinary approach in the interpretation of psychological data**

We also assume that to study the transformation of the values of modern adolescents and young people in the transitive and multicultural world it is necessary to go beyond the limits of psychological science and compare psychological data with data obtained from sociological, anthropological, political and other humanitarian studies. The transdisciplinary approach plays an important role in the methodology of modern social sciences and humanities. We assume that this broader conceptual framework allows us to more accurately interpret the results of psychological studies obtained.

## **3. Research Questions**

The following research questions were raised in this study. It is necessary to identify the significant differences in value orientations between adolescents and youth in a contemporary transitive and multicultural society and also to determine whether such differences exist exclusively in Russia or in other countries too.

Research tasks included:

- difference of value orientations between adolescents and young people;
- difference of value orientations between Russian and Venezuelan respondents.

#### **4. Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of the research was to study the value orientations of contemporary Russian teenagers, adolescents and young people in a situation of a transitive and multicultural society and then to compare them with the value orientations of adolescents and youth in other countries (for example in Venezuela).

It was assumed that:

- the difference in value orientations between adolescents and young people reflects the dynamics of ongoing changes in a transitive and multicultural society;
- the difference in value orientations between Russian and Venezuelan respondents allows in a comparative study to identify the influence of the socio-cultural context.

These assumptions were checked in the course of empirical research of teenager's and youth's average aged 15 years and 21 years from Russian; average aged 15 years and 21 years from Venezuela. Sample of the study included 229 participants. Group 1: 60 teenagers aged 13 to 16 years; 60 young people aged 20 to 22 years. Group 2: 54 Russian respondents aged 13 to 22 years; 55 Venezuelan respondents aged 14 to 22 years. Research was conducted on base of the several schools and universities of Moscow, Russia; schools and the Arturo Michelena University located in Valencia, Venezuela. The study was conducted in 2017-2018 years. All the participants gave their consent to participate in the study.

#### **5. Research Methods**

Research series were carried out using the following techniques:

- Schwartz's (2012) Value Inventory.
- Test of life-sense orientations (LSO) by Leontiev (2006) .

#### **6. Findings**

Comparative analysis of data shows that there are significant age and socio-cultural differences in value orientations of respondents

##### **6.1. Life-sense orientation in modern adolescents and young people in Russia**

The study of life-sense orientations of modern teenagers and young people in Russia revealed significant differences in the following positions: "general indicator of life-sense", "purposes in life", "life process", "life productivity", "locus of self-control". Representatives of modern youth in contrast to teenagers are more purpose-oriented. The purposes they set give life-sense, direction and temporary perspective. Their plans have real support in the present and are supported by personal responsibility for implementation. Young people have a richer and more interesting life. Young people are more satisfied with self-realization and consider their life productive and meaningful. Most young people seek to control both their actions and life in general (Table 01).

**Table 01.** Life-sense orientation in modern adolescents and young people in Russia (in percentage)

Life-sense orientation	Teenagers (High – Average – Low)			Young people (High – Average – Low)			Significant differences
General indicator of life-sense	20	47	33	43	47	10	0,022
Purposes in life	23	57	29	53	43	4	0,05
Life process	20	63	17	40	53	7	0,045
Life productivity	23	50	27	47	47	6	0,034
Locus of self-control	14	63	23	57	40	3	0,002
Locus of life control	23	54	23	37	53	10	–

The data according to the U-criterion of Mann Whitney revealed the following significant differences (at  $p < 0.05$ ).

### 6.2. Terminal values of modern adolescents and young people in Russia

Among the terminal values in Russian teenagers and young people the following positions prevail: “active social contacts”, “preservation of individuality”, “sphere of professional life”, “sphere of family life”, “sphere of public life”, “sphere of hobbies”. We found that teenagers have more active social contacts both real and virtual (through social networks and instant messengers) than among young people. An individual preservation and self-expression are of particular importance for teenagers. The space of hobbies in adolescents is represented more widely than in young people. Teens are more focused on leisure and entertainment activities (online games, online tournaments, watching YouTube videos). However, the importance of professional, family and social life is much higher among representatives of modern youth than among teenagers (Table 02).

**Table 02.** Terminal values of modern adolescents and young people in Russia (in percentage)

Terminal values	Teenagers (High – Average – Low)			Young people (High – Average – Low)			Significant differences
Prestige	33	53	14	20	53	27	–
High financial position	40	54	7	50	47	3	–
Creativity	27	53	20	20	47	33	–
Active social contacts	47	43	10	17	57	26	0,016
Self-development	23	70	7	20	60	20	–
Achievement	57	37	6	50	33	17	–
Spiritual satisfaction	14	63	23	17	60	23	–
Preservation of individuality	43	43	14	20	47	37	0,04
Sphere of professional life	20	53	27	50	30	20	0,035
The scope of training and education	40	40	20	47	33	20	–
Sphere of family life	30	40	3	57	30	13	0,05
Sphere of public life	37	33	30	57	30	13	0,023
Sphere of hobbies	40	47	13	26	47	27	0,04

The data according to the U-criterion of Mann Whitney revealed the following significant differences (at  $p < 0.05$ ).

### 6.3. Comparative study of Russian and Venezuelan respondents (adolescents and young people)

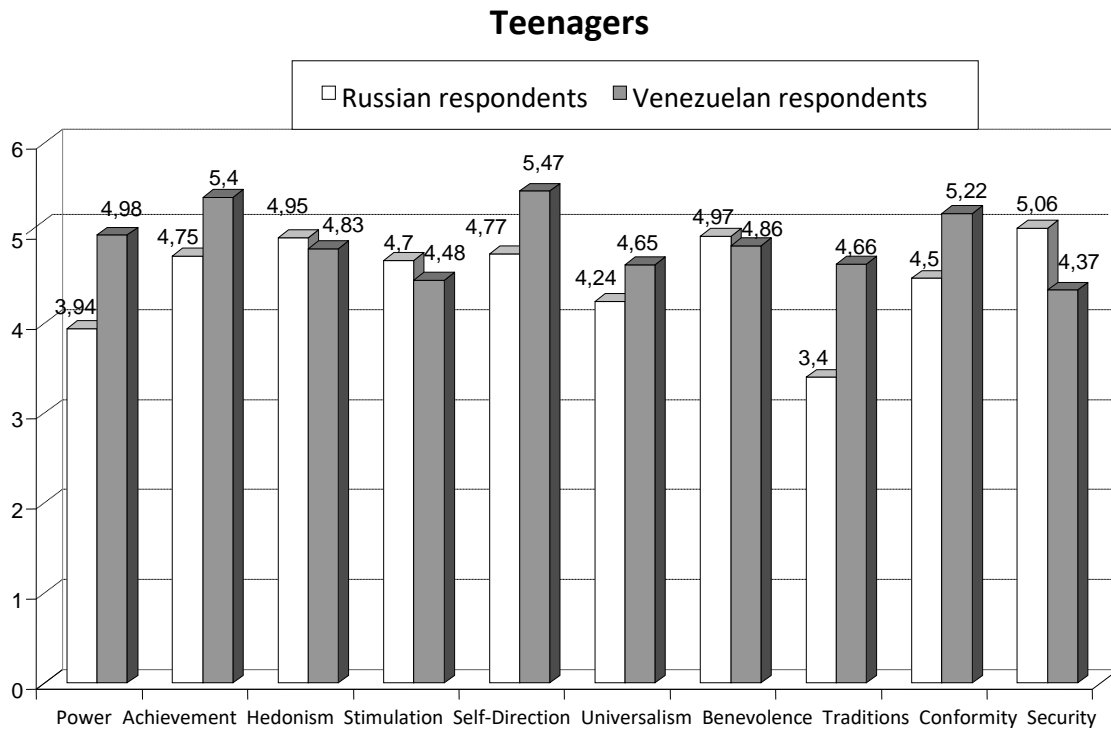
As a result of a comparative study of Russian and Venezuelan respondents it was revealed that there are values that are identical in significance for all groups of respondents and differ significantly from each other (Table 03).

**Table 03.** Preferred values of Russian and Venezuelan respondents

Values / respondents	Russian respondents				Venezuelan respondents			
	Teenagers		Young people		Teenagers		Young people	
	Hierarchy / average		Hierarchy / average		Hierarchy/average		Hierarchy/average	
Power	<b>9</b>	3,94	<b>9</b>	3,83	<b>4</b>	4,98	<b>10</b>	3,40
Achievement	<b>5</b>	4,75	<b>2</b>	4,90	<b>2</b>	5,40	<b>6</b>	4,77
Hedonism	<b>3</b>	4,95	<b>6</b>	4,21	<b>6</b>	4,83	<b>7</b>	4,11
Stimulation	<b>6</b>	4,70	<b>7</b>	4,07	<b>9</b>	4,48	<b>8</b>	3,99
Self-direction	<b>4</b>	4,77	<b>1</b>	5,23	<b>1</b>	5,47	<b>2</b>	5,12
Universalism	<b>8</b>	4,24	<b>5</b>	4,25	<b>8</b>	4,65	<b>3</b>	5,06
Benevolence	<b>2</b>	4,97	<b>3</b>	4,64	<b>5</b>	4,86	<b>1</b>	5,19
Traditions	<b>10</b>	3,4	<b>10</b>	3,15	<b>7</b>	4,66	<b>9</b>	3,83
Conformity	<b>7</b>	4,50	<b>8</b>	4,01	<b>3</b>	5,22	<b>4</b>	5,00
Security	<b>1</b>	5,06	<b>4</b>	4,59	<b>10</b>	4,37	<b>5</b>	4,86

In this study was established a similarity between Russian and Venezuelan adolescents in the fact that Self-Direction is the leading value for Russian and Venezuelan respondents. However, significant differences were established between the Russian and Venezuelan youths in that Russian young people chose Security as their leading value while Venezuelan young people chose Benevolence.

Traditions were the least valuable for Russian respondents both teenagers and young people. In the Venezuelan participants values were distributed as follows: Security was the least valuable for teenagers and for young people the minimum value was Power (Figure 01).

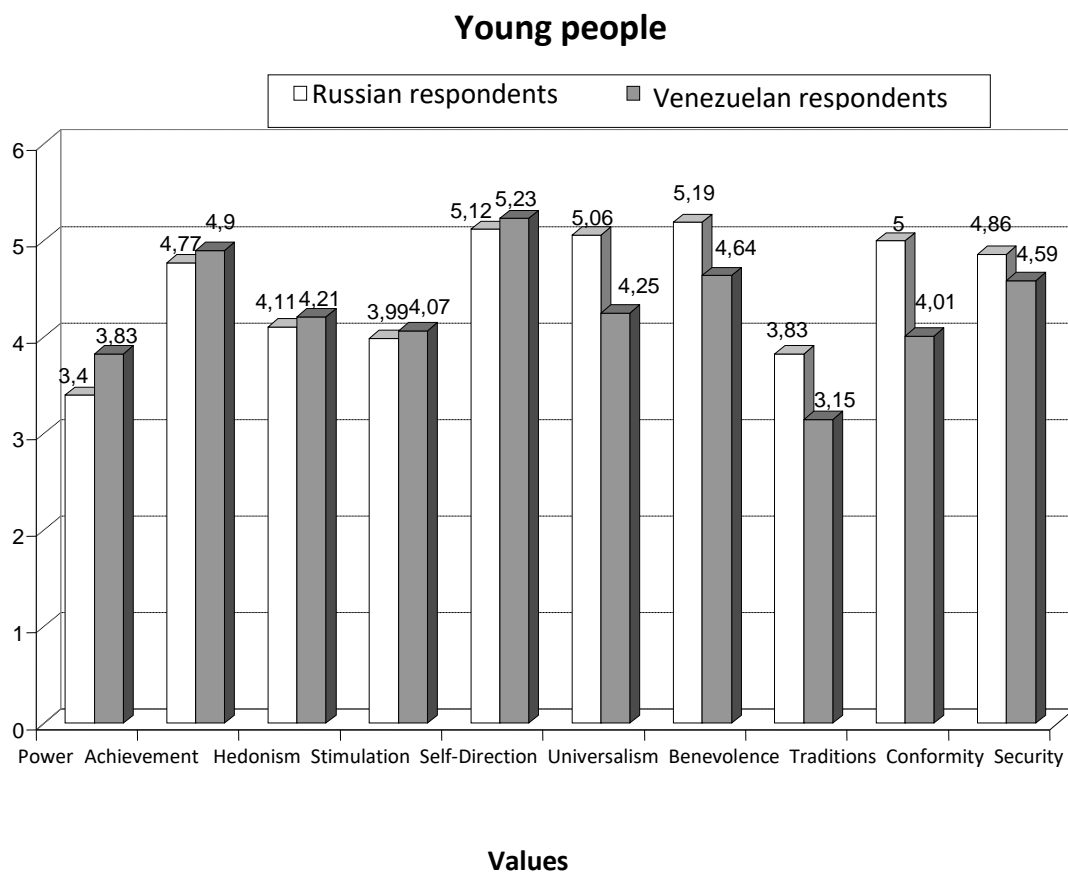


### Values

**Figure 01.** Distribution of values in the structure of value hierarchy among Russian and Venezuelan adolescents (in percentage)

In this way values of Security and Stimulation (fullness of life sensations, novelty in life, necessary to maintain an optimal level of activity) are the least relevant for Venezuelan respondents. Values of Tradition and Power are the least relevant for Russian respondents.

Discussing the socio-cultural features of the hierarchy of values in adolescence it can be noted that the significance of Self-Direction is leading for Russian youth respondents. While for respondents from Venezuela Benevolence is the leading value and then Self-Direction. Significant differences in the priority of values for Russian and Venezuelan young people have Traditions and Conformity which are more relevant for Venezuelan respondents. The fact that differences in the significance of Autonomy and Achievements are minimized confirms the role of sociocultural differences in the hierarchy of values (Figure 02).



**Figure 02.** Distribution of values in the structure of value hierarchy among Russian and Venezuelan youths (in percentage)

Discussing the differences in age characteristics between teenagers and young people we note that the fundamental differences here relate only to the values of Hedonism which is more in demand by adolescents. The maximum differences for different age groups have values of Power, Tradition and Hedonism which are also most significant for adolescent respondents. Minimal differences have Conformity and Self-Direction values that are equally high in all age strata. In this way the integration of freedom and its regulation by sociocultural norms is the main value space of the personal development of adolescents and young people.

## 7. Conclusion

The human value system is variable. This is especially evident in a transitive and multicultural society. The transformation of values is conditioned on the one hand by the changing social environment and on the other hand by the current level of personal development.

### 7.1. Life-sense orientation and terminal values in modern adolescents and young people in Russia

Thus, the value orientations of modern Russian teenagers are concentrated in the system of interpersonal relations and personal interests. They have insufficiently expressed purposefulness and



locus of self-control but self-expression and preservation of their own individuality are important for them. Modern Russian youth is distinguished by pronounced life-sense orientations. The terminal values of Russian teenagers and young people are mediated by the educational-professional and intimate-personal sphere.

### **7.2. Preferred values of Russian and Venezuelan respondents**

A comparative analysis of the age and socio-cultural characteristics of the structure of the value hierarchy shows that in adolescence the Russian and Venezuelan study participants have maximum differences in values of Power and Tradition. And this is more significant for the Venezuelan respondents. Values of Achievement and Self-Direction are also most preferable for Venezuelan teenagers.

The leading values are the values of Security, Benevolence (preservation and improvement of the well-being of loved ones) and Hedonism (pleasure, enjoyment of life) for Russian adolescents. This fact largely reflects the specifics of personal development in a transitive and multicultural society.

Comparative analysis of data shows that:

- the difference in value orientations between adolescents and young people reflects the dynamics of ongoing changes in a transitive and multicultural society;
- the difference in value orientations between Russian and Venezuelan respondents points to the influence of the socio-cultural context.

It should be noted that more similarities have been found between teenagers from different countries because the age factor prevails here. However, in the group of young people sociocultural differences are more clearly visible. The minimal preference of tradition values by Russian respondents also indirectly indicates latent modernization of society from industrial to post-industrial.

### **7.3. The role of the transdisciplinary approach to data interpretation**

The conceptual framework of the transdisciplinary approach makes it possible to point out not only explicit but also latent processes of transformation of values in a modern transitive and multicultural society.

Thus, the preference of security values by Russian respondents and correspondingly the values of benevolence by Venezuelan respondents particularly clearly indicate the difference in the socio-cultural context. This is also confirmed by data from World Values Survey according to which Russians are characterized by the predominance of security values over the values of self-expression. However, with the advent of new generations on the historical scene this situation is gradually changing rather latent than obvious.

## **Acknowledgments**

The study was supported by Russian Foundation for Basic Research, project 17-06-00077-OGH\18/.

## References

- Guseltseva, M. S. (2018). A transdisciplinary approach to contemporary psychology. *Voprosy psikhologii*, 5, 3–12.
- Inglehart, R. (2018). *Cultural Evolution: People's Motivations are Changing and Reshaping the World*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Leontiev, D. A. (2006). *Test of life-sense orientations* (2nd Ed.). Moscow: Smysl.
- Leontiev, D. A. (2007). *Psychology of the sense: nature, structure and dynamics of semantic reality* (3rd Ed.). Moscow: Smysl.
- Schwartz, S. H. (1992). Universals in the content and structure of values: Theory and empirical tests in 20 countries. *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology*, 25, 1–65.
- Schwartz, S. H. (2012). An overview of the Schwartz Theory of basic values. *Online Readings in Psychology and Culture*, 2(1). <https://scholarworks.gvsu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1116&context=orpc>
- Spranger, E. (1928). *Types of Men. The Psychology and Ethics of Personality*. N.Y.: Hafner Publishing Company. <https://archive.org/details/in.ernet.dli.2015.122134/page/n1>