

**EdCW 2020****International Scientific and Practical Conference Education in a Changing World: Global Challenges and National Priorities****VALUE ASPECTS OF THE ETHNIC IDENTITY OF RUSSIANS**

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**Abstract**

The acceleration of globalization inevitably leads to the transformation of many socio-psychological phenomena in the modern world, and above all ethnic self-awareness. According to the author, shifts towards individualism in national consciousness, the weakening of ethnic identity can be identified through the study of the relationship between the individual value priorities of an individual and his ideas about the values of his nation. The article presents the results of a study of the relationship in assessing the significance of certain value orientations at the individual and ethno-cultural level among ethnic Russians. A close direct correlation has been proven for all value categories of the Schwartz questionnaire between indicators at the level of an individual and an ethnic group. If the subjects noted the high significance of any value for themselves, then they indicated the high significance of this value for the Russians as well. There were no clear signs of internal value misidentification with ethnicity among the Russian respondents. However, at the same time, several orientations were identified, according to which there are tendencies to divergence: “power”, “independence”, and “traditions”.

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## 1. Introduction

The improvement and dissemination of information and communication technologies, the acceleration of globalization, inevitably leads to the transformation of many socio-psychological phenomena in the modern world, and above all ethnic self-awareness. The processes of unification of cultures, erosion of national identity, strengthening of cosmopolitanism and individualization in all spheres of social life are growing. Changes in value orientations in public consciousness, change of ideologies, loss of national identity lead to the destabilization or disintegration of some communities and the strengthening of others. In a multicultural, global world, genetic, historical, and traditional determinants of national self-awareness are weakening. It is the values that become the basis for the consolidation of the masses.

On the other hand, since the second half of the twentieth century, in many communities, the opposite processes have been increasingly manifested: the aggravation of ethnic identity, national interests, the growth of collectivism. Marcinkovskaya and Kiseleva (2018) believe that “native culture ... gives rootedness and stability, allowing you to find points of support in the changing reality and restore the lost integrity of the perception of the world and yourself” (p. 81).

## 2. Problem Statement

In psychology, the study of values is carried out in two directions: at the individual and social level (Khotinets & Pletnikov, 2018; Rokeach, 1973; Schwartz, 1994). A large number of cross-cultural studies conducted in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries revealed many differences in the structure of value orientations of peoples and social groups within one ethnic group (Arestova et al., 2018; Berberyan & Berberyan, 2017; Danilenko et al., 2017; Podolskyi & Idobaeva, 2019; Rean & Shagalov, 2018; Schwartz et al., 2017; Tatarko, 2018). Nevertheless, generalizing these studies, one can definitely draw a conclusion that values are the most important core characteristic of culture and ethnic psyche. Boronoev and Smirnov (1992) consider values as the basis of Russian national character.

Ethnic or national identity is a complex conglomeration of cognitions, attitudes, perceptions and feelings associated with the awareness of a community of people, their identity and uniqueness. On an individual level, it manifests itself primarily as identification with one's people. In contrast to ethnic status, “... ethnic identity is dynamic: external circumstances can lead to the fact that a person rethinks the role of ethnicity in his life and ethnic identity is transformed” (Berberyan et al., 2019, p. 44).

The Russian philosopher Shpet (1996) wrote that the experience of nationality “... is formed from the appropriation of well-known historical and social relationships, and in opposition to other peoples” (p. 153). Also, ethno-cultural values are appropriated by the individual through the mechanisms of cultural transmission and become part of his individual psyche (Lebedeva et al., 2016). However, at the same time, “... values are a good indicator for tracking the processes of social and individual change arising from historical, social and personal events” (Karandashev, 2004, p. 6). We assume that some trends in the transformation of national self-awareness (shift towards individualism, weakening of ethnic identity) in the modern global world can be partially traced through the study of the relationship between individual

value priorities of an individual and his ideas about the values of his nation. In our opinion, the study of the value aspects of a person's identification with their nation will reveal the deep dynamics of ethnic self-awareness, but so far there are no such studies.

### **3. Research Questions**

- Is there a relationship in assessing the significance of certain value orientations at the individual and ethno-cultural level of ethnic Russians? And if so, which one?
- Are there differences in assessing the significance of certain value orientations of the representatives of the Russian nation at the level of the individual and the ethnos as a whole?

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

The purpose of our study is to investigate the value aspects of the identification of Russians with their people. We did not set ourselves the task of forming an objective understanding of the modern system of values of the Russian nation. The question was different:

- Are ethnic Russians aware of the internal gap between their own and national value priorities?
- On the other hand, is there some kind of unity, a relationship between their own values and ideas about the ethnic and cultural values of Russians?

If such a relationship exists, the significance of specific ideas, norms, beliefs and behaviors at the individual and social level will not differ significantly. The personal and ethno-cultural hierarchies of values, according to ethnic Russians, will be similar.

### **5. Research Methods**

At the empirical stage of the research, in order to solve the set tasks, questionnaires, psycho-diagnostic method and mathematical analysis of data were applied.

Initially, through a questionnaire, a sample of the study was formed. It included men and women between the ages of 25 and 40, all of them are Russian by nationality, their parents too. The study involved 178 people (89 women and 89 men). All respondents permanently reside in Russia, but in different regions and districts: North-Western, Central, Southern, etc. The sample included residents of megalopolises, regional and subregional centers (Moscow, St. Petersburg, Kaliningrad, Petrozavodsk, Voronezh, Makhachkala, Cheboksary, Murmansk, Saransk, Angarsk, Izhevsk, Nizhnevartovsk, Segezha, Kirishi, Valdai, etc.) and small rural settlements of Novgorod region, Arkhangelsk region, Perm Territory, the Republic of Udmurtia, and other regions of our country.

At the psycho-diagnostic stage, it was not enough for us to measure the severity of value orientations; it was important to identify whether the individual is aware of the gap between his value

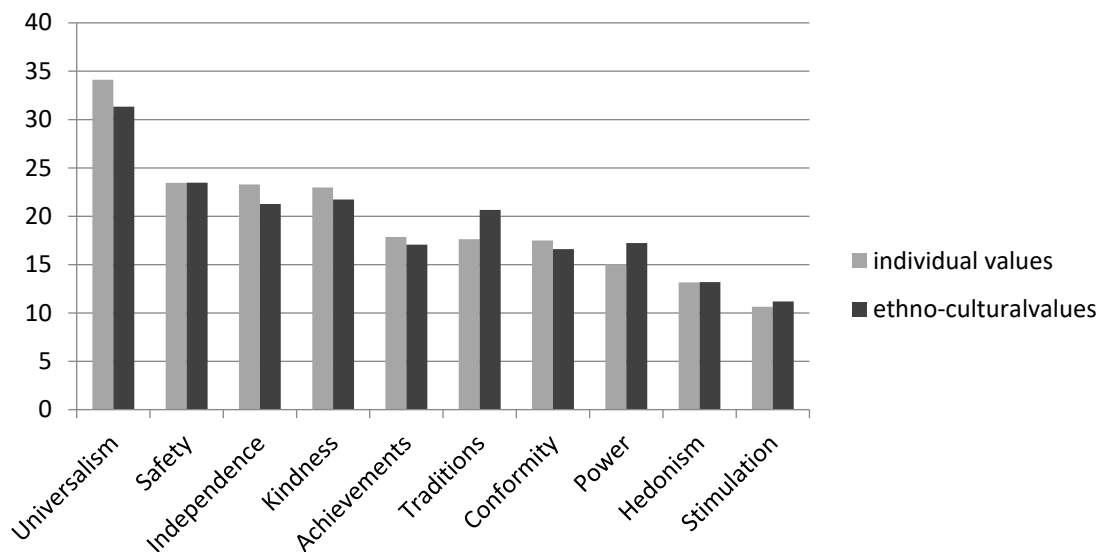
priorities and the dominant ones in society. In accordance with the set goal, the following research plan was developed. Initially, the respondents were asked to assess the significance of certain life principles and methods of behavior for themselves, and then, using the same methodology, to assess how these values are typical for the social group (ethnic Russians) as a whole.

The Schwartz questionnaire was chosen as a psycho-diagnostic tool. This technique allows not only to build a value hierarchy, but also to measure the intensity or severity of each value, since the categories are not ranked, but assessed through a semantic differential.

The idea of universality of basic human goals, underlying his methodology, makes it possible to apply it to diagnose not only individual, but also ethno-cultural value priorities. The first part of the methodology measures values as normative ideals, beliefs that are not always manifested in behavior. The second is the values that determine human behavior (Karandashev, 2004).

## 6. Findings

First, let us consider the results of diagnostics of terminal values, which can be defined as life principles, normative ideals or beliefs of the individual (Fig. 01).



**Figure 1.** Expression of individual and ethno-cultural normative values-beliefs of Russians

Summarizing the psycho-diagnostic data for the first part of the Schwartz questionnaire to average values, we received two value hierarchies: individual and ethno-cultural. It is interesting that in these hierarchies the extreme four positions completely coincide, namely: the most significant first two (“universalism” and “safety”) and the two least significant (“hedonism” and “stimulation”).

In individual value systems, such a category as “independence” is more often in third place, and in the fourth place in the hierarchy of ethno-cultural values. “Kindness” is the other way around - on the fourth and third, respectively. At the personal level, “achievements” and “conformity” more often found themselves in higher positions: fifth place against seventh and seventh against eighth in the ethno-cultural

hierarchy. “Traditions” and “power”—they often put it lower for themselves than for the Russians. At the level of personality, the categories “tradition” and “power” occupy the sixth and eighth places, respectively, on the social –the fifth and sixth. These displacements can be called insignificant –always only one, maximum two, steps up or down.

Then we found out if there is a relationship between indicators at the individual and social level separately, for each value category. The results of the correlation analysis of the data using the Pearson coefficient  $r$  are presented in Table 01. For all normative value reference points, a reliable direct relationship is observed. The highest value of the correlation coefficient for the parameter “safety”, the lowest for the parameter “independence”.

**Table 1.** Results of mathematical analysis of data for the first part of the Schwartz questionnaire (normative values-beliefs of Russians at the level of personality and society)

Values	Average values (Xave.)		Correlation coefficient values( $r$ )	T-testvalues (temp.)
	Individual level	Social level		
Universalism	34.12	31.33	0.48**	3.77**
Safety	23.45	23.47	0.62**	0.36
Independence	23.28	21.26	0.26**	5.61**
Kindness	22.97	21.73	0.45**	2.36*
Achievements	17.86	17.06	0.36**	1.28
Traditions	17.62	20.66	0.45**	7.44**
Conformity	17.49	16.6	0.40**	2.13*
Power	15.05	17.23	0.37**	6.67**
Hedonism	13.16	13.19	0.52**	1.51
Stimulation	10.64	11.19	0.37**	0.02

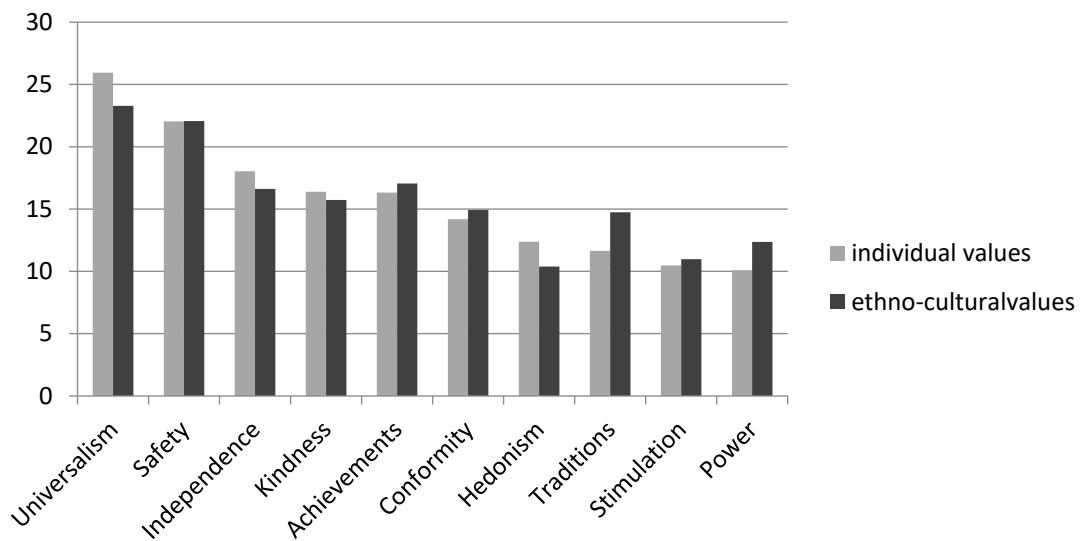
Notes: \* – significance at the  $p < 0.05$  level;

\*\* – significance at the  $p \leq 0,01$  level

Differences in the severity of terminal values at the personal and social levels were identified using the Student's t-test. The values of the criterion are presented in Table 01. There are reliable differences only in four parameters: “universalism”, “independence”, “traditions”, and “power”. Despite the fact that universalism (the well-being of all people and nature) occupies the highest level both in the ethno-cultural and in the individual value hierarchy of the majority of respondents, nevertheless, the respondents rated its importance for the Russian nation lower than for themselves. As a value category “independence”, the subjects considered it more important for themselves. The opposite situation is in the parameters of “tradition” and “power”. Most of the subjects felt that Russian people in general value power and the preservation of traditions more than they do.

There are no differences in expression for the following value categories: “safety”, “achievements”, “hedonism”, and “stimulation”. The differences in the parameters “kindness” and “conformity” have not been proven (T-test values fell into the zone of uncertainty).

The following are the results of a study of value priorities manifested in the behavior of Russian people (Fig. 02)



**Figure 2.** The severity of individual and ethno-cultural value priorities manifested in behavior

The two hierarchies completely coincide in four positions: “universalism” and “safety” (the first two are the most significant), conformism (sixth place), “stimulation” (penultimate place).

In the ethno-cultural system of values, categories such as “achievements”, “traditions” and “power” often occupy higher places than in the individual hierarchies of the subjects. Therefore, for Russians, the orientation towards achievement came in third place, for themselves –in fifth. The value of traditions is in seventh and sixth place, respectively. The desire to possess power, to dominate occupies the tenth and eighth places. In addition, vice versa, “independence” in the individual hierarchy takes the third place, in the ethno-cultural hierarchy– the fourth place. “Kindness” is, respectively, on the fifth and sixth positions. The largest shift is observed in the parameter “hedonism”. Still, for the majority of respondents, sensual pleasures have some meaning (seventh out of ten). At the same time, they believe that hedonism is the last thing that can motivate a Russian person.

In the results of the correlation analysis of the data (Table 02), a reliable direct relationship was revealed for all value priorities at the individual and social level. The highest value of the correlation coefficient for the parameter “universalism”, the lowest for the parameter “power”.

The results of the mathematical analysis of differences in the significance of value priorities in behavior at the personal and social levels are presented in Table 02.

**Table 2.** Results of mathematical analysis of data on the second part of the Schwartz questionnaire (value priorities manifested in the behavior of Russians, at the level of personality and society)

Values	Average values (Xave.)		Correlation coefficient values( <i>r</i> )	T-test values (temp.)
	Individual level	Social level		
Universalism	25.94	23.28	0.77**	6.16**
Safety	22.04	22.06	0.53**	1.27
Independence	18.03	16.62	0.68**	4.5**
Kindness	16.39	15.73	0.73**	2.38*
Achievements	16.32	17.06	0.71**	2.14*

Conformity	14.19	14.92	0.66**	2.59*
Hedonism	12.38	10.39	0.67**	0.8
Traditions	11.65	14.74	0.54**	7.94**
Stimulation	10.48	10.98	0.63**	0.79
Power	10.09	12.37	0.30**	7.05**

Notes: \* – significance at the  $p < 0.05$  level;

\*\* – significance at the  $p \leq 0,01$  level

Statistical processing of data on value priorities in behavior revealed all the same patterns as for normative ideals. Only four orientations also reliably differ in intensity at the level of the individual and society: “universalism”, “independence”, “traditions”, and “power”. Similarly, in all other parameters, there are no reliable differences, or exist at the level of tendencies.

## 7. Conclusion

Summarizing the research results, we can say the following. We have proved a close direct correlation in all value categories between indicators at the level of the individual and society (in our case, ethnic group). If the subjects noted the high significance of any value for themselves, then they indicated the high significance of this value for the Russians as a whole. If the significance is low for oneself, then it is low for the Russians. At the same time, there are reliable differences in the expression of values at the personal and ethno-cultural level only for four out of ten positions. All this allows us to draw a conclusion about the expressed value identity of the respondents with their people.

We did not find obvious tendencies towards internal psychological value misidentification with an ethnic group. However, at the same time, several orientations were identified, according to which there are tendencies to divergence: “power”, “independence”, and “traditions”.

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