

VALUE ORIENTATIONS OF A PERSON IN THE CONTEXT OF PERCEPTION OF THE OTHER

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Abstract

The rapid development of modern societies, the multi-layered nature of intercultural relations, as well as immigration and emigration processes, demonstrate the need to study and shed new light on the perception of the other in psychological science. Over time, the ideas about the other have changed; therefore, a multifaceted analysis of perceptions of the other in modern society is essential. This article examines the value orientations of individuals in the contemporary Armenian environment, which are shaped by their perception of others. Theoretical models of value orientations have been analysed, and modern manifestations of orientations have been subjected to comparative analysis with the ideas about the psychological sovereignty of a person. As a result of qualitative and quantitative analysis, it has become possible to reveal the complex of dichotomous notions of “self-the other”, which has been studied among modern Armenian youth.

Keywords: Perception of the other, value orientation, sovereignty, stability, hierarchy of values.

ԱՆՁԻ ԱՐԺԵՔԱՅԻՆ ԿՈՂՄՆՈՐՈՇՈՒՄՆԵՐԸ ԱՅԼՈՅ ԸՆԿԱԼՄԱՆ ՀԱՄԱՏԵՔՍՏՈՒՄ

ՏԱԹԵՎԻԿ ՎԱԹՅԱՆ

ՀՀ ԳԱԱ գիտակրթական միջազգային կենտրոնի
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Համառոտագիր

Ժամանակակից հասարակությունների արագ զարգացումը, միջմշակութային հարաբերությունների բազմաշերտ բնույթը, ինչպես նաև ներգաղթի և արտագաղթի գործընթացները ցույց են տալիս այլոց

ընկալմանն առնչվող հարցերի ուսումնասիրության և հոգեբանական գիտության մեջ նոր մոտեցումներ ներկայացնելու անհրաժեշտությունը: Ժամանակի ընթացքում այլոց պատկերացումներն որոշակի փոփոխություններ են կրել, այդ պատճառով արդի հասարակության մեջ այլոց ընկալման բազմակողմանի վերլուծությունն առանձնակի կարևորություն ունի: Հոդվածում ուսումնասիրվել են ժամանակակից հայաստանյան միջավայրում ձևավորվող անձի արժեքային կողմնորոշումները, որոնք արտահայտվում են այլոց ընկալման համատեքստում: Վերլուծության են ենթարկվել արժեքային կողմնորոշումների տեսական մոդելները, ինչպես նաև ժամանակակից կողմնորոշումների դրսևորումները համեմատվել են անձի հոգեբանական սուվերենության գաղափարների հետ: Որակական և քանակական վերլուծության արդյունքում հնարավոր է դարձել բացահայտել «ես-այլք» դիֆտոմիկ ընկալումների համալիրը, որը ուսումնասիրվել է ժամանակակից հայ երիտասարդության շրջանում:

Բանալի բառեր՝ այլոց ընկալում, արժեքային կողմնորոշում, ինքնիշխանություն, կայունություն, արժեքների հիերարխիա:

Introduction

Value orientation is a psychological phenomenon that expresses the basic principles and positions of a person's life activity and self-expression in society. Value orientation creates an individual ideology of a person's lifestyle. It is formed when assimilating social experience and is expressed in goals, ideals, beliefs, interests, aspirations, and is realised in behaviour.

Value orientations guide the process of assimilation of social norms, the specifics of the manifestation of which have become an essential object of study in the psychological discipline. Value orientations are essential for clarifying the framework of the concepts of “self”–“alien”, “us”–“them” in modern societies, integration and adaptive processes in social interactions, as well as the semantic-value, demand-based, and, in general, socio-psychological context of migration processes.

It is no secret that values underlie any interpersonal relationship; therefore, they also play a decisive role in the formation of relationships with others. The analysis of value orientations provides an opportunity to understand and interpret in a new way not only modern ideas about the other, but also to outline the psychological boundaries of the psychological sovereignty of the individual within society and the differentiation of the Self from the Others. Due to such manifestations, perceptions of one's people are formed in society, and the world of the others is perceived through value orientations that differ from one's own environment, often opposing them.

Literature review

Scientific studies of value orientations are aimed at the classification and systematic presentation of values. In studies conducted at the beginning of the 20th century, attempts were made to present value orientations according to specific types and theoretical approaches. The authors of the diagnostic approach to value orientation are G. Allport, P. Vernon and G. Lindzey (1970). This approach is based on the theoretical typology proposed by the German philosopher and psychologist E. Spranger. According to E. Spranger's typology, dominant values are distinguished in value orientations, which play a decisive role throughout life and shape an individual as a person (Klüver, 1925; Pedroza, 2016). For this reason, the authors have distinguished dominant value types that follow the theoretical ideal, pursue economic interests, correspond to aesthetic (external), social (interpersonal), political (governmental), and religious (spiritual) needs.

M. Rokeach characterises value orientations as beliefs that determine a preferred behavioural pattern. The value system, according to M. Rokeach, is a stable system of these beliefs, which is best expressed by the use of words such as “should”, “must,” or “desirable”. According to M. Rokeach, human values can be characterised by five main characteristics (Rokeach, 1968; Rokeach, 1973).

- Each person has a small number of basic values.
- There are universal values that all people share to one degree or another.
- Values form a system.
- The origins of values are in culture and social institutions.
- A person's value system influences various spheres of their life.

The universal and stable characteristics of value orientations seem to be the necessary components that contribute to the formation of perceptions of a stranger and the integration of a stranger into one's own value system. However, even though values are stable beliefs, M. Rokeach nevertheless considers values as a dynamic concept. He was convinced that individual and social changes would not be possible if values were unchanging. However, on the other hand, if values did not have a certain stability, then the continuity of the human personality and society would also be impossible. Therefore, we can say that values are stable-changing quantities that exist for each individual in a unique value hierarchy system.

In the context of the perception of the other, several authors emphasise value orientations from the point of view of the formation and maintenance of one's own psychological space. The other is a person who poses a threat to the value orientations rooted in society, which the transformation of the psychological space can accompany.

Shalom Schwartz (2012) proposes a new model of an individual's value

orientation, which consists of ten basic values. Schwartz’s value system offers a universal solution to value orientation, which includes all levels of previously existing value orientation theories and all values that are accepted in all cultures of the world. Speaking about values, Schwartz distinguishes five characteristics that complete all previously existing ideas about values.

- Values are beliefs. However, these beliefs are inextricably linked with feelings and do not represent objective, cold thoughts.
- Values are motivational structures. They refer to desirable goals that people strive for.
- Values lie beyond the scope of concrete actions and events. They are abstract goals. The abstract nature of values distinguishes them from concepts such as norms and relationships, which usually refer to concrete actions, objects, and situations.
- Values play a decisive role in the selection or evaluation of actions, policies, people, and events. That is, values serve as standards or criteria.
- Values are organised according to their relative importance. This hierarchical system of values also distinguishes them from norms and attitudes.

The classification of values put forward by D.A. Leontiev (2012) relates to the stages of a person’s activity, which follow one another. First, a person assimilates public ideals; then, these ideals motivate him to action, during which they are realised and become material. Later, the realised values, in turn, become the basis for the formation of new public ideals, and this cycle is constantly repeated.

Based on the above, value orientations are formed and manifested according to a particular structure, express socially significant behavioural norms, and socio-cultural stereotypes. To clarify the socio-psychological significance of value orientations in the perceptions of the other, let us first try to present several examples of the classification of value systems (Table 1).

Table 1.

Value types classification

	<i>E. Spranger</i>	<i>M. Rokeach</i>	<i>S. Schwartz</i>	<i>D.A. Leontiev</i>
Value types	Theoretical Economic Aesthetic Social Political Religious	Terminal Instrumental	Self-Direction Stimulation Hedonism Achievement Power Security Conformity Tradition Benevolence Universalism	Public Ideals Materialisation of Ideals Motivational Structure

As we can see from Table 1, classifications of value orientations are mainly built according to types of values. One type of typology is mostly descriptive and is formed by enumerating values or groups of values. This type includes, for example, the classifications developed by E. Spranger and S. Schwartz. The other type of typology is built at the meta-level of the value system, when some characteristic unites groups of values and has methodological significance. Such classifications include M. Rokeach and D.A. Leontiev's interpretations of value systems.

However, it should be noted that any classification of value orientations is aimed at defining socially significant meanings, behavioural norms, and positions within a given society. Value orientations, thus, contribute to the ability of a person to perceive the privacy of his own culture and distinguish his own culture from other cultures. Therefore, value orientations outline the boundaries of a person's value sovereignty and the distinguishing features of "own" and "alien" or "self" and "the other" (Simmel, 1950; Alexander, 2014; Park, 1950).

In the context of the other's perception, assessments of psychological sovereignty in value orientations are of particular importance. Moreover, the phenomenon of psychological sovereignty is gradually becoming a key term in the perception of the other, which has been expressed by several authors. Thus, S. Nartova-Bochaver (2017) emphasises the component of value sovereignty in the system of psychological sovereignty, which is presented as a semantic feature of separating one's environment from strangers.

Several scientists (Inness, 1992; Menges, 2021; Frener & Trepte, 2022) have studied the phenomenon of psychological sovereignty from the perspective of privacy manifestation. These studies indicate that the value feature of privacy appears with certain age-gender differences. In women, psychological sovereignty is primarily expressed through rituals of privacy, which reveal the distinct characteristics of their value system. Among men, psychological sovereignty is mainly expressed in the value orientations of autonomy and freedom of behaviour. From this standpoint, the perception of the other is formed outside the psychologically assimilated sovereign value system.

In the context of psychological sovereignty or privacy, one can make assumptions not only about the value orientations of locals or aliens in society, but also about the value system of other people with the status of the others: immigrants, refugees, representatives of national, religious, and other minorities. As several studies show, the perception of the other can also "spread" to those members of society who are part of the local population, but who demonstrate value orientations that differ from socially significant norms and positions. Thus, several authors have expressed the opinion that in case of unsatisfied privacy needs, a person tends to exhibit behaviour that differs from the values and social norms accepted in society. Therefore, in case of

violation of privacy or psychological sovereignty, a person may exhibit a low level of socialisation, and with the increase in maladaptation to social norms, gradually transform from the status of “one’s own” to “another’s” (Guntrip, 2018; Jackson et al., 2017).

Methods

In order to find out the perceptions of foreigners in modern society and the peculiarities of value orientations in these perceptions, we conducted an empirical study. The study was conducted in Yerevan, Republic of Armenia, from May 2024 to May 2025. The study involved young Armenians aged 20–35 (N=560), of whom the number of female (N=280) and male (N=280) respondents was selected in equal distribution, as well as foreign immigrants (N=560), also in equal distribution by gender – women (N=280) and men (N=280). The sample of immigrants was formed according to the following principles:

- Immigrants temporarily settled in the Republic of Armenia within 1 month at the time of conducting the study,
- Immigrants temporarily settled to carry out work activities.

The study aimed to examine and reveal the differences in the perceptions of others’ value orientations and their characteristics.

Research methods are:

- M. Rokeach, “The Value Survey”. It contains two lists of terminal and instrumental values, each of which consists of 18 values. Rokeach’s test is a rating and assessment of a list of values according to the importance attribute.
- S. Nartova-Bochaver’s “Sovereignty of Psychological Space” test. The test consists of 80 questions. The test contains questions that cover all six zones of psychological space proposed in S. Nartova-Bochaver’s theory. These are the sovereignty of the physical body, the sovereignty of space, the sovereignty of things, the sovereignty of habits, the sovereignty of social ties, and the sovereignty of values.

The results of the study were analysed using the JASP 0.17.3.0 statistical program. The test results were compared in groups of Armenian and foreign youth and analysed using the Principal Component Analysis factor method. Statistically significant results were recorded with scores of 0.8 and higher. The choice of the factor method was determined by the study’s purpose, which was to identify the value manifestations of others’ perceptions in both Armenian and foreign respondent groups. This method allowed to reveal the value orientations of primary importance to be revealed, which are important in modern Armenian society. During the study, respondents assessed the values that are most important to them. Then, the perceptions of the others were identified by cross-checking the value orientations among the Armenian and foreign samples. Respondents assessed the values that, in their subjective

opinion, can be attributed to others. For this reason, the above-mentioned tests were cross-checked. Armenian and foreign youth appreciated each other’s value orientations, which were emphasised in the context of the perception of the others.

Results

The results of this study present a new perspective on the interpretation of value orientations, specifically identifying key values and value orientations that retain priority and significance in the context of temporary immigration. The results of the experimental study are summarised below.

Table 2.

Principal Component Analysis Results

Sample of Armenian respondents					Sample of foreign respondents				
Component Loadings					Component Loadings				
	RC1	RC2	RC3	Uniqueness		RC1	RC2	RC3	Uniqueness
An exciting life	0.924			0.121	An exciting life	0.892			0.090
A comfortable life	0.889			0.202	A comfortable life	0.876			0.159
Independent	0.762			0.271	Imaginative	0.790	-0.439		0.127
Imaginative	0.702	-0.556		0.152	Inner harmony	0.648		0.447	0.138
Inner harmony	0.551		0.515	0.157	Ambitious		0.894		0.218
Ambitious		0.891		0.190	Independent		-0.812		0.254
Self-respect		0.759		0.460	Self-respect		0.668		0.570
Honest			0.963	0.079	Honest			0.953	0.081
<i>Note.</i> Applied rotation method is promax.					<i>Note.</i> Applied rotation method is promax.				

As we can see from Table 2, the following value orientations turned out to be statistically the most significant. In the immigrant group, the importance of sovereignty of things, habits, social connections and territory was emphasised. In other words, these are the value orientations that were best preserved in the conditions of immigration and those values, the preservation or sovereignty of which is most significant for the studied sample. The most alarming result was the one showing the low degree of expression of the sovereignty of values. Apparently, this is a consequence of the adaptation processes of immigrants in a new place of residence. In comparison with the group of immigrants, this parameter of value orientation in the studied Armenian group retained its high degree of expression.

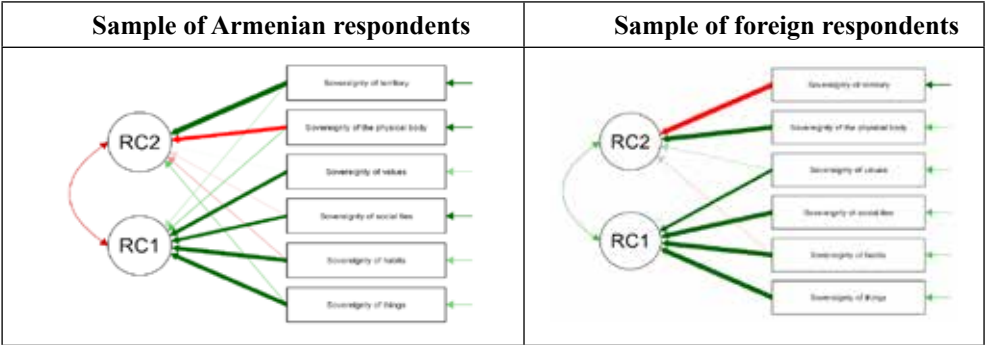


Diagram 1. Principal Component Analysis Results

These results empirically demonstrated that the value sovereignty component appears more sensitively in the perceptions of the foreign respondents, which served as the basis for separately examining value orientations in the two sample groups.

Table 3.

Rokeach Value Study Results

Sample of Armenian respondents					Sample of foreign respondents				
Component Loadings					Component Loadings				
	RC1	RC2	RC3	Uniqueness		RC1	RC2	RC3	Uniqueness
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Independent	0.762			0.271	Imaginative	0.790	-0.439		0.127
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Ambitious		0.891		0.190	Independent		-0.812		0.254
Self-respect		0.759		0.460	Self-respect		0.668		0.570
Honest			0.963	0.079	Honest			0.953	0.081
Note. Applied rotation method is promax.					Note. Applied rotation method is promax.				

Based on the results presented in Table 3, it can be concluded that in the immigrant group the most significant values were of a comfortable life and an exciting life. It should be noted that the same picture of value assessment was observed in the group of Armenian respondents. It can be assumed that in the conditions of temporary immigration in the studied sample, a picture of transformation of value orientations is observed; however, this transformation

does not affect the assessment of terminal values, which are a priority in the value system.

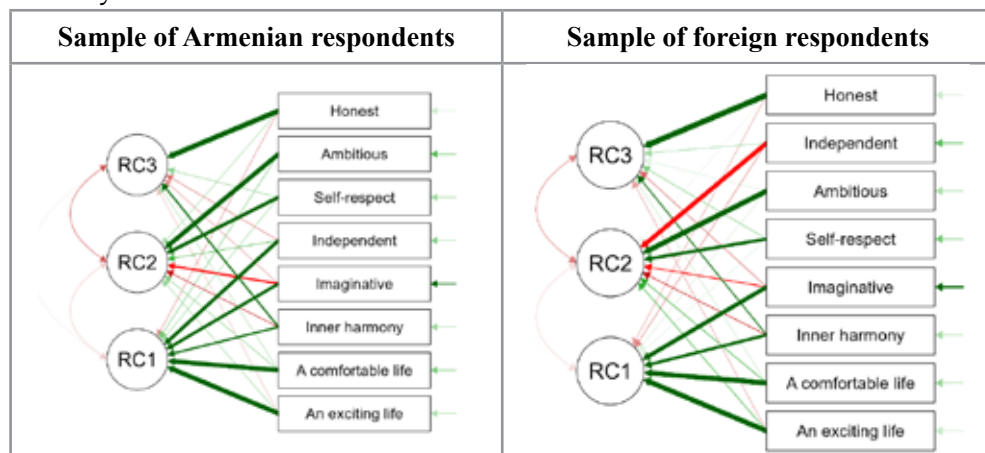


Diagram 2. Rokeach Value Study Results

In the Armenian sample group, the following values were most important: “an exciting life” and “a comfortable life”. The terminal value of independence, instrumental values of ambitious and honest were also highly rated. In the foreign group of the others, the terminal and instrumental value components remained almost unchanged. However, the value of independence underwent a certain transformation, emphasised by high negative scores. In addition, if the independence component appeared in the Armenian group alongside the “inner harmony”, “a comfortable life”, and “an exciting life” components, then in the group of foreign respondents, it appeared together with the “self-respect” and “ambitious” components.

Discussion

As we can see from Table 2 and Figure 1, the results of Principal Component Analysis among Armenians are presented in two groups of sovereignty components. One group represents the assessment of a person’s spatial sovereignty, in which the territorial sovereignty component is statistically significant. In other words, the higher a person assesses the degree of sovereignty of “one’s” territory, the more emphasised is the person’s identification with “one’s own.” In the group of social interaction sovereignty components, except for the sovereignty component of social ties, all other components showed significant relationships. In this group of components, the assessments of the sovereignty of habits, objects, and values were thus given importance.

Along with the group of Armenians, the assessments of foreign respondents were analysed. Taking into account the fact that these assessments

were recorded from foreigners temporarily residing in the Republic of Armenia, who were far from their native land and environment at the time of the survey, it is logical that in the group of territorial sovereignty components, the assessments of the sovereignty of the two spatial components – territory and physical body – were recorded with opposite meanings. Having appeared in an unfamiliar and foreign environment, spatial identification with one's own is no longer relevant. Instead, the assessment of the sovereignty of the physical body is strengthened; foreign respondents often note that in the process of identifying with one's own and distinguishing themselves from an environment that is foreign to them, they pay great attention to the appearance of the body and the style of clothing. The assessments of the sovereignty of the components of social interaction suffer most from the assessment of the sovereignty of values.

Conclusion

The results of the study showed certain transformation tendencies in value orientations and the perceptions of others. In particular, it became clear that the level of sovereignty of values was most sensitively manifested in the assessments of the self and the other environments. In the group of strangers, it ceases to be statistically significant, and the sovereignty of values is “replaced” by high assessments of the sovereignty of social ties and habits. Of the terminal and instrumental value orientations, the value assessment of independence was most sensitively manifested in the environment of strangers, and showed a decreasing trend. The results of the study present empirical evidence for value transformation in temporary migration.

The conducted research revealed the main value components of the own-foreign perceptions. It became clear that in a foreign environment, the value orientations of personal values and territorial sovereignty suffer the most, and the terminal value of independence ceases to play a decisive role in the system of value orientations. The data obtained empirically show that the key findings of the study may have not only theoretical and methodological significance for a new understanding of the phenomenon, but also for a deeper understanding of the other. The results of the study also have practical significance in the field of applied social sciences, since the identified trends in value orientations can be considered when developing a migration policy strategy, sociological monitoring studies, and psychological counselling for migrants. However, it is also worth noting some of the limitations of the conducted research. The limitations of the study, first of all, relate to the following principles of sample formation:

Depending on the national and religious affiliation of foreign respondents, the assessments of the aforementioned value orientations may vary slightly.

The value orientations of the perception of foreigners also depend on the gender and age composition, as well as the educational qualifications, of the sample.

Among the possible limitations of the study, it is also necessary to note the limitations of data regarding the cross-sectional or longitudinal design of the study, the inclusion in the sample of parameters of migrants' employment, sphere of activity, as well as their communication links in the studied society.

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