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PERSONALITY TRAITS AND PERSONAL VALUES IN POLISH STUDENTS

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ОСОБИСТІСНІ РИСИ ТА ЦІННОСТІ ПОЛЬСЬКИХ СТУДЕНТІВ

У статті здійснено теоретичний аналіз особистісних цінностей як одного з ключових трендів сучасних наукових досліджень у сфері психології і педагогіки. Представлено також результати емпіричного дослідження, метою якого було виявлення взаємозв'язків між особистісними рисами і цінностями серед польських студентів (N = 326). Отримані нами показники вказують на наявність значущих кореляцій між особистісними рисами та цінностями. Таким чином, результати дослідження можуть бути використані у психолого-педагогічній практиці з метою розробки та реалізації заходів, спрямованих на формування системи цінностей, з урахуванням індивідуальних відмінностей між людьми.

Ключові слова: людські цінності, особистісні цінності, ціннісні переваги, особистість, особистісні риси.

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ЛИЧНОСТНЫЕ ЧЕРТЫ И ЦЕННОСТИ ПОЛЬСКИХ СТУДЕНТОВ

В статье раскрыто ценности как предмет научных исследований в области гуманитарных и социальных наук, в том числе психологии и педагогики. Представлены результаты проведенного исследования, целью которого было определение взаимоотношений между личностными чертами и ценностями среди польских студентов (N = 326), женщин и мужчин. Полученные результаты указывают на наличие существенных взаимосвязей между личностными чертами и ценностями. Результаты исследования могут быть использованы в психолого-педагогической практике с целью разработки и реализации мероприятий, направленных на формирование системы ценностей, с учетом индивидуальных различий между людьми.

Ключевые слова: человеческие ценности, личностные ценности, ценностные предпочтения, личность, личностные черты.

Introduction

Values are treated as specific rules that regulate the lives of individuals as well as groups. They set standards of what is desired and valued in relation to people's decisions, behaviours and attitudes [22, p. 701]. Scientific studies include analyses of value preferences of different social groups, at different stages of development and in different cultural contexts [5, 24]. The subjects of analysis are also relationships between values and different variables, including those in the area of morality, social and personal functioning [19, 18]. This article discusses the issue of relationships between one's preferred personal values and personality traits in a group of students. Previous analyses in this area need constant updating. What is more, their results are inconsistent [5, 15, 18, 19]. Presented results allow better understanding of axiological functioning of young people and conditioning of preferred values. Apart from the theoretical aspect, carried out analyses have also a practical dimension. Better recognition of one's values and their relationships with personality may be used in rearing influences and in shaping adolescents' and young adults' ethical attitudes.

Traits describe relatively stable characteristics of an individual [17]. According to Costa and McCrae's conception, adopted in these analyses, a trait is understood as an overall disposition visible in cognitive, emotional and motivational sphere [13]. Traits understood in this way do not allow prediction of specific behaviours but of long-lasting patterns of behaviour. Patterns of actions, thinking and emotions are consistent, which means that traits are revealed in different situations and moments of one's life. Consistency of the pattern allows explanation of stability as well as change in the sphere of personality [13]. The Five Factor Model, also known as the Big Five by Costa and McCrae distinguishes five personality traits: Extraversion, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, Neuroticism and Openness to Experience. Neuroticism is understood as individual's tendency to experiencing unpleasant emotions and restlessness in thinking and actions. This dimension includes components such as: anxiety, anger, depression, excessive self-criticism, impulsiveness and vulnerability. *Extraversion* is characterised by quantity and quality of social interactions, active actions and level of energy. This dimension is composed of the following interpersonal traits: cordiality, sociability and assertiveness, and temperamental traits: activeness, seeking experience and emotionality in the area of positive reactions. *Openness to Experience* means openness to new ideas, preference for novelty and interest in the world and in experiencing it. This dimension includes openness in the spheres of imagination, aesthetics,

emotions, actions, ideas and values. *Agreeableness* is connected with concern for others and trusting them. The elements of agreeableness are: trust, righteousness, altruism, compliance, modesty and tendency to pity *Conscientiousness* describes individual differences in the area of work organisation, discipline, dutifulness, level of demand from oneself and from others. This dimension includes: competences, tendency to maintain order, dutifulness, self-discipline, seeking achievements and consideration [6, 13]. In the article, relationships of personality traits, understood in this way, and values, according to Schwartz, are analyzed.

Values constitute trans-situational goals, which differ in their importance and meaning, as rules managing human's life [22]. According to Schwartz theory, values are universal – distinguished in all societies within cultures and intercultural [24]. In the presented conception, 10 basic categories of values were distinguished: Power, Achievements, Hedonism, Stimulation, Self-direction, Universalism, Benevolence, Tradition, Conformity, Security [23, 24]. Self-direction is connected with independence in thinking and behaviour, exposed in the process of making choices and in creative actions. Stimulation is connected with seeking novelty and life challenges. Hedonism refers to pleasure and the joy of life. Achievements are connected with personal successes, achieved thanks to actions compliant with social standards. Power means gaining prestige, high social position, and having control over people. Security refers to do sense of security, as well as harmony and stability, in individual as well as interpersonal dimensions. Conformity refers to controlling one's behaviours and limiting those that may violate social norms, especially in relations with people from the closest environment. Tradition is connected with customs and symbols of a given group, collecting customs important for the members of a given community. Benevolence means care for wellbeing of those close to oneself in everyday situations. Universalism relates to care for wellbeing of all people, understanding, tolerance, and also care for the environment [3, 23, 24]. The enumerated categories of values constitute circular structure based on conflict or compliance with motivations expressed by them [24]. Complementary values re situated next to each other, whereas competing values are situated at the opposite sides of the circle [3, 23].

The analysis of recent research

Dependencies between personality traits and values constitute the subject of exploration – Polish [e.g. 3, 16, 16], as well as global [e.g. 1, 8, 11, 18, 19].

What is stressed in subject literature is that the system of values accepted by an individual is shaped under the influence of environment and of personal predispositions [15, 5, 13]. Brzozowski [3], when analysing relationships between personality traits and values, treats traits as inner indicators of values, however, he does not exclude dependency in the opposite direction. Roccas, Sagiv, Schwartz and Knafo [19] think that values and traits affect each other –

people who consequently expose some traits are likely to have more esteem for values in accordance with those traits. They also try to behave according to the values they esteem. What is more, in order to reduce discrepancy between behaviour and values, people often change their behaviour [4]. Analyses connected with dependencies between traits and values concentrate not only on influences between them. Bilsky and Schwartz [1] think that similar motivational dynamics may lay at the basis of both of these terms. Dependencies between traits and values may also be related to temperamental mechanisms [4, 19] that connect them. Caprara and colleagues [4] stress that traits and values expose different aspects of personality. Traits and values provide different information about functioning of personality. Bilsky and Schwartz [1] describe differences between the two terms as follows: (1) traits describe patterns of behaviour, whereas values constitute a criterion for the assessment of behaviours, people, and events, (2) personality traits are diverse as to how much they expose an individual's characteristic, whereas values differ in importance of purposes that an individual imputes to them, (3) personality traits are related to presumable actions of an individual without taking into account their intentions, whereas values are related to separate intentional purposes accessible for consciousness. Leong and Ulicni [7] notice different aspect of differences between analysed terms. Both personality traits and values are categories describing individual differences, defined as stable in time and in different situations. However, the authors stress that traits are more permanent because they are conditioned by outer factors, whereas values are more susceptible to influences and changes.

In recent years, many studies on this issue were carried out basing on uniform theoretical assumptions, referring to the Five Factor Theory by McCrae and Costa and to Schwartz theory of values [7, 18, 19]. The results of those studies reveal that not all traits are connected with values with equal strength. Olver and Mooradian [18] stress that values are connected more strongly with *intellectual* personality traits, which are Openness to Experience, Agreeableness and Conscientiousness, than with *affective* traits, such as Extraversion or Neuroticism. This belief is shared also by other authors [9, 20].

The am of this article is to determine the relationships between personality traits and preferred values in a group of Polish students.

Results of the author's studies

326 students (253 women and 73 men) took part in the studies. Presented results are part of a greater research project [25]. The following research tools were used: NEO Five-Factor Inventory (NEO-FFI) by Costa and McCrae, Polish adaptation [27] and Schwartz Value Survey (SVS), Polish adaptation by P. Brzozowski, available thanks to the author's courtesy. The results of carried

out studies are presented below. *Table 1* shows zero-order correlations between the basic dimensions of personality and preferences regarding each category of values.

Table 1

Correlations (r-Pearson correlation) between basic dimensions of personality and value preferences

Categories of values	Basic dimensions of personality				
	Neuroticism	Extraversion	Openness to Experience	Agreeab-leness	Conscientio usness
Self-direction	-0,17**	0,17**	0,42**	-0,07	0,13*
Stimulation	-0,10	0,42**	0,12*	-0,17**	0,04
Hedonism	-0,08	0,20**	0,05	-0,19**	0,06
Achievements	-0,08	0,25**	0,15**	-0,06	0,24**
Power	0,03	0,26**	-0,16**	-0,20**	-0,10
Security	0,05	0,15**	-0,04	0,18**	0,09
Conformity	0,04	0,09	-0,06	0,32**	0,14*
Tradition	0,06	0,02	-0,06	0,20**	0,03
Benevolence	-0,04	0,17**	0,14*	0,35**	0,16**
Universalism	-0,07	0,06	0,26**	0,21**	0,01

Explanation: * p < 0,05   **p < 0,01

The results of correlation analyses (*Tab. 1*) indicate the existence of weak and moderate relationships between examined variables. The following dimensions show the greatest number of significant correlations with preferred values: *Agreeableness*, *Extraversion* and *Openness to Experience. Conscientiousness* correlates with a relatively lower number of values, whereas *Neuroticism* only with one of their categories. These correlations will be discussed in the later part of this paper.

Agreeableness correlates positively with the values: Benevolence, Conformity, Universalism, Tradition and Security, and negatively with the values:

Power, Hedonism and Stimulation. Therefore, agreeable people prefer values connected with concern for others, order and stability in interpersonal relations and respecting customs, norms and rules of a given community. At the same time, they do not have too much esteem for values connected with having power and control over people, seeking novelty, challenges and the pleasures of life. *Extraversion* correlates most strongly with category Stimulation. Significant, but weaker, are correlations of this dimension with the values Power, Achievements, Hedonism, Self-direction, Benevolence and Security. All of the enumerated correlations are positive. Extraversion is, therefore, accompanied by seeking stimulation and, in a lower extent, seeking power, pleasure and individual successes, achieved in accordance with social standards. Extraversion is also connected with concern for others and seeking security. What is more, the results indicate positive correlations between *Openness to Experience* and Self-direction. This dimension also correlates with other categories of values, although those relationships are weaker. The relation between this dimension and the values Universalism, Achievements, Benevolence, Stimulation seems significant, and – negative – with values Power. Openness to Experience is, therefore, connected most strongly with preference for independence in thinking and actions. On one hand, openness is connected with independence, exposed, for example, in the choices made and interpersonal relations, and, on the other hand, with concern for others and observing social norms in achieving personal goals. *Conscientiousness* correlates with four categories of values: Achievements, Benevolence, Conformity and Self-direction. The enumerated correlations are positive with low intensity, but significant. With the rise of conscientiousness, raises the preference for values connected with achieving personal successes but with observing social norms and rules. Higher conscientiousness is accompanied also by concern for significant others and relations with them while keeping certain independence of judgement, actions and interpersonal relations. The lowest relationships with value preferences were established in the case of *Neuroticism*, which correlates significantly only with Self-direction. The higher neuroticism, the lower preference for values connected with autonomy and independence, also in interpersonal contacts.

The results of the author's studies confirmed the existence of significant relationships between basic dimensions of personality and value preferences. The results of the author's studies show that agreeable people are motivated to care for others' wellbeing, to protect stability and to maintain *status quo*. Similar results were obtained in numerous explorations [7, 8, 18, 19]. According to Schwartz, those results indicate different motives of showing agreeable disposition. Motivation to agreeable behaviours may therefore stem from benevolence, care for others and their wellbeing, but it may also be connected with meeting social expectations in fear of rejection or weakening ties [12].

Less consistent are the results of the author's studies related to dependencies between *Extraversion* and esteemed values. It should be stressed that in subject literature belief in weak relationships between this dimension and value preferences is widely spread [9, 18, 20]. However, some researchers stress dependencies between *Extraversion* and the values of Stimulation [7, 8, 11, 19]. Relationships with remaining categories of values indicate that extroverts are motivated to personal achievements, independence of actions and decisions, gaining social prestige and appreciation, but also to care for wellbeing of those close to them. Higher *Extraversion* is accompanied by stronger preference for Security. Perhaps sociable people, cordial in interpersonal contacts esteem sense of security, which may be secured by a group of people or by positive interpersonal relations. What is more, obtained results reveal that high intensity of Conscientiousness is accompanied by preference for Achievements, Benevolence, Conformity and Self-direction. Presented results seem to confirm Moon's assumptions [12] regarding two aspects of conscientiousness: dutifulness and achievements. Dutifulness, sense of duty and concentration on others may decide on conscientious people's motivation to care for others and to avoid actions which may hurt them. Whereas, seeking achievements and concentration on oneself motivates people with high conscientiousness to decide on one's life, to independence of actions and decisions, and to seek personal achievements [12]. What is more, people who are more disciplined and organised are more strongly motivated to achieve personal successes [10], but those successes, according to Schwartz [21], may be achieved only when individual's actions are in accordance with social standards [3]. Higher *Openness to Experience* is accompanied by stronger preference for values connected with tolerance, understanding, care for others and nature. People with high openness also esteem varied life and independence in thinking and choosing actions, which is in accordance with the results of other studies [18, 19]. What is more, positive dependencies between the trait of openness and care for wellbeing of those close to one were revealed, which confirms the results obtained by other researchers [20]. The results of the author's studies revealing that higher *Openness to Experience* is accompanied by stronger preference for Achievements proved to be more complex. These results suggest that seeking new experiences and cognitive openness may be connected with seeking personal successes. Previous analyses showed significant relationships between *Openness to Experience* and achievements [10], but weak dependencies with preference for *Achievements* [19]. Dollinger, Leong and Ulicni [7], when analysing the origin of *Openness to Experience*, stress the role of supporting environment in the shaping of imagination and creativity, which constitute components of this trait. They also notice that parents and teachers, while developing these characteristics, stress competition and victory in com-

petition with others. Such understanding of *Openness to Experience* could explain the relationship of this dimension with preference for *Achievements*, stressing not excellence in accomplishment of a task but «being better in competition with others» [2, p. 172 – 173]. With relation to Neuroticism, it was revealed that people with high intensity of this trait have little esteem for Self-direction, which is in accordance with the results obtained by Wolfradt and Dalbert [26]. Weak dependencies between *Neuroticism* and preferred values Schwartz explain by stating that people with high intensity of this trait do not esteem it and minimize its influence on action [12].

Conclusions

The studies revealed significant relationships between individual's personality traits and values preferred by them. Most numerous relationships with personal values were revealed in the cases of Agreeableness, Extraversion and Openness to Experience. The weakest relationships with preferred personal values were observed in the case of Neuroticism. Presented results shed new light on the character and structure of analysed dependencies. They also show the complexity of those relationships. Obtained results provide data regarding the conditioning of personal value preferences. They also show validity of taking into account individual differences, such as personal characteristics, when dealing with processes that shape values. In future studies on relations between personal characteristics and preferred personal values, it would be worthwhile to take into account the significance of mediating and modifying factors – mediators and moderators of studied relationships. Taking into account socio-demographic variables and also subject variables, such as self-image, individualistic and collectivist orientation, social axioms, also seems interesting. In future studies it would also be worthwhile to take into account cultural differences, which may constitute a factor modifying the character of analyzed relationships between personality and personal values.

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