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RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE VALUES AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION STRATEGIES IN CROSS-CULTURAL PERSPECTIVE

This study investigated the connection between values and styles of handling interpersonal conflict in the context of two different societies. Important for us is the question which value determines the choice of one or another type of behaviour in the conflict situations. Data were collected with questionnaires from Ukraine and Bulgaria and processed with hierarchical regression analysis for each country. The results in the study were gathered by administrating a questionnaire for research of the value orientations (Krumov, 1990) and scales for styles of handling interpersonal conflict (Rahim, 1983). The study sample consisted of 275 Ukrainian undergraduates and workers in state and private organizations in Kiev, Odessa, Izmail and 253 Bulgarian undergraduates and workers in Sofia and Varna.
Key words: value orientations, interpersonal conflict, dominating strategy, obliging strategy, avoiding strategy, compromising strategy and integrating strategy.

Introduction: The social transformations which occurred in the last years in the countries Ukraine and Bulgaria originated a number of differences and contradictions in the way of life and put these societies before new challenges. In the conditions of a social change the preconditions of the current situation contribute to a prehierarchication of the well fixed values. With a view to this in the contemporary societies special attention is paid to the research direction and the analysis of the dynamics of the value orientations. These values are one of the main sources of motivation of the human activity and are a factor that influences on the personality formation. The value priorities in individual and social plan affect the changes in the social consciousness and the method of functioning of the contemporary civilization. They are like a «catalyst» for the changes occurred.

As relative stable in the time, the value orientations are determined by individual- psychological, social and temporal factors. The study of the condition and the development of the dominant profile of the value orientations allow us to discover the quality characteristics of the mass consciousness and to give answer to the question: «How will the personality feel in the new global world, which values and models will it take?» This is one of the reasons which provokes the execution of the present empiric research of the structure and the dynamics of the system of values, the members of two sample, put

under authentic social transformations and in view of their heterogeneity in character and nature.

On the other hand, the processes of social transformation which occurred, directed to a change of the political and economic foundations, caused new social and individual conflicts. As we know, conflict is a complicated process which can be kept with difficulty under control. The difficulties and the countless problems which conflicts cause in the contemporary democratic societies increase the necessity of finding reliable means for their prognostication and constructive overcoming.

The huge interest of the social-psychological and organization-conductive scientific knowledge to the constructive handling of the conflict phenomena caused numerous classifications of the strategies and the methods for their handling [1; 2; 8; 9]. In their essence the strategies for coping with conflicts are steady attitudes of the participants in the opposite for using a definite way of conduct for handling a conflict. The first conceptual plan for classification of strategies for handling conflicts is made by R. Blake and J. Moten (1964) [10]. They suggest two-dimensional model for measurement of the ways of conduct. The two dimensions express concern a themselves and concern for the others. On this model for measurement are defined five basic methods for coping with conflicts: *forcing, withdrawing, resolving, compromise and solving the problem*. This classification is subsequently reinterpreted by K. Thomas (1976) [4]. His model suggests comparison of the strategies according to dimensions, cooperativeness and assertiveness and they can be applied to the interpersonal as well as to the intergroup conflicts. Five different personal strategies for coping with conflicts are also suggested by Afrazal Rahim. In his conception they reveal other two aspects, integrative and distributive dimensions. The strategies offered by him are: *integrating, obliging, compromise, dominating and avoiding* [9].

In his researches Rahim (1983, 1986) accentuates that there is no such thing as best strategy, each one of them has its advantages and disadvantages. Depending on the concrete situational characteristics one of the methods for handling conflicts can prove to be more effective than the other one. For instance, the use of the integrating strategy leads to a better performance of the tasks and to a higher satisfaction from the group. The dominating strategy is functional when the collision cannot be provided in another way except by having a way. This strategy is applied mostly in extreme situations when the results from the conflict are a threat to the existence of the group or the organization.

The overview of the existing researches indicates that people have certain dispositions in their behaviour directed at solving conflict situations [5; 10]. The preferred strategies of a person's behaviour can be mediated by his/her intellectual, personal characteristics and specific features of his individuality [4; 2], which contains motives, beliefs and value orientations. For example, the dominating strategy of behaviour is inherent to the authoritarian type of personality, whereas obliging behaviour — to people with intensive need in affiliation [3]. On the other hand, cultural factors and situational determinants

influence the development of personal individuality, which directly entails differences between people in the choice of this or that strategy for handling conflicts.

The object of the article — to reveal the determinative role of personality value orientations in the individual choice of behaviour in conflict situations, conditioned by the socio-cultural specificity of the Ukrainian and Bulgarian societies.

Hypotheses: we assume that because of the differences in the social cultural conditions of Ukraine and Bulgaria, the value priorities which determine the choice of behaviour strategies in conflict situations will substantially differ in the two samples of respondents under study.

We also concede that the similarity of the former socio-political development of the two countries has influenced the similarity of the dominating priorities in the value and meaning sphere of the respondents from Ukraine and Bulgaria.

On the other hand the integration processes which take place today in these states, promote different socio-cultural transformations in each country, and this has resulted in objective differences in the structure of values, intensified by the modern cultural specificity of these societies.

Participants: participants in this survey were undergraduates and workers in state and private organizations from Ukraine and Bulgaria (N = 528; 253 from Bulgaria, 275 from Ukraine; 44,8 % female and 55,2 % male). In the selection of the research sample we stick to the fact that students are heralds of the existing trends for modernization of society and that especially their values show the direction of the social and cultural changes. On the other hand, the value priorities of the generation of age, which are priorities for traditional ones, are qualified as opposing to the values of the modernization and the globalization. The age of the interviewed people lies between 18 and 63 (M = 29.53; SD=11.76 and the median is MD=26.3 years).

Procedures: For collection and processing of data is used a complex Questionnaires, made in accordance with the cultural context in East Europe and on the grounds of this it appears to be especially suitable for their application in the concrete case. The questionnaire has included the next scales items: scales for research of the value orientations of the personality, created by K. Krumov (1990) [6] and scales for research of strategies for handling conflict situations (*Styles of handling interpersonal conflict*), created by A. Rahim (1992, 1983) [8; 9].

Results: Cultural Values Analyses. The collected data were put to mathematical-statistical processing with the program SPSS for Windows. The hierarchical importance of the value orientations for each society was revealed through a frequency distribution made. It was found that the values which get into the dominating kernel of the system of values in Ukraine and Bulgaria are the same but arranged in a different way. These are universal for all cultures, common to all mankind values, like love, health and vitality, personal and domestic happiness.

The next group of values which have a higher intensity, compared to the others are: freedom of the personality and the social justice, the strive for self-perfection and personal appearance, respect and recognition from the others, creative contribution at work. They are no more a landmark of the previous socialistic system, they express a clear tendency to democratization.

It was also found that the Bulgarians and the Ukrainians rely more on the spiritual values than the material ones, and the instrument values like «power and glory», which during the socialism had another significance and were a main value, today have low importance in both the two societies. These results back up the formulated by us hypothesis for presence of a similar system of values in Bulgaria and Ukraine. One of the main reasons for that is the similar pressure exerted on the social-political and the economic progress of these societies.

The analysis of the results shows also presence of statistically significant differences in the values of the value orientation. Thus in Bulgaria the priority of great importance «health and vitality» is put in the first place in the system of values, but in Ukraine a lower degree of significance is imputed to this terminal value. However the value «love» holds the leading position for the Ukrainians while for the Bulgarians it is put in the forth place according to significance. Statistically significant difference is discovered in the priority of «friendship and respect from the others». For the Ukrainians the importance of this value is expressed more slightly than for the Bulgarians. We can note that support in the friendship is a traditional national characteristic for the two cultures which remains significant even in a period of cardinal social transformations. Probably the need of adherence, of a closer surroundings and positive connection with the others is a more strongly expressed necessity for the Bulgarians. In the Ukrainian contingent this need is displaced by the priorities «striving for self-perfection» and «recognition and respect from the others». Statistically significant difference is discovered also in the value «professional realization and career», which determines man's future and which is with greater value for the Bulgarians, and the Ukrainians are mainly orientated to self-updating and personal progress. Probably this is caused by the conditions of the social environment which help part of the Ukrainians to do not exercise in practice their profession. Because of this they are mainly orientated to rise in personal plan, not to a professional realization.

The results also confirm our assumption for the existence of objective differences in the structure of the value priorities in Bulgaria and Ukraine. Trend is predetermined by the cultural specificity of the societies and the various social-cultural transformations.

The value orientations as *predictor* of strategies of handling conflicts

To examine the relationship between the value priorities and strategies of handling conflicts, we used multiple linear regression models for each sample separately. The results showed presence of cultural differences in the determining role of the values regarding the strategies for handling conflicts.

The integrating strategy: It was found that in Ukraine the high ambition to hedonistic value orientation leads to low preference of collaboration in solving

a conflict. However the high concern about health and vitality, the implacable attitude towards disadvantages and injustice, the need of strive for respect and recognition from the others lead to more often use of the integrating strategy, to desire for standing up for personal interest and respecting other person's interests. It was established that material prosperity as a value priority for the respondents in Ukraine has inversely proportional effect on the integrating strategy. Probably, the ambition for a better material status decreases the interest in the integrating style which requires respecting other people's interests (see table 1).

In Bulgarian however the attitude for application of integrating strategy is influenced by other value priorities. The ambition of the Bulgarians for self-perfection and personal appearance contributes to more seldom application of the integrating strategy. The interesting thing is that the higher ambition for social activity in Bulgaria determines more frequently use of the collaboration in handling conflict situations. The value orientations «professional realization and career» and «love» have similar positive influence. Although this influence is weak, the priority of these values contributes to frequent application of the integrating strategy.

It was also discovered that it is found availability of similar, between the different cultures, determinants regarding the integrating strategy. Thus the strive for respect and recognition of the others predetermines the high attitude towards use of this strategy and the strive for power and social status predetermines low attitude towards collaboration in handling conflict and more seldom application of the avoiding strategy.

Table 1

The regression analysis of the value orientations and the integrating strategy

Value orientations	Ukraine DR^2 = 0.220		Bulgaria DR^2 = 0.155	
	Beta	P	Beta	P
Easy and carefree life	−0.233	p=0.001		
Health and vitality	0.201	p=0.006		
Respect and recognition from the others	0.620	p=0.011	0.192	p=0.006
Implacable attitude towards disadvantages and injustice	0.742	p=0.003		
Material prosperity	−0.142	p=0.046		
Creative contribution at work	0.140	p=0.024		
Social status (power)	−0.151	p=0.012	−0.210	p=0.001
Strive for for self-perfection and personal appearance			−0.282	p=0.005
Strive for democratic changes and economic prosperity			0.203	p=0.001
Love			0.152	p=0.035
Professional realization and career			0.191	p=0.043

The dominating strategy: The regression analysis found that in the Ukrainian examined persons the value «strive for democratic changes and economic prosperity» has statistically significant positive influence on this strategy (see

table 2). The determining role of the social orientation in the Ukrainian respondents is of special interest. While in Bulgaria this value contributes to more frequent application of the integrating strategy, in Ukraine it is a determinant for strive for imposing personal interests and disrespecting the other side's opinion in the conflict. On the other hand Ukrainians who estimate highly love and have strong orientation towards material prosperity more seldom apply the dominating (the competitive) strategy. It is also interesting to be noted that the ambition for the value health and vitality in Ukraine predetermines the choice of rivalry as a preferred way for settling opposites. The value priority «social status and power» is also in positive interrelation with this way of conduct in conflict. The moderate attention of this value to the dominating strategy is natural. The ambition for power and social influence always leads to attempts on domination in a conflict situation. In Bulgarian however influence of the values was not found regarding the dominating strategy.

Table 2

The regression analysis of the value orientations and the dominating strategy

Value orientations	Ukraine DR^2 = 0.106		Bulgaria	
	Beta	P	Beta	P
Health and vitality	0.264	p=0.001		
Material prosperity	−0.213	p=0.007		
Social status (power)	0.134	p=0.041		
Strive for democratic changes and economic prosperity	0.163	p=0.010		
Love	−0.160	p=0.021		

The aviding strategy: The results show that the choice of the avoiding strategy in the Ukrainian members is determined by the strive for social status and power (see table 3). This value priority has moderate negative influence on the application of this strategy which evidences for this that persons with high orientation to social influence and power have the attitude towards more seldom use of the avoiding behaviour as a way for coping with conflict.

The social status as a value also has negative influence on the choice of the avoiding behaviour in the Bulgarian sample. The results also show that the Bulgarian members who strive for self-perfection, personal appearance and good material status do not prefer escaping conflicts, just the opposite they have strong attitude for their solving. On the other hand the high need of respect and the strive for receiving approval from the others, connected with the attitude to escape the conflicts.

The compromise strategy: The compromise strategy in the examined persons in Ukraine is influenced to high extent of importance by the high strive for personal and national security, the implacable attitude towards disadvantages, injustice, care for disadvantaged persons and tolerance for new ideas determine the more frequent application of the compromise strategy

The obtained results show that in the Bulgarian respondents is available negative influence of the value «easy and carefree life». Probably more strongly expressed hedonistic orientation like enjoying life and satisfying desires

Table 3

The regression analysis of the value orientations and the avoiding strategy

Value orientations	Ukraine $DR^2 = 0.170$		Bulgaria $DR^2 = 0.137$	
	Beta	P	Beta	P
Respect and recognition from the others			0.273	0.002
Material prosperity			−0.194	0.035
Social status (power)	−0.132	0.034	−0.140	0.030
Strive for self-perfection and personal appearance			−0.221	0.004

(pleasure) makes the strive for finding compromise less possible. However the high attitude towards compromise and mutual compromises in the Bulgarians is determined by the strive for professional realization, career making, personal success, strive for respect and recognition by the others.

The obliging strategy: Cultural differences also regarding the obliging strategies were found. In the Bulgarian examined persons the more often choice of the helpful attitude is predetermined by high strive for respect and recognition from the others (see table 4). However the high orientation towards self-perfection, personal appearance and material prosperity determine more seldom making of concessions before the desires of the other side in handling arising conflict. Tendency to negative influence was found of the value «social status and power». The influence of this value priority on the obliging strategy is comparable to its influence on integration and the avoiding strategy.

In the Ukrainian respondents however the ambition of the person for realization and progress in the profession and for achievement of personal success decreases the attitude towards application of the obliging strategy, which requires satisfaction of needs of the other conflict side. Personal success as s value is determined by the social standards. With a view to this circumstance and the fact that Ukraine is characterized as a comparatively unstable social-cultural environment, the inversely proportional influence on the attitude towards helpful behaviour is logical. Although the frequent application of this way of coping with conflict contributes to development of altruistic directed behaviour, the seldom use of this strategy causes suspicion among the others and creates conditions for a new conflict.

Table 4

The regression analysis of the value orientations and the *obliging* strategy

Value orientations	Ukraine $DR^2 = 0.040$		Bulgaria $DR^2 = 0.235$	
	Beta	P	Beta	P
Strive for self-perfection and personal appearance			−0.362	0.000
Material prosperity			−0.201	0.002
Social status (power)			−0.180	0.003
Professional realization and career	−0.183	p=0.005		
Respect and recognition from the others			0.314	0.000

Conclusion

Today, in the contemporary world, the integrative processes in the various spheres of life are now taken as necessity of the new social society. Although the processes of social transformation, directed to change in the political and economic foundations, were adopted with exaltation by the world society as a progressive step in the social development of the former post-totalitarian countries, they quickly provoked general disappointment among the population. The social cataclysms, which shook the world in the last few years, are one of the main motives that impelled the research-workers to extend their interest in nature, the reasons and the results from the social-psychological conflict and in problem how to control it.

The fast social-economic and political changes in global aspect also contributed to sudden change of the previous ways for handling conflicts in the social environment. Still empiric enough researches do not exist, researches which show the interrelation between the value dominants and the preferred strategies for solving conflicts at intercultural level. This evidences that maybe the most neglected variable in the researches of the social conflict are the differences of the system of values in cultural aspect. The studies of the determining role of the value orientations regarding the strategies can significantly influence for making it easy to search for ways for constructive settlement of conflicts.

The results from the present intercultural research, of which the main stress is connected with the study and the clarification of the cultural specificity of the conflict and value problems, give reason for the following *conclusions* to be drawn:

By adapting to the quick pace of democratization of the social life and by starting a new stage in their historical progress, the societies in Bulgarian and Ukraine go through stormy changes which contribute to a cardinal change of the models of behaviour and the value orientations. In the contemporary Bulgarian culture, in a situation of uncertainty, the active conduct of the individual is dominating regarding the environment, the strive for imposing the personal will on the situative conditions instead of adapting to them. At individual level the dominating value kernel contains the values of the new contemporary society like freedom, independence and self-respect. For the Ukrainians however the transformation of the system of values goes in the conditions of downfall of many illusions and ideals, left from the previous public peace and furthermore in the conditions of rebirth of the cultural tradition of the people. Because of instability and uncertainty in the social sphere, caused by the difficult transition to democratization of the social life, the Ukrainians turn more to themselves, to the physical survival, not to the social problems. The dominating value of this society is expressed by orientation towards oneself and the family. This is an act of sefl-securing and concern about the close people of the person.

From the obtained data it can be concluded that the various temporal characteristics and the social transformations in these societies predetermined the different choice of the preferred strategies for coping with conflict situations.

Despite this both in the two cultures strongly expressed attitude is observed towards the integrating and compromise strategies and weakly expressed attitide towards the dominating strategy. The last rank position of the dominating strategy evidences that despite the intensive transformation of the social order in Ukraine and Bulgaria to new democratic societies, despite the integrative processes, requiring desperate struggling and imposing personal opinion, in these countries rivalry is put on the lowest position among all other ways of conduct in rise of opposites.

The assumed differences between Ukraine and Bulgaria showed also regarding the influence of the value orientations on the strategies for settlement of conflict opposites. From the obtained results concrete conclusion could be drawn about a practice connected with formation of techniques and methods for constructive settlement of conflict opposites.

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ВЗАЄМОЗВ'ЯЗОК МІЖ ЦІННОСТЯМИ І СТРАТЕГІЄЮ ВИРІШЕННЯ КОНФЛІКТІВ В МІЖКУЛЬТУРНІЙ ПЕРСПЕКТИВІ

Резюме

У статті представлені результати крос-культурного дослідження взаємозв'язку ціннісних орієнтацій і стратегії вирішення міжособистісного конфлікту в контексті двох культуральних груп. Основна мета дослідження — розкрити вплив соціокультурної специфіки суспільства на детермінуючу роль ціннісних орієнтації особистості в індивідуальному виборі стилю поведінки в конфліктній ситуації. Дані для емпіричного дослідження були зібрані шляхом проведення анкетування в вузах та організаціях України та Болгарії. Всього було опитано 528 респондентів, з них 275 осіб — українські студенти і працівники державних та приватних організацій міст Києва, Одеси та Ізмаїла, і 253 особи — болгарські студенти і співробітники приватних організацій міст Софії та Варни.

Ключові слова: ціннісні орієнтації, міжособистісні конфлікти, стратегії інтегрування, домінування, поступливості, уникнення і компромісу.

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ВЗАИМОСВЯЗЬ МЕЖДУ ЦЕННОСТЯМИ И СТРАТЕГИЕЙ РАЗРЕШЕНИЯ КОНФЛИКТОВ В МЕЖКУЛЬТУРНОЙ ПЕРСПЕКТИВЕ

Резюме

В статье представлены результаты кросс-культурного исследования взаимосвязи ценностных ориентаций и стратегии разрешения межличностного конфликта в контексте двух культуральных групп. Основная цель исследования — раскрыть влияние социо-культурной специфики общества на детерминирующую роль ценностных ориентаций личности в индивидуальном выборе стиля поведения в конфликтной ситуации. Данные для эмпирического исследования были собраны путем проведения анкетирования в вузах и организациях Украины и Болгарии. Всего было опрошено 528 респондентов, из них 275 человек — украинские студенты и работники государственных и частных организаций городов Киева, Одессы и Измаила, и 253 человека — болгарские студенты и сотрудники частных организаций городов Софии и Варны.

Ключевые слова: ценностные ориентации, межличностные конфликты, стратегии интегрирования, доминирования, уступчивости, избегания и компромисса.