

## STUDYING THE VALUE ORIENTATIONS OF STUDENTS IN THE CONTEXT OF THEIR LIFE PERSPECTIVE

**Elena Bondareva**

Senior Lecturer National University of Uzbekistan Department of Psychology

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**Abstract.** *The article substantiates the need to study the motivational-value sphere of students and discusses the results obtained in the course of an empirical study of students' values in the context of their attitude towards the future, present and past.*

**Keywords:** *life perspective, degree of future orientation, hedonistic present, negative past, normative values, individual priorities, demonstration of social competence.*

## STUDYING THE VALUE ORIENTATIONS OF STUDENTS IN THE CONTEXT OF THEIR LIFE PERSPECTIVE

**Аннотация.** *В статье обосновывается необходимость изучения мотивационно-ценностной сферы студентов и обсуждаются результаты, полученные в ходе эмпирического исследования ценностей студентов в контексте их отношения к будущему, настоящему и прошлому.*

**Ключевые слова:** *жизненная перспектива, степень ориентации на будущее, гедонистическое настоящее, негативное прошлое, нормативные ценности, индивидуальные приоритеты, демонстрация социальной компетентности.*

### Introduction

The modern approach to education includes not only the transfer of knowledge and the development of professional competencies among students, but, above all, the formation of an active life position in them, a willingness to work for the benefit of society, to contribute to the prosperity of their country. This approach is based on a deep impact on the personality of students, which, in turn, requires taking into account their individuality – interests and inclinations, features of the emotional, motivational and value areas. In this regard, the problem of studying the values of student youth in the context of their attitude to the future is of great scientific and practical interest.

### Methodology

The purpose of our study was to identify the quantitative and qualitative features of life prospects, as well as their relationship with various components of the students' personality orientation.

Life perspective, as K.A. Abulkhanova-Slavskaya and E.I. Golovakha understand it, is a cognitive-motivational category related to the future, to the immediate and distant goals of human activity and the expected events [1, 4]. Close in meaning are also the concepts of life style (K. Levin [8]), future prospects (J. Nutten [9]), life scenario (N.V. Grishina [5]), life plan (A.A. Kronik [7]). Based on their works, we conducted a comprehensive study of the life perspective of students and the identification of psychological mechanisms for the formation of a life perspective. The research participants were 542 students enrolled in different courses of domestic and foreign universities.

When planning the study, we also relied on the ideas of S. Schwartz about the value orientations of the individual. Let us dwell on their description in more detail, since this is directly related to the research strategy we have chosen. S. Schwartz singles out values as

abstract (social-normative) ideals and values as guides to action (individual priorities) [6]. According to S. Schwartz, the first and the second may have significant differences. The reasons for this may be the limitations of a person, group pressure, adherence to traditions, following patterns of behavior and other factors.

In our study, the S. Schwartz questionnaire was used to identify the significance of various personality values – power, achievement, hedonism, stimulation, generosity, independence, conformism, traditions, universalism and security (10 types of values in total). However, our goal was not just to determine the level of preference for certain values – we were interested in how this preference would affect the characteristics of the life prospects of the respondents and, in particular, their attitude to the future.

To study the characteristics of students' life prospects, we used the F. Zimbardo Time Perspective Inventory (ZTPI) [10, pp. 101-109]. This questionnaire includes five indicators: the negative past perception factor, the positive past perception factor, the hedonistic present perception factor, the fatalistic present perception factor, and the degree of future orientation. The technique reveals not only the emotional attitude of the individual to various periods of her life, but also the degree of her acceptance of responsibility for what is happening [11].

Respondent's attitude to his past, present and future we determined with the help of T. Cottle's Circles Test [2, pp. 28-37].

Cottle's Circles projective test recreates a spatial model of a person's subjective time [3]. It allows you to determine the relative importance for the respondent of his past, present and future, as well as the degree of connection between these time zones. A reassessment of the past is observed among those respondents who attach great importance to the events of their childhood and believe that they will have an impact on their entire subsequent life. It is common for people who are pragmatic, career-oriented, socially significant achievements to depict the present in the largest circle. A large circle denoting the future may mean an increased significance for the respondent of those events that are just about to happen, their preoccupation with their goals and plans.

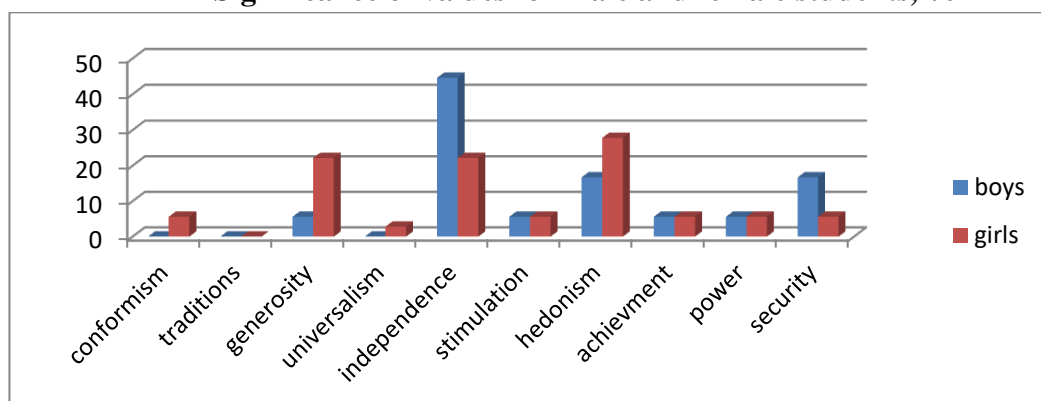
The location of the circles relative to each other is a measure of how much the respondent is aware of the mutual conditioning of the events of his life.

## Results and Discussion

Let's move on to the description of the results of the study. Figure 1 shows the significance of different values for boys and girls according to the method of S. Schwartz.

**Figure 1.**

**Significance of values for male and female students, %**

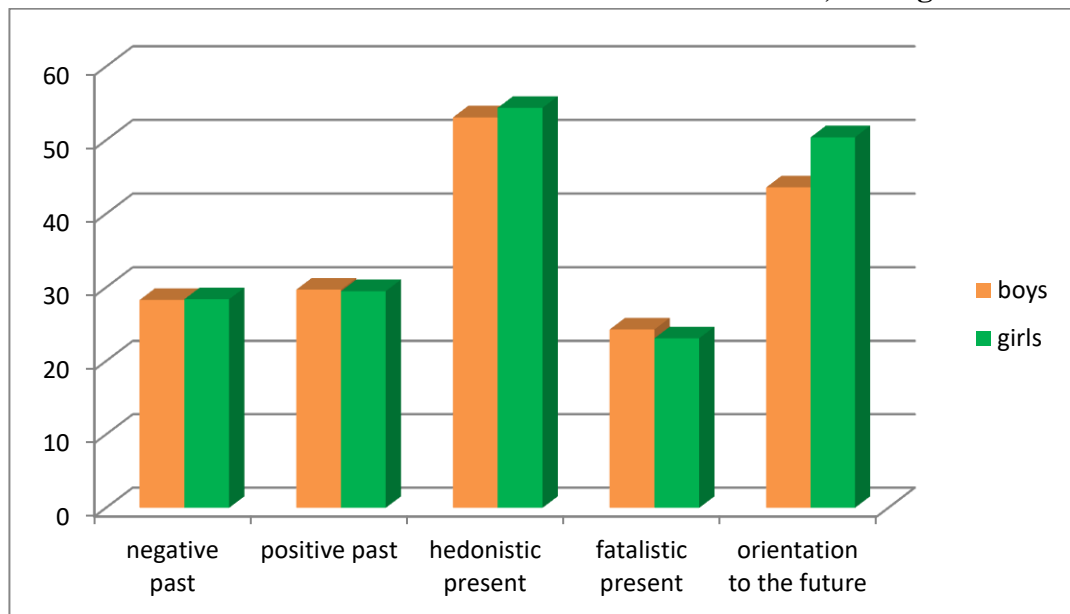


As can be seen from the diagram, young men give the greatest preference to independence (44.4% of the respondents); girls' preferences are not so unambiguous - generosity and independence are equally pronounced (22.2%), hedonism is slightly more pronounced (27.8%). Therefore, it is important for boys not to depend on others, and for girls, along with this, to take care of others; however, in the first place for girls to have fun. It is noteworthy that the value of traditions is rejected by both groups of respondents.

Next, we determined the specifics of the students' life prospects, while we also tried to identify differences between the groups of respondents by gender. The results of the examination according to the method of F. Zimbardo are shown in Figure 2.

**Figure 2.**

**Values on time scales for male and female students, average scores**



The diagram shows that boys and girls show great similarities in terms of the negative and positive past, as well as the fatalistic present. Girls are more focused on the future and (slightly) on the hedonistic present than boys.

Correlation analysis of variables showed that in the whole sample there is a strong positive relationship between the severity of the value of achievements and the degree of orientation towards the future ( $r = .451$ ;  $p \leq 0.01$ ). Consequently, the more significant success and demonstration of social competence are for the respondent, the stronger the future is presented in his life perspective.

Respondents' conformism slightly correlates with a fatalistic attitude to the present ( $r = .164$ ;  $p \leq 0.05$ ). This suggests that the tendency to follow the opinions of the majority leads to a loss of responsibility for what is happening, a feeling that nothing depends on you. The dominance of the value of traditions also accompanies fatalism in relation to the present ( $r = .237$ ;  $p \leq 0.01$ ).

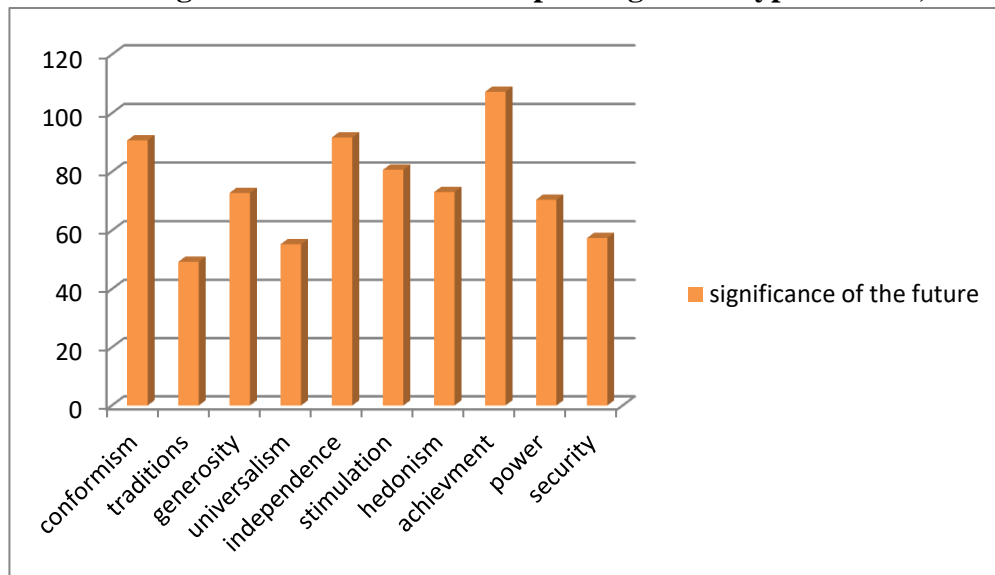
The degree of positive attitude towards the past is strongly associated with values such as tradition ( $r = .311$ ;  $p \leq 0.01$ ), kindness ( $r = .244$ ;  $p \leq 0.01$ ) and, to a lesser extent, with universalism ( $r = .166$ ;  $p \leq 0.05$ ). Those respondents who show a hedonistic attitude to the present value stimulation ( $r = .225$ ;  $p \leq 0.01$ ), their own achievements ( $r = .169$ ;  $p \leq 0.05$ ). Thus, the

orientation towards pleasure, social approval is accompanied by a tendency to live for today, without thinking about the future.

Figure 3 shows the results of the Cottle method for 10 groups of subjects, formed according to the parameter of the prevailing value.

**Figure 3.**

**The Significance of the future depending on the type of value, mean rank**



An analysis of the significance of differences between the groups of subjects in terms of the prevailing value showed that the future has the greatest significance for those who are achievement-oriented, and the least for those oriented towards traditions. The significance of the past, on the contrary, is least among those who strive for achievements, and the greatest among conformists. According to Zimbardo's test, the least pronounced desire for the future was among those respondents for whom power is significant. The differences between the groups of respondents are statistically significant.

### Conclusions and Recommendations

Based on the data obtained, we concluded that the attitude of students to their future directly depends on what is significant for them in life - career achievements, safety and comfort or independence, the ability to help people, which is so important for those who receive the profession of psychologist. Our research has shown that special attention should be paid to the development of professional motivation of future specialists, which, in turn, is unthinkable without organizing their practical activities from the first year of education. This is especially true for female students.

The results of the study can be used to improve the effectiveness of the educational process in educational institutions, as well as serve as a basis for further research in the field of personality psychology.

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