Value Orientations and Quality of Life

Pejo Đurašinović
University of Banja Luka, Bosnia and Herzegovina

Abstract: Our topic focuses on the pre-war system of values, then the period of decadence and destruction of the system of values and value orientations in general, and the postwar system with its different views on values that goes through a period of the formation of awareness of values. The young will play the most important role in the formation of the new system of values.

The phenomenon of values among young people today is a complex social problem that is influenced by a large number of factors. These various factors can be classified into biological, social and individual factors.

Keywords: destruction, decadence, values, orientations.

Introduction

When we speak of the value system among young people in a postwar society, from a sociological point of view there are many connections and relationships that determine this subsystem of the social system. In this paper, we refer to "axiology as a special scientific discipline that studies the value" (Sociološki leksikon, 1982)., giving special attention to their social determination in social functions.

Both, the system of values and the value orientations, they unite the past and the present directing the man to the future.

The most numerous are the social factors and they will be the subject of our interest. They include economic, political, legal, moral, religious, family, cultural, and educational factors. Among these factors, the biggest importance have the factors that affect the most the formation of the system of values which in turn affects the value orientations of young people. A very important fact is that in every system of values an important role also play: needs, goals, means, interests, abilities, etc.

Man as a conscious being forms his awareness of the values and his value system. This comes from the biological, social and individual development of human life in general.

It isn't possible to understand the value orientations of young people without knowing the system of values within which the value orientations are arranged. As we focus on young people, their education plays an important role. When it comes to social phenomena such as the education, according to the theory of systems a historical approach is inevitable. This means that these social phenomena are not only perceived in their current valuation, but also in its history and development. For our topic it is important that the value, through the value system and the value orientations, influences the society and the social life of man as an individual.

In this way, human behavior is consciously based on values. Thus, all significant human activities are determined by values. In matters of education, the classification of value systems goes through a problem-historical approach, i.e. directing educational work through a significant period of development of a society. Several value systems were dominant in different periods of which the elements of the pragmatic-cultural value system mostly remained. Stoic, Christian, hedonistic and intellectual-idealistic value systems didn't appear or end in a clear form, so that their outlines are present until today.

The practical and cultural dimension of the educational system is reflected in the fact that this value primarily has the function of preparing people for the work and participation in social life.

The approach to values hasn't been sufficiently established since the war. For certain values it can not be reliably determined whether they are traditional, modern or transitional, absolute or relative, objective or subjective, and constant or variable values.

The Social System

A disorganized social system disorient young people, so that the existence and functioning of the system of values is of great importance for them to be able to make correct choices. In doing so, they need help and support of the institutions, adults, parents and peers. Value orientations are not objective givens, i.e. social statics, as variable values they belong to social dynamics.

For these objective reasons, it is unjustified to impose traditional, modern or other values on the young, values that are desirable in the opinion of adults, because it is difficult to understand their imaginary significance considering that values are changing in the period after the war. It is difficult for the young to understand the value system before the war and its decadence and destruction in the war.

Because of the disturbed system of values, the discrepancy between the proclaimed and the real, the views of young are unstable because their attitudes are not sufficiently empowered by practice of personal experience in their environment. It depends on many factors which values will be accepted and adopted. The establishment of the system of values in young people from a variety of different forms of value mainly depends on the characteristics of the society at a certain time. It also depends on the type of value or the value orientation, status and influence of parents, personality traits, the impact of schools, colleges, then the characteristics of the social group they belong to, media, literature, and the social environment.

The adoption and creation of the awareness of values are a platform for the value orientations of the young. In fact, it represents the ability of the young to get along in time and space, their relationships, behaviours, activities, and status in society.

Looking at the value orientations that way, they can be classified into primary, secondary and tertiary orientations.

The primary value orientations classify the most general terms as antipodes by the system good-bad, worthy-unworthy in certain activities, beautiful-ugly in art, educated-uneducated in education etc.

On the basis of value orientations are human needs, so that none of the significant value orientation is the result of specific circumstances or current situations. It is the result of many related needs and goals and the ways of how they are realized.

„The most characteristic population that breaks the traditional and modern values are the young." (Suzić, 1998).

Considering that young people at this age often wander, search for something, are at the crossroads of life, changes in the value orientations are faster and more obvious than in the behaviour itself.

Therefore, the following hypothesis is that the young more slowly change their behaviour than the value orientations and attitudes. To support this argument, I primarily think of the psycho-physical characteristics of the young such as insecurity, improvisation, dynamics, emotions etc.

Next hypothesis is the importance of the relation between the value orientation and the socialization of personality.

The narrower or organized socialization we discussed earlier through education which is its basic form.

The spontaneous socialization is wider, takes place in everyday life and involves many groups. This paper is primarily interested in the participation of the young in the process of growth from an individual to a person ready to take over some social roles. This process can be observed through imitation, interaction, and internalization.

In this paper, personalization will be examined as a complementary process to socialization with the outside influence and pressure of the system of values through the institutions of the system. We will examine its impact on the individual, but also its efforts to form itself, using its incentives, motives and reasons to develop awareness and self-consciousness to the final shape of the system of values.

Socialization and Presonalization

Socialization and personalization show that there isn't only a one-way influence from the society to the individual, but also vice versa.

„If you look at socialization as compulsion of certain standards or pressure of the cultural and social order, then the individual must be included in this milieu through subjugation or adjustment." (Andevski, 1991).

Another aspect of this hypothesis is the relation between the value orientation and the maturation of personality. In the system of values, it represents a criterion for solving everyday problems in forming interpersonal relationships, thus defining philosophy of life and meaning of existence. On the same platform, the relation between the value orientation and the integration of personality is established which puts this cycle into social frameworks.

As in the system of values, the value orientations have a typology established in the scientific sense.

The most characteristic is Fromm's typology in his work "man for himself" in which he distinguishes productive and unproductive orientations of the human nature.

All physically and mentally healthy beings have the predispositions to the productive value orientation. The unproductive value orientations include recipient, exploitative, and market orientations of the human nature.

Again, as in the system of values, they do not exist or come and go in pure forms, their forms are combined or mixed.

In both cases, the value helps people to regulate their relations with other people, the environment and the society as a whole, creating a perception of the world and a complete understanding of the world.

Whether and to what extent an individual accepts, adopts and disseminates the values of a society largely depends on individual characteristics and capabilities of the individuals to accept the social symbols as their own. Also, they must go through the developmental course of maturation from the individual to the personality through the earlier listed stages of socialization and personalization.

Post-war society is undergoing a process of change in all spheres of life.

The previous system of values based on the socio-political and economic system of the socialist order, the ideology of one party and its inherent view of the world, religion, family, law, liberty, property, authority, broke up after the disintegration of the state. The transition our society is going through is a process of transformation from a socialist to a capitalist system. They were two opposite, different and antagonistic systems.

The road to the establishment of the capitalist system involves the transformation of all subsystems of the global social system (political, economic, cultural, security and defense, legal, health, educational, social, etc.).

„Young people who are in the focus of our study do not remember the previous system of values. They live in a time of different value orientations" (Ninković, 2004). In a short time, their pluralism will establish the same value system as in the Western capitalist society. This model of society proclaims the following system of values: Political pluralism, market economy, rule of rights, private property, civil society, individuality, technical progress, etc. This system of values is possible and compatible with other systems. Only in unity with other systems of the capitalist order, it can be realized on principles of rationality and functionality. "In our conditions, until the establishment of the capitalist system and the system of values based on it, it's the most objective to treat the value orientation." (Kačavenda, 1983). In this interregnum the young will wander between what is said and the real, with a bad and uncertain current and future position in society. "This situation favours the betrayal of young people to alcohol, drugs, prostitution, delinquency, violence, suicide, immorality, lack of solidarity, idleness, divorce, lack of culture, generation conflict, gender conflict, apathy, lack of imagination, etc." (Group of authors, 2006).

Research Results

The results indicate the following:
- There are two parallel systems of values, the one that established and built up the previous social order and the other that is formed through the process of building of new social relations through the transition and European integration.
- In the formation of the system of values we can distinguish two subsystems, namely:
  a) ambitious, aggressive, intrusive, rich tycoon national elites as a minority and
  b) a discouraged majority which lacks in ambition, will and power to change.
- There is also a great turmoil and disorientation among young people when it comes to their relation towards the material, the enrichment which in their opinion suits crime and corruption.
- 2/3 of the respondents consider important and very important the regaining of the B&H traditional values.
- It is important to emphasize that the same number of young people in another context prefer modernist orientations.
- The next interesting thing is that 4/5 of the young prefer a strong and energetic leader who will help the society out of difficulties. This attitude is characteristic for past times and it stands in contrast to the strengthening of the institutions in the system of the rule of law and democracy as a goal towards modernization.
- There is a very strong relation towards the state property, which is also a tendency and a value orientation of an earlier time and not of their own which is characterized by the change of ownership through privatization difficulties.
- Behind state property there is the development of democratic awareness and social liberalization in the scale of values.
- Education, science and culture are in the fourth place in the scale of values and are considered important and very important.

- Civil and human rights are in the third place in the scale of values.
- The part of environmental awareness is in the group of first goals and is located in the middle of the scale of values.
- The importance of the fulfillment of specified conditions for joining the EU is positioned far below the other goals.
- The state of law and the rule of law are in the upper part of the scale of values as important and very important which indicates a liberal-democratic orientation of the young.
- Crime and corruption are highly positioned as a social evil.
- Jobs are the most important social goal and are in the first place with 98%.
- The importance of social welfare is the second most important and highly placed as the first objective.
- The value of social activism is of secondary importance.
- It is observed that there is low need for social engagement.
- The passivism of the young and weak social activism put them on the margins of the society.
- What is also obvious as a paradigm in the behaviour of the young is the so-called accustomed non-activism.
- The problem of social engagement of the young is followed by the justification of the impossibility of changes.
- Young people show a remarkable maturity and criticism towards the social reality in which they live.
- Religious programs are interrupted with beer commercials which is incompatible.
- The media have become a disaster for the young because they show everything that distorts values.
- Reforms lead education to destruction and cripple the young.
- Alcohol, drugs, violence and socio-pathological phenomena degrade the young a lot.

Conclusions

Man as a conscious being forms his awareness of the values and his value system.

All significant human activities are determined by values.

Post-war society is undergoing a process of change in all spheres of life.

The road to the establishment of the capitalist system involves the transformation of all subsystems of the global social system (political, economic, cultural, security and defense, legal, health, educational, social, etc.).

A disorganized social system disorient young people.

In this interregnum the young will wander between what is said and the real, with a bad and uncertain current and future position in society. This situation favours the betrayal of young people to alcohol, drugs, prostitution, delinquency, violence, suicide, immorality, lack of solidarity, idleness, divorce, lack of culture, generation conflict, gender conflict, apathy, lack of imagination, etc.

There are two parallel systems of values.

The most characteristic population that breaks the traditional and modern values are the young.

Summary

The system of values and value orientations largely influence lifestyles of citizens of any community, i.e. society.

In this regard, the new value orientations change the quality of life of young people and the society as a whole compared to pre-war system of values.

Hedonism, altruism, trendy lifestyle, utilitarianism, conformism are the new value orientations that are preferred by a growing number of young people.

On the other hand, family environment, self-reference, help and support (solidarity), work, peace and security, the truth, and other value orientation from the system of values of the previous society take a high place in the scale of values of the young.

So, there aren't only universal or traditional or modern values, but all of them.

Therefore, the earlier values are not completely discarded, the new ones aren't completely taken and haven't become common, it is a trend of questioning that is closer to the value orientations rather than the system of values.

References

Andevski, M. (1991). Razmatranje vrednosnih orijentacija u uslovima tehnoloških i drugih društvenih promena, *Zbornik Instituta za pedagogiju*, sveska 9, Novi Sad.

Group of authors. (2006). Publication of the project: "The system of values in young people of B&H after the war." Work, values and their sociological significance.

Kačavenda, N. (1983). Vrijednosne orijentacije odraslih i obrazovanje, *Prosvjetni pregled*, Beograd.

Ninković, B. G. (2004). Vrednosne orijentacije mladih i odraslih, Učiteljski fakultet, Jagodina.

Suzić N. (1998). Kako motivisati učenike, Zavod za udžbenike i nastavna sredstva Republike Srpske, Istočno Sarajevo.

Sociološki leksikon. (1982). Savremena administracija, Belgrade.