sciendo International Conference KNOWLEDGE-BASED ORGANIZATION
Vol. XXIX No 2 2023

SOCIAL VALUES, ATTITUDES AND GENDER STEREOTYPES IN ROMANIA

Raluca RUSU

"Nicolae Bălcescu" Land Forces Academy, Sibiu, Romania
rbalasoiu@yahoo.com

Abstract: *In this paper we will analyze the value orientation of Romanians, starting from the indicators from the Word Values Survey (is a global network of social scientists studying changing values and their impact on social and political life) which are based on the value change model of R. Inglehart (2005). The author configures a cultural map of the world, based on two axes: traditional values versus secular-rational values and survival values versus self-expression values. Starting from these axes, the author identifies the orientations of the predominant values of the societies. In Romania, the traditional and survival values are more specific, so the orientation towards the acceptance of different ones is weaker, including what concerns gender values. As a result, stereotypes, including gender stereotypes, still work.*

Keywords: traditional and secular values, survival and self-expression values, gender values, gender stereotypes

1. Theory of modernization and post-modernization of social values

Theories of social change bring to the fore three dimensions of value orientations: traditionalism, modernity and post-modernity. All involve a profound process of change in society as a whole and not just in the traditional paradigm. Thus, modernity infers industrialization, urbanization, a reduction in the role of the extended family, the organization of work on a federal scale, etc. And late modernity, not to say post-modernity, implies the predominance of the service sector, a reduction in the importance and balance of the individual's time, civic participation that takes precedence over political participation, increased tolerance of diversity, decisional autonomy, etc. The first and most powerful hope for change in basic values is the shift from materialist to post-materialist values. In this sense, R. Inglehart starts from the hypothesis that the change in value orientations starts from the twofold perspective. On the one hand, the **hypothesis of rarity**, which postulates the idea that material subsistence and physical security are closely linked to the survival of the human family and to the priority of materialistic goals. And in conditions of security, people place increased emphasis on values such as freedom of choice, autonomy, affiliation, etc. And on the other hand, the author speaks of the **socialization hypothesis**, namely that people's value orientations reflect the material conditions prevailing during their pre-adult times, and that these change as the young generations replace the old ones [1].

Based on this idea, Inglehart and Welzel (2005) constructed a theoretical and empirical model for analyzing value orientations, which led to the configuration of a global cultural architecture (see Figure 1). In constructing this map, the authors considered two dimensions of value variation and the values included in the

DOI: 10.2478/kbo-2023-0064
© 2023 Raluca Rusu. This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-Non Commercial-No Derivatives 3.0 License.

model, namely: on one axis there is, *traditional values versus secular-rational values* and on the second axis, *survival values and self-expression values*, both axes overlapping the opposition of the traditional-modern linear opposition. Thus, Inglehart announces a *quiet revolution* of the transition from modernism to postmodernism, i.e. from the first category of values to the second category of values [2].

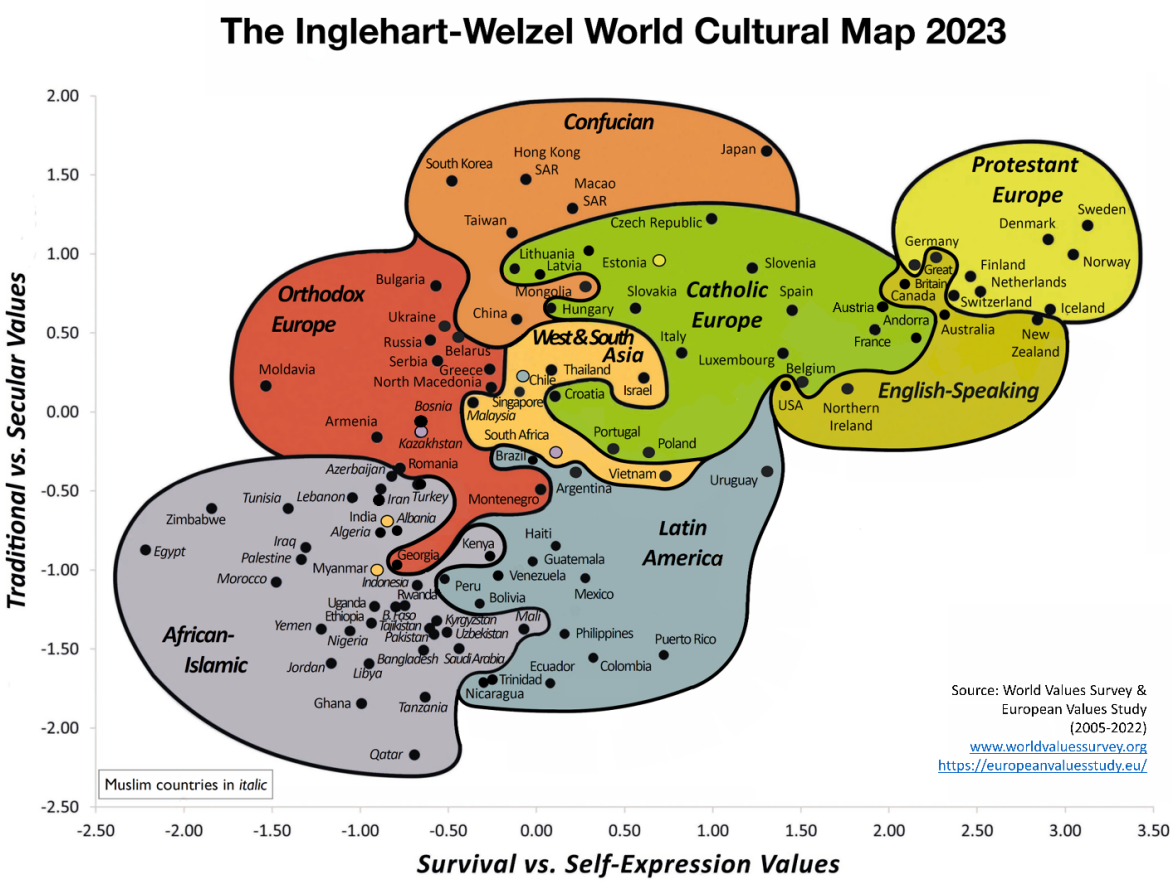


Figure 1: The map representing the distribution of countries on the two axes based on World Value Survey analyses [3]

Traditional values are those values that emphasize the importance of religion and authority. Also, people who embrace these values reject divorce, those who are different, abortion for example, but place a greater emphasis on work, family and authority. The authors state that societies with a high level of national pride, and therefore a nationalist profile, value the above aspects to a great extent. Societies where *secular values* predominate, with a strong emphasis on religion, normativism and hierarchy, and divorce and diversity are relatively low accepted. On the other hand, we have *survival values*, which emphasize the idea of physical and economic security and a tendency towards tolerance and trust. The opposite of these are the *values of self-expression*, which place great importance on environmental protection, hedonism, participation in political and economic decision-making, gender equality and civic-mindedness.

The global cultural map shows how societies are located as a result of the scores calculated on the basis of the indicators of the four dimensions identified by R. Inglehart in the World Values Survey [4].

As can be seen in Figure 1, our country would fall somewhere in the middle, between traditional and postmodern values. As you will see below, from the analysis of Romanians' responses in the WVS surveys, there are signs that the Romanian society is moving towards a

greater practice of post-materialist values, with more and more individuals expressing a desire for self-expression. Concern for self-fulfillment and the acceptance of diversity are not neglected aspects of the evolution of Romanian society.

Through a simplified analysis it can be stated that, as the standard of living rises from an industrial to a post-industrial society, the values of survival are specifically theoretical and the values of self-expression are specific to Western traditions. Ronald Inglehart argues that economic development and cultural change are dependent on, and often involve, credible patterns of evolution. Such change implies substantial alterations in the scale of preferences, reflected in behavior, attitudes, and in the structure of social norms and institutions. Thus, it is unlikely, for example, that a deeply religious person would become intolerant of homosexuals or of gender equality [5]. People from different countries see the world through different lenses and have different values. For example, in some countries, 95% of people say that *God is very important in their lives* and in others 3% do not consider this to be true. Also in some countries, 90% of the population believes that *when jobs are scarce, men have priority*, while in other countries only 8% of the population considers this to be the case [6]. Changing values is a long-term but continuous process. In any collectivity, small, critical communities develop new value. Some of these values disappear over time or are taken up by groups of individuals and are characteristic of subcultures. Others are gradually taken over by the majority of the community, becoming dominant, part of the core value of society. Given the nature of this process of perpetual change, there will be many groups with different values in the same collectivity, and diversity will increase over time as new values emerge in addition to the old ones. The "old" values may lose their dominant role in society, but there are still many similar groups and people who will share them.

2. Gender value in Romania

Further on, we will analyze the gender value orientation in Romania, starting from the indicators built on R. Inglehart's theoretical model and the empirical analysis of the World Values Survey. As we have seen, Romania is positioned between traditional and secular-rational values, and the second axis is based on survival values. Thus, the acceptance of diversity is more limited, including in terms of gender values. As a result, we will show that stereotypes, including gender stereotypes, still work in the choices, attitudes and behaviors of Romanians.

Thus, for the indicator related to the extent to which *Children suffer if their mother is working (has a job)*, it can be seen in Table 1 that the majority of individuals disagree with this statement, but according to age, surprisingly, we find that those aged up to 29 years consider that this happens to a greater extent than in older ages. Also those from rural areas, as expected, consider to a greater extent that the inclusion of women in the labor market can affect the child's development.

Table 1 Pre-school child suffers with working mother

	TOTAL	**AGE**			**SEX**		**URBAN-RURAL**	
		Up to 29	30-49	50 and more	Male	Female	Urban	Rural
Agree strongly	12.2%	13.9%	12.2%	11.7%	12.2	13.1%	9.5%	18.3%
Agree	26.3%	29.6%	29.6%	23.8%	26.3	24.0%	26.7%	26.2%

Disagree	38.9%	35.0%	38.6%	40.3%	38.9	38.0%	43.7%	28.8%
Strongly disagree	18.5%	17.1%	17.4%	20.8%	18.5	19.9%	17.5%	22.2%
Don't Know	3.9%	3.6%	2.4%	3.3%	3.9	2.1%	2.4%	4.0%
No answer	0.3%	0.8%	0.2%	0.1%	0.3	0.2%	0.1%	0.5%
N	1616				779	837	1043	574

When asked "*In general, are men more successful political leaders than women*"? (see Table 2), a majority of men disagree, although a still significant percentage, almost 40%, believe that men are more successful political leaders than women. Of those who consider this to be true, the majority are over 50, men and women from rural areas. On this indicator, one can see the more traditionalist orientation towards gender values.

Table 2 Men make better political leaders than women do

	TOTAL	**AGE**			**SEX**		**URBAN-RURAL**	
		Up to 29	30-49	50 and more	Male	Female	Urban	Rural
Agree strongly	13.3%	11.6%	11.2%	14.3%	15.8%	11.0%	10.3%	18.9%
Agree	25.6%	20.0%	26.3%	27.3%	27.4%	24.0%	26.3%	24.5%
Disagree	28.3%	32.4%	28.5%	27.3%	28.4%	28.3%	30.4%	24.7%
Strongly disagree	25.4%	26.7%	27.2%	24.0%	21.5%	29.0%	27.4%	21.8%
Don't Know	6.2%	8.1%	5.8%	6.0%	6.3%	6.1%	4.8%	8.7%
No answer	1.1%	1.2%	1.0%	1.2%	0.6%	1.5%	0.9%	1.4%
N	1616				779	837	1043	574

When asked whether *university studies are more important for a boy than for a girl*, as in the case of the previous questions, the majority answered strongly disagree (44.4%), which for the development of Romanian society is an advantage, given that education is one of the important tools in changing value orientations. To build the profile of those who consider university education more important for men than for women, it can be stated that they belong to all age groups, are more likely to be men and come from rural areas.

Table 3 University is more important for a boy than for a girl

	TOTAL	**AGE**			**SEX**		**URBAN-RURAL**	
		Up to 29	30-49	50 and more	Male	Female	Urban	Rural
Agree strongly	7.2%	4.9%	7.1%	7.7%	8.0%	6.6%	6.0%	9.5%
Agree	10.6%	12.9%	11.4%	9.4%	11.4%	9.9%	9.2%	13.1%

Disagree	31.0%	26.8%	28.7%	36.2%	34.0%	28.2%	34.8%	24.2%
Strongly disagree	44.4%	47.3%	46.3%	40.2%	38.2%	50.3%	45.1%	43.2%
Don't Know	5.9%	7.1%	5.4%	5.9%	7.5%	4.3%	4.2%	8.9%
No answer	0.9%	1.0%	1.2%	0.5%	0.9%	0.8%	0.7%	1.2%
N								

In terms of the "*Men make better business executives than women do*!" indicator, the percentage of respondents who disagree with this indicator is lower compared to previous indicators. Younger people take this to be true - probably the active labor force - also in this category there are more men than women residing in rural areas.

Table 4 Men make better business executives than women do

	TOTAL	**AGE**			**SEX**		**URBAN-RURAL**	
		Up to 29	30-49	50 and more	Male	Female	Urban	Rural
Agree strongly	11.2%	12.1%	9.7%	11.0%	13.9%	8.7%	8.7%	15.7%
Agree	23.9%	18.8%	24.5%	25.6%	28.1%	19.9%	24.4%	22.8%
Disagree	26.7%	29.0%	24.8%	28.0%	28.0%	25.5%	28.2%	24.3%
Strongly disagree	32.0%	33.3%	36.1%	28.3%	24.6%	38.9%	33.7%	29.0 %
Don't Know	5.4%	6.4%	4.0%	6.2%	4.8%	5.9%	4.1%	7.6%
No answer	0.8%	0.5%	0.9%	0.9%	0.6%	1.0%	0.8%	0.8%
N								

As illustrated in Table 5, under the statement: *When there are fewer jobs, men should have a greater right to a job than women*, a higher percentage than in previous cases agree with this statement. Of these, more are men, but it is still men who disagree with the statement.

Table 5. Jobs scare: Men should have more right to a job than women

	TOTAL	**AGE**			**SEX**		**URBAN-RURAL**	
		Up to 29	30-49	50 and more	Male	Female	Urban	Rural
Agree strongly	20.7	17.6	19.1	23.0	22.5	19.0	17.6	26.4
Agree	22.1	18.4	24.0	22.2	23.7	20.6	23.9	18.8
Disagree	23.9	26.8	21.4	25.0	25.0	22.9	24.9	22.1
Neither agree nor disagree	13.3	13.3	14.3	12.5	11.8	14.7	13.9	12.3
Strongly disagree	17.2	18.8	18.8	15.0	13.5	20.7	17.6	16.5
Don't Know	2.6	4.3	2.3	2.2	3.2	1.9	2.2	3.2

No answer	0.3	0.8	0.2	0.1	0.3	0.3	-	0.7
N								

There are still some questions in wave 7 of the WVS related to the size of gender gaps, but they were not included in the questionnaire addressed to Romania, such as: *If a woman earns more than a man, this creates problems*; *Having children is a duty to society* etc. Probably if we had the right answers to these questions, we would be able to build a more accurate picture of the gender values in Romania, values that do or do not lead to gender stereotyping.

It seems that in Romania, too, both of the processes that R. Inglehart mentions in the change of values took place, namely: the intergenerational replacement of the population and the diffusion of values. Intergenerational change seems to play a dominant role in the shift from materialist to post-materialist values, but a process of diffusion of values also seems to take place at the same time. Certain cohorts not only do not become more materialistic as they get older, but move even more towards post-materialism with the passage of time. It is no longer socially acceptable for people to be prejudiced against the opposite gender, but older people from immigrant communities still oppose gender equality. Certainly, formal and non-formal education in Romanian society and mass communication must play an important role in transforming attitudes towards gender equality.

3. Conclusions

In short, values are the natural, inner realities of individuals, but socially determined, relatively stable in time, which direct attitudes, behaviors and beliefs. They constitute consistent systems of values, supporting each other and determining the choices people make at any given time. It determines the way society is structured, the way the family is formed and organized, social relations, relations within organizations, the functioning of institutions.

How people relate to gender values and how they structure gender stereotypes is a complex process that involves the value orientation of the whole of society - as we have seen in the positioning of the global cultural map and in political and economic aspects. It is clear that the predominant values are shaped by the entire historical landscape.

Change is and has been determined by major structural changes in societies, involving post-industrialism, post-Fordism, demographic ageing, technical progress, increasing breadth and access to education and schooling, increasing economic efficiency, etc. But all these processes of change are expected to continue, including in the sphere of values, with postmodernity and late modernity being little more than an "end of history". This opens the door to another question, one that is just as fascinating in the study of values: What will the future bring? What values are shared by the future generations?

References List

[1] Inglehart R. The Silent Revolution: Changing Values and Political Styles Among Western Publics, Princetton Legacy Library, 2015.

[2] Inglehart R. & Welzel C. Modernization, Cultural Change and Democracy: The Human Development Sequence. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005.

[3] http://www.worldvaluessurvey.org/.

[4] The World Values Survey (www.worldvaluessurvey.org) is a global network of social scientists studying changing values and their impact on social and political life, led by an international team of scholars. The WVS is the largest non-commercial, cross-national, time series investigation of human beliefs and values ever executed, currently including interviews with almost 400,000 respondents.
[5] Rokeach M. The nature of human values, New York: Free Press, 1973.
[6] Inglehart R. Evoluția culturală, Editura Școala Ardelenă, Cluj-Napoca 2019.