

## Youth values and value changes from cultural and transnational perspectives

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**Abstract** – The understanding of values is necessary in the multi-cultural world. In this article we study some aspects of the significance of values in cross-cultural as well as in national context in youth life: what is meant by values; where they origin; what are the values of young people today; what are adolescents' attitudes towards diversity and co-existence of different ethnic groups in the globalizing world. We discuss the interconnection between values and action, and why young people need space and tools for developing their value awareness and for their search of meaning in the process of identity formation. With a large youth survey data example from nine countries, we pay attention to the centrality of civic and diversity values when examining adolescents' attitudes towards co-existence of different minorities, like immigrants. The essential question seems to be how the two different orientations, integration (of immigrants) or strong nationalism advocacy, are balanced in the values and attitudes of the adolescents.

**Keywords:** youth, values, citizenship, identity, diversity, ethnic minorities, integration, nationalism

## Introduction

Values are a vital element in all cultures and value awareness can be seen as an essential part of intercultural competence. The meaning of values is also very central for individual identity and its formation during youth. One of the most important general goals in today's world universally is the search for peace and security, combined with general well-being. The reality is unfortunately the opposite for many and well-being is not equally distributed. Thus the questions of what could bring equity between people and different cultural groups, freedom yet sufficient order against chaos, are increasingly strident.

Values may be the essential area where to seek answers from cultural and transnational perspective. Values are strongly interconnected with both thinking and emotions and form a basis of action, both good and bad. They can even be traced as the background of some dramatic recent tragedies like the school shootings.

The value discourse is necessary in the multicultural world. One crucial question is how to solve the huge problems we face in societies and globally. Another crucial question is individual: how each of us should live, how to orientate ourselves in life, how can we manage our life and on which basis we can build our world view. Values are supposed to give some answers to these kinds of questions. In the multicultural world we also need reflection on how we should orient ourselves towards diversity and differences. It is a question touching us globally but more and more also locally and individually when people, ideas, policies, practices, etc travel from one place to another faster and faster.

The building blocks for values in youth are, for instance, our ideas about us and about others and the different sociocultural growth environments in which we act and live. Important growth and learning environments for identity and value socialization are for example family, friends, peer group, studying or workplace, hobby and leisure time communities and other kind of local activity communities.

In changing and globalizing society capabilities to understand and cope with diversified social and cultural reality and construct one's own identity and value related world view are pivotal, especially for young people.

Adolescents are negotiating complex "identities" as they manage these challenges (Thomson, 2007). The identity work of postmodern human being is in principle a versatile, lifelong developmental task. Although traditional conceptions on identity and human development emphasize youth as being the central period for the identity work (for instance Erikson, 1968), identity is necessarily never ready or definitive. It is developing and changing throughout the whole human life cycle. Everyone is constantly affected by different world views and ideologies. A lack of value-self-awareness leads to adoption of prevalent values, instead of intentional and aware value formation. Without conscious choices we tend to adopt the common opinion, to go with the group.

In the globalizing world, young people are seeking their identities and values within a jungle of cultural approaches, ideologies and philosophies. To make sense of who they are and what they want, they need tools and support for understanding. In this article we aim to bring forth some of the relevant questions related to youth values and especially values towards diversity and co-existence of different ethnic groups and review some trials and comparative data sets on structuring the settings.

A discussion on values will easily lead to confusion, misunderstandings and misleading conclusions simply because of the variety of meanings given to the concept of value. For this same reason the research and studies made on youth values, value changes and needs of value re-assessments are difficult and often impossible to use for significant comparisons. Therefore we start our article by an attempt to clarify the different contents given to the concept. A major dividing line seems to be the question whether there are absolutes which provide a final and ultimate standard or whether all values are seen

relative and equal in their “worth”. Growing ability to recognise these different basic approaches significantly helps young people, and others, to make sense of various values, ideologies and world views.

## About values and value changes in multicultural world

### What is meant by a value?

It can be said that values are about our thinking and our thinking is about our values. So the origin of values is hard to reach as such. Thinking is the foundation to all our action, the decisions we make both individually and collectively and what directions we choose. Values tell something about the big questions: who we are; where do we come from; where are we going to; how can we define our identity; what do we want to become; what do we think about others or diversity? And finally: what gives the basic meaning to our lives?

Professor Shalom Schwartz, one of the most well-known researchers of values at present, defines values as “desirable, transsituational goals, varying in importance, that serve as guiding principles in people’s lives” (Schwartz, 1994). According to him, there is widespread agreement in the literature regarding five features of the conceptual definition of values: A value is (1) belief (2) pertaining to desirable states of modes of conduct, that (3) transcends specific situations, (4) guides selections or evaluation of behaviour, people, and events, and (5) is ordered by importance relative to other values to form a system of value priorities (Schwartz, 1992; Schwartz & Bilsky, 1987).

Both in classical philosophy and religion, the concept used instead of values was a “virtue”. For Aristotle the main virtues were wisdom, justice, temperance and courage, associated with prudence, magnanimity, liberality and gentleness. Then Christian virtues faith, hope and love, as well as truth, righteousness and justice, were emphasised. Yet secular philosophers also insisted upon the importance of virtues

not only for the good life of individuals but for the well-being of society and the state (Himmelfarb, 1995). According to Himmelfarb the concept “value” in its present sense comes from 1880s as Friedrich Nietzsche began to speak of “values” instead of “virtues”, connoting the moral beliefs and attitudes of a society. *“His ‘transvaluation of values’ was to be the final, ultimate revolution, a revolution against both classical virtues and the Judaic-Christian ones. The ‘death of God’ would mean the death of morality and the death of truth – above all the truth of any morality. There would be no good and evil, no virtue and vice. There would be only values.”* (Ibid.)

“Values” brought with it the assumptions that all moral ideas are subjective and relative, that they are mere customs and conventions, that they have a purely instrumental, utilitarian purpose, and that they are peculiar to specific individuals and societies. And, as Himmelfarb continues, in the current intellectual climate, to specific classes, races and sexes (Himmelfarb, 1995). Global ethics can be one ground for transnational value discussion.

We may ask, is there some basis for universal values that would be considered more or less objective? The Institute of Global Ethics states: *“After more than a decade of doing research across the globe, we have discovered that while different people use different words to voice their values, the concepts nearly always can be distilled into a set of five or six shared values with a common subset: compassion, fairness, honesty, respect, and responsibility”.* (Institute of Global Ethics, 2007)

One of the main differences in the understanding of values is whether by values one is referring to mere preferences, beliefs and attitudes or is there a moral assessment included. Rokeach (1973, 6-7) suggests three categories of values: existential beliefs, which determine whether something is right or wrong; evaluative beliefs which determine whether something is good or bad; and beliefs which determine whether or not a certain activity is acceptable. The current definitions in general are far more relativistic: values are seen as mainly as subjective preferences.

Already Rokeach made lists of values which were supposed to be comparable and measurable so as to put them into order of importance. The universal value theory of Schwartz (1992; 1994) continued on this, in the first hand socio-psychological – not philosophical – understanding of values as personally or socially desirable subjective goals. It does not take a stand concerning good or bad, right and wrong. Instead, the choice of values presented in the dimensional categories is referenced like the values being equal.

Value subjectivism (in practise synonymous to value relativism) is a view, which sees values as mere subjective beliefs, preferences or attitudes. This seems a very remarkable trend in postmodern way of thinking and reflexive identity (see more Giddens, 1991; Beck, 1992). Absolute standards or norms have diminished in this kind of thinking. Nothing seems to be objectively and universally valuable.

An individual or a community decide only in their minds what is valuable. Value subjectivism makes a clear difference between value arguments and fact arguments. Value arguments cannot be true or untrue, right or wrong. They are matters of taste, which people may disagree without getting into clash with each other.

Values are also related to the meaning of life. The uncertainty of today's world, as not giving sure prospects of decent jobs, peace and place in the society for adolescents, leaves many of them without hope and perspective. This situation is common even among the "healthy" population and especially obvious for youngsters with long term difficulties.

There is a specific need to support young people to gain trust for life and find meaning (Lindh, Gashi & Hämäläinen, 2005). Viktor Frankl pointed out for years the problems of young people in integrating into society and the danger of mass neurosis by hopelessness and emptiness. Frankl says that the man's search for meaning is a primary motivation of our existence and one that gives us a reason for living in spite of life's difficulties. The primary message is: *"You have right and it is your responsibility to search for purpose in your life, in work, in human relationships and in values."* (Frankl, 1963; 1975).

## Value changes concerning world views and multiculturalism

Values can be defined in reference to world views. Some world views are based on absolutes existing, like Judaism, Christianity (excluding the liberal lines) and Islam, some are not, like the eastern religions, secular Humanism, New Age and all materialistic world views. A great clash can be expected between world views that do have absolutes and those that do not.

In our multicultural world where intercultural communication has quickly increased, we need to seek answers to understand these clashes. Samuel Huntington, in his analysis (1996), presents that the biggest sources of conflict are mainly due to cultural differences. Thus, Western nations will lose predominance if they fail to recognize the irreconcilable cultural tensions.

Huntington (*ibid.*) identifies seven, or possibly eight, major civilizations: Western, Latin American, Islamic, Sinic (Chinese), Hindu, Orthodox, Japanese and the African. According to Huntington (*ibid.*) international order based on civilizations is the best safeguard against war and conflict and for peace. Huntington's analysis has faced criticism in many aspects; however, it offers one vehicle for understanding main cultural world view differences and tensions.

On the other extreme, Multiculturalism is a controversial concept used in numerous different ways. Enthusiastic multiculturalism, or pluralism, aiming towards open tolerance and integration, has become a very popular and prevalent view associated to civic and diversity values in multicultural world, especially in many western societies.

Swedish social anthropologist Ulf Hannerz (2003) criticises this approach in its very ideological form, sometimes seen leading to a "multicultural inferno", as not being able to give a genuine alternative to the "cultural fundamentalism" of Huntington. The latter is seen as a static view with emphasis on conflict and leading to xenophobia. The opposite, uncritical multiculturalism, on the other hand denies

real existing differences and the needs of changes in the society and in individuals. Hannerz (ibid.) sees culture rather as a process and far more complex in its different dimensions and implications. Derived from his process view of cultures, Hannerz (ibid.) points out the free choice of an individual to have impact on, to change or even reject his culture as a part of “a right to one’s own culture”.

The previous approach, distinct civilizations with their own cultures clashing towards outside world (strong nationalism), obviously seeks to answer the question of maintaining order even if the cost would sometimes be high. The idealized, strong multiculturalism approach is based on an ideology of freedom and tolerance as the main value. In both extremes, the end result may lead to either chaos or the most powerful groups finally taking dominance.

To reach balance, sound consideration of justice, compassion and truth need to be added to mere tolerance. There is always some tension between undefined tolerance (tolerance as the highest value) and human rights, as well as there is tension between equality and respect of diversity. Yet without tolerance we would end up with racism which may be seen as one of the greatest tragedies of the globalization. Learning to see the world from another person’s point of view and to build confidence are basic elements in cultural competence.

Racism is an increasing problem among adolescents and a most relevant question connected with youth value changes in this multicultural world. Not only are childhood and adolescence crucial phases in developing of an individual’s thinking but also some of the most racist groups may be found among youngsters. This is the case in Finland.

According to national studies the most reserved attitudes towards ethnic minorities were found among boys aged between 15 and 17 and elderly pensioners (Ihmisoikeusliitto/ Finnish League for Human Rights, 2005). On the other hand, this may well be the case with young people who never even had any contact with a foreigner or a person representing a group considered “different”. Just one personal contact



may change the thinking quickly (Gashi & Lindh, 2004). It would be misleading to consider cultures and ethnic groups as something like unchanging, homogenous entities.

The dividing lines of “otherness” do not go between ethnic groups, nationalities, cultures or civilizations but also within one’s own society, culture and group which might have influences for identity formation in individual or collective level. Research as well as practise has shown that emotions play a most vital role in reducing intergroup tensions (e.g. Pettigrew and Tropp, 2000) and thus also racism.

Emotional literacy is shown to be not only an individual quality but as well social (Park, 2003). Anxiety caused by social tensions and other difficult emotions, can be understood & become transformed into productive energy. Empathy and recognition of one’s own emotions can be seen interconnected with values, such as sense of justice. There can be no trust without integrity.

All religions and ideologies have so far failed to uproot racism. Yet in our history we have seen some successes in efforts towards more equality and freedom. In the Northern countries we have been accustomed to expect certain civic rights, not only equality but also security for all citizens, though many changes, not all of them good, and more polarization have taken place in a few recent years.

In the Northern countries, as in the Western world generally, legislation and the system of justice have been based for centuries on the Judeo-Christian foundation, deriving their concepts of right and wrong from an absolute standard outside human arguments, a universal basis for equality in front of law. In spite of race, gender, wealth and other qualities all people have been seen created with unique individual worth.

That is, despite of anyone’s personal beliefs or religion, people from whatever cultural or ethnic background or social status have been supposed to be treated indiscriminately with equal respect and dignity. Reciprocally they are expected to treat others with justice, mercy and truth, not raising oneself above others.

The practise is not always that beautiful, as there is freedom of choice for every individual, but there are standards however. The “Golden Rule” of “doing to others what you would have them to do to you” is of universal heritage, recognized in several major religions and cultures, a basic principle which simply means “treat others as you would like to be treated.” It is an essential basis for the modern concept of human rights and for global ethics.

A specific challenge is raised by the changing economic, social and psychological atmospheres of our societies. As security and traditions are perceived to be threatened on many levels, a question is how young people are able to find a basis for orientation and identity formation. Obviously we are on a verge of a new era as for the single value of economic determinism by the rapid economical change worldwide, currently accelerated. Determinism, as biological reductionism, sees no real freedom of choice for human being; everything is determined by some outside factor like in a machine. It may leave young people very frustrated, lacking any sense of meaning and purpose or reason to try influence the world around, even issues in their own life.

The term “civic” refers to social and moral responsibility, community involvement and political literacy (see Wray & Flanagan, 2009; The Active Learning Active Citizenship project, 2009). Social and moral values like democracy, equity and justice are often taken for the goals of good “citizenship” and “civic education” (Galston, 2001). “Diversity” in civic education refers to the differentiation like process: separation of me or us from others and the potential to overcome these cultural and collective boundaries. We try to show further that civic and diversity values, especially social and moral responsibility values, are essential when examining adolescents’ attitudes towards co-existence of different minorities, like immigrants.

Adolescents’ attitudes towards cultural changes and minorities have usually been tried to understand in two different ways. The approach which emphasizes the readiness for change considers that the young people usually are distinct from the chains of cultural

traditions and the change in the world will become possible through this liberality of the adolescents, in particular (see Ziehe, 1991). This might be favorable for cultural integration approaches. According to the second viewpoint the adolescents' attitudes could be understood in the light of the present day cultural atmosphere. In that case the young people will react for example to different ethnic groups with the similar kinds of patterns which others, like conservative elderly people, use when resisting the change. The latter atmosphere might be favorable for strong nationalism and discrimination like approaches.

### Changing youth values and identities

Some youth studies have shown a strong polarisation phenomenon concerning well-being of youngsters: some are doing quite well in their life while others are in a danger of having different kind of social problems and in a risk of exclusion (Robb, 2007; Thomson, 2007b). This has consequences in how young people today orient to value and world view questions. Finland is an example of a Western country where the structural changes from a rural society into urban, industrial society took place later than in most European countries. Finland used to be considered one of the safest societies of the world, well-known for its unique combination of a high-tech information society and a welfare state, much praised by sociologist Manuel Castells (Castells & Himanen, 2002).

The situation has changed radically since and we have witnessed two tragedies of school shooting within the two last years 2007-08. The first one took place at Jokela on 7 November 2007. Nine people died. The perpetrator of the massacre made his philosophy wide open in YouTube and in his web journal. He described himself as “anti-social social Darwinist”, “godlike atheist”, “cynical existentialist” and “antihuman humanist”. As his heroes he mentioned among others

Friedrich Nietzsche, Charles Darwin, Adolf Hitler and Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel. He said that hatred was the only thing he loved in this life. (Documents on his internet media package and videos listed in Wikipedia 2009.)

Most people would say that the values and deeds of the shooter were sick, bad and wrong. In the public discussion many possible reasons for these crimes have been raised, such as mental problems, media violence, loneliness and too theoretical and heavy school curricula. The philosophical thinking alone can be seen sufficient to explain the deeds: Why live, if there is no purpose for man, no God, no meaning. Why not kill and die if there is no truth, no right and wrong, no good and bad but whatever choice of values is equal? Young people are often black-and-white and they may act upon their philosophy with crystal clear consistence.

One might ask aren't there justifications for a thorough re-evaluation of our value systems as well as educational goals and methods. Do our school systems give space and material for assessment of different values and world views and for the identity building of the youngsters? Appleyard (1992; 2004) criticises the liberal "scientific world view" of irresponsible youth education: *"Tolerance becomes apathy because tolerance in itself does not logically represent a positive virtue or goal... The fact that the democracies constantly seem to have a crisis in their schools is important – it is a symptom of crucial uncertainty about what there is to teach, about whether there is anything to teach. At the heart of this spiritual problem lies the lack of a sense of self. Just as scientific liberalism holds back from the moral or the transcendent, so it also holds back from providing the individual with an awareness of his place in the world."*

There are different levels and layers in learning and development towards citizenship in multicultural world which can be examined with the help of collective identity formation. Göran Therborn (1995, pp. 229-232) has presented a useful classification where three phases can be identified in identity formation of communities: differentiation,

self-reference (or self-image) formation and recognition of others. Differentiation means separation of the potential me or us from others. This is achieved through two aspects, namely experience of an other and discovery of a self. Differentiation is a social construction of a boundary. In modern societies this could be seen as the outcome of competition of possible demarcations. Therborn (ibid.) makes a remark that this is also a negotiation of the issue of community (group) or individuals aggregating.

Differentiation is driven by the growth of internal resources through participation in communities of concrete life-world, or of a historical potential community; a growth process of internal resources becoming more equal, more resourceful, and more autonomous. Self-reference formation is identification with something after an awareness of separateness. Therborn (ibid.) argues that self-reference or -image may be constructed in the potential community through a common competence or task like speaking same language or having particular education or holding certain common values or insights – Christian, Muslim, socialist, liberal, humanist or other. Identities of common origin or ancestry have proved to be most powerful in history. So Therborn (ibid.) argues further that collective identities based on ideologies of inclusion/exclusion are more antagonistic than identities deriving from positional differentiations like division of labour or organizational hierarchies. The third one, recognition of others, refers to the critical moment that collective identity is being acknowledged and recognised by others. Recognition by others may also precede differentiation. Therborn (ibid.) claims that discriminatory recognition may provide the impulse for stronger collective identity.

Anti-Semitism and the defeats of universalist projects have aroused the Zionism movement and other forms of Jewish ethnic identities, for instance. The process of recognition may have some power and status related questions as well. In the modern theory of professions, for instance, identity of a particular category of people as the only legitimate possessors of a certain kind of knowledge is taken

as crucial. So politics of recognition has some significance in identity formation. On the basis of collective identity conceptions Therborn (ibid.) states that otherness has a certain kind of primary nature in relation to sameness. This distinction of others shapes identities and values of individuals strongly. Adolescent's values and world views are formed in the experiences they have with different cultural groups and people. This shapes their conceptions of collectives and groups, what they don't want to be, and where they want to belong to.

In a changing world where common and collective values are fragmented the identity formation at the individual level is very reflexive. This also brings its own special tone to the discussion of the universalness of values. The reflexive self is promoted by Giddens (1991) and Beck (1992) as a model of postmodern universal self. Beck (ibid.) makes a notion that although individuals are unable to escape structural forces in societies in general, they can decide on which forces to act and which ones to ignore. This does not create a free individual; rather, it creates individuals who live out, biographically, the complexity and diversity of the social relations which surround them.

Beck (ibid.) argues that self is a biographical production and it is a development of a new universal 'life politics' where individuals search to create a coherent biography in a fractured world. Self becomes a project on which to work in order to produce some sense of coherence. Looking at biographies of youth in late modernity more closely gives a picture of different kinds of paths in identity formation: "normal" or many alternative paths (Thomson, 2007a). Alternative paths and 'life projects' might mean atypical choices of life-style, taste, outlook, hobbies, friends or careers in youth.

## Civic and diversity values in a core of citizenship in a multicultural world

How civic and diversity values represent our ideas and thoughts about citizenship (or identity) in a globalizing, multicultural world? It can be said that young people are like "a mirror of their societies"; if you look at what youngsters today think and how they live it also tells something about the present change and attitudes towards diversity of civic questions. Earlier peoples' world views can be seen based on traditions and local collectivity while youth today represent a different, individualized generation which is actively creating different kind of world views for themselves. Harinen (2005) makes a notion that young people today will meet and communicate with other cultures through their whole life cycle, unlike the elderly people, who are just learning the attitudes and ways of action in the more multicultural environment. The multicultural life-world in youth does not only mean internationality, frontier crossings, travelling and hybrid identities but fields of new conflicts, uncertainties and tensions also.

Wray and Flanagan (2009) state that when linking values to civic (and identity) development a concept of social contract seems to be highly relevant. The social contract refers to the way that people perceive their relationship to society; how for instance youngsters view the world and others in it. It means the relationship of how personal identity and views connect to communal and societal collective identities and views. Wray and Flanagan (*ibid.*) deliberate to what extent do young people feel a sense of allegiance, and how do they conceive of the obligations of governments or individuals (in local communities) to each other. Central to the concept of the social contract are feelings of reciprocity and the ties that bind people together and how boundaries between different communities and ethnic groups might be constructed.

For present day youth the 'identity politics' between similarness and otherness seem to be very important. Both for youngsters of

majority and ethnic minorities such as immigrants cross-culturality belongs in one way or another to the present day life-world. This determines what life is in or outside school in the textures of social networks and youth cultures. (Harinen, 2005) Civic and diversity values in this connection can be understood as what young people think on different ethnic groups and their co-existence, what are young people's attitudes towards difference in general, what are their attitudes towards racism and discrimination in particular, and how do youngsters value equity and equal opportunities for different minorities or cultural groups.

When comparing to Schwartz's value scale on self-transcendence versus self-enhancement, this dimension of values seems to reflect the extent to which an individual endorses public interest or just self interest, respectively, the personal hierarchy of value preferences (Wray & Flanagan, 2009). Valuing self-transcendence is convergent with the appreciation of benevolence and cooperation with others, while valuing self-enhancement suggests a competitive view towards others and other groups (*ibid.*). Schwartz (1994; 2007) has demonstrated that these are opposing value orientations and these seem to connect on the social contract of diversity and differentiation of others.

Ethnicity often serves as a vehicle for mechanisms of social inclusion or exclusion and is interwoven with the sociocultural structures where people live. It is worth noticing that in overall conceptions on multiculturalism may have changed during the last decades. In 1970s and 1980s multiculturalists argued that all cultures ought to be treated equally and ethnic minorities supported. In their view, ethnic minorities will only give their contribution to the society on the basis of strong and confident minority cultures, appreciated and promoted by the nation states. For multiculturalists, the integration of immigrants was thus achieved by double socialisation: they first need to be socialised in their own cultures before they could feel part of the receiving society (see Janmaat, 2008).



This kind of conception on multiculturalism was gradually fading towards the close of the millennium. Increasingly it was believed that immigrant cultures easily isolated and marginalised ethnic minorities rather than encouraged their integration in society. One could call interculturalism as an approach that supports the incorporation and democratic participation of migrant groups in the wider society (Gundara, 2000; Janmaat, 2008). Interculturalist mindset is also trying to avoid the nation-centered bias of world view (like patriotism and self-enhancement).

Janmaat (2008) finds in his survey data comparison between five West European countries (Belgium, England, Germany, Sweden, Switzerland) that migrant youth generally are almost as supportive of civic values as the ethnic majority. However, they do not adopt the civic values of patriotism, institutional trust and gender equality to the same extent as the dominant majority group. In addition, he argues further that differences between the two groups on gender equality and to some degree also on institutional trust disappear when social background variables are controlled for.

This leads to the conclusion that differences between the groups in the learning of civic values depend more on social differences than cultural ones. Migrant cultures as such are not solely obstructing the adoption of these values. Civic values are likely to be more common in Western cultures than in migrant cultures of other origins. It is often assumed that ethnic minorities may have an underdeveloped civic consciousness. However, Janmaat (*ibid.*) makes a further conclusion based on the survey findings that ethnic minority adolescents are likely to benefit more from civic education in schools than the majority group.

## International comparison of youth civic and diversity values

### Whose voice is heard?

Several value related researches on youth values and diversity issues in multicultural world have been conducted during the last decade (for instance concerning Finland and near regions Jasinskaja-Lahti, 2000; Jasinskaja-Lahti & Liebkind, 2001; Helve, 2005; Iskanius, 2006). Within transnational comparative research frameworks have been examined, for instance, the integration of immigrants, family background influences, adaptation in schooling, and further ethnic and language identity issues.

A frequently used starting point has been the concept and theory of acculturation (see Berry 1990; 1997; see also Korhonen in this volume) which refers to the intercourse between people of diverse cultural backgrounds and how they act in contacts with each others, for example when a group of Russian-speaking young people moves to Finland (see Jasinskaja-Lahti, 2000). Acculturation is understood as a two-way process in the situations of cultural intercourse which changes both groups which participate in it (Berry, 1990). The ethnic identity and diversity are understood as the pith of the acculturation which determines other phenomena related to the processes around acculturation. The ethnic identity is a subjective process, social contract, which strength varies individually, which can be individually chosen and which significance for the person should be taken into consideration. (Jasinskaja-Lahti, 2000.)

According to Berry (1990; 1997; see also Korhonen in this volume) the process of acculturation may have four different kinds of results from the point of view of immigrants (or other minority): integration, assimilation, separation, or marginalization. Integration means that immigrants want to maintain good contacts with majority and society, but they respect and cherish also their own ethnic cultural backgrounds and traditions. Assimilation means an adaptation to the

life style and culture of dominant population where origins of own ethnic roots gradually disappear. Separation in turn means much stronger orientation into own ethnic cultural roots and separation from dominant population and their cultural influences, while marginalization means separation from both: own ethnic roots and majority dominant population influences.

Youth research has lately concentrated much on examining minority's voice. It might be worthwhile to look also majority youth values and opinions concerning acculturation of ethnic minorities and diversity. According to John Berry's (1990; 1997) acculturation model integration of immigrants and positive attitudes towards diversity among the majority population assume a willingness to establish relationships with minority cultures.

Appreciation towards their language and particularity is needed as well, and readiness to accept equal chances for minorities to participate into different areas of societal life (in education, work, leisure time activities, health care, political parties, civic associations and others).

The following youth civic and diversity value comparison example is based on an empirical data set source: the IEA Civic Education Study Data 1999–2000 and nationally representative samples of 14–19-year old students in 28 countries. IEA is an International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement and this study has been the largest effort ever to study civic education internationally among adolescents.

The broad survey instrument originally consisted of five types of items measuring the students' knowledge of fundamental principles of democracy; their skills in interpreting political communication; their concepts of democracy and citizenship; their attitudes related to trust in institutions, their nation, opportunities for immigrants, the political rights of women; and their expectations for future participation in civic-related activities. The sample for the comparison here is taken from 9 countries participating in the original IEA Civic Education

survey including Finland, Denmark, England, Switzerland, Greece, Russian, Hungary, United States, and Hong Kong.

## Majority youth values concerning nationalism versus integration of ethnic minorities

In the IEA Civic Education data set there are some questions which are useful in this connection for more detailed inspection of respondents' values and attitudes concerning equal chances of different minorities and cultural groups or, on the other end, a stronger national pride and identification.

One can think that very strong national pride and patriotism form in the opinions of majority adolescents a stronger negative counterforce and antithesis towards cultural variety and diversity. For example Janmaat (2008) discusses that the positive attitudes of majority toward one's nation are feeding ideas of a uniform, strong and monolithic culture where it is difficult for different minorities and ethnic groups to define their positions. The differentiation (collectively) from others is emphasized in this orientation, and as an acculturation attitude this produces easily pressures for assimilation, separation or even marginalization to the ones representing immigrant and minority groups.

As an alternative for strong nationalism (and patriotism) one can consider diversity and equity oriented attitudes which are closely connected to integration endorsement as presented earlier. In the basic values and acceptance of diversity the cultural differences and co-existence of diverse ethnic groups are understood to be normal, and adolescents are more compliant to accept equal possibilities for different groups, for instance supporting the right for preserving minority language and cultural particularity. Some earlier studies have suggested strong connections between basic values supporting

integration and good adaptation of immigrants in their host country (Snauwaert et al., 2003). Often this has also proved to be the main acculturation choice favored by the majority population.

When examining the value atmosphere between nationalism and integration of immigrants, two sum variables were constructed for integration and nationalism scales. Firstly, appropriate questions from IEA Civic Education instrument were chosen for closer review and with Principal Component analysis such components (factors) were searched for which seemed to best describe integration orientation and on the other hand nationalism orientation. The principal component analysis produced a neat two factor solution in one country sample (Finland) which could be then applied to the whole nine country sample in this comparison. Questions with best factor loadings were chosen into these two scales. Cronbach alfa reliability rank for the integration orientation scale was 0,867 and for the nationalism orientation 0,573. So these two scales appeared to be sufficient for transnational comparison.

*Integration orientation* included questions concerning respondents' attitudes towards immigrants and ethnic minorities and their rights:

1. Have the same rights than everyone else
  2. Have the opportunity to vote
  3. To keep their own customs and lifestyle
  4. Have opportunities to keep up their own language
  5. Teach students to respect ethnic members
  6. Ethnic groups should have equal chances for education
  7. Ethnic groups should be encouraged
  8. Forbidden to engage in political activities (inversely related to the other items)
- (strongly disagree – disagree – agree – strongly agree)

In transnational comparison this integration orientation scale shows some interesting emphasis between disagreement, agreement and strong agreement (see Table 1). These differences between countries are also statistically very significant ( $p = 0.000$ ) in Pearson Chi-Square test. Integration was expected to be the major acculturation attitude among majority youngsters but strong, uncharged agreement was not as common anywhere as mid-level agreement. However, the IEA Civic Education studies have demonstrated that the agreement of integration grows and conceptions on democracy are diversifying at older age groups of young people (Amadeo et al., 2002; Husfeldt & Nikolova, 2003). United States (30,4 %), Greece (28,6%), Hong Kong (27,1%), England (22,4 %) and Finland (22,0 %) where the highest in “strong agreement” attitudes. United States as a melting pot of different cultures and as a target country of immigrant floods, Hong Kong as a cross-road of Asian and Western cultures, and Greece as a country strongly dependent on tourism and travelling seem to differ from others in their more favorable attitudes for integration of immigrants.

On the other edge were those two countries where “disagreement” (strongly disagree + disagree) attitudes raised over 20 % level: Switzerland (26,5 %) and Denmark (21,6 %). Large majority of the respondents in different countries chose the mid-level agreement alternative. This large majority respondent group might probably be the group willing to move in their opinions and valuations towards either stronger agreement or disagreement depending on situation. This is better to keep in mind when evaluating changing conditions and effects of economic, politic and social trends in the circumstances of globalization.

This might be true in different countries and in their youngsters' valuations towards ethnic minorities and diversity. Longitudinal studies have shown that youth values and identities might change according to global or local changes (see more Helve, 2005). Youth is the most important period of searching identity in human life-cycle (Eriksson 1968) so young people are exposed to influences.

**Table 1.** Crosstabulation of adolescents' integration orientation in chosen countries.

INTEGRATION ORIENTATION							
		Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Total	
COUNTRY	Denmark %	90 <b>2,9%</b>	587 <b>18,7%</b>	1862 59,2%	607 19,3%	3146 100,0%	
	England %	25 0,9%	345 12,3%	1806 64,4%	628 <b>22,4%</b>	2804 100,0%	
	Finland %	37 1,3%	302 11,0%	1811 65,7%	605 <b>22,0%</b>	2755 100,0%	
	Greece %	8 0,2%	281 8,2%	2158 62,9%	982 <b>28,6%</b>	3429 100,0%	
	Hong Kong %	14 0,3%	276 6,0%	3087 66,7%	1254 <b>27,1%</b>	4631 100,0%	
	Hungary %	39 1,2%	465 14,7%	2370 <b>74,8%</b>	293 9,3%	3167 100,0%	
	Russian %	8 0,4%	160 7,5%	1678 <b>78,9%</b>	281 13,2%	2127 100,0%	
	Switzerland %	128 <b>4,2%</b>	687 <b>22,3%</b>	1678 54,4%	590 19,1%	3083 100,0%	
	USA %	36 1,3%	208 7,7%	1648 60,6%	826 <b>30,4%</b>	2718 100,0%	
	Total	Count	385	3311	18098	6066	27860
		%	1,4%	11,9%	65,0%	<b>21,8%</b>	100,0%

The other chosen scale, *nationalism orientation*, included items related to positive attitudes toward one's nation and patriotism like opinions:

1. To be patriotic and loyal citizen
  2. Patriotic and loyal to the country
  3. People should support their country
  4. This country deserve respect from other countries
  5. Prefer to live permanently in another country (inversely related to the other items)
- (strongly disagree – disagree – agree – strongly agree)

In the transnational comparison of nationalism orientation there were not so many countries where a strong agreement is prevailing. Only Greece was an exception and there the level of strong agreement was even 36,8% (more than one third of youngsters supporting strongly nationalism) and correspondingly disagreement (disagree or strongly disagree) was very low (only 6,8%). In Finland and Russian the strong agreement level was approaching 20% endorsement, but in both cases also disagreement (disagree or strongly disagree) level was a little bit higher going over 10%.

The case of Greece (and to some extent Finland as well) is contradictory when compared with integration orientation scale. Research data doesn't give clues to reflect this finding more deeply, but in general one can believe that the Greeks' case might show some connections to the country's geo-political history and tensions between neighbor nations. It is good to keep in mind that value and world view questions are always being coloured according to the changing economic, political, social and psychological atmospheres in society as discussed earlier.

On the other edge in the nationalism orientation scale were England, Hong Kong and Switzerland, where disagreement (disagree or strongly disagree) levels were clearly over 20%. When compared to integration orientation the disagreement emphasis in England and Hong Kong seems quite logical: where values are generally towards integration acceptance correspondingly disagreement of strong nationalism is also lower. But again one country, Switzerland, made an exception. There the both orientations are dominant concurrently: the disagreement of nationalism and the disagreement of integration. Again one can search the explanation from the country's geo- and sociopolitical history, which shows that Switzerland as a country has developed to several canton areas which each have its own constitution, parliament, government and courts. Within the cantons, numerous local communes also enjoy a certain degree of autonomy. So this kind of geo- and sociopolitical structure might color adolescents'



opinions towards both issues: strong integration acceptance or strong nationalism.

However, also in the nationalism orientation scale, large majority of the respondents in different countries emphasized the mid-level agreement alternative.

**Table 2.** Adolescents' nationalism orientation in comparison in the chosen countries.

NATIONALISM ORIENTATION							
		Strongly disagree	Dis-agree	Agree	Strongly agree	Total	
COUNTRY	Denmark %	23 ,7%	555 17,6%	2200 69,8%	376 11,9%	3154 100,0%	
	England %	45 <b>1,6%</b>	688 <b>24,0%</b>	1781 62,1%	352 12,3%	2866 100,0%	
	Finland %	19 ,7%	314 11,4%	1889 68,3%	543 19,6%	2765 100,0%	
	Greece %	11 ,3%	225 6,5%	1941 56,3%	1269 <b>36,8%</b>	3446 100,0%	
	Hong Kong %	36 <b>,8%</b>	1019 <b>21,6%</b>	3399 72,0%	270 5,7%	4724 100,0%	
	Hungary %	12 ,4%	432 13,6%	2378 <b>75,1%</b>	344 10,9%	3166 100,0%	
	Russian %	3 ,1%	225 10,6%	1487 <b>70,0%</b>	409 19,3%	2124 100,0%	
	Switzerland %	56 <b>1,8%</b>	776 <b>25,1%</b>	1945 <b>62,9%</b>	315 10,2%	3092 100,0%	
	USA %	23 ,8%	438 15,9%	1915 69,6%	377 13,7%	2753 100,0%	
	Total	Count	228	4672	18935	4255	28090
		%	,8%	16,6%	67,4%	15,1%	100,0%

The transnational comparison of the emphasis shows illustratively that integration or nationalism do not, in the respondents' values and attitudes, stand for the opposite ends of the same continuum. Rather they seem to be separate dimensions which are a little differently present in different sociocultural connections.

The appreciations of the majority population can supposedly move simultaneously to the same or to separate directions on the integration or on the nationalism orientation. The respondents' choices in different countries will become much more understandable through this kind of double scale interpretation.

Civic and diversity related attitudes seem to have a strong connection to the integration approval. Generally girls might be slightly more positive than boys for the integration of immigrants in different countries. Especially in the Nordic countries (Finland, Denmark) gender (female) was the best explainer variable for the integration orientation (Sig.  $p = .000$ ). This finding is similar than in other studies from Finnish adolescents' attitudes towards multiculturalism (see Harinen, 2005).

Correspondingly, in Greece, Hong Kong, England and United States the 'diversity attitude' item ("*To understand people with different ideas*") raised as a best explainer for integration orientation (Sig.  $p = .000$ ). Strong nationalism attitude on the other hand can be preventing the approval of immigrant integration but, however, the connection was not as straightforward as expected. The question seems to be how these two different orientations, integration and nationalism, are balanced in the values and opinions of the adolescents. So it might be worthwhile in the future to look for more detailed where strong nationalism and discriminating declined attitudes are coming from in youth.

One must remember that this research example is only indicative statistical information from those adolescents' opinions that belong to the majority population. As stated earlier, the big majority of the respondents can also very easily move into more positive or more negative directions when the situation changes.

More qualitative research is also needed about the forming of youth values and worldviews, and adolescents' own life-world and meaning making towards sameness and otherness in the multicultural world. As a whole this research example, however, wakes many thoughts and questions concerning education, teaching and learning in the civic education domain and what connections civic and diversity issues might have to acculturation orientations.

## Challenges for education, teaching and learning

In this article we have tried to give a glimpse on how crucial and multifaceted is the question of values and world views in transnational contexts, how they shape the life and thinking of youth and, how civic and diversity values of youth is a specific topic as well influenced by many dimensions of value backgrounds and choices. In our conclusions we wish to point out the responsibility of educators and the impact that learning may have for youth on both identity and value awareness and on their construction and re-assessment.

Youngsters often experience lack of meaning of their life and different kind of value conflicts. For instance the appeal of strong nationalism might be rooted in the need of people to feel oneself significant and have meaning. Educators on intercultural competence have to face the question whether or not to give space for real discussion on values. There are different possible approaches: to ignore, concentrating on what is common and general, avoiding to touch any inflammable topics, or to give freedom to openly study any question of values, with equality and respect.

When working with youth groups involving representatives of several major or minor ideologies, world views and religions as their family background and/or personal view, it is hard to try to overlook questions related to values. If a group involves adolescents from

Muslim, Jewish, Catholic and other cultural backgrounds we cannot just deny religion as something irrelevant on a basis of our “scientific” world view.

Talking about world views and religion has often been unnecessarily avoided. On one hand, certain “rules of the game” are an absolute necessity for successful communication. E.g. in a school or in an online learning community we cannot allow certain type of language, such as offensive, threatening or intimidating. On the other hand, we cannot and as we suggest, should not, avoid completely all sensitive or controversial topics.

Why not rather accept there is discussion on world views and open communication but learn and teach respect, and in case we fail to understand each others’ emotions or unintentionally seem to offend someone, to learn to ask for forgiveness and to forgive.

It is essential for young people to have a sense of the values that they and their community live by. We cannot rely on families alone to provide this. Schools, teachers, youth workers etc. must take civic education and civic and diversity values into consideration.

We need to teach young people about values in environments where it is safe to explore a range of opinions, where people learn to debate and discuss controversial issues and where it is possible to put at least some of the principles in live. Dialogic teaching and learning is a good way to put this into practice. Moral and democratic participation and dialogue must have a place in school and its’ learning community.

Teachers and other adults in or around schools have a wonderful and, in a sense, unique opportunity to give space, encourage and lead the youngsters to question the prevalent “self-evidences” and values presented as determined, “the only alternative”, such as economic competition and hard competition on personal achievements and power. Why always competition, why not cooperation? Diversity is celebrated in rhetoric, yet not always in practise. Why always self-centred gaining more instead of the joy of finding a noble enough

goal to fight for and sacrifice something for? Young people love to find their own way. Deterministic thinking may cause them to lose hope and become apathetic, cynic and disinterested. Materialism unchallenged is as narrow thinking as any religion unchallenged, leading to a most reductionist reasoning. Like a famous Jewish rabbi put it: *“What good is it for a man to gain the whole world, yet forfeit his soul?”*(The Bible, NIV).

Social and moral values are interwoven in all aspects of teaching: in the curriculum, in the school culture, and as moral examples in teachers’ behavior. Working with values should be an essential part of teaching and learning. For cultivation of tolerance and respect, even pleasure of diversity, the emotional atmosphere of the school is significant. Emotional literacy – to recognize one’s own and others’ emotions and take them into consideration – is also a central part of intercultural understanding. It can be taught and learned within a community like a school.

Discussion on values in educational contexts and making world views transparent give youngsters a life-long advantage: They learn critical assessment and self-reflection. They start to question prevalent self-evidences and outer appearances. They learn to validate each others’ stories, even those from other cultures and far from their own experienced world. They learn to think and they may listen to their hearts and seek truth.

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