

Universal Values in Estonia, Finland and Sweden

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This cross-national study of values is based on Shalom Schwartz's psychological instrument. It can also be characterized as a cross-disciplinary project involving psychological and ethnological contributions. It further exemplifies one model of combining quantitative and qualitative methods. Its main purpose is to point at the research prospects of assessing similarities and differences in universal values, and how to account for the differences by relating them to various societal and historical aspects.

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Introduction

This presents a subproject within Shalom H. Schwartz's international project on universal values (cf. Schwartz 1992). The initiative for this three-country comparison was taken by Markku Verkasalo. The project has been conducted in cooperation with Åke Daun, Institute of Ethnology, Stockholm University, and Toomas Niit, Department of Psychology, Tallinn Pedagogical University. It has been financially supported by NOS-S, the Nordic Council for the Social Sciences and the Estonian Science Foundation.

Schwartz's value project is a psychological one. Most participants in the more than 40 involved countries/cultures are trained psychologists. This study, however, presents an effort to combine aspects of a quantitative research tradition with a qualitative one (cf. Daun 1989; Brannen 1992).

Within a primarily qualitative context of ethnology/anthropology the advantages of statistical surveys should be underlined, especially when studying national culture. Also, in cross-cultural studies the survey technique

makes it possible to detect phenomena that cannot otherwise be documented. We do not argue that qualitatively trained scholars should take courses in statistics, or – the reverse – that psychologists should widen their orientation in any fundamental way. We would like to indicate the available option of bringing these somewhat contrasting approaches into interdisciplinary collaboration, and the advantages – in our view – of mixing quantitative and qualitative methods (Brannen 1992). Needless to say, branches like cross-cultural psychology and psychological anthropology/ethnology do share a basic common interest.

Purpose and Theoretical Outline

In Shalom Schwartz's value project (see Schwartz 1992) three broad questions are addressed. One is how the value priorities of individuals are affected by their social experiences. The second question is how the value priorities held by individuals affect their behavioral orientations and choices, that is, their ideologies, attitudes, and actions in various domains. Third, the project addresses "the question of cross-cultural or cross-national differ

ences in value priorities and seeks to identify some of their causes and effects”.

The cross-cultural study presented in this article is an application of Schwartz's research model and methodological approach. "For example", he asks, "how do the value priorities of matched groups from countries as diverse as China, Poland, Spain, the United States, Venezuela, and Zimbabwe differ? What aspects of the ecology, history, technology, and social and political structures of the societies from which these groups are drawn might account for these differences in value priorities? How might the differences in value priorities account for differences among societies in other domains, such as educational policies, political involvement, health, law, etc?" (Schwartz 1992:2).

Our purpose is to identify differences in value priorities between the three geographically close countries, Estonia, Finland and Sweden, and also to suggest ecological, historical, etc. aspects of these countries that may account for these differences.

According to Schwartz and Bilsky (1990), values (1) are concepts or beliefs, (2) pertain to desirable end states or behaviors, (3) transcend specific situations, (4) guide the selection or evaluation of behavior and events, and (5) are ordered by relative importance. Values, understood this way, differ from attitudes primarily in their generality or abstractness (feature 3) and in their hierarchical ordering by importance (feature 5) (see also Schwartz 1992:4).

The values studied are supposed to be comprehensive, that is to include all the types of values to which individuals are likely to attribute at least moderate importance as criteria of evaluation. In other words, the values studied are supposed both to be universal and to cover all important aspects of culture-linked behavior motivation.

Schwartz's survey instrument used in the present project contains 10 motivational types that have been found in most studied cultures: power, achievement, hedonism, stimulation, self-direction, universalism, benevolence, traditions, conformity, security. The total number of values included is 56. (In this study we use

the value type spirituality as well, although the structure of spirituality is not similar in all cultures.)

Motivational types

Schwartz's theory is based on studies in more than 40 cultures all around the world. According to the theory the 10 value types make a continuum on a two-dimensional level. Power, achievement, hedonism, stimulation and self-direction are value types whose attainment serves individual interests, while benevolence, tradition and conformity serve collective interests, and universalism and security emerge in regions on the boundary between the individual and collective interests (Schwartz 1992). Another useful way to view the connections of value types is Schwartz's division of the value types into two dimensions so that the opposite ends of the same dimension define value types that are opposite to each other. The first dimension he calls openness to change versus conservation. On this dimension people can either show motivation to follow their own intellectual and emotional interests (especially high appreciation of the value types self-direction and stimulation) or else prefer the status quo and the certainty it provides in relationships with close others, institutions and traditions (especially high appreciation of security, conformity and traditions). Schwartz (1992) calls the other dimension self-transcendence versus self-enhancement. This dimension presents at one end the extent to which people are motivated to transcend selfish concerns and promote the welfare of others (high appreciation of the value types universalism and benevolence). At the other end of this dimension self-enhancement arrays values in terms of the extent to which they motivate people to enhance their own personal interests even at the expense of others (high appreciation of power and achievement reflects this). In this study we use the division of values into 11 value types, and conclusions at the two-dimensional level are studied briefly in the discussion.

In the following we present the 10 value types in brief so that the order of presentation

shows how near the value types are to each other. The only exception is the 11th value type spirituality that is not included in Schwartz's (1992) final list of universal values. Because the value types are thought to represent a two-dimensional circle, the first value type power and the tenth value type security can be also regarded as being near each other in context (for more details see Schwartz 1992).

1. Power

Power values are probably grounded in more than one type of universal requirement. The functioning of social institutions apparently requires some degree of status differentiation, and a dominance/submission dimension emerges in most empirical analyses of interpersonal relations both within and across cultures. To justify this fact of social life, and to motivate group members to accept it, groups must treat power as a value. Power values may also be transformations of the individual needs for dominance and control. The central goal of power values is identified here as attainment of social status and prestige, and control or authority, preserving one's public image, social recognition. (Preserving one's public image also belongs to a another motivational type: security; social recognition also belongs to the another motivational type: achievement.) In this study power values are: social power, wealth, authority and preserving public image.

2. Achievement

This type means personal success through demonstrating competence according to social standards. Competent performance is a requirement if individuals are to obtain resources for survival and if social interaction and institutional functioning are to succeed. Achievement values emphasize demonstrating competence in terms of prevailing cultural standards, thereby obtaining social approval. Achievement values are: ambitious, influential, capable, successful. (Influential also belongs to another motivational type: power; intelligence belongs to two other motivational types: self-direction and universalism.)

3. Hedonism

This value type is derived from organismic needs and the pleasure associated with satisfying them. The motivational goal of this type can be defined as pleasure or sensuous gratification for oneself. Values here are: pleasure, enjoying life.

4. Stimulation

Stimulation values derive from the presumed organismic need for variety and stimulation in order to maintain an optimal level of activation. The motivational goal of stimulation values is excitement, novelty, and challenge in life. The values here are termed: a varied life, an exciting life, daring.

5. Self-Direction

The goal of this value type is independent thought and action-choosing, creating, exploring. Self-direction is derived from organismic needs for control and mastery. Values included in this type are: freedom, creativity, independent, choosing own goals, curious. (Self-respect also belongs to achievement.)

6. Universalism

The motivational goal of universalism is understanding, appreciation, tolerance, and protection for the welfare of all people and for nature. This contrasts with the narrower focus of benevolence values. The motivational goal of universalism values can be derived from the survival needs of groups and individuals that become apparent when people come into contact with those outside the extended primary group and become aware of the scarcity of natural resources. People may then realize that failure to accept others who are different and treat them fairly will lead to life-threatening strife, and failure to protect the natural environment will lead to the destruction of the resources on which life depends.

Although such values may be absent in the few remaining small, isolated, homogeneous cultures, they are likely to be recognized to some degree in virtually all others.

Research on collectivist versus individualist cultures demonstrates the importance of distinguishing between the universalism and be-

nevolence types of social concern. Members of collectivist cultures tend to show great concern for the welfare of members of their own in-group but relative indifference to the needs of outsiders. Members of individualist cultures tend to distinguish less sharply between in-groups and outgroups when responding to their needs. This suggests a pattern of much greater emphasis on benevolence than on universalism values in collectivist cultures and more equal emphasis on both value types in individualist cultures. The values are: equality, unity with nature, wisdom, a world of beauty, social justice, broad-minded, protecting the environment, a world at peace. (Unity with nature also belongs to spirituality.)

7. Benevolence

The motivational goal of benevolence values is preservation and enhancement of the welfare of people with whom one is in frequent personal contact. The values are: helpful, responsible, forgiving, honest, loyal, mature love, true friendship. (Responsible and loyal both also belong to conformity; mature love also belongs to universalism.)

8. Tradition

Groups everywhere develop symbols and practices that represent their shared experience and fate. These eventually become sanctioned as traditions and customs that are valued by the group's members. Traditional modes of behavior become symbols of the group's solidarity, expressions of its unique worth, and presumed guarantors of its survival. The motivational goal of tradition values is respect, commitment, and acceptance of the customs and ideas that one's culture or religion imposes on the individual. The values are: respect for tradition, devout, accepting one's portion in life, humble, moderate. (Devout and accepting one's portion in life both also belong to spirituality; humble also belongs to conformity; moderate also belongs to security.)

9. Conformity

The defining goal of this value type is restraint of actions, inclinations, and impulses likely to upset or harm others and violate social expecta-

tations or norms. It is derived from the requirement that individuals inhibit inclinations that might be socially disruptive if interaction and group functioning are to run smoothly. As defined here, conformity values emphasize self-restraint in everyday interaction. The values are: obedient, self-discipline, politeness, honoring of parents and elders.

10. Security

The motivational goal of this value type is safety, harmony, and stability of society, of relationships, and of self. It derives from basic individual and group requirements. The values are: national security, reciprocation of favors, family security, sense of belonging, social order, healthy, clean. (Reciprocation of favors also belongs to another motivational type: conformity; healthy also belongs to hedonism; clean also belongs to conformity.)

11. Spirituality

Theologians, philosophers, and sociologists of religion emphasize that the basic rationale for traditional creeds and customs is to endow life with meaning and coherence in the face of the seeming meaninglessness of everyday existence. Most religions supply answers to the questions of the ultimate meaning of reality by referring to some supernatural being or force. Nonreligious perspectives, such as humanism, locate sources of meaning in the natural world. These answers refer to what is commonly known as spiritual concerns. However, there is probably no universality of a single spirituality type and therefore Schwartz (1992) did not include it in the list of universally found value types. However, in this study of three adjacent northern countries with a Lutheran background a comparison of the subjects as regard this value type can be accepted.

The values in this value type are: a spiritual life, meaning in life, inner harmony, detachment. (Meaning in life also belongs to universalism; inner harmony also belongs to both universalism and security.) (For a more conceptually developed elaboration of this theme, see Schwartz 1992: 10–11.)

Research problems

Our primary question is: how similar or different are the values of university students in the three northern countries, Sweden, Finland and Estonia. Can we find some values or value types that are nation-specific, so that the three countries differ from each other, or that one culture differs from the other two cultures? Or does the subculture with which the subject identifies have a stronger effect than the national culture? The subculture in our context is defined here as educational orientation: either business, technology or humanities/social sciences. The possible effect of gender is also considered. Based on earlier studies (Feather 1984) it may be expected that males value more such values as ambitious, capable, a comfortable life, and an exciting life and that females value more such values as forgiving, helpful, mature love, a world of beauty.

We also ask what aspects of ecology and history may account for the relative importance of these value types and subordinated single values, and consequently, account for the differences between the countries.

Method Subjects

For comparative purposes some factors that were known to affect values were held constant in the samples of all three northern countries, Sweden, Finland and Estonia. All subjects were studying in the capitals of each country: Stockholm, Helsinki or Tallinn; the only exception was the Estonian university town of Tartu. Only students from the native ethnic group were selected and students over 30 were omitted. In all three countries students of business, technology or humanities/social sciences were selected. In this article students of humanities will be called humanistic students.

Swedish sample, originally 647 subjects with mean age 28, SD=10. 63 of these subjects were dropped because their ethnic group was not Swedish. A further 130 were dropped because they were aged 31 or older. The final study

group consisted of 450 students (46% females). The mean age was 23.6 years, SD=2.6. The subgroups according to educational orientation consisted of business students (N=146, mean age 21.7, SD=2.0, females 30%), technical students (N=122, mean age 24.6, SD=2.4, females 27%) and humanistic and social science students (N=182, mean age 24.4, SD=2.6, females 71%).

Finnish sample, originally 871 students with mean age of 23.1, SD=4.7. First 70 students aged 31 or over were dropped. From the University of Helsinki, only students in humanities and social sciences were included in the sample. Thus the final sample consisted of 651 subjects (55% females). The subgroups according to educational orientation consisted of business students (N=128, mean age 21.5, SD=2.3, females 58%), technical students (N=162, mean age 21.5, SD=2.0, females 16%), humanistic and social science students (N=360, mean age 22.2, SD=2.5, females 73%).

Estonian sample, originally 236 subjects with mean age of 21.3 years, SD=2.4. Two subjects were dropped because they were 31 or over. The final sample consisted of 234 subjects (54% females). The subgroups according to educational orientation consisted of business students (N=34, mean age 19.8, SD=1.4, females 24%), technical students (N=109, mean age 22.0, SD=1.8, females 39%), Tartu University students (this group is labeled humanities and social sciences for comparative reasons: 50 had a humanistic or social sciences major subject, 24 named no major subject, and 10 had a major subject other than humanities, such as mathematics, geography, biology), N=84, mean age 20.8, SD=2.4, females 86%).

Measures

The Schwartz Value Survey (1987), originally developed in English, was administered in the respondent's native language. Each of 56 values was rated "as a guiding principle in my life," on a 9-point scale ranging from 7 (supreme importance) to -1 (opposed to my values).

To form indexes of the priority of each value type, we used the 44 values recommended by Schwartz and Sagiv (in press; cf. Schwartz 1992) based on multidimensional analyses of relations among values in 88 samples from 41 countries. Each of these values emerged empirically in the same conceptually appropriate region in each of at least 75% of those samples. This indicates that the meanings of these values are quite stable and that they fit their intended type across groups and cultures. The set of values representing each value type is listed after the definition of the type above in the introduction to this article. The variables have been made by summing the responses of the subjects to the values mentioned in the definition of every value type. Some values that are presented in brackets are not included in the variables, because their position has not been stable in most studied cultures.

Besides the 44 value items we added value type spirituality (4 items). This value type did not emerge in the worldwide analysis, but was useful for the purposes of the present study.

In addition, religiosity was ascertained by the question "How religious are you?" The scale was from 0, not at all religious, to 6, very religious.

Reliabilities for value type indexes are presented separately for Swedish, Finnish and Estonian data (in this order) in the following. General reliability coefficients (Tarkkonen, 1987) for the value types were: power 0.75, 0.83, 0.75, achievement 0.74, 0.82, 0.75, hedonism 0.45, 0.51, 0.45, stimulation 0.73, 0.68, 0.76, self-direction 0.55, 0.66, 0.53, universalism 0.80, 0.77, 0.67, benevolence 0.62, 0.70, 0.64, tradition 0.38, 0.64, 0.56, conformity 0.70, 0.66, 0.69, security 0.67, 0.66, 0.69, spirituality 0.28, 0.43, 0.39.

Procedures

Finnish and Estonian students were tested in groups during their lecture time. For Swedish students the questionnaire together with a letter was mailed to all registered students at each department.

Subjects answered the questionnaire anonymously, and they were told that the study ex-

amined attitudes and values and that it was a part of a crosscultural study. In the Swedish mail survey the percentage of replies was 58. In the Finnish sample, about 90% of those attending lessons replied (the exact number could not be determined, because some left the lecture room without taking the questionnaires). In the Estonian sample all those who attended the lessons completed the questionnaire.

Results

Similarities and dissimilarities of value rankings

Similarities and dissimilarities of value rankings of the 9 subgroups – subjects in each of the three countries were divided into groups according to educational orientation – were measured by intercorrelations of rankings.

First the 56 value items were ranked separately in all three countries in three subgroups with different educational orientation (see Table 4). In Table 4 values with high ranks mean that the value is given high priority (e.g. freedom) and in contrast values with low ranks have low priority in the particular group (e.g. social power).

The intercorrelations of the value rankings of the subgroups in the same country but different educational orientations (see Table 1, underlined numbers) were high, mostly about 0.9. However, almost as high and in some cases even higher were intercorrelations of the same educational orientation in different countries (see Table 1, numbers printed in bold face).

The correlations between value rankings were highest between Swedish and Finnish students, almost as high for Finnish and Estonian students, and the intercorrelations were lowest between Swedish and Estonian students. Nevertheless, all correlations were relatively high, the lowest correlation being 0.68–0.79 for Swedes and Estonians, but mostly about 0.8–0.9.

The differences in means of the 11 value types

Our main purpose was to reveal how students

Table 1. *Intercorrelations of 56 value rankings in different subgroups and countries*

	Swedish			Finnish			Estonian		
	bu	te	hu	bu	te	hu	bu	te	hu
Swedish:									
bus	1								
tec	0.95	1							
hum	0.86	0.88	1						
Finnish:									
bus	0.90	0.84	0.81	1					
tec	0.89	0.86	0.80	0.97	1				
hum	0.84	0.84	0.92	0.92	0.91	1			
Estonian:									
bus	0.78	0.67	0.64	0.80	0.81	0.74	1		
tec	0.77	0.72	0.68	0.82	0.84	0.79	0.90	1	
hum	0.71	0.72	0.79	0.76	0.79	0.86	0.80	0.89	1

Note. Bold face shows correlation coefficients of the same educational orientation in different countries. Educational orientation = bus. business, tec. technology, hum. humanities/social.

in Sweden, Finland and Estonia differed from each other as regards the 11 value types. We controlled the effects of subculture (defined here as different educational orientation) and the effect of gender.

The results of 2 (gender: male, female) X 3 (educational orientation: business, technology, humanities/social) X 3 (country: Sweden, Finland, Estonia) multivariate analysis with the 11 value types as dependent variables indicated that the main effects of gender, country and educational orientation were significant ($p < .0001$). These main effects were qualified with interactions of country X educational orientation and country X gender. These results and the univariate tests for the 11 value types are reported in Table 3. Only significant results are presented and the nonsignificant interaction between country and gender is therefore excluded from Table 3.

Country differences

There was a country effect for the value types power, hedonism, self-direction, universalism, tradition, conformity and spirituality (see Table 3). Swedes had the lowest scores on power, while the Finns had intermediate and Estonians had the highest scores ($p < .001$ for all comparisons). Estonian technical and humanistic students had lower scores than Swedes

and Finnish students for hedonism. Estonian business students did not differ from students in Sweden and Finland.

Students in all three countries valued self-directional values highly, but nevertheless there was a statistically significant country effect so that Swedes valued self-directional values most ($p < .0001$); the difference between Finns and Estonians was not statistically significant ($p < .01$). Estonians had lower scores on universalism. However, there was interaction between country and educational orientation. This was due to the fact that Estonian technical and university students valued universalism less than Swedes and Finns, whereas business students in Estonia did not differ from students of the same subjects in Sweden and Finland. Swedes and Finns did not differ from each other as regards universalism.

Swedes had the lowest scores on conformity ($p < .0001$), while Estonians and Finns did not differ from each other. For spiritual values Swedes had the lowest scores ($p < .0001$), and again Finns and Estonians did not differ from each other.

The greatest country differences measured as differences in means were in the spirituality value type where Swedes valued spiritual values least; Estonians and Finns did not differ.

In the questionnaire there was also a direct question about religiosity. Finns were most re-

Table 2. Means of value types by educational orientation and country by gender

Males	Educational orientation								
	Business			Technology			Humanities/Social		
	Sw	Fi	Es	Sw	Fi	Es	Sw	Fi	Es
Country:	Sw	Fi	Es	Sw	Fi	Es	Sw	Fi	Es
N:	102	54	26	89	133	67	51	98	12
Value type	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M
power	2.6	3.5	3.4	1.9	2.8	2.8	1.4	1.7	1.4
achievement	4.4	4.6	4.8	3.9	4.1	3.9	3.6	3.5	3.2
hedonism	4.4	5.2	4.7	4.2	4.4	3.9	4.4	4.2	3.3
stimulation	4.2	4.4	4.2	4.0	4.0	3.5	3.9	3.6	3.4
self-direction	4.7	4.6	4.8	4.8	4.5	4.5	5.0	4.7	4.8
universalism	3.7	3.7	3.5	3.8	3.8	3.4	4.5	4.1	3.7
benevolence	4.3	4.3	4.2	4.5	4.4	4.2	4.2	4.3	4.4
tradition	1.6	1.6	1.2	1.8	1.6	1.6	1.7	1.5	1.8
conformity	3.3	3.5	3.0	3.3	3.5	3.6	2.7	3.1	2.7
security	3.9	4.1	3.6	4.0	3.8	3.8	3.3	3.3	3.3
spirituality	2.8	3.7	4.0	2.6	3.9	3.7	3.7	4.1	3.9

Females	Educational orientation								
	Business			Technology			Humanities/Social		
	Sw	Fi	Es	Sw	Fi	Es	Sw	Fi	Es
Country:	Sw	Fi	Es	Sw	Fi	Es	Sw	Fi	Es
N:	44	74	8	3	27	42	128	262	72
Value type									
power	1.8	2.2	2.4	1.2	2.2	2.5	1.0	1.4	1.7
achievement	4.1	4.0	4.1	4.0	4.1	4.0	3.4	3.6	3.3
hedonism	4.4	4.4	3.7	4.3	4.1	4.1	4.5	4.2	3.3
stimulation	4.0	3.9	4.6	3.6	3.9	3.4	3.3	3.7	3.2
self-direction	4.8	4.1	5.2	4.9	4.6	4.8	4.9	4.6	4.7
universalism	3.9	4.2	4.1	4.2	4.3	3.4	4.7	4.6	4.0
benevolence	4.4	4.7	4.7	4.5	4.6	4.6	4.6	4.7	4.6
tradition	1.7	1.2	1.4	1.6	1.3	1.4	1.8	1.2	1.6
conformity	3.0	3.4	3.4	2.8	3.4	3.3	2.6	3.1	3.0
security	3.7	3.8	3.4	3.7	4.0	3.8	3.5	3.6	3.5
spirituality	3.2	4.0	4.5	3.1	4.2	3.8	3.6	4.3	4.4

Note. Country: Sw=Sweden, Fi=Finland, Es=Estonia

ligious (M=2.88, SD=1.79) with a significant ($p<.001$) difference from other groups, whereas Estonians (M=2.06, SD=1.7) and Swedes (M=1.73, SD=1.85) did not differ from each other at a significance level of $p<.01$.

Differences according to educational orientation

Educational orientation had a major effect for most value types: power, achievement, hedonism, stimulation, universalism, conformity, security and spirituality. For power and achievement the order of the means was: highest for business, intermediate for technical and

very much lower for humanistic and social students. For hedonism the difference was that business students valued hedonism most (mostly due to male business students) and the other educational groups did not differ from each other.

Conformistic and security value types were valued alike by business and technical students and least by humanistic and social science students. Universalistic and spiritual values were most highly valued by humanistic and social students in all three countries and less by business and technical students.

In answer to the question whether educa-

tional orientation or country had more effect on values, we found that the outcomes differed depending on value types. For the individual value types power, achievement and stimulation and for the collective value type security the effect of educational orientation was stronger for value priorities than the native country (see table 3 and figures 1 and 2). Instead country effect was stronger especially for the value type spirituality (because Swedes valued spiritual values less than Finns and Estonians), but also for traditions and self-direction.

Gender differences

The gender X educational orientation interaction approached statistical significance for the value types power, achievement and hedonism. For power and achievement value types this interaction was due to the fact that for males the order of means was: business students valued them most, technical students intermediate and humanistic and social students least. For females the order of means was different: business and technical students valued them alike and humanistic/social science students again least. For power there was also a major effect of gender: males valued power more than females. For hedonistic values the interaction of gender X educational orientation was due to the fact that male business students valued hedonism most, but all other male and female subgroups alike. The

other significant main effects of gender (without any higher order interactions) were for universalism, benevolence and spirituality. Females valued these value types more than males.

Discussion Profiles of national cultures?

The values among Estonian, Finnish and Swedish male and female students in business, technical and humanities/social science faculties turned out to differ in many respects. We found significant differences between Estonian, Finnish and Swedish students in various ways, besides the education- and gender-related variation in values. At the same time, the three samples appeared relatively alike – all representing small, ethnically homogeneous, Lutheran countries in Northern Europe. In a more global comparative perspective (recently presented by Schwartz 1994), the cross-cultural variation in universal values appeared much greater than is indicated by this study. Nevertheless, there are systematic differences between these three countries. The differences in some cases divide the countries into two blocks, sometimes into three. Finland tends to be related to Sweden in certain respects, to Estonia in others. Estonia and Sweden more often than Finland stand separately.

Let us now present an effort to put some of the national characteristics into a wider con-

Table 3. Summary of analysis of variance of value types

	Gender X Educ. orient. F(2,1299)	Country X Educ. orient. F(4,1299)	Gender F(1,1299)	Educ. orient. F(2,1299)	Country F(2,1299)
power	5.75**	2.32-	30.23***	46.94***	26.07***
achievement	3.69*	0.59-	2.89-	32.68***	0.35-
hedonism	3.24*	4.53**	4.11*	7.07**	10.33***
stimulation	0.21-	1.32-	2.88-	14.43***	1.18-
self-direction	1.05-	1.38-	0.10-	1.11-	11.85***
universalism	0.17-	3.50**	22.01***	13.81***	10.36***
benevolence	0.18-	0.32-	13.71***	0.18-	0.49-
tradition	0.74-	0.91-	2.43-	1.06-	10.10***
conformity	2.11-	0.56-	0.27-	11.23***	10.56***
security	2.14-	0.51-	0.12-	13.48***	1.77-
spirituality	0.50-	4.46**	14.70***	14.20***	75.99***

*p<.05. **p<.01. ***p<.001.

text. It is not possible to discuss all the cross-national differences that we found, but a selection of differences will be taken up. There are certainly a great many questions that could be raised on the basis of the presented data. Nor do we pretend to give any final answers or theoretically full-fledged elaborations of the

results. Our purpose is limited to suggesting some accounts and hypotheses.

The effects of education and gender

The high intercorrelations of value orders in the three samples showed that in many respects the means of values of the three Nordic

Table 4. *The rankings of the 56 value items in Sweden, Finland and Estonia according to three educational orientations*

Educational orientation	Country											
	Sweden				Finland				Estonia			
	bu	te	hu	M	bu	te	hu	M	bu	te	hu	M
Value												
<i>Power</i>												
Social power	53	54	56	54	51	52	55	53	51	53	56	53
Wealth	37	47	50	45	38	39	47	42	35	35	48	37
Authority	50	52	52	52	49	51	53	51	37	45	51	49
Preserv. public image	42	45	47	46	48	50	49	49	33	36	45	36
(Social recognition)	22	36	35	31	32	33	38	36	16	28	36	27
<i>Achievement</i>												
Ambitious	19	22	33	27	18	21	32	21	36	44	49	43
Influential	38	48	45	43	44	43	46	45	32	47	46	41
Capable	17	14	28	18	16	11	27	17	7	8	17	11
Successful	11	21	32	22	19	19	30	20	4	12	24	13
(Intelligent)	8	9	25	12	12	6	14	10	1	3	3	2
<i>Hedonism</i>												
Pleasure	30	32	31	30	25	27	37	31	21	26	34	28
Enjoying life	7	11	12	9	7	16	13	11	27	24	38	31
<i>Stimulation</i>												
Exciting Life	12	15	24	16	27	26	36	30	22	34	35	32
Varied life	20	23	29	26	11	12	19	15	10	23	30	20
Daring	45	46	48	49	42	45	42	43	41	49	42	48
<i>Self-direction</i>												
Freedom	2	1	2	1	4	1	2	1	3	6	6	4
Creativity	24	19	18	20	34	24	20	26	20	19	13	16
Independent	15	16	19	15	26	23	24	24	5	5	8	5
Choosing own goals	9	10	9	7	22	18	17	19	15	11	12	12
Curious	25	20	22	24	29	22	21	22	30	31	32	33
(Self-respect)	5	7	4	5	9	7	8	8	26	15	14	17
<i>Universalism</i>												
Equality	26	25	14	23	24	35	16	25	42	48	40	44
World at peace	23	17	8	13	23	28	22	23	47	43	31	39
Unity with nature	49	38	34	41	43	38	35	39	46	46	27	38
Wisdom	27	31	20	28	15	13	12	14	18	21	22	19
World of beauty	44	39	30	37	40	41	26	37	23	32	18	24
Social justice	31	28	10	25	35	40	23	33	38	37	28	35
Broad-minded	18	24	11	17	14	15	9	12	19	33	15	21
Protecting the environment	28	18	17	21	36	31	25	32	43	30	29	34

samples were rather similar. For some value types educational orientation effects were stronger than the effects of the country/culture. This is important with reference to generalizations about national culture as such. The "national culture factor" is not always the strongest one.

Humanists had less regard for power and

achievement values, such as wealth and social recognition, and placed less emphasis on values like capable and successful, whereas they appreciated more universal values like equality, social justice, being broad-minded and protecting the environment. In contrast, business students, especially males, in all three countries especially stressed power and achieve-

Educational orientation	Country											
	Sweden				Finland				Estonia			
	bu	te	hu	M	bu	te	hu	M	bu	te	hu	M
<i>Value</i>												
<i>Benevolence</i>												
Loyal	14	13	21	14	17	17	18	16	28	18	23	22
Honest	10	3	15	8	8	9	5	7	24	13	9	15
Helpful	33	35	26	32	33	37	29	34	34	25	21	26
Responsible	16	8	16	11	10	10	10	9	11	10	10	10
Forgiving	29	27	27	29	30	29	28	29	25	27	20	23
(Mature love)	21	26	13	19	13	14	11	13	13	7	1	6
(True friendship)	4	5	3	4	2	4	3	3	6	2	5	3
<i>Tradition</i>												
Respect for tradition	48	49	43	50	53	54	51	52	53	50	37	50
Moderate	54	53	54	53	47	46	50	48	44	39	47	46
Humble	47	44	42	44	55	55	54	55	54	54	53	54
Accepting my portion	52	51	49	51	54	53	52	54	55	55	55	55
Devout	55	56	55	56	56	56	56	56	56	56	54	56
<i>Conformity</i>												
Politeness	43	43	44	42	28	25	33	28	29	20	33	29
Self-discipline	46	42	51	48	45	44	44	46	48	38	44	45
Honoring of parents	39	40	39	40	39	42	40	41	40	22	26	30
Obedient	36	33	41	36	41	36	41	40	50	51	52	52
<i>Security</i>												
Social order	40	34	40	38	31	30	39	35	45	42	41	42
National security	41	29	46	39	37	32	43	38	52	41	39	47
Reciproc. of favors	35	30	36	34	46	47	45	47	39	40	43	40
Family security	6	6	6	6	5	3	7	5	14	4	7	7
Clean	32	37	38	35	20	34	31	27	17	16	25	18
(Sense of belonging)	13	12	7	10	21	20	15	18	9	17	19	14
(Healthy)	1	2	5	3	1	2	6	2	2	1	4	1
<i>Spiritual</i>												
Inner harmony	3	4	1	2	3	8	1	4	12	14	2	8
Spiritual life	51	50	37	47	50	48	34	44	31	29	16	25
Meaning in life	34	41	23	33	6	5	4	6	8	9	11	9
Detachment	56	55	53	55	52	49	48	50	49	52	50	51

Note. Abbreviations for educational orientation: bu = business, te = technology, hu = humanities/social orientation, and M = Mean of the rankings of the country. If the difference in the means of rankings of the country is large to a specific value, the minimum is in bold face.

ment, and hedonistic values more than the other groups. In many cases the values of technical students were in between those of business and humanistic/social students. The effect of educational orientation was found in most value types, but especially in those value types that belonged to the dimension which is described by Schwartz (1992) as self-transcendence (especially universality values) versus self-enhancement (stimulation, hedonism, achievement and power values). On this axis there were great differences according to the educational orientation. On the other axis, which Schwartz names conservation versus openness to change, there was not as much variation according to educational orientation. For conservation values – tradition and its opposite self-direction – there was no effect of educational orientation. All these student groups were orientated to self-direction and not to conservation.

Gender differences showed that females attach less importance to power values and more to universalistic, benevolence and spiritual values. These findings are in line with previous work (Feather 1984).

The effects of gender and educational orientation are important to value research in two ways. First they show the validity of this kind of research and secondly they show that without any consideration for subculture – in this case educational orientation and gender – the conclusions can sometimes be misleading if the sample is not carefully selected to present important subcultures.

In this study all groups were highly educated and young. These two variables have an effect on values. Puohiniemi (1993) notices that stimulation, hedonism and achievement values are highest at the age of 20, whereas traditions and security become more important in the older ages. The subjects of our study were mostly 19–23 years old. Compared to a Finnish national sample (1993), in which mean age is not mentioned but where it is higher than in the present study, and a sample done in the Finnish parish of Pyhtää (mean age 39.2 years, mostly people with low education (Pohjanheimo 1994)) showed that in our study in all three countries university stu-

dents had higher means for stimulation, hedonism and achievement value types than the subjects in these Finnish national samples.

Puohiniemi also notices that highly educated people are more self-directed than less educated people, whereas less educated people emphasize security and conformity. The comparison of the means of Finnish samples (Puohiniemi 1993; Pohjanheimo 1994) to this study shows that self-direction was the most important value type for students in this study, whereas in Finnish samples it was 5th and 6th respectively. Also security and conformity values were less important to students than to nationally representative Finnish samples.

The differences in the three “national cultures”

Power

Swedes had lowest scores on power in all three educational orientations, the Estonians the highest. This makes sense, given our knowledge about the particular stress in Swedish society on equality. For example, Swedish companies have a relatively “flat” (anti-hierarchical) organization, and Swedish managers are in many ways expected to play down their power position. Power symbols are dismissed. Equality, informality, discussion and cooperation are positively loaded key words.

Sweden scores lower than Finland on Hofstede’s Power Distance Index (Hofstede 1984:77). Finland is in several ways a more conservative country than Sweden; social hierarchies are more strict, implying less informality – titles are much more in use – and implying less cooperation. Finnish executives often make decisions without previous discussions with their subordinates. This is a problem in Finnish-Swedish cross-cultural management (Laine-Sveiby 1991).

Estonia represents another step toward a cultural conservative position. The social hierarchies of Estonia as a post-Soviet country are still more marked and even more expressed in power distance. In the former Soviet Union, power also meant material benefits, more so than in Finland and Sweden. The communist regimes in Estonia brought an end

to the class society, as in the Soviet Union generally, but mainly in its political rhetoric, less so in social reality.

Achievement

As shown in Table 3, there was no significant country effect on achievement. However, if we look at the single values, we will notice that the Estonian students rate being capable, successful and intelligent more highly than the Finns and the Swedes. Most striking is perhaps the difference between the Estonian and the Swedish students of humanities/social sciences: the Estonians put intelligence in third place, the Swedes put it in twenty-fifth place. The high rank of intelligence probably reflects the importance of educatedness in Estonian culture, which has been a highly valued quality for a long time, especially among the students.

The insignificant country effect of the value type achievement was mainly due to the lower score given to the single value ambitious by the Estonian students. Since the difference between the West European countries on the one hand, and on the other hand the East European country Estonia (in accordance with the until now well-established conceptual division), constituted the reverse tendency, the value differences between the countries were statistically leveled out.

Why do Estonians score ambitious so much lower? One may speculate about the particular connotation or "flavor" of the word ambitious among young people in today's Estonia. It may for some of them be associated with the political past, where the decisiveness of getting ahead did not primarily demand intelligence or professional capability, but rather the striving or strong career-orientation as such, something that necessitated political loyalty.

Hedonism

In hedonistic values Estonian students had lower scores than Finns and Swedes. This can be expressed brutally: there is not very much to enjoy in Estonia now. At least, it seems to us to make sense that the single value enjoying life was given much higher scores in Finland and Sweden. Enjoying life contains more real-

ism in these two countries; it is a value that can actually be implemented to a greater extent.

However, in contrast to this single value, pleasure scored somewhat higher among the Estonian business and technical students than among Finns and Swedes. Pleasure certainly is a "narrower" concept; it refers to separate situations rather than to life itself. To aim at pleasure may be considered as something more realistic, especially for those students of business and technology who have better reasons to look forward to some kind of material comfort.

Stimulation

The value type stimulation did not show any country effect. Still, looking at the single values, one sees some differences between the countries. Exciting life (stimulating experiences) was scored higher by the Swedish students, especially in comparison with the Estonians. There is an open question to what extent this is due to a difference in value orientation, and to what extent it reflects the lower chances of realizing such a goal.

Self-direction

Self-directional values were important in all three countries. However, we found some national differences. The Finns had lower scores on self-direction than Swedes and Estonians. It should be especially noted that the Estonians particularly stressed the importance of being independent. Compared to the Finns, the Swedish students also gave independence a high score.

We lean towards two somewhat diverse interpretations. Among the Estonians the negative political experience of the reverse situation – dependency – certainly awards the concept of independence a high value. Individual independence is probably perceived as a hallmark of a liberal democratic state. Among the Swedes, on the other hand, being independent has become a central feature both in child rearing (Ekstrand 1990) and in social relationships (Daun 1992). For example, grown-up children are not (legally) defined as members of the family where they grew up. In the same

way, the elder generation in Sweden constitutes an economically separate unit. Social independence also implies symmetrical relationships between friends (they “split the bills” in restaurants; they “take turns” when entertaining) a structure based on the idea of “sameness” which is particularly strong in Sweden.

Choosing one’s own goals is particularly important for the Swedes, least important for the Finns. Once again, the Swedes stress the chance to “follow your own path”, without asking anyone else, including parents. This is an anti-family and anti-tradition approach, typical of Sweden. The Estonians certainly stress the political freedom and the new individualistic orientation of their country.

Creativity is especially high among most of the Estonian groups. We believe that this relative priority is associated with the value given to intelligence. It might be loaded with the sense of individual success in the new era of liberty in Estonia.

Why is self-respect given such high priority among Swedes, not so high among Finns, and considerably lower among Estonians? Self-respect is an inner-directed value, which means that it concerns individual feelings, self-image, a notion inside yourself. One might suggest that the level of self-respect is pretty much related to the level of happiness (cf. Landell 1985). In the European Values System Study (EVSSG), those individuals who answered that they were “not very happy” made up 3% of the Swedish population, but 7% in Finland, which is consistent with other Scandinavian surveys (see Allardt 1975). Another result in the same survey (cf. Daun 1992:149), seemingly pointing in the same direction, concerns the value of having a job involving great responsibility. This value was stressed more by Swedes (51%) than by Finns (30%). Estonia was not included in EVSSG.

Even without data from Estonia, these differences may indicate that the variation in the position given to self-respect is partly due to the level of welfare in the three countries. This could be formulated in another way: the less burdened people are by day-to-day worries, the better prerequisites there are for the luxury of cultivating their self-respect.

Universal values

Estonian students scored universal values less than Swedish and Finnish students. However, there is a significant variation – going in different directions in terms of single values. This makes it less adequate to discuss the value type universalism as such.

The two terms equality and world at peace are both obviously associated with – or at least somewhat colored by – the old political rhetoric in Estonia, whereas they have deteriorated less in Finland and Sweden. But if we compare Sweden with Finland, we also see that peace is valued much more by Swedes. According to a recent European survey (reported by the Swedish news press) in 1994, Swedes – considerably more than other nationalities – answered that they “feared war”. The question given was, “What do you fear most of all?” Common answers in the other countries were, for example, “cancer” and “AIDS”.

The single value social justice seems to us also to be associated with a political rhetoric, and therefore the lower score given by the Estonians is to be expected.

The Estonians’ less affirmative responses to the value protecting the environment is striking, especially with respect to the serious ecological problems in the former Soviet Union. Alternatively, however, this finding confirms the comparatively limited environmental engagement in this part of Europe.

The two values wisdom and world of beauty are given lower scores in Sweden, although the country differences are not very big. Still, it makes sense that Swedes, who generally appear to be down-to-earth, practical-minded, and not very philosophical, to put it that way, do not find these vague and abstract values particularly appealing.

Benevolence

The value type benevolence did not show any country effect. Still, looking at the individual values, there are some noticeable differences. A striking feature was the high priority among the Estonians given to mature love. Mature love certainly sounds somewhat old-fashioned to many Swedes, not only among the young ones, whereas the Estonian culture can be de-

scribed as more conservative, to a certain extent also Finland.

Helpfulness seems to be given high priority in Estonia – as probably in other parts of the former Soviet Union, where close friendship ties constitute necessary means for daily survival.

Tradition

From a value type perspective, Swedes put a more positive stress on tradition than did Estonians and Finns. This deviation is exclusively accounted for by the particularly high score given to being moderate and being humble, which are both principal values in Swedish culture.

Moderation (expressed in the Swedish word *lagom*) means not too much and not too little, but rather the middle way, and has been described as almost a key to Swedish society and mentality: consensus, compromise and emotional control (Childs 1936). *Lagom* is often (falsely) depicted in Sweden as a term that cannot be translated into any other language. Being humble (or modest) has long been described as a Swedish (and Danish-Norwegian) value, not stressed to the same extent in Finland and other parts of Europe. It is related to the meaning of the ideological concept of equality and to the sociological stress on “sameness” in these Northern countries (Daun 1992b).

Conformity

Finnish students had higher scores on conformity, compared to Estonians and Swedes, but the differences are small and the tendency – looking at the single values – not altogether consistent. The single value politeness is particularly stressed by the Estonian students, least by the Swedes. Politeness (specified as “good manners” in the questionnaire) seems to be to some extent related to a conservative lifestyle, in its turn also expressed in the single value honoring of parents, where most advocates are found among the Estonians. Given our general knowledge about the three countries, it seems reasonable that “conservative values” are favored least in Sweden, and most in Estonia – even if the differences are by no

means great. It could be noted that in the EVSSG survey (1984), politeness as a quality that parents think it is especially important to encourage children to learn at home, is affirmatively mentioned by 55% of the Swedes and by 77% of the Finns.

On the other hand, the Swedish students were the most obedient ones, and the Finns the second most obedient group, although the differences were rather minor. In the EVSSG survey the difference was the reverse, probably because the question concerned child-parent relationships. This theme is certainly too large to be elaborated here any further. Obedience as such concerns child-parent relationships, but it also concerns, for example, employee-employer relationships. Furthermore it has a political dimension. The Swedes and the Japanese have sometimes been lumped together as two national cultures characterized by loyalty and subordination, i.e. obedience, versus state and public bureaucracy (cf. Daun 1986). In Sweden a common attitude toward the word obedience probably reflects an overall positive experience of the state. One can conceive that the word obedience in Estonia, on the other hand, to a greater extent is associated with negative political experiences, which would account for the lower score.

Security

There was no country effect in terms of value type, but variation in terms of some single values could be noted. Cleanliness (being neat, well-kept) was scored particularly high among the Estonians, especially compared to the Swedish students. Why? We have no available explanation for this, except for speculatively relating a stress on this value to a generally conservative value orientation and also to the long German influence in Estonia with the emphasis on cleanliness and order.

Spirituality

Here we found an outstanding country effect. The Swedes attached least importance to spiritual values in all three educational groups compared to the same educational groups in Finland and Estonia.

A reverse tendency was represented by the

single value inner harmony, which was given high priority in all countries, but with much less favor among students of business and technology.

Striking, on the other hand, was the much lower scores given by the Swedish students to spiritual life, detachment, and particularly – to meaning in life. We may conclude that these results seem to be strongly in line with the typical personality orientation among Swedes which implies preferences for tangible, concrete things, and practical issues, rather than abstract ideas (Daun 1996). It is probably related to the high degree of secularism characteristic of the Swedes. Very few Swedes “think often” of death (8%), compared with Finns (18%), and, for example, with Italians (28%), according to the European Values System Study (Daun 1992:150). No comparative figures are available for Estonia, but a new interest since the 1970s in evangelistic sects among young people has been observed (Raag 1990).

Also answers to the question in this study “How religious are you?” confirm this result, especially contrasting Finns with the highest religiosity to Swedes and Estonians with less religiosity. In this study the difference between Swedes and Estonians did not reach statistical significance, although the original means were lower for Swedes.

Concluding Remark

We have tried to do two things, first to characterize the Estonian, Finnish and Swedish students in terms of value priorities, second to suggest aspects of these countries in terms of history, demography, political organization etc., that might account for these value priorities and differences in value priorities between the countries.

Two things should be pointed out in this final comment. One is the methodological need for comparative data from some more contrasting cultures. Another point is that all values included in Schwartz’s list represent human orientations of general importance. Although they are all single values subordinated to more general motivational types, they are neverthe-

less spacious concepts which in most cases contain a multitude of more specific, culture-linked single values.

As a consequence of this, our contribution in this account has been to indicate the methodological potential of this approach to the comparative study of cultures (see Smith & Bond 1993). A circumstance that limits our ability to make use of the theoretical potential of this method is the relative cultural closeness between Estonia, Finland and Sweden. The most distinctive differences between the three societies are probably, on the one hand, Estonia’s communist past, and on the other hand, the much less stratified social structure of Sweden, its greater economic success, and its particular stress on social equality.

Furthermore, we have stressed the importance of paying attention to subcultures to which subjects are inclined (in this case by selecting different educational orientations for the sample).

However, a much more detailed and elaborated analysis of these three societies, their particular profiles of ecology, history, technology, etc., would be desirable in an extended study of this kind. It is also evident that any type in Schwartz’s list of universal values could very well be chosen as a separate theme for further analysis.

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