

Interpretation of the questionnaire results

Chapter C Behavioural attitudes

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1. Preliminary consideration

Many psychological and sociological studies have shown that the scales of values that every person develops in the course of his life determine to a strong degree his judgement of certain conditions or events. According to how this disposition or early character-forming is shaped, people react differently in certain situations.

In this context it was to be clarified through 21 statements or items in Chapter C of the COMCULT questionnaire whether young people also already have a particular pattern of values or as it were a “lens” through which their view of social or political processes are formed.

For this purpose a so-called battery of statements or items was modified and amplified, which was published by the “Institut für interdisziplinäre Konflikt- und Gewaltforschung” (Institute for Interdisciplinary Research in Conflict and Violence) of the University of Bielefeld in 2003¹. In the German and English original version of the questionnaire the single statements are arranged under the following 10 values:

Self-determination
Goodwill
Tradition
Power
Hedonism

Universalism
Conformity
Security
Achievement
Stimulation

In the questionnaire given to the young people these headings were omitted and the statements were mixed.

2. Evaluation and Interpretation

The results of the pre-test and post-test are reported in the basis data in Chapter C of the COMCULT questionnaire. Although considerable differences can sometimes be observed in the individual statements in C1 to C21 both from country to country and between pre-test and post-test, these cannot be overestimated, especially as the groups of countries are sometimes very small. Furthermore - with the mass of data - general statements on behavioural attitudes can only be made with difficulty.

We know from other sociological studies that behavioural attitudes – once they are established –can only be corrected with great difficulty. Within the school context that could only succeed by investing a great deal of time, if at the same time several other related subjects were taught and learnt along the same lines.

With lessons in the framework of the COMCULT network which only involved one or two subjects (i.e. about 2-4 hours per week) and lasted an average of only about 7 months no great changes in students’ behavioural attitudes can be expected.

This assumption is confirmed also in the sum of all the participant school classes in Table 1.

¹ JULIA ISER, PETER SCHMIDT. Gefährliche Werte? (Dangerous Values?) Was Tradition und Konformität anrichten können. in: Deutsche Zustände, Folge 2, Hrsg. WILHELM HEITMEYER (Suhrkamp Verlag, Frankfurt a.M.,2003) S. 66

Tab 1 C) Behavioural attitudes

Statements (Items)			BG	CY	CZ	DE	ES	GR	HU	IT	NL	PL	Total
			Col %	Col %	Col %	Col %	Col %	Col %	Col %	Col %	Col %	Col %	Col %
C1 It is important to me to decide for myself	agree	pre	100%	100%	88%	99%	100%	89%	70%	91%	76%	96%	94%
		post	100%	100%	94%	99%	98%	100%	77%	96%	59%	91%	94%
C2 It is important to me always to behave well	agree	pre	94%	73%	78%	77%	80%	63%	67%	83%	41%	96%	76%
		post	94%	87%	88%	75%	90%	79%	80%	78%	41%	100%	81%
C3 It is important to me to have fun.	agree	pre	89%	100%	88%	93%	88%	89%	80%	87%	94%	87%	90%
		post	89%	100%	91%	93%	94%	100%	73%	91%	88%	78%	91%
C4 Tradition is very important to me.	agree	pre	72%	53%	22%	38%	32%	58%	43%	87%	12%	57%	43%
		post	89%	67%	41%	41%	30%	58%	47%	78%	12%	83%	48%
C5 People who behave differently from me I find interesting.	agree	pre	44%	80%	38%	58%	62%	84%	53%	52%	53%	74%	58%
		post	67%	60%	44%	64%	72%	84%	60%	70%	41%	61%	63%
C6 It is important to me always to do well at school.	agree	pre	61%	73%	59%	83%	92%	68%	77%	70%	59%	87%	78%
		post	67%	60%	78%	77%	90%	68%	87%	61%	59%	83%	76%
C7 I am careful not to act out of character.	agree	pre	39%	40%	38%	56%	70%	79%	80%	57%	12%	48%	55%
		post	33%	47%	34%	46%	78%	84%	77%	48%	41%	43%	53%
C8 I like to be the one who makes the decisions.	agree	pre	50%	40%	25%	21%	24%	32%	27%	17%	24%	17%	25%
		post	22%	53%	16%	31%	20%	47%	33%	22%	29%	26%	29%
C9 I always find new surroundings very stimulating.	agree	pre	89%	73%	56%	59%	78%	47%	77%	83%	59%	65%	66%
		post	83%	73%	69%	63%	82%	58%	73%	87%	29%	52%	67%
C10 If other people have problems, I like to be able to help.	agree	pre	100%	100%	94%	90%	94%	100%	87%	96%	65%	74%	90%
		post	94%	93%	84%	86%	86%	79%	93%	100%	65%	87%	87%
C11 If I start something, I must be sure that it will work.	agree	pre	56%	60%	50%	36%	62%	37%	73%	65%	29%	57%	49%
		post	78%	73%	53%	41%	54%	47%	80%	65%	41%	48%	53%
C12 I sometimes find different opinions hard to bear.	agree	pre	56%	47%	19%	30%	40%	58%	60%	61%	18%	87%	41%
		post	61%	53%	9%	33%	30%	53%	73%	61%	0%	65%	39%
C13 I am always happy when conflict between people is avoided.	agree	pre	100%	87%	88%	77%	62%	74%	73%	83%	65%	91%	78%
		post	100%	60%	84%	74%	76%	68%	67%	83%	71%	91%	76%
C14 You should enjoy yourself as much as possible in life.	agree	pre	100%	100%	94%	96%	100%	100%	93%	96%	88%	74%	95%
		post	89%	93%	81%	96%	96%	95%	97%	96%	94%	65%	92%
C15 People should hold on to the culture they grew up in.	agree	pre	94%	60%	59%	57%	60%	84%	90%	74%	24%	87%	65%
		post	100%	67%	59%	62%	70%	84%	87%	83%	35%	91%	70%
C16 I cannot understand people who have no ambition.	agree	pre	72%	67%	44%	58%	32%	100%	47%	43%	59%	61%	55%
		post	50%	60%	50%	62%	38%	84%	53%	70%	35%	61%	56%
C17 It gives me pleasure to work for harmonious co-existence with my fellow-men.	agree	pre	94%	93%	94%	76%	78%	95%	87%	78%	65%	61%	80%
		post	72%	67%	84%	82%	70%	89%	97%	96%	41%	39%	77%
C18 I like it when others do as I say.	agree	pre	33%	27%	56%	30%	32%	42%	53%	30%	47%	61%	38%
		post	39%	47%	63%	39%	44%	47%	53%	30%	47%	61%	45%
C19 You should always listen to your parents and to older people.	agree	pre	50%	47%	66%	37%	90%	42%	53%	61%	18%	26%	49%
		post	67%	47%	56%	38%	84%	42%	63%	74%	35%	43%	53%
C20 I do not like running risks.	agree	pre	28%	13%	44%	32%	46%	5%	50%	43%	24%	26%	34%
		post	17%	40%	41%	35%	40%	32%	60%	48%	29%	30%	38%
C21 I like to plan my activities myself	agree	pre	94%	60%	84%	91%	88%	89%	50%	61%	53%	87%	82%
		post	100%	47%	97%	91%	86%	89%	40%	52%	71%	100%	82%

On average the difference between pre-test and post-test is only 3 % and, with one exception, never more than 5 % (Cf. Column total in Tab.1).

For this reason in assessing further tables the absolute numbers from the pre-test and post-test were added together in order make the interpretation of the by now 730 questionnaires all together more reliable.

2.1 Reduction to behavioural types

With the help of a so-called factor analysis it is possible to collect in groups or types from the single statements those that were frequently marked the same way, whether in agreement or disagreement.

Tab 2 Results of the factor analysis

Statements	Factor (Syndrome)
C6 It is important to me always to do well at school.	adjusted
C2 It is important to me always to behave well.	adjusted
C7 I am careful not to act out of character.	adjusted
C19 You should always listen to your parents and to older people.	adjusted
C12 I sometimes find different opinions hard to bear.	traditional/dominant
C4 Tradition is very important to me.	traditional/dominant
C18 I like it when others do as I say.	traditional/dominant
C15 People should hold on to the culture they grew up in.	traditional/dominant
C9 I always find new surroundings very stimulating.	open
C5 People who behave differently from me I find interesting.	open
C3 It is important to me to have fun.	open
C20 I like running risks.*	open

*Here all those were counted, who disagreed with the original statement “I do **not** like running risks”, that means now with agreement to the new statemen C20 “I like running risks”

Everybody who answered mainly „agree“ to all the statements C6, C2, C7, and C19 seems to find it important to behave as far as possible without conflict. For this reason they were included in the behaviour syndrome “adjusted”.

For all those who mainly agreed with the statements C12, C4, C18 and C15 the behaviour syndrome “traditional/dominant” was chosen.

Agreement with the statements C9, C5, C3 and C20 characterizes an “open” type of student who also has certain hedonistic inclinations.

In order to arrive at a further typology of youth in the participant schools, one point was given for each agreement with a statement in the “adjusted” syndrome. Disagreement and “don’t know” were given no points. The “traditional/dominant” and “open” syndromes were treated the same way.

This means that if a young person agrees with all the statements of one syndrome he is given a maximum of 4 points. All points were added together and divided by the number of students in the single countries. Table 3 shows the mean values calculated in this way.

Tab 3 Behavioural attitudes in the single classes

		I adjusted	II traditional/ dominant	III open
		(maximum 4 points) Mean	(maximum 4 points) Mean	(maximum 4 points) Mean
Country	ES	3,4	1,7	3,1
	HU	3,1	2,6	2,5
	GR	2,7	2,4	3,1
	PL	2,7	3,0	2,6
	BG	2,6	2,9	3,2
	CZ	2,6	1,7	2,6
	IT	2,6	2,5	3,0
	CY	2,4	2,3	2,9
	DE	2,4	1,8	2,9
	NL	1,8	,9	2,3
	Total	2,6	2,0	2,8

Thus it can be seen from Table 3 that for example for the “adjusted” syndrome Spanish students reached an average 3.4 out of a maximum 4 points. According to this they attach great importance to conformity with their family and social circumstances. This seems to be **below** average in CY, DE and NL.

The „traditional/dominant“ syndrome seems to be less common. It has on average in all 10 countries only 2.0 out of 4 points. Young people in almost all the participant countries - with 2 exceptions (Cf. Basis data C3) – appear relatively open and oriented towards amusement. The single mean values stray very little from the common average (total) 2.8.

2.2 Reduction to value syndromes

To demonstrate the connection assumed in the preliminary consideration between behavioural attitudes and situation evaluation, the statements in Chapter A in the questionnaire have to be reduced to certain syndromes, as a comparison with 10 pages of basis data is difficult to carry out.

First of all eleven of the total of 69 statements in Chapter A were taken out as they were undisputed by the vast majority of students, i.e. there was either a high degree of agreement or disagreement.

From the remaining 58 statements or items four factors or syndromes were filtered out by a factor analysis, i.e. the answer behaviour shows a high degree of similarity in the relevant statements (statistically: high intercorrelation of items).

Tables 4, 5, 6 and 7 show the statement groups (item batteries) that were summed up under the following factors or syndromes.

- a) Tolerance towards immigrants
- b) Aspiration towards equality
- c) (national) egocentricity
- d) Standing up for democracy and justice

Tab 4 Factor a) Tolerance towards Immigrants

Statements (Items)		Pre-test	Post-test	Indication example
		Column N %	Column N %	
A14 If jobs are scarce, employers should take on workers from our own country and not foreigners.	disagree	21%	21%	1 Point
	do not know	7%	12%	
	agree	71%	67%	
A16 It is a personal choice if Muslim students decide not to participate in sports or excursions for religious reasons.	disagree	19%	21%	
	do not know	12%	11%	
	agree	69%	68%	1 Point
A23 Foreigners enrich a society by bringing in new ideas.	disagree	28%	21%	
	do not know	28%	27%	
	agree	43%	52%	1 Point
A32 It is perfectly fair for a car mechanic in Romania to earn only a quarter of the wages that his French colleague receives.	disagree	76%	73%	1 Point
	do not know	12%	14%	
	agree	12%	13%	
A34 I cannot see no reason why I should give up part of my income out of solidarity with other European peoples.	disagree	40%	41%	1 Point
	do not know	27%	30%	
	agree	33%	29%	
A38 To ensure social peace in a country it is better if the population is homogeneous and there are few foreigners.	disagree	49%	50%	1 Point
	do not know	16%	15%	
	agree	34%	35%	
A44 Standards of learning are lowered in classes with many immigrants.	disagree	50%	46%	1 Point
	do not know	22%	18%	
	agree	29%	37%	
A47 It is a personal choice to wear religious symbols/ clothing.	disagree	15%	16%	
	do not know	4%	7%	
	agree	82%	77%	1 Point
A49 Non-EU nationals with the right of permanent residency in an EU country should have the same rights as EU citizens.	disagree	13%	12%	
	do not know	12%	16%	
	agree	75%	72%	1 Point
A67 Rich EU countries should pay into a development fund to raise the standard of living in the poorer member states.	disagree	15%	15%	
	do not know	19%	24%	
	agree	67%	61%	1 Point
			maximum	10 Points

Every young person who marked the statements in Tab.4 in favour of tolerance was given one point, a maximum therefore of 10 points. This way a **tolerance index** was obtained with 6 points and more being valued as **above** average.

The syndromes in Tables 5, 6 and 7 were similarly indexed and for each the percentages of the **above** average group in the total of the tests obtained. Tables 5, 6 and 7 are in the appendix at the end of this chapter.

2.3 The relationship between behavioural attitudes and the evaluation of certain situations or processes (statements in Chapter 2)

If we now draw up a relationship between the three syndromes of behavioural attitudes (I, II, III) and the four value syndromes (a – d) we obtain the following table:

Tab 8

Value syndrome		a) Tolerance towards immigrants	b) Aspiration to equality	c) (national) egocentricity	d) Standing up for democracy and justice
		Above average	Above average	Above average	Above average
		N %	N %	N %	N %
Behavioural attitudes					
I adjusted	0 not adjusted	47%	26%	29%	42%
	4 (highly adjusted)	60%	72%	43%	40%
II traditional/dominant	0 not traditional/	57%	27%	24%	43%
	4 (very traditional)	55%	79%	63%	60%
III open, interested, prepared to risk	0 not open	40% (1)	70%	60%	40%
	4 very open	61% (2)	53%	33%	48%

(1) 40 out of 100 students who see themselves as not open, not interested and not prepared to take risks show more than average tolerance towards immigrants; (2) 61 out of 100 students who see themselves as very open, very interested and prepared to take risks show more than average tolerance towards immigrants. This means as a trend: an open, interested student prepared to take risks is comparably tolerant towards immigrants.

Considerable differences are immediately striking between “not adjusted” and “highly adjusted” young people with regard to the value syndromes a, b and c. There are similarly large differences between “not traditional” and “very traditional” students, who at 79% show above average aspiration to equality, an above average national awareness and stand up more (60%) for law and order.

With „very open“ students prepared to take risks, aspiration to equality is not as firmly fixed as with the “not open”. Against this, the “very open” stand out more for greater tolerance towards foreign influences (61%) and are far less nationally oriented.

3. Summary

In some countries some very positive changes on certain points can be established between pre-test and post-test, probably resulting from appropriate teaching, particularly in the area of of the “standing up for democracy and justice” value syndrome.

If, however, behavioural attitudes are to be influenced during schooling with **lasting positive effect** - and this as a rule is only possible here - then far-reaching changes are needed, namely

- in teaching organization (Timetable and cross-subject team-teaching),
- in teaching methods (project and group teaching, use of internet)
- in further training for teachers.

Because of the different historical and political developments in Europe the questionnaire results bring to notice attitudes and modes of behaviour specific to different countries. Unfortunately the small number of questionnaires from most countries is not sufficient to guarantee assertions made in this regard. Even so, the COMCULT network has made a beginning and uncovered many deficiencies that can be targeted and corrected in the future through further European projects. In this light the work was certainly necessary and not in vain.

Appendix

Tab 5 Factor b) Aspiration to equality

Statements (Items)		Pre-test	Post-test
		Column N %	Column N %
A7 A citizen working abroad should still be subject to the laws of his/ her country of origin.	disagree	62%	64%
	do not know	16%	14%
	agree	22%	22%
A26 Only the forces of the market can guarantee a fair distribution of goods.	disagree	18%	19%
	do not know	55%	56%
	agree	27%	25%
A31 All monotheistic religions accept human rights without any restrictions.	disagree	36%	36%
	do not know	44%	45%
	agree	20%	19%
A35 I find consolation in the fact that after so much injustice on earth there will be compensation with justice in heaven.	disagree	32%	36%
	do not know	30%	29%
	agree	38%	35%
A45 There are clear principles of good and evil. These are valid for everyone everywhere.	disagree	40%	41%
	do not know	16%	16%
	agree	44%	42%
A50 There should be equal taxes across the EU in order to ensure equal conditions of competition.	disagree	20%	17%
	do not know	25%	25%
	agree	55%	58%
A51 I feel very close to members of my own religion, regardless of whether they are rich or poor, educated or uneducated, right or left-wing.	disagree	31%	39%
	do not know	21%	19%
	agree	48%	42%
A52 Equalizing wage scales across the EU would be a good thing for all citizens.	disagree	16%	17%
	do not know	22%	26%
	agree	61%	57%
A55 To act morally, I do not need to have a religion.	disagree	19%	15%
	do not know	8%	12%
	agree	73%	74%
A66 For me there is no higher value than the honour of my family.	disagree	28%	29%
	do not know	15%	16%
	agree	58%	55%

Tab 6 Factor c) (national) Egocentricity

Statements (Items)		Pre-test	Post-test
		Column N %	Column N %
A3 Democracy is not conducive to decision-making.	disagree	37%	40%
	do not know	31%	28%
	agree	32%	32%
A4 Money is essential to be free.	disagree	44%	34%
	do not know	12%	13%
	agree	44%	53%
A9 In our country large companies are more influential than government.	disagree	16%	18%
	do not know	59%	56%
	agree	25%	25%
A11 The EU is a threat to our democratic right to self-determination, if more and more decision-making takes place in Brussels.	disagree	28%	30%
	do not know	52%	50%
	agree	20%	21%
A20 Solidarity with people of my own nationality is more important to me than it is with other people who also live here.	disagree	65%	63%
	do not know	13%	13%
	agree	22%	24%
A22 In the EU individual citizens have very little influence on important political issues	disagree	11%	15%
	do not know	36%	35%
	agree	53%	51%
A29 If I had a job in a car factory in a country in eastern Europe, it would be all the same to me if jobs in the same firm were lost in Germany or Sweden.	disagree	56%	56%
	do not know	30%	29%
	agree	14%	16%
A37 The society in which I live gives me a lot of freedom.	disagree	18%	14%
	do not know	9%	8%
	agree	74%	78%
A41 In a global world the national state can no longer guarantee the rights of the individual.	disagree	27%	22%
	do not know	45%	45%
	agree	28%	33%
A54 My national identity is more important to me than European citizenship.	disagree	24%	24%
	do not know	28%	20%
	agree	48%	56%

Tab 7 Factor d) Standing up for democracy and justice

Statements (Items)		Pre-test	Post-test
		Column N %	Column N %
A18 The unemployed should accept any work offered to them, or else their unemployment benefits should be stopped.	disagree	34%	30%
	do not know	15%	14%
	agree	52%	56%
A39 The rule of law is undermined when a government restricts specific human rights.	disagree	5%	6%
	do not know	30%	25%
	agree	65%	69%
A42 The attractiveness of the EU is that it guarantees civil rights.	disagree	13%	13%
	do not know	44%	36%
	agree	44%	51%
A43 The quality of democracy can be seen in the freedom of opinion and of its press.	disagree	17%	15%
	do not know	18%	19%
	agree	66%	66%
A46 The division of powers is necessary to guarantee legal rights.	disagree	12%	10%
	do not know	28%	29%
	agree	60%	61%
A53 In a democracy there is more opportunity for the individual to develop than under any other form of government.	disagree	6%	4%
	do not know	28%	26%
	agree	65%	70%
A58 The EU should wait until the Balkan countries first fix their problems with corruption, drug and people trafficking by themselves; then it can allow them to become EU members.	disagree	20%	21%
	do not know	21%	20%
	agree	59%	59%
A59 The values that people use to guide their behaviour are best discovered when there is wide political discussion.	disagree	27%	26%
	do not know	49%	46%
	agree	24%	28%
A60 Everyone who has a television should pay for the service so that it does not depend on a few private companies.	disagree	39%	36%
	do not know	34%	30%
	agree	27%	34%
A68 My homeland is not so important to me when I know that all the people around me think in the same way as myself.	disagree	44%	42%
	do not know	23%	22%
	agree	33%	36%