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**THE ROLE OF RELIGIOUS
IDENTITY AND PERCEIVED
PSYCHOLOGICAL CLOSENESS IN
PARENT-CHILD VALUE
SIMILARITY: COMPARISON OF
RELIGIOUS MINORITY AND
MAJORITY**

BASIC RESEARCH PROGRAM

WORKING PAPERS

SERIES: PSYCHOLOGY
WP BRP 54/PSY/2015

This Working Paper is an output of a research project implemented within NRU HSE's Annual Thematic Plan for Basic and Applied Research. Any opinions or claims contained in this Working Paper do not necessarily reflect the views of HSE

THE ROLE OF RELIGIOUS IDENTITY AND PERCEIVED PSYCHOLOGICAL CLOSENESS IN PARENT-CHILD VALUE SIMILARITY: COMPARISON OF RELIGIOUS MINORITY AND MAJORITY⁴

This paper describes the impact of religious identity and perceived parent-child psychological closeness on their value similarity in different religious contexts (contexts of religious minority and majority). The total sample includes 454 respondents. Parents and adolescent children of 118 Russian Orthodox Christian families from the Kabardino-Balkarian Republic (KBR) (with 72% Muslim population) and 109 Russian Orthodox families from the Republic of North Ossetia-Alania (RNO-A) (with 91% Orthodox population) were surveyed using a questionnaire measuring values (PVQ-R of Schwartz), religious identity and scales of perceived parent-child closeness assessed by parents and adolescents developed by the authors. The results of structural equation modelling showed that religious identity of Russian Orthodox adolescents in KBR predicts parent-child value similarity (PCVS), while the perceived psychological closeness of adolescents with their parents negatively related to their value similarity. In RNO-A parental religious identity and psychological closeness assessed by both parents and children predict the PCVS. The discussion of the results is devoted to the role of religious context in the impact of religious identity and perceived psychological closeness on PCVS.

JEL Classification: Z

Key words: values, religious identity, perceived psychological closeness, religious context, Russian Orthodox Christians, the Kabardino-Balkarian Republic, the Republic of North Ossetia-Alania

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⁴ The article was prepared within the framework of the Basic Research Program at the National Research University Higher School of Economics (HSE) and supported within the framework of a subsidy granted to the HSE by the Government of the Russian Federation for the implementation of the Global Competitiveness Program.

Introduction

Over the past few decades the field of psychosocial research has seen growing interest in value transmission across generations because of the relevance of this process for individual development and for societal functioning. As intergenerational similarity is an important source of continuity, a high parent-child value similarity (PCVS) has often been assumed to be an indicator of a successful transmission of values within the family [Trommsdorff, 2009]. At the present time in studies of intergenerational continuity much attention is paid to the mechanism of transmission of values, to the age and gender specifics of this process, and to the impact of social and cultural context [Boehnke, 2001; Boehnke et al. 2007; Vedder et al. 2009].

Family is the first and the main context for value socialization of children and an important source of intergenerational continuity [Grusec & Davidov, 2007]. Although intra-familial processes do not take place in an isolated family-only environment, there is very little research considering the role of the socio-cultural context in the transmission of values. Some recent studies [Boehnke, 2001; Boehnke et al., 2007; Vedder et al., 2009] have focused on this neglected issue and have concluded that PCVS may depend not only on the family, but also on the modal value climate of a society. Moreover, within the same society, people belong to a variety of groups, such as generation, gender, ethnicity, friendship groups. All of these groups provide contexts that operate in conjunction with the family on the development of youth values [Goodnow, 1997].

The current study focuses on the role of family (parental and adolescent religious identity and their mutual perceived psychological closeness) and social context (religious minority or majority status) in PCVS.

Schwartz and Huismans [1995] first studied the relation between religiosity and individual values. They found that religion was positively associated with Tradition and Conformity values. In this regard, we suggest that in families with higher religiosity, PCVS will be also higher due to higher level of Conformity values, which contribute to higher values and attitude congruence in such families.

Studies with majority populations have shown, that parents are the main source of religious [Myers, 1996] and value socialization [Gecas, 1981]. Is it true for minority populations or there are other influential sources of socialization outside of the family? Are parents

belonging to religious minorities also successful in transmitting their identity and values when their religion differs from religion of dominant group?

Does the religious identity of adolescents from families of religious minorities play a significant role in PCVS? We should remember that adolescents are most susceptible to influence from larger society, being in an alien cultural and language environment [Maliepaard, Lubbers, 2013]. This influence especially affects the development of ethnic and religious identity [Phinney, 1990], which can be an important factor of cultural continuity, contributing to the PCVS. These questions are relatively new for the field of research on intergenerational transmission of values and deserve special attention.

When studying factors influencing PCVS, it is important to take into account family relations, for example, the family climate, perceived psychological closeness between parents and children, and emotional ties.

Although in studies in majority populations many authors have underlined the importance of the emotions of parents and their children toward each other in the context of socialization [e.g. Grusec & Goodnow, 1994; Hoffman, 2000], few studies have directly addressed the role of emotions in the value transmission process [see also Schönplflug, 2009]. Roest, Dubas, and Gerris [2009] focused more explicitly on family climate variables, namely, family adaptability and cohesion, as a transmission belt for two kinds of values, “work as duty” and “hedonism”. They reported higher PCVS in more connected than separate families, and concluded that family cohesion and emotional bonding provide a receptive atmosphere which facilitates value transmission between parents and children. Others have concentrated on the dyadic relationship as a transmission belt, reporting that intimacy or self-disclosure of adolescents toward their mothers, and adolescent perception of maternal appreciation increased mother-child similarity in individualistic and in group-oriented values [e.g. Albert, 2007; Friedlmeier, 2006; Trommsdorff, 2009]. However, does the perceived psychological closeness between parents and children from minority group families play an equally effective role in value transmission when minorities have the same or different religion with dominant society? For example, in the case of family migration, intergenerational transmission from parents to children should be less effective because the transmission of the culture of origin may be dysfunctional in the host society. Not only will the younger generation be reluctant to accept transmission but parents may also hesitate to transmit their own value orientations, which might be non-adoptive in a society with a

different religious background. Cultural traditions usually lag behind environmental variability [Schönpflug, 2001].

Empirical research shows that parental support and the dynamics of parent-child relationships are more important for the emerging religiosity of the child than simply parental religiosity [Leonard et al. 2013].

We studied parent-child dyads of Russian Orthodox Christians from two North Caucasian republics: the Kabardino-Balkarian Republic (KBR) with a Muslim majority population, where Orthodox Christianity is the religious minority, and the Republic of North Ossetia-Alania (RNO-A) with an Orthodox Christian majority population, where Russians and Ossetians both belong to the same religious denomination.

Russians in the Kabardino-Balkarian Republic and the Republic of North Ossetia-Alania : ethnic and religious contexts

The dynamics of the ethnic composition of the population of the North Caucasus demonstrated an intensive outflow of ethnic Russians from the region [Belozerov, 2001]. In addition, the identity of Russians living in the North Caucasus is being transformed as they become aware of themselves as an ethnic minority [Soldatova, 1998; Vorobyev, 2001], although they are still the dominant majority in the Russian Federation as a whole.

The number of Russians in the North Caucasus began to decline at the end of the 1970s [Belozerov, 2001]. According to official sources, the Russian population in this region decreased by approximately one-fifth in the period between 1979 and 1989. In the 90s, the process increased dramatically. Today, the rate of reduction of the Russian population has declined significantly, but the overall trend has not changed: Russians are leaving the region [Vsesoyuznaya2015; Itogi ...2004; Itogi ... 2010].

This article presents the results of empirical research in KBR and RNO-A. Several factors determined the choice of these republics. These republics have similarities: both are multicultural and with the share of the titular ethnic groups of more than 50–70%, and the share of the Russian population about 20%. In addition, the share of Russians has declined by 10–20% in these republics between 2002 and 2010, these republics also have differences in religious context. In KBR, 72.0% of the population are Muslims, while 27.8% of the population are Orthodox Christians. In RNO-A, 8.7% of the population are Muslims, while 91.2% are Orthodox Christians [Demograficheskiye..., 2012].

These different religious contexts, which place Russian adolescents in a position of being the religious majority or minority, may influence PCVS. The adolescents who belong to the religious minority are influenced by a wider set of values and social norms provided by their two different social environments. Religious identity is especially actualized among members of religious minority [Ebaugh, Chafetz, 2000]. This process proceeds most intensely in adolescence, the period of the search for identity. Therefore, adolescents' own religious identity affects PCVS more than the parental religious identity does. In contrast, adolescents belonging to the religious majority undergo less variety of social norms due to their common religion with the ethnic majority group. This means that parental religious identity may affect PCVS more than the child's own identity, because the family intergenerational transmission of values and identities is still useful for the child's adaptation. Comparing the influence of these different contexts is especially interesting because of the impacts of the conflicting religious norms of the home environment and wider society during adolescence, a period very sensitive to outside influences. Based on these conceptualizations and taking into account social context of KBR and RNO-A, we develop the research question: what are the similarities and differences in the relationships between religious identity, perceived psychological closeness and PCVS among Orthodox Christians in different religious contexts?

We can suggest that children from the religious minority group are more independent in their value preferences and less psychologically dependent on their parents that decreases the effectiveness of intergenerational value transmission. Moreover, perceived parental closeness with their children has a negative impact on PCVS in both groups because of typically critical attitudes of adolescents towards parental influence.

Method

Participants

We have gathered data in North Caucasian republics: KBR (N=118 parent-child dyads from ethnic Russian families) and RNO-A (N=109 parent-child dyads from ethnic Russian families) during 2014. The total sample's size is 454 respondents. Tables 1 provides the basic characteristics of the samples.

Table 1. Gender and age characteristics of the sample

	<i>N</i>	Male (%)	Female (%)	Min.	Max.	Mean	<i>Std.dev.</i>
Russian Orthodox Christians from KBR							
Adolescents	118	54 (51.9%)	50 (48.1%)	14	25	17.8	2.35

Parents	118	34 (30.1%)	78 (69.9%)	34	59	42.7	6.97
Russian Orthodox Christians from RNO-A							
Adolescents	109	34 (32%)	74 (68%)	14	25	18.5	2.80
Parents	109	29 (27%)	79 (73%)	36	61	44.6	6.31

Measures

Values were measured using the Russian version of the Portrait Values Questionnaire Revised (PVQ-RR) [Schwartz et al., 2012]. The PVQ-RR contains 57 short verbal portraits that describe a person's goals, aspirations, or wishes. The questionnaire is based on the refined theory of values and uses 19 values. In order to measure values, respondents choose an answers indicating, "How much is this person like you?" An example of an item is "He/she thinks it is important to do things the way he/she learned from his/her family". The PVQ uses Likert-scale from 1=not like me at all to 6=very much like me. 19 values of Schwartz's refined theory of basic individual values can be combined into four higher order values: Self-Transcendence (all $\alpha > .81$), Openness to change (all $\alpha > .82$), Self-Enhancement (all $\alpha > .76$), Conservation (all $\alpha > .86$).

Religious identity was measured using five items (5-point scales), such as: 'My religious identity is an important part of me', 'I am proud of my religious background'. This scale assesses strength and positivity of religious identity [Verkuyten, 2007; Verkuyten, Yildiz, 2007] (all $\alpha > .92$).

Perceived psychological closeness was evaluated by: 'Please rate your level of psychological closeness with the people listed below, on a 5-point scale from 1 (not close) to 5 (very close): my father, my mother, my son, my daughter ... other family members' For further analysis mutual parent-child closeness estimations were used.

Socio-demographic data were self reported (gender, age, education, ethnicity).

Intergroup analysis of the variables included in the study allowed us to determine the index of proportionality (proportionality index or Tucker's phi) [Lorenzo-Seva, ten Berge, 2006; Tucker, 1951]. All indexes are above 0.9. Therefore, we have the opportunity to compare two models in the discussion.

Data processing was done using the following methods: in the statistical package SPSS 22.0: descriptive statistics, the rate of reliability coefficient α -Cronbach, path analyses in AMOS 22.0.

Procedure

The adolescents were recruited from schools and universities in KBR and RNO-A. Parents of the adolescents filled out the questionnaires at parental meetings at the schools. We asked university students to distribute questionnaires among their parents. Completed questionnaires were returned to the researcher who administrated the survey. Respondents were not remunerated.

Results

Gender, age and education had no effects in the analyses and we do discuss them further.

We calculated our outcome variable 'PCVS' according to the formula (manhattan distance):

$$PCVS = (O_c - O_p + SE_c - SE_p + C_c - C_p + ST_c - ST_p) / 4$$

Note: PCVS=parent-child value similarity; O_c =child's index 'Openness to change'; O_p =parent's index 'Openness to change'; SE_c =child's index 'Self-Enhancement'; SE_p =parent's index 'Self-Enhancement'; C_c =child's index 'Conservation'; C_p =parent's index 'Conservation'; ST_c =child's index 'Self-Transcendence'; ST_p =parent's index 'Self-Transcendence'.

Descriptive statistics, including means, standard deviations, and reliability coefficients are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Means, standard deviations and paired t-Tests for all Measures of the Study

Variables	Adolescents (religious minority)		Parents (religious minority)		Adolescents (religious majority)		Parents (religious majority)		Adolescents and parents (religious minority)		Adolescents and parents (religious majority)		Adolescents (religious minority) and adolescents (religious majority)		Parents (religious minority) and parents (religious majority)	
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	t	Cohen's d	t	Cohen's d	t	Cohen's d	t	Cohen's d
Independent variables																
Religious identity	3.79	.96	4.02	.88	3.80	1.02	3.79	.98	-1.23	.25	.54	.01	-.03	.01	-1.70	.25
Perceived psychological closeness	4.75	.55	4.78	.53	4.63	.77	4.67	.76	-.57	.06	-.61	.05	-.95	.18	-1.02	.17
Openness to change	4.02	.30	3.89	.33	4.15	.46	3.84	.42	3.46***	.41	5.0***	.70	2.56*	.33	-.80	.13
Self-Enhancement	3.80	.60	3.63	.61	3.62	.62	3.50	.58	2.20	.28	-1.37	.20	-.2.11*	.30	-1.56	.22
Conservation	4.22	.59	4.17	.63	4.02	.41	4.26	.38	-2.47*	.08	-5.27***	.61	-.67	.39	2.35*	.17
Self-Transcendence	3.82	.69	3.98	.57	3.90	.82	4.13	.71	-1.74*	.25	-1.37	.30	.87	.11	.86	.23
Dependent variable	Religious minority		Religious majority						t				Cohen's d			
	M	SD	M	SD												
Parent-child value similarity	5.17	.52	5.11	.45												.12

We did not find significant differences in the levels of religious identification between adolescents and parents within both groups or between adolescents and parents from different groups. PCVS does not significantly differ in the groups of religious minority and religious majority.

Adolescents from the religious minority group prefer values of Openness to change, Self-Enhancement and Conservation more than their parents. Adolescents from the religious majority group prefer values of Openness to change more and values of Conservation less than their parents.

Adolescents from the religious majority group prefer values of Openness to change more and values of Self-Enhancement less than adolescents from the religious minority group. Parents from the religious majority group prefer Conservation values more than parents from the religious minority group.

At the next stage of our analysis we computed a correlation matrix, which presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Pearson’s correlations of the variables

	1	2	3	4	5
1 Religious identity of child	-	.26*	.32**	.57**	.23*
2 Religious identity of parent	.38**	-	.07	.22*	.13
3 Child’s perceived psychological closeness with a parent	.23*	.06	-	.30*	-.24*
4 Parent’s perceived psychological closeness with a child	.23*	.14	.48**	-	-.17*
5 Parent-child value similarity	-.04	.24*	.30**	-.12	-

Note: *** $p < .001$; ** $p < .01$; * $p < .05$ (two-tailed); correlations obtained from a sample of Russian Orthodox Christians from KBR are presented in the upper part of the matrix, correlations obtained from a sample of Russian Orthodox Christians from RNO-A are presented in the lower part of the matrix.

Based on the data in Table 3, we conclude that almost all the independent variables of the theoretical model are significantly associated to the dependent variable, allowing us to test the model by applying path analysis without any meaningful adjustments.

The relationships between religious identity, perceived psychological closeness and parent-child value similarity were tested for each of group. Goodness-of-fit indicators of two path models are presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Goodness-of-fit Indicators of Models

Model for the group of	χ^2/df	CFI	RMSEA	SRMR	PCLOSE
The group of religious minority (Russian Orthodox Christians in KBR)	1.03	.99	.02	.03	.53
The group of religious majority (Russian Orthodox Christians in RNO-A)	1.66	.97	.07	.05	.30

Assessments of the model's fit indicates that all of the goodness-of-fit indices are exceptionally good [Hu, Bentler, 1999].

Path model of predictors of PCVS in KBR is presented in Figure 1.

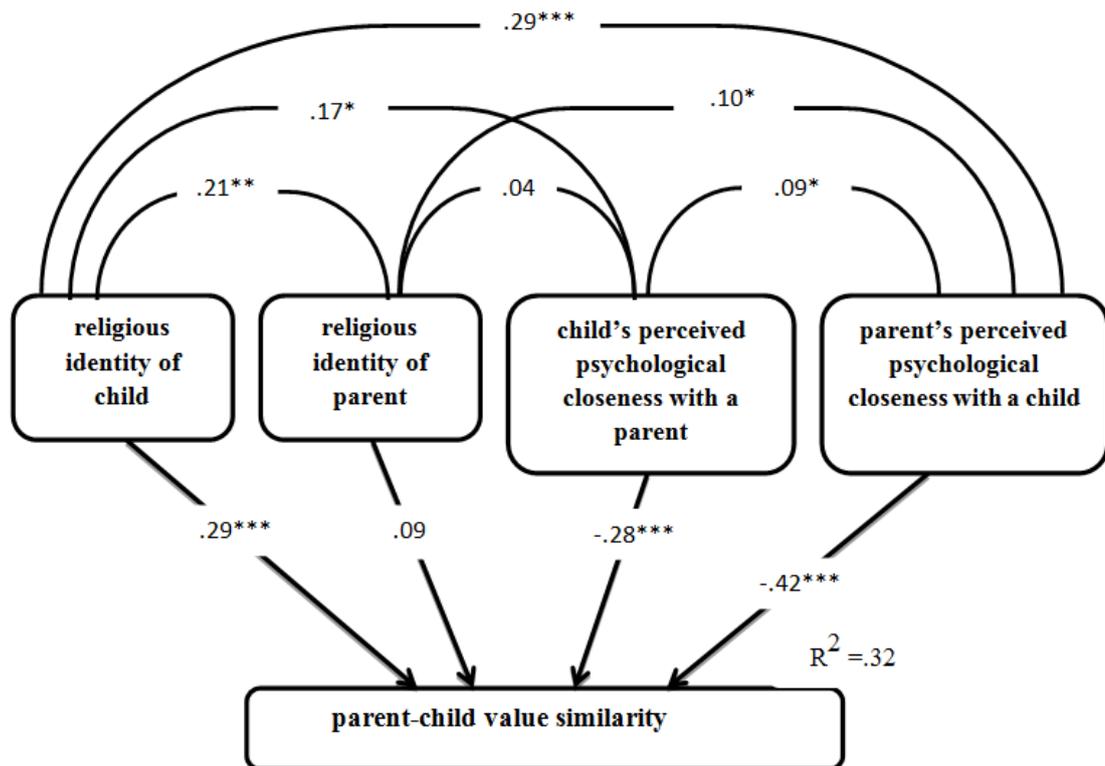


Fig. 1 Path model of predictors of PCVS in the group of religious minority (Russian Orthodox Christians in KBR)

Note: *** $p < .001$; ** $p < .01$; * $p < .05$;

The path model of predictors of PCVS in RNO-A is presented in Figure 2.

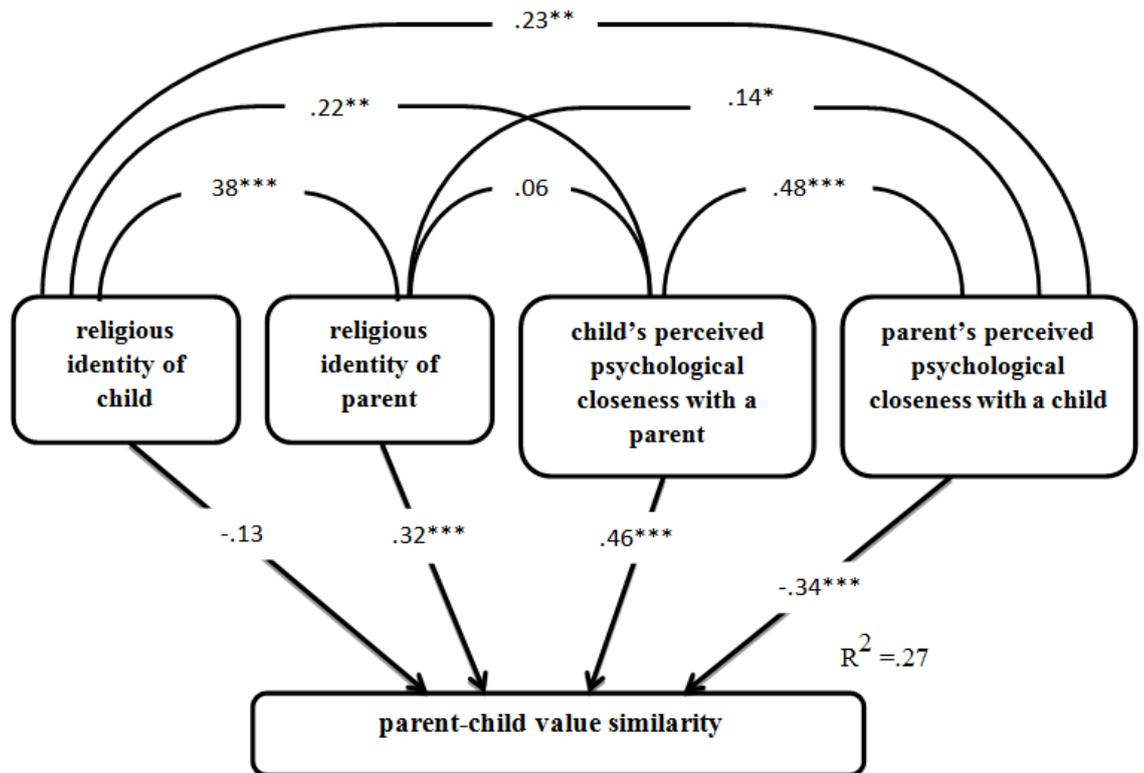


Fig. 2 Path model of predictors parent-child value similarity in the group of religious majority (Russian Orthodox Christians in RNO-A)
 Note: *** $p < .001$; ** $p < .01$; * $p < .05$;

The results for the religious minority group showed that adolescent religious identity significantly and positively predicts PCVS ($\beta=.29, p < .001$). The parental religious identity does not significantly predict PCVS ($\beta=.09, p < .05$).

The results for the religious majority group showed that adolescent religious identity does not significantly predict PCVS ($\beta=-.13, p < .05$). The parental religious identity significantly and positively predicts PCVS ($\beta=.32, p < .001$). Overall, the results demonstrated that the impact of adolescent and parental religious identity on PCVS differ in the religious majority or minority: in the minority adolescent religious identity predicts PCVS while in the majority this predictor is the parental religious identity.

For both groups we found, that the parent's perceived psychological closeness with an adolescent significantly negatively predicts PCVS ($\beta=-.42, p < .001$ for group of religious minority and $\beta=-.34, p < .001$ group of religious majority).

The results for the religious minority group showed that the adolescent's perceived psychological closeness with the parent is a significant negative predictor of PCVS ($\beta = -.28$, $p < .001$).

The results for the religious majority group showed that the adolescent's perceived psychological closeness with the parent was a significant positive predictor of PCVS ($\beta = .46$, $p < .001$).

We also found for both groups that the adolescent and parental religious identity and their perceived psychological closeness were positively related to each other. The adolescent's religious identity positively relates to the perceived psychological closeness with the parent and with parental perceived psychological closeness. At the same time the parental religious identity positively relates to their perceived psychological closeness with the adolescent but does not relate to the adolescent's perceived psychological closeness with the parent.

Discussion

Previous studies have shown that religiosity is an effective tool for socialization and the transmission of values [Myers, 1996; Myers, Trommsdorff, 2012], and the quality of parent-child relationships is an important factor in the transmission of values [Albert, Ferring, 2012]. However, this study for the first time test the simultaneous contribution of the religious identity of parents and adolescents, as well as perceived psychological closeness of parents and adolescents in the similarity of their values in different religious contexts.

The study found that the religious identity of both parents and adolescents is linked to the similarity of their values. However, in an 'alien' religious environment the adolescent's religious identity has the greatest influence on the PCVS. Probably, the high level of religious identity of the young person makes their values close to the values of their parents in an 'alien' religious context, being a "transmission belt" in these terms.

In the same religious context the religious identity of the adolescent has no significant effect on PCVS, and parental religious identity provides the greatest influence on PCVS. This is consistent with the research data on the transmission of religion in groups of ethnic (religious) (Turkish and Moroccan communities in the Netherlands) majority where transmission occurs vertically from parents to children [Maliepaard, Lubbers, 2013]. The transmission of religion is understood as an important part of value transmission.

We would like to draw attention to the fact that parents with high religious identity in an 'alien' religious context do not have a strong value similarity with their children, probably because they are not the only source of influence on children in a multicultural environment. In a different cultural contexts, children from ethnic (religious) (immigrants from 10 countries (Australia, Canada, Finland, France, Germany, Norway, Sweden, The Netherlands, UK, and the US)). minorities often differ from their parents in values, experiencing the intense influence of the other cultural environment, including peers [Vedder et. al. 2009].

Regarding the role of the perceived psychological closeness of parents and adolescents, we found that psychological closeness perceived by adolescents was positively associated with PCVS in the same religious environment, which is consistent with the results of earlier studies. Albert and Ferring [2012] showed that the level of intergenerational coherence of values is higher when adolescents regard their relationship with their mothers as very close; if they feel hostility or anxiety in these relationships, the consistency of the values is lower. In addition, the quality of family relations, family climate and parenting style [Schönpflug, 2001; Albert, Ferring, 2012; Roest, Dubas, Gerris, 2009], have a positive impact on the value similarity of children and parents.

According to this study, in an alien religious context, there is an inverse relationship: the psychological closeness perceived by adolescents is negatively associated with PCVS. Perhaps this is because in the alien religious context children are emotionally closer to those parents that allow them to be "different" in value terms, as in a different cultural environment this can enhance the psychological and sociocultural adaptation of children.

The fact that parental perceived psychological closeness is negatively associated with PCVS in different religious contexts is of particular interest: the less psychologically close parents perceive their children, the higher the actual similarity of their values with the values of their children. Perhaps parents in ethnic minority families may hesitate, when deciding on what kind of values they need to transmit to their offspring: the values of their ethnic culture, or the culture of the dominant majority [Schönpflug, 2001], carrying out the border between what is good for them and good for their children [Grusec, Goodnow, 1994; Knafo & Schwartz, 2003]. Thus, the higher the level of perceived psychological closeness of parents with their children, the more they "allow" their children to be different from themselves.

The relationships of child and parental religious identities are consistent with the results of earlier studies. In their study Leonard et al. [2013] found that parental religiosity predicts

children's religiosity, it was also revealed that the religiosity of adult children (aged 18–23) depends on the perceived parental religiosity, and the perceived similarity of their mother's and father's religious beliefs, their father's faith, support, and their attachment to their parents.

Research by Smith and Denton [2005], Boyatzis [2005, 2009]; Flor and Knapp [2001], and Smith [2003] showed that adolescents imitate their parents in religious beliefs, which is confirmed by the positive correlations between parental and adolescent religiosity. Parents can serve as role models in the patterns of religious behaviour and can develop the religiosity of their children through dialogue or instructions-prescriptions [Schwartz, 2006].

As our study has revealed the relationship between the religious identity of adolescents and religious identity of parents, we suggest that the religiosity of children affects the religiosity of their parents. These data coincide with the research of Schönplflug and Silbereisen [1992] in Germany, who found that the transmission of the importance of religion comes from German mothers to teenagers and vice versa—from teenagers to their parents. Pinquart and Silbereisen [2004] argues that teenagers transfer their religious beliefs to their parents.

This study revealed the close relationship between the psychological closeness perceived by adolescents and by parents, which was expected. The more a child perceives his/her parent as psychologically close, the more the parent perceives the child as psychologically close. In addition, the relationship of the religious identity of adolescents and the perceived psychological closeness between adolescents and parents was shown. This is consistent with the data obtained in the study of Pinquart and Silbereisen [2004], who revealed the transmission of religious values from parents to adolescents in families with an authoritative parenting style, which is characterized by parental susceptibility and benevolence toward their children.

Conclusion

We conducted a cross-cultural study of the influence of religious identity and perceived parent-child psychological closeness on PCVS (which means the effectiveness of value transmission) which resulted in the following findings:

The religious identity of adolescents predicts PCVS in the religious minority group.

The religious identity of parents predicts PCVS in the religious majority group.

The psychological closeness perceived by parents negatively relates to PCVS regardless of the religious environment.

The psychological closeness perceived by adolescents negatively relates to PCVS in the religious minority group.

The psychological closeness perceived by adolescents positively relates to PCVS in the group of religious majority.

In conclusion, we want to emphasize that in different religious contexts the strong religious identity of the child promotes PCVS more than the parental religious identity and perceived child-parent psychological closeness. This suggests the important role of the children and their religiosity in the process of intergenerational transmission of values. In the same religious environment high religious identity and psychological closeness perceived by adolescents to the PCVS, indicating the role of the parents as the main agent of socialization, and the role of emotional attachment of the adolescent to the parent in the process of intergenerational transmission of values in this context.

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