

VALUES AND THEIR SIGNIFICANCE IN HUMAN LIFE

WARTOŚCI I ICH ZNACZENIE W ŻYCIU CZŁOWIEKA

The concept of values is based on their variety – they differ when we talk about values of a performance, aesthetic, ethical, political and even legal values.

According to some theoretical definitions, values are to be understood as an essential attribute and foundation of human existence, of groups and communities, of culture and civilization. They are a part which creates social order which is necessary to preserve human existence¹.

Values always come from a certain culture. Depending on the culture, people specify the materialistic and spiritual values, patterns, relationships, behaviour, course of action as well as a system of values². Value orientation can be considered the most important part of the structure of personality which forms a particular person's knowledge and is closely associated with its thoughts and feelings. Value system creates a base for mirror thinking and gives the direction for each person because these are the values what regulate their behaviour. The order of the values in the system of values is determined by objective quality of values as well as quality evaluators. System of values is such a complex, dynamic and open psychological process, because one constantly experiences new values that are affected by age, education, experience, environment and self-awareness. The highest value is life³.

According to Bartoša value is a „specific characteristic of all social and natural phenomena, which reflects a positive or negative significance of occurrences for humans”⁴ Similarly Kučerova defines value as a cultural category corresponding to higher social, moral and aesthetic standards and ideals⁵.

Among the values of being there are: honesty, courage, peacefulness, autonomy, efficiency, temperance, self-denial, fidelity, restraint.

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¹ V. Štefancová, *Hodnoty a životné pocity ako predpoklad etickej výchovy v súčasnej rodine, in: Dobro a zlo, alebo o morálke psychologické a filozofické aspekty morálky v edukácii (zborník vedeckých štúdií)*, Banská Bystrica 2013, s. 192.

² Z. Hubinková a kol., *Psychologie a sociologie ekonomického chování*, Praha 2008, s. 83.

³ D. Baková, *Rodina včera a dnes z pohľadu hodnôt*, in: *Mosty k rodine 2011: zborník z konferencie konanej 25.10.2011 v Banskej Bystrici*, Banská Bystrica 2011, s. 5.

⁴ S. Kučerová, *Človek-hodnoty-výchova*, Prešov 1996, s. 24.

⁵ J. K. Boroš, *Problematike hodnôt adolescentov (stredoškôľakov a vysokoškôľakov)*, in: „Pedagogická Revue”, 1996, roč. XLVIII, č. 5–6, s. 257.

The value of giving include: commitment, reliability, respect and esteem, love, selflessness, justice, warmth, peacefulness.

Respected and universally „acceptable“ values are beneficial both for the person who recognizes them as well as people with whom the spirit of these values is shared⁶.

Kučerova divides values according to dimensions of self-experiencing and experiencing the world around. She states following groups of values:

- Natural: they can be divided into vital values (the needs of physical existence and are pronounced tendency to maintain and enforce to preservation and development of life i.e.: Health, vigour, physical well-being, natural living conditions, etc.) and social values (a manifestation of man's relationship with their inner self as well as with others, a man has a need of association, sociability, mutual emotions, responsiveness of others; they also want to love and be loved).
- Civilizational: a precondition and a result of social production and organization, technology and economics, which allow one to create materialistic culture as such; these are for instance benefits and comfort.
- Spiritual: a sort of a fireplace, around which the spiritual culture of an individual and a society constitutes i.e.: self-awareness, art capturing the sense of things, the essence of life, intellectual development, education, emotional wealth, etc.⁷.

Although social values and their hierarchy are deeply rooted in culture of any company, they may also be a subject to change because of global development. There are moral values that result from a person's attitude to the world⁸. The basic condition of moral behaviour is freedom. A free man should be, in every situation, in line with their moral responsibility⁹.

Value system and factors influencing it

Starting from the most basic cell formed by a human which is a family, through friends at school or work till the entire surrounding environment, each of us has to confront reality and is forced to make decisions and to manifest, basing on their foundation which is their values. A man is an intentional being and therefore always acts with the same purpose, it's just that they do not always recognize consciously what the intention is. They might even sometimes be in conflict with it. „Focus of personality on creation and acquisition of certain values is called value system“¹⁰. It becomes a moral right to choose certain values and to hierarchize them in

⁶ R. Eyre, L. Eyre, *Jak naučit děti hodnotám*, Praha 2000, s. 12.

⁷ S. Kučerová, op. cit., s. 79.

⁸ Z. Hubinková a kol., op. cit., s. 86.

⁹ Ibidem, s. 87.

¹⁰ P. Lajčiaková, A. Blaščíková, *Pohľad na hodnotovú orientáciu mladých ľudí*, in: *Zborník príspevkov vedeckej konferencie s medzinárodnou účasťou konanej v rámci 5. výročia stretnutia SFZ*, Bratislava, s. 293.

a process of value-orientated activities. Systematization of value orientation is the aim of human's experience, which comes as a sum of knowledge and habits. It becomes a set of norms and is developed and implemented throughout human's life, but also experienced quite often, reforming themselves in the present time¹¹.

Everyday experiences can then be influencing and be preferred over currently presented values. A map of man's values may change throughout person's life under the influence of society, but also under the influence of severe life events, for example. job loss, divorce, illness, childbirth, and the like.

Value systems inside companies can vary depending on age, sex, socioeconomic status, educational level and others¹². „The research findings are that the most important values for young people (aged 15–30 years) are health, love, peace, freedom, friendship, interesting work”¹³. At the same time the research pointed out that the more educated the person is the more they value social recognition, prestige, interesting work and self-development.

In general we can say that human's system of values primarily affects family, school, society and mass media. Connection between the environment and humans relations are described by certain relations, which are interconnected:

- human personality – family environment,
- human personality – social environment (peers, school class, school clubs, hobby groups, etc.),
- human personality – the local environment (town, village, city, district, region, etc.),
- human personality – society and its norms, laws, institutions, media environment (media, mass communication, etc.)¹⁴.

Family environment and values

A key factor in the transmission of values and shaping their system of a child, is a family. The important influencers are family atmosphere, mutual relations in the family, system of values and attitudes within the family. They shape attitudes, values and basic objectives of a child in a coherent system.

Nowadays there is a very popular trend called a democratic or liberal education. It does not allow teaching children moral values until they are able to create their own value system themselves¹⁵. Opponents of this trend argue by saying that even if the parent does not want to interfere their child's values, they are influenced consciously or unconsciously by their peers, television, parents. Therefore such education is equal to metaphoric image of a fragile paper boat which is outside on a stormy sea hoping to swim to a safe harbour.

¹¹ Ibidem, s. 294.

¹² J. Průcha, J. Veteška, *Andragogický slovník*, Praha 2012, s. 119.

¹³ Ibidem, s. 120.

¹⁴ D. Čábalová, *Pedagogika*, Praha 2011, s. 196.

¹⁵ R. Eyre, L. Eyre, op. cit., s. 10.

Equality provides children with facilities that enable socialization. It is focused on certain cultural and social values and standards of behaviour, develops their social skills, communication skills and provides social support¹⁶. Matoušek states that „a family is the child’s first meeting point with a specific binding model of society”¹⁷.

A human is not only affected by their family but also by the nature and local social environment and of course the company and especially when the family goes through many challenges.

Many published research show that nowadays children are insufficiently educated by their parents due to parents’ commitments, which disturb functioning of a family and therefore education is reduced to a command, to prohibition or control via mobile phone or the Internet¹⁸.

Personality and social environment

Social groups are an important environment for an individual off-springs, building their independence from parents and by their self-realization. Social groups can act both positively and negatively. The groups acting positively to its members include various youth organizations with which they meet during their leisure-time.

Personality and local environment

Local environment means a space where a group of people has certain social relationships¹⁹.

Conclusion

Nowadays humans have norms, laws, institutions, media and mass communication which form person’s system of values. Present is associated with the concept of globalization, which is a complex social process of continuing secularization, rationalization and modernization²⁰.

Among socially important and recognized values there is education. It is very important that we recognize that the lack of education among young people is a threat to society and instead an optimistic vision of an educated society there is the pessimistic one – about the decline of education, whose causes are much deeper²¹.

¹⁶ D. Čábalová, op. cit., s. 197.

¹⁷ Ibidem, s. 198.

¹⁸ M. Gluchmanová, *Uplatnenie princípov a hodnôt etiky sociálnych dôsledkov v učiteľskej etike*, Prešov, Filozofická fakulta Prešovskej univerzity v Prešove 2009, s. 169.

¹⁹ D. Čábalová, op. cit., s. 207.

²⁰ S. Jirásková, *Vývojové tendencie organizačných štruktúr vsúčasnosti*, in: *Organizácia založená na vedomostiach v období globalizácie a internacionalizácie – zborník z medzinárodnej vedeckej konferencie konanej 26.–27. apríla 2010 v Poprade, Ružomberok*, 2010, s. 104.

²¹ S. Gálik, *Filozofia a médiá*, Bratislava 2012, s. 62.

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SUMMARY

In the past, the Epos addressed the question of values. Defining the term itself is subject to review by many philosophers, especially those who have tried to create a universal value system. Proper value system is very important especially in the young generation that lives in open space who acquires not only their culture but also the cultures of other countries. The current period was also characterized by rapid changes and the time of postmodernism thus amplify the riskiness of a life stage of life, so it is important the correct value chain of values.

Keywords: people, values, value systems, meaning.

STRESZCZENIE

W przeszłości Epos próbował odpowiedzieć na pytanie „Czym jest wartość?”. Zdefiniowaniem tego pojęcia zajmuje się wielu filozofów, a zwłaszcza tych, którzy próbują stworzyć uniwersalny system wartości. Właściwy system wartości jest bardzo ważny zwłaszcza wśród młodych pokoleń, które żyją na otwartych przestrzeniach i przyswajają nie tylko swoją lecz także kultury innych krajów. Na obecne postawy wpływ miały również gwałtowne zmiany ow czasach postmodernizmu co zwiększa ryzyko na pewnym etapie rozwoju człowieka, więc istotnym jest posiadanie poprawnego systemu wartości.

Słowa kluczowe: ludzie, wartości, system wartości, znaczenie.