

Exploring the Values of Educators in Greek Schools

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| Abstract | Article Info |
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| <p><i>Among the factors that determine an organization's effectiveness, values are critical elements. However, little is known about the values of those who work in schools. The research reported here is an initial step in exploring the value orientations of educators in Greece. The findings are used to formulate recommendations for extended investigations of Greek educators' values and the implications for school administration and leadership.</i></p> | <p>Article History: <i>Received</i> December, 12, 2018 <i>Accepted</i> June, 30, 2019</p> <hr style="width: 50%; margin: 5px auto;"/> <p>Keywords: <i>Values, teacher education, leadership effectiveness</i></p> |

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Introduction

In general, the contemporary organizational literature reflects widespread acceptance that values are critical elements in an organization's culture, mission, and leaders' styles. More important, it has been shown that values influence the effectiveness of organizations (Francis and Woodcock 1990, Boeckmann & Dickinson, 1999, Hoy and

Miskel 2005, Berkhout, & Rowlands, 2007; Gregory, Harris, Armenakis, & Shook, 2009). Consistent with this, the research that has been done in educational organizations has shown that the values held by individuals and groups affect what happens in the organization in many ways. For example, Begley (1999) and Begley and Johanssen (2005) concluded that the values held by individuals influence the action alternatives they consider acceptable or unacceptable; and Leithwood and Steinbach (1995) and Lazaridou (2002) found that values influence leaders' approaches to, and success in, solving problems. However, understandings about the roles that values play in educational organizations are still rather limited. This is especially true for Greece.

The research I report here was designed to begin addressing this lack of information through a survey of the values of teachers and school principals in the Greek school system. Knowledge of Greek educators' value would be useful, first of all, because Greece is making radical changes in its social structures as a consequence of a financial crisis and European Union pressures for fiscal and social reform – and the success or failure of any attempt to make related changes in the education system hinges on those changes fitting with stakeholders' values.

Second, knowledge about the current values of Greek educators would be valuable in efforts to strengthen leadership in Greek schools, for research has shown that leaders are more effective when they take others' values into account.

However, another reason for conducting this investigation is that there is some ambiguity about the effects that can be expected when school principals attempt participative approaches with their teaching



staff. For example, Hulpia and Devos (2010) found that when teachers' morale was low, they were not committed to the school and did not respond to distributed leadership. Moreover, even though the school leaders recognized this problem, they felt unable to conquer the negativism, which demotivated school members who were initially committed to the school. And an additional caution about distributed leadership is that motivation for distribution arises partly from the growing recognition that principals and other senior leaders are overloaded, particularly in education systems with high levels of decentralization to the school level (Bush, 2013) and is a way of encouraging teachers to do more work, a form of disguised managerialism (Fitzgerald & Gunter, 2006; Liljenberg, 2015) that could have negative consequences.

In the wider perspective, the inquiry I report here was designed to contribute eventually to understandings of the conditions that must be present if school leaders' modes of leading are to be successful. In line with this larger objective I espoused three assumptions. First, I accepted that there are various fairly distinct styles of leading – more specifically, that there are five archetypal approaches or styles of leading: heroic, transactional, transformative, distributed, and dispersed. Furthermore, I assumed that the contingency principle applies to each leadership style – that is, the success of a given approach to leading is contingent on certain conditions being present. Third, I assumed that the values of the actors in a leadership situation are important contingent factors.

But before I could pursue my overarching objective, I had to identify a suitable means of surveying Greek educators' values. To this end I reviewed the pertinent literature and conducted a small-scale survey. The remainder of this article is a report of this research.

Conceptualizations and Models of Values

It is useful to distinguish between attitudes, beliefs, and values. In this connection an early statement by Gue still serves well:

Attitudes are ... a state of readiness to respond, refer exclusively to the individual, not the object, and exclude imputations of the desirable. Beliefs are considered to be those phenomena that are accepted by the individual as real or possible, true or false, correct or incorrect. Beliefs do not necessarily include feelings or commitment to action. Values are distinguished from beliefs and attitudes by the inclusion of the concept of betterness (Gue, 1967, p. 16-17).

As to definitions of values, the following also has stood the test of time:

A value is a conception, explicit or implicit, distinctive of an individual or characteristic of a group, of the desirable that influences the selection from available modes, means, and ends of action (Kluckhöhn, 1951, p. 395).

There are numerous models of human values. For the purposes of this article I will focus on those of Kluckhöhn and Strodbeck, Rokeach, Hofstede, and Schwartz. These I will outline briefly and then indicate how their provenances influenced my choice of instrument for this research.

Kluckhöhn and Strodbeck (1961) developed a model of basic human values that entails three propositions. The first is that all humans face six basic challenges or problems; the second is that there is a limited number of possible solutions to each of the problems; and the third is that humans develop preferences among the possible solutions – the solutions are valued differentially. The basic problems and their possible solutions are as follows (Maznevski, DiStefano, Gomez, Noorderhaven, & Wu, 2002):



1. What is the nature of human beings: Do we prefer to think of them as essentially good, evil, or neutral?
2. What is our relationship to nature: Do we believe that we are subjugated to nature, in harmony with nature, or have mastery over it?
3. What is our relationship to other human beings: Do we prefer our relations with others to be lineal (ordered positions within groups), collateral (primacy given to goals and welfare of groups), or individualistic (primacy given to the individual)?
4. What is our primary mode of activity: Do we prefer being-in-becoming, active, or reflective?
5. How do we view time: Do we focus on the past, the present, or the future?
6. How do we think about space: Do we consider it public, private, or mixed?

Kluckhöhn and Strodtbeck developed this model over 10 years through rigorous content analysis of a generation's worth of anthropological field studies around the world (Maznevski et al, 2002).

Rokeach (1973, 1979) developed a classification of values by amassing several hundred values suggested by 130 individuals and a literature review, then distilled them "intuitively" into two sets – 18 "terminal" values and 18 "instrumental" values. The former represent desirable end-states of existence, the latter represent desirable modes of conduct for attaining those end-states (Tuulik, Öunapuu, Kuimet, & Titov, 2016).

Hofstede's (1980, 2001) theory posits that values cluster on six dimensions:

1. Power distance – acceptance versus rejection of power being distributed unequally.
2. Individualism vs. collectivism – preference for being left alone to look after themselves versus remaining in a close-knit network.
3. Masculinity vs. femininity: Masculinity – preference for assertiveness, heroism, achievement, and material reward for attaining success versus a preference for modesty, cooperation, quality of life, and caring for the weak.
4. Uncertainty avoidance – preference for making life as predictable and controllable as possible versus being more relaxed, open, or inclusive.
5. Long-term vs. short-term – preference for honouring and keeping traditions, and valuing steadfastness versus preference for adaptation and pragmatic problem-solving as circumstances dictate.
6. Indulgence vs. restraint – preference for acting on impulses and desires versus preference for exercising restraint. (Adapted from Cleverism. (n.d.).)

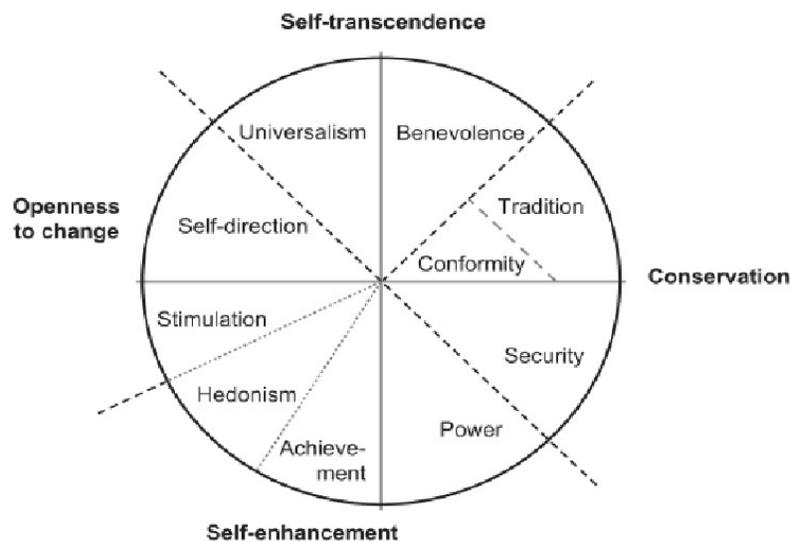
This model was derived initially from a survey of the values espoused by 117,000 employees in worldwide subsidiaries of the IBM corporation. The survey was motivated by concerns about the effectiveness of cross-national communications. The model has scaffolded countless investigations, particularly in cross-cultural psychology, international management, and cross-cultural communication. It continues to be a major resource in cross-cultural fields.

Schwartz theorized, first of all, that values are beliefs linked to emotions, refer to desirable goals that motivate action, transcend

specific actions and situations, and serve as standards for evaluating actions, policies, people, and events. Values relate to three classes of universal human requirements: biologically based needs of the organism, social interactional requirements for interpersonal coordination, and social institutional demands for group welfare and survival (Dali, 2016). Second, Schwartz theorized initially that there are ten basic human values in all major cultures. Subsequently this typology was refined to comprehend 19 basic values (Schwartz, Melech, Lehman, Burgess, Harris, & Owens, 2001). Third, Schwartz theorized that individuals and cultural groups organize these basic values into relatively enduring hierarchies of importance (Schwartz, 2016). Fourth, The relative importance of values guides behaviour. Fifth, Schwartz's theory is rounded out with a "circumplex" – for example, Figure 1 depicts relationships in the 10-values model (Schwartz, 2012).

Figure 1.

Relationships among Schwartz's 10 basic human values



The circumflex depicts the proposition that some values are compatible (adjacent in the circle) while others are opposed (diametrically opposite). According to Schwartz (2017), actions that promote each value have consequences that are congruent with some values but conflict with others. For example, pursuing tradition values is congruent with pursuing conformity values. Both motivate actions of submission to external expectations. In contrast, pursuing novelty and change (stimulation values) typically conflicts with preserving time-honoured customs (tradition values).

Values in Education

Values in Teaching

In the field of education, research on the role of values in relation to the work of teachers has gained momentum in recent years. The values associated of people who wish to become teachers have included a commitment to the well-being of children, justice, equality, and intellectual development (Sachs, 2000).

Tirri's (2010) research on the values that inform teachers' professional ethics and relationships surfaced caring and respect, professionalism and commitment, and cooperation. She also notes that caring and respect are the "most evident emotional expressions" associated with meeting the needs of individual students.

Clement (2010) unravels students' perceptions of "caring teachers" and states that they interact democratically and encourage reciprocity in communication, deal with students fairly and respect them as persons, account for individual differences when formulating expectations, offer constructive feedback, give appropriate support



and feedback, have high expectations of students, and model commitment.

Two of the more enduring profiles of qualities/values that underpin optimal teacher-student relationships are those of Carl Rogers (1969) and Paulo Freire (1998). Rogers portrayed the ideal teacher and human being as emotionally and psychologically stable, guided by the following values:

Being Real. This involves the teacher “being herself/himself without pretense or assuming different classroom persona” she/he can be enthusiastic, bored, interested, angry, sensitive and sympathetic because she/he accepts these feelings as her/his own, she/he has no need to impose them”.

Prizing, Accepting, and Trusting. This involves the teacher attaching importance to acknowledging individual students, and caring for them in such a way that their feelings and opinions are affirmed. It includes accepting the students’ “occasional apathy” and “erratic desires” as well as their disciplined efforts.

Being Empathic and Understanding. This involves the teacher valuing and demonstrating a sensitive understanding of how the student thinks and feels about learning. In his endorsement of context as a major requisite for learning, Rogers (1969) adopts the student voice: “At last someone understands how it feels to be me without wanting to analyze me or judge me. Now I can grow and learn.”

Being a Fully Functioning Person. This involves teachers in “the process of being and becoming themselves” by being open to their feelings and evidence from all sources, and by discovering that they are “soundly and realistically social”. Such teachers are emotionally

secure and have no need to be defensive. In similar fashion Freire's (1998) "Indispensable Qualities of Progressive Teachers" also portrayed the essentially human and emotionally responsive teacher as valuing the following:

Humility – attaching importance to knowing one's limitations, and embracing a democratic rather than an authoritarian classroom environment.

Lovingness – loving both students and teaching, and practicing "armed love" (fighting for what is right).

Courageousness – overcoming one's own fears.

Tolerance – respecting difference but not "acquiescing to the intolerable."

Decisiveness – making often-difficult choices for the best, yet being careful not to "nullify oneself in the name of being democratic."

Living the tension between patience and impatience – striving to preserve the tension between the two yet never surrendering to either.

While some of the ideal-teacher values identified by Rogers (1969) and Freire (1998) are perennial – i.e., realness, lovingness, humility, the fully functioning person, and the joy of living – others have been replaced as conceptions of teaching and learning changed. Brady (2006) identified three phases in the evolution of broad approaches to learning and teaching, and posits that contemporary learning and teaching is based on the valuing of social constructivism. Similarly Bruner (1996) claimed that learning should be participative (students being engaged in their learning), proactive (students taking initiative for their learning), and collaborative (students working with



each other and their teacher to promote their learning). This active view of learners has had the effect of highlighting the need for teacher tolerance and neutrality in values education, and accenting the need for student participation and pro-action.

Begley and Wong (2001) reported obstacles often encountered in the attempts of managers to understand the values of others, and the effect they have on their actions. According to Begley's research the main obstacles are instability of teachers' values, the concept teachers attribute to the values they refer to, age and related factors. An investigation by van Niekerk and Botha (2017) revealed that managers valued an open school climate, and consider it a prerequisite for sharing their personal values with their teachers.

In Karakose's (2007) survey, teachers pointed out that when managers did not exhibit moral behaviour, they were concerned and their effectiveness was reduced. In contrast, when managers engaged in moral behaviour, their efficacy increased and the school experienced greater success. In similar vein, many surveys have indicated that teachers praise morality in managers' behaviour and feel safe with it (e.g., Feng-Feng, 2016; Keskinilic-Kara & Zafer-Gunes, 2017).

In short, being a good teacher requires more than a solid theoretical training. Teachers should adopt the principles that guarantee good professional practice and appropriate interaction with students and colleagues. It is therefore, important to determine whether universities pay attention to inculcating appropriate professional values and moral principles in future teachers.

As to the values of teachers in Greece, very little is known. Hatzimihail (2008) found that her research participants attached

primary importance to freedom, family, justice, selflessness, stability, self-control, responsibility, respect for others, religious faith, patience, creativity, meritocracy, and honesty. The participants also valued ethical and moral principles. More specifically, they valued such behaviours as solving moral dilemmas and making moral decisions, creating an ethical school culture and atmosphere, being socially responsible, and fulfilling responsibilities. With regard to directors (principals) desirable behaviours are those that reflect the values of equality and encouraging teachers, understanding, humility, self-evaluation, sincerity, and protection of individual rights. Finally, Lada (2018) found that teachers valued respect, loyalty, justice, sociability, and trust.

Values and Leadership

The literature about leadership presents many types or styles of leadership, the main ones being heroic (e.g., Burns, 1978; Bass & Avolio, 1994; Yukl, 1994; Northouse, 2013), transactional and transformational (e.g., Burns, 1978), distributed (e.g., Leithwood, Jantzi, Earl, Watson, Levin, & Fullan, 2004; Sinclair, 2004), and dispersed (Lazaridou & Fris, 2008; MacBeath, 2005). Much of the discourse about these modes of leading concerns how they differ. In this regard the various modes can be viewed, first of all, as varying in how control over an organization's objectives and activities is allocated. Lazaridou and Fris (2008) have argued that under this lens heroic leadership inheres concentration of influence/power/control in one individual (autocracy, from Greek *autokratēs*: ruling by oneself) while, in contrast, dispersed (not distributed) leadership allows and encourages leadership initiatives by all members of a group or organization (democracy, from Greek *dēmokratia*: government by common people). The styles with low dispersion of power have fallen



into disfavor among some, primarily because many organizations have become too complex to be managed by one person and, it is said, contemporary workers want to be genuinely engaged in deciding what direction to take and how to go there. (Gunter, Hall, & Bragg, 2013). With distributed and/or dispersed leadership the emphasis is upon interdependent interaction and practice rather than individual and independent actions associated with those with formal leadership roles or responsibilities. (Harris, Jones, Adams, Perera, & Sharma, 2014). In contrast, transactional leaders, as well as transformative leaders, use varying amounts of power of position to make decisions unilaterally with little real input from subordinates (Lazaridou & Fris, 2008). Contemporaneously, dispersed leadership has gained considerable favour because:

1. It is a pragmatic way to ease the burden of overworked leaders (Bush, 2013; Hartley, 2010).
2. Research has indicated a positive relationship between distributed leadership, organisational improvement and student achievement (Hallinger & Heck, 2009; Leithwood & Mascall, 2008).
3. Mobilising expertise of individuals at all levels in [an organization] facilitates change and increases the capacity for improvement.

Attention has turned to *when* the various modes of leading are best deployed. In this regard the contingency theories of leadership that have developed acknowledge that nominal leaders exercise considerable influence, but also insist that the leaders' influence is mediated by the characteristics of the environments in which they operate (Jackson & Parry, 2011; Houghton & Yoho, 2016). These

environmental “contingent” factors include the characteristics of “followers” and their values.

School leaders too need to be informed about the nature of the environments in which they operate – including the value orientations of those they have to lead. Equally important, they need to be informed about the ways value orientations differ from one country (or even region) to another. The “best practices” they hear about may have been developed in different value-ecologies, and research has shown that borrowing of “best practices” can be hazardous (Steiner-Khamsi, 2006).

The values that underlie an individual’s leadership style need to be perfectly clear – his actions and his decisions (Shapiro and Gross, 2013). Where the values of a leader are not clearly defined or easily perceived the colleagues, his personal development and prosperity – as well as his colleagues and the whole school – will be impaired, because values are the ideal basis for decision-making (Eikenberry, 2010). In similar fashion, Johnson (2010) also emphasizes that it is impossible to be a leader without clarity of values. Values affect people's attitudes in life and way they act and behave (Baloglu, 2012). Eikenberry (2010) also emphasises the importance of values for leaders, noting that they strengthen the ability to influence, to act clearly, to reduce tension, and to guide decision making.

A survey of South African school directors (principals) by Van Niekerk and Botha (2017) revealed an awareness that their personal values were an important consideration. These directors recognised that each school has different needs and values and they agreed with Begley’s contention that directors need to adopt values that fit particular contexts – including the values inherent in the legislation



and regulations of their state. The values they considered fundamental to fulfilling their duties successfully were honesty, respect, integrity, equality, loyalty, coherence in their work, professionalism, accountability, and democracy. They believed that sharing these core values with their colleagues could be achieved best in an open school climate, in a variety of ways, including frequent dialogue with everyone in order to continually reinforce the basic values.

The findings of Van Niekerk and Botha are echoed in research by Keskinilic-Kara and Zafer-Gunes (2017). They found that successful directors espouse high moral values, are capable and sensitive, and are able to influence their colleagues. The respondents accorded the most value to being reliable and engaging in proactive avoidance of difficult situations.

Research by Cherkowski, Walker, and Kutsyuruba (2015) in Canada indicated that managers consider it important to foster moral values like trust in their schools, and believed that such values would provide guidance when making unpleasant decisions. However, they also reported a reluctance on the part of teachers to connect with their moral values and become informal leaders in their schools.

The Greek Education System

Education in Greece is highly centralized and bureaucratic. It is regulated with a complex of numerous laws and decrees, all of which are overseen by the Ministry of Education, Research, and Religious Affairs. The Ministry exercises centralized control over state schools by prescribing the curriculum, appointing staff, and controlling funding. Private schools also fall under the mandate of the Ministry, which exercises supervisory control over them. At a regional level, the

supervisory role of the Ministry is exercised through Regional Directorates of Primary and Secondary Education, and those Directorates operate in every Prefecture.

Over the years, the Ministry made significant changes to the education system, most driven by the wish of each successive government to adopt recent research findings and acclaimed education models of other countries. Adapting state-of-the-art research in the field of education, as well as foreign education practices to meet the needs of Greek society and labour markets has resulted in a multi-layered education system that caters to all students in the country. Most students in Greece attend public schools at all levels from pre-school to tertiary – none of which levy tuition fees. Less than 10% of the student population enrolls in private schools.

Research Method

Method

This research was guided by two questions:

1. What are the contemporary values of educators in Greece?
2. Do Greek educators' values vary according to such demographic characteristics as gender and age?

I gathered data with the Greek language versions (one for men, one for women) of Schwartz's Revised Portrait Values Questionnaire (PVQ-RR) and two questions about participants' genders and ages. The questionnaire was designed to surface the 19 values in Schwartz's refined model of values or the earlier 10 values, and the four higher order value types (Schwartz, 2016). At the discussion, the suitability of



the Revised Portrait Values Questionnaire (SPVQ-RR) for investigating educators' values in Greece is also addressed.

The questionnaire was completed by a small convenience sample of 111 educators from various sectors in various locations in Greece. The responses were coded according to Schwartz's scoring and analysis instructions (Schwartz, 2016) for computing value-factor scores. The data were analyzed with IBM-SPSS 20. Given that the sample was small and select (see below), the response scores were analyzed in terms of Schwartz's 10-values model only. Below, there is a description of the instrument used in the study.

Instrument

Perhaps the best-known surveys of values are the long-term European Values Study (EVS) and the World Values Survey (WVS), but their interviews/questionnaires are lengthy and administered face-to-face by trained interviewers (European Values Study, 2015; World Values Survey, n.d.). For example, the questionnaires used in Wave 7 (2017-18) of the WVS consists of 290 items relating to 15 issues (World Values Survey - a (n.d.)). For the project I report here, the WVS and EVS instruments were clearly impractical. Instruments based on Rokeach's model have been criticized for lacking content validity, uncertainty about measuring what is preferred as opposed to what ought to be preferred, confounding of interests and values, and including only Western middle-class values (Domino & Domino, 2006). For these reasons the Rokeach model did not suit my investigation.

Although Hofstede's model has been used in many studies, some concerns have been expressed (e.g., McSweeney, 2002; Moulettes, 2007) Two particular critiques are that (1) the dimensions

were extracted from a very large data set, but those data came from sales and engineering personnel in subsidiaries of only one multinational cooperation, IBM; and (2) the questions asked were insufficiently wide-ranging and deep – they related only to organizational communications. These critiques rendered Hofstede's model less than optimal for my study.

The Kluckhöhn and Strodtbeck model aligned with my goal of surveying universal value orientations at the individual level – that is to say, to focus on values espoused personally rather than perceptions of a cultural group's values. One survey instrument based on this model -- the Cultural Perspectives Questionnaire (CPQ) -- seemed eminently suitable. It was developed by Maznevski and DiStefano (1995) and assessed respondents' preferences for 11 variations of four cultural value orientations: relationships, environment, nature of humans, and activity (Maznevski, DiStefano, Gomez, Noorderhaven, & Wu, 2002). Unfortunately, the CPQ project at the International Institute for Management Development (IMD) in Lausanne had been suspended and I was not able, at the time, to gain access to the CPQ.

Schwartz's theory has been validated in many cross-cultural studies of individual values. For example, one study involved 97 samples, 44 countries, and 25,863 participants (Potts, 2015). An investigations using Schwartz's refined 19-values model have consistently supported the proposition that an individual's behaviour is a product of trade-offs between opposing values (Schwartz et al, 2001; Schwartz et al, 2012). Schwartz's model of universal human values, then, was congruent with my desire to assess values in terms of basic challenges or problems that all humans face, and to survey values at the individual rather than group/cultural level. In addition, research by Pavlopoulos (2014) among adults in Greece, supported



Schwartz's 10-values model. But it should be noted that Pavlopoulos' survey did not focus on teachers exclusively.

In light of these considerations, I elected to use Schwartz's revised Portrait Values Questionnaire (PVQ-RR), which was already available in Greek.

Findings

Participants

The participants were 88 women and 23 men (79%, 21% respectively). They ranged in age from 22 to 63 years; the average age was 34. The distribution by 10-year age-groups is presented in Table 1. Half of this group was in the 30-49 age bracket.

Table 1.

Age-groups – Descriptive Statistics

| Age group | Frequency | Percent |
|-----------|-----------|---------|
| 20-29 | 18 | 16 |
| 30-39 | 27 | 24 |
| 40-49 | 30 | 27 |
| 50-59 | 19 | 17 |
| 60-69 | 2 | 2 |
| Missing | 15 | 14 |
| Total | 111 | 100 |

Questionnaire

A few participants commented on the questionnaire's length – but seemed to be not much concerned. Nevertheless, this suggests that data from future surveys should be tested for random responding and other rating nuisances (Gosling, Schwartz, & Koelkebeck, 2016). In addition, some participants indicated that the labels attached to the six points on the response scale were confusing. This suggests that the labels may need to be adjusted. But changes would have to be thought out and tested carefully to ensure clarity in the minds of respondents (Gosling, Schwartz, & Koelkebeck, 2016).

Values

In terms of the first question about the contemporary values of educators in Greece, table 2 presents the participants' mean scores on the ten basic human values in descending order of magnitude.



Table 2.

Rank Ordered Mean Scores on 10 Value Dimensions of the PVQ-RR

| Rank | Value | Mean |
|------|----------------|------|
| 1 | Benevolence | 5.2 |
| 2 | Security | 5.1 |
| 3 | Self-direction | 5.0 |
| 4 | Universalism | 5.0 |
| 5 | Hedonism | 4.8 |
| 6 | Conformity | 4.7 |
| 7 | Achievement | 4.6 |
| 8 | Stimulation | 4.3 |
| 9 | Tradition | 4.2 |
| 10 | Power | 3.1 |

The first thing to note is that, with one exception, the means lie beyond the mid-point (3.5) of the response scale. Second, the participants portrayed themselves as valuing power much less than all the other values – distant one interval on the six-point scale. And third, there are four clusters of means along the response continuum as presented in table 3 below.

Table 3.

Clustering of Values Along the 6-point Response Scale of the PVQ-RR

| | | |
|----------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Benevolence | Protecting and promoting the welfare of others. | |
| Security | Safety of society, relationships, and self | First tier |
| Self-direction | Independence in choosing, creation, and exploring. | (5.0-5.2) |
| Universalism | Protecting the welfare of all people and nature. | |
| Hedonism | Gratification of personable wants and needs. | |
| Conformity | Respecting and adhering to social expectations and norms. | Second tier (4.6-4.8) |
| Achievement | Personal success according to socially defined standards. | |
| Stimulation | Seeking excitement, novelty, and challenge. | Third tier |
| Tradition | Respecting long-established cultural customs and ideas | (4.2-4.3) |
| Power | Social status, control over people and resources. | Fourth tier (3.1) |



A possible explanation for the clusters is that they ghost the circumflex aspect of Schwartz's theory (Figure 1 above). First, in the cluster of values with the highest means, three are adjacent in the circumflex (Benevolence, Universalism, and Self-direction); while Security, as the circumflex shows, is their motivational opposite. Second, in cluster two, Hedonism and Achievement are adjacent in the circumflex and Conformity is opposite. Third, cluster three consists of the two opposites Stimulation and Tradition. The remaining value, Power, is opposite Universalism in the circumflex – which is consistent with these two values having distant means (3.1 vs. 5.0).

Differences Related to Gender and Age

As to the second research question regarding the variations of the values of Greek educators according to the demographics, first, multivariate analysis of variance was performed to test for effects of gender on value scores. The results indicated that there were no significant effects of gender on all the dependent variables (the ten values) considered as a group ($p < .05$). Then, univariate tests for the effect of gender on each of the value-dimensions uncovered significant effects on only Benevolence scores, which were significantly higher for women than men (mean of 5.3 and 4.7 respectively, $p < .05$).

Second, analysis of variance for effects of age on the ten values uncovered significant effects on only Hedonism ($p < .001$). The Pearson correlation coefficient was -0.3, indicating that the value attached to Hedonism went down as age increased.

Discussion

One of the objectives for this research was to verify that Schwartz's Revised Portrait Values Questionnaire (PVQ-RR) is

suitable for assessing educators' values in Greece. As in Pavlopoulos' research (2014), participants in this investigation indicated that this was the case, except for a few comments by my respondents that the response scale was somewhat confusing. With this qualification noted, I concluded that the PVQ-RR in its Greek versions is suitable for working towards my overarching objective of investigating the values of Greek educators in a larger scale.

Greek Educators' Values

Another objective for this project was to gain a tentative reading on Greek educators' current values. To this end I examined the data through the lens of Schwartz's 10-values model rather than his refined 19-values model – the small sample militated against useful fine-grained analyses. My findings regarding the rank-order that my sample of educators assigned to the 10 values are comparable to Pavlopoulos' (2014) findings for his sample of adult Greeks in general, not teachers specifically. Table 4 compares the two samples' rank ordering of values and the underlying means.



Table 4.

Rank-order of Values: Author vs. Pavlopoulos

| Author sample | Means | Means | Pavlopoulos sample |
|----------------|-------|-------|--------------------|
| Benevolence | 5.2 | 5.0 | Benevolence |
| Security | 5.1 | 4.9 | Universalism |
| Self-direction | 5.0 | 4.8 | Self-direction |
| Universalism | 5.0 | 4.3 | Security |
| Hedonism | 4.8 | 4.3 | Hedonism |
| Conformity | 4.7 | 4.1 | Conformity |
| Achievement | 4.6 | 3.9 | Stimulation |
| Stimulation | 4.3 | 3.7 | Achievement |
| Tradition | 4.2 | 3.6 | Tradition |
| Power | 3.1 | 3.2 | Power |

The table shows, first of all, that the cascades of means are not identical but very similar. Second, it shows that the means for Pavlopoulos' sample of adult Greeks are quite systematically a shade lower than the value-means for my sample of Greek educators. What this might signify is moot – and may, of course, be due to chance. Third, the clustering of means for the 10 values that is evident in my data (Table 2) is not present in Pavlopoulos' findings. Without more robust data, one can only speculate about the reasons.

Demographics – Gender, Age

The last objective of this research was to explore whether respondents' value orientations varied with gender and age. With two exceptions this was not the case: only Hedonism was valued less as age increased, and women valued Benevolence more than men. Other researchers have also found the Hedonism-Age relationship. For example, data from the 2002-2003 European Social Survey (20 countries and 36,527 participants) showed that in all countries the young tended to be the most hedonistic (Stoop, Billie, Koch, & Fitzgerald, 2010). In addition, the ESV data also revealed significant differences among countries. This indicates that accurate understandings of Greek educators' contemporary value orientations may facilitate effective leadership in Greek schools.

Widening the Focus

To conclude I will comment on what my findings say about how the literature illuminates the nature of values, keeping in mind that my findings are very tentative given that this was an exploratory investigation.

To a large extent the narrative about leadership tends to put a narrow spotlight on idealistic end-states of existence and modes of conduct (à la Rokeach, 1979). I believe that too often the study of values glosses over an important aspect of values, namely affect. Schwartz (2012) has argued that values are beliefs linked to emotions, refer to desirable goals that motivate action, transcend specific actions and situations, and serve as standards for evaluating actions, policies, people, and events. Schwartz's conceptions have widened the spotlight of inquiry, such that recent theoretical and research narratives reflect efforts to expand understandings of not only terminal



and instrumental values but also relationships among values and how they condition people's behaviours.

As a parenthetical note now, based on anecdotal evidence acquired while working with teachers in Greek schools, I wonder whether the values espoused most by the individuals who participated in this study (Benevolence, Security, Universalism, and Self-direction) might be correlates of feelings of being under attack, and a defensive rather than self-enhancing disposition. Specifically, quite frequently I have heard comments that suggest educators in Greece might not want Power in the sense of having control over people and resources. Instead, it seemed to me, they were expressing a disposition to protect themselves against further damage from Greece's prolonged and continuing political and economic crisis.

In other words, a need to ensure personal and group welfare and survival might be linked to high scores on Security (safety of self), Benevolence and Universalism (protecting and promoting the welfare of self and colleagues by banding together), and Self-direction (independently finding solutions). Indeed, this would be consistent with a finding of the Atlas of European Values Project: Greeks' confidence in their government and parliament (20% and 30% respectively) was far lower than the equivalent figures for Europe – 38% for both.

Furthermore, Krause (2012) has warned that in times of severe financial crises these figures have an extra impact because the government and parliament are the institutions that have to solve the problems, but their people have no trust in them. This situation in Greece militates against the use of dispersed leadership, for research has indicated that schools with high levels of trust in their

administrators more effectively distributed leadership than schools with low levels of trust. (Smylie, Mayrowetz, Murphy, & Louis, 2007; Liljenberg, 2015).

My findings also mesh with those of Caprara et al. (2017), who investigated the relationships between personal values (assessed with the PVQ), political orientations, and voting behavior. Their respondents included 374 Greek adults. They found that the respondents' values featured tensions or trade-offs between, on the one hand values associated with concern for those most like to have been weakened by market-driven policies and, on the other hand, values concerned with preserving the social order and status quo (security).

Whether my speculations are defensible or not, they raise the question "Are our conceptions of value orientations perhaps overly positive?" The PVQ cannot address this kind of hypothesis, so one implication of my investigation is that future research on educators' values could be enriched with follow-up interviews and focus groups to probe for feelings that are linked to values as well as linkages among espoused values.

If further investigation of Greek educators' values lends support to the findings reported above, there are clear implications for school leaders. As noted at the beginning of this article, a successful leader is one who tailors her/his leadership style to fit the characteristics of the environment – including such contingent factors as followers' values. My findings suggest that, in general, and given the centralized and highly bureaucratic nature of the Greek educational system, Greek educators might be more comfortable with directive rather than participative leadership styles – in other words, school principals



might be more effective if they provide heroic, transactional, and transformative leadership (as circumstances dictate), rather than distributed or dispersed leadership. In the former three, ultimate control is concentrated, vested in one person or office; in the latter control is shared among members of a group and direction is the product of “nudges” provided by multiple “followers” (Lazaridou & Fris, 2008).

This conclusion is supported by the seminal work of Hersey & Blanchard (1982) on situational leadership. They used the term “psychological maturity” in referring to the continuum of follower development, requiring and enabling a leader to change leadership style according to the maturity of the followers. In this context, “maturity” entails experience, skills, confidence, commitment, etc. to self-manage or self-lead. It seems that Greek educators are not well prepared to be involved in more dispersed forms of leadership for the time being.

Thus, principal preparation programs may have to develop understandings of the full repertoire of potential leadership styles but emphasize the acquisition of skill in providing a range of more directive approaches to leading – specifically, the heroic and transactional rather than the distributed and dispersed styles (Lazaridou & Fris, 2008). As well, initiatives by the Greek government to devolve decision making to school personnel should proceed with caution. Change in complex organizations is a fluid process of diffusion rather than a linear progression of stages, and leadership that must flow from multiple centres of influence (Adams & Jean-Marie, 2011; Carlson, 2012; Eacott, 2013; Hesbol, 2012).

Indeed, contemporary change theory recognizes that leadership is not just the domain of designated officials but often involves interactions of many types among multiple stakeholders (Bhindi, Riley, Smith, & Hansen, 2008; Plsek & Wilson, 2001). Moreover, devolving decision making to schools is both a technical change – one that can be solved by the knowledge of experts, and an adaptive change – one that challenges people’s values, beliefs, and philosophical systems (Heifetz & Linsky, 2002).

Epilogue

Greek society has been experiencing a deep crisis that is altering people’s ways of thinking and operating. In essence, people’s values and beliefs are being affected deeply as new forms and structures are being enforced in the economic and civic sector. Greek educators are among those groups who have been affected severely during the crisis. Because of their roles as agents of socialization for their students, their values drive their goals and desirable behaviours. Teachers’ goals and behaviours are also primary influences on students’ achievement, motivation, and learning. Therefore, investigating the values that drive their behaviours is of importance for the benefit of the students and society at large. This study is a part of a developing exploration of Greek educators’ values. Although the sample for this study does not allow generalized conclusions, it permits the conclusion that further investigation of the values of Greek educators is warranted given the lack of similar research in the Greek context and the significant ramifications for teacher and principal preparation.



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