



UNIVERSITY of TARTU

The Value Honest in Former Soviet Bloc Countries: Some Hints for Ethics

Maaja Vadi & Krista Jaakson
University of Tartu

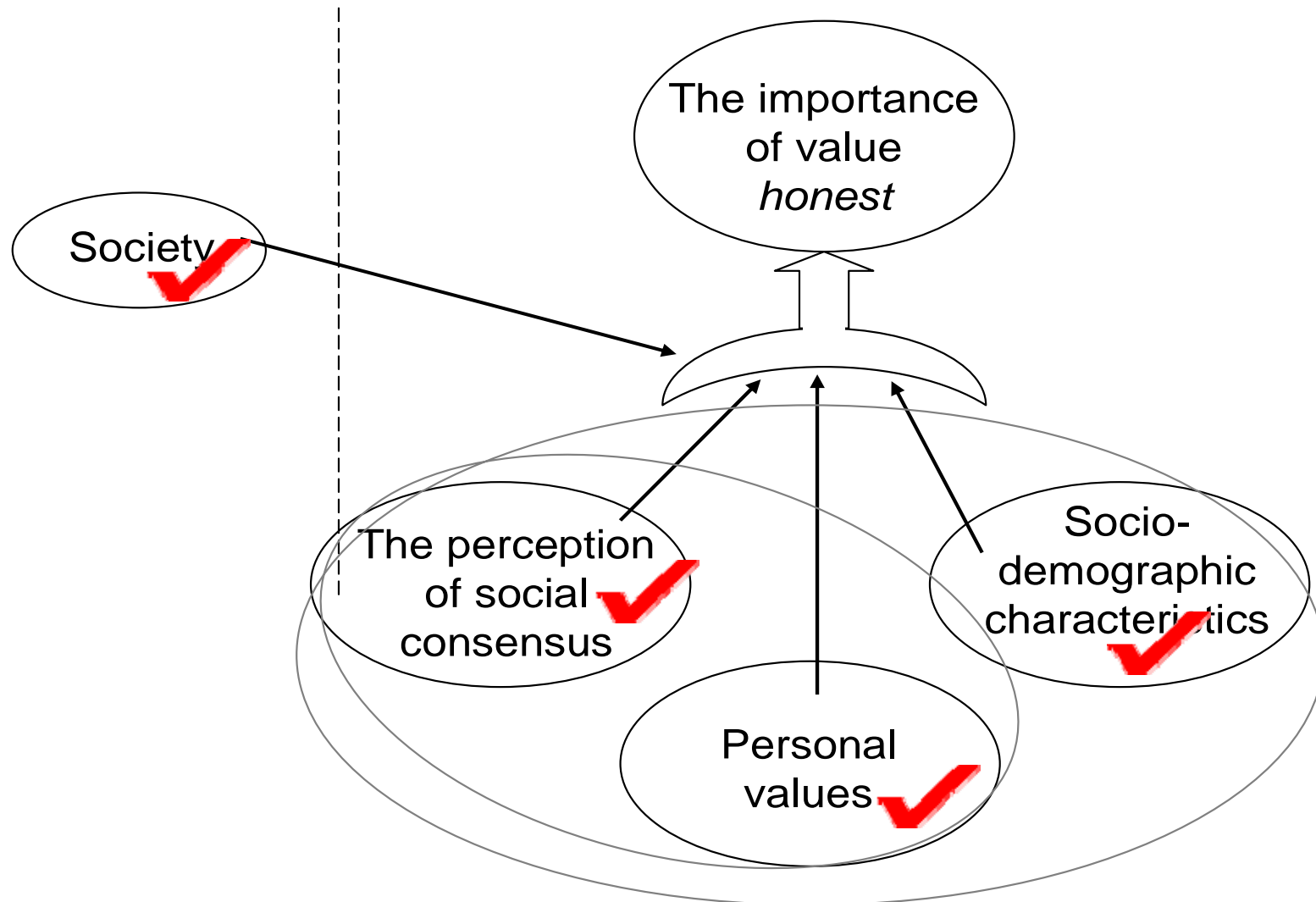




UNIVERSITY of TARTU

Background: the role of *honesty*

- Ethical problems in former Soviet Bloc countries;
- Individual values as the basis of preferences;
- The pencil returners and not returners (Rokeach 1973).



The determining factors for the importance of the value *honest*.



UNIVERSITY of TARTU

One possibility for studying values is using the method developed by Milton Rokeach (1973). He identified values as both modes of conduct and end-states.

Values were classified into two broad categories: Terminal values (e.g. *self-respect, wisdom, family security, comfortable life, sense of accomplishment* etc.) reflect a person's belief about "ends" to be achieved.

Instrumental values (e.g. *ambition, honesty, courage, independence, imagination, helpfulness* etc.) reflect beliefs about the "means" for achieving desired ends.

Rokeach differentiates 18 terminal and 18 instrumental values.

n= 1,688 respondents; their median age was 37 years



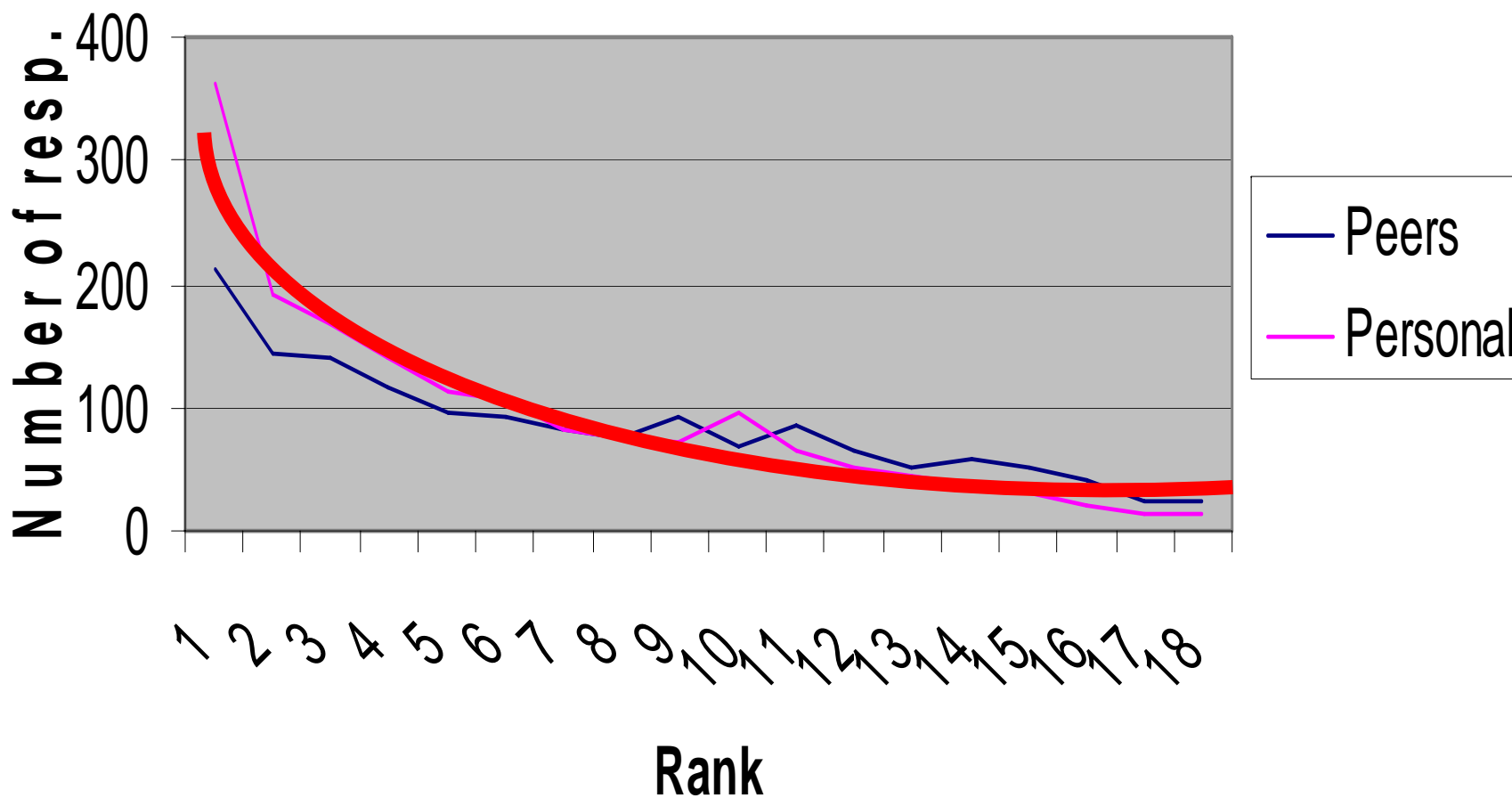
UNIVERSITY of TARTU



Categories					
<i>Position</i>	Workers	Specialists	Managers	Not spec- ed	
% of Respondents	36%	27%	19%	18%	
<i>Age</i>	...-30	31-40	41-...	Not spec- ed	
% of Respondents	35%	26%	26%	13%	
<i>Gender</i>	Female	Male	Not spec- ed		
% of Respondents	55%	35%	10%		
<i>Nationality and Country</i>	Russians in Russia	Russians in Estonia	Russians in Latvia	Russians in Lithuania	Estonians in Estonia
%	38%	25%	5%	12%	20%



UNIVERSITY of TARTU





- First quartile: those who consider *honesty* to be very important, i.e. rankings 1 and 2 (557 respondents);
- Fourth quartile: those who consider *honesty* to be relatively unimportant, i.e. rankings 10-18 (373 respondents).
- A dependent variable is thus defined by dichotomy: 1 for the respondents considering *honesty* unimportant and 0 for those with very important assessments.



- correlations between the rankings of *honesty* and other personal terminal values –
the biggest positive relationship emerged with *family security* (0.13, $p=0.000$).
- a negative correlation was significant also with *comfortable life* (-0.15, $p=0.000$).
- three instrumental values there were three values that emerged as highly correlated: *imaginative* (-0.19, $p=0.000$), *broad-minded* (-0.14, $p=0.000$) and *capable* (-0.16, $p=0.000$).
- These values were chosen as the explanatory variables providing the best fit for the regression model.



UNIVERSITY of TARTU

- The following variables were tested in the logit regression model:
- Country of residence (Russia, Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia);
- Native/non-native respondents (Russians in Russia and Estonians in Estonia versus Russians in other countries);
- Organisational position (white-collar versus blue-collar workers);
- Gender (male versus female);
- Age and age category.

Logit estimates **Categorised and ranked variables describing individual honesty**

Number of obs = 826

LR chi2(11) = 325.69

Prob > chi2 = 0.0000

Pseudo R2 = 0.2895

[95 % Conf.

Log likelihood = -399.73

Ind.hon	Coef.	Std. Err.	z	P>z	Interval]	
peers.hon	0.11	0.19	6.02	0.000	0.08	0.15
rank simil.	-0.68	0.26	-2.58	0.010	-1.19	-0.16
FS(peers)	0.06	0.02	2.82	0.005	0.02	0.09
imagin(ind)	-0.10	0.02	-5.39	0.000	-0.14	-0.07
CL(ind)	-0.06	0.02	-3.21	0.001	-0.09	-0.02
FS(ind)	0.05	0.02	2.43	0.015	0.01	0.09
broadm(ind)	-0.08	0.02	-4.32	0.000	-0.11	-0.04
capable(ind)	-0.12	0.02	-5.95	0.000	-0.16	-0.08
ruslat	1.28	0.46	2.80	0.005	0.38	2.18
ruslit	-1.03	0.30	-4.27	0.000	-1.90	-0.70
estest	-1.52	0.27	-5.57	0.000	-2.06	-0.99
russet	0.72	0.22	3.24	0.001	-1.16	-0.29
_cons	2.48	0.47	5.23	0.000	1.55	3.41



UNIVERSITY of TARTU

Note: peers.hon – peers' honesty in ranking order; rank simil. – honesty ranking similarity to peers (dummy); FS(peers) – peers family security in ranking order; imagin(ind) – individually imaginative in ranking order; CL(ind)- individual com-for-table life in ranking order; FS(ind) - individual family security in ranking order; broadm(ind) - individually broad-minded in ranking order; capable(ind) – individually capable in ranking order; ruslat - Russians in Latvia; ruslit – Russians in Lithuania; estest - Estonians in Estonia; rusest –Russians in Estonia.



UNIVERSITY of TARTU

Some conclusions

Perception of social consensus and some personal values are most telling factors for individual ranking of *honesty*. Differences were also spotted for countries studied.

- the measurement tool of the *honesty* would include the assessment of perception of this value with regard to peers.
- the manner of the question about the peers' values is put, would be critical. The route of asking would be the following: firstly we ask how similar is his or her ranking of value *honesty* to his or her peers' ranking and after that we can ask to speculate ranking of values for peers.
- we can ask about the values of *family security*, *imaginative*, *comfortable life*, *capable* and *broad-minded* in order to get more information about the importance of *honesty*.
- Lastly, country of residence might be taken into account.
- Gender, position and age did not affect *honesty* assessment significantly in our sample.



UNIVERSITY of TARTU

Limitations

- First, we have put the investigation into the environment of former Soviet Bloc countries but have not developed the deeper explanation of the specific features of every single country or national group.
- Secondly, the time period of measurements was quite a long, especially in respect with Estonian sample
- Finally, the seclusion of some values from the total personal value system is artificial and obviously, the variation among people is higher than these results have revealed.