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Future Orientations and Social Value Perceptions of Roma Youth



ABSTRACT

In 2023, a research project was launched within the framework of the University of Szeged IKIKK Research and Development Center for Supporting the Advancement of Roma and Disadvantaged Youth, with the aim of gaining a deeper understanding of the world of Roma youth in the Southern Great Plain region of Hungary. The survey respondents had an average age of 15 years, and of the 311 participants, 197 identified themselves as being of Roma/Gypsy descent. In this study, we analyze the data from this subsample, presenting the deeper patterns of social value perceptions and future orientations.

KEYWORDS

Roma youth, social values, future orientations

DOI 10.14232/belv.2025.1.7

<https://doi.org/10.14232/belv.2025.1.7>

Cikkre való hivatkozás / How to cite this article:

Jancsák, Csaba – Mezei Tímea (2025): Future Orientations and Social Value Perceptions of Roma Youth. *Belvedere Meridionale* vol. 37. no. 1. pp 98-113.

ISSN 1419-0222 (print)

ISSN 2064-5929 (online, pdf)

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INTRODUCTION

Based on nationality affiliation, mother tongue, and language used in family and friend circles, the Roma represent the most populous minority in Hungary. According to the 2022 census, 2.5% of respondents, totaling 209,909 individuals, identified themselves as Roma. In the Southern Great Plain region, comprising Bács-Kiskun, Békés, and Csongrád-Csanád counties, 18,001 people identified themselves as belonging to the Roma/Gypsy nationality during the 2022 census, of whom 4,740 indicated they speak Romani (Romani, Beás) in their family or community circles. According to the 2022 census data, the number of Roma (Gypsy) youth aged 10-19 living in the Southern Great Plain region was 2,723 (compared to 5,090 in 2011). In the region, 515 young people aged 10-19 had Romani as their mother tongue in 2022 (compared to 1,360 in 2011), while 628 young people aged 10-19 speak Romani in family or friend communities (compared to 1,592 in 2011).

Research emphasizes that the most vulnerable group with the greatest social exposure in Hungarian society is disadvantaged youth, a significant portion of which consists of Roma youth (ORSÓS 2015; ZOLNAY 2015; BIHARI 2021; TRENDL 2021; VARGA – CSOVCSIS 2021; FORRAY 2022; SÁNTA 2024; BOCSI – VARGA – FEHÉRVÁRI 2024). The social difficulties affecting Roma communities have been examined by numerous international studies (e.g., ABUBAKAR et al., 2015; BHABHA et al., 2017; HEPWORTH 2012; HOFMANN 2019; ÓHIDY – FORRAY 2019) and domestic research (e.g., ELEK 2022; FEJES – SZÚCS 2018; FORRAY 2022; KEMÉNY – JANKY 2004; KERTESI – KÉZDI 2006) in recent decades. Meaningful progress in the inclusion process of this ethnic group has been minimal (and in some areas regression has been observed; e.g., KENDE et al., 2021).

In Hungary, the Roma/Gypsy minority population is estimated at 600,000-800,000 individuals (BERNÁT 2014; HABLICSEK 2007; PÉNZES – TÁTRAI – PÁSZTOR 2018; KAPITÁNY – KAPITÁNY 2015). In the Southern Great Plain region, a total of 18,001 people identified themselves as Roma in the 2022 Hungarian census. Of this number, 8,249 (1.67% of the total population) were in Bács-Kiskun county, 3,562 (0.9% of the total population) in Csongrád-Csanád county, and 6,190 (2%) in Békés county (Hungarian Central Statistical Office, 2022). However, census data should be interpreted cautiously, as people may be sensitive to ethnic or cultural identification, which can influence how they respond to such questions. Therefore, we can assume that the number of people with Roma/Gypsy identity is higher in this region as well.

In the international literature, thinking about the future is typically referred to as future orientation (BATHÓ – FEJES 2013). Future orientation is an individual's ability and intention to plan and think ahead about future goals, opportunities, and challenges (SZABÓ et al. 2022). From a learner's perspective, future orientation means that the individual prepares for future challenges and opportunities and actively plans for the future (Seginer, 2009). However, in PIAGET and INHELDER's (2004) view, future orientation is a cognitive schema organized according to causal relationships (cited by SZABÓ et al. 2022). Regarding this definition, SEGINER (2019) emphasizes

that future orientation is an important developmental task for adolescents, as an individual's future perspective establishes the foundation for goal setting and planning. This finding implies that future orientation is a construct that can be developed and positively influences learning motivation.

A vision of the future is a conception of what goal or state is to be achieved in the future (SEGINER 2009). Through this vision, an individual can set long-term goals and plans in terms of studies and career. Future vision is part of time perspective and future orientation (VÁRINÉ 2004).

For an individual to be future-oriented, they must hold the view that behavior performed in the present increases the likelihood that a future goal will be realized at some point in the future. Additionally, the goal to be achieved in the future must have incentive value and be valuable enough to engage in behavioral patterns. For a child/young person to learn in the present, they must believe that future academic success is a goal that is important enough to them, and that their behavior leads to future academic success (BROWN – JONES 2004).

In the Hungarian literature, only a few works can be found that focus primarily on future orientation/vision (SZABÓ et al. 2022; SZALAI 2008; HOMOKI 2010).

One of the most popular topics in which the future perceptions of Roma youth are addressed is related to impact studies of various talent development programs and life path analyses of students/participants in these programs. For example, studies have examined the Arany János Program for high school students (FEHÉRVÁRI – LISKÓ 2016), institutions in the Roma Integration Program (SZALAI 2008), and the Roma Student Colleges in higher education, which have an increasingly extensive literature (FARKAS 2018; FORRAY 2014; 2022; JANCÁSÁK 2015; TRENDL 2015). Life path analysis has also emerged outside of talent development programs (e.g., VARGA 2017). Recurring themes included resilience and inclusion (FARKAS 2018; VARGA 2017), as well as exploring experiences of discrimination (BHABHA et al. 2017).

In terms of geographical relevance, the studies reviewed do not present a particularly diverse picture, as most research was conducted in Hungary. Only three English-language articles were identified related to the topic (BHABHA et al., 2017, DIMITROVA et al. 2018; ROTH – SERGIU-LUCIAN 2013) that examined samples outside Hungary, specifically in Serbia, Romania, and Bulgaria. The low number of foreign studies is not surprising, considering that Hungary is at the forefront of research on Roma people, especially intellectuals, and publications by foreign authors in the international English-language literature have only appeared in the last decade. Examining the territorial distribution of domestic research, it can be established that several studies involved national samples; however, there are dominant counties in Hungary where more research has been conducted within the topic, e.g., Baranya County (e.g., TRENDL 2015; VARGA 2017). In terms of methodology, three main groups can be distinguished: works based on written questioning, works based on oral questioning, and works incorporating mixed methods.

Regarding future orientation, the results reported in the studies suggest a mixed picture, as in some, Roma students have more pessimistic plans for their future than their non-Roma peers (e.g., SZALAI 2008), while in other cases, childhood future visions exceed later reality (e.g., VARGA 2017); and last but not least, there are also studies where Roma youth paint an optimistic picture of the future in their responses (e.g., FARKAS 2018; FEHÉRVÁRI – LISKÓ 2016; GULYÁS 2022; JANCÁSÁK 2016; TRENDL 2015). This ambivalent picture likely emerged because different studies

involved different target groups. Where Roma youth had more positive future visions, they generally participated in some support program, which may be one reason for their positive outlook. Since literature related to thinking about the future also emphasizes that students' future orientation can be developed, it is likely that in these programs, efforts to develop future vision were central to the training (e.g., involving mentors). It can be said, therefore, that supportive programs (e.g., Tanoda, AJP, Roma Student Colleges) provide important mobility opportunities for disadvantaged youth, especially members of the Roma ethnic minority group; these initiatives place great emphasis on shaping future orientation. It would be worthwhile to extend the good practices used in these programs to the public education sphere as well, as an optimistic future vision contributes to school success (Bathó & Fejes, 2013) and later labor market success.

Research on values (HANKISS 1977, ROKEACH 1969, 1973, 1979; VÁRINÉ 1987, SCHWARTZ 1992, 2005; VARGA 2003; REZSOHAZY 2006, GÁBOR 2012) starts from the premise that social values are internal convictions that have emotional charge, motivate people's actions, stand in hierarchy with each other, and provide criteria for evaluating and directing actions. Values are guiding principles in a person's or a group's life and are generally central elements of belief systems (SCHWARTZ 1992, 2005). The world of values changes dynamically across civilizational epochs and generations (SCHWARTZ 1992; INGLEHART 1997, 2000; TELESIEŃ – GROSS 2017; HALMAN et al., 2022; KOLARZ et al. 2022).

Few works discuss the values of Roma groups in detail (TRÁSY 2023). SZAKOLCZAI's (1982) study compares the value systems of Roma and the overall Hungarian population in similar social situations. The research points out that although material goods are important to both groups, the Roma's value preference differs from that of the majority society at certain points. Roma value advancement and progress more highly, while those living in similar social strata strive less for a better life. According to TRÁSY (2023), values related to work, homeland, and freedom are less important to Roma, and the significance of conformist values is also lower compared to non-Roma.

JANCSÁK's (2015) research focused on how participation in the institutional environment and programs of the Szeged Christian Roma College influences the value system and social integration of Roma youth, as well as its impact on the labor market situation. The author concluded that among college students, universal values (e.g., inner harmony, love/happiness, family security) and post-material values (e.g., freedom, creativity, enjoyable life) show a strong presence compared to traditional values (e.g., politeness, religious faith, role of the nation, patriotism) and material values (e.g., wealth). The value preferences of Roma College residents differ from those of residents in other University of Szeged dormitories: they more strongly emphasize inner harmony, a peaceful world, creativity, and religious faith, while less preferring wealth and power.

BOCSI and CSOKAI's (2015) work mapped the work values of Roma youth among 15-29 year-olds. The study focused on understanding what work values 15-29 year-old Roma youth possess. The research showed that although participants place great emphasis on external motivation, their ethnic affiliation continues to influence their work perception. Based on this, further research and the development of strategies to promote the labor market integration of Roma youth are recommended.

TRÁSY (2023) conducted a questionnaire-based study in Jász-Nagykun-Szolnok County involving the Roma population to measure value preferences. According to the results, among

the post-material values, freedom and equality were most important to the surveyed Roma, and among universal values, family and health were most important. Material values, such as wealth, were less important to them. The study also revealed that Roma trust state institutions more than civil, church, or market organizations, feel safe in their own environment, but feel less able to influence the shaping of public affairs or their environment.

The mentioned studies demonstrated that at the center of Roma youth's value preferences are often such universal and post-material values as family, equality, and freedom. Additionally, traditional and material values may have less significance for them. The studies also indicated that Roma youth differ from the majority society in terms of certain values, which influences their daily decisions and social integration.

METHODOLOGICAL NOTES

The aim of this study is to examine the views, value preferences, and future orientation of Roma/Gypsy youth in the Southern Great Plain region of Hungary.

Data collection was conducted using a paper-based self-completed questionnaire. The questionnaire focused on five main areas: demographic characteristics, educational situation, internal community world, social values, cultural traditions, and future plans/goals.

Data collection was mainly carried out in public education institutions in the spring of 2023. With the help of School District representatives, we contacted the schools and informed them in advance about the aims and process of the research. We requested consent forms from the institutions and from parents in the case of minor students to ensure the ethical and legal framework of data collection. All participants took part in the study anonymously and voluntarily, and the participants (and their legal representatives) were informed in advance about data protection rules. The questionnaires were completed during class time, and if participants did not understand something related to the questionnaire, we readily answered their questions and helped with interpretation. In addition to school locations, we also wanted to reach young people who could not be involved in institutional settings, for example, because some institutions declined to participate in the study, or because we wanted to reach so-called NEET youth (SÁNTA 2024). Therefore, with the help of recognized members of local Roma communities, we also visited residential areas with higher Roma population density to extend the data collection. The data were analyzed using SPSS Statistics 25 software.

The selection of participants ($n=322$) was done through convenience sampling. The young people volunteered to participate in the study. All participants had a permanent or temporary address in one of the Southern Great Plain counties (Békés, Csongrád-Csanád, Bács-Kiskun). All participants were between 12 and 25 years old, with an average age of 15.4 years at the time of the study.

In terms of ethnic affiliation, the participants were grouped as follows: 81 indicated that they belong to the Oláh Roma group, 5 to the Beás Roma group, 111 to the Romungro group, 35 could not determine their ethnic affiliation, while an additional 90 indicated that they do not belong to any of these groups. In total, 197 individuals identified themselves as being of Roma/Gypsy descent, which accounts for 61.2% of all participants. In our analysis, we focus on the Roma population in our sample, incorporating the responses of non-Roma youth only for comparisons.

Among the limitations of the research, we identified that the non-representative sample and the use of Likert-scale questions limited the generalization of results (the closed questions necessarily did not examine the entire value dimension, only in relation to the 14 social values and 14 praxis values we highlighted). Our database containing a subsample of 197 individuals provides an opportunity to formulate certain conclusions and observe phenomena for the base population of 2,723 Roma/Gypsy youth aged 10-19 living in the Southern Great Plain.

SAMPLE CHARACTERISTICS

Nearly half of the participants (47.2%) are still in primary school, one-third (31.7%) attend vocational school, nearly one-fifth (19.3%) attend grammar school, while 2% do not participate in school education.

The respondents' parents have low educational attainment, with 10% of fathers and 13% of mothers having a secondary education. The proportion of parents with higher education is only 2.5% for both fathers and mothers.

Respondents have an average of 2 siblings.

The distribution of respondents' places of residence was as follows: 30.5% reside in Bács-Kiskun County, 13.7% in Békés County, and 55.8% in Csongrád-Csanád County.

Regarding residence type, the majority of respondents live in towns (41.6%), while a significant portion live in villages (32.5%). The proportion of those living in county seats is 17.7%, while the proportion of those living on farms is relatively lower at 6.2%.

Three-quarters of respondents live in houses, while one-quarter live in apartments. On average, participants live in three-room houses.

Among the respondents, the proportion of those living with their parents is 70%, while among those raised by a single parent, 12% live with their mother and 8% with their father. The proportion of those living with grandparents is 3%, with foster parents 1%, and with other relatives 2%.

We also examined the financial circumstances in which participants live ("Have you experienced that by the end of the month, your parents' money has completely run out?").

Two-thirds of respondents have had such experiences. Three percent of respondents indicated that their parents almost always run out of money by the end of the month, and another 14% said this occurs frequently. Twenty-two percent answered that this happens sometimes, and an additional 22% said that such situations occur rarely.

88.8% of participants have internet access at home, 46% have a tablet, laptop, or desktop computer. 95% of respondents have a smartphone, and 71.1% also have mobile internet access.

RESEARCH RESULTS

Value Orientations

Our study results show that family security is the most important value for participants, rated with an average score of 4.84 on a 5-point Likert scale. This is closely followed by happiness and material well-being, both with a score of 4.8, indicating that individual well-being, emotional satisfaction, and material security are exceptionally important to people.

Freedom also received a very high score (4.78), suggesting that personal freedom and self-determination are also essential values for participants. Equality's score of 4.79 shows that social equality and justice are of great significance. An enjoyable life and true friendship both received ratings of 4.76, indicating that quality of life and human relationships are very important to participants.

Social order and public safety also play significant roles in participants' lives, with scores of 4.68 and 4.66, respectively. The rating for peace is 4.64, showing that participants value a peaceful and conflict-free life. The score of 4.61 for acceptance between people indicates that tolerance and acceptance are also important values.

The 4.59 rating for joy in work done suggests that satisfaction with work performed is important to participants. The true love score of 4.45 indicates that although important, it is less of a priority than the previous values. Respect for traditions received the lowest rating (4.23), suggesting that respecting traditions is less important to participants compared to other values.

The results of the study show that among participants, universal values (e.g., family security, happiness, equality, true friendship, peace) and post-material values (e.g., freedom, enjoyable life) are of paramount importance. Material well-being also enjoys high priority, while traditional values, especially respect for traditions, are less emphasized. The grouped list of all professed values in preference order is illustrated in Table 3.

Table 1. Value Preference Order

| Preference Rank | Value | Value Group | Average Value on Five-Point Scale |
|-----------------|-------------------------|---------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1. | Family security | Universal | 4.84 |
| 2. | Happiness | Universal | 4.80 |
| 3. | Material well-being | Material | 4.80 |
| 4. | Freedom | Post-material | 4.78 |
| 5. | Equality | Post-material | 4.79 |
| 6. | Pleasant enjoyable life | Post-material | 4.76 |
| 7. | True friendship | Universal | 4.76 |
| 8. | Social order | Traditional | 4.68 |
| 9. | Public safety | Universal | 4.66 |

| Preference Rank | Value | Value Group | Average Value on Five-Point Scale |
|-----------------|------------------------------|-------------|-----------------------------------|
| 10. | Peace | Universal | 4.64 |
| 11. | Acceptance of another person | Universal | 4.61 |
| 12. | Joy of work completed | Traditional | 4.59 |
| 13. | True love | Universal | 4.45 |
| 14. | Respect for traditions | Traditional | 4.23 |

In addition to professed values, we also examined praxis values, using a shortened version of the Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale (cf. J rai et.al. 2015; Kiss 2015). In the results, the importance of close relationships stands out and is one of the most important praxis values among the Roma in the sample. This is followed by adaptability, stress management, perseverance, and purposefulness, which are also important. However, acting based on senses, strong self-esteem, and a sense of controlling one’s life may be less emphasized in the sample.

Table 2. How True Are the Following Statements for You?

| | Not True at All | Rarely True | Sometimes True | Often True | Almost Always True | SUM |
|---|-----------------|-------------|----------------|------------|--------------------|-----|
| I have close and secure relationships. | 1 | 3 | 12 | 34 | 50 | 100 |
| I think of myself as a strong person. | 2 | 5 | 16 | 30 | 48 | 100 |
| I work to achieve my goals. | 0 | 7 | 9 | 38 | 47 | 100 |
| Past successes give me confidence for new challenges. | 0 | 2 | 16 | 42 | 41 | 100 |
| I am able to adapt to changes. | 0 | 4 | 15 | 42 | 40 | 100 |
| Sometimes fate or God can help. | 2 | 7 | 17 | 35 | 40 | 100 |
| Coping with stress strengthens me. | 0 | 5 | 26 | 37 | 32 | 100 |

| | Not True at All | Rarely True | Sometimes True | Often True | Almost Always True | SUM |
|---|----------------------------|------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------------|------------|
| I am very purposeful. | 1 | 3 | 19 | 46 | 31 | 100 |
| I think clearly and concentrate when under pressure. | 5 | 5 | 23 | 38 | 29 | 100 |
| I feel I control my life. | 1 | 11 | 21 | 40 | 27 | 100 |
| I always act with my greatest effort, no matter what. | 1 | 4 | 21 | 48 | 26 | 100 |
| When things seem hopeless, I don't give up. | 3 | 8 | 19 | 44 | 26 | 100 |
| I must act based on my intuitions. | 1 | 8 | 25 | 40 | 26 | 100 |

In examining cultural traditions as social values that determine lifestyle and way of life, we found that among the respondents, these are closer to professed values than to praxis values. The results showed that 46.2% of respondents' families follow Roma/Gypsy traditions, and these traditions are also important to the young respondents. In contrast, according to 14.7% of respondents, although their families maintain traditions, these are not important to them. They tend to participate passively in preserving traditions and do not attribute particular significance to them. Another group, 16.2% of respondents, does not maintain Roma traditions but shows interest in them. These participants would be open to learning more and possibly incorporating certain elements into their daily lives. Finally, 22.8% of respondents neither maintain nor are interested in Roma traditions. For them, these traditions have no significance, and they do not wish to participate in their preservation or rediscovery. Overall, the results suggest that the importance and preservation of Roma traditions are present to varying degrees in participants' families, where they are important to the majority, but there is a significant group that is not interested in them.

Further results show that only 37.1% of respondents speak the Roma/Gypsy language. This indicates that although the preservation and importance of traditions play a significant role in the lives of some participants, the use of the language is much less widespread. Based on the data, traditions are important and present in everyday life for nearly half of the participants, yet language use is much more limited, with only a smaller portion of participants actively speaking one of the Roma/Gypsy languages.

FUTURE ORIENTATIONS OF SOUTHERN GREAT PLAIN ROMA YOUTH

Study Plans

Based on the results, we found that very few (0.5%) participants do not wish to complete their basic education. The results suggest that vocational school qualifications are targeted by most, nearly half of the participants. However, one-third also want to obtain a high school diploma. Those who have not yet obtained a secondary education plan to do so by the age of 19 at the latest.

23% of respondents plan to obtain some form of higher education qualification.

This data suggests that a significant number of participants are committed to long-term learning and professional development. Furthermore, the diversity of learning goals indicates that participants have different career goals and seek different educational opportunities to achieve their goals. Nearly 10% of respondents also plan to study abroad. However, about one-fifth of respondents have not yet completed education and plan to do so at an average age of 17 years. This fact suggests that the possibility of early termination of the school life path is present among respondents, which can have serious consequences for labor market success and also poses the risk that from among them will come the replenishment of the circle of NEET youth.

Conceptions of Family Formation and Childbearing

Three-quarters of respondents reported having been in a relationship, starting their first relationship at an average age of 15 years. The study results showed that those participants who have not yet established a relationship plan to begin their first relationship at an average age of 17 years.

Those who plan to marry in the future wish to do so around the average age of 25 years (85 individuals).

Three-quarters of respondents plan to start a family, one-fifth are uncertain, and 4% do not plan to do so. Among young Roma, the average planned number of children is 1.7. Most respondents plan to have one or two children in the future.

Four individuals in the sample already had children, and one pregnant woman was also included in the sample. Participants with children were on average 18 years old when their first child was born. However, those who have not yet had children would like to have children in their late twenties, at an average age of 27 years.

Our results suggest that the family planning habits of Roma youth in our sample are similar to generational patterns observed in the modern socio-economic environment.

Plans for Establishing Independent Living

Two-thirds of respondents (68.26%) have independently visited some entertainment venue. They were on average 16 years old when they first participated in such an event. Those who do not yet go out for entertainment plan to go out independently for the first time at the age of 17.

Among the young people we studied, we found that those who had already moved out (7 individuals) had an average age of 17.8 years when they did so. In contrast, those who have not yet left their family residence, thus living with a parent/guardian, plan to move out at an average age of 22 years (in the case of 96 individuals).

We also asked participants when they would like to first work in a regular job, or if this has already happened, at what age it occurred. There were a total of 9 respondents who already had jobs, with their employment occurring at an average age of 18 years. Those who do not yet have full-time work experience plan to be on average 21 years old when they do.

We also asked when participants plan to independently acquire an apartment/house. Three participants indicated that they already own property. The others plan to achieve this goal by an average age of 25 years.

These data show that the phenomenon of adulthood being pushed to later ages, as well as the phenomenon of acceleration, has also appeared among Roma youth. Post-adolescent youth complete their studies at later ages, detach from the parental home later, and begin independent life, start a family, and have children at later ages than the parent generation.

Reviewing the data (since the sample is not representative, this is only a well-founded suspicion), the appearance of an element of what Kálmán Gábor called the “youth era change” in the early 2000s regarding Hungarian youth can be suggested among Roma youth as well, namely that this trend has occurred in all strata of domestic youth to this day, which is why we see that the planning and occurrence of life events in the young Roma generation are no longer determined by traditions and norms, but by mass media and peer groups, just as in the case of majority society youth.

Opinions on Achieving Goals

In our study, we examined participants’ confidence in achieving goals in the near future. Respondents could rate how much they trust in achieving their goals on a 5-point Likert scale. One-quarter of respondents completely trust that they will achieve their goals, a further 42% of respondents marked the “rather yes” response, which shows that more than two-thirds of participants are optimistic about achieving their goals. One-third of respondents could not decide whether they would achieve their goals or not. Few thought they would not achieve their goals: only 2% of respondents answered rather not, and only 1.5% chose the not at all option. Overall, it can be said that most participants look optimistically at achieving their goals in the near future.

SUMMARY

During the analysis of data from a questionnaire research conducted in the Southern Great Plain region of Hungary (Békés, Bács-Kiskun, and Csongrád-Csanád counties), we examined the opinions of 197 young people aged between 12 and 25 who identified themselves as Roma, Gypsy, or Romungro (hereinafter collectively: Roma). In the subsample, nearly half of the respondents (47.2%) study in primary school, one-third (31.7%) attend vocational school, nearly one-fifth (19.3%) attend grammar school, while 2% do not participate in school education.

Based on the analysis of the research data, we found that the preservation of Roma traditions and language is present to varying degrees among respondents. Commitment to traditions is present in some respondents, but more than half of the Roma youth involved in the study do not consider Roma traditions important or do not follow them at all. The data also show that the use of a Roma language (Beás, Lovári) is a less important praxis value among young people.

Universal values (such as family security, happiness, equality, true friendship, and peace) and other post-material values (such as freedom and enjoyment of life) are particularly important to Roma youth.

The phenomenon of adulthood being pushed to later ages has appeared in the young Roma generations. The planning of life events is less determined by traditions and norms. The youth phase is diversifying in their generation as well, with individual life paths being created. The path of life regulated by norms, as has happened in the majority society's youth cohorts over the last twenty years, is being replaced by a choice-based life path among the growing Roma generation as well, when life events and milestones are shaped according to the decisions of the individual. Behind this phenomenon, we see the increased penetration of globalization into the lifeworld of youth. With the increase in smartphone usage and internet access, the enhanced role of mass media in influencing decisions (and thus the relegation of traditions to the background) has appeared among Roma youth just as it has in the case of majority society youth in Hungary.

In the case of study plans, we found factors that reinforce the above-described phenomenon and are closely related to it. The expansion of the school youth phase is also appearing among Roma youth, which determines the planning of further life events. The proportion of those who do not wish to complete their basic education does not reach one percent of respondents, while half of the respondents plan to obtain vocational school qualifications, one-third a high school diploma, and nearly one-quarter higher education qualifications.

Regarding conceptions of family formation and childbearing, we found that more than two-thirds of the surveyed youth want to get married (definitely yes 46.7%; rather yes 31.5%). This is a significant proportion compared to the aspirations of youth cohorts in the majority society appearing in research. In the pattern of Roma youth's perceptions of relationship cohabitation, marriage and the traditional family model strongly exist. The respondents' intention to have children and start a family is also considered high (77%). However, the planned number of children among them is low (average value 1.7), although this is still higher than among non-Roma youth.

In all this, we see a value co-existence phenomenon, the survival of universal values across generations (family security, happiness) and the co-existence of postmodern post-material (pleasant, enjoyable life) and material (material well-being) values, which is reinforced by the fact that the average values of responses for every element of the value space included in the questionnaire are high (indicating importance above 4.4 on the five-point scale). An exception is respect for traditions, which with an average value of 4.2 came in last place in the value preference order. A deeper understanding of these patterns, specifically perceptions about Roma/Gypsy traditions, will be examined in the next phase of the research through personal and focus group interviews.

Among the limitations of the research, we identified that the non-representative sample and convenience sampling, as well as the use of Likert-scale questions, limited the generalization of results. Consequently, we plan to collect qualitative data and conduct a larger-scale study.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We are very grateful to the Centre of Excellence for Interdisciplinary R&D and Innovation of the University of Szeged, Social Responsibility Competence Centre, Szeged, Hungary, for supporting the implementation of this research.

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