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# Content and Distribution of Cultural Knowledge about Leisure Time, Social Participation, and Material Goods

## Significance for Holistic Anthropological Research of Psychosocial Stress in Croatian Youth

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## Introduction

Theoretical Grounding

The influence of culture on health is well established in bio-cultural research.[1] This study is motivated by recent breakthroughs in bio-cultural research indicating a direct link between individual health outcomes and adherence to cultural models.[2] Furthermore, our study is carried out in the tradition of the Croatian School of Anthropology oriented towards bio-cultural synthesis and holism in studying population structure,[3] and within the framework of a large-scale bio-cultural research project that examines the association of cultural changes in a post-socialist society and individual psychosocial stress outcomes in youth. Our current ethnographic efforts are concentrated at identifying locally meaningful and culturally specific notions of everyday life that can be operationalized in the upcoming research involving the measuring of individual chronic psychosocial distress based on the variety of biomarkers – anthropometric and physiologic, such as the body mass index, waist-to-hip ratio, blood pressure, electrocardiograms as well as salivary cortisol and alpha amylase profiles.

This article is third in a series of publications (Peternel, Malnar, and Martinović Klarić 2014a, b), aimed at researching cultural dimensions of "the good life" among Croatian youth. We use the cognitive anthropological perspective on culture and the theory of cultural consensus to assess the importance of various lifestyle subdomains in constructing the image of "the good life" in Croatian youth. The concept of cultural consensus is rooted in the tradition of cognitive anthropology that explores the relationship between human culture and human thought. Cognitive anthropology focuses on the cognitive organizations of material objects, events, and experiences. Culture is viewed as a *shared* and *learned* information pool stored in the minds of its members and, to a different extent, in artifacts (D'Andrade 1987) as well as shared rules and principles that underlie, motivate, and guide human behavior in community (Goodenough 1963). Keesing (1974) expanded the cognitive anthropological definition of culture as the knowledge one must learn to function adequately in society or as individual's personal theories of how society operates. If these individual theories are shared in the group, one recognizes culture. The term "cultural competence" was suggested by Keesing (1974) to describe individual's sharing in the culture.

These concepts were further developed by cognitive anthropologists in the theory of *cultural models*.[4] This theoretical orientation is based on the idea that knowledge of the world is structured in terms of cultural models – mental representations of prototypical events, behavior, and things – that define the nature of any situation that a person may be involved in his or her society. It is argued that culture consists of a set of cultural models that apply to different cultural domains of life. Cultural models are understood as schematized outlines of all elements of the domain, processes within the domain, and the relations between that and other domains. Although individuals vary with respect to the extent and elaboration of knowledge encoded in cultural models

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1 E.g., Cassel, Patrick, and Jenkins (1960); Cassel (1976); McGarvey and Baker (1979); McGarvey (1999); Dressler (1991, 1995); Dressler, Campos Balieiro, and Dos Santos (1997, 1998, 1999); McDade, Stallings, and Worthman (2000); McDade (2001); McDade and Worthman (2004).

2 E.g., Dressler, Campos Balieiro, Ribeiro, and Dos Santos (2007); Reyes-García, Gravlee, McDade, Huanca, Leonard, and Tanner (2010); Dressler (2012).

3 E.g., Rudan (1972); Rudan et al. (1992); Martinović Klarić (2013).

4 D'Andrade (1995); Holland and Quinn (1987); Romney and More (1998); Shore (1996); Strauss and Quinn (1997).

(as well as their motivation and ability to act in accordance to the cultural model), this knowledge is widely shared by members of the same group.

These briefly summarized theoretical developments in culture theory and particularly the concept of sharing cultural knowledge are the key concepts in the cultural consensus theory developed by Romney, Weller, and Batchelder (1986). Cultural consensus theory represents a collection of analytical techniques and models that can be utilized to quantify consensus regarding "informant responses to systematic interview questions," when the investigator does not a priori know the answers to the questions or cultural knowledge of informants (Romney, Weller, and Batchelder 1986: 313). It enables the investigator to determine if the level of sharing in informant's responses is sufficient to conclude that all informants are drawing on the same cultural model of the tested cultural domain. More specifically, if consensus can be inferred, then it is possible to estimate culturally correct answers to the series of posed questions (group beliefs) and each informant's knowledge or the degree of sharing of the answers (cultural competence).

In assessing cultural consensus, the object of analysis is a cultural domain. "A cultural domain is any organized focus of discussion in a society (e.g., the family, religion, soccer)" (Dressler 2007). Domains are:

constructed in discourse between members of an organization, network, or field and are discoverable through participant observation, interviewing, or content analysis of documents … Domains and their elements are "emic," that is, part of the local knowledge system rather than analytical categories imposed by the researcher (Caulkins 2004: 318).

Studied cultural domain should be relevant for the members of the studied community as well as to the researchers, as elaborated by Caulkins (2004: 319):

The point, of course, is that the domain of knowledge should be important to the target population as well as to the researcher … By focusing research on domains that are important in the target knowledge system, we minimize the possibility that we will identify a real but relatively trivial part of the culture … We should attempt, therefore, to identify important, central, over-reaching, or organizing domains.

In our ethnographic research, we have identified so far six "important, central, over-reaching, or organizing" (Caulkins 2004: 319) lifestyle subdomains among Croatian youth: education and professional life, intimate and family relations, health and well-being, leisure time and social participa-

tion, material goods, migration and socioeconomic milieu. The results of our two recent studies demonstrate theoretical, methodological, and empiric usefulness of analyzing the structure and distribution of cultural knowledge in the large sample of Croatian youth (Peternel et al. 2014a, b). These studies also represent a solid baseline for our continuing holistic anthropologic research involving bio-cultural modeling. The overall sharing of cultural knowledge was demonstrated in the subdomains of education and professional life, family and intimate relationships, health and well-being (Peternel et al. 2014a, b) and not in migration and socioeconomic milieu (Peternel et al. 2014b). In this article, we use the analysis of cultural consensus to assess the importance of leisure time, social participation, and material goods in constructing the image of good life in Croatia. By analyzing how cultural knowledge about leisure time, social participation, and material goods is structured and distributed in Croatian youth, we contribute to research exploring direct links between individual health outcomes and adherence to cultural models and to more intensive dialogues between biological and cultural anthropologists, necessary for understanding how cultural contexts and knowledge become inscribed "beneath the skin" to shape human health and well-being.

Cultural Framework

We focus on the upper secondary school seniors, because they are an example of a young population facing their first important life decisions, such as continuing university education, finding job, living with parents or independently, migrating, etc. Successful transition to independent adulthood is a universal and demanding process that requires various competences in dealing with age-specific developmental tasks. Youth maturation and identity formation in the post-socialist, transitional society, that itself is undergoing dramatic and multiple transformations, is considered to be especially challenging, uncertain, and stressful (e.g., Ule, Rener, Mencin Čeplak, Tivadar, and Vukovič 2000; Roberts 2003). A more detailed description of the characteristics of the transitional period and the upper secondary school system in Croatia is provided in our previous studies (Peternel et al. 2014a, b). In short, Croatia is an example of the post-socialist and post-conflict society undergoing multiple transitions. Major political and economic transformations involving democratization (introduction of the multiparty system) and restitution of capitalism (privatization of the state-owned companies) occurred during the war

and postwar period (Rogić 1998; Tomić-Koludrović and Petrić 2007). During this time, some mechanisms of the decision-making process and civil rights were suspended and these structural transformations did not have satisfactory outcomes. The negative public image of privatization, the abuse of political power, and clientelism have largely contributed to a widespread cynicism, opportunism, and corruptive behavior (Štulhofer 2000). During the 2000s, Croatia has invested considerable effort in carrying out judicial, administrative, economic, and other reforms necessary for the country to meet the conditions for joining in the Euro-Atlantic integrations. Although now an EU country, Croatia is still facing numerous social and economic problems, growth of unemployment, increasing social gap and decreasing social protection and security, unequal educational opportunities, decreasing quality of the public health care system as well as numerous financial, privatization, and corruption scandals involving members of the political and business elites (e.g., Horvat and Štiks 2012).

To analyze how cultural knowledge about leisure time, social participation, and material goods is structured and distributed within and between various Croatian contexts, we sampled seniors attending two major types of the upper secondary schools (grammar and vocational) from four cities in Croatia: Zagreb, Split, Vukovar, and Knin (Map). Zagreb is the capital and the largest city in Croatia, located in the northwest of the country, with a population of 790,017 inhabitants (*Census 2011*). The capital is the seat of the central government, administra-

tive bodies, and almost all government ministries and the city with the most developed economic, technological, industrial, social, cultural, and educational infrastructure in Croatia. Split is a central city and a seaport on the Eastern Adriatic Coast and in Dalmatia. With a population of 178,102 citizens (*Census 2011*), Split is the second-largest city of Croatia. In the Yugoslav era, Split had a significant industrial significance, which is now below former production and employment capacity. Nowadays, the city's economy relies mostly on trade and tourism with some old industries undergoing partial revival, such as food, paper, concrete, and chemicals. Vukovar is a city in eastern Croatia and the biggest river port in the country, located on the Danube. The city's registered population was 27,683 in the 2011 census. During the Croatian "Homeland War" (1991–1995), Vukovar was especially devastated, with a high number of killed, wounded, imprisoned and missing persons, refugees as well as a massively destroyed city's infrastructure. Following the end of the war, much of the infrastructure in Vukovar remains unrestored and the unemployment at high rates. Knin is a small city located in the Dalmatian hinterland with 15,407 citizens (*Census 2011*). The city has experienced significant demographic, socioeconomic, and political changes, mostly due to the immigration of population groups from Bosnia and Herzegovina during and after the war and a slow return of population of Serbian ethnic background after the war. The after-war economy is slowly growing and not yet reaching previous levels of production and employment.



**Map:** Geographical map of Croatia, with location of the sampled cities.

**Methods**

Sample

The sample consisted of 20 upper secondary school seniors in the first phase of the data collection and 469 seniors in the second phase of the data collection. Students were aged 17 to 21 years (mean age 17.92, SD 0.57). Schools were randomly chosen in three cities: 1 grammar and 3 technical and related schools in Zagreb, 1 grammar and 3 technical and related schools in Split, 1 grammar and 2 technical and related schools in Vukovar. In Knin the only grammar school was sampled along with 1 technical and related school. At the end of 2011/2012 (Croatian Bureau of Statistics 2013), in Zagreb there were 39,905 students (19,925 females) in 1,517 class units in 34 grammar schools, 39 technical and related schools, 11 art schools, 16 industrial and craft schools, and 4 schools for disabled youth. In Split there were 13,610 students (6,928 females) in 546 class units in 12 grammar schools, 16 technical and related schools, 3 art schools, 8 industrial and craft schools, and 3 schools for disabled youth. In Vukovar there were 1,871 students (1,496 females) in 115 class units in 1 grammar school, 3 technical and related schools, and 2 industrial and craft schools. In Knin there were 836 students (426 females) in 39 class units in 1 grammar school, 2 technical and related schools, and 2 industrial and craft schools.

A detailed description of the sample (i.e., distribution according to gender and the place of residence as well as the self-estimated family socioeconomic status and the place of residence) was provided previously (Peternel et al. 2004a, b). In short, the majority of study participants are females (61.7%), overall and in each city, 60.4% in Zagreb, 53.8% in Split, 68.5% in Knin, and 80.0% in Vukovar. The majority of students (83.8%) claim an average socioeconomic status whereas 9.2% claim a high and 7.0% a poor one. The majority of students who claim the highest socioeconomic status lives in Split (47.6%), while among those who claim the poorest socioeconomic status the majority lives in Zagreb (34.4%), followed by Knin (25.0%), and Vukovar (21.9%).

First Phase Data Collection

In the first phase of the field study (during the fall of 2011) we carried out free-list interviews with five upper secondary school seniors from each of the four sampled cities. Students were asked to discuss and free-list elements of the good life domain. The free-listing routine was carried out until the point of saturation, that is, until no new elements of good life were mentioned. After content analysis of the collected data, an inventory of 124 items associated with the good life was selected and organized in seven subdomains: 1) education and professional life, 2) intimate and family relations, 3) health and well-being, 4) leisure time and social participation, 5) material goods, 6) migration and socioeconomic milieu, and 7) religion and identity. In this article, we focus on two subdomains, leisure time and social participation and material goods.

Second Phase Data Collection

The second phase of the field study (conducted in the spring of 2012) consisted of the survey in which upper secondary school seniors were given the self-administered questionnaires. The questionnaires were structured, based on the first phase inventory of items associated with good life, in the form of the 5-point rating Likert scale. Students were asked to think about the entire population of Croatian youth and to answer the question: "What is important for youth to have good life in Croatia?" by rating the importance of good life items as "not important (1)," "slightly important (2)," "moderately important (3)," "very important (4)," and "extremely important (5)." To assess how each student is positioned in the social structure, the questionnaire also contained a set of questions pertaining to the demographic and socioeconomic status.

Data Analyses

Thematic content analysis of free-list interviews was done manually and with ATLAS.TI 7 software. The analysis of cultural consensus was performed with ANTHROPAC 4.92 (Borgatti 1996) software and descriptive and additional statistical procedures with SPSS 16.0 software.

The analysis of cultural consensus enables the estimation of consistency in how respondents answer questions. The formal model (Romney, Weller, and Batchelder 1986) is suited for short, open-ended, multiple choice (including dichotomous) answers whereas the informal model (Romney, Batchelder, and Weller 1987) accommodates ordinal, interval, and ratio-scaled answers. The informal cultural consensus model was used for the data analyses in this study. In brief, the informal model is oriented to differences between respondents and not variables and, therefore, it does not require correcting for guess-

ing. It does not test how questions are asked and answered, hence, competence scores do not indicate the proportion of answers that a respondent knows, but how well the responses of each respondent correspond with those of the group (Weller 2007). The informal model allows the estimation of answers to a series of questions and respondent accuracy in answering those questions. Here, an agreement matrix is factored with the minimum residual factoring method without rotation, and the competence scores are used to weight the responses of each respondent (Weller 2007). The ANTHROPAC 4.92 software provides three basic outputs: the competence score of each informant (factor loadings on the first factor), the estimated answer key showing the culturally correct answers of the group to the items under inquiry and the similarity matrix (correlations for all pairs of informants). If the ratio of the eigenvalues for the first and second factors is 3 to 1 or greater, then the data fit the cultural consensus model. An eigenvalue ratio less than 3 to 1 indicates that the assumptions of the model probably are not met due to "negative" competence or incorrect answers.

Ethical Issues

The informed consent was designed according to the necessary requirements set by the European Union with respect to the informed consent and the specific recommendation for research involving "emancipated minors" (adolescents between 16 to 18 years of age). The informed consents were signed at two separate occasions, prior to the first and the second phases of the field research, by participating adolescents and their parents/legal representatives.

**Results**

Free-List Interviews

Various elements of leisure time, social participation, and material goods subdomains were free-listed and articulated as important aspects of the good life construct by students during the first phase of the data collection. We approached the analytical concept of leisure time very openly and attempted to describe and understand it in terms and definitions of our informants, without clear boundaries between different domains of everyday life. The most frequently listed leisure time activities among the interviewed upper secondary school seniors are: "going out to cafés and clubs," "attending cultural and sport events," "going to movies or theaters," "reading of

books," "following news," "volunteering in local community," etc. Students free-list and comment two conventional contents of leisure time, rest and entertainment. Leisure time is perceived as an added value and even the quality of health is discussed through the prism of the quality of leisure time:

It is a fact that in life we always have problems and too many obligations. Sometimes we need to relax and forget a little bit about problems, and to nicely and properly entertain ourselves, because that is good for the health from all points of view.

Students describe leisure time as semi-structured time created in relation to other people, and they often refer to it as to the "time spent with a boyfriend or a girlfriend," "time with family," or "time for recreation with friends." Some descriptions reflect very precise and structured ideas such as "organizing trips with family and friends to visit each corner of Croatia" or "becoming actively involved in the local community through civil service or firefighting." Curiously, descriptions of carefree idleness are almost nonexistent among interviewed students. One rare account containing these aspirations is contained in the following citation:

I would love to drive a motorcycle … Anywhere, anytime. Driving is what matters to me.

The ideal leisure time for some students represents the active rest from stress related to schoolwork, time to earn the pocket money, and freedom from various pressures during school year:

For me, the ideal leisure time is on the island of Rab where I go when school finishes. My buddy has a club there. From Rab I go to the island of Cres, there I wash windshields of the cars lined-up in the ferry lines. I make some money there and go back to Rab. There I spend it all and go back to Cres, and then again, and again. That's all. And the summer is gone. These days are great, without tension and stress because I absolutely have no worries about school or parents, because my grandmother is there … come there by myself and she is so happy because she has company … However, granny does not get some things, you can do what every you want to, granny is freedom.

Leisure time is connected with relaxation, entertainment, and healthy activities, but also with work, money, activism, and freedom of choice:

I spend the most of my leisure time studying. But, when I truly have free time, then I go out with friends, we go downtown and alike. I listen to music, rock and metal, I check the Face, but more for contact. I have enough leisure time, definitely, I cannot complain. Leisure time is important for good life, without it my entire life would turn into school, into work, into nothing.

In a transitional society such as that in Croatia, leisure time and activities become a polygon for expressing various kinds of ambitions and values in reaching the aspired social status. Leisure time is also connected to material goods, and this connection becomes apparent in students' attitudes towards political participation:

It is important to have money because nothing can be done without money today … I think that it is necessary to use free time to become politically engaged!

As far as our leisure time and political and social participation are concerned, our opinions and wishes do not matter unless we have money.

We, the younger people, should activate ourselves to do something useful for our homeland, and not listen how media and the press propagate that we should only have fun and rest, in other words, not to work. How are we then to acquire working habits! We should look up to Japan.

The material goods subdomain reflects common items important for decent life in the transitional context. These items are: "house/apartment, secure and paid job, savings, car, travelling and alike." Free-listing of material goods items reveals criticism of consumerism. For example, students comment on the importance of "not following blindly fashion trends," "knowing how to save and allocate money," and "not spending on the non-essentials." More radical attitudes in terms of negating the value of material goods as a necessity are also present: "material status is important to stupid people," or "who owns what is completely unimportant." Negative attitudes to the value of material goods pertain more to luxuries goods than to necessities: "It is important not to stand out in the crowd through superficial things." Important material goods items are those associated with security, functionality, and necessity: "it is important to own house or apartment," "it is important to have money for education and health," and "it is important to have a job with regular and good pay." On the other side, prestigious lifestyle and wealth are commented positively as well:

Being rich is important because everybody aspires better opportunities in life and because money plays an important role in life and society that surrounds us. Furthermore, today in society you are often judged by the visual effect, that is, by your outside appearance. Summer vacations are also important in lives of everybody, but especially for the young, because during summer we rest, have fun, and prepare for obligations that follow. It is also important to have jewelry and expensive watches, you know … us women, we like to please ourselves in that way whenever we have such an opportunity.

Survey

Cultural consensus model was tested to analyze presence, structure (content), and distribution of shared knowledge in two lifestyle subdomains. The single-factor solution and the assumption of the consensus model was not confirmed in the case of the leisure time and social participation subdomain (the ratio between factors was 2.34 to 1) and was confirmed in the case of the material goods subdomain (the ratio between factors was 5.09 to 1) (Table 1).

Separate cultural consensus model analyses were also run for different subsamples (based on gender, place of residence, self-assessed family socioeconomic standard, and type of school) for the non-coherent leisure time and social participation subdomain (Table 2). The cultural consensus model was confirmed in the case of female (the ratio between factors was 4.33 to 1) and male students (the ratio between factors was 3.01 to 1), the students from the capital city Zagreb (the ratio between factors was 3.50 to 1), and the students attending gymnasiums across Croatia (the ratio between factors was 3.05 to 1). The assumptions of the cultural consensus model were violated in the case of students living in Split (the ratio between factors was 1.86 to 1), Knin (the ratio between factors was 1.43 to 1), and Vukovar (the ratio between factors was 1.91 to 1). Heterogeneous notions regarding leisure time and social participation were noted in the group of students claiming low family socioeconomic standard

**Table 1:** Results of Consensus Analysis in the Leisure Time and Social Participation and Material Goods Subdomains.

| Sub-Domain | N | Factors and Eigenvalues | Ratio between Factors | Competence Estimators | | | Conclusion |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | Mean (sd) | Range | Negative Scores | |
| Leisure Time and Social Participation | 469 | 3.234 1.377 | 2.34 | 0.52 (0.29) | (−0.70, 0.94) | Yes (26) | No Consensus |
| Material Goods | 469 | 6.739 1.324 | 5.09 | 0.66 (0.24) | (−0.60, 0.97) | Yes (10) | Consensus |

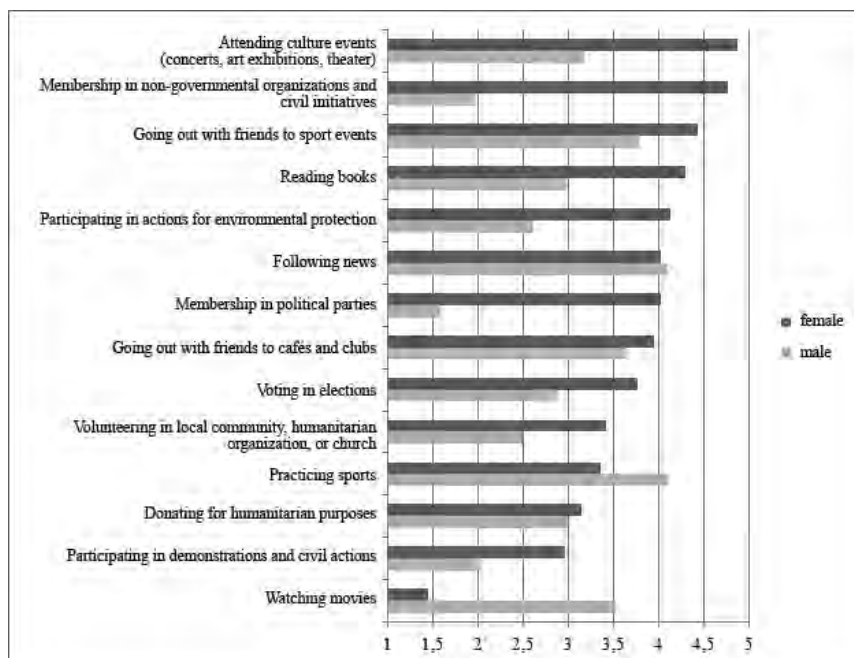**Table 2:** Results of Consensus Analysis in the Leisure Time and Social Participation Subdomain in Different Subsamples.

| Subsample | N | Factors and Eigenvalues | Ratio between Factors | Competence Estimators | | | Conclusion |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | Mean (sd) | Range | Negative Scores | |
| **By Gender** | | | | | | | |
| Female | 287 | 4.968 1.146 | 4.33 | 0.63 (0.22) | (−0.19, 0.92) | Yes (6) | Consensus |
| Male | 178 | 3.379 1.120 | 3.01 | 0.51 (0.28) | (−0.67, 0.93) | Yes (10) | Consensus |
| **By City** | | | | | | | |
| Zagreb | 198 | 3.780 1.079 | 3.50 | 0.55 (0.24) | (−0.39, 0.94) | Yes (5) | Consensus |
| Split | 145 | 2.687 1.437 | 1.86 | 0.49 (0.31) | (−0.66, 0.93) | Yes (12) | No Consensus |
| Knin | 75 | 2.395 1.669 | 1.43 | 0.46 (0.34) | (−0.62, 0.92) | Yes (8) | No Consensus |
| Vukovar | 51 | 3.263 1.701 | 1.91 | 0.59 (0.26) | (−0.31, 0.92) | Yes (2) | No Consensus |
| **By SES** | | | | | | | |
| Low | 32 | 2.592 1.318 | 1.97 | 0.50 (0.30) | (−0.21, 0.89) | Yes (4) | No Consensus |
| Average | 383 | 3.344 1.360 | 2.45 | 0.53 (0.29) | (−0.69, 0.94) | Yes (19) | No Consensus |
| High | 42 | 2.467 1.224 | 2.01 | 0.44 (0.33) | (−0.43, 0.85) | Yes (4) | No Consensus |
| **By School Type** | | | | | | | |
| Gymnasium | 120 | 3.408 1.114 | 3.05 | 0.52 (0.31) | (−0.69, 0.96) | Yes (7) | Consensus |
| Vocational School | 349 | 3.244 1.370 | 2.36 | 0.52 (0.29) | (−0.67, 0.92) | Yes (19) | No Consensus |

(the ratio between factors was 1.97 to 1) as well as average (the ratio between factors was 2.45 to 1) and high standard (the ratio between factors was 2.01 to 1). Finally, cultural consensus was not determined in the group of Croatian students attending vocational schools (the ratio between factors was 2.36 to 1).

A more detailed information about the level of agreement in the analyzed data is provided by the average competence score. The higher the average competence score, the higher the consensus. The highest competence score in the material goods subdomain is evident for the entire group of students (0.66; see Table 1). In the leisure time and social participation subdomain the highest competence score is noted among female students (0.63), followed by students living in Zagreb and those attending gym-

nasiums across Croatia (Table 2). The lowest competence score is confirmed among male students (0.51; see Table 2). However, in spite of the confirmed sharing in cultural knowledge about leisure time and social participation in various subsamples of students and about material goods in the entire sample, there are students with negative estimated cultural competences: 2.1% female students, 5.6% male students, 2.5% students from Zagreb, and 5.8% students from gymnasiums in the leisure time and social participation subdomain and 2.1% students in the material goods subdomain (Tables 1 and 2).

To capture the content of cultural knowledge in the coherent subdomains it is useful to analyze consensus answers or culturally correct answers ("the answer key" in the ANTHROPAC module). The cut-off values for interpreting culturally correct an-

swers are: high (above 4), medium (from 3 to 4), and low cultural importance (below 3).

The culturally correct answers related to the list of items in the leisure time and social participation subdomain (Fig. 1) are shown for the female and male students. The highest level of cultural importance among female students is noted for the heterogeneous group of items reflecting various needs such as personal growth, fun, activism, and political engagement: "attending culture events," "joining non-governmental organizations and civil initiatives," "going out with friends to sports events," "reading books," "participating in actions for environmental protection," "membership in political parties," "following news." Average cultural importance among female students is also associated with the heterogeneous items "going out with friends to cafés and clubs," "voting in elections," "volunteering in local community, humanitarian organization, or church," "practicing sports," and "donating for humanitarian purposes." Two items reach low culture importance, i.e., "participating in demonstrations and civil actions" and "watching movies." Contrary to female students, in male students only two items are considered to have high cultural importance, "following news" and "practicing sports." Items of medium cultural importance are "attending culture events," "going out with friends to sport events," "going out with friends to cafés and clubs," "donating for humanitarian purposes," and "watching movies." Low cultural importance relates to the items reflecting personal growth, activism, and

political engagement: "joining non-governmental organizations and civil initiatives," "reading books," "participating in actions for environmental protection," "membership in political parties," "voting in elections," "volunteering in local community, humanitarian organization, or church," and "participating in demonstrations and civil actions."

The cultural content of the material goods subdomain (Fig. 2) among the entire sample of students echoes their needs for security, comfort, autonomy, pleasure, and prestige. Security is the theme of the highest cultural importance among students. The cluster of items with highest scores ("not being in debts," "owning safe car," "owning flat or house," and "having savings") is dominated by the images of personal security. Five items of medium cultural importance are heterogeneous and reflect comfort ("having own computer and internet"), security ("having shares, bonds, life insurance, and alike"), autonomy ("having own room in parental household"), pleasure ("going away for summer vacations"), and pleasure associated with personal development and openness to exploring different cultures ("travelling abroad"). The largest cluster of items belongs to those of low cultural importance. In fact, the cluster of low cultural importance is dominated by ideas of prestige, with the exception of two items reflecting pleasure ("going away for winter vacations") and security ("living in rented apartment, without bank loan"). The item "going on winter vacations" is close in score to the items of medium cultural importance, and the item "living in a rent-
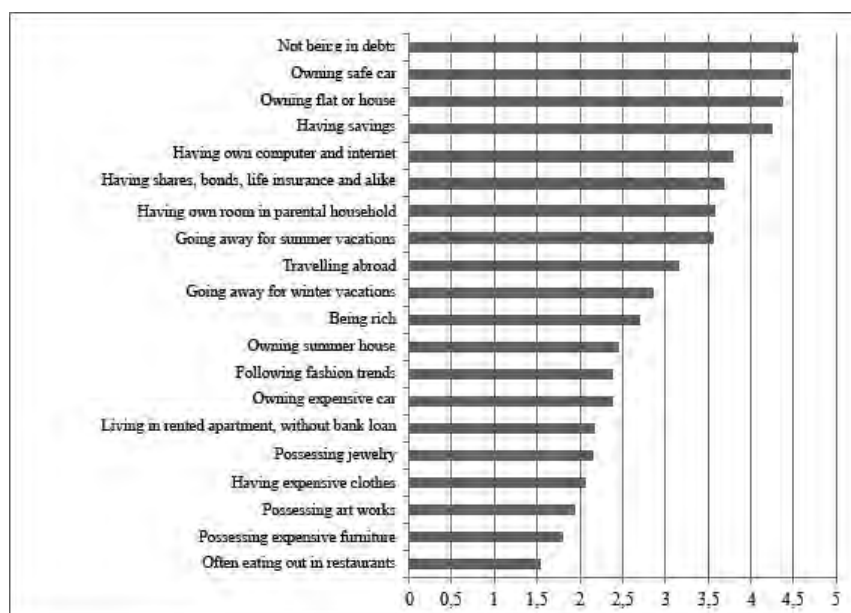
**Fig. 2:** Answer key for the material goods subdomain for the entire sample of students.

ed apartment, without bank loans or mortgage" underlines the high cultural preference of home ownership as a basic prerequisite for decent life, or, in other words, accepting the idea of bank loans and mortgage for obtaining an own house or apartment and low cultural valuing of home renting. The remaining items of low cultural importance are connected to prestige, in the descending order, "being rich," "owning summer house," "following fashion trends," "owning expensive car," "possessing jewelry," "having expensive clothes," "possessing art works," "possessing expensive furniture," "often eating out in restaurants."

## Discussion

As explained in the introductory remarks, the investigation of the leisure time and social participation and material goods subdomains is important in the context of our own ethnographic research of the good life construct as part of the holistic anthropological investigations of psychosocial stress in youth. However, investigation of these two good life subdomains is also important with respect to previous theoretical and empiric bio-cultural research, investigating links between individual health and well-being and adherence to cultural models.[5] In developing the concept of cultural consonance, as

the extension of cultural consensus theory, in which individual's adherence to cultural models is tested in relation to consequences for health and well-being, Dressler and colleagues tested a large number of cultural domains. The first tested domains were lifestyle and social support, and later family life, national identity, and food.[6] In examining cultural consonance in the lifestyle domain (e.g., Dressler et al. 2007), Dressler and colleagues follow Bourdieu's (1984) definition of lifestyle as material accoutrements and behavioral manifestations of being successful / having success in life. In an earlier work, Dressler and Bindon (2000) argue that lifestyle represents local cultural expressions of the larger theoretical constructs of socioeconomic status (SES). Furthermore, Dressler et al. (2007: 201) specify that "lifestyle represents the way in which differences in SES are introduced into mundane social interaction," in other words, "SES is 'performed' in social interaction via a medium of lifestyle." Dressler and colleagues[7] examine the cultural model of lifestyle by breaking it into two subdomains, leisure activities, and material goods.

Our research of the two good life subdomains, leisure time and social participation as well as material goods, reveal the following characteristics of the content and distribution of cultural knowledge

5 E.g., Dressler, Campos Balieiro, Ribeiro, and Dos Santos (2007); Reyes-García, Gravlee, McDade, Huanca, Leonard, and Tanner (2010); Dressler (2012).

6 E.g., Dressler, Campos Balieiro, and Dos Santos (1997; 1998) and Dressler, Campos Balieiro, Ribeiro, and Dos Santos (2007).

7 E.g., Dressler and Bindon (2000); Dressler, Borges, Campos Balieiro, and Dos Santos (2005); Dressler, Campos Balieiro, Ribeiro, and Dos Santos (2007).

of Croatian upper secondary school seniors. The analysis of cultural knowledge content indicates the importance of various themes in the studied good life cultural subdomains: personal growth and fun in leisure time, activism and political engagement in social participation, security, comfort, autonomy, pleasure, and prestige in material goods. However, these themes do not necessarily have the same level of cultural importance in various contexts and groups. The cultural consensus model analysis discloses a high level of cultural knowledge agreement in the material goods subdomain at the level of the entire sample and less consistent cultural beliefs about leisure time and social participation with more complex patterning in various subsamples of students.

In this study, high and medium cultural value of material goods is associated with security, comfort, autonomy, and pleasure versus low cultural value of mostly the prestigious and luxurious goods. These findings for the entire group of studied Croatian students are in line with the classical Veblen's theoretical predictions (Veblen 2001 [1899]) and recent empiric evidence regarding cultural consensus in the material possessions in Brazil and Afro-American communities in the US (e.g., Dressler and Bindon 2000; Dressler 2007). The structure of cultural knowledge regarding the subdomain of material goods among Croatian upper secondary school seniors fit well with Dressler's (2007: 185 f.) remarks and conclusions:

Although Veblen is usually associated with the notion of "conspicuous consumption" with respect to lifestyles, he also argued that the majority of people aspire to what he called "a common standard of decency"; that is, individuals seek not to exceed local standards of lifestyle, but rather to attain what is collectively regarded as "good life", often more a kind of domestic comfort than a high level of consumption. In examining cultural models of lifestyle in Brazil and in the American-African community, this is precisely what we found (although the specific content of models differs between societies).

A highly shared degree of cultural knowledge regarding the importance of various material goods in the large sample of students is probably connected to the long-lasting economic crisis and social insecurity in contemporary Croatia. The prevailing cultural logics among Croatian students implies that life necessities are provided through good education that should result in secure and paid employment, but in reality, employment is an unsecure category causing anxiety and distress, especially in the youth (Peternel, Malnar, and Martinović Klarić 2014a). The following citation of a male student from a vo-

cational school illustrates how a description of a good life is reduced to the existential minimum:

For an educated adult a good life nowadays is to be employed. The situation is such that people are not interested in the amount of pay, it is only important to be paid and not to worry if you have money to give it to your child for a snack in school. For me, a good life in future means to have good salary, family, and pleasant place for living, without worries. However, these things aren't and will never be possible in Croatia. People here should leave their homes and move somewhere else to have better future.

An example of a more optimistic account of good life, that implies not only a connection between good education and employment but also the connection between good education and good job with quality free time that allows lifetime personal development and specific types of prestigious leisure activities, is contained in the following citation:

It would be ideal if I would graduate from a good university outside of my current place of living that would give me good knowledge, skills, and possibility of becoming employed. I would love to travel a lot, to have a good salary, and to work on personal development and various trainings all my life. I would like to have many sincere friends and family support and enough free time for horseback riding and painting.

In the research of Dressler and colleagues (2007: 204) lifestyle was discussed as the "accumulation of material goods and the adoption of related behaviors that signify the achievement of a particular level of SES." Interestingly, in this study the leisure time and social participation proved to be a more complex and contested subdomain than material goods. In cultural anthropology, leisure time is considered to be a contested category that reflects various values, meanings, and contents of cultural realities (e.g., Valtonen 2004). We observe a complex patterning in cultural knowledge about leisure activities and forms of social participation in various subsamples of students. Cultural consensus is confirmed in male and female students, students from Zagreb and gymnasiums across Croatia, whereas that is not the case with students from Split, Knin, and Vukovar as well as with groups of students claiming a low, average, and high family socioeconomic standard. A striking difference is noted between female and male students in their sharing of cultural knowledge about leisure time and social participation. Females value more highly than males those items reflecting activism, political engagement, and personal growth. On the other side, females value less highly than male students the undemanding fun activities. Gender differences were previously dem-

onstrated for the reading of books and practicing sports between young males and females in Croatia, but not in their social and political participation, which was found to be low in the representative population of Croatian youth aged 14 to 27 years (Ilišin, Bouillet, Gvozdanović, and Potočnik 2013).

Therefore, we conclude that the analysis of the cultural consensus model, based on the locally elicited and meaningful good life items, allowed us to report what in the transitional context of contemporary Croatia is culturally appropriate for various subgroups of youth in leisure time and social participation as well as what comfort is associated with good living and what kind of superficial goods are related to status aspirations and social prestige in the entire group of students. Multiple themes in the investigated subdomains and plural voices among the group of Croatian upper secondary school seniors point to a heterogeneity of perceived needs in what is imagined as good life in leisure time and social participation and material goods subdomains.

The relationship between culture and individual health outcomes is and will continue, being a subject of theoretical and methodological challenge in anthropological studies of health and well-being. Data analysis, rooted in theoretical and empirical account of cognitive anthropology, allows the operationalization of ethnographic data collected through free-list interviewing in interdisciplinary and holistic anthropological research involving a complex bio-cultural modeling. As anthropologists we are aware that every phase of both qualitative and quantitative analysis has to be carefully developed and analytically precise. Coming full circle to our opening arguments, we conclude that the approach, based on the cultural consensus theory and cultural models, is useful in holistic anthropological research of psychosocial stress, because it allows an elegant maneuver in crossing the gap between diverse analytical paradigms, the sociocultural, and the biomedical.

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# Sexo en la posrevolución

## Poder, cultura y prostitución en una ciudad mexicana

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### Introducción

Imaginemos a Basilia Pecina sentada, frente a un empleado municipal, quien la mira lascivamente mientras le pregunta su nombre, edad, estado civil, su origen, su domicilio. Además, la observa para captar el color de su piel, de su cabello, de sus ojos, la forma de su nariz y su boca, su estatura. Finalmente, el empleado le pregunta a Basilia si tiene en su cuerpo alguna seña particular y ella, tal vez consternada o enfadada, le responde: "Un lunar en la barba".

A Basilia le siguieron otras mujeres. Como ella, también fueron cuestionadas por el empleado municipal. Una a una se sentó para dar información privada a un hombre que representaba a una institución pública. Se trataba de un censo femenino, pero no cualquiera, sino de un registro estadístico de prostitutas iniciado en 1930 e interrumpido en 1934 en Ciudad Victoria, una ciudad del noreste mexicano situada a 320 kilómetros de la frontera con Estados Unidos de América. Por supuesto, esta política de registro no es la primera en su tipo en México. Se tiene el antecedente de un padrón de prostitutas or-

denado por Maximiliano de Habsburgo en 1865 y realizado por autoridades sanitarias (Massé 1996); así como de la reglamentación de la prostitución en la segunda mitad del siglo XIX y primera del XX (Ríos de la Torre 2004), lo que evoca la representación de las prostitutas como "viciosas, corruptas y sin moral" (Muñiz 2002: 210).

Tal como han afirmado Pachajoa Londoño y Figueroa García (2008: 54), algunas teorías tradicionales han intentado definir, comprender e incluso normativizar la prostitución, a decir del prohibicionismo, el abolicionismo y el reglamentarismo. Es quizá con este último enfoque con el que se puede entender el registro de prostitutas citado, al ser un ejemplo de control institucional de las trabajadoras sexuales, no obstante, es necesario ir más allá de los datos en sí. Para los autores citados, las tres teorías tienen un fundamento jurídico a la vez que están permeadas de ideologías de género en torno a la sexualidad femenina: mientras que el prohibicionismo estipula que es necesario erradicar las prácticas sexuales remuneradas por ser una afrenta a la moral sexual, el abolicionismo plantea que hay que erradicarlas en tanto un problema de salud pública, y el reglamentarismo que es "un mal necesario" que requiere de la intervención del Estado (Pachajoa Londoño y Figueroa García 2008: 56–58).

De diferentes formas, la recopilación de datos sociodemográficos sobre las prostitutas de esta ciudad mexicana trasciende el mero conocimiento institucional de llevar una estadística. Refleja también lo que Lagarde (1997) ha denominado "cautiverios de las mujeres" en determinada sociedad; a decir de la condición femenina, del estado de las mujeres en un mundo patriarcal que las subordina y oprime culturalmente asignándoles supuestos roles, clasificándolas y estigmatizándolas. Incluso para Lagarde, quien habla de "las putas" como una evidencia más del cautiverio de las mujeres, se trata de la subyugación del cuerpo y la sexualidad femenina: dos espacios vitales asociados con la procreación y el erotismo. Sin embargo, nos dice la autora, mientras que el primero es vinculado con la maternidad, el segundo es reservado para aquellas mujeres situadas en lo negativo, la maldad, las putas, las malas mujeres.

Entonces, ¿cómo leer esta fuente estadística en tanto un texto histórico y cultural? La sugerencia de Scott (2008: 150) es útil al advertirnos que los informes estadísticos no son neutros, por ello deben problematizarse, asimismo, sus categorías y conclusiones contextualizarse, pues reflejan la postura y legitimación de cierto orden social. Este último, sin duda, construido a través de ideologías, discursos y prácticas predominantes en torno al cuerpo y la sexualidad.