

# Characteristics and Types of Authority: the Attitudes of Young People. A Case Study

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## **Characteristics and Types of Authority: the Attitudes of Young People. A Case Study.**

This paper focuses on the socio-psychological dimension of authority as a cultural-integrative category. The results are presented of research into students' perceptions of desirable, positive characteristics of authority, providing an insight into what constitutes the qualities of certain types of authority. The dynamic interplay among social norms, beliefs and perceptions of real life influence the students' view of what authority is, as a role model, in Serbia today, still suffering the consequences of the disintegration of social norms. Six hundred and fifty-five students participated in the research project by filling in a questionnaire on the characteristics of authority. The results of factor analysis point to three relatively independent types of authority: charismatic, traditional and bureaucratic. The results are discussed in the context of changing authority rank in a transitional society like Serbia today, and the capability of particular types of authority to influence young people's attitudes and behaviour.

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## **Introduction**

Authority is one of the most complex principles of social organization in a modern society, and the most important relationships between individuals or groups are based on some type of authority. By understanding the attitudes of the members of a society towards its basic types of authority, conclusions can be reached on the level of development of social relations in a given historical moment.

Over the last decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Serbian society has been transformed by the severe processes of post-communist transition. Among

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numerous devastating effects are that people on the whole have lost confidence in most governmental institutions, and that the value system has decomposed, which was accompanied by a decline in the authority of social subjects who were once widely recognized as role models. This trend continued in the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century and has been clearly manifest in the younger generation. According to some recent research (UNICEF u Srbiji, 2005 – 2009), young people in Serbia lack interest in any social issue outside their peer circles, tend to reject any authority, show no awareness of or enthusiasm towards social goals of general significance. At the same time, their life style is strongly marked by consumerism, passivity and even apathy. Therefore, the attitude of younger generation towards authority figures is worth investigating in order to better understand what types of authority are recognized in the framework of the changed value system.

### **Multiple connotations of authority**

The concept of authority is difficult to define operationally in empirical studies since it embraces both sociological and psychological content (Arendt 1969: 114). The very term is inexplicit, derived from the Latin *auctoritas* and has various meanings: reputation, dignity, value, conscience, assurance, affirmation, veracity, notability, significance, role model and opinion. As regards the concept's ambiguity (Sorm 2010; Schellens – Verhoeven 1994; Schellens 1985; Wilson 1983; Woods – Walton 1974), Bocheński (1974) recognizes only two fundamental types of authority: epistemic, which is expertise-based, and deontic authority, the authority of obligations and control. These two forms of authority are closely related to each other, and the deontic one must at least to some extent be based on knowledge and competence (Neiman 1986). In this paper, we accept De George's (1985) pluralistic concept of authority, the multiple forms, functions and justifications of authority. In addition to epistemic, expertise-based authority, De George mentions parental, political, moral and religious authority.

The reasons for subjection to authority are defined in different ways. Some authors find them in the personal common sense's directive (Bakunin 1950), others in a form of obedience and conformity which is beneficial for society (Milgram 1974), or in adjustments of an individual to social norms that are regulated and disposed by a certified authority (Russell 1974). Reasons are also found in the axiomatic confidence provided by the authority (Simmel 1908), and a form of emotional commitment (Sennet 1980), or as the eternal principle of life (Valois 1923).

In psychological literature, authority is usually described through the relation between supremacy and subordination, and is given a negative connotation. Such approaches can be found in studies on the development of

moral awareness (Kohlberg 1981; Piaget 1952), authoritarian submission (Adorno 1950), cognitive authoritarianism (Salancik – Pfeffer 1989), obedience and subjection (McDougall 2001; Milgram 1974; Murray 1938), and authoritarian, or in other words, sado-masochistic, personalities (Fromm 1936).

Sociologist M. Weber (1968) says that government is institutionalized power, where power (*Macht*) represents any degree of probability to fulfill someone's will over others in spite of resistance, and government (*Herrschaft*) represents the probability that certain people will obey a command of certain content. Whereas power rests solely on the coercion of the will, authority rests on what Weber has called the "inner justification" of dominion (Seligman 2000). This inner, subjective experience is at the heart of the phenomenon of authority. Charismatic, rational-legal and traditional types of authority (*Autorität*) are realized by legitimacy. Its legitimacy is judged in four different ways (Weber 1968): on the basis of tradition, affectionate and emotional belief, rational belief, and belief in legality. According to the principle of legitimacy, Weber distinguishes three forms of the authority: traditional, charismatic and rational-legal.

This concept is considered when it comes to the relations between power and freedom, in other words freedom and an authoritative system of power (Tadić 2007, 1987; Stanovčić 2003). According to this, *auctoritas* differs from *potestas* and *imperium* which imply power. Tadić (1987: 13) cites the concepts of authority, such as willingness, power, decision, command and order, in the sense of (political) subordination.

Some political theoreticians regard these two concepts as synonyms (de Jouvenel, for more see Đorđević 1973), whereas the others claim that there is a difference in quality since power represents a political category, while authority is a social and moral category, and power as a social mode is an evaluation of difference and the confirmation of inequality in these modes (Đorđević 1973). According to Raz (1979: 19), authority is a "species of power", since to have authority over others is to have power over them. Effective authority is feasible only when that authority is regarded by a sufficient number of people as legitimate (Raz 1979).

Research approaches in studying authority are numerous (Spencer 1970: 124; Lukes 1987: 60) as are the areas in which the authority relations and subjects of authority are manifest: political, psychological, philosophical, theological, juristic, etc. In particular areas of life authority is manifest in certain social roles: parental authority, the authority of teachers, managers, judges, *coaches* (Bocheński 1974), the authority of law, and of eminent persons (Jaspers, according to Horn 1993). An authority can be rational or irrational, public or anonymous, charismatic, legal, personal in the sense of gained experience and knowledge, as well as traditional, related to a position,

institution or title. Authority is most often related to a person whose judgement or behaviour is highly valued and accepted as undoubtedly correct (Gruden 2007).

### **Authority as a factor of social cohesion**

In this paper, authority is regarded as a positive form of social relation, a cultural-integrative value category (Golubović 1973), and one of the factors of social cohesion necessary for a society's sustenance. This general approach has its support in sociological literature as well. Simmel (1908) describes authority as a social category: one who believes in authorities participates spontaneously in a social event. There is also De Jouvenel's opinion (1955: 49) that there would be no co-operation among people, no security and no society if all types of authority were annulled.

In our research approach, authority is inseparable from deliberate acceptance (De Jouvenel 1955: 49). In other words, acceptance of authority is deliberate, compatible with freedom and with a certain amount of intellectual autonomy, and not a result of authoritarian manipulation, blind submission, "collective trance", or so called "directive from the centre" (Grlić 1965: 49). Thus the recognition or finding of an authority is at the same time a quest for personal identity, when an individual becomes aware of oneself in relation with "someone else" as a role model of behaviour (Golubović 2003). An authority should contribute to development of independent, original and self-aware persons, increasing the chances for a society to be a community of such persons (Filipović 1989).

The attitudes of young people towards authority have been investigated in many western countries over the last decades. The investigations have focused on attitudes towards parents (Rigby – Schofield – Slee 1987), teachers (Raviv – Bar-Tal – Raviv – Biran – Sela 2003) and institutional authorities (Rigby – Mak – Slee 1989; Rigby 1990). The studies have shown that the attitudes towards parents, teachers and institutions are generally positive (Levy 2001).

### **SUBJECT OF RESEARCH AND RESEARCH OBJECTIVE**

The starting point of our research is the concept of authority as a cultural-integrative and value category. The authority value of an individual is considered to be broader than his/her personal moral value, as A. Heller puts it (1984), since it is necessary to include the values chosen by the individual from a set of social norms within the limits where this choice is possible (Golubović 1973: 191). Since there is an unresolved conflict between certain elements in the sphere of values, individuals deliberately accept authority as a projected value, or as a value – ideal or value – possibility (Životić 1969).

The principal research objective comprises the following:

- To determine how the students perceive authority figures as role models;
- To determine what "positive properties" are considered by students as outstanding enough to give their bearers authority;
- To find out whether the assessment of particular qualities of authority are related to students' age, gender, economic status, parents' education level and the financial resources available for studies.
- To distinguish different types of authority based on the qualities that students attribute to them.

## **METHODOLOGY**

### **The Participants**

There were 655 participants in this research and they are students of the Higher School of Professional Business Studies in Novi Sad, Serbia. There were 326 female students (49.8%) and 329 male students (50.2%). Their average age was approximately 22. The participants were students of the first (55%), second (23.2%), and third year (21.7%). Most were financed by their families (59.5%), 31.3% received grants from the state budget, only 6.4% of the students were employed, and 2.7% stated that the options given were not applicable to them. The social status of the participants' families was self-assessed by the students following the band: excellent, very good, good, and poor. Most participants (44.6%) considered their family's economic status good; 35.6% of them very good, whereas excellent and poor were claimed by 11.6% and 8.2% respectively. The majority of the participants' parents have completed secondary education (65.3%), and 29.6% of the participants' parents have graduated from university. The least number of the participants' parents have had only an elementary-school education (5%).

The particularity of the sample lies in the fact that it is only formed by students of one college, which has a limiting influence on generalizations based on the results obtained. However, a relationship can be established with several important demographic attributes of the sample: social status, ethnicity (Serbian, Hungarian, Slovak, Ukrainian, Croatian, Romanian, Roma), residential status (urban/rural), academic success, and means of financing studies (state grants/ self-financing).

### **Instrument**

A self-administered questionnaire was designed for this empirical study. It consists of 23 characteristics that describe various aspects of authority on the basis of an overview of relevant references from the field of sociology,

psychology, social psychology, political science and anthropology (Origgi 2005; Golubović 2003; Goodwin 1998; Walton 1997; Altemeyer 1996; Rot 1994; Havelka 1992; De George 1985; Schellens 1985; Wilson 1983; Sennet 1980; Jerotić 1980; Bojanović 1979; Weber 1968; Milgram 1974; Russell 1974; Bocheński 1974; Woods and Walton 1974; Adorno 1950; Fromm 1941; Simmel 1908). The list of the characteristics of authority includes: *freedom, definiteness, determination, validity, uniqueness, credibility, exclusiveness, omnipresence, consistency, reliability, charisma, progressiveness, superiority, unerringness, categoricalness, habitualness, familiarity, tradition, esteem, dignity, influence, exemplarity* and *involvement*. The participants were asked to assess the level of dominance of each one of these 23 characteristics of authority by ranking it on a ten-degree scale.

### **Procedure**

Participants completed the questionnaire over a course of academic classes and their participation was voluntary. The time allotted for completing the questionnaire was 25 minutes.

## **RESULTS**

### **Characteristics of authority**

The results of descriptive analysis on the whole sample show that our participants find determination, dignity, reliability and positiveness the most outstanding characteristics of authority (Appendix A). Hence the results of the analyses referring to only these four characteristics will be presented hereafter.

As far as the differences among participants in terms of sex are concerned, the results of the *t*-test (*Independent Sample Test*) show that determination ( $t(653) = -2.137, p < .03$ ) and progressiveness ( $t(653) = -2.426, p < .01$ ) are statistically more significant in case of female students (determination  $M = 8.71, SD = 2.03$ ; progressiveness  $M = 8.45, SD = 2.27$ ) in comparison with male students (determination  $M = 8.37, SD = 2.04$ ; progressiveness  $M = 8.01, SD = 2.31$ ).

The results of the one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) show that among the participants of different years of studying, there are statistically significant differences in their perception of authority for the following characteristics: determination ( $F(2,654) = 4.271, p < .014$ ), reliability ( $F(2,654) = 7.463, p < .001$ ), and progressiveness ( $F(2,654) = 4.640, p < .01$ ). The application of Tukey's post hoc test shows that the second-year students ( $M = 8.15, SD = 2.0$ ) see determination as a lower quality than third-year students do ( $M = 8.82, SD = 1.97$ ), whereas they assess reliability with much lower values ( $M = 7.75, SD = 2.51$ ) than both first-year students ( $M = 8.34, SD = 2.11$ ) and third-year

students ( $M = 8.72$ ,  $SD = 1.75$ ). The third-year students ( $M = 8.73$ ,  $SD = 1.99$ ) assess progressiveness with higher marks than first-year ( $M = 8.14$ ,  $SD = 2.37$ ) and second-year students ( $M = 7.96$ ,  $SD = 2.35$ ).

The results of the one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) showed that there are differences among participants in terms of financing their studies. Statistically significant differences can be seen for the perception of the following characteristics: dignity ( $F(3,654) = 3.915$ ,  $p < .01$ ), reliability ( $F(3,654) = 4.293$ ,  $p < .005$ ), and progressiveness ( $F(3,654) = 3.871$ ,  $p < .009$ ). The application of Tukey's post hoc test showed that the students financed from the state budget assess dignity, reliability and progressiveness higher than the students financed by their families do. Thus, the results are as follows: dignity (budget  $M = 8.74$ ,  $SD = 2.11$ , family  $M = 8.14$ ,  $SD = 2.16$ ), reliability (budget  $M = 8.73$ ,  $SD = 2.05$ , family  $M = 8.11$ ,  $SD = 2.23$ ), and progressiveness (budget  $M = 8.67$ ,  $SD = 2.16$ , family  $M = 8.00$ ,  $SD = 2.36$ ).

When differences among the participants in terms of self-assessment of their social status and the educational level of their parents are considered, the analysis of variance did not show any statistically significant differences in the perception of authority.

In order to find out what factors underly the participants' estimation of which characteristics which characterise authority, we employed factor analysis.

### Factor analysis

Five factors were extracted in the analysis of the principal components. Table 1 shows the percentage of variance explaining the first three factors (55.115%). The other factors are too weak and cannot be interpreted, so we did not take them into consideration. The isolated factors were brought into Promax rotation, and they were interpreted on the basis of the structure matrix. Likewise, Table 1 shows three extracted factors with the percentages of explained variance and the loading indexes of related scales.

**Table 1: Three extracted factors with the percentages of explained variance and the loading indexes of the most loaded scales**

Factor 1 (41.29 %)	Factor 2 (7.45 %)	Factor 3 (6.36 %)
Reliability	Familiarity	Credibility
.87	.91	.80
Progressiveness	Esteem	Exclusiveness
.81	.70	.74
Determination	Categoricalness	Uniqueness
.74	.65	.73
Dignity	Tradition	Omnipresence
.69	.60	.71
Charisma	Habitualness	Validity
.59	.54	.55

The first factor explains that the highest percentage of variance and the most loaded scale: *reliability, progressiveness, determination, dignity* and *charisma*. The characteristics involving this factor are also assessed as those that best describe authority for our participants (Appendix A).

The second factor is involved in the most loaded scales *familiarity, esteem, categoricalness, tradition* and *habitualness* whereas the most loaded scales *credibility, exclusiveness, uniqueness, omnipresence* and *validity* have to do with the third factor. The choice of characteristics that the respondents considered to be most important is based on clearly ethical ideas, even if it is partially based on what is considered socially desirable.

Since the most loaded factors turned out to be the closest to Weber's typology of forms of authority (1968), the first type was called charismatic authority, the second type traditional authority, and the third type bureaucratic authority.

Regarding different types of authority, the epistemic or knowledge-based and the deontic or the authority of obligations and control (Bocheński 1974) are the most often recognized. As defined in this paper, the traditional type of authority is closer to the epistemic or de facto one (Schellens 1985; Woods & Walton 1974), or to cognitive (Walton, 1997; Wilson 1983), or to non-executive authority (De George 1985), while the bureaucratic type of authority is more similar to the deontic or de iure authority (Schellens 1985; Woods and Walton 1974) or administrative (Walton 1997; Wilson 1983) or executive authority (De George 1985).

The similarity is obvious between the three types of authority in our paper and those defined by Goodwin (1998): the traditional type of authority in our paper corresponds to Goodwin's (1998) authority based on expertise, the bureaucratic type is similar to authority based on command, and the charismatic type corresponds to authority based on dignity. As Sorm (2010) notices, what distinguishes authority based on dignity is a personal eminence like that of priests, royalty or the Dalai Lama, and not on knowledge resulting in expertise or power resulting in giving orders. Therefore it can be said that Goodwin's (1998) authority based on dignity is quite similar to Weber's (1968) charismatic type of authority.

Since most authors (De George 1985; Schellens 1985; Bocheński 1974; Woods and Walton 1974) distinguish two forms of authority, excluding Goodwin (1998) who ascertains three forms, it is recognized that the types of authority mapped in this paper are most similar to Weber's (1968) typology of authority regarding its comprehensiveness.

In order to determine to what extent these factors are independent, correlation analysis of the factors obtained after Promax rotation was carried out. Promax rotation revealed that the factors are relatively independent

because there are inter-correlations between all the factors (charismatic and traditional types of authority:  $r = .51$ ; charismatic and bureaucratic types of authority:  $r = .56$ ; traditional and bureaucratic types of authority:  $r = .44$ ). Therefore it can be seen from the results of factor analysis that within the context of authority three relatively independent types can be distinguished, and these are charismatic, traditional and bureaucratic types of authority.

In order to see if the participants differ in their estimations about the types of authority in terms of social characteristics, three variables were created first. The first variable is charismatic authority, and it is defined as the average of five most loaded scales: reliability, progressiveness, determination, dignity and charisma. The second variable is traditional authority, and it is defined as the average value of five most loaded scales: familiarity, esteem, categoricalness, tradition and habitualness. The third variable is bureaucratic authority, and it is defined as the average value of five most loaded scales: uniqueness, credibility, exclusiveness, omnipresence and definiteness. A *T-test (Independent Sample Test)* and one-way analysis of variance are used for these variables.

As far as gender is concerned, the results of *t-test* showed that the participants differ only in case of charismatic authority ( $t(653) = -2.151, p < .03$ ). The female students ( $M = 8.49, SD = 1.72$ ) assess charismatic authority higher than the male students do ( $M = 8.19, SD = 1.83$ ).

The results of the one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) showed that among participants with differing years of studies there are statistically significant differences in the perception of authority when speaking about charismatic authority ( $F(2,654) = 6.030, p < .003$ ), and bureaucratic authority ( $F(2,654) = 4.491, p < .012$ ). The application of Tukey's post hoc test showed that the third-year students assess charismatic authority ( $M = 8.70, SD = 1.69$ ) higher than the second-year students do ( $M = 7.99, SD = 1.92$ ), whereas the third-year students ( $M = 7.40, SD = 1.98$ ) assess bureaucratic authority considerably higher than the first-year students do ( $M = 6.84, SD = 1.88$ ).

The results also show that, according to the method of financing their studies, there are statistically significant differences in their perception of the types of authorities – more precisely, charismatic authority ( $F(3,654) = 5.166, p < .002$ ) and bureaucratic authority ( $F(3,654) = 2.838, p < .037$ ). The application of Tukey's post hoc test showed that students financed from the state budget assess charismatic (state budget  $M = 8.74, SD = 1.65$ , family  $M = 8.16, SD = 1.82$ ) and bureaucratic authority (state budget  $M = 7.29, SD = 1.94$ , family  $M = 6.82, SD = 1.87$ ) more highly than students financed by their families do.

In terms of the differences among the participants regarding their self-assessment of social status and the educational level of their parents, the

applied analysis of variance did not show any statistically significant differences in their perception of the types of authority.

## DISCUSSION

The results of the research obtained on the basis of the estimation of the participants showed that characteristics such as determination, dignity and reliability best describe the authority acceptable to our participants. It can be said that these results are somewhat expected because it had previously been shown (Origgi 2005; Goodwin 1998) that the most frequent qualities used for describing authority are reliability, professionalism, trust and dignity. Among the results of this study, the characteristic of progressiveness is noticeable in the description of authority by female students, along with reliability in the case of third-year students as well as those financed by the state budget. It can be concluded that characteristics such as progressiveness and reliability are indicators of nuances in projected values for an imaginary authority according to which the participants are distinguished in this study. The justification for this can be found in the fact that these characteristics are understood in the context mentioned by Životić (1969) – an individual accepts authority as a projected value. It seems that the characteristic of progressiveness specially determines the specific qualities of authority which are acceptable to the participants since the authority is generally described by characteristics such as professionalism, reliability, trust and dignity. (Origgi 2005; Walton 1997; Rot 1994; Goodwin 1998; Schellens 1985; De George 1985; Wilson 1983; Woods and Walton 1974)

The factor analysis showed interesting results. There are three types of authority, and among them there are charismatic, traditional and bureaucratic types of authority, which corresponds to Weber's typology (Weber 1968).

*Charismatic authority* in this paper comprises all characteristics related to reliability, progressiveness, determination, dignity and charisma. According to Weber's (1968) description of charismatic authority, the personality of an individual and his or her charisma are of the highest importance. The legitimacy of the charismatic authority figure, according to Weber (1968), rests on their personal and intermittently proven power. Also, this form of authority must always defend and bring good solutions to its followers (Weber 1968). In this paper, there is a link between Weber's description of charismatic authority (1968) and the charismatic authority mapped in our research, especially when the characteristics such as progressiveness and charisma are taken into consideration. It is interesting to mention that according to Weber (1968), charisma is not an institutional product but its opposition, which is not seen in the context of today's view on charismatic authority (Grubić-Nešić 2008; Vukadinović 2005). Characteristics like democratic attitudes, reliability, clear

expectations, determination, dignity, initiatives, commitment and involvement may be considered as important indicators of contemporary charisma, especially as regarded by our respondents.

*Traditional authority* in this paper comprises characteristics such as familiarity, esteem, categoricalness, tradition and habitualness. Weber's (1968) description of a traditional authority figure is based on accepting the sanctity of tradition - they do not acknowledge legal but rather traditional norms. Consequently, in this paper, based on our respondents' assessments, the characteristics such as habitualness, categoricalness, familiarity and above all tradition are inextricably bound up with Weber's (1968) view on the traditional authority figure.

*Bureaucratic authority* in this paper comprises characteristics such as credibility, exclusiveness, uniqueness, omnipresence and validity. According to Weber (1968), a rational-legal form of authority is characterized by abstract legality and stability and is based on balancing all everyday activities which are repetitive; it contains a system of rational rules. There is an obvious link between this group of characteristics that we obtained and Weber's rational-legal authority, but also between Weber's (1968) view that the objective basis of bureaucratic power is its technical necessity and the characteristics obtained in this study – omnipresence and validity.

It is worth mentioning that the studies of some authors, such as Houghton (2010), show that Weber's typology of authority is applicable in the 21<sup>st</sup> century as well, especially in the field of management. Thus charismatic authority is applicable and effective (Houghton 2010) in today's rapidly changing environments, whereas topical and self-managing forms of organization may present the epitome of Weber's rational-legal authority

On the basis of this research, it seems that Weber's (1968) typology of authorities is still topical and recognizable – not only in the field of management as was previously mentioned (Houghton 2010) – but also when authority is seen as a cultural and integral value category, as suggested in this paper, within which an individual accepts authority as a projected value (Životić 1969).

The results of the research show that there are significant differences among participants regarding the way they estimate various types of authority. For example, the characteristics that are typical for charismatic authority are assessed as acceptable more by female than by male students. Also third-year students are more in favour of these characteristics than second-year students. The same tendency is seen with students financed from state budget as compared to students financed by their families. These assessments by the female respondents can be understood regarding the following three influential factors: still dominant patriarchal culture, the specific nature of women's

emotional engagement, and expectations women are faced with when entering the world of work and management. The bureaucratic form of authority is assessed highly by third-year students (vs. first-year students) and students financed from state budget (vs. students financed by their families). Hence it can be stated that authority is more accepted by the third-year students and students financed from the state budget. Generally speaking, it can be concluded that students who are to complete their studies and those with high GPA (since financing from state budget is closely tied with high GPA and passing all the required exams) have more clearly defined attitudes to authority. This could lead to further research on success, as to whether students with clearly defined attitudes are more successful or whether the factors of success contribute to a more clear defining of attitudes.

## **CONCLUSION**

Authority as a value, or standard of action and thinking, represents an important component of the mental and social development of young people. The adoption of a value framework should be directed and cherished, and "generation thinking" (Mannheim 1978) must be diagnosed. What is the opinion of the generation in these hard times, who are nonetheless getting important roles in our economic and political circumstances.

Changes that have been reshaping Serbian society for the last two decades are neither one-dimensional nor homogenous. Deep gaps divide modernization trends on the one side, from the anti-modernization trends on the other; parochial political culture from mondialistic culture; traditional thinking, from rational; inclinations towards an authoritative regime, from those towards democracy; an ethnic state on the one side, from a civil state on the other. The resulting confusion in the system of values has profound impacts on social behaviour of the young people in Serbia. However, the majority of students participating in this research believe that reliability, positive attitude, dignity and resoluteness are the most important qualities for a person they would consider as an authority. This supports a rather optimistic conclusion that orientations toward terminal values are dominant in at least some segments of younger adults, who have grown up in a social climate in which instrumental values have become dominant in the way of thinking about authority.

This research may be considered as an insight into the thinking of the population that should be the intellectual elite in the future and whose value framework will be recognizable and serve as a model for the development of the professional, cultural and social identity of the community. This study only offers answers to only some of the research questions, because of limitations in the research sample and instruments. This research is particularly significant regarding its social environment – the conditions of anomy and transitional

changes that certainly have important impacts on the formation of attitudes and the behaviour of young people. However, it is necessary to continue this research in order to further clarify the problem of authority and to move towards defining what constitutes desired authority.

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Appendix A

**The hierarchy of the characteristics describing the authority acceptable for the participants – obtained from the total sample (N=655)**

<b>Characteristics</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>SD</b>
Determination	8.54	2.04
Dignity	8.32	2.15
Reliability	8.28	2.20
Progressiveness	8.23	2.30
Exemplarity	8.09	2.30
Influence	8.00	2.21
Validity	7.97	2.20
Charisma	7.83	2.44
Superiority	7.74	2.36
Freedom	7.63	2.45
Consistence	7.58	2.38
Esteem	7.51	2.53
Definiteness	7.51	2.39
Involvement	7.36	2.30
Unerringness	7.33	2.39
Tradition	7.24	2.49
Uniqueness	7.11	2.32
Exclusiveness	7.01	2.34
Habitualness	6.94	2.41
Omnipresence	6.92	2.38
Credibility	6.89	2.27
Categoricalness	6.62	2.35
Familiarity	6.43	2.71