Traditional family values as a determinant of the marital and reproductive behaviour of young people: the case of Southern and Eastern Serbia

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Abstract

This paper analyses the importance of the family of origin for the marital and reproductive behaviour of young people in Southern and Eastern Serbia. The data were gathered using quantitative techniques: surveys and scaling. The study was carried out in the region of Southern and Eastern Serbia across nine districts. The quota sample numbered 500 respondents, 15 to 34 years of age. The respondents were selected according to district criteria, type of settlement, age, and gender. Based on the selected sampling characteristics, the sample is virtually identical to the existing structure of the selected population. The extent to which the family of origin followed traditional values proved to be a significant determinant of the marital and reproductive behaviour of young people. Young people from more traditional families tend to emulate their attitudes towards marriage and childbearing/parenthood. The results confirm the importance of including socio-cultural determinants in the study of the complex dynamics of the marital and reproductive behaviour of young people.

KEY WORDS:

the young, marriage, cohabitation, marital and reproductive behaviour, traditional values in the family of origin.

1 INTRODUCTION

Demographic changes are a key component of deeper social changes. Therefore, the marital and reproductive behaviour of young people should be analysed in the context of socioeconomic changes and the idiosyncrasies of contemporary society (mass production, urbanisation, long-term education, the emancipation of women, individualisation, etc.). Changes in the determinants affecting the family and the marital and reproductive behaviour of young people follow changes in values and norms across all aspects of life. Altering the content of marriage is a complex process in contemporary societies, and in theory represents the transformation of marriage from an institution into a partnership seen as a "pure relationship" that depends on cooperation and emotional communication between the participants (Gidens 2003). There has been a decrease in the number of young people opting for matrimony, who when they do choose to get married, do so later in life. Furthermore, the number of young people opting to cohabitate before marriage (as a kind of substitute for marriage) has increased. Altered attitudes towards marriage, family, and reproduction are manifested as: 1) a shift from "the golden age of marriage to the birth of cohabitation," 2) a shift from children as the key family component to the couple themselves, 3) a shift from "preventive contraception" to the "conception of self-realisation," and 4) a shift from uniform families and households to more diverse forms (Bobić 2003:69).

The family, one of the oldest and most significant social groups, plays an important role both for society and the individuals born into or shaping it. There are two types of families: the family of origin (of orientation) and the family of choice (of procreation) (Tomanović and Ignjatović 2004; Tomanović 2012; Tomanović and Stanojević 2015). The former is an irreplaceable environment into which every individual is born, which determines their upbringing and socialisation. This is the family of one's childhood and youth. Within it, the individual is formed as a person and prepared for social life and social integration. One cannot choose their family of origin. On the other hand, the family of choice (of procreation) is the family one creates. It comes into being through the choices made by an individual, their decision to enter into a martial (or extramarital) union, and with the birth of any children. This is the family of the "mature" age in an individual's life (Mladenović 1991).

An entire network of connections and influences exists between the family of origin and starting a family of choice. Specifically, the family of origin is a social framework for the preparation of young people for their future roles, including marital and parenting roles. It provides an emotional base and emerges as a significant conveyer of cultural, moral, and traditional norms and values (those predominant in the family and in the environment). It can be assumed that the family of origin, depending on whether it is predominantly traditional (patriarchal, authoritarian) or democratic (egalitarian, contemporary) could influence the behaviour of young people and thus could prove to be an important factor in determining their marital and reproductive behaviour.

The traditional (patriarchal) family favours the specific, traditional parenting culture. It divides roles based on gender and age, whereby the woman and children are subservient to the head of the family, the *pater familias*. Family assets are centralised and distributed by the

authority figure. The basic role of the woman is to care for the home, her husband, children, and any elderly family members. The man is superior to the woman legally, economically, and morally (Mladenović 1991). Over time, the structure of this kind of patriarchal family has changed. "Individual married couples and their children have begun to step outside of family communities when they achieve economic independence. This is how more narrow (simple, individual) families are formed, in size more similar to contemporary (democratic) ones, which have in their organisation and in the nature of the family relations remained traditional, since within them the husband and father continues to dominate his wife and children in the same old way" (Mitrović 2015: 130, authors' translation). Certain authors even cite that in this small patriarchal family, at least in the beginning, the authority of the husband-father is even more pronounced (Erlich 1971; Novakov 2011). In the traditional/patriarchal family, socialisation predominantly takes place within the core family, but is also strongly influenced by outside kin, the church, and the neighbourhood. Upbringing in a patriarchal family is based on a patriarchal culture, manifested in obedience, collectivism, altruism, and religiosity, and is mostly authoritarian. One of the most important functions of the patriarchal family is education. It has considerable influence on how children form their attitudes and values, and how they establish relations with their future partners. The biological function in a narrow sense (gender-sexual) is often not separate from the biological function in a broader sense (reproductive functions). The latter is one of the most important functions of the patriarchal family (Mladenović 1991).

Unlike the patriarchal, the democratic family is a small (bi-generational) nuclear family consisting of a married couple and their children. Its development is affected by urbanisation and industrialisation. Therefore, it is not involved in production but in consumption, and depends on the salaries and earnings made outside of the family. It is based on the emotional relationships between the genders, who are considered equal and have equal rights and obligations. It allows the emancipation of women and men, and is characterised by an atmosphere of understanding and agreement. The biological-sexual function in this family is separate from the reproductive one, and the child is no longer a vehicle for the continuation of the species and for preserving family assets. Children are less frequently the goal of marriage; instead, the aim is more often to satisfy the most intimate desires of both spouses (Mladenović 1991).

It's rare to see pure forms of the traditional (patriarchal) and democratic (contemporary) family. We often find features of both at the same time in a single family. In these families, the altered financial basis and/or partial structural disintegration are unable to change family members' views towards traditional values and the patriarchal mentality.

1.1 THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

The assumption that the family of origin could, through its system of values, affect the marital and reproductive behaviour of young people is supported by certain theories and authors who add socio-cultural factors to economic ones when explaining demographic changes. They strive towards a revision of economic theories of family and fertility. A major opponent of the (first) demographic tran-

sition theory (Landry, Notestein and Thompson), according to which demographic transformation is under the direct influence of socioeconomic determinants, is Ansley Coale, whose research indicates that there is no immediate connection between economic development and fertility. His revision of the theory takes into account economic and cultural dimensions, both of which are needed for us to understand demographic trends. In his view, "birth becomes the result of a rational choice on the part of the married couple, which can be realised in the context of existing moral, religious and cultural norms" (Coale 1973, as cited in Devedžić 2006: 44, authors' translation). Rodolfo Bulatao is another demographer who has attempted to overcome the limitations of micro-economic theories (Leibenstein, Easterlin, Becker). In addition to economic factors, Bulatao cites the importance of social and cultural ones: perceptions, attitudes, and values related to the desired size of the family, the value and non-value of children, the characteristics of money, and the household, etc. (Bulatao 1984, as cited in Blagojević 1997: 53). John Cleland and Christopher Wilson are sharply opposed to the economic/market theories of fertility, claiming they provide a one-sided interpretation of the decrease in fertility, seen as a consequence of changes in the gains and expenses of childbearing. According to their ideational-cultural theory, changes in fertility are more heavily influenced by cultural factors than economic ones: "The speed with which fertility control emerges in certain cultural communities, and the speed with which the decline in marital fertility occurs, primarily confirm the diffusion (expansion) of new ideas than they do micro-economic influences" (Devedžić 2006: 49–50, authors' translation).

The second demographic transition theory (Van de Kaa and Lesthaeghe) represents a revision of the first, opposing contemporary theoretical approaches, which tend to give economic determinants the deciding power. When attempting to explain changes in marital and reproductive behaviour, this theory includes various factors (structural, cultural, technological), as well as their interaction. According to the tenets of this theory, the modernisation process has had an undoubtable impact on both individuals and groups, leading them to change their views on marriage and reproduction. In its explanation of demographic changes, the second demographic transition theory places special emphasis on cultural processes, including changes in values, which are now shifting towards individualism, egalitarianism, and rationalism (Lesthaeghe and Van de Kaa 1986; Lesthaeghe and Surkyn 1988; Van de Kaa 1987; Van de Kaa 2001). Unlike economic theories, which don't focus on changes in primary social groups, this theory singles out the importance of the changes in their structure, functions, roles, and the relationships within them (Golubović and Marković Krstić 2008: 18). What ensues is a thorough transformation of male-female relations, a change in the form and content of marriage and partnerships; instead of the pro-familism and altruism that have shaped the family, the values of individualisation, self-actualisation, and self-realisation are now highlighted (Bobić 2007: 141).

The marital and reproductive behaviour of young people is quite complex, and so in order to study it, it is first necessary to accept the tenets of several theoretical orientations. The initial general assumption adopted in this study was that the family represents a significant determinant of marital and

reproductive behaviour of the young. This general assumption consists of a series of special hypotheses, which will be presented and analysed as part of the results.

1.2 PREVIOUS RESEARCH

In addition to the previously presented theoretical debate on the determinants of marital and reproductive behaviour, this study is also framed by the results of numerous sociological and socio-demographic studies, as well as statistical data indicating that Serbia has been caught up in a process of depopulation and population ageing (Rašević and Penev; Marković Krstić 2018; Penev and Stanković 2018).

Serbia is undergoing an intense process of change in the sphere of marriage and biological reproduction: there is a decrease in the number of individuals getting married; there is a rise in the divorce rate, in postponing matrimony, and deciding against it; the average age of spouses when they first get married is increasing; and there are more varied forms of partnerships today (common-law marriage or co-habitation, etc.). In the case of childbearing, there is a clear delay, an increase in the average age when one first has a child, which could lead to a decrease in the likelihood of having children, and an increase in physiological/biological infertility. There is a conscious refusal to give birth, or voluntary/sociological sterility, when an individual or couple make the personal decision not to reproduce (Bobić 2007: 73). The current changing trends result in fewer children and a lower birthrate. The most frequently accepted model of reproductive behaviour includes having one or two children, but also the decision not

to have children, which is insufficient for simple reproduction/a generational change (Penev 2002). The aforementioned changes in the field of marriage and reproduction have been confirmed by empirical sociological and socio-demographic research carried out by many authors (Blagojević 1997; Bobić 2003; Bobić and Vukelić 2011; Milić 2010; Marković Krstić 2013; Petrović 2011; Rašević 2013; Tomanović 2012; Tomanović and Stanojević 2015).

Even though biological reproduction in Serbia most often takes place within the confines of marriage, the number of children born in wedlock is declining and the number of children being born outside of wedlock is increasing (Avramov 1993; Stanković and Penev 2010). In addition, partnerships, and even marriage over time, are losing the function of biological reproduction. Many people have emotional relationships, live together, or get married, but do not plan on parenthood. The fact that young people who are engaging in marital or extramarital unions make up the backbone of the reproduction/renewal of the population has affected our decision to select marital and reproductive behaviour as the subject matter of the current study. Due to people postponing marriage and parenthood, to the change in the age at which people first get married and have children, or to the phenomenon of "extended adolescence" (Mihailović 2004: 28-29; Ule 1989), the sample used in our study consists of younger individuals, aged 15 to 34.

The choice of (statistical) regions for the study stems from the fact that Southern and Eastern Serbia are demographically the most compromised (compared to the other statistical regions). In 2010, the lowest birthrate was recorded in this region (0.82%), as was the lowest popu-

lation growth (-0.71%). In addition, the overall fertility rate (1.283) and the net reproduction rate (0.62) are lower than any other regions in Serbia (Marković Krstić 2013: 41-62). According to data from 2018, the population growth in the Republic of Serbia is -0.54%, while the highest negative value of population growth was registered in the regions of Southern and Eastern Serbia (-0.8%) (RZS 2019: 1). According to the last Census (2011), compared to 2002, there has been an increase in the percentage of unmarried individuals, a decrease in the number of married individuals (Pešić Jenaćković 2019: 187), and an increase in the marriage age, both for the bride and the groom. According to the 2011 Census, the average marriage age in Southern and Eastern Serbia was 32.5 for the groom and 28.8 for the bride. In 2017 it was 33.5 and 30.2 respectively (RZS 2018a).

The 2011 Census marked the very first introduction of the category of extramarital union. Among the population aged 15 to 39 in Southern and Eastern Serbia, there was a total of 32,228 individuals registered as living in such a union (Pešić Jenaćković 2019: 189).

When it comes to reproductive behaviour, statistical data indicate an increase in the number of women opting not to have children. According to data from the 2002 Census, the ratio of women who had given birth compared to those who had not was 56:44, while that same ratio in 2011 indicated virtually equal halves of the population (50.4:49.6).

Most women at the beginning of their fertile years (from the ages of 15 to 19) had not taken part in reproduction, which is expected and understandable considering that this is a time when they are not completely ready (physically, psychologically, economically, etc.) to take on such

a role. However, there is a large proportion of women who have not reproduced among those aged 20 to 24 and 25 to 29: more than three-quarters and almost one-half, respectively, while every 10th woman aged 30-39 had still not had her first child according to the 2011 Census (Pešić Jenaćković 2019: 190-191). The average age at which women gave birth in 2011 was 27.5, while in 2017 it was 28.5. In addition, there was an increase in the age when a woman had her first child, from 26.3 in 2011 to 27 in 2017 (RZS 2018b: 74).

The aforementioned demographic indicators emphasise the necessity of studying the social determinants of the marital and reproductive behaviour of young people in this region.

This study is particularly focused on socio-cultural determinants, that is, the extent to which the strength of the family of origin's traditional values have an impact on the marital and reproductive behaviour of young people in the region of Southern and Eastern Serbia.

2 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The aim of this study was to analyse the correlation between the strength of the family of origin's traditional values on one hand, and the valuation and practice of certain models of marital and reproductive behaviour of young people on the other. The study was based on the hypothesis that the extent to which the family of origin follows traditional values is a significant determinant both of the valuation and practice of marriage, cohabitation, and parenthood (in and out of wedlock). It was assumed that there are differences in the marital and reproductive behaviour of young people based on how traditional their families of origin

Table 1. Scale of traditional values in the family of origin

	Not at all				Definitely
All of the most important decisions were made by the father.	1	2	3	4	5
There was a clear division of roles based on gender and age.	1	2	3	4	5
Religion was very important.	1	2	3	4	5
Work was very important.	1	2	3	4	5
Family members regularly attended church and celebrated patron saint's days.	1	2	3	4	5
The mother primarily took care of the children and the home, while the father provided the means for living.	1	2	3	4	5
The authority of the father was considerable.	1	2	3	4	5
Your parents primarily instilled in you a sense of obedience.	1	2	3	4	5
You were brought up to love and respect your parents no matter what their behaviour was like.	1	2	3	4	5
Your parents made sacrifices for you and took care of you even when that disrupted their own wellbeing.	1	2	3	4	5

are; that stronger traditional values in the family will to a greater extent affect the acceptance and valuation of marriage and the traditional pattern of childbearing/parenthood (and vice-versa).

The study of traditional values in the family of origin as a determinant of marital and reproductive behaviour is part of a more extensive empirical study that includes a combination of qualitative (in-depth interviews) and quantitative (surveys and scaling) methods and techniques (Pešić Jenaćković 2019). The survey was carried out in the region of Southern and Eastern Serbia in nine districts (the District of Niš, District of Toplica, District of Jablanica, District of Pirot, District of Braničevo, District of Podunavlje, District of Bor, District of Zaječar, and the District of Pčinja) from September 2018 to June 2019. The research sample included younger individuals, aged 15 to 34. The quota sample of 500 respondents was structured so that respondents were proportionally represented based on the size of their district; that respondents from all nine districts were in-

cluded; that based on the degree of urbanisation of the region, respondents from urban and rural settlements were equally represented; and that the respondents were equally represented based on gender – 248 males and 252 females, i.e., 49.6% to 50.4% (according to the 2011 Census, there were 194,841 males and 181,292 females aged 15-34 in South and East Serbia, i.e. 51.8% to 48.2%) (Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia 2012: 372).

Cronbach's alpha coefficient indicates a high reliability of the scale and the internal agreement of its items ($\alpha=0.821$). The possible values on the scale range from 10 to 50, whereby the theoretical average is 30.

Another four scales were used to analyse the valuation of marital and reproductive behaviour. Each of the scales is composed of three attitudes or items. The respondents were presented with them and asked to indicate their level of agreement with each one on a five-point Likert-type scale. All the attitudes that were negatively worded were reversed and the reliability of the measurement

scale was evaluated. Cronbach's alpha coefficient for all four scales is greater than 0.7, which indicates a very good reliability and internal consistency of each of the scales (DeVellis 2012). The possible values on each scale range from 3 to 15, whereby the theoretical average is 9.

The marriage valuation scale includes the following items: 1. Marriage is sacrosanct, 2. Every man should live in a state of matrimony, and 3. Marriage is an outdated institution. Cronbach's alpha coefficient indicates the high reliability of this scale (α=0.836).

The cohabitation valuation scale includes the following items: 1. It is appropriate for two people to live together before marriage, 2. It is appropriate for a couple to live together, even though they have no intentions of getting married, and 3. It is an embarrassment to live in a common-law marriage. Cronbach's coefficient is somewhat lower here, but indicates satisfactory reliability (α=0.706).

The traditional model of childbearing/ parenthood valuation scale includes the following items: 1. Parenthood is the most important thing in life, 2. Having children is very important for a marriage to function, and 3. As many children as possible should be born in order for us to survive as a nation (α=0.722).

The unwed parenthood valuation scale: 1. It is appropriate to be a parent in a common-law marriage, 2. It is appropriate that a woman/man realises the role of a mother/father as a single parent, and 3. It is an embarrassment for a woman to have a child out of wedlock (α=0.714).

To analyse practices, the survey included questions that refer to the achieved, planned, desired, or ideal marital and reproductive behaviour of the respondents:

- *achieved* (marital/partner status, age when one was married, parental status, age when one became a parent, the number of children one has);
- *planned* (plans for marriage, intentions regarding cohabitation, planned parenthood) and;
- *ideal and desired behaviour* (the desired number of children, the ideal number of children, the ideal age for marriage for a woman, the ideal age for marriage for a man, the ideal age for a woman to have her first child).

3   RESEARCH RESULTS

The starting point in the study was the general assumption that the family of origin represents a significant determinant both of the valuation of marriage and of the practice of marriage, cohabitation, and parenthood, with special importance given to how traditional its values are.

When analysing the strength of the family of origin's traditional values as a determinant of the marital and reproductive behaviour of young people, the results will be presented in accordance with the starting hypotheses.

Hypothesis 1: There is a positive correlation between the strength of the family of origin's traditional values, the valuation of marriage, and the traditional pattern of childbearing/parenthood.

The association between the aforementioned variables is expressed through Pearson's correlation coefficient. Preliminary analyses were carried out to prove the assumptions about the normality, linearity, and homogeneity of the variance.

A statistically significant highly positive correlation was determined between the strength of traditional values in the family of origin and the valuation of marriage (r=0.503; N=500; p=0.000), while a mod-

Table 2. The correlation between the strength of the family of origin's traditional values and the valuation of various forms of marital and reproductive behaviour

Strength of traditional values in the family of origin			
	r	p	% of variance
Valuation of marriage	0.503**	0.000	25.30
Valuation of the traditional model of childbearing/ parenthood	0.368**	0.000	13.54
Valuation of cohabitation	- 0.461**	0.000	21.25
Valuation of unwed parenthood	- 0.427**	0.000	18.23

Note: **the correlation is significant at the 0.01 level, *the correlation is significant at the 0.05 level.

erate positive correlation was calculated for the family of origin's traditional values and the valuation of the traditional model of childbearing and parenthood (r=0.368; N=500; p=0.000). This means that high levels of traditional values in the family of origin accompany high valuation of marriage, as well as childbearing and parenthood in the traditional sense.

Hypothesis 2: There is a negative correlation between how traditional the family of origin is and the valuation of cohabitation and unwed parenthood.

A moderate negative correlation was determined between the strength of traditional values in the family of origin and the valuation of cohabitation (r=-0.461; N=500; p=0.000), as well as between the family of origin's traditional values and the valuation of unwed parenthood (r=-0.427; N=500; p=0.000). Thus, the results indicate that strong traditional val-

ues in the family of origin accompany low valuation of cohabitation and unwed parenthood.

The determinant coefficient indicates that the strength of traditional values in the family of origin explains 25.30% of the variance in the responses on the marriage valuation scale, 21.5% on the cohabitation valuation scale, 18.23% on the unwed parenthood valuation scale, and 13.54% on the traditional model of childbearing/parenthood valuation scale (Table 2).

Hypothesis 3: Young people who live in common-law marriages originate from less traditional families than young people living in wedlock.

The results shown in Table 3 indicate that the average value on the scale of traditional values of the family of origin for respondents who are married is 36.25, while it's 30.76 for those living in common-law marriages. The values are

Table 3. Differences in the strength of traditional values of the family of origin between young people living in wedlock and young people cohabitating[1]

	Type of community				t	p	η^2
	Married (n=125)		In a common-law marriage (n=46)				
	AS	SD	AS	SD			
Strength of traditional values of the family of origin	36.25	6.928	30.76	6.881	4.601	0.000	0.11

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[1] The analysis included only those respondents who were living with a partner.

Table 4. Analysis of variance (ANOVA) between the strength of traditional values of the family of origin and plans for matrimony[2]

	Sum of squares			F (2.372)	p	η^2
	Between groups	Within groups	Total			
Strength of tradition-al values of the family of origin	1,773.533	20,067.496	21,841.029	16.438	0.000	0.08

Table 5. Post hoc test (LSD) – strength of traditional values of the family of origin and plans for matrimony

			LSD test					
Strength of traditional values of the family of origin and plans for matrimony Is planning on getting married soon			Is not planning on getting married soon but would like to do so		Is not planning to get married or is not thinking about marriage			
	AS	SD	Raz. AS	p	Raz. AS	p	Raz. AS	p
Is planning on getting married soon (n=81)	37.19	7.320			0.958	0.327	5.442	0.000
Is not planning on getting married soon but would like to do so (n=189)	36.23	7,315	-0.958	0.327			4.485	0.000
Is not planning to get married or is not thinking about marriage (n=105)	31.74	7.418	-5.442	0.000	-4.485	0.000		

close to the halfway mark (29). The results of the T-test indicate that there is a statistically significant difference between young people living in wedlock and young people living in common-law marriages in terms of how traditional their family of origin was (t=4.601; p=0.000). Eta squared indicates a medium effect (η^2=0.11), while the coefficients of the point-biserial correlation (rpb=-0.334) indicate a significant correlation (of a moderate degree) between these two variables.

Hypothesis 4: Young people who aren't planning or thinking about marriage come from less traditional families than those who are planning to marry and/or want to do so (in the immediate or foreseeable future).

The results shown in Table 5 indicate that the respondents who are not planning or not thinking about marriage come from the least traditional families (AS=31.74; SD=7.418). On the other hand, respondents who are planning to marry soon (AS=37.19; SD=7.320) come from the

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2 The analysis included only those respondents who are not married.

most traditional families of origin. The ANOVA analysis indicates statistically significant differences ($F(2.372)=16.438$; $p=0.000$), while eta squared indicates a medium effect ($\eta^2=0.08$) (Table 4). An LSD comparison determined a statistically significant difference in the strength of traditional values of the family of origin among the respondents who are not planning marriage or not considering it on the one hand, and the respondents who are planning marriage soon and young people who aren't planning to get married soon but who would still like to do so, on the other ($p=0.000$) (Table 5).

Hypothesis 5: Young people who aren't planning or thinking about parenthood come from less traditional families than young people who plan or expect to be parents soon.

The results shown in Table 7 indicate that the respondents who are not at all planning or not even thinking about parenthood come from significantly less traditional families (AS=32.92; SD=7.687) compared to respondents planning or expecting to become parents soon (AS=35.87; SD=7.631), as well as compared to those who are currently not planning to but want to eventually become

Table 6. Analysis of variance (ANOVA) between the strength of traditional values of the family of origin and planned parenthood[3]

	Sum of squares			F (2,372)	P	η^2
	Between groups	Within groups	Total			
Strength of traditional values of the family of origin	507.905	21,356.271	21,864.176	4.424	0.013	0.02

Table 7. Post hoc test (LSD) —strength of traditional values of the family of origin and planned parenthood

Strength of traditional values of the family of origin and planned parenthood Is planning or expecting to become a parent soon			Is not planning on becoming a parent soon but would like to do so one day		Is not planning or considering parenthood			
	AS	SD	Raz. AS	p	Raz. AS	p	Raz. AS	p
Is planning or expecting to become a parent soon (n=87)	35.87	7.631			0.121	0.900	2.950	0.013
Is not planning on becoming a parent soon but would like to do so one day (n=210)	35.75	7.514	-0.121	0.900			2.829	0.005
Is not planning or considering parenthood (n=78)	32.92	7.687	-2.950	0.013	-2.829	0.005		

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[3] The analysis included only those respondents who are not parents.

parents (AS=35.75; SD=7.514). The ANOVA analysis indicates statistically significant differences (F(2.372)=4.424; p=0.013), while eta squared indicates a small effect (η^2=0.02) (Table 6). The LSD test indicates a statistically significant difference between those not planning to be parents at all or not even thinking about parenthood and those planning or expecting parenthood soon (p=0.013) on the one hand, and those who are not planning to soon, but eventually want to become parents (p=0.005) on the other (Table 7).

Hypothesis 6: Young people who express a readiness to live in a common-law marriage (on a permanent or temporary basis) originate from less traditional families than those who do not agree with cohabitation.

The analysis of variance indicates that there are statistically significant differences in the strength of traditional values of the family of origin among respondents who show varying tendencies when it comes to cohabitation (F(2.372)=39.982; p=0.000). Eta squared indicates a large effect (η^2=0.19) (Table 8). The scale of traditional values of the family of origin shows high values for respondents who stated that they do not want to live with

Table 8. The analysis of variance (ANOVA) between strength of traditional values of the family of origin and the tendency for cohabitation[4]

	Sum of squares			F (2.372)	p	η^2
	Between groups	Within groups	Total			
Strength of traditional values of the family of origin	3,680.899	15,006.456	18,687.356	39.982	0.000	0.19

Table 9. Post hoc test (LSD) – strength of traditional values of the family of origin and the tendency to cohabitate

Strength of traditional values of the family of origin and the tendency for cohabitation Would cohabitate before marriage			LSD test					
			Would cohabitate on a permanent basis		Would not cohabitate			
	AS	SD	Raz. AS	p	Raz. AS	p	Raz. AS	p
Would cohabitate before marriage (n=184)	36.18	7.191			4.718*	0.000	-5.617*	0.000
Would cohabitate on a permanent basis (n=91)	31.46	6.412	-4.718*	0.000			-10.335*	0.000
Would not cohabitate (n=54)	41.80	5.897	5.617*	0.000	10.335*	0.000		

Table 10. The correlation between the strength of traditional values of the family of origin and the ideal and actual age for marriage and parenthood

Strength of traditional values of the family of origin			
	R	p	% of variance
The best age for a woman to marry (n=500)	-0.382**	0.000	14.59
The best age for a woman to have her first child (n=500)	-0.376**	0.000	14.13
The best age for a man to marry (n=500)	-0.398**	0.000	15.84
Actual age when one was married (n=132)	-0.315**	0.005	9.92
Actual age when one became a parent (n=125)	-0.255**	0.004	6.50

their partner prior to marriage (AS=41.80; SD=5.897). On the other hand, the average traditional value scores of the family of origin are lower among respondents who cohabitated with their partner before marriage (AS=36.18; SD=7.191), and especially among those who would like to cohabitate on a permanent basis (AS=31.46; SD=6.412). The LSD test indicates that the differences among the respondents who stated that they would not cohabitate and those who stated that they would cohabitate on a temporary or permanent basis are statistically significant (p=0.000). In addition, statistically significant differences were noted among those who would only cohabitate on a temporary basis and those who would cohabitate on a permanent basis (p=0.000) (Table 9).

Hypothesis 7: There is a negative correlation between the strength of traditional values of the family of origin on the one hand, and the ideal age for marriage and childbearing and the age at which respondents were actually married and became parents on the other.

Pearson's linear correlation coefficient confirmed a moderate negative correlation between the strength of traditional values of the family of origin on the one hand, and the ideal time for a woman to marry (r=-0.382), the ideal time for a woman to give birth to her first child (r=-0.376), the ideal age for a man to marry (r=-0.398), and the actual age at which the respondents were married (r=-0.315) on the other. In addition, a low negative correlation was noted among the strength of traditional values of the family of origin and the age when the respondents first became parents (r=0.255) (Table 10). The cited data indicate that having stronger traditional values in the family of origin lowers the age considered best for marriage and for childbearing, as well as the age when the respondents were actually married and became parents.

Hypothesis 8: There is a positive correlation between the strength of traditional values of the family of origin and the ideal, desired, and planned number of children born to young people.

Pearson's correlation coefficient confirms a positive moderate correlation between the strength of traditional values of the family of origin and the ideal (r=0.374; p=0.000), desired (r=0.391; p=0.000), and planned number of children born to the respondents (r=0.420; p=0.000). A low positive correlation was noted between the strength of traditional values of the family of origin and the actual number of children (r=0.221; p=0.013) (Table 11). The cited data confirm the set hypothesis and indicate that stronger traditional values in the family

Table 11. The correlation between the strength of traditional values of the family of origin and the ideal, desired, planned, and actual number of children born to the respondents

Strength of traditional values of the family of origin			
	r	P	% of variance
Ideal number of children (n=500)	0.374**	0.000	13.98
Desired number of children (n=500)	0.391**	0.000	15.28
Planned number of children (n=500)	0.420**	0.000	17.64
Actual number of children (n=125)	0.221*	0.013	4.88

of origin indicate an increase in the ideal, desired, planned, and actual number of children born to the respondents.

4 CONCLUDING DISCUSSION

The results confirmed the initial hypothesis that the strength of traditional values in the family of origin is a significant determinant both of the evaluation and the practice of various models of marital and reproductive behaviour of young people in Southern and Eastern Serbia.

In brief, young people who grew up in more traditional families not only value traditional patters of marital and reproductive behaviour more, but also practise them to a greater extent than those whose families of origin were less traditional. On the other hand, young people who come from less traditional families are more likely to value and practise alternative patterns of partnership and childbearing/parenthood. The cited differences in the marital and reproductive behaviour of young people can be explained by traditional or more contemporary value orientations and dominating patriarchal or more flexible, egalitarian patterns of behaviour stemming from their families of origin, and thus adopted through the process of socialisation. Encouraging families, with their specific set of characteristics and attitudes regarding life, shared life, and marriage also determine the attitudes and practices of young people pertaining to marriage and their relationships with their partners. Young people from the subgroup of individualistic families stand out in particular, as they accept post-modern patterns to a greater extent than young people from non-encouraging families. Specifically, the results of previous studies indicate that young people from encouraging families are more prone to living in matrimony; fewer of them cohabitate; and the number of divorced individuals from this group is significantly smaller than that of young people who grew up in non-encouraging families (Tomanović 2012: 135, 144).

In addition to the impact that one's family has on accepting a certain model of marital or reproductive behaviour (matrimony/cohabitation, the age when one was first married, number of children, etc.), some authors point out the impact of a series of cultural factors, as well as the impact of territorial belonging. "When it comes to one's first marriage, traditional norms have determined not only the earliest age when one can wed, but also the optimal age, and the uppermost age limit. If this uppermost age limit is crossed, the individual is considered a spinster or a bachelor and their chances of getting married are very slim, especially to a person who has not previ-

ously been married. Various parts of our country have different age ranges, and generally speaking, in the lowlands they are lower than in the mountainous regions, in the eastern parts of the country lower than in the western, and in the Muslim cultural circle lower than in the Catholic or Orthodox one" (Petrović 1981: 172, authors' translation).

When it comes to matrimony and cohabitation, the results of previous studies indicate that in Serbia there is a dominant presence of marital unions, even though there are indications that the traditional institution of marriage is changing: the decline of its omnipresence and an increased number of individuals choosing to lead the single life or delaying matrimony. The average age of marriage is constantly on the rise, and the "ageing of nuptials" is manifested in decreasing numbers of live births, or voluntary sterility. A connection was noted between the chosen model of living (accepting alternative unions to marriages) and voluntary sterility, which is no longer a marginal occurrence (Golubović and Marković Krstić 2008: 73). Although the paper does not specifically analyse the impact of gender factors on the marital and reproductive behaviour of young people, the results of research presented in the literature indicate its great importance. The research results showed that, among young people in our country, there is a lingering cultural pattern that girls begin family transitions earlier than boys (Tomanović and Stanojević 2015: 50).

Therefore, in addition to the effect of economic factors, the impact of socio-cultural factors, values, and changes to primary social groups (family, neighbourhood) is also significant. In that sense, Golubović and Marković Krstić (2008: 21) point out that the changes in marital and reproductive behaviour in our country have occurred due to "the inability of young people to bear the financial burden of leaving the parental household and forming their own," and also due to a network of cultural factors (an individual's culture, nationality, education, religious influence, etc.). Rašević also indicates the complex effect of numerous variables. In addition to structural obstacles such as unemployment, housing, and an unsatisfactory economic standard, emancipation and individualism are also among the more significant factors, according to the author (Rašević 2013). Tomanović emphasises that transition and strategies pertaining to the activities of young people in the family domain can "depend on the dominant and normative framework accepted by the young individual, the structural (material) conditions, as well as the institutional context" (Tomanović 2012: 127).

Demographic factors also are important, as they cause changes to the age structure of the population due to decades of low fertility, which dwindles the size of the generations that most frequently enter into matrimony. It was within these generations that the greatest changes in the attitude towards marriage occurred (delaying marriage, an increase in common-law marriages, voluntary sterility, etc.). On the other hand, these changes are the outcome of existential difficulties encountered at a time of social and economic transition, as well as of cultural and socio-psychological factors whose effects might be even more pronounced due to rapid changes in the system of values, understandings, and aspirations that guide the behaviour of young people.

Therefore, our study illustrates that traditionalism as a dominant value orientation in shaping the behaviour of individuals, social groups, and the population has weakened over time and been re-

placed by an excess of individualism (Lesthaeghe and Van de Kaa 1986). What has until recently been taken for granted – that everyone wants children – is no longer accepted as a universal truth in Southern and Eastern Serbia. The empirical findings of numerous studies also indicate that there is a common denominator between adopting alternative forms of partnership and low reproductive norms, as well as voluntary sterility in Serbia (Avramov 1993; Golubović and Marković Krstić 2008; Rontos 2010; Pešić Jenaćković 2019).

The research results also indicated that young people from extended families – multi-member families, multi-generational families (compared to young people who originate from smaller families), as well as young people living in rural areas (compared to young people living in cities) – are more prolific in terms of reproduction (their ideal, desired, planned, and actual number of children), that they perceive the ideal time for marriage and parenthood to be earlier in life, and that they actually do get married and become parents earlier on. A statistically significant moderate positive correlation was also noted between the strength of traditional values of the family of origin on the one hand, and the number of family members the respondents grew up with and the type of settlement on the other. All this confirms that traditional families are still multi-member families and are still linked to rural areas.

The presented results might be of use when designing strategies for youth policy, pro-natalist policy, and the policy of regional development. Carrying out suitable measures and activities related to pro-natalist policy includes prioritising action in the sphere of education, the job market, concordance between work and parenthood, the promotion of the reproductive health of young people, the quality of the relationships between men and women, the promotion of family values, etc. This study points to the importance of family values and family education for the marital and reproductive behaviour of young people. In addition, it indicates the need for strengthening the family, its structure, and the cohesion between its members. In that sense, along with the results of other studies (which include other determinants of marital and reproductive behaviour), the findings of this study can be of use for socially responsible actors who aim to demographically renew the population of Southern and Eastern Serbia.

Research into traditional values as a determinant of marital and reproductive behaviour is very important, since it offers new insight into the patterns of forming a family in Serbia. In that sense, it raises numerous questions, which intensifies the need for new socio-demographic studies. The analysis of traditional values regarding the marital and reproductive behaviour of young people has the potential to encourage future studies by implementing more advanced (multivariate) techniques, so that following specific analyses (of gender, level of education, etc.), we could derive a more precise image of traditional family values and their impact on the marital and reproductive behaviour of young people.

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Tradicionalnost porodice kao determinanta bračnog i reproduktivnog ponašanja mladih: primer jugoistočne Srbije

Sažetak

Društveno-ekonomske i demografske promene, ekonomska kriza i politička tranzicija, kao i tranzicioni model normativno-vrednosnog sistema uticali su na bračno i reproduktivno ponašanje mladih. Iako brojna istraživanja govore o tome da se brak i reprodukcija visoko vrednuju kod mladih u Srbiji, zvanični statistički podaci i rezultati istraživanja ukazuju na: opadanje univerzalnosti braka, praktikovanje vanbračnih vidova partnerstva i rađanja, odlaganje ili odustajanje od sklapanja braka, porast razvoda, niske reproduktivne norme itd.

U radu se, nakon analize postavki više teorijskih orijentacija, pristupilo razmatranju povezanosti nivoa tradicionalnosti porodice porekla i bračnog i reproduktivnog ponašanja mladih na podacima empirijskog istraživanja sprovedenog od septembra 2018. do juna 2019. godine u Regionu južne i istočne Srbije, na uzorku 500 mladih ljudi starih 15–34 godina. Cilj je da se ispitaju razlike u vrednovanju i praktikovanju određenog modela bračnog i reproduktivnog ponašanja mladih s obzirom na nivo tradicionalnosti porodice porekla. Polazna hipoteza je da nivo tradicionalnosti porodice porekla predstavlja značajnu determinantu kako vrednovanja, tako i praktikovanja braka, kohabitacije i roditeljstva, odnosno da viši nivo tradicionalnosti porodice porekla u većoj meri utiče na prihvatanje i vrednovanje braka i tradicionalnog obrasca rađanja/roditeljstva.

Rezultati istraživanja potvrdili su polaznu hipotezu da je nivo tradicionalnosti porodice porekla značajna determinanta kako vrednovanja, tako i praktikovanja različitih modela bračnog i reproduktivnog ponašanja mladih ljudi. Testiranje posebnih hipoteza ukazuje na to da visoki nivo tradicionalnosti porodice porekla prati visok nivo vrednovanja braka i tradicionalnog obrasca rađanja/roditeljstva, a niski nivo vrednovanja kohabitacije i roditeljstva van braka. Dakle, mladi koji su odrastali u porodicama sa većim stepenom tradicionalnosti, više vrednuju tradicionalne obrasce bračnog i reproduktivnog ponašanja i u većoj meri ih praktikuju (ranije sklapanje braka, rađanje većeg broja dece), u odnosu na mlade čije su porodice porekla manje tradicionalne (više vrednuju i praktikuju alternativne obrasce partnerstva i rađanja/roditeljstva).

Eksplikacija povezanosti nivoa tradicionalnosti porodice i bračnog i reproduktivnog ponašanja mladih temelji se na značajnom uticaju roditelja u procesu socijalizacije i prihvatanju roditeljskog modela bračnog i reproduktivnog ponašanja. S obzirom na to da je istraživanje identifikovalo neke od činilaca bračnog i reproduktivnog ponašanja mladih u jugoistočnoj Srbiji, ono može poslužiti kreatorima omladinske, populacione i politike regionalnog razvoja za definisanje adekvatnijih mera.

Ključne reči:

mladi, brak, kohabitacija, bračno i reproduktivno ponašanje, tradicionalnost porodice porekla