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Psychology of Personality: Real and Virtual Context

SOCIALIZATION OF MODERN TEENAGERS IN TRANSITION SPACE

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Abstract

Nowadays modern teenagers, whose socialization takes place in the changing conditions of a transitive society, enter independent life. Our empirical research was aimed at studying tolerance to uncertainty and values as indicators of socialization among modern adolescents. The results showed that modern teenagers are not confident enough and they lose self-control in below situations: the essence of what is happening is not obvious, the outcome of the case is not clear, the goals and expectations are not defined. As a result it indicates lack of tolerance for uncertainty. Most modern teenagers in a transitive society demonstrate high indicators of energy and increased vitality; they are able to find ways out of difficult situations, they turn to new sources in order to solve problems; they believe in success, and they tend to focus not on problems, but on the possibilities to solve them. A small number of teenagers can be creative in a situation of uncertainty. Values of independence and achievement are significant for modern teenagers; it indicates high motivation for autonomy and personal recognition. The results we obtained demonstrate a trend of increasing individualization's role in contrast to the interests of the environment.

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Keywords: Modern adolescents, socialization, tolerance, transitivity, uncertainty, value orientations.



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1. Introduction

Social transitivity is characterized not only by multiplicity, that is, the simultaneous existence of several variants of the social world in the same time and space, but also by the constant and unpredictable change of these variants. Thus, we can talk about transitivity as a multiplicity, variability and uncertainty of macro and microsocial spaces. In this case multiplicity is primarily associated with the expansion of the multicultural space of socialization. Globalization and mass migration increase cultural, linguistic, and social multiplicity, which further increases the variability of the seemingly familiar environment.

We may state that various aspects of transitivity are associated with different difficulties for a person. Thus, variability and uncertainty are associated with the violation of identity's integrity which include its individual components and the time perspective. Multiplicity makes it difficult to choose the group of identification and direction of socialization space (Martsinkovskaya, 2017).

The uncertainty of the modern social situation is associated with the difficulties of socio-psychological adaptation to constantly changing conditions, and the very unpredictability of social conditions can lead to increased emotional tension, neurotization of children and teenagers, especially in the situations defined and controlled by adults. The variability and fluidity of modern social situation of development, which increases the variability in the choice of socialization groups and provides additional opportunities for activity and independence, at the same time leads to increased responsibility for the choice made (Martsinkovskaya et al., 2016; Table 01).

2. Problem Statement

In the conditions of transitive society the process of socialization becomes contradictory. On the one hand, socialization is the translation of an established, fixed social experience; on the other hand experience of generations is recorded in a completely new way nowadays (Dubovskaya, 2014). The new situation of transitivity is typical for all generations, although it becomes more relevant for young people and adolescents. At the same time, young people and children perceive transitivity as a natural situation in which they grow up and enter the world (Martsinkovskaya, 2015).

A transitive society is characterized by the fluidity and variability of values and norms, which cause increasing anxiety and tension to people who can hardly adapt to changing "rules of the game". It leads to the fact that the process of socialization occurs throughout the entire life path. Therefore, at the present time, we may talk about the fundamental continuity of the process of socialization. In the context of this idea, the term "resocialization" appears. At the same time, the modern multidimensional culture assumes "liquid" socialization, which allows multi-dimensional and non-directional impact. The result may be set-back, latent (Martsinkovskaya, 2017).

Methodically justified tradition of studying value representations can be considered research conducted in the late 60s-70s in the United States by M. Rokeach (Rokeach, 1973). He has used the method of direct ranking of values. According to Rokeach, human values are characterized by the following features: 1) the total number of one's values is relatively small; 2) all the people have the same values, although to different degrees; 3) values are organized into systems; 4) the origins of human values can be

traced in culture, society and its institutions and individuals; 5) the influence of values can be traced in almost all social phenomena that deserve to be studied. Rokeach (1973) identified two classes of values:

- Terminal beliefs: the ultimate goal of individual existence is worth striving for.
- Instrumental beliefs: a particular course of action or personality trait is preferable in any situation.

This division corresponds to the traditional division into values-goals and values-means.

In the 70s in the 20th century the Rokeach method was adapted by the research group for the study of value orientations in the ISEP of the USSR Academy of Sciences. Also, a popular tool for determining value preferences is the method proposed by Schwartz and Bilsky (1990).

The basis of this method is a concept that can be presented in the form of the following theses:

- Values are beliefs (opinions). They are not objective; they are mixed with emotions and coloured by them in the process of activation.
- Values are a person's desired goals and behaviour that contributes to the achievement of these goals.
- Values are not limited by certain actions and situations.
- Values act as standards that guide choices or an assessment of actions, people, and events.
- Values are ordered by importance relative to each other. An ordered set of values forms a system of value priorities. Different cultures and individuals can be characterized by a system of their value priorities (Schwartz & Bilsky, 1990).

Basic personal values are a reflection of the main cultural and individual goals that people carry and strive to achieve. Values-goals that control people's behaviour are traditionally grouped into groups called "motivational types", each of which corresponds to a main motivational goal. As a result of cross-cultural empirical research, we identified ten universal motivational types:

- Self-regulation that focuses on independence of thought and action.
- Stimulation or fullness of life sensations associated with the search for novelty and competition.
- Hedonism - focus on pleasure.
- Achievement - the pursuit of personal success based on social approval.
- Power, i.e. dominance, social status, prestige.
- Security, defined as the desire for stability, security, and harmonious relationships.
- Conformity achieved by limiting own actions that harm other people or violate social expectations.
- Tradition - a type associated with respect and maintenance of customs and established ideas.
- Benevolence (kindness) is realized through concern for the well-being of others.
- Universalism, which means motivation for understanding, tolerance and maintaining the well-being of all people and nature (Schwartz & Bilsky, 1990; Garvanova & Garvanov, 2014).

Value orientations are special psychological formations that set up a hierarchical system and exist in a person's structure as its elements only. It is not possible to imagine a person's orientation to a particular value as an isolated entity that does not take into account its priority, subjective importance relative to other values. This entity is not included in the system.

We may consider an individual's value system as a subsystem of a wider system, described by various authors as "the life world of a person", "the image of the world", etc., which, in turn has a complex and multi-level character. Value orientations, like any psychological system, can be represented as a multidimensional dynamic space, each dimension of which corresponds to a certain type of social relations and has different weights for each individual. Value system has a horizontal-vertical structure. The horizontal structure means an ordering of values in parallel sequence, i.e., the hierarchy of preferred and rejected values. Vertical structure is understood as the inclusion of individual value systems in the value system of society as a whole.

The principle of the hierarchy of values, multilevel, is the most important characteristic of the system of the individual's value orientations. Subjective experience of a certain value includes the experience that it is higher than some other value. The individual's acceptance of values, therefore, automatically presupposes the construction of an individual value hierarchy. In the works of modern Russian writers, the authors point out the ambiguity of the criteria for individual ranking of values: their preference may be due to ideas about their absolute significance for society and humanity as a whole, or their subjective relevance and urgency. In this regard, the concept of Bubnova (1999) is of particular interest. This concept highlights the principle of non-linearity of the system of value orientations along with the principle of hierarchy. She points out that an important property of the personal value system is its multidimensional character. The criterion of values hierarchy is personal significance which includes various contents due to the influence of different types and forms of social relations.

The structural nature of the orientations value system of an individual, its multilevel and multidimensional nature determine the possibility of its implementation of diverse functions. The system of value orientations of the individual, occupying an intermediate position between the motivational-need sphere and the system of personal meanings, ensures the interaction of these elements of the more General system "human". The dual nature of the value system, which is determined by individual and social experience, defines its dual functional significance. First, values are the basis of formation and preservation of one's attitudes that help an individual to take a certain position, express their point of view, and give an assessment. In this way, they become part of consciousness. Secondly, values appear in a transformed form as motives for activity and behaviour, since the orientation of a person in the world and the desire to achieve certain goals are inevitably correlated with the values that have entered into his personal structure.

The most significant function of value orientations is the regulation of social behaviour of an individual. Value orientations serve as an incentive to action, they guide and correct the process of goal-setting (Mudrik, 2010). Different authors also name such functions of value orientations as displaying and protecting the ideals of a person, determining the purpose of life, and leading principles of life. In addition, value orientations can be a criterion for choosing from alternative ways of action. They can act as a determinant of decision-making.

The system of value orientations is an important regulator of human activity, since it allows us to correlate individual needs and motives with the values and norms of society that are realized and accepted by the individual. According to Alekseeva, value orientations are a form of inclusion of social values in the mechanism of activity and behaviour of an individual that presupposes individual free choice (as cited in Andreeva, 2002).

Zdravomyslov (1986) believes that the mechanism of action of the system of value orientations is associated with the resolution of conflicts and contradictions in the motivational sphere of an individual, expressed in the struggle between duty and desire, i.e. between moral and utilitarian motives.

The regulatory function of personal value orientations covers all levels of the system of motivators of human activity. Zdravomyslov (1986) notes that the specificity of the action of value orientations is that they function not only as ways to rationalize behaviour; their action extends not only to the higher structures of consciousness, but also to those that are usually designated as subconscious structures. They determine the direction of the will, attention, and intelligence.

It should be noted that the duality of the system of value orientations of the individual as a higher regulatory education is that it does not only determines the forms and conditions for the implementation of human motives, but also becomes the source of its goals. Value orientations guide and correct the process of human goal-setting. Value orientations as one of the goal-setting mechanisms, since they orient a person among the objects of the natural and social world, creating an ordered and meaningful picture of the world that has meaning for a person. According to her, value orientations provide a basis for choosing goals and means from the available alternatives, for the order of preferences for selecting and evaluating these alternatives, defining the "boundaries of action", i.e. they not only regulate, but also direct these actions.

At the same time, the system of value orientations of an individual, being a reflection of the values of the social environment, can itself influence group norms and values. Individual value orientations of individual group members interact and influence the collective ones through interpersonal relationships (Yanitskiy, 2000).

The significance of certain values and their priorities allow a person to regulate their behavior in accordance with their ideas about society, about various social objects and about themselves, as well as in accordance with their attitude to them. Values, acting as regulators of social behavior, are implemented in the system of value orientations, and as a result-in attitudes as the most important elements of the overall structure of dispositions of the individual (Table 02; Figure 01).

3. Research Questions

In a modern transitive society, it is important to understand how modern teenagers are socializing with each other. Traditionally, adolescents are considered as a special social group, which is characterized by potentially high personal activity on the one hand, and on the other, objectively limited in the freedom to make decisions and bear full responsibility for them. In our opinion, all this contributes to the growth of contradictions between values at the level of normative ideals and individual priorities of modern teenagers (Ayanyan & Martsinkovskaya, 2016; Grebennikova et al., 2017).

4. Purpose of the Study

The purpose was to study indicators of socialization of modern teenagers in a situation of transitivity, uncertainty and their value orientations.

The sample consisted of 196 people, aged 14-17 years, studying in educational institutions of Moscow.

The study was conducted in 2018-2019.

5. Research Methods

Methodology for determining tolerance to uncertainty (adaptation of N.A. Bazhanova and G.L. Bardier) (as cited in Martsinkovskaya et al., 2016). The values questionnaire. The values questionnaire is aimed at the study of universal values that exist in all cultures in one form or another. The Schwartz test consists of two parts, the first of which examines values at the level of normative ideals, personal values at the level of beliefs, and the value structure that has the greatest impact on the entire person, but is not always manifested in real social behaviour. The second part of the test allows you to explore values at the level of behaviour, at the level of individual priorities, which are most often manifested in social behaviour of an individual. According to Schwartz's concept, a value rank from 1 to 3 indicates high value significance for the Respondent. In turn, a rank from 8 to 10 indicates a low significance of value for the study participant (Schwartz & Bilsky, 1990).

6. Findings

The tolerance to uncertainty study of modern teenagers has shown results in seven scales: passion (energy, vigour, increased vitality) – high level – 52 %, average – 48 % of today's teenagers; resourcefulness (ability to find ways out of difficult situations, to turn to new sources to solve new problems) – high level – 50 %, middle level – 34 %, low – 16 %; optimism (hopes, faith in success, the unwillingness to focus on the worst case scenario, the desire to fix not on the problem, but on solutions) – high level – 68 % of respondents, the average level of 32 %. Courage, enterprise (craving for the new, unknown, rejection of trusted) - high level-44 %, average level-56 %. Adaptability (ability to change your plans and decisions, adjust to new situations, not to insist on your own if the situation requires it) – high level – 20 %, average level – 68 %, low level-12 %. Confidence (belief in yourself, in your own strengths and abilities, in the fact that everything is possible if you only want to) - high level-30 %, average level-70 %. Tolerance of ambiguity (calm attitude to the lack of answers, self-control in situations when the essence of what is happening is not clear or the outcome of the case is not clear, when goals and expectations are not defined, when the case is not completed) – high level – 16 %, average level – 56 %, low level – 28 %.

Table 01. Features of tolerance to uncertainty among modern teenagers

Scales of tolerance to uncertainty	Level of development		
	High	Average	Low
Passion	52%	Passion	52%
Resourcefulness	50%	Resourcefulness	50%
Optimism	68%	Optimism	68%
Courage, entrepreneurship	44%	Courage, entrepreneurship	44%
Adaptivity	20%	Adaptivity	20%
Confidence	30%	Confidence	30%
Tolerance of ambiguity	16%	Tolerance of ambiguity	16%

The study showed that the most significant value of modern teenagers is independence, both at the level of normative ideals and at the level of individual priorities. In our opinion, the choice of this value fully corresponds to the solution of age-related tasks of respondents and indicates the need for autonomy and independence. As for the second most popular value at both levels, it turned out to be an achievement that somewhat contradicts the value of independence and implies receiving social approval and recognition from others. However, it seems to us that a certain ambivalence of significant values fits perfectly into the concept of age-related crises and changes occurring in the inner life of adolescents.

Table 02. Hierarchy of values among modern teenagers

Level of normal ideas	Value rating	Level of individual priorities
Independence	1	Independence
Achievement	2	Achievement
Power	3	Hedonism
Security	4	Power
Stimulation	5	Universalism
Hedonism	6	Stimulation
Tradition	7	Security
Universalism	8	Kindness

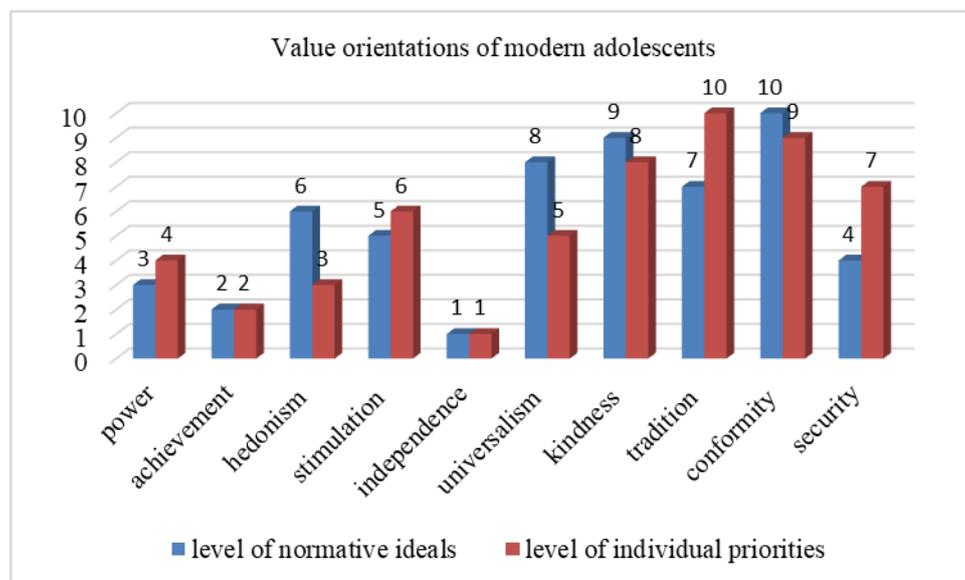


Figure 01. Value orientations of modern teenagers

The third most important value at the level of normative ideals was power. This choice implies the orientation of teenagers to dominate others, acquire a high social status in society, and possess attributes and things recognized as prestigious. This probably indicates that teenagers "read" the values broadcast which shows the importance of being on top and have power denounced in various forms. At the level of individual priorities, hedonism was the third most important value. Hedonistic motivation involves getting pleasure, enjoyment in all possible ways. In our opinion, such a mundane need is actualized in modern teenagers not only because of internal motives, but also due to the prevailing ideas that you need to get the most out of life, which is so common among the younger generation. As for the least significant values, at the level of normative ideals, they are universalism, kindness, and conformity. At the level of individual priorities, modern teenagers are least focused on the values of kindness, tradition, and conformity. Thus, according to the concept of Schwartz, this choice assumes that teenagers are not interested in the well-being of others, observance and respect for cultural traditions, and reject conformist manifestations.

7. Conclusion

Most modern teenagers in a transitive society demonstrate high indicators of energy and increased vitality; they are able to find ways out of difficult situations, they turn to new sources in order to solve problems; they believe in success, and they tend to focus not on problems, but on the possibilities to solve them. Entrepreneurship among modern teenagers is average.

The current situation of uncertainty shows that modern teenagers are not adaptive and confident enough, they can lose their composure in situations when the essence of what is happening is not clear or the outcome of the case is not clear, when goals and expectations are not defined, which indicates a lack of tolerance for uncertainty.

At the level of normative ideals, modern teenagers believe that the modern world is dominated by the desire for independence, achievement, and the need for power.

At the level of individual priorities, modern teenagers also value independence, recognition, and at the same time strive to have fun. The unpopular motivational types were kindness, tradition, and conformity. According to the results of the study, a "portrait" of an independence-oriented, ambitious, power-hungry, violent hedonist who is not interested in traditions and the opinions of others is emerging. The high degree of significance of the values of independence and achievement for adolescents indicates a high motivation for autonomy and personal recognition. The results we obtained demonstrate a trend of increasing individualization's role in contrast to the interests of the environment.

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