

**PNP 2021**  
**Personality in Norm and in Pathology**

**PSYCHOLOGICAL PREDICTORS OF DESTRUCTIVE  
BEHAVIOR OF AN INDIVIDUAL**

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**Abstract**

The research is aimed at the analysis of psychological predictors of the destructive behavior of an individual during the period of active development. We identified the degree of influence of the factors contributing to the development of the destructive behavior of an individual. We also determined that a considerable influence on the development of destructive behavior of an individual is caused by relationships in the family and family environment, and a less substantial influence is caused by the school environment and relations in the classroom, and the minimal influence is caused by the personal characteristics of an adolescent. The research also helped to identify the factors of psychological climate in the family that play an important role during the period of active personal development and influence the development of destructive behavior in adolescents. These factors include irritability of parents towards the child, low cohesion of the family, conflicts, low level of organization of family rules, moral and ethical aspects, focus on achievements, low level of mother's attention to the child. Factors of the social climate at school that influence the development of destructive behavior include the level of involvement in the group, participation in the school life, conflicts with teachers and peers, as well as the level of academic performance. Personality traits of an adolescent with destructive behavior are affective, cyclothymic, hyperthymic, or excitable personality traits; inflated or deflated self-esteem; high levels of verbal, physical, emotional, subjective aggression, and self-aggression.

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## 1. Introduction

In recent years, there has been a growing interest among social and humanitarian scientists in the problems of the destructive behavior of an individual during the period of active development. This may be attributed to changes in the economic and social environment in Russian society. Such changes include the deterioration in the financial situation of the family, a faster pace of life among young people, an increased number of divorces, a decline in the birth rate, deterioration in the physical and mental health of children and their parents (Troshina, 2017; Zlokazov & Kappushev, 2018).

Adolescents are extremely sensitive to crisis conditions and unfavorable changes. Due to their inexperience, they fail to respond to changes adequately and constructively, which often leads to the development of the following behavioral deviations: aggression, negativism, cruelty, tendency to take unjustified risks, failure to comply with existing norms (Kleyberg, 2008).

The development of destructive behavior is influenced by relationships in the family, the degree of family cohesion, the degree of intimacy between parents and children, the school environment, and the personal characteristics of the younger generation. Adolescents learn to act aggressively by witnessing the behavior of their parents, adults, and peers (Fetiskin, 2017a).

## 2. Problem Statement

The problems of the development of a psychological climate in the family are examined in the works of N.P. Fetiskin, A.E. Lyubimov, N.M. Dyachkov, Y.G. Taktueva, A.N. Sofronov. The influence of the social environment is described in the works of D.M. Kozlov, A.T. Abdurahmanova, L.A. Lipskaya, A.V. Pryalukhina, I.B. Khrapenko, K.V. Zlokazov, M.M. Goguyeva, Y.A. Kleyberg, and N.V. Troshina. The personal characteristics of adolescents with destructive behavior are studied in the works of N.P. Fetiskin, A.V. Ipatov, and D.M. Kozlov. The authors consider the socio-psychological climate as a set of psychological conditions that favorably contribute to the effective implementation of cooperative activities and all-round harmonious development of a personality in the group, team, and family (Zlokazov, 2016). During the period of active personal development, there is an escalation of the crisis in the relationship between parents and children. In the process of development, adolescents experience changes in the requirements and expectations that they have for others. Therefore, young people are forced to adapt to these conditions, but the result is not always successful (Fetiskin, 2017a, Lyubimov & Dyachkov, 2018; Taktueva & Sofronov, 2020). A child's development largely depends on the favorable situation in his family and the adequate participation of parents in his physical and moral development. It is the family that introduces the child to the traditions and norms that are socially accepted. This age is a sensitive period for the shaping of values and worldviews (Kozlov, 2018; 2020; Lipskaya, 2019; Pryalukhina & Khrapenko, 2019). Alienation from the family and group leads to increased anxiety, internal tension, insecurity, fear, feelings of loneliness, resentment, etc. In most cases, such feelings can lead to destructive manifestations in the behavior of adolescents (Abdurakhmanova, 2020; Fetiskin, 2017b; Goguyeva, 2010; Ipatov, 2014).

### **3. Research Questions**

Research questions are:

- What psychological factor contributes the most to the development of the destructive behavior of an individual?
- What conditions of the school environment influence the development of the destructive behavior of an individual?

What are the personality characteristics of an adolescent with destructive behavior?

### **4. Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of the study is to identify psychological predictors of the destructive behavior of personality and assess the degree of their influence.

### **5. Research Methods**

The Determination of Predisposition to Deviant Behavior Questionnaire allows to identify the readiness (predisposition) of an adolescent to the manifestation of various forms of deviant behavior. Parental Attitude Research Instrument - RARI ) is used to study the attitude of parents to different aspects of family life (family roles), as well as the examination of child-parent relationships. The Family Environment Scale is designed to assess the social climate in families of all types: indicators of relationships and personal growth; indicators of family system management. The Parental Behaviour and Attitudes Questionnaire (ADOR) explores parents' attitudes, behavior, and parenting practices as seen by their adolescent children. The methodology Self-Assessment of a Personality allows to study the common level of self-esteem of positive personality development, the self-esteem of individual factors and qualities of a personality, as well as its adequacy or inadequacy. The Aggression Questionnaire helps to identify the levels of verbal, physical, subjective, emotional aggression, and self-aggression. The methodology Assessment of Adolescent's Relationships with the Classmates allows to reveal three possible types of an individual's perception of a group, which may be individualistic, pragmatic, and collectivistic. The Leonhard-Smishek Characterological Questionnaire is designed to determine the type of accentuated personalities: demonstrative, pedantic, stuck, excitable, hypertensive, dysthymic, anxious, cyclothymic, affective, emotive.

A total of 661 people participated in the research: 146 parents (98 women and 48 men), 26 female teachers and psychologists, and 489 adolescents aged 10 to 18, 225 of whom were girls and 264 boys. The sample was designed on the basis of the following parameters: age, gender, and family composition. Adolescents were divided into three groups by cluster analysis. The first group included adolescents with non-destructive behavior – 165 people (including 57 girls and 108 boys, 113 children from two-parent families, and 52 children from single-parent families). The second group included adolescents with less destructive behavior – 190 people (including 83 girls and 107 boys, 134 children from two-parent

families, and 56 children from single-parent families). The third group included adolescents with destructive behavior – 134 people (including 85 girls and 49 boys, 74 children from two-parent families, and 60 children from single-parent families).

## 6. Findings

To answer the first research question we used the results of tests, questionnaires, and methodologies. By means of comparative analysis with the help of the non-parametric Kraskell-Wallis test, we determined the degree of manifestation of the factors that influence the development of destructive behavior of an individual. Irritability of parents towards the child ( $p=0,001$ ), low cohesion of the family ( $p=0,001$ ), conflicts ( $p=0,001$ ), low level of organization of family rules ( $p=0,001$ ), moral and ethical aspects ( $p<0,05$ ), focus on achievements ( $p<0,05$ ), as well as the low level of mother's attention to the child ( $p<0,05$ ) have the greatest impact on the degree of manifestation of the destructive behavior of an individual in parent-child relationships. We can conclude that adolescents with destructive behavior have excessive emotional distance in their relationships with parents. Family members are not very protective of each other, do not help each other, have no sense of family unity. There are frequent conflicts in the family in which family members can raise their voice, while anger and aggression in the child are mostly being suppressed. The family does not care about order and organization in terms of structured family rules and responsibilities. There are no conversations with the child about what is right and wrong, and each family member has his or her notions of what is right and wrong. Family members do not stick to the rule of being the best at whatever you do, they do not care about life success, job promotion, and school grades.

To answer the second research question, we used the results of a methodology that defined adolescent's relationships with their classmates. By means of comparative analysis with the help of the non-parametric Kraskell-Wallis test, we identified the most significant factors that have an impact on the development of the destructive behavior of an individual. These factors include the level of involvement in the group ( $p=0,001$ ), participation in the school life ( $p=0,001$ ), conflicts with teachers and peers ( $p=0,001$ ), as well as the level of academic performance ( $p=0,001$ ). We can conclude that adolescents with destructive behavior have difficulties in establishing relationships within the group as they often experience alienation, isolation, and are not accepted in the team or the group. This, in turn, triggers manifestations of various forms of destructive behavior, creating more conflicts with classmates and teachers. Such behavior in its entirety can also affect academic performance.

To answer the third research question, we used the results of questionnaires that determine the level of self-esteem, type of aggression, and accentuated personality. We identified the most significant parameters by means of comparative analysis with the use of the non-parametric Kruskal-Wallis test. Affective ( $p=0,001$ ), cyclothymic ( $p<0,05$ ), hyperthymic ( $p<0,05$ ) and excitable personality traits ( $p<0,05$ ); level of self-esteem on the scales of "Harmony" ( $p=0.001$ ) and "Morality" ( $p<0.05$ ); types of aggression - verbal ( $p=0.001$ ), physical ( $p=0.001$ ), emotional ( $p=0.001$ ), subjective ( $p<0.05$ ) and self-aggression ( $p<0.05$ ) influence the degree of manifestation of destructive behavior of an individual. We can assume that adolescents with destructive behavior have a dependence on mood swings and high

emotional susceptibility. Mood swings are both not rare and not random. Adolescents may also be energetic, but still carefree.

Adolescents with destructive behavior are talkative, tend to make witty pranks, may be disrespectful to people, show their bad manners; may verbally express their aggressive attitude to another person, experience emotional alienation when communicating with other people.

## 7. Conclusion

Therefore, we can draw conclusions based on the results of the research. The following factors influence the development of destructive behavior of an individual: the psychological climate in the family, school environment, and relations with peers, as well as personal characteristics. By means of methods of mathematical statistics, we were able to identify the degree of influence of psychological predictors on destructive behavior. The greatest influence on the development of destructive behavior of an individual is caused by the family environment and the relationship between the child and his/her parents. The next factor is the school environment. The greatest impact on the development of destructive behavior is caused by involvement in the team, participation in the school life, and relationships with teachers and peers. The least influence on the development of the destructive behavior of an individual is caused by the personal characteristics of an adolescent. Therefore, we can conclude that the family and social environment have the most significant role in the period of active personal development. In this environment, a person observes and adopts the behavioral characteristics that are expressed in the family, in society, and in the reference group.

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