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**FEATURES OF PERSONALITY VICTIM BEHAVIOR IN  
ADOLESCENCE**

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*Abstract*

This article presents the features of victim behavior in the personality. It also discusses the main risk factors during teenage years which make this age group vulnerable to victim behavior. The authors explore a theoretical analysis of the main reasons for victim behavior of the personality. This is done by means of the results of an empirical study concerning interrelated characterological features of teenagers and their predisposition to victim behavior. Specifically, the article examines the correlated interrelations between the tendency to aggressive, self-damaging and self-destroying victim behaviors and liveliness, affectivity and meticulousness. The relationships between the tendency to hyper social, dependent and helpless behavior and uneasiness, imbalance, neuroticism and involvement are also studied. There is also connection between realized victimhood and affectivity, neuroticism, acceptance of risk and control; between the tendency to noncritical behavior and involvement and control. The authors then use the results of the study to categorize the characterological types of teenagers corresponding to various types of victim behavior. They are the depressive type, inclined to aggressive victim behavior; the excitable type, inclined to auto-aggressive victim behavior; the disturbed type, inclined to the expression of pro-social behavior; the unstable type, inclined to dependent behavior; the fond type, inclined to noncritical behavior; and the affective type, inclined to the realized victim behavior.

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**Keywords:** Victim behavior, teenagers, characterological features, personality.



## 1. Introduction

In the modern world, media quite often present information about children and teenagers involved in crimes or violence. At the same time, teenagers more often than not act as victims, which indicates the special place of the victim behavior problem in teenagers among other current problems in psychology. The prerequisites to the formation of victim behavior are characteristic of all age periods in the development of a child since early childhood. The following prerequisites include episodes of both physical and psychological violence in the family: alcoholism, drug addiction, parental immorality, frequent family relocation, negative social environment (peers, teachers), corruption, oppression, and loneliness (Pronina, 2008; Morozova, 2003; Zhihareva, 2018). At the same time, teenage years are a sensitive and important period for the formation of a victim behavioral model from the standpoint of victimologic prevention, the period of active growth (Anisimov, Matusevich, & Shatrova, 2013). The victim behavior phenomenon, a concept of victim behavior and victimization of the personality in the domestic sphere were discussed in publications by V.L. Vasilyev, E.V. Melnikova, N.B. Morozova, and I.V. Kuznetsova (Kuznetsova & Ermoshenko, 2013), where victim behavior is understood as a predisposition of the person to the role of the victim in certain circumstances (Vasiliev & Mamajchuk, 1993; Melnikova, 2005; Kolchik, 2018). However, these works are based primarily on materials from judicial and psychiatric practices where theoretical analysis is based on the personality characteristics of a fully formed personality, showing victim behavior. The practical aspect of this problem is of special interest; namely the mechanisms of the formation of victim behavior, the factors determining similar behavior, the features of children yet to fall victim in a criminal situation remain unstudied. The theoretical analysis of modern psychological literature allows one to determine two main approaches explaining victim behavior: the first approach assigns the leading role in victim behavior to present circumstances and situational features, and the second approach focuses attention on individual and psychological features of the personality. The existing research in the field (Matusevich & Tkachuk, 2014; Feldman, 2012) indicates that victim behavior takes place only with the simultaneous existence of several factors – situational, individual, psychological, and certain emotional coloring. In real experience, only one of these factors need be present for the realization of a model of victim behavior. The diagnostic material making it possible to reveal a tendency toward victim behavior at early stages is practically non-existent. A system of preventive actions necessary for a timely prevention of formation of victim behavior is also insufficiently developed.

## 2. Problem Statement

Teenage years are a time when a person has little life experience but has to cope with and solve various problems, such as the release from guardianship of adults, forming relationship with peers and with people of an opposite sex, and older teenagers face the problem of choosing a profession.

Interest, naivety, suggestibility, a thirst for adventures, a lack of ability to adapt quickly to surrounding conditions, helplessness in conflicting life situations and other cases, along with physical weakness, are psycho-physical features of childhood and teenage years which create a pronounced victim behavior in this age group. Taking into account everything listed above, teenagers face a variety of problems with which many young people cannot independently cope when entering independent life. The victim

behavior will be more often observed in young people who have no life experience, are incompetent, ignore warnings, are careless, imprudent, make risky actions, and are reckless.

Based on the analysis of victimology research, it was determined that the personality framework of a victim-prone personality contains split-levels elements which become more active under the influence of risky situations and are psychological prerequisites to the transformation of this personality into a victim.

From a psychology point of view, to answer the question “Why does this person or this category of people become victims of crimes?”, it is necessary to establish how to measure personal will, emotional and social processes, as well as personal borders which influence the degree of victim-prone behavior in certain persons. It is important to determine how personal borders are shown in critical situations – why one easily becomes a victim, and others safely avoid danger under similar circumstances. The results of such research would promote identifying criteria which would facilitate recognizing a potential victim long before such person becomes one.

### **3. Research Questions**

The subject of the article is psychological features of the identity of teenagers.

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

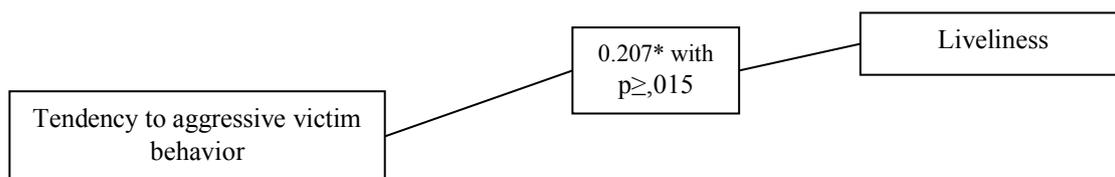
The purpose of this research is studying individual and personal features in the identity of teenagers inclined to victim behaviour.

### **5. Research Methods**

To achieve the research purpose in this study, a number of methods were used: theoretical and methodological analysis, systematization and synthesis of psychological data on a research problem, methods of psychological diagnostics and methods of mathematical statistics of data processing. A psychodiagnostic complex includes the following methods: the “Psychological Diagnostics” technique to measure the predisposition of teenagers towards realized forms of victim behaviour, "Diagnostics of the Victim Role" , a technique of accentuation in character and temperament of the personality which is intended for diagnosing accentuation in character and temperament, "Express Diagnostics of Characterological Features of the Personality" which is intended for the study of individual and psychological lines in personalities. Sixty teenagers, aged fifteen to sixteen, who demonstrated a tendency for victim behavior participated in this study (Emilianov, 2008).

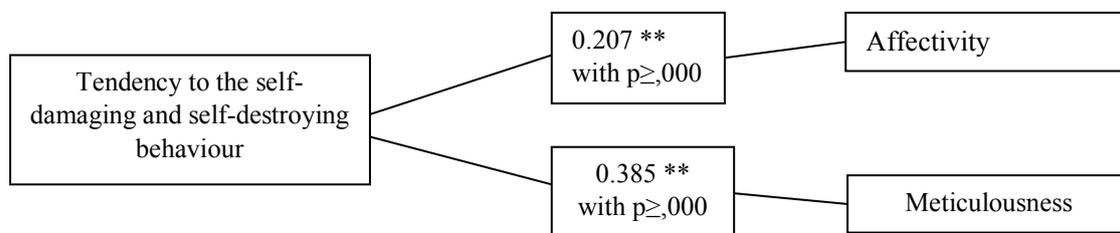
### **6. Findings**

The results of statistical processing of the various obtained data demonstrate reliable connections between the types of tendency to victim behavior and characterological features of the identity of teenagers were established.



**Figure 01.** Correlation pleiad of the connection between aggressive victim behavior tendency and personal features.

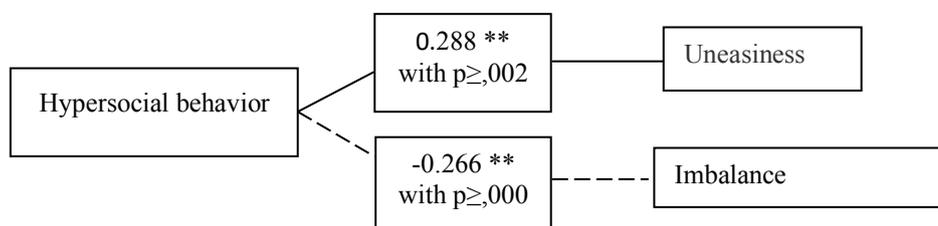
So, there is a reliable connection between indicators of aggressive victim behavior tendency and suppressed mood (207 \* were found with  $p \geq 0,15$ ). According to the presented results, teenagers inclined to aggressive types of victim behavior often show a suppressed mood background – they underestimate a self-assessment, and the pessimistic relation to the future is often noted. Such teenagers differ in seriousness and briefness of expressions (Figure 01).



**Figure 02.** Correlation pleiad of the connection between self-destructive and self-damaging tendencies of victim behavior and peculiarities of personal characteristics.

According to the results presented in figure 2, the reliable connection between tendency for self-damaging and self-destructive victim behavior and personal characteristics of the personality, such as, affectivity (207 \*\* with  $p \geq 0,000$ ), meticulousness (385 \*\* are found with  $p \geq 0,000$ ).

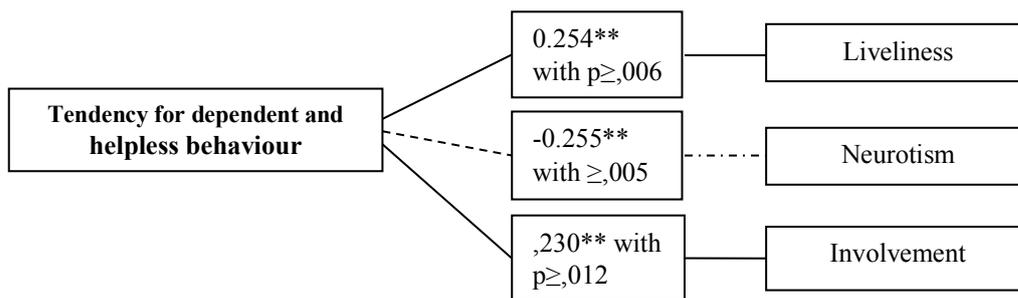
In the structure of the personal sphere of teenagers inclined to the self-damaging, self-destroying behaviour, there is a striking trait of attraction seeking. They are quick-tempered, but accurate at the same time. They often enter the conflict, rarely passing leadership to others.



**Figure 03.** Correlation of the connection between hypersocial tendency of victim behavior and personal characteristics.

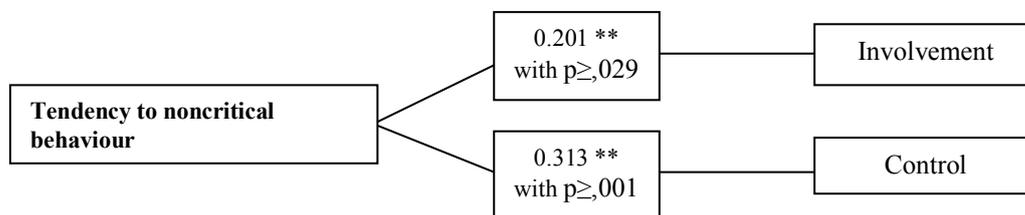
According to the results presented in figure 3, reliable correlation on the scale indicates connection between hypersocial behavior uneasiness (-, 288 \*\* are found with  $p \geq 0,002$ ), imbalance (-, 266 \*\* with  $p \geq 0,000$ ). Such teenagers show a low level of sociability, self-distrust, fear of something and someone. Such

teenagers show signs of child-like petulance, sensitivity, shyness. They are sensitive to the attitude of people around towards themselves. The understanding that they are accepted and loved is important to them. They do not transfer sneers, not in force to stand for oneself and one's point of view. The feeling of inferiority is disguised in self-affirmation through activities where they can disclose their abilities to a large extent. The excessive impulsiveness, roughness, tendency to rudeness and abuse is also inherent in them. They start conflict situations in which they pose as instigators. The following teens are rather irritable, quick-tempered. Teenagers with unbalanced type of accentuation of character tend to have drastic mood changes.



**Figure 04.** Correlation table of the connection between the tendency to dependent and helpless behavior and personal features.

There are reliable correlations between indicators of dependent and helpless behavior and a suppressed mood (254 \*\* were found with  $p \geq 006$ ), the involvement (230 \*\* with  $p \geq 012$ ) and the return correlation with a scale of neuroticism (-, 255 \*\* with  $p \geq 005$ ). According to the presented results, teenagers inclined to dependent and helpless behavior are often excitable, aggressive and disturbed. They react too emotionally to any situation and are excessively impulsive. It is typical for them to exaggerate and dramatize and they are very sensitive to criticism. They can feel unnecessary and pointless in activities. They lack strength and persistence to finish things they start and they constantly feel useless and odd. Teenagers with a distinct type of accentuation of character are serious and at the same time are very sluggish and show weak will power. They see the future rather pessimistically.



**Figure 05.** Correlation Table: "Concatenation of noncritical behavior and personal characteristics"

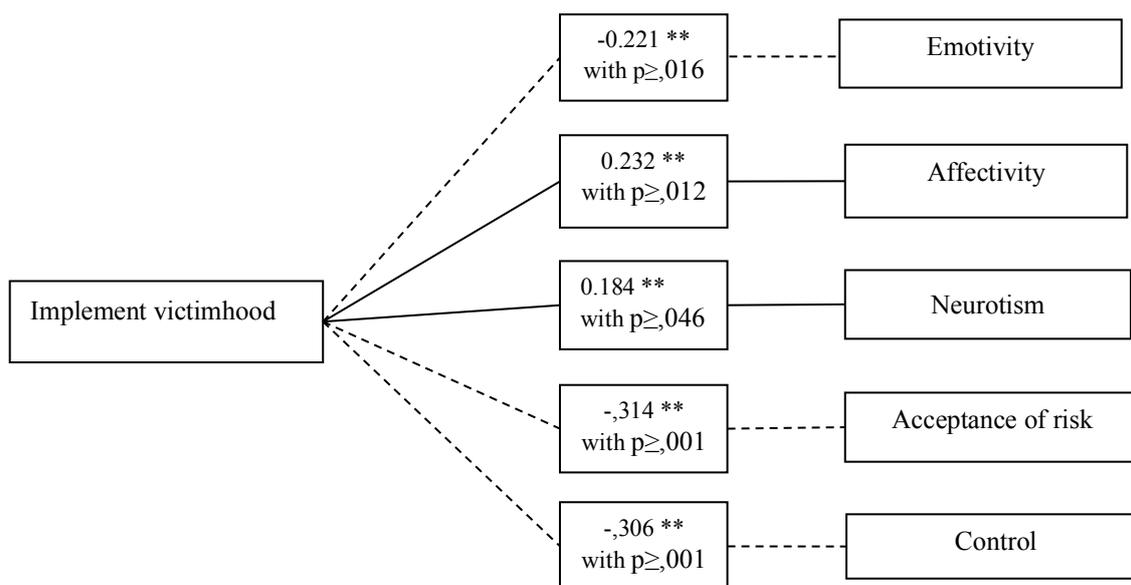
According to the results presented in figure 5, there is a reliable correlation between a tendency towards noncritical behavior and involvement (-, 201 \*\* with  $p \geq 0292$ ) and control (-, 313 \*\* with  $p \geq 001$ ). According to the presented results, teenagers inclined to noncritical behavior do not achieve their objectives and are not sure of themselves. They have constant doubts and no confidence in their decisions

and abilities. Everything seems to be difficult and unsolvable for them. They tend to feel unnecessary and pointless in their activity. They lack strength and persistence to finish what they started.

According to the results presented in figure 6, a reliable connection can be seen between indicators on scales of the realized victimhood and affectivity (232 \*\* are found with  $p \geq 012$ ), neurotism (184 \*\* with  $p \geq 046$ ) and interconnection with the emotivity scale (-, 221 \*\* with  $p \geq 016$ ), adoption of risk (314 \*\* with  $p \geq 001$ ) and control (-, 306 \*\* with  $p \geq 001$ ).

According to the presented results, teenagers inclined to the realized type of victimhood are very emotional, sensitive to many situations, are rather disturbed. Under external expression of wellbeing, there is internal dissatisfaction and the personal conflicts. They react to everything too emotionally and often inadequately to the situation.

Teenagers inclined to the realized type of victim behavior are sure that everything that happens to them, positive or negative, contributes to the development of their experience. These emotions give them love for life. They take up on the most daring ideas. They control a situation as long as they need it. They always achieve goals, considering that it can affect result, even in case that success is not guaranteed and defeat is possible. They are confident only in themselves and their influence on the outcome. Such young people are absolutely sure that their life is in their hands (Emilianov, 2008).



**Figure 06.** Correlation table revealing the connection between the tendency to the realized victim behavior and personal features.

## 7. Conclusion

Thus, as a result of the conducted empirical research, we marked out individual and personal features of the teenagers inclined to victim behavior correlation communications between types of victim behavior and characterological features of teenagers are found and analyzed, and also characterological types of the teenagers inclined to certain types of victim behavior are allocated. Potentially most dangerous types of the identity of teenagers are, first of all, those types which are characterized by a suppressed mood, drastic changes in their mood from the clearly positive to clearly negative; some estrangement from surrounding people, a high neurotism and the expressed readiness for risky behavior. These lines are interconnected

with the low level of self-checking and susceptibility to affective flashes which cause not only the realized victim behavior, but suicide behavior. Superficial, unstable, disturbing and autoaggressive types cause the self-damaging, noncritical and dependent behavior connected with lack of the developed self-checking behind the actions and behavior. The received results give the chance for correctional and therapeutic actions to increase chances for adaptation of teenagers and mitigation of a number of the characterological lines causing victim behavior at this age

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