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ROLE OF OPTIMISTIC ATTITUDE IN FORMATION OF INTEGRAL INDIVIDUALITY STRUCTURES

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Abstract

This article presents an analytical review of the development of a systematic approach to studying man in psychology, highlights the current condition of the problem of integral study of individuality and integrative developmental psychology, analyzes the achievements of domestic and foreign psychologists in the field of optimism and pessimism research. Distinctive signs of representatives of an optimistic and pessimistic attitude are theoretically substantiated. A program for diagnosing multi-level properties of the integral individuality of students with an optimistic and pessimistic attitude is presented, and statistical criteria for evaluating empiric material are defined. Differences in structures of the integral individuality of students with optimistic and pessimistic attitudes are established. The conceptual approach to the development of structures of integral individuality of students with a pessimistic attitude is substantiated. A theoretical model of psychological support for students with a pessimistic attitude is developed. The effectiveness of the psychological support program for the development of structures of integral individuality of students with a pessimistic attitude is established. Students with an optimistic attitude have a more developed, flexible, harmonious structure of the integral individuality. Psychological support is advisable to provide a group of students with a pessimistic attitude. This will be more effective if the development of a psychological model and methodological tools considers the conceptual approaches to the development of optimistic attitudes of pessimists, reveals the hidden patterns of this phenomenon and finds ways to harmonize the properties of pessimists. All this determined the topic and purpose of our study.

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1. Introduction

In psychology, optimism and pessimism act as personal attitudes, dispositions or opinions and moods that reflect positive or negative expectations about a particular event or the future as a whole.

In the modern period, the phenomenon of optimism and pessimism was studied

- as the basis of the attribute style (M. Zeligman, L. Abramson, K. Peterson), the strategies of coping with economic insufficiency (K. Muzdybaev, L.E. Keselman, V.B. Zvonovsky, M.G. Matskevich, K.A. Abulkhanova, T.N. Berezina, E.Yu. Kozhevnikova);
- as dispositional optimism / pessimism (C. Carver and M. Scheyer);
- as an individual property (disposition) of a personality and a life perspective characteristic (O.F. Kovalev);
- as a component of negative prediction (O.A. Sychev), resilience (S. Muddy and D. Koshab), personal choice (E.Yu. Mandrikova);
- as a correlate of meaningfulness of life and dispositional hope (W.C. Compton, L.A. King, M.F. Steger, N. Mascaró), locus-control (V.L. Cheplyaev), tolerance for uncertainty (S.L. Yashchuk);
- as a factor affecting health (K. Peterson, J. Veilant, M. Zeligman),
- as an indicator of life satisfaction, psychological well-being and happiness (N.M. Bradburn, H. Cantril, A.H. Maslow, A. Campbell, P.E. Converse, W.L. Rodgers, R. Inglehart, A. Tellegen);
- as an innate personality trait or the result of the first stages of socialization (H. Cantril, J. Freedman, E. Diener);
- as a type of attitude (L.S. Vygotsky, P. Yusupov, N.G. Kapustina).

An analysis of the above authors works leads to the conclusion that optimism (pessimism) is a complex phenomenon due to multiple factors. Any reasons lead to a constant result: pessimists stop below their potential, and optimists surpass it. Therefore, the problem of optimism and pessimism does not lose relevance and attracts the attention of researchers.

This article is an extension of research aimed at studying the problems of internal (psychologic) determination and integrative developmental psychology in the period of adolescence. Subject properties, optimism and pessimism, are considered as system-forming factors that can have a significant impact on the development of integral personality structures.

The relevance of this study is determined by the following contradictions:

- between an impersonal necessary systematic study of the optimism (pessimism) problem and a widespread reductionist approach in studying this property of the subject;
- between the need to form and develop optimism in the adolescence, as the most favorable age period, and the occurrence of isolated studies of optimism (pessimism) in this age group;
- between the need of society for people with an effective strategy to overcome life and economic difficulties, as a pledge of successful adaptation to changing conditions, and the lack of scientific substantiation of creating psychological conditions for the formation and development of an optimistic attitude;

- between the need to develop a theoretical psychological model for the development of optimism and the lack of a comprehensive system of criteria for the distinguishing features of optimists and pessimists, taking into account the results of research by foreign and domestic psychologists.

2. Problem Statement

The problem of our research is reduced to defining the role of an optimistic attitude in the formation of integral individuality structures in the adolescence.

3. Research Questions

The development of structures of integral individuality of students with a pessimistic attitude by means of psychological support.

4. Purpose of the Study

The desire to overcome the revealed contradictions, to reveal the uniqueness of the structures of the integral individuality of optimists and pessimists among students, to reveal the hidden patterns of this phenomenon, to find ways to harmonize the properties of pessimists. All this determined the topic and purpose of our study.

5. Research Methods

Methodical tools are formed by a set of techniques that investigate optimism and pessimism (“Test for Optimism” and the method for diagnosing social and psychological adaptation) and different levels of integral personality: properties of the neurodynamic level, properties of the psychodynamic level (temperament structure questionnaire (TSQ), the properties of the personal level (methods of diagnosing the level of psychologic control of the personality (LPC) by some authors) and the properties of social psychology ogical level.

6. Findings

For the conducting the experiment, the “Test for Optimism” by Nemov (1999), was taken as the leading technique. To obtain clearer results, we also used the methods of diagnosing the socio-psychological adaptation by C. Rogers and K. Diamond. This method allows to determine the established boundaries of adaptation and maladaptation, acceptance and rejection of oneself and others, emotional comfort and discomfort, internal and external control, domination or weakness, avoiding problem solving. Processing of the obtained results allowed us to divide the subjects into two polar groups: “optimists” and “pessimists”. The total number diagnosed is 112 people. However, 12 students had unrealistic optimism (over 90 points). Thus, a group of optimists consisted of 42 people out of 100 subjects, and a group of pessimists - 58 people.

At the first stage of our study, we conducted a statistical comparison of the structures of the integral individuality of optimists and pessimists according to the Student's t-test in order to identify how different or similar the structures of the object of reality under study are in element-by-element analysis.

Statistical element-by-element comparison of the structures of the integral individuality of optimists and pessimists according to the Student's t-test revealed their similarity by 78%, recording the differences only at psychodynamic and personal levels.

Statistical comparison of the integral indicators of the four levels separately revealed that the structures of the integral personality of optimists and pessimists differ significantly only at the psychodynamic and personal levels, which coincides with the results of the element-by-element Student's t-test.

Describing the higher and lower levels separately, we obtained the following results: the structures of the integral individuality of optimists and pessimists statistically significantly differ in higher levels.

In terms of the integral indicator, we can note the presence of dissimilar, unique structures of the integral individuality of optimists and pessimists, developing according to their own laws. To confirm this thought, we turn to the correlation analysis.

Intra-level correlation analysis showed that at the neurodynamic (density 83.8%), psychodynamic (75%) and socio-psychological (50%) levels, the structure of the optimists' integrated personality is more organized and streamlined compared to pessimists (66.7%, 42%, 9%, 40%, respectively). And at the personal level, the dependency densities in both groups coincide (80%). In both groups, intra-level links are only single-valued.

The total inter-level density of correlations of the group of optimists is 2.6 times higher than the same indicator of pessimists (32.5% and 12.4%, respectively). In addition, in the structure of the integrated individuality of optimists, a multi-valued relationship is observed between all levels, and for pessimists only between neurodynamic and psychodynamic levels. These facts suggest that optimists have a more flexible structure with high compensatory capabilities (Arskieva, 2014).

The results obtained at this stage of the study lead to the following conclusion: optimists have a more flexible structure with high compensatory capabilities; pessimists have poorly developed polymorphic dependencies and they need a higher compensatory ability to adapt to the outside world and inner harmony.

In the further study of the structures of integral individuality, we applied factor analysis.

According to the degree of occupancy of the factor with multilevel properties, the structure of the integral personality of optimists turns out to be more developed, harmonious, since it contains two complete factors and two partial factors. While in the structure of the integral individuality of pessimists, only one factor is complete, and the rest are partially filled.

According to the average value of saturation with significant factor weights in the factor structures of both groups, we find two natural and two social factors in the group of optimists and three natural and one social level among pessimists.

By the nature of inter-factor relations, the structure of the integral individuality of optimists is more plastic, since they have more oblique connections (10) than pessimists (3); and orthogonal - less (8) than pessimists (19).

All these data suggest that the structure of the integral individuality of students with an optimistic attitude is more plastic and adapted to the constantly changing conditions of life activity.

To conduct a formative experiment, a theoretical model of psychological support for students with a pessimistic attitude was developed. In the framework of the formative experiment, the students of the pessimistic group were divided into two groups - experimental and control.

The program is aimed at developing the personal and socio-psychological level of the integral individuality of students.

The purpose of this model is the correction of pessimism and the formation of a positive attitude.

The following tasks contribute to achieving the goal:

- the formation of a positive attitude towards others;
- the formation of a positive attitude towards oneself, an increase in the level of self-acceptance, self-esteem;
- the formation of a life perspective;
- development of volitional regulation, skills of control over life situations and the formation of a positive attributive style of explaining successes and failures;
- the formation of awareness of the close relationship between mental and physiological conditions.

The model consists of five modules:

The first module "Socio-communicative" is aimed at the formation of positive attitudes towards the social environment; development of reflexivity; enrichment of the repertoire of communicative and situational blanks.

The second module "Personality-semantic" is aimed at developing skills for regulating positive mood, self-confidence, and success; clarifying the role and significance of religion in a person's life; increase the level of life meaningfulness; activation of intellectual development and the desire to apply the knowledge gained in life.

The third module "Prognostic" is aimed at changing the attitude to time; the formation of a long-term life perspective, tolerance for uncertainty; active life position; setting clear, real life goals.

The fourth module "Cognitive-activity" is aimed at developing skills of volitional regulation; control over life events, responsibility for their actions and the results obtained; developing attitudes towards difficult life situations as opportunities for growth; development of adaptive abilities; the formation of a positive attributive style.

The fifth module "Health-saving" is aimed at forming the desire to lead a healthy lifestyle; proper organization of work and leisure; increase the level of volitional regulation, mood and health through sports (Arskieva, 2011).

It is recommended that the content of each module be divided into two blocks: Block 1. "Introductory lecture material" and Block 2. "Practicum".

The forms of work used in the training are general group discussions, individual conversations, analytical work in small groups, comparative analysis in pairs and triples, elements of situational-role-playing games, drawing associations and simulation games.

When selecting the form and content of the trainings, we used the developments of such authors as Csikszentmihalyi (1990), Sidorenko (2001), Fopel (2002), Shevtsova (2003), Vachkov (2003), Evtihov (2003), Zinkevich-Evstigneeva (2002), Pezeshkian (2006), Gnezdilov (2003) and others.

After conducting the formative experiment, we carried out a re-diagnosis of the integral individuality of the students of the control and experimental groups (pessimistic groups) using the same algorithm as in the ascertaining experiment.

According to statistical analysis, the overall level of change was 35%.

According to factor analysis, there is a superiority of the experimental group over the control group according to the criteria of the leading role of social factors. In the factor structure of the experimental group, there are 3 complete and one partial factor. In the control group there is only one complete factor, and the other three are partial.

In the experimental group, there are 9 hard orthogonal dependencies, in the control these dependencies are 16. The number of lucid bonds in the experimental group is almost two times greater than in the control group (13 and 7, respectively).

As a result of the forming experiment, there is a significant transformation of the structures of the integral individuality of the experimental group students in the direction of harmonization of the personal and socio-psychological properties. Psychological support for students with a pessimistic world view gives the structure of integral individuality the opportunity to become more plastic, which ensures greater success in adapting to the constantly changing conditions of life activity.

7. Conclusion

1. Optimistic and pessimistic attitudes are significantly different at the personal and socio-psychological level.
2. Statistical integrative analysis on four levels separately confirmed the results of the element-by-element analysis based on the Student's t-test: differences were found at the psychodynamic and personal levels. Statistical integrative comparison of integral indicators of higher and lower levels revealed significant differences at higher levels. The statistical integrative comparison of the four levels as a whole showed that the structures of the integral personality of optimists and pessimists in general are not similar and unique.
3. Intra-level correlation analysis showed: at the neurodynamic, psychodynamic, and socio-psychological levels, the indicators of properties in the structure of the integral personality of optimists are more cohesive and organized in comparison with pessimists; at the personal level, the structures of both groups are equally coordinated and streamlined; at all levels of the optimists and pessimists structures, there are single-valued connections.
4. According to the inter-level correlation analysis, optimists, unlike pessimists, have a more flexible structure of integral individuality with high compensatory capabilities; among pessimists, polymorphic dependence is developed only between neurodynamic and psychodynamic properties, and among optimists, between properties of all levels.
5. The factor structures of the integral individuality of pessimistic students are characterized by the equivalent influence of natural and social levels; representation in factors of all four levels; the

- prevalence of orthogonal dependencies over the oblic. The factor structures of optimists are characterized by the predominance of the oblic dependences over the orthogonal ones. In the structure of individuality of optimists, two complete and two partial factors are revealed, pessimists - one complete and three partial factors.
6. According to the degree of the factor by multi-level properties occupancy, by the nature of inter-factor relations, the integral individuality of optimists is recognized as more developed, plastic, harmonious.
 7. The properties of the subject (optimism and pessimism) are the backbone factors in the formation of unique structures of the integral individuality of students.
 8. Pessimists need psychological support in order to increase the level of plasticity, increase the number of multi-valued (polymorphic) connections in the structure and lydical dependencies, minimize the impact of natural levels; when developing a support program, one should take into account the distinctive features of both attitudes and leading social properties in the structure of the integral personality of optimists.
 9. The theoretical model of psychological support for students with a pessimistic world view includes five modules: “Socio-communicative”, “Personality-semantic”, “Prognostic”, “Cognitive-activity”, “Health-saving”. The purpose of the first module is the formation of a positive attitude towards others; the second – is the formation of a positive attitude towards oneself, an increase in the level of self-acceptance, self-esteem; the third – is the formation of a life perspective; the fourth – is the development of volitional regulation, skills of control over life situations and the formation of a positive attributive style of explaining successes and failures; the fifth – is the formation of awareness of the close relationship between mental and physiological states. The model presents the goal and main tasks of psychological support for students with a pessimistic attitude, the goals and content of each module, the algorithm of methodological tools (cognition - connotation - emotion), recommended forms of training and recommended authors for the selection of content and forms of work.
 10. As a result of the implementation of the program of psychological support, the following changes occurred in the structure of the integral individuality of students: the element-by-element analysis showed that the effectiveness of the influence of psychological support on the development of the structures of the integral individuality of students with a pessimistic attitude of the experimental group on individual properties was 35%, in the control group - 8.7%. Multidimensional factor analysis allowed to state that the structures of the integral individuality of students, the experimental group, became more flexible and streamlined, acquired a higher adaptive potential and approached a group of students with an optimistic outlook on their development. In the control group, the detected changes in the factor structure are insignificant.

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