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**ORTHODOX BELIEVERS' RELIGIOUSNESS IN MODERN
SOCIETY: STUDY OF PECULIARITIES AND GENDER
SPECIFICS**

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Abstract

Under conditions of the multipolar world and the society, undergoing transformation, the study of the problem of peculiarities of religiousness of the Russian population acquires particular significance. With widespread of Orthodoxy in Russia and, correspondingly, orthodox religious values, attitudes, the problem of interrelation of peculiarities of religiousness of orthodox believers and perception of the surrounding world by them has been insufficiently settled. The chosen research approach was aimed at the study of religiousness peculiarities of orthodox believers and their interconnection with peculiarities of perception of the surrounding world, their own life, gender specifics of these phenomena. In the paper, the authors shed light on the results of the empirical study of religiousness peculiarities of orthodox believers with consistent internal religiousness, undertaken in sociocultural conditions of the Chuvash Republic as a region where the religious and cultural tradition of orthodox creed has been historically established. Individual religiousness of orthodox believers is characterised by the fact that testees consider themselves religioners. In religion, they seek support and comfort, which is an important prerequisite of formation of their religiousness. Gender specifics of individual religiousness of orthodox believers with consistent internal religiousness manifested itself in the assessment of importance of observing external signs of religiousness, with respect to religion as a philosophical concept and in perception of benevolence of the surrounding world. The indicators of life meaning orientations among orthodox believers do not differ significantly on a gender basis.

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Keywords: Religiousness, orthodox believers, individual religiousness, type of religious orientation, subjective well being, basis convictions of individual.



1. Introduction

Under conditions of the multipolar world, the society undergoing transformation, the study the problem of religiousness of Russian population acquires particular importance.

Religiousness in Russia at the end of the XX – beginning of the XXI centuries, as the studies of scientists showed, is characterised by increased dynamism, contradictions of the processes proceeding in it, unpredictability of trends of its further development (Garadzha, 2007).

Owing to popularity of preliminary Orthodoxy on the Russian territory, many foreign studies, devoted to the psychology of religion, in which the representatives of other confessions participated, being of significant scientific and research interest, do not allow basing on them fully. Meanwhile, significance and importance of studying the psychology of religion, accumulation of scientific empirical data about religious life in its different psychological aspects, is extremely high and consists in interrelation with demographic, ethnic, social, political and other tendencies of modern Russian society. Scientifically substantiated data about psychological characteristics must be considered when making important state decisions in the field of demography, policy, social sphere.

It is possible to judge about the popularity of forms of religious worldview of Russian population by the data of the survey, devoted to religiousness of the modern Russians, conducted by the Foundation “Public Opinion” (Values: religiousness, 2013). Among the respondents, 64 % consider themselves orthodox believers; 25 % – atheists; 6 % believe in Islam; 4 % do not know or were unable to name a certain confession; 1 % – other Christian confessions (Catholics, Protestants, Uniats, Baptists, etc.); 1 % – other religions.

Analysing religiousness of the population based on the data of multiyear surveys of the Foundation “Public Opinion” and All-Russian studies of population’s religiousness of the Department of sociology of religion and the Department of strategic social and socio-political studies of ISPR RAS, Sinelina (2013) makes the following conclusions: the majority of the Russians consider religion important for them. At that, the share of believing respondents continues to grow, and that of atheists – to decrease, the share of undecided people remains almost stable. Despite the fact that more than 70 % of all respondents identify themselves with orthodox culture, a core – about 10 % of population – has formed in Russia. This core includes believers and religious citizens with relatively high indicators of religious behaviour and participation in religious life. Such core is surrounded by the “periphery” (25–30 %), consisting of people whose indicators of religious behaviour are little lower, but, nevertheless, their life is connected with religious communities and parishes; they believe in the mortality of the soul and consider religion as an important part of their life. For the rest of the respondents, called themselves as orthodox, religion is a way of cultural self-identification, but not the basis of the worldview.

Based on the analysis of these values of the Russians and the Europeans, by the results of the European social study, it was revealed that the Russian youth consider themselves more religious than the European do. But, at the same time, they are more oriented to accumulation of wealth and “proper” behaviour, possess less openness to new occupations and unexpected prospects (Mastikova, 2013).

The change of religious indicators in the Russian Federation (RF) over the years of religious freedom, analysed by Osmachko (2014), was connected with the number of the most characteristic features of condition of the religious situation in Russia. They are mass positive attitude to orthodox and

the Russian Orthodox Church (ROC), dominating in public consciousness; prevalence of orthodox self-identification in the Russian (Russian-speaking) population; prevalence of “external” religiousness, in which blurring, vagueness, eclecticism, “verbality” are inherent.

The studies of Ryazanova S.V., Mikhaleva A.V. (Ryazanova, Mikhaleva, 2011) show that an important peculiarity of post-soviet confessional space is female religiousness.

In the authors’ opinion, the basic problem field in psychological studies of the individual religiousness phenomenon at present is in the sphere of interconnection of religiousness with psychological, psychical, spiritual and moral health of the individual, life meaning orientations, one’s well-being, social interaction.

Based on the analysis of the studies of religious motivation concepts in foreign research, Yasin (2016) concludes that religiousness itself does not lead to the growth of subjective well-being; only intrinsic, deeply integrated spiritual motivation leads to improvement of psychological state of health. On the contrary, if the individual is unable to completely accept religious principles, internal conflict, leading to anxiety, is possible.

The sources of scientific discussions about interrelation of religiousness and well-being namely for the Russian population consist in the fact that many authors relate the growth of religiousness in the Russians to the fact that aggravation of the feeling of insecurity today and uncertainty in future has become typical for the part of the population, going through transformation and structural reconstruction of the whole social pattern, crisis situations, cardinal breaking of individual fates along with the whole country. All this caused their increased interest in religion, which has become for them a refuge for comfort, stability and permanence, hope for the better.

Religiousness is considered as one of the resources of individual resistance to negative life situations. Traditional religious values, in the opinion of Dunaeva N.I. (Dunaeva, 2012), have accumulated the experience of overcoming crisis situations of many tens of generations, enabled development of existential explanations of life meaning, included the experience of rendering assistance to people, being at a borderline state, in a difficult life situation.

Ivanov & Dulina (2013) showed in their work that creation of environment, psychologically safe for human life, granting the sense of protection against threats to one’s dignity, spiritual well-being, positive perception of oneself is one of the main tasks of social society, orthodox religion and the church as its guide.

The studies of Nikolaev (2006) show that despite the long-term history of attempts of immediate integration of religion in psychotherapy, this process has not been completed and is problematic. In addition, the significance of spiritual worldview and religious convictions for treatment of psychological and behavioural disorders is obviously underestimated. The consideration of peculiarities of religious and spiritual worldview of the patient and one’s family facilitates an adequate use of these spheres as a psychotherapeutic resource.

In the opinion of Suchkova (2008), religiousness, being a social and psychological individual property, subjective reflection, the degree of acceptance of religious elements, manifesting themselves in the individual consciousness and behaviour, provides the main psychological function of religion – protection of youth believers.

The results of the studies, undertaken by the Scientific centre of psychology of religion at St. Tikhon's Orthodox University (Scientific..., 2017), confirmed that religious coping can be considered as an independent mechanism of "controlling" behaviour. Belief exerts significant positive influence on the adaptation process of the patient to the disease of vital threat at a high level of stress, acting as a strategy of controlling behaviour.

Religious belief is considered as a protective factor against suicidal behaviour. Religiousness in traditional Abrahamic religions (Islam, Christianity, Judaism) determines a greater meaning as an anti-suicidal factor compared to the religions of the East (especially when the church members are involved in the life of the church community).

In the studies of Semenova (2014), interrelations among components of psychological well-being, religious ideas and orientations in men and women in their adulthood (aged 35-45) were identified.

Beskova (2015) revealed that separate components of morality and religiousness influence the sensation of psychological well-being or ill-being of the individuality (the persons, connected with orthodox culture, took part in the study). At that, the more the person bases oneself on religious convictions in one's deeds and the more often one resorts to religious practices, the more psychologically happy one feels.

In their studies, Khukhlaev, Shorokhova (2016) revealed that almost all values, interconnected with different components of religious identity of orthodox youth, are related to the social focus. At that, religious identity of the modern orthodox youth is of pronounced social character.

In her study, Gustova (2012) states that the individual qualities that are actualized at a high individual level of religiousness in people, affiliating themselves with orthodox creed, coincide with the standard, the model of ideal personality and its qualities, which evolves in Christianity as in a system of spiritual education. The basic characteristic features of such model are resignation, passivity, moral and physical suffering, refusal to fight, lack of will, submissiveness, fear. In the opinion of this author, the impact, related to the rise of the individual level of religiousness, will negatively influence the individual qualities and lead to the lowering of the level of psyche integration.

In the work of Dvoinin & Danilova (2012), devoted to religiousness of modern orthodox youth, it was established that those people tend to seek comfort in religion who do not feel being in control of their life, who think that a human being possesses a limited freedom of choice. In the study of the authors, this regularity manifested itself in young men. That is, addressing the religion serves as a protective mechanism in situations when young men are disappointed about the past, do not find any sense in future and feel that they do not control their life anymore. In such situation, religion really helps them to regain the control over their life, to gain confidence in future and to overcome disappointments of the past.

This problematics is closely connected with the studies of social beliefs. Social beliefs are ideas of what essence of other people is, how they behave with respect to other people and how to react to their actions. The number of such ideas includes belief in a dangerous world (a conviction that society is chaotic, unpredictable and aggressive) and a competitive world (a human conviction that surrounding people lie, manipulate one, and aim to "outplay" one) (Gulevich, Anikeenok, Bezmenova, 2014).

The studies of Yagiyaev (2015) aimed at comparison of indicators of belief in the dangerous world among the respondents with different religious views, showed that religious respondents follow the ideas

about the danger of the world to a greater degree than indifferent ones do, and the latter – to a significantly greater degree than atheists do.

Thus, analysis of publications on population religiousness at the modern stage of transformation of the Russian society leads to the thought that in case of wide spread occurrence of Orthodoxy and, accordingly, orthodox religious values, attitudes in Russia, the problem of interrelation of religiousness peculiarities of orthodox believers and perception by them of the surrounding world has been addressed insufficiently.

2. Problem Statement

The purpose of this research is to study peculiarities and gender specifics of religiousness of orthodox believers in the modern society undergoing transformation.

The parishioners of orthodox temples of Cheboksary city (the Chuvash Republic), a region where a religious and cultural tradition of the orthodox creed has been historically established, took part in the study of religiousness of orthodox believers in the transforming society under social and cultural conditions of Chuvashia, RF.

The studies of the confessional structure of Chuvashia revealed (Interethnic, 2015) that more than 60% of respondents class themselves as believers, 23% hesitated between belief and infidelity, 7.5% noted that they are unbelievers, and 9% found it difficult to answer this question. The majority of population are adherents of Orthodoxy (76,7%), 3,3% - of Islam. A more distinct concentration of those who rank themselves among different confessions is observed among women: among them, 67.5% are believers; among men – 52.9%.

The number of historically conditioned specific peculiarities of the Chuvash Republic also includes the following: a bicultural situation based on intensive interaction of two cultures (Chuvash and Russian); high density of population; a high portion of rural population; a historically established system of family upbringing connected with traditional patriarchal connections; fairly late beginning of industrialization and urbanization (Zakharova, 2011). As a whole, the population of Chuvash differs by powerful traditionalism and conservatism owing to prevalence of women, rural population, a low level of incomes as compared to the All-Russian one in its structure (Nikolaev, 2013).

The research approach chosen by the authors is aimed at studying the peculiarities of religiousness of orthodox believers: the type of religious orientation of the believer's personality, pronouncedness of structural components of individual religiousness and their interrelation with peculiarities of perception of the surrounding world (its benevolence-animosity, justice) and their life.

3. Research Questions

What is the nature of interrelations between personal religiosity and perception of social environment & self-perception for Orthodox Christianity devotees? Does gender factor mediate that relations?

4. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this research is to study peculiarities and gender specifics of religiousness of orthodox believers in the modern society undergoing transformation.

5. Research Methods

The research methods include:

1. The religions orientation scale of Allport G., Ross D.
2. The test for determination of the structure of individual religiousness (Myagkov, Shcherbatykh, Kravtsov, 1996).
3. The research method of basis individual convictions of Janoff-Bulman R. (modification of Padun M.A., Kotelnikova A.V.) (Padun, Kotelnikova, 2008).
4. The test of life meaning orientations (LMO) of Leontev D.A., representing an adapted Russian-language version of the methodology “Purpose-in-Life Test” (J.S. Crambaugh and L.T. Maholick).

The obtained data were processed by the methods of mathematical and statistical analysis (relative values, calculation of the indicator of two-sample Student's t-criterion, calculation of the coefficient of Pearson's linear correlation, ranging).

6. Findings

To study personality religiousness, the authors used the methodology “Religions orientation scale of Allport G., Ross D.”, allowing obtaining the information about the types of religious orientation of believers' personality and determining the general index of religiousness.

The majority of orthodox believers (88.24%) demonstrated consistent intrinsic religiousness, which is characterised by stability of religious convictions, internal experience in understanding faith issues. The observance of not so much external ritual aspect of religious behaviour as internal experience is extremely important for the people of this group. For this group of believers, religion serves as a means of the world understanding.

A part of the believers (11.79%) demonstrated “inconsistent religiousness”, which is connected with the fact that the individual manifests both external religious manifestations and internal religious convictions, which are insufficiently coordinated and stable.

Such types as an “unreligious type” and a “consistent external religious type of personality” (by “Religions Orientation Scale of Allport G., Ross D.”) were not revealed among parishioners in this study.

For the unreligious type of the personality, religion is not a prior motive. Such people do not aim at living in accordance with religious behests and convictions.

The absence of the consistent external religious type of personality justifies the fact that orthodox believers do not tend to use religion for their own purposes.

In the subsequent research, the results of only orthodox believers with consistent internal religiousness were considered. 90 people aged 20 to 45 took part in the study; among them: 58 – women, which amounted to 64.44 % of the total sampling; 32 – men (35.56%). 52 people out of all respondents are married (57.78 %). All respondents have families, practicing Orthodoxy.

Differences by the Student's t-criterion of the religiousness index in women and men by the methodology "Religions Orientation Scale of Allport G., Ross D." are insignificant.

Having summarised the data, obtained during the interview, the authors concluded that orthodox believers consider church-going, reading religious literature, abstinence and celebration of religious events as obligatory.

To reveal the meaningful aspect of individual religiousness of believers, the authors used the method "Structure of individual religiousness" by Shcherbatykh Yu.V. The results are given in Table 1. The mean values and standard deviations by each of the scales of the methodology for men and women were presented; the level of significance of differences by the Student's t-criterion was indicated.

Table 01. Indicators of scales of questionnaire "Structure of individual religiousness" ($\bar{x} \pm \sigma$)

	Common (n=90)	Men (n=32)	Women (n=58)	t	Significance level p
Presence of religious self-awareness. need for belief	9.34±0.75	9.34±0.75	9.09±0.8	1.4960	0.1382
Treatment of religion as standard of moral norms of behaviour	9.19±0.90	9.19±0.9	9.1±0.79	0.4613	0.6457
Search for support and comfort in religion	9.00±0.67	9±0.67	8.93±0.67	0.4661	0.6423
Belief in Creator and acceptance of existence of Heavenly Power	8.91±0.86	8.91±0.86	8.88±0.86	0.1425	0.8870
Treatment of religion as philosophical concept	8.56±0.84	8.56±0.84	9.02±0.69	2.7714**	0.0068
External evidences of religiousness	5.47±0.67	5.47±0.67	5.17±0.68	1.9899*	0.0497
Treatment of magic	3.69±0.64	3.69±0.64	3.76±0.6	0.5235	0.6019
Interest in "pseudoscience"	2.94±0.80	2.94±0.8	2.86±0.87	0.4056	0.6860

* differences are significant at $p \leq 0.05$

** differences are significant at $p \leq 0.01$

Very high common indicators of the structure of individual religiousness in orthodox believers were established by the following scales:

- The highest indicators are observed by the scale "Presence of religious self-awareness" with the mean score of 9.34 points. The presence of religious self-awareness is considered as individual's involvement in certain religious ideas and values. Internal need for religious belief in orthodox believers is at a high level, which implies the significance of belief in the consciousness of these people.
- There is a mean score of 9.19 points by the scale "Treatment of religion as standard of moral norms of behaviour". Believers think that religiousness determines the moral make-up of the human being, that the role of religion is important in preserving and supporting ethics and morals in the modern society.
- The scale "Tendency to search support and comfort in religion" has a mean score of 9.00 points. Orthodox believers identify religion with support and comfort; reliance on religion is one of the most significant coping-resources of the individual, assistance in overcoming difficult life situations.

Next, the believers rank the indicators by the scale “Belief in Creator and acceptance of existence of Heavenly Power” (the mean score is 8.91 points), which justifies that religious people tend to believe in the Divine, to recognize higher reasons, to see the Creator’s volition in the happening.

- There is a mean score of 8.81 points by the scale “Treatment of religion as philosophy”. Many believers tend to consider religion as a philosophical concept, on which the understanding of life is based.

The mean values of the scale “External evidences of religiousness” show mean scores of 5.47 points. This is inclination to follow the tradition in external manifestations: to observe rites and holidays, to have icons at home, to wear a crucifix, etc. In this research, this inclination is expressed at the average level; it is probably connected with the fact that for religioners, the presence of religious attributes is a self-evident fact, and they are not inclined to attach particular importance to it.

The lowest indicators were observed by the scales “Treatment of magic” and “Interest in pseudoscience”.

The scale “Treatment of magic” has a mean score of 3.69 points. Treatment of magic is characterised by turning to clairvoyants, fortunetellers, soothsayers, mystical practices, by the interest in the problems of malefice, putting the evil eye, witchcraft, etc. Christian canons reject similar practices, passion for occult knowledge, what was demonstrated by the respondents, having scored few points by this scale.

The scale “Interest in pseudoscience” was given 2.94 points, which implies that the interest in pseudoscience or would-be-scientific knowledge on the part of orthodox believers is shown rarely.

Comparison of indicators of the meaningful aspects of ideas-beliefs by the questionnaire “Structure of individual religiousness” reveals some statistically reliable differences in men and women (Student's t-criterion).

Men are more inclined to emphasise the importance of observing external evidences of religiousness than women do, following traditions in external manifestations to observe rites, holidays, to have icons at homes, to wear a crucifix, etc. ($t=1.99$, $p<0.05$).

There are also differences with respect to religion as a philosophical concept (gnoseologic roots of religiousness and inclination to idealistic philosophy) – this indicator is significantly higher for women ($t=2.77$, $p<0.01$).

Using the methodology of Janoff-Bulman R. (modification of Padun M.A., Kotelnikova A.V.) studying bottom-level beliefs of personality, the authors obtained the results given in Table 2. This methodology allows measuring deep ideas of the individual about the surrounding world and about one’s Self. The concept of Janoff-Bulman R. emphasises that the individual constructs one’s life experience, attempting to achieve the sense of security, basing on the implicit internal structure, including convictions about benevolence-animosity of the surrounding world, its justice, as well as ideas about one’s “Self”. On the whole, bottom-level beliefs can be determined as implicit, global, stable ideas of the individual about the world and oneself, influencing the thinking, emotional states and behaviour of the human being (Padun, Kotelnikova, 2008).

Table 02. Indicators of scales of Janoff-Bulman R. methodology of studying bottom-level beliefs of personality (modification of Padun M.A., Kotelnikova A.V.) ($\bar{x} \pm \sigma$)

	Common (n=90)	Men (n=32)	Women (n=58)	t	Significance level p
Benevolence	41.57±3.13	40.19±2.78	42.33±3.08	3.2651**	0.0016
Justice	22.37±5.69	21.72±5.97	22.72±5.55	0.8009	0.4254
Self-image	33.39±2.71	33.34±2.75	33.41±2.7	0.1169	0.9072
Luck	38.67±3.14	38.91±3.55	38.53±2.92	0.5347	0.5942
Convictions about control	33.59±6.12	35.16±5.59	32.72±6.27	1.8287	0.0708

* differences are significant at $p \leq 0.05$

** differences are significant at $p \leq 0.01$

- Mean values of 41.57 points belong to the scale “Benevolence of the surrounding world”, which reflects the conviction of orthodox believers in the fact that surrounding people are kind and are worthy of trust.
- There is a mean score of 22.37 points by the scale “Justice”; this indicator is at the average level, which implies an average conviction of believers in the fact that distribution of events that happen to people is carried out by the principle of justice, i.e. everyone receives what one deserves.

By the scale “Self-image”, the averaged indicator is 33.39 points, which implies that the individual has self-conception as of a human being who is worthy of love, respect. This indicator is at the high level for orthodox believers.

The scale “Luck” reflects the conviction that this individual is a successful and lucky person (38.67 points), and the scale “Convictions about the control” reflects the human conviction that one is able to control one’s own life and events, occurring in it (33.59 points). The averaged indicators of the sampling are also at a high level.

Comparison of indicators of the meaningful aspects of bottom-level beliefs of men and women revealed statistically reliable differences by the scale “Benevolence of the surrounding world”, which turned out to be higher for women ($t=3.27$, $p<0.01$).

The test of life-meaning orientations diagnoses the degree of life conciseness in the contexts of the past, present and future, as well as human conviction that one is able to control one’s life and that such control is possible. The test of life-meaning orientations (LMO) by Leontev D.A. allowed determining the pronouncedness of life-meaning orientations for orthodox believers. The results by this methodology are given in Table 3.

Table 03. Average values and standard deviations of LMO subscales

Scale	Common (n=90)	Men (n=32)	Women (n=58)	t	Significance level p
Purposes in life	36.73±2.11	37.03±2.06	36.57±2.14	0.9957	0.3221
Life process or interest and emotional richness of life	35.87±2.00	36.28±1.65	35.64±2.15	1.4694	0.1453
Life productivity or satisfaction	29.08±1.43	28.84±1.27	29.21±1.51	1.1539	0.2517

with self-realisation					
Locus of control – Self	24.60±2.88	24.09±2.76	24.88±2.93	1.2412	0.2178
Locus of control – life or life controllability	28.73±2.70	29.41±2.8	28.36±2.59	1.7763	0.0791

* differences are significant at $p \leq 0.05$

** differences are significant at $p \leq 0.01$

By the scale “Purposes of life”, orthodox believers demonstrate a high value – 36.73 points, $\Sigma = 5.35$, which allows characterising them as sufficiently purposeful people, having certain purposes in future, attaching meaningfulness, purposefulness and time perspective to life.

The scale “Life process or interest and emotional richness of life” has 35.87 points, $\Sigma = 2.00$, which means the perception by believers of their life as an interesting, emotionally rich and meaningful process.

By the scale “Life productivity or satisfaction with self-realisation”, the following average values were obtained – 29.08±1.43 points, $\Sigma = 1.43$, which implies satisfaction of believers with their life, about meaningfulness of its spent part.

The scale “Locus of control - Self” gained 24.60 points, $\Sigma = 2.88$, which corresponds to the self-concept as of a strong personality, possessing sufficient freedom of choice to build one’s life in accordance with one’s purposes and ideas about life meaning.

The scale “Locus of control – life or life controllability” obtained 28.73 points, $\Sigma = 2.70$, which implies the conviction of orthodox believers that the human being is allowed to control one’s life, to freely make decision and to implement them, which is expressed at the average level. These data correspond to the religious concept about the absence of conscious control over life as predetermination and life control on the part of the God.

The indicators of life meaningfulness among orthodox believers do not differ significantly by gender.

Positive interrelations of indicators “Life productivity or satisfaction with self-realisation” with the scales “Presence of religious self-awareness, need in belief” ($r=0.53$; $p \leq 0.01$), “Treatment of religion as a philosophical concept” ($r=0.43$; $p \leq 0.01$), and negative ones – with scales “External evidences of religiousness” ($r=-0.25$; $p \leq 0.05$) and the scale determining the tendency of accepting existence of Heavenly Power ($r=-0.25$; $p \leq 0.05$) were revealed.

Correlation analysis, conducted by the results of studies in the common group of respondents, showed that there is a positive interrelation between scales “Benevolence of the surrounding world” and “Treatment of religion as a philosophical concept” ($r=0.35$; $p \leq 0.01$) and a negative interrelation with indicators of the scale, determining the tendency of accepting existence of Heavenly Power ($r=-0.29$; $p \leq 0.01$). This dependence probably is evidence of the fact that believers tend to treat failures, some negative phenomena in their life as godsent trials.

The interrelation was revealed between scales “External evidences of religiousness” and “Luck” ($r=0.21$; $p \leq 0.05$) – external evidences of religiousness (icons, crucifixes, etc.) are mandatory attributes of religiousness for believers, giving believers a confidence boost.

As a result of the correlation analysis, positive interrelations among the scale “Treatment of religion as standard of moral norms of behaviour” and scales “Life process or emotional richness of life”

($r=0.31$; $p\leq 0.01$), “Locus of control – life or life controllability” ($r=0.38$; $p\leq 0.01$), “General indicator of life meaningfulness” ($r=0.24$; $p\leq 0.05$) were identified, which allows suggesting that orientation to the standards of moral norms, their observance gives the individual a confidence boost in one’s ability to control one’s life circumstances, to independently create circumstances, satisfying one’s needs and values.

7. Conclusion

Individual religiousness of orthodox believers is characterised by the fact that respondents consider themselves religioners, which is confirmed by their high level of religious self-awareness, manifesting itself in conscientious sharing of religious ideas and principles, treatment of religion as a sample of moral norms of behaviour. They believe in the Creator as a Heavenly Power that created the world. They seek support and comfort in religion, which is an important prerequisite of formation of their religiousness. By means of external religious attributes, they aim at meeting the norms of religious beliefs, without overvaluing this side of religiousness.

Orthodox believers believe in benevolence of the surrounding world, do not perceive any threatening to them animosity in it, are able to control their actions and compare their actions with socially acceptable norms. Conviction in justice of the surrounding world and regularity of events, occurring to them and around them, is at the average level for them.

Orthodox believers think that their past period of life was productive and meaningful; the life process at present is perceived by them as interesting, emotionally enriched. Awareness of purposes of the future attaches to their life the sense of meaning, directionality and time perspective.

Gender specifics of individual religiousness of orthodox believers with consistent internal religiousness revealed itself in assessment of importance of observance of external evidences of religiousness (more in men), in treatment of religion as a philosophic concept (more in women) and in perception of benevolence of the surrounding world (higher in women). On the basis of gender, the indicators of life meaning orientations among orthodox believers do not differ significantly.

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