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# THE NOTIONS ABOUT WORK IN YOUNG PEOPLE WITH DIFFERENT TYPES OF INDIVIDUALITY

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### *Abstract*

HRs who are responsible for conducting employee testing/recruitment programs doesn't use adequate psychological tests consequently these results do not allow to reveal the implicit idea of young people about work. The question arises whether or not young people with different types of individuality differ in their views on work? This study focuses on the relations between the features of the organization of the concept Work as a correlate of the individual picture of the world in young people with different types of individuality and the description of their behavioural manifestations. 1110 volunteers aged 19–35 (73% female), took part in the present study. We used a set of methods for assessing (a) different types of individuality: Temperament, Fundamental Personality Dimensions (PEN), Character, Motivation, Cognitive Styles, Hardiness; and (b) the organization of the concept Work (directed associative experiment). Mathematical data processing was carried out by using the IBM SPSS Statistics 22. “Spiritual Man” and “Man of Action” find their work difficult as they are distinguished by high level of hardiness, meaningfulness of life, spiritual abilities. “Man of Mood” considers their work as responsible. Subjective significance of professional activity, family values, material well-being are important for them. “Ordinary man”, being of low level of meaningfulness of life see their work hard. The data obtained revealed significant differences in the notions about Work in people with different types of individuality. We believe that how the features of the individual mental resources of young people determine their perceptions of work.

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**Keywords:** Individuality types, conceptual structures, work, youth.



## 1. Introduction

The crucial role in the work is not always played by the material, but always by the master.

Maksim Gorky

Effective employee behaviour depends not only on professional skills and specific competencies to a particular job, but on types of individuality that are highly important for the attitudes to various aspects of work.

Work is an essential part of a human being, in which an individual picture of the world is formed. An individual picture of the human world is a mental image of reality that arises in the process of human life, a mental matrix of reality, through the prism of which and through which a person is guided in the world, society and himself. An individual picture of the world includes both conceptual knowledge of reality, which is the result of direct empirical reflection of reality through the senses, as well as a set of mental stereotypes adopted in culture and determining understanding, interpretation of various phenomena of reality.

A brief literature review shows that the word "concept" has many meanings and can be understood differently depending on the context. Thus, according to F. Aquinas, the concept has an inner comprehension of things in the mind, expressed through the sign, through the unity of the ideal and the material and phenomenal.

The concept is the basis of conceptual thinking (Vecker, 1976; Kholodnaya, 2012; Volkova, 2013), a unit of the mental resources that reflect the conceptual experience (Kholodnaya & Volkova, 2016), the operational meaningful unit of memory, mental lexicon, conceptual system and brain language, the whole picture of the world reflected in the human psyche (Kubryakova, Demyankov, Pankrats, & Luzina, 1996). The concept is reflected as the collective experience of the people (objective ethnic mentality; significant signs) and individual experience of its individual representative (the subjective mentality; individually significant signs).

Concepts (conceptual structures) are not only thoughts of, but they are experienced by humans. They are the cause of emotions, sympathies and antipathies, and sometimes of collisions. There are two types of the concepts: external concepts and internal concepts. The external concepts are concentrated expression of historically acquired knowledge about an object or a phenomenon and the external concepts are the concepts that for a person knowledge which is to be acquired. Studies by Kholodnaya (2013) revealed such characteristics of the concept organization as the hierarchy, integrativity, extensiveness, selectivity, intensity.

As the main research methods, as a rule, are used sociological surveys, questionnaires and psychological testing, which do not allow revealing an implicit idea of young people about work and are not free from social desirability. The solution to this problem can be solved at the intersection of psychological and psycholinguistic (in particular, associative experiment) research.

The fact that the association to a particular concept in the memory of respondents often "emerge" spontaneously and reveal unconscious elements of values and meanings. As shown in studies of N. In. Ufimtseva associative array is a reflection of verbal memory of a person, his motives and evaluations and,

consequently, its cultural stereotypes (Ufimtseva, 1996), a fragment of his/ her image of the world, which included the man himself, his/her actions and conditions (Leontiev, 1977).

Volkova (2013) defines the concept as a model of mental reflection, the highest level of organization of mental structures that defines the creative productivity. Her research has shown that the emergence of new ideas is associated with the formation of a detailed level of concepts. Highly differentiated and integrated conceptual structures, corresponding to the object of professional activity, are essential basis for the manifestation of creativity in a particular field of professional activity. These structures are a systemic factor that integrates the properties of the creative person.

In the studies of Kholodnaya and Volkova (2016), it was found that the level of organization of concepts determines the features of conceptualization of what is happening, the level of intelligence and creativity, competence and success of professional activities.

In an empirical research devoted to the analysis of cross-cultural differences in the organization of "stress" concept and coping strategies in difficult life situations in young people from Russia, China and Turkey, it was found that the higher the level of organization of the concept, the more often people resort to productive behavioural strategy (Kuvaeva, 2017).

## **2. Problem Statement**

The study of concept "work", due to the rapidly changing geopolitical and social situation, is increasingly attracting the researchers' attention from various fields of science such as social studies, philosophy, psychology etc.

Thus, in the recent research conducted by Volkova and Ten (2017) was found that for young people with a predominantly positive appraisal of work, the type of professional employment and the quality of their work is not essential. The main thing is that the activity is familiar and well paid. Young people with a high adaptability, intelligence, motivation for the importance of professional activity, tolerance, and reflectivity are distinguished by the prevalence of negative estimates of the work.

However, despite the wide range of studies devoted to the concept 'work', especially in the field of sociology they are rather of a nature, aimed at expanding the ideas about the phenomenology of work, which makes it difficult to collect, analyse and interpret the obtained results.

The research on notions about work in young people with different types of individuality has not been the subject of any research yet.

The typology used in the presented study is the typology proposed by Volkova and Kalugin (in press) «Typology of individuality: problems and solutions» The authors identified and suggested the following 4 types of individuality:

- (1) "Ordinary man" is psychotic, emotionally unstable, with a low level of meaningfulness of life, spirituality, family and profession values, low intelligence. He does not aspire to anything (low rates of achievement motivation and choice of professional activity), but has a high need for communication (communicative activity) and heightened sensitivity to any critical remarks. He is field-dependent, intolerant and rigid. In difficult life situations, he resorted to coping "social activities", "Ignore the Problem", and "Seek Professional Help"

(2) “Spiritual Man” is distinguished by a high level of hardiness, meaningfulness of life, spiritual abilities. Facing a difficult life situation, he is focused on problem solving and productive work. “Spiritual Man” is an introvert, distinguished by high intelligence, and emotional stability. He is kind-hearted. He relies on his inner experience and easily withstands the influence of other people (field independence). He is able to “grasp” the essence of the problem or phenomenon (abstract conceptualization). Such a person is open to new experience (tolerance) and easily switches from one cognitive function to another (flexibility of cognitive control).

(3) “Man of Mood” is an introverted, emotionally unstable, and anxious, with mood swings for no apparent reason, focused on the dark and sad sides of his own life. He is characterized by low activity, hardiness, spirituality and meaningfulness of life. He does not strive for achievements, but the subjective significance of professional activity, family values, material well-being and spiritual satisfaction are important for him. He is field-dependent and resorts to coping “Self-blame” and “Keep to Self”.

(4) “Man of Action” is extraverted, sociable, initiative, possessing an even mood and able to get along well with other people. He has a high achievement motivation and availability of professional activities motivation, a high level of meaningfulness of life, spiritual capacity and hardiness. He has a wide repertoire of coping (excluding “Keep to Self”). He is tolerant, has a high sensitivity to detail.

The general vision towards work might be of particular importance for HRs who are responsible for conducting employee testing/recruitment programs.

### **3. Research Questions**

The question arises whether or not people with different types of individuality differ in the ideas about the work? Why?

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

This study focuses on the relations between the features of the organization of the concept Work as a correlate of the individual picture of the world in young people with different types of individuality and the description of their behavioural manifestations.

Arising from the research question, the study was conducted to test the following hypotheses:

H1. We anticipate that there are differences in young people’s concept of ‘work’ work depending on the types of individuality.

H2. We presume relationships between the types of individuality and modalities of concept ‘work’ in young people.

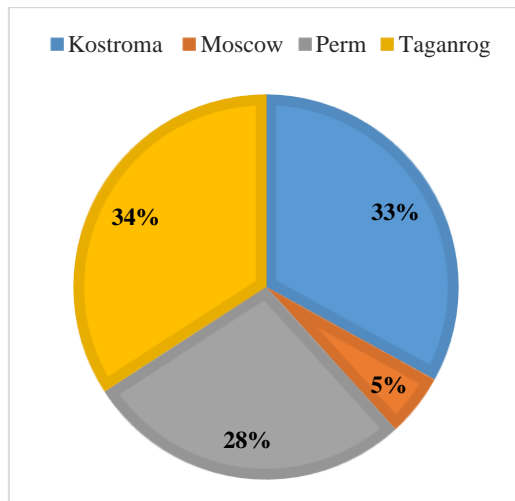
### **5. Research Methods**

Empirical data was collected in accordance with generally accepted ethical standards. One thousand one hundred people volunteers aged  $23,74 \pm 5,39$  (among them were 73% female respondents) took part in our research. Testing was anonymous. The average test time was 120 minutes.

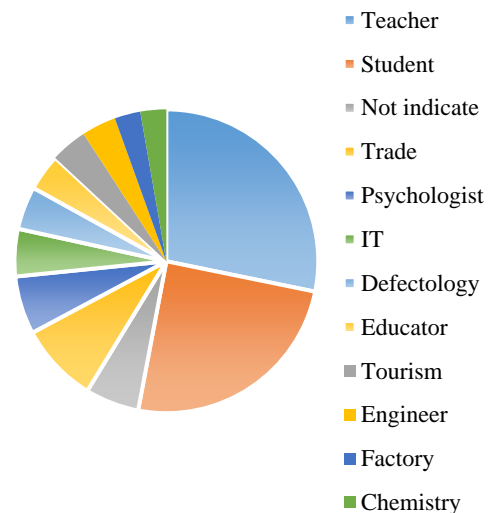
## 5.1. Participants

The study was conducted in 2018. Participants of the research were Russians from 5 different cities of Russia (Kostroma, Moscow, Perm, and Taganrog) and different specialties took part in the study.

Detailed data on respondents can be found in Figure 1 and Figure 2.



**Figure 01.** Geographical profile of the respondents



**Figure 02.** Occupation profile of the respondents

## 5.2. Measure

A complex design was used in our study including a set of methods for assessing 1) the multi-level properties of individuality: Temperament, Fundamental Personality Dimensions (PEN), Character, Motivation, Cognitive Styles; 2) methods of assessment of concept “work”: “Directed Associative” technique and “Visual Portrait of a Notion” technique.

### *Methods of assessment of concept Work*

- To evaluate the field structure of the concept Work, students were asked to write as many adjectives as possible that correspond to the word Work. The time given was 2 minutes. When processing the data only the first reaction to the stimulus word was considered. The field structure of the concept included the core of the concept, near periphery and far periphery.
- To evaluate the modalities of the concept adjectives were ranked by three modalities: sensory (dirty, clean, wet, etc.), emotionally-evaluative (interesting, boring, horrifying, hateful, etc.), and spatio-temporal (long, short, quick, daily, etc.).
- To estimate visual modality of the concept Work, students were asked to draw as many “pictures” as possible that correspond to the word Work. The time given was 2 minutes.

These methods enabled to explicate four modalities of concepts such as sensory, emotionally-evaluative, spatio-temporal and visual modalities.

#### *Methods for assessing types of individuality*

- To estimate *temperament properties* (Ergonicity, Tempo, Plasticity, Emotionality, and Activity in Motor, Intellectual or Social spheres; General Activity and Adaptability) the shortened version of the Structure Temperament Questionnaire (STQ-S) was used (Rusalov & Trofimova, 2007).
- To evaluate the fundamental personality dimensions (Psychoticism/Soft-heartedness, Extraversion/Introversion, Neuroticism/Emotional stability) the Russian modified, validated, and shortened version of Eysenck PEN-questionnaire was used (Slobodskaya, Knyazev, & Safronova, 2006).
- To assess character traits (Hyperthymicity, Stuckness, Emotivity, Pedanticity, Anxiety, Cyclothymicity, Demonstrativeness, Excitability, Dystimicity, and Exaltitveness) the shortened version of the questionnaire was used (Volkova, Rusalov, & Nilopets, 2018).
- To estimate cognitive styles (Field Dependence/Field Independence, Narrow/Wide Range of Equivalence, Flexibility/Rigidity of Cognitive Control, Impulsivity/Reflectivity, Concrete/Abstract Conceptualization, Tolerance/Intolerance of Unrealistic Experience) the shortened version of Cognitive Personality Styles Questionnaire (CPS-Q-S) was used (Volkova & Rusalov, 2016).
- To assess motivation (Achievement Motivation, Accessibility Motivation, and Value Motivation) Motivation Questionnaire was used (Volkova, Rusalov, & Nilopets, 2018).

### **5.3. Analysis**

Statistical data processing was carried out based on the IBM SPSS software package. Statistics 22.0. It included descriptive analysis (mean, standard deviation), one-dimensional analysis of variance and Relationships (Hierarchical Cluster Analysis Ward's Method) and Kruskal-Wallis H test.

## **6. Findings**

To reveal the relations among the organization of the concept Work and types of individuality we used the typology presented in the study proposed by Volkova and Kalugin (in press) «Typology of individuality: problems and solutions». The authors identified and suggested the following 4 types of individuality: “Ordinary Man”, “Spiritual Man”, “Man of Mood” and “Man of Action”.

### **6.1. Notions about work in respondents with different types of individuality**

The results of the comparative analysis of notions about work in respondents with different types of individuality are presented in Table 1.

**Table 01.** The core and the periphery of the concept Work in different groups of the respondents

Association frequency	Types of individuality			
	“Ordinary Man”	“Spiritual Man”	“Man of Mood”	“Man of Action”
	N=119	N=260	N=326	N=356
<b>Core</b>	Interesting (15,1%)	Interesting (20,4%)	Interesting (17,2%)	Interesting (18,0%)

<b>Near periphery</b>	Difficult (7,6%) Busy (6,7%) Responsible (5,9%) Hard (5,0%) Daily (4,2%)	Difficult (8,8%) Favourite (8,1%) Responsible (6,5%) Hard (5,8%)	Responsible (8,3%) Difficult (7,7%) Severe (6,7%) Hard (6,4%) Favourite (5,5%)	Responsible (7,3%) Difficult (7,3%) Severe (5,6%) Favourite (5,1%) Hard (4,8%)
<b>Far periphery</b>	Favourite (3,4%) Good (3,4%) Intellectual (2,5%) Important (1,7%) Well-paid (1,7%) Best (1,7%) Dangerous (1,7%) Wonderful (1,7%) Labour-consuming (1,7%) Severe (1,7%) Enthralling (1,7%)	Severe (3,8%) Good (2,3%) Important (1,5%) Labour-consuming (1,5%) Enthralling (1,5%) Well-paid (1,2%) Useful (1,2%) Boring (1,2%) Hardworking (1,2%)	Hardworking (3,4%) Enthralling (2,5%) Good (2,5%) Intellectual (2,1%) Busy (1,5%) Well-paid (1,2%) Long (1,2%) Creative (1,2%) Boring (1,2%) Permanent (1,2%)	Good (3,9%) Well-paid (2,5%) Labour-consuming (2,2%) Enthralling (2,0%) Hardworking (1,7%) Busy (1,4%) Financial (1,1%) Creative (1,1%) Boring (1,1%) Intellectual (1,1%)

Frequency analysis of associations (first reactions) showed predominance of positive emotional characteristics in structure of notions about work. However, a considerable number of near periphery features indicated a struggle to perform the work (e.g. *Difficult, Hard, Severe*). The data coincides with the results obtained by Volkova and Ten (2017) in which the study was also focus on concept work but had a different design of the research.

As it can be seen from the Table 01, for both groups of the respondents (“Ordinary Man” and “Spiritual Man”) work is seen as rather difficult, however “Spiritual al Man” enjoys what he/she is doing (e.g. Favourite), while “Ordinary Man” keeps doing he/her job without expressing any feelings (e.g. Busy). “Man of Mood” and “Man of Action” are very similar in their responsible attitude to their work (e.g. Responsible).

## 6.2. Interrelation between types of individuality and his/her representation about work

The modality analysis of associations revealed 4 different types of modalities such as sensory modality, emotionally-evaluative modality, spatio-temporal modality and visual modality (Table 02.). It should be noted that only two indicators of modalities such as sensory modality and emotionally-evaluative modality obtained acceptable significance of differences in four types of respondents that varies from 0.007 to 0.043.

**Table 02.** Modalities of the concept Work in groups of the respondents with different types of individuality.

Association frequency	Types of individuality				Kruskal-Wallis (H test)	p
	“Ordinary Man”	“Spiritual Man”	“Man of Mood”	“Man of Action”		
	N=119	N=260	N=326	N=356		
<b>Sensory modality</b>	0,18±0,22	0,22±0,18	0,23±0,18	0,22±0,19	12,229	0,007
<b>Emotionally-evaluative modality</b>	0,72±0,26	0,67±0,21	0,67±0,22	0,67±0,22	8,151	0,043
<b>Spatio-temporal modality</b>	0,09±0,16	0,10±0,13	0,09±0,12	0,10±0,13	6,267	0,099
<b>Visual modality</b>	0,38±0,54	0,50±0,68	0,55±0,70	0,51±0,69	4,568	0,206

As it can be seen from the Table 02, the “Ordinary Man” type is characterized by a predominance of emotionally-evaluative modality of the concept of Work, while “Man of Action”- spatio-temporal modality of the concept of Work, “Man of Mood”- visual modality.

“Ordinary Man” type, according to the typology proposed by Volkova and Kalugin (in press) «Typology of individuality: problems and solutions», is emotionally unstable psychotic, with a low level of meaningfulness of life, spirituality, profession and family values that does not aspire to anything. As it can be seen the lower the level of sensory modality of the concept Work the lower achievement motivation and choice of professional activity. Apparently, it is hardly possible to change their view towards work, however if the work is well-paid they are going to perform it despite any circumstances (e.g. ‘Work’ is Difficult, Hard, Daily, Well-paid). The “Ordinary man” type positively evaluates work, however, the type of professional employment and the quality of the work performed by him/her are not of primary importance significant, as long as the activity he/ she performs is familiar and well- paid.

“Man of Mood” and “Man of Action” are very similar in their responsible attitude to their work (e.g. Difficult, Severe, Hard, Favourite, Responsible). It should be emphasized that they have approximately equal indicators of sensory and emotionally-evaluative modalities. Subsequently the question arises whether or not these people with different types of individuality differ in the ideas about the work? To investigate whether or not these people differ in the ideas about the work we should refer to the results of the study of the multi-level properties of individuality.

“Man of Mood” type is characterized by low level of activity and hardiness while “Man of Action”, on the contrary, has a high level of activity and hardiness. Obviously, low level of activity and hardiness makes a person of “Man of Mood” type to estimate profoundly all aspects of work not only about how far is it or is it a good work. Money is not the issue for them. High level of activity and hardiness, apparently, helps “Man of Action” to overcome all the inconveniences connected with the work.

## 7. Conclusion

Analysis of all gathered associations based on the elements of the core of the concept allowed identifying positive emotional manifestations as the main categories of ideas about Work.

Of all the modalities, only sensory and emotionally-evaluative modalities of the concept ‘work’ differ within all types of individualities, which may indicate the significant role of sensory-emotional experience for the construction of the semantic context as a special mechanism that provides the coagulation and deployment of mental spaces, causing the productivity of intellectual activity.

It is possible to assume about the special role of types of individuality on the view of the work. Thus, the concept ‘work’ varies depending on the specific type of the individuality of the respondent.

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