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**WAYS OF OVERCOMING FRUSTRATION BY ADOLESCENTS IN**  
**A SITUATION OF UNCERTAINTY**

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**Abstract**

The article attempts to generalize the views and approaches to the study of uncertainty, characterizes the structural components of uncertainty and describes in detail how each of the considered components of uncertainty is represented in the activities of practical educational psychologists. The difficulties of young specialists adaptation to the profession of a psychologist are explained by the authors by the fact that all the activities of practical educational psychologists are associated with the need to interact with people and provide them with psychological assistance, as well as a large range of psychological services. This creates an increased emotional burden due to the following factors: the need to act in constant uncertainty due to the lack of professional experience and inconsistency of information provided by clients; the need to work with clients who have a serious mismatch between the existing picture of the world and the desired changes; impossibility to control the fulfillment of recommendations by clients; etc. The article also considers the uncertainty of a situation as an assumed condition for a state of frustration in adolescents. The revealed interdependence between the indicators points to the fact that overcoming a situation of uncertainty by adolescents leads to overcoming the state of frustration. This is indicated by the revealed inverse dependence between the indicators "level of tolerance to uncertainty", "frustration", and "social frustration". Moreover, the lower the level of tolerance to uncertainty in adolescents, the stronger the interdependence between the indicators "frustration" and "a way out of a difficult life situation".

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## 1. Introduction

Specialists of various professional spheres, namely, teachers, psychologists, sociologists, philosophers are concerned with the problem of emotional states caused by a situation of uncertainty.

Specialists in the field of social psychology, whose research interests include the issues primarily related to the study of personality, turned to the study of the problem of uncertainty when significant changes penetrated into public life, transforming the system of social interaction between people into a series of uncertain situations. The need to constantly make social choices turned into almost the main problem. Variability of social reality transforms the entire spectrum of socio-psychological phenomena. This explains the interest of researchers in the social aspect of adolescence, as well as in the ways of overcoming difficulties in a situation of uncertainty used by adolescents. Adolescents' perception of social changes has a significant impact on the process of constructing their image of the social world (Andreeva, 2009). However, it is obvious that due to the instability of many individual psychological patterns in this age, adolescents are very susceptible to experiencing frustration.

## 2. Problem Statement

Adolescence is one of the most difficult periods of personality formation. Adolescents naturally tend to demonstrate adulthood, and, most importantly, demand recognition of their adulthood. Besides, during this period, their self-awareness and self-esteem are actively developing, interest in their personality, capabilities and abilities increases.

Entering adolescence, a person discovers that satisfaction of many needs that are significant at this age is often impossible due to a number of objective or subjective factors. The main paradox of this age is that adolescents are still subject to numerous restrictions that are introduced in primary school. At the same time, new expectations and responsibilities are also imposed on them. They require independent decision-making and responsible actions. Taking into account the dynamic nature of mind and frequently changing demands for satisfaction of needs caused by various aspects of growing up, we can say with confidence that a situation of dissatisfaction simply haunts adolescents. This makes it common to experience a state of frustration in adolescence.

Giving credence to the fact that uncertainty fills the essence of social change, we can define its structure as the interdependence of its three components.

Firstly, the multiplicity of manifestations, questions, and possibilities. Subjectively, the situation of uncertainty offers a person a large number of not only questions, but opportunities as well and allows making an independent choice, finding many solutions, and interpreting them in different ways.

Secondly, unpredictability, i.e. the subjective inability for a person to predict the consequences of certain actions and the overall development of a situation. A person can never know for sure how events will develop, he can not accurately identify cause-and-effect patterns.

Thirdly, the situation of uncertainty is almost impossible to control, i.e. it is impossible to calculate in advance all the unexpected consequences.

The situation of uncertainty is most often understood as a difficulty in trying to categorize and self-categorize, which can cause a person to feel frustrated. Emotionally and personally unstable

adolescents are more likely to experience this state than others. However, until now, there have been no academic studies devoted to investigation of the prevailing ways of overcoming these emotions in a state of uncertainty, although many scientists have studied both the situation of uncertainty and the state of frustration separately.

### **3. Research Questions**

Many studies are devoted to various aspects of uncertainty. For example, Belinskaya's (2001) research is devoted to the peculiarities of constructing identification structures in a situation of uncertainty. Gusev (2011) studied uncertainty as a component of personal potential. Kornilova (2003) introduced the concept of the uncertainty principle into the scientific terminology. Zavershneva (2001) investigated methodological borrowings related to the uncertainty principle. Kapustin's (1993) research is devoted to the types of uncertainty in decision-making in the economic sphere.

The state of frustration has also been thoroughly studied. The psychology of frustration as an emotional phenomenon is presented in the works of Vilyunas (1976), Vasilyuk (2002) and Levitov (1967); Belov and Malinina (2011) considered frustration as a means of predicting deviant behavior in adolescents; Brel (2007) established the interdependence between the types and directions of reaction to frustration and the types of aggressive behavior in adolescents; Lvova et al. (2016) investigated the peculiarities of overcoming the state of frustration in adolescents; verbal signs of frustration are presented in the study by Sobchik (2002).

However, after analyzing a large number of scientific sources, we nevertheless have not revealed any studies on the peculiarities of overcoming frustration by adolescents in a situation of uncertainty.

In this regard, our experimental research is expected to answer the following questions:

- What categories of adolescents can be distinguished depending on their attitude to uncertainty?
- What are the prevailing ways to overcome frustration by adolescents in a situation of uncertainty?

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

The research purpose consists in establishing experimentally the possible dependence of the way to overcome frustration in adolescents on the level of their tolerance to uncertainty.

### **5. Research Methods**

The following methods have been used to achieve the goal: theoretical (review and analysis of psychological literature), empirical (testing using psycho-diagnostic techniques), qualitative and quantitative analysis of the obtained data.

### **6. Findings**

Health of mind in adolescents can be judged by their emotional intelligence. The essence of this phenomenon lies in the ability of a person to manage their own emotions, use mental resources in the

process of self-regulation. Stress can trigger a chain of consistently connected thoughts, characterized by negative dynamics. It occurs at the moment when a person is aware of unforeseen changes in the surrounding environment, to which he has not yet had time to adapt. However, stress cannot be considered as a uniquely destructive phenomenon. As mentioned above, perception of a difficult situation depends on a personality type – people can feel stressed, excited or even challenged. Conflicts and a state of frustration are the most common stress triggers.

The concept of frustration has no clear definition in psychology. In general terms, frustration is a psycho-physiological state characterized by high emotional tension, nervousness, unexplained anxiety, hostility to surrounding environment. A person may become irritable and aggressive. A person in a state of frustration experiences intense suffering due to discovered discrepancies between expectations and actual results.

Entering adolescence, a person discovers that satisfaction of many needs that are significant at this age is often impossible due to a number of objective or subjective factors. Taking into account the dynamic nature of the mind and the frequently changing demands for satisfaction of needs caused by various aspects of growing up, we can say with confidence that a situation of uncertainty simply haunts adolescents. This makes it common to experience a state of frustration in adolescence (Shaidova, 2020).

A situation of uncertainty deprives adolescents of the opportunity to use habitual behavior patterns, making them choose a way to overcome it. The freedom to make a choice from a variety of alternatives is interrelated with the ability to predict the future. However, in most adolescents this ability is poorly developed, which creates serious difficulties in understanding and evaluating the consequences of their actions, and, thus, makes it difficult to make a conscious choice. Having several options for overcoming a situation of uncertainty, but not being able to predict consequences, adolescents cannot make right decision.

Consequently, they may suffer from frustration due to inability to make a choice from a variety of alternatives aimed at overcoming a situation of uncertainty. Thus, adolescents will most likely choose ways out of this situation unconsciously, at random, and, therefore, not always correctly. This can further complicate a difficult life situation.

Therefore, at the initial stages of our research, we have set the following objective: to establish experimentally the possible dependence of the way to overcome frustration in adolescents in a situation of uncertainty on the system of their life values. The study involved 50 adolescents aged 12–13 years. All the respondents took part in the study voluntarily and with the consent of their parents.

The analysis of the obtained data shows that in respondents with a high level of tolerance to uncertainty, the interdependence between the indicator "way out of a difficult life situation" and the indicators "frustration" ( $p < 0,05$ ) and "social frustration" ( $p < 0,05$ ) is poorly expressed, since it has a low degree of significance. These adolescents are more likely to use a transformative way out of difficult life situations than an adaptive one. In the course of the interview, many of them admitted that a lack of information or unclear prospects encourage them to take more active actions, in some cases even to take risks. They try to calculate consequences of their actions, and experiences in case of an unsuccessful decision or action do not lead to strong emotional tension. Respondents with a high level of tolerance to uncertainty do not worry very much in such situations and are not subject to emotional stress in the event

of negative consequences. They more often go to rash actions and take risks. In case of failure, they try to apply other behavior patterns and find a different solution.

Respondents with an average level of tolerance to uncertainty demonstrate strong interdependence between the indicators "a way out of a difficult life situation" and "frustration" ( $p < 0,01$ ). A weak interdependence has been found between the indicators "a way out of a difficult life situation" and "social frustration" ( $p < 0,05$ ). These adolescents in a situation of uncertainty, either adapt to it, lowering the level of their claims, or accept it, or even prefer not to think about it at all. Adolescents with an average level of tolerance to uncertainty, but with a high level of social frustration, in a situation of uncertainty are most concerned about possible loss of their status in a social group they belong to.

In the group of respondents with a low level of tolerance to uncertainty, the strongly pronounced interdependence between the indicator "a way out of a difficult life situation" and the indicators "frustration" ( $p < 0,01$ ) and "social frustration" ( $p < 0,01$ ) has been revealed. In a situation of uncertainty, respondents of this category fall into a state of frustration, do not tend to search for missing information, do not solve the problem, but react emotionally, thus easing emotional tension. This way of dealing with intensely experienced emotions allows them to accept a situation without solving the problem or trying to find a way out.

Thus, we can observe the strongly pronounced interdependence between the indicator "a way out of a difficult life situation" and the indicators "frustration" and "social frustration" in adolescents with a low level of tolerance to uncertainty. In adolescents with an average level of tolerance to uncertainty, the strongly pronounced interdependence between the indicator "a way out of a difficult life situation" and the indicator "frustration", and the weakly pronounced interdependence with the indicator "social frustration" has been revealed. In adolescents with a low level of tolerance to uncertainty, the interdependence between the indicators "frustration" and "social frustration" is strongly pronounced.

The revealed interdependence between the indicators points to the fact that overcoming a situation of uncertainty by adolescents leads to overcoming the state of frustration. This is indicated by the revealed inverse dependence between the indicators "level of tolerance to uncertainty", "frustration", "social frustration" and "a way out of a difficult life situation". Moreover, the lower the level of tolerance to uncertainty in adolescents, the stronger the interdependence between the indicators "frustration" and "a way out of a difficult life situation".

## **7. Conclusion**

A situation of uncertainty deprives adolescents of the opportunity to use habitual behavior patterns, making them choose a way to overcome it.

Having several options for overcoming a situation of uncertainty, but not being able to predict consequences, adolescents cannot make right decision. Consequently, they may suffer from frustration due to inability to make a choice from a variety of alternatives aimed at overcoming a situation of uncertainty.

In a situation of uncertainty, adolescents can use either an adaptive or a transformative way out of this situation.

Thus, we can observe the strongly pronounced interdependence between the indicator "a way out of a difficult life situation" and the indicators "frustration" and "social frustration" in adolescents with a low level of tolerance to uncertainty.

In adolescents with an average level of tolerance to uncertainty, the strongly pronounced interdependence between the indicator "a way out of a difficult life situation" and the indicator "frustration", and the weakly pronounced interdependence with the indicator "social frustration" has been revealed.

In adolescents with a low level of tolerance to uncertainty, the interdependence between the indicators "frustration" and "social frustration" is strongly pronounced.

Overcoming the situation of uncertainty, adolescents thus overcome the state of frustration. This is indicated by the revealed inverse dependence between the indicators "level of tolerance to uncertainty", "frustration", "social frustration" and "a way out of a difficult life situation". Moreover, the lower the level of tolerance to uncertainty in adolescents, the stronger the interdependence between the indicators "frustration" and "a way out of a difficult life situation".

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