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**THE MEANINGFUL SPHERE OF PERSONALITY AND THE
LEVEL OF ANXIETY**

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Abstract

The article examines the development of ideas and phenomenology of the meaning of life in psychology, the role of the level of subjective awareness in the development of the general value structure of the individual. Anxiety and anxious states are analyzed in terms of the main psychological directions. The deficit of awareness is investigated from the standpoint of the main criterion of the development of the system of life meanings of the individual which regulates the level of situational and personal anxiety, the role of development of life-meaning orientations in crisis situations when making decisions. The basic psychological concepts of anxiety and anxiety states in modern psychology are analyzed. The author compares indicators of life-meaning orientations (LMO) with the level of situational and personal anxiety and concludes about the relationship between the personal dispositions. The meaningful sphere of personality creates the motivational structure of personality, affects the quality of life, is the foundation for the orientation of personality and the image of ego. The aim is to study the influence of subjective meaningfulness, the presence of life-meaning orientations on the level of personal and situational anxiety of cadets. Anxiety (situational and personal) depends on the purpose of life of cadets. The sample of the study is 98 university students aged 18 to 24. The inversely proportional dependence of indicators of the level of situational and personal anxiety and the system of meaningful life guidelines was identified.

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Keywords: Meaningful orientations, anxiety, situational and personal anxiety



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1. Introduction

During his life, the person acquires his own experience, through which a system of values is formed; he builds his own life strategy and is involved in various social relations. This individual history lives against the background of the general social picture of the world with changes characteristic of the era. Each new decade is different from the previous one in socio-political and material-economic conditions due to the transformation of universal and ideological values. Society creates new requirements and value orientations, which are beyond the power of a person to realize and include in the system of his own beliefs in a short period. The person with his own traits is in a continuous interaction with the surrounding natural and social world, and events that occur outside affect the person. The modern rhythm, instability increase risks which cause psychophysiological disorders, exacerbating the internal contradictions. One of the most common violations is an increased level of personal and professional anxiety which affects the ability to maintain one's own health, make decisions and act. Decision making presupposes a choice, making which a person relies on his own value orientations, beliefs, meanings important for him from a subjective position. The presence of a stable system of values, awareness of the meaning of existence allows you to maintain an adequate level of anxiety maintaining the basic state of security.

2. Problem Statement

The problem of life meaningfulness and regulation of the level of anxiety which determine the general mental state are relevant in the educational activities, since it is the understanding of mental states, the ability to diagnose them, build a structure and determine methods of correctional works that improve the quality of the educational system and communication skills of students.

3. Research Questions

The meaning of life and subjective meaningfulness. The problem of meaning of life is relevant throughout the entire existence of a person, both in individual and collective contexts. It is the stable system of values that sets the focus for the future: it forms the motivational structure of the personality, affects the quality of life, being the foundation for the orientation of the individual and the image of ego (a set of rational and emotional ideas about oneself). The fundamental nature of the meaning of life is due to the phenomenology of the concept, which includes the words "life" and "meaning". The word "life" means "to revive, reborn, recover", to find tools for organizing life (Greek *Bitoc*, *Bioti*) (Fasmer, 1986). In terms of syncretism, it is a philosophical and cultural category that characterizes a special combination of dissimilar factors into integrity, when many elements do not lose their originality in unity, and unity does not allow the elements to go into a state of chaos. The Philosophical Encyclopedic Dictionary contains the concept of thinking contemplating the world – person's experience of life which is accompanied by questions about the meaning of life, goals and values (Ilyichev et al., 1983). In his teachings, Confucius spoke of the meaning of life as the primary knowledge that should serve practical interests, where the main thing is to understand the hidden nature of man, the mechanism that drives his aspirations and actions. The person needs to study the world around him and be able to adapt, relying on knowledge and his own experience.

In the 20th century, the philosophical question of the meaning of life was considered to be the psychological problem of finding a meaning. The problem was studied by A. Maslow, K. Rogers, V. Frankl, E. Fromm, S. Folkman, etc. In Russian psychology, the problem was studied by B.G. Ananiev, V.G. Aseev, L.I. Antsiferova, A.A. Bodalev, L.I. Bozovic, D.A. Leontiev, T.V. Stolin, S.L. Rubinstein, V.E. Chudnovsky, etc. The main ideas on the meaning of life were presented in the psychodynamic theories by Freud, Adler and Jung. Freud explored the meaningfulness of involuntary actions and fantasies, the connection between meaningfulness and relevance and personal history. Adler linked behavioural meanings, general orientation with the meaning of life, developed a psychological theory of the meaning of life in the aspect of mutual influence and interdependence with mental processes and social conditioning. Thus, meaning is an integral formation and a structural element. Humanistic psychologists (E. Fromm, A. Maslow, K. Rogers, V. Frankl and others) see the meaning and purpose of human life in the self-actualization, realization of abilities in external activities. Exploring the duality of human nature and existential dichotomies, Fromm (1993) points to the only possibility of solving problems through awareness and acceptance of responsibility for his own life: "... The person must take responsibility for himself and admit that only through his own efforts he can make his life meaningful" (p. 101). E. Fromm examined ethical and psychological problems of human self-realization, believing that psychology cannot be separated from philosophical ethics and sociology, since the motives of human behaviour are determined by value judgments, and mental health and well-being are based on their validity. The author believes that the meaning of life, the nature of one's own dichotomous existence becomes accessible to understanding through love, reason and creative life activity. According to Fromm (1993), this person is guided by his own mind, uses his powers, is able to be free and not depend on anyone. Abraham Maslow defined the meaning of life through the prism of the process of satisfying needs, linking the comprehension of meaning with self-actualization and relying on what really exists: the resources of personality and the surrounding world. Self-actualization is based on the value of what the person does. Maslow identified eight ways of self-actualization:

- 1) full emotional inclusion and experience;
- 2) use of all opportunities in the continuous process of choice ensuring personal growth;
- 3) manifestation of one's own ego, without using external labels and stereotypes;
- 4) willingness to take responsibility;
- 5) non-conformism;
- 6) reliance on one's own abilities and their implementation according to the "want" principle;
- 7) the ability for higher experiences as moments of self-actualization;
- 8) deritualization.

Maslow (1997), a supporter of the holistic way of thinking, which implies the coordinated existence of the sensual and rational, contemplation and reforming, the material, healthy animal nature of man and the spiritual, assigns a special role to the process of accepting the objectively existing. The cognitive process becomes the process of defining values. Facts become assessments. The real world turns into a world appreciated and desired ... In other words, the real merges with the value (Maslow, 1997). The approach in psychology that suggests including what is due, relying on objectively existing ones, allows you to redistribute your own expectations, increase the level of attainability and motivation (Maslow emphasizes

the motivational mechanism of self-actualization). Maslow considers the meaning of life as a striving for values, higher ideals through self-actualization of the individual in the context of social relations.

The founder of logotherapy Frankl (1990) in his book "Man in Search of Meaning" defines the meaning of life as the main life task of a person, where the driving force is the desire to find and fulfill his meaning in life; the desire is an innate motivational tendency, the main engine of behaviour and development. "The search for meaning is the main force of life rather than "secondary rationalization" of instinctive drives. The meaning is unique and specific because it must and can be realized only by the person himself when he understands what could satisfy his own need for meaning" (p. 66). Frankl (1990) emphasizes the role of person's convictions and beliefs in the existence of the meaning of life; the lack of awareness gives rise to an existential vacuum which causes neuroses, alcoholism, crimes, suicides. The author offers the following formula for the "existential vacuum": Not knowing what he needs or what he should, the person seems to have lost a clear idea of what he wants" (p. 67). Frankl (1990) considers the meaning of life specifying the personality, place, event, time, believing that the meaning is dictated by life itself, in which there are no situations devoid of semantic loading. The meaning of life is an integral and objective awareness of possibilities which the person can discover realizing what he gives to the world, striving to experience values. Frankl (1990) considered the meaning of life in the key of human self-transcendence, and believed that human life is meaningful.

The person searches for the meaning of his own being from subjective ideas and experiences, which are unique; it is impossible to give a meaning, the person can find it only himself. The influence of the meaning of life on the human behaviour in stressful situations is described by a model that includes two semantic levels: the global one which has a more generalized, abstract nature, including stable beliefs and goals, and the situational one which is the result of interactions between the global and specific situations, suggesting a situational assessment. Researchers indicate the mutual influence of these levels: the global meaning forms an understanding of the past and the present, influencing expectations about the future; the situational one can trigger changes in some global goals, reassessment of values in the context of the dynamics of the modern world Langle (2017) suggests taking the answer to the question "Why do I live?" as a basis of human behaviour. The search for meaning allows you to determine semantic possibilities in each situation for each person, the acceptance of the fact that freedom is limited by reality. Freedom of choice requires internal guidelines: it is important to make a decision understanding reasons for the choice, responsibility for it, and determining actions rather than "in spite of" (fear of error leads to external orientations, dependence on other people). It is possible to overcome helplessness in the face of a large number of choices through understanding the meaning and opportunities that form confidence and inner strength. Otherwise, thoughts of suicide can arise. Langle (2017) offers practical tools that help to learn to live meaningfully: to solve the task by means of concrete actions; to find personal meaning in what is happening; to develop the skill of observation and attention to messages from the outside; to strive for holistic thinking; to act in accordance with the vital value, accepting the dynamics and subjectivity of the semantic component. Thus, the meaningfulness of human life is determined by the level of openness to the external world, the readiness to accept requests from the outside, and the ability to determine opportunities and personal resources (Langle, 2017). In his book "Existential psychotherapy" Yalom (2008) draws the following conclusions: formation of a positive meaning is facilitated by religious beliefs, belonging to

groups, involvement in activities, clear life guidelines (goals). The author indicates the dynamics of the meaning of life. In Russian psychological studies, scientists deal with the problem of meaning of life at the individual and social levels, considering the person from the standpoint of his life. Leontyev (2009) emphasizes the role of motive in the meaning formation, where meaning is the result of subjective reflections of purposeful subject-object relations, and the relation of motive to goal forms a personal meaning. According to Leontyev (2009), meanings develop the internal system of individual consciousness: "... personal meanings, like the sensory fabric of consciousness, do not have their own supra-individual, their non-psychological existence. If external sensuality in the consciousness connects meanings with the objective world, personal meaning connects them with his life in this world, with its motives. Personal meaning creates the partiality of human consciousness" (p. 99). Leontyev (2009) emphasizes the contextuality and intentionality of meaning, which determines the basic position of life-meaning orientations in the general system of human development, since it is the life-meaning orientations that set directions and boundaries of the process and limits to personality self-realization. Exploring the factors that make up the sense-forming structure, Leontyev (2009) identifies the first group, which includes life goals, saturation and degree of satisfaction with self-realization, and the second one which includes the worldview belief about self-control. Vygotsky (2000) introduces the concept of dynamic semantic system and assigns the leading role to the social environment. Chudnovsky (2006) explores the role of universal human morality in the formation of meaning of life determined by the level of human activity, contributing to the maximum use of own resources; meaningful orientations are determined by the personal development, where the preparatory period is especially important. The preparatory period is the time of development of the personality determined by the content and choice of a life path. The concept of personal foundation is defined as a set of personal properties that create a favourable basis for life-meaning orientations.

Anxiety. In modern reality, the time interval for understanding and accepting successive facts and events has decreased, forming a deficit of awareness, which results in a decrease in the ability to reflect; the basic process of formation of the system of meaning of life is disrupted, the level of situational and personal anxiety increases. The person makes a choice based on his previous experience, which requires a pause that weakens the connection of determination, when the current realities are refracted through the subject-object picture of the world. The person reflects and experiences his own authenticity and involvement of being. The contradictions between the experience and reality are ontological and epistemological and cause anxiety. The works by Z. Freud, E. Erickson, C. Spielberger, K. Horney, K. Isard, R. May, F. Perls, N. Mc Williams, V. Frankl, A.G. Asmolov, L.S. Vygotsky, A.R. Luria, A.N. Leontiev, D.A. Leontiev, A.V. Petrovsky deal with this issue. In recent years, the integrated approach to anxiety has been developing, there are joint studies of psychotherapists and psychiatrists

The psychiatrist and psychotherapist Annibali (2018) presented his findings in the book "Anxious Brain". In modern psychology, anxiety and anxiety states are differentiated. The "Brief Psychological Dictionary" defines anxiety as an emotional state that arises in a situation of uncertain danger and manifests itself in anticipation of an unfavourable development of events, anxiety state is a mental property, a tendency to experience anxiety, characterized by a low threshold for an anxiety reaction (Petrovsky & Yaroshevsky, 2007). The problem of anxiety is central in the life of modern society, a characteristic of time. It is considered as a mental state caused by special conditions. Z. Freud was the first to focus attention on

the problem of anxiety: The problem of anxiety is the nodal point of many important questions; solving the riddle of anxiety will shed light on the mental life of a person (Freud, 2011). Freud defined anxiety as a consequence of inadequate release of libido, as a function of the ego, emphasizing the role of anxiety in the neurosis. In existential psychology, ontological anxiety is considered as a complex phenomenon, the main criterion for determining which is uncertainty, the absence of a specific object (Perls, 2017). Anxiety accompanies the person throughout his life, being the result of the mutual influence of external (changes in the political and economic sphere) and internal factors formation, value-semantic guidelines, a consequence of the frustration of urgent needs. May (2016) in his book "The Meaning of Anxiety" examines the phenomenon from historical, philosophical, theoretical and clinical perspectives, examining the meaning of anxiety and its possible constructive use and defines it as "fears caused by the threat of some value that an individual considers essential for its existence" (p. 77). The human security system is built on the ability to perceive oneself through relationships with external objects. Anxiety does not have an object of real threat, which violates the ability to perceive oneself in relation to something, that is, to distinguish between the subjective and the objective, endangering the very existence of the Self, which disappears when there is a "fear of nothing", a threat nonsense. May (2016) focuses on the constructive function of anxiety, emphasizing the normal and pathological, and suggests working out anxiety commensurate with the danger, since repression leads to its transformation into a pathological form. Anxiety as a state is a stable personality characteristic. Spielberger distinguishes between personal (a relatively stable characteristic of the subject who perceives the world as a potential danger, including in a situation where there are no real threats from the outside) and reactive types of anxiety (a reaction to stress accompanied by mental and physical stresses, anxiety and nervousness) (as cited in Nemov, 2008).

Thus, personal anxiety is based on semantic constructs of the individual; weak awareness of the meaning of own existence directly affects the psychological state. Frankl identified the reasons for anxiety and neuroses; the root cause is the loss of meaning of existence. Anxiety is directly related to the quality of life, provoking fear in specific social situations" (as cited in Nemov, 2008). Without realizing the meaning, the person makes a choice in favour of the past, thereby interrupting the process of change, and anxiety is transformed into fear, often paralyzing the ability to act. Action requires reference points, the loss of semantic reference points causes anxiety, inability to act (stupor), helplessness. Describing the anxiety conditions that accompany various disorders (stress, ADHD, depression), Annibali (2018) uses the concept of restless brain. The restless brain works in a mode of increased activity, reducing efficiency and ability to make quality choices. The author focuses on the increased activity of the limbic system in a state of anxiety and believes that to restore the resource state "it is necessary to understand yourself, your individuality, your personality, your soul" (p. 54), to use the determination of neurobiological and psychological processes, to apply psychological techniques, to identify patterns of repeated negative choices and change them, giving personal meaning to what is happening. Awareness of the meanings of existence, formation of a system of life-meaning orientations is the result of relationships with the surrounding world and himself, the highest degree of individual development characterized by the ability to realize life goals and development prospects, it is a movement towards self-determination and self-development. The issues of meaningfulness of life and anxiety affecting the mental state are relevant in

educational activities, since it is the understanding of mental states, the ability to diagnose them, and correctional work that improve the quality of the education system and communication skills of students.

4. Purpose of the Study

The purpose is to study the influence of subjective meaningfulness, the presence of life-meaning orientations on the level of cadets' personal and situational anxiety. The study was based on the assumption that the level of cadets' life-meaning orientations affects situational and personal anxiety. The study conducted at the State Maritime University named after Admiral F.F. Ushakov involved 100 people aged 18 to 24. Two respondents exceeded the acceptable value of reliability; in the analysis we used the results of 98 respondents.

5. Research Methods

To study meaningful life orientations, the method "Test of meaningful life orientations" was used (Leontiev DA); for the study of anxiety, the Bassa-Darki questionnaire was used. The data were processed qualitatively and quantitatively. The methods of descriptive statistics, the one-way analysis of variance, the Student's t-test for independent and paired samples (IBM SPSS Statistics 21) were used to analyze the results.

6. Findings

It was revealed that LMO was low in 30 cadets, of which the level of situational anxiety was high (SA) in 18 cadets, the medium level was identified in 11 cadets; the low level was in 1 cadet; the high level of personal anxiety (PA) was observed in 22 cadets, the medium level of PA was observed in 7 cadets, the low level of PA was observed in 1 cadet; The general high LMO was in 49 cadets, of which 9 cadets have the high SA level, the medium level was in 31 cadets, the low level was in 9 cadets; the high PA level was in 5 cadets, the medium level – in 26 cadets, the low level – in 8 cadets. In general, the general medium LMO (50 %) and the medium level of situational and personal anxiety were dominant, while the indicator of high situational anxiety was 16.6 % higher than the indicator of personal anxiety: cadets with a high level of personal anxiety had a high level of situational anxiety. See in Tables 1, 2 and 3.

Table 1. Relationship of the general low LMO with the level of anxiety

No	Indicator	Anxiety level	Situational anxiety		Personal anxiety	
			%	Number of persons	%	Number of persons
1	general low LMO – 30 persons	High	60	18	73,3	22
		Medium	37	11	23,3	7
		Low	3	1	3,4	1

Table 2. Relationship of the general medium MO with the level of anxiety

No	Indicator	Anxiety level	Situational anxiety		Personal anxiety	
			%	Number of persons	%	Number of persons
1	general medium LMO – 49 persons	High	18,3	9	30,7	15
		Medium	63,4	31	53	26
		Low	18,3	9	16,3	8

Table 3. Relationship of the general high MO with the level of anxiety

No	Indicator	Anxiety level	Situational anxiety		Personal anxiety	
			%	Number of persons	%	Number of persons
1	general high LMO – 19 persons	high	10,5	2	15,8	3
		medium	52,6	10	52,6	10
		low	36,9	7	31,6	6

7. Conclusion

The research and analysis of the theoretical material made it possible to confirm the conditionality of the increased anxiety by the level of awareness of the value structure, which is the inner support and core of own ego. The lack of clear life goals, orientation to external stimuli and ignorance of own needs provoke an increase in the level of anxiety. An anxious subject experiences failures, when fear of being unsuccessful dominates over the motivation for achievement, reacts sharply to criticism, loses the ability to act productively under various restrictions. Knowledge of characteristics of the behavior of cadets with different levels of anxiety allows for using the pedagogical process as a practical tool for improving the quality of training. It is important for participants in the pedagogical process to understand that the high level of anxiety manifests itself through a hostile perception of the world and distrust in the external environment. Reacting to various situations as potentially dangerous, the body is mobilized and kept in a state of "combat readiness", being exhausted; stress and anxiety reduce the level of attention, productivity of activities; anxiety contributes to the formation of aggressive patterns of behavior, increasing the level of conflict, complicating the processes of social interaction. Thus, psychological and pedagogical work on the formation of the value system in cadets can reduce the level of anxiety and improve educational activities.

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