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THE NOTIONS ABOUT TERRORISM IN YOUNG PEOPLE WITH DIFFERENT INDIVIDUAL MENTAL RESOURCES

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Abstract

In the modern society, the problem of terrorism is becoming increasingly important. This problem has been studied from different points of view: economic, political, social, military, religious, psychological and others. The implicit representation of broad masses of the population about terrorism, especially young people, has not yet been the subject of focused research. The question arises whether young people with different mental resources differ in their views on terrorism. The paper is devoted to the revealing the relationship among the features of the organization of the concept "terrorism" as a correlate of the individual picture of the world and indications of human mental resources. A multiple design was used in our research including assessment of (a) the organization of the concept "terrorism" (directed associative experiment) and estimation of (b) individual mental resources: 1) temperament, 2) fundamental personality traits, 3) character traits, 3) cognitive styles, 4) intelligence, and 5) motivation. Participants were volunteers aged 17-35 years (449 persons). The results of a comparative analysis of individual mental resources and the organization of the concept "terrorism" among young people with different individual mental resources are discussed. It has been shown that young people with a high adaptability, intelligence, motivation for the importance of professional activity, tolerance, and reflectivity have a more detailed and complexly organized notion about terrorism. The data obtained will permit us to create a methodology and to suggest principles of targeted training for young people aimed at developing "antiterrorism immunity" (resistance) to this kind of sociogenic catastrophes caused by terrorism.

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1. Introduction

Modern terrorism is capable to develop on principles of network organization and to expand indefinitely. It penetrates any sphere and adapts to virtually any social conditions. That is why the problem of terrorism is becoming increasingly important. This problem is studied from different point of view: economic, political, social, military, religious, psychological and others. It should be noted that despite the legal force of the term Terrorism, its definition remains rather vague (Dershowitz, 2002; Marsaveski 2013; Pipes, Blumenfeld, 2014). Researchers consider the genesis of terrorism (Atran, 2003), the essential characteristics (Hoffman, 1998) and the typology of terrorism (Sosnin, Nestik, 2008; Marsden, & Schmid, 2011), the methods and forms of terrorism, the factors of its formation.

The study of Bashkirova (2000) shows, that the social basis for the formation of terrorism is the destruction of the centuries-tested life attitudes and values.

Lyubarsky (2010) notes that the activity of terrorism sharply increases at the bifurcation point, when the development of the social system becomes imbalanced and unstable. Terrorism is defined as the deviation of social system indicators from normal development. Such a fluctuation of indicators has a resonant effect and can change the vector of society development (Lyubarsky, 2010).

Psychologists study the deep foundations of terrorist behaviour, personality characteristics of convicts involved in terrorist activities, the relationship between members of a terrorist group, the motivation to join terrorist groups (Atran, 2003; Belokurov, 2008; Bongar B. et al., 2007; Hoffman, 1998; Ilyasov, 2008; Konovalov, 2007; Marin, Kasperovich, 2012; Olshansky, 2002; Shaw, 1986; Sosnin, Nestik, 2008; Zinchenko, 2007). It has been shown that a significant role in the behaviour of a terrorist is played by neurotic complexes, over-focusing on protecting one's self, insufficient personal identity, inadequate self-esteem, a propensity to project into society the reasons for their failures, loss of life perspective, the desire to assert oneself thanks to the possibility of using violence against others, intolerance of dissent, denial of universal values, a special transformation of the fear of death.

Researchers address the characteristics of perceptions of terrorism in the circles of revolutionaries and the liberal opposition **(**Rud, 2008), official circles and ordinary people (Noskov, 2011), perceptions of terrorism among students (Miller, 2010), cross-cultural features of the attitude of youth to terrorism in modern Russia (Peisakhov, 2006). However, the question arises whether or not people with different mental resources differ in their views on terrorism?

2. Problem Statement

Young people are at the heart of the socialization process, the process of human assimilation of values, norms, roles and statuses that exist in a certain society. Interaction of family and social institutions is necessary for the successful socialization of youth. The lack of a targeted youth state policy that legally defines the rights and duties of young people, as well as the institutions responsible for their socialization, the transformation of the school into the provision of educational services leads to the formation of an environment in which terrorism does not meet any resistance, but, on the contrary, finds a positive response unresolved many acute problems. An excessively detailed description of the terrorist attack and the personality of the terrorist in the media produce a discord between the rejection of terrorism and a

sympathetic attitude towards terrorists. In the most active age, non-socialized young people become prone to asocial phenomena. As the study of the attitude of young people to terrorism and moral principles showed that not all young people consider a terrorist as a criminal, moreover, some young people would be ready to make a terrorist action to achieve their goal (Kichkin, 2016). It should be noted that the question of how the features of the individual mental resources of young people determine their perceptions of terrorism remains virtually unexplored. As a rule, sociologies survey, questioning and psychological testing are used as the basic research methods. These methods do not allow us to reveal the implicit idea of young people about terrorism and are not free from social desirability. We believe that the solution to this problem is possible at the junction of psychological and psycholinguistic studies. In particular, the data of an associative experiment allow us monitoring the hidden phenomenon. The matter is that the associations to a concept in memory of respondents often emerge spontaneously and reveal unconscious elements of values and meanings. As Ufimtseva (1996) showed, associative series is a reflection of a person's verbal memory, his/her motives and assessments and, consequently, his/her cultural stereotypes, a fragment of his/her image of the world, in which the person himself, his/her actions and states are included (Leontiev, 1977).

2.1.Individual mental resources

Mental resources are mental formations that provide positive development of a person. The most important function of mental resources is to regulate behaviour and activities aimed at achieving success in a challenge situation. It should be emphasized that not all individuality properties are related to the mental resources construct, but only those that are evaluated by a person as useful for achieving a positive result.

The system of mental resources begins its formation as a hierarchy, but in the process of age development it builds up into a hierarchy, determining the existence and interaction of different types of mental resources in complementary relations, allowing a person to adapt flexibly according to the requirements of life. There are individual differences in the use of individual mental resources - harmonious, economical, cumulative and costly (Khazova, 2013).

The development of mental resources is reaching a maximum at the age of 18-20 years. Up to 30–35 years, there will be a stabilization of the interactions between the hetearchical and hierarchical components in the structure of mental resources as a result of the formation of the most successful and stable combinations for overcoming difficult life situations (Volkova, 2016).

Concepts are the basis of conceptual thinking, which play a key role in the structure of mental resources of a person determining the processes of conceptualization, thanks to them occur analysis of the situation, identify causal relationships, the interpretation of what is happening, identify resource functions of the various characteristics of individuality, the outside world, interpersonal interactions and management.

2.2. Conceptual Thinking

The concept is the basis of conceptual thinking, a unit of mental resources reflecting a person's conceptual experience (Kholodnaya & Volkova, 2016), an operational, substantive unit of memory,

mental lexicon, conceptual system and brain language, the whole picture of the world reflected in the human psyche (Kubryakova, 1996). The concept reflects both the collective experience of a people (objective, ethnic mentality; generally significant attributes) and the individual experience of its individual representative (subjective mentality; individually significant attributes) (Efremov, 2009). So, the peculiarities of conceptualization, the process of concept formation, are due both to the cultural and historical conditions of a person's life activity, as well as to his individual psychological characteristics. The former are fairly well reflected in psycholinguistic studies, the latter, the field of the psychology of individual differences, are extremely poorly represented in literary sources.

3. Research Questions

Do young people with different mental resources differ in their views on terrorism?

4. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to reveal the relationship among the features of the organization of the concept of terrorism as a correlate of the individual picture of the world and indications of human mental resources.

5. Research Methods

The psychological research was organized according to the generally accepted ethical norms. Participants were volunteers. They filled out questionnaires in a large auditorium after classes during the second week of spring semester. Researchers helped students if the questions arose. Testing was anonymous.

5.1. Participants

Participants of the experiment were Russians. 449 students of different specialties from Moscow, Kaluga, Ekaterinburg, and Perm aged 19.43±1.83 years (76,6% female) were recruited in our research. Most of them were psychologists (28.3%), geographers (25.7%), medic (19.2%), journalists (9.1%) and lawyers (5.4%).

5.2. Measures

A multiple design was used in our research including assessment of (a) the organization of the concept Terrorism (directed associative experiment) and estimation of (b) individual mental resources: 1) temperament, 2) fundamental personality traits, 3) character traits, 3) cognitive styles, 4) intelligence, and 5) motivation.

- ▪ To evaluate the field structure of the concept Terrorism, students were asked to write as many adjectives as possible that correspond to the word Terrorism. Task execution time is 2 minutes. When processing the data only the first reaction to the stimulus word was taken into account

since many researchers pointed out that the first reaction is the most free from social desirability and allows revealing the implicit notions about the object under study.

- Intelligence (IQ level) was measured with speed and precision of solving Simple Logical Problems (SLP, Volkova, Rusalov & Nilopets, 2016).
- Temperament properties were measured with the shortened version of the Structure Temperament Questionnaire (STQ-S, Rusalov & Trofimova, 2007).
- The fundamental personality dimensions were evaluated with the help of Russian modified, validated, and shortened version of Eysenck PEN-questionnaire (Slobodskaya, Knyazev, & Safronova, 2006).
- Character traits were scored with shortened version of the questionnaire (Volkova, Rusalov & Nilopets, 2018).
- The cognitive styles were estimated with the help of a shortened version of Cognitive Personality Styles Questionnaire (CPS-Q-S, Volkova & Rusalov, 2016).
- Motivation was assessed by achievement motivation indicator, accessibility motivation (orientation to accessibility of professional activity), and value motivation (orientation to personal value of professional activity) (Volkova, Rusalov, & Nilopets, 2018).

Question type of the Questionnaires (temperament, character traits, cognitive styles, and motivation) was self-evaluation of own mental resources. A person should as quickly as possible to evaluate the expression of his/her individual characteristics on 5-point Likert scale.

5.3. Analysis

Mathematical data processing was carried out by using the IBM SPSS Statistics 22. Statistical processing techniques of empirical data included descriptive statistics, parametric methods for identifying differences (Independent-Samples T-Test) and relationships (Hierarchical Cluster Analysis Ward's Method).

6. Findings

To reveal the relations among the features of the organization of the concept Terrorism and indications of human mental resources we identified three homogeneous groups based on Hierarchical Cluster Analysis (Ward's Method, z-scores by variable). Average values of the indicators of the fundamental personality dimensions in the groups are shown in Table 1. The significance of differences in indicators between the groups of respondents varies from 0.000 to 0.037.

Table 01. Comparative analysis of fundamental personality dimensions in early adulthood

Fundamental personality dimensions	Mean		
	1 cluster	2 cluster	3 cluster
Extraversion/Introversion (EXTR).	**23.34**	19.5	20.42
Neuroticism/Emotional stability (NEUR).	16.47	**23.78**	18.9
Psychoticism/Soft-heartedness (PSYCO).	10.4	11.27	**16.44**

The first cluster united young people with a pronounced indicator of extroversion / introversion. Extraverts are sociable, joyful, and lively. They like being in big companies. However, they are often unreliable and frequently change friends, sexual partners. They are bored with uninteresting and hard work.

The second cluster included respondents with a strong indicator of neuroticism /emotional stability. Neurotics are emotionally unstable. Such features as low self-esteem, depression, anxiety, and guilt feeling characterize them.

Third cluster respondents have higher rates of psychoticism/soft-heartedness. Psychotics have such behavioural attributes as aggressiveness, stubbornness, goal-directedness, manipulation, sensation seeking, dogmatism, and masculinity.

6.1. Notions about terrorism in respondents with different fundamental personality dimensions

The results of a comparative analysis of notions about terrorism in respondents with different fundamental personality dimensions are presented in Table 2.

Table 02. The core and periphery of the concept Terrorism in different groups of respondents

Association frequency	The frequency of occurrence of the trait		
	Extraverts	**Neurotics**	**Psychotics**
Core	dangerous (12.1) death (11.0)	terrible (16.7) horrible (10.5)	terrible (10.5)
Near periphery	terrible (9.8) horrible (8.7) cruel (7.5) killing (7.5)	cruel (9.9) dangerous (9.9) death (7.4)	horrible (6.1) cruel (5.3) dangerous (5.3) death (5.3)
Far periphery	evil (3.5) bloody (2.9) destructive (2.3) ill (2.3) aggressive (1.7) ruthless (1.7) merciless (1.7) inhumane (1.7) hostile (1.7) bad (1.7) amoral (1.2) explosive (1.2) threatening (1.2)	destructive (3.7) killing (3.7) frightening (3.7) unlawful (1.9) evil (1.9) violent (1.9) bad (1.9) meaningless (1.2) ill (1.2) military (1.2) bloody (1.2) mass (1.2) tragic (1.2) disturbing (1.2) threatening (1.2)	bad (4.4) bloody (3.5) destructive (3.5) evil (2.6) violent (2.6) threatening (2.6) frightening (1.8) hostile (1.8) harmful (1.8) national (1.8) negative (1.8) hateful (1.8) religious (1.8) killing (1.8) unexpected (1.8) ill (1.8)

Frequency analysis of associations (first reactions) showed the predominance negative emotional characteristics in the structure of notions about terrorism. A considerable number of peripheral features indicated a lack of understanding in young people about terrorism.

Categorical analysis of associations revealed five categories of attributes of the concept Terrorism covering 89-94% of all responses of participants (Table 3).

Table 03. Volume and variety of categorical attributes of the concept Terrorism

Association frequency	Groups of respondents		
	Extraverts	**Neurotics**	**Psychotics**
Danger	41.6	30,2	33,3
Terrorist	23,7	18,5	14,0
Fear	19,1	32,5	20,2
Attitude to terrorism	6,9	6,8	11,4
Types of terrorism	3,5	6,8	10,5

Extroverts and psychotics most often described characteristics indicating the danger of terrorism. Neurotics are more focused on the feelings of fear and horror. The strongest reactions that are common to all groups of respondents are:

- *Danger:* dangerous, deadly, murderous, bloody, destructive, and violent.
- *Fear:* terrible, horrible.
- *Terrorist:* cruel, evil, aggressive, inhuman, and ill.
- *Types of terrorism:* explosive, military, and religious.
- *Attitude to terrorism:* bad, meaningless, and wrong.

Extraverts see the danger of terrorism in uncontrollability, invincibility, forethought and secrecy. Neurotics draw attention to such aspects of the danger of terrorism as its preparedness and forethought, psychotics - lies and unpredictability.

Psychotics are more informed about the types of terrorism. They express the more negative attitude towards terrorism than neurotics and extraverts.

6.2. Interrelations between individual's mental resources and his/her representation about terrorism

Comparative analysis of individual mental resources in respondents with varying fundamental personality traits revealed significant differences in indicators of temperaments, cognitive styles, and motivation.

Extraverts are more active and adaptable to the environment. They easily analyze complex environmental influences (flexibility of cognitive control, $p<0,001$). It is probably this personality trait may determine the predominance of danger attributes in the structure of the concept Terrorism. However, extraverts are open to the controversial information (tolerance to unrealistic experience, $p<0,05$) and tend to overstep instructions (abstract conceptualization, $p<0,01$). This fact can explain why we observe only a few attributes of negative attitude towards terrorism in the structure of the concept.

Neurotics are extremely emotional persons (emotionality, $p<0,001$). They are highly sensitive to nuances (narrow range of equivalence, $p<0,003$) and trust more in external impressions (field dependence, $p<0,001$). Probably that is why the attribute of fear and horror dominate in the structure of the concept Terrorism.

Psychotics rely only on one's own knowledge and experience (field independence, $p<0,001$). They are characterized by spontaneity and high tempo of decision making in complex situations (impulsivity, $p<0,001$). That is why high awareness about types of terrorism and their danger correlates with a pronounced negative attitude towards terrorism.

7. Conclusion

Analysis of all proposed associations based on the elements of the core zone allowed identifying negative emotional manifestations as the main categories of ideas about terrorism. The predominance of emotional characteristics in the structure of notions about terrorism, a large number of moving peripheral elements demonstrates the insufficient formation of the concept. Young people with a high adaptability, intelligence, motivation for the importance of professional activity, tolerance, and reflectivity have a more detailed and complexly organized notion about terrorism.

It should be noted that the above-described groups of respondents are conventionally called as extraverts, neurotics, or psychotics. A more detailed analysis (Tables 1, 2 and 3) allows us to assume that the combination of the middle values of the indicators of extraversion, neuroticism and psychoticism may determine "antiterrorism immunity" i.e. a stable resistance to the terrorist threat.

Acknowledgments

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