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Psychology of Personality: Real and Virtual Context

PSYCHOLOGY OF EVERYDAY LIFE IN A TRANSITIVE SOCIETY

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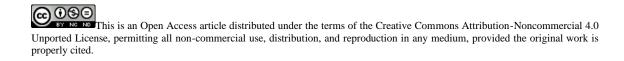*Corresponding author

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Abstract

Psychology of everyday life creates a wide conceptual context for interpreting and comparing data obtained in separate psychological studies of identity, attachment and affiliation, collectivism and individualism, intergenerational transmission, etc. The transitivity of everyday life is manifested in the latent transformations, the diversification of the sociocultural environment, the problem of generational change, the antinomy of traditions and innovations, and various lifestyle strategies. The study of everyday human life in modern society takes place in a number of coordinates: stability and flexibility; simplicity and complexity; uniformity and diversity; socialization and individualization, etc. In our study in the first case we examined a social group of educators and psychologists living in small settlements and in megacities. Respondents were differentiated by us in terms of informational, normative and diffused identity as well as commitment to collectivism or individualism in their life strategies. In the second case we examined the differences between adults and adolescents regarding the situation of informational and value (success strategies) transitivity of their daily lives. Teachers and practice psychologists, regardless of their place of residence, are characterized by a prevailing normative identity style. At the same time adults from the metropolis use more flexible life strategies and different stylistic characteristics than adolescents. There is a conflict of identity styles in a modern transitive society. We affirm that the prevalence of horizontal collectivism among teachers and practice psychologists from the megalopolis and small settlement is due more to their professional identity than to the diversification of the sociocultural space.

Keywords: Psychology of everyday life, personality, identity style, horizontal and vertical individualism, success strategies.

1. Introduction

An everydayness is a chronotope (synthesis of time and space) of human life that changes from day to day, containing many different layers: cultural, historical, social, biographical, subjective. The everyday world of human is studied by different research. In the second half of the 20th century new research directions arose such as sociology of everyday life, history of everyday life, anthropology of everyday life, psychology of everyday life. In our opinion, this is associated with an increase in the value of human life, increased attention to the individuality and problems of personality. Moreover, this trend corresponds to the key transformations of our time such as increasing complexity and diversity, variability and uncertainty. Psychology of everyday life today studies a wide range of issues relating to the individual and his living environment. This is a change in human lifestyles and ways of thinking, his perception and experience of the events of the world around him, a variety of types of human subjectivity, problem of intergenerational transmission and digital environment (Guseltseva, 2017, 2019; Martsinkovskaya, 2015, 2016).

1.1. Different approaches to the study of everyday life

There are various and even polar approaches to the study of everyday life. Some researchers pay attention to aspects of routine and repeatability in everyday life, and therefore to the stability of social structures. Other authors seek to identify contradictions and changes, so-called "growth points" of new cultural practices and life strategies. We adhere to the second approach and assume that, for example, by studying the diversity of identity styles in a transitive society can be found these "growth points" (Guseltseva, 2019). In psychology the most fundamental in the study of everyday life is the approach of Thomae (1988). The typology of thematic structuring of life in this approach involves leading themes of the era and private themes of the individual. The thematic diversity and complexity of human life is becoming even more relevant in the light of modern research, where the relationship of the era and the individual falls into the focus of the psychology of everyday life. In the studies of Twenge (2006), the integration of social, cultural and personal spaces in human development is carried out through the prism of historical generations. If Twenge uses the concept of E. Erickson's identity as a conceptual framework, then Thomae (1988) proves that the concrete cultural and historical era is a key factor in the formation of "themes of life". We emphasize that in a transitive situation the integrity of identity is associated more with the culture and social environment than with the development of life cycles or epigenetic concept. This attracts the attention of researchers to a finer differentiation both of different types of identity and to diversity of sociocultural space (regions, dwelling place) (Martsinkovskaya, 2016).

1.2. Everyday life in conditions of transitivity and diversity of sociocultural environment

In modern psychology various types of identities are considered: personal and social, gender and ethnic, cultural and territorial, family and civil, etc. Berzonsky (1997) identified three styles of identity depending on how people process relevant information: informational, normative and diffuse. Relevant identity information means any information that is somehow related to a person's worldview, his moral principles, his vision of his political and religious views (Belinskaya & Bronin, 2014). Informational identity style means that people tend to collect as much information as possible by making decisions and drawing conclusions about the value or situation regarding their own development. People who have a

normative identity style do not seek information themselves, but prefer to follow cultural traditions, group norms, ready-made and socially desirable solutions. Diffuse identity style means that people have no formed position, and decisions are made depending on the development of a particular situation or social interaction. The transitivity of everyday life is manifested in transformations of psychological chronotope (Martsinkovskaya, 2016), diversification of sociocultural environment, problem of generational change (Twenge, 2006), antinomy of traditions and innovations, and various lifestyle strategies. The study of everyday human life in modern society takes place in a number of coordinates: stability (conservatism) and variability (flexibility); simplicity and complexity; uniformity (monotony) and diversity (variety); socialization and individualization, etc. In our study in first case we examined a social group of educators and psychologists living in small settlements and in megacities. Respondents were differentiated by us in terms of information, normative and diffuse identity as well as commitment to collectivism or individualism in their life strategies. In second case we examined the differences between adults and adolescents regarding the situation of informational and value transitivity of their daily lives.

2. Problem Statement

Discussing the features of personality development and socialization in modern society, it is necessary first of all to analyze the problems associated with transformations of everyday life: diversification of their sociocultural environment, swiftness of changes, differentiation of identity and an intergenerational gap. Such an analysis can become the basis for the development of the psychology of everyday life as an interdisciplinary project, embracing a holistic person in the current changes in his life and culture. The main problem in this context is studying of human personality changes in a variety of contexts in transition world; the relationship of sociocultural changes and differentiation of identity.

2.1. Differences in identity styles between megacities and small settlements

In a modern transitive society, informational (associated with developed critical thinking) and diffuse identity styles (associated with a willingness to create strategies depending on the situation) are more productive (Martsinkovskaya, 2015). We assume that there are significant differences between respondents from the metropolis and respondents from small settlements: greater criticality to information and social flexibility of residents of megalopolises will be manifested in the predominance of informational and diffuse styles of their identity.

2.2. The balance of individualism and collectivism as life strategies in the socio-cultural space

Based on the conceptual model of Triandis, personality strategies in the socio-cultural space of everyday life can be divided into 4 types (as cited in Triandis & Gelfland, 1998): 1) horizontal individualists are self-oriented and independent of the opinions of others; 2) vertical individualists tend to compare themselves with others, striving to be the best; 3) horizontal collectivists are oriented toward group belonging and the achievement of common goals, but hierarchy and submission to the group are not significant for them; 4) vertical collectivists focus on a clearly defined hierarchy and are also ready to sacrifice their interests for the interests of the group. Each person is a carrier of both individualistic and

collectivist tendencies, which are expressed to a varying degree (Triandis & Gelfland, 1998). Differences are found in the balance of individualism and collectivism as life strategies in the sociocultural space.

We suggest that between respondents from megacities and small settlements, as well as between adults and adolescents, there are significant differences in the strategies in everyday life.

3. Research Questions

The daily life of an individual in a modern transitive society proceeds in a diversified sociocultural environment and is characterized by a variety of types of identity.

3.1. Differences in identity styles among respondents from megacities and small settlements

We assume that there are differences in identity styles among respondents from megacities and from small settlements. Residents of a megalopolis in contrast to residents from small settlements should have a more pronounced criticality of thinking and social flexibility, and this will manifest itself in the predominance of informational and diffuse identity styles.

3.2. The tendency to individualize life strategies in different communities

We assume that in a modern transitive society there is a tendency to individualize life strategies, which manifests itself in different ways in communities of residents of megalopolises and small settlements, as well as among adults and adolescents.

4. Purpose of the Study

These proposals were verified in the process of theoretical and empirical research in the conceptual framework of the psychology of everyday life in a transitive society (Guseltseva, 2017, 2019; Martsinkovskaya, 2015, 2016):

- studying the differentiation of identity styles depending on the sociocultural space (metropolis or small settlement).
- studying the correlation of collectivism (horizontal and vertical) and individualism (horizontal and vertical) depending on the place of residence and in different age groups (adults and adolescents).

5. Research Methods

In the process of research theoretical and comparative-analytical methods were used as well as a series of empirical methods.

5.1. Sample

The study involved 130 respondents: 30 of them were teachers and practice psychologists (from 24 to 50 years old) living in a settlement in the Republic of Tatarstan; and 40 of them were graduate students (from 22 to 46 years old) specializing in the field of psychological and pedagogical education in Moscow; and 60 of them were adolescents (from 14 to 16 years old), students in school number 806 (in Kuntsevo).

Studies were conducted in 2019-2020. All participants agreed to participate in the study.

5.2. The testing procedure and methodology

Research series were carried out using the following techniques:

▪ The identity style inventory of M. Berzonsky (Russian version) (Belinskaya & Bronin, 2014).

▪ Method for measuring the level of collectivism / individualism (Martsinkovskaya & Dubovskaya, 2016).

▪ The "Stability – Instability" scale for studying the respondent's subjective perception of the situation in society (Martsinkovskaya & Dubovskaya, 2016).

▪ The technique of "Successful Man" (Martsinkovskaya & Dubovskaya, 2016).

6. Findings

6.1. Normative identity styles in a metropolis and in a small settlement

We found that regardless of the dwelling place (in small settlement or metropolis) the normative identity style prevails among teachers and practice psychologists (Table 01). This means that such people do not seek information on their own but rely on family traditions and socially approved norms in their worldview and behavior. Nevertheless, the information style was expressed in 19% of respondents from a small settlement and 35% of respondents from a megalopolis. These people are focused on obtaining maximum information to make decisions about the significance of a particular goal, position, value. For 31% of respondents from a small settlement and 15% of respondents from a megalopolis diffuse style is characteristic. This means that they do not have a clearly defined position and they either postpone their decisions or take them under the influence of incentives for a specific situation or social interactions.

Table 01. The dominant identity style among teachers and practice psychologists from different sociocultural spaces

Identity Styles	Teachers and practice psychologists from a small settlement	Teachers and practice psychologists from the metropolis
Informational Identity Style (Information Orientation)	19%	35%
Normative Identity Style (Normative Orientation)	50%	50%
Diffused Identity Style (Diffuse Orientation)	31%	15%

The data according to the U-criterion of Mann-Whitney revealed the following significant differences (at $p < 0.05$). Significant differences were found by such an identity style parameter as "commitment". This style of identity is characterized by a tendency to adhere to their views or, conversely, to change them. In our opinion, low rates for this indicator can be considered as the flexibility of choosing an information processing strategy, which provides more opportunities for solving current problems. Thus, the normative identity style prevails among teachers regardless of place of residence. Adults from different places of residence vary significantly in terms of commitment. Adults from the metropolis have significantly lower indicators on the scale of commitment, which can serve as an indicator of greater flexibility in the use of various style characteristics. Correlation analysis (of Pearson) showed that the

commitment parameter is directly proportional to the indicators of the normative style (0.405 *), and inversely proportional to the indicators of the informational (-0.384 *) and diffuse (-0.482 *) styles.

We emphasize that our hypothesis about the difference in identity styles among residents of megacities and small settlements has not been confirmed. All teachers and practice psychologists regardless of place of residence have a normative style. Perhaps this is due to the peculiarities of their professional identity and orientation towards constructive interaction with surrounding people. Significant differences were obtained in terms of commitment, which can be evidence that in a small settlement, where more traditional values, norms, traditions are noted, reliance on existing rules is an adequate way of socialization. However, we found differences in the characteristics of social flexibility (an indicator of "commitment"), which indicates that a faster pace of life and a more transitive, variable, multicultural space requires more social flexibility and plasticity.

6.2. Collectivism and individualism strategies in a metropolis and in a small settlement

In this study we measured such parameters as horizontal collectivism (characterizing a high degree of significance of group membership in the absence of a strict hierarchy, subordination to the group); vertical collectivism (clearly defined hierarchy); horizontal individualism (characterizing self-orientation and independence from the opinions of others); vertical individualism (the tendency to compare oneself with others, the desire to be the best.) Regardless of the place of residence all respondents are dominated by horizontal collectivism (Table 02): representatives of a small settlement (88%) and representatives of a megalopolis (66%). This means for them a high degree of importance of group membership. However, the representatives of the metropolis still have a slightly more pronounced horizontal individualism (34%), characterized by independence and the priority of personal goals over group ones. None of the respondents showed either vertical collectivism or vertical individualism, however, the range of indicators for this parameter is wide enough. According to the Mann-Whitney criterion, significant differences were found in terms of vertical individualism (at p = 0.05). Representatives of a small settlement are more inclined to compare themselves with others ("to be no worse than others" or "to be better than others"). Thus, the following contradiction was established: along with a greater severity of collectivism and the importance of belonging to group values and norms, the tendency for representatives of small settlement to be better than others is characteristic.

Table 02. Features of the manifestation of collectivism / individualism among teachers and practice psychologists from different sociocultural spaces

Collectivism and individualism manifestations	Teachers and practice psychologists from a small settlement	Teachers and practice psychologists from the metropolis
Horizontal individualism	12%	34%
Horizontal collectivism	88%	66%

The data according to the U-criterion of Mann Whitney revealed the following significant differences (at p <0.05). A direct relationship has also been established between indicators of vertical individualism and indicators of adherence according to the identity style inventory of Berzonsky (1997) (Pearson criterion 0.579). We assume that the desire to relate oneself to others and to be better than others

correlates with a certain social rigidity. We also assume that the predominance of collectivist tendencies may be due to the specifics of the sample, which were teachers and practice psychologists. We conclude that modern life, proceeding in the context of globalization and digital everyday life, continues to blur the differences between the representatives of megacities and small settlements. The key factor for personality changes and types of identity is not so much a place of residence as professional affiliation.

6.3. Studying the respondent's assessment of the situation in society as stable or unstable

An analysis of the results of a study of the perception of the situation in society as stable or unstable did not reveal significant differences (according to the Mann-Whitney criterion) between residents from rural areas and from the metropolis. 75% of teachers and practice psychologists from a small settlement and 73% of respondents from a metropolis perceive the situation in society as stable (indicators of stability prevail over indicators of instability).

6.4. A comparative analysis of the perception of the social context in adolescents 14-16 years old and adults 22-46 years old

We have found that there is a shift in perceptions of success in adolescence. If adolescents of 13-14 years of age have more ideas about success associated with external factors (beauty, success in the profession), then adolescents of 15-16 years old shift their focus from external indicators of success to internal ones (the role of self-regulation, values of one's own efforts and activity). Moreover, in adolescence, the image of success is poorly differentiated (on average 5 definitions). The description of the image of success is dominated by individualistic characteristics aimed at achieving personal success, but not for the common good (which is characteristic of collectivist tendencies in identity).

Ideas of success in adults are more differentiated (on average, 10-11 definitions) and informative, meaningful. In the description of the image of success in adults as well as in adolescents, individualistic characteristics associated with individual achievements prevail. Among the definitions of success, the following groups of values are clearly expressed: values of thinking ("flexibility of thinking", "harmony of thinking", "be able to summarize information", "emotional intelligence"); values of self-organization ("ability to overcome", "self-activity", "time management", "punctuality", "working capacity", "determination", "perseverance", "determination"); values of transitivity (willingness to change, "adaptability", "quick response to changing circumstances", "flexibility, mobility", "openness, interest in new experience", "willingness to take risks", "creative spirit"), that is those qualities that are necessary in an unstable, volatile society; values of professionalism; values associated with communicative qualities ("honesty", "empathy", "communicativeness", "ability to set boundaries", "ability to cooperation").

It is significant that success in both adolescents and adults is determined mainly through individual achievements. This is in line with the trends of modern culture. We emphasize that already in adolescence, values are associated with the mechanisms of self-government and self-organization. The structure of ideas about success in adults also presents the values that are necessary for a productive everyday life in modern society: critical thinking, self-organization, flexibility and openness to experience, sociability, and professionalism. Both adolescents and adults are aware of the need for their own activity, self-organization, for successful socialization and maintaining a positive style of their own identity.

7. Conclusion

The psychology of everyday life creates a broad conceptual context for interpreting and comparing data obtained in separate psychological studies of identity, affiliation, collectivism and individualism, intergenerational transmission, etc. Studying the personality in the dynamics and diversity of its sociocultural development space, the psychology of everyday life seeks to create a helicopter view as a way of integrating personality research in a transitive society.

7.1. Professional identity overcomes diversification of sociocultural environment

Teachers and practice psychologists regardless of their place of residence are characterized by a prevailing normative style of information processing. At the same time, adults from the metropolis use more flexible life strategies and different stylistic characteristics than adolescents. The prevalence of horizontal collectivism among teachers and practice psychologists from the megalopolis and small settlement is due more to their professional identity than to the diversification of the sociocultural space. The strengthening of collectivism in this group is associated with social flexibility and the successful nature of socialization in the professional environment. Nevertheless, representatives of the metropolis have more pronounced tendencies toward independence (indicators of horizontal individualism).

7.2. Individual strategies for success in a transitive society

Success in both adolescents and adults is determined mainly through individual achievements, which is typical for trends in modern culture. Already in adolescence, values associated with the mechanisms of self-government, self-organization, that is, the need to form an active life position, are distinguished. The structure of ideas about success in adults is dominated by values, the presence of which is necessary for successful functioning in modern conditions: critical thinking, self-organization, flexibility and openness to experience, sociability, and professionalism. We conclude that despite the normative style of identity in modern Russian society not only the tendency towards individualization is intensified but also self-organization in everyday life.

7.3. Diversity and contradiction of identity styles in a modern transitive society

Modern society is characterized by a variety of identity styles. Socialization in a transitive society and diversification of sociocultural space makes the informational and diffused identity styles more productive, while the normative identity style prevails among teachers and practice psychologists. On the one hand, this contradiction explains the stability of conservative trends in some Russian communities. On the other hand, horizontal collectivism among teachers and practice psychologists is a way of coping with the situation of transitivity, where individual seeks to find stability in space of connections of his everyday life.

Thus, there is a conflict of identity styles in today's complex, diverse and multicultural society. Personality faces the task of socialization in conditions of transitivity, regardless of age the person does not feel confidence and stability. At the same time, individual has the realization that successful socialization requires his own activity, flexibility and openness to new experience. It is the awareness of everyday life and interaction in the immediate environment that gives a person a sense of confidence and stability in a

situation of constant change and the variability of the sociocultural context. If the desire for self-organization, flexibility of position, openness to new experience, a calm attitude to uncertainty become conscious values of a person, this contributes to the success of his socialization in a situation of transitivity.

Acknowledgments

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