PSYRGGU 2020

Psychology of Personality: Real and Virtual Context

ASSUMPTIONS OF SOCIAL SPACE IN ADOLESCENCE AND YOUTH

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Abstract

The article discusses the specifics of attitude to social space in adolescence and youth. The role of social space in the mental development of the individual is shown. The role of globalization and transitivity in the formation and development of social space is determined. Particular attention is paid to the analysis of social space as a category of personality psychology, expanding the explanatory potential of the personal development phenomenology. The author identifies and describes the specifics of social space in conditions of variability and uncertainty. The study involved 1,054 respondents (488 adolescents and 566 young people). The purpose of the empirical research was to study the structure of the personal chronotype in adolescence and youth, as well as to determine the specifics of the relationship in the reference groups. The results of the study show that in adolescence and youth, a positive attitude is formed towards all areas of social reality. The greatest trust among them is caused by the social environment, and the least - by place of residence and study. It is proved that young people trust their social environment more than teenagers. Teenagers show a more positive attitude towards the people of their country than young men. The most reference group in both adolescence and youth is the family. It is family that determines the social status, prestige and social mobility of the individual in conditions of transitivity. Based on the research, the prospects for further study of the social space of a developing personality are determined.

Keywords: Adolescence, reference group, social space, socialization, youth.

1.   Introduction

The features of modern society are the transitivity of social reality (Martsinkovskaya & Turusheva, 2017), the acceleration of the rhythms of life, the diversity of life styles. The perception of social space by man is one of the leading characteristics that determine transformations in the modern world. Social space allows people to think, feel and act in such a way that they have the opportunity to construct an optimal system of relationships in it (Friedman et al., 2016).

Social space is a hybrid entity formed in relation to natural space (Kharlamov, 2009; Urry, 2000). It is not established as a background for social life, but is formed through many changes in the current social life. Through activity, an individual always forms a spatial relationship of identity with respect to members of a reference group for him, based on various resources (de Haan & Leander, 2011). The transformation of social and political life inevitably entails the transformation of social space (Lefebvre, 1991; Soja, 1989). And otherwise, the reproduction of social life inevitably entails stabilization or reproduction of social space (de Haan & Leander, 2011).

As a rule, an individual is included in many social groups, such as family, friends, neighbors, and colleagues; therefore, his spatial representations to a certain extent depend on the social trajectory (Dias & Ramadier, 2015) and the distribution of social and economic statuses in these groups (Fischer, 2011; Giddens, 1984). However, subjective assessments of the individuals' status in society cannot be completely determined by socio-economic indicators (Adler et al., 2008; Andersson, 2018; Schnittker & Bacak, 2013). The openness of the modern information space, its limitlessness, is increasingly affecting the formation and development of personality, its socialization. New universal information and orientation skills and actions of information search by a person, communication in the information space are formed under the influence of various sources and volumes of information. A person carries out a movement in relation to information and adapts it to himself. On the one hand, the information space has expanded the possibilities of perceiving the world, and on the other hand, narrowed the geographical space. Therefore, socialization is the self-organization of "the individual in the process of social relations based on information interaction" (Shcheglov, 2014, p.37), and the space of socialization of the personality is the space of life experience, the deployment of life resources.

2.   Problem Statement

The transformation of the social space of modern man leads to significant changes in development tasks at each age stage. The current development situation forces the individual to use all his potential abilities for self-realization and personal growth within the framework of those social conditions and the culture in which he grows and develops (Martsinkovskaya, 2010). Positive social relationships will help adolescents and youths adapt to the surrounding social environment and develop healthy psychosocial structures. The social space expanding during this age period stimulates the desire to emancipate and determine one's place in life. It should be noted that adolescents and youths attach great importance to loyalty and group solidarity. They live in fear of being isolated from reference groups, and therefore exhibit conformal behavior (Duzenli et al., 2012).

Teenagers and young people make mistakes in evaluating relationships between themselves and other people. At these ages, excessive self-interest dominates. They are interested in themselves and believe that others are interested in them. Therefore, they are characterized by demonstrative behavior and exaggeration of their own significance, which contributes to the formation and development of a sense of singularity and uniqueness. The feeling of "belonging" to a group is an important feeling for the social development of an individual. If they do not become members of the reference group, then they do not identify themselves with its social space. Friendships contribute significantly to the social and cognitive development of an individual (Duzenli et al., 2012). Furthermore, social space by teenagers and youth determines the structural components, the focus, and acceptance of the socio-cultural identity by an individual (Kobzeva, 2019).

Therefore, the study of social space allows us to better understand the mechanisms of socialization in transitive society.

3. Research Questions

3.1. How do adolescents relate to different areas of social space?

3.2. How do young men relate to different areas of social space?

3.3. Is there a difference in attitude to different areas of social space between adolescents and young people?

3.4. What is the specificity of the relationship in the reference groups in adolescence and youth?

4. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the research is to study the features of attitude to social space (personal chronotype) and reference groups of adolescents and young people.

5. Research Methods

The research paradigm has determined the choice of research methods. The psychodiagnostic method, mathematical and statistical analysis method were applied.

5.1. Participants

The study was carried out at Murmansk Arctic State University (MASU) and Murmansk educational organizations. The participants were 1054 respondents (234 boys and 254 girls aged from 12 to 14 years and 220 young men and 346 young ladies aged from 18 to 21 years).

The survey was conducted with the voluntary consent of the participants. To achieve greater sincerity, psychological diagnosis was carried out anonymously. The results of the study were given to the interested parties.

5.2. Methods

Attitude to social space (personal chronotype) was studied using the methodology "Significant Spheres of Social Space". The technique allows one to determine the subjective attitude to the following

areas (levels) of social space: attitude to culture, people; attitude to the place of residence and study; attitude to the information space; attitude to the social environment; attitude to oneself and one's activity; time aspect of perception of various levels of social space. The questionnaire "Reference groups" was used for the diagnosis of reference groups.

6. Findings

Table 01 shows the attitude of adolescents and young people to different areas of reality.

Table 01. The structure of social space in adolescence and youth (%)

My attitude towards…	Positive		Ambivalent		Negative	
	Teenagers	**Youth**	**Teenagers**	**Youth**	**Teenagers**	**Youth**
Place of residence and study	66	63	24	17	10	20
People, culture	66	69	24	25	10	6
Information space	68	68	18	20	14	12
Social environment	79	93	19	7	2	0
Different generations	72	80	21	10	7	10
Oneself and one's activity	78	85	18	10	4	5

As the results of the study show, adolescents and young people have a positive attitude to all components of social space. Adolescents and young people demonstrate the greatest confidence in their social environment, themselves and their activities. It should be noted that young men have a higher degree of trust in their social environment than adolescents ($p \leq 0.05$). It can be assumed that kinship and personal ties are the most significant in the system of social interaction for modern adolescents and youths, therefore, building relationships with parents, grandparents, teachers, friends, they accept and adopt their values and behaviors.

The respondents have a positive attitude to the need to achieve everything with their work, mutual assistance between people, their own responsibility. In these age periods, it becomes important to maintain their own independence and achieve high results in their activities. A conscious positive attitude towards the world allows us to form a conscious motivation for our own activities, which ensures the achievement of high results in its implementation.

A distinctive feature of adolescence and youth is the maintenance of constructive relationships with representatives of different generations. Young people value relations with parents and grandparents more ($p \leq 0.05$), and adolescents - with those younger than them ($p \leq 0.05$).

An important point in the analysis of the structure of social space is the attitude to the people and culture. Most adolescents and young people accept the norms of their own ethnic group. They are characterized by a hedonistic orientation in the structure of personality. However, a fairly high percentage of respondents is indifferent to the lifestyle that their social environment leads, as well as to their material and social values. Adolescents show a more positive attitude towards their people ($p \leq 0.05$), while young men – to their own religion ($p \leq 0.05$).

Information space as a structural component of social space has a pronounced social context and is not tied to a specific territory. This is a combination of knowledge and information that is being formed and constantly changing in society, reflecting the worldview of people. Slightly more than half of adolescents and young people demonstrate confidence in the information that they receive from the Internet

and the media. Perhaps the results are due to a lack of desire to analyze new information, as well as an unformed need for new knowledge.

Most respondents have a positive attitude towards both their place of residence and their place of study. However, young people have a more pronounced positive attitude towards the educational organization ($p \leq 0.05$) and future place of residence. Most nonlocal students do not want to return to their small homeland, because they will not be able to find work in their specialty with a decent level of wages, and also to satisfy their hedonistic needs. It should be noted that the majority of young men have a negative attitude to the past of their locality ($p \leq 0.05$).

The next analyses stage is to define the specificity of relationships types in the reference group (Table 02).

Table 02. Types of relationships in reference groups

Groups of respondents	Family		Friends at school		Friends by interests	
	Median	Std. Dev.	Median	Std. Dev.	Median	Std. Dev.
Teenagers	5,8	3,1	1,2	4,7	3,6	4,3
Youth	6,6	2,4	1,1	3,2	4,2	1,8

The dominant reference group of both adolescence and youth is the family, which correlates with the results of Khuzeeva (2013). For the most part, respondents broadcast the norms of parents, brothers and sisters, relatives. The family not only determines the trajectory of their development, but also provides a certain social status, prestige, social mobility.

The "sense of maturity" that is being formed and developing in the process of individualization contributes to the assertion of one's own independence. However, the life position of adolescents and youths is mainly focused on social norms and values adopted in their own family.

The opinion of parents and relatives on a wide range of issues is important for teenagers and youths. They listen to it and, as a rule, act exactly as family members recommend. However, the "importance of opinion" does not always mean having trusting relationships in the family. Common interests and related communication contribute to the development of their referentiality and attraction.

Respondents prefer not only to spend free time with friends sharing the same interests, but also trust them, listen to their opinion more often than the opinion of friends in school.

7. Conclusion

Modern social space requires a flexible position on the part of the person that best suits the context of the social situation. This is especially true for adolescents and youths who simultaneously carry out several polar social contexts - the normative space of the educational organization, the family, formal and informal associations. A study of the attitude of adolescents and youths to social space showed that the majority of respondents, regardless of age, demonstrate a positive attitude towards all its structural components (social environment, themselves and their activities, different generations). However, young men demonstrate a more positive and stable perception of social space than adolescents. It should be noted that among the youth there are no respondents who would negatively assess their social environment. At

the same time, the information space is not always an instrument for incorporating adolescents and youths into society.

The development of social interaction is an important part of the overall mental development in adolescence and youth. In this age period, the system of a person's relationship changes radically, not only with the social environment, but also with himself, and new value orientations are formed that help to reflect.

In adolescence and youth, the family is not only the sphere of intimate communication, but also the reference group when making important decisions. Family members help shape the information and social space, and family values contribute to the development of social contacts.

The study showed the versatility of the phenomenon of social spaces as a psychological determinant. Therefore, a positive attitude to all areas of social reality will allow adolescents and youths to successfully adapt to the uncertainty and variability of modern society.

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