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Psychology of Personality: Real and Virtual Context

SOCIAL IDENTITY AND IDEAS ABOUT SUCCESS AMONG YOUTH IN TECHNOLOGICAL SOCIETY

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Abstract

The study of the socialization of modern youth in a technological society is presented in the article. The problem of the socialization of modern youth is closely related to the problem of the formation of identity and social representations of the younger generation about success and successfulness. The study involved 192 representatives of the youth age group (n = 192) studying at the Moscow universities. The social identity of the modern young generation, on the one hand, is focused on the importance of the family, on the other hand, is focused on professional and personal realization, purposefulness, the importance of social contacts and mutual assistance in relationships. Ideas about success among modern youth are characterized by recognition of the importance of personal initiative. Young boys and girls are aware and highly value education, knowledge and experience in achieving professional results. They note the importance of social contacts and mutual assistance in relationships. They articulate humanistic values in ideas about success. It is noteworthy that modern youth recognizes the value of material values and notes privileges in a situation of material security, but in the received descriptions, as an indicator of success, the values of professional and personal realization and freedom prevail, and not the presence of specific widely recognized attributes of high material status.

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Keywords: Ideas about success, identity, modern youth, socialization, structure of social identity, technological society.



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1. Introduction

In a technological society in the process of socialization, we can observe the appropriation of sociocultural values and the formation of the social essence of modern man, of the socio-psychological maturity of the individual and his individual position in society. The development of technologies, social networks, multiculturalism and transitivity are becoming important factors determining the personal development of children and adolescents. The psychological consequence of the influence of these factors is the strengthening of the personal component of identity, as well as increasing the importance and actualization of such an important psychological quality as subjectivity (Gusel'tseva, 2018, 2019; Leont'ev, 2010; Martsinkovskaya, 2015a). This actualizes the problem of choice for the individual – which is the choice of an identification group, information sources, an individual strategy of identity construction, the choice of a path for one's own life and lifestyle construction, ensuring a balance of individualization and socialization, which contributes to personal development and the possibility of self-realization of a person.

2. Problem Statement

The problem of socialization of modern youth is closely related to the problem of the formation of identity. Identity today is not only a transdisciplinary concept, which is a link between psychology and related areas of socio-humanitarian knowledge, but also a term that integrates knowledge within psychology, including the study of the structures of personal, social, cultural and individual behaviour (Gusel'tseva, 2018).

Identity is not considered as the sum of all personal identifications, but as a result of the selection, structuring and redesigning of the most significant identifications. Poleva (2018) notes that identity is a complex dynamic structure that is subject to constant verification, which is especially important in a transitive situation.

There are many definitions of the concept of "identity" in various psychological schools. The concept of identity has become popular in psychology since the 70s of the XX century. It supplements, refines, and sometimes replaces the accepted and established concepts of "Self-concept", "image-I", "self" and others.

For the first time, the concept of "identity" was considered in detail in the work of Erikson "Childhood and Society" (1950). From the point of view of psychology, as Erikson (1977) later writes in his work "Identity: Youth and Crisis," "identity formation employs a process of simultaneous reflection and observation, a process taking place on all levels of mental functioning, by which the individual judges himself in comparison to themselves and to a typology significant for them; while he judges their way of judging him in the light of how he perceives himself in comparison to them and to types that have become relevant to him" (pp. 31-32). This process proceeds most often subconsciously, constantly changing and developing. Changes occur when the range of persons who are significant for the individual extends: "from mother to all humanity," that is, from birth to death.

The process of forming an individual's identity throughout his life involves the emergence of new identifications. The typology of the basic strategies for identification and formation of identity is based on the choice of differentiated identification objects, according to which it can be said whether a person is

aimed at recognizing his uniqueness, searching and realizing personal meanings. As a rule, two main identification strategies are distinguished: a strategy of personal identity and social. The first strategy, according to Leont'ev (2010), implies the gradual predominance of the personal component over the social, an increase in independence, the identification of oneself as an autonomous person. According to the theory of E. Fromm, the strategy of personal identity refers to self-identity – the formation of the concept of one's self, one's own system of values, and a picture of the world. To identify with your own I, to identify yourself as a separate unit, a person must have a high level of reflexivity and selectivity, the ability to establish boundaries between the I, “mine” and the non-I, “not mine”. This makes it possible to separate oneself from others, to get rid of various forms of symbiotic dependencies, and also to expand its boundaries, adding to its own self only components that find its response, which as a result ensures identity with itself (as cited in Poleva, 2018).

When choosing a group as an object of identification, the strategy of social identity becomes dominant. The person's choice of groups and roles as objects of identification has a direct impact on identifying himself with them. The strategy of social identity is reflected in the descriptions of oneself as a person, when self-ideas are formed on the basis of the image of the Self that others see. Such social perceptions of oneself depend on the communicative situation. According to Leont'ev (2010), it is they who create the labyrinth of human identities. This strategy threatens a partial or complete refusal of a person from his own self. A similar refusal by Fromm was defined by the concept of “escape from freedom”. A person's desire to identify himself with a group leads to the loss of his own Self and merging with the saving “We” (as cited in Poleva, 2018).

According to most researchers such as Deaux, Brown J. & Smart S., Stryker S., who worked in this paradigm, social identity is the result of self-identifications of a person with various social categories and, together with personal identity, is an important regulator of social behaviour. The idea of the existence of two aspects of identity, which are oriented both to society and to the uniqueness of a person, was most fully embodied in Tajfel's theory of social identity and Turner's theory of self-categorization (as cited in Tajfel & Turner, 1986).

Identity, or “Self-concept”, appears in these theories as a cognitive system that regulates human behaviour in different conditions. This system includes two subsystems: personal identity and social identity. Personal identity is understood as self-determination in terms of physical, intellectual and moral traits. Social identity is as a person's belonging to various social categories: race, nationality, gender, group, etc. According to Tajfel (1982), personal and social identities are two poles, while the first is the behaviour determined by personal identity, the second is determined by social identity. Typical behaviour, as the scientist notes, is located between these two poles (pp. 1-39).

Breakwell (1987) believes that personal and social identities are interconnected, that is, these identities do not represent different types of one identity, but act as different points in the development of the second (social) one (pp. 94-114). According to Tajfel (1982), the achievement of identity is possible through the development of personal identity and the formation of social identity. To adapt to various situations, the self-concept is able to regulate human behaviour, in turn emphasizing awareness of one or another identity (Tajfel, 1982, pp. 1-39). Turner (1985) developed the idea of bipolarity and introduced the term “social categorization”, which is one of the most important and is understood as a system of

orientations that determines a person's specific place in society. Turner suggests considering three hierarchical levels of the process of self-categorization (Turner, 1985; Kiseleva & Orestova, 2018):

- The level of categorization of oneself as a human being.
- Self-categorization of oneself as a member of a social group (level of social identity).
- Personal self-categorization (level of personal identity).

Studies, primarily of the second level, show that J. Turner understood by social identity the total amount of personal identifications, which are specific social categories internalized into the cognitive component of the self-concept (Belinskaya & Tikhomandritskaya, 2001).

Breakwell (1987) also notes the social origin of identity, and she puts personal identity in the background, and social in the foreground. Interacting with society, a person knows himself. The categories of social identity and social roles that a person assimilates help: a) to form a structure of personal identity; b) to evaluate the elements of the content structure (moral and social norms set by the reference group). Therefore, personal identity, according to Breakwell (1987), is a product of social identity, but, as the author notes, if a personal identity is formed, then it has an active influence on the social one (pp. 94-114).

Cooley (1996) believed that a person is formed in the process of interaction with other people, due to which he creates his own "the Looking Glass Self", consisting of three elements (pp. 314-327):

- how, in our opinion, others perceive us;
- how, in our opinion, they react to what they see;
- how we respond to the reaction we perceive of others.

Mead (1996) believed that "Self" is a social product that is formed on the basis of relationships with other people. Mead (1996) argued that, being born, a person does not have an identity; it arises as a result of his social interaction with other people. In his opinion, it arises only when an individual joins a social group, communicates with members of this group (pp. 213-221).

Thus, uncertainty and variability are associated with a violation of the integrity of identity – both its individual parts and the time perspective, and also, presumably, increase the heterochronism of the psychological chronotope in a multicultural, rather than monocultural, space. Plurality limits the choice of identification group and socialization space. These "challenges" of transitivity facing modern society so complicate the situation that they critically exclude the possibility of searching for rational strategies for constructing adequate models of socialization and personal development.

In the process of socialization of modern youth, the social ideas of the younger generation about success and successfulness become relevant. These concepts are cultivated in the media and are widespread. Programs, advertising, the general context of social interaction are permeated by the understanding that in the twenty-first century it is necessary to prepare a successful person from an early age who will be a reference model. But everyone brings their own understanding to this definition and often success means high material status, a prestigious profession, aggressiveness, uncompromisingness, mobility and not always high intelligence and hard work.

The most developed and studied are the ideas about success in the field of labour or professional activity, as well as in the field of social relations. The key psychological characteristics in the context of

labour (professional) activity are: the ability of a person to be active in a particular area; the degree of development of the motivational sphere; development of the "Self-concept" and its components; orientation of the personality with its characteristic: motivation for achievement; values; communication skills; cognitive abilities; ability to control emotions.

As for the sphere of public relations (social environment), the following psychological characteristics act as criteria for success (of a person or his activity):

- determination as the desire to achieve a goal, despite the difficulties;
- confidence;
- sociability;
- a desire to develop oneself;
- responsibility;
- satisfaction;
- self-realization;
- self-efficacy.

Meanwhile, success and the content of ideas about success are the most important aspect of the problem of personal development as a whole. This issue acquires special significance in adolescence and in the period of youth, when the psychological mechanisms of future life and professional self-determination, personal identity are formed. Representations of success and successfulness reflect the values of modern youth, its moral and ethical guidelines, life goals and ways to achieve them, largely determine the formation of life scenarios. Thus, the problem of studying the specifics of ideas about success in modern youth is quite relevant.

3. Research Questions

It must be emphasized that the formation of identity in the technological, transitive world is simultaneously characterized by an increase in the number of factors included in group and sociocultural identity, and an increase in the significant role of the personality factor in the overall structure of identity. Such a complex nature of identity is assessed by researchers as a factor that increases the tolerance for uncertainty, promotes socialization and positive socialization in conditions of social transitivity. The desire to be successful and the ability to realize this intention is an important point in the process of socialization of modern youth in a new technological and transitive world.

4. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of our empirical study was to study the characteristics of social identity and ideas about success in modern youth as indicators of socialization in a technological society.

Sample: the study involved 192 people (N = 192) aged 19 to 25 years, studying at Moscow universities at the faculties of psychology and journalism. The study was conducted in 2018-2019.

5. Research Methods

1. Methodology “Structure of social identity” (Martsinkovskaya, 2015b). Purpose is to identify the features of the structure of social identity.
2. Methodology “Successful person” (Martsinkovskaya, 2015b). Purpose is to study the social concept of success in modern society.
3. Method of mathematical statistics and data processing: the Pearson correlation.

6. Findings

Analysis of the results of the social identity structure study among modern youth made it possible to identify priority areas: family, hobbies, generation, profession, gender, humanity, country, city, nationality, religion. In the first place with a significant difference with subsequent priorities, respondents put the family (2.46). Hobby (4) was the second most popular. The third and fourth most important was the identification with the generation (4.3) and professional interests (4.7). With a small gap, gender-role identification (5.3) and involvement in humanity (5.4) are popular among study participants. Almost equal positions belong to ownership of the country (6.3) and the city (6.85). Identification with one's nationality (7.1) and religion (8.5) close this list.

Data from a study of ideas about success showed that among 93% of modern youth, the activity aspect forms the basis of ideas about success in the modern world. Students called patience / perseverance, hard work, education / knowledge, determination / activity, professionalism / experience, multitasking / versatile interests the most popular characteristics that are necessary for success. Group affiliation among 76% of respondents is included in the picture of ideas about success, and this is the second most popular category. Representatives of modern youth noted that the ability to build social ties, communicate, and maintain relationships in various reference groups occupies an important place to achieve success in the modern world. They noted sociability, the ability to determine the needs and interests of others, the openness to establish and maintain new contacts, the ability to adhere to intragroup rules, the ease of communication, the sense of humour. For 48% of youth, the humanistic aspect is included in the picture of ideas about success in modern society.

Young people noted that it is important to benefit others, to take care of the world around them, to take into account the interests of others and to be ready to give up their desires and interests for the common good. It is noteworthy that 10% of the participants in the study had characteristics that could be classified as conditionally ambivalent or negative, censured in society; they are lying, the ability to play roles, to manipulate in order to achieve goals, arrogance, unscrupulousness and the ability to eliminate competitors, not to wait for recognition and approval, and to earn a place in this world, to rely only on yourself and not think about others. It is worth noting that only 35% of young people have a material aspect included in the ideas about success in modern society. Respondents noted the possession of certain status items, for example, an expensive car, branded clothing, luxury cosmetics and technological innovations, real estate in a prestigious area, the presence of savings, etc., as indicators of success.

So, in the presented sample, young people are optimistic and have positive ideas about the variability of the realization of professional potentials in modern society. They aware and appreciate education,

knowledge and experience in achieving professional goals. They note the importance of social contacts and mutual assistance in relations. They show humanistic values in ideas about success. It is noteworthy that modern youth recognizes the value of material values and notes privileges in a situation of material security, but in the descriptions received the values of professional and personal realization and freedom prevail as indicators of success, and not the presence of specific widely recognized attributes of high material status. Representatives of modern youth highly value family affiliation and seek to maintain contact with family members. At the same time, they are focused on their hobbies and personal interests. They are interested in what is happening among their peers and the whole of humanity, to a lesser extent they are limited by the gender framework and borders of the country and their city. On the periphery of interests they have a national and religious affiliation.

Table 01. Correlation relationships between indicators of the social identity structure in modern youth

Indicators of the structure of social identity	Activity aspect	Humanistic aspect	Material focus	Group affiliation
Activity aspect		-,605**	,225*	-,122
Humanistic aspect	-,605**		,023	,135
Material focus	,225*	,023		,012
Group affiliation	-,122	,135	,012	

Note: The Pearson correlation. Statistical significance ** p < 0.01; * p < 0.05.

Table 02. Correlation relationships between indicators of ideas about success in modern youth

Indicators of success	Family	Humanity	Country	City	Nationality	Religion	Profession	Generation	Gender	Hobby
Family		-,287**	-,162	-,009	,205	,097	-,107	-,157	-,060	-,291**
Humanity	-,287**		,005	-,447**	-,194	,063	-,219*	-,288**	-,007	-,055
Country	-,162	,005		,149	-,028	-,218*	-,266*	-,023	-,355**	-,102
City	-,009	-,447**	,149		,086	-,157	-,091	-,027	-,327**	,065
Nationality	,205	-,194	-,028	,086		,257*	-,293**	-,131	-,193	-,432**
Religion	,097	,063	-,218*	-,157	,257*		-,158	-,052	-,174	-,418**
Profession	-,107	-,219*	-,266*	-,091	-,293**	-,158		,018	-,088	,140
Generation	-,157	-,288**	-,023	-,027	-,131	-,052	,018		,042	-,228*
Gender	-,060	-,007	-,355**	-,327**	-,193	-,174	-,088	,042		,068
Hobby	-,291**	-,055	-,102	,065	-,432**	-,418**	,140	-,228*	,068	

Note: The Pearson correlation. Statistical significance **p<0,01; *p<0,05.

A comparison of the categories of the structure of social identity in the presented sample (Table 01) showed the predominance of negative significant correlations. Negative correlations were identified by categories Family / Humanity (-, 287 **), Family / Hobby (-, 291 **). Categories Humanity / City (-, 447 **), Humanity / Generation (-, 288 **), Humanity / Profession (-, 219 *), Country / Religion (-, 218 *), Country / Profession (-, 266 *), Country / Gender (-, 355 **) and City / Gender (-, 327 **) also showed a negative correlation. One positive correlation was obtained for the categories Nationality / Religion (, 257 *). Negative correlations were identified on the scales Nationality / Profession (-, 293 **) and Nationality

/ Hobby (-, 432 **). And another significant negative correlation was obtained for the Religion / Hobby categories (-, 418 **). Thus, in most cases, an increase in one variable is associated with a decrease in another, which was confirmed by the obtained negative correlations for the presented categories of the structure of social identity.

A correlation analysis of the study of ideas about success in modern youth (Table 02) showed a negative correlation by categories of the Activity aspect / Humanistic aspect (-, 605 **) and a positive correlation by the Activity aspect / Material focus (, 225 *). Thus, based on the obtained correlation, we can assume that in the presented sample there is a tendency to highly evaluate personal activity and self-realization against the background of a decrease in the value of altruism and self-sacrifice. And the increase in the value of self-actualization entails the desire to increase the value of material status.

7. Conclusion

The socialization of modern youth in a technological society is updated through social identity and ideas about success.

The social identity of modern youth in a technological society is characterized by the fact that young people, on the one hand, adhere to traditional identification strategies and practices in line with the institution of the family, and on the other hand, are focused on the search for a personal strategy of self-identification in professional realization and hobbies.

The ideas about success among modern youth in a technological society are distinguished by recognition of the importance of personal initiative and activity in the pursuit of self-realization, the value of education and career progression, the need for social recognition and financial well-being.

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