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Motivation and Development of Senior Pupil’s Personality

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Abstract

Motivation system in senior adolescent and youth age (students of the 9th and 11th forms) was studied on the basis of a complex approach and a comparative analysis of emotional attitude and a deliberate preference of values (those general and educational). It was shown, that the significance and accessibility of analyzed groups of values to a considerable extent are determined by a dominant motivation. Besides, a tendency was found out of contraposition of a conscious and emotional attitude to values, – the values, which are highly attractive in the motivation-and-emotional plane, on the level of conscience are underestimated, as compared with other ones. This determines also the further trend of development of a personality in the direction of acceptance of socially approved general and educational values, leads to convergence of personality development of schoolchildren at that stage of their life. Besides, there were also revealed some gender features of value orientations, related to the outstripping development of girls, as compared to boys of the same age.

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1. Introduction

The motivation system in the senior adolescent and youthful age not only determines the content of the educational activities, but also sets up personal development. The period of senior schoolchildren age is connected to an intensive development of the entire personal structure, and in particular, to the motivation necessity sphere. In that transitional moment, new value orientations arise, as well as new necessities and interests, and on that basis new personal qualities are formed. A stable hierarchical structure of the motivation sphere appears which in its developed form presupposes an assimilation of certain moral values [1]. The system of value orientations determines the pithy side of a life perspective as a system of adaptations and the means of assimilation of the interior world, which assures a higher type of regulation of behavior. As noted by D.A. Leontiev [2], as to their functional place and role in the motivation structure, the personal values refer in a sufficiently obvious way to the class of stable motivation formations or sources of motivation.

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With development of a personality, both values and motives undergo a certain interdependent evolution [3]. At the boundary of development in the transitional period, the value orientations of schoolchildren often come in conflict with the established system of motives and necessities, leading to their qualitative reconstruction [4]. With all that, the main indicator of the personal development can be considered the grade of transition of originally comprehended values from the category of just known to regulators of behavior, the grade of their integration to the common motivation system. The personal development trend, being a certain kind of the “trend vector”, can be diagnosed through a comparative analysis of emotional (mainly an unconscious attitude to values) and deliberately assimilated social norms and rules of relationship [5]. In this connection, the correlation of already existing motives and assimilated value orientations (which determine the area of the nearest development of motives) can be examined as one of mechanisms of the personal growth and development [3].

It results in the fact, that the trend of personal development of senior schoolchildren is determined by two interconnected motives. On one side, it is a previously formed individual system of motives (individual profile, determined also by predominance of motives of educational activity, specific to every pupil), on which it depend, which values will be taken as the leading trend of personal development. And on the other side, they are socially preset norms, requirements and rules, which determine the system of basic values, common to all mankind. From the point of view of a social purpose of education and training, such values should be to an equal extent adopted by all schoolchildren during their normal maturation, and should form a corresponding system of motivation of educational activity and a subsequent adult life [6], [7]. In such a way, the first reason should intensify individual peculiarities of the system of motivation and values, lead to a divergent development of senior schoolchildren, while the second one, on the contrary, promotes unification of systems of motivation and values and should lead to convergence of personal development. However, it is not clear, how the development of senior schoolchildren takes place from the point of view of correlation, actually existent motivation and accepted values, which of such motives affects in a stronger way the formation of a personality? Considering all that, the task of a practical research requires a complex approach and a comparative analysis of an emotional attitude and a deliberate preference of values, exposure of their significance and accessibility in the future. The purpose of this research was to find out specific features of value orientations (of the systems of basic human and educational values from the point of view of their significance and accessibility in the future, which reflects the trend of a personal growth) of senior schoolchildren, depending on their educational motivation (as per types of a dominant motive).

2. Methods

The research was conducted with schoolchildren of the 9th – 11th forms in Moscow in the period from 2009 through 2011, totally obtained 196 reports (of which 54 reports from boys of the 9th form and 23 reports from boys of the 11th forms; 81 report was obtained from girls of the 9th form and 38 reports from girls of the 11th form).

A student first performed rating of 22 values by means of their comparison two by two from the point of view of their significance for him (parameter “value”), in conformity with the methods of E.B.Fantalova [8]. Then he arranged the same values, realizing the choice in the pair of the value, which, in his opinion, can be easier achieved in the future (parameter “accessibility”) A set of 22 values was used: 10 values of the school life and 12 values common to all mankind (partially, the set included terminal values of the M.Rokich’s methods).

Besides, every pupil was supposed to evaluate with a number from -3 to +3 each of 10 values of the school life (self-perfection in studies, interesting conversation, acknowledgement in the student body, deep and solid knowledge, my authority, loyal and good friends, successful studies, approval of his associates, to be better than the others, overcoming of obstacles) according to the scale system, preset by a pair of adjectives (25 pairs of adjectives were used), in accordance with the methods of Semantic differential of Ch.Osgud, adapted by V.F.Petrenko [9]. The procedure of analysis was the same, as described in previous researches [10] [11]. As an auxiliary method, methods of unfinished sentences by A.D.Andreeva [12] were used.
3. Results

The entire massif of received evaluations for the semantic differential of values of the school life (in total, 250 evaluations per pupil) was processed by means of the factor analysis (method of main components with subsequent “Varimax” rotation). As a result, 4 most significant factors were singled out, common for pupils of both, the 9th and the 11th forms. Interpretation of the received factors was conducted with due regard for the pithy analysis of written materials, received by the method of unfinished sentences, as well as other materials and observations, which allowed to confirm independently lawfulness of the singled out motivation types.

Factor 1 may be characterized as an emotional attitude, defined by the affiliation motivation (necessity of acceptance and self-assertion through communication). The greatest loads on it had the values: “interesting conversation” (gay, beloved, good, bright, pleasant), “loyal and good friends” (gay, strong, good, bright, pleasant, cheerful), “my authority” (bright, kind, strong), “acknowledgement in a student body” (gay, good, bright, kind). Pupils, who refer to that type, noted, that they try in school to obtain such marks, which could satisfy their parents and teachers, that it is important for them to have in school “many friends”, they suffer in school usually because of “a bad attitude of associates”.

Factor 2 describes emotional attitude, determined by the self-affirmation educational motivation. It includes the following values: “self-perfection in studies” (complicated, strenuous, hard), “acknowledgement in the student body” (hard, complicated, strenuous), “overcoming difficulties” (complicated, strenuous, hard), “deep and solid knowledge” (hard, complicated, strenuous, slow), “successful studies” (hard, complicated, strenuous), “to be better than the others” (hard, complicated, strenuous), “approval of associates” (hard, complicated, strenuous). Pupils of that type often noted, that for performance of a home task they spent too much time, but they still try to perform it carefully. They noted out, that “introduction of education without marks” is a bad idea, that the most difficult, but important for them in their studies was to achieve good marks, to pass exams, that good marks show the pupil’s effort.

Factor 3 may be designated as the factor of orientation to knowledge and successful studies (educational and cognitive motivation). Here are included the values “successful studies” (gay, strong, good, active, pleasant, hot, cheerful, beloved, clever), “deep and solid knowledge” (gay, strong, good, big, bright, pleasant, cheerful), “self-perfection in studies” (active, beloved, acute, clever, kind). Pupils of that type noted out, that they studied for “learning new things”, “to get new knowledge”, “to develop and cognize the environment”, “to get formed as a person”.

Factor 4 describes emotional attitude, determined by prestige and status (status competitive). It includes the values: “my authority” (gay, bright, fresh, beloved, strong, big) “to be better than the others” (cheerful, beloved, one’s own, acute), “acknowledgement in a student body” (active, hot, dear, fresh, acute). Pupils of that type (prestige motivation) have supplied the following motivations of studies: “to enter a prestige university”, “to find in future a prestigious job”, “to provide for oneself a brilliant future”, they mainly suffer ‘school failures”, “marks”. They study to “be successful”, “to be first-rate workers”, “to become an excellent pupil and to be the best in knowledge”.

As a result of measurement of significance of the singled out factors, every pupil obtained a quantitative evaluation of expressiveness of his emotional attitude towards corresponding values, i.e. he was characterized with a corresponding four-factor profile. Thus, it allowed to determine for every pupil the leading type of motivation attitude (according to the dominant factor) and to arrange the whole excerption in 4 groups, in order to compare in the future the results of the revealed semantic content of values (emotional attitude towards them) with the results of a deliberate preference (rating) of values.

To that purpose, in respect of the results of rating the values (their significance and accessibility in future), inside every singled out motivation group for every single value there were calculated the average and 95% lawful intervals, which allowed to reveal differences in evaluations, conditioned by the types conditioned by motivation. Besides, it is important to note, that in cases when the rate of significance of a certain value considerably exceeds the rate of its accessibility in the future, a psychological conflict takes place, which is indicative of an interior dissatisfaction, but at the same time of an incentive semantic-generating power of that
value, direction of the motivation development. However, in case when the rate of accessibility of a value exceeds its significance, one may speak of a presence of interior vacuum, which shows “satiety”, dying away of an incentive in that sphere. Coincidence of the rates of significance and availability are indicative of a coordination of personal orientations.

The obtained data show, that the significance of general values (such as “a happy family life”, “love”, “friends” and “health”) for pupils of that age exceeds the significance of concrete educational and status values for all motivation types. However, certain specifics are also revealed in the value rating. Thus, students with an educational and cognitive motivation, who are as a whole emotionally mostly attracted by the values “deep and stable knowledge” and “successful studies” at a deliberate rating do not consider such values the most significant (as with students of other motivation types), and for the value “self-perfection in studies” demonstrate even vacuum. For them the first place is occupied (apart from the basic values common for all mankind) by “freedom” and “confidence in oneself” with a small conflict. For them getting adult is determined by that area of the nearest motivation development. However, for boys the values of the acceptance and association sphere are more important, than for girls. Though with both of them in that area some vacuums are observed, while with boys the values of the cognitive and development group are more coordinated, than with girls, who value them higher and demonstrate a conflict in that area.

For a student with the status competitive motivation, we observe a good coordination in the most motivation-important spheres, - “my authority”, “to be better than the others”, “confidence in oneself”, though such values are placed at the bottom part of the rating scale (lower, than in the other motivation groups). It is just for status values to the same extent for both boys and girls. Conflicts are revealed with the values “a deep and stable knowledge”, “successful studies”, “overcoming difficulties”, “presence of good and loyal friends”, which are more significant for them, but less accessible. Evidently, it is indicative of the fact that for them it is no longer a problem, since they already have had for a long time a certain status in the group and confidence in themselves. And the conflict values in friendly relations with their age-mates and the values of receiving knowledge for them now become the most important. In such situation, the getting adult is connected with an achievement of results in studies and self-development, as well as with the perfection of inter-personal relations. As a whole, for the sphere of knowledge and self-development, conflicts are more expressed for girls, whereas for boys they are displayed only in the sphere of acceptance and association (for girls in that area we already observe vacuum, since, evidently, getting older of girls in that respect leaves behind boys).

For students with a self-affirmative educational motivation (which on the emotional level consider studies as a hard, strenuous and complicated labor) a conflict area is revealed in the values: “deep and stable knowledge”, “my authority”, “successful studies”, “confidence in oneself”. Though they reveal vacuums in such values as “cognition”, “creation”, as well as “association”, “to be better than the others”, “approval of the associates”. For them getting adult is connected with a growth of proper status and authority, also through obtaining knowledge at the account of a strenuous labor, which leads to successes in studies. However, it is characteristic, that a conflict in the spheres of knowledge and self-development is pronounced only for boys, while for girls such values are well coordinated. And for the sphere of the status values vice versa, a conflict is revealed with girls possessing such motivation type.

Students with the affiliation motivation (who emotionally are oriented to intercourse, acknowledgement and authority) at a deliberate choice, nevertheless, value rather high such values as “a deep and stable knowledge” and “a well-to-do life” with a deep interior conflict. Though on the emotional level those values are more characteristic of students with another motivation type, – self-affirmative educational motivation. Besides, the emotionally significant value “approval of the associates”, values of intercourse and acknowledgement find themselves already on a low level with an expressed vacuum, because they are not more timely for them. This is indicative of the trend of development of a personality of students with such motivation, of their aspiration for realizing themselves already in a new, adult quality (based on understanding that the future well-to-do life is conditioned by the received knowledge). As a whole, for students with such motivation type the specifics of preference of values by boys and girls are not pronounced, though in the sphere of the status values the girls have a more pronounced motivation conflict than boys.
4. Discussion

The achieved results allow for coming back to the initial problem, clarify, how development of the personality of senior schoolchildren takes place from the point of view of connection of motivation and accepted values, which of such reasons influences more the personality formation. At a comparison of deliberately rated values in connection with the type of existing motivation, there was discovered the fact of convergence of the personality development. This is manifested in the fact that, notwithstanding the initially different types of emotional preference of values, the area of conflicts and vacuums for the analyzed groups of values appeared to be practically the same, while an absolute preference of values in numerous cases appeared to be contrary to the expected one on the basis of emotional preferences. Such picture, in particular, is characteristic for the values of knowledge and development, - their significance for all types of motivation is higher, than for the educational and cognitive motivation. The significance of values of the sphere of acceptance and association for students with motivation of affiliation appeared to be not higher, than in other motivation groups. The significance of status values appeared for the status-competitive motivation also not higher, than for students with another motivation. On the other part, as previously was shown [13], to all schoolchildren the pragmatic motivation is not alien either: for instance, out of the values of the school life even students with the affiliation motivation chose, in the first run, only those subjects, which will be useful to them in future.

Thus, there was manifested an identical domination of conflicts for all motivation types (and, correspondingly, the areas of the nearest development of personality) in the field of knowledge and self-development (and a wish to study, which is not surprising for schoolchildren of the 9th -11th forms). Besides, for all schoolchildren of such age the values of acceptance and association already appear in the area of vacuums. As a whole, those results can be accounted for by the fact, that the socially preset norms, requirements and rules, must be accepted to an equal extent by everybody at the normal getting adult, and to form a corresponding system of motivation of real studies and a further adult life. As pointed out by D.A.Leontiev [13], the regulating action of values is expressed in presetting of an activity vector, which is directed to infinity. Values are experienced as ideals, – final references of a desirable state of affairs, and not only as a realization of an individual wish, but as “objectively” desirable state of affairs, well-grounded from the point of view of social standards. Thus, it favors unification of systems of motivation and values, which leads also to convergence of development of personality at this stage of life of schoolchildren.

Corresponding results also have been obtained before [3] at a protracted analysis of development of motivation. It was shown, that dynamics of changes in rating of values are not occasional, but are correlated with variation of motivation, and the system of choice of a value determines a subsequent change of motivation, as if it “led” it, determining the area of the nearest development. Thus, it is clear, that at availability of socially approved general values, being a criterion of “desirability of the desired” [13] at compatibility with strategic aims and the trend of development of social groups and social-and-cultural systems, a reapproachment of trends of the development of personality of the schoolchildren should take place.

5. Conclusion

The obtained data allow concluding, that the significance and accessibility of the analyzed groups of values to a considerable extent are determined by an actually existing (dominant) motivation. Besides, there has been revealed a tendency of a contraposition of a deliberate and emotional attitude to values with a value, highly attractive in the motivation-and-emotional plane, on the level of consciousness is being underestimated. There are also specifics, related to the schoolchildren’s sex, which demonstrate an outstripping development of girls as compared with boys. Thus, the conducted research permits us to conclude, that from the point of view of interdependence of the motivation existing at the moment and the accepted values, the second of such motives influences stronger the direction of development of a personality in senior school age. It promotes unification of
the motivation and value system, which just leads to convergence of personal development at this phase of the schoolchildren’s life.

References