

Shilova

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Relationship between Significant Life Events and Experiences in Adolescence

Natalya P. Shilova

Federal Service for Supervision of Education and Science of the Russian Federation, Moscow, Russian Federation

npshilova@outlook.com

Abstract

Introduction. The goal of research presented in this paper was to study the relationship between life events significant for adolescents and their experiences. The novelty of research consists in identification of experiences that are typical for Generation Z adolescents depending on what events in their vision of their lives they consider the most significant ones. For the first time it was demonstrated that there is a relationship between the categories of significant life events defined by adolescents and specific features of their personal experiences. **Methods.** The study was performed using projective techniques: 'Past, Present, Future' (A. L. Venger & Yu. M. Desyatnikova) and author's original projective method 'Becoming an Adult'. The study sample involved 1394 adolescents aged between 14 and 23. **Results.** The research showed that 85 % of respondents were interested in life situations that demonstrated traditional concepts of becoming an adult – in particular, adolescents paid special attention to creativity, achieving success, relativity of adulthood, and the brevity of life. Relativity of adulthood is directly associated with comprehension of adolescent experiences about the search for the meaning of life, its success or failure. It was demonstrated that on average, representatives of the Generation Z defined events that were significant in their lives in the time interval of 15 years, and most of them were associated with career and education, which reflects the expectations of the modern society, in which professional achievements act as an essential tool of social adaptation. **Discussion.** Multiple-stage analysis showed a distinct relationship between adolescent experiences of success and/or failure and life events, associated with respondents' education and career. **Conclusions.** All in all, data of the performed study demonstrate the necessity to expand educational programs with situations that will allow adolescents to experience success/failure.

Keywords

adolescence, life events, lifestyle, adolescent experiences, adolescent interests, modern adolescence, Generation Z, experience of success, time perspective, adolescent self-identification

Highlights

- More than 85 % of respondents are interested in life situations that demonstrate traditional concepts of becoming an adult.
 - Respondents pay special attention to the topics of creativity, achieving success, relativity of adulthood, and the brevity of life.
 - The relativity of adulthood is associated with the search for the meaning of life and its success and/or failure.
 - Representatives of the Generation Z, same as adolescents of previous generations, associate most of their significant life events with career and education, which reflects expectations of the society.
 - Experience of success and/or failure in adolescence is related to the importance of events in the field of education and career.
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Introduction

Adolescence is a relatively late 'invention' of the humanity. In primitive societies, this stage is a priori absent: children get ready to become adults, and once they master all the necessary skills and undergo a ritual of initiation, they are granted all the rights, liberties and responsibilities of an adult person (Mead, 1988). In modern civilization, society already regards adolescents as adults, but continues to foster them and limit their opportunities to demonstrate their adulthood, at the same time raising the standards for young people. Nowadays, the youngest generation – young people born in 1995 and later – is conventionally called 'Generation Z' (Yanitskii et al., 2019; Schwartz et al., 2017). This is the first generation that has grown up in the information age and has not seen the world without modern network digital technologies (Vorontsova & Ermolaev, 2016). For them, information resources of the Internet represent the most important source of sociocultural development, which exerts a critical influence on all spheres of their life, including education and self-identification. Since representatives of the Generation Z have a good command of information technologies, they "are quick to learn and equally quick to process information, they can instantaneously switch from one activity to another, as well as operate in multitasking mode" (Kulakova, 2018, p. 4). At the same time, modern researchers acknowledge 'an ideological gap' between the representatives of this generation and their parents, which results from the traditional model of basic values and internal personal meanings (Vorontsova & Ermolaev, 2016; Danilov, Grishchenko, & Shchelkova, 2017; Giordano, 2019). These studies reveal the differences between the generation of modern adolescents and previous generations, but they do not explain why, despite having informational freedom and ability to process information quickly, not all representatives of the modern generation can be successful in their self-identification and professional development.

In the context of this discussion, we believe that increasing relevance can be attributed to the specific character of the social situation of adolescent development, distinguished in classical Soviet psychology. Unlike children, who discover a new stable form at each next stage of their childhood,

adolescents face the entire diversity of their lifeworld forms (Vygotsky, 2013). L. S. Vygotsky defined a unit of social situation of development as '*perezhivanie*', the concept which encompasses both the individual – with all his or her motives, aspirations, and psychological features – and the environment – i.e. something that is experienced. Following L. S. Vygotsky, we will regard '*perezhivanie*' (experience) as a complex indicator of adolescent development.

Modern researchers indicate that all the interests of adolescents revolve around the problem of choosing their life path and future career, when the dream, in which anything is possible, and the ideal, as an abstract reference, gradually turn into a more or less realistic plan of actions. For adolescents, the subject of reflection is not only the final result, but also the means of achieving it (Bukharina & Tolstykh, 2019; Danilova, 2020; Kurus' & Soldatova, 2020; Adelman et al., 2017). Young people experience adolescence in a positive way, if they have an opportunity to develop stable educational interests, make choices in their own life and educational space (Adelman et al., 2017), engage in the subject area of their future career and the range of related social tasks (Chesnokova, Churbanova, & Molchanov, 2019), and manage their own life in the time perspective (Bukharina & Tolstykh, 2019; Wilt, Thomas, & McAdams, 2019). Thus, experiencing of one's future life and realization of these experiences allow adolescents to choose their life path.

Representation of one's own life is characterized by its qualitative fullness, i.e. goals, values, meanings, obtainment of self, as well as by determination of life events in the time perspective. In psychology, the problem of time perspective has been studied by Frank (1939), Lewin (2000), Nuttin (1984), Abul'khanova (2017), Golovakha & Kronik (1984), and many others. They justifiably state that in adolescence time perspective significantly extends, and so choice of a career and attainment of a professional degree can be regarded as the first ideal goal, i.e. an event that for a long time determines the life path of an individual and links together all other life events. At the same time, modern studies show that specific aspects of time perspective can facilitate negative experiences (Zakharova & Trusova, 2019; Rubin, Wetzler, & Nebes, 1986). Uncertainty of a lifelong time perspective at the beginning of professional self-identification can affect the successfulness of academic activity (Bukharina & Tolstykh, 2019) and in late adolescence may manifest itself as an experience of insufficient self-fulfillment, freedom, independence, as well as family problems, feeling of loneliness, and professional failure (Shilova, 2018). This tendency is reinforced by large amounts of information available to the Generation Z. Unbalanced time perspective, negative vision of the future, disinclination to plan the events of one's life and to set life goals can all become reasons for a low level of self-fulfillment (Vedeneeva & Zabelina, 2019).

At the same time, results of modern research show that logical perception of the sequence of 'life events', including career-related ones, as well as psychological orientation of these events towards present and future demonstrate adequate self-perception and social positioning in adolescence (Makushina, 2019). Moreover, the study by Lukina & Solov'eva (2019) proves that the longer the time perspective, in which an adolescent understands the outcome of his or her future professional activity, the greater his or her willingness to obtain an education on a higher professional level. In adolescence, time perception is characterized by recognizing it as a resource, partially realized in the present and in the future in the form of space for implementing life projects (Boiko, 2019). Specifically, modern studies show that university students who structure their current time with orientation towards the future demonstrate higher academic performance compared to those who are focused on the present and perceive future as an abstract emotional image (Bredun, Balanev, Vaulina, Krasnoryadtseva, & Shcheglova, 2020).

Hence, in our study of personality formation in adolescence, we consider it constructive to focus on the influence of life events and their perception in one's own life in the time perspective. In this context, the most significant events are associated with career and education. However, the question of how significant these events are for the representatives of the modern generation, who have informational freedom and ability to process information quickly, remains open in modern psychology. As adolescents grow older and master the full range of experiences, their successful self-identification and professional development imply creativity, self-identification and self-realization of an individual, implementation of one's goals and projects in the settings of a complex lifeworld (Zakharova & Trusova, 2019). At the same time, distinctive characteristics of experiences, associated with career and professional education, have never been an object of detailed research. Therefore, our study had the following *empirical* objectives:

1. To assess the significance of different categories of life events in modern adolescents' perception of their life in the time perspective.
2. To identify experiences and life interests that young people associate with the life goal of adolescence.
3. To identify differences in adolescents' experiences depending on the category of events that are significant in their lives.

In this study, we assumed that there are steady correlations between the experience of success/failure and the significance of education and career in the description of one's life events. Hence, the *goal* of our study was to examine a relationship between life events that are significant for adolescents and their experiences.

Methods

Participants of the study were adolescent boys and girls aged between 14 and 23 living in the Russian Federation. The sample was comprised of 1394 boys and girls of the indicated age group. Age distribution of study participants was the following: 14-year-olds – 157, 15-year-olds – 120, 16-year-olds – 313, 17-year-olds – 255, 18-year-olds – 161, 19-year-olds – 102, 20-year-olds – 85, 21-year-olds – 107, 22-year-olds – 43, 23-year-olds – 51. The sample was formed according to the snowball principle. We emailed a link to our study to the educational institutions of Russia and asked to recruit as many participants as possible between 14 and 23 years old. To those who were willing to participate, we described test conditions and provided a personal computer. From each participant we received a consent to take part in the research. The study was carried out in any location convenient for the test subject, with the use of a personal computer or a laptop. To solve the research tasks, we analyzed questionnaire data and results of two projective methods.

The first research method was the 'Past, Present, Future' technique developed by Venger and Desyatnikova (1995). Study participants were asked to write down five most important events in their past, present, and future life. Additionally adolescents specified a time period, when each of these events happened or was supposed to happen. We analyzed the differences in time perspective of the life space using characteristics of time distance between the past and the present, the future and the present, and the depth of life space, which included all past, present, and future events. Qualitative assessment of significant events was performed by means of content analysis.

The second research method that we used was our original projective technique 'Becoming an Adult' (Shilova, 2019), implemented as a software program. The stimuli material of the method was a classical image of young age, portrayed in the feature film 'Practical Joke' ('Rozygrysh'),

1976. This movie captures typical features of young age, both in general and in particular actions of a specific character (Shilova, 2019). Several windows were simultaneously open on the screen:

- video fragments of the ‘Practical Joke’ (1976);
- questions and fields for writing a detailed answer about the fragment.

Study participants were asked to watch several video fragments and after each one answer the questions online. Thus, in the course of the study each respondent watched the suggested movie fragment and answered the questions about it. Answers to the given questions show us, in what terms adolescents interpret their objective at current age, what experiences and life interests they associate with the life task of adolescence. Selection of movie fragments and formulation of related questions were performed by five experts (psychologists and teachers with academic degrees) (Shilova, 2019).

Qualitative data, obtained by both methods, was structured and analyzed using content analysis by applying step-wise classification and generalization to semantic units of the text. Solving these problems implied the use of both qualitative descriptions and correlation analysis. To ensure validity, three experts – psychologists and teachers, candidates of sciences – analyzed events given as answers to the questions of the first method, as well as descriptions of the scenes seen by adolescents. In case of differences in the interpretation of obtained results, they were collectively discussed in order to come to the final evaluation. Before doing the main scope of the study, we performed pilot tests. In the process of pilot research, a small sample was used to develop a system of rules for evaluating all types of expressions that we expected to see at the main stage of the study (Shilova, 2019).

When choosing variables for content analysis according to the first method, we relied on the works by Nuttin (1984), which identified criteria for qualitative analysis of the time perspective. We also proceeded from his concept that individual categories of analysis can be absent in some samples. Therefore, at the first stage we identified those categories that were significant for our sample. Such topics of significant events included *occupation* (events related to the activity aimed at doing something (this category includes both career and education)), *communication* (events related to contacts with other people), and *entertainment* (events related to recreation, games, and amusement).

When choosing variables for content analysis according to the second method, we relied on our previous results, where we analyzed a large number of research works on adolescence, presented results of testing the proposed method, and identified the key indicators of becoming an adult (Shilova, 2019).

Analysis of obtained results was carried out in accordance with the following criteria:

1. What do adolescents find interesting? This criterion was used to analyze answers to the question ‘What thoughts of the characters seemed interesting to you?’ that we asked after the first video fragment, where ‘Schoolchildren skip a chemistry class and play the guitar. The deputy head teacher sees it, scolds them, and sends them to class. Meanwhile, young boys assert their adulthood and independence in their choice of actions’.
2. What experiences do adolescents have? This criterion was used to analyze answers to the question ‘What experiences do film characters have?’, asked after the next movie fragment, where ‘Son and father talk about how a boy’s life may turn out, and son’s arguments are closer to the classical arguments of a grown-up man’ (Shilova, 2019).

In the process of testing, we identified the following indicators: (a) interest towards creativity,

(b) interest towards relativity of adulthood and the brevity of life, (c) interest towards achieving success, (d) experience concerning the opposition of success and failure, (e) search for the meaning of life, (f) experience concerning the fullness of life and life achievements, (g) experience concerning time, (h) experience concerning childishness and adulthood (Shilova, 2019). These indicators were subsequently used in the content analysis.

To evaluate the significance of relationship between identified features, we performed correlation analysis. Correlation analysis of qualitative features of the important events, identified using the first method, was carried out using Pearson correlation coefficient, since both variables were measured on an interval scale. Significance levels of 0.05 and 0.01 were utilized. Statistical significance of differences in the answers obtained using the second method was estimated using the chi-square criterion and contingency tables. These methods allowed us to identify the main types of correlations, if the standardized residual was greater than 2 (values of standardized residuals '2' and '-2' were considered critical for finding a correlation). Results of two methods were compared using Student's t-test, the effect size was calculated with Cohen's d coefficient.

Results

As a result of the *first stage of our research*, we obtained a list of significant life events, each of them specified in time by the study participants. For some events, study participants specified a year when the event occurred and even its date; for future events they usually specified the number of years, after which the event would occur; present-time events were usually identified as something that was happening at that moment, that day, that month, or that week. As a result of analyzing the indicated time periods, we established that an average time interval, which contained all mentioned significant events, amounted to 15 years for all study participants from 14 to 23 years old, regardless of their age. On average, important events of the past fell into the period of 9.16 years, events of the future – 7.43 years.

In total, study participants mentioned 12953 events. Experts classified 46.2 % of them as 'occupation', 35 % – as 'communication', 18.8 % – as 'entertainment'. Obtained data broken down by age are presented in Table 1.

Table 1 contains information about the percentage of important events, broken down by age. The respondents associate the majority of significant events with the activity oriented towards career and education (*occupation*). An exception is provided by middle adolescents, whose representations contain significantly less events focused on occupation, compared to the past events of other categories. Taken as a whole, the number of past and present events associated with occupation increases, as the respondents grow older, whereas the respective number of future events slightly decreases. In late adolescence, most events in the field of education and career are regarded as significant in the past, while the future contains less such events. These results can be explained by age characteristics of the studied sample: the oldest study participants – 22- and 23-year-old adolescents – in most cases have already earned a professional degree and found employment, hence, in their opinion, the significance of this category of events might be more in the past and less in the future compared to younger respondents. On the contrary, middle adolescents most often have only one significant past event associated with occupation – their admission to school, but in the future they envision more events related to career and education.

Table 1

Categories of important events broken down by age (N = 1394)

<u>Age, years</u>	<u>Number of mentioned events</u>	<u>Occupation (past), %</u>	<u>Communication (past), %</u>	<u>Entertainment (past), %</u>	<u>Occupation (present), %</u>	<u>Communication (present), %</u>	<u>Entertainment (present), %</u>	<u>Occupation (future), %</u>	<u>Communication (future), %</u>	<u>Entertainment (future), %</u>
14	1398	7.4	15	10	12	12	8.5	20.2	8.5	6.4
15	1213	9.6	13	9.5	12.3	12.4	7.9	18.7	9.5	7.1
16	1477	12.5	13	7.5	13.2	12.3	6.4	18.6	11	5.5
17	1448	13.2	12.9	7.7	14.1	12.7	6.1	18.6	10	4.7
18	1390	14	13.1	6.9	14.1	12.9	4.6	18	11.3	5.1
19	1215	16.5	11.6	6.6	14.5	12.3	4.3	18.2	11	5
20	1215	17	11.4	6.2	17	10.6	3.8	18	12	4
21	1220	17.1	11.1	6	17.2	10.6	3.9	18.4	12	3.7
22	1187	18.7	11.4	4.7	18	9.3	3.7	19.5	11.5	3.2
23	1190	19.2	11.3	5.1	19.8	8.4	3.2	18.5	11.6	2.9

With an increase in respondents' age, the number of communication-related events oriented decreases in the past and present and increases in the future. For middle adolescents, events associated with communication a priori have greater significance than for any other age group. Late adolescents who participated in the study were less inclined to mention important communication-related events in their past or present lives.

Events associated with entertainment are less often identified as significant, and with an increasing respondents' age, their number has a tendency to decrease even more.

Subsequently, Pearson correlation coefficient was used to analyze specific content of important events from the viewpoint of a relationship between identified event categories in a certain time interval (past, present, future) and increasing age. Obtained data is presented in Table 2.

Table 2

Correlation between the categories of important events and increasing age (N = 1394)

<u>Period of life</u>	<u>Category of events</u>	<u>Age</u>
Past	Occupation	0.1885**
	Communication	-0.0763**
	Entertainment	-0.1419**
Present	Occupation	-0.0028
	Communication	-0.0545*
	Entertainment	-0.1573**
Future	Occupation	-0.0679*
	Communication	0.0510
	Entertainment	-0.0727**

Note: * $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$.

Table 2 demonstrates a correlation between the categories of significant events occurring in a certain life period of an adolescent, in which these events have statistically significant correlation with the age of respondents. Obtained values of correlation between age and important life events are mostly negative, i.e. they indicate that the number of important events decreases with age. In particular, with increasing age, in the representation of adolescents there are significantly less events associated with recreation and entertainment. It was also statistically confirmed that respondents of the study were more inclined to mention education- and career-related events in their representations of the past and less so in the future. Statistical differences in the number of communication-related events are confirmed by the data: their number decreases in the representations of past and present periods of life with increasing age of the respondents. At the same time, an increase in the number of communication-related events in the future is not supported by the data.

The second stage of the research was aimed at studying the interests and experiences of adolescents. In terms of the first criterion, when the respondents answered the question "What thoughts of the characters seemed interesting to you?", we received 1364 statements. As a result of content analysis performed by the experts, all the statements were divided into four groups of topics that contained top key points of adolescent interests.

Creativity (35.8 % of statements). For example, "Desire to have one's own creative path, to create, to be persistent in studying and hardworking" or "What I found interesting is the thought that 16 is not childhood anymore. And that in each activity a person should convey something of his own. In creative work, your activity conveys your soul, your emotions, your view on life, and your thoughts. If a person has a beautiful soul, then his painting, his music, his poems, or stories will be magnificent, and they will inspire others. You cannot be someone else's shadow or copy, you should always remain yourself, as every human being is beautiful in his own way".

Relativity of adulthood and brevity of life (14.7 % of statements). For example, "That they are almost 16, but they are still not regarded as adults", or "That wasting time is always bad, and you should direct your energy towards your goals and aspirations", or "What really struck a chord with me was the opening phrase of the protagonist 'but there is no time anyway'. Time is irreversibly slipping away, and you cannot retrieve lost opportunities. You should always think about that".

Achievement of success (34.8 % of statements). For example, "It is important not to get lost in the crowd, to have something original, all your own. You need to express your vision of the world. You also need to listen to your heart and ignore the opinions of those, who see your hobby as a waste of time" or "What matters is individuality, innovation, a specific message. You should not underestimate the capabilities of adolescents. History is full of examples of geniuses who revealed their potential in their youth".

Refusal (14.7 % of statements). Here we mostly gathered statements that the respondents did not find anything of interest in the movie fragment.

In terms of the second criterion, when the respondents answered the question 'What do film characters experience?', we received 1186 statements. As a result of content analysis, we identified six prevailing topics of statements that contained top key points of adolescent experiences.

Success/failure (17.1 % of statements). For example, "The father experiences anxiety that his son in his pursuit of success and recognition would not be able to enjoy life as it is. And the son is concerned that his father is not living to his full potential to achieve success and recognition" or "The father experiences worry for his son, that he 'grew old' too early; in his turn, the son is

concerned about unrealized ambitions of his father and believes that he had failed in life".

Search for the meaning of life (24.1 % of statements). For example, "That the meaning of life is to overcome difficulties".

Fullness of life / life achievements (5.9 % of statements). For example, "The son believes that the most important in life is to achieve something by overcoming difficulties and ignores the happiness and all the life beauties in front of him. The father has long outgrown his son's perspective, and his reasoning is more down-to-earth".

Future/present, anything about time (20.8 % of statements). For example, "The future that is going to happen to the young boy and that has already happened to his father" or "The present of Oleg and his father's family and the future that has not happened".

Childishness/adulthood (10.5 % of statements). For example, "That they are different, and the connection between them is getting thinner, and they may altogether stop understanding each other and be concerned about each other's future" or "The son thinks that his parents consider him a child".

Refusal (21.5 % of statements). Here we mostly gathered statements that the respondents did not relate to the characters in the movie fragment.

Significant correlations between adolescents' opinions about the experiences of movie characters and interesting thoughts are presented in Table 3.

Table 3

Correlation between adolescents' interests and experiences (N = 1394)

		What do film characters (Oleg and his father) experience in this fragment?					
		Refusal	Success/failure	Search for the meaning of life	Fullness of life/ life achievements	Future/present, anything about time	Childishness/ adulthood
What thoughts of the characters seemed interesting to you?	Creativity	-1.4	1.4	-0.8	-0.5	0.3	1.4
	Relativity of adulthood and brevity of life	<u>-4.0*</u>	<u>2.0*</u>	<u>2.7*</u>	0.2	-0.3	-0.7
	Achievement of success	<u>-2.2*</u>	0.0	-0.4	1.4	1.9	0.0
	Refusal	<u>9.6*</u>	<u>-4.2*</u>	-0.9	-1.6	<u>-3.1*</u>	-1.4

Note: * value of standardized residual higher than threshold (-2; 2).

When we asked about the interesting thoughts of the characters in the fragment, those respondents who singled out the idea about the relativity of adulthood and the brevity of life, believed that the characters had concerns about the search for the meaning of life and/or its success/failure. Those adolescents, who could not name any interesting thoughts of the characters in the fragment, rather disagreed that the characters had experiences concerning the opposition of success and failure, or concerning the future, present, and time in general. Those who could not distinguish what the characters in the fragment were experiencing mostly had no interest in the thoughts about the relativity of adulthood and life brevity, as well as the thoughts about success and achievements in life. Respondents who refused to answer one of the questions were more likely to refuse the second time.

At the **third stage of research**, we studied the differences in the experiences of adolescents in life representations with the prevalence of events oriented towards occupation, communication, or entertainment. In order to do that, we compared the answers of respondents obtained by both methods. All the data obtained by the second method were divided into three groups depending on the category of events significant for the respondent, which were identified by means of the first method. Thus, all respondent's answers about important experiences and interests were divided into three groups: occupation, communication, and entertainment. After that, we analyzed different topics of adolescents' experiences depending on the significance of a certain event category for them. Results are presented in Table 4.

<u>Categories of experiences</u>	<u>Success/failure</u>	
	Student's t-statistic	Effect size (Cohen's d)
Occupation		
Search for the meaning of life	0.019*	-0.239¹
Fullness of life /life achievements	0.037*	-0.207¹
Future/present (about time)	0.013*	-0.381¹
Childishness/adulthood	0.021*	-0.212¹
Refusal	0.016*	-0.286¹
Communication		
Search for the meaning of life	0.693	-0.039
Fullness of life /life achievements	0.968	0.006
Future/present (about time)	0.479	0.071
Childishness/adulthood	0.636	0.057
Refusal	0.752	-0.032
Entertainment		
Search for the meaning of life	0.736	0.033
Fullness of life /life achievements	0.752	0.047
Future/present (about time)	0.422	-0.082
Childishness/adulthood	0.347	-0.111
Refusal	0.977	-0.003

Note: * $p < 0.05$; ¹ average effect size.

As a result of analysis, significant differences were obtained only for the experiences concerning success/failure and only for the category of events, associated with occupation (events associated with activity aimed at doing something (this category includes both career and education)). Hence, adolescents concerned about the opposition of success and failure were significantly more inclined to place importance on events associated with career- and education-related activity, compared to those respondents who focused on other experiences.

Discussion

As a result of performed study, it was established that on average, modern adolescents identify events that are significant in their lives in the time interval of 15 years, including both past and future events. By comparing the topics of significant events, we demonstrated that most of them were associated with career- and education-related activity. This conclusion correlates with the data of modern studies, which indicate that representations about the length of a life path depend on the significant life events in the professional field (Habermas & Reese, 2015; Settersten & Mayer, 1997). At the same time, according to Gonta (2018), one of the main problems for adolescents is the problem of psychological loneliness, which arises despite various communication networks, and becomes one of the main reasons for social alienation of modern adolescents. Our results show that for late adolescents, the problem associated with loneliness does not play a pivotal role, since for them present significance of communication-related events is lower compared to younger adolescents. In particular, we observe that the significance of events in adolescence reflects the expectations of modern society, and solution of professional-related problems comes to the forefront, as among other things, it also allows to solve the issues of social adaptation.

Modern researchers who study specific nature of the Generation Z indicate a change in the internal personal meanings of modern adolescents (Vorontsova & Ermolaev, 2016; Danilov et al., 2017), while classical development psychology states that all interests of adolescents revolve around choosing their life path and future career. When studying adolescent interests, we tried to accommodate both classical psychological ideas about adolescence and relevant trends of research on the specifics of the modern generation of adolescents. In our sample, 85.3 % of adolescents replied in a positive and engaged manner when assessing a classical video about life representations of adults, and focused their attention on the topics of creativity, success, relativity of adulthood, and the brevity of life. It should be noted that the topics of creativity and achieving success in life often become a focus of psychological research (Adykulov, 2020; Bogoyavlenskaya, 2019; Golovina, 2018). The topic of discussing adulthood and brevity of life, identified in our research as interesting for adolescents, has not been studied before. More detailed analysis of this subject showed us that adolescents, who are interested in the relativity of adulthood and the brevity of life, believe that the characters experience concerns about the opposition of success and failure or about the search for the meaning of life. Earlier Shabanova & Leonova (2019) proved that late adolescents often experience dissatisfaction with their self-fulfillment, freedom, independence, family well-being, and professional success. We identified that these experiences were typical for those adolescents, who were interested in the relativity of adulthood and the brevity of life. A factor of great importance is the plot of the movie fragment, in the discussion of which adolescents spoke about the experience concerning the opposition of success and failure or the search for the meaning of life. Polivanova & Shakarova (2016) use exactly the same video fragment to indicate the first signs of blurring in the term 'adulthood', where they argue

that in this fragment, representations of the protagonist – the son (Oleg Komarovskiy) about the success in life correspond to classical representations of an adult man. As this plot is free from the specifics of modern communication, by offering it as a stimuli material to the representatives of the Generation Z, we could compare classical representations about becoming an adult to the characteristics singled out in the discussion and identify the true picture of adolescent experiences.

Realization of experience concerning the opposition of success and failure plays a significant role in adolescence. Analysis of modern studies showed that negative and positive perception of one's own life has an effect on the important events in the professional field (Vedeneeva & Zabelina, 2019; Lukina & Solov'eva, 2019; Makushina, 2019; Shabanova & Leonova, 2019). In the terminology of F. Vasilyuk's lifeworlds, Kryuchkov (2019) indicates that an individual masters a full range of experiences before reaching adulthood and starts using them in the periods of adulthood. In the scope of our study, we obtained significant differences in the categories of events, which prevailed in life representations of modern adolescents depending on the experiences that they found important. For example, life representations of adolescents concerned about success/failure are often dominated by career- and education-related events. Therefore, experience of success/failure determines the number of events associated with career and education in the lives of adolescents. Interpersonal communications do not play a pivotal role in the life experiences of modern adolescents.

Conclusions

Performed study demonstrated that adolescents' interest in the topic of the relativity of adulthood and the brevity of life is associated with the experience concerning the search for the meaning of life and its success and/or failure. At the same time, the experience of success and/or failure is the topic that resonates the most with the adolescents who name career and education as significant events in their lives. In contrast to previous generations, for whom professional self-identification and getting a job related to their degree was enough, modern adolescents need to experience success in order to realize the significance of life events associated with education and career.

Obtained results allow to specify questions for further research and psychological and pedagogical designs. Established correlation between the experience of success/failure and the significance of education- and career-related life events demonstrates the need to expand educational programs with situations that will allow adolescents to experience success/failure. In our opinion, there must be specially prepared educational courses, aimed at helping adolescents interpret potential life events associated with education and career.

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Author Details

Natalya Petrovna Shilova – Cand. Sci. (Psychology), Deputy Head of Department, Federal Service for Supervision of Education and Science of the Russian Federation, Moscow, Russian Federation; Scopus Author ID: 57200278732, ResearcherID: AAZ-6740-2021, SPIN-code: 6840-0900; e-mail: npshilova@outlook.com

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