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Psychological indicators of subjectivity of life position

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Abstract

Introduction. The relevance of the issues of constructing a person's life path is conditioned by intensive modern transformations and the need to function in conditions of uncertainty, innovation, risks, multitasking and time deficit. The focus of the present study is the identification of psychological indicators of the subjectivity of life position in youth (chronotopic, metacognitive and reflexive). **Methods.** The diagnostic study was conducted with the participation of girls and young men studying undergraduate programmes at the Orenburg State Pedagogical University (n = 217, age of the subjects 19-24 years old). The psychodiagnostic complex consisted of standardised methods of diagnostics of life position, temporality, psychological boundaries, metacognitive processes and self-constructs: "Personal Life Position Questionnaire (PLQ)", "Temporal Modalities of Life Existence", "Psychological Boundary Diagnostic Methodology", "Analyticity-Holistic Scale", "Self-Efficacy Scale", "Tolerance-Intolerance to Uncertainty Questionnaire", "Related Self-Concept", "Collective and Independent Self-Concept". **Results.** The results of the conducted research fix the connection of subjectivity of the life position with the balance of modal evaluations, rationalisation of time periods of life realization, giving and taking in functions of psychological boundaries, tolerance to uncertainty, self-efficacy, independent self-concept. **Discussion.** Psychological indicators of the subjectivity of the position in youth are a holistic and authentic perception of the present, a meaningful attitude to time, its perception as a resource for achieving goals and realising life tasks. The balanced information-energy exchange between the external and internal spaces of the personality, provided by the intensity and vigour of the passing functions of psychological boundaries (taking in and giving away), is significant for the formation of the subjectivity of the life position. The importance of intrasubjective

self-constructs in the formation of the subject's position in adolescence is proved. The analysis of significant links between the subjectivity of the position and metacognitive processes – self-efficacy, tolerance to uncertainty – is presented. In adolescence, the identified indicators reveal the potential of personality in the independent choice of goals and strategies for their achievement, building an authentic life line on the basis of an active, responsible and conscious attitude to their own lives, constructive creative self-realisation and self-development.

Keywords

subjectivity, adolescence, life position, temporality, psychological boundaries, independent self-concept, chronotopic foundations, metacognitive processes

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Introduction

Modern reality, which synthesises transitivity, virtuality, temporal mobility into a single context, actualises the need for permanent change and renewal of personality for effective problem solving, realisation of creative potential and harmonious living. The ability and readiness of the individual to function in the format of multitasking, uncertainty, innovation and risk is rapidly increasing. Under these conditions, the problems of personality subjectivity in relation to their own life and development, their self-determination in the conditions of imposed socio-cultural standards of success and efficiency, deficit of external and internal resources become extremely important. In this regard, it is necessary to comprehend the issues of subjectivity of life position in adolescence, to identify psychological indicators mediating this process.

Purpose of the study

The aim of the study is to identify psychological indicators of subjectivity of life position in adolescence. Achievement of the goal involves scientific and theoretical analysis of the problem of personality's life position and its subjectivity, as well as a diagnostic study of the stated phenomenon. The **object of the** study is the life position of a person, the **subject of the** study is psychological components of the subjectivity of the life position in adolescence.

The extensive interdisciplinary research space of the considered problem of the life position of the individual allows to designate it as a complex, integrative, systemic and dynamic phenomenon, which:

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- connects personality and social reality – objective and subjective aspects of personality, external and internal life space (Leontiev, 2019, p. 95).
- accumulates the individual's life experience and opens new life perspectives, potentials of future achievements and results (Abulkhanova, Berezina, 2001);
- defines a way of personal movement based on prolongation, positive inertia, and resilience (Maslow, 1970);
- integrates dynamically developing relations of personality to the surrounding reality, others and oneself and realises these relations in activity (Markin, 2005);
- unites the past, present and future of the personality into a continuous and unified line of the life path; provides the possibility of continuous changes of the personality through the integration of fundamental and emergent personal constructs - dynamics and statics, process and result (Fominyh, 2022a).

D. A. Leontiev (2019) notes as important components of the life position the individual's separation of himself from the flow of life, ability to manage and arbitrarily influence life, to implement conceived projects and goals, as well as to coordinate the perception of himself and his own life. Life position acts as a component of the highest level of personality disposition and an aspect of its psychological maturity. These aspects are realised in the parameters of awareness, activity and harmony, laying the foundations for constructive, progressive and proactive life transformations or their inversion. Living according to imposed socio-cultural templates and standards is a common variant of life position, leading to destructiveness, regression and passivity. It can be concluded that the system-forming elements of life position are intertwined in the context of personality subjectivity.

Subjectivity as a characteristic of development and life reflects the ability to build a unique life trajectory in accordance with personally significant criteria, as well as to creatively transform personal life space on the basis of independent, responsible and free choice, vision of opportunities and alternatives (Podolsky, Idobaeva, 2019). Subjectivity is revealed through the concept of activity, that is, the ability to manage one's life, consciously design and implement plans and goals, realise potential, and transform the life path (Abulkhanova, 2005; Antsyferova, 2000; Grishina, 2009). The criteria of activity are the balance of autonomy and inclusion in the social context, the ability to overcome dependence on external and internal circumstances, independence of decisions (Leontiev, Shilmanskaya, 2019).

Methods

Sample

The study involved 217 subjects aged 19–24 years old (80% of the subjects were girls) studying undergraduate programmes at the Orenburg State Pedagogical University. The sample is homogeneous in terms of professional employment and marital status.

Methodology

The basis for the diagnostic study of the subjectivity of the life position was the method "Personal Life Position Questionnaire (PLQ)" (Leontiev, Shilmanskaya, 2019), within which the activity is considered in a similar meaningful context.

The study of chronotopic bases of the life position was carried out on the basis of the methods "Temporal modalities of life fulfilment" (Bredun, Shcheglova, Smeshko, Shmer, 2021), "Methods of diagnostics of psychological boundary" (Levy, 2013a).

In the study of the specificity of metacognitive processes of the subjects were used "Analyticity-Cholisticity Scale" (Apanovich, Znakov, Alexandrov, 2017), "Self-Efficacy Scale" (Schwarzer, Yerusalem, Romek, 1996), "Tolerance-Intolerance to Uncertainty Questionnaire" (Kornilova, Chumakova, 2014).

Reflexive elements of personality, combining inter- and intrasubjective aspects of self-concept, were diagnosed using the techniques "Related Self-Concept" (Dorosheva, Knyazev, Kornienko, 2016) and "Collective and Independent Self-Concept" (Dorosheva et al., 2016).

Mathematical and statistical processing of the results included the calculation of Pearson's (C) and Chuprov's (T) coefficient of mutual conjugation, which allows to establish the degree of closeness of the relationship between the studied features.

Results

Based on the methodology "Personal Life Position Questionnaire (PLQ)" (Leontiev et al., 2016), we obtained relatively high indicators of life position activity in young men and girls (62% of respondents – high level of activity, 30% – medium, 8% – low levels), revealing the ability of personality to manage and arbitrarily influence their own lives. Psychological indicators of subjectivity in adolescence were identified on the basis of statistical analysis of the links between high indicators of life position activity and chronotopic, metacognitive and reflexive aspects of personality.

Chronotopic bases are the point of intersection of temporal and spatial dimensions of personality's life, in this regard, they are considered through the correlation of temporal moduses of personality reflected in temporal characteristics, as well as through interaction with external and internal reality regulated by psychological boundaries (Table 1).

The results of the conducted research fix the connection of the subjectivity of the life position of the subjects with the balance of modal evaluations ($C = 0.254$; $T = 0.324$) and the rationalisation of the time periods of life ($C = 0.249$; $T = 0.289$). A strong correlation was established for these indicators. The balance of modal evaluations reflects the integrity and authenticity of the perception of the present. Rationalisation of life-exercise periods provides a meaningful attitude to time, distribution of time resources taking into account actual goals and tasks (Bredun, Shcheglova, Smeshko, Schmer, 2021).

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Table 1

Indices of the coefficient of mutual conjugation between life position activity and chronotopic bases in adolescence (C; T; $p \leq 0.05$)

Chronotopical foundations	Activity
Emotional fixation on events	C = 0.117; T = 0.137
Rationalisation of time periods of life existence	C = 0.249; T = 0.289
Balance of modal scores	C = 0.254; T = 0.324
Non-permissive boundary	C = 0.116; T = 0.121
Permeable boundary	C = 0.131; T = 0.146
Retractable boundary	C = 0.243; T = 0.288
Reciprocating boundary	C = 0.307; T = 0.331
Containment boundary	C = 0.265; T = 0.298
Calm-neutral border	C = 0.128; T = 0.162

Note. *Statistically significant figures are highlighted in the table.*

Psychological boundaries carry out regulation and control of interaction, as well as protection of personal space. In the conducted research, a strong correlation between the activity of the life position and the intensity and vigour of the passing functions of boundaries - the taking in (C = 0.243; T = 0.288) and giving back (C = 0.307; T = 0.331) – which provide exchange processes between the external and internal spaces of the personality: they pass the necessary information and energy from the external space and allow the expression of internal impulses (Levy, 2013b). Most likely, the revealed connection is an important condition for constructive interaction with social space. The strengthening of the indicators of the permeability functions of the boundaries runs parallel to the tension of the restraining function (C = 0.265; T = 0.298), which containers the internal energy subjectively significant for the individual. In general, openness to the new and expression of authentic impulses are the basis for building a subjective life line.

Because metacognitive processes encompass an individual's abilities to assess and apply his or her own resources, we included analyticity-holistic cognitions, assessment of perceptions under uncertainty, and analyses of self-efficacy in the focus of the study (Table 2).

Table 2

Indices of the coefficient of mutual correlation between life stance activity and metacognitive processes in adolescence (C; T; $p \leq 0.05$)

Metacognitive foundations	Activity
Focus of attention	C = 0.123; T = 0.156
Causal attribution	C = 0.123; T = 0.145
Tolerance for contradictions	C = 0.121; T = 0.156
Perception of change	C = 0.102; T = 0.149
Tolerance for uncertainty	C = 0.439; T = 0.533
Intolerance to uncertainty	C = 0.123; T = 0.165
Interpersonal intolerance to uncertainty	C = 0.125; T = 0.141
Self-efficacy	C = 0.353; T = 0.443

Note. *Statistically significant indicators are highlighted in the table.*

The general results of the "Analytic-Cholistic Scale" (Apanovich, Znakov, Alexandrov, 2017) indicate the predominance of the holistic pole in the subjects. At the same time, statistically significant relationships between the activity and analytic-cholistic poles of the studied parameters (focus of attention, causal attribution, tolerance to contradictions and perception of changes) were not revealed. The mentioned emphasises the fact proved in science about the necessity of harmonious correlation of contextual and dispositional explanation of events and changes (Brushlinsky, 2006). Within the framework of the study of metacognitive processes of young men and girls, strong links were established between the activity of life position and tolerance to uncertainty (C = 0.439; T = 0.533), self-efficacy (C = 0.353; T = 0.443), as important elements of personality potential assessment.

The study of reflexive elements of personality, including inter- and intrapersonal aspects of self-concept, was chosen as another angle of the scientific and empirical search for the foundations of subjectivity of life position in adolescence (Table 3).

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Table 3

Indices of the coefficient of mutual conjugation between life position activity and reflexive elements of personality in adolescence (C; T; $p \leq 0.05$)

Reflexive elements of personality	Activity
<i>Interpersonal</i>	
Related self-concept	C = 0.145; T = 0.187
Interdependent self-concept	C = 0.137; T = 0.178
<i>Intrapersonal</i>	
Independent self-concept	C = 0.346; T = 0.395

Note. Statistically significant indicators are highlighted in the table.

The subject status of the personality in adolescence correlates with high indicators of independent self-concept (C = 0.346; T = 0.395), for which a strong correlation was recorded. Self-perception, the attitude of the individual to himself in this case does not depend on the social context in which he is included, but is determined by personal results and achievements. Autonomy, independence from others, the ability to resist social pressure and the opinion of others are prioritised for a person.

Thus, psychological indicators of subjectivity of life position in youth are based on chronotopic, metacognitive and reflexive elements of personality. The data obtained in the study fix the significance of temporality, psychological boundaries, tolerance to uncertainty, self-efficacy and independent self-concept in building a subjective life position.

Discussion

Subjectivity in this study is considered from the position of activity and initiative in relation to the processes of life fulfilment (Leontiev, 2003). Activity is the basis for building interaction with the surrounding world on the basis of subjectively significant reference points, meanings and values, implementation of autonomous and flexible behavioural strategies, creative transformation of life space. The opposite pole of this component covers passive rigid adaptation strategies, dependence on the assessment and opinion of others, deficit of internal resources of life transformations.

The acceleration of life processes in modern socio-cultural space rapidly changes the priority goals and values of the individual, divides the chronotope into unrelated short-term fragments, and blocks the stable identification of the individual (Emelin, Tkhostov, 2015). The chronotopic orientation of a personality's life is reflected in the originality of the temporal structure (Bredun, Balanev, Vaulina, Krasnoryadtseva, Shcheglova, 2020). An important aspect of a personality's life fulfilment is its temporal perception, which includes subjective balance in the ratio of past experience, present resources and future prospects. These processes are necessary for the reorganisation of interconnected relations between the personality and the environment in conditions of continuous change (Bredun, Shcheglova, Smeshko, Schmer, 2021).

The results of the study confirmed the connection of subjective aspects of the subjects' life position with temporal perception, in particular, a holistic and authentic perception of the present, a meaningful attitude to time, and its perception as an obligatory resource for achieving goals and realising life tasks (Fominyh, 2022b). The psychological boundaries of personality take part in these processes. The subjectivity of the position of young men and girls is associated with the intensity and vigour of the permeability functions of psychological boundaries – absorbing and giving, which allow to ensure the balance between the external and internal spaces of the personality.

Metacognitive processes are the basis for perception and comprehension of the surrounding reality and life situations. Cognitive assessment of what is happening on the basis of the system of formed relations determines the choice of strategies of response and personal behaviour. In modern conditions associated with uncertainty, continuous challenges and changes, time deficits, the implementation of subjective strategies is associated with a certain measure of complementarity, balance in inclusion in the social context and autonomy, independence, i.e. analyticity and holistic (Znakov, 2013; Nisbett, Peng, Choi & Norenzayan, 2001; Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Matsumoto & Yoo, 2006). In the sample we studied, no statistically significant relationships were obtained for these indicators, which confirms the significance of the trade-off / flexible variation of analyticity-cholisticity in the perception and interpretation of events and phenomena of the real world. In the study we obtained pronounced indicators of holisticness in the sample population, indicating the significance of social elements in the processes of mentalisation in the adolescent period, but significant links with activity were not confirmed. The result is obvious, given the age of the subjects, the importance of the social context in the organisation of life processes, the accumulation of experience, the formation of a system of professional and personal ties necessary for the effective functioning of the personality. The relevance of the holistic-analytical balance is also determined by important conditions of personogenesis of the subjective life position in adolescence: separation processes, overcoming dependence on family and significant relatives, confronting imposed life patterns and success criteria, setting meaningful life tasks and accepting personal responsibility for the chosen decisions.

The indicators of self-efficacy – the cognitive basis of activity organisation, which includes subjective ideas of an individual about potential possibilities of achieving life goals

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and transformations – turned out to be significant for the subjectivity of a person's life position. It is self-efficacy that determines the choice of the scale and complexity of tasks, the forecasting of options for the development of events, and the development of a behavioural line (Bandura, 1977; Jerusalem, 1992; Stajkovic & Luthans, 1998; Loschakova, 2015).

The position of the subject of life and development, the author's attitude to one's life is connected with the specificity of reflexive elements of personality. Domestic and foreign studies use a number of related terms to characterise them: self-constructs, self-concept, sensations of the Self, self-consciousness, identity, etc. (Rogers, 1961; Erikson, 1968; Hartmann, 1971; Kohut, 1971; James, 1890; Freud, 1991; Burns, 2003; Shapoval, Fominyh, 2018; Harris, 2019; Abdurasulov, Nazirli, 2020, etc.). For the subjective status of personality in the adolescent period, intrasubjective self-constructs including autonomy, independence, self-sufficiency as a key context of functioning turned out to be significant. In addition, concentration on individual motives, goals, needs, authenticity of self-realisation, self-expression, and the tendency of out-of-context explanation of social reality are characteristic. At this age, the emphasis on internal attributes is the basis for choosing life guidelines and strategies, independent construction and implementation of life project, in spite of significant intersubjective relations, transmitted and imposed socio-cultural stereotypes, economic and other factors.

Conclusion

The subjectivity of the position is a key characteristic of personal development and life, determining the construction of a unique life trajectory in accordance with personally significant criteria, as well as the creative transformation of life space on the basis of independent, responsible and free choice. Adolescence is a period of intensification of the processes of building life plans and projects, associated with the formation of subjective personal qualities. Psychological indicators of subjectivity of life position in youth are based on chronotopic, metacognitive and reflexive elements of personality, which together reveal the inner potential in building an authentic life line on the basis of a conscious, valuable and active attitude to one's own life, constructive creative self-realisation and self-actualisation. The results of the conducted research allowed us to establish that the subjectivity of life position in adolescence is expressed in the following psychological indicators:

- holistic and authentic perception of the present time, meaningful and valuable attitude to time, perception of it as a resource for achieving goals and realising life tasks;
- balanced information-energy exchange between the external and internal spaces of the personality on the basis of coordinated work of the absorbing and giving functions of psychological boundaries;
- independent self-concept with a prioritisation of autonomy, independence, self-sufficiency and internal attributes of personal and social functioning;

- self-efficacy, tolerance to uncertainty, which ensure the scale and complexity of the chosen tasks, forecasting of options for the development of events, development of the optimal behavioural line, internal stability of the personality in relation to emerging threats and obstacles.

In general, the identified chronotopic, metacognitive and reflexive indicators of the subjectivity of life position expand the possibilities of psychological and pedagogical support of young men and girls at the stage of life self-determination. The identified indicators can be used as vectors and guidelines for individual diagnostic and advisory, psycho-educational, and training work, implemented by psychological services of educational organisations and youth support centres. The results presented in the study do not claim to be exhaustive coverage of the problem; therefore, they can be continued in interdisciplinary scientific contexts.

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Conflict of Interest Information

The author has no conflicts of interest to declare.