

Personal Integrity: A Conceptual Model

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Abstract

Introduction. Changes in modern reality are described in terms of its uncertainty, variability, and complexity. The complex and differentiated nature of the surrounding reality is the main challenge in maintaining personal integrity. This paper aims to describe and substantiate a conceptual model of personal integrity. **Personal integrity as a systemic property: Description possibilities.** Integrity is the most integral characteristic of personality, relating to its fundamental properties that stem from the systemic nature of personality. The possibility of identifying independent partial integrity types is justified, provided that the relevant units that preserve integrity properties are selected. **The contextual nature of integrity.** Personal integrity is most clearly manifested in human activity in various forms of life and can be described through its manifestations in situational and life-related contexts. The integrity of an individual as a subject of activity and a subject of life is ensured by the processes of self-regulation and self-determination. Consistency of activity in situational and life-related contexts ensures higher-level consistency. The highest level of human behavior control, which determines human activity at different levels of life, is the value-meaning system. **Identity and authenticity as forms of manifestation of personal integrity.** Integrity, as a property of the systemic nature of personality, has no inherent psychological content. Personal identity and authenticity are considered psychological forms of manifestation of integrity as forms of personality "consolidation". **Meaning-related associations as the basis for the formation of identity and authenticity.** The formation and maintenance of personal identity and authenticity are based on meaning-related associations between individual psychological structures of personality, types of human activity, and life space spheres. **Discussion.** A theoretical analysis of the issue of personal integrity enabled us to propose

a conceptual model that connects the integralities that ensure the coherence of individual forms of life activity in situational and life-related contexts, and their integration through meaning-based regulation, which underlies identity and authenticity as psychological manifestations of personal integrity.

Keywords

integrity, differentiation, context, identity, authenticity, meaning-related associations, conceptual model

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Introduction

Over the past few decades, the most important issue of social science and humanities has been the change in the modern world. This discussion has led to the identification of many characteristics of a changing reality, including the most frequently mentioned uncertainty, variability, and complexity.

Psychology, with its emphasis on the study of the “changing individual in a changing world”, has encountered the need to describe the psychology of modern people in these new realities. Changes in modern reality are fundamentally altering the context of human life and challenging the most fundamental characteristics of personality—the ability to change, maintain stability, and maintain integrity.

Psychologists have increasingly focused on the uncertainty of the modern world, identified by D. A. Leontiev as the central problem of personality psychology (Leontiev, 2018), and personality variability (Grishina et al., 2021). Methods for identifying the potential of personality variability and its ability to cope with uncertainty have been developed and are actively used in modern psychology.

The complexity of modern reality, as experienced by modern people, has received little attention in the psychological sciences dealing with the problem of human existence in the modern world. It is no coincidence that in the fundamental monograph *Mobilis in Mobile: Personality in an Era of Change*, published by a team of authors led by A.G.

Asmolov (2018), complexity challenges are the least studied. At the same time, the need to face the complexities of this world is a task of no less importance for modern humans, and complexity challenges address the most fundamental foundations of personality.

The complexity of systems or objects is traditionally defined by the complexity of their structure, which causes difficulties in understanding and interaction with complex objects. The complexity of modern reality is linked to its diversity and differentiation, to the variety of the worlds of human existence.

It is well known that the evolutionary processes occur within the coordinates of development and increasing differentiation. Human development, as a process of personality transformation, becomes a challenge to the individual's ability to change and maintain sustainability, while the growing complexity of the world and its differentiation becomes a challenge to the individual's integrity. If we accept the current view that modern human evolution is no longer determined by biological processes, but by sociocultural processes, then the rapid pace of change in reality may lead to the acceleration of evolutionary trends, leading to even greater challenges for the ability of the individual to cope with them.

Personal integrity as a systemic property: Description possibilities

The concept of integrity is a general scientific category, and its description dates back to Aristotelian science. According to Aristotle, integrity unifies the structure and function of an organism into a single whole, which means the unity and harmony of the elements of the organism (personality). This understanding of integrity reflects its nature and, in this sense, it is present in the scientific discourse in various areas of knowledge.

Despite the long tradition of the concept of integrity, modern science is still interested in its development. Modern approaches to describing integrity are characterized by transdisciplinarity, complementing the philosophical understanding of integrity with its exploration in various fields of scientific knowledge and art. The development of the concept of integrity is linked to a broader understanding of the complexity of human beings and their relationships with the world around them, contributing to the emergence of new perspectives on integrity (see, for example, Kiyashchenko, Sidorova, 2022).

We can also observe the increasing interest in the integrity problem in modern science, associated with the characteristics of changing reality, its growing complexity, and its differentiation, which poses a challenge to human ability to maintain and preserve integrity.

Increased differentiation is one of the vectors of human ontogenetic development. This process is described in detail by L. I. Antsyferova. The initial "diffuse single-level integrity of the psyche" inherent in infancy undergoes "stratification and differentiation"

into increasingly clearly distinct “levels, structures, and mechanisms”; and this “constant mechanism for the segregation of new parts of the integral psychological system requires the formation of mechanisms for the integration of the personality system, which strengthening is one of the central tendencies of personality development” (Antsyferova, 2006, pp. 23-24). K. Lewin also writes about increased differentiation in the process of individual development, “Increasing differentiation means that the number of parts of an individual that can function relatively independently increases, i.e., the degree of their independence increases” (Lewin 2001, pp. 284-285). Increasing differentiation requires greater integration of the “parts” of a person, the development of “inner order” (Allport, 2002).

However, individuals do not exist outside their existence in the world, and the structure of human existence is described by the diversity of their connections and relationships to the world. Consequently, the space of a person's life, connecting its inner world to reality, is influenced by modern reality and its increasing differentiation. As a result, the increasing complexity of the environment becomes a challenge for the integrity of personality and its integrating mechanisms.

According to Antsyferova's dynamic understanding of integrity, it means more than simply maintaining the stability and “coherence” of the individual. Integrity develops, “builds” itself up to a new level; it is the subject's constant “cultivation” of their personality (Antsyferova, 2006, p. 162). The result of this process is the development of increasingly comprehensive and more integrated forms of integrity that correspond to the development of the individual and the expansion of their living space. At the same time, the integrity of personality as a means of connecting its components, coping with the complexity of the inner world and the world of life, can also be achieved by reducing this complexity.

The mechanisms of personality functioning contain the potential for reducing differentiation. M.A. Kholodnaya, in her analysis of patterns of change in cognitive function in the late stages of ontogenesis, therefore points to the emergence of a phase of dedifferentiation on the path to centralization as the mobilization of available resources. In fact, the same thing happens with the human space—a decrease in activity in the elderly, a contraction of the spheres of active activity and a reduction in connections to the outside world—which essentially means the same process of dedifferentiation. These are examples of natural process of reducing complexity related to human capabilities limitations.

However, people can consciously or unconsciously reduce the complexity of the world they live in. Lyotard's well-known hypothesis about the relationship between man and the world around him speaks of a tendency to simplify the worldview in the face of growing complexity, i.e. of the same process of dedifferentiation. “In response to growing uncertainty, complexity, and diversity, humanity increasingly differentiates itself into those willing to perceive complexity and those inclined to simplify reality” (Asmolov,

2018, p. 19). Rollo May, describing neurotic symptoms, writes of a narrowing of the human world "to a size that one can manage" (May, 2013, p. 29). This refers to the conscious or unconscious choice of strategies for reducing complexity, strategies aimed at avoiding difficult situations.

This choice, however, has serious psychological consequences for the individual. The existential philosopher Kierkegaard once wrote of a fundamental choice that involves the entire personality. The result of this choice goes beyond a specific situation and has a profound impact on personality as a whole. "By making a choice, one is completely filled with what has been chosen" (Kierkegaard, 1994, p. 234).

Today, the consequences of choosing certain strategies to manage life for the individual have empirical basis. L.I. Antsyferova noted, "Individuals... who avoid difficult situations, resort to psychological defense mechanisms, and are prone to downward social comparison, perceive the world as a source of danger, have low self-esteem, and their worldview is colored by pessimism" (Antsyferova, 2006, p. 345).

Therefore, strategies aimed at reducing the complexity of the environment are perceived in psychology as destructive by nature and have devastating consequences for the individual.

Understanding the constructive possibilities for ensuring personal integrity requires clarifying its nature.

In psychology, personal integrity is associated with the harmony of various spheres of personality, their coherence, ensuring internal balance, and the correspondence of a person's behavior to his/her inner world.

The ideas of a holistic approach—as opposed to simpler elemental descriptions of personality—were developed by W. Stern (1911), K. Lewin (1935), G. Murray (1938), and others in the early stages of personality psychology (see Magnusson & Torestad, 1993).

Within the disposition paradigm, personality integrity began to be considered from the perspective of the interconnectedness of its components; the advantage of this approach is the ability to create methods to measure personality integrity.

Research describing integrity through the connectivity of personality components predominates in psychology in worldwide perspective (Fournier, 2021, Beck et al., 2022; Rasool et al., 2022; etc.); this reflects in particular the widespread use of the concept of coherence, which denotes the degree to which a person's psychological characteristics are coordinated and integrated (Fournier et al., 2022). In 2022, a special issue of the *European Journal of Personality*, titled "Towards Conceptualizing and Assessing Personality Coherence and Incoherence", was published. It explored the development of approaches to describing and measuring personality coherence. For example, it proposed to study personality coherence based on an analysis of the "personality architecture", i.e. the overall structure and dynamics of intra-personal personality systems, including (a) belief-based coherence, (b) goal-based coherence, (c) evaluative standards-based

coherence, (d) intrapsychic coherence (i.e., coherent functional interrelations among personality systems), and (e) phenomenological coherence (Cervone, 2022).

Increasing attention to dynamic approaches to personality description also requires new approaches to personality integrity description. An example of such a solution is the Dynamic Model of Personality, which includes (a) the foundation or stable part of personality; (b) personality variability; (c) the force of attraction in the personality system—the speed with which deviations in the system are replaced by a return to its center, reflecting the individual's ability to maintain balance in the system (Sosnowska et al., 2020). The advantage of this model is its description of the integrity of personality as a result of the interaction of stability and variability processes.

Overall, descriptions of the concept of integrity in foreign psychology show a variety of interpretations, expressed in terminological inconsistencies and in the existence of different methodological approaches. The concept of coherence is most frequently used to operationalize the concept of integrity. An analysis of the use of the concept of integrity in scientific discourse reveals some trends and perspectives on its development—the advantage of describing integrity at different levels of personality organization, the need to address the context of the manifestation of integrity, and the integration of these descriptions with a phenomenological approach to understanding integrity (Moskvicheva, Mamaeva-Niles, 2025).

In Russian literature, the concept of personality integrity cannot also be considered as a specific terminological definition. Integrity is generally described through its psychological manifestations. Moreover, the coherence of various components is typically considered as the mechanism for maintaining integrity. Thus, A. L. Zhuravlev, D. V. Ushakov, and A. V. Yurevich note that “for a psychosocial individual, the principle of integrity signifies the presence of correlations between their attitudes, relationships, and action patterns” (Zhuravlev et al., 2013, p. 73). This approach—through assessing the degree of correlation between various components—is used in a number of studies (see Kaptsov, 2018). Work on individual forms of integrity, particularly the holistic nature of cognitive systems, can also be mentioned (Apanovich, Znakov, Aleksandrov, 2017).

The concept of integrity refers to the integral characteristics of personality, and, accordingly, the development of this concept faces difficulties typical of attempts to describe integral concepts. In the context of traditional structural and functional approaches, integral concepts are often defined by their constituent components.

The integrity of personality refers to its fundamental properties, arising from the systemic nature of personality. The existence of personality as a system is associated with processes of variability and stabilization, the combined effect of which ensures the integrity of personality, which was the focus of our previous studies (Grishina, Kostromina, 2021; Kostromina, Grishina, 2024; Grishina, Kostromina, 2024). These processes, like the principle of integrity, are inherent in all systems. Integrity is a condition for the existence of the system.

Accordingly, integrity (like variability and stability) is not a purely psychological property of personality, but a property of its systemic nature. This applies equally to the functioning of the integrating mechanisms that ensure the coherence of the components of the system and, ultimately, its integrity. If we do not consider systems in general, but individuals, then the principle of integrity also applies to all their subsystems, organismic and individual characteristics.

Integrity is the ultimate integrative characteristic of personality, which is described by integrative concepts and manifests itself in integrative phenomena. Traditional approaches to classical personality psychology face a key methodological problem—the description of personality as “splintered”, which makes such explanations wrong and largely dead-end. This is especially evident when we describe the problems of life. An individual interacts with reality and life not through individual mental processes and states, but through their integral properties.

The study of personality integrity as a fundamental feature involves finding description units.

The possibility of a partial study of integrity is observed in the discussion of the integrity problem by L.I. Antsyferova and K. Lewin, who not only acknowledges this possibility, but even warns against the “inclination to make these integrities as encompassing as possible”, noting that “some integrities exist at all levels of dynamic unification” (Lewin, 2001, p. 114).

A. R. Luria, analyzing L. S. Vygotsky, pointed out that any science is forced to decompose a complex phenomenon into its component parts, and that it was Vygotsky who succeeded in finding the answer to the question of “into what parts can a complex mental integrity be decomposed without losing the characteristics of the integrity”. The correct answer, referred to by Luria as Vygotsky’s greatest achievement and his contribution to psychological science, is that complex phenomena must not be decomposed into elements, but into units (Luria, 2002, p. 280). Moreover, the “unit” of a complex phenomenon (unlike its component parts) must retain all the properties of the whole (a well-known illustration of this is the example of a drop of water, which retains all its properties, unlike the “parts” of the molecular formula of water H₂O).

The interpretation of this principle regarding the description of integrity means that it should not be divided into its components, but can be studied in different “orders” of its manifestation, while maintaining the general properties and nature of integrity.

The Contextual Nature of Integrity

In our approaches to personality research, the principle of the contextual nature of personality phenomena is an obvious criterion for identifying individual manifestations of integrity.

The principle of contextuality in the study of psychological phenomena can be traced back to K. Lewin’s well-known methodological work, “The Transition from the Aristotelian

to Galileian Mode of Thought in Biology and Psychology". The fundamental differences in these approaches stem precisely from their treatment of situational conditions as factors potentially influencing objects. According to the concepts of traditional Aristotelian science, with its focus on describing an object through its inherent properties, "...in order to understand the essence of an object and its inherent purposefulness, it is necessary to exclude as much as possible the influence of the situation and abstract from it". Thus, the "purity" of studying an event (object) requires eliminating the influence of the situation in which it occurs. In contrast, Lewin asserts the principle of contextuality, which presupposes "a profound study of situational factors", since *"only a concrete holistic situation, including an object and its environment, determines the vectors that determine the dynamics of a particular event"* (Lewin, 2001, pp. 75–76).

In personality psychology, the logic of the Aristotelian approach underlies theoretical descriptions of personality through the combination of its inherent traits and characteristics. The limitations of this approach manifested themselves in the impossibility of predicting a person's behavior in specific life situations based on knowledge of their personality traits. In the 1970s and 1980s, a number of works were published arguing this position, the most prominent of which was the well-known and resonant work by W. Mischel. An equally important work of this decade was the book by L. Ross and R. Nisbett, dedicated to the development of K. Lewin's ideas (Ross, Nisbett, 1999). In the early 1980s, fundamental works on the psychology of situations began to appear (Argyle et al., 1981; Magnusson, 1981; and others).

In contemporary psychology, the principle of contextuality in the study of personal phenomenology has acquired a new meaning. Modern humans engage in more active and extensive interactions with the world, with information space and virtual reality, which has led, among other things, to the replacement of the concept of the situation as the primary unit for describing the world around us with the concept of context as one that reflects contemporary realities. Furthermore, there is a growing awareness of the limitations of the decontextualized nature of psychological research, in which psychological phenomenology is studied "outside of time and space", outside the context of human existence (Rauthmann et al., 2015; Geukes et al., 2017). In contemporary literature, it is precisely this methodological limitation that is regarded as the main problem behind the inconsistency of empirical data obtained in studies.

According to our process-based approach to personality description and the idea of a leveled structure in personality phenomenology (Grishina et al., 2018), personal integrity can be described through its contextual manifestations.

Personal integrity is most clearly manifested in individuals' behaviors and their activity in various forms of life. The primary contexts of an individual's life are the situational context of habitual everyday activity and the life context described by their life situation, life circumstances, life goals, and plans.

Each form of human activity requires the coordination of its actions, ensuring the “unity of action”. The usual forms of daily activity are largely based on the usual patterns of behavior, but even in these cases, coordination between the conditions of the task at hand, an individual’s competences and his/her motivation is necessary. This coordination is based on self-regulation processes, and its integral result is an individual style of activity.

In the context of life, people face more complex tasks, such as coordinating distant and immediate life goals, life strategies and plans, and opportunities posed by current life situations. In this case, coherence requires the work of higher-order integrative mechanisms—self-determination processes. In the context of life, stable strategies of human behavior form their lifestyles as an integral characteristic of the relationship with life. Thanks to the work of integrative mechanisms—the processes of self-regulation and self-determination—not simply coherence is ensured, but the integrity of an individual as a subject of activity and a subject of life.

Coherence between these levels ensures *coherence at the highest level*, which in turn becomes the coordination center for the functioning of the lower levels. Luria wrote, “The genesis of organized human behavior follows the path of the development and integration of ever more new regulatory systems that overcome the primary forms of behavior and transform them into increasingly new and complete organizational systems” (Luria, 2002, p. 27).

The different contexts of human life are interconnected and united by a common “vertical contour” of regulation, a common center that performs the meaning-based regulation of human activity. It is the value-meaning system that constitutes the “highest” level of human behavioral control, determining human activity at various levels of life. This “highest” level is the one that guarantees personality integrity, integrating all manifestations, personality “consolidation” and “compression” (L. Karsavin 1992).

Identity and Authenticity as Forms of Manifestation of Personal Integrity

The description of personal integrity—not simply the coherence and integration of the activity of an individual as a subject of activity and a subject of life in individual contexts—requires a search for a personal phenomenon which nature corresponds to the holistic nature of the personality, its “consolidation” into a single whole.

In our opinion, such phenomena are the phenomena of identity and authenticity.

The issue of identity remains a constant subject in psychology, mainly because identity is a fundamental characteristic of personality and the nature of these characteristics will always be at the center of research interest.

The study of identity has a long history in psychology. In addition to the classical distinction between individual and social identities, various types of “individual” identities,

the characteristics of identity under modern conditions, and the crisis manifestations of identity are described. The modern understanding of identity is characterized by the influence of a general trend towards a transition from structural descriptions of personal phenomenology to its process-based and dynamic descriptions. The process-based and dynamic approach to identity leads to the rejection of the traditional distinction between personal and social identity. As E. P. Belinskaya notes, "today, the traditional dichotomy of 'personal identity vs. social identity', which emphasized the structural components of the self, is becoming a thing of the past, while modern identity is increasingly understood as a constant process of transformation, where both poles (social and personal identity) are simultaneously completed by an individual in accordance with the 'external-internal dialectic' of identifications" (Belinskaya, 2024, p. 7). In this approach, the identification of individual, specific forms of identity that are oriented towards their traditional structural understanding also seems doubtful.

The identity of modern man is a living, dynamic construct, confirmed and refined through interaction with the surrounding reality. Identity is increasingly understood as a contextual phenomenon. Two recent issues of the Identity journal are devoted to "real-time identity" (*Real-time processes: Theories and methods* (2021). *Real-time processes: Empirical applications*. (2022). *Identity. An International Journal of Theory and Research*).

Identity is considered to be the result of an individual's interaction with the context, the result of his/her interaction with the micro (family, partners, school, workplace) and macro (social, cultural, political and historical) levels of the context. Identity originates from everyday experiences, thoughts, feelings, interactions and behaviors of individuals, and refers to their efforts to build, maintain, and improve their identity. The concept of narrative identity is increasingly popular because it is more sensitive to socio-cultural contexts.

Understanding identity as a holistic, dynamic entity completely aligns with the understanding of integrity in the process-based approach, so that it can be regarded as a form of expression of integrity.

The basis for this understanding of identity is that identity, like integrity, is a response to the complexity and differentiation of an individual's life space and internal world. Identity is a form of self-determination that overcomes the diversity and uncertainty of existence in the multidimensionality of the modern world. Essentially, like integrity, it is a form of "consolidating" or "compressing" personality. G. M. Andreeva (Andreeva, 2011) argues that identity can support integrity in her work on identity crisis. In our interpretation, identity is not considered one of the pillars of integrity, but a form of its manifestation.

In the logic of analysis, authenticity appears as another form of manifestation of personal integrity. Like identity, it relates to the individual's self-identity. Both identity and authenticity belong to the same problematic field of personal "self-consolidation", its "compressing", and thus are the forms of maintaining and protecting personal integrity.

The difference between the concepts of identity and authenticity is that identity is the individual's accordance with the context of life, while authenticity is the individual's consonance with himself.

The issue of authenticity is not less popular than the issue of identity and is also distinguished by various interpretations of the phenomenon of authenticity.

In particular, there is ambiguity in understanding the nature of the phenomenon of authenticity — whether authenticity is a characteristic of personality or a state of experience. S.K. Nartova-Bochaver, the author of a series of studies on authenticity issues, attempted to synthesize various approaches into a general concept, which she designates as subjective. "In the context of the paradigm of subjective approach authenticity is defined as a transcendental and adaptive personality trait that ensures the fidelity of individuals to their nature (individual qualities), the spatio-temporal circumstances of their life (environmental parameters of existence), their vocation and destiny (existential-transcendent challenges)" (Nartova-Bochaver, Korneev, Bochaver, 2024, p. 24). In the main provisions of the subjective concept of authenticity, Nartova-Bochaver points to the dynamic development of authenticity, however, by adopting a dispositional approach to its understanding, which is reflected in her active development of a psychometric instrument for measuring identity.

Studies that interpret authenticity as a state felt (experienced) by an individual present a phenomenological approach to its interpretation, giving priority to the subjective experience of one's own authenticity, the feeling of 'being oneself'. This understanding of authenticity is more consistent with the principles of a dynamic processual approach and is also closer to the modern understanding of identity as a dynamic entity, 'refined' through interaction with the surrounding reality.

The definitions of authenticity in the literature emphasize a person's ability to "be himself", to "be faithful to himself", to experience harmony, etc., and are clearly vague and ambiguous. Some definitions are based on the concept of authenticity used in existential philosophy and later in humanistic (Carl Rogers, A. Maslow, and others) and existential psychology. According to the existential approach, it is assumed that an individual is endowed with a desire to realize his authenticity, identified with his true nature, and the extent to which an individual succeeds in achieving this authenticity determines his personal maturity.

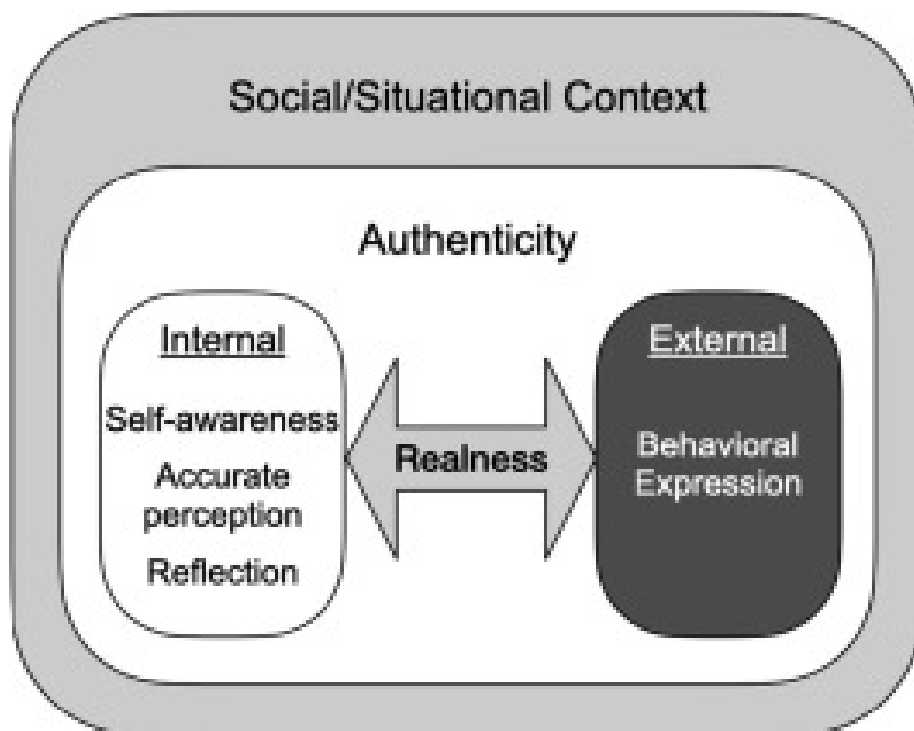
Despite all the differences in the descriptions of the concept of authenticity and the ambiguity of its existing interpretations, its understanding as an integral characteristic of personality, related to its integrity, remains.

A direct or indirect confirmation of this can be found in several studies. For example, Hopwood et al. (2021) tried to provide a more stringent framework for the dynamic and multifaceted concept of authenticity. To this end, the authors introduce the concept of realness, which can be translated into Russian as "truth" or "being real", into their description of the phenomenology of authenticity.

Authenticity is described as a complex construct comprising two dimensions—internal and external. The internal aspects of authenticity include psychological functions that support authentic behavior, such as self-awareness, accurate social perception, and the ability to reflect. The external dimension of authenticity is described through its behavioral manifestations, which reflect the variability of authenticity in social situations. These two dimensions of authenticity are complemented by the authors' concept of Realness, which serves as a link between its internal and external aspects (Figure 1). Realness is considered by the authors as a key ("core") feature of individual differences in authenticity; it reflects the extent to which people behave in accordance with what they think and feel; in this case, as the authors write, they are "real". Realness is a relatively stable tendency to act and behave in accordance with one's inner feelings, without regard for possible personal and social consequences, and is considered a key ("core") characteristic of individual differences in authenticity. Realness reflects a certain level of psychological maturity of an individual and is associated with indicators such as well-being, mental health and satisfying relationships.

Figure 1

Realness as the core of authenticity (Hopwood et al., 2021, p. 2)



The theoretical description of realness as a central component of authenticity was empirically verified in a series of empirical studies by the authors, confirming a number of their hypothetical propositions. The authors note that they successfully verified the concept of realness in their empirical studies (Hopwood et al., 2021).

The conceptual model of authenticity, with its central, unifying component of realness, in our view, is consistent with our interpretation of authenticity as a form of link between internal psychological structures of personality, the "consolidation" of personality.

The next step in developing an approach to understanding the personal integrity is to find a solution to the question of what mechanisms constitute the "consolidation" of personality into identity and authenticity.

Meaning-Related Associations as the Basis for the Formation of Identity and Authenticity

The results of our empirical studies suggest that meaning-related associations underlie personal integrity and the formation and maintenance of identity and authenticity.

The subject of some of our studies focused on the goal-based and situational determinants of human activity, immediate and distant goals, the meaning of life, the position of life and authenticity. These research findings have led to an understanding of meaning-related associations as the basis of personal integrity.

The origins of this research were associated with the development of problems in the goal-based regulation of behavior, within which activity tasks, life goals, and meanings were correlated with the contexts of human life (Grishina, 2023).

Further research into the goal-based regulation of behavior and the contextual nature of goals (N=350) confirmed the contextual nature of goals and that the presence or absence of important life goals and the degree of goal determination become significant, system-forming factors determining a person's relationships with the outside world (Grishina et al., 2023).

The results of this study determined the focus of further research aimed at identifying the connections between the goal-based regulation of human activity and its meaning-related parameters.

In a study conducted under our supervision, Z. Zhou tested the hypothesis of the relationship between goals and meaning in life. Participants included individuals from Russian and Chinese cultures (143 and 150 subjects, respectively). For Russian participants, meaning in life was associated with the importance of life goals and the ability to achieve them, while for Chinese participants, it was associated with a willingness to make changes to achieve goals, life satisfaction, as well as a focus on family and traditional values and closeness to the parent family. In view of these differences, the main result of the study

was the confirmation of the primary hypothesis on the contextual nature of goals and their relationship to meaning in life (Zhou, 2024).

The next step in our research was to test the hypothesis of meaning-related associations between individuals' immediate and distant goals, their daily activities and life plans, their position in life, and authenticity (realness) (study by M. V. Viklein). A total of 110 subjects participated in the study. The results showed that authenticity is closely related to the meaningfulness of life ($R = 0.432$; $p < 0.01$). Higher authenticity scores were also associated with a more active life position and a sense of harmony in life. The realization of future goals in the daily activities of individuals gives them a sense of meaning in their lives. The higher the level of goal-setting, the greater harmony in life, the higher the meaningfulness of life, and the greater the ability to be oneself as manifestations of authenticity (Viklein, 2024; Viklein, Grishina, 2024). The study of authenticity was continued by E. V. Mokhova ($n = 102$), whose results showed the close relationship between authenticity and psychological well-being indicators, particularly general psychological well-being (0.461^*) and autonomy as a manifestation of independence of thought and behavior (0.485^*) (Mokhova, 2025).

The results of these studies allowed us to clarify the concept of authenticity and its relationship with integral parameters of personality description, such as meaningfulness in life, life position, and life goals. While they do not fully support the hypothesis of meaning-related associations as the basis for the formation of identity and authenticity, they do allow us to consider this hypothesis plausible. This suggests that the threat to personal integrity, their identity, and authenticity lies in the destruction of meaning-related associations. Consequently, the protection and strengthening of integrity lies in the strengthening of these meaning-related associations.

Discussion

Integrity is a fundamental characteristic of personality and attracts the attention of new researchers. The principle of integrity, not only in understanding personality but also in its study, is generally recognized in psychological science. Nevertheless, and considering the idea of a holistic approach formulated in psychology a long time ago, the description of the nature of integrity is far from complete.

Initially, within the framework of the dispositional paradigm, which dominated psychology for decades with its emphasis on personality traits, the search for research solutions focused on describing integrity as the coherence of personality characteristics. This approach is a feature of many studies in psychology and interest in this approach has not diminished.

However, in this respect, it is appropriate to recall L.I. Antsyferova's statement on the inadmissibility of solutions based on "mechanism in personality research

through identification of different characteristics and subsequent research into their interrelationships" (Antsyferova, 2006, p. 230). In her work, the scientist contrasts this with the system-based approach developed in Russian psychology.

In modern personality psychology, with its increasing emphasis on a process-dynamic understanding of personality, integrity is regarded as a dynamic entity, the result of the coordination of variability and stabilization processes.

Integrity is a systemic characteristic of personality. However, integrity (like the processes of variability and stabilization) relates to the properties of any system; therefore, integrity itself has no psychological content.

The research task is to find a way to describe personal integrity within the framework of the logic of a system-based approach that reflects its systemic nature.

Works of prominent methodologists in the field of personality psychology such as K. Lewin (2001) and L.I. Antsyferova (2006) allow partial analysis of integrity and require the selection of descriptive units that can be studied but reflect the nature of integrity.

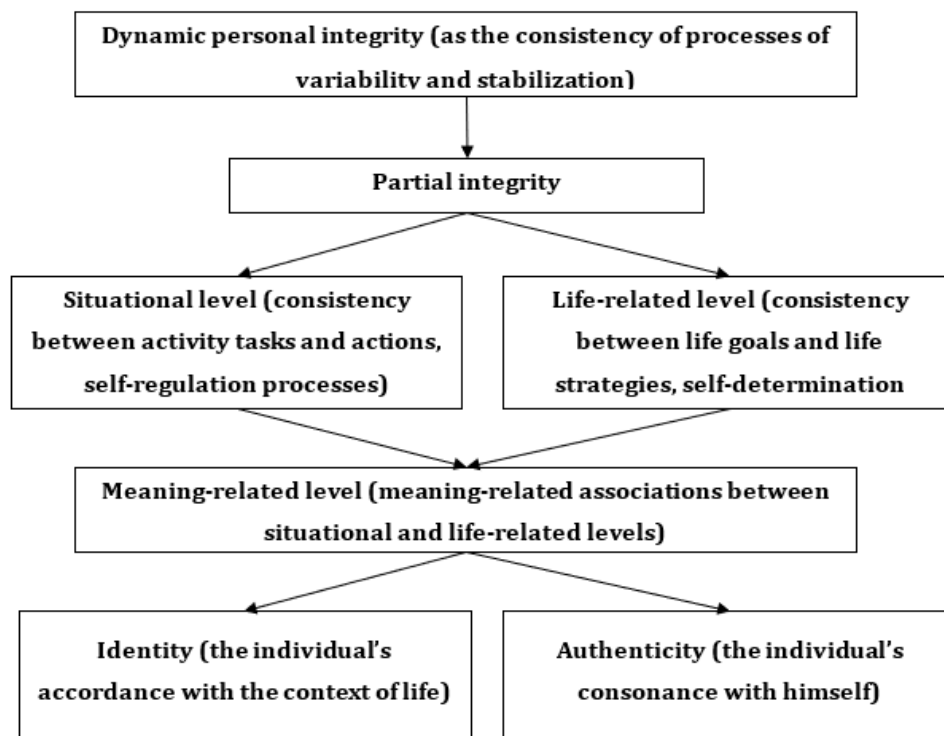
In the framework proposed for describing integrity, these units are described as partial types of integrity in human life. This approach to studying integrity aligns with the principle of the contextual nature of personal phenomenology, recognized in contemporary personality psychology. Personality integrity is most clearly manifested in its activity, behavior, and performance, which require "unity of action" and the coherence of its various components. According to the distinction between situational and life contexts, integrity at the level of habitual activity in the situational context (the unit of description of which is the activity situation) is ensured by self-regulation processes, while at the level of the life context (including life situations, life goals, and plans) it is ensured by self-determination processes. As noted above, these processes ensure the effectiveness of human activity as a subject of activity and a subject of life.

These partial types of integrity, however, do not yet constitute personal integrity. Personal integrity is associated with the coherence of different levels of life activity, situational and life contexts. The highest "coordinating center" is the value-meaning system, which provides the foundation and direction for various types of human activity.

Another key thesis of the approach we present to describing personal integrity is that identity and authenticity are considered psychological phenomena that manifest personal integrity. These phenomena are exactly what defines the holistic nature of personality, its "consolidation".

These ideas form the basis for our conceptual model of personal integrity (Figure 2).

Figure 2
Hypothetical conceptual model of personal integrity



The eventfulness of life, a sense of its meaningful realization, is achieved by an individual in result of the alignment of daily activities with individual life goals and the realization of these life goals and plans in everyday life.

The advantages of the proposed model, in our view, lie in the justification of the study of integrity in accordance with the contexts of human life, in the connection of the phenomenon of integrity with the phenomenology of identity and authenticity, in the possibility to take into account the meaning foundations of human life through the coherence of the activity of situational and life contexts, by "adapting" daily activities to individual life plans and objectives.

This model is a hypothetical model that serves a heuristic function and identifies ways forward for further research, in particular for the search for methodological solutions and the development of methodical tools to study the coherence of human activity in different contexts.

Conclusions

One of the major trends in modern reality changes is the increase in its complexity, associated with the growing diversity and differentiation of reality, with the multiplicity of the worlds of human existence, which poses a challenge to the individual's ability to maintain integrity.

Personal integrity is a systemic property that reflects the individual's ability to ensure coherence of the components, "consolidation" of personality, in the context of the differentiation of individual inner world and living space.

On the basis of the methodological justification of the possibility of identifying partial manifestations of integrity, it is proposed that the principle of context – the description of integrity in different contexts of human life – be considered as a criterion for its distinction.

Personal integrity is ensured by the action of integrative mechanisms—the processes of self-regulation in the situational context of habitual activity and the processes of self-determination in the context of life. Integrity is one of the ultimate integral characteristics of personality; the coherence of various levels of activity is guaranteed by the value-meaning regulation, which is the highest level of regulation.

We propose to consider identity and authenticity, the unifying foundation of which are meanings, as psychological forms of manifestation of personality integrity and its "consolidation".

The proposed conceptual model of integrity based on theoretical and empirical research enables us to define the prospects for the development of methodological tools for the study of human integrity in various contexts of life.

The aim of our ongoing work is to provide a theoretical and empirical basis for the phenomenon of personality integrity and its ability to cope with challenges of the complexity of modern life.

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Conflict of Interest Information

The author has no conflicts of interest to declare.