

SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY

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The technique of individual's social-psychological adaptation research in small group and informal subgroup

The article describes the questionnaire of individual's social-psychological adaptation in the group and subgroup. The technique is based on an ordinal scale with bipolar principle of the signs ordering and has 14 points in the form of statements. Evaluation of the sign severity, displayed at the item is carried out by means of the 7-point scale. The results of evaluation the substantive and the face validity, reliability, consistency, normality of distribution and compilation of normative data are presented. The study involved 174 employees – members of labor collectives in different fields of activity. Established, that the technique meets the basic requirements and can be used in research and applied purposes.

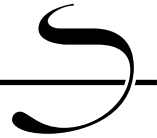
Keywords: *small group, informal subgroups, individual, social-psychological adaptation.*

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The problem of adaptation is an interdisciplinary, as falls in the research field of different disciplines: social and educational psychology, industrial psychology and psychology of personality, sociology, pedagogy, biology, etc., which focus on one or another aspect of adaptation.

In the social-psychological context adaptation is studied as the process and result of incorporating the subject in the social environment: microenvironment (adaptation in the primary, i.e. small contact group), mesoenvironment (adaptation in the secondary group), macroenvironment (adaptation in the society). Specialists are interested in a wide range of issues: the factors and mechanisms, strategies and levels of the individual's adaptation, adaptation peculiarities depending on its object, etc.

In order to solve a number of research and practical tasks, the tools for assessing the individual's social-psychological adaptation is essential. In our country and abroad are developed techniques such as questionnaire for the study of this kind of adaptation that can be divided into several categories. The first category is intended to study level of the individual's adaptation in general, without any connection with the



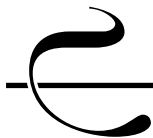
particular social environment. Moreover, in some questionnaires are evaluated not only the social-psychological, but also physiological aspects of adaptation. Thus, *the questionnaire for assess the disadaptation signs* includes the following subscales: "the emotional shifts", "peculiarities of individual psychic processes", "reduction in general activity", "somatic-vegetative disorders", "violation of the cycle "the sleep-wake"", "peculiarities of social interaction", "decrease in motivation to activity", "deterioration of health" [3]. The other contains the subscales, that measure not only adaptation, as otherwise characteristics of the individual. In this regard, these are indicative subscales as "self-acceptance", "locus of control", "desire to dominate" in *the diagnostic methods of the social-psychological adaptation* (C. Rogers and R. Diamond) [5]. In other techniques adaptation is studied indirectly, for example, using a *questionnaire of life satisfaction and social well-being questionnaire* [1].

The second category is the highly specialized techniques, as tool is directed at studying the limited contingent of people and their adaptation level in the certain social environment. For example, *the technique of research the freshmen's social-psychological adaptation* focuses on identifying students' satisfaction level of the teaching conditions and everyday life at the university [2]. At the same time lost sight of students' attitude to the norms, values and traditions of the university, their self-realization in the social and cultural environment of educational establishment, etc.

The third category focuses on the evaluation of the dominant strategies or ways of adaptation flow. Thus, *the technique of research adaptive behavior strategies* is intended to evaluate the eight adaptation strategies in different situations of social interaction [1].

The fourth category consists of techniques intended to study the individual's adaptation in the small group. It may be noted *the small groups socialization scale (SGSS)*, which took place on the procedure for evaluating the reliability and validity [6]. It is based on such operational criteria as comfort, confidence and satisfaction from the involvement in the group.

However, there are not techniques that would allow to study not only the social-psychological adaptation of individual in small group, but also in the informal subgroup (if he is included in the subgroup). In the latter case, it is possible to make some assumptions in terms of microgroup theory regarding the peculiarities of adaptation demonstration [4]. First, the different subgroups in the group are characterized by various adaptive property in relation to the novice. Second, in the process of entering novice in any group he is actually included into one of the informal subgroups, which is most opened for him, or not included in any of the subgroups. The overall process of novice's adaptation in the group – is largely the process of inclusion or exclusion in any subgroup. Third, the adaptation of the full members of the group is mediated by adaptation in the informal subgroup (for members of subgroups) or adaptation to a subgroup (for "independent" members). Fourth, members of the subgroups have a higher level of adaptation within their subgroups than for the group as a whole. "Inde-



pendent" members are characterized by higher level of adaptation to the subgroup, to which they are oriented, as in the group as a whole.

Research tasks: a) to develop a rapid technique – *questionnaire of individual's social-psychological adaptation in the group and subgroup*; b) to study and evaluate the representativeness of the sample, reliability and validity of the questionnaire; c) to make the normative data to the questionnaire.

Technique

Construction features of the questionnaire. The technique is based on the understanding of the individual's social-psychological adaptation as the result and process of the mutual activity of the individual and the group / subgroup connected with his assimilation of goal and tasks, norms and values of the group / subgroup, with the definition of his place in the system of relations in line with mutual interests and capabilities.

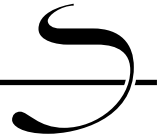
To develop the technique were used the following subjective (internal) criteria:

- subject perception of the possibility of applying his skills in the group / subgroup, positive-negative evaluation of this possibility (№№ 6, 12);
- subject feelings of the support, recognition or non-recognition of his qualities and activities, achievements and abilities of the group / subgroup, satisfaction with his status in the group (№№ 7, 10, 14);
- subject satisfaction with psychological atmosphere, formed relations with others in the group / subgroup (№№ 2, 3, 4, 8);
- subject perception of the inclusion measures in the life activity of group / subgroup and satisfaction from this inclusion, acceptance of the group / microgroup norms and values (№№ 5, 13);
- subject perception of the mutual understanding degree and similarity to other members of the group / subgroup, the satisfaction from the measure of understanding and similarity (№№ 1, 9, 11).

The technique is based on the ordinal scale with bipolar principle of the signs ordering and has 14 points in the form of statements (Appendix), that have the inverse formulation. Evaluation of the sign severity, displayed at the item, is carried out by means of the 7-point scale.

The technique consists of two parts: "In the group as a whole" and "Among those with whom I support the close relations". The first part is intended for studying the adaptation of the individual in the group as a whole, and the second – in the informal subgroup (if he is included in the subgroup), or to the subgroup (if he is not included in the subgroup). To distinguish the informal subgroups, their composition and members, not included in the subgroups, is used the additional tools.

The investigation can be conducted in the shortened and full versions. The difference consists of the parts of work with the technique. In the full version the adaptation of the individuals in the group and informal subgroup (to the subgroup) is studied. For each item of the questionnaire, the subjects make a separate assessment



of the following topics: "In the group as a whole" and "Among those with whom I support the close relations". In the short version only the adaptation of individuals in the group is studied.

Participants of the research. To assess the content validity of the questionnaire two specialists with the basic psychological education were involved as experts: SFU Professor and Head of Personnel Management Ltd. "Computer Engineering" (Rostov-on-Don).

To assess the reliability, consistency, normality of distribution and compilation of normative data of the questionnaire 174 employees were investigated, 21 are members of the work collective in different fields of activity (production, trade, service, building, government and militarized structures), to assess the face validity – 24 employees. To assess the retest reliability two diagnostic stages were conducted with two months as time difference in investigation. As a result, 64 employees as members of the five groups were investigated.

Registration of parameters and variables. The study was conducted in group form using the blank tools.

The level of individual's adaptation in the group and informal subgroup is the studied variables.

Analysis of results. The algorithm of results analysis in the full version of the technique consists of the fact that in the questionnaire blank individual rates of adaptation (**A**) of each study participant are calculated:

- A-G** (adaptation in the group) It is calculated on the section of stimulus material "In the group as a whole";
- A-SG** (adaptation in the subgroup) It is calculated on the section of stimulus material "Among those with whom I support the close relations".

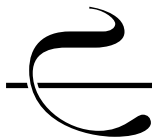
The coefficients (A-G and A-SG) can vary from 14 to 98 points.

The procedure of the methods evaluation. *Substantive validity* of the methods was determined by psychologists-experts on the subject of the accordance each item to the criterion against which it is made. *Face validity* evaluation was made by randomly selected subjects from the standpoint of the items accordance to their ideas: items content should be clear in meaning. The expertise was carried out on a 5-point scale. If the average evaluation of experts (psychologists, and "people from the street") is 4–5 points, then the item is considered possessing the appropriate kind of validity.

Evaluation of *reliability, consistency* of the technique was conducted using Cronbach's alpha coefficient. The values of the coefficient $\alpha > 0,7$ on the scale allow us to judge about its internal consistency.

Evaluation of the technique *retest reliability* was conducted using the Pearson correlation coefficient. If the value of the correlation coefficient is 0.7 or more (high and very high correlation), it is considered that the scale has the retest reliability.

Representativeness of the sample was provided with the following conditions: a) each of the objects must have equal probability of being represented in the sample;



b) the selection was made of uniform set. Selection of industrial groups was carried out from different organizations with different activity profiles using the method of random selection.

Normality of distribution was assessed using the criterion of Kolmogorov-Smirnov. If $p > 0.1$, then the conclusion consists of the approximate accordance of this empirical distribution to the normal.

Statistical data analysis was carried out using SPSS 17.0.

RESULTS

The average value of substantive validity expert estimates of the questionnaire items is ranged from 4 to 5 points, and value of face validity – from 4.36 to 4.86.

Evaluation of reliability, consistency, based on the calculation of Cronbach's alpha coefficient showed that the coefficient for the section "In the group as a whole" (adaptation at the group) is 0.853. Thus, the magnitude of the coefficient $\alpha > 0,7$ indicates the consistency of the scale items.

On the section «In the group as a whole» is established the accordance of the empirical distribution to the normal distribution ($Z = 1,020$ with $p = 0.249$).

Evaluation of the retest reliability evidences the stability of the test results on section «In the group as a whole» on the next indicator of the correlation coefficient: $r = 0,850$ with $p = 0.01$.

In conclusion, we calculated the normative data to assess the level of individual's adaptation in the group and subgroup / to the subgroup: high, trend to high, average, trend toward low, low (Table 1).

Table 1

Normative data and statistical zones of indicators of individual's social-psychological adaptation in the labor collective

Parameter	Normative data			Statistical zones				
	N	x	σ	low	trend toward low	average	trend to high	high
A-G	174	55,0	16,1	14,0–22,6	22,7–38,8	38,9–71,1	71,2–87,3	87,4–98,0
A-SG	123	78,0	13,4	14,0–51,0	51,1–64,5	64,6–91,4	91,5–98,0	-

Note: 1) N – number of members of the group and subgroups, and 2) A-T – indicators of adaptation in the group, and A-II – adaptation in informal subgroups.

Thus, the study showed that the questionnaire of individual's social-psychological adaptation in small group and informal subgroup corresponds with the basic requirements and can be used in research and applied purposes.



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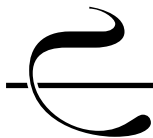
Appendix

Instructions and stimulus material of the questionnaire

INSTRUCTIONS: Read the statements and evaluate their verity with regard to: 1) your primary collective as a whole – the department, shift,... (to the right side from the statements); 2) those with whom you support the close relations in your primary collective (to the left side from the statements).

The evaluation is performed on the 7-point scale, where 1 point means "totally agree", 7 points – "totally disagree", 4 points – "middle" and the remaining points reflect different intermediate measure of your agreement / disagreement. Make note of those numbers that correspond to your opinion. For each item is permitted the choice of only one numerical value. Do not leave the tasks without answers.

«Among those with whom I support the close relations»							Statements	"In the group as a whole"						
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1. Often my opinion (even if I do not speak out it) disagree with opinion of others	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	2. I do not have enough confident and warm relations	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	3. I often have difficulties in communicating	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	4. I doubt of the sincerity of the other to me	1	2	3	4	5	6	7



1	2	3	4	5	6	7	5. I do not like some of the accepted rules of behavior and relation	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	6. Others often do not listen to my opinion	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	It seems to me that others underestimate my capacity	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8. I do not feel a sense of satisfaction from communication with others	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	9. I have few common interests with others	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	10. I do not feel the support	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	11. It seems to me that others do not understand what I say or do	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	12. I can not express myself (my capabilities) fully	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	13. I often have a sense of loneliness	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	14. It seems to me that others know me not enough	1	2	3	4	5	6	7