

Features of Social Attitudes and Value Orientations of Youths and Adolescents Prone to Auto-Aggressive Behavior

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ABSTRACT

The relevance of the study is due to the growth of social symptoms of aggression directed forwards the Self, which is especially visible in environment of young people. The presented article is aimed at research relations between value orientations and social attitudes among youths and adolescents prone to auto-aggressive behavior. The methodological basis of the research corresponds to Jadov's dispositional conception of personality. Considerable interrelations between value orientations and social attitudes of youths and adolescents prone to auto-aggressive behavior are discovered. The results of the study may be useful for diagnostics of auto-aggression among young people in educational organizations and for psychological consulting of the cases related to auto-aggressive behavior.

KEYWORDS

Auto-aggressive behavior, value orientations, social attitudes, youths, adolescents, personality dispositions

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Introduction

In the contemporary world stressful conditions of human living activity are getting stronger, due to which the issues of social-psychological adaptation of personality to modern society are obtaining higher urgency (Maklakov, 2001). Modern tendencies of social development are reflected to a higher extent in the consciousness of youths and adolescents, influencing social regulation of behavior, expressed in different forms, including a form of auto-aggressive behavior (Zakrevskaja, 2013; Shestopalova & Perevoznaja, 2003). Fore there the

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issue of adaptive abilities of youths and adolescents depending on psychological features of personality is especially real.

Auto-aggressive behavior, differing in content and in purpose and in the extent of danger for personality, may be displayed in different forms - from self-destructive, directed to infliction to Self a conscious and unconscious harm, to committing a suicide (Sushko, 2014). Auto-aggressive symptoms are expressed not only in the external, behavioral side; the development of auto-aggressive behavior is lead by deformation of value-normative beliefs, that is by system of internal regulation (Belicheva, 1994). Disorders of external social connections are closely related with the deformation of internal behavioral regulation - value orientations and social attitudes.

The adolescent's age is a transitive period of human development, full of multiple contradictions, age-related conflicts, refraction in self-consciousness (Efimova, Oschepkov & Salahova, 2015). The social situation of development in this period determines not only the dynamics of psychological development, but also the restructuring of the adolescent's relations to the World and to the Self, the development of processes of self-consciousness and self-determination (Bozhovich, 1972; Vygotskij, 1972). Among the many problems related to the forming psyche of the adolescent, the most significant and most dangerous is auto-aggressive behavior (Gorodetskaja & Konuhova, 2008). The type of auto-aggressive behavior specific for adolescents is a suicide with the motivation of self-elimination, for which the lack or extreme instability of orientation to death is characteristic. The earlier age of adolescents, the brighter prevailing of aggressive orientation over auto-aggressive, especially during demonstrative-squeezing suicide attempts. E.M. Vrono (2001) notices that adolescent often experience the problem of three «I»: insuperability of difficulties, infinity of unhappiness and intolerance of sorrow and loneliness. The desperate adolescent is forced to struggle with three «lesses»: helplessness, powerlessness, hopelessness. During the process of this struggle he may come to conclusion that he is worthless and sentences himself to death (Vrono, 2001). In this aspect, auto-aggressive symptoms are expressed not only in the external, behavioral side; to developing auto-aggressive behavior the deformation of system of internal regulation leads, including value-normative beliefs (Lewin, 2000). This gives the opportunity to assume that auto-aggressive behavior is a result of unfavorable social development, of disorders of socialization, appearing in different age stages (Magnusson, 1983). Disorders of external social relations are closely related to the deformation of internal behavioral regulation - value orientations and social attitudes.

The problem of social attitude stays in the centre of attention of psychology not only for an year, although this interest may increase and may decrease (Burns, 1982). The possible cause of interest fluctuation to this problem is as the nature of social attitude phenomenon itself (its ability to appear in the different spheres of psychological organization of human), so the pattern of development of psychology as a science (Jadov, 2013). Nowadays together with the differentiation of psychological knowledge there is also the systematization of psychological ideas on a philosophical level that leads to the rethinking of accumulated material (Devjatkin, 2000).

The problem of attitude is central in a huge amount of works, a lot of empirical studies are conducted – from C.I. Hovland's & M. Sherif's (1952) global

studies in Yale research centre to the study of religious fanatics by L. Festinger (1957). There are known works of the problem of attitude by G.W. Allport (1935), by M. Rokeach (1968) and many others. P.N. Shihirev (2000) foretells that the problem of social attitude will take in the future psychological studies.

Instead of going too deeply into analysis of a huge quantity of works dedicated to the study play a central role phenomenon of attitude, it would be better to focus attention to the most important ideas from the point of view of understanding it. First of all, a critical point in understanding attitude is a proposal of attitude construction by W. Thomas and F. Znaniecki as «value» + «relation to value». W. Thomas and F. Znaniecki defined an attitude as «psychological process, considering relations to the social world and taken primarily in relations to social values» (Shihirev, 2000). At one time A.G. Asmolov & M.A Kovalchuk (1977) noted that social attitude «is conditioned by understanding value as a social object having meaning for individual», or, otherwise, social attitude describes the interrelation between individual and society, in which society is presented by social value, and individual - by relation to this value.

The given position is essential for us and allows us, first, to consider the issue of the dual nature of social attitude - from the point of view of environment and from the point of view of the individual, and, second, to consider the issue of relation to the values of society. In this sense, the duality of nature of social attitude is regulator of social behavior and of a activity of the individual in society (Oschepkov, 2014). On this basis, we suggested a hypothesis of interrelation of the social attitudes system and the value orientations system of youths and adolescents as a base of behavior regulation, influencing the display of certain forms of behavior, including auto-aggressive behavior.

According to what was said above, our study look on the following tasks:

- 1) to study the significance of social values for youths prone to auto-aggressive behavior and for youth non-prone to auto-aggressive behavior;
- 2) to research the quantity rating of the social attitudes system of youths prone and non-prone to auto-aggressive behavior;
- 3) to reveal the interrelations of the social attitudes system and the value orientations system of youths;
- 4) analysis of differences of the value orientations and the social attitudes of youths prone and non-prone to auto-aggressive behavior;
- 5) to study the significance of social values of adolescents prone and non-prone to auto-aggressive behavior;
- 6) to research the quantity rating of the social attitudes system of adolescents prone and non-prone to auto-aggressive behavior;
- 7) to reveal interrelations of the social attitudes system and the value orientations system of adolescents;
- 8) analysis of differences of value orientations and social attitudes of adolescents prone and non-prone to auto-aggressive behavior.

Materials and Methods

The empirical part of the study was conducted on the platform of Dimitrovgrad engineering-technological institute - branch of NRNU MEPhI,



Dimitrovgrad city, Ulyanovsk region. As a sample there was a group of students of 3th – 4th year students, ages of 19 - 22, totalling 98 men and women. The second empirical part of the study was conducted on the platform of Humanitarian-economical lyceum of Dimitrovgrad city of Ulyanovsk region. As a sample there was a group of pupils of the 9th grade, age of 15 - 16, total 42 boys and girls.

In the study the method of semantic differential by Charles E. Osgood was used directed to reveal quantity rating of social attitudes of personality (Serkin, 2004); a value questionnaire by Shalom H. Schwartz, oriented to measure motivational domains determining the most significant value points of human living activity (Shapar, 2005) was also used. Furthermore we used the Scale of proneness to self-destructive behavior by Alexander N. Orel being a standard test-questionnaire designed to measure proneness to realization different forms of deviant behavior, including proneness to auto-aggressive behavior (Shapar, 2006).

Results

With the aim of analysis of values systems of both youths non-prone to auto-aggressive behavior (YNAB), and youths prone to auto-aggressive behavior (YPAB), we conducted the comparison of average group significance of values with the use of Student's statistical t-criterion. With this, special attention was paid to significant differences of values in the studied groups of youths. As a result, statistically significant differences in values «social power» ($t_{emp}=1,9128$ at $p \leq 0,05$) and «stimulation» ($t_{emp}=2,8946$ at $p \leq 0,01$) were revealed, the significance of which is higher for younger people prone to auto-aggressive behavior, and values «social culture» ($t_{emp}=2,2709$ at $p \leq 0,05$), the significance of which is higher for younger people non-prone to auto-aggressive behavior (table 1). Hereafter, the following abbreviations will be used: YNAB - youth non-prone to auto-aggressive behavior, YPAB - youth prone to auto-aggressive behavior.

Table 1. The comparison of each values average group significance of youths non-prone to auto-aggressive behavior, and youths prone to auto-aggressive behavior

№	Values	Average group significance		t_{emp}
		YNAB	YPAB	
1.	Pleasure	2,7222	3,5000	1,0842
2.	Achievements	4,4444	4,5500	0,1983
3.	Social power	3,2778	4,0625	1,9128*
4.	Self-determination	4,4811	4,5850	0,2026
5.	Stimulation	4,0367	5,0000	2,8946**
6.	Conformism	3,5278	2,6875	1,1209
7.	Sociality	4,6400	4,1275	1,0672
8.	Security	5,1856	5,0025	0,4153
9.	Maturity	4,7000	4,5700	0,3408
10.	Support of traditions	4,8333	4,1875	1,1208
11.	Social culture	3,2078	2,5775	2,2709*
12.	Spirituality	3,9333	4,2500	0,7076

* - $atp \leq 0,05$, - $atp \leq 0,01$

Further analysis was dedicated to the comparison of the average group significance of social attitudes of youths non-prone to auto-aggressive behavior, and youths prone to auto-aggressive behavior with the use of the Student's statistical t-criterion. With the use of the semantic differential method by

Osgood, social attitudes of young people for values relevant to Schwarz's typology were measured. As a result of such analysis, statistically significant differences among studied groups of youths in social attitudes for «achievements» ($t_{emp}=1,9117$ at $p \leq 0,05$), «traditions support» ($t_{emp}=2,6596$ at $p \leq 0,01$), «social culture» ($t_{emp}=2,7671$ at $p \leq 0,01$) and «spirituality» ($t_{emp}=2,7244$ at $p \leq 0,01$), the significance for which is higher for youths non-prone to auto-aggressive behavior, were revealed (table 2).

Table 2. The comparison of each social attitudes average group significance of youths non-prone to auto-aggressive behavior, and youths prone to auto-aggressive behavior

№	Social attitudes for	Average group significance		t_{emp}
		YNAB	YPAB	
1.	Pleasure	16,2220	17,2500	0,1983
2.	Achievements	25,4440	17,0000	1,9117*
3.	Social power	8,5556	14,0000	0,9844
4.	Self-determination	22,0000	21,0000	0,2646
5.	Stimulation	17,4440	13,7500	0,7540
6.	Conformism	9,2222	1,2500	1,4299
7.	Sociality	22,7780	20,0000	0,6772
8.	Security	25,7780	21,7500	0,8598
9.	Maturity	15,2220	10,0000	0,7851
10.	Traditions support	23,1110	14,5000	2,6596**
11.	Social culture	24,1110	13,0000	2,7671**
12.	Spirituality	27,4440	14,2500	2,7244**

* - $atp \leq 0,05$, ** - $atp \leq 0,01$

With the aim of analysis of values systems of both adolescents non-prone to auto-aggressive behavior (ANAB), and adolescents prone to auto-aggressive behavior (APAB), we conducted the comparison of average group significance of values with the use of the Student's statistical t-criterion. With this, special attention was paid to significant differences in values of the adolescent groups studied. As a result, statistically significant differences in values «achievements» ($t_{emp}=2,6732$ at $p \leq 0,01$) and «security» ($t_{emp}=2,5721$ at $p \leq 0,05$) were revealed (table 3). Hereafter, the following abbreviations will be used: ANAB - youth non-prone to auto-aggressive behavior, APAB - youth prone to auto-aggressive behavior.

Table 3. The comparison each of values average group significance of adolescents non-prone to auto-aggressive behavior, and adolescents prone to auto-aggressive behavior

№	Values	Average group significance		t_{emp}
		ANAB	APAB	
1.	Pleasure	8,7273	8,2222	0,5007
2.	Achievements	23,8180	26,0000	2,6732**
3.	Social power	14,9550	15,6670	0,2824
4.	Self-determination	29,0450	28,6670	0,2770
5.	Stimulation	13,7270	14,6670	0,9729
6.	Conformism	16,0450	16,6670	0,5960
7.	Sociality	16,5910	17,6670	0,8207
8.	Security	35,2730	34,1110	0,5398
9.	Maturity	30,0450	27,4440	2,5721*
10.	Traditions support	32,6820	32,7780	0,0741
11.	Social culture	25,7730	25,4440	0,1514
12.	Spirituality	21,0450	22,2220	0,8238



* - significant differences at $\rho \leq 0,05$

** - significant differences at $\rho \leq 0,01$

Further analysis was dedicated to the comparison of each social attitudes average group significance for adolescents non-prone to auto-aggressive behavior and adolescents prone to auto-aggressive behavior with the use of the Students' statistical t-criterion. With the use of semantic differentials method by Osgood social attitudes of adolescents for values relevant Schwarz typology were measured. As a result of such analysis statistically significant differences in the studied groups of adolescents in social attitudes for «pleasure» (temp=2,7690 at $\rho \leq 0,01$), «sociality» (temp=2,6358 at $\rho \leq 0,01$), «maturity» (temp=2,0503 at $\rho \leq 0,05$) were revealed (table 4).

Table 4. The comparison of each social attitudes average group significance of adolescents non-prone to auto-aggressive behavior, and adolescents prone to auto-aggressive behavior

№	Social attitudes for	Average group significance		t _{emp}
		ANAB	APAB	
1.	Pleasure	18,3182	10,3333	2,7690**
2.	Achievements	27,7727	27,2222	0,2889
3.	Social power	18,1818	15,4444	0,8837
4.	Self-determination	24,4091	28,5556	1,3474
5.	Stimulation	18,1364	17,3333	0,2498
6.	Conformism	12,0909	16,2222	1,2531
7.	Sociality	18,8636	17,8889	0,4788
8.	Security	26,2273	33,2222	2,6358**
9.	Maturity	27,5000	27,5556	0,0254
10.	Traditions support	19,9545	28,3333	2,0503*
11.	Social culture	23,1364	24,5556	0,5054
12.	Spirituality	24,0000	23,7778	0,0926

* - significant differences at $\rho \leq 0,05$

** - significant differences at $\rho \leq 0,01$

The given differences indicate that adolescents prone to auto-aggressive behavior have distinct attitude for satisfying wishes and life enjoyment.

Discussion

The higher rating for value of social power of youths prone to auto-aggressive behavior indicates higher orientation for influence on people and events, on authority, to which they need to obey. At the same time, as for youths non-prone to auto-aggressive behavior, the given value is related from the the right to rule own life with cooperation with environment, wich also indicates the higher significance of value of social culture oriented to reciprocity in relations. However, in our opinion, it is more indicative for youths prone to auto-aggressive behavior the higher significance of value of stimulation that characterizes youth prone to auto-aggressive behavior as oriented to experiencing the thrill, seeking risk, related with the need for changes, novelty.

The obtained results of comparison of social attitudes of youths, indicating the higher significance of achievements, traditions support, social culture and spirituality for youths non-prone to auto-aggressive behavior, in its turn, characterizes also the group of youths prone to auto-aggressive behavior. So youths prone to auto-aggressive behavior may be characterized having lower orientation foward, traditions, culture and spirituality.

The higher rating of value of achievements for adolescents prone to auto-aggressive behavior indicates the higher orientation for social recognition, orientation for possessing material goods, at the same time as for adolescents non-prone to auto-aggressive behavior the given value is related with success in activities that demonstrate by increasing personal competence. At the same time, the importance of security for adolescents prone to auto-aggressive behavior is lower in comparison to adolescents non-prone to auto-aggressive behavior, which characterizes adolescents prone to auto-aggressive behavior as less responsible, less reliable, and, at the same time, adolescents prone to auto-aggressive behavior experience less feelings of affiliation, the care of surrounding people.

Along with that, for adolescents prone to auto-aggressive behavior, the attitude for sociability is more characteristic that is an attitude for social justice, equal opportunity for everybody, honest, sincere relations for what is probably they have a lack of in relations with environment. In this aspect the more distinct attitude for maturity is explained by its relation to a mature understanding of life, deeper emotional and spiritual relation with environment and by understanding one's mission in life.

Conclusion

Thus, on the basis of the said above we may make the following conclusions:

1. The values system of youths prone to auto-aggressive behavior may be characterized as oriented toward values of stimulation, indicating orientation toward experiencing thrill, seeking risk, the need for novelty, changes. The value system of youths prone to auto-aggressive behavior displays the higher rating of orientation toward values of social power, which indicates the tendency for higher influence on people and events, on authority, to which one needs to obey. At the same time, for youths non-prone to auto-aggressive behavior the given value is related with the right to rule one's own life with cooperation from the environment, for which the higher rating of social culture oriented to reciprocity in relations indicates.

2. The system of social attitudes of youths non-prone to auto-aggressive behavior is characterized by higher significance of values of achievements, support of traditions, social culture and spirituality that, in its turn, also characterizes youths prone to auto-aggressive behavior. So the system of social attitudes of youths prone to auto-aggressive behavior is less oriented for achievements, traditions, culture and spirituality. Thus, we may say that youths prone to auto-aggressive behavior are less oriented toward social recognition, successfulness for them ambition is less characteristic. Also youths prone to auto-aggressive behavior display lower respect for traditions and social order. In relations with surrounding people the youths prone to auto-aggressive behavior are less oriented for reciprocity and moderation, which indicates an orientation toward displaying extreme feelings and deeds. For inner state of youths prone to auto-aggressive behavior it is more characteristic to have disharmony, and an incomplete understanding of one's own mission in life.

3. The undertaken theoretical analysis showed that social attitude expresses a determined relation of an individual to the values of society. For adolescents whose personality is forming, this means the specific refraction of social values in one's consciousness expressing them selves then in a determined orientation of behavior. In this aspect, the features of social attitudes for values



of society in which adolescents prone to auto-aggressive behavior live in along the orientation for auto-aggressive behavior deserve special attention.

4. The conducted empirical analysis showed that adolescents prone to auto-aggressive behavior attach higher significance to the value of achievements and lower significance to the value of security. Probably this is explained by the tendency of adolescents prone to auto-aggressive behavior for respect from the environment, for seeking mutual relations, driving times when the feeling of affiliation and closeness with surrounding people are reduced for them.

It is worth paying attention to features of social attitudes for certain values of adolescents prone to auto-aggressive behavior. The low rating of attitude for enjoyment of life and higher rating for social justice and maturity indicate a more serious relation for life. Adolescents prone to auto-aggressive behavior are oriented to more sincere, deeper interrelations with surrounding people, they see sense of life in it. Along with it, this is exactly what they lack in relations with others, and this that leads to intrapersonal tension and, perhaps, increases the level of proneness to auto-aggressive behavior.

Recommendations

The results can be used for elaborating programs of prevention of auto-aggressive behavior in the environment of young people, for determining contents of psychological assistance of learners in the educational environment. They can be useful for providing psychological assistance of adolescents and youths with difficulties of adaptation in school.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the authors.

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