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Features of representatives of Russian young generation’s self-attitude

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Abstract

Modern social and cultural reality is perceived as a constant complication of the social world in its multitude and given incompleteness. It is highly important to understand leading tendencies in dynamics of the youth identity processes when you consider transformations of social reality as they define social and psychological peculiarities of the young generation. The youth is one of the most important capitals of the society. In our research we consider identification processes as psychological phenomena carrying the nature of sense. In the recent years concepts of sense constructs are widely developed in psychology, which strongly enriches identity researches. Sense is considered not only as a phenomenon of consciousness, but also as a phenomenon of unconsciousness. It is very likely that the major part of person’s social identity’s contents is outside its consciousness in the most cases and is actualized only when the person is faced with certain social objects and situations. When we study features of identity we start with a theoretical notion that proposes to understand identity as a dynamic attitude, as a certain self-attitude. In our research we present the analysis of representatives of Russian young generation’s self-attitude based on detecting ordinary concepts about oneself and one’s social and ethnical group. Psychosemantic procedures as well as projective drawings and questionnaires were used for the research.

Introduction

The modern paradigm in the area of understanding "man - society" problem is formulated in terms of postnonclassical scientific rationality. Principles of knowledge are changing from "holism" to systemacity, from

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determinism to stochasticity, from the principle of relativity to the principle of complementarity, from the principle of causality to the principle of target causality. Modern knowledge is moving from the abstract-logical approach to the system-integral one. These two trends of scientific thought are converging at present, which indicates a role of a cross-disciplinary research and mutual penetration of different theoretical approaches to the problem of understanding a man in the modern conditions of sociality transformation. Besides that, transforming “object-subject” connections are important for the study of social systems: the subject is not only dependent from the object influence, but affects it on one’s part. Thus, to make a complete description of the “object-subject” relationships state when considering the issues of personal development in the system of social relations, it is required to recognize the influence of personality on the social environment. In psychology this approach of understanding personality proposed by the classics of Russian science: S.L. Rubinstein, B.G. Ananev, V.N. Myasischev, A.N. Leontiev. A. Maslow conception is trying to overcome the limitations of cognitive approach in which people positions and views are determined by external (social) environment and socio-cultural norms. The advantage of the humanistic conception is in the fact of raising the question about the internal determination of human social behavior.

The socio-cultural reality is considering by modern investigators not as a given configuration, not as a result of objective historical transformations (the linearity of development) but as an invariant tendency of social world to become more complicated in its multitude and incompleteness. The man is understood as an active creator of social reality not in terms of the activism but in terms of producing meanings and values. In fact this is a process of social reality construction itself. This approach allows to consider the increasing individualization of the modern world as a necessary condition for the formation of a new sociality in the unity of causal and spiritual determinations. According to B. Porshnev (1974), the entire process of development of human society is a history of the individuality formation. Formation of transnational spaces does not involve the destruction of a national as a unique quality. National as an individual starts a new life in the modern world. On the level of certain personality all deepening processes of individualization are not considering by us as those which assign only social destructions. It is not necessary to assess the modern society processes of individualization from the “end of the sociality” stand. The result of the individualization is the formation of responsible and free man, one who creates his own life. The main achievement of individuality - a change of behavior, it is activity to transform ourselves and the world. In this sense, personalization is the process of becoming a person capable of transformation not only themselves, but also the social space. Such a person is not an expression of egocentric position, self-contained man emerged from a field of attraction of the social space. Such a person is capable of creating a new social space with different rules, norms and structures. Studies among the younger generation allow to understand the meaning of the ongoing social transformation.

In recent years, more and more researches of transcultural processes of the world appears. Differently evaluated the role and nature of the interaction of different cultures and, therefore, the result of this interaction (Berry J.& Pleasants M., M. Bernal, P. Knight, K. Chun, P.B. Organista & G. Marin, B. Porshnev, L. Drobizheva, T. Stefanenko, S. Gurieva, V. Tishkov, A. Buchek, etc.). You can find a very critical and pessimistic mood among researchers about the prospects for the future of the world community as a whole and for individual societies and well-balanced and reasonably optimistic forecasts for the new sociality. The modern multicultural society is a society of social diversity, and diversity that is fundamentally volatile. As a result of the interaction in a multicultural environment a person is faced with a variety of culture-specific views of the world, with a variety of multi-dimensionality and cultural environment, and in front of it there are two significant problems of personality: the preservation of their identity and socialization in this environment. In a multicultural environment, a person gains experience of destruction, loss of its ethnic identity and the experience of creation a new social identity, relevant to the circumstances. As a result self-consciousness acquires new qualities and functioning differently under the pressure of the changes happening in a variety of cultures, peoples, religious worlds, historical traditions, political and economic realities. Russia has historically been conceived as a multi-cultural society and multi-ethnic state. Over the centuries of Russian history formed an original socio-cultural type and that thesis is supported by researches in the field of ethnography, sociology, and psychology. In the Russian science is accumulated a rich empirical material in the personal development of identity in a multicultural society.
The methodology of study

It should be noted that in the Russian and Western psychology has developed a certain tradition of using the terms "self-consciousness" and "identity." The beginning of the study of identity lay in psychoanalysis. Freud in his "Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego" for the first time used the term "identification" in a psychological context. Identification was seen as an unconscious emotional bond of child with parents as an important mechanism of interaction between the individual and social group (Freud S., 1921). Symbolic interactionism assumes that personal identity is formed in the process of social interaction through comparison and contrasting positions of the various groups and communities. Dzh. Mid introduced the concept of the "generalized other" which meant a set of impersonal systems, norms and values of society (Mead GH, 1934). Sociopsychological approach to the study of identity began to develop in cognitive psychology, where identity is understood as a critical psychic structure of both the individual and the group. The basic idea is that the impression of the world are organized into coherent interpretation - ideas, stereotypes, expectations that act as regulators of social behavior. In social identity theory, developed by H. Tajfel and his colleagues (Tajfel H., 1978), are distinguished three components of identity: values, cognitive and emotional. At a central place in contemporary social theory, the concept of identity brought by E. Erickson. He outlined the terms of the key issues and concepts related to identity. E. Erikson highlighted the concept of psychic identity as a product of the interaction between society and the individual. Psychosocial identity characterise the mature person whose "internal identity and continuity" is synthesized with the aspirations of its integration with social structures (the state, the nation, the different social groups). In Russian psychology, along with the term "identity", the term "self-consciousness" is in use. Self-consciousness performs a number of functions: regulatory, cognitive, emotional and evaluative, consolidating, values, social and psychological. Personal integrity is determined by the activity of self-consciousness. The development of self-consciousness in specific socio-cultural environment is understood as a mechanism of the formation of the historical personality type (E. Bobrova). In the Russian literature of recent years, there are increasing number of works in which the processes of identification are considered as psychological phenomena that have the nature of sense (Gordeeva N.D., V.P. Zinchenko, 1982; Agafonov A., 2000; Nalimov V.V., Drogalina J.A., 1985, E.T. Sokolov, 1989; Chkartishvili S.N., 1978, his brother, B.S., 1988; Dotsenko, E.L., 1997 DA Leontiev, 1999). At the same time sense is understood not only as a phenomenon of consciousness, but as a phenomenon of the unconscious too. It is likely that much of the content of social identifications of particular individual in most cases is outside of his mind, and is only updated when a collision between the person and other social objects and situations. The identification with a social group involves persons understanding of his place in the structure of social relations, the actual social practices adopted by the group, the values of the group and et cetera. Selection of the social identity is actualized by critical situations when social future of the person depends on his choice and proceeds as a conscious process. In stable situations, most of the processes of identification are not realized. In the Russian psychological science there are a lot of works on the problem of ethnic self-consciousness. Quite often, the concept of ethnic self-consciousness and ethnic identity are treated as synonyms, but, according to G.U. Soldatova, ethnic identity is narrow, as it is a cognitive-motivational core of ethnic self-consciousness, and on the other hand is broader because it contains a layer of the unconscious (G.U. Soldatova, 1998). The main content of ethnic identity in the opinion of some authors are ethno representations. They differ from individual because of their universality, stability, inter-generational continuity and coercive nature of the impact on the individual (E.V. Osipova, 1977; G.U. Soldatova, 1998). Central place among ethno-social representations are taken by the images of our own and other ethnic groups. The structure of ethnic image consists of ethnic attitudes (stereotypes, biases, prejudices), values and value orientations, psychological universalities. Ethnic images are formed on the basis of three interrelated processes: self-identification, ethnic differentiation and understanding of ethnic differences. Stability of identity and its positivity are the central moments for a group to feel psychological safety. Ethnical belonging is one of the adaptation means, better orientation and achieving certain social objectives in today's complex world. At present, it is very important moment for many cultures of the world, as the distinctiveness begins to take quite a high place in the hierarchy of modern life values.
In our study, we started from the idea that acceptance of self and a high level of reflection of its features in the structure of the self-image correlated with the group values, the level of life satisfaction, the presence of a developed system of goals in life, and positive ethnic identity.

Methods

There were 279 respondents in this research: 179 live in Saint-Petersburg (140 of them are Russians, 39 are from Azerbaijan), 100 live in Perm Kray, all of them are Russians (36% men, 64% women). The age span is 18-25 years. All of the respondents are the citizens of Russian Federation.

Assessment of the expression of the individual qualities of the people as a cultural entity, and the measurement of group value orientations in four areas of life activity: orientation to group, orientation to power, orientation to each other and, orientation to change using the "Cultural Value Differential" questionnaire by G. U. Soldatova.

In order to identify the characteristics of ethnic identity of the respondents we used the method "Types of ethnic identity" by G. U. Soldatova.

To study the group representation of the system of significant values for the respondents, those of them that determine general directions of focus of their lives and those that are formed during socialization process by interiorisation of values of the group and society, we used the sense-of-life orientations questioner of D. A. Leontiev (This is an adapted version of Purpose-in-life PIL test by J. Crambo and L. Maholik).

The self-relation was measured by “Who am I?” test (M. Kuhn, T. McPartlend, modified by T.V. Rumyantseva). In this study we used the scale of identification characteristics, which allowed us to define and describe features of self-identification and self-relation across the whole sample: “Social Self”, “Communicative Self”, “Material Self”, “Active Self”, “Physical Self”, “Perspective Self”, “Reflective Self”.

Discussion

According to the results of calculation of the coefficient matching the severity of the qualities (CSQ), the representatives of Russian nationality identified: "Openness", "Distrust of authority ", "Cordiality", "Peacefulness". These data are consistent with earlier results obtained by us describing Russians (Ananieva, Sveshnikov, 2008).

Also such a structure is confirmed by analysis of values, as the results of which for the respondents are important: focus on weak social control ("Distrust of authority" "self-will"), focus on the interaction ("Cordiality", "peacefulness") and openness to change ("Openness", "The propensity to risk"). The dominant is the "focus on the changes". In the group of Azerbaijanis the most pronounced features of the people are "Loyalty to tradition", "peacefulness", "Openness", "Cordiality", "Striving for the Future", "Rivalry". The leading value orientations in this group are "orientation to each other" (focus on the interaction / competition) and " focus on the group". Azerbaijanis have subordination to groups, to traditions, and at the Russian orientation to change and openness to change. In order to identify the significance of differences between Azeris and Russian on the specifics of the value orientations of two-factor analysis of variance was used.

Azerbaijans have dominant high level of loyalty to tradition and the low level of their destruction. Russian have high dominant level of destruction of traditions. Tradition and culture play an important role in the life of Azerbaijani youth, and the importance they attach to parents, elders and the community at large. The young Russian is characterized by more independent and autonomous attitude to life, deeds and actions are increasingly guided by its own opinion.

The dominant type of ethnic identity among the respondents is a positive ethnic identity. Positive ethnic identity, as evidenced by the analysis of literature, is a necessary condition for self-acceptance. Also, the dominant ethnic positive identity in a multicultural society is seen as the norm. This is due to its understanding as the balance of tolerance towards their own and other ethnic groups. It should be noted that this understanding is not connected to the idea of cosmopolitanism, as a person with "normal" natural ethnic identity tend to prefer their own ethnic and cultural values, and a positive value relation to other ethnic groups. Analysis of different types of ethnic identity on
a scale of "personality - group" identity can be attributed to positive identity ("normal") is closer to the pole of "personal" identity. Hypoidentity (ethnic indifference) and hyperidentity (ethnoegoism) are closer to the "group" identity. Correlation analysis of positive ethnic identity in a separate group of Russian and Azerbaijani revealed some originality positive relationship with the structure of ethnic identity as a people, a meaningful life, and value orientations. In the group of Azerbaijani positive ethnic identity contributes to the pursuit more attentive to the cultural traditions of their ethnic group, lower level of aggression towards other nationalities, evaluating his own life as an interesting, fruitful, satisfying his own self-realization. In the group of Russian ethnic identity is a positive effect on the increase in the desire for reciprocity, fosters openness to interact with others, increase the severity of addiction to risky behavior. Latter is associated with personality traits such as a desire for success, impulsivity and independence.

The respondents in our study are characterized as purposeful, conscious of themselves, as people with enough freedom of choice to build their life in accordance with their own ideas about its meaning. They can take pleasure in the present, but also have plans for the future which they aspire and hope to make a reality. Respondents consider their past life as meaningful and productive, in some moments they may be dissatisfied with life, but in general, the subjects are satisfied with it.

The structure of self-identifications of the respondents, regardless of gender or ethnicity, the personal identification dominates over social. The lowest figure obtained by "material self". Respondents did not characterize themselves in terms of well-being, wealth / poverty, property (apartment, car, clothes), habits, leisure activities (holidays, fests), the relationship to the environment (I love nature, I love the city hustle and bustle, do not like...) Analysis of the quality and quantity of semantic groups indicates a high level of reflection own self-image. Personal property, personal data, existential attitudes. Also self-assessment of their own interests, hobbies, knowledge, skills, competencies and achievements is adequately represented. In the area of social class respondents described themselves rather standard: Russian, Azerbaijani, resident of St. Petersburg, a native of St. Petersburg, Novgorod, the believer (Orthodox, Muslim) / non-believer, daughter, son, wife, husband. This is reminiscent of a factual account of their autobiography, compiled upon employment. Correlation analysis revealed a relationship life orientations and self-identities. When people describe themselves as a strong personality having sufficient freedom of choice, its rich set of identification characteristics - belonging to social groups, focuses on the personal, emotional, and physical characteristics, valued communication with loved ones, friends and family.

Purposefulness correlated with plans for the future, the desire to change something in your life and belonging to a number of social groups. Satisfaction with self-realization and the degree of effectiveness of life depends on the ability to properly set goals, monitor events of their lives, to determine the future plans and material security. Respondents, stating their affiliation to a particular social group, are active in any activities, and in communication with loved ones, friends and family. Respondents are characterized by a responsible attitude to health, the desire to keep fit. Respondents, for whom plans for the future are significant, identified with the personality traits, emotional attitude to yourself. The subjects are satisfied with their lives in the present, also consider themselves to be a strong personality, able to build their life in accordance with its objectives. The identification system of such people includes an array of activities and planning for the future.

Conclusion

The results obtained in our study may contribute to the understanding of some problematic aspects of the identification of the younger generation of Russians. The presented results are important for studying the formation of self-consciousness in the period of social transformation. It should be noted that the observed gap of personal and social components of an self-image have evidence, in our opinion, on the impact of social destruction of the last decade. During this period the prevailing social structures and institutions were partially destroyed, partially converted, there were changes in the professional field. The period of adolescence test generation took place in the decade of social and political transformations. Teenage years are characterized by "role- moratorium" (I.Kon), which is associated with a constant exercise of choice: the profession, social environment, values, etc. Years of youth are a busy time of searching and making vital decisions, which then determine its social profile. The younger
A generation today is trying to fit into the vague and blurred social space of our society. Support for them is self-understanding and self-attitude. This, in our opinion, is the basis of success in overcoming the crisis in the personality dynamics of social structures. Also a significant role in making yourself a high level of reflection of the self image played a positive attitude to the features of its people, that allows young Russians to overcome the devastating impact of social destruction on individuals.

References

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