

ABSTRACT

Zubenko O.M. Personality's regulation of the personal lifestyle. – Qualification scholarly paper: a manuscript.

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The dissertation is devoted to the current issue of the modern Ukrainian youth lifestyle. The theoretical and methodological basis of the research is Adler's approach to understanding the way of life and the concept of emotional schemas. Lifestyle is considered as an integral characteristic of individuality which comprises: early personality's experience, level of personality's maturity, features of personality's emotional traits, stable interpretations of the world, features of social interaction, relationship's building, the general level of subjective wellbeing.

The goal of the research is to enhance theoretical aspects of the mechanism and main determinants of personal lifestyle modeling. The following research tasks were accomplished: 1. To analyze theoretically the personal lifestyle problems and the main factors of personal lifestyle modeling in terms of various psychological approaches; 2. To analyze the components of modern youth lifestyle; 3. To create a typology of modern youth lifestyles; 4. To study early emotional schemes as individual lifestyle background; 5. To determine modulation factors of influence of early emotional schemes on personal lifestyle; 6. To set up developmental and educational programs aimed at supporting the mature components of youth lifestyle and preventing challenges in partnership and parenthood.

The object of the study is a personal lifestyle.

The subject of the study is personal lifestyle determinants.

The study engaged 245 people, 142 of whom were women and 113 were men aged 20-27 years. These people divided into two groups took part in diverse work stages. Group 1 took part in an empirical study with 195 people, 105 of whom were women and 90 were men. In terms of social status, these people are students who are completing degree programs of Kharkiv Higher Education

Institutions or young people who have recently finished higher education and work currently. By marital status, 100% of the sample group is not married and does not have children, but has experience of partnerships. Group 2 took part at the implementation phase of developmental and educational programs and comprised 60 people, 30 of whom were participants (18 women and 12 men aged 21-30), and 30 undergraduate students of the V.N. Karazin University (19 women and 11 men aged 20-23) represented the control group.

In this study the following method group was used: 1) diagnostic methods of lifestyle and maturity indicators: life stance questionnaire; analysis of earliest memories (A. Adler); self-assessment scale of personal maturity (A.V. Mikliaieva); diagnostic method of personal maturity (V.A. Ruzhenkov, V.V. Ruzhenkova, I.S. Lukiantseva); diagnostic method of interpersonal relations (O.S. Kocharian, Y.V. Frolova, I.O. Baru); 2) diagnostic methods of traumatic emotional experience of the personality: a questionnaire of early maladaptive schemas (J. Young); differential emotions scale (K. Izard); 3) diagnostic methods of cognitive and motivational components of emotional schemes: world assumptions scale (R. Janoff-Bulman); 4) diagnostic methods of personality functioning level and self-regulation as lifestyle modulating factors: the Taylor Anxiety Scale; questionnaire "Style of self-regulation" by V.I. Morosanova; questionnaire for diagnostics of borderline personality disorder, S-screening form (T.Y. Lasovska, S.V. Yaichnikov, Y.V. Sarycheva, C.P. Korolenko); 5) methods for studying prescriptions in partnership and parenthood: questionnaire "Role expectations and claims in marriage" (A.N. Volkova), drawing "Me and my child" (H.H. Filippova).

Mathematical and statistical processing of the study results was conducted using the following methods: Fisher's ϕ -test, Mann-Whitney U-test, Student's t-test, Wilcoxon's *T-test*, G-test of signs, Kendall's correlation analysis; factor analysis (Varimax rotation).

By factoring, six typical lifestyle options for the modern student youth were identified:

1. “*Avoiding contact*” is based on an immature experience of a traumatic feeling of rejection and an experience of being unaccepted. On this basis, coping mechanisms are developed by avoiding emotional connection, confidence in low self-worth, and searching for a “safe space” of life and relationships. This can manifest itself in a tendency towards independence, reclusiveness, relying only on oneself, and having trust issues;

2. “*Superiority complex*” is a style of externally demonstrated dominance complex, grandiose self, narcissism which is a protective self-image. A basic sense of unfulfillment and inferiority is an immature personality foundation;

3. “*Assertiveness*” is associated with self-confidence, a high value of self, self-efficacy, and self-control and is based on cultured psychological autonomy, but has a lack of emotional intimacy;

4. “*Mimetism*” reflects orientation to external authorities and values, a lack of internal control, and immaturity of the disciplinary sphere. As a result, an individual «mimetic desire» is formed (R. Girard), which is devoid of autonomy and provoked by a model or external example, a willingness to follow standards of living provided “from outside” and which are perceived as their own free choice;

5. “*Maturity*” reflects the mature position in partnership and ability for psychological intimacy based on the positive immature experience of being accepted and positive attitude experience;

6. “*Interpersonal addiction*” is based on the acquired experience of “learned helplessness” as evidenced by “Loser’s” scenario and basic guilt feeling which rules behavior and relationships.

Highlighted styles can be represented as a three-aspect model: “Interpersonal contact” (“Avoiding contact”, “Interpersonal addiction”); “Ego” (“Mimetism”, “Maturity”); “Maturity” (“Superiority complex”, “Assertiveness”). The identified factors are orthographic (as the result of factorization procedure) and this fact enables to represent these aspects as a coordinate system with the axes. But their content directs attention towards the main trends of life structuring, which is observed in modern youth space. The differences in expression levels of styles

found in men and women were determined: “Mimetism” lifestyle is higher among women, and “Interpersonal addition” lifestyle is more common among men.

Analysis of lifestyle components was aimed at analyzing earliest memories, maturity assessment as a whole, and individual spheres of mental, stable emotional personality traits and subjective interpretation system of the environment (basic beliefs).

Content-analysis of earliest memories revealed that typical events are physical injuries and accidents; situations of novelty and danger and these parameters are the highest among women which indicate the view of life as dangerous and hostile. Memories of boundaries violation, situations of child control, situations of poor progress and devaluation, situations of “immediate gratification of desires”, watching over the quarrels between parents, memories of the parents’ divorce are highly significant regardless of gender. Therefore, the general content reproduces the deficit of psychological autonomy, learned helplessness, and fixation on the negative side of family relationships. Memories associated with positive events are of high importance: a trip, rest, play, and communication with friends which indicate positive emotional background, social adaptation, and significance outside the family environment.

Quantitative indicators to assess the earliest memories revealed the following features: connotation of the earliest memories with the sense of rejection in men. Men are also characterized by a higher level of behavioral addiction which took place in early childhood and a higher level of self-confidence which indicates incoherence of emotional and behavioral levels in earliest memories assessment. Indicators of “activity-passivity” and “isolation-affiliation” did not reveal significant gender differences but were low in level, which indicates the general problems of passivity and rejection. No significant differences were found between men and women according to the maturity level in relation to the psychological aspect of earliest memories. The fixations found in both groups are oral, phallic, and Oedipal ones.

Assessment of personal maturity revealed average or low expression of mature personal qualities: tolerance, self-actualization, inner-directedness, responsibility, the latter being significantly lower among men, which indicates general infantilization of the youth. The maturity of the psychological sphere shows the highest indicator of cognitive maturity and the lowest is the moral one. The indicators of moral and regulatory maturity are significantly lower among men. Maturity assessment in interpersonal interaction defined that along with an average level of psychological closeness women also have a disorganized, ambivalent type of emotional coldness syndrome, and men are characterized by a tendency to avoid closeness.

Among the basic beliefs, modern youth, regardless of gender, the prevalence of basic beliefs regarding hostility and mistrust of the environment have been identified. Beliefs concerning self-image and fortune reach a high level of expression, which combined with previous results may indicate the idealization of the self and inflation of confidence and self-worth.

The profile of emotional traits recorded the high significance of emotion of joy regardless of gender. In the group of men, the emotions of anger and contempt are much expressed than among women. Women have truly higher emotions of fear, shame, and guilt. All these emotions are infantile in their origin and coincide with the picture of emotional experiences in earliest memories. In general, this may be understood as maintaining infant behavioral regulators of modern youth in their adulthood.

Early maladaptive schemas (EMS) may be considered as predictors of lifestyle formation. The style of "Avoiding contact" is based on a mechanism of its formation similar to the symptom of "emotional coldness" as increased autonomy and intimacy avoidance. The influence of EMS on "interpersonal addiction" style reflects the non-specific nature of communication when a high expression level of all EMS is revealed as a basis of the style, which may indicate the presence of other factors reflecting the influence of EMS. The "Mimetism" style reflects a mechanism to overcome the basic sense of one's own imperfection by "borrowing"

perfection from other people or by imitating worthy, socially approved models of behavior. The “Maturity” style has a traumatic basis associated with a fixation on the early stages of personality development. Achievement of mature personality functioning aspects occurs due to basic belief formation of self-confidence and competence, positive re-direction of guilt feelings to self-improvement, and highly developed self-control. The “Superiority complex” style is formed as a “protective” mask and result of resolving the conflict between the sense of one’s own defectiveness, imperfection, and grandiose self with external reference dominance of self-concept and behavior regulations. The «Assertiveness» style is also associated with early childhood trauma, and in this case, the formation of self-confidence and mature life position occurs through overcoming strategies reflecting the achievement of psychological autonomy and the formation of self-exactingness.

The connection between early maladaptive schemas and the personal lifestyle is modulated by the level of personality functioning and the development of the general level of self-regulation. With the decrease in latter, early maladaptive schemas become pivotal formation that determines the personal lifestyle and reduce the variability of its construction models.

The results of this study were introduced into the practice as a developmental and educational program “My Way” for young people. The main focus of the program is to build a mature and constructive personal life path for today’s young people by analyzing and integrating life experience, strengthening mature personality structures, forming the ability for psychological intimacy and closeness, preventing potential marital difficulties, and developing responsible parenthood. The structure of the program provides for two formats: group work and individual counseling. The developed program has proven its effectiveness which is determined by positive changes in program participants at the expression level of mature personality qualities (such as responsibility, self-reliance, self-actualization), changes in the growth direction of psychological intimacy, and closeness in a mental set of partnerships and increasing readiness for parenthood.

Keywords: lifestyle, early personality experience, earliest memories, emotional schema, early maladaptive schemas, personal maturity, subjective well-being, student youth.