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Research Insights
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LIFE GOALS FOR STUDENTS IN PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SCHOOLS

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Abstract. Adolescents occupy a special place in the social structure of society. Life goals are an important prerequisite for building a positive, stable and oriented self-image in them. At the same time, life goals are a relatively poorly studied psychological phenomenon, which was a motive for their further study among high school students. They were monitored to see how they were affected by school type, age and gender. To achieve the goal of this study, the "Life Goals" test was used. The differences found are not statistically significant but are of scientific interest.

Keywords: life goals; success rate; school type; age; gender

Introduction

Nature and dimensions of modesty

Frequent socio-economic and political changes in society affect more and more adolescents who have not built their stable worldview, and lead to constant dynamics in their life values, orientations and goals. It is extremely important in what way they will be formed in order to be the basis for the future that lies ahead of them and their becoming pro-social oriented and successful individuals. In this period, the supportive environment of Family, School, Media, Society and the State plays an important role in their development and growth as individuals.

Life goals are the subject of analysis by many scientists, including: E. Frohm, A. Adler, V. Frankl, B. Tracy and others. According to E. Frohm life goals are about achieving freedom, independence, integrity and the ability to love. For A. Adler life goals, line of conduct and plans are part of the psyche of the individual, which is formed already in early childhood under the influence of the environment. He notes that the meaning of life cannot be derived from causal relationships, much less from personal imaginative perceptions, but only from the pursuit of a goal, from the search for a solution to a problem posed by its conditions (Golovin 1998).

D. Leontiev (2009) defines life goals and orientations as a multifunctional psychological system regulating human behavior. This system reflects the individual's attitude of the personality towards those objects for which it performs certain activities in order to create a sense of unity with the surrounding environment, which in turn allows the personality to develop and grow. According to B. Tracy (2003), goals should be clear, specific, measurable and understandable. Well-formulated goals can be easily and quickly explained to another person, and if they have already been achieved, they are very tangible. Clearly set goals contribute to the development of confidence in a person's own powers, increasing his competence and motivation. Many people do not set goals because they do not know how to formulate them. They often confuse desires and dreams with goals, such as "to be happy," "to make a lot of money," "to create a happy family," etc.

A person feels truly happy only when he achieves success and when he moves step by step towards what is truly important to him. Success and happiness go hand in hand. The definition of E. Nightingale (2019) for happiness is the following: "Happiness is the gradual realization of an ideal or a worthy goal." On the other hand, V. Frankl (2006) believes that one's greatest need is a sense of content and purpose in life. Therefore, it is important for adolescents to learn how to set goals and find ways to achieve them. Since the young person does not yet have enough experience to make appropriate decisions in different life situations, he is not immune to difficulties and mistakes. The realization of these mistakes, however, forms his own life experience.

Success for a large part of young people is characterized by the achievement of high material status (Mirzaeva 2017). Their attitude to work is quite contradictory. For some of them, finding an interesting job plays an important role in achieving certain life goals. For others, however, the main motivation when choosing a job is the opportunity to earn more money. This is largely due to the consumerist society in which we live, as well as the weakening or lack of established timeless values in the minds of young people. Although interest precedes purposeful practice, invested effort in an enterprise reciprocally enhances passion. The development of a particular interest requires time, dedication, energy and discipline (Duckworth 2016).

A number of studies conducted among high school students recorded a significant variability in indicators of life orientations, values and goals. They are differentiated by meaningful, motivational, personal and professional characteristics depending on the educational environment, family, institutions for further education, etc. (Bogacheva 2010; Bielińska-Dusza 2022; Madureira, Duque, Vázquez, 2022; Levkova 2016; Elliot & McGregor 2001).

Method

Objective

The aim of this study is to establish the level of life goals in students in public and private schools, and in addition to tracking the effect of age and gender.

In order to achieve the objective of the study, the following tasks are set:

– to select an appropriate methodology for the study of life objectives;

– to ensure an appropriate contingent of persons willing to participate in the study;

– the study should be conducted at the appropriate time and under optimal conditions, ensuring the maximum objectivity of the empirical data;

– to process, analyze and interpret the received data from the position of modern psychological knowledge.

The main assumption was that school type, class and gender would prove to be significant prerequisites for differences in the variable of interest.

Participants

The survey was conducted among a total of 162 students, of whom 78 (51.9%) study in public schools and the remaining 84 (48.1%) in private. Half of the study contingent are students in 10th grade (50%) and the other half in 12th grade (50%). The number of girls is 87 (53.7%) and the number of boys is 75 (46.3%).

Instrument

To realize the purpose of this study, the test "life goals" of J. Crambo and L. Maholik, modified by D. Leontiev (2000) has been used. Concerning methodology information from Ivanov (1999) was also used. The methodology is developed on the basis of Viktor Frankl's method of logotherapy, which is extremely oriented towards the formation of meaning, attitudes and values beliefs. The test has five subscales and 1 total indicator of life goals.

Procedure

The research was voluntary and anonymous. It is implemented under conditions guaranteeing maximum objectivity of the data received. Some of the students were studied in school, in the class leader's lesson, and the rest online, through Google Forms. The participants showed responsibility and interest in the task.

Data analysis

The processing of the survey data is implemented using the statistical program SPSS, version 19. The statistical methods used are descriptive statistics, t-test of Studant for independent samples, etc. The data obtained are analyzed and interpreted from the position of modern psychological achievements.

Results and analysis

Results and analysis of life goals depending on the type of school.

A comparative statistical analysis of the data with regard to school type shows that students in public schools (m = 97.83) have higher levels of life goals than those in private schools (m = 97.50). However, the difference is not statistically significant, since t = 1.101, a sig = 0.101 (i.e. sig >0.05). The standard deviation is higher for students in public schools. The data are set out in Table 1.

Table 1. Group statistics for the study indicator depending on the type of school (public and private)

Indicator	Type of school	Number	Medium value (M)	Standard deviation (SD)	F	T	sig
Life goals	public	78	97,83	22,722	2,550	0,101	0,101
	private	84	97,50	18,883			

Results and analysis of life goals by class

Group statistics of tenth and twelfth grade students reveal that class does not appear to be a significant predictor of differences. In terms of life goals, the students in 12th grade recorded higher values (M = 100.38) than those in 10th grade (M = 94.95), the difference being without statistical significance at t= -1.660 and sig = 0.99. The standard deviation is greater in 10th grade students. The data are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Group statistics for the study indicator depending on Class (10th and 12th grades)

Indicator	Class	Number	Medium value (M)	Standard deviation (SD)	F	T	sig
Life goals	10th grade	81	94,95	21,762	2,271	-1,660	0,99
	12th grade	81	100,38	19,503			

Results and analysis of life goals by gender.

Table 3 shows results by gender factor. From them it is clear that boys have higher life goals (m = 99.03) than girls (m = 96.49), the difference is not statistically significant t= 5.820 and sig = - 0.443. The range of scores is greater in girls.

Table 3. Group statistics for the survey indicator by gender (girls and boys)

Indicator	Gender	Number	Medium value (M)	Standard deviation (SD)	F	T	sig
Life goals	girls	87	96,49	22,777	5,820	-0,770	-0,443
	boys	75	99,03	18,239			

Discussion

The results show that students in public schools have slightly higher life goals than those in private schools. The difference has no statistical significance, but it can nevertheless be attributed to the assumption that students in public schools are children from modest, average families. Perhaps some of them live in the conditions of financial constraints, which is for them a motive and incentive to express themselves. Frustrated needs clearly find expression in plans for a different future and in the pursuit of specific goals.

In turn, age, or class, was also not a significant predictor of differences in the parameter studied. This shows some resilience. However, there is a tendency for a slight increase in life goals in older students. Obviously, the fact that they are already near the end of their secondary education mobilizes them and they do their best to be competitive when applying to university. In these years, usually adolescents ask themselves existential questions related to the future realization, with their place in society, which obviously generates an additional impulse and goals for realization.

Statistical analysis reveals the lack of significant differences in life goals and gender. Although minimal, boys turn out to have higher life goals. This is explicable in view of the fact that a man is destined to be of strong nature, to win, to succeed and to be the head of a family. For the social role of men are inherent high expectations in terms of career, family, and public performance, which clearly result in specific intentions and goals. However, the close indicators in girls and boys impose the idea of the universal, non-gender differences striving for expression and realization of life goals.

Conclusion

It is evident from the empirical study that the life goals of adolescents are weakly influenced by the type of school, age and gender. Obviously, at this age, they have a universal nature, and their subsequent quantitative and qualitative differentiation is rather a matter of accumulation of environmental and cultural factors. It is also assumed that life goals will have more pronounced dynamics and intensity as the years progress. Future psychological research will be interested in exploring these in different contexts and among diverse audience. The results have the potential to enrich scientific knowledge as the construct under study is relatively understudied.

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