



International Journal of Applied Business and Economic Research

ISSN: 0972-7302

available at <http://www.serialsjournal.com>

© Serials Publications Pvt. Ltd.

Volume 15 • Number 11 • 2017

Formation of an Adequate Self-esteem in Adolescents as a Psychological and Pedagogical Problem

Tatyana A. Stepchenko¹, Tamara E. Demidova², Irina A. Mezentseva³, Natalia V. Seregina⁴ and Larisa P. Petukhova⁵

¹Bryansk State University Named after Academician I.G. Petrovsky, Bryansk, Russia. Email: ta-step2007@yandex.ru

²⁻⁵Bryansk State University Named after Academician I.G. Petrovsky, Bryansk, Russia

ABSTRACT

This paper presents the results of an analytical study of modern Russian and foreign psychological and pedagogical literature devoted to the problem of self-esteem formation in adolescence. Self-esteem is regarded as the ability of an individual to make a definite opinion about the value, relevance and effectiveness of their actions on the basis of emotional relationship to themselves and their activities. The authors have studied the basic functions of self-esteem: regulatory (makes it possible to adapt successfully to the conditions of the environment) and defensive (provides relative stability and freedom); specific features of the self-esteem: subjectivity and relative stability; the most important characteristics of self-esteem: adequacy, optimality and differentiation; types of self-esteem (complete and partial) and their variants. The different levels of self-esteem are classified as low-, middle-, and high self-esteem. The main determinants of the formation of self-esteem in adolescence were found. In particular, it was found out that many personal and behavioral characteristics of a teenager, including the formation of self-esteem, are determined by the parent-child relationship in the family. The analysis of psychological and pedagogical literature devoted to the research problem allowed the authors to put forward the assumption that the adolescent's self-esteem as a factor of social and psychological adaptation is determined by the conditions of family upbringing, including family size, as well as their level of anxiety.

JEL Classification: H52, I20, I29, P36.

Keywords: Personality, teenager, self — esteem, family, anxiety.

1. INTRODUCTION

The current stage of societal development is characterized by profound economic and social changes, which is reflected by the demands that society imposes on an individual.

The society's need in educated, erudite and intellectually mature people has always been high. However, today intellectual maturity alone cannot be considered the only basic characteristic.

In the conditions of intensive social renovation, a person is required to be quick at adapting to society and establishing contacts with others. It is also required for the person to learn quickly and efficiently, to produce constructive solutions, possess sense of purpose and determination, etc.

All this is impossible without sufficient knowledge and appreciation of one's skills and aptitude, confidence in one's abilities and actions, in other words, without adequate self-esteem. Thus, the problem of studying the features and functions of self-esteem as an important regulator in the formation of active life position among younger generation is very important.

2. LITERATURE OVERVIEW

The problem of self-esteem has long attracted the attention of researchers. Various aspects of self-esteem have been studied using data obtained from researches involving different age groups.

William James is considered to be the first researcher to start the development of the 'I' problem. It was him whose research evoked the emergence of the concept of self-esteem in psychological science. However, despite the long period of studying the problem, there still is no uniform approach to the understanding and interpretation of the "self-esteem" concept in either domestic or foreign psychological and pedagogical science.

The study of the issues related to self-esteem is reflected in the works of famous scientists: B.G. Ananiev, R. Burns, L. Borozdina, P. Zimbardo, V.P. Zinchenko, B.V. Kaygorodova, I.S. Con, A.N. Leontiev, A.I. Lipkina, S.R. Pantileeva, A.M. Prihozhan, V.F. Safina, M.V. Smirnova, E.T. Sokolova, V.V. Stolin, N.N. Tolstih, I.I. Chesnokova, etc. (Borozdina, 2011; Zimbardo, 2000; Levitov, 2008; Prihozhan, 2000; Tolstyh & Severny, 2004; Chesnokova, 1977).

The basic approaches to the concept of self-esteem lie between the opinion that self-esteem is a generalized sense of personality, emotional appraisal of the 'I' image, which displays self-worth and self-acceptance, and the conclusions that self-esteem is the sum total of evaluations of different properties or qualities of the 'I' image, which presents general, global self-esteem ("Issues in Modern Science", 2016).

In this study, self-esteem is regarded as the ability of an individual to make a definite opinion about the value, relevance and effectiveness of their actions based on the emotional relationship to themselves and their activities.

The main functions of self-esteem include self-regulation (makes it possible to optimally adapt to the conditions of the environment) and protection (provides relative stability and freedom) (Borozdina, 2011).

Specific features of self-esteem include subjectivity and relative stability (Pastukhova, 2010). The subjectivity of self-esteem is a private, personal relationship of a person to himself or herself. Sustainability involves a person's ability to maintain self-esteem under the influence of external impacts. According to the degree of stability, self-esteem can be stable or variable. Flexible self-esteem (sufficiently stable, can be changed by adapting of the individual to the new conditions if necessary) is optimal for personal development and successful activity.

The important characteristics of self-esteem are its adequacy, optimality and differentiation (Pastukhova, 2010). Differentiation of self-esteem denotes the range of person's estimates of his/her diverse manifestations. With a large number of private self-esteems, there is a high degree of self-differentiation, while a more uniform estimation of various personal characteristics by a person will yield a more integral self-esteem.

The optimality of self-esteem implies the feasibility of expression of its personal level. The most popular opinion is that high self-esteem is a feature of positive self-concept (A.M. Prihozhanm, I.I. Chesnokova, etc.). Some researchers (R. Martens, D.A. Momot, etc.) consider medium self-esteem to be optimal (Pastukhova, 2010; Prihozhan, 2000; Chesnokova, 1977).

We agree with the researchers, who believe that the most productive approach is regarding success of a person in important activity and the level of satisfaction with it as a criterion of optimality of self-esteem (V.F. Safin, A.G. Spirkin etc.) (Eliseev, 2013; Molchanova, 2010).

The adequacy of the self-esteem is a degree of objectivity, realistic representations of a person about themselves. It can be adequate and inadequate. The more realistically a person evaluates himself or herself, the more appropriate will be their self-esteem (Borozdina, 2011).

According to N.A. Vorobiev and Yu.A. Komarova the indicators of adequacy of self-esteem include an ability to set goals that are always achieved; realistic assessment of a particular situation and own potential in it (Vorobiev & Komarova, 2014).

In the psychology of self-esteem, best studied are the issues related to its type and levels. Analyzing the types of self-assessment, total and partial self-esteem are singled out most often. As a rule, if the type of self-esteem is not specified, total self-esteem is meant.

Overall self-esteem reflects the person's self-image as a whole and their place among the others. The total self-esteem reflects a general level of satisfaction with oneself and one's qualities and manifests itself in the levels of self-respect, acceptance or rejection of one's integrity (Molchanova, 2010).

Partial self-assessment reflects the person's self and his/her action in a particular situation, on specific personal or business needs. Partial self-esteem characterizes certain aspects of personality, actions, success of individual activities ("Issues in Modern Science", 2016; Molchanova, 2010).

The varieties of partial self-esteem, resulting from individual course of actions, include predictive, self-correcting, and retrospective self-esteems.

Predictive self-assessment is future-oriented and describes the initial phase of activity. It represents the orientation of the individual in their ability to carry out future activities.

Corrective self-esteem is present-oriented, it manifests itself in the course of activities and is linked to its correction.

Retrospective self-esteem is past-oriented, it describes the final phase of activities and represents an assessment of one's performance.

Describing self-esteem levels, researchers usually distinguish the following types: inflated, high, medium, low, depressed.

Inflated self-esteem is inadequate and is manifested in an idealized self-image of the person and one's overestimated capabilities, ignoring unsuccessful actions and results. One adheres to excessively high opinion of himself or herself, his/her abilities, while their actual achievements are rather modest. With high self-esteem one can show arrogance, exaggerated claims for the attention to their person, uncompromising stand, intolerance towards different points of view, disdainful attitude towards others, disrespectful treatment of them, too harsh and unfounded statements about others — all this often leads to conflicts with others (Zimbardo, 2000; Molchanova, 2010).

High self-esteem suggests that a person appreciates and respects himself. The high level of self-esteem forms self-confidence, initiative, and perseverance.

According to P. Zimbardo, people who are aware of their importance do not depend on the support and approval of others, because they have high internal motivation, and they are able to stimulate themselves. A person with high self-esteem does not depend on the opinions of others, organizing their behavior on their own principles (Zimbardo, 2000).

People with adequately high self-esteem differ from others in flexibility: they change their opinion considering their importance in accordance with their true position – increasing it with success and decreasing failures.

When a person has inadequately high self-esteem, they arrogantly undertake an activity surpassing their objective possibilities. Most often, inadequate self-esteem becomes inflated.

Low self-esteem is regarded as a negative attitude to one's identity, the rejection of oneself, self-denial.

Depressed self-esteem (below the real possibilities of the person) leads to anxiety, shyness, self-doubt, self-blame, excessive self-criticism and excessive demands on the others (not forgiving others' mistakes or errors, constantly emphasizing their shortcomings); often leads to the formation of an inferiority complex. It is not characteristic for people with depressed self-esteem to set difficult goals; they are limited to performing everyday tasks. They are characterized by the rejection of the initiative, lack of aspiration, inability to realize their inclinations and take decisions. Consequently, the person with low self-esteem obtains the "learned helplessness" state, the result of which is that they give up on difficulties and challenges in advance, as they are not capable of doing anything right anyway (Kharlamova & Kornienko, 2009).

A lot of psychological and pedagogical research suggests that many personal and behavioral characteristics are determined by the specificity of parent-child relationship in the family during adolescence.

The majority of domestic and foreign researchers in the field of anxiety problems (V.M. Astapov, A.V. Basov, G.S. Gabdreva, B.A. Gunzunova, A.I. Zakharov, Yuri Zaitsev, B.I. Kochubey, K. Izard, M.S. Kagan, R.B. Cattell, R. Lazarus, N.D. Levites, A.V. Miklyaeva, R. May, S.A. Ozerova, Yu.P. Petrova, A.M. Prihozhan, Charles Spielberger, B.N. Phillips, S. Freud, K. Horney, etc.) state that the family is an external source which affects the formation of the adolescent anxiety (Astapov & Malkova, 2011; Issues in Modern Science, 2016; Zaitsev & Hvan, 2006; Levitov, 2008; Levitov, 2008; Ozerova, 2000; Petrova & Pyanova, 2015; Prihozhan, 2000; Spielberger, 2008; Starshinina, 2007; Freud, 2008).

Thus, for example, Yu.A. Zaitsev and A.A. Hwang, note in their works that the formation of adolescent's anxiety is influenced by the genetically transmitted biological factor of parental hypersensitivity. Secondly, they believe the tendency to imitate leads to dependence of children's anxiety on the anxiety of

their parents (Zaitsev & Hvan, 2006). Among the negative factors, provoking anxiety in adolescents, the researchers also mention excessive, contradictory, negative demands of family members, putting the child in a humiliating, dependent position.

Peculiarities of emotional-personal development of adolescents in single-child and large families are considered in the studies of L.L. Balandina, R.I. Vinogradova, T.A. Gurko, D.S. Kornienko, S. N. Matatov, Yu.P. Petrova, E.N. Pyanova, E.A. Silin, T.M. Kharlamova and others. It was found out that there are significant differences in certain personal and behavioral characteristics between only children and children from large families (Petrova & Pyanova, 2015; Silina, 2013; Kharlamova & Kornienko, 2009).

The result of analysis of psychological and pedagogical literature on the research problem, suggests that adolescents' self-esteem as a factor of social and psychological adaptation and self-regulation is determined by the conditions of education in the family, including its size, as well as their level of anxiety.

3. METHODS AND MATERIALS

The purpose of our research is to determine the characteristics of self-esteem in adolescents brought up in single-child and large families.

The object of ongoing research is self-esteem of adolescents brought up in single-child and large families.

The subject of the research are the psychological and pedagogical features of self-esteem formation in adolescents from the single-child and large families.

In our study, we used the following research methods: analysis, synthesis, concretization, comparison, generalization, empirical methods.

The following methods were chosen to carry out the empirical study (Prihozhan, 2000):

- methodology “Investigation of self-identity” developed by T.V. Dembo, S.J. Rubinstein, adapted by A.M. Prihozhan,
- methodology “Verbal self-diagnosis of personality” by S.V. Kovalev.
- “Investigation of personal and situational anxiety” technique by C. D. Spielberger (adapted by Y.L. Hanin)
- “Scale of personal anxiety of students” technique by A.M. Prihozhan

The research base is made up of Russian school students from Bryansk region.

The experimental group was comprised of 40 students in grades 6-8; including 20 people from one-child families and 20 - from large ones.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

For the empirical study of the problem of self-esteem formation in adolescents, we used the methodology “The study of self-identity” developed by T.V. Dembo, S.J. Rubinstein using self-assessment scale with seven categories:

- absolutely not satisfied with themselves (their personal qualities, skills, knowledge, abilities);
- not at all satisfied;
- more or less unsatisfied;
- not satisfied;
- more or less satisfied with themselves (their personal qualities, skills, knowledge, abilities);
- very satisfied;
- completely satisfied.

The results of testing showed that self-esteem of the majority of teenagers from single-child families was clearly expressed (65%), while self-esteem of the majority of adolescents from families with many children is expressed moderately (60%). Therefore, adolescents from one-child families are more confident, they develop a sense of self-respect, and they strive for self-sufficiency, self-expression and self-actualization. This confirms the results obtained previously (“Issues in Modern Science”, 2016).

Self-esteem of teenagers from large families is fragile, situational, and is often determined by the results of the current activities and relationships with others. In other words, young people with average self-esteem tend to make straight connection between their actions and qualities. Consequently, their attitude towards themselves, their successes and failures is not always adequate.

Calculations using the Student’s *t*-test ($T_{emp.} = 4.66$) confirmed the presence of statistically significant ($\sim 0.01\%$) differences in the levels of self-esteem of adolescents in the studied groups—higher level in adolescents from single-child families and average level in the adolescents from large families.

In order to validate the results of the study on the self-esteem testees, we conducted a study using a questionnaire offered by S.V. Kovalev “Verbal self-diagnosis of personality.”

The results showed that for the majority of teenagers brought up in single-child families the high level of self-esteem (75%) is characteristic. Moreover, low level of self-esteem is not detected at all in this group (0%).

Most teenagers who from families with many children showed an average level of self-esteem (60%), while 20% of test subjects have low self-esteem. Teenagers with low self-esteem are characterized by a lack of faith in themselves, in their strengths and capabilities. They constantly feel discontent with their physical and personal qualities, skills, actions etc. They often feel that others think bad of them, do not love them enough.

Calculations using the Student’s *t*-test ($T_{emp.} = 4.34$) confirmed the presence of statistically significant ($\sim 0.01\%$) differences in the levels of self-esteem of adolescents in the studied groups—higher level in adolescents from single-child families and average level in the adolescents from large families.

An empirical study of the problem of self-esteem formation in adolescents with different levels of anxiety, brought up in single-child and large families, was started with anxiety diagnosis using techniques by C.D. Spielberger “Investigation of personal and situational anxiety.”

The statistical analysis of the data obtained from the experimental group the showed that the majority of adolescents from single-child families have both types of anxiety (situational and personal) that are expressed on an average level with a slight predominance of the first ($X_{av.} = 41.3$ and $X_{av.} = 37.6$, respectively).

The majority of teenagers from large families, situational and personal anxiety is expressed at a high level, with a predominance of the first ($X_{av.} = 52.3$ and $X_{av.} = 48.8$, respectively).

Percentage distribution of anxiety types in adolescents in the experimental group fully supports the results of the statistical analysis and suggests:

- high prevalence of anxiety level in the teenagers from single-child families, although it is inherent to much of the testees in the group (30%);
- high level is peculiar to both situational (65%) and personal anxiety (55%) in young people who are brought up in large families;
- the average level of situational (55%) and personal anxiety (70%) is typical for most adolescents from single-child families;
- the predominance of the average level of anxiety has not been identified in teenagers who are brought up in large families. Although it is characteristic for a large part of the people in this group of testees (situational – 35%, personal – 45%);
- the prevalence of low level anxiety is not found in any type of anxiety in both experimental groups. However, it is slight (to 15%) among the testees brought up in single-child families, while for the testees from large families it is not typical at all (0%).

Thus, according to the results of the study, it can be stated that:

- most adolescents raised in single-child families have optimal situational and personal anxiety;
- most teenagers brought up in large families have a high level of situational and personal anxiety, which manifests itself in stress, anxiety, nervousness and anticipation of adverse developments in the specific situation of communication or activity.

Personal anxiety in most teenagers from large families is expressed as a stable tendency to anxiety feelings in various situations, not even prepossessing to it. To such young people a feeling of helplessness, self-doubt, inability to make decisions, low self-esteem, increased self-criticism, constant vigilance, low activity and initiative, withdrawal, and depressed mood are characteristic.

As the theme of our research is to analyze the anxiety of teenagers who from single-child and large families, we felt it necessary to compare the two experimental groups by the types of anxiety described above in order to confirm the validity of the differences.

The calculations using Student's *t*-test for the two compared experimental groups on situational and personal anxiety showed a statistically accurate ($\sim 0.01\%$) difference with respect to personal anxiety ($T_{emp.} = 4.22$) - a high level of anxiety in adolescents from large families and the optimal level among adolescents from single-child families) and an uncertainty of a statistically significant difference with respect to situational anxiety ($T_{emp.} = 3.13$).

For better understanding of anxiety types within teenagers from single-child and the large families, we conducted a study using the methodology by A.M. Prihozhan "Scale of personal anxiety of students."

Statistical analysis of the study results showed that the majority of teenagers from single-child families have all kinds of average-level personal anxiety. Besides, the most pronounced was school anxiety ($X_{av.} = 23.8$); the least pronounced - self-assessment anxiety ($X_{av.} = 19$).

The majority of teenagers from large families have self-assessment anxiety expressed at a high level ($X_{av.} = 28.3$). School and general anxiety of teenagers are also at a high level ($X_{av.} = 26.5$ and $X_{av.} = 26.3$, respectively). Interpersonal anxiety is manifested at an average level ($X_{av.} = 24.7$).

At the last stage of the empirical study of self-esteem in adolescents with high levels of anxiety, we found it useful to carry out a correlation analysis using Pearson's method to determine the relationship between self-esteem and anxiety in adolescents.

As a result, we found a statistically significant inverse correlation ($\sim 0.01\%$) between self-esteem and all the studied types of anxiety. Therefore, it can be stated that during adolescence there is a relationship between self-esteem and anxiety: the higher self-esteem, the lower the intensity of anxiety.

Thus, the hypothesis of this study that self-esteem of teenagers from single-child and large families affect the level of anxiety, is fully confirmed.

5. CONFIRMATION

The theoretical and empirical analysis of the problem in question suggests that the formation of adequate self-esteem in adolescents in single-child and large families is very topical, as has a significant impact on the effectiveness of personal formation and success in life.

Self-esteem in the majority of the experimental group of the adolescents from single-child families has been found to be at a high level, whereas it was at an average level in adolescents from the families with many children. Low self-esteem was found in the least number of testees.

The study of self-esteem and anxiety showed that many of the personal and behavioral characteristics of adolescents depend on the conditions in the family, including its size: adolescents from single-child and from large families have differences on a number of personality characteristics and behaviors.

The results of empirical study showed that the majority of adolescents from single-child families have their situational and personal anxiety expressed at an average level with a slight predominance of the first. Most adolescents from large families are characterized by high situational and personal anxiety, in the same way with a predominance of the first.

The majority of subjects in the experimental group from one-child families have their school, self-assessive, interpersonal, and general anxiety at an average level; school anxiety was found to be most pronounced and self-assessment anxiety to be the least expressed. Most young people from families with many children have their school, self-assessive, and general anxiety at a high level; self-assessive anxiety is the most pronounced, interpersonal anxiety is manifested at an average level.

Calculations made using Student's *t*-test revealed statistically significant differences in personal, self-assessive, general anxiety, and their self-esteem, and no difference regarding school anxiety.

Our analysis of correlations according to Pearson's method revealed a statistically significant inverse relationship between self-esteem and all the studied types of anxiety in adolescents of the experimental group. The obtained results allow us to determine the direction of the future work related to the development of special programs on the formation of self-esteem in adolescents with high levels of anxiety, brought up in single-child and large families.

References

- Astapov, V., & Malkova, E. (2011). *Anxiety Disorders in Childhood and Adolescence. Theory and Practice* (1st ed.). Moscow-Voronezh: MPSI-MODEK.
- Borozdina, L. (2011). *The Essence of Self-esteem and its Relation to the Self-concept*. Moscow: Moscow University, 54-65.
- Chesnokova, I. (1977). *The Problem of Self-consciousness in Psychology*. Moscow: Nauka.
- Eliseev, E. (2013). *Socio-Pedagogical Design of Senior Self-sufficiency in Educational Institution* (1st ed.). Saint - Louis, MO: Science & Innovation Center.
- Freud, S. (2008). *Angst. Anxiety and Anxiousness*. Moscow: PER SE.
- Issues in Modern Science*. (2016) (1st ed., pp. 99-116). Moscow.
- Kharlamova, T., & Kornienko, D. (2009). Psychological Characteristics of Adolescents, Depending on Family Size. *Successes of Modern Science*, 5, 29-30.
- Levitov, N. (2008). *The Mental State of Anxiety* (1st ed., pp. 75-85). Moscow: PER SE.
- Miklyaeva, A., & Rumyantseva, P. (2004). *School anxiety: Diagnostics, Correction, Development*. St. Petersburg: Rech.
- Molchanova, O.N. (2010). *Self-esteem. Theoretical issues and Empirical Studies*. Moscow: Flint.
- Ozerova, S. (2000). *Psychological Characteristics of Anxious Adolescent's Personality Structure* (Candidate of Psychology). (2017).
- Pastukhova, M. (2010). *Theoretical Aspects of Psychological study of Self-identity*, 460-462.
- Petrova, Yu., & Pyanova, E. (2015). Self-esteem and Anxiety of Children in a large family. *International Student Scientific Gazette*, 5, 13-16.
- Prihozhan, A. (2000). *Anxiety in Children and Adolescents: Psychological Nature and Age Dynamics*. Moscow-Voronezh: SAG - MODEK.
- Silina, E. (2013). Personal Features of Children of Large and One-child Families *Basic Research*, 8-5, 1243-1246.
- Spielberger, C. (2008). *Conceptual and Methodological Problems of Anxiety Studies*. Moscow: PER SE.
- Starshinina, I. (2007). *Psycho-pedagogical Support of Teenagers with High Levels of Anxiety* (Candidate of Pedagogics).
- Tolstyh, N., & Severny, A. (2004). *Anxiety. Anxiety phenomena. Anxiousness*. St. Petersburg: Peter.
- Vorobiev, N., & Komarova Yu. (2014). *Self-esteem*. St. Petersburg: ProRealnost.
- Zaitsev, Yu., & Hvan, A. (2006). *Anxiety in Adolescence and Early Adolescence*. Moscow: KRIPKiPRO.
- Zimbardo, P. (2000). *Formation of self-esteem* (1st ed., pp. 282-296). Samara: Bachrach.

