The self-concept in the personal component of individual experience structure

Sevostyanov P.O.
P.sevostyanov@karazin.ua

В статті проведено аналіз особливостей співвідношення образу я з особистісним компонентом індивідуального досвіду. Стисло наведено вміст понять образу Я, відчуття благополуччя власного Я, та особистісного компоненту індивідуального досвіду. Розглянуто структурну організацію індивідуального досвіду та його динамічний аспект. Обґрунтовано використання особистісної моделі Великої п'ятірки у якості однієї з теоретичних основ дослідження. Проведено співставлення різних елементів особистісного компоненту індивідуального досвіду з позиції їх найбільш репрезентативного представлення останнього. Проведено теоретичне обґрунтування дослідження образу Я в структурі особистісного компоненту індивідуального досвіду. Зроблено узагальнення результатів попередніх досліджень. Емпіричне дослідження проводилось на виборці студентів Слов'янського національного університету та Харківського національного університету імені В.Н. Каразіна кількістю 154 особи. В ході дослідження було проведено факторизацію показників образу Я, завдяки чому було отримано два фактори, які умовно можна назвати благополучним та проблемним сприйняттям власного Я. При подальшому кластерному аналізі за отриманими двома факторами було отримано чотири групи – профілі, кожен з яких певним чином репрезентує особистісний компонент індивідуального досвіду – від благополучного до конфліктного. Передбачена можливість подальшого порівняння отриманих профілів як репрезентативних характеристик особистісного компоненту індивідуального досвіду для більш глибокого розуміння процесів, властивих для даного компоненту.

Ключові слова: індивідуальний досвід, особистісний компонент індивідуального досвіду, образ Я, профіль образу Я.

The article analyzes the relation of the self-concept with the personal component of the individual experience features. The contents of the self-concept, the feeling of well-being of my own self, and the personal component of individual experience are summarized briefly. The structural organization of individual experience and its dynamic aspect are considered. The use of the personal model of the Big Five as one of the theoretical foundations of the research is substantiated. Comparison of different elements of the personal component of individual experience is conducted from the point of view of their most representative representation of the personal component of individual experience. The theoretical substantiation of the research of the self-concept in the structure of the personal component of the individual experience is carried out. A generalization of the results of previous studies has been done. An empirical study was conducted by the 154 students of the Slavic National University and the V.N. Karazin Kharkiv National University. In the course of the research, factorization of the indicators of the self-concept was carried out, which resulted in two factors which can be conventionally called the prosperous and problematic perception of self-concept. In the further cluster analysis, the four groups (profiles) were obtained, each of one is representing a certain personality component of individual experience features - from a safe to a conflict. It is possible to provide further comparison the received profiles as representational characteristics of the personal component of individual experience for a deeper understanding of the processes inherent in this component.

Key words: individual experience, personal component of individual experience, self-concept, self-concept profile.

В статье проведен анализ особенностей соотношения образа я с личностным компонентом индивидуального опыта. Кратко приведены содержание понятий образа Я, ощущения благополучия собственного Я, и личностного компонента индивидуального опыта. Рассмотрена структурная организация индивидуального опыта и ее динамический аспект. Обосновано использование личностной модели Большой пятерки в качестве одной из теоретических основ исследования. Проведено сопоставление различных элементов личностного компонента индивидуального опыта с позиции их наиболее репрезентативного представления последнего. Проведено теоретическое обоснование исследования образа Я в структуре личностного компонента индивидуального опыта. Сделано обобщение результатов предыдущих исследований. Эмпирическое исследование проводилось на выборке студентов Славянского национального университета и Харьковского национального университета имени В.Н. Каразина количеством 154 человека. В результате факторизации показателей образа Я были выделены два критерия, которые условно можно назвать благополучным и проблемным восприятием собственного Я. В результате дальнейшей кластеризации по обозначенным факторам было получено четыре группы - профиля, каждый из которых определенным образом представляет личностный компонент индивидуального опыта – от благополучного к конфликтному. Предусмотрена возможность последующего сравнения полученных профилей как репрезентативных характеристик личностного компонента индивидуального опыта для более глубокого понимания процессов, характерных для данного компонента; рассмотрены перспективы дальнейших исследований.

Ключевые слова: индивидуальный опыт, личностный компонент индивидуального опыта, образ Я, профиль образа Я.

We have repeatedly pointed to the importance of the problem of individual experience study and conducted a series of studies of this topic [5; 6]. In an effort analyze deeply the features of the relation between the structural components of the personal component of the individual experience, we drew attention to such a phenomenon as the self-concept.

At this stage, among other substructures of personal experience, studying the self-concept, as we think, is one of the priorities of our researches for the reasons listed below. Let's recall that the structure of the personal component of individual experience includes such phenomena as self-esteem, level of aspirations, value orientations, self-concept, openness to experience, self-regulation of behavior, sense of life orientation, and a number of others.

While analyzing these phenomena, we realized that almost all of them are characterized by the focus on a separate area of the personal component of individual experience. In addition, a significant part of them are characterized by expressive dynamism, which complicates the obtaining of more or less stable results, and that is why we faced the problem - to identify in the structure of the personal component such a generalization phenomenon, which would maximally clearly represent the personal experience, with no disadvantages, which could complicate the research. That is, speaking of a clear representation, we mean a property of a particular psychological phenomenon that manifests itself, firstly, in the possibility of minimizing the measurement errors that can be caused by dynamic processes in the personal experience, and, secondly, in the ability to determine the main thing in the personal component of individual experience.

At first glance, such a phenomenon could be self-esteem, because it reflects a person's perception of the significance of his personality, as well as the advantages and disadvantages of his personal qualities. However, the personal component of individual experience, apart from being responsible for evaluating a person himself, acts as an instrument of organizing a person`s behavior [4], therefore, in our opinion, self-esteem can not fully represent personal experience.

As for other substructures of personal experience, most of them cannot be characterized by the maximum completeness of its coverage: self-regulation relates to a greater extent to the emotional-volitional sphere, the level of aspirations – to the actualization-activity sphere, semantic and value orientations – to the motivational sphere, etc.

Thus, in such circumstances, our attention was attracted by such a phenomenon as the self-concept. First, the self-concept is a broader notion than self-esteem. Secondly, it is a more or less stable and conscious personal entity that can be verbally documented by a person - and this fact gives us significant opportunities for its study. In addition, the self-concept is actually one of the ways of subjective evaluation of a person's well-being, and in such a statement the question the self-concept can act as a very informative indicator that reflects the processes that occur in the structure of the personal component of individual experience.

Before proceeding to the consideration of the question of determining the self-concept in the structure of the personal component of individual experience, we briefly recall the theoretical foundations on which our research was relied.

We proceed from the position of O.M. Laktionov, that personal experience, being a structural entity, is characterized by a certain stability, permanence. Despite the constant dynamics inherent in the formation of this structure, at a particular moment of time personal experience - this is relatively stable formation [4]. In addition, we rely on the personal model of the «Great Five,» within which there are five factors that fully describe the personality: neuroticism, extraversion, openness to experience, agreebleness and conscientiousness [7]. Speaking about the fact that the fifth is «Great», Goldberg emphasizes not in its special meaning, but in the breadth of the coverage of personality manifestations, the ability to include factors of lower order. As empirical indicators of personality traits the researcher uses lists of adjectives, assuming that language is an exhaustive carrier of personality variability of man [8]. This approach to the study of personality structures is known as psycho- lexical.

A self-concept we understand as a more or less conscious and relatively stable system of representations of the individual about himself, as a reflexive part of the personality, as his imagination about himself [1].

Thus, we have defined the basic concepts of our study. As respondents of our study were students, as educational activity is quite dynamic, and the experience processes can be shown in a high level in it.

The experiment was attended by 154 students representing different faculties,: Radiophysics Faculty of the Slavic National University (58 persons), Faculty of Philology of the Slavic National University (25 persons), Faculty of Philology of V.N. Karazin Kharkiv National University (33 persons) and faculty of psychology of V.N. Karazin Kharkiv National University (38 persons). Of the total sample - 65 boys and 102 girls. The distribution of the courses is as follows: the first course - 12 persons, the second - 38, the third - 87, the fourth - 10 and the fifth - 7 persons.

In the course of the study, a self-concept well-being study test by I.V. Kryazh was used [3].

During the analysis of empirical data for the greater convenience of their processing, we resorted to the procedure of reducing the dimension by factorizing the variables that representing the scales of the self-concept. As a result, we obtained two factors that explain 60% of the total dispersion (Table 1).

Table 1

The result of the factorization of variables, that representing the scale of the self-concept

Indicators of the self-concept	Factor loads	
	Factor 1	Factor 2
I am sensitive in the past	**0,68**	0,33
I am anxious in the past	0,49	**0,53**
I am independent in the past	**0,63**	0,38
I am secured in the past	**0,62**	*0,45*
I am confident in myself in the past	**0,68**	0,33
I am successful in the past	**0,68**	0,34
I am hard in the past	0,31	**0,72**
I am carefree in the past	**0,61**	*0,46*
I am optimistic in the past	**0,77**	0,28
I am sensitive now	**0,75**	0,22
I am anxious now	0,31	**0,69**
I am independent now	**0,73**	0,34
I am secured now	**0,69**	0,37
I am confident in myself now	**0,74**	0,35
I am successful now	**0,75**	0,27
I am hard now	0,30	**0,75**
I am carefree now	**0,73**	0,25
I am optimistic now	**0,72**	0,30
I am sensitive in the future	**0,78**	0,17
I am anxious in the future	0,19	**0,79**
I am independent in the future	**0,72**	0,30
I am secured in the future	**0,76**	0,24
I am confident in myself in the future	**0,67**	0,36
I am successful in the future	**0,72**	0,20
I am hard in the future	0,21	**0,81**
I am carefree in the future	**0,70**	0,26
I am optimistic in the future	**0,76**	0,24
Expl.Var	11,20	5,20
Prp.Totl	0,41	0,19

As a result, we got two factors. The first factor included scales with a positive load: sensitive, independent, secured, confident in myself, successful, carefree, optimistic; and all these scales within the framework of this factor concern the perception of oneself in the past, present and future. The second factor also covered all three time measurements (past, present and future), and with the positive load included scales such as anxious and hard (also partially secured and carefree in the past).

Consequently, both factors associate within their limits the same ideas about themselves in the past, the present and the future. By analyzing the first factor, we pay attention to the fact that it combines a good idea of self-concept throughout life. In other words, this factor characterizes our investigators in such a way that they, perceiving themselves as prosperous in the past and now, see themselves as such in the future. We are inclined to explain the position that is reflected in this factor, namely, the person's reliance on his experience (we have already noted that the self-concept serves as a very informative indicator reflecting the processes occurring in the structure of the personal component of the individual experience, and the stated position it should be displayed rather brightly), that is, if a person sees in his experience a positive and knows that there are no prerequisites for a fundamental change in the behavior line in the future, he is confident that in the future everything will be just as positively. We call the first factor conditionally "I am prosperous".

The second factor characterizes our investigators in such a way that, subject to a self-assessment of himself in the past and present as a hard person who is quite clearly worried about anxiety, the subject sees himself as hard and disturbing in the future. Considering the connection of anxiety with hardness, we tend to interpret it as a person`s desire to protect himself: anxiety makes a person worry about himself; he begins to deal more distrustful with others, which can be manifested in external coldness, detachment, rigidity. In addition, in this case, there is also the basis for talking about human reliance on his experience: he sees harsh and disturbing in the past and now, and such an image is so well-established that no man can see another variant of his development in the future. We call conditionally this factor "I'm problematic".

Consequently, we received a rather informative picture of the characteristics that adequately represent the personal component of the individual experience, and then we aim to analyze this component deepen.

The next step in our study was to identify certain types or profiles of representing the self-concept of our voter. For this purpose, data clustering was conducted on the basis of the selected factors - the scales of the self-concept.

Distribution of respondents to groups was conducted in two stages. At the first stage, hierarchical clustering was carried out using the Ward`s method. On the basis of dendrogram analysis and increment of intracluster dispersion, it was decided to select the four clusters as optimal. After that, the K-mean algorithm was used, which showed the best F-criterion for the four clusters. As a result, we received the following data (Figure 1). Fig. 1 shows the graph of mean values in two dimensions of the self-concept for the four groups (clusters) of the respondents selected.
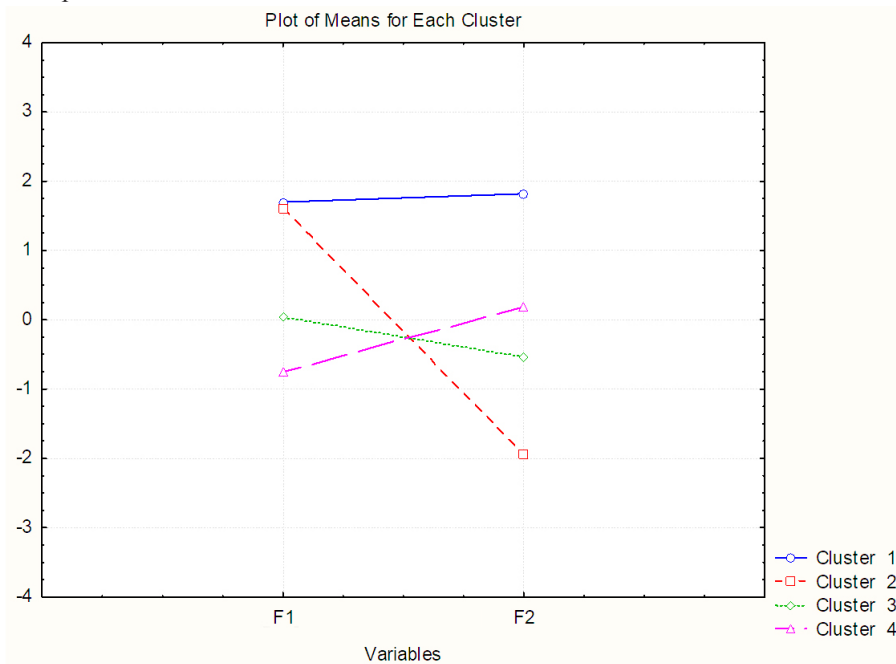

Figure 1. The results of clustering

The first group, or the first profile (cluster 1), included 27 persons. As we can see from figure 1, this type is characterized by combination of a safe and problematic types of self-image. That means, that the students who have this profile have quite contradictory ideas about their self: if they perceive it as positive, at the same time they consider themselves to be rigorous and worrying; in the negative assessment of their self, they do not evaluate themselves as rigid and disturbing. Here we should assume many factors that could explain such a construction of this profile. For example, such an intrapersonal conflict can be caused by the constant desire to approve of their personal characteristics by the people («I am successful, but do others notice this?»), or anxiety that maintenance of the proper level of their positive characteristics will require worrying that is for a person it turns out to be too tense. Accordingly, with a low evaluation of their positive qualities, this anxiety also decreases. So, let's call this profile «conflicting».

Second profile (cluster 2 - 18 persons). Students, that are characterized by this profile, see themselves save and non-problematic. This subjects see themselves in a positive light, and this vision does not cause them contradictions. Here we are inclined to talk about assuming the following possible reasons for constructing this cluster:

1) Students, that are characterized by this profile, see in their "I am" more positive, they make an emphasis on it, and they do not get stuck on their negative sides because of their self-confidence;

2) This persons totally ignore the problematic aspects of their being, that is why they inadequately assess the well-being of their self.

3) Their sense of well-being with a significant dominance suppresses all possible negative perceptions of their self-concept.

Of course, our further analysis should show which of our assumptions is correct. Given the overall positive background, at this stage, we characterize this profile as «safe».

Also, in figure 1, we can see the presence of two more clusters, and we tend to call them intermediate between the two mentioned above. Thus, the third profile (a cluster 3 - 62 persons) is characterized by a tendency to reduce the negative evaluation of self-concept with average indicators of its well-being. It is similar to the second profile, but less expressive. Here we tend to talk about a general, relatively healthy perception of one, characterized by a desire for positive development in the absence of a tendency to cling to problems. We call conditionally this profile «a tendency to well-being».

Finally, the last, most numerous, profile (cluster of 4 - 103 persons) is characterized by average indicators of perception of self-concept in a problematic context in a tendency to decrease the assessment of well-

being. In this case, we can also talk about many factors that could explain such results: self-doubt, avoidance of failures, mismatches of opportunities and aspirations, etc. Whatever it was, we hope that further analysis will reliably reveal the reasons for this construction of this profile, and at this stage we state its discovery, and we give it the conventional name «tendency to conflict».

Consequently, we have identified four profiles, each of which in a certain way represents the self-concept. Our study leads to see the relation between such phenomena as the self-concept, the sense of well-being of person`s own self and the personal component of the individual experience, and should give an impetus to a deeper further study of personal experience.

Література

1.Бернс Р. Что такое Я - концепция // Психология самосознания: Хрест. / Ред. Д.Я. Райгородский. - Самара: Бахрах-М, 2003. - С.333-393.

2.Иващенко, А.В. Я-концепция личности в отечественной психологии Текст. / А.В. Иващенко, В.С. Агапов, И.В. Барышникова. М.: Изд. МГСА, 2000. -153 с.

3.Кряж И.В. Социальное время в представлениях жителей восточной и западной Украины / И.В. Кряж. // Вісник Харківського університету. Серія психологія. 2007. №771 - С.137-145.

4.Лактионов А.Н. Координаты индивидуального опыта / А.Н.Лактионов – Харьков: Бизнес Информ, 1998. – 492 с.

5.Севост`янов П.О. Взаємозв'язок відкритості досвіду та смисложиттєвих орієнтацій у студентів / П.О. Севост`янов // Вісник Харківського національного університету імені В. Н. Каразіна. Серія «Психологія». Випуск 63. 2017. с. 12-16

6.Севостьянов П.А. Взаимоотношение ценностных ориентаций и открытости опыту у студентов. / П.А. Севостьянов // Вісник Харківського національного університету імені В. Н. Каразіна. Серія «Психологія». Випуск 45, №937. 2011. с. 259-261

7.Goldberg, L.R. The development of markers for the Big-Five factor structure / L.R. Goldberg. Psychological Assessment, 4, 1992. 26—42.

8.Norman, W.T. Toward an adequate taxonomy of personality attributes: Replicated factor structure in peer nomination personality ratings /W.T. Norman. Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology, 66, 1963 574—583.

References

1.Berns R. Chto takoe Ya - kontseptsyia // Psykholohyia samosoznanyia: Khrest. / Red. D.Ia. Raihorodskyi. - Samara: Bakhrakh-M, 2003. - S.333-393.

2.Ivashchenko, A.B. Ya-kontseptsyia lychnosty v otechestvennoi psykholohyy Tekst. / A.B. Yvashchenko, B.C. Ahapov, Y.V. Baryshnykova. M.: Yzd. MHSA, 2000. -153 s.

3.Kryazh I.V. Sotsialnoe vremya v predstavleniyah zhiteley vostochnoy i zapadnoy Ukrainy / I.V. Kryazh. // Visnik Harkivskogo universitetu. Seriya psihologiya. 2007. №771 - S.137-145.

4.Laktyonov A.N. Koordynaty individualnogo opyta / A.N.Laktyonov – Kharkov: Byznes Ynform, 1998. – 492 s.

5.Sevost`ianov P.O. Vzaiemozviazok vidkrytosti dosvidu ta smyslozhyttievykh oriientatsii u studentiv / P.O. Sevost`ianov // Visnyk Kharkivskoho natsionalnoho universytetu imeni V. N. Karazina. Seriia «Psykhologiia». Vypusk 63. 2017. s. 12-16

6.Sevostianov P.A. Vzaymootnoshenye tsennostnykh oryentatsyi y otkrytosty opytu u studentov. / P.A. Sevostianov // Visnyk Kharkivskoho natsionalnoho universytetu imeni V. N. Karazina. Seriia «Psykhologiia». Vypusk 45, №937. 2011. s. 259-261

7.Goldberg, L.R. The development of markers for the Big-Five factor structure / L.R. Goldberg. Psychological Assessment, 4, 1992. 26—42.

8.Norman, W.T. Toward an adequate taxonomy of personality attributes: Replicated factor structure in peer nomination personality ratings /W.T. Norman. Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology, 66, 1963 574—583.