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**ANALYSIS OF THE CONCEPT OF “HEALTH”
AND ITS COGNITIVE CONTENT IN SECONDARY SCHOOL LEAVERS**

Abstract. The article studies the concept of “health” and the mental field of concepts statistically associated with the concept of “health” on the basis of cognitive assessment of value concepts by secondary school leavers. It substantiates the necessity of obtaining data for further socialization of schoolchildren in general educational institutions, including schoolchildren with special educational needs. The author gives a brief theoretical analysis of the methodological principles of the undertaken research and provides the methods of formation of the stimulus material for experiments with responders. The main results of the study are illustrated by a table and a picture and are commented on.

Key words: health, happiness, school leavers, cognitive content, mental field of concepts, meanings and value orientations, correlation of concepts, inclusive education, schoolchildren with special educational needs.

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The urgency of the research presented in the article is substantiated by the importance of the concept of “health” both as a vital resource of successful life and as a subjective value of the socializing personality of the general education school leaver. The indices of the state of children’s health in Russia are still low. The results of the 2009 medical observation of schoolchildren showed that only 20.8% of pupils can be referred to Health Group 1, whereas 20.7% of children have disabling diseases including chronic ones [22]. It is only natural that it is impossible to count on a considerable rise of health indices in the nearest future. The urgency of health as a value is also growing in connection with the introduction of

inclusive schools in the system of general secondary education which radically changes the criteria of assessment of academic and other activity of a general education institution. The Order of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation of December 19, 2014 “On Adoption of the Federal State Educational Standard of Primary General Education for Children with Special Educational Needs” (Registered by the Ministry of Justice of the Russian Federation on February 3, 2015) clearly states that beginning with September 1, 2016 the former spontaneous integration of children with SEN will become a legislative right to education for this category of children at general education institutions (the so-

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called “mass” institutions) [17]. The Federal State Educational Standard of Secondary (Complete) General Education directly demands to form health both as a universal competence and as a personal value of a school leaver [16]. Consequently, the principles and methods of special pedagogy and psychology become really urgent for the practice of realization of pedagogical and educational processes in an educational institution. In this connection, revealing the conceptual context associated with the notion of “health” in school leavers in the process of their school socialization may create possibilities for a more professional and methodical approach to the academic and educational process in educational institutions including realization of the compulsory rehabilitation programs (according to the Federal State Educational Standard of Primary General Education for children with special educational needs).

The purpose of our research was to reveal the cognitive meanings and values constituting the concept of “health” and to define the forms of their interaction with each other.

The research hypothesis consisted in the assumption that the cognitive content of the concept “health” is defined not only by the personal value orientations of the respondents but also by state legislation.

Sample characteristics

The sample included 633 respondents. General secondary school leavers in the ages between 17 and 18 took part in the experiment. There were 397 female and 236 male gender respondents in the sample. The statis-

tic calculations were done with the help of the program “STATISTICA 10.0 Russian”.

Theoretical analysis of the problem of meanings and values in personal activity

Scientific literature often treats the notions of “values” and “value orientations” as synonyms. Analysis of psychological literature [3; 8; 12 etc.] shows that personal motivation and value orientations make up one of the basic factors of personal development. Personal motivation defines the type of personal life which forms the character of life relationships, resolution of problems and the methods of adaptation and self-realization (in profession and private life).

The system of value orientations, as defined by I. G. Senin, is the highest level of regulation of personal motivation [19; 20]. The regulatory function of personal value orientations embraces all levels of the system of personal activity motives. C. Rogers notes that personal needs may be satisfied in those ways only that are compatible with the personal system of values and the conception of “self” [18]. V. G. Alekseeva believes that value orientations represent a form of inclusion of personal values in the mechanism of personal activity and behavior based on the person’s free choice [1]. A. G. Zdravomyslov states the coordinating-limiting role of value orientations associated with their functioning in resolving conflicts and contradictions in the personal motivation sphere manifested by competition between duty and wish, i.e. between

the motives of moral and utilitarian character [12]. In connection with this, F. E. Vasilyuk says that the system of values functions in this case as a “psychological organ” responsible for measuring and comparing the importance of motives, and correlating individual desires and “supra-individual essence” of a person [9, pp. 122-125].

B. F. Lomov defines value orientations as “a psychological system ..., as a multi-dimension dynamic space each dimension of which corresponds to a certain kind of social relations and has different weight with different persons” [14, p. 36]. Ya. Gudechek, in his turn, divides the system of values along the horizontal and vertical axis. An ordered hierarchy of preferred and overruled values is placed along the horizontal axis. The vertical axis reflects the degree of inclusion of individual value systems into the system of values of the whole society [10]. While considering the structure of value orientations, S. S. Bubnova introduces the principle of non-linear relations which means that their personal importance for the subject, defined through the content aspects “of various types and forms of social relations” serves as a criterion for the formation of the hierarchy of personal values [7, p. 39].

The systemic approach was chosen by us as the main method of investigation of the problem of formation of the system of values and meanings of secondary general school leavers.

The basic idea of a systemic approach consists in the necessity to regard the object under study as a system of a certain level possessing a

certain structure and peculiarities of organization. The systemic approach to the study of values and meanings orientation found its reflection in such complex systems as the “multi-dimension world of man” by A. N. Leont'ev, the “life worlds” by F. E. Vasilyuk, “reality of meanings” by D. A. Leont'ev, etc.

As long as the system is characterized by the fact that it possesses new integrative properties not found in its constituents, its qualitative characteristics is mainly influenced by its structure rather than the constituents proper [5, pp. 21—22]. And the component or element of the system may be defined as a “further indivisible smallest structural unit of the system possessing functional and structural specificity and functional integrating capacity” [5, p. 10].

We used the systemic approach in our research to study the structure of the field of values and meanings of the concept “health” and its connection with other concepts.

Research methods

The respondents were offered 59 value-based notions as stimuli which were evaluated through expressing the respondents’ rational opinion about the notion (yes/no).

Selection of words-stimuli

The respondents were offered a list of value concept names. The words (for example, *justice*), word combinations (for example, *love of one’s birth place*) were given in alphabetic order. The presented list of words-stimuli was made up on the basis of four fundamental lists of value names.

The philosophical treatise “Origins and Meanings of the Russian

Communism” was used as the basic source of material [6, pp. 245—413]. It is necessary to note that the observations and conclusions of N. A. Berdyaev are based on the historically concrete detailed consideration of the social ideas of Russian and Western thinkers, leaders and participants of social movements and writers. The book by N. A. Berdyaev (1874—1948) was published in German and French in 1937. “The Russian edition was a posthumous publication in 1955. This work concludes a cycle of investigations aimed against the ideology of bolshevism” [11, p. 8]. Its criticism is based on the interpretation of the categories that lay the foundation of the Russian life and serve as markers of the national character.

Using the method of continuous sampling, we wrote out from the text of the treatise utterances containing the name (or a number of names) of a value-based concept including those words that were accompanied by ethno-specific markers. As a result, we compiled **List 1** incorporating the names of nationally relevant values realized by N. A. Berdyaev in his treatise.

List 2 was formed on the basis of the study of the value-based ideas of Russian writers. It can hardly be disputed that value-based consciousness of the nation was really reflected in the works of the Russian writers. Starting from this assumption we carried out an experimental study of value-based considerations of M. E. Saltykov-Shchedrin systematically collected in the special edition of 2008. “Shchedrinisms” always helped

and still help to make the right diagnoses on the basis of the latest social, socio-political, psychological and ethical situations and states. We wrote out the names of value-based concepts from aphoristic utterances of M. E. Saltykov-Shchedrin; and thus List 2 was formed of the names of nationally significant values.

We superimposed the experimental lists (1, 2) on the list of values compiled by B. S. Alishev in his psychological theory of values [3]; as a result, we managed to distinguish the intersecting zones of value objects nomination which constituted the required list of stimuli. In some cases it was necessary to make a choice between synonymous nominations. For example, taking into account the regional specificity of monitoring we preferred the nomination *love of one’s birth place* to the nomination *patriotism* (while we are about it, let us note that the question connected with suggestivity of concept names and understanding of their content by young people needs special investigation). Here is the list we obtained: “Well-being of close people”, “Freedom”, “Honor”, “Friendship”, “Good”, “Happiness”, “Self-realization”, “Respect”, “Knowledge”, “Justice”, “Family”, “Life”, “Health”, “Love”, “Truth”, “Conscience”, “Dignity”, “Culture”, “Security”, “Morality”, “Hope”, “Mercy”, “Russian Language”, “Courage”, “Creativity”, “Industry”, “Talent”, “Verity”, “Children”, “Soul”, “Literature”, “Habitat preservation”, “Sensitivity”, “Tolerance”, “Power and well-being of the Motherland”, “Well-being”, “Beauty”, “Beliefs”, “Spirituality”, “Love of the Fatherland”, “Power-

ful state”, “Religion”, “Russian history”, “Birth place”, “Equality”, “Charity”, “Multicultural and multinational community”, “People”, “Law”, “International cooperation”, “National idea”, “Social networks”, “Collectivism”, “Empire”, “Monarchy”, “Orientation to the West”, “Party”.

The obtained list of values was processed with the help of mathematical statistics methods, namely the following: we established the correlation between the concept “health” and all other concepts using Spearman's rank correlation coefficient with significance criterion $\rho < 0.01$ (to make sure that ρ is significantly different from zero). The obtained list of concepts significantly correlated with the concept “health” was statistically processed using Spearman's rank correlation coefficient with significance criterion $\rho < 0.05$ (with the purpose of revealing all meanings minimally connected with the concept “health”).

Research results and analysis of the obtained regularities

The results of the statistical analysis of the correlations of the concept “health” with other concepts are given in the table.

Table 1
Statistical results of the study of the cognitive content of the concept “health” in general secondary school leavers (correlations table)

Correlations (Spearman, $\rho < 0.01$)	Health
Life	0.22
Security	0.22
Law	0.17
Children	0.16
Well-being	0.16
Good	0.14
Love	0.13
Family	0.12
Powerful state	0.12
Happiness	-0.11

As seen from the table, the research hypothesis is corroborated. Health does not only support both life and personal security, does not only bring success but also definitely depends on the power of the state the person lives in and the law.

The research made it possible to discover the negative (inverse) relationship between the notions “health” and “happiness”. The Russian cultural tradition keeps to the opinion that “happiness does not depend on money; it depends on health”. But the revealed correlation contradicts the cultural tradition.

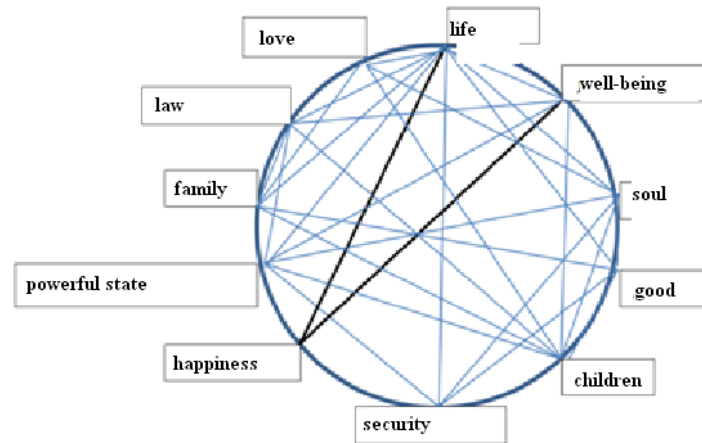


Figure. Graphic representation of the revealed relationships of the cognitive field of the concept “health”

In order to resolve the revealed contradiction we carried out correlation analysis of the notions connected with the concept “health” in relation to each other. It was found that the determined relationships are in direct proportion to each other. The results are presented graphically in the figure.

As seen from the figure, the concept “happiness” is associated by the respondents with the concepts “Life” and “well-being”. These notions themselves are also in direct proportion to each other.

Thus, the respondents understand happiness as life with good well-being. The concept “well-being” in its turn is in direct proportion to “children” and “law”. The seeming contradiction between the concepts “happiness” and “health” is resolved with the help of semantic analysis of the given concepts: in order to feel happy it is necessary to spend life (vital) resources to reach well-being, to allocate a certain amount of re-

sources and well-being for children and pay income taxes according to the law. Consequently, happiness can be reached only through spending a certain part of vital resources and health.

Summing up our research, we can say that we did not only manage to reveal the semantic content of the concept “health” in the modern young people but also found out significant internal relationships within the given field. All this allows us to come to the conclusion about the correlation of the government policy aimed at strengthening the young people’s health and the mental images of the young people about the value of “health” for their future socialization.

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