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**SOCIO-PSYCHOLOGICAL COMPETENCE AND RESILIENCE  
OF PERSONS WITH DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES:  
FACTOR ANALYSIS**

**Abstract.** The paper studies socio-psychological competence and its correlation with the person's resilience. It is common knowledge that resources of persons with developmental disabilities are psychologically weakened, which prevents this group of persons from timely and full acquisition of both socio-psychological competence and resilience. The article presents the results of an experimental study of the following key factors of socio-psychological competence of persons with developmental disabilities: social adaptation ability and self-regulation ability. The experimental study revealed the factors regulating the ability to carry out personal interaction of junior teenagers: communicative purpose, behavior in relation to the nearest environment, communication characteristics determinants, reaction to frustration, etc. Analysis of separate properties representing the scales of two leading factors (social adaptation ability and self-regulation ability) allows the researcher to single out those components of socio-pedagogical competence which are severely disabled in junior teenagers with intellectual disability and psychological retardation: realization of emotional states and adequate responses to requests, control of non-verbal responses in difficult situations of interaction, rigidity, prevention and control of aggressive responses in conflict situations.

**Keywords:** socio-psychological competence, person's resilience, developmental disorders.

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Recent changes of social relations, interpersonal interaction between people, and insecurity of people make scholars think about the necessity of study of such psychological phenomena as resilience (E. V. Galazhinskiy, A. I. Laktionova, A. V. Makhnach, Yu. V. Naumenko, A. A. Nesterova, E. A. Ryl'skaya, M. Ungar, etc.) and socio-psychological competence of a person (A. A. Derkach, A. V. Kvitchasty, E. S. Kuz'min, V. N. Kunitsyna,

L. A. Petrovskaya, V. S. Semenov, A. N. Sukhov).

Analysis of psychological phenomena allows defining their interrelation through the definition of both their common and distinguishing features.

Resilience and socio-psychological competence (further referred to as *SPC*) are personal phenomena which are created during a person's life as a result of social interaction, which highlights certain similarity in their genesis. L. S. Vygotskiy

convincingly proves in his cultural-historical theory that even the most elementary functions developing at the early stages of ontogenesis have an indirect social character [3]. According to L. I. Antsyferova, development of a person depends to a large extent on the person's way of life, which is defined through typical characteristics "of individual and group life activity and communication of people ..." [2, pp. 33-40]. A. S. Masten argues that resilience is a product of social interaction and inclusion of a person into social networks and interaction between man and means of communication [15]. The experiments conducted by A. N. Leont'ev, Yu. B. Gippenreyter and O. V. Ovchinnikova allow us to make a conclusion that socio-psychological competence interpreted in a generalized way as ability to interact is formed in the process of "the person's mastering the world of human objects and phenomena" [9, p. 60].

As stated in researches by various authors, complexity and versatility of interrelation of SPC and resilience of a person with social adaptation is the common feature between these phenomena [8; 10; 11; 12; 13].

The relationship between resilience and social adaptation is reflected in definitions of the notion of resilience by many authors. A. A. Nesterova treats the given phenomenon as "an integrating unity of psychological moments defining the ability of a person to adapt successfully at different levels" [12, p. 65]; A. V. Makhnach and A. I. Laktionova interpret it as an individual ability of a person to display

social adaptation and self-regulation helping them to manage their own resources [10].

The relationship between SPC and social adaptation of a person is based on the structural integration of these phenomena. According to A. A. Nalchadzhyan, social adaptation is believed to be an important constituent of the competence itself [11]. In other works, SPC is described as a mechanism helping the person to reach the state of adaptation. The latter approach is explained by the fact that adaptive processes of a person in complex problematic situations are not effected by separate isolated mechanisms, but by their complexes. Actualizing environments and being used in similar social situations, adaptive complexes are fixed in the structure of a person and become the substructures of the individual's character and personal formations. SPC as a person's ability to actively interact with the surrounding people in the conditions of a dynamic social environment is transformed under the influence of difficult situations of interaction that bring about the person's activity, generate the necessity to look for means to overthrow the difficulty and to work out the corresponding strategies; nevertheless, it is necessary to note that this happens only when the degree of difficulty of the situation (or the barrier of psychological adaptation) corresponds to age and individual peculiarities of a child [1].

The relationship between the phenomena under study is observed in their structural integration as well. Thus, social competence and adaptive

defensive-coping behavior strategies (which may comprise part of the SPC) represent structural elements of resilience in the work by A.A. Nesterova [12]. Studying communicability as a phenomenon close to SPC, V. I. Kabrin believes that it “occupies a special place in the structure of resilience” [4, p. 217], i.e. social-psychological competence may be regarded as a structural element of resilience defining “the person’s ability to be stable, having awareness of the self, capable of planning, changing and controlling one’s behavior, and preserving one’s functions in the dramatically changing conditions of the postmodern society” [5].

Taking into account the discovered connections of the SPC and resilience with social adaptation, we can substantiate the feedback between the phenomena under study: if we interpret resilience as individual ability to display social adaptation and self-regulation helping to manage one’s own resources, adaptation itself will be a driving force of the SPC and a leading factor/resource, included in the competence as interacting components.

It is known that personal resources and ability to adapt are weakened in persons with developmental disorders, which prevents the corresponding group of people from timely and full acquisition of both socio-psychological competence and resilience. Theoretical analysis of personal characteristics of people with developmental disorders shows a high rate of incidence of polar properties in the framework of one continuum: high/low levels of ambitions and self-

assessment, high/low levels of anxiety, incredulity/suggestibility, etc. The variety of data parameters in these continua testify to the instability of the properties under consideration.

Many kinds of developmental disabilities display the following peculiarities of such systemic construct as socio-psychological competence: low social position, impairment of the motives and mechanisms of establishing social ties with the environment, and lowered orientation on speech communication and interaction. Communication with the peers is the leading kind of activity in the teens and needs maturity and integrity of the SPC. Lowered ability of persons with developmental disorders to develop the given personal construct actualizes the questions of psychological support of formation of the SPC, first of all, at the age of early teens when, on the one hand, we can easily define the implications of the competence, and, on the other hand, discern the difficulties of interpersonal interaction caused by the deformation of the SPC. To define the junior teenagers support targets, it is necessary to carry out experimental analysis of the leading interacting factors of the competence. We shall undertake this analysis on the sample of 150 junior teenagers with different level of intellectual development: with mild intellectual disability (experimental group 1 – EG-1), with disorders of psychological development (experimental group 2 – EG-2), and with conventionally normal development (control group – CG).

The experiment was carried out

on the basis of the following methods: “Personal Questionnaire on Rigidity” by V. G. Zalevskiy, “Test of Frustration Tolerance” by S. Rozentsveyg, “Communication Questionnaire” by O. V. Zashchirinskaya, and “Test Film of Interpersonal Relationship” by Rene Gilles. On the basis of factor analysis of the group matrices results of all methods with varimax rotation, we revealed several factors which are dominant for the consideration of the interpersonal interaction ability of junior teenagers.

The first factor EG-1 was made up of the following parameters (significant values  $\geq 0,7$ ): social adaptation, communication orientation, normativity and actual rigidity (-). It is known that the pole of rigidity – flexibility – represents a personal resilience resource [6]. The largest factorial weight was manifested by the characteristic of “social adaptation” (0,814), meaning adjustment to living in a collective, and ability to establish contact in interpersonal communication. Inclusion of the said parameters into one factor makes it possible to regard it as an utterly significant one, defining a most important subsystem of related properties for interaction of junior teenagers with intellectual disability. This factor defining the resources and a possibility to control them is interpreted by us as the “*social adaptation ability*”.

The second factor represents the parameter “externalizing behavior”, which reflects the orientation of aggressive responses of junior teenagers with intellectual disability to the nearest environment. What is more, the

parameter of intra-punitive orientation of response in a frustrating situation (-) appears to be maximally approximate to credibly significant indicators, which is interpreted as absence of possibility to take the responsibility for what is happening upon oneself. The essence of the given factor consists in its stimulation to resolve conflict situations and control them, in which connection the factor got its name “*self-regulation ability*”.

The third factor included the following scales: “attitude to the teacher” and “aspiration for privacy and seclusion”. The variables constituting this factor show the dependence of wish to communicate on the relationship with the teacher. This factor is defined as “*determinants of communication characteristics I*”.

Similar results were obtained after the conduct of factor analysis of experimental data of junior **teenagers with disorders of psychological development**.

The first factor got the name of “*self-regulation ability I*”. Externalizing behavior prevails in the same way as in junior teenagers with intellectual disability, but the factor includes some other types of reaction characterizing the specificity of interaction: “concentration on self-defense” and “index of aggression”.

The next factor was made up of such parameters as social adaptation, actual rigidity (-), communication orientation and normativity. The largest factorial weight was displayed by the characteristic of “social adaptation” (0,860). The structural content of the factor corresponds to the earlier

singled out one under the name of “*social adaptation ability*”. Thus, a specific group of factors could be singled out defining success or failure of interactions in cases of intellectual development disorders, which corresponds with the regular tendencies of development of junior teenagers with the given variant of dysontogenesis.

The third factor included only one parameter – “concentration on an obstacle”, which highlights the presence or absence of an obstacle and degree of its significance. The results of the factor analysis show that the given characteristic defines the peculiarities of manifestation of the SPC and is autonomous enough to make an independent subsystem. In addition, the parameter of impunitive orientation of response in a frustrating situation turned out to be a credibly significant indicator. This factor was given the name of “*response to frustration*”.

The fourth group contains the parameters of “attitude to parents”, “aspiration for leadership” and “aspiration for privacy and seclusion” (–). The variables constituting this factor indicate the positive role of relations with parents and aspiration for leadership and the negative impact of aspiration for privacy and seclusion. We called this factor in the same way as the similar factor of experimental group 1 – “*determinants of communication characteristics 2*”. It differs from the preceding one in the fact that the determinant here is not the attitude to the teacher but to the parents.

The first factor in the group of **normally developing junior teenagers** united two types of response to

frustration: “externalizing behavior” and “reaction to oneself” (–), as well as “index of aggression orientation” (–). This means that junior teenagers of this group realize conflict situations to a greater extent, and reactions in this case are more often oriented to oneself rather than to the surrounding people as in other groups; i.e. normally developing teenagers are able to some extent to take responsibility for their actions upon themselves. On the basis of analysis of similar combinations of the parameters in the two preceding groups we defined this factor as “*self-regulation ability 3*”.

The next factor includes such parameters as social adaptation, communicability, actual rigidity (–) and normativity. The largest factorial weight was received by the characteristic of “social adaptation” (0,888). It is the factor already distinguished in the two other groups “*social adaptation ability*”.

The third factor embraces the following scales: “concentration on an obstacle”, “concentration of satisfaction of a need”. And the signs of both types of response are opposite: the more the teenager concentrates on an obstacle, the less he or she thinks about satisfaction of his or her needs. This factor got the name of “*response to frustration 1*”.

The fourth factor includes the variable which is positively connected with the scale of “attitude to the teacher” and negatively referred to the scales “conflict production and aggression” and “aspiration for privacy and seclusion”. This fact proves the significant role of the teacher for jun-

ior teenagers: the better the relations with the teacher, the lower the child's degree of manifestation of conflict production, aggression and aspiration for privacy.

The given factor in many aspects coinciding with one of the factors in other groups got the name of "*determinants of communication characteristics 3*". Its main difference from similar ones in other groups consists in the fact that the main manifestations of the SPC are low conflict production and aggression.

Summing up it is necessary to note that the factor "*social adaptation ability*" is the most significant one defining the socio-psychological competence of junior teenagers in all three groups. Such characteristics as social adaptation, actual rigidity (–), communication orientation and normativity characterize interaction at this age.

Another important factor is the "*self-regulation ability*". There insignificant differences in its content between the three groups: teenagers with intellectual disability display only one dominant kind of this factor – of external orientation characterizing the group as not ready to resolve the conflict and take responsibility upon themselves. In junior teenagers with disorders of psychological development this factor, in addition to the previously mentioned component, includes concentration on self-defense and index of aggression to a large degree defining all interaction with the surrounding people; normally developing junior teenagers, in comparison with the two other groups, begin to show the reaction to oneself and the

feeling of one's guilt instead of concentration on self-defense. Hence, the school children of the third group differ from their peers with intellectual disorders by more mediated behavior, and by realization and possibility to take responsibility for what is going on upon themselves.

Distinguishing two leading factors of the SPC corroborated the connection between two phenomena – resilience and socio-psychological competence of a person. Resilience interpreted by A.V. Makhnach and A.I. Laktionova as an individual ability of a person to display social adaptation and self-regulation helping them to manage their own resources [8; 10] is represented in the aggregate in the first two factors of the SPC.

Thus, the factor analysis provided us two basic assumptions: the starting positions of the socio-psychological competence in junior teenagers with different levels of intellectual development are similar, but the main factors defining the SPC at this age are "*social adaptation ability*" and "*self-regulation ability*". Inclusion of such parameters defining the majority of dispersion of individual values as social adaptation, communication orientation, normativity and actual rigidity (–) into a single factor makes it possible to regard the given combination as an utterly important subsystem of interconnected properties urgent for interpersonal interaction of junior teenagers.

The analysis of properties representing the scales of the two leading factors allows distinguishing those constituents of the SPC which are im-

paired in junior teenagers with intellectual disability and disorders of psychological development to a greater degree: understanding emotional states and adequate response to requests, control of non-verbal reactions in difficult situations of interaction, rigidity, prevention and orientation of aggressive responses in conflict situations. The presence of connection between the SPC and resilience of a person highlights the social dependence of the phenomena under study, demonstrates the common nature of the mechanisms of acquisition and allows defining corrective mechanisms for working out foundations of support for people with developmental disorders.

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