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## **ЛИЧНОСТНЫЕ ОСОБЕННОСТИ САМОРЕАЛИЗАЦИИ СТУДЕНТОВ В ОБРАЗОВАТЕЛЬНОЙ СРЕДЕ ВУЗА**

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**Аннотация.** Целью статьи является определение психологических признаков самореализации студентов в процессе обучения в университете. Объект исследования - психологические характеристики самореализации студентов. Предметом исследования является психологические свойства личности студентов как показатели и предпосылки их самореализации в обучении. Исследование базируется на социокультурном и личностном подходах к развитию личности в образовательной системе. Авторы представляют научную картину разработки проблематики самореализации в рамках трех исходных гуманитарных традиций: потенциалистской, экзистенциалистской, трансцендентной. Методы исследования: 1. Теоретический анализ научных источников. 2. Психологическое тестирование с использованием «Методики исследования самореализации в вузовском обучении» (авторы А.И. Шутенко, Е.Н. Шутенко); метод парных сравнений потребностей по иерархии Маслоу; метод «мотив и цель» (автор Б.А. Сосновский); Опросник личностной ориентации (POI) Э. Шострома; методика исследования самоотношения С.Р. Панталева; Тест смысло-жизненных ориентаций СЖО Д.А. Леонтьева. 3. Математические методы: метод анализа значимых различий (*t*-критерий Стьюдента), кластерный анализ данных и метод ранговой корреляции Ч. Спирмена. Научная новизна исследования заключается в признании ведущей роли образовательной практики в обеспечении полноценной самореализации студентов. В результате исследования авторы определили, что самореализация студентов отражается в таких психологических характеристиках как: мотивация активного самоопределения в текущей жизни, самоподдержка и компетентность во времени, позитивное самоотношение и самопринятие, продуктивность жизни и внутренний локус контроля. Была установлена связь между уровнем самореализации студентов и положительной мотивацией обучения, а также целостностью и смысловой согласованностью их Я-концепции. Сделан вывод о необходимости применения индивидуально-ориентированных форм обучения.

**Ключевые слова:** самореализация студентов, образовательный процесс, мотивация, жизненные ориентации, самоотношение, смысловые личностные свойства, саморазвитие, Я-концепция, персонализация обучения, целостность личности.

## **PERSONAL FEATURES OF STUDENTS' SELF-REALIZATION IN THE UNIVERSITY EDUCATIONAL ENVIRONMENT**

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**Abstract.** The purpose of article is to determine psychological signs of students' self-realization in training. The subject of the study is the psychological properties of students' personality as indicators and prerequisites for their self-realization. The study is based on sociocultural and personal approaches to development of personality in education. The authors present the scientific picture of self-realization within the framework of three initial traditions: potentialistic, existential, transcendental. Research methods: 1. Theoretical analysis of scientific sources. 2. Psychological testing using the «method for studying self-realization in university» (A. Shutenko, E. Shutenko); method of the pair comparisons of needs on Maslow's hierarchy; method «Motive and Purpose» (B.A. Sosnovsky); «Personal Orientation Inventory» (E. Shostrom); research method of self-attitude (S.R. Pantilev); Life-sense orientations test (D.A. Leontyev). 3. Mathematical methods: analysis method of significant differences (Student's *t*-criterion), cluster analysis and the method of rank correlation of Ch. Spearman. The scientific novelty is the recognition of the education leading role in ensuring the students' self-realization. It was found that students' self-realization is reflected in: motivation for active self-determination, self-regard and time competence, positive self-attitude and self-acceptance, life productivity and internal control locus. A connection was established between the students' self-realization and positive motivation of learning, as well as integrity and sense-meaning coherence of their Self-

concept. The conclusion is made on necessity to apply individual-oriented forms of teaching.

**Keywords:** students' self-realization, educational process, motivation, life orientations, self-attitude, meaning properties of personality, self-development, self-concept, personalization of learning, integrity of personality.

## INTRODUCTION

At the current time one of the leading tasks of a contemporary higher education is the one to secure conditions for a diversified and full-fledged self-realization of university youths who, for the time of their study, should acquire a firmly positive worldview and gain a stable experience of self-development for many years to come [1, 2].

At all times, the forming potential of a higher educational establishment centered on the possibility of producing such an educational environment, which at the personality level acts as a specific space of students' self-understanding, self-determination and self-realization [3]. Introduction to the basics of scientific knowledge, to the culture of academic thinking and lifestyle, to professional knowledge and values is inevitably linked to the student's inward sense searching [4, 5]. This is caused by the very process of personality formation in the youthful period, when the logic of age development is associated with an active growth of self-consciousness, as well as requires the implementation of a series of subjectively significant and socially responsible choices [6].

The meaning of self-realization for a young person is the capacity to be a subject, be creative, active, take responsibility, make decisions, pursue goal-setting, etc. [7]. In this regard, the content, process and technology of university training should be focused on stimulating student self-realization in the logic of maintaining their psychological well-being, psycho-emotional stability, and overcoming crisis and destabilizing factors [8, 9].

According to studies D.A. Leontiev, the issue of self-realization acts as an interdisciplinary field of research, covering three levels of scientific development, i.e. philosophical, sociological and psychological [10]. In psychological discourse, the key aspects of the self-realization problem development can be traced in the course of the three initial traditions of its humanitarian reflection: *potentialistic, existential and transcendental*.

The first line presented by humanistic psychology (A. Maslow, C.R. Rogers, G. Allport etc.), links self-realization to the manifestations of *The Self*, which itself unfolds in this process the potentials, immanently embedded in it [11, 12]. The same principle of preformism is peculiar to a great number of approaches. Thus, the *autopoiesis theory* (H. Maturana, F.J. Varela, A. Weber, E.A. Di Paolo, etc.) explains self-realization as a man's self-reproduction by virtue of the «autopoietic organization» of his very nature [13, 14]. Preformism is largely inherent in cognitive, gestaltic teachings, and others.

The second line considers self-realization not so much due to the presence of a certain inner essence, as through the prism of the very plan of *existence*. The existential approach (J.-P. Sartre, L. Binswanger, R. May, M. Boss, and others) takes as its basis the ontological situation right here-being (*Dasein*) as the source of self-realization, pushing towards the act of conscious choice of the abandoned into the world and alienated individual [15, 16].

The third line brings self-realization beyond the limits of the current plane of being into the sphere of searching for the meaning of life in the course of moral growth, while the whole range of human relations and movement towards higher values is being unfolded (V. Frankl, A. Längle, etc.). The transcendental tradition underlying this orientation (I. Kant, G. Hegel) directs self-realization to higher, spiritual values and meanings [17, 18].

In accordance with the studies of humanistic psychology, self-realization is considered the most important ontological state and an attribute of a fully functioning personality [12, 19]. By its genesis self-realization is the result of a personality's productive socialization [20], and is generated by some kind of inner existential desire for self-actualization

[21]. Being the leading motivator of life in the adolescent period [6], the desire for self-actualization psychologically inspires and mobilizes a young man, activates his abilities and internal resources to express himself, gain valuable life experience, show his worth in learning, science, society, business, culture, etc. [1, 22].

In the psychological dimension, the need for self-realization as the students' leading life intention implies a fundamental and more extensive phenomenological state connected with the processes of self-determination and self-fulfillment [5, 7].

It is significant to note that these and other approaches point out the crucial role of social-cultural conditions in the development and upbringing of personality. In this regard, the importance of the education system and, above all, higher education in the process of forming a psychologically viable generation of students is highlighted [9, 23, 24]. For the full-fledged development of the personality in the educational system, a complex of different conditions and measures to maintain psychologically safe and life-affirming standards and practices of social and cultural growth are needed, setting positive dominants of consciousness, behavior and social relations [25].

## METHODOLOGY AND METHODS

*Conceptual framework.* In our study, we proceeded from the conceptual position about the *social-cultural determination* of today's youth psychological development (S.L. Rubinstein, L.S. Vygotsky, A.N. Leontyev, etc.) [26, 27, 28]. According to this provision, for full-fledged development of students, a holistic educational process is needed, which is aimed at creating the conditions for their full self-realization in the educational and upcoming professional activities as capable persons [5]. This approach corresponds to the fundamental psychological research carried out within the framework of various scientific schools and approaches.

In our study, we also relied on a *person-centered approach*, according to which the university training process should cultivate personality-oriented technologies and forms of training future specialists for the development of students' internal forces, their creative and intellectual resources [10, 12, 29]. This means that a successful university should support and promote student initiatives in training, developing their proposals for interesting and promising research works and projects [4].

*Hypothesis and object of the study.* When planning and constructing the research, we relied on the hypothesis that the process of students' self-realization was due to the personalization of educational theory and practice at the university, ensuring the development of the internal potential of students as capable and competent individuals.

As subject matter of our research we considered the self-realization of students' youth as an indicator of their psychologically successful development in higher education.

The main problem of the research was the determination of subjective important circumstances and signs for students' self-realization in the educational space as factors for ensuring and maintaining the full development of the personality.

*Participants.* To collect objective quantitative information, it was organized a survey of students from two universities in Belgorod (Russia): National Research University and State Technological University. In total, the study covered 220 students, of whom 110 were enrolled in the humanitarian faculties of the national university and 110 received technical education at the technological university. During the study, senior, 4th and 5th year students were interviewed.

The purpose of the survey was to determine the conditions and psychological characteristics of self-realization of students in university education.

Experimental work with the students of both universities was carried out during the 2017-2018 academic year.

**Methods.** As the main empirical methods of collecting and obtaining statistical data, we used a complex of psychological survey methods. To provide a psychological survey of students, we used the following test methods: method «self-realization in learning» (A. Shutenko, E. Shutenko, 2008) [30]; method of the pair comparisons of needs on Maslow's hierarchy [21]; method «Motive and Purpose» (B.A. Sosnovsky) [31]; «Personal Orientation Inventory (POI)» (E. Shostrom) [32]; research method of self-attitude (S.R. Pantilev) [33]; Life-sense orientations test (D.A. Leontyev) [34].

The study used such methods of counting and representation of data as: analysis method of identifying significant differences (Student's t-criterion), cluster analysis of data, and the method of rank correlation of Ch. Spearman.

As the main statistical method, Student's t-test was used, operating with differences in arithmetic mean values in two samples of students. The subsequent interpretation of the data was carried out only on statistically significant t-test data from those obtained, i.e. for those that were above the critically tabular with a sufficient level of confidence probability of the coefficient «p», which allows to judge about the number of probable errors. This coefficient, as is customary in psychological studies, must be no higher than 0.05 ( $p \leq 0.005$ ) [35].

**The logic of experimental work.** The research work consisted of two phases.

The first stage was devoted to identifying the features of students' self-realization through a survey method «self-realization in learning» [30]. According to the results, the main categories of students were established according to the level of self-realization in university education.

The second main stage of the work consisted in the study of students' personal characteristics of different levels of self-realization through monitoring measurements and differentiated analysis of their psychological measurements data (motivation, personal orientations, self-attitude, life-sense features, etc.).

### RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

To structure the entire sample of students by the degree of self-realization in training, we applied the author's method for studying self-realization in education environment [30]. This questionnaire method is aimed at detection of three leading indicators of students' self-realization at a university:

1) personal involvement of the students into the learning process;

2) realization of personal capacities in training;

3) social involvement in the university community.

According to the results of received data cluster analysis (n = 220 people), three categories of students with different degrees of self-realization were selected:

- 1st cluster: students with reduced self-realization (51 respondents – 23%);

- 2nd cluster: students of average self-realization (85 respondents – 39%);

- 3rd cluster: students with sustainable self-realization (84 respondents – 38%).

As can be seen from the data, the first category of students was the smallest in number that indicates a positive trend to students' self-realization in the process of education at these universities. A content analysis of students' answers to the questionnaire items showed that students with articulate self-realization are convinced that they made the right choice of the specialty of training and the university. They believe that they will be able to use their potential in order to benefit the economy and the country as a whole. They are studying with great interest, and they consider learning themselves not only as a formal necessity or a meeting place with comrades, but as a serious and important matter.

For students with a high level of self-realization, it is also typical to feel their personal involvement with the education process, to see in learning the most important activity that

leads them to the goal, helps bring the realization of the dream closer and acts as a source of inspiration and emotional lift. The students of this group actively use the opportunities offered by the university to develop their potential and show their abilities in various spheres of life.

**Motivational features of students with different levels of self-realization.** The need-motivational sphere was measured by means of Maslow's scale of needs hierarchy with using the method of pair comparisons [21], as well as through the method «Motive and Purpose» [31]. During the implementation of these methods, such types of needs were measured as: material needs; safety needs; need for recognition; social belonging need; need for self-expression; need achievement; need for learning; need for dominance, and so on.

Subsequent data processing was carried out through a comparative analysis of the obtained values for each parameter of the methods performed. The main statistical method was the procedure for assessing the significance of differences between the data of students with unexpressed and articulated self-realization in university education. This procedure was based on the calculation of Student's T-test values [35].

The generalized data of the comparative analysis of the measurements carried out are shown in Table 1. For the convenience of reading the data cited, the T-criteria are located only in the column that applies to students who showed higher rates on the studied characteristics.

The data presented in the table and their interpretations are performed only for reliable t-values that correspond to standards with an acceptable p-value ( $p \leq 0.005$ ).

Table 1 – Data of the comparative analysis of need-motivational characteristics of students with the different level of self-realization in training (by t-criterion of Student)

personal characteristics	students of unexpressed self-realization	students of articulate self-realization	p
attitude to learning		7.16	0.001
satisfaction by achievements		5.34	0.001
satisfaction by knowledge		2.29	0.024
safety need	2.26		0.026
need for self-expression		3.08	0.003
satisfaction by dominance		2.99	0.003
need achievement		2.56	0.012

The results of the comparative analysis of the received data have demonstrated that, first of all, students with unexpressed self-realization stand out for low indicators on the scale of «attitude to learning» ( $t = - 7.156$  and  $p \leq 0.001$ , whereas «t» is the Student's criterion, «p» – level of admissible probability for the comparison of two groups of data) (see Table 1).

It was also revealed that this part of students is less interested in academic subjects, they are not ready to independent and systematic work to gain the knowledge, they are distinguished by lower indicators on such scales as: «satisfaction by achievements» ( $t = - 5.34$ ;  $p \leq 0.001$ ), «satisfaction by knowledge» ( $t = - 2.294$ ;  $p = 0.024$ ). In addition, they experience a great safety need ( $t = 2.262$ ;  $p = 0.026$ ), which as a rule creates a serious internal barrier to the development of other needs of a higher level (on A. Maslow's hierarchy) [21].

In contrast to this group, students with a high degree of self-realization showed higher rates in such parameters as: «need for self-expression» ( $t = 3.084$ ;  $p = 0.003$ ), «satisfaction by dominance» ( $t = 2.990$ ;  $p = 0.003$ ), «the need achievement» ( $t = 2.564$ ;  $p = 0.012$ ) (see Table 1).

Thus, according to received data, students with an increased level of self-realization are generally characterized by a pronounced motivation for self-determination in current life.

**Personal orientations of students with different levels**



of *self-realization*. The sphere of personal orientations was studied under the results of the Personal Orientation Inventory (POI) by Shostrom [33]. This sphere includes the students' initial attitudes towards the world and to themselves as productive personalities with certain experience of self-understanding and self-knowledge; it also reflected the features of orientations in life [36].

The received data of the comparative analysis are shown in Table 2.

Table 2 – Data of the comparative analysis of personal orientations of students with the different level of self-realization in training (by *t*-criterion of Student)

personal characteristics	students of unexpressed self-realization	students of articulate self-realization	<i>p</i>
self-regard		2.77	0.007
time competence		2.32	0.022
self-actualizing value		2.18	0.031

According to the results of this method, students with articulated self-realization had high data on the scale of *self-regard* ( $t = 2.767$ ;  $p = 0.007$ ), as well as on such scales as: *time competence* ( $t = 2.319$ ;  $p = 0.022$ ) and *self-actualizing value* in life ( $t = 2.180$ ;  $p = 0.031$ ). Thus, students who successfully realize themselves have a consciousness of the unity of their lives in the past, present and future, they do not tend to postpone life for tomorrow, they are not fixed on the past. They are more consistent with the parameters of a self-actualizing personality (according to Shostrom) [36], i.e. capable and willing to build their lives in accordance with their views and beliefs. The received data indicate a more productive spectrum of life orientations among students with an increased level of self-realization in the learning process.

*Features of self-attitudes of students with different levels of self-realization.* The structure of such features was studied by means of «Research method of self-attitude» by S.R. Pantileev [33]. In this structure, the subjective sign of emotional activity toward the «Self» crystallizes, which leads to some global feeling of «for» or «against» oneself. This aspect represents the emotional component of students' self-consciousness and was considered by us as very important indicator of their self-realization in education. The calculated data on the students' self-attitudes parameters are presented in table 3.

Table 3 – Data of the comparative analysis of self-attitudes of students with the different level of self-realization in training (by *t*-criterion of Student)

personal characteristics	students of unexpressed self-realization	students of articulate self-realization	<i>p</i>
closeness	2.93		0.001
self-confidence		2.62	0.010
inner contradiction	1.99		0.049
self-management		4.34	0.001
reflected self-attitude		3.18	0.002
self-esteem		2.96	0.004

A comparative analysis of the data showed that a more positive attitude towards themselves was characteristic of students with high self-realization in learning. They expect that their personality (the qualities and capacities) can cause respect, favor and approval from others.

Students with unexpressed self-realization in learning have higher grades on parameter of the «closeness» in self-attitude ( $t = 2.932$ ;  $p = 0.0004$ ), lower grades on the «self-confidence» scale ( $t = -2.617$ ;  $p = 0.010$ ) and higher scores on the scale of «internal contradiction» ( $t = 1.987$ ;  $p = 0.049$ ). Such data reinforced our assumption that the students of this group have emotional barriers of adequate self-consciousness that prevent them from fully and diversely realizing themselves in learning and hinder personal growth, returning them to teenage problems.

Students with a distinct self-realization in education have significantly higher «self-management» indicators

( $t = 4.335$ ;  $p \leq 0.001$ ), as well as «reflected self-attitude» ( $t = 3.183$ ;  $p = 0.002$ ), and «self-esteem» ( $t = 2.956$ ;  $p = 0.0041$ ).

*Purpose orientations of students with different levels of self-realization.* For research this sphere of students' development a «Life-sense orientations test» was used (D.A. Leontyev), which assesses the topmost layer of psychological features of a person, in particular the awareness of the life path from the point of view of its target and sense definiteness [34].

The generalized data of the comparative analysis of this sphere are shown in Table 4.

Table 4 – Data of the comparative analysis of life-sense orientations of students with the different level of self-realization in training (by *t*-criterion of Student)

personal characteristics	students of unexpressed self-realization	students of articulate self-realization	<i>p</i>
life productivity		3.84	0,001
internal control locus		4.50	0,001
emotional saturation of life		3.80	0,001
life-management		4.07	0,001

According to received data of the comparative analysis, the students of successful self-realization achieve higher rates of «life productivity» ( $t = 3.838$ ;  $p \leq 0,001$ ), «internal locus of control» ( $t = 4.502$ ;  $p \leq 0,001$ ), «emotional saturation of life» ( $t = 3.799$ ;  $p \leq 0,001$ ) and «life-management» ( $t = 4.074$ ;  $p \leq 0,001$ ).

As the analysis of the life-sense component has shown, students of different poles of self-realization are characterized by differences in data for all parameters of this component. It should be noted especially that higher grades relate to such scales as: the «locus of control» and «life-management» that emphasizes the important features of students of high pole who recognize themselves as owners of their lives in university training, able to build their own plans in accordance with a specific goal.

It has been established that, on the whole, the life-sense component of students' personality characteristics of (unlike the other features considered) is closely connected with the dynamics and degree of self-realization in the university training.

*The connection between students' personal features and the level of their self-realization.* To establish this connection, we used the method of calculating Spearman's rank correlation coefficient [37]. As a result, a relationship was established between the indicator «attitude to learning» and such items of the questionnaire as: the desire to actively work in the classroom ( $r = 0.51$ ), understanding the personal usefulness of training ( $r = 0.50$ ), lack of disappointment in learning ( $r = 0.48$ ), informal participation in classes ( $r = 0.48$ ), and psychological inclusion in the educational process ( $r = 0.46$ ). A connection was also found between the indicators of «satisfaction by knowledge» with such indicators of self-realization in the training as: achieving a deeper self-knowledge ( $r = 0.50$ ) and realization of the personal potential ( $r = 0.50$ ).

In the sphere of self-attitudes, a certain relationship was recorded between the indicator of «self-management» and such aspects of self-realization as: «achieving better self-understanding» ( $r = 0.47$ ) and «realizing the internal potential» ( $r = 0.46$ ). Besides, there is also a certain correlation between the data on the «self-esteem» scale and the «self-understanding» scale ( $r = 0.41$ ).

In the life-sense sphere, the indicators of the «locus of control of I» and the «locus of control of Life» are somewhat connected with such points of the questionnaire on self-realization as: conscious choice of a university ( $r = 0.43$  and  $r = 0.44$ , respectively), lack of disappointment in learning ( $r = 0.41$ ), achieving better self-understanding ( $r = 0.41$ ) and the desire for personal participation in the university affairs ( $r = 0.40$ ). In addition, it is essential to note the fact that there is a positive connection between the indicator of «life productivity» and the students' ability to express themselves as

individuals in the learning process ( $r = 0,43$ ).

### CONCLUSIONS

In general, the process of students' education at a university is closely related to successful and sustainable self-realization in the training process, which depends on the following conditions: personal involvement in the learning process; realization of abilities in the education process; social integration into the university community.

According to the received results there is a certain connection between the level of self-realization of students and the positive motivation of university education, as well as the integrity and coherence of students' Self-concept due to the congruence of their internal aspirations to regulatory learning requirements. Especially clearly this connection appears in the life sense sphere, in their awareness of themselves as strong personalities, capable of making responsible decisions, building a productive and rich life, aimed at creative interaction with the world and with oneself in it.

The work carried out has shown the fruitfulness of socio-cultural determination in the study of the problems of contemporary students, because in the context of this determination we can find a universal mechanism for its self-realization. At the level of the individual, this mechanism consists in the realization of culture into «Self», and not only «Self» into culture. It is a question of the young man's realization of his potential and essential forces, which are initially revealed not so much in the internal plan as in the socio-cultural sphere, in the constant devotion of oneself to something more significant than one's own personality (studies, profession, science, country, society, culture, etc.). Such an approach to the problem of self-realization, in our opinion, can serve as a heuristic basis for its scientific and humanitarian reflection, in which the field of education and, in particular, higher school is a kind of field for self-realization, a social and cultural space for the search for meanings and ways of developing the essential forces of students.

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