SELF-ESTEEM AND SELF-PERCEPTION AS FACTORS OF INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS AMONG ADOLESCENTS

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Abstract: This article examines the influence of self-esteem and self-perception on the nature of interpersonal relationships in adolescence. The cognitive, emotional, and behavioral aspects of these psychological constructs are analyzed in the context of individual socialization. A relationship is established between the level of self-esteem, the type of self-concept, and the communication strategies of adolescents. It is shown that a positive self-perception contributes to the development of an empathic, constructive communication style, whereas unstable or low self-esteem correlates with anxiety, aggression, and social alienation. Areas of psychological and pedagogical support are proposed to promote the harmonious development of self-awareness and interpersonal competence in adolescents. The importance of a systems approach to creating conditions for the formation of a stable, adequate, and positive self-image in the educational environment is emphasized.

Key words: self-esteem; self-perception, adolescence, interpersonal relationships, self-concept, socialization, school adaptation, emotional intelligence, psychological support, pedagogical interaction.

INTRODUCTION. Self-esteem and self-perception in adolescence are integral psychological constructs formed at the intersection of personal development and social interaction. Adolescence is characterized by qualitative changes in the structure of self-awareness, intensified processes of reflection, reassessment of oneself as a subject of communication, and assessment of one's place in the system of interpersonal relationships. During this period, the self-concept actively develops, in which self-esteem plays a central role as a regulator of emotional state, behavior, and communication strategies.

The development of self-esteem is largely determined by both intrapsychic mechanisms and the social context, including family, peers, and the educational environment. Adolescents' interpersonal relationships, especially within peer groups, are both a reflection and a source of their self-esteem. Through the assessments of others and self-comparisons with others, adolescents develop a relative understanding of their qualities, significance, level of social acceptability, and success. Empirical studies show that adequate, stable self-esteem positively correlates with a pro-social type of communication, a high level of empathy, willingness to cooperate and tolerance in interpersonal relationships [1, p. 57].

LITERATURE REVIEW ON THE TOPIC. M.A.Khodjaeva notes that in the Uzbek pedagogical environment, collectivist norms contribute to the development of an externally oriented self-esteem, which is based not on internal self-esteem per se, but on the expectations and assessments of significant others [2, p. 29].

Low self-esteem in adolescence, according to L.N.Isaeva is associated with increased anxiety, a sense of insecurity, social isolation, and a tendency to interpret neutral signals as hostile [3, p. 36].

The influence of positive self-perception on the social adaptation of adolescents is revealed in the works of O.V.Shepeleva who emphasizes that adolescents with a holistic and positive self-concept possess more flexible socialization mechanisms, are better able to recognize the emotional states of others, are more willing to participate in collective activities, and constructively resolve interpersonal conflicts [5, p. 79].

METHODOLOGY. This article examines the impact of self-esteem and self-awareness on the nature of interpersonal relationships during adolescence. Statistical research, literature review, and hypothesis testing were used. Methods such as comparative economic and economic analysis, systematic and empirical data were effectively used to analyze the collected data.

DISCUSSION AND RESULTS. Self-perception, in turn, encompasses a broader set of self-concepts, encompassing not only evaluative but also descriptive, prognostic, and normative aspects. It sets the framework within which adolescents interpret their own emotions, actions, motives, and experiences. Along with the cognitive component, self-perception is closely linked to the affective sphere, shaping a subjective picture of the self that can enhance or inhibit personal activity. Moreover, the structure of self-perception in adolescence is influenced by conflicting factors: the desire for individualization and, simultaneously, social belonging creates internal tensions, the resolution of which is directly linked to the experience of interacting with others.

Adolescents in this sociocultural context demonstrate an increased dependence on the approval of others, which is reflected in the nature of their interpersonal attitudes: adaptive, compromising, but also less proactive communication patterns are more common.

This, in turn, gives rise to aggressive and defensive forms of communication, which become entrenched in behavior and become stable behavioral patterns. Adolescents with this attitude are more likely to be involved in conflict situations, have difficulty building trusting relationships, and exhibit low levels of acceptance of others' perspectives[5].

These qualities not only contribute to improved social interactions but also to increased academic motivation and the development of a stable, positive attitude toward themselves and others.

The emotional component of self-perception, associated with a sense of personal value and self-acceptance, occupies a special place. According to S.U. Mamatova, adolescents with developed self-awareness and emotional intelligence demonstrate a higher degree of social empathy and are better able to cope with frustration in conflict situations [4, p. 95].

This allows them to build stable and trusting interpersonal relationships, reduces the likelihood of aggression, and contributes to the development of a favorable psychological climate in the educational environment. An analysis of existing scientific approaches suggests that developing adequate self-esteem and a positive self-perception should be viewed as a targeted pedagogical and psychological process, incorporating elements of reflection, feedback, emotional support, and the development of communicative skills. In school education, this can be achieved through psychological training, project-based activities, group work methods, and mentoring. The implementation of social and psychological support programs aimed at developing emotional resilience, self-confidence, and the ability to build healthy relationships with peers has also proven effective.

A significant factor in shaping self-esteem and self-perception is the pedagogical position of adults-teachers, mentors, and psychologists. The quality of feedback a teenager receives about themselves, its emotional content, and its interpretation depend on the nature of their interactions with them. Situations in which an adult acts as an accepting, supportive figure foster a positive self-image, stimulate the development of intrinsic motivation, and reduce anxiety[2]. In contrast, a predominance of criticism, hypercontrol, and a lack of recognition distort the structure of self-perception, inhibit initiative, and increase feelings of insecurity.

The self-concept and self-esteem structure formed in adolescence serves as the basis for subsequent adult identity. It determines communication style, level of aspiration, attitude toward oneself and others, the ability to accept responsibility, and readiness for social roles. Having a positive self-image increases the likelihood of successful social adaptation, professional self-realization, and stable interpersonal relationships. In this regard, issues of supporting the development of constructive self-esteem are of not only individual but also social significance.

Modern research emphasizes the need for a systemic approach to developing adolescent self-awareness, including not only psychological support but also the optimization of the educational environment as a whole. This requires creating a safe, accepting atmosphere at school, where mistakes are seen as part of development, and success is determined not only by academic achievement but also by personal growth. Engaging adolescents in reflective practices, social projects, volunteer and creative activities allows them to expand their understanding of themselves, strengthen their sense of personal worth, and develop an adequate system of interpersonal benchmarks[3].

Developing self-esteem and self-perception as factors in interpersonal interaction requires attention not only at the level of individual assessment but also at the level of educational policy strategies. The development of targeted programs aimed at the social and emotional development of students should be based on interdisciplinary approaches, including elements of developmental psychology, social pedagogy, neuropsychology, and cultural anthropology. Only in this case can we speak of a holistic and effective approach to raising an individual capable of constructive interaction and sustainable self-development.

Thus, the development of self-esteem and self-perception during adolescence can be considered a key indicator of successful socialization and personal development. These psychological constructs, possessing a high degree of plasticity, are shaped by a wide range of factors, including family upbringing, the school environment, the characteristics of pedagogical interactions, ethnocultural norms, and the quality of feedback received in interpersonal interactions. It is during adolescence that stable attitudes toward oneself and others are established, the first meaningful experience of emotional intimacy and distancing is gained, and models of adaptive or, conversely, maladaptive behavior in a group are developed.

Particular attention in modern psychological and pedagogical support practice is given to the correction and prevention of destructive forms of self-perception associated with low or inappropriately high self-esteem. Educational institutions, acting as agents of socialization, have the opportunity to create a nurturing environment where adolescents can master socially accepted forms of interaction and experience acceptance, respect, and recognition, which fosters an inner sense of worth and confidence[4]. Programs aimed at developing emotional regulation skills, empathy, and self-awareness enable adolescents to gain a deeper understanding of their own behavior, learn to see themselves through the eyes of others, and develop constructive communication strategies.

It is important to recognize that developing a positive self-perception and harmonious self-esteem is impossible without comprehensive support from significant adults. This applies both to the family sphere, where parental sensitivity, consistency, and respect for the child's individuality play a decisive role, and to the education system, where not only academic achievement but also support for personal growth is important. Interaction between teachers and adolescents should be built on the principles of trust, openness, respect, and cooperation. Such interactions foster a sense of psychological security in adolescents, which is a fundamental condition for the development of a positive self-concept.

Recent psychological research also raises the need for early identification of signs of unstable or negative self-esteem. The use of diagnostic methods allows for early detection of the risk of developing deviant behavior, social isolation, anxiety, or aggression. In an educational setting, this allows for individualized support for adolescents and the creation of conditions for their social and psychological support. Psychological training aimed at developing self-presentation skills, awareness of personal boundaries, assertive behavior, and acceptance of one's uniqueness are proving effective.

The development of interpersonal relationships in adolescence is mediated not only by an individual's internal self-concept but also by their ability to build trusting and boundary-respecting relationships. Adolescents with a positive self-image strive for open, empathetic, and dialogic interactions, they are able to respect differences and recognize the right of others to be different. This is an important component of civic education aimed at developing individuals capable of living in a multicultural and information-rich society.

CONCLUSIONS. In conclusion, it should be emphasized that adolescent self-esteem and self-perception are not isolated psychological structures, but integral characteristics of their inner world, directly influencing the nature and quality of interpersonal relationships. Their development requires a systematic and sensitive approach from teachers, psychologists, parents, and all participants in the educational process. Creating conditions for conscious, emotionally fulfilling, and socially oriented development in adolescents not only strengthens their personal resilience but also develops socially mature individuals capable of constructive interaction, self-acceptance, and acceptance of others, and a responsible approach to life.

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