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## SYSTEMATIC ANALYSIS OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CHARACTER ACCENTUATIONS AND ANXIETY LEVELS IN EARLY ADOLESCENCE

**Анотація.** У статті розглядається фундаментальна проблема взаємодії статичних і динамічних властивостей психіки в період раннього юнацтва (15–18 років). Актуальність зумовлена необхідністю розкриття внутрішніх механізмів емоційної дезадаптації, де особистісна тривожність виступає не як автономний стан, а як функція характерологічного профілю індивіда. Дослідження спрямоване на подолання наукового розриву між описовою характеристикою акцентуацій та функціональним аналізом тривожних реакцій у стресових умовах.

Метою є теоретичне обґрунтування та експериментальне дослідження когнітивно-афективної детермінації тривожних станів через призму типологічних особливостей характеру особистості

Для збору та аналізу емпіричних даних було застосовано комплексний підхід, що поєднує методику діагностики типів акцентуацій характеру Г. Шмішека (за К. Леонгардом), концепція ситуативної та особистісної тривожності (Ч. Спілберг, Ю. Ханін) та положення про вікову сензитивність раннього юнацтва (А. Личко). Дослідження базується на кількісному аналізі результатів опитувальника Г. Шмішека (адаптація концепції К. Леонгарда). Вибірка демонструє показники за 10 шкалами, де значення понад 18 балів інтерпретуються як виражена акцентуація, а понад 21 бал — як сильна акцентуація з високим ризиком психосоціальної дезадаптації. Вибірка складає 50 осіб віком від 15 до 18 років. Методика Чарльза Спілберга (в адаптації Юрія Ханіна), що передбачає результати за двома шкалами: реактивної та особистісної тривожності, де  $\geq 45$  висока тривожність,  $\leq 30$  низька.

Статистична обробка масиву даних базувалася на методах описової статистики (визначення моди та середнього значення) та кореляційному аналізі за Пірсоном для виявлення інтердетермінації між показниками обох методик.

В ході експериментального дослідження встановлено, що вибірка характеризується високими показниками гіпертимної ( $x=18,6$ ) та екзальтованої ( $x=17,4$ ) акцентуацій, що створює передумови для високої інтенсивності емоційного реагування. Верифіковано статистично значущий позитивний зв'язок «Тривога–Екзальтація» ( $r=0,78$ ;  $p<0,01$ ), який доводить, що особистісна тривожність ( $x=43,8$ ) у даному віковому періоді виступає внутрішнім стимулом для афективних спалахів. Доведено, що екзальтованість є «виходом» для накопиченої тривоги. Виявлено негативну кореляцію між гіпертимністю та реактивною тривожністю ( $r=-0,45$ ), що дозволяє інтерпретувати гіпертимність як адаптивний механізм, який знижує суб'єктивну значущість стресових подій через активну соціальну екстраверсію, аналіз яких виявив, що суттєво знижений рівень педантичності ( $x=7,9$ ), що з урахуванням високої тривожності свідчить про ускладнену спроможність респондентів до раціонального структурування власних емоцій та переживань.

**Ключові слова:** ранній юнацький вік, акцентуації характеру, особистісна тривожність, реактивна тривожність, психологічна детермінація, емоційна стабільність, екзальтованість, гіпертимність, психологічна адаптація.

**Abstract.** The article considers the fundamental problem of the interaction of static and dynamic properties of the psyche in early adolescence (15–18 years). The relevance is due to the need to reveal the internal mechanisms of emotional maladjustment, where personal anxiety acts not as an autonomous state, but as a function of the characterological profile of the individual. The study is aimed at overcoming the scientific gap between the descriptive characteristics of accentuations and the functional analysis of anxiety reactions in stressful conditions.

The aim is to provide theoretical justification and experimental research into the cognitive-affective determination of anxiety states through the prism of typological features of personality character.



To collect and analyze empirical data, a comprehensive approach was used, combining the diagnostic method of H. Shmishek's character accentuation types (according to K. Leonhard), the concept of situational and personal anxiety (C. Spielberg, Yu. Khanin) and the provisions on the age sensitivity of early adolescence (A. Lychko). The study is based on a quantitative analysis of the results of the H. Shmishek questionnaire (adaptation of K. Leonhard's concept). The sample demonstrates indicators on 10 scales, where values over 18 points are interpreted as pronounced accentuation, and over 21 points - as strong accentuation with a high risk of psychosocial maladjustment. The sample consists of 50 people aged 15 to 18 years. Charles Spielberg's method (adapted by Yuri Khanin), which provides results on two scales: reactive and personal anxiety, where  $\geq 45$  is high anxiety,  $\leq 30$  is low.

Statistical processing of the data set was based on descriptive statistics methods (determination of mode and mean) and Pearson correlation analysis to identify interdetermination between the indicators of both methods.

During the experimental study, it was found that the sample is characterized by high indicators of hyperthymic ( $x=18.6$ ) and exalted ( $x=17.4$ ) accentuations, which creates the prerequisites for a high intensity of emotional response. A statistically significant positive relationship "Anxiety-Exaltation" ( $r=0.78$ ;  $p<0.01$ ) was verified, which proves that personal anxiety ( $x=43.8$ ) in this age period acts as an internal stimulus for affective outbursts. It is proven that exaltation is an "outlet" for accumulated anxiety. A negative correlation was found between hyperthymia and reactive anxiety ( $r=-0.45$ ), which allows us to interpret hyperthymia as an adaptive mechanism that reduces the subjective significance of stressful events through active social extraversion. The analysis revealed that the level of pedantry ( $x=7.9$ ) was significantly reduced, which, taking into account high anxiety, indicates a complicated ability of respondents to rationally structure their own emotions and experiences.

**Keywords:** early adolescence, character accentuations, personal anxiety, reactive anxiety, psychological determination, emotional stability, exaltation, hyperthymia, psychological adaptation.

**Introduction.** Early adolescence is one of the most important stages of personality development, as it acts as a kind of transition from childhood to maturity. This period is accompanied by qualitative changes in the intellectual and emotional spheres, the formation of a new level of self-awareness and an increased need for self-affirmation and self-determination [9]. However, the process of formation is often complicated by the emergence of anxiety states, which modern researchers consider as one of the typical features of the emotional sphere during this period. In psychology, anxiety is defined as a stable personality trait that reflects the tendency to regard a wide range of situations as threatening. An increased level of anxiety negatively affects the development of young men, forming self-doubt and a negative attitude towards their own "I". An important factor determining the emergence of such states is character accentuations - extreme variants of the norm, in which individual character traits are excessively strengthened. In adolescence and young adulthood, accentuations are very common (in 50–80% of people) and are a determining factor in many behavioral acts.

Scientists (K. Leonhard, A. E. Lichko, etc.) have proven that each type of accentuation has its own "weak points" or "places of least resistance". Psychological disorders and anxiety arise precisely when life situations or mental traumas are addressed to these "weak links" of a particular type of character [3]. For example, anxious, cycloid and emotionally unstable types show greater vulnerability to stress and a tendency to emotionally-oriented coping strategies, which only increases anxiety. Despite a significant number of studies (Ch. Spielberger, Yu. Khanin, A. Prikhozhan, etc.), the problem of the relationship between accentuations and anxiety in early adolescence requires further study to develop effective prevention and correction programs.

**Analysis of the problem and modern research.** The problem of psychological determination of anxiety states is considered through the specificity of character accentuations, which act as extreme variants of the norm. In early adolescence, anxiety often becomes a stable personality trait, which determines the tendency to perceive neutral situations as threatening. The main mechanism of anxiety is the presence of a "place of least resistance" or "weak link" in each type of accentuation. Psychological distress occurs when external stressors or traumatic situations are addressed to these vulnerable points [2]. For example, for certain character types, a situation of uncertainty about the future or assessment (exams) becomes a powerful determinant of high anxiety. The study of the relationship between anxiety and character traits is presented in the works of the following scientists: (K. Leonhard) - the founder of the concept of accented personalities, who identified 12 character types and described their selective vulnerability, (H. Schmishek) - the developer of diagnostic tools for determining the types of accentuations. (C. Spielberger) - the author of the classification of anxiety into situational (reactive) and personal, (Z. Freud) - the first to distinguish

objective, neurotic and moral anxiety. (J. Taylor) - studied the levels of personal anxiety and their impact on self-confidence, (R. Lazarus and S. Folkman) - developed the concept of coping strategies as ways to overcome stress that depend on character traits. Modern Ukrainian researchers: (Natalia Ryabukha) - established a direct correlation between a high level of anxiety and a stuck character type in students, (O. Kosyanova and A. Andreadaki) - proved that the hyperthymic type is prone to adaptive coping, while anxious and cyclothymic types more often use avoidance strategies. And this topic is also in the works of the following Ukrainian scientists (M. Afanasenko, I. Yastochkina, S. M. Tomchuk and M. I. Tomchuk, I. G. Koshlan and I. S. Mayor, G. M. Kantsur and L. P. Mishchykha, O. Yu. Ovcharenko) [9,8,7]. Thus, modern scientific thought is focused on studying how individual character traits (accentuations) determine the adaptive potential of the personality and its ability to resist anxiety states in crisis periods of development.

**Experimental part.** To identify the relationship between character accentuations and anxiety levels in early adolescence, the observation method was used, using Google-form to digitize data from the Leonhard-Shmishik Character Accentuations questionnaire and the Spielberg-Khanin questionnaire (SX). The study was conducted in a newly created group aged 15-18 years on the basis of a vocational educational institution as part of the adaptation program. 50 respondents participated in the study.

According to the results of the study of the level of anxiety according to the Spielberg-Khanin questionnaire, a comparative table is presented below, which demonstrates the difference between the internal tendency to anxiety (OT) and the current state of tension (RT). Fig. 1

Analyzing the data obtained, it can be said that every second respondent in the group has a tendency to experience (OT), which indicates a stable tendency to perceive the world as threatening (48%). This indicates a deep internal tension, which is part of their character. However, the other half of the respondents recorded a moderate level of personal anxiety, which indicates an optimal zone where anxiety performs a mobilizing function (42%). Instead, only a small part of the sample experiences disorganizing tension at the moment of activity (16%). In turn, (64%) recorded a moderate level of manifestation, i.e. The vast majority of students in a testing situation maintain a working state. This indicates good adaptability: despite internal anxiety, they cope with current tasks. Table 1.

Fig.1

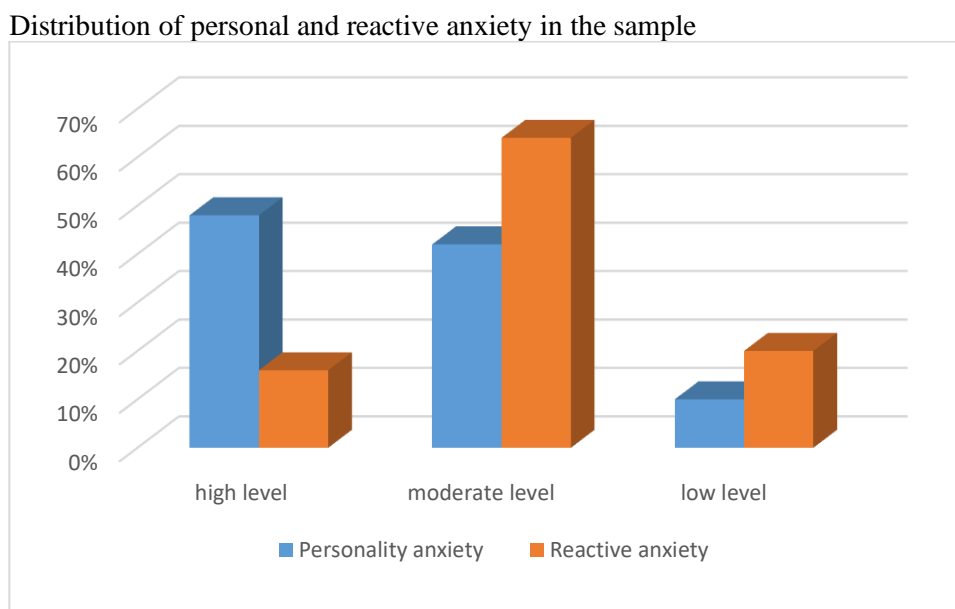


Table 1.

**Ratio of anxiety levels in percentage**

Anxiety level	Personality anxiety (PA)	Reactive anxiety (RA)
High ( $\leq 45$ points)	48% (24 people)	16% (8 people)
Moderate (31–44 points)	42% (21 people)	64% (32 people)
Low ( $\geq 30$ points)	10% (5 people)	20% (10 people)

Comparing the percentages reveals an important psychological phenomenon of your group: "Latent tension". While 48% of respondents are internally very anxious (PA), only 16% demonstrate this externally through reactive anxiety (RA).

This means that the group uses significant volitional resources to restrain their emotions. The largest percentage of moderate RT (64%) indicates that adolescents try to appear calm and balanced, even if inside they feel strong discomfort.

Such a gap (48% of high PA versus 16% of high RA) indicates a high risk of psychosomatic disorders, since emotional energy does not find a way out, but is "conserved" inside the personality.

According to the diagnostic data of Leonhard-Shmishik character accentuations, the following results were obtained. The profile was constructed taking into account the multiplication factor (according to the method of G. Shmishek), where an indicator of more than 12 points is considered accentuation, and more than 18 points is considered clear accentuation. Table 2

Table 2

**Indicators of the distribution of types of character accentuations of respondents according to the method of G. Shmishek (N=50)**

Accentuation type	Score	Proportion of people with accentuation (%)	Number of people (n)	Level of severity
Hyperthymic	18.6	84%	42	accentuation
Exalted	17.4	72%	36	accentuation
Excitable	15.2	56%	28	accentuation
Cyclothymic	14.1	44%	22	accentuation
Demonstrative	12.5	38%	19	accentuation
Stuck	10.4	28%	14	norm
Anxious	9.8	18%	9	norm
Dysthymic	9.2	14%	7	norm
Emotional	8.6	22%	11	low
Pedantic	7.9	8%	4	low

In the study, the dominant type of accentuation in the sample is hyperthymic (84%): The indicator is almost total for the group, which indicates that energy and sociability are basic social norms in this environment. High activity acts as a compensator, "silencing" internal anxiety. A high percentage (72%) of the manifestation of the exalted type confirms that most young people are prone to intense, "peak" experiences. A tendency to rapid mood changes from "unearthly happiness" to "deep despair". Any event is perceived as extremely significant.

Moderate accentuations are characteristic of the following types of accentuations. Excitable type (28%), characterized by a tendency to impulsive reactions and conflict. In a state of irritation, loss of control over emotions is possible. Low threshold of patience. In combination with anxiety, it gives an aggressive type of defense. Cyclothymic type (44%) is characterized by the dependence of the internal state on the phases of mood. Periods of elation (hyperthymia) alternate with periods of depression. This makes the behavior of respondents unpredictable for others. Demonstrative type (38%) desire to be the center of attention, tendency to self-presentation. Often use emotional manifestations (exaltation) to attract attention to their person.

Weakly expressed accentuation features in the following types. Stuck type (28%) moderate tendency to form stable feelings. Teenagers are able to remember insults, but this does not turn into pathological suspiciousness. Anxious type (18%) it is important to note that according to Shmishek this score is low, but according to Spielberg (PA) it is high. This indicates that the anxiety in the group is not "quiet" (fear of the dark or loneliness), but is socio-affective. Dysthymic type (14%) tendency to pessimism is weakly expressed. The group is more active than apathetic.

It is necessary to take into account the deficits and risks associated with low indicators of pedantry (8%) only 4 people out of 50 have a tendency to order and systematicity. This indicates a total deficit of volitional regulation in the group.

The connection "Anxiety-Accentuation": Since 48% have high PA, and 72% - exaltation, we can say that in most cases anxiety is "masked" under bright emotions and turbulent activity.

Statistics in percentages confirm that the group is hyperthymic-exalted with a high background of personal anxiety. This creates a portrait of "energetic but vulnerable" youth who need to be taught self-regulation techniques and rational planning. Table 3

Table 3.

**Summary analysis of levels of personal and reactive anxiety and frequency distribution of character accentuations according to the results of empirical research**

Correlation pair	Pearson's coefficient (r)
Exaltation+ PA,	0,778, p < 0,01
Excitability+ RA	0,624, p < 0,01
Anxiety+ PA	0,819, p < 0,01
Pedantry+ RA	-0,023, p < 0,05
Hypertimacy+RA	-0,449, p < 0,05

Exaltation + PA ( $r = 0.778$ ) - the higher the ability to exaltation, the deeper the personal anxiety. This is the strongest relationship in the study. It means that personal anxiety in this group is not "quiet" or depressive. It is externalized. High PA (43.8) constantly "feeds" exaltation (17.4). Any internal anxiety instantly turns into a violent emotional reaction.

Excitability + RA ( $r = 0.624$ ) - high activity reduces the level of situational anxiety. Anxiety at the moment of activity provokes outbursts of irritability. This relationship explains the mechanism of conflict in the group. When the level of situational tension increases, individuals with an excitable accentuation do not "freeze" from fear, but switch to active, often aggressive defense.

Anxiety + PA - Mutual validation of methods (confirmation of the reliability of the data).

Pedanticism + RA ( $r = -0.023$ ) - Low pedantry does not allow anxiety to become constructive.

Hyperthymia + RA ( $r = -0.449$ ) - negative correlation indicates an inverse relationship: the more active and energetic (hyperthymia) a young person is, the less stress he feels here and now. Hyperthymia works as a psychological defense - "escape" from anxiety into activity or communication.

Based on the empirical study conducted, it can be argued that. The psychological profile of the sample of early adolescence is determined by a complex interweaving of high natural energy and pronounced emotional vulnerability. The central feature of the group is the dominance of hyperthymic and exalted types of accentuations, which forms a tendency to intensively experience events and constantly seek external activity. At the same time, the identified high level of personal anxiety indicates that this activity is often a form of psychological protection aimed at compensating for internal anxiety. The statistically significant correlation between exaltation and anxiety confirms that the emotional outbursts of adolescents are a direct consequence of their internal tension, which does not find a rational outlet due to critically low indicators of pedantry and self-control. The lack of systematic behavior becomes the main factor of maladaptation, since adolescents feel anxiety due to future challenges, but do not have an internal resource for their systematic solution. Thus, the main vector of psychocorrectional work should be aimed at the development of volitional regulation and skills of structuring activity, which will reduce the level of personal anxiety by translating chaotic emotional reactions into a constructive direction. It is recommended to implement programs focused on rationalizing the emotional sphere and teaching time management techniques, which will ensure the harmonization of the characterological profile and increase the overall stress resistance of young people in the conditions of modern educational and social requirements.

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