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FEATURES OF THE COMMUNICATIVE BEHAVIOR OF AGGRESSIVE TEENAGERS

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Abstract.

The article looks at the problem of communicative behavior in teenagers who show aggression. Nowadays, psychological research is increasingly focusing on the features of normal communicative behavior during adolescence. However, it is in this period that certain personality traits stand out particularly in teenagers—heightened emotionality and impulsiveness, intolerance, and aggressiveness. The author analyzes the results of an empirical study on the communicative behavior of aggressive adolescents based on a sample of 63 teenagers with medium and high levels of aggression. The study's results show that the communicative behavior of aggressive teens is driven by impulsive emotional reactions, a combination of high cynicism and hostility with very low levels of communicative tolerance in interactions, and a low ability to respond emotionally.

Key words: *communicative behaviour, adolescents, propensity to aggression.*

Introduction

Communicative behavior is an integral part of the communication process, which defines any human life. A person is a social being who needs constant contact with other people, so to realize their potential, they need to do it through communicative behavior. Traditionally, communication is studied in three directions: communication as a type of activity (M.Ya. Basov, A.A. Leontiev, S.L. Rubinstein); communication as a process of interaction (V.P. Konetskaya, M.I. Lisina, A.V. Sokolov); and communication as behavior (I.A. Sternin, E.B. Chernysheva, A.V. Korneeva). The term “communicative behavior” was first introduced by I.A. Sternin. In a broad sense, he views it as the behavior of an individual or a group in the process of interaction, guided by the norms and traditions of society. It's based on generally accepted social norms established in society. It's worth noting that the author emphasizes two components of communicative behavior – verbal and nonverbal. Communicative behavior is conveyed not only through words, but also through facial expressions and gestures that are necessary for the communication process [3]. It's worth noting that I.A. Sternin defines the development of communicative behavior within the communicative sphere of the individual. In this approach, communicative behavior is viewed from the perspective of norms and answers the question: 'Does a person's communicative behavior violate the norms accepted in society or not?' Accordingly, the specific communicative behavior that an individual shows can be described as either normative or non-normative [4].

Communicative behavior, regulated by individual norms, can lead to both negative and positive situations. Essentially, it reflects a clash of viewpoints on certain things between two or more people, where each sees the world from their own perspective of what is 'right.' Communicative behavior can be characterized by an egocentric attitude toward a partner, or by a natural desire to understand the other person, to make them comfortable for further dialogue, and so on. In this case, we say that communicative behavior includes empathy, which acts as the driving force behind successful positive interpersonal interaction [5].

In studies of age-related communicative behavior (I.A. Sternin, E.B. Chernysheva), there is a notion that communicative behavior reflects the communicative consciousness of an individual. By studying communicative behavior, one can identify the features of a person's communicative consciousness. I.A. Sternin includes in this structure communicative categories that represent a person's knowledge about communication and the norms of its implementation. As an example of communicative categories that determine communicative behavior, the author suggests highlighting politeness, tolerance, literacy, good/bad speech, and the communicative ideal.

Communicative behavior should always be considered within a specific age context, as it manifests differently depending on the age stage, as well as in the context of interpersonal interaction. In adolescence, communication serves as a source for building social contacts, finding people with similar interests, and sharing thoughts that are important for the teen. The communicative behavior of adolescents is shaped by generally accepted norms, stereotypes of confident behavior, and the example set by a well-known person who is seen as an authority [6].

During adolescence, noticeable changes occur in many areas of a teenager's personality – emotional, moral, interpersonal, and others. A teen can become either withdrawn or overly social, very rude or unusually affectionate, overly aggressive or surprisingly calm. Their emotions become more intense, they tend to act impulsively, and they can't always control themselves [7]. These factors can affect a teenager's behavior – aggressive reactions can increase rapidly. The inability to properly manage communication is also linked to the fact that teens aren't taught socially acceptable ways to deal with frustration, stress management techniques, finding optimal solutions to conflicts, reacting appropriately to aggressive behavior from others, and how to avoid being aggressive themselves. It's worth noting that aggression is one of the main ways to deal with problems related to maintaining individuality, protecting and defending personal boundaries, self-esteem, and increasing control over the environment that is important to a teenager [8; 9].

A.A. Ushanova notes that the higher the level of aggression, the lower the level of adaptation to new and unfamiliar surroundings. This is accompanied by an inability to get along with peers and difficulties showing initiative when interacting with others. Teenagers prone to aggression tend to have lower levels of empathy. They don't try to show compassion or understand another person's inner world: their feelings, thoughts, expectations, goals, fears, and joys. They tend to be very rigid in their opinions and believe there is no other point of view. In arguments, resentment, vindictiveness, lack of empathy, and ignoring other people's feelings and emotions become very noticeable, along with a refusal to follow common rules and norms [10].

A review of scientific studies shows that behavior is always guided by a set of norms and can be described as either normative or non-normative, and it develops specifically during adolescence. Teenagers' tendency to show aggression in interpersonal interactions inevitably leads to the development of destructive communication behavior.

Materials and methods of research

All of the above has defined the goal of our study – examining the characteristics of aggressive teenagers' communicative behavior. The research tasks are: to study the features of normative communicative behavior; to determine the characteristics of aggressive teenagers' communicative behavior. We assumed that the communicative behavior of aggressive teenagers is characterized by impulsive emotional reactions, a combination of high levels of cynicism and hostility with very low levels of communicative tolerance during interaction, and a low ability to respond emotionally.

An empirical study was conducted at two general education schools in Tula. At the preparatory stage, which involved identifying teenagers with a tendency towards aggression, 87 ninth-grade students (aged 15-16) participated: 49 girls and 38 boys. The participants were given a quick questionnaire called 'Signs of Aggressiveness.' The questionnaire was conducted online on the website Psychological Tests Online <https://psytests.org/>. As a result, the empirical sample included 63 teenagers who were found to have a medium or high level of aggressiveness. The

further study used the following methods: the Hostility Scale (W. Cook, D. Medley) to assess the levels of cynicism, aggressiveness, and hostility; V.A. Losenkov's method for diagnosing communicative impulsivity to identify a person's potential for communicative impulsiveness; the "Communicative Skills" test (L. Michelson; translated and adapted by Yu.Z. Gilbukh) to determine the level of communicative competence; the "Diagnostic of Communicative Tolerance" questionnaire (V.V. Boyko) to study tolerant and intolerant attitudes in a person that appear during interpersonal interactions; and a method for studying the level of empathy (I.M. Yusupov, E.M. Nikireev).

Results and Discussion

Using the "Hostility Scale" method by W. Cook and D. Medley, we obtained data on the number of participants across the scales of cynicism, aggressiveness, and hostility. The results of the method allow us to confirm that the composition of the sample matches the goal of our study on the communicative behavior of aggressive adolescents. On the cynicism scale, 10.3% of adolescents showed a high level. These teens can be intolerant of others' opinions because they have their own point of view and are not concerned with commonly accepted norms. 31% of adolescents showed an average score with a tendency toward high. The data allows us to conclude that most participants have high or average-with-a-tendency-to-high levels of cynicism, which manifests as a tendency to treat commonly accepted moral norms with disdain and contempt. Such behavior can lead to the fact that, due to rejecting existing norms, a teenager cannot fully build relationships with the people around them: the lack of a sense of compassion, shame, and empathy is usually unpleasant for the person they're talking to, so people may start to distance themselves from them.

According to the aggression scale, 6.9% of teenagers showed a high level, meaning these teens often escalate conflicts and tend to use physical force. For 20.7% of teens, a medium level with a tendency toward high was identified. The data allows us to conclude that about a quarter of the participants show mostly medium-to-high or high levels of aggression. This negatively affects not just the teenager, but also those around them: lacking self-control can destroy existing relationships and make it harder to form new, meaningful ones. A tendency toward aggression leads to destructive interactions often filled with conflicts.

On the hostility scale, 3.4% of adolescents were found to have a high level of hostility. Adolescents with a high level of hostility often experience negative emotions towards people around them: anger, hatred, irritation, and make rude remarks to others. 17.2% of adolescents showed an average score with a tendency towards high. Based on the results, it can be concluded that a smaller portion has an average with a tendency to high and high levels of hostility. Negative perception of others can lead to problems in building communication with peers, teachers, and parents. This condition is caused by weak willpower as well as a low level of self-control.

Thus, the analysis of the obtained data allows us to conclude that to a greater extent (58.6%), the sample reflects the manifestation of aggression in adolescents across various indicators: low levels of empathy and tolerance, and high and medium with a tendency to high scores in cynicism and aggressiveness.

To identify the potential of a person's communicative impulsiveness, V.A. Losenkov's method was used. In psychology, impulsiveness is seen as a feature of a person's behavior, characterized by a tendency to act on the first impulse, under the influence of external circumstances or emotions. Impulsiveness shows up in thoughtlessness of words, actions, and deeds. In teenagers, impulsiveness is often a consequence of heightened emotional excitability, which is typical for this age. Analysis of the data on the levels of impulsiveness shows that among the respondents in the sample, teenagers with a high level of communicative impulsiveness predominate (49.4%), an average level was diagnosed in 24.3% of teenagers, and a low level was found in 26.3% of the participants.

A high level of impulsivity characterizes a teenager with insufficient self-control in communication and activities. Impulsivity, or the tendency to act too quickly and thoughtlessly,

shows up both in everyday life and in communication and activities. In any situation, such teenagers allow impulsivity to dominate over reason and restraint.

The L. Michelson Communicative Skills Test (translated and adapted by Yu.Z. Gilbukh) is designed to determine the level of communicative competence and the quality of developed basic communicative skills. The data show that 20.7% of the participants display an aggressive style of behavior in interpersonal communication. These teenagers are unable to react to criticism objectively; they respond to provocation from others and find it difficult to engage in dialogue with other people. For 44.8% of the participants, a dependent style of behavior in interpersonal communication is characteristic – this is expressed through passivity, submissiveness, suggestibility, and conformity.

The problem of tolerant communication becomes especially acute in the teenage community, particularly among teens who are prone to aggression. Indicators of communicative tolerance include: the level of empathy, emotional stability, sociability, fairness, and willingness to compromise. The criteria for assessing the level of formed communicative tolerance are expressed in quantitative and qualitative characteristics at low, medium, and high levels. In our study, a high level of tolerance in communication and a low level of tolerance in communication were identified in 34.5% of respondents – that's more than a third of them. Teenagers don't hide unpleasant feelings that arise when interacting with another person and struggle to adapt to the character and habits of the person they're talking to.

Another important feature of normative communicative behavior is empathy, which helps maintain balanced interpersonal relationships and social adequacy of a person's behavior [11]. The results of the method by I.M. Yusupov and E.M. Nikireeva for determining empathy levels show that 34.5% of participants exhibit a low level of empathy, while 13.8% of participants demonstrate a very low level of empathy. A person with minimal empathy is unable to feel compassion or sympathy. The emotional state at a low level of empathy is critically low, so a person may show intolerance and even aggression towards others.

Conclusion

One of the most important conditions for effective behavior management is communication, as it plays a leading role in the development and formation of personality. The issue of forming communicative behavior in ontogeny is particularly relevant. Norms of communicative behavior primarily reflect an individual's culture, personal qualities, and communicative experience.

The research conducted allows us to state that the communicative behavior of aggressive teenagers is largely determined by their personal traits – impulsiveness in expressing emotional reactions, a combination of high levels of cynicism and hostility with extremely low levels of communicative tolerance in interactions, and a low capacity for emotional responsiveness.

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