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The Role of The Emotional Component in The Structure of Adolescents' Independence as a Condition of Their Personal Growth

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Abstract

The article presents material on the importance of independence as a condition for personal growth of adolescents. Latest research on the development of adolescents' independence are analyzed. The development of the emotional component in the structure of adolescents' independence, which is characterized by such criteria as self-esteem and anxiety, is considered. The prevalence of low self-esteem in girls has been established, which can lead to dependence on other people's opinions, self-doubt, depression and apathy. The boys have a predominance of a very high level of self-esteem, which can have negative consequences in the form of refusal to work on their further personal development and problems in relationships with others. A sharp drop in confidence at the end of adolescence was found. It is associated with the irreversibility of awareness of the end of childhood and taking full responsibility for the acts of adolescents. It is also determined that modern adolescents have a low level of anxiety. That means, that they do not feel emotional discomfort, which is associated with the expectation of a threat. But it could also mean that there was the presence of protective mechanisms and reluctance to talk about this topic. The importance of independence development in adolescence is showed.

Keywords: Independence, self-esteem, anxiety, confidence, personal growth, emotional development, personal development, adolescents.

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Introduction

The issue of personal growth has attracted the attention of modern scholars recently. It is a multifactorial phenomenon that covers a wide range of personal qualities. I. Bulakh notes, that personal growth is “a dynamic process of mastering new values, making responsible choices, unconditional acceptance of other people, objective awareness of the normative-value image of oneself, ability to reflect personal qualities, one's own actions and ability to moral self-control of interactions (communication, relationships, behavior)” (Bulakh, 2004: 211). Adolescence is an important stage in personal development. The final formation of their own character, choice of values, priorities and ideology of life, finding a style of interaction with others for a harmonious entry into adulthood take place by the young people. Such self-changes are possible in the presence of the following qualities: responsibility, activity, initiative, perseverance, creativity, readiness to self-change, etc. The key component of these qualities is independence, which allows young people to easily adapt to the information space, independently analyze and process the information, navigate the news flow, overcome difficulties and be creative in solving problems in today's dynamic world.

The explanatory dictionaries of psychological terms determine the concept of "independence" as “volitional property of the individual, which is manifested in the ability to systematize, plan, regulate and actively realize their activities without assistance from the outside” (Platonov, 1984: 212). Also Ju. Prykhodko sees in “independence” volitional quality, which consists in the ability of a person not to be influenced by various factors that can distract from achieving the goal, to critically evaluate the advice and suggestions of others, to act on the basis of their own views and beliefs; ability to self-affirmation, self-control, self-regulation, and responsibility for their own life” (Prykhodko, 2012: 164). S. Golovin considers "independence" as "a generalized property of the individual, which is manifested in initiative, critical thinking, adequate self-esteem and a sense of personal responsibility for their activities and behavior" (Golovin, 1998: 659). So, as we can see, the researchers emphasize on the volitional properties of the individual when they research independence. It is expressed in behaviour as purposeful actions aimed at achieving results, the ability to independently plan their activities without relying on the help of others, also, in the stability of their own personality, in self-control and, responsibility for their own lives.

Independent autonomous personality, according to O. Dergacheva (Dergacheva, 2005), is characterized by an active life position, a sense of freedom, a high level of self-esteem and confidence, spontaneity. The researcher considers independence as a component of personal self-regulation in the field of motivation. She also notes that it is a person's ability to be himself, to know what this person wants and how he could be able to realize it. Detection of personal autonomy is seen as an indicator of personal health and mental resilience, and the absence of independence can lead to mental disorders of a person.

Various scholars (Bozhovich, 2009; Kon, 1992; Prichozhan, 2007), who is studying adolescence, believe that this age stage is the richest in terms of personality development. It means that adolescence is characterized by the largest number of qualitative psychological growths and the vast majority of them relate to the phenomenon of independence. I. Kon (Kon, 1992) associates independence with freedom and defines two dimensions of it: objective and subjective. Objective dimension on the freedom is an awareness of the one's independence, freedom from external coercion, the right to make one's own choices. Subjective dimension is an ability to use this right to make these choices, the presence of the will, determination and perseverance in a young person. I.

Kon believes that a truly independent person is able to build their own goals, independent of others, is able and willing to live with his mind, can defend himself and his beliefs.

According to E. Erickson (Erikson, 2008) adolescence occurs during the fifth stage of human psychosocial development. The conflict of identity or confusion of roles resolves at this stage. The goal for teenagers at that period of time is to integrate various roles, such as their place in society, family, etc. into a holistic identity. This integration is important for the realization of their own independence and awareness of their abilities as an integral person. This process is successful in those adolescents whose parents help them develop trust, independence, competence. These children have a high chance of realizing their own individuality. If the integration did not happen and the adolescent is unable to acknowledge these several roles with the opposite value system in his personality, there is a diffusion of identity appears, which is manifested in infantile behavior and leads to the inability to figure out personal self-determination.

Adolescence is called transitional precisely because at this stage of personal development there is a transition from childhood to a new stage of mental development happens. This transition is intended to prepare the child for independent adult life. Becoming an adolescent, child must to learn to organize it owns activities, be able to control own behavior and, to be responsible for it, also, to be independent in everyday life. L. Bozhovich (Bozhovich, 2009) paid a lot of attention to the formation of an adolescent independence. According to the scientist, internal processes that allow to form relatively independent and stable views, assessments in relation to themselves and others before the formation of youth, are starts in adolescence. During this period of development that adolescents' judgments about themselves become more independent. They are based on the analysis of their behavior and activities. Children of this age are already capable of self-education and self-improvement. This age period, according to the scientist, is the stage of the most significant shift from the orientation of evaluation of others to the orientation on the self-esteem. This is possible because personality traits of the adolescent, such as the desire for independence, freedom, self-education, etc. are already established.

A similar opinion holds also O. Osnitsky (Osnitsky, 2010), who believes that in adolescence comes the ability to self-education, self-learning and awareness of the way to achieve the goal. At this age, independence becomes conscious and controlled. During this period the child becomes "the master of his deeds and actions", because in earlier age the child, seeking his own, acted impulsively, not realizing the advantages of some efforts over others, seeking only the result. The scientist also believes that in the independent behavior of adolescents the most important role is played by goals - they are the true regulator of human activity. After all, the fact of goals' formation is a motivating factor for their further implementation. Also, an important factor in the formation of independence is self-esteem. And the teenager relies on his self-esteem before he starts to act. His self-esteem helps him to decide whether this activity is possible or not.

Various scholars consider independence as a central neoplasm of adolescent mental development. Thus, O. Bedlinsky (Bedlinsky, 2011) is of the opinion that the leading activity in adolescents is the testing of a conscious level of arbitrariness in the form of autonomous social behavior. He emphasizes that the central neoplasm of the adolescent psyche is the need to "be and seem adult" based on conscious autonomous action. Ju. Soshina (Soshina, 2016) came to the conclusion that awareness of one's own level of adulthood and formation of worldview is a new formation of adolescence. G. Prigin (Prigin, 2009) also believes that independence is a central

neoplasm of the adolescent psyche. The scientist considers the studied phenomenon as a symptom complex of personal qualities that are formed in the activities of the adolescent and allows him to achieve the desired results without assistance. These qualities are: persistence, responsibility, concentration, self-control, reflection, ability to plan activities, to analyze, self-criticism, and so on.

Investigating the process of independence in adolescents, D. Elkonin (Elkonin, 1989) considers the concept of "adulthood" as a specific form of self-awareness in adolescence. The researcher identifies two types of children's adulthood: socio-moral and intellectual. Socio-moral adulthood is expressed in the relationship with adults and friends and is manifested in the presence of the adolescent's own views, assessments, judgments and moral and ethical ideas. Intellectual adulthood is manifested in the desire for self-education, in romantic relationships with another person, in a personal appearance and behavior as an adult. So, we can say that adolescent behavior is the result of imitation of adults.

I. Kon (Kon, 1992) includes in the concept of "independence" three interrelated qualities: autonomy, as the ability to make decisions without the need for a hint; responsibility, to be ready to be responsible for the consequences of own actions; confidence in the social possibility and moral correctness of such behavior. According to the scientist, all these qualities are formed by the whole lifestyle, which motivates a person from early childhood to perform actions and take responsibility for them. The researcher believes that the growth of independence depends on the level of development of adolescent self-awareness, awareness of the stability of self-identity, which are associated with the level of intelligence.

According to the views of L. Labinska (Labinska, 2016), it is very important for adolescents to complete the work on their own without outside help, because in this case, adolescents develop an adequate level of demands, self-belief and strength.

Studying the manifestations of adolescent independence, D. Badmayeva (Badmayeva, 2004) found the influence of individual psychological qualities of personality on the peculiarities of the manifestation of the studied phenomenon. She identified the factors that contribute to increasing the level of independence. These factors are the motivation to succeed, high self-esteem, a high degree of meaningfulness of life, low personal anxiety, a high level of subjective control.

Of course, not all adolescents have the above-mentioned personal qualities and conditions, so a number of researchers note the difficulties with the formation of the studied personal phenomenon in adolescents. Thus, O. Osnitsky (Osnitsky, 2010) notes changes in the behavior of adolescents, manifested in a decrease in independence and self-confidence and a parallel increase in criticality in assessments. According to the author of psychological training with adolescents L. Ann (Ann, 2007), the main problem of modern adolescents are passivity and lack of initiative.

During adolescence, the foundations of emotional resilience and balance so much needed in adulthood are laid. However, it is known that there are many stressors that affect the emotional state of the adolescent and cause increased anxiety. In our study, we determined that the phenomenon of independence consists of 4 components, namely: cognitive, behavioral, motivational-value and emotional. In this article, we will explore the level of development of the emotional component of independence of modern adolescents.

Based on the analysis of the theoretical literature on this issue, we determined that the emotional component of independence consists of the following personal characteristics: emotional

resilience for rational decision-making, high self-esteem for self-belief, low anxiety and frustration to reduce anxiety when adolescents make their choices and effectively overcome stressful situations.

Methodology

To achieve the goal of our research we used theoretical (analysis and generalization of socio-psychological and psychological-pedagogical literature on the research topic), psychodiagnostic and mathematical-statistical (quantitative and qualitative analysis of statistical results) methods. To study the level of development of the emotional component in the structure of independence, we chose the method of determining the level of self-esteem T. Dembo-S. Rubinstein in the modification of A. Prikhozhan (Prikhozhan, 2007), which allows exploring the special aspects of self-esteem using 7 scales - health, character, intellectual abilities, talent, authority among classmates, appearance, self-confidence. Each scale determines the level of self-esteem, the level of claims, as well as calculates the differences between them.

In order to investigate the level of anxiety in adolescents, we chose the "Anxiety Scale" by J. Taylor (Lemak, 2012), which includes 30 questions aimed at identifying 3 types of anxiety: school, self-esteem and interpersonal. In this method we used a form with 30 statements, on which each adolescent is asked to choose the degree of concern they cause: 0 - anxiety is noticeable, 1 - a little, 2 - enough, 3 - significantly, 4 - very much.

The study was conducted in 2019-2020 in secondary schools in Kyiv (Ukraine). The total sample of this study were 296 adolescent students in age range 11 to 15. Of the total number of participants 159 (53,72%) were male and 137 (46,28%) were female. All the participants were in grade 6-9.

Stages of empirical research:

1. Analysis of psychological research of the emotional component of independence, substantiation of its indicators and selection of diagnostic methods for the purpose of their empirical research.
2. Experimental study of the level of development of adolescent self-esteem and features of anxiety as indicators of the emotional component of independence.
3. Quantitative and qualitative analysis of the obtained data on the peculiarities of the development of the emotional component of independence.

Results and Discussion

In our article, we decided to investigate the level of development of the emotional component of independence by modern adolescents. The criteria for this component are the adolescent's self-esteem and level of anxiety. To study the first criterion of the emotional component in the structure of adolescent independence, we chose the method of studying self-esteem T. Dembo-S. Rubinstein (modification A. Prikhozhan), which defines 4 levels of self-esteem: low, medium, high and very high. Figure 1 shows the results we got.

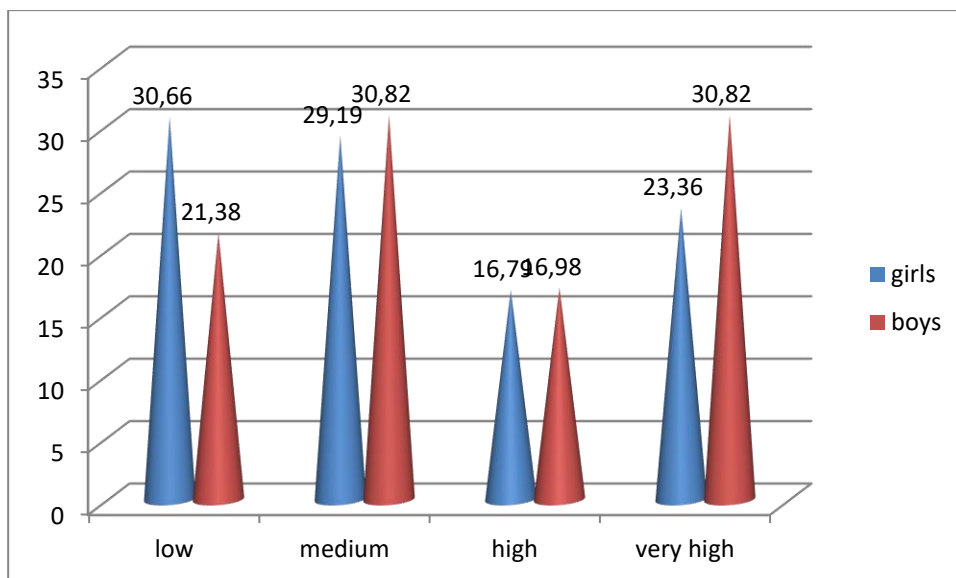


Figure 1 Determination the level of self-esteem of adolescents according to the method of Dembo-Rubinstein, in%

From Figure 1 we can see that the level of self-esteem of girls has the highest values at low (30.66%) and medium (29.18%) levels. This means that adolescent girls have self-depreciation, suffer from inferiority complex and need moral support and correctional work to increase their self-esteem and self-confidence. The self-esteem of adolescent boys reaches its highest level at medium and very high levels (30.82% each level). We can explain this difference in the gender context by the fact that boys are encouraged from an early age to achieve, decisive actions, they are taught to be confident and active, to believe in themselves. Girls are on the other pole of character building - they are more cared for, parents more often rush to help them, trying to support their little girls, thus raising dependence, insecurity, resulting in self-doubt and inability to accept and overcome life's challenges.

Studying the self-esteem of adolescents, we also decided to trace the level of their demands and obtained the following data (Fig. 2).

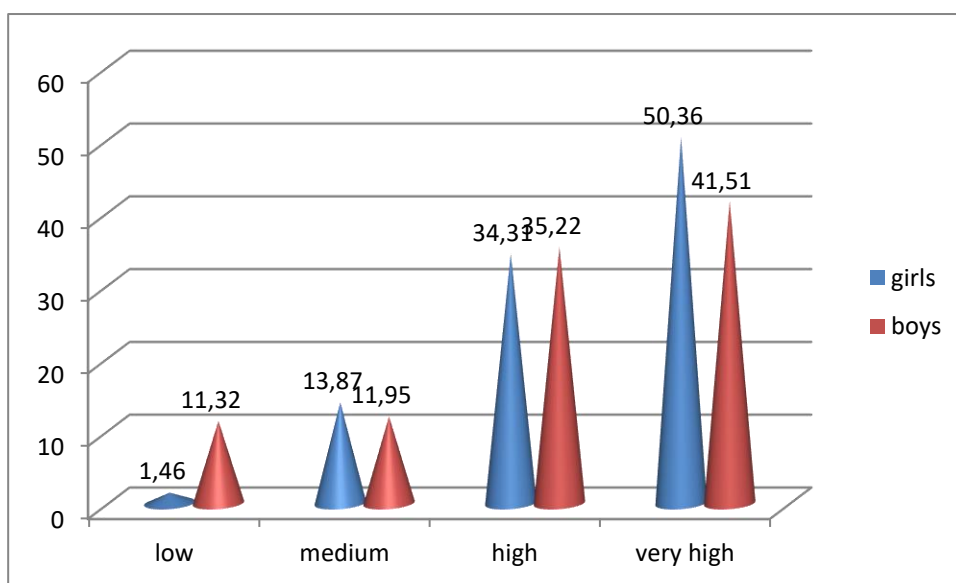


Figure 2 Determining the level of claims of modern adolescents by the method of Dembo-Rubinstein, in%

As can be seen from Figure 2 modern adolescents have a very high level of achievement (50.36% for girls, 41.51% for boys). Thus, we can assume that girls with low and medium values on the self-esteem scale will not be able to overcome this gap and reach a very high level they want, which may lead to depression, disillusion and frustration.

Calculating the differences between the self-esteem of adolescents and the level of their demands, we can see the confirmation of our assumption (Fig. 3).

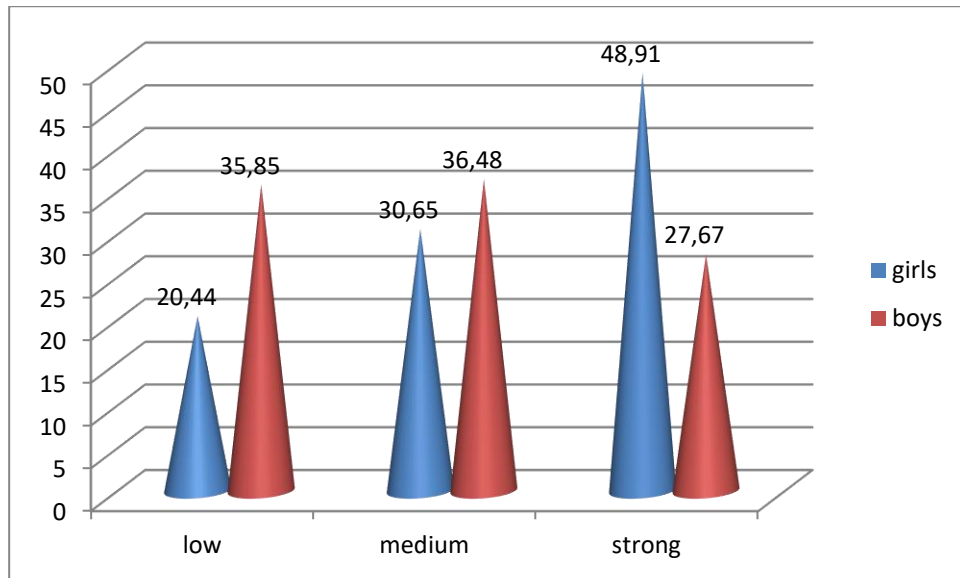


Figure 3 Differences between the level of self-esteem and the level of demands of adolescents, in%

According to Figure 3 almost half of the girls (48.91%) have strong differences between the level of self-esteem and its desired degree, which makes it impossible to achieve the desired state of health. The data obtained mean that girls without outside help will not be able to overcome the obstacles that arise in their way to achieve high self-esteem, so there may be severe frustration and depression, which can lead to apathy and inaction. Boys have low (35.85%) and medium (36.48%) levels of differences between self-esteem and their demands. Thus, we assume that boys, having a very high self-esteem, do not try to make every effort for their personal development, because they feel confident and omnipotent. We think that boys' self-confidence and lack of desire to develop personal qualities and intentions can negatively affect their relationships with others, because boys are convinced that they have reached the maximum in their personal growth and they no longer need to strive for better results, that means, boys do not feel the need for self-development.

Also, in the study of adolescent self-esteem, we consider it is necessary to explore in more detail such a personality trait as confidence. It is known that this quality is a measure of one's own skills and abilities, as sufficient to achieve goals and reduction needs. Thus, on the scale "Confidence" of the method of studying self-esteem T. Dembo-S. Rubinstein, we obtained the following results (Table 1).

Class	Gender	Levels of development			
		low	medium	high	very high
6 class	girls	23,91	21,74	13,04	41,31
	boys	17,07	12,2	14,63	56,1
7 class	girls	21,88	18,75	12,5	46,87

	boys	10,64	21,28	17,02	51,06
8 class	girls	15,91	9,09	11,36	63,64
	boys	13,73	9,8	13,73	62,74
9 class	girls	52,95	5,88	5,88	35,29
	boys	22,22	27,78	16,67	33,33

Table 1 Determination of the level of adolescent self-confidence by the method of Dembo-Rubinstein, in%

Thus, analyzing the above data, we can see that during adolescence, children are inherent in the vast majority of a very high level of self-confidence. We see its gradual growth from 6th to 8th grade. Girls at the beginning of adolescence have a very high level of confidence reaching 41.31%, then in the 7th grade it rises to 46.87%, and reaches its maximum in the 8th grade - 63.64%. As for the boys, we can see that there is an almost similar situation - in the 6th grade a very high level of confidence is at the level of 56.1%, in the 7th grade there is a slight fluctuation to 51.06%, and in the 8th grade we trace the maximum point of confidence at the high level in the value of 62.74%. In the 9th grade, both girls and boys have a significant decrease in self-confidence, namely - by girls this figure decreases by almost a third (28.35%) and reaches 35.29%; by boys, this figure also drops by 29.41% and is 33.33% at the end of adolescence. Thus, we can state a significant decrease in self-confidence at the age when there is a transition from adolescence to youth. In our opinion, this is because adolescents on the verge of entering adulthood are beginning to understand the irreversibility of this process and have certain fears about realizing all the responsibility for the effectiveness of their own lives. The data we received give us a cause for concern, because people with low confidence cannot feel full and self-sufficient person, because confidence is the basis of success in life, and its absence can lead to self-destruction due to self-doubt.

We also chose the J. Taylor Anxiety Scale to study the emotional sphere of modern adolescents, which helps us analyze the degree of anxiety that is inherent in adolescents. The results of the research we received are presented in Figure 4.

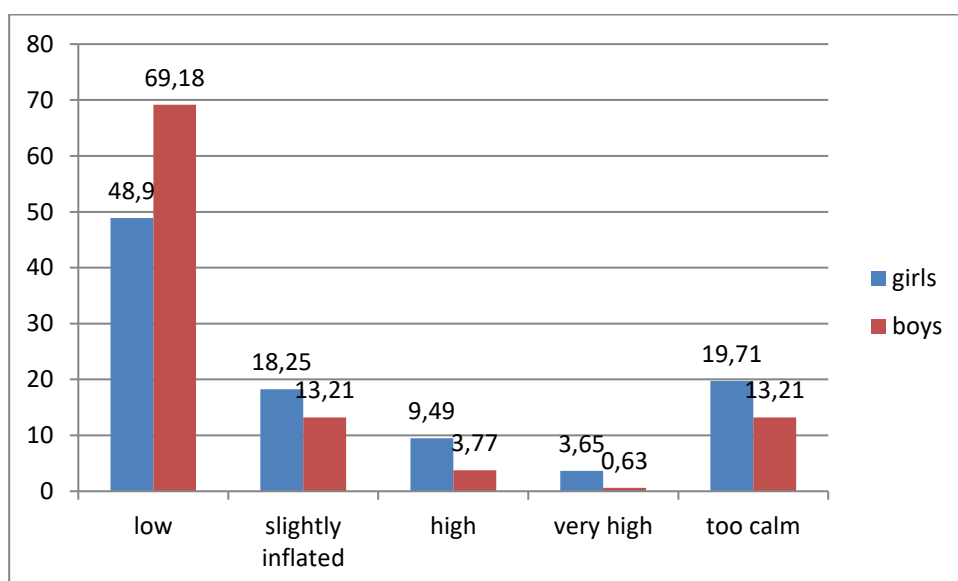


Figure 4 Study of the level of anxiety of modern adolescents according to the method of J. Taylor, in%

According to the above data, we can see that adolescents have a low level of anxiety - 48.9% of girls and 69.18% of boys. According to researcher A. Prikhozhan (Prikhozhan, 2007), anxiety is an experience of emotional discomfort, which is associated with the expectation of a threat. Thus, the data obtained by us indicate that adolescents do not expect a threat from the outside, feel free and confident, or during the survey there were such protective mechanisms as displacement or resistance. We are also concerned that 19.71% of girls and 13.21% of boys, according to our research, feel too calm. This may mean that this group of adolescents is passive, has no feelings about their own personal development and just goes with the flow. Manifestations of depressive and apathetic states are also possible, which require corrective action by appropriate specialists.

Conclusions

So, having studied the level of development of the emotional component in the structure of adolescent independence, we came to the following conclusions:

- The theoretical literature on the studied phenomenon has allowed us to conclude that the emotional component of adolescent independence consists of the following personal characteristics: emotional resilience for rational decision-making, high self-esteem for self-belief, low anxiety and frustration to reduce anxiety when adolescents make their choices and effectively overcome stressful situations.

- More than half of the surveyed girls (59.85%) have low and medium development of self-esteem, which can lead to dependence on other people's opinions, self-doubt, inability to overcome the challenges of fate, depression and apathy. But we should also notice that more than half of girls (50.36%) tend to have high self-esteem level. It's clear that girls singly will not be able to overcome from low to high level and reach all the personal qualities they need and want, which may lead to disillusion and frustration. Boys' self-esteem is at medium and very high levels (61.64%). Due to this, boys do not have a high level of demands for personal growth, as they believe that they have already reached the peak of their development, which can have a negative impact on relationships with others and inhibit their further personal growth. In our opinion, the difference in the self-esteem of boys and girls lies in a family upbringing. At a time when boys are taught to be active, determined, courageous, cultivate the desire to achieve their goals, to go to the victory, to be the first, etc., girls are more often offered help and support by their parents, even when they do not need it.

- During adolescence, there is a fairly high level of confidence, which falls sharply at the end of adolescence and, thus, complicates the process of transition to youth, because confidence is the property that helps us overcome difficulties, resist negative influences, defend our point of view and so on. In our opinion, because yesterday's students suddenly realize that they have to rely only on themselves in solving life's problems and it can't help but scare.

- The predominance of low levels of anxiety in adolescents was found, which may indicate both the comfortable conditions of upbringing in the family circle and school, as well as the presence of protective mechanisms and reluctance to talk about this topic. It was also found that a significant number of adolescents (19.71% girls and 13.21% boys) are too passive about their own self-development. They don't want to do anything, just relax and go with the flow. That can lead to manifestations of depressive and apathetic states.

Thus, analyzing the criteria of the emotional component of independence, we concluded that there is a need for psychological education among adolescents with elements of training to develop and maintain positive self-esteem and confidence as basic elements of further personal development.

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