

Concerning Investigation of the Cultural Dyssynchrony of the Mental Development of Intellectually Gifted Teenagers

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Abstract: In the 21st century, the study of the culture impact on the mental development of a person is topical like never before. However, the cultural-psychological aspect of the personality formation is underinvestigated in the psychological science and practice. This is particularly so with the studies relating to the gifted teenagers. The gap in this area shall be filled with this study during which a set of psycho-diagnostic procedures was developed that also includes the author's culturally-oriented questionnaire by V. V. Potapova. Totally, 412 teenagers were diagnosed. The performed research study of impact of culture including the ethnic culture on the mental development of the intellectually gifted teenagers was described. The ambivalent nature of this impact is emphasized: from socialization and mental regulation to neurotization of a personality. The scientific definition of the cultural dyssynchrony of the mental development and its types is marginal, mono-cultural, deep. Culture is considered as the determining sphere of the human life. The theoretical analysis of the scientific literature on the subject of the culture impact on the personality was performed.

Key words: Cultural dyssynchrony, mental development, culture, adolescence, intellectual giftedness

INTRODUCTION

The dynamics of the modern cultural-psychological processes exercises significant and controversial impact on the mental development of a personality. The objectives of the cultural and social-psychological transformations of the modern world with respect to teenagers representing different cultures consist in the necessity of recognizing and considering culture as the set of exclusive impact exercising ultimate effect on formation of the psychic features of a personality (Vygotsky, 2002; Sukharev, 1996; Druzhinin, 2000; Babayeva, 2000; Anastasi, 2001; Matsumoto, 2005; Jung, 1996, 2001). Life of a personality in the human world is saturated with culture. Thus, realization of the capabilities, motivation, needs, will and personal features is 'riddled' with cultural impact. A personality is simultaneously not only a culture carrier but the consumer and creator of it as well. Culture in its turn, allows not only releasing mental strain of a personality but fighting against it constantly. A gifted teenagers more sensitively responses to the changes in the world around which is determined by a number of significant circumstances; the particular role of culture in its impact on a personality in all of its aspects, age peculiarities, unevenness of mental development of an intellectually gifted personality, its particular sensitivity to nuances of the surrounding reality.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Within the working concept giftedness is considered as a 'systemic mental feature developing all life long that determines the possibility of achieving by a person of (extraordinary) results in one or a few kinds of activity as compared to other people (Babayeva, 2000; Bogoyavlenskaya, 2003).

Within the structure of general aptitudes intellectual giftedness is considered as the mental feature of a whole individual (Babayeva, 2000). In the concept of dyssynchrony of mental development of intellectually gifted the term 'giftedness' is considered as potential onset of unevenness of the mental development of a personality. Dyssynchrony of mental development of intellectually gifted teenagers is expressed in 'inconsistent state of the systems of interrelated psychic phenomena, imbalance of the cognitive, emotional, somatic and other components of mental development (Sibgatullina, 1998, 2001).

The culture-dependent dyssynchrony of mental development is considered in the studies by Potapova (2007a). The phenomenon of dyssynchrony, unevenness of the mental development, i.e., cultural dyssynchrony of functioning of mental processes is presented in the indicator units; personal, cultural, cultural-psychosomatic, cultural-geographical, intellectual ones.

Culture as the environment nourishing and raising a personality, i.e., the specifics of the cultural impact on a personality is represented in the studies by P.A. Florensky (Rozin, 2001). Conceptually, the cultural impact on the mental development of a personality was reflected in the theory of determination of the personal development and the personal approach to investigation thereof (Rubinstein, 1973), in the study of the development of higher mental functions during the process of mastering of cultural values by an individual (Vygotsky, 2002) and the dynamic theories of giftedness (Babayeva, 2000; Bogoyavlenskaya, 2003).

Dealing with the issue of a subject of culture of psychology, Bayanova (2009, 2011, 2012) interprets culture as the system of common situations with which a subject interacts. Today, culture rapidly becomes one of the most important and essential issues of psychology (Matsumoto, 2005), features the nature of a functional phenomenon (Mezhuyev, 1995). In the research studies, the non-uniform nature of understanding culture is also emphasized (V.I., Silbermann, V.I., Mezhyev) and along with that its main value, understanding of the alien and own culture (Rozin, 2001).

However in the science, there are still a number of unanswered significant questions concerning the impact of culture that it exerts on the mental development of an intellectually gifted person. The heart of reasoning on this issue are the ideas of giftedness as a systemic mental feature developing all life long; of determination of culture and mental development of gifted people; of culture as the power featuring not only a social but a deep personal meaning to a gifted person; of the cultural dependence of cultural dyssynchrony of intellectually gifted teenagers.

As the result of the study in which culture is represented as the determining sphere of the human life and the factor of ultimate effect on all of its components the definition of cultural dyssynchrony is provided that is considered as the topographic model of the personal and culture-dependent indicators; the forms of cultural dyssynchrony have been considered (marginal, mono-cultural, deep); the functional grounds (ethnic-differentiating, ethnic-integrating, ethnic-transcendent) have been specified; the criteria have been identified: socio-cultural, anthropo-biological, climate-geographic, sedentism (allochtones, autochtones) (Potapova, 2007a, b, 2013).

The grounds of the ethnic function of culture as the ethnic-culturally determined ethnic-integrating and ethnic-differentiating personal image of the world were analyzed from the perspective of the scientific views of Bromley (1983) and Sukharev (1996). The main theoretical

provisions concerning the essence of a human and features of his development within the ethnic-cultural paradigm confirm the role of the ethnic function of culture in the mental development of intellectually gifted teenagers (Khotinets, 1995). While thinking of non-equilibrium states and forecasts of the cultural-psychological future we relied on the research by Kapina (2003); of the world-view and self-identification of teenagers within the global world context on the research by Nekhoroshkov and Akhmetzyanova (2014).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The overall picture of the study by Potapova (2007a, b, 2013) is determined by correlation relationships between the emotional-vegetative (mood background, anxiety, fears), vegeto-somatic (sleep, appetite, tidiness) and vegeto-diencephalic manifestations (headache, fatigue), development of the psycho-motor sphere (motility, compulsive movements, pathological habits), behavior (cultural, marginal, etc.), development of cognitive processes (memory, attention, thinking). At that, the indicators of the school success significantly correlate to the indicators of the memory development and vegeto-diencephalic manifestations of a gifted person.

In the group of aboriginal inhabitants of Tatarstan being considered there were identified strong correlations between the indicators of the cultural unit: markers of ethnic culture and ethnically determined feelings. In the resettlers subgroup, this indicator unit is correlation-passive which is explained by the unemotional attitude of the gifted people to manifestations of the ethnic culture in the everyday life and by moving to the new cultural conditions (Potapova, 2007a). Development of the emotional intelligence on the basis of the sustainable cultural patterns is topical to the mental development of a gifted personality (Fedorenko and Potapova, 2014).

Hypothesis of the unique architecture of cultural dyssynchrony of mental development of gifted persons has been confirmed during the empiric study performed and the 5 year long longitudinal experiment. The study involved 412 persons at the age 11-17 year (aboriginal inhabitants, 83 persons, resettlers, 329 persons; representatives of the ethnic groups; the Arabs, Armenian, Afghans, Vietnamese, Georgians, Russians, Tatars, Ukrainians, Chechens) representing different cultures. The main sample consisted of the intellectually gifted teenagers from the Kazan general education schools and gymnasias.

The correlation between the ethno-cultural unit of the representatives under investigation and the personal,

Table 1: The correlation analysis

Correlative pair	Rank value in the longitudinal experiment	Correlation of the indicator units
39-44	0.78	II-III
39-45	0.55	II-III
39-48	0.89	II-III
39-51	-0.54	II-III
39-61	0.67	II-IV
40-38	0.67	II-I
40-51	0.56	II-III
41-1	-0.56	II-I
42-1	0.65	II-I

Analyzed by representatives: 1: school anxiety; 38, behavioral coping-strategies; 39, markers of ethnic culture in a family; 40, ethnically-determined feelings; 41, source of education; 42, attitude to the ethnic culture; 44, exhaustion; 45, stomach complaints; 48, pressure complaints (one of the test scales representing the total of the psychosomatic deviations); 51, vegeto-diencephalic manifestations; 61; school successfulness. Indicator units: I, personal; II, cultural; III, cultural-somatic; IV, intellectual

psychosomatic and intellectual units has been established. Indicators of markers of the ethnic culture in the family affect the psychosomatic health of intellectually gifted teenagers (Table 1).

Summary: The requirement to the school successfulness determined by culture does not solve the issue of the full implementation of the intellectual giftedness of a teenager: monocultural or deep dyssynchrony may be the cause of disturbance of synchrony and harmony of the mental development. However, disregard of the potential positive effect of impact of the ethnic function of culture on the mental development of a gifted person may cause development of the marginal cultural dyssynchrony.

Culture affects the nature and content of dyssynchrony of mental development of a gifted person. This impact may be of both negative, i.e., enhancing the dyssynchrony duration and intensity and expressed in neurotization and positive reducing the dyssynchrony duration and intensity, facilitating the mental regulation, socialization of a personality, solving the issues of some psychosomatic disorders nature.

CONCLUSION

In the study of the cultural dyssynchrony of mental development of intellectually gifted teenagers, the debating points of the psychological sciences have been touched on that relate to investigation of 'special' children and teenagers. In the light of the modern cultural and migration processes, the results obtained gain particular importance to the psychological science and practice.

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