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SCIENTIFIC DISCOURSE ON THE CATEGORIES OF “MATURITY” AND “PSYCHOLOGICAL MATURITY” OF PERSONALITY

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Abstract. The article deals with the theoretical and methodological aspects of the concepts of “maturity” and “psychological maturity” of a personality. Russian and international researchers’ psychological approaches and views on various aspects of the category “maturity” are scientifically substantiated. Interim conclusion of the study: the definition of personal “maturity” has not been fully clarified to date and requires further scientific and applied research. The concept of “psychological maturity” is reflected in the context of both ontogeny and socialization. Based on existing scientific views, the psychological components of a mature personality are defined. Psychological approaches to studying mature and psychologically mature individuals are analyzed, drawing a parallel between human and psychological maturity. This analysis systematizes the characteristics of a psychologically mature person from a humanistic perspective and presents different levels of psychological maturity. The paper also states that personal maturity is reflected in activity motives, social competence, a high level of responsibility, and a positive attitude toward society.

Keywords: *maturity, psychological maturity, personality, maturation, approaches to understanding maturity, concepts, ontogeny, socialization, characteristics of a mature person, stages of psychological maturity, approaches, characteristics of a psychologically mature person*

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In recent decades, science has paid special attention to the problem of personal maturity [1–4]. As people become more and more interested in themselves, interpersonal relationships become more complex, and as modern life becomes faster and faster, there is an increasing risk that psychologically underdeveloped people will not have the knowledge and skills to cope with life’s difficulties on their own. An analysis of the scientific literature on the psychological maturity problem shows that international researchers and Russian scientists have sufficient experience with this definition [5, 6].

When we discuss the concept of “maturity” scientifically, it is important in the first place to define the methodological approaches that reveal the essence of this category. In psychological science, maturity is usually considered a stage of human development representing the longest and most productive phase of activity [7]. This stage is determined by the end of adolescence and the beginning of adulthood. Moreover, maturity is generally considered an

integral aspect of personality that combines certain characteristics and enables effective problem-solving and harmonious interaction with the environment and oneself.

It should be noted that our study will focus on maturity as a personality trait. Therefore, the first methodological approach will reflect the concept of maturity as a temporal guideline of human development, and the second approach will serve as a basis for scientific considerations.

A psychological approach to human development from the perspective of ontogeny allows us to state that the concept of “maturity” encompasses the development of each of the structural components of the psyche: emotional, intellectual, moral, social, and biological. In this regard, we can assume that the formation of personal maturity occurs through social, biological, intellectual, moral, and emotional development. This is proved by the scientific views of national and international psychologists on the problem of personal maturity.

Thus, we refer to the works of K. A. Abulkhanova [8], who defines it as the ability to consider one’s personality type and abilities while trying to solve life tasks. According to Abulkhanova, only people with a mature attitude can consider their efforts from the point of view of what is important and what is not. In such cases, truly mature people can self-regulate. Abulchanova also highlights another remarkable feature of maturity, namely the ability to determine and predict the course of a life event and apply various interpersonal interactions. Clearly, the category of maturity based on these criteria represents the highest level of a person’s life achievement.

A. Maslow’s concept of maturity focuses on the capacity for self-actualization [9]. He emphasizes that a mature person is able to distinguish between the “I” and the “non-I,” which is evidence of authenticity and self-actualization [9]. As a result, a mature person is less susceptible to the influences of the social environment and has greater freedom for self-expression and independence in his or her behavior.

B.G. Ananyev identified six types of maturity, including general somatic, sexual, mental, civic, personal, and labor maturity [10]. Biological criteria determine general somatic and sexual maturity, while mental maturity reflects a person’s intellectual development. Civic maturity is achieved when a person attains legal capacity, while labor maturity encompasses physical and mental development. Personal maturity, on the other hand, is influenced by the social and economic structures of society, as well as by traditions and national aspects.

It is also worth mentioning N.E. Kharlamenkova’s view on maturity as an indicator of personality formation [11]. She focuses on personal maturity in the context of self-control, where a mature person is able to regulate spontaneity and impulsivity through internal motivation and volitional control functions. A.G. Lieders builds on Kharlamenkova’s views of personal maturity and extends them by arguing that it expands the boundaries of personality and enables the formation of new behavior patterns [12].

The above interpretations of the concept of “maturity” provide a basis for further understanding this scientific category. However, it is important to note

that the concept of Psychological Maturity is similarly complex and ambiguous [6, 13].

According to the psychological dictionary, Psychological Maturity is the opposite of immaturity and infantilism [14]. P.S. Gurevich explains that maturity is associated with managing one's needs and emotions, regulating one's feelings, and expressing one's attitude toward inappropriate actions or events. It also includes the ability to accept criticism, the autonomy of one's personality, determination, and a realistic assessment of the situation [14].

Personal evolution includes the development of various cognitive processes, such as thinking and speaking, as well as the conative and emotional-sensory areas, which eventually lead to the formation of consciousness. Consequently, the emergence and formation of psychological maturity take place [15].

For a more comprehensive understanding of the term “psychological maturity,” we should examine the conceptual approaches in the psychological literature.

It is important to note that the phenomenon of maturity is multidisciplinary and has been studied from the perspectives of philosophy, biology, psychology, and medicine. In this context, we focus on the psychological dimension of the scientific definition. The term “mature personality” was first introduced by A. Adler, who attributed altruism, self-sufficiency, and the capacity for cooperative activities to a mature personality [16].

Z. Freud, the founder of psychoanalysis, considered the psychologically mature personality as the ultimate goal of psychoanalytic therapy. According to Freud, a mature personality shows initiative and problem-solving skills, is able to deal with challenging situations, strives to improve work-related skills, shows altruism and caring for others, and can defer gratification [17].

K. Jung argued that a mature personality is able to take responsibility [18].

According to E. Erikson, a mature personality naturally passes through all stages of development and emerges as a product of social and intrapsychic events [19]. Thus, Erikson's approach emphasizes that psychological maturity presupposes the ability to recognize one's aspirations and desires, to implement them rationally, and to combine the motivational and emotional-volitional spheres.

As representatives of developmental psychology, E. Erikson, J. Lovinger, and G. Craig have also contributed to the study of maturity. The study of the development of personal characteristics in ontogenesis is of central importance [20].

E. Erikson's approach to studying psychological maturity as a part of personal development assumes that people can achieve psychological maturity only in old age. The essential element of maturity is the coherence and consistency of the personal inner world and social relationships [19]. As people mature, they exhibit new patterns of behavior characteristic of their particular stage of development.

According to E. Erikson, the presence and expression of a sense of identity is also an indicator of maturity. He believed a stable identity is necessary for

true personal maturity [19]. Other characteristics of a psychologically mature person are intimacy with developed autonomy, responsibility, and integrity [21]. By integrity, E. Erikson means achieving success through the following characteristics: Autonomy, strong will to achieve goals, competence, responsibility, individuality, and expression of love [22].

J. Levinger developed a theory of personal maturity that combines cognitive development and ego. The theory identifies several stages of personal maturity: presocial (in which attachment to significant adults is paramount); impulsive (characterized by extreme egoism and dependence on the opinions of others); self-protective (characterized by fear of punishment and manipulation for personal gain); conformist (unconditional acceptance of social rules); conscious (development of moral responsibility); autonomous (tolerance of the views of others and resolution of internal conflicts); integrative (understanding of Self and others) [1]. An essential aspect of this theory is that each stage builds on the previous one and allows the individual to develop new characteristics and skills. According to Levinger, only a small percentage of adults (less than 1%) are able to reach the final stages of development, and biological age is not necessarily a determining factor in this process.

In other words, maturity is determined by the development of an autonomous and independent personality, as well as the ability to become aware of and resolve inner conflicts, display authenticity, consistency, and integrity, and show tolerance and respect for others [10]

In addition, the issue of developing psychological maturity remains relevant from a humanistic perspective, especially with regard to mental health. A. Maslow, a proponent of humanistic psychology, shared this view. He believed that the higher a person climbs in the hierarchy of needs, the greater self-awareness he or she attains, leading to the manifestation of qualities and characteristics of a mentally healthy person. Therefore, humanistic psychology states that psychological maturity is associated with the fulfillment of the need for self-actualization [23]. A. Maslow identified several key characteristics that mature, self-actualizing people possess, including acceptance of reality, autonomy and openness, self-sufficiency, respect for others, empathy, the ability to build deep relationships, moral principles, humor, and creativity [9, 24].

Another perspective on the problems of development and formation of psychological maturity came from G. Allport, who focused on personality's general and individual concepts. Allport considered that personality is an open, self-developing system that reflects the characteristics and indicators of a healthy, psychologically mature person [25]. According to Allport, personality continues to develop throughout a person's life. A psychologically mature personality is qualitatively different from an immature personality and is characterized by autonomous, motivated processes of consciousness. In contrast, an immature personality is characterized by unconscious behavioral motives stemming from childhood experiences. Allport identified six key characteristics that a psychologically mature personality must possess. The first characteristic is an extension of the sense of Self. A person with an extended

sense of Self is well-rounded and pursues a variety of social activities, hobbies, and interests. The second characteristic is the ability warm relating of Self to others. Allport divides interpersonal relationships into two types: friendly intimacy and empathy. Friendship manifests itself in the ability to treat family and friends respectfully without feeling jealous or possessive. This trait manifests itself in friendship and goodwill toward others and includes being patient and accepting others' opinions and points of view. The third characteristic of a psychologically mature person is emotional security (self-acceptance), which is the ability to deal with negative life events calmly and without emotional breakdowns. This characteristic reflects the individual's ability to control his or her emotional states, as well as the ability to reckon with the opinions of others and to influence others with one's own.

The fourth characteristic denotes realistic perception, skills and assignments, and the ability to apply existing experience and adjust one's expectations. Mature people perceive things, phenomena, and other people as they are, not distorted by their fantasies. People with a healthy psyche have specific goals in life that they strive for.

The fifth characteristic of mature people is the ability to self-objectify – insight and humor. According to G. Allport, this characteristic includes the ability to recognize one's strengths and weaknesses. However, it is also important not to use humor for self-promotion or empty talk, as this can hinder personal growth.

A unified philosophy of life characterizes the sixth characteristic of a mature person. This means that the person has his or her own value system and can prioritize meaningful things, people, and activities. G. Allport believed that mature people should have a deeply rooted value system.

C. Rogers examined personal psychological maturity through the lens of self-concept [26]. He identified openness to new experiences, adaptability, and a desire for self-improvement as the most important characteristics of a mature personality. For C. Rogers, personality is valuable, unique, and central. The self-concept is a generalized perception of oneself that consists of organized beliefs and attitudes about oneself. A unique aspect of the self-concept is the formation of values that reflect fixed ideas about what is acceptable, meaningful, and important. The core essence of the self-concept is self-actualization.

Existential humanistic psychologists have also made significant contributions to the study of a psychologically mature personality. F. Perls, for example, believed that maturity is expressed in the adaptation of the environment to oneself and in the ability to self-regulate. He held that the formation of psychological maturity proceeds from the rejection of peer support and the realization of self-help. According to Perls, maturity occurs when individuals use their inner resources to eliminate the frustration and anxiety caused by the lack of support from others. A truly mature person must be autonomous and rely on his or her life experience [27].

Another psychologist, E. Fromm, held that a person's abilities and knowledge are shaped by his or her environment, education, and upbringing.

Fromm viewed psychological maturity as the ability to be self-actualized and productive, which he linked to the ability to love. In addition, Fromm believed that mature love meant caring for others, respecting their interests, and taking responsibility for them. Thus, according to Fromm, psychological maturity involves establishing and maintaining interpersonal relationships [28].

The concept of psychological maturity was first introduced in Russian psychology by N.I. Rybnikov [29]. He defined a mature personality as progressive, developing, and self-actualized in professional and other activities. Later, K.A. Abulkhanova-Slavskaya, D.A. Leontiev, and A.G. Asmolov associated a psychologically mature personality with vitality, the ability to shape life according to one's own ideas, and responsibility [8, 24, 26]. V.I. Slobodchikov and A.G. Asmolov particularly emphasize the importance of responsibility in connection with personal maturity [26, 30].

B.S. Bratus defines maturity as the ability to distinguish between ideal and real-life goals and attitudes [23]. L.I. Bozhovich equates personal maturity with independence [31].

G.S. Sukhobskaya refers to the ability to program one's own behavior, overcome difficulties, motivate oneself to achieve goals, analyze one's own activity, formulate conclusions, and be highly reflective as the main indicators of personal maturity. Therefore, the acmeological concept of A.L. Zhuravlev considers the "psychological maturity of a personality" from the point of view of moral development [32]. The authors of this direction consider psychological maturity as a category that includes the humanistic motivation of a personality, a set of norms, rules of behavior, protective behavior, and attitudes [30, 33, 34].

Based on the scientific understanding of the concept of "psychological maturity," stages of personality development are defined.

Thus, the level of psychological maturity should be developed through an adequate reflection of reality, the ability to focus on an object, retain and use information in memory, and logical and critical thinking.

Our study suggests cultivating psychological maturity by focusing on key factors such as emotional stability, emotional and affective maturity, appropriate responses to age and situational demands, maintenance of physical and psychological well-being, cognitive development, and the ability to experience pleasure and heightened states of enthusiasm.

The next level of maturity is personal and social maturity. A mature personality at this level possesses characteristics such as optimism, balance, an appropriate level of ambition, awareness of goals and one's desires, a high degree of self-control, benevolence, purposefulness, appreciation, and meaningful participation in the world.

The highest level of personal maturity is characterized by responsibility, spirituality, morality, and understanding of Self and others.

It is worth noting that the level of personal development correlates with socialization, and the criteria of maturity are manifested in social relationships, motivations, social competence, and activity. Moreover, a truly mature person

is characterized by high responsibility and a developed inner positive attitude towards society.

Thus, the scientific discussion of the concepts of “maturity” and “psychological maturity” of a personality has shown that this problem requires further scientific and applied research, possibly within the framework of interdisciplinary approaches.

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НАУЧНЫЙ ДИСКУРС КАТЕГОРИЙ «ЗРЕЛОСТЬ» И «ПСИХОЛОГИЧЕСКАЯ ЗРЕЛОСТЬ» ЛИЧНОСТИ

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Аннотация. Статья посвящена теоретико-методологическим аспектам рассмотрения понятий «зрелость» и «психологическая зрелость» личности. Научно обоснованы психологические подходы и взгляды отечественных и зарубежных исследователей на различные аспекты категории зрелости. Промежуточный вывод по проблеме исследования: на сегодняшний день дефиниция «зрелость» личности до конца не раскрыта и требует дальнейшего научного и прикладного изучения. Понятие «психологическая зрелость» отражено как в контексте онтогенеза, так и социализации. На основе существующих научных взглядов определены психологические составляющие зрелой личности. Проанализированы психологические подходы изучения зрелой и психологически зрелой личности. Проведена параллель становления зрелости человека и его психологической зрелости. С позиции гуманистического подхода систематизированы черты личности, характеризующие психологически зрелого человека. Доказана стадийность данной категории. Представлено уровневое становление психологической зрелости личности. Доказано, что зрелость личности проявляется в мотивах деятельности, социальной компетентности, активности, в высокой степени ответственности и в сформированных внутренних позитивных установках по отношению к обществу.

Ключевые слова: *зрелость, психологическая зрелость, личность, становление, подходы к пониманию зрелости, концепции, онтогенез, социализация, качества зрелой личности, уровни становления психологической зрелости, подходы, качества психологически зрелой личности*

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