

PSYCHOLOGICAL FEATURES OF IMPACT OF ADOLESCENT ANXIETY ON SELF-ESTEEM



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Abstract. The paper considers the notion of «self-esteem» and «anxiety» of an individual. It presents the results of an empirical study of anxiety impact on the formation of self-esteem in adolescence. The authors analysed the results of the conducted research using the techniques on determination of anxiety and self-esteem of an individual. Mathematical and statistical analysis of the data obtained was carried out in order to establish correlation between the indicators of techniques chosen. Comparative analysis of gender differences in displays of anxiety impact on self-esteem was conducted.

Keywords: *anxiety, worry, level of anxiety, self-esteem, level of self-esteem, level of aspirations, adolescence.*

Introduction

The problem of self-esteem formation of an adolescent occupies one of the most important places. Self-esteem consists of ability to assess oneself, strengths and capabilities to fulfil certain tasks and requirements of the surrounding environment.

Anxiety is one of the factors affecting the formation of self-esteem in adolescence. Adolescence is referred to as the complicated stage in human life. At this age, not only human physical, but also

mental development is finally formed. A high level of anxiety can prevent successful self-esteem formation.

A considerable amount of literature has been published on the problem of self-esteem and anxiety. However, these studies provided ambiguous conclusions about the features of correlation of adolescent anxiety and self-esteem. Insufficient study of this problem makes the current research relevant in this direction.

The **purpose** of this paper is to obtain data which will help to address these research gaps.

Analysis of the recent researches and publications.

A number of scholars, including L. Bozhovich, J. Bruner, H. Heckhausen, A. Leontiev, A. Lipkin, A. Luria, M. Skatkin, L. Vygotsky, and others, have reported on the concept of self-esteem of an individual. Scientists have tried to find out the features of formation and development of self-esteem of an individual, the influence of various factors on the formation of self-esteem, the correlation of self-esteem with various psychological peculiarities.

Many attempts have been made by scholars, including C. Erikson, W. Morgan, Yu. Pakhomov, Yu. Khanin, H. Eysenck, B. Vyatkin, Ch. Spielberger, N. Mahony, Ye. Sokolov, E. Eiedemiller, A. Zakharov and others, in particular, to investigate the phenomenon of adolescent anxiety as an emotional state.

According to B. Ananiev, self-esteem is one of the most complex and multifaceted component of self-consciousness (a complex process of indirect cognition of oneself, disclosed in time, associated with transition from unitary, situational images through the integration of similar situational images into a holistic entity – the concept of «Me», the direct expression of esteem by other individuals involved in the development of personality [8].

V. Stolin distinguished three levels in the development of self-consciousness: organic, individual and personality-based one. According to these levels, the author distinguishes between units of self-consciousness. At the level of organic self-consciousness, this unit has a sensory-perceptual nature. At the level of individual self-consciousness, this unit is a perceived esteem by others and an appropriate self-esteem, as well as age, gender and social identity. At the level of personality-based self-consciousness, this unit is a conflict of meaning, a collision in the act of one personal

quality with others, which brings to an individual the significance of personal qualities and signals it in the form of an emotional-value attitude to oneself [3].

O. Leontiev considers self-esteem as one of the essential conditions through which an individual becomes a personality. According to the scholar, self-esteem forms the need of an individual to meet the level requirements of others and to meet the level of personal esteems [6, p.117].

A. Zakharova considers self-esteem to be the central, nuclear entity of an individual through the prism of which all the lines of child's mental development are refracted and mediated, including the formation of personality and individuality. Self-esteem is analysed as a system entity, which is a component of self-consciousness [3].

D. Lewis (2002) defines anxiety as a form of neurotic reaction involving conditional fear. At the same time, the researcher distinguishes the «cohesive» anxiety caused by certain external objects and «generalised» caused by internal stimuli with long-term effect. B. Bosselman categorically asserts that the symptom of anxiety is identical to the reaction of fear.

D. Biron points out, reviewing the researches on anxiety, that psychologists often define this phenomenon as an emotional state with a generalised sense of fear. Researcher suggests other thoughts, according to which anxiety is referred not to the emotion of fear, but to the area of motivation, but does not report the reasons for opposing the emotional state and motivation. Scientist sees this phenomenon as an emotional state, which, of course, does not exclude the role of a motive prompting an action [1].

Ch. Spilberger distinguishes three different understandings of anxiety: as a passing state; as a complex process that includes the components of stress and threats; as a personal trait. Thus, stress generates anxiety [5, p.53].

L. Aftanas (2000) believes that anxiety is a personality trait that characterises the steady

degree of perception of threats to personal «Me» in different situations and the tendency to respond to them by increasing the state of anxiety.

Presenting main material

Self-esteem is the central component of the concept of «Me». Self-esteem is the centre of commitment, the value an individual gives to oneself in general and to particular components of personal individuality, activity, behaviour [14, p.307].

The first one who introduced the concept of «self-esteem» into the structure of personality was W. James, who began to study this phenomenon in 1892. He highlighted the dependence of self-esteem on the nature of relationship of an individual with other people. Such an approach was idealistic, since the communication of individuals was considered independently of its real basis – of practical activity [5].

The development of self-esteem takes place throughout the life of a person, and «the very landmarks for self-esteem, laid in childhood, support themselves during the life of a person, and it is very difficult to abandon them» [13, p.216].

The self-regulation of person's behaviour is carried out with self-esteem. Man in the process of communication constantly compares oneself with the «standard» and depending on these results, remains satisfied or dissatisfied with oneself. Self-esteem is not permanent, it varies according to circumstances. Adoption of new estimates may change the values of the previous ones. Self-esteem is an important way of self-regulation. Being formed in the process of activity, it has several stages and certain features:

(i) prognostic – reflects the stage of orientation in personal capabilities in future activities; its function – assessment by the subject of personal capabilities, defining the attitude towards them;

(ii) corrective or procedural – is displayed in the process of activity and is aimed at its correction depending on circumstances that arise; its function – assessment and correction of actions (behavioural acts) in their course;

(iii) retrospective – evaluation of results of activities; its function – assessment of results of activities, of achieved levels of development [4].

Anxiety is a so widespread phenomenon, having so many different shades, that it is difficult to find a unified explanation for it.

One of the earliest researchers of anxiety in the United States, Maurer identified this state as conditional fear, that is, fear caused not by the unconditional, but by conditional stimulus.

Anxiety is the result of the emergence or anticipation of frustration and the obligatory mechanism of mental stress. It is a signal indicating a violation of adaptation and activating adaptive mechanisms [9]. Consider anxiety as a quality of a person, closely related to resistance to stressful situations, as a form of adaptation of an organism in conditions of acute or chronic stress.

Thus, the terms «anxiety», «worry» are used to refer to relatively persistent individual differences in inclination of an individual to the feel this condition. In this case, anxiety means the personality trait. Anxiety, as a personality trait, or personality anxiety, is not displayed itself directly in behaviour. But its level can be determined on the basis of how often and how intensely states of anxiety appear in an individual [1].

Anxiety is distinguish as an emotional state and as a stable quality, personality trait or temperament [11, p.3].

In domestic psychology, anxiety is differentiated into two main types: personal and situational [11, p.87].

Personal anxiety is the readiness of a person to experience fear and anxiety over a wide range of subjectively significant phenomena. Personal anxiety is a basic personality trait, shaped and fixed in early childhood.

Situational anxiety is an indicator of the intensity of emotions that arise in relation to typical events. It can be displayed in different people in a variety of situations, and in some people it is displayed clearly, but in others it is not displayed at all [10].

Research Methods

The *aim of the research* is to determine the effect of anxiety on self-esteem of an individual. *Participants*: 57 adolescence, 13-14 years old. *Techniques used*: 1. method on determining the level of self-esteem after Dembo-Rubinstein; 2. method on determining the level of self-esteem after G. Kazantseva; 3. method on determining the level of self-esteem after S. Budassi; 4. anxiety scale after J. Taylor; 5. anxiety scale after A. Pryhozhan;

6. social-situational anxiety scale after O. Kondash.

Having conducted empirical research, we received the following results:

1. method on determining the level of self-esteem after Dembo-Rubinstein:

– aspiration by levels: low – in 13 (23%) students; average – in 20 (35%) students; high – in 21 (37%) students; very high – in 3 (5%) students.

– self-esteem by levels: low – in 15 (26%) students; average – in 20 (35%) students; high – in 19 (34%) students; very high – in 3 (5%) students.

After statistical data processing, we found that inter-gender differences in the level of self-esteem were not statistically significant. Having calculated the Student's T-criterion of inter-gender differences after the indicators of this method, we obtained the indicator at the significance level $P > 0.05$, which means that there were no significant differences between male and female groups. Consequently, according to the results of this method application, the high level of aspirations and the low level of self-esteem prevail among the students (see Figure 1).

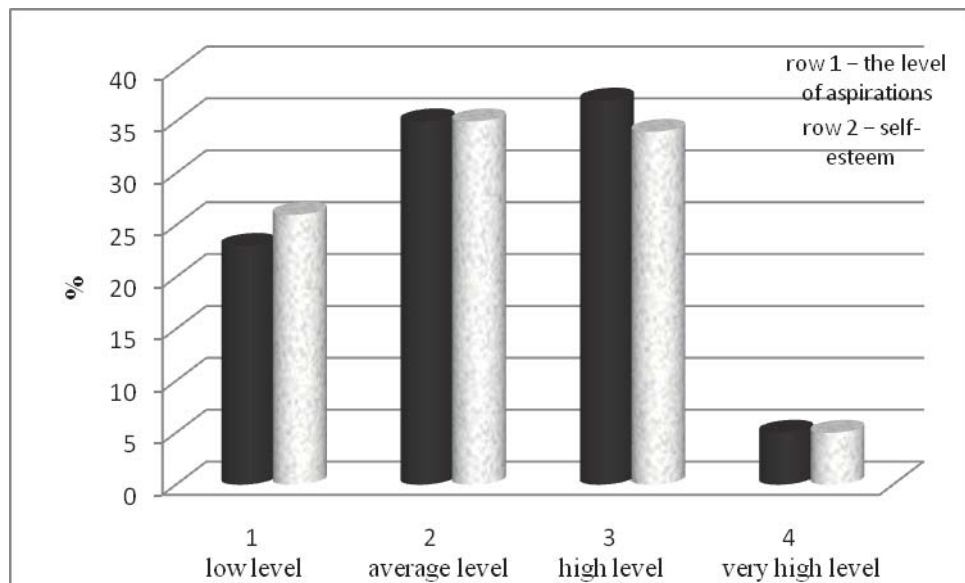


Figure 1. Average figures by the method on determining the self-esteem after Dembo-Rubinstein

2. method on determining the level of self-esteem after G. Kazantsev: low level – in 10 (17%) students; average level – in 29 (51%) students; high level – in 18 (32%) students.

After statistical data processing, we found that, women in this sample possessed the high and average level of self-esteem. However, these differences were statistically insignificant. Having calculated the Student's T-criterion of inter-gender differences after the indicators of this method, we obtained the indicator at the significance level $P > 0.05$, which means that there were no significant differences between male and female groups. Consequently, according to the results of this method application, the average level of self-esteem prevails among the students (51%) (see Figure 2).

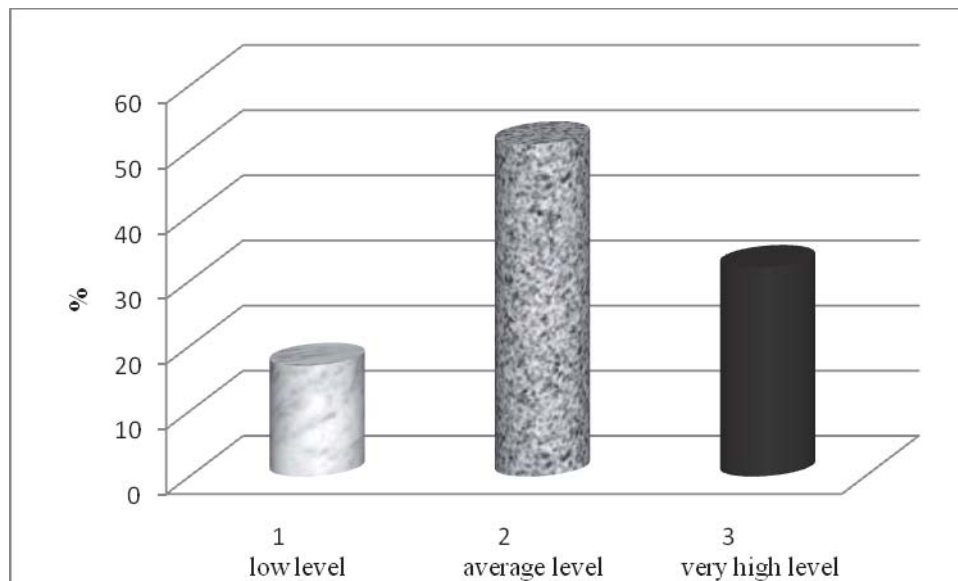


Figure 2. Average figures by the method on determining the level of self-esteem after G. Kazantseva

3. method on determining the level of self-esteem after S. Budassi: low level – in 6 (11%) students; below average level – in 5 (9%) students; average level – in 23 (40%) students; above average level – in 7 (12%) students; high level – in 16 (28%) students.

After statistical data processing, we found that, female group in this sample possessed the high and low level of self-esteem; male group in this sample possessed average level of self-esteem. However, these differences were statistically insignificant. Having calculated the Student's T-criterion of inter-gender differences after the indicators of this method, we obtained the indicator at the significance level $P > 0.05$, which means that there were no significant differences between male and female groups. Consequently, according to the results of this method application, the average level of self-esteem prevails among the students (see Figure 3).

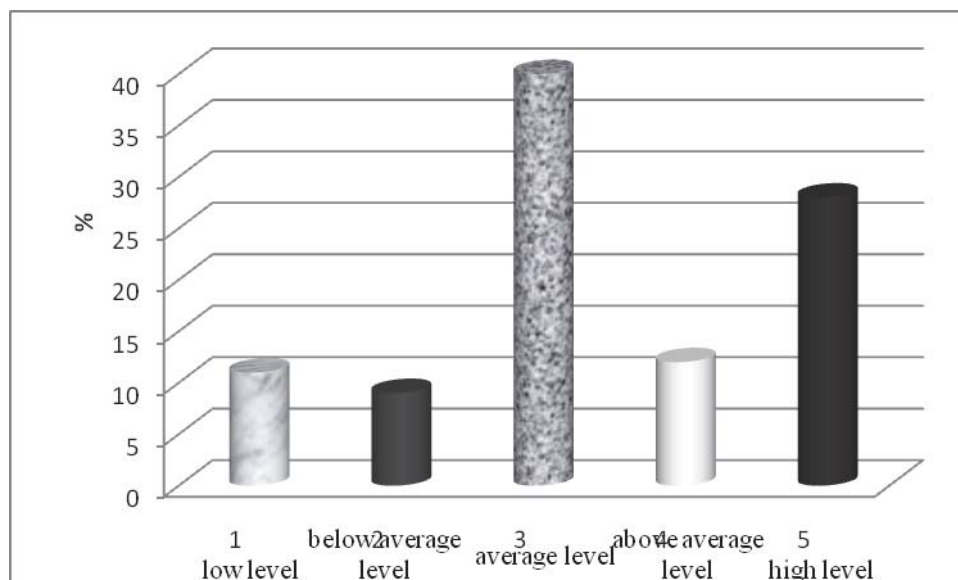


Figure 3. Average figures by the method on determining the level of self-esteem after S. Budassi

4. anxiety scale after J. Taylor: low level – in 7 (12%) students; below average level – in 4 (7%) students; average level – in 21 (37%) students; above average level – in 11 (19%) students; high level – in 14 (25%) students.

Minor differences in displays of anxiety between male and female representatives of this sample were revealed. Female group in this sample possessed the average and low level of anxiety. However, these differences were statistically insignificant. Having calculated the Student's T-criterion

of inter-gender differences after the indicators of this method, we obtained the indicator at the significance level $P > 0.05$, which means that there were no significant differences between male and female groups. Consequently, according to the results of this method application, the average level of anxiety prevails among the students (see Figure 4).

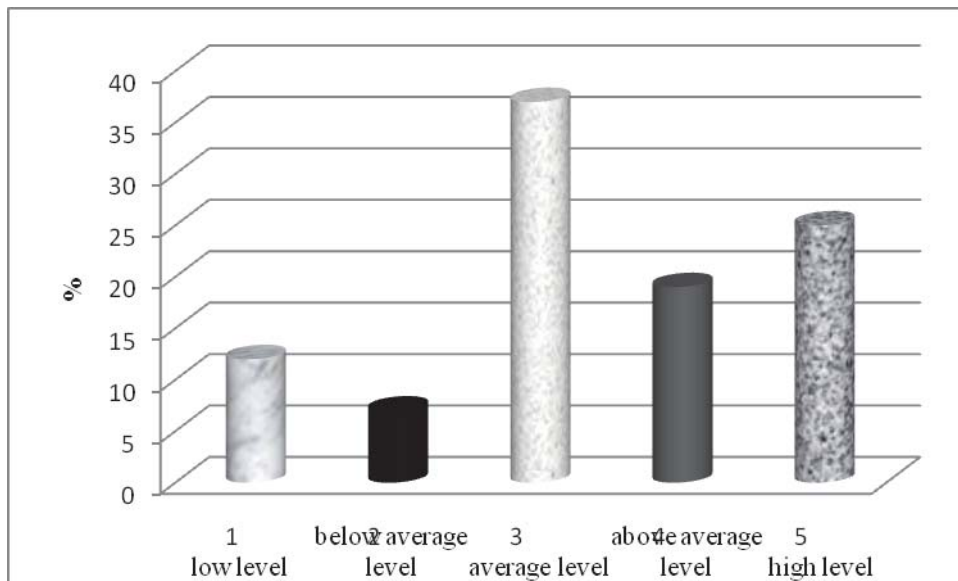


Figure 4. Average figures by the anxiety scale after J. Taylor

5. anxiety scale after A. Pryhozhan: low level – in 10 (18%) students; average level – in 27 (47%) students; high level – in 20 (35%) students.

We found that a higher percentage of males possessed the high level of anxiety and a higher percentage of females possessed the average and low level of anxiety. However, these differences were statistically insignificant. Having calculated the Student's T-criterion of inter-gender differences after the indicators of this method, we obtained the indicator at the significance level $P > 0.05$, which means that there were no significant differences between male and female groups. Consequently, according to the results of this method application, the average level of anxiety prevails among the students (see Figure 5).

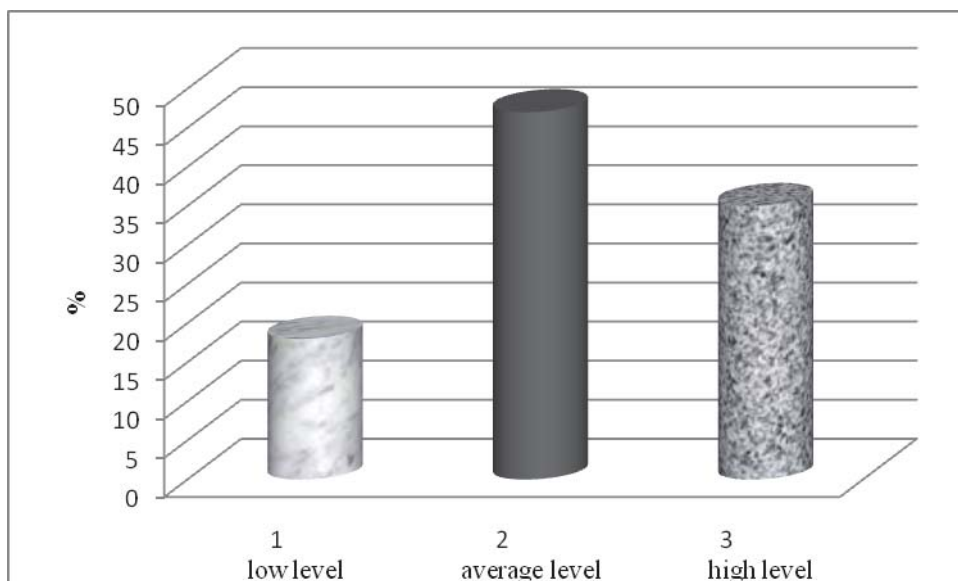


Figure 5. Average figures by the anxiety scale after A. Pryhozhan

6. social-situational anxiety scale after O. Kondash: very low level – in 10 (18%) students; average level / norm – in 20 (35%) students; above average level – in 12 (21%) students; high level – in 15 (26%) students.

After statistical data processing, we found that, female group in this sample possessed the low level of anxiety; more males in this sample possessed the above average level of anxiety than females. However, these differences were statistically insignificant. Having calculated the Student's T-criterion of inter-gender differences after the indicators of this method, we obtained the indicator at the significance level $P > 0.05$, which means that there were no significant differences between male and female groups. Consequently, according to the results of this method application, the average level of anxiety prevails among the students indicating the norm (see Figure 6).

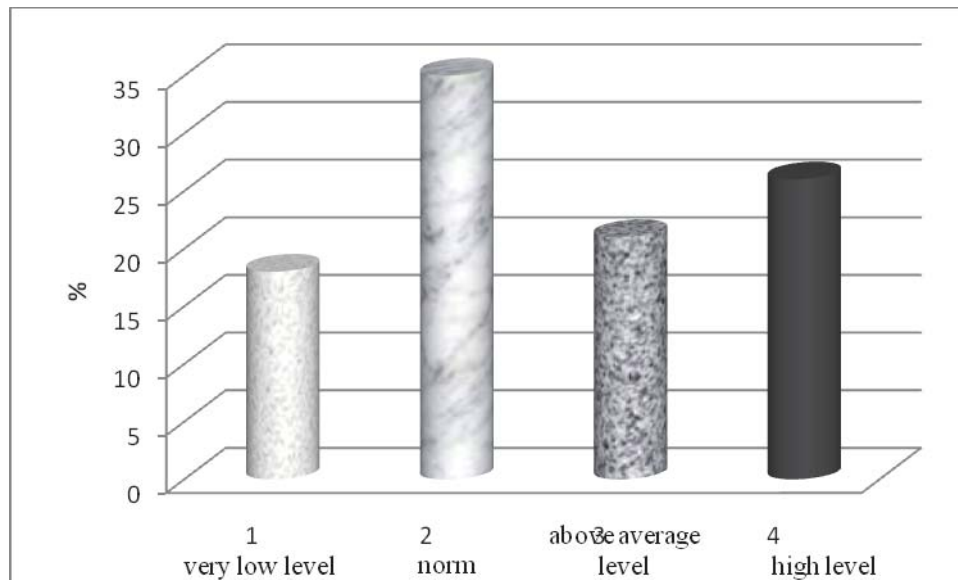


Figure 6. Average figures by the social-situational anxiety scale after O. Kondash

Having applied the correlation analysis we obtained the following results:

- between the level of aspiration (method on determining the level of self-esteem after Dembo-Rubinstein) and anxiety scale after J. Taylor a positive correlation was obtained ($r = 0.502^{**}$; $p < 0.01$);

- between the level of aspiration (method on determining the level of self-esteem after Dembo-Rubinstein) and anxiety scale after A. Pryhozhan a positive correlation was obtained ($r = 0.618^{**}$; $p < 0.01$);

- between the level of aspiration (method on determining the level of self-esteem after Dembo-Rubinstein) and social-situational anxiety scale after O. Kondash a positive correlation was obtained ($r = 0.452^{**}$; $p < 0.01$);

- between the level of self-esteem (method on determining the level of self-esteem after Dembo-Rubinstein) and anxiety scale after J. Taylor a positive correlation was obtained ($r = 0.520^{**}$; $p < 0.01$);

- between the level of self-esteem (method on determining the level of self-esteem after Dembo-Rubinstein) and anxiety scale after A. Pryhozhan a positive correlation was obtained ($r = 0.517^{**}$; $p < 0.01$);

- between the level of self-esteem (method on determining the level of self-esteem after Dembo-Rubinstein) and social-situational anxiety scale after O. Kondash a positive correlation was obtained ($r = 0.454^{**}$; $p < 0.01$).

- between the indicators of the method on determining the level of self-esteem after G. Kazantseva and anxiety scale after J. Taylor a positive correlation was obtained ($r = 0.652^{**}$; $p < 0.01$);

- between the indicators of the method on determining the level of self-esteem after G. Kazantseva and anxiety scale after A. Pryhozhan a positive correlation was obtained ($r = 0.617^{**}$; $p < 0.01$);

- between the indicators of the method on determining the level of self-esteem after G. Kazantseva and social-situational anxiety scale after O. Kondash a positive correlation was obtained ($r = 0,547^{**}$; $p < 0,01$).

- between the indicators of the method on determining the level of self-esteem after S. Budassi and anxiety scale after J. Taylor a positive correlation was obtained ($r = 0.685^{**}$; $p < 0.01$);
- between indicators of the method on determining the level of self-esteem after S. Budassi and anxiety scale after A. Pryhozhan a positive correlation was obtained ($r = 0.645^{**}$; $p < 0.01$);
- between indicators of the method on determining the level of self-esteem after S. Budassi and social-situational anxiety scale after O. Kondash a positive correlation was obtained ($r = 0,725^{**}$; $p < 0,01$).

Having analysed the results of the correlation connection we revealed that the high level of self-esteem may be interconnected with the high level of anxiety. This may be conditioned with the fact that people with high self-esteem behave confidently and it can bring them recognition and admiration, but this behaviour can lead to a rejection from others, up to the rejection by peers. Also, the positive self-esteem does not always coincide with the assessment of the environment, which is very important for working in the group.

Thus, the high self-esteem can obstruct an adolescent from integrating into a group of peers, which in turn can negatively affect the individuality of an adolescent thereby causing anxiety, since communication with peers, the desire to become the part of a group is very important at this age stage.

Conclusions

As a result of the study of features of self-esteem and anxiety in adolescence by the method on determining the level of self-esteem after Dembo-Rubinstein the high level of aspirations and the average level of self-esteem prevail among the students.

By the method on determining the level of self-esteem after G. Kazantseva the average level of self-esteem prevailed in students, which indicated an adequate self-esteem.

By the method on determining the level of self-esteem after S. Budassi the average level prevailed, which indicated an adequate self-esteem.

By the anxiety scale after J. Taylor the average level of anxiety prevailed in students.

By the anxiety scale after A. Pryhozhan the average level of anxiety prevailed in students.

By the social-situational anxiety scale after O. Kondash the average level prevailed, which indicated a norm.

To find out the differences in the displays of anxiety and self-esteem between male and female representatives, calculations were performed by Student's T-criterion. Having calculated the Student's T-criterion of inter-gender differences, we obtained the indicator at the significance level $P > 0.05$, which means that there were no significant differences between male and female groups.

To establish the relation between self-esteem and anxiety indicators, a correlation analysis of the research results was conducted. As a result of it, we found that the high level of self-esteem may be interconnected with the high level of anxiety.

Taking into account of these results, we conclude that: – the high level of self-esteem can obstruct an adolescent from integrating into a group of peers, because the positive self-esteem does not always coincide with the esteem of the environment; – adolescents with the high level of self-esteem can behave too confidently, demanding recognition and admiration from a group, however such behaviour can lead to a rejection by others, up to the rejection by peers. In turn, it can cause anxiety, because the recognition of a group of peers and communication take an important place in the life of an adolescent.

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