



POTENTIAL OF MEDITATION IN OVERCOMING CURRENT AND CHILDHOOD FEARS OF ADULTS

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Abstract

Relevance. Modern society is characterized by a high level of stress (war, economic instability and other unforeseen circumstances), which significantly affects the psychological well-being of the individual. In conditions of constant stress and anxiety and the need for rapid adaptation, it is important to find methods that allow a person to independently overcome these problems. One of such methods is meditation, which can help reduce the level of stress, improve emotional self-regulation and contribute to maintaining a person's psychological well-being.

The purpose of the article: to experimentally prove the positive effect of meditative practices in the process of correcting the subjective well-being of adults, caused by their childhood and current fears.

Methodology. Methods: Five-factor mindfulness questionnaire FFMQ; Anxiety and worry scales STAI; Tolerance scale for ambiguity of several types of stimuli MSTAT-I; New questionnaire for tolerance to uncertainty (NTN, Kornilova T.V.); Personal beliefs survey SPB; Dysfunctional beliefs questionnaire PBQ-BPD; Psychological well-being scales K. Riff; Symptomatic questionnaire SCL-90-R; author's Scale of children's and current fears for adults, program for the development of psychological flexibility. The study sample - 130 adults.

Results. The results of the testing of the author's program for overcoming fears using meditative techniques statistically confirm its effectiveness. The study revealed a significant decrease in the severity of current and children's fears that affect the lives of program participants, a decrease in the level of their situational anxiety and personal anxiety, positive changes in psychological health and well-being, separate, participants significantly improved their competence in managing the environment, increased assessments of personal autonomy and self-acceptance.

Keywords: children's fears of adults, stress, meditation, awareness, mindfulness, psychological well-being, self-regulation.

Relevance

For the author, the presented material is part of a study on the influence of childhood and current fears on the subjective well-being of adults through the development of their psychological flexibility. A key problem identified is the impact of childhood fears on stereotypical behavior in adults. Literature notes that direct influence on fear reactions formed in childhood is ineffective because scientific evidence shows that

once formed, fear responses persist throughout life and are almost irreversible — they can be suppressed but may reappear under certain conditions (Barad, 2006).

Meditation is a process of deep, prolonged contemplation, focused attention, or self-reflection aimed at achieving altered states of consciousness for deep relaxation, insight, and better self- and world-understanding (APA, 2024). The number of scientific works dedicated to the impact of meditative practices on mental and physical health has significantly increased in recent years. By early 2021, the American Psychological Association's database APA PsycNet contained over 9,500 publications on this topic, including 361 peer-reviewed journal articles. The current database of psychological and medical literature PubMed.gov includes nearly 8,000 works where meditation was the subject of study, among which are 1,102 clinical trials.

Meditation, as a modern psychological intervention, has a long philosophical foundation. Two approaches have formed in Western culture: 1) mindfulness, aimed at developing a decentered metacognitive stance, and 2) transcendental meditation, aimed at transcending ordinary states of consciousness. The first approach has led to authoritative therapeutic programs with clinically proven efficacy, such as Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy (MBCT), Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR), loving-kindness meditation, and mind-body skills groups.

An advantage of meditative practices is their simplicity and accessibility, ability to be adapted to various socio-cultural and age groups, and different types of disorders, their integration into daily life, and their high preventive potential in fostering resilience and stress resistance. Furthermore, meditative practices have the potential to overcome stereotypical behavior and increase psychological flexibility through components such as: contact with the present moment instead of focusing on past or future; acceptance of difficult emotional states instead of fighting or avoiding them; distancing from thoughts instead of fusing with them; and understanding inner experiences as a context in which life unfolds.

Today, many everyday and clinical meditation practices are known for stress relief and have proven effects in promoting physical health and psychological well-being. Each has unique focus, procedures, expected effects, and benefits. Empirical evidence supports meditation's impact on emotion regulation related to reducing fears and anxiety — both on neurological processes and metacognitive functions of consciousness. However, these sometimes fragmented and contradictory data do not provide a comprehensive scientific-psychological explanation of the mechanism of this effect and cannot reliably describe intervention methodologies for different cases.

At the same time, J. Michalek and T. Heidenreich (2018) note that the rapid spread and acceptance of meditation-based psychological interventions precede empirical validation. L. Carlson (2018) adds that leading roles in this movement are played not by scientist-clinicians or professional therapists but by media and a powerful community of instructors and followers.

The aim of the article is to statistically substantiate the positive effect of an author's intervention program incorporating meditation elements on overcoming stereotypical



behavior in adults caused by childhood fears and on developing their psychological flexibility.

Methodology

The study used the strategy of a formative experiment. The need to develop a program for psychological correction of the consequences of the influence of childhood phobias in the form of negative stereotypes of adult behavior is based on the results of our previous ascertaining study (Potonska O., 2020, 2021). Diagnostic sections were conducted before the beginning of the formative influence and immediately after its end using the following tools: the Scale for determining childhood and current fears developed by the author in the work; The Scale of Tolerance to Ambiguity of Several Types of Stimuli MSTAT-I (McLain, 1993, adaptation by O. G. Lukovytska and E. M. Osin, 2010); The New Questionnaire of Tolerance to Uncertainty (NTN, T. V. Korniylova, 2009) and the index of stereotyped behavior additionally calculated for it; STAI Anxiety Scale (Spielberger, Gorsuch & Lushene, 1970, adapted by Yu. L. Khanin, 1978); SPB Survey of Personal Beliefs (T. P. Demaria, H. Kassinoe & C. A. Dill, 1989); PBQ-BPD Dysfunctional Belief Questionnaire (Butler et al., 2002, adapted by M. O. Konyina and A. B. Kholmogorova, 2016); K. Riff Psychological Well-Being Scale (adapted by L. V. Zhukovskaya and E. G. Troshykhina, 2011); SCL-90-R Symptomatic Questionnaire (adapted by N. V. Tarabrina, 2001), which considered the General Symptom Severity Index and the indicators of two scales "Anxiety" and "Phobic Anxiety".

Based on the analysis of empirical data from the first ascertainment stage, a program of group classes was created to develop psychological flexibility (plasticity) of those study participants who reported the presence of childhood fears. Each class included three mandatory elements:

a) cognitive component: mini-lectures, self-diagnosis, discussion of experience, group discussions;

b) MF component: various meditative practices: mindfulness approach, as well as transcendental meditations (Altway method), kindness meditation, guided visualizations, mantra repetition technique, relaxation, simplified elements of yoga; (a variety of approaches was deliberately used here so that each participant could choose practices that are personally suitable for him);

c) psychological component: psychological exercises, mainly in the context of MF-oriented cognitive-behavioral therapy, as well as ice-breaking exercises and techniques for relieving psycho-emotional tension.

The program for developing psychological flexibility and overcoming fears lasted six weeks, during which participants attended group classes (total duration 24 academic hours), and also worked independently, implementing meditation practices in their daily lives.

Sample The study on this program was conducted in 2 stages. Initially, data collection was carried out on a sample of 130 adults.

The experimental group (EG) consisted of 34 people, including 21 women and 13 men (age from 23 to 51, average age 36.27 ± 5.97). They participated in a six-week formative program.

The control group (CG) also consisted of 34 people who had similar socio-demographic characteristics and psychological problems and contacted the authors for various psychological consultations, but did not participate in the meditation program (21 women and 13 men aged 21-53 years, age: 35.5 ± 6.94). Most of this group were participants in the ascertainment stage of the study. The participants of the control group also filled out the questionnaires twice, between these sections they lived their usual lives and were not involved in targeted psychological interventions using meditative practices. In addition, during the formative experiment, we regularly monitored the dynamics of the formation of conscious presence using the FFMQ questionnaire.

Results

At the first stage of the study, it was found that the intensity of fears in its participants is directly related to the stereotyping of their perception, emotions, thinking, and behavior. This is manifested in mental rigidity (the inability to change attitude, mindset, motive, or mode of experience when there is an objective need) and intolerance to uncertainty (a desire for control and order, a dichotomous division of actions, thoughts, and values into "right and wrong"; an unwillingness to independently go beyond accepted limitations).

Table 1 presents a correlation matrix that demonstrates the relationships between the indicators of the intensity of childhood fears in adults and the manifestations of stereotyping in them. Significant coefficients are highlighted with gray shading ($p \leq 0.05$) and in bold font ($p \leq 0.01$).

As can be seen from Table 1, individuals with pronounced phobic reactions stereotypically interpret the surrounding environment and current life events as sources of threat or discomfort. They have a negative attitude toward new, complex, or ambiguous situations; encountering such situations triggers strong anxiety reactions that lead a person into a passive-depressive or hostile-aggressive state.

Manifestations of stereotypes in the cognitive sphere are expressed in the presence of persistent dysfunctional beliefs about one's own vulnerability, excessive sensitivity to frustration, the need for external support, and at the same time, the inability to trust other people and the world in general. All of this disrupts psychological adaptation processes, causing a person to feel dissatisfaction with themselves and their life.



Table 1. Correlations between the indicators of childhood fear intensity and manifestations of stereotypes in various spheres of life (N=130)

	Childhood fears	Adult fears	Overall intensity of fears	Number of fears	Strength of fear	Phobic component	Destructive fears	Constructive social fears
Current rigidity	0,12	0,138	0,143	0,129	0,05	0,128	0,194	-0,04
Tolerance of uncertainty of multiple stimulus types (MSTAT-I):								
Acceptance of novelty	-0,20	-0,22	-0,23	-0,23	0,005	-0,18	-0,31	0,042
Acceptance of complexity	-0,13	-0,06	-0,13	-0,18	0,084	-0,04	-0,27	0,119
Acceptance of uncertainty	-0,15	0,032	-0,11	-0,20	0,174	0,015	-0,24	0,062
Overall tolerance score	-0,18	-0,06	-0,16	-0,22	0,117	-0,06	-0,30	0,086
New intolerance of uncertainty questionnaire (T. V. Kornilova):								
Tolerance of uncertainty	0,044	-0,06	0,025	0,02	0,069	0,026	-0,11	0,242
Intolerance	-0,16	-0,27	-0,21	-0,14	-0,34	-0,25	-0,09	-0,22
Interpersonal intolerance	0,208	0,248	0,242	0,206	0,115	0,23	0,154	0,190
Stereotyping	-0,17	-0,18	-0,19	-0,14	-0,30	-0,21	-0,02	-0,32
Survey of Personal Beliefs (SPB H. Kassiove, A. Berger):								
Duty to self	0,16	0,057	0,138	0,103	0,011	0,148	0,072	0,321
Low frustration tolerance	0,268	0,069	0,246	0,242	0,046	0,194	0,230	0,231
Self-esteem	0,228	0,065	0,197	0,231	-0,05	0,113	0,279	0,021
Irrational beliefs	0,225	0,126	0,225	0,212	0,006	0,190	0,184	0,202
Dysfunctional Beliefs Questionnaire PBQ-BPD:								
Mistrust	0,339	0,414	0,399	0,378	0,169	0,334	0,391	0,06
Dependence	0,234	0,417	0,312	0,208	0,31	0,365	0,206	0,172
Defense	0,093	0,424	0,200	0,059	0,302	0,323	0,055	0,103
Total BPD score	0,301	0,544	0,404	0,298	0,325	0,440	0,301	0,138
Anxiety scales (STAI):								
State anxiety	0,338	0,559	0,443	0,290	0,462	0,524	0,315	0,214
Trait anxiety	0,372	0,485	0,455	0,356	0,342	0,470	0,319	0,317

Note: The critical value of Pearson's correlation coefficient is 0.172 at $p \leq 0.05$; 0.225 at $p \leq 0.01$; 0.285 at $p \leq 0.001$.

Discussion

The diagnostic indicators of the experimental and control groups before the start of the formative intervention did not differ significantly. The results of the comparative analysis showed that for none of the variables were there any statistically significant differences in distribution or mean values.

A post-program survey revealed significant changes in the psychological indicators in the experimental group (EG). The significance of the shift in mean values was determined using Student’s t-test for paired samples, and the reliability of the changes was additionally verified using the nonparametric Wilcoxon T-test. The hypothesis of a significant shift was accepted if the p-value was less than 0.05.

Table 2. Dynamics of Fear Intensity in the Experimental Group

Quantitative indicator	Frequency analysis			Central tendencies		Comparative analysis (two-tailed p)	
	Decrease	No change	Increase	Before	After	Wilcoxon t-test	Student’s t-test
Past fears	↓ 21	= 6	↑ 7	16.71±9.46	14.88±7.64	<,001	<0,001
Current fears	↓ 21	= 5	↑ 8	3.44±3.58	2.26±1.93	0,008	0,006
Fear intensity	↓ 25	= 6	↑ 3	20.15±10.75	17.15±8.50	<0,001	<0,001

Note: * parameters that do not meet the criterion of normal distribution, thus it is necessary to rely on a nonparametric comparison criterion.

First of all, it should be noted a significant decrease in the intensity of fears: both those that respondents recalled from their own childhood ($p<.001$), and those experienced in adulthood ($p<.01$). The average scores in the experimental group decreased, and the distributions narrowed due to the correction of high values.

The vast majority of participants at the end of the program indicated fewer fears in the questionnaire than during the first survey (73.5% of the experimental group). This reflects significant changes in participants’ current attitudes toward the world and their own relationship with it. The most substantial positive changes concerned the parameter “Current fears.” Participants in the experiment began to feel significantly less influence of various types of fears (primarily social) on their present life and behavior. This result is quite logical, as a significant part of the program’s exercises focused on awareness of fear sensations and related cognitions, distancing from them, and eliminating their influence on behavior.

There was also a significant reduction in the “Past fears” indicator. 21 participants (61.8% of the group) indicated fewer fears during the follow-up survey than at the



beginning of the experiment. This can be explained by the fact that a person remembers and interprets their past based on their current state — their present self-perception. Thus, since some fears became irrelevant for participants (were “processed” and “released”), they disappeared from the self-reports. Our assumption is confirmed by the fact that the most significant reduction in this indicator was observed in individuals who initially reported a very large number of childhood fears (20 or more items). In these cases, by the end of the experiment, participants reported 3–8 fewer childhood fears than at the beginning. Therefore, a positive perception of oneself “here and now” influenced the perception of the past as being less filled with anxiety and fears.

At the same time, some participants demonstrated an increase in the intensity of fears by the end of the experiment: 7 people reported more fears that occurred in the past, and 8 people reported more fears currently present in their lives. We associate this dynamic with the growing awareness of these participants regarding their own feelings and thoughts, including negative ones. The development of mindfulness includes improving the ability to name and describe one’s experiences in words, as well as reducing psychological defenses that suppress the memory of fears. As can be seen from Figure 1, the tendency toward increase is primarily characteristic of individuals who initially reported a very small number of fears or believed they had none at all. In the course of the work, participants became aware of how past fears are reflected in their present life, so the proportion of “adult” fears increased. It is worth noting that according to the goals of the program, awareness of the presence of a certain fear was accompanied by non-judgmental acceptance and conscious responding (or rather, non-reacting) — therefore, in this case, the increase in the fear indicator is not a sign of psychological distress.

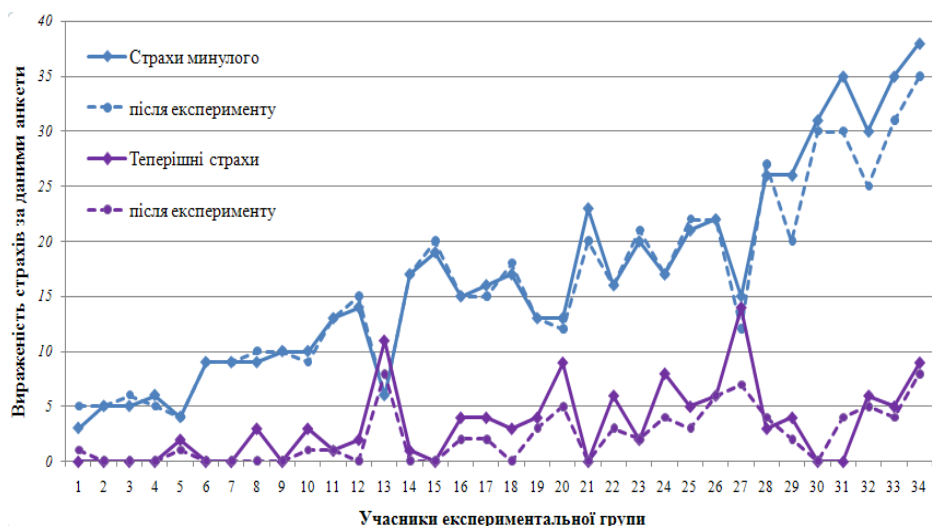


Figure 1. Dynamics of fear indicators among participants of the experimental group.

Thus, it can be confidently stated that the implemented program using meditative practices had a positive impact on the experience of fears of various origins, which manifested in:

- a) a decrease in the self-reported presence of fears and anxieties in one’s life (both past and present),
- b) non-judgmental acceptance of one’s own fear as a temporary phenomenon.

The mindfulness-based approach (MBA) involves a decentered awareness of the emotion of fear and the neutralization of its limiting influence on a person’s current behavior.

By the end of the experiment, participants also demonstrated a significant decrease in state anxiety ($p = 0.003$), and most importantly — in trait anxiety ($p < 0.001$). Thus, as a result of regular meditation, actual psycho-emotional tension decreased, as did the general tendency to experience anxiety in a wide range of everyday situations perceived as threatening.

These changes, as well as a number of effects not accounted for in the study but typical for learning meditative practices, led to significant improvements in the psychological health and well-being of participants (see Table 3).

Table 3. Shift in mean indicators of psychological well-being and psychopathological symptoms as a result of psychological intervention (34 participants)

Diagnostic parameters	Mean trends in the experimental group				Зуб M	Student’s t-test	Wilcoxon t-test
	before		after				
	M	SD	M	SD			
Ryff’s Psychological Well-Being Scales							
Autonomy	29,24	3,22	30,53	2,65	+1,29	<0,001	<0,001
Environmental Mastery	29,18	3,96	31,29	3,28	+2,12	<0,001	<0,001
Personal Growth	33,59	3,73	34,21	3,13	+0,62	0,002	0,005
Positive Relations	32,44	4,24	33,47	3,58	+1,03	<0,001	0,001
Purpose in Life	33,65	4,37	34,35	3,72	+0,71	0,002	0,006
Self-Acceptance	31,74	5,55	34,03	4,20	+2,29	<0,001	<0,001
Psychological Well-being	189,8	17,45	197,9	14,30	+8,06	<0,001	<0,001
Symptom Checklist							
Global Severity Index (GSI)*	0,62	0,57	0,53	0,46	--0,09	<0,001	<0,001
Anxiety	0,64	0,84	0,51	0,69	--0,14	<0,001	<0,001
Anxiety Phobic	0,32	0,59	0,22	0,45	--0,11	<0,001	<0,001

Note: * indicators that do not meet the criterion of normal distribution, thus a nonparametric comparison criterion should be used (Wilcoxon signed-rank test).



While noting the overall reduction in psychopathological symptoms in the experimental group ($p < 0.001$), particular attention should be paid to the indicators of manifest anxiety and phobic anxiety. The data obtained from the participants indicate a significant decrease in nervousness and tension, including both somatic correlates of anxiety and cognitive components that involve the feeling of fear. There was a significant reduction in persistent irrational phobic reactions (to places, objects, or situations) that previously led to avoidance behavior.

These results demonstrate the positive effects of the developed program aimed at enhancing psychological flexibility and overcoming fears. However, a final conclusion about the effectiveness of the program using meditative techniques can only be made after a secondary comparison of the control and experimental group indicators, which is a prospective direction for further research.

Conclusions

Thus, based on the results of the conducted study, it can be confidently concluded that the program developed by the author — aimed at overcoming fears through the use of meditative techniques — had a positive effect. This was manifested in a significant reduction in the intensity of fears affecting the participants' lives, a decrease in levels of state and trait anxiety, and the elimination of irrational and dysfunctional cognitive distortions in the experimental group. These distortions included catastrophic thinking, vulnerability to stress, excessive self-demands and self-criticism, unstable self-esteem, distrust of others, and a perceived need for protection.

All of this led to positive changes in the psychological health and well-being of the program participants: their competence in managing the environment improved significantly, and their levels of personal autonomy and self-acceptance increased.

This direction appears promising for future scientific and psychological research, as evidence-based meditation practices may significantly expand the toolkit of modern practical psychology in working to enhance clients' psychological well-being, allowing for the study of those individual psychological characteristics that underlie more effective self-regulation of behavior.

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THE POTENTIAL OF MEDITATION IN OVERCOMING CURRENT AND CHILDHOOD FEARS IN ADULTS

Abstract

Relevance. To experimentally demonstrate the positive effect of meditative practices in the process of correcting the subjective well-being of adults, influenced by their childhood and current fears.

Methodology. Five Facet Mindfulness Questionnaire (FFMQ); State-Trait Anxiety Inventory (STAI); Multiple Stimulus Types Ambiguity Tolerance Scale (MSTAT-I); New Uncertainty Tolerance Questionnaire (by T.V. Kornilova); Survey of Personal Beliefs (SPB); Personality Belief Questionnaire - Borderline Personality Disorder version (PBQ-BPD); Ryff's Scales of Psychological Well-Being; Symptom Checklist-90-R (SCL-90-R); an author-developed scale of childhood and current fears in adults; and a psychological flexibility development program. The study sample included 130 adults.

Results. The results of the implementation of the author's fear-overcoming program using meditative techniques statistically confirmed its effectiveness. The study revealed a significant decrease in the intensity of current and childhood fears affecting the lives of the program participants, a reduction in their levels of state and trait anxiety, and positive changes in psychological health and well-being. In particular, participants showed a significant improvement in their competence in managing their environment, as well as increased scores in personal autonomy and self-acceptance.



Keywords: childhood fears in adults, stress, meditation, mindfulness, psychological well-being, self-regulation.

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REVIEW ARTICLES

PSYCHOLOGICAL MECHANISMS OF ECONOMIC SOCIALIZATION IN CONDITIONS OF AN UNSTABLE ECONOMY

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Abstract

Relevance. The aim of this article is to highlight the results of a theoretical and methodological analysis of the psychological mechanisms of economic socialization in the context of an unstable economy.

Methodology. Research methods include analysis, synthesis, and generalization of scientific sources on the problem of psychological determination of economic socialization, as well as the method of theoretical modeling.

Results. Economic socialization mechanisms are defined as psychological processes of mutual influence between the subjects of economic benefit appropriation, which ensure the development of personal qualities. These mechanisms become relevant in situations of intersubjective interaction. As a result, there are changes in the key characteristics of an individual as a bearer of the culture of economic activity. This system of mechanisms is shown to be complex, hierarchical, and unfolds on different levels of socializing influence: interpersonal and intrapersonal. Interpersonal socializing mechanisms serve as external conditions and means of activating intrapersonal mechanisms of personal change.

The properties of the psychological mechanisms of economic socialization are described. It is shown that the mechanism can be both a substantial, static formation and simultaneously a process that develops over time; it serves as a means of personal change and is primarily activated in the space of intersubjective economic interaction, leading to the demonstration, transmission, and embodiment of the canonical content of society's economic culture in everyday practices. Those psychological processes that ensure its internalization and transformation into the inner content of an individual's consciousness are intrapersonal mechanisms of economic socialization.

Conclusion. A structural-goal model of the psychological mechanisms of economic socialization of a young person is presented as an attempt to generalize our vision of the systemic nature of the activation and functioning of interconnected processes that determine and ensure the formation and lifelong development of an individual's economic qualities as a subject of the economy. The functioning of the system of psychological mechanisms of socialization is shown according to the principle of isomorphism.

Keywords: personality socialization, psychological mechanism, economic socialization



Relevance

Unveiling the essence of the psychological mechanisms of economic socialization is a complex task, as the term "psychological mechanism" is not well-established in psychological science.

The etymology of the term "mechanism" highlights the procedural nature or the intermediary state of any phenomenon, for which the concept of a mechanism is used. For example, N. Kogutyak (2008: 115) demonstrates the mediating role of those psychological processes that act as means, links, or prerequisites for an individual to find a sense of existence appropriate to their unique circumstances. This approach to understanding a mechanism stems from the idea that a mechanism is a process that connects the conditions and determinants of a phenomenon with its result.

Another approach to this phenomenon is developed by A. Luchinkina, who argues that a mechanism constitutes the resource support of the socialization process, its material part, which includes a set of interconnected elements "tuned" to perform the function of the given process (see: Dembytska, 2024).

Through the unfolding of the intimate-psychological mechanism of differentiation (integration) of relationships with the social environment, in which an individual is involved, as the fundamental process of personal development, Yu. Shvalb (2015) defines the phenomenon of socialization. According to the author, socialization is the process of the formation of an individual as a subject of social interaction.

The philosophical and natural-scientific context of the term "mechanism" denotes two essential meanings: a mechanism is the internal structure of something, in relation to the interconnectedness of its elements that ensure a certain process, and the process itself, or a set of processes, which include a sequence of actions or operations interconnected with each other. In the social sciences, the term "mechanism" is used to denote the method, manner, system, or form of organization by which a particular goal is achieved, as well as the natural system or type of behavior that performs a specific function (Oxford Learner's Dictionary of Academic English, 2023). Therefore, if we take the psychological meaning of the term "mechanism," it can be divided into two aspects: structural and procedural. A mechanism is, on the one hand, something that has a clear structure and interconnection between elements, and on the other hand, a set of processes that have a goal and function and unfold over time.

M. Smulson (2021) indicates that all mechanisms identified in psychology, beginning with the defensive mental mechanisms defined by Z. Freud, are characterized by three main categories: mechanism as a system, as an explanatory principle and model, and the "psychological mechanism" as a still-uncertain complex phenomenon.

Yu. Shvalb (2015) points out that there are two main approaches to understanding psychological mechanisms: the naturalistic and the organizational-technical. From the perspective of the first approach, a psychological mechanism is defined as a system activated by a trigger, which carries out a defined sequence of actions, transforming one type of energy (stimulus) into another (reaction) in a specific way, such as the mechanism

of an unconditional reflex. The researcher notes that the specificity of the natural process lies in the fact that it contains the mechanism of its unfolding within itself: it is not an active, but a reactive formation, its action reduces the range of choices for actions or behavior to a single possible response or a defined sequence of responses, and it is unconscious for its carrier (Shvalb, 2015).

The organizational-technical approach shows that in processes of activity or communication, which are not natural but specially organized, or even spontaneous, it is impossible to identify laws or mechanisms that ensure their existence. The unfolding of such processes occurs on the basis of natural processes, and the mechanisms of their unfolding are seen as external, with their meaning lying in the organization and management of the process (Shvalb, 2015). In other words, the phenomenon of mechanisms embodies not only the structure-process duality but also the natural-controlled duality. From the perspective of the structural-goal approach, the methodological effectiveness of which has already been demonstrated in our previous studies, the psychological mechanism of socialization is a certain psychological system with a specific structure, whose elements are interconnected to ensure the socialization process through a sequence of actions and processes of assimilation and appropriation by the individual of social, cultural, economic, and other relations, values, which are also interconnected.

The natural flow or managedness of the process of cultural internalization, in our view, depends on many factors that provide it with the means of mechanisms within the individual's consciousness. Thus, at the interpersonal level, all the diversity of socialization mechanisms act through their influence on the individual's consciousness, and at the intrapersonal level, they are either appropriated by the individual, internalized by their mind or consciousness, or not.

Moreover, socialization is not always a controlled process; it can be spontaneous, relatively directed, or socially controlled. Spontaneous socialization occurs due to the influence of various, not specifically created circumstances of public life on the individual. Relatively directed socialization involves the creation of certain economic, cultural, and other preconditions in society that influence the development and life creation of the individual. Socially controlled socialization shows in the organized transfer of social experience, culture, values through agents of socialization, such as schools, families, informal organizations, etc.

Methodology

The research methods included analysis, synthesis, and generalization of scientific sources on the issue of psychological determination of economic socialization, as well as the method of theoretical modeling.

Results

Our view of the psychological mechanisms of socialization follows the structural-goal approach to economic socialization (Dembytska, 2020; 2024), within which it is studied as a process of acquiring qualities of a subject in the relations of appropriation of economic benefits, oriented towards the value system of the culture of economic activity. In this context, all psychological processes of various scales (interpersonal and intrapersonal) that



ensure the development of these qualities form a system of mechanisms of socializing influence (Fig. 1). Upon theoretical analysis of the understanding of psychological mechanisms, we reached the following generalizations about the nature of the phenomenon under study. The mechanism of economic socialization is characterized by the following properties:

The same mechanism can be a substantial, static formation (examples include self-esteem, identity, awareness of oneself in a specific economic role, etc.) and at the same time a process (e.g., self-assessment, identification, reflection) unfolding over time. A psychological mechanism can be an organized phenomenon of group or individual psychology or a complex one. For example, the "Self-concept" of an individual is a dynamic formation whose development is ensured by various cognitive, evaluative, and conative processes/mechanisms, which itself is both a mechanism and a product of the system organization of self-awareness.

The mechanism is designed to ensure necessary personal changes in general and adaptation in a specific situation in particular. Therefore, the mechanism of socialization is a means of personal changes. It should be taken into account that economic socialization is a process of forming and lifelong developing key orientations of an individual for the norms and prescriptions embedded in the canon of valuable traits for society. This consolidated normative image of a community representative is a means of preserving and transmitting society's accumulated experience of economic activity to future generations.

Mechanisms of socializing influence are primarily activated in the space of intersubjective economic interaction, leading to the demonstration, transmission, and embodiment in everyday economic practices of the canonical content of society's economic culture. Those psychological processes that ensure its internalization and transformation into the inner content of an individual's consciousness are intrapersonal mechanisms of economic socialization.

Thus, a mechanism of socialization refers to the psychological processes of mutual influence and exchange of economic experience on different scales (from macrosocial to interpersonal) that are generated and activated in intersubjective interaction, the result of which is changes in important characteristics of an individual valued by society as a representative characteristics of a bearer of the respective culture of economic activity such as buying and selling, entrepreneurship, tax payment, volunteerism, patronage, etc.

The mechanism of socialization functions: both at the level of group psychological phenomena — interpersonal changes, from influence (coercion, manipulation, persuasion, counter-argumentation, suggestion) in interpersonal interaction (mechanisms of interpersonal influence, socio-psychological) to the influence at the level of macroeconomic subjects' interaction; and at the level of individual psychology — at the level of intrapersonal changes: the formation of skills, traits of character (formative mechanisms), their development (development mechanisms), correction of existing formations and states (corrective mechanisms), and protection from destructive influences (defensive mechanisms).

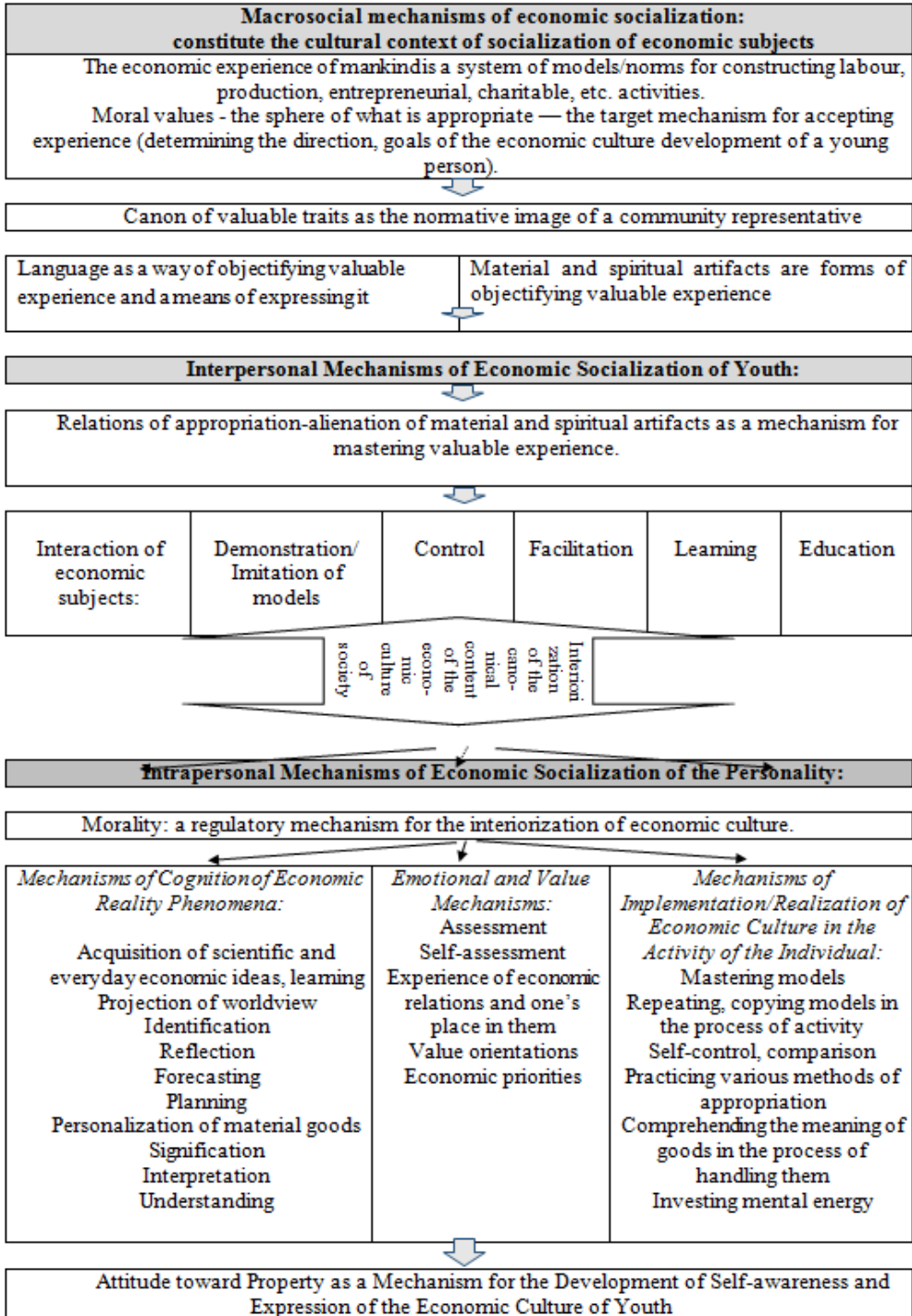


Fig. 1. Structural-target model of psychological mechanisms of economic socialization of a personality (Dembytska, 2024)



The results of the actualization of socialization mechanisms are expressed in socialization itself, particularly in the level of development of subject-related personal qualities. Thus, following Yu. Shvalb (Shvalb, 2020), who identifies various spheres of relationships in which personality development unfolds, we emphasize its result-the acquisition of subjectivity -the ability of the individual to solve life-critical tasks related to organizing, managing, and leading their own system of social interactions.

The question of which intra-systemic socializing processes contribute to the acquisition of subjectivity in economic activity remains a debated issue in psychological science. This can be clarified by the established tradition in domestic psychological research (Dembytska, 2020; Moskalenko, 2013) to study it in a procedural aspect. The very definition of socialization of the individual as a subject of the economy reveals the first definition of the complex psychological mechanism underlying it. Thus, the phenomenon under investigation is explained as the process by which an individual enters the economic system of society and acquires the expected economic-psychological qualities and traits, through which their inclusion and realization as a subject of economic relations are successful. In this way, economic socialization is explained as a powerful socio-psychological process.

The procedure for describing the semantic field of the concept of "economic socialization" as a scientific category opens up the possibility to show a range of mechanisms that ensure such an entry. Let's analyze a series of conceptual oppositions in which the concept appears in the works of researchers: "typical – unique," "activity – passivity," "spontaneity – goal-oriented," "external influence – internal influence," "structured – unstructured."

According to the first opposition, the twofold nature of economic socialization already involves the action of two powerful psychological mechanisms: on the one hand, the development of personal qualities of the individual that are required under specific historical conditions of societal development, which, as V. Moskalenko (Moskalenko, 2013) emphasizes, are determined by the characteristics of a particular historical period. This refers to the mechanism of typification, which ensures the formation of qualities common to many members of the community, contributing to the organization of economic interaction, mutual understanding, and the exchange of information and other benefits.

On the other hand, there is the process of forming unique, special personality traits, understood as the particular presentation of the universal, considering that the unique in the personality is shaped in certain conditions and within the requirements set by the economic system for its participants – the mechanism of individualization, where the individual tests their uniqueness as a subject of economic benefit distribution. The mechanisms of typification, closely related to individualization, are actualized in the consciousness of each member of any community.

These two mechanisms operate within the context of broader mechanisms of community influence on its individual members - interpersonal mechanisms of socio-psychological influence. We refer to the socio-psychological processes that ensure the

transmission of the requirements regulating the behavior of community members. This involves the unfolding of interpersonal communication between more experienced individuals, knowledgeable in the field of consumption or production, who are ready to correct initially unsocialized economic actions of less experienced participants in communication. This influence occurs in the direction of developing culturally conditioned models and schemes, primarily through the demonstration of conventionally accepted examples, socially developed ways of interacting with certain categories of economic objects. Therefore, interpersonal socializing mechanisms are external conditions and stimuli for intrapersonal changes in the corresponding areas of the personality.

As we can see, explaining the procedural essence of economic socialization inevitably leads us to the mechanisms of intrapersonal changes, which must be considered in close connection with the psychological processes of developmental-formative influence within a broader socio-psychological context on the economic-psychological qualities and traits of the personality.

The opposition "spontaneity – goal-oriented organization" compels us to view economic socialization as a lifelong process, not devoid of influences from various external and internal personal factors, making it difficult to organize and control. However, with purposeful preparation of agents creating special conditions and involving various psychological mechanisms of socializing influence, this process can be managed and planned to some extent. In this sense, we are not talking about a mechanism of total control over the process of forming economic-psychological qualities of the personality, but about mechanisms for supporting and stimulating its development in a certain direction, ensuring the movement of the entire system of personal qualities in line with the requirements presented to the individual by the communities of which they are a member. Again, we must refer to socio-psychological, even societal, mechanisms of intrapersonal changes since these requirements are concentrated in the basic model of the "ideal person" for any society – the "basic personality." According to A. Kardiner and R. Lipton (1945), the basic personality is the main personal structure formed by a given culture based on the shared experience of all members of a society and includes personal traits that make an individual most receptive to that culture, enabling them to achieve the most comfortable and secure state within it.

Using the term "basic," A. Kardiner emphasized the socio-cultural matrices common (modal) to society, which serve as the initial genetic source of various behavioral presentations among society's members. It is in these matrices that the full spectrum—the canon of values—of personal traits valuable to the society is reflected, which are expected to be formed in all its members. This matrix is reflected in societal consciousness within the value system, implicitly carrying the normative image of a person in the economy and constituting the content of the economic culture of the society. These values are the result of the objectification mechanism in property, knowledge, achievements, and projects of humanity, being fixed in the social experience of acceptable ways of appropriation and alienation of life benefits. The latter is preserved in a material or spiritual form detached from the subject. This mechanism operates by objectifying the results of the individual's



creative activity in economic goods, thus embodying the valuable human creativity that satisfies material needs.

The individual masters this creativity through the active process of re-objectifying and further interiorizing the cultural experience of successful "appropriation – alienation" of life benefits. In the process of re-objectifying, the personality masters and reveals for itself the creative potential of humanity through activity, thus gaining social maturity. They emerge as a bearer of the economic value system, achieving a certain level of personal autonomy, independence, and becoming a subject of the economic culture of society.

V. Moskalenko (2013) defines the psychological mechanism of projecting the individual's worldview onto their personal identity, relying on the associative property of thought to create connections between different phenomena by constructing generalized strategies through combining ideas from various fields of experience, helping to achieve the set goal.

In the works of Yu. Shvalb (2004), we find a description of the universal socio-cultural mechanism of "translation" of cultural forms into the contents of consciousness. The key condition for its successful and organized unfolding is that idealized cultural exemplars as norms for building any activities must be incorporated (also suggested during social governance) into the content of educational activities.

Thus, by actively learning to operate with material and spiritual economic objects, the individual becomes the subject of self-transformation. Therefore, in the intrapersonal dimension, we can speak of the mechanisms of economic socialization as psychological processes that ensure the development of those economic-psychological qualities of the personality that will ensure its harmonious integration into economic relations. Thus, the creative mastery of the achievements of the economic culture of society is a crucial condition for the successful economic socialization of the individual.

Studying economic socialization within the opposition "activity – passivity," as noted in our works (Dembytska, 2020; Psychological, 2024), emphasizes the active role of the socialized individual, the subject nature of their acquisition of economic culture through the active comprehension of cultural meanings and values of economic goods, about which they engage in interaction.

In the context of an axiological approach to explaining the active mastery of culture, we speak (Dembytska, 2020) of the mechanisms of value-based mastery of economic reality, as opposed to passively acquiring the corresponding knowledge and practical skills. This occurs through the ethical filling of economic categories: forming one's attitude to labor through behavioral experiences in different environments (household labor, educational activities, etc.), actively acquiring consumer behavior skills, and forming ideas about the presentation of "new" economic phenomena (cryptocurrency, electronic signature, etc.).

Yu. Shvalb (2004) describes the unfolding of an intimate-psychological mechanism of differentiation/integration of the individual's relationships with the surrounding

environment. By the predominance of one of the components of this mechanism, one can distinguish stages of socialization, each with its own socio-psychological meaning. The author starts from the first 4-5 years of a child's life, the primary differentiation of interactions with close surroundings, while the integration process presents itself in the establishment of the child's emotional attachment to the surrounding people. This later stereotypes and determines the stability of the individual's life style. Later, throughout primary school, up until early adolescence, the differentiation of formal and informal relationships takes place. The inclusion of a younger student in the system of formal institutional relationships and regulated interactions, as well as in friendships, when they face their first moral choice, involves differentiating their attitude toward themselves as a subject of this choice and self-organizing their life. In adolescence, the mechanism of differentiation of self-positioning unfolds, allowing the individual to shape the sense of "my own" life space and trajectory of its development as an instance of personal consciousness. In adulthood, the mechanism of differentiation recedes, and integrative processes of development begin to prevail. Finally, the author notes the mechanism of social disintegration, which presents itself in social fatigue, which can be compensated by the emergence of a particular phenomenon - wisdom. This refers to the personal ability to engage in new social differentiations while maintaining a high level of personal integration, which is generally directed not so much at solving an individual's own problems, but at addressing the problems of those around them.

The opposition "structure – unstructured" allows us to view economic socialization within the framework of the classical empirical tradition of scientific analysis, where this phenomenon is studied through the description of the processes involved in the formation and development of a person within the social environment. S. Fera (2016) emphasizes the effectiveness of mechanisms that shape adequate and harmonious ideas about economics, knowledge of economic categories, and the development of economic behavior skills during the senior preschool age. At the same time, the mechanisms of acquiring basic economic concepts and categories, forming essential economic-psychological traits, and gaining initial economic experience are examined. This will enable the individual to later engage as a subject of economic activity.

Discussion

A rather debatable issue in our concept of the mechanisms of economic socialization remains the role of processes of appropriation, which embody the essence of translating the economic content of the culture of economic activity into internal personal structures. There is no consensus among psychologists regarding the sequence or relationship of these processes. However, a number of studies shed light on this matter, revealing the essence of operating with material goods, attributing them the status of "ours," "personal," and, at the same time, internalizing their cultural content.

The complex nature of the mechanism of appropriation is evident in the fact that it has been described in scientific literature as encompassing a broad range of processes: constructing and expressing the identity of an owner (Barrett, 1996), defining socio-



economic status (Barton, 1985: 465-468), mediating the perception of the world or another person by the observer through reading meanings from environmental characteristics (Altman, 1975), internalizing systems of values and methods of categorizing the social world (Dittmar, 1992).

R. Tanchuk (see: Dembytska, 2020) refers to collecting as a practice of appropriation, calling it a mechanism of interpreting the world, a method of establishing control over it, and an activity that imbues the world with meaning. Thus, it is about cognitive and interpretive mechanisms of appropriation as a means of explaining and giving meaning to economic reality. Moreover, the author focuses on the previously mentioned evaluative mechanism, emphasizing that a collection, as a carrier of culture (since it consists of meaningful objects), represents a cultural good. It is valued not for its usefulness, as its practical function may diminish over time, and it may lose its consumer value. Objects in a collection are valued not because they are vital, but because of their importance to the collectors and because the items are endowed with special characteristics such as originality, rarity, mystery, antiquity, memorial value, classicism, preciousness, aesthetics, and so on. These objects are seen as evidence of scientific or historical truth, and they possess axiological qualities that form the basis of their significance. As S. Pearce (Pearce et al., 2009) asserts, objects, through their longevity, are capable of physically transporting the past into the present.

Researchers suggest (Belk, 1995) the existence of an important emotional-value mechanism in the accumulation of owned objects—experiencing satisfaction from power, domination, and control over possessions that have gained the status of "ours." Moreover, following T. Veblen, R. Tanchuk names the act of owning property as confirmation of the owner's power, the foundation of respect and self-respect, and the realization of one's expertise and uniqueness.

Such mechanisms of appropriation, such as the anthropomorphization of "personal" objects during childhood (attributing personal names and titles to them) (Belk, 1995) and the general personalization of the environment (Altman, 1975) — assigning qualities of one's own personality to objects in the external environment — are connected with the development of communicative competence and the arrangement of the owner's life space.

In studies of the connection between "Self" of a person and objects (Belk, 1995; Wolfe, D. Rudy, J. Grusec J. E, 1999), we find references to a mechanism of expanding individuality —literal ("real ownership") and symbolic ("symbolic ownership") through the appropriation of goods. According to R. Belk, objects signify our recognition of the elements of our identity that we can control, as well as those we are subordinated to. The more we believe we own an object or that it owns us, the more it becomes part of our individuality. At the same time, there are at least several psychological mechanisms in scientific sources that explain how objects become part of individuality, which supports our conclusions. The first is called the control mechanism. An example of this is purchasing goods with money, which

gives the person power and confidence in their ability to freely use the object. The same mechanism is triggered in the act of giving, which is associated with the freedom to dispose of the gifted item and simultaneously expand the giver's sense of self.

Another mechanism — creation — is reflected in the conclusions of American researchers on the process of personality formation through transactions with material objects (M. Csikszentmihalyi & R. Halton, 1981). It involves goal-oriented actions and the comprehension of meaning through signs. The authors point out that when a person dedicates time, attention, and effort to an object, they invest mental energy into it. J. Pierce et al. (2009) note that this energy and its outcomes are considered part of the individual's self, as they have "grown" and emerged from the "Self."

When discussing the active internalization of the cultural meaning of material and spiritual objects, it is worth referring to achievements in the field of cultural philosophy. Thus, we address the mechanism of internalizing the value content of economic culture by an individual. Since the current economic culture objectifies humanity's economic experience within its subject, the primary process through which this experience is internalized is the mechanism of depersonalization (V. Moskalenko, Y. Shyhorodsky, O. Mishchenko, 2012).

R. Belk uncovers the essence of another mechanism of appropriating the cultural content of objects — the attribution of authorship to a collection, from naming it to attempting to impose requirements on collection users to preserve its integrity and present it with clear attribution of its creator. This is, in turn, an act of self-definition.

In the study of privacy and the subject-environment approach, we find similar examples illustrating complementary mechanisms of signification and personalization. Every living being pays attention to a significant object, thereby highlighting it as a figure against the background, transforming the "world in general" into a visible, marked world. This is signification — the highlighting of the meaning or value of an object for the individual's life activity. Later, under the influence of the image of the object, certain activities are stimulated to change the life space, and the world, having been merely perceived, becomes transformed and personalized.

Conclusions

In theoretical research, mechanisms of economic socialization have been identified as psychological processes of mutual influence between the subjects of appropriation of economic goods, which ensure the development of personal qualities. These mechanisms are activated in intersubjective interactions. The result of these mechanisms' activation is changes in the significant traits of personality valued by the community, such as economic activity culture — buying, selling, entrepreneurship, paying taxes, volunteering, patronage, etc. The theoretically grounded position is that this system of mechanisms is complex, hierarchical, and unfolds at various levels of socializing influences, specifically on interpersonal and intrapersonal levels. Interpersonal socializing mechanisms act as external conditions and stimuli for intrapersonal mechanisms that lead to changes in the relevant aspects of a person's economic activity.



The idea that the system of psychological mechanisms of socialization functions according to the principle of isomorphism is theoretically substantiated. Invariant psychological mechanisms present both as external socio-psychological processes (affecting the configuration of appropriation relations) and as internal personal mechanisms of change in the components of an individual's economic culture and qualities (within their cognitive, evaluative, and regulatory functions). Both levels of functioning of these mechanisms form a unified system of mutual influences on the individual, resulting in the deliberate transformation of their economic-psychological traits, aligned with the model of the economically socialized person in a market economy, such as the model of an entrepreneurial individual.

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