

**PECULIARITIES OF LIFE VALUES AND EXPERIENCES OF LONELINESS
IN INDIVIDUALS OF DIFFERENT AGE GROUPS**

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Abstract

The article is devoted to the study of the dominant life values and peculiarities of loneliness experiences in individuals of different age groups in adolescence and adulthood. The sample consisted of two groups. The first comprises 30 people aged 18 to 25, 15 - females and 15 - males. The second group comprises 30 people aged 40 to 50 years, 15 - females and 15 - males. Due to quarantine restrictions one-week study was conducted online using Google Drive.

Research methods used in this article are as follows: "Differential questionnaire of loneliness" by E.M. Osina and D.O. Leontieva to determine the level of loneliness, which includes the acceptance of this loneliness, positive loneliness and dependence on communication; methodology "Diagnosis of the level of subjective feeling of loneliness" by D. Russell, L. Popel, M. Ferguson in the adaptation of N.E. Vodopyanova to determine the level of negative loneliness; methodology "Value Questionnaire" by S.H. Schwartz to study the life values of the individual.

The study found that young people are dominated by the values of independence in thoughts, openness to change, independence in behavior in contrast to adults, who are dominated by the values of self-transcendence, openness to change, motives of hedonism in behavior. An important vital value for both age groups was openness to change, which, we can assume, is not related to age. It was also determined that the highest level of loneliness and positive loneliness is observed in respondents aged 18 to 25 years, in contrast to the subjects aged 40-50.

The studied theoretical and practical aspects of the connection between experiencing loneliness and life values of the individual made it clear that certain life values have a close direct or inverse connection with the feeling of loneliness, namely with the values of hedonism, self-aggrandizement in behavior, independence in behavior and also have a direct significant relation to the feeling of loneliness, while the motives of kindness, security and self-transcendence in behavior have a significant inverse connection with the feeling of loneliness.

The prospects for the research in this area are quite large, but we have identified a way for the further research, which involves comparing our data with the fact whether the subject has a family or not.

Keywords: loneliness, life values, connection of loneliness experience and life values, influence of life values on feelings of loneliness.

Introduction

The scale of the problem of experiencing loneliness by a modern person is exemplified by the following data: no more than 1-2% of individuals questioned by

psychologists in terms of this experience usually pointed out that they had never felt lonely in their lives, while about 10-30% stated that they experienced this feeling at least once in life. Another part of the respondents asserted that they either often experience a state of loneliness or stay in this state constantly.

Loneliness is an emotional state that is most often associated with a lack of close, emotional connections with people or with the fear of losing them as a result of a certain psychological reason or forced social isolation.

Feelings of loneliness can be related to various psychological factors, among which the values of life, that, as we believe, belong to the main regulators of human behavior and life.

Life values determine orientation of the individual, the attitude of the individual to the surrounding reality, other people and to oneself. They are the core of worldview and motivation for life activity.

There are many studies that determine the peculiarities of experiencing loneliness in people of different age groups; usually these are teenagers, adolescents and the elderly (Zotova, 1987). You can also find many studies aimed at determining the values of life (Reznik, 2002).

Falling back on the definition of life values and the concept of "loneliness", we have made the assumption that each age group has priority life values and the experience of loneliness may be associated with certain life values of the individual.

The aim of the article is identification of the priority life values in adolescents and adults, their level of loneliness and the relationship between the life values of the individual and the experience of loneliness.

Theoretical background

Previously, loneliness was considered as a predominantly physical characteristic, but over time and in the course of research, loneliness has acquired a purely psychological meaning, its manifestations have been studied on a personal level. Currently, scientists are actively conducting research on loneliness: its types, manifestations of feelings of isolation, uselessness, methods of mastering it, effective ways of regulating the experience of loneliness, alienation, and so on. The research was based on the theory that defines loneliness as an emotional state associated with a lack of close, positive emotional connections with people and / or fear of losing them as a result of an existing or hidden psychological cause of social isolation (Verbitskaya, 2002). In the modern foreign scientific literature, the problem of loneliness has been actively studied since about the 50s of the XX century. Aspects of loneliness are reflected in the works of such researchers as B.M. Golota, Y.M. Schwalb and others (Golota, 2004; Schwalb, 1991). Experience of loneliness and attitude to it (D.O. Leontiev, E.N. Osin, Z.S. Perlova), the phenomenon of loneliness as a subjective experience and its socio-psychological peculiarities, loneliness, alienation and their psychological aspects, different types of loneliness and ways of overcoming loneliness ((Voznyuk, Kolesnichenko, 2017; Osin, Perlova, 2012) are topical issues for research. Mental state of loneliness is investigated in the works of K. Rogers and E. Ash as a feeling that arises when realizing the difference between a personal position and the desires of society (Rogers, 2001; Ash, Micelles, Morash, 1989).

We distinguish explicit and implicit (hidden from the environment) loneliness. Explicit loneliness is formed as a physical phenomenon and occurs when a person with a lack of communication with people, wants to communicate, but cannot. Loneliness in an implicit (hidden from the environment) form is much more common. A person is constantly surrounded by people, communicates with them, but at the same time feels alienated and unnecessary. The problem of implicit loneliness is now very common among adolescents, and if it is not solved and addressed in time, it passes on to the stage of adult life, which is accompanied by the inability to establish long-term social relations. Ignoring the problem, such people deliberately doom themselves to loneliness. It is difficult to detect this kind of experience of loneliness, because such a person in society behaves in the most ordinary way (Labyrinths of Loneliness, 1989).

In the course of the research, more and more scientists distinguish between positive and destructive loneliness.

Positive loneliness or solitude is a necessary, desirable state that forms a full-fledged self-sufficient personality, while destructive loneliness has opposite features (Miyuskovich, 1989).

W. Sadler and T. Johnson (Labyrinths of Loneliness, 1989) distinguish types of loneliness in terms of four "dimensions": cosmic, cultural, social, interpersonal. Cosmic loneliness is present when there is a problem with the preservation of oneself as a holistic reality, due to which an individual will relate himself to nature and universe, or when there is involvement with mystical secret aspects of life close to the depths of existence, or when the individual believes in the uniqueness of his/her destiny or in involvement in major historical goals.

Cultural loneliness is most often experienced because of the separation of the individuals from the cultural heritage that has always been a part of their lives (such loneliness is most often experienced by immigrants), simple human living in the modern world for especially vulnerable individuals can be the cause of this type of consciousness.

Social loneliness most often occurs due to social isolation which can manifest itself in the form of boycott, expulsion or resignation. This type of loneliness appears when a person is deprived of the opportunity to be included in a group (social circle) that he/she considers important and desirable for himself.

Interpersonal loneliness often occurs when a person experiences a lack of friendship or intimacy. There are two main areas in the study of factors associated with this measurement of loneliness. One of them considers possible situations in which loneliness occurs, i.e. the locus of attention shifts to external factors. The second direction studies the nature of the lonely personality and is therefore guided by internal factors.

The types of loneliness experiences, which are based on temporal characteristics, are also studied. Thus, researchers distinguish: chronic loneliness (if a person has no social contacts for a long time) and situational loneliness (which is associated with stressful life events that may relate to the death of a partner or divorce). The latter is called "temporary" and occurs only in certain periods of life when a person for a relatively short time feels lonely. Based on the above mentioned, it is appropriate to

define loneliness as a temporary mood, but we should not equate this concept with active loneliness, which is a necessity, and the manifestation of loneliness as a way of life.

Life values are one of the aspects of life which accompany a person throughout his life and change in the process of reshaping his/her thoughts and attitudes. In the structure of a mature, developed personality values perform the function of perspective strategic life goals and motives, the realization of which is expressed in the contribution of the individual to culture, the creation of its new, objective forms of values (Frankl, 1990).

The works of O. Zotova, O. Bobrenko and other researchers are devoted to the definition of the peculiarities of life values in adolescence (Zotova, 1989; Bobrenko, 2011). They dwell on the dependence of social activity of the individual on its orientation. Value orientations in the context of problems of regulation and forecasting of social behavior are considered by such scientists as V.O. Yadov, E.G. Chernova (Yadov, 1975; Chernova, 2003). The dynamics of value orientations were studied by A.L. Zhuravlyov and Y. Y. Kolyagina (Zhuravleva, 2011; Kolyagina, 2004).

According to M. Rokich's theory, two main groups of life values can be distinguished: terminal and instrumental, or goal values and money values (Rokeach, 1972).

- terminal values are reflected in the belief that some ultimate goal of individual existence from a personal or social point of view is worth striving for;
- instrumental values determine the course of action that is best in any situation from a personal or social point of view;

Terminal and instrumental values can be distinguished as interconnected "blocks" (Leontiev, 2003).

In the first block, which is created by means of the interaction of terminal and instrumental values, we can highlight the following:

- 1) concrete life values and abstract values;
- 2) the values of professional self-realization and the values of personal life;
- 3) individual values and values of interpersonal relations;
- 4) active and passive values.

The combination of terminal and instrumental values in the second block leads to the formation of the following:

- 1) ethical values - the values of interpersonal communication - the values of professional self-realization;
- 2) individualistic values - conformist values - altruistic values;
- 3) the values of self-affirmation - the values of acceptance of others;
- 4) intellectual - emotional worldview.

In our study, we relied on the approach of S. Schwartz, that is a modified version of the theory of M. Rokich (Schwartz, 1987). He highlights the following values:

- 1) values of preservation (security, conformity, traditions);
- 2) values of change (completeness of feelings, self-regulation);
- 3) the values of self-determination (the well-being of the group and humanity as a whole);

4) the values of self-aggrandizement (power, achievement, hedonism).

Methodology

For the empirical study of the relationship between loneliness and life values, the following methods were used: "Differential questionnaire of loneliness" by E.M. Osina and D.O. Leontieva (<https://testometrika.com/personality-and-temper/the-differential-questionnaire-feelings-of-loneliness/>). The full version of the questionnaire contains 40 statements grouped into 8 subscales and 3 scales.

Subscale 1 "Isolation" contains allegations that there are no people with whom close contact is possible. Subscale 2 "Experiencing loneliness" includes statements that construct the image of the respondent's self as a lonely person. Subscale 3 "Alienation" emphasizes the lack of meaningful connections with others. Subscale 4 "Dysphoria of loneliness" measures the negative feelings associated with being alone. Subscale 5 "Loneliness as a problem" reflects a negative assessment of loneliness as a phenomenon. Subscale 6 "Need for a company" measures the experience of the need to communicate. Subscale 7 "The Joy of Solitude" measures a person's acceptance of loneliness and solitariness. Subscale 8 "Solitude Resource" contains statements that reflect the productive aspects of solitude. The sum of subscales 1-3 gives a score on the scale "General loneliness" - a current feeling of loneliness, the lack of close communication with other people. The sum of subscales 4-6 gives a score on the scale "Dependence on communication" - rejection of loneliness, inability to be alone. The sum of subscales 7-8 gives a score on the scale "Positive loneliness", which measures a person's ability to find a resource alone, creatively use it for self-knowledge and self-development.

Methodology "Diagnosis of the level of subjective feelings of loneliness" by D. Russell, L. Popel, M. Ferguson in the adaptation of N.E. Vodopyanova (<https://psytests.org/interpersonal/lonvod-run.html>) consists of 20 statements to which there are four possible answers: "often", "sometimes", "rarely", "never". The methodology itself is based on the theory that loneliness is a complex feeling that binds together something lost by the inner world of the individual. The feeling of loneliness motivates a person to energetically search for resources to confront this state, which blocks a person's ability to fulfill his expectations and hopes. There is a cognitive moment in the feeling of loneliness. It signals a person, "who I am in this life."

The first part of the "Value Questionnaire" by S. Schwartz (<https://onlinetestpad.com/ru/test/148095-cennostnyj-oprosnik-shvarca>) is designed to study the values, ideals and beliefs that influence the personality. The list of values consists of two parts: nouns and adjectives, which include 57 values. The respondent evaluates each of the proposed values on a scale from 7 to -1 points. The second part of the Schwartz questionnaire is the personality profile. It consists of 40 descriptions of a person, characterizing 10 types of values. A scale from 4 to -1 points is used to evaluate the descriptions. By values Shalom Schwartz meant "identified" needs that directly depend on the culture, environment and mentality of a particular society. The Schwartz questionnaire is based on the theory according to which all values are divided into social and individual.

Characteristics of the sample. Our sample consists of two groups. The first consists of 30 people aged 18 to 25, 15 - females and 15 - males. The second group consists of 30 people aged 40 to 50 years, 15 - females and 15 - males. All participants either study at universities or work, and their professions are diametrically different - from teacher to a bus driver. The survey was conducted during the week in an online format due to quarantine restrictions. The right of anonymity was preserved and each respondent could obtain his / her processed results at will.

Results

After processing the results of the methods "Diagnosis of the level of subjective feeling of loneliness" by D. Russell, L. Popel and M. Ferguson, adaptation of N.E. Vodopyanova and "Differential questionnaire of loneliness" by E.M. Osin, and D.O. Leontiev it was determined that there are age-specific peculiarities of experiencing loneliness. Almost 17% of adolescents have a high level of loneliness as opposed to 3% of adults; 47 percent of adolescents have a low level of loneliness as opposed to 67 percent of adults (see Figure 1-2). According to Pearson's χ^2 criterion, it was found that there are differences in the two empirical distributions for the experience of loneliness (χ^2 empirical (13.08) > χ^2 critical (9.21; $p < 0.01$).

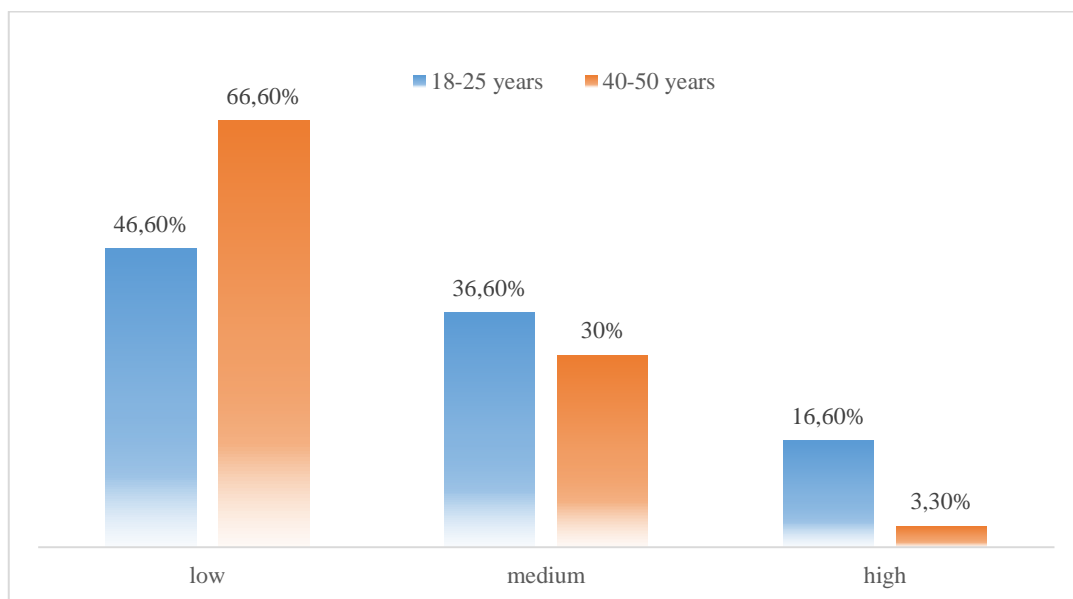


Fig.1. Indicators of loneliness in people of different ages

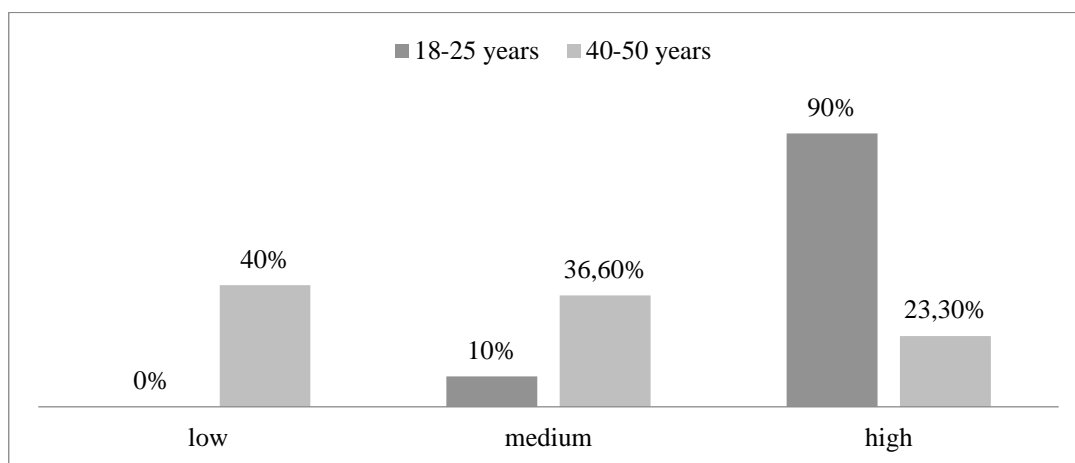


Fig.2. Indicators of experiencing positive loneliness in people of different ages

However, it should be noted that individuals aged 18 to 25 have a high level of positive loneliness. This means that young people can use this state for reflection and self-development.

Pearson's criterion χ^2 test was used to determine whether there were significant differences in the experience of positive loneliness between adolescents and adults. It was determined that χ^2 is empirical (94, 38) > χ^2 is critical (9.21; $p < 0.01$), which means that there are differences in the two empirical distributions.

In the course of the study of life values of different age groups using the method of S. Schwartz, it was found that between them there are both differences in the priority of values and similarities in the value "openness to change" (see Fig. 3-6).

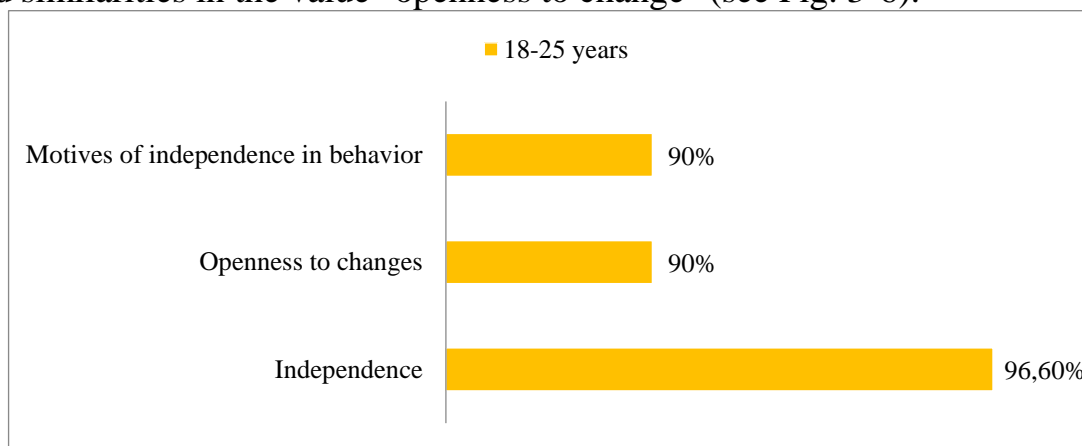


Fig. 3. Percentage distribution according to the indicator of the most important life values for adolescence

Thus, according to the results of the method in question, it can be noted that for the sample which represents individuals aged 18 to 25 years, the most important life value is independence of thoughts. In second place in importance are openness to change and motives for independence in behavior, actions and deeds. These results prove the importance of independence for young people in the period of their formation as individuals.

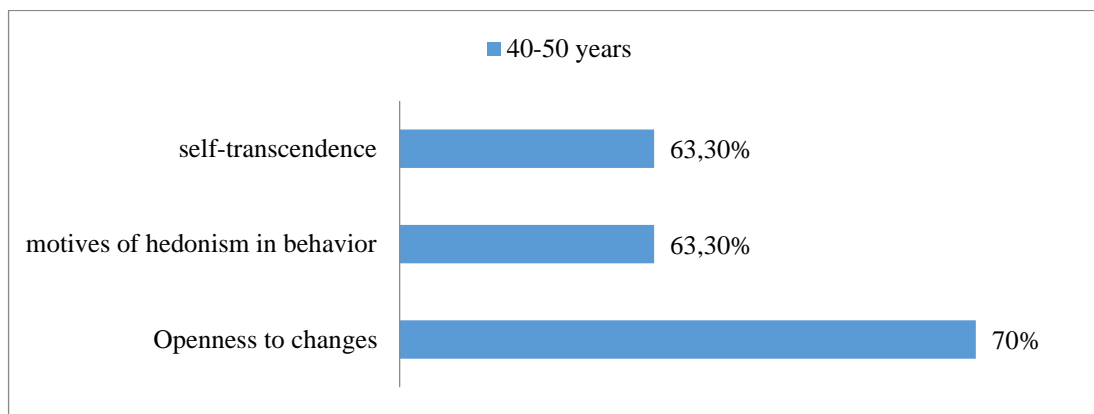


Fig. 4. Percentage distribution according to the indicator of the most important life values for adulthood

For the age group from 40 to 50 years, the most important life values are openness to change, which in turn may be due to the constant changes of the modern world and the constant need to adapt to it. Another important value for mature people is the value of self-transcendence and the motives of hedonism in behavior.

Using Fisher's angular transformation criterion to determine whether the differences between the percentages in adolescents and adults on the frequency of selection of chosen values are significant, the following was discovered:

- the value of self-transcendence was determined by $\varphi_{\text{empirical}} (2.93)$. Comparing it with the critical (2.81); $p < 0.001$ it was found that there are significant differences between the percentages of adolescents and adults in the frequency of choosing the value of self-transcendence as important in life;

- the value of hedonism in life was determined by $\varphi_{\text{empirical}} (4.25)$. Comparing it with the critical (2.81); $p < 0.001$ it was found that there are significant differences between the percentages of adolescents and adults in the frequency of its choice;

- independence in thought - was determined by $\varphi_{\text{empirical}} (4.39)$. Comparing it with the critical (2.81); $p < 0.001$ it was found that there are significant differences between the percentages of adolescents and adults in the frequency of its election;

- independence in behavior which has significant differences as well, was determined by $\varphi_{\text{empirical}} (3.43) > \varphi_{\text{critical}} (2.81)$; $p < 0.001$;

- the value of openness to changes, which in both groups occupy the third place, also has significant differences $\varphi_{\text{empirical}} (1.99) > \varphi_{\text{critical}} = 1.64$; $p < 0.05$.

Thus, it can be noted that the most important value for the age group from 18 to 25 years is independence in behavior, openness to change and independence. For the age group of 40 to 50, the most important life values are self-transcendence, hedonism in behavior and openness to change. It can be determined that the value of openness to change is equally important regardless of age.

The correlation analysis (Pearson's correlation coefficient), which was carried out in SPSS, found that certain life values have a direct significant connection with the feeling of loneliness. These are hedonism, self-aggrandizement and independence in behavior. The value of "independence in behavior" has a direct significant connection with the general experience of loneliness, with dependence on communication, and with isolated loneliness and is not related to positive loneliness.

The values of kindness, security, and self-transcendence in behavior have an inverse significant connection with the feeling of loneliness.

Positive loneliness has a direct significant connection with the values of self-aggrandizement in behavior, hedonism, stimulation in behavior and the motive of independence in behavior.

The obtained data point to the connection between life values and the feeling of loneliness of the individual.

Discussion

The main results of our study indicate that there are differences not only in the experience of loneliness, but also in significant life values in adolescents and adults. We believe that the establishment of the value of "openness to change" in individuals of both age groups is a rather important point. Establishing the connection between certain life values, experience and types of loneliness shows that loneliness associated with certain life values, such as independence, autonomy in behavior and rejection of traditions, can be a person's choice. Candidate of Psychological Sciences D. Kashirsky in his article "Psychological features of value systems of students with varying degrees of loneliness" in particular emphasized and considered the aspect of loneliness in connection with self-realization as a value. His main idea was that if students are lonely, it puts obstacles in their way to self-realization (Kashirsky, 2008). Our researches coincided in terms of the fact that students have a low level of loneliness. (Kashirsky, 2008). At the same time, we found that students are characterized by positive loneliness, which they use for self-knowledge and self-development. Also, to compare the results, we studied the article by Y. (Kolyagina, 2004) "Dynamics of value orientations in adolescence" in which the author studied the value orientations and the dynamics of their growth, rather than their connection with the feeling of loneliness. (Kolyagina, 2004). These studies also indicate that the value of independence, which includes freedom and independence, is important for young people. We determined another dominant value - openness to change. In our study, we identified the links between value orientations and feelings of loneliness in different age groups.

Conclusion

The article shows that loneliness is an emotional state associated with the absence of close, positive emotional connections with people and/or with the fear of losing them as a result of an existing or hidden psychological cause of social isolation. The existence of explicit and implicit (hidden from the environment) loneliness is theoretically substantiated. Explicit loneliness is formed as a physical phenomenon when a person experiences a lack of communication. Implicit loneliness is manifested when a person is constantly surrounded by people, communicates with them, but at the same time feels alienated and unnecessary. Such a person does not feel much love and affection from them.

It is shown that life values determine orientation of the individual, the attitude of the individual to the surrounding reality, other people, to oneself. Value orientations can also be considered as a relatively stable, socially conditioned attitude of an individual to a set of material and spiritual benefits and ideals, which are seen as goals and means to meet the needs of an individual. It was empirically determined that the following values

prevail in young people: independence, openness to change, independence motives in behavior. In adults such values as self-transcendence, openness to change, motives of hedonism in behavior prevail. For both age groups, an important life value is openness to change. At the same time, for the age group 18-25 the value of independence (thoughts) and independence in behavior (actions) prevail. For the age group 40-50 the most important value is self-transcendence, as a combination of universalism and kindness and hedonism which presupposes getting pleasure from life.

In the course of the study it was determined that the highest level of loneliness is observed in the subjects aged 18 to 25 years, in contrast to the respondents aged 40-50.

It was also found that the components of loneliness are presented differently in the subjects of these two groups: a high level of positive loneliness is more pronounced in individuals aged 18-25. This indicates that people of this age experience loneliness as a positive phenomenon necessary for cognition and reflection.

It has been established that such values as hedonism, self-aggrandizement in behavior, independence in behavior have a direct significant connection with the feeling of loneliness while the motives of kindness, safety and self-transcendence in behavior are inversely related.

Positive loneliness has a direct significant connection with self-aggrandizement in behavior, openness to change, hedonism, stimulation and openness to change in behavior.

The conducted empirical research helped us to determine the priority life values of people of different age groups and the peculiarities of the relationship between certain life values and the feeling of loneliness.

Research prospects. In the future, we consider it necessary to expand the research, including the data on whether the subject has a family or not and the peculiarities of his relationships in the parental family.

Conflict of interests

In the course of the research, none of the co-authors declared a conflict of interests.

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