



## Anthropological Mechanisms of Self-management of Personality Behavior

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### ABSTRACT

Security of personality is not only a set of specific measures to ensure its protection from various dangers, but a condition of being protected, which is based on the ability to self-manage one's own behavior. The aim of the article is to identify the anthropological mechanisms to self-manage the behavior of the individual. The leading approach to the study is the anthropological approach that considers the personality as a product of human existence; the aggregate's bearer of socially significant features and mental characteristics, established during ontogeny and determining the behavior of the individual, as a conscious entity of activities and social relations. The article defines the essence and structure of psychological security of a person; clarifies and describes cognitive, emotional, behavioral self-regulation mechanisms to promote the effectiveness of coping behavior of the individual; identifies and justifies mechanisms of information-psychological self-protection that are manifested in the unconscious, subconscious and conscious levels. The paper submissions can be useful for managers and teachers of educational institutions; employees of the centers of advanced training and retraining of personnel in the selection and structuring of the content for the training of scientific and pedagogical staff.

**Keywords:** Self-management, Anthropological Mechanisms, Psychological Safety, Coping Behavior

**JEL Classifications:** I21, I25, I28

### 1. INTRODUCTION

The relevance of the study is conditioned by the complexity of life activities of modern society, which leads to serious negative consequences: Psycho-emotional and socio-psychological tension, distortion of moral criteria and norms, moral and political disorientation, inappropriate behavior of individuals, groups and masses of people (Tsygankov, 2010). Today, it is possible to speak about the occurrence of a new direction in science - The psychology of security. The research subject of the security psychology are: (1) Mental processes (cognitive, emotional, volitional), which are caused by vital activities functions of personality and affecting its safety; (2) personality's traits (temperament, abilities, orientation, character) that affect the security of professional activities and social interaction; (3) the mental state of the person (paroxysmal

disorders of consciousness, psychogenic changes in mood and affective state, an altered state of consciousness) that affect the security of its activities and social interaction (Efimova, 2010; Minimansurovich, 2014; Kalimullin and Vasyagina, 2015; Telegina et al., 2015). The conducted researches show that in conditions of growing anomie, characterized by the disintegration of moral and value system, the person needs in protection of its consciousness from the effects which are able against its will and desire to modify the mental states that can dramatically affect the person as far as to change its way of life and career (Pugacheva et al., 2016; Levina et al., 2015; Vlasova et al., 2015). Security of personality is not only a set of specific measures to ensure its protection from various dangers, but the state of being secured (Maslow, 1959). This state is based, first, on the activities of people, societies, state, international community to identify, study,

prevent, weaken, eliminate dangers and threats which are able to destroy them, to deprive the fundamental material and spiritual values, to bring objectively and subjectively unacceptable damage, to close the path to survival and development; secondly, on the ability of the individual to self-manage its behavior. Personality is a socio-psychological, relatively stable and vitally emerging formation, which is a system of motivational and consumerist relations, which are formed and modified as a result of adaptation to a constantly changing environment and objective transformation of the world. To be personality means to be the entity of one's own life, to build one's vital (in the broad sense) contacts with the world (Petrovsky and Yaroshevsky, 2001; Yashkova and Kalimullin, 2015; Kamalova and Zakirova, 2014). All the above mentioned determines the aim of the study - to identify the anthropological self-controlling mechanisms of the individual's behavior.

## 2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The leading approach to the study is the anthropological approach that considers the personality, as a product of human existence; the aggregate's bearer of socially significant features and mental characteristics, established during ontogeny and determining the behavior of the individual as a conscious entity of activities and social relations (Yepaneshnikov et al., 2016; Kalimullin and Masalimova, 2016). Anthropological approach allows as essential personality's characteristics to determine the multidimensionality, complexity and ambiguity. Multidimensionality is manifested in the subjective understanding of the phenomenon of personality, which is expressed, depending on the particular worldview of the researcher (Petrovsky and Yaroshevsky, 2001). The diversity is found in interdisciplinary status of the concept of "personality;" the richness of language features, describing personality and its manifestations; the contingency of such terms as "individual," "individuality," "entity of security," "personality" (Efimova, 2010). The ambiguity is expressed in different understanding of the etymology and the diversity of definitions of the notion "personality;" the division of research orientation (focusing on understanding of regularities of behavior's self-conduct) and practical position (directed to ensure personal safety) (Petrova et al., 2016; Mokeyeva et al., 2015). In the process of the research the combination of methods was used: Theoretical (analysis, synthesis, generalization, classification), sociological (observation, interviews, questionnaires, expert evaluation) and psychological (diagnostic methods).

## 3. RESULTS

The main results of this study are: (1) The nature and structure of psychological security of a person; (2) the mechanisms of self-regulation to promote the effectiveness of coping behavior of the individual; (3) the mechanisms of information-psychological self-protection; (4) experimental verification of the theoretical conclusions.

### 3.1. The Nature and Structure of Psychological Security of a Person

It is established that the psychological security of the person is a complexly structured system of mental processes, ensuring the

implementation of socially significant needs. The structure of psychological security can be divided into the following levels: Senses and feelings, perception and evaluation of reality according to the criterion of dangerous-safe, analysis and forecasting for a secure future. The process of formation and development of psychological security implies the reflection by the personality of dangers and threats in the form of anthropological mechanisms, which serve as the basis for preliminary programming of actions and their regulation during activities. The different entities in the same environment can experience a different degree of security and to give preference to different anthropological mechanisms of behavior's self-control, being determined by their behavior in different situations (Pugacheva et al., 2016). Therefore, the psychological security of the person is caused by the individual understanding of dangers and threats, emerging in the process of socialization.

### 3.2. The Mechanisms of Self-regulation to Promote the Effectiveness of Coping Behavior of the Individual

Self-regulation is considered as a systematically organized process of internal mental activity on initiation, construction, management of various forms of activity aimed at the achievement of goals. Awareness of self-regulation is characterized by the ability to build plans and programs of one's activity, their accessibility to conscious analysis, assessment and control (Konopkin, 2005). The mechanisms of self-regulation contributing to the effectiveness of coping behavior of the individual is a targeted changing of individual psycho-physiological functions and nervous and mental state in general, which is achieved by specially organized mental activity, with the aim of methods' choice to protect the consciousness from stress and to form adequate information and orientation base of personality's life-activities. Coping strategy is a set of cognitive, emotional, behavioral forms of personal activity, directed on overcoming of dangers and threats and ensuring of their own safety. It is found that the mechanisms of self-regulation contributing to the effectiveness of the coping behavior of an individual can be: (1) Cognitive (concentration of the attention, self-hypnosis, conscious self-management, information integration, self-monitoring, self-awareness, self-perception, the formation of sanogenic thinking, changing of positions, removing of the "lack of information); (2) emotional (seeking for support, positive reassessment, creating of sensory images, muscular self-control, autogenic training, self-disclosure); (3) behavioral (confrontation, distancing, collaboration, competition, compromise, avoidance, adaptation, role playing, self-determination, de-individualization, self-presentation, self-identification, social borrowing).

### 3.3. Mechanisms of Information-psychological Self-protection

It is established that the mechanisms of information-psychological self-protection are autonomous structural-functional formations, ensuring the protection of the individual against internal psychological discomfort or external psychological influence, and contributing to the preservation of the psychological stability and homeostasis that contribute to the formation and functioning of adequate information and orientation base of life activities and effective self-realization (Pugacheva et al., 2016). Mechanisms of information-psychological self-protection are

implemented on three psychological levels: (1) Unconscious protecting the individual from emotionally negative overload and including instinctive-reflexive mechanisms of information-psychological self-protection (this retro mechanisms - retreat, self-closing, etc.), (2) subconscious protecting the person from the perception of stressful information, manipulative information impacts, causing a steady focus on coping behavior and including unconscious generalized mechanisms of information-psychological self-defense (these are the ethno-modus mechanisms [from lat. modus - method, form] - repression, suppression, asceticism, nihilism, leaving in virtual reality); (3) the conscious, promoting creation of volitional programs of self-defense, manifested by automatisms (complexes of stereotyped self-protection mechanisms in typical situations - aggression, idealization, humor, emotional burnout, depreciation) and logical-semantic mechanisms (identification, role playing, rationalization, intellectualization, compensation). Thus, based on the psychological levels of mechanisms' implementation of information-psychological self-protection, the following mechanisms can be identified: Retro-mechanisms (unconscious level), modus-mechanisms (subconscious level) and volitional mechanisms (conscious level). All the apparent variety of mechanisms of information-psychological self-protection can be reduced to a single function: The achievement of a comfortable condition, safe. Mechanisms of information-psychological self-protection are not built-in at birth structural and functional formations. In the process of socialization these mechanisms arise, are changed and are reconstructed under the influence of information effects. For example, the defense can be transformed into altruism or the accumulation of values, etc., (Table 1).

### 3.4. Experimental Verification of Theoretical Conclusions

Experimental verification of theoretical conclusions was conducted on the basis of Kazan state University of architecture and construction from 2014 to 2016. The experiment was attended by 445 students. Experimental testing took place in three stages: Ascertaining, forming and control.

On ascertaining stage based on the methodology "Hierarchy of needs" the basic needs of students were identified (Posokhova

and Solov'eva, 2008). Students were given 15 statements. It was suggested to compare these statements among themselves in pairs: The first statement with the second, then the first statement with the third one, etc. The results each student put down in column 1, if comparing the first assertion with the second the second one was preferred, so in primary cell the number 2 was put down. If the preferred one was the first statement then the number 1 was put down. And this was done for every comparison. Then the same operations were made with the second assertion: A comparison was made of the second with the third, then the fourth, etc. Each comparison of statements' pairs were advised to begin with words "I want": (1) To achieve recognition and respect, (2) to have warm relations with people, (3) to secure the future, (4) to earn a living, (5) to have good interlocutors, (6) to consolidate my position, (7) to develop my powers and abilities, (8) to provide for my own material comfort, (9) to increase the level of skill and competence, (10) to avoid troubles, (11) to strive for the new and unknown, (12) to secure a position to influence, (13) to buy good things, (14) to work, requiring my full commitment, (15) to be understood by others. Table 1 shows the answer sheet filled by one of the students.

For processing and interpretation of results it was recommended to count how many times each statement could be met. The sums received were put down in the last cell of each column. These operations provided an opportunity to determine preferences on all claims. Next the sums of scores on five scales were calculated. Table 2 contains the keys for processing of the results by the method of "hierarchy of needs."

The final procedure was to construct by each student of their own profile of satisfaction of needs on the five scales. This requires the above amount to be postponed for each scale. Three areas are defined: Full satisfaction 0-13 points; partial satisfaction 13-26 points; complete dissatisfaction - 26-39 points. Summarizing the results obtained, it is found that full or partial satisfaction is natural for needs in interpersonal relationships and the respect of others (Table 3).

From Table 3 it follows that for most students the need for security is not fully satisfied. This allowed us to develop and include in the curriculum a special course on "Mechanisms of self-regulation and self-protection."

On the forming stage the most common variants of coping behavior were identified by the method of Heim. The methodology is adapted in the laboratory of clinical psychology of the psycho-neurological Institute named after Bekhterev, under the guidance

**Table 1: The answer sheet by the method "hierarchy of needs" filled by one of the students**

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
1	3	3	4	6	6	8	8	10	10	12	13	13	15	6
3	4	3	4	7	8	9	10	9	12	13	12	13	1	
4	2	3	4	8	6	10	8	12	13	11	12	12		
1	6	3	8	9	10	11	8	13	10	15	10			
6	2	8	4	10	6	12	13	14	10	3				
1	8	3	10	5	12	13	8	15	12					
8	9	10	4	12	13	7	8	5						
9	10	3	12	13	6	15	12							
10	2	3	13	5	6	2								
11	12	13	4	15	8									
12	13	3	15	2										
13	2	3	8											
1	15	10												
1	4													
5														

**Table 2: The keys for processing of the results by the method of "hierarchy of needs"**

No. of scales	The name of the scale	Assertion numbers
I	Financial situation	4, 8, 13
II	The need for security	3, 6, 10
III	The need for interpersonal relationships	2, 5, 15
IV	The need for respect of the others	1, 9, 12
V	The need for self-realization	7, 11, 14

**Table 3: Generalized profile of needs' satisfaction (%)**

No. of scales	The name of the scale	Criteria		
		Full satisfaction	Partial satisfaction	Full dissatisfaction
I	Financial situation	24	29	47
II	The need for security	26	32	42
III	The need for interpersonal relationships	76	12	12
IV	The need for respect of the others	63	19	18
V	The need for selfrealization	28	24	48

**Table 4: The results of the students' choice of variants of coping behavior (%)**

Orientation of coping strategies	Options of coping behavior	Statement	The results of the students' choice
Cognitive	Ignoring	I say to myself: At the moment there is something more important than the difficulties	6
	Humility	I say to myself: This is fate, got to roll with it	5
	Dissimulation	It's not essential difficulties, not so bad, basically all good	11
	Preservation of self-control	I do not lose composure and control in difficult moments and try not to show anyone my state	10
	Problem analysis	I try to analyze, make conclusions and explain to myself what had happened	11
	Relativity	I say to myself, in comparison with the problems of other people my problems - is trifle	19
	Religiosity	If something happened, God was so pleased	7
	Confusion	I do not know what to do and I sometimes think that I cannot get out of these difficulties	13
	The addition of sense	I give special significance to my difficulties, overcoming them, I cultivate myself	7
	Setting of one's own values	At this time I cannot fully cope with these difficulties, but over time I will be able to cope with them, and with the more complex of them	11
Emotional	The protest	I am always deeply angered by the injustice of fate to me and protest'	7
	Emotional discharge	I despair, I weep and I cry	4
	The suppression of emotions	I suppress emotions in myself	20
	Optimism	I always believe that there is a way out of a difficult situation	38
	Passive cooperation	I trust my challenges to overcome to other people who are willing to help me	12
Behavioral	Obedience	I fall into a state of hopelessness	3
	The self-blame	I feel guilty and get what I deserve	9
	Aggressiveness	I fall into a rage, becoming aggressive	7
	Distraction	I plunge into a favorite hobby, trying to forget about the difficulties	2
	Altruism	I try to help people and cares about them make me forget my afflictions	1
	Active avoidance	I try not to think, avoid focusing on my troubles	1
	Compensation	I try to distract and relax (with the help of alcohol, sedatives, delicious food, and so on)	4
	Constructive activity	In order to survive the difficulties, I undertake the implementation of long-standing dream (go to travel, attend the foreign language courses, and so on)	2
	Retreat	I am isolated, I try to stay alone	1
	Collaboration	I use my partnership with the dare people for me to overcome difficulties	37
Treatment	I usually look for people who are able to advise me	52	

of Professor Wasserman (2009). This technique allows us to investigate 26 situational-specific variants of coping behavior, distributed in accordance with the three directions of coping strategies (cognitive, emotional and behavioral) (Ivanov and Garanyan, 2010). According to the instructions, students were offered three statements relating to behavior. The number which suited them, they circled. In each block of statements it was necessary to choose only one option. Table 3 shows the ratio of coping strategies' directions, options for coping behavior, statements and results of the students' choice.

From Table 4 it can be seen that the most common coping behavior's variants are relativity, optimism, and emotional repression, treatment, and collaboration.

Relationships between accentuation (character traits) and variants of coping behavior were established on the control stage of the experiment (Nepomnyaschaya, 2001). It is found that for the excitable, anxious and fearful types of accentuations coping strategies of emotional orientation dominate. The demonstrative types are increasingly presented by behavioral coping strategies.

The stuck, pedantic and exalted types of accentuations are characterized by cognitive coping-strategy. The experiment shows that for most students the satisfaction of security needs is very important. The study of a special course “Mechanisms of self-regulation and self-protection” allows students to learn the options of coping behavior and to choose the most preferred on the basis of character accentuations.

#### 4. DISCUSSIONS

Problem of management of personality’s behavior has already been considered in the current literature. In studies of Abulkhanova-Slavskaya (1980), Leontiev (1975), it is emphasized that any activities of human as the entity includes those or other mental processes and is regulated by them. Indeed, a person acts as a regulator of its mental capacity and its consciousness determines its qualities. Therefore, we believe that the security of the person can be, above all, provided by mechanisms of self-regulation and self-protection. In the works of Verbina (2013), Efimova (2010) the concept of “psychological security of the person” is proposed and scientifically proven. Analysis of publications of these authors shows that they consider psychological security in isolation from the overall security system, as a separate phenomenon. We are convinced that psychological safety is one of the components of the security of the individual, along with the property, civil, physical, informational and psychological security. This implies that the goal of this research is to identify anthropological mechanisms of self-control of personality’s behavior.

Publications of Professor Konopkin (2008) specifically are devoted to the problems’ solving of psychic self-regulation. According to Konopkin (2008), psychic self-regulation is a man’s independent acceptance of a number of interrelated decisions, the implementation of the agreed sequence of choices as overcoming of the different sides of subjective information uncertainty. Established by Konopkin (2008) regularities of conscious self-regulation, according to which a person carries out a process of self-regulation of its vital functions, determines the methods of cognition of the essence of man as the entity of the actual socio-economic reality, identifies tools of targeted effects on the environment by creating of the necessary objective and subjective prerequisites for self-regulation are of great interest for this study. At the same time, we believe that in the works of Konopkin (2008), insufficient attention is paid to external influences. We believe that self-regulation is a universal mechanism of response to external influences through the integration of various mental functions of the individual. Therefore, self-regulation may represent anthropological mechanisms of management of personality’s behavior. This led to our interest in the works of Antsyferova (1994) in which the dynamics of consciousness and personal actions in difficult circumstances of life is studied as mental processing’s results by the individual of life difficulties from the standpoint of their own, only partially perceived “theory” of the world. The most significant is its conclusion that the solution about the danger of the situation a person takes on the basis of its value orientations. In order to preserve, protect, affirm its values the personality uses various methods. Based on the findings of Antsyferova (1994), it is found that the more significant place in

the value orientations of the individual takes an endangered object and the more intensively personality perceives “threat,” the higher the motivational potential of coping with the difficulties and the effectiveness of coping behavior of the person.

There are three approaches to the essence of coping behavior can be identified. The first approach treats it as one of the ways of psychological protection, used to alleviate stress. The approach is not common, primarily because its proponents tend to identify coping-behavior, with its result (Bouchard et al., 2004; Brown et al., 2005). The second approach defines coping-behavior as a relatively constant predisposition of the individual to respond to a stressful event in a certain way (Moss and Schaefer, 1986; Ebata and Moos, 1991). However, since the stability of the considered methods is very rarely supported by empirical data, this understanding also hasn’t a lot of support among the researchers. Finally, according to the third approach, coping-behavior is understood as a dynamic process, the specificity of which is determined by not only the situation, but also the stage of the conflict, the entity’s collision with the outside world (Folkman et al., 1979; Lazarus and Folkman, 1984). We are interested in the conclusion of Lazarus about two processes in coping behavior: Immediate respite and motor reactions. The process of temporary relief, in his opinion, is expressed in the form of mitigating of the suffering associated with the experience of stress and a decrease of psycho-physiological effects using two methods: Symptomatic (alcohol, tranquilizers, sedatives, practice of muscle relaxation, etc., in order to improve the physical condition...) and intrapsychic (identification, displacement, repression, denial, reaction’s formation and intellectualization). Intra-psychical method Lazarus calls the cognitive mechanisms of protection (Lazarus, 2006). Direct motor responses, in his opinion, are relevant to the actual behavior to change man’s relationship with the environment, and can be expressed in actions, aimed at an actual reduction in the existing dangers and threats. These findings allow us to say that coping behavior covers a wide range of human activity - from unconscious psychological defenses to purposeful overcoming of dangerous situations. Psychic tensions, meaningful experiences, changing of self-esteem and motivation, the need for psychological support from the outside can be called the leading characteristics of coping behavior. These inferences mediate our attention to the works of Vaillant (1994), which identified three classes of coping strategies: Search for social support, awareness of the dangers and independent selection of protective measures; involuntary mental mechanisms that alter the perception of internal or external reality in order to reduce stress. These findings determine the dialectical relationship of coping behavior and self-regulation mechanisms. All the above mentioned has allowed us to include coping behavior in a set of anthropological self-behavior mechanisms of personality.

Mechanisms of information-psychological self-protection are presented by Grachev (1998), Kara-Murza (2008) and etc. For this research different criteria are interesting for the mechanisms’ classification of information-psychological self-protection: Blocking or misrepresentation of the information; the degree of activity of the person in formation of protection; peculiarities of information processing to be “in banning” to

consciousness; the nature of the obstacles faced by the entity; protection result - achievement of awards, or the avoidance of danger; primarily or secondary nature of protection, and others. Classification of mechanisms of information-psychological self-protection for various reasons has allowed us to identify their anthropological foundation that ensures the formation of protective barriers to dangerous external actions carried out on the personal, interpersonal and social-group levels.

Thus, the psychological problems of security, self-control and coping behavior of the person, information-psychological self-protection were considered by different authors as a separate subject of study. They have not been claimed as anthropological behavioral mechanisms of personality, which enables us to carry out this study.

## 5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Psychological security of the person is a complex entity that determines the way of protection from dangerous external influences and constructive regulation of behavior in order to preserve the integrity and stability of life support. In modern conditions of development of society the capacity for psychological security is an imperative of effective self-management of behaviors.

The mechanisms of self-control involve the use of the necessary measures to eliminate the hazard or reduce it to an acceptable level. Structural and functional components of the self-regulation are: Purpose, plans and programs of activity, the success criteria, evaluation and self-correction of the entire process. Each of the components is realized by a specific process of goal-setting, planning, evaluation, correction and composition of psychophysiological functions and neuro-psychic condition. Thus, self-regulation is only individual and in principle cannot be typed. It is found that the structural defect of any component upsets the whole process of self-regulation, reduces the effectiveness of self-management of the individual's behavior. Thus, the mechanisms of self-regulation, which can be cognitive, emotional, behavioral ensure the creation and a dynamic existence in the consciousness of the individual of the coherent program of coping behavior.

Coping behavior are conscious individual strategies to overcome dangerous situations in accordance with the importance in the life activities of the individual and its psychological possibilities. It is found that developing coping behaviors' variants a person is able to realize what it previously carried out unconsciously, and purposely to use automatisms during its protection. This allows it to exercise control over dangerous situations.

Mechanisms of information-psychological self-protection are aimed at removing of the information uncertainty and are used purposefully by a person, depending on living conditions. It is found that the mechanisms of information-psychological self-protection and self-regulation mechanisms that contribute to the effectiveness of coping behavior of the person are dialectically interrelated. This relationship is determined by their functions in

the process of self-management of personality's behavior. Self-regulation mechanisms perform a compensatory function, and self-protection mechanisms - decompensatory one. This leads to two styles of self-management of personality's behavior: (1) Problem-oriented (problem-focused), including a rational analysis of the problem associated with the creation and implementation of a plan, using coping behaviors' variants; 2) subjective-oriented (emotion-focused), providing for the emotional response to the situation, which is not accompanied by concrete actions, the use of information-psychological self-protection mechanisms. Preferred style of self-management of personality's behavior depends on the specific dangers and threats, as well as the accentuation of character.

In view of the results obtained a number of scientific issues can be identified related to the anthropological mechanisms of self-management of the personality's behavior, and requiring their further consideration: Algorithm of self-management of actions in coping behavior; peculiarities of self-management of strategies' coping.

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