TÍTULO: El factor cultural-étnico contribuyente de la incapacidad personal: fundamentos teóricas de la investigación.

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RESUMEN: En el artículo está expuesto un análisis teórico de los factores culturales y étnicos de la formación de la incapacidad personal, cuyos datos representan una cuestión abierta para la ciencia psicológica contemporánea. El estudio de los determinantes culturales – étnicos de la incapacidad personal incluye la consideración de las condiciones étnicas y culturales de la vida de un individuo, de las peculiaridades de su vida cotidiana, valores comunes y familiares inculcados, así como de la identidad étnica de la persona. El estudio de los factores culturales y étnicos en el contexto del concepto de la incapacidad personal permite crear una base teórica para solucionar las tareas aplicadas relacionadas con la prevención y la corrección de la incapacidad personal.

PALABRAS CLAVES: factor cultural-étnico, identidad étnica, incapacidad personal, independencia, naturaleza de la incapacidad personal.

TITLE: Cultural and ethnic factor contributing to personal helplessness: theoretical foundation of research.

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ABSTRACT: This paper presents a theoretical analysis of cultural and ethnic factors contributing to personal helplessness which remains an open question for the modern psychological science. Study of the cultural and ethnic determinants of personal helplessness includes exploration of the ethnic and cultural living conditions of an individual, peculiarities of everyday life, disseminated general and family values along with an individual's ethnic identity. Exploration of the cultural and ethnic factors in the context of a personal helplessness concept helps to build the theoretical foundation for addressing applied tasks related to prevention and correction of personal helplessness.

KEY WORDS: cultural and ethnic factor, ethnic identity, personal helplessness, self-sufficiency, nature of personal helplessness.

INTRODUCTION.

The dynamism of social processes occurring in the modern society, unstable socio-economic situation over the recent decades have an unpredictable impact that most people are unable to control, state programs to modernize social sphere and economy require not only capital infusions, but also readiness of people for changes. The need to be engaged in the innovative process causes difficulties not only of economic but also psychological nature.

Human behavior in a difficult life situation is complex and may have ambiguous effects and consequences. When an individual is exposed to some stressful situation, their homeostasis and inner balance is disturbed.

An ability of a person to withstand the forces that disturb their inner balance is a highly important characteristic of the person's living. Daily observations indicate a clear link between personality formations, individual characteristics (resilience, peculiarities of attributive style, self-esteem, anxiety level, potential resources, etc.), and the way how a person fulfills one's self, achieves one's goals and overcomes various difficulties. A large experience of encountering uncontrollable social, economic and political upheavals predisposes a person to personal helplessness (Tsiring, 2010).

DEVELOPMENT.

Literature review.

Personal helplessness which represents a bundle of personal characteristics combined with the neurotic symptoms and certain behavioral features, regulates the behavior and activities of a person, influences relationships with others, affects personal self-conception, and is aimed at changing information about difficult life situations in order to reduce the psychologically traumatic impact on an individual.

The concept of personal helplessness, that has been under intense research in the Russian School of Psychology (Tsiring, 2010, Klimova et al., 2018) within the framework of the subject-activity approach, personal helplessness is defined as "the quality of a subject representing the unity of certain personal features which emerge as a result of interaction between the internal and the external conditions and determining the low level of subjectivity, that is, the weak ability of a person to transform reality, to control the events of their own life, to set and achieve goals by overcoming various difficulties" (Tsiring, 2010, p. 185).

Personal helplessness is aimed at changing information about difficult life situations in order to mitigate the psychologically traumatic impact on an individual and creates an adaptive effect for a subject due to which the events are perceived as beyond the subject's control. Tension, in stressful conditions, is reduced by convincing the individual of their inability to impact the situation and by reducing attempts to actively intervene in the situation. The studies devoted to personal helplessness (Tsiring, 2010, Tsiring & Salieva 2007, Tsiring & Ponomareva, 2015, Klimova et al., 2018) described the content of the phenomenon under scrutiny, identified structural components, examined factors contributing to personal helplessness, the relationship with some aspects of living, identified different types of personal helplessness in adolescents.

It should be noted that the author of the concept of personal helplessness D.A. Tsiring (2010) proved a continual nature of personal helplessness. Thus, the opposite characteristic of personal helplessness is the self-sufficiency of a subject, which determines a high level of subjectivity.

Self-sufficiency "as a subject's characteristic opposite by its essence defines the specifics of an individual's living activity in such a way that the individual's behavior, activity, and relationships exhibit a strong ability to transform reality, to act as an active agent in its own life" (Tsiring, 2010, p. 133). Self-sufficiency as a steady quality of a subject is diagnosed in the presence of such indicators as optimistic attributive style, sufficiently high self-esteem, and low levels of depression and anxiety. Personal helplessness is diagnosed in the presence of the opposite indicators: pessimistic attributive style, depression, anxiety, low self-esteem (Tsiring, 2010). It should be noted that both self-sufficiency and personal helplessness cannot be reduced to the sum of these indicators but represent a holistic systemic characteristic of an individual and gain new qualities.

The main environmental factor in the formation of personal helplessness is the specifics of interaction in the family, namely, dysfunctions in the system of family relationships (Ponomareva, 2013, Tsiring, 2010, Tsiring & Salieva, 2007). The primary social environment of a person is the family, core values

and attitudes of parents are an important factor in the development of the child's personality, ideas about the family relationships are among the first to be shaped and subsequently determine the future family life.

A series of studies confirms that family relationships act as a mediating link between the child and the outside world, determining the specific features of their interaction (Cohn, 1985). Family relationships represent an environmental factor of depression and anxiety disorders in children (Parker & Endler, 1997, Rapee, 1997, Volikova, 2003). A style of child-parent relationship plays a significant role in forming the child's self-esteem (Bozhovich, 2001). The results of these studies indicate the importance of family education in the formation of personal helplessness as a systemic quality of a subject characterized, among other things, by anxiety, depression and low self-esteem.

The author of the concept of personal helplessness, D.A. Tsiring (2010), built a theoretical foundation and provided an empirical evidence that personal helplessness results from the following disharmonious family relationships: hyper-protection, heightened moral responsibility, abuse, and conflicting upbringing.

Research methodological framework.

The objective of this research is to determine and theoretically substantiate possible cultural and ethnic factors contributing to the personal helplessness.

The research tasks are as follows:

1. Conduct a theoretical analysis of data on the nature of personal helplessness.

2. Describe a problem of cultural and ethnic factor in psychological science.

3. Present a correlation between the personal helplessness and cultural and ethnic factor.

Methods.

The analysis of the research subject and object theory was used as a scientific method, in particular, overview of the studies on the problem of personal helplessness was conducted in 2019 with the use of key words "personal helplessness", "ethnic identity" and "self-sufficiency", as well as cross references. The papers devoted to this problem were thoroughly explored within the frames of theoretical analysis underpinning this research.

Findings and Discussion.

Despite the achievements in the development of the psychology of personal helplessness, the genesis of research on this phenomenon suggests that the researchers are only concerned with certain aspects of personal helplessness.

The question of how the personal helplessness is forming remains understudied. The primary contributing factors, though not exhaustive, include dysfunctions in the system of family relationships, and the secondary factors are the traumatic events and social indicators (financial security, family completeness, serious social, economic and political upheavals) beyond the subject's control. In addition, we believe that the cultural and ethnic factors also contribute to the personal helplessness.

The revealed fragmentary approach to exploration of the personal helplessness impedes the holistic study of the subject, presentation of the psyche in the unity of its organization, exploration of behavior and activities as mediated by the inner world of a person. That's why for more holistic and deep understanding of the nature of personal helplessness phenomenon, it is needed to take a systematic look at the environmental, in particular, cultural and ethnic factors contributing to that characteristic. The study of cultural and ethnic determinants of personal helplessness will allow not only to develop the concept of personal helplessness, discovering new data on the nature of personal helplessness, but

also to build a theoretical foundation for solving the applied problems associated with the correction of the phenomenon under study, the question of which also remains open so far.

The further development of psychology of personal helplessness in the context of detailed research of contributing factors and specific features of its progression, may help to answer a number of questions concerning the nature of personal helplessness and its possible prevention and correction. Despite the relevance of the stated problem, no research to explore the role of cultural and ethnic factors contributing to personal helplessness has been conducted to date.

As noted above, the personal helplessness, for the most part, results from the environmental factors, among which the role of disharmonious family relationships has been studied to a greater extent. A style of upbringing, a structure of inter-family communications, family functionality/ dysfunctionality are the factors contributing to the personal helplessness or self-sufficiency in children. Apart from the childrearing in the family, other environmental factors contributing to personality development include the anthropogenic, biogeographical, cultural, psychological, socio-economic, and ethnic factors (Kharitonov et al., 2004). Exploration of the above-mentioned factors in the context of development of personality and complex personal traits (personal helplessness and self-sufficiency) is of high scientific interest.

Cultural and ethnic factor includes a traditional way of life, specific features of human reproduction and everyday life, worldview, methods of children and adolescent's socialization, beliefs, different cultural traditions, social-legal and moral-ethical norms, etc. (Platonova, 1999, Kalantzis & Cope, 2016).

The culture of society and the specificity of a particular ethnic group are vital factors underpinning development of a subject, influencing the behavior and activities of an individual, ranging from approach to tackling everyday issues to the characteristics of personal, family and professional life. The humanity has different models of personality depending on ethnocultural traditions and socio-

economic order. Different social communities have their specific requirements to personality (Platonova, 1999, Warikoo & Carter, 2009). Undoubtedly, this impact may be seen in various spheres, inter alia, the family upbringing. Family, values of family life, peculiarities of upbringing of the younger generation are interpreted differently in different cultures and ethnic groups. A strong parental intervention in affairs of their children, overprotection and overcontrol may be normal among some peoples and totally unacceptable among others. Such examples may be considered with regard to any upbringing style: from pandering hyperprotection to abusive treatment.

The contribution of ethnic factors to the personal helplessness can also be considered from the point of view of cultural peculiarities (collectivism-individualism) of an area where the family resides. The division of cultures into collectivistic and individualistic helps to explain the differences in the behaviour of representatives of different cultures. In the countries with a collectivist way of life, the family consists of a fairly large number of people living together on the same territory. In such families, children learn to perceive themselves as a part of the whole, and the relationship of dependency develops between the child and the family from the very beginning, and usually a personal opinion is determined by the opinion of the group (Sandell & Tupy, 2015). Family in the individualistic culture usually includes only parents and children. The goal of upbringing is to develop a personality that is self-sufficient and independent, including, from the parents (Grushevitskaya et al., 2003).

I.S. Cohn (1985) draws comparison between the models of personality that evolved under the influence of the western (European) and eastern (Japanese) cultural traditions. He points out that the western model of a human is strongly substantive, the western (European) culture promotes development of a personality through activities, actions and deeds. The eastern culture does not attach such a great significance to the substantive activity, it asserts that the creative activity forming the basis of general activity of a person "unfolds only in the inner spiritual space and may be cognized

not through practice but through instantaneous enlightenment, stroke of insight" (Platonova, 1999, p. 22).

Consideration of ethnic factors in connection with the ethnic identity of subjects, in our opinion, will provide valuable data on the factors contributing to the personal helplessness. Ethnic identity emerges around a structured system of values that mediates multiple stable connections between an individual and the surrounding world and ensures integrity and self-identity of an individual (Verhoeven, 2011). Ethnic values with a spatial and temporal determination are vital and objective. Their historical structuring into a framework of behavioral norms is conditioned by the aspiration of ethnic community for consistency and orderliness of social life (Stefanenko, 1999).

The specificity of ethnic identity evolvement implies consideration of cultural values in the sense of their subjective existence, and attachment to them of personalized meaning and value-bearing potential. Self-identification as a process of ethnic identity evolvement is related to self-association with the ethnic group, and transfer of qualities and specific features of representatives of the given ethnos to one's self. The formation, maintenance and preservation of ethnic identity is ensured by the joint actions of the family, school, mass media and other social institutions, the activities of which should be systematic and coordinated (Soldatova, 1998).

CONCLUSIONS.

The ethnic identity as an awareness of one's belonging to a certain ethnic community allows a child to realize, on the one hand, their identity with the group and, on the other hand, their own uniqueness (Stefanenko, 1999). Attribution to a certain group yields a sense of security, satisfies the need for belonging, and sets common life values.

The level of ethnic identity affects the attitude towards one's self in general: the higher the level of ethnic identity, the more positive the self-attitude (Mironov, 2012). Positive ethnic identity, which

consists in the awareness of one's belonging to a certain ethnic group, assessment of the significance of such belonging, interest in the history and culture of the people of certain ethnos, and a sense of national pride, constitutes the basis for effective socialization and professionalization, and enables successful personal and professional development (Stefanenko, 1999). It is, therefore, important to study the ethnic identity of individuals with personal helplessness, and to determine the guiding criteria that it sets. We assume that it is possible to correct personal helplessness by changing and developing ethnic identity.

Based on the above, it can be concluded that the study of cultural and ethnic factors contributing to personal helplessness includes exploration of the ethnic and cultural living conditions of an individual, peculiarities of everyday life, disseminated general and family values along with an individual's ethnic identity. Further exploration of cultural and ethnic factors in the context of the concept of personal helplessness, the subsequent empirical study of the influence of cultural and ethnic aspects on the personal helplessness opens up the possibility of a holistic and deep understanding of the researched phenomenon, allows to build a theoretical foundation for solving the applied problems related to the prevention and correction of the phenomenon under scrutiny.

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