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ANALYSIS OF ADULTHOOD CRISES AS A STAGE OF PSYCHOLOGICAL PERSONALITY DEVELOPMENT

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Abstract

The article is devoted to the analysis of adulthood crises as a key stage of psychological personality development. Theoretical approaches to understanding maturity, identity formation, and spiritual and moral values are examined. Particular attention is paid to the spiritual crisis of middle age and its relationship with features of self-attitude. The empirical part presents the results of a study conducted among middle-aged individuals in Uzbekistan. Age-related differences were identified in the manifestations of adulthood crises and associated personality characteristics, allowing for the formulation of conclusions and practical recommendations for psychological counseling.

Keywords

adulthood crises, maturity, normative crises, spiritual crisis, self-attitude, identity, psychological support.

Introduction

The psychology of adulthood and maturity occupies a central place in contemporary developmental and social psychology. Adulthood is the longest, most eventful, and most productive stage of the human life course, during which deep socialization, professional self-determination, family formation, and the realization of personal potential take place. However, this stage is not static: it is accompanied by a series of normative and non-normative developmental crises that require the individual to revise their value and meaning orientations, restructure the "self-concept," and search for new coping strategies.

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The relevance of studying adulthood crises in the context of contemporary Uzbek society is driven by dynamic socio-economic and cultural transformations. The transformation of traditional family structures, the increasing pace of life, and a high level of professional competition bring to the fore the problem of adaptation and the preservation of psychological health during the middle years.

Theoretical and Methodological Foundations of the Study

The theoretical analysis of the problem of adulthood crises draws on the fundamental works of both domestic and foreign psychologists. In Erik Erikson's concept of epigenetic development, adulthood is examined through the resolution of psychosocial conflicts: intimacy versus isolation (early adulthood), generativity versus stagnation (middle adulthood), and ego integrity versus despair (late adulthood). Particular significance is attached to the midlife crisis (ages 35–45), which Gail Sheehy characterized as “the midlife passage” and which Carl Gustav Jung described as a stage of individuation, marked by a shift in value orientations from external achievement toward the inner spiritual world and a reassessment of the path already traveled.

In the domestic psychological tradition (L.S. Vygotsky, B.G. Ananyev, L.I. Bozhovich, A.N. Leontiev, E.I. Golovakha, A.A. Kronik), crisis is viewed not as a pathological state but as a necessary condition for personal growth, for the restructuring of the social situation of development, and for the formation of new psychological structures. Spiritual and moral values and features of self-attitude (V.V. Stolin, S.R. Pantileev) serve as a key internal resource that determines success in overcoming crisis periods.

Empirical Study of the Characteristics of Adulthood Crises

Organization and Methods of the Study

To study the manifestation of crisis experiences and their relationship with parameters of self-attitude, an empirical study was conducted. The study involved 120 respondents aged 28 to 55, residing in Tashkent and the Tashkent region. The

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participants were divided into two groups: the first group — early adulthood (28–35 years, n=60), and the second group — middle adulthood (36–55 years, n=60).

The following diagnostic tools were used:

1. The "Adulthood Crisis" questionnaire (adapted to assess the severity of the normative crisis);

2. The Method of Studying Self-Attitude (MIS) by V.V. Stolin and S.R. Pantileev;

3. Carol Ryff's "Scales of Psychological Well-Being."

Results and Discussion

Analysis of the data obtained revealed statistically significant differences in the manifestation of crisis symptoms between the groups. Among respondents in the first group (28–35 years), crisis experiences were most often associated with problems of professional self-realization (78%), the search for a balance between career and personal life (82%), and heightened anxiety about the future (75%).

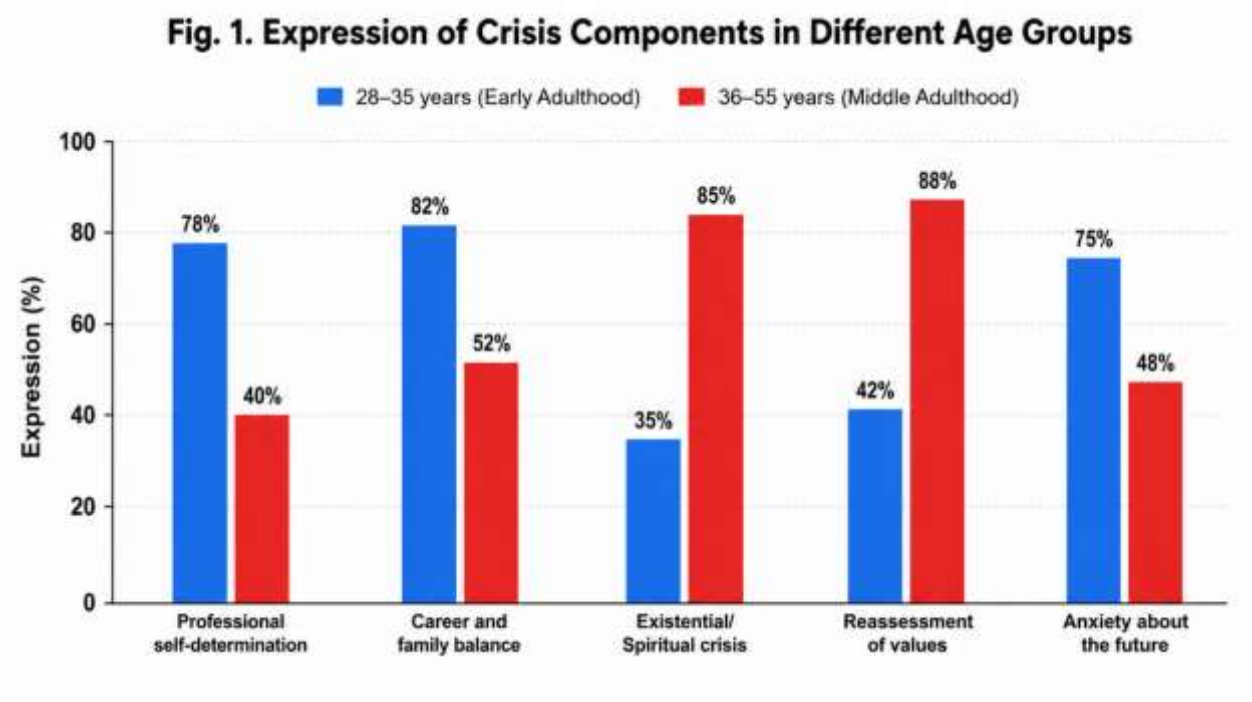

Fig. 1. Prevalence of crisis components by age group (%)

In the second group (36–55 years), existential and spiritual experiences come to the fore (85%). Respondents in this group show a tendency toward deep reflection on their life path, a reassessment of values (88%), and a search for new life meanings. A

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direct correlation was found between the level of positive self-attitude (self-acceptance, self-sympathy) and success in navigating the midlife crisis ($p < 0.01$).

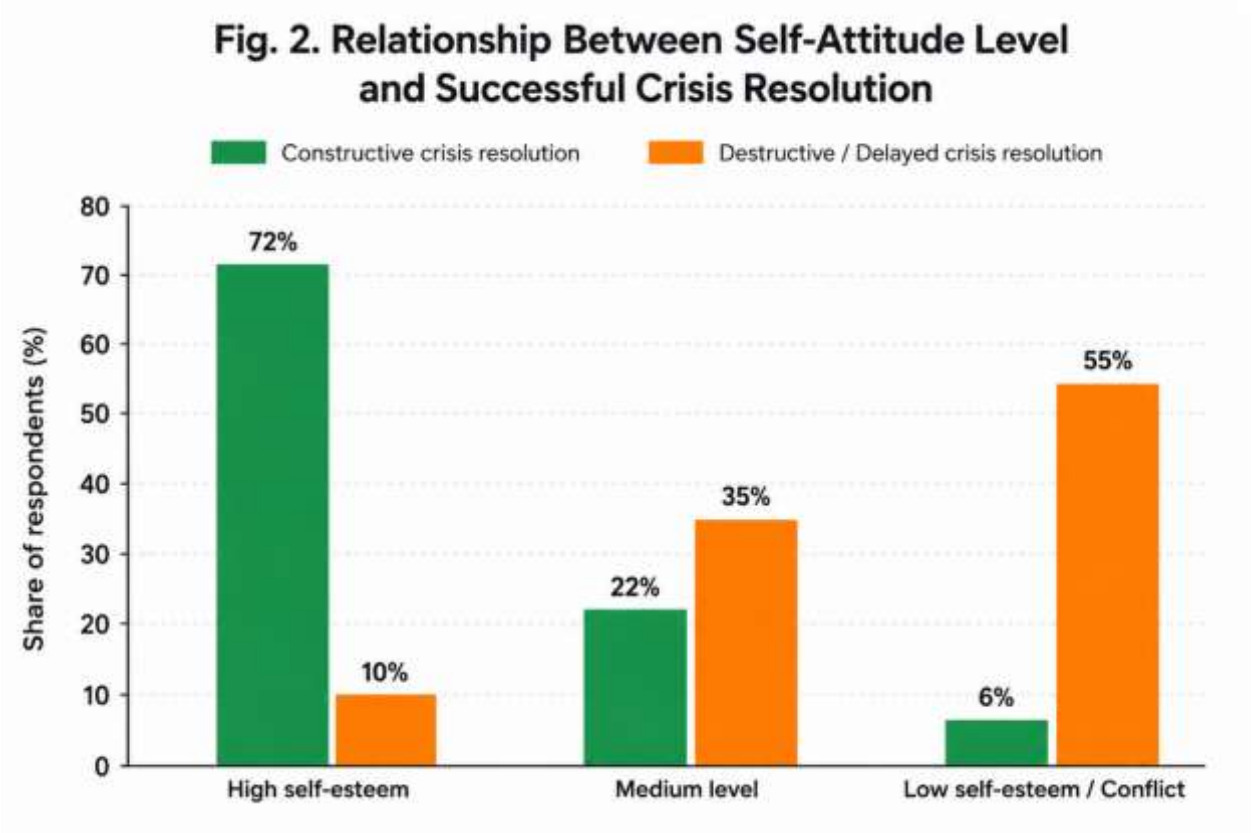

Fig. 2. Distribution of crisis-coping success by level of self-acceptance (%)

As Figure 2 shows, individuals with a well-developed sense of meaning and a high level of self-acceptance (72%) perceive the crisis as an opportunity for personal growth and renewal. At the same time, respondents with low self-esteem and pronounced inner conflict (55%) tend to experience this period as a state of stagnation, depressive symptoms, and loss of meaning.

Conclusions and Practical Recommendations

1. Adulthood crises represent natural stages of psychological development, determined by internal contradictions and changes in the social situation of development.

2. Distinct age-related patterns are observed in the manifestation of crises: early adulthood is characterized by social and professional self-determination, while middle adulthood is accompanied by a spiritual and existential rethinking of life orientations.

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3. Self-attitude and an individual's spiritual and moral values act as the most important psychological factors mediating a constructive or destructive passage through the crisis.

Practical Recommendations:

• For practicing psychologists: when conducting individual counseling and training programs for middle-aged individuals, special attention should be paid to developing resources of self-acceptance, working with the sphere of values and meaning, and rethinking life experience.

• For educational and social institutions: it is advisable to implement programs of psychological support and guidance for mature individuals, aimed at preventing burnout, supporting professional adaptation, and strengthening family values.

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