Author's statement
of the contributions in the works of Assoc. Prof. Dr. Margarita Bakracheva, submitted for participation in the competition for the academic position of "professor" in 3.2. Psychology (General and age psychology), published in the State Gazette 22 / 16.03.2021

A number of psychological constructs and their interrelations have been studied, on the basis of which models applicable in practice have been generated.

1.   Coping strategies

Coping is analysed in respect to the effects of internal and external factors and its impact on result variables in personal aspect. The transformation of reactive into proactive behaviour is considered component of the optimal identity. The conscious escape from reality in the virtual world, the sharing of conspiracy theories and the motivation for tattooing are presented as specific coping behaviours. The most effective model of reaction and adaptation to the context today is outlined to be the accommodative coping - representing self-reflection with a focus on rethinking the possibilities and reformulating the goals in situations where active behaviours are not possible but avoidance and passiveness are a luxury. This mechanism of adaptation turns out to be uniform despite the individual and personal differences and is the basis for developing interventions in predictive and proactive direction. (publications 3.1., 4.1, 4.2., 7.22., 7.26., 7.30., 7.32., 7.38., 7.39., 7.40., 10.1., 10.2.)

2.   Psychological well-being

A review of research in positive psychology and the integration of the hedonistic and eudemonic approach in the study of well-being from the perspective of the theory of flourishing is realized. The results demonstrate that happiness, life satisfaction and well-being are both interrelated constructs and determined by different predictors. The optimal psychological well-being is analysed as a learning process and some empirically generated models for interventions and programmes for building proactive mindfulness are suggested - cognitive, emotional and behavioural self-reflection, aimed at finding and implementing the most effective individual choices with differentiation of social roles and areas along with ongoing experimentation. (publications 3.1, 4.1, 4.2., 7.1., 7.2., 7.12., 7.38., 7.39., 7.40.)

3.   Psychosocial identity

Identity is conceptualized from the position of maximum adaptability and in relation to coping strategies and [sychological well-being. The ability to maintain optimal self-esteem and self-perception is outlined as a process and in connection with the pursuit of self-affirmation. The perceived distress related to the maintenance of identity, the specificity of the functions and the style of identity are discussed. The most adaptive strategy for the contemporary context has been outlined – postponement of the stable commitments and extending the period of experimentation, which corresponds to the most adaptive coping - accommodation – both in adolescence and adulthood: an environment that is perceived as unstable and not supporting stable commitments, leads to ongoing search. (publications 3.1., 6.4., 7.3., 7.5., 7.7., 7.11., 7.21., 7.24, 7.35., 7.41., 10.3.)

4. Virtual identity

A new approach to the study of virtual identity as a component of the general self-concept is suggested. The time spent on social networks is considered coping behaviour in conditions of high perceived stress, insecurity and requirements for maintaining identity and making choices. Identical patterns in the real and virtual world are outlined regarding the influence of social norms and the connection between coping strategies and active and passive identity. (publications 4.2., 7.4., 7.6., 7.9., 7.16., 7.20, 7.31.)

5. Applied contributions - models

Applied contribution are the proposed models and guidelines for design and implementation of programmes and interventions in support of personal self-determination, self-reflection and coping behaviours that ensure optimal personal effectiveness and functioning. They aim to build and improve skills for coping with stress and accumulating resources, providing better adaptability to the requirements of the environment, as well as to internal changes throughout the life cycle and anticipatory self-preservation. In the context of social diversity, the place of applicability of phototherapy techniques is presented as promoting empathy, tolerance, emotional intelligence and social inclusion. With regard to addictions an innovative typology has been developed, which distinguishes individual profiles of the addicted, suggesting the effective approaches to work and which can be implemented as a screening tool. A conceptual model focused on the possibilities for shortening the period of adaptation to changes in the physical environment and / or the related experiences or fears, defined as a "state of weightlessness", is proposed. (publications 3.1, 4.1., 4.2., 6.1., 6.2., 7.15., 7.17., 7.18., 7.33., 9.1.)

6. Applied contributions - scales

Scales have been developed to study the degree of experienced derealisation through the use of social networks, measurement of national identity, motivation for learning, stereotypes and social attitudes and conspiracy theories, that have good psychometric indicators, as well as a methodology for visual content analysis. (publications 4.2., 7.9., 7.25., 7.32., 7.34.)

7. Prevention of violence

As an opportunity for sustainable prevention of violence and deviant behaviour is proposed the perspective of building a prosocial attitude through identification and differentiation of assertiveness and aggression. Peer-to-peer messages and work on building soft and transferable skills through active involvement and generation of own ideas are described as effective measures in the experiential learning paradigm. Ethics is conceived as a personal value, subject to construction and maintenance throughout the life cycle. (publications 4.2., 6.1., 6.2., 7.29., 7.37.)

8. Intercultural dialogue

In the conditions of cultural diversity, stereotypes and social distances are analysed in relation to intercultural dialogue. The issue of social equality and the potential of art and creative activities as an supracultural model, stimulating tolerance and inclusion is outlined. (publications 7.13., 7.28., 7.34., 7.36.)

9. Parenting styles

The different parenting practices and the influence of the parenting style on the process of identity formation and attachment to the significant figures are analysed. (publications 7.8., 7.10., 7.14., 7.19.)

10. Education

Regarding the educational process, learning in an electronic environment and distance learning, the individual trajectories of development are accounted along with the constructivist theory as continuing possibilities for application in conceptual terms, and in practice. In applied perspective the results of adaptation to the process of transition to learning in an electronic environment are described and suggested to be extrapolated in the long-term for crisis management. (publications 7.23., 7.42, 9.2.)

11. Response to the needs of disadvantaged groups

In the perspective of a changed demographic picture of the aging population and the increase of the number of people with disabilities and the need to improve their quality of life, the unification of the efforts of different sciences has been analysed as a new perspective. Social entrepreneurship is considered from the position of changing the model of personal development within the perspective of career instead of professional development. (publications 6.3., 7.27, 7.43.)