

# ROLE OF PERSON'S IDEOLOGICAL ORIENTATIONS IN THE WORLD VIEW FORMATION AND THE SELF-IMAGE

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## **Abstract**

The article describes features of the influence of ideological orientations of personality on building a picture of the world and the self-image. It defines specificity of self-cognition, self-realization and self-identity process in adolescence. Determinants of ideological orientations formation are mentioned. The features of synergistic approach to the study of world view formation, the self-image, the hierarchy of personal values in a contemporary environment are considered. Differences were defined of life values, senses, perceptions about the meaning of life between creative and talented high school students and other high school students from regular schools. The influence of social and cultural factors on these differences (social status of parents of high school students, the prestige of school) is analyzed.

**Key words:** *synergy, self-cognition, self-image, meaning of life*

## **Introduction**

Very actual problem of socialization in adolescence is a process of self-identification, self-realization and self-creation. Thus, making a life choice a person realizes through the self-image their personal opinion on the system of values offered by society. Person's own world view is constructed based on the existing system of ideological orientations. The psychological, psychotherapeutic methodologies, diagnostic and practice require further development of differential characteristics, classification criteria, and symptomatic and terminology correction. In our opinion, the phenomenon of ideological self-determination is closely linked with person's self-creation. The most developed area of study of this problem is systematic and synergetic approach. The systematic and synergetic approach to the person's self-creation is tested in humanitarian education today (Радчук, 2009). The synergetics as a cooperative science explores developing complex, open systems. When a person realizes their inner world, they begin to look at the external environment in a different way. Then in the perception of the outside world there are no static categories and shapes, the world is perceived in all its diversity.

The thinking is in constant motion, consciousness gives rise to various opinions and forms, that will never be complete and dogmatic. Discovering their inner world, a person opens the outside world in a constant state of change and they are always on the way of self-creation. In the process of self-creation the semantic category is formed — the self-image, which bears the imprints of its being.

So the self-image becomes the main thing for defining person's behavioral strategies. The very idea of our selves becomes the foundation for development of flexible adaptive capabilities of our individuality. The world is in constant change, and the self-image strives for stability, even for conservatism to preserve its integrity. Therefore, the structures formed on the background image of the environment dynamics become a destructive element that slows further self-development of the self-image. Each component that took shape of clear categories and its place in the self-structure of person's individuality is committed for continuous existence. And it changes or transforms very painfully. With the deepening into process of self-identification the self-image is detailed, each component gets its clear structure and subjects to reflective activities, if needed. All of this continues until there are new barriers in social adaptation and new changes in person's features, abilities.

**Research subject:** ideological orientation of high school students.

**Research goal:** to determine the most pressing problems in self-creation of the individual in adolescence, to reveal the features of influence of ideological orientations on building a picture of the world and the self-image.

**Research methods:** theoretical analysis methods, experimental methods (questionnaires, tests).

**The research was attended** by 72 adolescents — 30 students of Children Academy of Arts in Kyiv and 42 students of secondary school.

#### **Results and their analysis**

Personality is a mobile, self-organizing and self-developing open system. Its different elements mutually provoke, enrich, neutralize or suppress each other, generate new ideas and understanding. The result of self-affirmation of the individual in different approaches is quite illusory and significant only for the subject. And the result is a real and socially significant. According to the first illusory type a person produces feeling (superiority complex), which may be one of ways to escape his problems. From the position of Erikson (Эриксон, 1996) the individual identity resistance appears as firmly assimilated self-image, which is taken by a person and prevents changes in self-creation.

Self-creation is a complex set of cognitive, emotional and behavioral reactions. Self-creation is determined by the value of its own self-affirmation, its strength and significance. The self-creation of personality is carried out by externalizing its values in order to be supported by others. The essential in its direct meaning of the term is not a life of its own, it's possibility of existence, individual, private. Life appears as the personification of particle of being like individuation — differentiation — separation — disconnection. In Latin "existence" means "the selection of things" from the whole. Separation of own self, feeling of loneliness, inner unique integrity creates conditions for self-creation, ability for self-awareness and reflection, ability to feel and think, take the character and inclinations, own opinion and relation to the world. Even unconscious part of self becomes the condition for self-awareness formation for selfhood, separateness, "otherness", the ability to live according to its own needs and life scripts.

One of the lines of research of person's ideological orientations in adolescence is the definition of meaning of life. The problem of mastering the meaning of life by human, building a world view, was illustrated by such leading authors as Frankl (Франкл, 1990), Sartre (Сартр, 1991), Yalom (Ялом, 2005), Buber (Бубер, 1993). In the Russian psychological science, this problematic is developed and attended in the works of Vasiliuk (Василюк, 1997), Vygotskiy (Выготский, 2002), Ivannikov (Иванников, 1985), Leontiev (Леонтьев, 2002), Rubinstein (Рубинштейн, 1976). Among Ukrainian psychologists who explore the question of ideological orientations, the meaning of life in branch of humanistic-existential orientation, spiritual development paradigm we can mention Boryshevsky (Боришевский, 1994), Bondarenko

(Бондаренко, 2006), Romenets (Роменец, 1993), Savchyn (Савчин, 2001), Tytarenko (Титаренко, 1998). It is believed that semantic field subjugates all other vital signs, determines the direction of knowledge vector of personality. And indexes of personal self-determination are the choice where higher level values are preferred.

Therefore, humanistic psychology recognizes the possibility of harmonious human existence only if it has a “high” meaning in life. In an effort to find out the genesis of a person’s ability to obtain such experience, it is necessary to distinguish:

- a) highly developed form of existence (combined with reflection), which encourages people to act consciously, relevant to high spirituality criteria;
- b) less developed forms of existence;
- c) internal premises of becoming forms stated above.

Based on the definition by Leontiev (Леонтьев, 2002) of categories of sense as “Meaning (in particular, the meaning of texts, fragments of the world, images of consciousness, psychic phenomena or actions) is determined, firstly, because of the wider context and, secondly, through intention or entelechy (target orientation, purpose or direction of motion)” (Боришевський, 1994, p. 26), and conceptual concretization of this category, which can be considered “personal meaning” by Leontiev (Леонтьев, 1971) and others. In modern culture to high meanings belong: love, goodness, truth, beauty, harmony, activity, excellence, responsibility, justice, honor, conscience, freedom, etc. Research manifestations of each of these meanings can be performed by different types and different methods of determination: causal (mechanistic, linear) determinism of classical psychology in its behavioral or biogenetically conditioned variant, the leading methods — objective observation and experiment; probabilistic (stochastic) non-classical determinism of humanitarian-oriented psychology (first of all — numerous psychodynamic theory), the leading method — hermeneutics; teleological determinism of phenomenological and existential theories of personality, etc., the leading method — phenomenological.

These types of methods and determination, which make it possible to investigate person’s patterns of meaning of life formation, are represented by the laws of life (the answer to the questions why?, how? and where?), mechanisms of meaning functioning (the answer to the question how?), and experience as a personal phenomenon (the answer to the question what is the meaning of life? what is this for me?). Existing implicit theories of personality of ordinary people, which do not depend on their educational background, irrational guidelines, prejudice, spirituality subconscious, the collective unconscious, can complement other theories of personality for sufficient integrity of representation of a person’s world. Formation of meaning of life activates integration and becomes the most important determinant of person’s changes. Through the dialogue of conflicting sides of personality, individuals take responsibility for their own choice of ideological orientations and formation of life strategies. Understanding that nothing happens by itself, only “we are the authors of everything: every gesture, action, all reflections and senses”.

Formation of ideological orientations occurs in the process of social inheritance in the family, surrounding of peers, educational and other social institutions. Person’s ideology creates a social and psychological world that builds up a hierarchy of values, goals, meaning of life. Formation of ideological orientations of personality is mediated by the influence of others’ life styles, their life scenarios, systems of relationships, attitudes and values.

In the theory of Gestalt approach the main underlying ideas of Perls (Перлз, 2005), related to a specific mode of contact of an individual with the environment, are directed to consideration of creative adaptation, the ability to find constructive ways to adapt to a particular situation in life. This constructive search enables an individual to find optimal strategy of interaction with the environment. In situation of uncertainty an individual has

a need for constructive search for interoperability. In this case a creative adjustment, in contrast to an adaptation, represents the process of constant search for balance between the needs of both contact phenomena and possibilities of the environment that provides the possibility and the need for free choice. If the choice is made depending on the circumstances and judgments of other people, the personality adapts rather than create its own strategy of interaction. The criterion for creative interaction with the environment is the ability to assimilate new experience of contact, the ability to choose adequate method of communication. In the theory of paradoxical changes of Bateson (Bateson, 1972) the ability of individual to change is considered not as a result of what they want to be, but as a result of their formation as they are. Creative adjustment unlike adaptation is the process of searching the needs as the phenomena of contact with possibilities of the environment in the course of this contact implementation.

Contradictions that are associated with change in the life position, lifestyle, are the most difficult for individuals, especially in formation of their worldview. Vitally important, influential are those contradictions that mediate changes in attitude, habits and relations of individuals to society and themselves. The ability to adjust their way of life is the basis of life strategies formation. The sense of embarrassment on a subconscious level, caused by alienation, loneliness and horror, exacerbates the perception of the surrounding world. These experiences, along with associations arising from books, the information field surrounding individuals, their childhood introjections become such stimulants that accelerate and mediate the development of behavioral strategies. Problems, which arise every day, push individuals to changes in behavior, seeking new goals and means of their achievements. This overcoming of certain problems, that have not been solved since childhood and can convert into the sense of inferiority, increase the persistence of an individual in finding new ways, developing the ability and desire to generate ideas that are new, unique and creative. This overcoming of problems that seem insuperable and fatal, forms the will of an individual, awareness of the need of independence and responsibility in the struggle for survival.

Representatives of psychoanalytic approach believe that each person adapts to the world due to certain defense mechanisms. The findings of American and Western psychologists demonstrate that transpersonal feelings can lead to significant and persistent improvements: increasing of own feelings perception, relief of existential crisis (Ялом, 2005; Ленгле, 2004), awakening of altruism, compassion, acceptance of oneself, others and the surrounding world (Allport, 1935), expanding the range of understanding and awareness of the importance of life. Spirituality is a core entity, which runs through all aspects of the structure of personality and affects creation of life strategy of an individual.

The discussion of searching the meaning of life, own attitudes to life, achievements, goals in life becomes an important basis of an individual and individual's self-acceptance. Harry Stuck Sullivan considered self-system weak, if individuals manifest contempt for themselves, self-deprecation, inability "to be like others". This leads to disruption of self-estimation, attitude to own capabilities, limitations, which violate relationships with others. Reproduction of different ways of contact: manipulation, adaptation to other people, relationships "to be equal to theirs" helps an individual to be flexible in the choice of behavioral strategies. To become part of an individual model of the world, both internal and external motivations shall be displayed in the intersubjective space, become the subject of psychological dialogue and semantic exchange. The interaction of an individual with other people becomes the reality that can be interpreted by subjects, "read" by them, as some "text" and therefore disclose as discourse.

In domestic psychology the problem of a human survival in severe, extreme life situations is considered in terms of coping strategy, the strategy of survival in complicated situations, post-traumatic states, stresses and other disorders. These directions of consideration

of different strategies of a human survival in complicated conditions are directed mainly to the possibility of mental disorders prevention, which arise as the result of extreme factors influence.

The search for the meaning of life forms adaptive capability of an individual, which is revealed due to psychological characteristics, important for regulation of mental activity and adaption process. The higher is the level of these characteristics, the higher is probability of successful adaptation of individuals and more significant is the range of environmental factors to which they can adapt. These features form personal adaptive potential: neuropsychological stability, which development level provides tolerance to stress, self-identity of an individual, which mediates self-regulation and the level of perception adequacy of operating conditions and own capabilities, the feeling of social support, which determines the feeling of personal significance to others, the level of conflict of an individual experience of social communication. All properties are important in assessing and forecasting a successful adaptation in difficult and extreme situations, as well as in evaluating the rate of mental equilibrium recovery. It was studied by Vasiluk (Василюк, 1997), Orban (Орбан, 1992) and others. Factors and conditions of psychological and educational support to an individual in the meaning of life search in close interaction with the value-orientation context of modern educational process in schools and universities were investigated. It revealed the importance of interpersonal relationship humanization in the educational process as a condition of lack of spirituality prevention as well as conflict prevention, provoking crisis situations of loss of meaning in life. While agreeing with Levin's theory of field behavior of an individual (Левин, 2000), human features should be considered in the system of interrelations with surroundings, with the environment of their life activity. Based on this approach, it is appropriate to examine the determinants of search for individual's search of life meaning under different conditions and situations in life that mediates formation of ideology.

To determine the relations between formation of life goals and ideological orientations of personality, we used the methodology of researching the meaning of life by Kotlyakov (Котляков, 2003), method of Rokich (Рокич, 2000) (determination of value orientations), LPO method (life-purposes orientations) by Leontiev and Must-test (determination of person's life values) by Ivanov and Kolobova (Иванов & Колобова, 1998). Experimental researches have shown urgent condition of meaningfulness of life and the dominant values of this age period. 72 adolescents took part in the research, 30 of them were students of the Kyiv Children Academy of Arts, and 42 — students of secondary school in Kyiv. The survey was carried to find out the features of the value-sense sphere, and to find the differences between the life values and understanding among different groups — namely, the creatively gifted boys (Kyiv Children Academy of Arts) and boys enrolled in regular school.

In order to verify the connection between the value of general life meaningfulness (LM) of Leontiev's LPO method and other values of our chosen methodology correlation analysis was used, the calculation of the Spearman's correlation coefficient in particular. The obtained results showed the presence of significant correlation between general life meaningfulness (LM) with categories of life meanings by Kotlyakov's research methodology of life meaning and categories of terminal and instrumental values by methodology of value's orientations detection. The general value of life meaningfulness (LM) of students of the Academy correlates with a status ( $r = -0.435$  at  $p \leq 0.01$ ), communication ( $r = -0.416$  at  $p \leq 0.01$ ), and cognitive ( $r = 0.655$  at  $p \leq 0.05$ ) categories of the life meaning (by Kotlyakov's research methodology of the life meaning).

Those students focused on claims of success, career achievements and taking their rightful position in society (status), as well as those aimed at building relationships, have a higher rate of LM: to feel someone needs you, be with the loved one, enjoy communication

with other people (communication). In addition, the higher the values for LM scale, the less importance youths give to understanding themselves, the knowledge of God and life understanding (cognitive). The last regards also to students of 10th grade of secondary school, the higher the rate of LM the less importance is attached to cognitive categories of life meaning ( $r = 0.460$  at  $p \leq 0.01$ ), and existential (to live, to be free, etc.) ( $r = 0.484$  at  $p \leq 0.01$ ).

Test results of the 11<sup>th</sup> grade secondary school students discovered the following LM correlations with “family” and “hedonistic” categories: those students who see the life meaning is to in living for the sake of family, giving all the best to their children, helping their relatives and friends ( $r = -0.439$  at  $p \leq 0.05$ ) have higher LM rate. Also, the higher rate of LM, the smaller value students give to pleasure, happiness, getting sensations and emotions as much as possible ( $r = 0.462$  at  $p \leq 0.05$ ). The low LM rate indicates the presence of existential vacuum that person is trying to fill with entertainments that give quick satisfaction. No significant correlations for boys and girls separately were found. It means that correlations between various categories of common life senses and life meaningfulness (LM) do not depend on gender but the status and age of the persons tested.

Significant correlation of LM with the categories of terminal and instrumental values by the method of value orientations detection are as follows: the total correlation for students of the Academy, and secondary school students detected significant correlations between such terminal values as “development” ( $r = 0.266$  at  $p \leq 0.05$ ), “active pragmatic life” ( $r = -0.284$  at  $p \leq 0.05$ ); and the instrumental “cheerfulness” ( $r = 0.268$  at  $p \leq 0.05$ ), “responsibility” ( $r = -0.399$  at  $p \leq 0.01$ ), “tolerance” ( $r = -0.297$  at  $p \leq 0.05$ ).

So:

- the higher LM value, the less significant is development (work on themselves, the constant physical and spiritual perfection) and more significant is freedom (autonomy, independence in judgment and actions);
- the higher LM value, the more significant is responsibility (a sense of duty, ability to keep one’s word) and tolerance (to views and opinions of others, ability to forgive their mistakes), but vivacity (sense of humor) is less important.

When considering separate indicators of students of the Academy, students of the 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> grades of secondary school, the following data were obtained. Significant for students of the Academy were the following correlation of general life meaningfulness (LM) with terminal values: LM — “interesting work” ( $r = -0.536$  at  $p \leq 0.05$ ), LM — “development” ( $r = 0.430$  at  $p \leq 0.05$ ), LM — “fun” ( $r = -0.467$  at  $p \leq 0.05$ ), LM — “freedom” ( $r = 0.473$  at  $p \leq 0.05$ ); and with instrumental values: LM — “self-control” ( $r = 0.459$  at  $p \leq 0.01$ ), LM — “integrity” ( $r = 0.466$  at  $p \leq 0.01$ ):

- students who have a high rate of LM value in interesting work and fun also pay less attention to development and freedom;
- the higher the general life meaningfulness (LM) of students of the Academy, the less self-control and honesty is valued in achieving the goals (the opposite is true: the more youth appreciates honesty and self-control, the lower is the rate of general life meaningfulness).

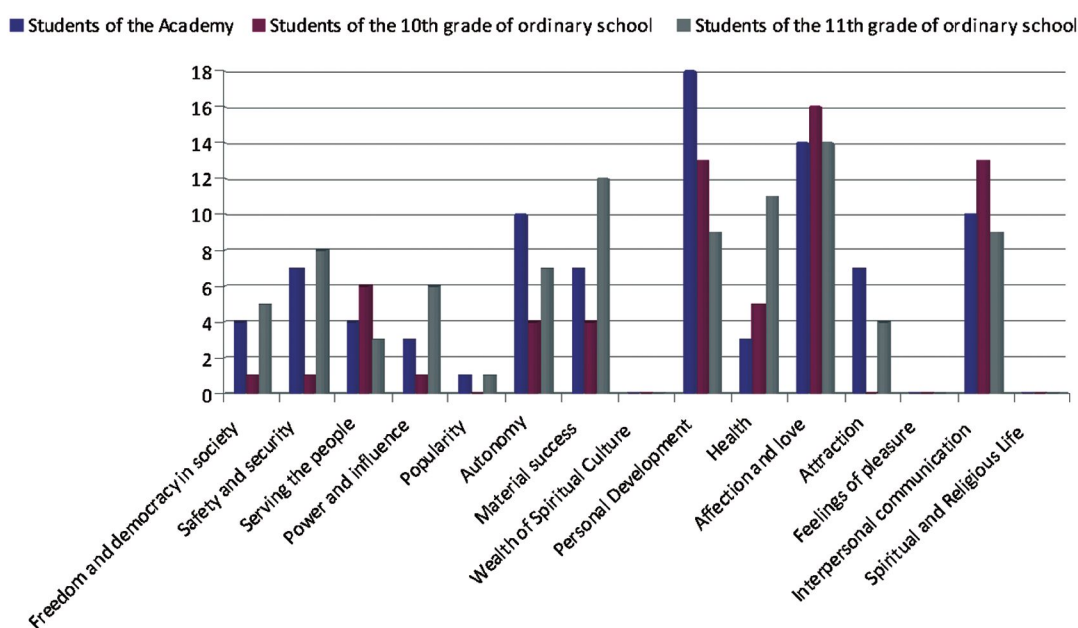
The higher LM rate of students of the 10<sup>th</sup> grade of secondary school, the more significant to them is health (physical and mental) ( $r = -0.477$  at  $p \leq 0.01$ ), and less important — happy family life ( $r = 0.563$  at  $p \leq 0.01$ ).

Students of the 11<sup>th</sup> grade of secondary school revealed the feedback of general life meaningfulness (LM) with their development (work on themselves, constant physical and spiritual improvement) ( $r = 0.536$  at  $p \leq 0.01$ ), which is common for them and Academy students.

Students of 11<sup>th</sup> grade of secondary school with a high rate of LM in achieving the goals valued accuracy (ability to comply with order of things and affairs) ( $r = -0.475$  at  $p \leq 0.01$ ), responsibility (sense of duty, ability to keep one's word) ( $r = -0.451$  at  $p \leq 0.01$ ) and tolerance (for views and opinions of others, ability to forgive their mistakes) more ( $r = -0.438$  at  $p \leq 0.01$ ), and the least attention is given to cheerfulness ( $r = 0.439$  at  $p \leq 0.01$ ) and uncompromising to defects in themselves and others ( $r = 0.489$  at  $p \leq 0.01$ ).

All young men examined, regardless of age and social status, identified “love”, “having good and trusted friends” and “happy family life” among the most important values. Students of ordinary school put health (physical and mental) first in contrast to Academy students, but Academy girls ranked it third and guys — the sixth. Also, students of 11<sup>th</sup> grade of school defined “financial supply” as one of the primary values (the guys — at the 2<sup>nd</sup> place and the girls — at the 5<sup>th</sup>), as Figure 1 shows.

The obtained results show students' orientation mostly on specific values (financial supply, active life, physical and mental health and happy family life), that promote to self-satisfaction and self-actualization needs. The dominant instrumental values appeared to be those that are closely related to learning activity (interpersonal communication). The most pronounced terminal values are financial position, active social contacts, the need for achievements, spiritual satisfaction and their own prestige.



**Figure 1.** Results for the “Person’s life values determination” test (Must-test Иванов & Колобова, 1998)

Both Academy and ordinary school students chose “autonomy”, “material success”, “affection and love”, “interpersonal communication” among important values. However Academy students are oriented towards personal development and autonomy more than of ordinary school, but at the same time students of ordinary school give greater importance to value of interpersonal communication, affection and love.

Students of the 11<sup>th</sup> grade identified material success, health, love and affection. By analyzing features of formation of person’s ideological orientations, we primarily directed an interest in features of integration, its life meanings development, changing attitudes to

stressful situations, taking responsibility for own life. Following the principle of person's integrated subjectivity, according to which a person's ability to self-actualization is shown in rising teleological perspective in the continuum of: 1) relative subject (biological individual psychosomatic organism) endowed with ability to reflexive configuration (subjective ability of "premonition") for favorable living conditions and based on the first key value — "vitality" (health); 2) mono subject (actually subject of relatively individual activities), which operates with specific subject content (knowledge, communication, labor) produced in accordance with social norms and cultural standards, dominated by pragmatic values, we defined determinants of person's value-sense sphere in adolescence.

Development of person's value-sense sphere is explained by person's adaptive activity, ability to moral and psychological self-regulation (through awareness of duty, responsibility, and manifestation of conscience "have to", "should be"). Subjective ability of level is implemented by targeting "I will", "I dare" and provides person's new experience construction. Building a picture of the world is a result of understanding the meaning of being of a specific person in the world order (subjective ability to "accept"). Person understands their own hierarchy of values, identifies existential ideas, values accentuations, activates individual integration, in terms of awareness, acceptance and integration of its own desires, needs and opportunities.

### Conclusion

Person's self-creation occurs in the process of understanding their own resource capabilities, changes of transferential characteristics, methods of defense, attack, stable behavioral patterns.

This process requires a good structuring: self-image, life goals, future perspectives; presence of positive strategies of psycho-emotional self-regulation experiences: the presence of responsible choice, adequate anxiety, emotional satisfaction from reality; existential position: basic trust in the world, freedom and responsibility in life choices, developed reflection, infernal type of locus-control, a sense of dignity; sociality: a conscious choice of a distance in interpersonal contacts, effective communications strategies; self-realization: personal and professional fulfillment has effective strategies that do not harm the self-image, the presence of behavioral competence.

The process of self-creation must be based on the will of person, their ability to move forward and develop, the ability to be themselves, to understand their own needs. It is related to the ability of person to contact with others and the world as a whole.

The ability of communication, interaction and empathy is both a reflection and a condition of that person's existence.

The analysis gives reason to believe that for deeper processing and successful application of research methods of ideological orientations, for their role in formation of the world view, person's self-image we should be: a) relying on the concept of a person as an individual mode of culture and as integrative character of a person; b) using a systematic approach in identifying trends in the change of person's life meanings.

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### Summary

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**Problem:** very actual problem of socialization in adolescence is a process of self-identification, self-realization and self-creation.

**Research subject:** — ideological orientation of high school students.

**Research goal:** — to determine the most pressing problems in self-creation of the individual in adolescence, to reveal the features of influence of ideological orientations on building a picture of the world and the self-image.

**Content:** a pilot study of axiological sphere of schoolchildren in early adolescence was performed, which showed the current state of life meaningfulness and the dominant values at this age. The study was performed in order to determine the features of axiological sphere, and to find differences between values and life meaningfulness of different groups: creative talented children (Kyiv Children Academy of Arts) and children from regular school.

The obtained result demonstrated availability of significant links of the indicator of overall meaningfulness of life with categories of meaning of life by the research procedure of Kotlyakov of the system of meaning of life and categories of terminal and instrumental values (by the procedure of M. Rokich of value orientations detection). Those schoolchildren, who are focused on success, achievement of career and dignified position in society, as well as those, who are aimed at building relationships, feeling needed by someone, being close with someone, enjoying communication with others, have higher indicator of meaningfulness of life. In addition, the higher indicators on the scale of meaningfulness of life, the less important understanding of themselves and life is for children. Low indicator of life meaningfulness indicates availability of existent vacuum, which person is trying to fill in with entertainments that provide quick satisfaction.

The test results of schoolchildren from regular secondary school demonstrated following links of meaningfulness of life with “family” and “hedonistic” categories: those schoolchildren, who see the meaning of life in living for the sake of their families, transferring all the best to their children, helping their relatives and friends, have higher rate of meaningfulness of life.

**Conclusions:** person’s self-creation occurs in the process of understanding their own resource capabilities, changes of transference characteristics, methods of defense, attack, stable behavioral patterns.

This process requires a good structuring: self-image, life goals, future perspectives; presence of positive strategies of psycho-emotional self-regulation experiences: the presence of responsible choice, adequate anxiety, emotional satisfaction from reality; existential position: basic trust in the world, freedom and responsibility in life choices, developed reflection, internal type of locus-control, a sense of dignity; sociality: a conscious choice of a distance in interpersonal contacts, effective communication strategies; self-realization: personal and professional fulfillment has effective strategies that do not harm the self-image, the presence of behavioral competence.

The process of self-creation must be based on the will of person, their ability to move forward and develop, the ability to be themselves, to understand their own needs. It is related to the ability of person to contact with others and the world as a whole.

The ability of communication, interaction and empathy is both a reflection and a condition of that person’s existence.

The analysis gives reason to believe that for deeper processing and successful application of research methods of ideological orientations, for their role in formation of the world view, person’s self-image we should be: a) relying on the concept of a person as an individual mode of culture and as integrative character of a person; b) using a systematic approach in identifying trends in the change of person’s life meanings.