

Self-Regulation of the Image of Labor in Young People's Cultural Space



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Abstract. The idea of the essence of labor is largely socio-cultural, i.e. it is conditioned by a connection with a certain type of culture. Therefore, this article looks into the socio-cultural approach to self-regulation of the image of labor. Self-regulation of the image of labor is investigated in connection with the cultural space of young people. With the help of theoretical positions of phenomenological sociology we substantiate the concept of socio-cultural foundation used by young people to create an image of labor; we describe the process of formation of cultural space, consider a role of different types of culture in the process of formation of the meanings that form the image and act as semantic basis of what young people expect from labor. This approach contributes to a more adequate understanding of how young people form their attitude toward labor and of the contradictions arising in this sphere of life. The way in which young people understand the meaning of labor forms a basis on which the image of labor is created. We substantiate the most significant features of the conditions for the formation of meanings, reflecting the following changes in social reality in modern society – social uncertainty, destruction of

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normativity, and semantic hybridization. The construction of young people's new ideas about labor takes place through the contradictory interaction between traditional and modern semantic patterns. We use data of sociological studies to analyze the connection between various characteristics of the image of labor and types of culture; we also analyze the influence of terminal and instrumental values in the constructed image of labor on young people's attitude toward actual labor. The mechanism of self-regulation of the attitude toward labor is revealed as a process of realization of expectations, in trust or distrust toward labor. The role of moral and psychological state of young people in this process is shown. The analysis allows us to understand more deeply the features of self-regulation of the image of labor and its role in the formation of young people's attitude toward labor. We make conclusions about the changes in the image of labor in the direction of more flexible forms that often depend on the moral and psychological state of young people, which is manifested in their attitude toward labor. We show a connection between self-regulation models based on terminal and instrumental values of labor and "adaptive" and "spiritual" types of culture.

Key words: young people, labor, image of labor, self-regulation, cultural space, socio-cultural mechanism of self-regulation, meanings, terminal and instrumental values of labor, trust and distrust, expectations.

Introduction

Global social and economic changes affect the sphere of labor and significantly change the very space of labor activity. The labor market is changing, not just separate professions, but their entire blocks are disappearing; developments in the field of artificial intelligence can lead to the devaluation of the human labor but also increase the importance of the creativity of the person; the level of education is being raised; and there remained, however, a contradiction between the level of people's training and the new demands of a rapidly changing professional landscape. Is it possible to survive socially and professionally in these conditions? Who will be in demand and what is needed so that not to fall out of the professional field? How to integrate into current and future changes and how they will be regulated? Finally, the main question is: who is the main actor of regulation?

Regulation of life activity is largely self-regulation, which in modern conditions of uncertainty, emancipation and individualization increasingly dominates purposeful regulation. And although society, in the face of its institutions, opposes uncertainty in its own way,

the young people themselves have the final say. Based on their ideas about successful life, status and prospects, they make their choice in the labor field, they design and regulate their labor strategies.

The labor biography of a modern young man is a series of acts of choice, which is a multi-level subjective self-regulation, based on the idea of the reality of labor relations, generalized images of labor and its various aspects. Conceptualized and emotionally experienced, often formed not from their own experience, but through the reflection of the experience of others, they become the basis of a generalized image of work and affect its value.

Ideas about work are formed in a certain cultural space in which the life activities of different groups of young people take place. It is filled with a variety of ideas, meanings, values, which, when they correlate with their expectations and receive confirmation or refutation, are embedded in the image of reality. Therefore, everything that happens to young people in the labor sphere can be viewed more generally as a semantic projection of culture.

The source of basic semantic constructions are archetypal images contained in culture and reflected in the collective unconscious [1]. As a product of the historical evolution of society, archetypes are reflected in folk art in the form of proverbs, sayings, epics, myths passed down from generation to generation. In the process of social interactions, they are transformed into conscious forms. Interacting with other elements of the mechanism of self-regulation (meaning-life values, types of culture, etc.), they become a common cultural basis for the formation of the image of work and set the foundations of semantic self-regulation.

The process of changing generations includes not only reproduction, but also a constant rethinking of experience, which is a source of young people's new ideas about work, and therefore other expectations. Constructed new meanings are nurtured by the very practice of youth interaction with modern social intermediaries, their contact with modern global culture. Tested in inter-subjective interactions, they also participate in the formation of the image of labor.

Inherited traditional and formed modern values are in a state that reflects the unity and struggle of opposites in the semantic field of the cultural space of youth. Being concretized in the clash of formal and informal norms, proclaimed institutional and group goals of labor activity, meaningful and utilitarian values, this contradiction defines the specifics of the cultural space of youth by defining the image of work.

Thus, the problem lies in the contradictions of the formation of young people's image of work in a changing cultural space. Based on this most general problem, the goal of our paper is to study features of self-regulation of the image of work in connection with the components of the cultural space of youth. For this purpose, we analyze the relationship of archetypes, life values, types of culture as basic elements

of social and cultural mechanism of self-regulation and components of the cultural space of young people with an understanding of the meaning of work and its association with behavioral attitudes of youth.

Research methodology

In the course of theoretical substantiation of the mechanism of self-image of labor in the cultural space of youth we have relied on an understanding of the historical role of culture in shaping a specific personality type. Culture acts as the basis of the semantic content of young people's ideas about the images of reality, filling them with moral and ideological content.

Self-regulation, which manifests itself in the social construction and redesign of reality, in the modeling of individual biographies, in the development of new value orientations, in the choice of adequate forms of behavior, is considered in the phenomenological paradigm (A. Schutz). The formation of archetypal and mental components of culture in the collective unconscious, which is the result of the reproduction of past experience, is developed in the psychoanalytic paradigm (C. Jung).

In the paradigm of understanding sociology by M. Weber, two main models of attitude toward social reality are identified: traditional and modern. They reflect the specifics of forming ideas about the image of objects of reality. The traditional model is characterized mainly by conventional ideas based on everyday experience, rooted in everyday life. Formed historically, they are inherited from generation to generation. In the modern model, the attitude toward the objects of reality is based on a rational understanding of their characteristics as a means to achieve the goals of their own life.

The formation of meaning and the formation of the semantic field of cultural space were substantiated on the basis of the concepts of L.S. Vygotsky, A.N. Leontiev, D.A. Leontiev and others.

For empirical analysis, we use the results of three studies conducted by the Center for Youth Sociology of ISPR RAS under our guidance. The 2011 study was conducted among the population of the Russian Federation over the age of 18 in 13 regions of the Russian Federation, in 67 localities. 1,300 people were surveyed, the sample of young people aged 18–29 comprised 301 people. The 2014 survey was conducted among the population aged over 15 in 13 constituent entities of the Russian Federation, in 65 settlements. 1,459 people were surveyed. The sample of young people aged 15–29 was 401 people. The 2017 study was conducted in 7 regions of the Russian Federation, in 28 localities. The sample of young people aged 15–29 was 803 people.

Surveys were conducted by the Public Opinion Institute “Qualitas” under the leadership of N.A. Romanovich, using the method of personal interview at the place of residence of respondents.

1. Socio-cultural approach to self-regulation of the image of work

The mechanism of social regulation has two sides, one of which is connected with the purposeful regulatory activity of social institutions, and the other – with the processes of individual and group self-regulation. Self-regulation is understood as “activities aimed at preventing and overcoming emerging deviations from such a state of conditions of existence and ways of life, which the individual (group) accepts for themselves as due and expected” [2, p. 141].

Understood as the impact of individuals and groups on themselves and their life activities in order to realize their own social expectations, self-regulation is directly related to the independent construction of life strategies in key areas of life. In this capacity, self-regulation is a form of formation of youth subjectivity as the ability to “act as an active beginning (actor, creator) of social reality” [3, p. 146].

Self-regulation is based on constructed images of reality objects as a set of semantic *representations* of their essence, correlated with their own expectations of interaction with these objects. According to B.F. Lomov, “representation is not a shadow of sensations and perceptions, not their weakened duplicate, but a generalized image of objects and phenomena of objective reality” [4, p. 167].

The established ideas of significance, importance and accessibility determine the nature of the relationship to the objects of reality. The awareness of oneself as an active subject of one's own life activity is accompanied by the formation of an appropriate attitude toward the objects of reality and the spheres in which young people construct their life trajectories. Therefore, the relationship becomes an accumulator of *ideas about the essence* of objects of reality and the *possibilities* of realization of group and individual interests in the process of becoming their subjectivity. The attitude toward labor is manifested in the work expectations of young people, and expectations are reflected in the characteristics of the image of work they construct, as if filling them with their own meaning.

From the theoretical positions of phenomenology, the essence of meaning is revealed through the concept of “lifeworld” defined by A. Schutz as the world of human experience, in which “we, as human beings among their own kind, experience culture and society, depend on their objects that affect us and in turn are exposed to our influence” [5, p. 116]. Representing an individualized reflection of the actual relationship of the individual to the objects for which their activities are deployed, the personal meaning that is given to the objects of reality reflects its subjective images. The formation of the image is based on its meaning as a representation of the essence, without which, as S. Averintsev notes, “the image crumbles” [6, p. 387].

Using the concept of the semantic field in the study of the mechanism of semantic regulation of activity, L.S. Vygotsky emphasized the importance of a person's awareness of the actual situation of their behavior. When the situation is considered in the process of activity, the semantic field and the actions themselves can change [7, 8]. According to A.N. Leontiev, the "conscious meaning" that a person possesses, in turn, is mediated by the phenomenon of social consciousness and values as elements of this consciousness [9; 10]. Therefore, an important feature of personal meaning is the derivative of its content from the social position of a person in the system of social relations. A significant role in this process is played by the place of individuals and groups in the system of interactions in a particular area, the associated opportunities and limitations, the basis of stratification and the degree of inequality, the prospects for social mobility and the realization of expectations.

In the youth environment, the diversity of meanings is especially noticeable due to the deep social differentiation caused by the economic conditions of life in the regions, differences in the structure of production and the labor market, and dramatic gaps in the level of remuneration. These drivers of inequality are supplemented by motivational differences, in which social attitudes, expectations, individual and group perceptions of the standard of living and quality of life, and life values play an important role. In addition, in the process of comprehension, in addition to the intellectual processes of cognition of reality and its understanding, there is also an emotional component on the basis of which the experience arises. Young people use all this to construct the image of reality as a whole, including the image of work.

According to I.I. Kvasova, "the fundamental meaning of the concept of "meaning" is that it brings the explanation beyond the limits of

individual consciousness, in the plane of the real life of the actor" [11, p. 35]. The meaning of labor defines the idea of labor in some integrity, linking it with a broader layer of reality. This determines the special role of meaning as a correlate of understanding, in which the ideal idea of work and its actual state converge. The young person's understanding of the meaning of work is not limited to the attitude toward a particular job. It is associated with many aspects of their life – with education, social status, career, relationships in the immediate environment, and lifestyle. Thus, the image of work is formed in the mind, in which the ideas about its essential characteristics are resulting in a generalized form on the basis of a significant and stable meaning (idea).

The nature and content of the meanings that young people give to the image they construct reflect historical experience and knowledge, mostly theoretical, accumulated in the culture, as well as everyday knowledge and experience contained in everyday interactions with the close environment. Inter-subjective interactions become a mechanism and at the same time a social space in which ideas circulate, meanings are formed and transmitted. Semantic patterns and social interactions arising from them are the basis for the formation of cultural space.

If social space is understood as a set of structured and ordered social positions, as a stage on which the interaction of social actors with different statuses unfolds [12; 13, p. 329], then cultural space is a set of ideas on the basis of which images are formed. The representation of social space as a set of social meanings allows us to identify common semantic formats of social life, forms of organization of everyday experience – "frames" [14; 15]. Based on this, the main elements of cultural space are cultural patterns that are formed and preserved in the collective unconscious in the form of archetypes and mental traits of national character, habitual attitudes and social practices formed on their

basis, as well as diverse forms of modern culture generated by global cross-cultural interactions. They are the basis of various types of culture and together form a socio-cultural environment for young people. In this sense, cultural space is “the space of realization of human virtuality (inclinations, opportunities, abilities, desires, etc.), implementation of social programs, goals and interests, dissemination of ideas and views, language and traditions, beliefs and norms, etc.” [16, p. 39].

In the cultural space, the integration function of culture is realized, aimed at uniting young people who are committed to various types of culture. Manifesting itself in the self-identification of young people with the group and with their generation, cultural integration contributes to the objectification of the meanings underlying self-regulation of life. The meanings shared by others acquire a more reasonable form in the young individual's mind, giving them confidence in the correctness of the constructed image of reality.

The types of culture that make up the cultural space act as semantic bases in forming the corresponding expectations of young people in relation to work. Reflected in the characteristics of the constructed image of work, expectations are essentially a reference point with which a young person compares the real opportunities realized in work. Fulfilled expectations are manifested in the trust in labor as a social institution, which is positively reflected in labor motivation, labor mobility, and job satisfaction. The narrowing of opportunities to realize expectations in the field of labor, the formation of an image of labor as difficult, unprotected, alienated and meaningless reduces the trust and interest in labor with all the implications that follow.

Thus, the attitude of young people toward work is the result of individual and group construction and is formed on the basis of ideas

about what work should be and what it is, based on current knowledge and life experience. Therefore, self-regulation is manifested in the construction of an image of work by young people, which is a reflection of its meaning, functions and their own perspectives in connection with work in the group and individual consciousness.

2. Changing reality as a condition for constructing the image of work

The formation of ideas about the work of modern youth takes place in a changing social reality. Numerous objects of social reality – social groups, communities, organizations, institutions, as well as objects that form the cultural space of life of young people, are in constant change. Inside them, some processes are continuously occurring, something changes under the influence of both internal (endogenous) and external (exogenous) factors. The constructed social reality changes accordingly.

In understanding the changes in social reality in a sociological sense, the emphasis is placed on the concept of “social”. We are not referring to any changes occurring in society, but to the social causes and consequences of these changes, which are reflected in the ordinary consciousness of people in the process of their social interactions. That is, the basis of changes in social reality are social changes, which are understood as “various changes that occur over time in social communities, groups, institutions, organizations and societies, in their relationships with each other, as well as with individuals”¹. Interacting with each other in changing structures of society and getting new knowledge about their real state, young people correct the existing images of objects of social reality undergoing change, and their attitude toward them (subjective reality).

¹ Osipov G.V., Moskvichev L.N. *Sociology. Fundamentals of General Theory: Textbook*. Moscow: Aspekt Press, 1996. P. 317.

As noted, the change in subjective reality implies its reinterpretation, giving the past and present a different meaning. The emergence of new meanings leads to a change in the structure of social expectations. P. Berger and T. Luckmann call this process resocialization, in which “the past is reinterpreted so that it corresponds to the present reality” [17, p. 263]. Through resocialization, phenomenology explains the transformation of subjective reality and the specifics of its objectification in transitional conditions. Previous studies have shown quite convincingly how social reality is changing. First, by *changing the content of semantic meanings in traditionally existing forms*. Traditionally existing forms mean familiar concepts that are used in everyday life, but the meaning of which changes under the influence of new living and working conditions. The former understanding of them gives way to new meanings that change, in essence, their content. Second, by *rationalizing the ways to realize expectations that arise in the image of the object of reality*. Instead of the old ways of realizing expectations, new ones appear that are more rational from the point of view of optimizing the result (speed and quality) and are approved by a large part of young people [18, pp.185-189].

These processes are associated with more general trends as sources of life experience and representations as generalized images.

First of all, it is the acceleration of socio-economic change and the accompanying uncertainty. It manifests itself in the deconstruction of stable patterns, the blurring of structures and patterns of behavior, the absence of direct determinations between actions and expected results, the blurring of the line between the properties and states of structures such as the economy, the labor market, and professional groups, due to the increasing share of randomness in their functioning.

Such conditions prevent a young person from forming a clear picture of reality and making a meaningful choice of work strategy.

Uncertainty is directly related to the state of social regulation mechanisms – the weakening of their institutional foundations and the expansion of non-institutional ones, the shrinking of the space of purposeful regulation and the expansion of self-regulation. This means increasing the role of subjectivity of individuals and groups, and individual choice of young people, which is regulated by their own semantic structure, ideas about a successful life, career, professional achievements, status, etc. At the same time, it is necessary to take into account that the formation of several generations of young people takes place in the conditions of destruction of normativity and ambiguity of ideas about work and scenarios of work biography. Emerging new ideas and meanings are soft, polysemantic, and optional. Work is not a central element of life for everyone, and the understanding of its significance varies among different groups of young people. Therefore, social self-regulation is associated with the deconstruction of some semantic patterns of labor relations and the formation of new ones.

The changes in the meaning of work and in the mechanisms of its regulation have become a prerequisite for new forms of interaction in the labor sphere between the employee and the employer and within work teams, and naturally affected young people and the choice of forms of working life: from the desperate desire to be involved primarily in building a career, achieving a high professional status to escapism and downshifting [19, 20]. And the search for flexible ways of self-regulation of working life is the basis for the development of new forms of employment, including self-employment, freelancing, etc. [21, 22]; on the one hand, this expands the freedom to design labor strategies

and reflects the processes of emancipation as getting rid of strict institutional restrictions, and on the other hand significantly increases the risks. The flexibility of the labor market and its structural components has a downside in the form of employment instability – precarization [23; 24; 25; 26; 27], not protected by employment contracts and obligations, creating new uncertainty; to overcoming it means to get involved in individual and group slalom and surfing, the effectiveness of which in the absence of reliable forms of social protection is rather random. The spread of these practices on a mass scale reflects various ways of discrimination against young people, expands their socially vulnerable groups, and leads to their exclusion and marginalization. The reflection of these features of the state of labor relations in the minds of young people through their actual experience and knowledge expands the semantic picture of reality. Its correlation with one's own social expectations creates an ambiguous image of work and attitude toward it as an object of reality.

Reinterpretation and adding different meanings to work activity reflects the process of changing reality. At the same time, changing the images is a process of interiorization and construction of new meanings that takes place against the background of inertia and reproduction of the basic, traditional foundations of culture. Historically formed and recognizable features of the image of labor can be seen in the views of young people and create the phenomenon of hybridization as one of the most typical features of modern Russian society.

Thus, change is an immanent property of social reality, and the changing reality itself is reflected in the cultural space of young people in the formation of modern images and representations, i.e., meanings. In the situation of open reality, which is associated with the lack of sustainable social regulation and the need for

its individual construction, group experience and behavioral models tested by practice play a crucial role. At the same time, traditional semantic patterns coexist and reproduce, reflecting the inertia of historically determined cultural patterns that take their own place in the mechanism of self-regulation. This reality is marked by a constant updating of socio-cultural patterns, pluralism of norms and the permissibility of any of its configurations; “temporal dyschronosis”, as well as the coexistence of different “time-worlds”, when the normative representations of different groups are correlated with different types of social time [28]. Through their contradictory interaction, actual images of reality are built.

3. Sociocultural self-regulation of the image of work: empirical analysis

Based on the results of studies, we will analyze how self-regulation of the way of work is carried out by young people. Historically formed ideas about labor are contained in proverbs and sayings that preserve the archetypes of labor in the collective unconscious. The following question was asked: “Which of these proverbs is more appropriate to your life position?”, and the following proverbs were analyzed, containing alternative ideas about the attitude to work: “He who would catch fish must not mind getting wet” or “Only fools and horses work”, as well as “Idleness is the mother of all evil” or “Break a sweat while you are eating, get cold while you are working”. The responses of young people in different age groups are presented in *Table 1*.

The choice of proverbs reflecting archetypes with a positive meaning of work from the proposed alternatives by the majority of respondents indicates the appropriate orientation of the image of work being constructed by young people. Their share increases as the age of respondents increases. At the same time, there is a fairly stable part of young people who agree

with proverbs that reflect the archetypes of negative attitudes toward work. Such archetypes of labor have historically been a consequence of the class nature of the attitude toward it. Physical labor was perceived as unworthy of a free person, and it was considered shameful to engage in it; this viewpoint is reflected in proverbs and in fiction. In modern conditions, the negative attitude toward work is filled with new meanings. Unprecedented stratification in terms of living standards contributed to the destruction of normativity as such and unambiguous ideas about labor biography as the only norm. Labor is no longer regarded as an absolute norm, and non-labor biography has ceased to be an unambiguous deviation. Therefore, the refusal to work becomes one of the options of the biography if it does not meet expectations. The “aristocratic fastidiousness” in relation to work, the idleness of the creative way of life, and the emergence of a subculture of exclusivity among young people – young people who defiantly despise social norms, including in relation to work – are again spreading.

Having chosen the proverbs “Only fools and horses work” and “Break a sweat while you are eating, get cold while you are working”, almost one in five young people (17.6%) recognizes

work as unworthy for themselves, and one in ten (12.7%) shows a dismissive attitude toward it. Accordingly, the various meanings that have been historically formed in the archetypes of labor, as well as their modern modernization, are reflected in the young people’s understanding of its essence.

Understanding the essence of labor is revealed in the answers to the question “What is the meaning of labor to you?” The answers reflect the value attitude toward work. Work as a terminal value was defined by a set of semantic meanings: a sense of utility, inner need, creativity. And the instrumental attitude toward work was defined by a set of the following semantic meanings: the opportunity to earn, forced necessity, communication. Let us analyze the relationship of positively and negatively directed archetypes (the average values of the relationship for each proverb) with the value of labor (*Tab. 2*).

The analysis of the table data shows, first, that the value of the terminal value of labor is more than twice higher in groups with a positive orientation of archetypes (26%) compared to groups with a negative orientation (11.2%). Terminal value is inherent in the traditional attitude toward labor, in which it is considered

Table 1. Archetypes of labor in the collective unconscious of youth

Age (years)	Distribution of answers to the question, % of respondents			
	He who would catch fish must not mind getting wet	Only fools and horses work	Idleness is the mother of all evil	Break a sweat while you are eating, get cold while you are working
15–17	77.8	22.2	87.3	12.7
18–24	83.7	16.3	87.4	12.6
25–29	85.8	14.2	87.2	12.8
Average	82.4	17.6	87.3	12.7

Source: compiled based on the results of a study conducted by the Center for Youth Sociology of ISPR RAS in 2011.

Table 2. Connection of archetypes with the value of labor

Archetypes	Connection with the value of labor, % of respondents	
	Terminal value of labor	Instrumental value of labor
Positive orientation	26.0	74.0
Negative orientation	11.2	88.8

Source: compiled based on the results of a study conducted by the Center for Youth Sociology of ISPR RAS in 2011.

primarily as a source of development of an individual's own spiritual and physical forces. And second, there is a clear trend of instrumentalization of labor in modern conditions. This trend reflects the influence of increasing dynamism, variability, and uncertainty in modern society. The labor market is changing, professions are being transformed, and the scale of professional prestige is being revised. In these conditions, the role of self-regulation of labor relations increases, and the instrumental attitude toward work becomes an important element in its mechanism.

Since the value attitude toward work has a socio-cultural nature, we analyze the relationship between the types of basic culture that form the cultural space of youth [29; 30, pp. 14-19], with the value of labor (*Tab. 3*). The typologization of culture is based on the theory of social and cultural dynamics of P.A. Sorokin [31].

The data presented in the table show that all the analyzed types of culture are more closely related to the instrumental attitude of young people toward labor (average value = 60.1%) than to the terminal one (39.9%). To the greatest extent, the instrumental value of labor is associated with adaptive culture (the need to save in everything, adapt to changing conditions) – 68.8%, and the terminal value – with spiritual culture (47.4%). That is, when constructing the image of labor, the

semantic content of its characteristics (terminal or instrumental) is determined by the belonging of young people to a certain type of culture.

Historical experience and knowledge accumulated in different types of culture and in the characteristics of the image of labor they construct, serve as a semantic basis for the corresponding expectations from actual labor. In terms of significance, expectations were distributed as follows: to adapt to changing conditions; to satisfy one's spiritual needs; to provide a quiet comfortable life for oneself and one's family; to serve as a normative basis (meritocratic criterion) for social advancement; to realize one's own innovative potential; to satisfy the need for self-transformation and physical development. By means of expectations the constructed image of labor is connected with the process of life activity as a whole.

Let us consider to what extent the formation of young people's image of labor is connected with the meaning of their life. To do this, we will analyze the relationship between meaning-life values and the value attitude of young people toward labor (*Tab. 4*).

These tables show the predominant relationship of the majority of meaning-life values with instrumental values in young people's image of work. Moreover, the most significant connections are traced with the following meanings of life: with political

Table 3. Relationship between basic culture types and the value of labor

Types of basic culture	Connection with the value of labor, in %	
	with terminal value	with instrumental value
Spiritual culture	47.4	52.6
Innovative culture	39.5	60.5
Physical development culture	44.4	55.6
Hedonistic culture	38.2	61.8
Adaptive culture	31.2	68.8
Culture of moral anomie	38.4	61.6
Average	39.9	60.1

Source: compiled based on the results of a study conducted by the Center for Youth Sociology of ISPR RAS in 2017.

Table 4. Relationship between life values and the value of labor

Life values	Connection with the value of labor, in %	
	with terminal value	with instrumental value
Pursuit of truth	54.1	45.9
Love	45.1	54.9
Struggle for justice	50.9	49.1
Quiet comfortable life	33.6	66.4
Political struggle (for power)	28.1	71.9
Manifestation of one's individuality (self-realization)	47.0	53.0
Continuation of oneself in future generations	38.7	61.3

Source: compiled on the basis of the results of a study conducted by the Center for Youth Sociology of ISPR RAS in 2017.

struggle (for power) – 71.9%; with a quiet comfortable life – 66.4%; with the continuation of oneself in future generations – 61.3%, and to a lesser extent – with love – 54.9% and with the manifestation of one's individuality (with self-realization) – 53%. Only the pursuit of truth and the struggle for justice, as meaning-life values, are more related to the terminal values in the image of work. That is, the instrumental attitude toward work as an opportunity to earn money, as a forced necessity, or as a communication reflects the corresponding understanding of the meaning of life by young people. Therefore, in the changing reality, more rational ideas of young people about the meaning of life are actualized, which is manifested in the instrumentalization of values in the image of work, and in the direction of their life activities.

To confirm this conclusion, we will analyze how labor values are related to the choice of life strategies and behaviors by young people (*Tab. 5*).

Young people's preferences related to choosing life strategies were evaluated on a seven-point scale between the following

alternatives: change taken as a unit, and constancy taken as 7 points. In the choice of behavior models, the preference for extreme and risk was taken as a unit, and confidence and predictability – as 7 points.

It follows from the table that the proponents of both the terminal and instrumental value of labor prefer constancy in choosing a life strategy, as well as confidence and predictability in choosing a behavior model. Moreover, among the supporters of the instrumental value of labor, the estimates are much higher ($K=5.39$ and 5.08) than among the supporters of the terminal value ($K=4.73$ and 4.89). Therefore, the more significant desire of the proponents of the instrumental value of work for consistency and predictability in the choice of life strategy and behavior model confirms the conclusion about the rationalization of the youth environment and the attitude toward work and life in general.

Let us consider how the expectations contained in the constructed image of work are manifested in the attitude of young people toward their own work. The answers to the question about what working young people

Table 5. Relationship between the values of work and young people's life strategies and models of behavior*

Values of work	Relationship with life strategies (K)*	Relationship with models of behavior (K)
Terminal	4.73	4.89
Instrumental	5.39	5.08

*K – weighted average coefficient on a seven-point rating scale.
Source: compiled based on the results of a study conducted by the Center for Youth Sociology of ISPR RAS in 2017.

expect from work were distributed as follows: decent earnings – 77.5%, interesting creative work – 37.9%, professional self-realization – 37.3%, a sense of self-usefulness – 24.9%, providing basic means of existence – 15.5%, self-affirmation in the team – 18.4%, opportunities for entrepreneurial activity – 10.1%². As can be seen, expectations were concretized in comparison with socio-cultural meanings in the constructed image of work, having taken the form of requirements for specific work.

Let us analyze how the expectations of labor (requirements for labor) are related to the attitude toward it (*Tab. 6*).

Analysis of the data presented in the table shows that there is a stable relationship between work expectations of young people and their attitude toward work. The attitude toward work was evaluated based on the answers to the question “To what extent are these qualities inherent in the labor relations of representatives of your generation?” These qualities were interpreted as ethical standards of attitude toward work. The table shows the scores for the answer “inherent in full”.

To the greatest extent, almost all the analyzed expectations are associated with a responsible attitude toward work (from 41.3 to 50%), which the majority of respondents, on the one hand, recognize as the highest level of their implementation, and on the other – as a priority condition for the implementation of expectations. This conclusion is confirmed by the high level of correlation between the following expectations from work: professional self-realization with mutual assistance (38%) and self-dedication in work (37.9%); interesting, creative work with a sense of freedom and independence from anyone (43.5%); opportunities for entrepreneurship with the principle of “every man for himself” (56.2%); self-affirmation in a team with mutual assistance (41%); decent earnings with hard work (38.4%) and with the principle of “every man for himself” (38%); a sense of self-usefulness with hard work (45%); providing basic means of existence with mutual assistance (44%).

Thus, the attitude of young people toward work depends on the degree of realization of

Table 6. Relationship of expectations from work (requirements for work) with ethical standards of attitude toward work

Expectations (requirements to work)	Ethical standards of attitude toward work, inherent in young people to the fullest extent, in %						
	Diligence	Mutual help	Responsibility	Thrifty	The principle of every man for himself	Feeling of freedom	Dedication to work
Self-realization	9.8	38.0	41.3	27.3	36.4	29.8	37.9
Interesting work	37.1	37.9	48.4	32.3	39.5	43.5	35.5
Opportunity for entrepreneurship	34.4	34.4	50.0	37.5	56.2	40.6	34.4
Self-affirmation in the team	32.8	41.0	45.9	29.5	39.3	37.7	37.7
Decent earnings	38.4	33.6	44.4	28.4	38.0	35.6	34.0
Sense of self-usefulness	45.0	40.0	45.0	28.8	31.2	33.8	40.0
Providing basic means of existence	42.0	44.0	46.0	34.0	34.0	30.0	38.0

Source: compiled on the basis of the results of a study conducted by the Center for Youth Sociology of ISPR RAS in 2014.

² The sum is more than 100%, since not more than three possible answers were allowed.

expectations, which reflect the meanings contained in the characteristics of the image of work constructed by young people. The results of the study show that these expectations were fully realized only in 13.8% of cases, rather realized in 46.3%, rather not realized in 25.4%, not realized in 7.6% of cases, 6.9% of respondents found it difficult to answer. Consequently, one in three (32.9%) persons, whose expectations have not been fulfilled to varying degrees, tend not to trust labor.

Let us consider how distrust in labor arises and what role it plays in the analyzed process. The figurative form of reflection of the object of reality contains not only a rational understanding of its nature, but also an emotional attitude toward it. In the construction of the image of work, the content aspects of emotionality reflect the attitude toward its characteristics, which are of particular importance to the young person. By associating their expectations of work with them, they emotionally experience the possibility or impossibility of their realization. The fact how much unrealized expectations from work affect the social well-being of young people can be judged by the degree of their connection with the answers to the question “To what extent do the following feelings reflect your state over

the past year?”. The following distribution of relationships was obtained: with hope for improvement (66.2%), with confidence and safety (38.3%), with anxiety (30.9%), with indignation (30.8%), with confusion (20.6%), with fear and despair (17.7%), with indifference (16.3%)³. Although the majority of young people in a situation of unrealized expectations from work retain hope and confidence, a significant proportion of them experience feelings of anxiety, indignation, confusion, fear or indifference. That is, the resulting distrust of work is accompanied by significant changes in the social well-being of young people, which in turn affect their attitude toward work as a terminal or instrumental value.

Let us analyze how the nature of the relationship between the basic culture and the value of labor changes depending on the states of confidence and security, on the one hand, and fear and despair, on the other (*Tab. 7*).

From the analysis of the table data, the following trends become apparent. First, the presented average values of the terminal and instrumental values of labor, reflecting the relationship between different types of culture and young people’s attitude toward specific work, significantly change in comparison with the average values of relations, reflecting

Table 7. Relation of basic culture types to the value of labor depending on young people’s moral and psychological state

Types of basic culture	Value of labor depending on the state:			
	confidence and security, %		fear and despair, %	
	Terminal	Instrumental	Terminal	Instrumental
Spiritual culture	42.3	57.7	52.4	47.6
Innovative culture	43.8	56.2	56.0	44.0
Physical development culture	45.6	54.4	54.2	45.8
Hedonistic culture	44.4	55.6	51.0	49.0
Adaptive culture	39.8	60.2	57.1	42.9
Culture of moral anomie	41.4	58.6	55.0	45.0
Average	42.8	57.2	54.3	45.7

Source: compiled on the basis of the results of a study conducted by the Center for Youth Sociology of ISPR RAS in 2017.

³ The sum is more than 100%, because the answers were evaluated for each analyzed feeling.

the constructed image of labor (see Tab. 3). Changes in the relationship between culture types and the value of work are particularly noticeable, depending on the state of fear and despair. In comparison with the image of labor, the average values of connection with terminal values increased from 39.9 to 54.3%, and with instrumental values decreased from 60.1 to 45.7%. Based on the socio-cultural approach, the attitude toward specific work, i.e. the work experience that a young person has, is evaluated on the basis of more general ideas about the essence of work as a phenomenon (generalized image). The correspondence of the expected characteristics of work and the real ones serves as a semantic basis for a positive attitude toward work, in fact, trust in work as the basis of life activity. And, on the contrary, mismatch between the expectations and the actual state of work becomes the basis for its negative image and distrust in it.

Second, all the analyzed types of basic culture, depending on the moral and psychological state of the respondents, change the direction of their influence on the value of labor. Moreover, due to the state of confidence and safety of the respondents, the scores of the instrumental value of labor (the average score = 57.2%) increase in comparison with the terminal value of labor (42.8%). And depending on the state of fear and despair of the respondents, on the contrary, the score of the terminal value of labor is higher than the instrumental value (the average score = 54.3% vs. 45.7%). That is, in the state of confidence and security, the modern rational attitude toward work is activated, and in a state of fear and despair, the traditional self-valuable attitude is activated.

A significant role in this dependence is played by trust or distrust of work, which can be judged by the nature of the relationship between the analyzed moral and psychological

states of young people with the realization of expectations from work. Among young people who rated their condition as “confidence and security”, expectations from work were not realized to varying degrees in 23.3% of cases, and in the opposite group – among those who rated their condition as “fear and despair” – 43.5% of expectations were unrealized, so the level of distrust of work is much higher.

It follows that the link between culture and young people's values related to work is mediated by a moral and psychological state that performs a significant regulatory function. On the one hand, it seems to compensate for the lack of activity of young people in a relatively prosperous state-confidence and security, affecting the increase in the importance of instrumental values. On the other hand, it makes up for the loss of certainty in a crisis state – fear and despair – by increasing the importance of terminal values.

In the self-regulation mechanism, this process looks like this. The analyzed types of basic culture reproduce both traditional terminal values and modern instrumental values in various spheres of young people's life, including work. This is reflected in the constructed image of work. In stable conditions that promote a sense of self-confidence and security in the youth environment, the importance of terminal values aimed at maintaining stability in the interactions of young people is weakening. Their influence is replaced by more rational modern instrumental values.

The opposite processes take place in conditions of uncertainty and risk in the youth environment, accompanied by a state of anxiety, indignation, fear and despair. Young people see the possibility of overcoming these conditions in a return to tradition, actualizing the influence of terminal values. Actualization of terminal or instrumental values in various

types of basic culture is carried out through reflection of the dominant moral and psychological states in the cultural space of various groups of young people.

Let us trace how the ratio of terminal and instrumental values in the image of youth labor has changed in recent years (*Tab. 8*).

The tendency toward increasing the terminal value of labor reflects the change in the moral and psychological state of young people in connection with the declining standard of living in the country during this period. The reason was inefficient economic policy in the context of the crisis and sanctions, one of the consequences of which was low labor efficiency. Against the background of a general decline in wages, areas of employment with the highest remuneration are becoming scarce. In these conditions, young people begin to value any work that provides basic means of subsistence. The self-valuable, terminal attitude toward work increases.

Conclusion

Thus, in the emerging attitude toward work, presented through its image in young people's minds, internal contradictions are inherent. The image of work in the minds of young people simultaneously combines both positive and negative features. They are related to the historical features of social relations in the field of labor, labor practices, most of which have not been overcome. In modern conditions, they acquire a new aspect not only under the influence of changed expectations of young people, but also taking into account changes in specific life situations.

In self-regulation of labor relations, the instrumental attitude toward labor becomes a reflection of the state of uncertainty. Rationalization of labor, expressed in its instrumental meaning as a means of earning money, is the dominant feature of the image of youth labor. Meanwhile, it has become one of the basic features of the image of labor in the parent generation. Although this aspect of the image of labor is dominant in the labor sphere, it is not implemented in the labor practices of both the younger generation and older age groups, which is a significant factor in the devaluation of labor as such.

Despite the dominance of material aspects in the minds of young people, a significant role in the image of work is played by other parties associated with self-realization. However, only one in eight people can fully implement them in work practice. In the minds of modern youth, a stereotype of work is formed as uninteresting, unpromising, often heavy and meaningless, which has a devastating effect on ethical orientations, and on the moral and psychological state of youth.

Self-regulation of the image of labor takes flexible forms. A significant role in their choice is played by the moral and psychological state of young people, manifested in trust or distrust of work. Purposeful regulation of this process depends on the form of ownership, the type of production, the nature of work, and the conditions in various spheres of work. At the same time, the effectiveness of regulation is increased by stimulating the adaptation culture as the basis for the instrumental attitude of

Table 8. Change in the ratio of terminal and instrumental values of labor, 2011–2017

Year	Values of labor, %	
	Terminal	Instrumental
2011	23.8	76.2
2014	31.1	68.9
2017	39.7	60.3

Source: based on the results of three studies conducted by the Center for Youth Sociology of ISPR RAS in 2011, 2014 and 2017.

young people toward work and spiritual culture value, as well as a source of confidence, security as the basis for the formation of its terminal and trust of young people.

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