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SOCIAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL DETERMINANTS OF CONSTRUCTIVE LIFE STRATEGY FORMATION IN ADOLESCENTS

O‘SMIRLARDA KONSTRUKTIV HAYOT STRATEGIYASI SHAKLLANISHINING IJTIMOIY-PSIXOLOGIK DETERMINANTLARI

СОЦИАЛЬНО-ПСИХОЛОГИЧЕСКИЕ ДЕТЕРМИНАНТЫ ФОРМИРОВАНИЯ КОНСТРУКТИВНОЙ ЖИЗНЕННОЙ СТРАТЕГИИ У ПОДРОСТКОВ

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Abstract. This study examines the social and psychological determinants of constructive life strategy formation in adolescents. Adolescence is a critical developmental period during which life goals, value orientations, and future planning are actively shaped. The research focuses on the influence of family environment, peer relationships, social support, personal motivation, and self-concept on the development of constructive life strategies. Empirical data were collected using standardized psychodiagnostic tools and analyzed through statistical methods. The findings highlight the significant role of social and psychological factors in adolescents’ life strategy formation. The results can be applied in the development of preventive and developmental psychological programs aimed at fostering adaptive, goal-oriented, and constructive life strategies among adolescents.

Keywords: *adolescence, life strategy, constructive development, social and psychological determinants, personality development.*

Annotatsiya. Ushbu tadqiqot o‘smirlarda konstruktiv hayot strategiyasi shakllanishining ijtimoiy-psixologik determinantlarini o‘rganishga bag‘ishlangan. O‘smirlik davri shaxs rivojlanishida hal qiluvchi bosqich bo‘lib, bu davrda hayotiy maqsadlar, qadriyatlar tizimi va kelajakka yo‘nalgan rejalar shakllanadi. Tadqiqot doirasida oilaviy muhit, tengdoshlar bilan munosabatlar, ijtimoiy qo‘llab-quvvatlash, shaxsiy motivatsiya va “Men” obrazi kabi omillarning konstruktiv hayot strategiyasiga ta’siri tahlil qilingan. Empirik ma’lumotlar psixodiagnostik metodlar orqali yig‘ilib, statistik tahlil asosida qayta ishlangan. Tadqiqot natijalari o‘smirlarda konstruktiv hayot strategiyasini shakllantirishga qaratilgan profilaktik va rivojlantiruvchi psixologik dasturlarni ishlab chiqishda amaliy ahamiyatga ega.

Kalit so‘zlar: *o‘smirlik davri, hayot strategiyasi, konstruktiv rivojlanish, ijtimoiy-psixologik determinantlar, shaxs rivojlanishi.*

Аннотация. Данное исследование посвящено изучению социально-психологических детерминант формирования конструктивной жизненной стратегии у подростков. Подростковый возраст является ключевым этапом развития личности, в котором формируются жизненные цели, система ценностей и ориентиры будущего развития. В рамках исследования анализируется влияние семейной среды, межличностных отношений со сверстниками, социальной поддержки, мотивационной сферы и образа «Я» на формирование конструктивной жизненной стратегии. Эмпирические данные были получены с использованием психодиагностических методик и обработаны с применением статистических методов анализа. Результаты исследования могут быть использованы при разработке профилактических и коррекционно-развивающих программ, направленных на формирование устойчивых и конструктивных жизненных стратегий у подростков.

Ключевые слова: *подростковый возраст, жизненная стратегия, конструктивное развитие, социально-психологические детерминанты, личностное развитие.*

INTRODUCTION

The formation of life strategies constitutes a central problem in personality and general psychology, reflecting an individual’s ability to consciously plan, regulate, and attribute meaning to their life course. During adolescence—particularly late adolescence—life strategy formation becomes a key developmental task closely associated with identity development, internalization of values, and future-oriented decision-making (Damon, 2024).

From the perspective of personality psychology, life strategies are conceptualized as relatively stable systems of goals, values, meanings, and behavioral patterns that guide individuals’ life choices and long-term trajectories. Contemporary psychological theories emphasize that life strategies are shaped through the interaction of individual characteristics and social-contextual factors. Psychological resources such as meaning-in-life orientations, value systems, and self-attitude play a decisive role in determining the constructiveness and adaptiveness of adolescents’ life strategies (Leontiev, 2005).

Empirical research indicates strong relationships between life strategies and psychological variables such as value orientations, self-regulation, and perceived meaning of life. Studies grounded in Schwartz’s theory of basic values demonstrate that adolescents who possess coherent value systems, positive self-attitudes, and clearly articulated life meanings tend to develop more constructive and adaptive life strategies (Schwartz, 2012; Karabanova et al., 2020; Donahue et al., 2020). However, the majority

of empirical investigations in this area have been conducted within Western or Russian-speaking cultural contexts (Azpiazu Izaguirre et al., 2021; Khlomov et al., 2020).

Despite the growing scholarly interest in life strategy formation, empirical studies focusing on adolescents in Central Asian countries remain limited. In Uzbekistan, differences in educational environments, socio-cultural values, and social expectations create a unique developmental context that warrants independent empirical investigation. In particular, the social and psychological determinants of constructive life strategy formation among adolescents have not been sufficiently explored.

Therefore, the present study aims to examine the social and psychological determinants of life strategy formation among adolescents aged 16–18 years in Uzbekistan. By analyzing the relationships between life strategies, meaning-in-life orientations, value systems, and self-attitude, this research seeks to contribute to a deeper understanding of adolescent personality development and to provide evidence-based recommendations for psychological support, career guidance, and educational practice.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The formation of life strategies during adolescence is one of the central issues in personality psychology and developmental psychology. Life strategies represent relatively stable systems of goals, values, meanings, and behavioral patterns that guide an individual in long-term life planning and adaptation (Leontiev, 2005). This process is particularly active in late adolescence (ages 16–18) and is closely linked to identity formation, internalization of values, and future-oriented decision-making (Damon, 2024).

Theoretical foundations draw from the psychology of meaning and self-determination theory. Leontiev (2005) emphasizes the close interconnection between life strategies and meaning-in-life orientations, viewing meaning as a psychological resource that provides purpose, coherence, and direction in life. Schwartz's theory of basic human values (2012) demonstrates that values serve as trans-situational guiding principles that organize life choices. In adolescents, the coherence and prioritization of values are positively associated with life satisfaction, resilience, and constructive planning (Karabanova et al., 2020; Donahue et al., 2020).

Self-attitude and self-concept also play a significant mediating role. Positive self-acceptance and self-confidence strengthen internal motivation and personal responsibility (Panteleev, 2001). Social context—including family environment, peer relationships, educational setting, and perceived social support—influences the internalization of values and meaning structures (Azpiazu Izaguirre et al., 2021; Khlomov et al., 2020).

Most empirical studies have been conducted in Western and Russian-speaking cultural contexts (Schwartz et al., 2012; Karabanova et al., 2020). Research in Central Asia, particularly Uzbekistan, remains very limited. Local studies highlight the impact of family and educational factors on adolescents' perceptions of life and success (Majidov,

2024; Kushakova & Mamatova, 2025), but the social-psychological determinants of constructive life strategy formation have not yet been systematically investigated.

While the existing literature provides a solid theoretical and methodological foundation, there is a clear research gap in non-Western, especially Central Asian, contexts. The present study aims to address this gap by examining the interplay of social (educational environment, social activity) and psychological (meaning in life, values, self-attitude) factors in the formation of constructive life strategies among Uzbek adolescents, thereby contributing to both global developmental psychology and regionally relevant psychological practice.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The empirical study involved 310 adolescents aged 16–18 years ($N = 310$) enrolled in full-time education. Participants were recruited from academic lyceums ($n = 136$) and vocational colleges ($n = 174$) located in Tashkent, Kokand, and Gulistan. The selection of these educational institutions was based on their accessibility and willingness to participate in the research.

All participants were informed about the purpose of the study and agreed to take part voluntarily. Adolescents with incomplete responses or evident difficulties in understanding questionnaire instructions were excluded from the final analysis. As a result, all 310 questionnaires were deemed suitable for statistical processing.

A quantitative cross-sectional research design was employed to examine social and psychological determinants of life strategy formation during late adolescence. This design was chosen to capture the current state of adolescents' life strategies and their relationships with psychological characteristics within a specific educational and socio-cultural context.

Data collection was carried out using a set of standardized psychodiagnostic instruments widely applied in adolescent and personality psychology:

- **Life Strategy Questionnaire** developed by M.O. Mdivani and P.B. Kodess was used to assess key components of adolescents' life strategies, including social activity, empathy, self-actualization, professional realization, and external success.
- **Meaning-in-Life Orientations Test** by D.A. Leontiev was applied to measure adolescents' life goals, sense of purpose, and perceived meaningfulness of life.
- **Schwartz's Value Survey** was used to identify dominant value orientations and their role in structuring life strategies.
- **Self-Attitude Inventory** by S.R. Panteleev assessed cognitive and emotional aspects of self-attitude, including self-acceptance, self-confidence, and self-perception.

Prior to the main data collection, the questionnaires were reviewed for clarity and comprehensibility. During administration, participants were given additional explanations when necessary to ensure accurate understanding of item content. The

internal consistency of the scales, calculated using Cronbach's alpha, ranged from α = .71 to α = .86, indicating acceptable reliability for the studied sample.

The data collection was conducted in classroom settings during regular school hours with the permission of educational administrations. The researcher personally supervised the administration process in each group.

Before completing the questionnaires, participants received standardized instructions explaining the purpose of the study and emphasizing the anonymity and confidentiality of their responses. Particular attention was paid to creating a calm and non-evaluative atmosphere to reduce possible anxiety and socially desirable responding.

The questionnaires were completed in group format. On average, participants required 40–50 minutes to complete the full set of instruments. In cases where respondents experienced difficulty understanding specific items, brief clarifications were provided without influencing their answers.

ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

This section presents a comprehensive analysis of the empirical data obtained during the study and outlines the main results derived from statistical examination. In line with contemporary approaches in personality and developmental psychology, the analysis focuses on the relationships between life strategy components and key social and psychological determinants (Leontiev, 2005; Karabanova et al., 2020).

At the initial stage of the analysis, descriptive statistics were calculated for the main components of life strategy, including social activity, empathy, self-actualization, professional realization, and external success. The results demonstrated that social activity was relatively high among adolescents in both academic lyceums and vocational colleges. This finding is consistent with previous research emphasizing adolescence as a period of intensified social interaction and active peer engagement (Hurrelmann, 2025; Azpiazu Izaguirre et al., 2021). Statistical comparison revealed no significant differences between the two educational groups in terms of social activity, indicating that social engagement represents a common developmental characteristic regardless of educational context.

The analysis of empathy revealed statistically significant differences between the groups. Adolescents studying in vocational colleges demonstrated higher levels of empathy compared to their peers from academic lyceums. Similar results have been reported in studies highlighting the role of practical and socially oriented educational environments in fostering emotional sensitivity and interpersonal competence (Khlomov et al., 2020). Higher empathy levels are considered an important psychological resource that supports socially adaptive and constructive life strategies (Donahue et al., 2020).

Self-actualization indicators also differed depending on the educational context. Vocational college students exhibited higher levels of self-actualization, suggesting

stronger tendencies toward personal growth, autonomy, and self-directed behavior. This finding aligns with theoretical perspectives that emphasize the role of meaningful activity and internal motivation in adolescent personality development (Leontiev, 2005). Opportunities for applied learning and real-life problem solving may contribute to adolescents' awareness of their own potential and promote more active self-realization (Karabanova et al., 2020).

Professional realization emerged as one of the most significant determinants of constructive life strategy formation. Adolescents enrolled in vocational colleges demonstrated clearer career goals, more defined professional plans, and a stronger orientation toward future employment. Statistical analysis confirmed significant differences between the two groups in this dimension. These results support previous empirical findings indicating that early professional orientation and engagement in vocational activities play a crucial role in shaping future-oriented life strategies and vocational identity during adolescence (Stojadinović & Nikolašević, 2025; Khlomov et al., 2020).

In contrast, no statistically significant differences were found between academic lyceum and vocational college students in terms of external success. This suggests that adolescents in both groups tend to associate success primarily with external evaluations, social recognition, and situational factors. Such perceptions correspond with developmental research indicating that internal criteria of success and personal responsibility are still forming during adolescence (Hurrelmann, 2025).

Correlation analysis further revealed positive and statistically significant relationships between life strategy components and psychological resources such as meaning in life, value orientations, and self-attitude. Adolescents who reported higher levels of life meaningfulness, clearer future goals, and a more positive self-concept demonstrated more pronounced features of constructive life strategies. These findings are consistent with Schwartz's theory of basic values, which emphasizes the regulatory function of values in guiding life choices and long-term planning (Schwartz, 2012), as well as with empirical studies linking meaning in life to adaptive developmental outcomes (Damon, 2024).

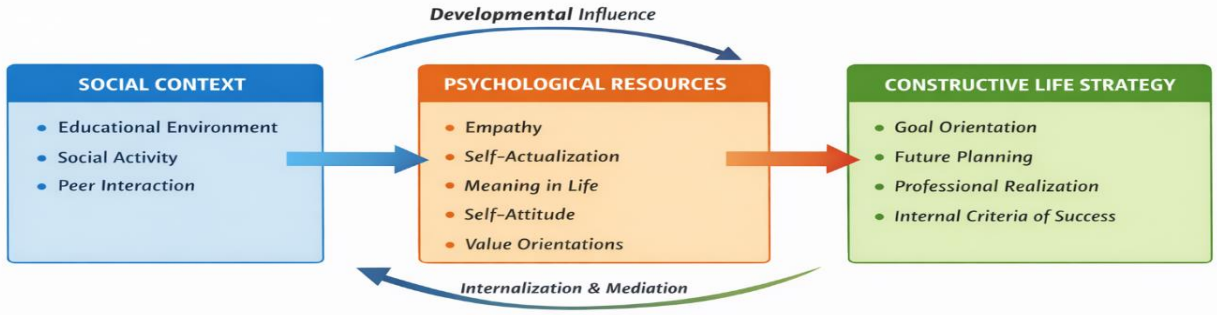
Overall, the results indicate that the formation of constructive life strategies in adolescence is a multidimensional process influenced by both social and psychological determinants. Educational context plays a particularly important role in shaping empathy, self-actualization, and professional realization, thereby contributing to adolescents' ability to develop coherent, goal-oriented, and socially adaptive life strategies.

Statistical data analysis was performed using SPSS (version 26.0). Descriptive statistics were calculated to summarize the main characteristics of the variables. Pearson's

correlation coefficient (r) was applied to examine relationships between life strategy components and psychological variables.

Student's t-test for independent samples was used to identify statistically significant differences between academic lyceum and vocational college students. The level of

Figure 1. *A Social–Psychological Model of Constructive Life Strategy Formation in Adolescents*



statistical significance was set at $p < .05$.

To assess the level of life strategy formation during late adolescence, the Life Strategy Questionnaire was administered to students from academic lyceums and vocational colleges. Descriptive statistics and Student's t-test were used to analyze group differences.

Table 1. Mean Scores of Life Strategy Components by Educational Group

Life Strategy Component	Academic Lyceum (M ± SD)	Vocational College (M ± SD)	t	p
Social Activity	57.90 ± 6.42	58.24 ± 6.11	−0.685	> .05
Empathy	56.58 ± 5.98	58.14 ± 5.76	−2.766	<.05
Self-Actualization	43.76 ± 5.21	44.76 ± 5.08	−2.153	<.05
Professional Realization	41.54 ± 4.89	43.00 ± 4.72	−2.961	<.05
External Success	28.65 ± 4.33	28.51 ± 4.41	0.344	> .05

The results indicate that social activity levels were high in both educational groups, with no statistically significant differences. However, vocational college students demonstrated significantly higher levels of empathy, self-actualization, and professional realization ($p < .05$). No significant group differences were found for external success.

Based on the obtained empirical results, the relationships between social context, psychological resources, and life strategy components were further conceptualized. The consistent patterns identified in the statistical analysis indicate that social and psychological factors do not operate in isolation but interact dynamically in shaping adolescents' constructive life strategies.

In order to systematize the empirical findings and to illustrate the mechanism through which social and psychological determinants contribute to life strategy formation, an integrative social-psychological model was developed. This model reflects the key variables examined in the study and summarizes their functional relationships. Figure 1 presents a conceptual model of constructive life strategy formation in adolescents, derived from the empirical results of the present research.

Discussion

To further clarify the conceptual structure of the proposed model, its main components and their functional roles are summarized in Table 2. The table provides a systematic overview of the social and psychological determinants identified in the study and illustrates how they contribute to the formation of constructive life strategies in adolescents.

Table 2

Model Component	Key Elements	Functional Role
Social Context	Educational environment (lyceum / vocational college); Social activity; Peer interaction	Creates external conditions for adolescents' development and socialization
Psychological Resources	Empathy; Self-actualization; Meaning in life; Self-attitude; Value orientations	Mediate social influences and support internalization of life goals
Constructive Life Strategy	Goal orientation; Future planning; Professional realization; Internal criteria of success	Represents the outcome of integrated social and psychological development

The findings of the present study confirm that the formation of constructive life strategies during late adolescence is a complex and multidimensional process shaped by the interaction of social and psychological determinants. In particular, social activity, empathy, self-actualization, and professional realization emerged as key factors influencing adolescents' ability to plan their lives consciously and to orient themselves toward future goals. These results are consistent with contemporary perspectives in personality and developmental psychology, which emphasize adolescence as a critical period for the integration of social experience and personal meaning into coherent life strategies (Leontiev, 2005; Damon, 2024).

The high levels of social activity observed among adolescents in both academic lyceums and vocational colleges indicate that active engagement in social interactions represents a normative developmental characteristic of late adolescence. Social participation provides adolescents with opportunities to explore social roles, establish interpersonal relationships, and test personal competencies in real-life contexts. Previous research suggests that such social engagement plays a foundational role in the

development of future-oriented life planning and identity formation (Hurrelmann, 2025; Azpiazu Izaguirre et al., 2021). The absence of significant differences between educational contexts in social activity further supports the notion that social involvement is largely driven by age-related developmental needs rather than institutional factors.

Differences in empathy and self-actualization between educational groups highlight the importance of educational environment as a contextual determinant of psychological development. Higher levels of empathy among vocational college students may be attributed to the practical and socially oriented nature of vocational education, which frequently requires cooperation, communication, and shared responsibility. Such environments foster emotional sensitivity and interpersonal awareness, both of which are essential for constructive social functioning and adaptive life strategy formation (Khlomov et al., 2020; Donahue et al., 2020). Similarly, higher self-actualization levels among vocational college students suggest that engagement in applied learning activities may enhance adolescents' awareness of their personal potential and strengthen their motivation for self-development.

Professional realization emerged as a particularly salient determinant of constructive life strategy formation. Adolescents involved in vocational training demonstrated clearer career aspirations and more structured future plans, reflecting a stronger sense of vocational identity. This finding aligns with theoretical models that view vocational identity as a central component of adolescent development and a key mechanism through which individuals integrate personal values with societal expectations (Karabanova et al., 2020). Early engagement in professional activities appears to support adolescents' ability to link present efforts with long-term life goals, thereby contributing to the coherence and realism of their life strategies.

Taken together, the results of this study underscore the importance of creating educational and psychological conditions that support the development of empathy, self-actualization, and professional orientation. Such conditions not only enhance adolescents' psychological well-being but also contribute to the formation of stable, constructive, and future-oriented life strategies. By situating the findings within a broader socio-cultural context, the present study contributes to a deeper understanding of life strategy formation in adolescents and highlights the relevance of context-sensitive approaches in psychological research and practice.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The present study examined the social and psychological determinants of constructive life strategy formation among adolescents aged 16–18 years. The results demonstrate that adolescence is a critical developmental period during which life strategies are actively shaped under the influence of social engagement, personal psychological resources, and educational context.

The main conclusions of the study can be summarized as follows:

1. Social activity represents a fundamental component of adolescents' life strategies and reflects their readiness for social interaction and participation in collective life.

2. Empathy and self-actualization serve as key psychological determinants contributing to the development of constructive and adaptive life strategies.

3. Professional realization and career orientation play a decisive role in shaping adolescents' future planning and goal-directed behavior.

4. During adolescence, perceptions of success are largely associated with external factors, indicating the need for further development of internal criteria of achievement and responsibility.

Based on the obtained results, several practical recommendations can be proposed. Educational institutions are encouraged to implement psychological and pedagogical programs aimed at developing empathy, self-reflection, and self-actualization among adolescents. Career guidance activities should be strengthened to help adolescents formulate realistic professional goals and align their life strategies with personal abilities and values. In addition, psychological counseling and training programs focused on fostering internal motivation and personal responsibility may contribute to the formation of more stable and constructive life strategies.

In conclusion, the findings of this study provide valuable insights into the mechanisms underlying life strategy formation in adolescents and may serve as a foundation for the development of effective psychological and educational interventions aimed at supporting adolescents' personal growth and future-oriented development.

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