



CHARACTER ACCENTUATION AND METHODS FOR ITS NORMALIZATION

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Abstract

This article is dedicated to the concept of character accentuation, its types, and methods for addressing them. Studying how excessive expression of personal traits affects an individual's social adaptation is a significant issue for psychologists. Based on the scientific perspectives of Karl Leonhard and Alexander Lichko, this article provides insights into the types of accentuation and psychological strategies for their normalization. It also presents psychological experiments and real-life examples illustrating the impact of accentuation on social life.

Keywords: Character accentuation, personal traits, Karl Leonhard, Alexander Lichko, normalization methods, psychology, adolescents, social adaptation.

Introduction

Character accentuation refers to the excessive expression of certain personality traits, considered an extreme form of norm. This term was first introduced by the German psychiatrist Karl Leonhard and later developed by the Soviet psychiatrist Alexander Lichko. Leonhard defined accentuation as personality traits that significantly manifest in a social environment and intensify under certain circumstances. Lichko, focusing mainly on adolescents, studied the dynamics of these traits during developmental stages.

The concept of accentuation

Karl Leonhard's Theory of Accentuation

In 1968, Leonhard introduced the term "accentuation" to describe extreme expressions of personality traits. According to him, accentuation is a form of norm where certain traits become overly prominent and manifest only in specific situations. In his classification, Leonhard divided accentuations into two groups based on temperament and character. Temperamental traits are linked to biological structure, while character traits are shaped by social and psychological factors.

Alexander Lichko's Theory of Accentuation

Lichko expanded Leonhard's ideas and adapted them to behavioral traits commonly observed in adolescents and young adults. He defined adolescent accentuation as a temporary phenomenon that



may stabilize or disappear with age. For instance, a teenager with schizoid accentuation might exhibit more social engagement as they mature.

Types of accentuation

Leonhard's Classification

Leonhard identified 13 types of accentuation, which he grouped as follows:

1. **Hyperthymic:** Marked by optimism, high energy, and activity. These individuals often take leadership roles and seek novelty.
2. **Dysthymic:** Characterized by persistent low mood, passivity, and preference for solitude.
3. **Emotive:** Highly sensitive with intense and consistent emotional reactions.
4. **Anxious:** Prone to worry, insecurity, and a lack of self-confidence.

Lichko's Classification

Lichko focused on traits emerging in adolescence and identified the following types:

1. **Schizoid:** Prefers solitude, struggles with interpersonal communication.
2. **Hyperthymic:** Energetic and highly sociable, but may display aggression during adolescence.
3. **Cycloid:** Experiences frequent mood swings, alternating between euphoria and depression.
4. **Labile:** Exhibits rapid mood changes, leading to emotional instability.

Methods for normalizing accentuation

1. Psychological Counseling and Training

Specialized group training and individual psychological counseling can be effective for individuals with accentuated traits. For example, group training focused on social skills can help those with hyperthymic accentuation better manage their social activity.

2. Personalized Support and Development

Lichko recommended personalized approaches for adolescents. Supporting their development in ways tailored to their unique traits helps them adapt more effectively to their social environment. For instance, providing one-on-one support for schizoid individuals can enhance their social skills.

3. Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT)

CBT is effective for individuals prone to anxiety and insecurity. It teaches them to manage negative thoughts and emotions. For example, CBT helps those with anxious accentuation regulate their emotional responses. Research shows that CBT improves mood and encourages positive behavioral changes.

4. Encouraging Social Adaptation

Support from parents, teachers, and peers plays a crucial role in improving social adaptation, especially for adolescents. Studies show that children who receive consistent social support adapt more easily to their environment and develop higher self-esteem.



5. Practical Examples and Psychological Studies

Studies, including those by Kretschmer, show how accentuated traits influence individuals' professional lives and social interactions. For instance, individuals with pedantic accentuation excel in roles requiring responsibility and attention to detail but struggle in high-pressure environments.

The importance of accentuation in social adaptation

Accentuation not only defines unique personality traits but also significantly impacts social adaptation. While Leonhard and Lichko described accentuation as extreme expressions of personality, these traits can sometimes enhance social success. For example, hyperthymic individuals adapt quickly to new situations and form friendships easily but may face challenges in tasks requiring sustained attention. Conversely, individuals with pedantic traits thrive in structured and detail-oriented environments but may struggle in unpredictable situations. This makes them well-suited for professions like accounting, law, or research.

Conclusion

Character accentuation represents an exaggerated expression of traits, which can either aid or hinder an individual's social adaptation. The theories of Leonhard and Lichko provide valuable insights into understanding these traits and their social implications.

Psychological studies suggest that accentuation can be normalized through various methods, including CBT, counseling, training, and social support. These approaches improve social adaptation and increase the chances of success for individuals with accentuated traits.

Understanding the role of accentuation in personal and social development is important not only for psychologists but also for educators and parents. It helps support the development, social integration, and psychological well-being of children and adolescents.

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