Research Paper

Comprehensive Assessment Of The Anxiety Level Of American And   Russian High School Students

Andrew J. Han
student at Jericho High School, Jericho, NY, USA,

Abstract. *Annotation. The presented empirical study provides data on a comparative assessment of the level of anxiety of American and Russian schoolchildren. On the general sample of American (n=10, age 15+0.3) and Russian (n=10, 15+0.6) secondary school students (boys), personal and situational anxiety and its levels were determined using a questionnaire (assessment of psycho-social and pedagogical adaptation of students) and the C.D. Spielberger test.*

It was revealed that a high level of anxiety was recorded in 10% of American and 40% of Russian students; an average level - in 60% of American and 50% of Russian students; a low level - in 30% of American and 10% of Russian students, and situational anxiety in 30% of American and 10% Russian students. There was also a significant excess ($p > 0.05$) of indicators for situational (37.86 ± 0.12 49.34 ± 0.12) and personal anxiety (42.64 ± 0.13 and 51.07 ± 0.12) in Russian students.

The analysis of the questionnaire data on the study of psycho-social conditions shows the relationship of child anxiety with socio-economic problems. Thus, among Russian schoolchildren, they were associated with such life situational difficulties as "fear of choosing post-secondary education" (99%), "fear of not passing state final exams" (94%), "enmity and conflicts between peers" (73%), "lack of time for personal life (70%), "conflicts with adults (teachers, parents)" (66%). American schoolchildren had such problems: "lack of time for personal life" (84%), "fear of choosing post-secondary education" (77%), "fear of not passing state final exams" (73%), "enmity and conflicts between peers" (60%).

Keywords: *American and Russian high school students, psycho-emotional state, anxiety*

One of the problematic trends that worries many representatives of school education is associated with an increase in the number of anxious children, characterized by increased anxiety, insecurity, emotional instability [1,2]. The anxiety of children has a powerful influence on all aspects of the life of the child's body. It leads to a decrease in motivation for learning, and functional work in the cognitive sphere of the individual, to an increase in psycho-emotional tension, which increases anxiety and increases the neuroticism of the student [2-5].

According to the US National Survey of Children's Health, it shows that deviations in mental health and, first of all, the level of anxiety leads to an increase in mental illnesses (neuroses, depression) in the school population [6-8]. According to statistics, in Russia, due to large socio-economic changes in the country, there is a negative impact on the mental health of the population and mainly on the child population [9].

It should be noted that the conditions of the social environment and society have a huge impact on the level of child anxiety. In this aspect, a comparative study of schoolchildren living in different societies is interesting. In this regard, we set a goal: to study the level of anxiety of schoolchildren studying in the USA and Russia.

Organization and methods of research. The study was conducted on the territory of Russia (Moscow Secondary School 1101) and the American High School (Jericho High School, Jericho, New York). The total study sample was represented by a group of American (n=10, age 15+0.3; 5 girls and 5 boys) and Russian high school students (n=10, 15+0.6; 3 girls and 7 boys) studying in the secondary education system.
The methodological material of the study was a questionnaire that addressed issues related to the problems of psycho-social and pedagogical adaptation of students (for example, fear of choosing post-secondary education,

fear of not passing state final exams, hostility and conflicts between peers, lack of time for personal life, conflicts with adults (teachers, parents), congestion of school subjects in the schedule, a small assortment in school canteens, lack of time for sleep, non-reciprocal love, problems in personal life, etc.).

To identify the type of anxiety (personal and situational) of students, the C.D. Spielberger test was used [10].

The results obtained and the discussion. The results of the responses to the questionnaire of the studied sample of schoolchildren showed (Table 1).

Table 1.

Average group indicators of the questionnaire data of American and Russian students (%; n=20)

Indicators	students (%)	
	American	Russian
Fear of choosing post-secondary education	77	99
Fear of not passing the state final exams	73	94
Enmity and conflicts between peers	60	73
Lack of time for personal life	84	70
Conflicts with adults (teachers, parents)	32	66
Congestion of school subjects in the schedule	52	47
A small assortment in school canteens	32	50
Lack of time to sleep	47	50
Non-reciprocal love, problems in personal life	34	44

As can be seen from the table, the main problems of Russian schoolchildren were associated with such life situational difficulties as "fear of choosing post-secondary education" (99%), "fear of not passing state final exams" (94%), "enmity and conflicts between peers" (73%), "lack of time for personal life (70%), "conflicts with adults (teachers, parents)" (66%). American schoolchildren had such problems: "lack of time for personal life" (84%), "fear of choosing post-secondary education" (77%), "fear of not passing state final exams" (73%), "enmity and conflicts between peers" (60%).

The results of the conducted testing to assess situational and personal anxiety (the C.D. Spielberger test) are presented in Table 2.

Table 2.

Average group anxiety indicators of American and Russian students (M+m; n=20)

Type of anxiety	students		P
	American	Russian	
Situational (score)	37,86±0,12	49,34±0,12	<0,05
Personal (score)	42,64±0,13	51,07±0,12	<0,05

A comparative assessment of situational and personal anxiety of American and Russian students showed a significant excess (p<0.05) of situational (37.86±0.12 49.34±0.12) and personal anxiety (42.64±0.13 and 51.07±0.12) in Russian students.

Table 3 shows the results of the anxiety level of American and Russian students.

Table 3.

Levels of anxiety of American and Russian students (n=20)

Anxiety levels	students	
	American	Russian
high	1 (10%)	4(40%)
medium	6(60%)	5(50%)
low	3(30%)	1(10%)

The study of the results of the assessment of the level of anxiety revealed that a high level was recorded in 10% of American and 40% of Russian students; an average level - in 60% of American and 50% of Russian students; a low level - in 30% of American and 10% of Russian students.

The analysis of the questionnaire data showed that the high level of anxiety among Russian students was associated with an increase in psycho-emotional tension, anxiety, uncertainty, which caused tension in the course of the psycho-social and pedagogical adaptation of students in the learning process. Many aspects of this high level of anxiety among Russian schoolchildren had a connection with the socio-economic and living conditions of schoolchildren. In particular, this group was dominated by fear of choosing post-secondary education (choosing a future profession and direction of study at a higher institution), fear of not passing state final exams at school, conflicts with adults (teachers, parents), enmity and conflicts between peers, lack of time for personal life.

The American student's problem of high anxiety levels was associated with problems of lack of time for personal life, fear of choosing post-secondary education (choosing a future profession and direction of study at a higher institution), fear of not passing state final exams in college and, like Russian schoolchildren, with enmity and conflicts between peers.

The average level of anxiety shows a normal level of life activity of the individual, in which there is motivation to learn, normal functioning of cognitive function, adequate self-esteem and balance. Schoolchildren of this group rarely experience problems in the process of making independent decisions and they practically did not experience acts of unmotivated anxiety, anxiety, and the level of psycho-social and pedagogical adaptation of students was adequate.

With a low level of anxiety, students (American and Russian) were observed to have self-confidence, some relaxation and courage in behavior. The level of psycho-social and pedagogical adaptation of students in this group was at a normal level and did not cause any discomfort in the learning process.

Conclusion.

Thus, the assessment of anxiety showed that a high level was recorded in 10% of American and 40% of Russian students; an average level was recorded in 60% of American and 50% of Russian students; a low level was recorded in 30% of American and 10% of Russian students. There was also a significant excess ($p<0.05$) of indicators for situational (37.86 ± 0.12 49.34 ± 0.12) and personal anxiety (42.64 ± 0.13 and 51.07 ± 0.12) in Russian students.

The analysis of the questionnaire data shows the relationship with socio-economic problems. Thus, among Russian schoolchildren, they were associated with such life situational difficulties as "fear of choosing post-secondary education" (99%), "fear of not passing state final exams" (94%), "enmity and conflicts between peers" (73%), "lack of time for personal life (70%), "conflicts with adults (teachers, parents)" (66%). American schoolchildren had such problems: "lack of time for personal life" (84%), "fear of choosing post-secondary education" (77%), "fear of not passing state final exams" (73%), "enmity and conflicts between peers" (60%).

References

[1]. Danacheva M. N., Glebov V. V. Ecological and psychophysiological approaches in optimizing the adaptation process of middle school students. Adaptation of biological systems to natural and extreme environmental factors: Materials of the VI International Scientific and Practical Conference 2016: 167-169.

[2]. Litvinova N.A., Ivanov V.I., Berezina M.G., Glebov V.V. Assessment of psychophysiological potential in the process of adaptation to educational activity // Psychology. Psychophysiology. 2021. Vol. 14. No. 2. pp. 108-122.

[3]. Bui AL, Dieleman JL, Hamavid H, et al. Spending on children's personal health care in the United States, 1996-2013. JAMA Pediatr. 2017;171:181–189

[4]. Sheldrick RC, Perrin EC. Medical home services for children with behavioral health conditions. J Dev Behav Pediatr. 2010;31:92–99.

[5]. Visser SN, Danielson ML, Bitsko RH, et al. Trends in the parent-report of health care provider-diagnosed and medicated attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder: United States, 2003–2011. J Am Acad Child Adolesc Psychiatry. 2014;53:34–46.e32.

[6]. Bramlett MD, Blumberg SJ, Zablotsky B, et al. Design and operation of the national survey of Children's health, 2011–2012. Vital Health Stat 1. 2017:1–256.

[7]. Ghandour RM, Kogan MD, Blumberg SJ, et al. Mental health conditions among school-aged children: geographic and sociodemographic patterns in prevalence and treatment. J Dev Behav Pediatr. 2011;33:42–54

[8]. Bloomgarden ZT. Type 2 diabetes in the young: the evolving epidemic. Diabetes Care. 2004;27:998–1010.

[9]. Veltischev D.Yu. Generalized anxiety disorder: epidemiology, pathogenesis, diagnosis and pharmacotherapy / D.Yu. Veltischev, A.S. Marchenko // Mental disorders in general medicine. – 2011. – № 1. – с. 3-10

[10]. Miklyaeva A.V., Rumyantseva P. V. School anxiety: diagnosis, prevention, correction - Publisher: Speech, 2004, 248 p.