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THE INFLUENCE OF FAMILY ENVIRONMENT ON THE MANIFESTATION OF GUILT FEELINGS IN STUDENTS

ABSTRACT

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Abstract

This article discusses the manifestation of guilt feelings in students and the influence of the family environment on their development. Guilt is considered a relatively less painful emotional experience compared to shame, which is associated with the negative evaluation of one's personal traits. Guilt is typically accompanied by feelings of repentance, apology, and remorse.

Keywords: Guilt, manipulation, emotionality, feelings, existential-ontological, reflexivity.

Introduction

In global educational and scientific centers, research is being conducted on correcting guilt feelings and determining the optimal level of guilt's natural regulatory and adaptive influence on human behavior. In this regard, the study of socio-psychological characteristics of emotional instability caused by guilt and the development of necessary scientific conclusions remain urgent issues of our time. In recent years, reforms in our republic based on the principle of "For Human Dignity" have aimed to improve public welfare, ensure human rights and interests, and form an active civil society. Special emphasis has been placed on educating young people as individuals who possess patriotism, civic



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responsibility, tolerance, respect for laws, and national and universal values, as well as the ability to resist harmful influences and destructive ideologies. Within this framework, opportunities have emerged to deepen scientific research aimed at developing and improving reflexivity as a personal trait.

Guilt is one of the fundamental human emotions and at the same time a moral category that connects individuals with the essence of human existence. The phenomenon of guilt has been studied in various ways throughout the history of human thought. In psychology and psychotherapy, depending on the researcher's perspective, guilt is sometimes viewed as a subjectively significant feeling regardless of objective grounds (S. Freud), sometimes as an ontic reality centered not in the soul but in life itself (Buber, 1999), and sometimes as a reality grounded in existential-ontological foundations, where guilt is considered a response to the personal choice of having a conscience (Vlasova, 1999).

Moreover, especially in Russian culture, guilt is often regarded positively as a moral feeling that plays the role of a social regulator and facilitates integration into moral principles. However, based on numerous literary sources, at least two main forms of guilt can be identified — conscious and unconscious (irrational) — which can exert a wide range of influences on both the individual and society. Therefore, considering guilt only from a positive perspective appears one-sided. Such a view may satisfy ethics, axiology, and religion, but not psychology, given the complexity of the human psyche. These considerations formed the basis of our study, in which we set the task of examining the influence of guilt on interpersonal relationships and communication in modern individuals.

According to E.L. Dotsenko, a manipulator is “in a certain sense a victim of manipulation” (Dotsenko, 1996). Since adult responsibilities are not limited to parenting but include broad social roles, priorities are often structured in a way that leaves little time for communication with children. This, in turn, leads parents to experience guilt toward their children. Their behavior then becomes compensatory:



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they begin to overwhelm children with toys and satisfy their wishes. The child cannot understand the reasons for such contradictory parental behavior — sometimes strict and prohibitive, sometimes kind and permissive. As a result, the child's worldview loses its integrity, which is one of the intrapersonal conditions for manipulation (Izard, 1980). The child thus becomes capable of manipulating parents, unconsciously using familiar manipulative techniques.

D. Weiss noted that many patients who complained about difficulties in relationships were unconsciously burdened with guilt. They were often so afraid of causing someone's dissatisfaction that they lost the ability to communicate freely. Their excessive vulnerability prevented them from enjoying relationships. Such patients often had stubborn and demanding parents who tended to blame them for their misfortunes. Many of them could not resist accusations from others and frequently allowed themselves to be blamed unjustly. Although they consciously denied their guilt, they were unable to defend themselves when accused — they would only cry and feel deeply unhappy. These individuals feared conflicts and did not know how to handle them. According to our observations, they could be highly conformist in relationships with strangers, while relationships with close people turned into an endless chain of hidden and open conflicts.

The author describes a patient overwhelmed by guilt who was so afraid of experiencing it that she completely refused to admit her mistakes. When confronting her husband, she tried to evoke his sympathy and tearfully prove her innocence, while simultaneously shifting the blame onto him and accusing him of her unhappiness.

Our research involved 22 first-year students from the Mathematics program and 24 first-year students from the Speech Therapy program at Fergana State University.

I.A. Belik's methodology "Study of Guilt Feelings" was used. The results are presented in Table 1.



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Table 1. Gender Differences in Guilt Feelings

Groups	Average Score	Level of Guilt
Girls	68	High
Boys	54.7	Medium

The results indicate that female students demonstrate higher levels of guilt compared to male students. The findings also show that the development of guilt as a state in boys positively correlates with its moderate expression as a personality trait. This suggests that individuals with moderate guilt levels tend to have higher adaptive abilities, including a positive emotional-value attitude toward themselves, a sense of life meaningfulness, a desire for personal growth, self-control, self-regulation skills, and resilience to stress.

Higher levels of guilt in girls compared to boys are associated not only with genetic but mainly with social, cultural, and psychological factors:

Social upbringing and the “Good Girl” syndrome – Girls are often expected to be obedient, agreeable, and likable. Striving for perfection fosters fear of mistakes and self-blame.

Empathy and emotional responsibility – Girls are more likely to feel responsible for others’ emotions.

Desire to preserve relationships – Girls tend to avoid conflict and may assume blame to maintain harmony.

Strong inner critic – Girls internalize failures, blaming themselves rather than external circumstances.

Gender stereotypes – Cultural expectations portray women as patient and self-sacrificing, increasing feelings of guilt when ideals are not met.

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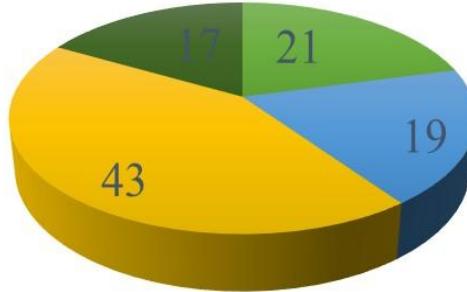
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In response to the prompt “Guilt is...”, 43% of respondents described it as “pangs of conscience,” which is psychologically natural and reflects moral development. This is explained by the formation of the Superego, internalization of moral values, empathy, fear of losing trust, and shared universal values among both boys and girls.

Conclusion

Gender differences in experiencing guilt are closely linked to stereotypical perceptions of social roles. The more individuals conform to prescribed gender roles, the more likely they are to experience guilt when violating these expectations. Excessive guilt associated with anxiety, fear, regret, and remorse may contribute to auto-aggressive tendencies and emotional distress.

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