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**РЕЦЕНЗИИ И ОБЗОРЫ**

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**SUBJECTIVE WELL-BEING IN THE DIGITAL WORLD  
(BASED ON THE MATERIALS OF THE INTERNATIONAL ONLINE  
CONFERENCE «THE TOPICAL ISSUES OF APPLIED PSYCHOLOGY  
IN THE CURRENT SOCIAL AND CULTURAL CONTEXT»)***Oksana V. Kozhevnikova, Vera Yu. Khotinets**Udmurt State University (Izhevsk)*

The paper describes the main results of the intense discussion of current challenges related to using new digital technologies and emerging online risks in various spheres of human life within a framework of the International Online Conference «The Topical Issues of Applied Psychology in the Current Social and Cultural Context» (November 30 – December 3, 2020) organized by the Udmurt State University (the city of Izhevsk, Russian Federation). The conference has been held primarily due to the necessity of drawing the authorities' attention to the critical concerns regarding psychological prevention of suicidal behavior in the region. The conference included a variety of the events: three symposia, sections for university and secondary school students; workshops and a documentary film discussion. According to the results of the conference debates and discussions, it has been pointed out that incorporation of digital technologies in psychological practice (counselling, therapy, etc.) provides psychology professionals with new opportunities through expanding their self-boundaries and enriching the field of professional reflection with additional meanings and senses. It is recognized that using artificial intelligence tools for initial appointments, basic diagnosis, and psychological prevention will facilitate professional activities of a psychology practitioner. The problem of psychological effects of everyday life application of digital technologies to maintain individual well-being, notably, the regulation of one's own inner space and coping with difficult situations is specified. It has been stated that transdisciplinary studies of the effectiveness of diverse organizational forms of teaching and learning (onsite, distance, online, etc.) in connection with the subjective well-being of students are believed to be forward-looking and promising.

*Keywords:* digital world, digital technologies, on-line education, mental self-regulation, subjective well-being.

**СУБЪЕКТИВНОЕ БЛАГОПОЛУЧИЕ В ЦИФРОВОМ МИРЕ  
(НА ОСНОВЕ МАТЕРИАЛОВ МЕЖДУНАРОДНОЙ ОНЛАЙН-  
КОНФЕРЕНЦИИ «АКТУАЛЬНЫЕ ПРОБЛЕМЫ ПРАКТИЧЕСКОЙ И  
ПРИКЛАДНОЙ ПСИХОЛОГИИ В СОВРЕМЕННОЙ  
СОЦИОКУЛЬТУРНОЙ СИТУАЦИИ»)***Кожевникова Оксана Вячеславовна, Хотинец Вера Юрьевна**Удмуртский государственный университет (Ижевск)*

Представлены основные результаты организованной Удмуртским государственным университетом (г. Ижевск, Россия) в рамках международной онлайн-конференции «Актуальные проблемы практи-

ческой и прикладной психологии в современной социокультурной ситуации» (30 ноября – 3 декабря 2020 г.) дискуссии, посвященной анализу новых вызовов, порожденных использованием современных цифровых технологий, и возникающих в различных сферах человеческой жизни виртуальных рисков. Одной из главных целей проведения конференции стало привлечение внимания властей к вопросам психологической профилактики суицидального поведения в регионе. Конференция была реализована в нескольких форматах и включала три симпозиума, секции для студентов и школьников, мастер-классы и обсуждение документального фильма. Участники дискуссий подчеркивали, что сочетание цифровых технологий и психологической практики (консультирования, терапии и т.д.) предоставляет специалистам новые возможности благодаря расширению поля профессиональной рефлексии за счет дополнительных смыслов. Было обозначено, что использование технологий искусственного интеллекта при первичном обращении, в базовой диагностике и психологической профилактике облегчает профессиональную деятельность практикующего психолога. Проанализирована значимость психологических эффектов повседневного применения цифровых технологий для поддержания субъективного благополучия, а именно регуляции внутреннего мира индивида и преодоления возможных трудностей. Кроме того, были отмечены перспективы трансдисциплинарного изучения эффективности различных образовательных форматов (очного, дистанционного, онлайн и др.) в связи с субъективным благополучием обучающихся.

*Ключевые слова:* цифровой мир, цифровые технологии, дистанционное образование, психическая саморегуляция, субъективное благополучие.

## Introduction

From November 30 through December 3, 2020, the International Online Conference «The Topical Issues of Applied Psychology in the Current Social and Cultural Context» was held at the Udmurt State University (the city of Izhevsk, Russian Federation). The event was supported by the Ministry of Education and Science of the Udmurt Republic and the Russian Psychological Society. The aim of the conference was to consolidate domestic and foreign researchers and practitioners in the various fields of psychology and to discuss social and psychological effects and possible consequences of implementing new digital technologies as a regular basis of the daily life of society, and factors that are necessary to take into consideration when facing online risks related to subjective well-being of the individual. The conference included a variety of the events: three symposia «Application of modern digital technologies by psychology practitioners», «Role of innovation in the development of competitive personality», and «Mental health and self-regulation in restrictive conditions of living»; sections for university and secondary school students; workshops and a documentary film discussion.

More than 120 professionals from the Russian Federation, the United States of America, Malta, Kenya, Latvia, Turkey representing educational and research institutions, centers for psychological support and psychological and pedagogical maintenance attended online meetings.

## Results

On the first day of the conference, speakers with various research and practice backgrounds discussed their experiences, explicit and implicit benefits and limitations of using modern digital technologies in the sphere of applied psychology.

*Prof. Elena Levchenko (National Research Perm State University, Russian Federation)* demonstrated introspection method potentials of reconstructing the client's internal space or «inner world» which is a category that has started being actively used by Russian scholars currently. The author sets as an example her attempts to reconstruct the features of the inner world of patients with bronchial asthma. Introspection techniques have shown that healthy individuals have much richer and saturated experiences and perceptions rather than those with this type of disease. The former perceive both external and internal worlds in all details and diversity while the latter have depleted and simplified mental representations of the outside reality, and their inner space is dominated by the results of constant scanning and monitoring the actual state of the body affected by their disorder.

*Dr. Anna Stavicka (University of Latvia, Latvia)* explored how misinterpretation of the concepts may influence international students' subjective well-being in the pandemic period when the term «social distancing» is widely used in the media, at the official level and in daily communication. Within the broader study framework, two group interviews with 27 international students from one of the

Latvian higher education institutions were conducted with the aim to identify whether the use of concepts of social distancing and physical distancing is properly understood by the respondents. It is revealed that none of the research subjects have ever considered the differences in the meanings of the terms and all the respondents use them as complete synonyms. The author claims that special workshops and raising awareness seminars and other events using social media and networking should be held focusing specifically on the well-being of international students through bringing them socially closer while still being physically distanced.

*Lolita Šelvaha (University of Latvia, Latvia)* also concentrated on fostering international students' well-being in host country higher education institutions. In the unprecedented situation of the total and rapid lockdown of the 2020 spring, international students were pressed into taking decisions whether to stay in the host country institutions or leave for home. The research sample of 27 students of diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds who chose to stay in Latvia during the COVID-19 pandemic were asked to use such a design-thinking approach technique of topicalizing problematic issues they had faced and looking for possible solutions as a written diary. The online feedback sessions held by experts revealed that all the respondents confirmed the effectiveness of the application of certain strategies within the design-thinking approach in fostering their subjective well-being through being a useful problem-solving tool.

*Dr. Svetlana Vyuzhanina (Udmurt State University, Russian Federation)* compared the level of subjective satisfaction with online and offline consulting of psychologists working in the field for more than five years and for less than a year by using subjective scaling method. It has been revealed that the beginners are more satisfied with online format of psychological practice rather than with personal meetings with a client; in addition, some of the respondents explained that they previously had got experiences in online counselling as clients which subsequently helped them to perform as advisers themselves. At the same time, the more experienced consultants indicated that they associate transition to Internet-based consulting with anxiety, fear, and inability to provide their sessions as effectively as they did that in a traditional face-to-face interaction.

*Lyubov Shchetinina (Izhevsk, Russian Federation)* analyzed resources and strategies for

effective online activities according to her substantial experience as a privately practicing psychologist. The author claims that restrictive conditions of the COVID-19 pandemic bring new requirements for professionals as they need not only to provide traditional forms of psychological maintenance but also to use most recent formats of interaction with their current and prospective audience such as blogging, social media networking, etc. And though they may have enough knowledge and skills to adjust their practices to recent needs of their clients, it may be challenging for them to finance required Internet services and improvement of their own ICT-competencies. In addition, the increase of online unpaid services provided by volunteers and non-professionals makes private psychologist feel economically defenseless.

Other practitioners in different fields of applied psychology who took part in the conference described the main stages of cognitive behavioral therapy provided in an online format; presented methodological strategies of working remotely with training and therapeutic groups; offered several recommendations for creating a secure and trusted environment in online consulting; presented a training online program for supporting practicing psychologists.

The second day of the conference was devoted to the topical issues of mental health and self-regulation in restrictive conditions of living including the current situation with the COVID-19 pandemic that forced a partial or complete transition to remote forms of educational and professional activities.

*Dr. Alexey Melyokhin (Humanitarian Institute named after P.A. Stolypin, Russian Federation)* presented the empirical study results of sleep disorders during the pandemic crisis. Research subjects (920 Instagram users: 75.3 % females and 24.8 % males aged from 18 through 37) were asked to answer the questions of a series of diagnostic scales (short health assessment questionnaire (PHQ-2), uncertainty tolerance scale (IUS-12), loneliness assessment scale (JGLS) and insomnia assessment scale (ISI)). It has been revealed that 55 % of participants experienced severe sleep disorders. Female sample demonstrates significantly higher symptoms of insomnia (14,8, SD = 4,28) compared to males (10,18; SD = 3,11),  $t(2319) = -729$ ,  $p \leq 0,001$ . Moscow residents (14,27, SD = 4,26) scored higher in the insomnia level than those in St. Petersburg (12,1,

SD = 3,23). Those who was not sure if they are infected with a coronavirus also scored significantly higher (14,25, SD = 4,11),  $F(2,28) = 11,27$ ,  $p \leq 0.001$ ) than those who were clear about their COVID status.

*Dr. Natalya Tokareva (National Research Ogarev Mordovia State University, Russian Federation)* analyzed the features of the emotional response of epilepsy patients in the process of their social adaptation. According to the World Health Organization, about 50 million people, or 0,5–1% of the world's population, suffer from epilepsy. In the study that involved 317 patients with focal epilepsy aged 18 to 65 years a psychometric scale of anxiety level was used to measure reactive and personal anxiety rate of the research subjects. High and moderate levels of situational anxiety (Me = 41, Q1 = 34, Q3 = 47) and moderate level of personal anxiety (Me = 40, Q1 = 33, Q3 = 47) have been revealed. The author believes that it is necessary and significant to continue research activities in the described field.

*Olga Mukhordova (Izhevsk, Russian Federation)* concentrated on the analysis of the mental states of schoolchildren during the period of forced self-isolation in the spring semester of 2020. The author has assessed the correspondence of parents in the various instant messengers and has made a short online survey demonstrating that students, their parents and teachers found themselves in quite a challenging situation when they had to shift to fully remote interactions that predictably caused a lot of negative emotional experiences among all participants of the educational process: irritability, aggression, resentment, passivity, boredom, uncertainty and anxiety. All these conditions require qualified psychological assistance which, in turn, is also carried out in a new format. The most important type of psychological maintenance in such situation is developing individual skills of self-regulation and self-organization that can also be provided online through remote counselling and distribution of recommendations via social media. All these forms of psychological support are relevant not only in the conditions of self-isolation and distance learning but also in the period when training is carried out in a traditional format but students continue to live in a restrictive space.

*Dr. Marina Lalayants (Hunter College School of Social Work, The City University of New York, USA)* took into consideration the issues of child abuse and neglect. According to the US Data and Statistics, be-

tween 1980 and 2000 crime rates among female adolescents have grown nationally: arrests for young females increased by 35% compared to 11% decrease among young males. Thus, the author concentrates on studying relationships between delinquency, depression, and substance use disorder among adolescent females. Utilizing the National Survey of Child and Adolescent Well-Being (Wave I and II: N = 5872), it was found that delinquency predicted depression or substance use disorder (CI = 1,10–17,16,  $p \leq 0,05$ ), and substance use disorder predicted delinquency (CI = 1,03–7,30,  $p \leq 0,05$ ). The author believes that child welfare specialists should address the risk for depression or substance use disorder by focusing on females with overall delinquency or with specific types of delinquency (minor theft for depression and public disorder for substance use disorder) and by offering interventions that have been shown to be effective in preventing the risks to adolescent well-being.

*Dr. Inga Saitadze (Hunter College School of Social Work, The City University of New York, USA)* examined the negative effects of early economic deprivation on developmental outcomes of children. The author claims that poverty exerts its influence on children indirectly through mediating pathways some of which can reduce that impact and provides a systematic analysis of published and unpublished studies that investigate mediating mechanisms that have been found to be effective in improving children's cognitive and social-emotional development. It is suggested that positive parenting and cognitively stimulating home environments have the potential to enhance the developmental outcomes of children living in poverty — in particular, educational materials including books, computers, and home learning activities such as reading and counting are salient for the outcomes of children living in poverty.

*Dr. Dorothy Aute (Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology, Kenya)* presented on the relationship between parental occupation and parental attachment style among adolescents in Homabay County, Kenya. The author states that an inappropriate parental attachment style between the parent and the child would negatively impact on the general well-being of the latter. Out of the population of 20 160 school students a representative sample of 512 subjects was randomly sampled; parents' association representatives were purposively sampled from each school involved in the procedure. The study used such instruments for data collection

as questionnaires, structured and unstructured interview schedules, focus group discussions. The research findings revealed a significant correlation between parental occupation and parental attachment style ( $r = 0,567$ ,  $p \leq 0,05$ ); therefore, the author recommends intensifying the efforts on improving adult education within the region.

On the third day, the issues associated with effects and possible consequences of the widespread and general adoption of digital educational technologies and the role of the innovative environment in the development of a competitive personality were discussed.

*Dr. Andrey Glukhov (National Research Tomsk State University, Russian Federation)* proposed the model of social networking literacy / competence developed based on the results of conceptualization of one of the general digital literacy types and analysis of sociological survey data ( $N = 201$ ). The model represents a complex structure of knowledge, skills, and normative ethical attitudes essential in the spheres of five sub-competences: content and media usage, online self-presentation, digital affiliation and collaboration, online content producing (or linguistic competency) and digital communication safety. It is specified that the higher level of social networking literacy is associated with more effective interpersonal interaction and socialization of young people in the current virtual communication space.

*Prof. Vera Khotinets and Dr. Daria Medvedeva (Udmurt State University, Russian Federation)* presented on edutainment technologies of developing bilingual children's cognitive structures. The problem of cognitive development of children with various linguistic abilities is topical in the multicultural regions such as the Udmurt Republic where the solution of the issues associated with a polycultural structure of the area population and the migration rate affects the educational policy of the regional authorities. It is relevant to pre-school preparation of bilingual children, development of educational programs at elementary school, professional competences of educators and psychologists working with biliterate students. The authors propose a technology aimed at heritage bilingual junior schoolchildren that is based on a non-linear self-organizing model of cognitive development meeting the modern requirements of post-nonclassical science. The proposed technology has been tested in a formative experiment set in an edutainment format with 152 bilingual children

participants. It has been identified that in the process of developing cognitive structures as a holistic system, relationships between the components of the system are established during the transition from one cycle to another.

*Dr. Alexander Lesin (Ryazan State Medical University, Russian Federation)* emphasized the significance of studying personal competences of students that are essential for their career choice, as well as for current and future subjective well-being. The purpose of his study that involved 196 humanitarian students as research subjects was to discover the correlations between the value and career orientations. It is revealed that students are interested in jobs that will not provide them with a possibility of maximum self-realization but rather allow to maximize profit without unnecessary emotional and physical costs. Creativity in this context perceived as antagonistic with stability and control at the workplace. In addition, most students have no idea how to find a reasonable balance between active professional and personal life. Managerial and entrepreneurial careers are more often identified as possible sources of subjective pleasure while other types of career orientations are associated with opposing feelings.

*Dr. Oksana Kozhevnikova (Udmurt State University, Russian Federation)* described a so called «sophomore slump» which is a normative crisis within the process of academic adjustment of students. Numerous researchers claim that second-year students continue to face various challenges requiring the formation of increasingly advanced personal and intellectual educational strategies though, at the same time, they may experience the lack of external support traditionally focused exclusively on freshmen. As a result of an empirical study that involved 326 respondents aged 18 through 20 (the main sample is 237 sophomores; the rest were first- (78) and third-year (11) students recruited as a check sample), academically adapted and non-adapted students have been identified; three stages of academic adjustment process (primary adaptation, sophomore slump crisis, and sophomore slump crisis recovery) are described; and psychological predictors of satisfactory academic adjustment are revealed. It is confirmed that positive outcomes of sophomore slump crisis are determined by a set of internal (or personal) factors and one of the most significant indicators of the academic adaptation failure is a consistently high or increasing situational anxiety level that affects not

only academic progress but also subjective well-being of students.

*Dr. Emrah Dolgunsöz (Bayburt University, Turkey)* analyzed a problem of censorship in EFL (English as a foreign language) materials. According to the author's observations, «pig related visuals» were recently excluded from English language learning materials supposed to be released for Muslim and Jewish regions such as Middle East and Gulf region; so, his study aimed to examine how emotions and learning gains interact during exposure to taboo content. The researcher recorded facial expressions of forty Muslim students who previously filled in a form about their ideas and attitudes towards pork while they watched a subtitled video clips containing pork visuals; in addition, participants took a subsequent short post-test. The results revealed that the disgust level measured by the facial data analysis and the survey data content analyses did not significantly affect vocabulary test performance so this recent marketing strategy in publishing may not have a causal influence on learning outcomes and subjective well-being of the students.

*Dr. Agostino Sorbara (Pegaso International, Malta)* emphasized that the learning process may be significantly influenced by emotions. It is stated that emotions affect the entire teaching-learning process and lead the student to perceive the school context according to his or her previous experiences. The perception of the teaching-learning relationships is also built and modified according to the emotions, feelings, and moods of the moment. The author believes that understanding and analyzing the emotional relationship between the student and knowledge is an essential part of any teacher responsibilities and it is possible to identify a widespread unease of the students towards the different study disciplines as it has direct repercussions on school dropout. The possible solution of the specified problem is the development of emotional intelligence in all stages of learning.

Within the student section, fifteen video reports uploaded for discussion at <https://vk.com/interstud2020> were presented. The audience was highly interested with workshops provided by the university alumni working in the various fields of applied psychology devoted to effective online and traditional technologies of counselling and therapy, productive strategies for promoting psychological e-services. The conference special event was a Zoom-based meeting with the director *Olga Lvoff*

(USA) who presented her documentary «Busy Inside» (2019) about a psychotherapist specializing in the treatment of dissociative identity disorder and her patients.

## **Discussion**

The significant results of the conference can be generalized in the following conclusions indicating promising directions of research and practical activities of modern psychologists.

The implementation of modern digital technologies in the various activities of a psychologist offer new opportunities through enriching the field of professional reflection with additional meanings and expanding self-boundaries by means of understanding how one is perceived by others. Various formats of communication and interaction (social networking services, messengers, platforms, etc.) that support and promote confidentiality, contactless psychodiagnostics, collection and storage of necessary information, as well as digital assistants and various mobile applications that provide opportunities for managing content and internal states of a person will contribute to the effectiveness of psychological practices. It is obvious that artificial intelligence technologies allowing to recognize and analyze the inner space of a person will soon change the professional algorithms used by consulting specialists. It is admitted that initial appointments, basic diagnosis, and psychological prevention in a virtual format will facilitate professional activities of a psychology practitioner. Thus, interaction with a «real» psychologist will begin when a client clearly understands the need for human relations and human assistance provided by a professional capable of true compassion and «co-existence».

The problem of psychological effects of human-IT interactions and using digital services in the daily routine for maintaining subjective well-being becomes urgent. In the new reality, e-bots, computer software and mobile applications designed for psychological self-help instruct a person how to regulate his inner space, to cope with challenging life situations and transmit the experience of intentional mental self-regulation and learned coping strategies to his real life.

The digital world and augmented reality based on artificial intelligence require a different view of the social situation of a growing person development unfolding other trajectories and pathways of forming qualitatively new mental

functions, psychological features, behaviors, and activities. Within the educational system, pedagogical technologies that combine various organizational forms of instruction (onsite, distance, online, etc.) with permanent access to knowledge and necessary information contribute to diversification of education in order to meet the diverse educational needs of students. Consequently, it is becoming topical to conduct transdisciplinary studies of how effective new organizational and pedagogical conditions are in compliance with new psychological features of students and the need to maintain their subjective well-being.

### Conclusion

It was noted that holding regular conferences on the above-mentioned topics is essential in order to

highlight key problems and modern methodological strategies of fundamental and applied psychology, to intensify cooperation with foreign colleagues, to popularize modern psychological science and psychological services in the mass media, and to draw the attention of the regional authorities to the problems of preventing suicidal behavior.

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