

Review

by

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As a member of a scientific jury for the defense of the dissertation of Zuriel Zuff, for the award of the scientific degree "doctor" in the scientific specialty "Psychology", professional direction 3.2 "Psychology", doctoral program "Pedagogical and Age Psychology", I reviewed the dissertation titled "Influence of Youth Movements on the Functioning of Their Members in Society."

1. Relevance. The presented work is undoubtedly dedicated to a topical subject, determined by the geopolitical situation and the role of informal leaders and groups in the lives of young people. In essence, the work also poses a complex philosophical problem (according to Ferguson) : how to combine, on the one hand, the need of each person in the community with the resource of the individual to be used for the benefit of society. Community is a natural state, and aspiration of man, with the ultimate goal being the achievement of the happiness of society. Ultimately, community is based on many small attachments, not obligation. A connection based on recognizing oneself in the other and thus builds a tangle of connection and recognition of the individual within the community's goals. Another fundamental question that is tacitly posed is about the construction of identity, of the image of oneself based on how others in the group see me, what position I occupy and the danger of too narrow identification with this, so to speak, uncritically constructed image of oneself based on the sometimes imagined view of others, building an idealized image of the personality – an idealization that will be an obstacle to leaving adolescence and building a mature image of oneself. The evidence that the given topic is relevant goes beyond the boundaries of purely psychological knowledge and is significant for the ongoing processes in a situation of crisis and war - processes whose analysis is very important for understanding and making sense of the situation and the role of the specific individual and small or larger groups.

The influence of the group and informal education on the formation and development of the statuses of psychosocial and national identity and the value system is increasingly greater. This influence is especially key in the period of adolescence and youth, when complex processes of self-determination and the construction of a stable value system and life position take place, which is decisive not only for subjective mental well-being, but also for the overall functioning at the level of social and political processes. The problem of national identity is an important aspect of the collective identity of a young person. Especially today, with such decisive social changes in the world, like migration, globalization and military conflicts, this issue comes to the fore and requires analysis and rethinking. Last but not least, it is important to study the values on which informal youth groups are based in order to ensure safety and predictability and to avoid extremes and distortions at both individual and cultural levels.

1. Characteristics of the dissertation work

The dissertation work contains 162 pages, and includes 6 tables and 4 graphs. The bibliography includes 166 titles in Latin.

The purpose of this work intertwines a search for the psychological aspects in the study of the influence of youth groups and movements in Israeli society with social and political aspects, making it difficult to define solely in psychological terms. More than one goal is achieved: on the one hand, the influence of youth groups on the development of their members in an individual-psychological plan (intragroup), and on the other, the influence of youth movements on society. The author also clarifies the theoretical basis on which the study of the study, and the tasks that the topic poses.

Material and methods: The author selects a structured methodology to study 310 participants aged 25-45, including 205 belong to youth movements, and 105 are a control group. The interesting thing about this study is that it revisits to the participants' teenage experiences, making it a retrospective study and a search for the influence of teenage experiences on life in adulthood.

The selection of the participants and the research methodology fully meet the goals that the author author's goals. The research for the dissertation was conducted on site, and testing was also conducted online.

In the first chapter, The dissertation presents the classical theories of development during adolescence, however the sample consists of people over 25 years old. There are contemporary researchers in developmental psychology who speak of an extended and long-lasting process of adolescence – up to about 35 years old. The author presents in detail the historical development of the understanding of adolescence, the classical psychological theories of Bandura, Freud, Piaget, Erikson, and the theories of temperament. In addition, other researchers of the pedagogical role of education and informal groups are mentioned, as well as the sociological aspects of adolescence.

In the second chapter, the author clearly and in detail presents the models of informal education, provides definitions, analyzes the differences between formal and informal education, and deduces unique characteristics of informal training and education. He presents the main goals of both types of training, emphasizing their social role and influence.

Chapter Three contains a dissertation now focuses on the main topic of the dissertation, namely the youth movements in Israel. He examines their influence on the psychosocial adaptation and identity formation of young people. He raises the question of the development of group theory in social psychology.

The fourth chapter focuses on the youth movements in Israel, from which the research subjects' sample the research subjects comes. Here, the author focuses on historical data on the development of these movements in Israel, with the social and political aspects slightly displacing the psychological presentation. The fifth chapter also includes a description of the questionnaire and pilot study. The author conscientiously describes the research process and its external formal structure in excessive detail, but the research design leaves something to be desired. As far as is clear, the main hypothesis predicts that participants in movements during adolescence find greater satisfaction from their group affiliation and later in military service, housing choices and social roles than non-participants. However the question remains open whether this is truly due to their participation in group movements or it is about certain personality characteristics that persist into adulthood. A limitation of the study is that it relies on a single self-assessment methodology , making comparisons and research of a broader set of hypotheses about influences beyond participation in movements impossible.

The sixth chapter discusses the results and provides an analysis. The sample of the studied individuals is described ; it is large-scale and corresponds to the topic. Descriptive statistics are presented, followed by statistical analyses: correlation analysis and T-tests. The results are graphically presented, illustrating the reasons for joining a youth movement. However, the study of motivation implies a more precise methodology, qualitative processing and analysis. The author also examines the interrelationships between participation in youth movements with those with a military focus. This is followed by an analysis of the control group of studied individuals, revealing their lower results in terms of leadership and social success compared to the rest of the group. The comparative analysis of youth movement graduates versus non-graduates reveals significant differences in leadership and community participation; graduates demonstrate a higher tendency to assume leadership roles as adults.

The author claims to present a comprehensive picture of the influence of youth movements on the development of individual members and societal processes, based on significant differences in results between control and experimental groups. The study's findings highlight the importance of initial motivation for joining youth movements, where ideological motives and family tradition are significant predictors of greater social engagement in adulthood. According to the author, these results strengthen the understanding of the effectiveness of education in youth movements, which is mostly considered from its positive side.

Chapter seven is devoted to discussion and the conclusion. Here again, the key issue is the question of motivation: the initial motives that lead an adolescent to a group with social significance, and the significance of the role he occupies in the group. The leadership role and the problem of leadership in such groups are phenomena of group psychology and can be viewed as consonant with it. Young people who have held positions of leaders or advisors were probably initially subject to the influence of the group and, in some way built their self-image based on their position as leaders. As expected, their satisfaction and assessment of the benefits of youth movements are naturally higher. An important aspect of the reference group's role is introduced: its importance lies in being a group where the Self relates to others. The author defends his thesis that the environment shapes individuals, but the question of how individuals change the environment remains unanswered. The eighth chapter summarizes the study's results, repeating and synthesizing previous points: a statistically significant correlation exists between participation in youth movements and significant military or national service. Those who completed the movement showed a significantly higher percentage of choosing significant service compared to non-participants. The leading role of participating in youth movements in building the motivation to continue this process into adulthood is emphasized. The author also supports his main hypothesis about the significance of youth movements in the conclusion. It is again emphasized that youth movements act as effective agents of socialization, as examined in a long-term retrospective plan from adolescence to adulthood. Important limitations related to the regional limitation of the sample and some deficiencies in the experimental design are considered.

Recommendations for the dissertation research.

I recommend to build a smoother transition and connection between the first part, related to the theories of adolescence, and the subsequent chapters, by structuring and analyzing the essentials of these classical theories, which are directly related to the topic at hand. The literature review should be updated with authors from the last five to ten years.

4. Scientific and applied scientific contributions.

Important theoretical and practical contributions are made. The breadth of the theoretical conceptual framework and its practical contribution to understanding the ways of developing and supporting the motivation for active inclusion in social groups is emphasized, it is considered in a broad time period of human development.

The scientific and theoretical contributions relate to posing the problem of the influence and role of youth movements in Israel both for the development of individual participants in them and for the social environment.. The main practical contributions relate to deducing the role of ininmal education as a factor for the development of leadership qualities and social responsibility. The presented publications correspond to the thematic area of the dissertation and were presented at scientific conferences in psychology.

Conclusion

Zuriel Zuff's dissertation represents a current, large-scale study in a significant and insufficiently studied area of socio-psychological knowledge. The study raises important philosophical-existential questions about the interrelationships and influence of the group on the construction of personal identity and addresses how individuals can influence and change the community. The presented results and conclusions relate to the stages of moral growth and the formation of motivation for a non-consumer attitude towards the community of young people. The the fundamental concept is to understand the complex processes of interconnection and influence between the individual and the group. This gives me reason to recommend that the esteemed members of the scientific jury vote to award the award of the educational and scientific degree "doctor" in the professional field 3.2. Psychology.

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