

The Concept of Spontaneity and its Relationship with the Individual Characteristics of Personality

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Abstract: In this article, the authors consider the concept of spontaneity and the relationship of this characteristic with such individual personality characteristics as locus of control, autonomy, tolerance to uncertainty, creativity, self-regulation, flexibility in communication and spontaneity itself. The authors conduct an experiment that allows to trace this relationship. The research involved 205 people between the ages of 18 and 40, including 125 people living in Ukraine and 80 people living and studying abroad. The Ukrainian study group consisted of 82 women and 43 men. The group of foreign researchers consisted of 52 women and 28 men. To study the impact on the spontaneity of the sociocultural experience of the individual, representatives of other communities aged 18–39 were involved. The sample of foreign respondents was divided into 4 groups: countries in Europe, countries in Asia and Africa, CIS countries and other countries in the world 80 people in total. In the study, the authors conclude that spontaneity does not exist separately from other personality characteristics, is not an independent personal property that develops according to its own laws, but is closely connected with many important personality formations and structures, and in order to understand how these connections function, it is not enough to investigate spontaneity separately from other personality traits.

Keywords: Human spontaneity, personality, creativity, autonomy, flexibility, communication.

INTRODUCTION

According to the latest research, it is proved that spontaneity is an internal motivational energy, has a connection with self-esteem and self-efficacy (Davelaar *et al.*, 2008), also positive signs of spontaneity are associated with mental well-being (Moreno, 1964).

Opportunities for the development of human spontaneity modern researchers see in the processes of its creativity.

The process of spontaneity is an important component of creative professions: the musical improvisation of jazz artists, the verbal flow of consciousness of poets and writers, based on sensations and impressions of the artists' paintings, as well as the spontaneity of the actors - all this is, at the same time, a reason for the release of creative energy and a guarantee of free, personal and original creation process. From medicine, the concept of spontaneity came as a sudden manifestation of diseases and symptoms, the cause of which is unknown. From this spontaneity has acquired a negative connotation. However, in addition to the unexpected manifestations

of the disease, spontaneity has interested many philosophers as a manifestation of personality (Larionov, 2005).

Like many abstract concepts, the concept of spontaneity can be found in philosophical writings. For example, Immanuel Kant viewed the spontaneity of the mind as a condition of knowledge and imagination (Kant, 1994). Representatives of the synergetic approach in philosophy consider spontaneity as a phenomenon of self-development, which cannot be explained in terms of cause and effect, quantity and quality, because a person with spontaneity is characterized by variability, the possibility of running ahead in understanding new experience, and hence unpredictability (Dorofeev *et al.*, 2005). Self-development is spontaneous due to conditionality of the internal laws of the person's formation. Based on this position, within the synergistic approach, the factors of development are not generally objective regularities, but the real situation, random changes, which are the basis of development. In this way, the spontaneity category is characterized by a random order that has multiple possibilities for self-organization and self-determination, the choice of which cannot be planned in advance.

Nalimov V. (Nalimov, 1989) determines the essence of spontaneity through a systematic analysis of the

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problem of consciousness in world philosophy. Fundamental importance is the position of the scientist's scientific concept about the relationship of personal spontaneity with such categories as "free causality", freedom, choice, probability, imagination, the semantic structure of personality, creativity, understanding - misunderstanding. This indicates confirmation of the connection of spontaneity with creativity. For a more detailed understanding of the relationship of these components, it is necessary to turn to a psychological understanding of the concept of spontaneity.

According to E. Fromm (Fromm, 1992), spontaneous activity is not a forced activity imposed on an individual by one's isolation and impotence; this is not the activity of the robot caused by the uncritical perception of patterns that are inspired from the outside. Spontaneous activity is the free activity of the individual; its definition includes the literal meaning of the Latin word "sponte" that means "by itself, on its own prompting". Talking about activity, E. Fromm understands it as not "doing something"; we are talking about creative activity, which can manifest itself in the emotional, intellectual and sensual life of a person, as well as in one's will. The reason for this spontaneity is the recognition of a holistic personality, closing the gap between "mind" and "nature", because spontaneous activity is possible only if one does not suppress a significant part of one's personality, if various spheres of his/her life merged into a single whole.

We agree with E. Fromm's views on the naturalness of spontaneity and our own and free manifestations of personality. At the same time, we see spontaneity not as activity, but as a property of the personality, which allows to find new ways of responding to the situation, unusual ways of expressing the manifestations of the emotional sphere, go beyond stereotypical reactions, allows the person to act naturally, following one's deep moods, experiences and calls (Trofimov *et al.*, 2017).

In the psychological literature, the most extensive overview of the concept of spontaneity is acquired in works of Jacob Moreno (Moreno, 1993). His interest in spontaneity arose and was embodied in scientific works during the creation of the first theater of spontaneity. Here's what J. Moreno thinks about spontaneity: "Spontaneity is behavior and feelings that are not regulated from the outside" (Moreno, 1993). Moreno directly related the concepts of spontaneity and mental health. Based on this idea by J. Moreno, it can be argued that the development of spontaneity

contributes to the healing and strengthening of the mental health of the individual.

Human nature is characterized by an unlimited capacity for spontaneous and creative activity. Moreno expresses similar views with S. Kierkegaard (Kierkegaard, 2012), saying that anxiety and spontaneity correlate inversely, having in the end a result in the form of panic with a complete absence of spontaneity. Spontaneity and creativity go side by side: "Without creativity, the spontaneity of the Universe will be empty and will end in abortion, without spontaneity, the creativity of the Universe will become perfectionism and will be deprived of life" (Moreno, 1993).

Moreno also paid attention to the possible manifestation of the destructive activity of spontaneity in those cases when spontaneity acts as a kind of energy impulse along which a person follows blindly. In such a situation, a person needs skills how to translate his spontaneous impulses into conscious actions or, as Moreno writes, to make "smart integration of spontaneity into the integral structure of human life", only under such a condition spontaneity can become a path to personality development. Otherwise, unbridled released spontaneity becomes a situational phenomenon, the positive effect of which is often minimal or absent at all.

Alexander Lowen, psychotherapist who developed the concept and practice of bioenergy, expresses the idea of a dialectical combination of spontaneity and self-control (Lowen, 2013). In his opinion, self-control indicate that the person is in contact with one's feelings and can control them, i.e., he freely chooses the nature and direction of his movements, and is not under the restrictions of internal clamps, prohibitions and stresses - in this case the behavior of such an individual will be a reaction to his stress. A. Lowen deduced from this statement the rule: "the freer a person becomes in his movements, the greater self-control he achieves" (Lowen, 2013). The same rule can be applied to the idea of spontaneity in everyday life: the more spontaneous a person is, the more self-control he/she manifests, and the more conscious and intense his/her life is.

According to O. Lowen, the integration of the conscious and the involuntary can help to reach this state. For this purpose, it is necessary for any conscious action to be accompanied and filled with feeling, and each involuntary reaction is consistent with consciousness. In this way, A. Lowen explains the

expression “to be in contact with the body” and sees this as a path to self-control: “The ability to express feelings and the ability to control their expression are two sides of the same coin, in other words, the qualities of a mature person” (Lowen, 2013). According to A. Lowen, “feelings are spontaneous reactions of an organism to its environment”. They are not subject to the will or mind of man. All he can do is express these feelings or refrain from expressing them, depending on the situation. But it is important to remember, A. Lowen further notes, trying to resist his feelings, a person changes himself - if he rejects his feelings, then he rejects himself. A. Lowen also writes that spontaneity is the main component of the pleasure of creativity, in tune with the ideas of J. Moreno about the connection between spontaneity and creativity.

It is necessary to supplement the views on the concept of spontaneity with a few more theoretical approaches. A number of scientists (Kipper, 1967) have described the characteristics of a spontaneous person, which include:

- the ability to express oneself;
- lack of self-awareness,
- resemblance to children,
- taking risks without braking, feeling guilty, and insecure.

Others settled on conditions that contribute to the emergence of a spontaneous reaction. A. Blatner (Davelaar *et al.*, 2008) argued that such an answer requires:

- trust and security,
- groups of norms that allow you to include non-rational and intuitive dimensions of thinking,
- feeling of the previous distance,
- movement towards risk taking.

R. Howell (Davelaar *et al.*, 2008) suggested that experts often work at the level of “unconscious competencies” which is the point at which skills have been practiced for so long that you no longer need to think about their effective use.

Based on the above features of personality spontaneity, it is possible to connect the concept of spontaneity with the concept of flow, about which C.

Rogers (Rogers, 1959) writes that it is an act with “full participation It is a state in which action follows action according to an internal logic that does not seem to require any conscious intervention.” He felt that in order for a “flow” to arise, a person’s skill level should be on a par with the task being performed (Rogers, 1959). P. Kellerman described resistance or protective reaction in the form of a block to spontaneous energy. E. Hollander emphasized the need for communication with others in order to spark one’s spontaneity. These different concepts suggest that behavior is spontaneous if:

- this happens easily, without resistance, without much effort, or unknowingly;
- appropriate to the situation, and therefore not impulsive;
- personalities act with full participation;
- and man controls his own actions (Lowen, 2013).

The purpose of our work was to investigate the spontaneity of the personality and to explore the interconnections of spontaneity with personality traits such as autonomy, creativity, internality, tolerance for uncertainty among representatives of both sexes living in Ukraine and other countries of the world (Miliutina *et al.*, 2018).

That is why we wanted to see in the results of our study the presence and nature of the connections between spontaneity and the three factors, namely (Rogers, 1959):

- personal (which includes the following personal characteristics: locus of control, autonomy, self-regulation, creativity, flexibility in communication, and tolerance for uncertainty);
- individual (including age and gender characteristics of the individual);
- socio-cultural (which is explained by the importance of the origin of the individual) (Trofimov *et al.*, 2019a; Trofimov *et al.*, 2019b).

METHODS

Therefore, for our study, we chose the following methods:

To study the spontaneity of the individual, as well as other personality traits, namely: creativity, autonomy

and flexibility in communication, we used the appropriate scales from the method of diagnostics of self-actualization of personality (by O. Lazukin in the adaptation of N. Kalina).

To study the presence and nature of the relationship of spontaneity with self-regulation, we used the methodology of the study of volitional self-regulation by A. Zverkova and E. Eidman.

Methodology for diagnosing the level of subjective control (LSC) by J. Rotter in adaptation of E. Bazhin, S. Golinkina, A. Etkind.

The readiness to uncertainty scale was used to study uncertainty tolerance. MSTAT-1 (Multiple Stimulus Types Ambiguity Tolerance-1) McLain scale adapted by E. G. Lukovitska.

For the study of the spontaneous ability of foreign participants in the study was used the method of Personal Attitude Scale II - Revised, which was developed by Keller (Personal Attitude Scale).

Statistical data processing included analysis of the significance of differences using analysis of variance, determining the correlation between individual indicators. The correlation was calculated based on the Pearson and Spearman correlation coefficients. Statistical processing was performed using the SPSS 16.0 software package.

The research involved 205 people between the ages of 18 and 40, including 125 people living in Ukraine and 80 people living and studying abroad. At the time of the research, all participants were studying in university at different faculties or had already completed higher education. The Ukrainian study group consisted of 82 women and 43 men. The group of foreign researchers consisted of 52 women and 28 men.

All subjects were divided into 3 age groups: the initial period of early adulthood: 67 people aged 18-22 years (the period of study at the university, the beginning of early adulthood), the middle period of early adulthood: 46 people aged 23-29 (period after

graduation and beginning professional activity, mid-early adulthood), the final period of early adulthood: 12 people aged 30-39 (the period of completion of early adulthood).

To study the impact on the spontaneity of the sociocultural experience of the individual, representatives of other communities aged 18–39 were involved. The sample of foreign respondents was divided into 4 groups: countries in Europe, countries in Asia and Africa, CIS countries and other countries in the world 80 people in total.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Describing the results of the study, we draw your attention to Table 1, which presents the correlation of the spontaneity indicator with other indicators.

Here we see a strong positive correlation that is observed between the indicator of spontaneity and the indicator of tolerance to uncertainty. This can be explained by the fact that spontaneity as a willingness to act in a new way regardless of the situation - whether it is new or already familiar - implies a willingness to act in unusual, uncertain, sometimes dangerous conditions.

It was also found that the indicator of spontaneity has a positive correlation with the indicator of general internality. This connection can be explained by the topic that true spontaneity, which we are researching, requires careful handling, in the sense that in order for this spontaneity not to be confused with impulsiveness and uncontrolled emotionality, it must be treated responsibly. Therefore, in the absence of the previously established structure of the personality's responsibility, the acquisition and the manifestation of one-self's true spontaneity becomes impossible, because spontaneity is a conscious natural reaction to what is happening with the personality. A conscious reaction, in turn, involves awareness of the consequences of this reaction, and is, in fact, an internal locus of control.

The correlation between the measure of spontaneity and the measure of creativity is explained by the fact that spontaneity is best manifested through creativity.

Table 1: Correlation of Spontaneity with other Indicators

	Tolerance to uncertainty	Internality	Creativity	Autonomy
Spontaneity	,488	,389	,580	,703
Sig	,000	,000	,000	,000

Table 2: Correlation of Spontaneity with other Indicators

	Tolerance to uncertainty	Internality	Creativity	Autonomy
Spontaneity	,340	,529	,421	,488
Sig	,000	,000	,000	,000

Therefore, the higher the development of the creative abilities of an individual, the more spontaneous he/she is.

A correlation analysis showed that there is also a connection between the indicator of spontaneity and the indicator of autonomy, which can be explained by the fact that only a person who feels independent and not constrained by any restriction can afford to be spontaneous. In other words, the more a person feels autonomous in one-self's actions and decisions, the more spontaneous he/she is, because spontaneity implies freedom of choice of actions and reactions, which is impossible unless one feels unable to act on his own.

Table 2 presents the correlation of uncertainty tolerance index with other study indicators.

The connection between tolerance for uncertainty and general internality can be explained by the fact that the more a person feels responsible for his life, for his actions and feelings, the more he is ready for changes that can suddenly begin among his previously calm life. The point is that, if a person realizes that his life and everything that happened, is happening and will happen in it depends on his actions, intentions and thoughts, then he will perceive unexpected situations as the result of his actions (Trofimov *et al.*, 2017). The internal locus of control will allow a person, when a new situation is unusual for him, to begin independently think how to react and what to do, while a person with an external locus of control when confronted with an indefinable situation may be confused and seek help not in himself, but in those around him/God/space/fate and the like. This may explain the general relationship between tolerance to uncertainty and the locus of control in general. Consider the possible explanations for the correlation of the uncertainty tolerance index with other internality scales.

The uncertainty tolerance index also has a correlation with creativity, which can be explained by the direct connection between creativity and new experiences (Sherembaeva, 2016). It has been repeatedly noted that the flow of creative energy can be opened or increased, if you change surroundings, or suddenly fall into unusual circumstances, or live through a new experience in an unexpected situation. Such a sharp immersion in a fresh feelings prompts the individual to express his or her experiences through creativity or creative means.

The connection between the indicator of tolerance to uncertainty and the indicator of autonomy can be explained by the fact that the more a person feels ready for new indefinable situations, the more he feels independent of other people and circumstances. That is, if he feels free from the restrictions that people (parents, wife/husband, children, management, colleagues, etc.) may impose on him and living conditions (socio-economic status, religion, culture, military-political restrictions), then he may not be afraid of unusual situations, because he is free to choose how to behave in a particular situation (Trofimov *et al.*, 2019).

Table 3 presents the correlation of the indicator of general internality with other indicators of the study.

The correlation between the indicator of general internality and the indicator of tolerance to uncertainty was interpreted by us above. Therefore, we proceed immediately to the interpretation of the correlation between the indicator of general internality and indicators of creativity, autonomy and spontaneity.

The indicator of general internality positively correlates with the indicator of creativity, which suggests that the more a person believes in his

Table 3: Correlation of the Indicator of General Internality with other Indicators

	Tolerance to uncertainty	Internality	Creativity	Autonomy
Spontaneity	,340	,374	,301	,389
Sig	,000	,000	,001	,000

Table 4: Correlations between Autonomy and other Indicators

	Tolerance to uncertainty	Internality	Creativity	Autonomy
Spontaneity	,421	,301	,529	,703
Sig	,000	,001	,000	,000

strength and takes responsibility, the more creative he feels. You can also talk about vice versa connection: the more creative expression is present in a person's life, the more this contributes to the development of this person's responsibility.

The relationship between the indicator of general internality and the indicator of autonomy indicates that the ability to be aware of the consequences of one's actions brings a person closer to independent life. And this is due to the fact that in order to gain independence, a person needs to build his behavior and life as a whole accordingly. And independence is achieved when a person is able to take a responsible attitude to his life, to those tasks and requirements that are set before him by important people and environments. And after a person can prove this to himself and the people around him, he gets his true independence, which is impossible without true and deeply conscious responsibility.

Table 4 presents the results of the correlation analysis for the indicator of autonomy, the interpretation of these relationships is given above.

CONCLUSIONS

Spontaneity is not a static entity that remains unchanged over the years, but a dynamic phenomenon that changes flexibly even within a single age period.

So, as a result of the correlation analysis, it was revealed that between all studied personality traits (locus of control, autonomy, tolerance to uncertainty, creativity, self-regulation, flexibility in communication and spontaneity itself), there are strong positive correlation relationships. The existing connections indicate the interdependence of the studied components: when one of the personality traits develops, the level of development of others will increase accordingly.

Between all the studied personality traits there is a significant correlation with spontaneity. This suggests that spontaneity does not exist separately from other personality characteristics, is not an independent

personal property that develops according to its own laws, but is closely connected with many important personality formations and structures, and in order to understand how these connections function, it is not enough to investigate spontaneity separately from other personality traits.

The spontaneity indicator is most affected by indicators (in decreasing order) of creativity, autonomy, and tolerance for uncertainty. That is, in order to develop spontaneity, it is necessary to focus on the formation and development of creative abilities, autonomy of the personality and to develop one-self's willingness to be in unusual situations.

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