

Youth's Activity in Changing Reality: Self-Regulation Contradictions*



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Abstract. The article substantiates the socio-cultural approach to the study of self-regulation contradictions of youth's activity. The developed approach considers the process of forming the meanings that determine the content orientation of self-regulation contradictions in changing reality. As a source for youth's development, the authors analyze contradictions between cultural and social, unconscious and conscious, traditional and modern, objective and subjective. The researchers carry out the empirical testing of the developed concept on the basis of the study results in relation to education, labor and family. Both conservative and constructive components become evident in the clash of culture and the social. The conservative component is associated with situations of various forms of economic restrictions, while the constructive one is related to rationalizing youth's attitude to education, labor and family, and searching for alternative ways to resolve contradictions. The contradiction between the unconscious and the conscious manifests itself as a conflict of essences – terminal, self-valuable, instrumental and rational

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attitude to the objects of reality. The contradiction between the traditional and the modern appears in different ways in education, labor, and family. In education, traditional educational values are devalued; there are no conditions for strengthening the modern ones. In labor, the historically formed contradiction of its instrumental and terminal essence persists. In family relations, there is a sharp discrepancy between the youth's desire for modern forms of family creation and the traditional forms that dominate in the society. The contradiction between the objective and the subjective in various spheres reflects the existing problems of objective reality and the subjective youth's attitude toward them. Empirically, the authors analyze the contradictions based on the results of comparative sociological studies conducted in 2014 and 2017.

Key words: youth, activity, self-regulation, changing reality, cultural and social, unconscious and conscious, traditional and modern, objective and subjective.

Introduction

Any social group's activity including youth is largely a self-regulating process. Self-regulation is shown in the ability of different youth groups to influence the conditions of their life by adapting social reality to their needs. Self-regulation is based on the images of reality constructed by young people, i.e. the essences and the meanings that they give to objects of reality that are formed in the socialization process. Formation of meanings occurs in the cultural space through the implementation of social culture functions, the most important of which is regulatory, aimed at adjusting social interactions.

Formation of meanings is accompanied by contradictions that represent "a certain type of interaction of different and opposite sides and properties, as a part of a particular system or between systems, the collision process of opposite aspirations and forces" [1, pp. 241–242]. Contradictions in the youth's life arise in the interaction of opposite sides of the mechanism elements of its self-regulation: the cultural and the social, the conscious and the unconscious, the traditional and the modern, the objective and the subjective [2, pp. 114–123]. In this regard, to study the youth's activity and the contradictions that arise in their self-

regulation process in a changing social reality, it is necessary to solve the following tasks.

First, the *correlation between the cultural and the social* needs theoretical justification in the organization of the youth's social life. Second, it is necessary to substantiate the connection of the *archetypal and mental structures of the collective unconscious with the rational foundations of self-regulation* of social interactions. Third, it is essential to identify stable types of social *connections between the traditional and the modern* in the organization of young people's social life. Fourth, it is important to have an idea of the correlation between *the objective and the subjective* in the social reality construction by youth. The solution of these tasks is aimed at substantiating a holistic approach to the socio-cultural self-regulation of youth's activity. It is provided by the general methodological orientation of the theoretical development of contradictions as a source of development in various spheres of youth life: education, work, and family relations.

Research methodology

In modern society, the forming-up process of the youth's activity is constantly changing. Increasing uncertainty, prolonged adulthood,

prolongations of the marginal state and, as a result, the growth of social contradictions within different youth's groups cause the basic differences that characterize the conditions of life and the ways of its regulation. In a relatively stable society, individual, local groups of young people with a deliberately low social status and limited resources for self-development are the most vulnerable to social problems. However, in the context of global transformations, the social base of contradictions is expanding. Escalation of the contradictions is characteristic for all types of societies which are reflected in the features of youth's activity and their self-regulation mechanisms [3–8]. The prospects for their resolution are related to forming-up individual and group social and cultural strategies of the transition, overcoming the new types of inequality that have emerged due to the changes in labor, education, and digital reality [9–13].

Global socio-economic and socio-cultural transformations are fixed in the “social generation” [14], in the images of reality and ways of activity. These include the gradual consolidation of unreliable work, combination of work and study for a long time, adoption of flexibility and mobility strategy, unpredictability and risk as immanent components of activity. These conditions and the corresponding attitudes form the basis of the “*new adulthood*” phenomenon [4, p. 20; 15; 16]. They speak about the growth of various contradiction types in the youth's activity, based on a wide context of social and cultural changes in the activity conditions, objective conditions of reality and their subjective perception, the youth's expectations, their intentional aspirations and experiences, ways of life activity organizing.

When substantiating contradictions, we rely on the theoretical approaches contained in the works of M. Weber, C. Jung, A.S. Akhiezer, N.I. Lapin, and A.B. Hoffmann.

A.S. Akhiezer's socio-cultural theory contains the theoretical justification of the *contradiction between the cultural and the social* in life activity. The author proves the existence of an “eternal split” between social relations and culture. He considers the inconsistency as a fundamental attribute characteristic, and sees more of an innovative essence in culture than in social relations. The researcher defines culture as “a sphere of creativity and fantasy, and social relations should always remain functional by virtue of their very embodiment in the mass reproduction process” [17; 3, pp. 22–23]. The new socio-cultural reality which has been forming since the end of the 20th century contributes to the tradition of transforming rather than conservative functions to human culture. There is a reorientation of the socio-cultural history. The realization of the problem of individuals' subjective ideas, thoughts, abilities, and intentions in the space of possibilities limited by objective conditions comes to the forefront of researchers' interests. The authors believe that it is in this formulation that the socio-cultural approach is most clearly expressed: culture is a way of implementing subjective ideas, thoughts, abilities, intentions of individuals, and the social reflects objective conditions, frames, boundaries, and structure as a whole [18, p. 130]. This implies a contradiction between culture as a way and the social as the youth's life activity conditions.

The basis of N.I. Lapin's socio-cultural approach is not a dual opposition of the social and the cultural, but a triple one. The author introduces the actor as a carrier of cultural and social relations. Its subjective role is manifested in the tradition and innovation. These three main components of society are equal in relation to each other, but they interpenetrate each other, and are therefore inseparable. There is no sociality outside of culture and individuals,

there is no culture outside of sociality and individuals, and there are no individuals outside of sociality and culture.

The *contradiction between the unconscious and the conscious* arises between the ideas, views, and images that persist in the collective unconscious and are reproduced by young people, on the one hand, and rationally meaningful orientations to achieve specific goals, on the other.

The basic elements of reality images are formed historically in the self-regulation mechanism in the form of archetypes of the collective unconscious and mentality, being fixed in the group and individual consciousness of young people. Reflecting the previous generations' experience, *archetypes*, as cultural prototypes¹, provide the formation and inheritance of semantic bases of attitudes to the objects of social reality. *In mental structures*, the attitude to the objects of social reality is fixed in the unconscious and unreflexed forms, as a property of the individual, group, society, and nation, manifested in the national character features. In the interaction of both forms (the unconscious and the conscious), their unity is ensured in the self-regulation process.

The *contradiction between the traditional and the modern* in the ways of organizing the youth's social life is revealed basing on the understanding of these phenomena essence.

In its most general form, sociology understands tradition as "a social and cultural heritage passed down from generation to generation and reproduced in certain societies and social groups over a long period of time"².

¹ Jung C.G. *Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious*. Moscow: Direct-Media, 2007. P. 77. Available at: <http://biblioclub.ru/index.php?Page=book&id=36246> (accessed: September 30, 2020).

² Hoffman A.B. *Traditions. Culturology. 20 Century: Encyclopedia*. Editor-in-Chief Levit S.Ya. V. 2. Saint-Petersburg: Universitetskaya Kniga, 1998. P. 265.

Summarizing the existing approaches to the problem of the correlation of traditions and innovations and comprehending in this way the Yu.A. Levada's legacy, V.V. Kolbanovskii defines it as follows: "*tradition* is a mechanism for the reproduction of social institutions and norms in which the maintenance of the latter is justified, legitimized by the very fact of their "existence in the past" [19, p. 11]. Traditions are preserved in people's historical memory in the form of cultural samples. A.B. Hoffman writes, "Each generation does not just assimilate them in an unchanged and ready-made form. It inevitably, one way or another, makes a selection among them, interprets them in its own way, ascribes new essence and meanings to them that did not exist before it" [20, p. 19]. New meanings and innovations arising on the basis of traditions are transformed into new cultural patterns (traditionalized) becoming an integral part of the cultural heritage.

Tradition can serve as a universal form of maintaining social organization mainly in relatively simple and stable social structures. In more developed societies, it only *complements* the system of ideological and other institutions. However, along with tradition, and often *within* it, there is an *innovation* associated with a modern change in social relations and institutions, so a certain reproduction degree of traditions does not mean immutability, but implies their renewal (innovation) by giving new meanings or transforming them into new forms ("traditionalism modernization", as A. Hoffmann defines). Moreover, "today, more than ever, traditions are the object of choice, interpretation and actualization; individuals and social actors choose not only their present and future but also the past. Traditional cultural patterns are often contained inside the variety of innovations" [19, p. 27].

Unlike the traditional one, the modern type of social life organization is based on the purposeful motivation of social actions. “An individual whose behavior is focused on the goal, means and side effects of his/her action acts purposefully...i.e., he or she acts, in any case, not affectively (primarily not emotionally) and not traditionally” [21, p. 629]. In other words, modern organization of social life is based both on tradition and on rationality principle assuming that the actors achieve their goal, correlated with rationally sensible means.

N.I. Lapin introduced the concept of “incomplete (relative) responsiveness (correspondence)” between these components. Responsiveness is developed as a natural-historical process of social reproduction [19; 22, p. 143; 23].

Traditional culture reproduction occurs in the process of generation change. Each new generation finds the culture created by the previous generations, changes it through its own activities, and transmits it in a modified form to the subsequent generations. In the process, the young generation obtains its own quality as a social group. Its main functions are reproductive, aimed at inheriting cultural samples; innovative involving their renewal, and translational ensuring the transfer of updated samples to future generations. In this regard, the contradictions in self-regulation mechanism of the young people’s activity *arise between the tradition and the innovation in the process of its subjectivity formation*.

The *contradiction between the objective and the subjective* is substantiated in the paradigm of the phenomenological sociology of knowledge on the basis of which the entire social reality is considered. As the knowledge complex about the essence and characteristics

of the manifestations of everything that a young person encounters in the course of social interactions is mastered, the objective aspect of social reality, social currency is revealed. Cognizing objective reality, a young person directly perceives its part about which he or she has own knowledge. It means that subjectively reality manifests itself in a person’s confidence in the reliability of their own knowledge about the observed objects. And the essence of social reality is rooted in the *relationship between the objective and the subjective* in social reality.

Knowledge is distributed in society; young people construct the objects of reality in their minds in accordance with the knowledge availability depending on their own social status when young people realize themselves as members of a certain social group, the owners of a certain social status. The construction of one’s own life also depends on the quality of the acquired knowledge, as far as it corresponds to the expectations associated with the performance of specific social roles. On the one hand, the result of awareness of one’s social position is expectations from reality, and on the other – social meanings that fill the constructed reality, so there is a contradiction between the objective and subjective sides of social reality in the life activity self-regulation process.

To analyze the contradictions, the article uses the results of two studies of the Center for Youth Sociology of the Institute of Socio-Political Research of the Russian Academy of Sciences (ISPR RAS) guided by the authors: 1) in 2014, among the population aged over 15 years old in 13 entities of the Russian Federation, in 65 localities; 1459 persons were interviewed, the sample of youth aged 15–29 was 401 people; 2) in 2017, in 7 entities of the Russian Federation, in 28 localities; the sample of young people aged 15–29 was 803 people.

Contradiction of the cultural and the social in the organization of youth's social life

In the contradictions between culture and social relations, actor's position plays an important role in the self-regulation mechanism of young people's activity. It reflects not only conflicts, but, at the same time, subjective possibilities to overcome the discrepancy between the cultural and social grounds in implementation of youth's expectations. It is reflected in various spheres of activity.

In education, this is the contradiction between the knowledge value and the availability of fee-based education. At the empirical level, the knowledge value is contained in the answers to the question about the young people's attitude to knowledge: as the main asset of a person or something optional which is easily compensated by money (*Tab. 1*).

As table 1 shows, fully fee-based education is available only to a small part of young people (8.6%), and for every second (47.2%) it is practically not available. However, among the respondents who regard knowledge as the main asset, the share of those who assess the availability of fee-based education is higher and

who admit that they will have to cut down the expenses (46.1%). The share of those who assess its inaccessibility is lower (44.9%) compared to those who believe that money is more important than knowledge (41.6 and 50.4%, respectively). So, there is a contradiction between the knowledge value and availability of fee-based education which is manifested in the discrepancy between social conditions in education and the youth's cognitive values.

In labor, this is the contradiction between the labor value and self-realization possibilities (*Tab. 2*).

The terminal labor value was determined by a set of the following semantic meanings: utility sense, internal need, and creativity. Instrumental one is the opportunity to earn, forced necessity, communication. Table 2 shows that the relationship of the terminal and instrumental labor value with the respondents' self-assessment of self-realization possibility in this area in most directions of self-realization does not exceed five points on a seven-point rating scale. At the same time, respondents, who highlight the terminal labor value, evaluate their capabilities in all directions of self-

Table 1. Relation of attitudes to knowledge with availability of fee-based education

Attitude to knowledge	Availability of fee-based education, % of the respondents' number		
	Fully available	Available, but it is necessary to cut down expenses	Practically not available
Knowledge is the main person's asset	9.0	46.1	44.9
Today, money is more important than knowledge	8.0	41.6	50.4
In general, among young people	8.6	44.2	47.2

Source: own calculations.

Table 2. Relation of labor value to self-realization possibilities in labor

Labor value	Self-assessment of self-realization opportunities, C*					
	Find a job	Improve professional skills	Raise salary	Make a career	Defend own rights	Make own business
Terminal	4.93	5.38	4.66	4.59	5.24	3.33
Instrumental	4.65	4.84	4.07	3.94	4.82	4.89

*C – average weighted coefficient on a seven-point rating scale.
Source: own calculations.

realization, except for business, significantly higher than those who support the instrumental value. Consequently, a contradiction arises between the labor values which largely reflect young people’s attitude to the economic policy, pursued in the country, and expectations from labor. However, unrealized expectations lead to protest moods. As we can see, the terminal attitude to labor on the part of its actors contributes to overcoming this contradiction with great success, while the instrumental one contributes with less success.

In *family*, this is the contradiction between the family value and the dissatisfaction with the financial situation (*Tab. 3*).

The terminal family value was determined by a set of the following semantic meanings: need (there is no life without a family); goal (i.e., it just has to be); and love. The instrumental value is a necessity (a sense of duty or a sense of unease without a family); means (for a career, comfort); and burden. The majority of the respondents in both groups are unsatisfied with their financial situation. Among those who share the opinion about the terminal family value, the share of dissatisfied people is significantly lower than among those who support the instrumental value (62.7% vs. 80.2). Therefore, dissatisfaction with their financial situation is a significant basis for the analyzed contradiction in the sphere of family relations of young people. Again, the potential for overcoming it is more a terminal attitude to the family, and less an instrumental one.

Thus, in the self-regulation process of youth’s activity, contradictions of culture with

social conditions contribute to the *satisfactory match* between the socio-cultural ways of realization of the young people’s subjective expectations in various activity spheres and the objective conditions of their implementation. In contradiction with social conditions, values perform both conservative and constructive function in self-regulation as fundamental culture elements. Young people, i.e. actors of contradictions, realize these contradictions. The *conservative function* has appeared in all the analyzed activity spheres in the formation of the semantic self-regulation orientation to ensure sustainability, activity stability. This function was realized in more effective overcoming by supporters of terminal values of a number of obstacles arising in connection with the unavailability of fee-based education, limited self-realization opportunities in labor, dissatisfaction with the financial situation in family relations. The *constructive function* is realized as a result of the instrumentalization of the young people’s attitude to education, labor, and family, contributing to the search for alternative ways to overcome emerging obstacles including workarounds.

Contradiction between the unconscious and the conscious in youth’s life activity self-regulation

The interaction process between the unconscious and the conscious forms is essentially a transition of the unconscious forms into the conscious ones. In this regard, the contradiction between the unconscious and the conscious is mediated, as it reflects the opposites not in the unconscious, but in those

Table 3. Relation of family value to financial satisfaction

Family value	Self-assessment of satisfaction for financial satisfaction, % of the respondents' number	
	Unsatisfied	Satisfied
Terminal	62.7	37.3
Instrumental	80.2	19.8
Source: own calculation.		

systems that are manifested in the group and individual consciousness. In *education* such systems are the values of knowledge and education, the opposite sides of which are the basis of contradictions with archetypes and mentality.

On the basis of the previously developed structure of archetypes [10, pp. 194–196], we will analyze the connection of the archetypes of fate, kindness, conscience, savior, past idealization, shared by young people, with the opposite positions in their attitude to knowledge: “Knowledge is the main person’s asset” or “Today, money is more important than knowledge”, as well as the terminal and instrumental education values. A set of semantic values determined the meaning of education as a terminal value, such as: developing abilities, need for knowledge, general culture. The instrumental values are diploma, prestige, and career (*Tab. 4*).

The data in table 4 indicate that there is a connection between the archetypes of the collective unconscious and youth’s attitude to knowledge and education. Among the respondents who fully agree with the proverbs that reflect the listed archetypes, there are supporters of terminal and instrumental values, and the meanings of the terminal values are noticeably higher than the instrumental values. There is the highest connection meaning with the terminal knowledge and education values

with the archetype of kindness (51.3 and 73%, respectively). Agreeing with the meaning of the proverb “Kind hearts are more than coronets”, young people expressed optimism that persists in the collective unconscious of Russians which influenced their attitude to knowledge and education mainly as a terminal value. Apparently, the belief in good and self-worth attitude to education occupy a common position in the collective unconscious of the majority of young people. This is confirmed by the answers to the question “Do you believe that kindness will always be rewarded?” Among the respondents who answered positively to it, 56.7% of knowledge is a terminal value, and 43.3% is an instrumental value. However, under the influence of life situations, the picture is changing. The answers to the question “Do you believe that unkind people live better than kind ones?” showed that among those who believe, 47.1% of respondents have already considered knowledge to be the main person’s asset. 52.9% are of the opinion that in our time, money is more important than knowledge. So, today, the connection of the kindness archetype with the attitude to education is filled with new meanings.

We note the least significant connection with the terminal knowledge value in the fate archetype (52.7%) which is expressed in agreement with the proverb “What is to be, will be”. In various life situations, young people

Table 4. Relation of collective unconscious archetypes to knowledge and education values

Archetype	Knowledge values, % of the respondents' number		Education values, % of the respondents' number	
	Terminal	Instrumental	Terminal	Instrumental
Fate	52.7	47.3	64.3	35.7
Kindness	61.3	38.7	73.0	27.0
Conscience	59.4	40.6	65.1	34.9
Savior	58.3	41.7	47.6	52.4
Past idealization	57.0	43.0	77.0	23.0
Average meanings	57.7	42.3	65.4	34.6

Source: own calculation.

differently interpret the meanings, inherent in this archetype, reflecting the dependence on the confluence of circumstances and suggesting the possibility of withdrawing from responsibility for failures in life including in school. To confirm this conclusion, we asked the respondent to determine his life position by choosing one of two alternative proverbs: “Every bullet has its billet” and “God helps those, who help themselves”. 58.2% of respondents who share the terminal knowledge value and 41.8% – the instrumental value agreed with the second proverb which reflects the importance of their own position.

Similarly, there are contradictions between the other archetypes of the collective unconscious and youth’s attitude to knowledge and education that we identified and described earlier, [10, pp. 291–295]. The average total meanings of the archetypes’ association with terminal and instrumental knowledge values are 57.7 and 42.3%, respectively, and 65.4 and 34.6% with educational values. These contradictions reflect the confrontation of the education and knowledge essence that arises in the process of their rationalization during the transition from the unconscious to group and individual consciousness.

We can also trace this trend in the contradiction between mentality and young people’s attitude to knowledge and education. The total weighted average coefficients of the relation of mental traits of national character (love of the country, mercy, honor, dignity, love of one’s neighbor, suspicion of foreigners), evaluated on a seven-point scale, with terminal and

instrumental values of knowledge were 4.99 and 4.93, respectively, with the education values – 5.02 and 4.88. Consequently, the contradiction between the mentality that goes back to the unconscious layer of spiritual life and the value structures in education also reflects the opposites of the rational youth’s attitude to knowledge and education.

In *labor*, on the one hand, the contradiction basis between the unconscious and rational is the labor archetype (the question “Which of these proverbs is more suitable to your life position?”), on the other hand, the terminal and instrumental labor values discussed above. We analyzed the following proverbs containing alternative ideas about the attitude to labor “No pain, no gain”, “Only fools and horses work”, “Idleness rusts the mind”, “Eat – sweat, work – chill”.

Let us analyze the relation of positively and negatively directed archetypes (the average relation meaning for each proverb) with the labor value (*Tab. 5*).

First, table 5 shows that the meaning of the terminal labor value in groups with a positive orientation of the archetypes (26%) is more than twice as high as its meaning in groups with negative orientation (11.2%). Secondly, at present, there is a clear trend of labor instrumentalization which reflects the influence of increasing dynamism, variability, and uncertainty in this area. Under these conditions, the contradiction of the historically formed ambivalent attitude to labor is intensified. On the one hand, the supporters’ share of the terminal labor value increases among holding

Table 5. Relation of archetypes to the labor value

Archetype	Relation to labor value, % of the respondents’ number	
	Terminal labor value	Instrumental labor value
Positive orientation	26.0	74.0
Negative orientation	11.2	88.8
Source: own calculation.		

the positive orientation of the archetype. On the other hand, the supporters' share of the instrumental labor attitude increases among adherents of the negative archetype orientation.

The analysis of mental traits relation of national character with the attitude to labor confirms the conclusion about the contradiction between the unconscious and the rational in this area. The total weighted average coefficients of the relation of mental traits with the terminal and instrumental labor values are 4.96 and 4.83, respectively. This indicates a fairly high level of relation (above the average, equal to four points) of the mental traits inherent in young people, both with the terminal and instrumental labor values. Consequently, the contradiction between the mentality and labor values is an interaction of opposites of the terminal and the instrumental young people's attitude to labor.

In *family*, the contradiction between the unconscious and the rational also reflects the splitting process of the family values into the terminal and instrumental ones. At the same time, all analyzed archetypes are more closely related to the terminal values (the average value of the relation is 88.9%) compared to the instrumental values (10.9%). Firstly, this indicates about the dominant role of archetypes in the reproduction of traditional terminal family values by young people, and secondly, the influence of modern instrumental family values as a dialectical opposite in contradiction with the unconscious on the development forms of family relations in changing reality.

The stability of these processes can be judged by analyzing the relationship of mental traits of national character that youth evaluate on the basis of a seven-point scale, with the attitude to the family. The total weighted average coefficients of association of mental traits with the terminal and instrumental family values are 5.05 and 4.51, respectively. It means

that the contradiction formed in the archetypal structures of the collective unconscious is fixed in the mental features, defining the specifics of the terminal and instrumental in the family relations of the current generation.

Thus, the analysis confirms the connection of the archetypal and mental structures of the collective unconscious with the rational foundations of self-regulation in various spheres of youth's activity. As a significant basis for self-regulation, there is a split of the values of education, labor, and family into the terminal and instrumental ones which form dialectical opposites of self-regulation contradictions. As the analysis showed, although to varying degrees, these opposites determine the content of the terminal and instrumental young people's attitude to education, labor, and family. If in education and, especially, in family, terminal meanings dominate, and then terminal and instrumental meanings are combined in labor. So, the contradiction between the unconscious and the rational manifests itself as a confrontation of essences, terminal, self-valuable and instrumental, rational attitude to the objects of social reality.

Contradiction between the traditional and the modern in the organization of youth's social life

In *education* self-regulation, the contradiction between the traditional and the modern is traced in the collision of the terminal (traditional) and instrumental (modern) education values. As we have already noted, the education meaning as a terminal value was determined by a set of semantic values – developing abilities (21.4%), the need for knowledge (12.7%), general culture (5%), and instrumental – diploma (17.3%), prestige (5.9%), and career (37.8%).

In general, 31.9% of respondents perceive education as a terminal value, and 60.9% perceive it as an instrumental value. The

instrumentalization trend of youth's attitude to education is characteristic of the entire post-Soviet period, primarily due to the reforms implemented in the country in this area. This trend was confirmed by the results of the previous studies [24, pp. 129–132]. As a result of the education system reform in the young people's minds, historically formed semantic foundations are deformed which traditionally determine the intrinsic value of the cognition process. They are replaced by rational meanings in which education is considered a meaning to achieve other goals that are not related to knowledge. In this regard, the contradiction between the terminal (traditional) and instrumental (modern) education values is manifested as a mutual denial of meanings that reflect, on the one hand, the desire for knowledge, and, on the other – to obtain status.

The analysis of the knowledge value confirms this. The terminal knowledge essence contained in the judgment “Knowledge should always be sought for general development, even if it is not in demand in practical life” is close to 54.5% of respondents. The instrumental essence contained in the judgment “Knowledge is not an end in itself, but a means of solving issues” – 45.5%. Consequently, knowledge remains the dominant youth's value which comes into conflict with the desire for status, giving it its place, under the influence of the instrumentalization of the attitude to education, as a result of its reform.

In *labor* self-regulation, the analyzed process manifests itself in the contradiction between the terminal and instrumental youth's attitude to labor. Labor as a terminal value was determined by a set of the following semantic meanings: utility sense (13.3%), internal need (6.2%), and creativity (4.6%), in total – 24.1%. Instrumental – earnings (61.9%), forced necessity (12.4%), communication

(1.5%), in total, it is 75.9%. Consequently, the contradiction is expressed in the dominance of the instrumental labor value.

Numerous studies suggest that this contradiction is rooted in culture which is associated not only with the actual confrontation between traditions and modernity, but also with the peculiarities of historically formed labor relations that were reproduced in Russian society in historical retrospect [24, pp. 261–269; 25]. On the one hand, they affirmed the priority of “reverent attitude to labor necessary for the soul and body”, based on the Orthodox culture. The tradition of self-valued attitude to work continued in the Soviet period in the labor proclamation as the first vital need. On the other hand, in Russia at all times, there has been a tendency to exploit labor which forms an instrumental attitude toward it. The contradictory attitude to labor is reflected in folklore: “Only fools and horses work” and “Idleness rusts mind”. So, there is an ambivalent attitude to labor (both instrumental and terminal) in proverbs which is reproduced in the life position of modern generation of Russian youth.

Consequently, in labor, the contradiction between the traditional and the modern is not reduced to the opposites of meanings between the terminal and instrumental attitude to it. On the contrary, terminal and instrumental meanings are present in both traditional and modern attitudes to labor. The contradiction is created as a result of the values' bifurcation which forms dialectical opposites in the form of traditional and modern labor values which are the source of development and labor, and the youth's attitude to it.

In *family* relations, the analyzed contradiction is even more clearly manifested in the bifurcation of the relationship to the family into terminal (traditional) and instrumental

(modern). The family is traditionally considered a terminal value which is confirmed by the research results. Self-valued attitude to the family is typical for 86.3% of youth, and instrumental – for 13.7%. The contradiction arises between the traditional and modern attitude to the family as dialectical opposites manifesting itself in various forms of its organization – types of marriage relations, ways of gender distribution of roles, the desired number of children, attitude to children, etc. Let us consider how the terminal and instrumental youth's attitude to the family is related to various forms of its organization (*Tab. 6*).

The analyzed forms of family organization are divided into traditional and modern. Traditional forms include “married in church and civil officially registered marriage”, “husband is the head of the family”, “multi-children family”, “authoritarian attitude to children”, modern ones are “unregistered marriage (cohabitation)”, “equal distribution of roles in the family”, “one-child family”, “liberal attitude to children”. Among the youth who share a terminal attitude to the family, 86.2% support traditional forms of its organization, 75.0% – support modern forms; among those who share instrumental attitude the figures are 13.8% and 25.0%, respectively. As we can see, the terminal attitude to the

family, inherent in the traditional culture of Russians, contributes to the predominant reproduction of traditional forms of its organization by young people, and instrumental – modern ones, so the basic contradiction in this area is manifested in the struggle between traditional and modern forms of youth's attitude to the family which in everyday life often leads to family conflicts. According to many sociologists, this struggle has caused the family crisis as a social institution. To the question “Do you agree with the statement that modern Russian society is experiencing a family crisis?” 21.4% of respondents answered in the affirmative, 52.3% of youth rather agree.

Thus, the analysis made it possible to determine the general and special in the contradictions of the traditional and the modern in the self-regulation of various spheres of youth's activity. The general idea is that the contradictions analyzed are based on a split attitude toward education, labor and family. It forms dialectical opposites in the form of the traditional and modern values. The special thing is reflected in the ways of resolving contradictions, while contradictions that have not been resolved do not lead to development. In education, this was manifested in its ineffective reform which resulted in the devaluation of traditional education

Table 6. Relation of terminal and instrumental attitude to the family with its organization forms

Attitude to family	Family organization forms, % of the respondents' number							
	Type of marriage relations		Distribution of roles in family		Desired number of children in family		Attitude to children	
	Officially registered marriage	Un registered marriage	Husband is the head of the family	Equal distribution of roles in the family	One-child family	Multi-children family	Authoritarian attitude toward children	Liberal attitude toward children
Terminal	86.2	75.0	85.3	57.1	80.4	90.6	82.7	69.7
Instrumental	13.8	25.0	14.7	42.9	19.6	9.4	17.7	30.3
Source: own calculation.								

values. In labor, in the current conditions, the historical instrumentalization trend of its value has increased the contradiction between traditional and modern attitudes to labor. In family, the contradiction manifested itself in the inconsistency of the youth's desire for modern forms of family organization with the traditional forms dominating in society which led to the development of contradictions into conflict. It means that what is special in resolving contradictions is different forms of harmony violation between the traditional and the modern in the activity self-regulation in its various spheres. Given the special role of young people in social reproduction, contradictions in the self-regulation mechanism of their activity arise between tradition as simple reproduction and innovation as the basis for social change.

Contradiction between the objective and the subjective in the construction of youth's social reality

In *education*, the opposition between the objective and the subjective is expressed in the contradiction between the educational status (education level) and satisfaction with the acquired knowledge (*Tab. 7*).

The table 7 shows contradiction between the education level that youth achieved and dissatisfaction with the gain knowledge. 21.7% of respondents are not satisfied to varying degrees with secondary general education, 35.2% – with vocational secondary education, 23.2% – with bachelor degree, and 21.4%

– with master degree. In other words, the subjective ideas and youth's expectations are in conflict with their objective position in education. On the one hand, it appears in a real decline in the education quality. It is associated with the reform consequences which are reflected in the decrease in purchased educational status, and dissatisfaction with received knowledge which becomes a stimulus to young people to overcome contradictions.

In *labor*, contradiction arises between the conditions, nature, and labor content in various production areas (objective side) and the youth's expectations (subjective side). Essentially, this contradiction is between the real situation of young people employed in different production areas and the way of labor they construct. Let us analyze how objective labor conditions in material, spiritual production, social services, distribution and exchange are related to the youth's expectations from working in these areas, and the assessment of their own capabilities in realizing these expectations (*Tab. 8*).

The analysis of data in table 8 shows that the youth's expectations from their own work and the possibilities of their implementation differ significantly depending on the actual working conditions in different production areas. Contradictions arise in all areas where expectations do not coincide with the capability assessment, as evidenced by the high respondents' proportion who rated them on

Table 7. Relation of education level to knowledge satisfaction

Education level	Knowledge satisfaction, in % of the respondents' number				
	Fully satisfied	Rather satisfied	Rather unsatisfied	Unsatisfied	Can not say
Secondary general	12.3	48.6	15.9	5.8	17.4
Vocational secondary	12.0	32.8	24.0	11.2	20.0
Higher, bachelor degree	17.9	39.3	16.1	7.1	19.6
Higher, master degree	11.8	56.9	15.7	5.7	10.0
Source: own calculation.					

Table 8. Relation of objective labor conditions in various production areas to youth's expectations and capabilities for their implementation

Production area	Expectations, %*				Capability assessment, % of the respondents' number							
	Get an interesting job	Improve professional skills	Raise salary	Rise through the ranks	Get an interesting job		Improve professional skills		Raise salary		Rise through the ranks	
					A**	B***	A	B	A	B	A	B
Material production (industry, agriculture, transport)	20.0	38.8	85.0	22.5	58.8	41.2	53.1	46.9	53.2	46.8	66.9	33.1
Spiritual production (culture, education, science)	84.0	48.0	68.0	24.0	78.0	22.0	82.0	18.0	62.0	38.0	64.0	36.0
Social service (healthcare, jurisprudence, law protection activity)	22.9	37.1	71.4	34.3	51.5	48.5	59.9	40.1	39.9	60.1	49.9	50.1
Distribution and exchange (financial and banking activity, service industry, trade)	31.6	34.2	78.9	34.2	59.2	40.8	61.9	38.1	56.6	43.4	56.4	43.6
* In total, it is more than 100%, as the choice of several answer options was allowed. **A – capabilities above average level; ***B – capabilities below average level. Source: own calculation.												

a seven-point scale below the average level. To the greatest extent, they appear in social service in relation to expectations of salary increases (71.4%) and estimates of the possibilities of their implementation below the average level (60.1%). In material production, due to the expectations of improving their professional skills (38.8%) and the capability assessment below the average level (46.9%). Thus, the contradictions between the objective position of young people in labor and their subjective expectations reflect the most relevant and significant aspects of self-regulation of their labor activity.

In *family*, this contradiction manifests itself in the most general form, between the desired and the actual. In particular, we can analyze it by comparing the desired number of children (the subjective side) with the actual one (the objective side). According to the research, among youth aged 25–29 years, 5.7% are focused on a childless family, one-child – 23.6%, two-child – 57.9%, three-child and more – 12.9%. In fact, the family composition

in this age group is as follows: no children (39.3%), one child (45%), two (15%), three or more (0.7%). Consequently, family planning was not implemented, and even in the older age group (30–39 years) in which 19.9% of childless families, 41.9% – one-child families, 34.3% – two-child families, and 3.8% – multi-children families. It means that the reality makes its own adjustments increasing the contradiction in the self-regulation of relations in the family.

Thus, the analysis of contradictions between the objective and the subjective in various youth's activity areas spheres showed that, on the one hand, they reflect the existing problems of objective reality which are significant factors of activity self-regulation, on the other hand, youth's subjective attitude to these problems, the adequacy degree of which depends on the choice of means and ways of implementing the emerging contradictions. Despite the various problems, the common feature in the implementation of this type of contradictions is the formation of youth's active life position

as a condition for the becoming of their social subjectivity.

Contradictions as a source of development in the self-regulation mechanism

The analysis shows self-regulation as a developing process identifying the fundamental contradictions that are the sources of development of youth's activity. Understanding that the essence of development is in the opposites formed as a result of the bifurcation of interrelated elements of the socio-cultural self-regulation mechanism. In accordance with the law of unity and struggle of opposites, "...all human activity forms are carried out by splitting the one into different and opposite, and, on the one hand, the interaction of opposite forces characterizes a certain system as something unified. On the other hand, this interaction constitutes an internal impulse for its change and development" [1, p. 241].

Contradictions arise in the structures formed in the process of elements interaction of the socio-cultural self-regulation mechanism. These structures represent the unity of the mechanism elements that are different in their functional orientation and opposite in their semantic content. In the interaction of different and opposite sides of the elements in the educated structures, there is a source for the development that determines the self-regulation orientation of youth's activity in education, labor, family, and other spheres.

In the contradiction between the cultural and social aspects of the mechanism elements, the opposites are distinguished, reflecting the implementation of the conservative and constructive functions of culture in interaction with social conditions in various spheres of youth's activity. Depending on social conditions, young people choose life strategies aimed at sustainable development (implementation of the culture conservative

function) or changes (implementation of the constructive function).

In the contradiction between the structures of the collective unconscious and the rational foundations of self-regulation, the opposite sides are formed through the bifurcation of values appeared in the transition process from unconscious to conscious forms, into terminal (values-goals) and instrumental (values-means). In this regard, the source of development is opposites which, on the one hand, are the meanings reproduced by youth in the archetypal and mental features of the collective unconscious and fixed in consciousness in terminal values. On the other hand, it is the meanings presented in instrumental values which are the result of everyday experience accumulated in youth's diverse interactions. If in the first case the value is the object of self-regulation itself (it is also the goal of self-regulation), then, in the second case, the object is evaluated as means to achieve these goals. In the confrontation of opposite meanings, the corresponding orientation of youth's development is determined, based on the self-valuable (terminal) or instrumental attitude to the objects of the surrounding reality in various spheres of its activity.

The bifurcation of values into terminal and instrumental also underlies the *contradiction between the traditional and the modern* in the self-regulation of various spheres of youth's activity. Inheriting the culture created by the previous generations, young people reproduce the traditions typical for it. The traditional terminal attitude to the objects of social reality is due to the fact of the existence of a self-valuable attitude to family, knowledge, and labor in the past, and reproduction which youth confirm by the research results. At the same time, the studies show a growing trend of instrumentalization of attitudes to various

objects of reality in current conditions which is a consequence of the implementation of an innovative social and group function. Therefore, traditions and innovations are the opposite sides in the contradiction between the traditional and the modern. The dominance of traditions contributes to the orientation of the self-regulation process to a simple reproduction of the main spheres of youth's activity, and innovation – to an expanded, ensuring its social development.

In youth's activity self-regulation from the standpoint of phenomenological sociology of knowledge, the *contradiction between the objective and the subjective* is considered the entity bifurcation of social reality in objective reality and designed young people's own reality. On the one hand, the resulting opposites are the youth's social position in various spheres

of their activity. On the other hand, it is the designed image of reality in these spheres. In this case, the source of development is the discrepancy between the youth's expectations associated with the real and designed social status. In its extreme manifestations, it takes on equally destructive forms, in overestimated expectations that lead to disappointments and in underestimated expectations that limit their implementation possibilities.

All the controversies are the source of development, not in themselves, but in the process of their resolution. Their necessary conditions are consensus achievement, reasonable compromise, and search for alternative solutions aimed at harmonizing the opposite sides of the contradictions ensuring the self-regulation development of youth's activity.

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