

## Научная статья | Original paper

# Structural and dynamic characteristics of the worldview of adolescent students

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### Abstract

**The context and relevance** of the study are determined by its focus on the analysis of the formation of the worldview of young people in modern socio-cultural conditions. **Objective.** To describe the structure of the worldview of students in early (16–18 years) and late (19–22 years) adolescence and to trace its substantive and dynamic characteristics. **Hypothesis.** Social and psychological sources of the formation of a holistic worldview in adolescence are civic position, family history, value orientations, desire for success and orientation towards the way of knowing the world, the significance of which can change depending on the requirements of the social situation of development throughout the age period from 16 to 22 years. **Methods and materials.** The study involved 529 people, including high school students and 1st–2nd year college students (16–18 years old) — 344 people ( $M = 16,7$ ,  $SD = 0,70$ ), university students (19–22 years old) — 185 people ( $M = 21,5$ ,  $SD = 0,85$ ). The study was conducted using the author's methodological kit "Study of the components of the picture of the world of modern high school students". **Results.** The picture of the world of adolescent students has a certain structure, which is formed by the beginning of the studied age period and is maintained throughout its entire period. It includes 4 factors: "Mastering the social norm", "Significant society", "Resources for success", "Self-determination". **Conclusions.** Dynamic characteristics of the content of the picture of the world of students throughout adolescence change depending on the social situation of development at different stages of education, ensuring socio-psychological adaptation of the subject to the transforming conditions of the social environment.

**Keywords:** worldview, adolescence, high school students, university students, the structure of the worldview, the social situation of development

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## Структурно-динамические характеристики мировоззрения учащихся юношеского возраста

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### Резюме

**Контекст и актуальность** исследования обусловлены его направленностью на анализ становления мировоззрения юношества в современных социокультурных условиях. **Цель.** Выделить и описать структуру мировоззрения учащихся раннего (16–18 лет) и позднего (19–22 года) юношеского возраста и установить ее содержательные и динамические характеристики. **Гипотеза.** Социально-психологическими источниками становления целостного мировоззрения в юношеском возрасте являются гражданская позиция, семейная история, ценностные ориентации, стремление к успеху, ориентация на способ познания мира, значимость которых может меняться в зависимости от требований социальной ситуации развития на протяжении всего возрастного периода от 16 до 22 лет. **Методы и материалы.** В исследовании приняли участие 529 человек, среди них старшеклассников и студентов 1–2 курсов колледжа (16–18 лет) — 344 человека ( $M = 16,7$ ,  $SD = 0,70$ ), студентов университета (19–22 лет) — 185 человек ( $M = 21,5$ ,  $SD = 0,85$ ). Исследование выполнено с использованием авторского методического комплекта «Изучение компонентов мировоззрения современных старшеклассников».

**Результаты.** Мировоззрение учащихся юношеского возраста имеет определенную структуру, складывающуюся уже к началу изучаемого возрастного периода и сохраняющуюся на всем его протяжении. Она включает 4 фактора: «Освоение социального норматива», «Значимый социум», «Ресурсы успеха», «Самоидентичность». **Выводы.** Динамические характеристики содержания мировоззрения учащихся на протяжении юношеского возраста меняются в зависимости от социальной ситуации развития на разных этапах обучения, обеспечивая социально-психологическую адаптацию субъекта к трансформирующимся условиям социальной среды.

**Ключевые слова:** мировоззрение, юношеский возраст, старшеклассники, студенты вуза, структура мировоззрения, социальная ситуация развития

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## Introduction

In psychological literature, the concept of worldview is generally understood as a comprehensive mental representation of the physical and social reality accessible to an individual (Koltko-Rivera, 2004). It also serves as a subject of applied research in fields such as counseling across different cultural contexts (Jensen, 2021; Lemettinen, Hirvonen, Ubani, 2021; Lohkvytska, Rozsokha, Azman, 2022), as well as in areas related to professional self-determination and athletic achievement (Miller, West, 1993).

Although the concept of worldview has been extensively developed in various theoretical studies, empirical investigation of this phenomenon remains challenging (Grigor'eva, Sharov, Zagranichnyi, 2022; Martsinkovskaya, 2007; Sorokoumova, Fadeev, Borisova, 2021; Czerniawska, Szydio, 2020; Czerniawska, Szydio, 2022). Nonetheless, most researchers concur that the foundations of worldview begin to form during early adolescence (Andreeva et al., 1989; Berestovitskaya, 2016; Berulava, 2001; Bozhovich, 2008; Lubovskii, 2022; Manukyan, 2022; Mukhina, Melkov, 2022). As an individual's mental image of the world, worldview encompasses both institutional and everyday levels of consciousness (Begunova, 2023a; Begunova, 2023b; Berulava, 2001; Kitova, Zhuravlev, 2021; Murashchenkova, 2024).

At the outset of our research, we posited that worldview is not only a layered but also a dynamic system. Its effective functioning depends on both the stability and variability of its components within the context of inevitable environmental changes — social, economic, and technological transformations affecting society at large — as well as psychological, developmental, and pedagogical factors influencing personality development.

The methodological framework for our study draws upon Vygotsky's cultural-histor-

ical theory, Bozhovich's theory of personality development during ontogenesis, and Dubrovina's concept of the formation of readiness for self-determination in adolescence (Andreeva et al., 1989; Bozhovich, 2008; Vygotskii, 1982; Vygotskii, 1983). The selection of these approaches aims to ensure semantic continuity with prior psychological research conducted in Russia and to adapt these theoretical positions to contemporary socio-cultural conditions of development.

We adopt the definition of worldview prevalent in Russian science, where it is typically regarded as a complex system comprising generalized assumptions about oneself and the world. This includes knowledge reflecting core life positions, beliefs, ideals, value orientations, principles guiding cognition and activity (Il'ichev et al., 1983; Karabanova, Tikhomandritskaya, Molchanov, 2024; Meshcheryakova, Zinchenko, 2009; Murashchenkova, 2024; Fedotov, 2022).

The conceptual structural-dynamic model of worldview tested in our study hypothesizes that socio-psychological sources contributing to the formation of a holistic adolescent worldview include civic position, family history, value orientations, desire for success, and orientation toward ways of understanding the world. The significance of these components may vary depending on social developmental demands throughout the age range from 16 to 22 years.

The purpose of this study is to describe the structure of students' worldviews during early (16–18 years) and late (19–22 years) adolescence and to examine their substantive and dynamic characteristics.

## Materials and methods

The study of the structure and dynamics of adolescent students' worldview was conducted using the author's methodological toolkit titled "The Study of the Components of the Worldview in Modern High School Students" (Andreeva, Begunova, Danilova,

2023). This toolkit includes questionnaires designed to identify students' dominant assumptions regarding the relationships between the individual, society, and the state (civic position), as well as the extent to which their worldview ideas are rooted in family history, societal values, and shared cultural beliefs. The questionnaires contain statements that respondents evaluate using a five-point scale. To examine the relationship between scientific worldview and everyday, common-sense, or quasi-scientific knowledge, paired judgments are assessed.

The methods were tested in schools and colleges across Moscow and the Ural regions of Russia. The results confirmed that the approach is appropriate for adolescents based on their age and educational level. The reliability and internal consistency of the instruments were verified using Cronbach's alpha.

The toolkit includes the following assessment methods:

- "Civic Position" (CP): comprising three scales — Institutional Component (IC), Activity Component (AC), and Emotional Component (EC).

- "Value Orientations in Proverbs and Sayings" (VO): consisting of nine scales — life stance; study and work; success and achievements; attitudes toward money; family and relatives; friendship; collectivism versus individualism; perspectives on law and personal responsibility; country and homeland.

- "My Family History" (FH): with four scales — self-identification; actual knowledge of family history; sense of responsibility toward other family members; positive perception of one's family.

- "Scientific Worldview": a single scale reflecting orientation toward scientific versus everyday ideas.

- The intensity of the desire for success was assessed using the "Need for Goal Achievement" questionnaire (Murashchenkova et al.; Orlov, 1984).

The psychological phenomena identified through these methods are regarded as components of worldview, characterizing features such as civic stance, value orientations, family identity, and scientific outlook among adolescent students.

The study involved 529 participants, including high school students and first- to second-year college students aged 16 to 18 years ( $n = 344$ ;  $M = 16,9$  years,  $SD = 1,38$ ), as well as university students aged 19 to 22 years ( $n = 185$ ;  $M = 21,5$  years,  $SD = 0,85$ ). The research employed a cross-sectional design: the groups differ solely by age — a purely objective parameter unaffected by other factors. This approach allows for studying the development of mental functions or psychological phenomena across different age groups (Martsinkovskaya, 2007).

Data were processed using descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, and factor analysis with IBM SPSS Statistics version 25.0.

## Results

The results of descriptive statistical analysis facilitated the selection of appropriate statistical methods for data examination, specifically for comparing mean values and analyzing the content structure of worldview components. The standard error of skewness across the scales ranged from 0,171 to 0,186, while the standard error of kurtosis varied between 0.340 and 0.369. According to established norms cited in prior research (Ivanova, 2024), these skewness and kurtosis values are relatively low, thereby justifying the application of parametric statistical techniques in subsequent analyses.

Comparative analyses of mean scores for each method were conducted between two groups: adolescents aged 16–18 (including high school seniors and first- to second-year college students) and young adults aged 19–22 (third- and fourth-year undergraduates), as summarized in Table 1.

Table 1

**Comparative characteristics of the average values of the worldview components  
in the samples of students aged 16–18 and 19–22**

Components of the worldview		Age	Group statistics			t-test for equality of means	
			Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error of Mean	T	p
Family history	Self-identification	16–18 лет	18,25	3,40	0,18	–20,42	<0,001
		19–22 лет	26,97	6,41	0,47		
	Real knowledge	16–18 лет	6,98	1,42	0,07	4,114	<0,001
		19–22 лет	6,42	1,62	0,11		
	Responsibility	16–18 лет	7,76	1,34	0,07	–2,958	0,003
		19–22 лет	8,18	1,83	0,13		
	A positive family image	16–18 лет	6,85	1,63	0,08	5,908	<0,001
		19–22 лет	5,98	1,58	0,11		
Civil position	IC	16–18 лет	45,60	4,55	0,24	–0,185	0,853
		19–22 лет	45,68	4,54	0,33		
	EC	16–18 лет	39,40	4,73	0,25	3,985	<0,001
		19–22 лет	37,60	5,37	0,39		
	AC	16–18 лет	46,54	5,37	0,29	2,112	0,035
		19–21 лет	45,49	5,65	0,41		
Scientific and everyday ideas		16–18 лет	9,30	2,26	0,12	–7,093	<0,001
		19–22 лет	10,73	2,11	0,15		
Value orientations	Life position	16–18 лет	21,23	4,09	0,22	–2,352	0,019
		19–22 лет	22,08	3,60	0,26		
	Study, work	16–18 лет	16,76	3,06	0,16	1,466	0,143
		19–22 лет	16,35	3,13	0,23		
	Success, achievements	16–18 лет	10,21	2,45	0,13	–1,800	0,072
		19–22 лет	10,61	2,43	0,17		
	Money	16–18 лет	9,35	3,28	0,17	2,337	0,020
		19–22 лет	8,68	2,98	0,22		
	Family	16–18 лет	11,19	3,17	0,17	–0,011	0,991
		19–22 лет	11,19	3,03	0,22		
	Friendship	16–18 лет	10,19	2,897	0,156	1,608	0,109
		19–22 лет	9,76	2,939	0,216		
	Collectivism	16–18 лет	9,71	2,798	0,151	–2,628	0,009
		19–22 лет	10,33	2,104	0,155		
	Attitude to the law	16–18 лет	26,40	5,100	0,275	0,934	0,351
		19–22 лет	25,98	4,707	0,346		

Components of the worldview		Age	Group statistics			t-test for equality of means	
			Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error of Mean	T	p
	Country	16–18 лет	9,07	2,907	0,157	3,232	<0,001
		19–22 лет	8,22	2,853	0,210		
The need to achieve a goal		16–18 лет	13,34	2,525	0,136	25,389	<0,001
		19–22 лет	8,04	1,777	0,131		

The comparisons revealed statistically significant differences between these age groups across several scales: all scales within the “Family History” method; the emotional and activity components of the “Civic Position” method; the “Scientific and Everyday Ideas” method; multiple scales within the “Value Orientations in Proverbs and Sayings” method — specifically Life Position, Money, Collectivism, and Country; as well as the “Need for Goal Achievement” scale (see Table 1).

Subsequently, an exploratory factor analysis was performed using principal component analysis with Varimax rotation (noting that factor analysis is a common approach in contemporary worldview research (Kononenko et al., 2020)). The adequacy of the data was confirmed by the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure: for adolescents aged 16–18, KMO = 0,834,  $p = 0,000$ ; Bartlett’s test yielded  $\chi^2 = 2333,495$  with  $p < 0,001$ . For young adults aged 19–22, KMO = 0,807,  $p = 0,000$ ; Bartlett’s test produced  $\chi^2 = 868,118$  with  $p < 0,001$ .

Based on eigenvalue scree plots and factor loadings, a four-factor model of worldview structure was identified, consistent across both samples:

- 1) Mastering the Social Norm,
- 2) Significant Community,
- 3) Resources for Success,
- 4) Self-Identity.

These four factors collectively explained approximately 50,323% of variance in the younger group (16–18 years) and about 51,48% in the older group (19–22 years). Detailed factor loadings for each scale are presented in Table 2.

Confirmatory factor analysis supported this structure: for adolescents aged 16–18, fit indices indicated an acceptable model fit (CMIN = 310,980;  $df = 104$ ;  $p < 0,001$ ; CFI = 0,926; RMSEA = 0,0583). Similarly, for young adults aged 19–22, fit indices also demonstrated an acceptable fit (CMIN = 310,980;  $df = 68$ ;  $p < 0,001$ ; CFI = 0,872; RMSEA = 0,0687) (Brown, 2015).

*Factor 1: “Mastering the Social Norm”* includes thirteen worldview components in the younger group (explaining approximately 25,5% of variance) and nine components in the older group (25,32%). Among adolescents aged 16–18, this factor primarily reflects an active, emotionally engaged civic stance — positive attitudes toward law and personal responsibility — as well as values related to work, study, friendship, and collective actions. Family and financial relations are considered important but are not dominant elements within social norms.

In contrast, among students aged 19–22, this factor still pertains mainly to a conscious civic position characterized by

Table 2

**The factor structure of the worldview of students aged 16–18 and 19–22 years**

Components of the worldview		Factors							
		16–18 years old				19–22 years old			
		Mastering the social standard	A significant society	Success Resources	Self-identity	Mastering the social standard	A significant society	Success Resources	Self-identity
Family history	1. Self-identification		0,641						
	2. Real knowledge of family history				0,870		0,600		
	3. Responsibility for family members			0,477			–0,565		
	4. A positive family image				0,880				
Civil position	5. The institutional component	0,473	0,373			0,750			
	6. The emotional component	0,641	0,669			0,723	0,357		
	7. Activity component	0,710	0,528			0,692	0,374		
8. The scientific picture of the world			0,336	–0,563					
Value orientations	9. Life position	0,651				0,452		0,452	
	10. Study and work	0,704				0,638			
	11. Success and achievement			0,638				0,792	
	12. Money	0,568		–0,362					
	13. Family, relatives	0,425	0,452			0,375			0,342
	14. Friendship, friends	0,646							0,476
	15. Collectivism / individualism	0,671				0,597	0,581		
	16. Attitude to the law, personal responsibility	0,736				0,718			
	17. Country / Homeland	0,477	0,511			0,680		–0,390	
18. The need to achieve a goal			0,333		–0,488				0,722
Total percentage of variance		25,5	10,963	7,545	6,315	25,32	9,814	7,498	6,919

emotional engagement and positive attitudes toward law, responsibility, homeland, study, and work; however, emphasis on

collectivist ties and family relationships diminishes noticeably — though they remain relevant aspects of social norms.



**Factor 2: “Significant Community”** comprises eight components in younger adolescents (explaining about 10,963% of variance) and five components in older students (9,814%). For high school and college students, this factor primarily relates to a strong sense of family belonging (“what kind of family am I from”) and a generally positive emotional attitude toward their country (“what kind of country am I from”). Family bonds, civic activity, and national values are secondary but still relevant.

In older adolescents and young adults, this factor appears more connected to personal self-determination — interest in family history takes precedence over active societal participation or civic engagement.

**Factor 3: “Resources for Success”** includes four components among younger students (explaining about 7,545%) and three among university students (7,498%). For both groups, success is valued unconditionally — initially linked more to family support than individual achievement or material wealth.

In university students, however, success becomes more associated with personal life orientations rather than solely family support.

**Factor 4: “Self-Identity”** contains three components in both age groups — explaining approximately 6,315% in younger adolescents and nearly 6,919% in older students — and reflects aspects of self-awareness such as a positive view of one’s family background or interest in family history.

For high schoolers and early college students, this factor mainly relates to a positive family image and self-identification within their familial group — family is not perceived as a primary resource for life success here.

In contrast, senior university students exhibit weaker connections between self-identity and parental family; their focus shifts toward personal ambitions related to

success and achievement — indicating a possible detachment from familial roots.

Overall, as adolescents mature into late adolescence or early adulthood, there is a tendency for a reduction in the number of worldview components associated with each factor — a phenomenon likely reflecting increased clarity regarding life goals and priorities due to ongoing developmental processes.

## Result discussion

The factor analysis of the entire dataset revealed certain structural and dynamic features of adolescents’ worldview. It appears that the overall structure of the worldview is established by the early stages of adolescence and remains relatively stable throughout this period. However, the specific components and their relative importance within these structures differ between early and late adolescents, which we interpret as reflecting the evolving content of their worldview in response to changing social development contexts at different educational stages. This approach enables us to characterize the typical worldview content for students in early (16–18 years) and late (19–22 years) adolescence.

**For high school and junior college students**, the most prominent components are associated with the “Self-Identity” factor. The most significant among these is a positive attitude toward one’s parental family and its history — essentially, towards one’s roots. At this stage, young people tend to rely on resources provided by their family while being less prepared to independently maintain family well-being. Other key aspects of their worldview include awareness and acceptance of societal normative values, civic stance, personal activity, and responsibility. Their aspirations for the future — an important feature of personal development at this age — are reflected in their attitudes toward success.



However, their ideas about what success entails and how to achieve it are not directly linked to financial stability or education. This suggests a duality in self-determination, as described by L. I. Bozhovich: adolescents hold generalized views about their future prospects and achievements while simultaneously expressing a specific desire to pursue education in a chosen professional field (Bozhovich, 2008).

Overall, the structural and dynamic traits of early adolescents' worldview indicate the initial formation of an internal adult position. This development is influenced more by institutional expectations related to life and career self-determination than by personal maturity (Andreeva, Begunova, Lisichkina, 2023).

In contrast, **university students and recent graduates** primarily exhibit components related to "Mastering the Social norm" and "Self-Identity." Their civic stance becomes more conscious and emotionally engaged but less proactive compared to high school students. The dominant aspect of self-identity at this stage is a need for goal achievement; relationships with friends and family — beyond just parental ties — gain personal significance. Nonetheless, a positive attitude toward family values becomes less central, likely due to their physical separation from parents and unpreparedness for establishing their own families or long-term relationships. Given their age and social status as they begin professional careers and gain economic independence, this can be seen as an indication of responsible behavior.

The developmental context of late adolescence involves both external institutional demands and the internal readiness to assume responsibility for one's life. The structural and dynamic features of worldview among university students and graduates reflect an internal adult position: they no longer identify primarily with their parental family or its resources but instead focus

on their own achievements and values. However, this internal adult position is still developing; it currently mainly pertains to personal needs and does not yet extend broadly to significant others or complex social relationships.

## Conclusion

1. Our research confirmed the conceptual structural-dynamic model of worldview, which identifies civic stance, family history, value orientations, desire for success, and ways of understanding the world as key social-psychological factors shaping an individual's overall worldview.

2. The structural features of adolescents' worldview are linked to their development of social norms, their choice of meaningful communities, their perceptions of life resources, and their self-identity.

3. The content and development of students' worldview during early (16–18 years) and late (19–22 years) adolescence are influenced by their social development context at different educational stages. This process reflects the formation of an internal adult position, serving as a motivational and cognitive foundation for behavior.

4. As university students and graduates develop a clear internal adult position and establish specific life goals and priorities, their worldview becomes more focused and less diffuse.

5. The findings of this study contribute to understanding worldview as a psychological phenomenon, as well as the processes of worldview and value self-determination among students in contemporary socio-cultural settings.

## Research prospects

Future research should explore the hierarchical structure of the modern adolescent worldview, test the structural-functional model of worldview, and examine regional, socio-cultural, age-related, and gender-specific differences.

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