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The scientific electronic periodical journal 'Sports Science and Human Health' highlights the results of scientific research in different fields of sports, physical education, physical culture, sports medicine, physical therapy, ergotherapy, modern recreational and health-improving technologies, as well as research related to human health and those to be valuable for ensuring the innovative development of Ukraine.

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## LEVELS OF PERSONAL MATURITY AMONG THE STUDENTS OF HUMANITARIAN UNIVERSITY

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### Abstract

*Introduction.* Maturity of personality, their inner world plays a substantial role in health development. For a reason, following the definition by the World Health Organization spirituality is one of human health components. Still, the level of personal maturity of an adult does not always comply with their age and can be lower.

*Aim* is to determine the levels of personal maturity (internal development) of the humanitarian university students and to identify the peculiarities of their distribution depending on gender, duration of studying, specialty, confession of faith, and attitude to religion.

*Material and methods.* 207 students of Borys Grinchenko Kyiv University, average age of the surveyed  $19.46 \pm 2.12$ . There were 105 males (50.7%), and 102 females (49.3%). For determination of the levels of personal maturity the questionnaire by Jose Stevens was implemented. There were 5 levels specified: «baby», «junior», «teen», «young man/woman», and «adult».

*Results.* Among the humanitarian university students of the specialties «physical therapy, ergotherapy» and «physical education and sports», in 62.8% (130/207) cases high levels of personal maturity were identified, in 32.4% (67/207) cases there were low levels. Among one fifth of the students (19.8%; 41/207) the combinations of several levels of personal maturity were identified. It was indicative of the youth's failure to having an integral idea of their inner world and spirituality. The female students were more internally developed than the male ones, which was indicative of statistically substantial predominance of high levels of personal maturity among them — 66.7%; 68/102 (among the males — 48.6%; 51/105). Ideas of personal maturity among the senior students (the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> years of studies) were more accomplished than the ones of the junior students (the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> years of studies). Following religious traditions both by the holders of religious beliefs and not, led to development of higher levels of personal maturity compared to those students not following religious traditions.

*Conclusions.* One third of the humanitarian university students have low level of personal maturity (internal development). According to the level of personal maturity, females prevail over males. The students following religious traditions (the holders of religious beliefs and not) are more internally developed than those not following such traditions.

**Keywords:** students, level, personality, internal development, spirituality, questionnaire, Jose Stevens.





**Introduction.** Human health is multicomponent phenomenon. Following the definition by the World Health Organization, mental (spiritual) well-being is one of health components [1]. Yet less attention is paid to the students' mental health than to somatic one. N. Karabushchenko reported that among 34.1% of students out of 173 people relative spiritual well-being was revealed [2]. According to the data by I. Mykhalets, 50% of the future vocational training teachers had low levels of spiritual development [3]. H. Holubieva and A. Holubiev by means of questionnaire revealed there was «spiritual exhaustion» among 60 % of the students [4].

Abroad the attention is paid also to the students' spirituality. The studies prevailing are those where the necessity of understanding spiritual and religious issues while providing the patients/clients with palliative medical and social care is observed [5, 6, 7]. At the same time some authors guess that spirituality itself should be distinguished from religiosity [8, 9]. Also we should take into account cultural aspects of a person's spiritual orientation [10].

Researching spirituality among students using the spiritual well-being scale [11] showed among 67% of the students there is a moderate level of spirituality with average rate  $90.65 \pm 16.64$  points [12]. Due to the data of another research average (moderate) level of spiritual health was common for 74.55% of the students [13].

These are spiritual health and spirituality in general which internal development of a human as personality is related to. Researching personal maturity of a young person is of fundamental importance as it can assist

in preserving and enhancing their general health [14, 15, 16]. The hypothesis of the study was proving among the student youth there is lack of personal maturity (internal development) possible to depend on gender, duration of studying, attitude to religion, etc.

**The aim of the study** was to determine the levels of personal maturity (internal development) of the humanitarian university students and to identify the peculiarities of their distribution depending on gender, duration of studying, specialty, confession of faith, and attitude to religion.

#### **Material and methods.**

*Participants of the study.* The study was conducted among Borys Grinchenko Kyiv University students of the 1-5 years of studies. The main criterion of including them in the study was the students' age from 17 to 24 years old, inclusive. In total 207 students were examined. Their average age constituted ( $M \pm S$ )  $19.46 \pm 2.12$  (95% confidence interval: 19.17 – 19.75) years old.

There were 105 males (50.7%), and 102 females (49.3%). 34 (19.8%) were at their first year of studies, 58 (33.7%) were at the second, 18 (10.5%) were at the third, 49 (28.5%) were at the fourth, and 13 (7.6%) students were at the fifth year of studies. Most of the students (72.5%; 150/207) studied at the Faculty of health, physical education and sports: 38.6% (80/207) at the «physical education and sports» specialty, and 33.8 % (70/207) at the «physical therapy, ergotherapy» specialty.

We got informed consents to take part in the study from all the students. The examination record was considered and approved at the meeting of the



committee of ethics of the Faculty of health, physical education and sports of Borys Grinchenko Kyiv University. The study fully complied with the principles of Helsinki declaration of the World Medical Association «Ethical principles of medical researches involving a human as an object of the research».

*Organization (design) of the study.*

A single center prospective cross sectional sample observational study was conducted. Material collection was completed by interviewing the students which gave consent for taking part in the survey. The interviewing was held as answering the questions of special forms, on a single occasion, when students were at the university in the presence of the researcher in the fixed time for it. The study was accomplished in October and November, 2018, which was in the period of the students' full entering educational process after holidays or admission to university.

To determine the levels of personal maturity (internal development) of the students the questionnaire by Jose Stevens was implemented [17]. The survey was formed requiring answers for 75 questions. The questions were grouped by five scales (15 questions in each scale), each corresponding one of the levels (stages) of a human personal maturity: «baby», «junior», «teenager», «young man/woman», and «adult». The level of personal maturity was considered the one which the biggest number of points was received for (each positive answer to a question was given 1 point). The level was considered formed if by its scale 9 and more points were received. If none of the levels received such number of points, personal maturity was considered undifferentiated. We gave conclusion on

combination of a few levels of personal maturity in cases of their simultaneous formation (equal sums of points by several scales).

The examination also included answering two following questions:

1) «Do you manifest any religion?» (answer options: I don't manifest any; Orthodox Christianity; Catholic Christianity, Protestant Christianity; Islam; Judaism; Buddhism; Hinduism; other religions or schools of internal development);

2) «Your attitude to religion and compliance with religious traditions» (answer options: not interested; respectful attitude but I don't comply with any traditions; I'm not religious but I sometimes comply with some traditions; I'm not religious but I regularly comply with some traditions; I'm religious but I don't comply with any traditions; I'm religious, I sometimes comply with traditions; I'm religious, I regularly comply with traditions).

The students' examination and further work required depersonalization of the received materials.

The main finding of the study was determination of the levels of personal maturity of the students and their classification due to different biosocial parameters required by the experiment (gender, duration of studies, specialty by studies, confession of faith, and attitude to religion).

*Statistical analysis.* The size of the sample was not counted beforehand. Statistical characteristics of the sample were given by counting mean average (M) and its standard deviation (S). To assess the scatter of values around the central point the confidence interval was used. The frequency distortions of

qualitative indicators were established by counting Student t-criterion for binary values, and for ordinal values – by counting the Pearson chi-square ( $\chi^2$ ) fitting criterion with Yates’s correction. The distortions between a few (more than two) collections were determined by Kraskell-Wallis non-parametric criterion. The level of significance indicating the probability of rejecting null hypothesis (p) by mistake served the criterion of confidence of statistical evaluations; the limit level was considered the value 0.05. Data processing was done using STATISTICA for WINDOWS 6.0 program software (StatSoft firm, USA).

**Results of the research and discussion.** Determination of personal maturity among 207 examined students showed there were mostly two levels of

it: «young man/woman» (n=65, 31.4%) and «adult» (n=54, 26.1%) (fig. 1). The level of personal maturity corresponding to the examined students’ physiological age was «young man/woman», and the highest one – «adult». In general, these two levels among the examined students constituted more than a half of cases (n=119; 57.5%). Undifferentiated and low levels of personal maturity («baby», «junior») in general were diagnosed among 17/207 (8.2%) students. It was also established that the single one level of personal maturity was found only among 16 (7.7%) students, while two levels (both with the same and different scale values) were found among 51 (24.6%), three levels – among 65 (31.4%), four levels – among 39 (18.8%), and five levels – among 26 (12.6%) out of 207 students

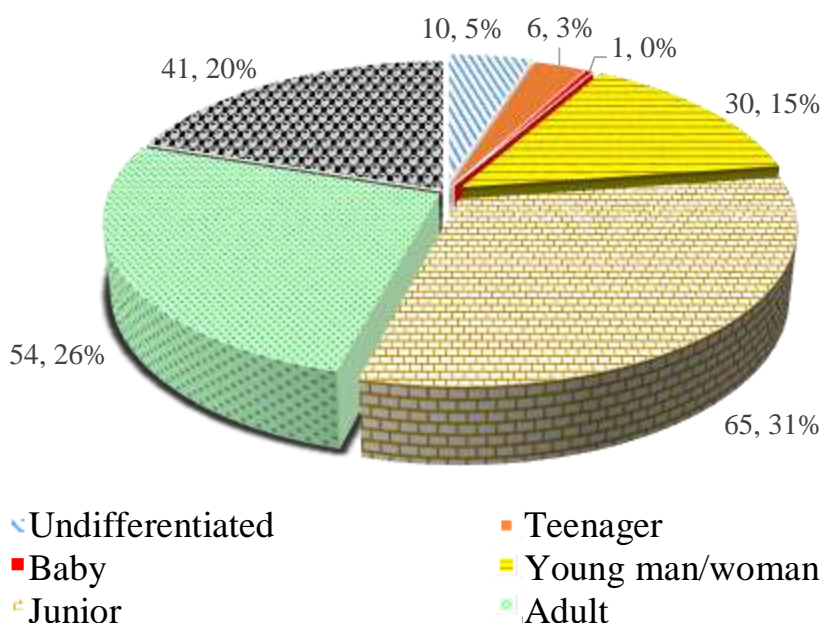


Fig. 1. Classification of personal maturity levels among the humanitarian university students (n, %)

The classification of personal maturity levels among the humanitarian university students depending on the gender is given in Table 1. In general,

the structure of this classification was statistically significant ( $\chi^2 = 33.59$ ,  $p=0.0204$ ).



**Table 1. Personal maturity levels among the humanitarian university students depending on the gender**

Personal maturity levels	Men (n = 105)		Women (n = 102)	
	n	%	n	%
Undifferentiated	8	7.6	2	2.0
Baby	3	2.9	3	2.9
Junior	0	0.0	1	1.0
Teenager	22	21.0	8	7.8 *
Young man/woman	29	27.6	36	35.3
Adult	22	21.0	32	31.4
Combination	21	20.0	20	19.6

Note: \* – statistically significant differences between samples under probability of wrong assessment  $p < 0.01$

The analysis of the students' personal maturity depending on duration of studies was conducted. With this purpose two groups were formed: the students of the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> years of studies were combined into a junior group (n=92), and the students of the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> years of studies were combined into a senior group (n=62).

In Table 2 the personal maturity

levels of the students examined in these groups are given. In general, the classification of the personal maturity levels depending on duration of studies was statistically nonsignificant ( $\chi^2=8.57$ ,  $p=0.1986$ ). The personal maturity level was often undifferentiated among the students of the junior group – 9.8% (9/92).

**Table 2. Personal maturity levels among the humanitarian university students depending on duration of studies**

Personal maturity levels	Duration of studies			
	I–II year (n = 92)		IV–V year (n = 62)	
	n	%	n	%
Undifferentiated	9	9.8	0	0*
Baby	2	2.2	2	3.2
Junior	1	1.1	0	0.0
Teenager	12	13.0	10	16.1
Young man/woman	26	28.3	20	32.3
Adult	25	27.2	14	22.6
Combination	17	18.5	16	25.8

Note: \* – statistically significant differences between samples under probability of wrong assessment  $p < 0.01$

There were no such students among the senior ones ( $t=3.158$ ;  $p < 0.01$ ). It is also worth stressing that

among the senior students often occurred the ones with minimal quantity of formed personal maturity levels (not



more than two levels) – 23.9% (22/92) compared to the junior students – 41.9% (26/62), which was statistically significant ( $t=2.343$ ;  $p<0.05$ ).

In the *Table 3* the classification of personal maturity levels of students depending on specialty by studies is given. From the mentioned table it follows that the «baby» level was more often recorded among the students studying by the «physical education and sports» specialty. Among the students

from the «physical therapy, ergotherapy» specialty there was no such personal maturity level ( $t=2.052$ ;  $p<0.05$ ). A relative number of the «young man/woman» level among the students studying by the «physical therapy, ergotherapy» specialty was considerably dominant above such level among the students from the «physical education and sports» specialty ( $t=2.154$ ;  $p<0.05$ ).

**Table 3. Personal maturity levels among the humanitarian university students depending on specialty by studies**

<i>Personal maturity levels</i>	<i>Specialty</i>			
	Physical therapy, ergotherapy (n = 70)		Physical culture and sport (n = 80)	
	<i>n</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>%</i>
Undifferentiated	3	4.3	6	7.5
Baby	0	0	4	5.0*
Junior	0	0	0	0
Teenager	8	11.4	13	16.3
Young man/woman	27	38.6	18	22.5*
Adult	19	27.1	18	22.5
Combination	13	18.6	21	26.3

*Note:* \* – statistically significant differences between samples under probability of wrong assessment  $p<0.05$

About the students' confession of faith we judged from the question «Do you manifest any religion?». The following answers for this question were received: I don't manifest any – 67 (32.4%), Orthodox Christianity – 116 (56.0%), Catholic Christianity – 5 (2.4%), Protestant Christianity – 7 (3.4%), Buddhism – 2 (1.0%), other religions or schools of internal development – 5 (2.9%) people out of 207 students. 4 people did not answer this question (1.9%). There were no adepts of Islam, Judaism or Hinduism. Then the analysis of personal maturity

levels classification was conducted among the students manifesting Christianity (n=128) compared to those students not manifesting any religion (n=67). It was established that personal maturity was more often undifferentiated among the students not manifesting any religion – 6 cases out of 67 (9.0%). Among the students manifesting Christianity there were only 2 such cases out of 128 (1.6%) ( $t=2.023$ ;  $p<0.05$ ).

The students' attitude to religion and compliance with religious traditions by them was considered by the analysis of the answers to the question «Your



attitude to religion and compliance with religious traditions». There were the following answers given to this question: not interested – 51 (24.6%), respectful attitude but I don't comply with any traditions – 50 (24.2%), I'm not religious but I sometimes comply with some traditions – 28 (13.5%), I'm not religious but I regularly comply with some traditions – 8 (3.9%), I'm religious but I don't comply with any traditions – 13 (6.3%), I'm religious, I sometimes comply with traditions – 50 (24.2%), I'm religious, I regularly comply with traditions – 7 (3.4%) people. Further analysis of personal maturity levels classification among the students depending on their attitude to religion did not reveal any statistically significant patterns.

Therefore, the developer levels (stages) concept of human personal maturity Jose *Stevens* considered that personal maturity not always corresponds to physiological age (development period) of a human. Personal maturity of some adult people can correspond to the levels young man/woman, teenager or even baby which means much lower levels than is demanded from their age [17].

The main result of our study appeared to be establishing the personal maturity levels of a human and their classification depending on gender, duration of studying, specialty by studies, confession of faith, and attitude to religion. It was revealed by us that most students (57.5%; 119/207) corresponded to the age-related («young man/woman») and high («adult») personal maturity levels of a human. We can add 11 students with combination of the levels «young man/woman» and «adult» to this set equivalent of the sum

of points by the scales. Thus in general these two high personal maturity levels were specific to 62.8% (130/207) of the students. Also it was established that 17.9 % (37/207) of the students did not correspond to their age by their personal maturity levels and had low levels («baby», «junior», «teenager»). We can add 30 more students to this list having at least one low level within the combination of levels by the equal sums of points by the scales. Thus in general almost one third of the students had low personal maturity levels – 32.4% (67/207).

Our received data greatly correspond to the spirituality study results given by A. Ghonchepour et al. (2019) – 67% of the students have moderate spirituality level [12] and K. Dhama et al. (2017) – 74.55% of the students have average level of spiritual health [13]. Similar result was received by M. Honcharenko together with co-authors (2008) reporting on 64 % of the foreign languages faculty students having high spiritual health levels [18]. On the contrary, most state researchers give data on low spiritual development / student youth's health levels [2, 3, 4]. Yet, it is not possible to state total correspondence of our gained data and that of the other authors'. It is caused by applying different methods (usually different questionnaires) of investigating the students' state of spiritual development / health.

Further we emphasize that in our case almost among one fifth of the students (19.8%; 41/207) the combinations of a few personal maturity levels were revealed. Those were formed but not differentiated levels indicating the youth's failure to having an integral idea of inner world and spirituality of a



human.

While studying the classification of spirituality levels depending on gender it was revealed that among males the «teenager» personal maturity level was revealed much more often – 21.0% (22/105), than among females – 7.8% (8/102) of cases being statistically significant ( $t=2.742$ ;  $p<0.01$ ). Among males low personal maturity levels («baby», «junior») in combination with «teenager» consisted in 23.8% (25/105) cases in general, and among females – twice less (11.8%; 12/102) being statistically significant ( $t=2.300$ ;  $p<0.05$ ).

It was also established that young women were more internally developed than young men. It was revealed in prevailing of high personal maturity levels («young man/woman», «adult») among females (66.7%; 68/102) compared to males (48.6%; 51/105;  $p<0.01$ ).

Similar data was given by other researchers. Sen et al. (2015) showed that the female students had higher spiritual health levels than male students [19]. Also girls assessed their attitude of importance of spiritual health more responsibly than boys indicated by V. Michaelson et al. (2016) [20].

Yuen C.Y.M. (2016) gave the data that female teenagers aged from 12 to 15 years old have higher spiritual health levels than males of the same age [21].

Emphasizing the conditionality of comparison of different data on spiritual development/health state as well after all we would make a conclusion on prevailing of personal maturity level (spirituality) among young females compared to young males.

The students' personal maturity somehow depended on the duration of

studying at the university and on the future specialty chosen. Thus, among the junior students almost every tenth one (9.8%; 9/92) had undifferentiated personal maturity level which was not specific of the senior students.

Namely, the attitudes on spirituality were more formed among the senior students. Similar data was given by Pesut B. (2002) showing that the fourth-year students (future nurses) have more comprehension on spirituality and are more oriented on providing spiritual assistance to the patients than the junior students [22].

Further it was revealed by us that among the students of the «physical therapy, ergotherapy» specialty high personal maturity levels were diagnosed more often («young man/woman», «adult») – 65.7% (46/70) than among the students of the «physical education and sports» specialty – 45.0% (36/80) cases ( $t=2.607$ ,  $p<0.01$ ). Such differences in personal maturity levels between the mentioned student groups are not possible to be explained explicitly.

As we see it, it can be related to peculiarities of pre-university upbringing of young people and peculiarities of the students' attitudes to various humanitarian events in the course of university studies. Usually, the «physical education and sports» specialty students do intensive sporting activities and take part in cultural or social-oriented volunteer events less.

Studying the personal maturity levels classification depending on confession of faith, and attitude to religion showed the following. Among the students manifesting Christianity the undifferentiated personal maturity level was observed considerably less (1.6%; 2/128) than among the students not



manifesting any religion (9.0%; 6/67;  $p < 0.05$ ).

High personal maturity levels («young man/woman», «adult») were diagnosed more often among the students complying with religious traditions despite they were religious (64.0%; 32/50) or not (75.0%; 21/28). Among the students not interested in religion such levels were observed in 51.0% (26/51) of cases ( $t = 2.219$ ,  $p < 0.05$  compared to the students not being religious but complying with traditions).

While comparing the frequency of observing high personal maturity levels («young man/woman», «adult») among the students complying with religious traditions (67.9%; 53/78) with the students not complying with religious traditions (50.5%; 51/101) statistically significant difference was established ( $t = 2.397$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ).

The gained results of the study do not allow us to state explicitly that confession of faith can promote personal maturity (spirituality) formation of a young person. Yet, we can state that compliance with religious traditions promotes formation of higher personal maturity (spiritual development) levels of a human. This was also reported by Sen S. et al. (2015) showing how the skills of execution of religious rituals gained in families promoted the formation of higher spirituality level among paramedic students [19].

So, the formation of personal maturity (spirituality) among youth is an urgent objective of the humanitarian university. Almost one third of the students due to our study, and 50-60% of the students in post-Soviet states due to

the other authors' studies have low or middle level of human internal development. That demands focused applying of the programs of a spiritual harmoniously developed personality formation within educational process [23].

### **Conclusions.**

1. Two thirds of the humanitarian university students studying by the specialties «physical therapy, ergotherapy» and «physical education and sports» are specific of high, and one third – of low personal maturity levels. Among one fifth of the students the combinations of a few personal maturity levels were revealed, indicating the youth's failure to having an integral idea of their inner world and spirituality.

2. The female students are more internally developed than the male ones, shown by statistically significant prevailing of high personal maturity levels among them. The attitudes on internal development are more formed among senior students (4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> years of studies) than among junior students (1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> years of studies).

3. The students' compliance with religious traditions both by the ones being religious and not lead to formation of higher personal maturity levels compared to those students not complying with religious traditions.

### **Prospects for further research.**

Further it has perspective to research the presence of relationship between the youth's personal maturity (spirituality) levels and their physical state (levels of physical health), as well as with diagnosed diseases.





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