

Study of the focus of achievement motivation in mental pathology

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Abstract

The phenomenon of achievement motivation is very important in psychology, as research explains the driving forces of human behavior and activity. That is why interest in studying the achievement motivation is constantly growing. The authors of this article believe that the content structure of the achievement motivation in humans has two components – adaptive and transcendental. The purpose of this article is to present an experimental study of the meaningful characteristics of achievement motivation in persons with mental pathology. The research method is projective methodology - Hekhausen test and author's modification of this test for persons with mental pathology, Freiburg multifactorial personality questionnaire, Diagnostics of self-actualization of personality SAMOAL. The obtained results of the study of achievement motivation in persons with mental pathology show that respondents of this category have changes in the motivational-value-semantic sphere, changes are shown in extreme manifestation of one of the tendencies (adaptation or transcendence), or extremely weak representation of both trends.

Keywords: achievement, neurotic disorders, affective disorders, adaptation, transcendence, Hekhausen test.

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1. Introduction

It is known that achievement motivation among individuals, who are conventionally called healthy are fundamentally different from the achievement motivation among individuals with mental disorders. This assumption is based on clinical observations and research conducted by scientists engaged in the problems of motivation (Azanova, 2005, Windecker, 2010, Garanyan, 2012, Gordeeva, 2001, Korolenko, 2006).

The phenomenon of achievement motivation is not homogeneous, and structure of achievement motivation consists of two main components related to adaptation and transcendence, the level of development and the nature of the interaction of which may be different (Morogin, 2006; Tapalova, 2014, Windecker, 2010). If a person is dominated by values associated with adaptation, he has more expressed adaptive component of achievement motivation and relevant semantic constructs and semantic disposition (Garanyan, 2012; Kaznachryev, 2000).

If the values associated with the development and transcendence are predominant, respectively, prevailing transcendental component and specific to it, semantic constructs and semantic dispositions are formed. There are numerous data in the literature that supports position that tendency to self-development is a compulsory part of motivational sphere of mentally healthy individuals (Hekhauzen, 2001; Gordeeva, 2001; Leontiev, 2002; Tapalova, 2015). At the same time, there is no lesser amount of evidence of necessity of sufficient representation of adaptation component in achievement motivation (Kaznachryev, 2000; Tapalova, 2015).

1.1. Purpose of study

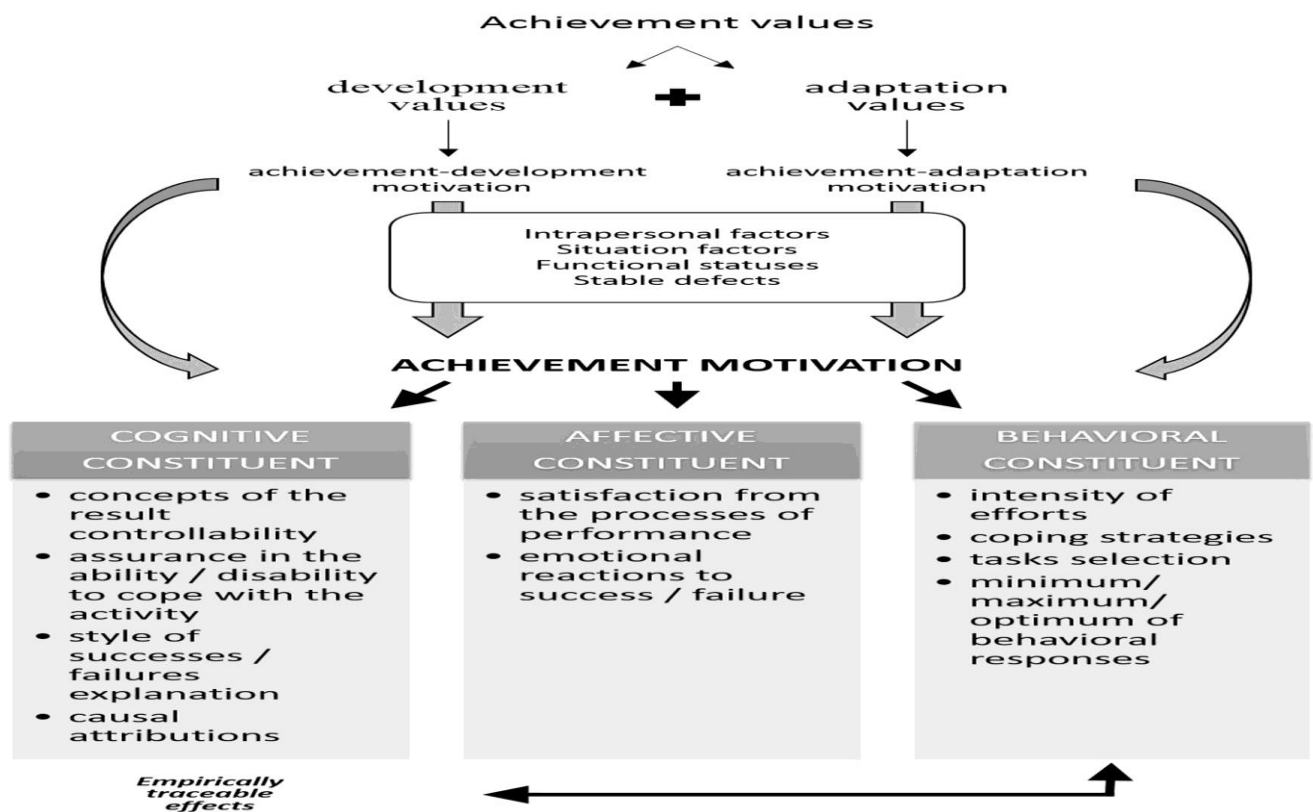
The purpose of this article is to present an experimental study of the significant characteristics of achievement motivation in persons with mental pathology. To meet this goal, we tested additional practical categories developed by us in addition to the existing key categories for analyzing the stories of the test subjects based on the images used in the Hekhauzen test to identify and analyses the adaptive and transcendent components of achievement motivation among people with mental disorders.

1.2. Research model

The authors of this study represent a model of achievement motivation, which is adequate for understanding the motivational features in health and mental disorders (Figure 1).

Figure 1

Equilibrium-dynamic model of achievement motivation



The authors believe that a person normally has two components of motivation to achieve a certain predominance of one of them, or about equal representation in the motivational-semantic field of human rights. During mental pathology can either extreme manifestation of a trend at a weak representation of the other, or extremely weak representation of both trends. Motivation of achievement-development can coexist with the motivation to achieve adaptation, but can keep her as in a symmetrical situation: achievement motivation - adaptation can be a factor, reinforcing the opposite side, or weaken it. That is, these two aspects of motivation can stay in a relationship of synergy and antagonism in the relationship. If a person has both tendencies are present in roughly equal measure, he is driven by them simultaneously or alternately. If consistently dominates one of the components, the person prefers or development or adaptation. At the same time, the person can not only operate in the mode of transcendence.

The man is healthy, as long as he has the two components of the motivational sphere, as long as they are balanced, that is, in a state of unstable equilibrium. Unstable equilibrium means the absence of static ratio of motivational trends in equal proportions. The temporary predominance of one or another trend depends on many factors, such as situational, personal, functional, physiological, and pathological presence of stable structures. The last factor affects the stable prevalence of one of the motivational tendencies and violation of a stable equilibrium. Normally, this delicate balance is

disrupted temporarily, with some predominance of one or another component. It is also possible a strong predominance of some of the trends in the conditions of the time of such a state. That is, the motivational system - a dynamic formation. This factor is a sign of dynamism health. A healthy person can be guided by the different components of the motivational sphere, to move from one implementation of the goals and values to another: from property development and adaptation to the values of self-transcendence and vice versa. The indicated components of achievement motivation, being refracted through intrapersonal, situational, physiological, and other factors presented in the actual human behaviour in different proportions and configurations, forming a theoretical consideration of the plane construct achievement motivation. Analysing further this construct, it can identify the cognitive, affective, and behavioural blocks. Of course, these components, blocks and trends can be identified only in theorizing. The actual behaviour is not complete and is divided into blocks, parts.

2. Materials and Methods

2.1. Characteristics of the research sample

The research sample includes patients of psychotherapeutic department and department of exogenous mental disorders, paroxysmal and crises conditions of the Republican Scientific and Practical Center of Psychiatry, Psychotherapy and Narcology of the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Kazakhstan - 265 examinees.

Including: with a diagnosis of cyclothymia (F-34.0) - 30 examinees; with a diagnosis of dysthymia (F-34.1) - 31 examinees; with a diagnosis of neurotic, stress-related and somatoform disorders (F-40 - F-48) - 147 examinees (among them with a diagnosis of neurasthenia - 27 examinees, obsessive-compulsive disorder - 25, undifferentiated somatoform disorder - 26, hypochondriacally disorder - 28, dissociative conversion disorder - 29, mixed anxiety and depressive disorder- 12); with a diagnosis of mental and behavioral disorders due to drug use (F-10-F-19) - 57 subjects (among them those with a diagnosis of mental and behavioral disorders due to use of alcohol - 27 subjects, mental and behavioral disorders due to use of opioids – 30).

2.2. Data collection instrument

We conducted the following procedures to check the equilibrium-dynamic model of the achievement motivation: SAMOAL test, the Freiburg Personality Inventory test. Three extra practical categories: realism-unrealism of goals setting, productive-unproductive of instrumental activity aimed at goal achieving, targets in the past developed by us (on the basis of Hekhausen test) were used in this research. Let us remember that in case of prevalence of development motives above maintenance motives by 5 points and more the profile of a testee is considered as progressive. In case of the inverse relationship, i.e., in case of prevalence of the maintenance motives above development motives, the profile of a testee is considered as regressive. Index of the ratio of the above-mentioned motives is considered to be one more operational criterion of transcendence, which is independent of the theoretical and applied basis of the SAMOAL test. For the purpose of mathematical processing of the data, we calculated the difference between the indicators of the development motives and the maintenance motives considering the obtained figure. The minimum value of the index was used as

the starting point to rank all values obtained for this indicator. The Freiburg Personality Inventory Test scales are operational criteria of the adaptation level. Therefore, with this set of variables we were able to obtain information both about the level of achievement motivation of the testees, and representation of various motivational poles in them: motivation-adaptation and motivation-transcendence.

2.3. Data analysis

As a result of the cluster analysis conducted using the SPSS program, we obtained two clusters which were different almost in all selected variables. Parameters of the achievement motivation and the Sociability scales of the Freiburg Personality Inventory test were the exception.

3. Results and interpretation:

In the process of study of empirical regularities of achievement motivation manifestations among individuals with mental disorders and individuals classified as mentally healthy, we have formed and tested a model of achievement motivation, which possesses explanatory potential for understanding the motivational peculiarities of the examinees. If a person has both trends approximately equally, they drive him simultaneously or alternately. If one of the components steadily dominates, a person prefers either development or adaptation. Motivation of achievement-development can coexist with the motivation of achievement-adaptation, but can also prevent it, as in a symmetrical situation: motivation of achievement and adaptation could be a factor, which reinforces opposite aspect or weakens it. These two aspects of motivation can stay in a relationship of synergy as well as a relationship of antagonism.

Figure 1 presents the author's model of achievement motivation, which, in our view, is adequate for understanding the motivational peculiarities in health and mental pathology. The equilibrium-dynamic model of achievement motivation based on the idea of the presence in the human's motivation of two tendencies - adaptation and transcendence, for the most part, is presented in the tradition of existential psychology. Value is a semantic construct in relation to the motive. Qualitative peculiarity of the individual's values creates diversity and specificity of his individual motifs. Values of achievement related to adaptation and transcendence, generate the appropriate motivation, and form a coherent achievement motivation. A person is healthy as long as he has both components of the motivational sphere and they are balanced, i.e., are in a state of unstable equilibrium.

Normally, this unstable equilibrium is disrupted temporarily, with some predominance of one or another component. Strong predominance of some of the trends upon condition of temporality of the state is also possible. Consequently, achievement motivational system of person - is a dynamic formation. In this case factor of dynamism is a sign of health. The driving force of development is an inborn human desire for self-realization, to perform the full realization of himself. The presence and awareness of life purpose, adequate to own abilities and aspirations, is regarded as a fundamental condition for the psychological health of the individual claiming that neurosality of the individual determined by lack of orientation and fuzzy self-determination. Regarding the second component of achievement motivation related to adaptation, it should be said that a person with predominance is more focused on the necessity than an opportunity. If the preponderance is significant, person forget

about the possibility of self-development, self-change, because his mind occupied by necessity to comply with external requirements and consider external threats (Morogin, 2006).

Identification of two tendencies of achievement motivation in the group of persons with mental disorders was a complex problem related not only to the technical aspects. Theoretical analysis shows that under existing specificity depending on nosology, generally in the group of persons with mental disorders exists violation of the formation of achievement motivation and the actual prevalence of the motivation of avoiding failure. However, in the literature there is a sufficient amount of data that mental disorders, such as, neurotic, stress-related and somatoform disorders, mental and behavioral disorders due to use of psychoactive substances are the consequence of unsuccessful attempts to implement vector transcendence (Tapalova, 2015). So even detected low levels of operational criteria for transcendence does not mean the absence of these trends at examinees. Transcendent vector can remain latent, reduced form.

In order to identify two tendencies - the adaptation and transcendence in the specific achievement motivation in individuals with mental disorders, we used the test of Hekhausen (Sobchik, 2002) as a method to obtain more specific information on achievement motivation, compared with questionnaires. The use of projective tools is dictated by the necessity of highlighting the achievement motivation components, which form its productive and non-productive patterns. In this context, productive components of achievement motivation determine the ability to self-disclosure the individual and further its self-development, transcendence, unproductive on the contrary - block this process, and provide in a greater degree adaptation of individual only to life under disease. This projective technique allows to solve the problem mentioned above.

Table 1 shows the results of the average values ratio of the motives of success desire (SD) and avoiding failure (AF). As can be seen from Table 1, in all subgroups of patients with mental disorders predominance of fear of failure indicator is predominated, which shows the predominance of the motivation of avoiding failure above the achievement motivation in all subgroups formed by the criterion set by psychiatric diagnosis. It is known that in normal, the average sum of the motivation associated with the hope of success correlated with the sum of the motivation of avoiding failure rates of 2: 1.

Table 1

Motives of success desire (SD) and the avoidance of failure (AF) patients with mental disorders

Diagnosis	Mo	Number of categories	Index SD – AF
Dysthymia	SD	12	0.4:1
	AF	30	
Cyclothymia	SD	18	0.6:1
	AF	30	
Neurasthenia	SD	10	0.5:1
	AF	18	
Obsessive - compulsive disorder	SD	16	0.8:1
	AF	19	
Dissociative conversion disorder	SD	20	0.7:1
	AF	27	

Hypochondriac disorder	SD	14	0.5:1
	AF	26	
Undifferentiated somatoform disorder	SD	20	0.7:1
	AF	28	
Mixed anxiety and depressive disorder,	SD	14	0.4:1
	AF	32	
Mental and behavioural disorders due to alcohol consumption	SD	18	0.5:1
	AF	34	
Mental and behavioural disorders due to the use of opioids.	SD	15	0.6:1
	AF	26	

In this case the average values of figures are 12 and 6, respectively. Using the content analysis of examinees stories, we can highlight categories, focusing on which the prevailing trend of achievement motivation - the hope of success or fear of failure can be detected [11]. Analysis of the of stories is performed in accordance with the key. The presence of a particular category in the story is estimated at 1 point. Scoring is carried out for each story separately for the hope for success (HS) and the fear of failure (FF). These points are summarized in the HS and FF indicators. Overall motivation is calculated as follows: $OM = HS + FF$, as well as the indicator of net hope: $NH = HS - FF$. For all samples of examinees NH rankings is performed. People with a strong motive for striving for success ($HS > FF$) - those who have got beyond 75%, with the motive of avoiding failure ($HS < FF$) - those who are in the part of the sample that is below 25%. We modified the procedure of test results processing in accordance with the task ahead: to identify productive and unproductive patterns in the structure of achievement motivation.

The content analysis of examinees' stories, which represent group of individuals with mental disorders in our study, not only confirmed the existing data in the literature on the prevalence among them tendency of avoiding failure over the desire for success, but also provided information about the productive and unproductive patterns of achievement motivation. This became possible due to the highlighting in examinees stories-those categories, which either partially or fully do not correspond to the key categories but being interesting from the standpoint of purpose of the study. Thus, we proceeded from the existing psychology classification of motivation types, based on the sources of motivation: 1) running from the inside; 2) instrumental; 3) external self-concept; 4) internal self-concept; 5) internalization of targets. Where the second and third types of motivation are more related to adaptation, the first, fourth and fifth to transcendence, self-actualization, free development of own potential. Closest to the implementation of the transcendence vector is the fourth type of motivation - motivation, stemming from the internal I concept.

The content analysis of examinees' stories also provided information about adaptive and transcendental patterns of achievement motivation, or rather about their expressiveness in different subgroups of examinees that make up the group of persons with mental disorders. It became possible due to highlighting in the stories compiled by the examinees of this group on the pictures of Hekhausen's test, that categories, based on which it can be concluded on representation in them, either adaptation or transcendental tendencies, or both trends simultaneously. To do this, we need to find the appropriate category in the available material. Thus, to the already existing key categories of analysis of examinees stories based on pictures used in Hekhausen test, we have added three additional categories: realism-unrealism of goals setting, productive-unproductive of instrumental

activity aimed at goal achieving, targets in the past. The first two categories are interconnected, the second substantially defines the first. Realism of goal depends on the nature of instrumental activity aimed at achieving it.

It is important to note that in itself the goal can be formulated both positively and negatively. In the first case, it is about positively formulated statements where there are no signs of fear or lack of confidence in the possibility of the goal achieving. The markers of positively formulated goals are the words want, going, seeks, (but not trying). At negatively formulated goals, statements reflect the need, intention, desire or hope for avoiding failure in activities aimed at achieving. Accordingly, the word markers are I do not want, I hope not ..., try not to ... etc. The goal is realistic, if the Instrumental activity aimed at achieving it leads to a positive outcome (success or failure avoidance). Therefore, if the subject has a need for success, and at the same time, he finds an instrumental activity aimed at achieving success, the result is success (NS → IS → Success). The result of “fulfill the need of failure avoidance” should also be seen as the achieving success, which is achieved due to the instrumental activity aimed at failure avoiding (NA → IF → Failure avoidance). The purpose is unrealistic, if Instrumental activity aimed at achieving it leads to a negative result - failure: the hero cannot achieve the desired success or avoid expected failure: NS → IS → F or NA → IF → F, where NS – need for success (positively formulated aim); NA – need of failure avoidance (negatively formulated aim); IS – instrumental activity aimed at success achieving; IF – instrumental activity aimed at success failure avoiding; F – Failure.

A good diagnostic potential also has category targets in the past highlighted by us. We added it into a set of categories for the analysis of stories, compiled by examinees, after repeated detection of it in stories of examinees that are included in a group of persons with mental pathology.

On the question of the experimenter - How did this situation come out, what happened before it? in relation to pictures, on which examinees compiled their stories, many responses followed a description of the past, where the goals, aspirations, dreams, i.e., categories, which suggest that there is a transcendent component of examinees achievement motivation can be discovered. Therefore, we concluded that the mention of these moments of persons with mental disorders may in itself be a diagnostic feature. This indicator helps to find transcendent vector in the past of examinee, in particular in the segment of life that preceded the formation of pathological patterns. Unrealized vector of transcendence, obviously, is one of the unresolved life issues that concern the examinee. Identification of this category in examinees responses may indicate aspirations and intentions that may remain unfulfilled because of the special adaptation option, which is a pathology. Table 2 presents the frequency of occurrence of the above categories in stories of examinees with mental pathology.

Table 2

Frequency of “realism of goal”, “productive of instrumental activity” and “goals in the past” categories

Diagnosis	Realistic (+) unrealistic (-)		Productivity (+) non-productivity (-)		Goals in the past
	+	-	+	-	
Dysthymia N=31	42.3	57.7	44.1	55.9	52
Cyclothymia N=30	45.8	54.2	42.6	57.4	63
Neurasthenia N=27	40.8	59.2	40.2	59.8	72
Obsessive - compulsive disorder N=25	36.1	63.9	40.0	60.0	75
Dissociative conversion disorder N=29	47.0	53.0	45.6	54.4	81
Hypochondriac disorder N=28	38.6	61.4	40.1	59.9	55
Undifferentiated somatoform disorder N=26	48.1	51.9	46.8	53.2	53
Mixed anxiety and depressive disorder N=12	32.4	67.6	30.4	69.6	54
Mental and behavioural disorders due to alcohol consumption N=27	31.5	68.5	33.8	66.2	79
Mental and behavioural disorders due to the use of opioids N=30	25.9	74.1	29.7	70.3	51

By the categories, realism of goals and productivity of instrumental activity specified % of "+" and "-" of the total number of answers in the subgroup by this category, by the category targets in the past - % of protocols were this category mentioned in relation to the total number of protocols in the subgroup. Realism of goals is determined by the adequacy of the productive instrumental activity, which as a result lead to success or failure.

Analysis of protocol with stories of examinees from the group, which is composed of individuals with mental disorders, gave the opportunity to identify the specific ratio of the selected categories in each subgroup formed by the criterion of psychiatric diagnosis. Here is an example of some of them: the story on picture of Hekhausen test of examinee K., 29 years old, with the diagnosis of neurasthenia. Categories found in the story are indicated in parentheses. This is teacher and student. 10-11 grade. The student had not learnt a lesson. Specifically, he did not fully understand the material ... (F). Tried, but failed (IS, F). It is likely, that it is some kind of difficult subject, physics, or mathematics. Today he even did not want to go to school (NA) ... But then he still went. He hoped that he would not be asked a question. However, he was called to the blackboard. Previously, he liked these items. He even went on an elective in physics and dreamed of becoming engineer-atomists (A). Now he wants it to be ended as soon as possible (NA). He waits - what if the bell suddenly rings ... He will get a bad mark and parents will be called to the school. IS – instrumental activity aimed at success achieving lead not for success but for failure. The aim is not clearly expressed. NA – negatively formed aim connected to failure avoidance (waiting for bell ring and all will be over).

In the subgroup of examinees with diagnosis of obsessive-compulsive disorder, positively formulated goal is accompanied by doubts about the ability to achieve and expectation of failure. Instrumental activity has trying character and is aimed at failure avoiding $NS \rightarrow EF \rightarrow IF \rightarrow F$, where EF – expectation of failure.

Example of examinee story M., 38 years old, with the diagnosis of obsessive-compulsive disorder. Turner. He is a pensioner. Master instructed him to make a unique item for a space rocket. Turner wants to justify the confidence of the master and to make this part (NS). Only he was trusted to do difficult work in the past. He even wanted to become an engineer and go to college (A). Turner thinks, whether I can? What if I cannot, and then I would be fired (EF). All day he was trying to do this work, checked with the sample, asked the advice of the staff, polished it (IS). Then came the decisive moment. Turner froze (C) in anticipation of the verdict of the master. He thinks what if something is wrong, he will be fired (EF). Master makes the necessary measurements and discovers the inaccuracy (F). Turner thinks, now surely, I will be fired. The master is angry. The worker ashamed. He filed an application to dismiss at will.

In the subgroup of examinees with diagnosis of hypochondriacally disorder, in most cases the attempt to organize an instrumental activity aimed at goals achieving cannot be realized. The hero himself blocks it. In particular, the thoughts and feelings associated with the disease, alleged terrible diagnosis and treatment of the forthcoming have frustrating importance: $NS \rightarrow C \rightarrow F$, where C – physical and emotional condition.

Example of examinee story L., 41 years old, with the diagnosis hypochondriacally disorder. A leader who tries to understand the meaning of the claims received for the work of his enterprise. He is seriously ill, suspected that he has cancer. Thoughts about the diagnosis and forthcoming treatment do not give him rest. What happened before that? Before the disease business in his organization was excellent. He even wanted to buy new equipment. In general, he was full of ideas, wanted to do a lot in his life and in profession (A). Repeatedly he returns to the document (IS), but it is useless (F). He calls his secretary and orders her to hand over documents to his deputy, and he would drink antidepressant, sort out everything and punish those who are responsible.

Attempt to organize an instrumental activity aimed at goals achieving cannot be realized. The hero himself blocks it. Formulation of goal is realistic, but achieving it delegated to other people. Story does not contain at least the partial participation of the hero to reach the goal. The result was not related to his activity. The focus of the hero in the present and the future – only at disease.

4. Discussion

Thus, summarizing the results of a study of achievement motivation obtained through the Hekhausen's test and additional practical categories developed by us it can be summed up that, depending on the type of mental disorder, there are different ratios of highlighted categories of stories analysis. Among individuals with diagnosis neurasthenia, obsessive-compulsive disorder, dissociative conversion disorder, hypochondriacally disorder the goal formulated mostly positive; in individuals with a diagnosis of undifferentiated somatoform disorder, neurasthenia the goal

formulated predominantly negative; in individuals with a diagnosis of mixed anxiety, and depressive disorder setting of goal blocked by negative emotions (Andoko, 2019).

Among individuals with diagnosis of neurasthenia, dissociative conversion disorder, hypochondriacally disorder predominates instrumental activity aimed at success (McLawhorn, 2019). Among individuals with diagnosis of obsessive-compulsive disorder and undifferentiated somatoform disorder predominates instrumental activity aimed at failure avoidance. Among individuals with diagnosis of mixed anxiety, and depressive disorder instrumental activity blocked by expectation of failure. For individuals with diagnosis of dysthymia characterized by ambivalence of goal with the predominance of instrumental activity aimed at success. For persons with a diagnosis of cyclothymia with type of monophasic flow for hypomanic type is characterized by a positive formulation of goals with accompanying of productive instrumental activity (Levenberg et al., 2021).

4. Conclusion

The results indicate that both components of the motivation to achieve reduced with the patients with mental disorders: the component associated with the adaptation and component associated with transcendence. The component related to adaptation undergoes changes that are determined by the narrowing of the adaptation sphere. Adaptation possibilities are realized by rigid pathological behavior patterns that do not allow fully meeting the challenges of mental and psychosocial adaptation. The component related to transcendence, is found only in the context of psychological structuring of examinees with mental disorders of their past.

Violations of the adaptation component of achievement motivation under mental pathology manifested in setting of unrealistic goals and/or in implementation of unproductive instrumental activity aimed at goal achieving. Violations of transcendent component manifested in the decasualization goals related to self-development and self-transformation in the context of achievement activities implemented in the present or expected in the future. A peculiar phenomenon of refusal of transcendence in favor of minimizing adaptation is detected with the strengthening of pathological patterns.

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