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Research article

Constructive and blind patriotism in adolescence: The contribution of age, gender and type of educational institution

S. V. Vasileva¹, A. V. Miklyaeva

¹ Herzen State Pedagogical University of Russia, 48 Moika Emb., Saint Petersburg 191186, Russia

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Abstract

Introduction. The problems of patriotic education of youth and adolescents attract increasing attention of psychologists and teachers. As a result, there is a growing demand in studies focusing on the content and age dynamics of patriotic attitudes in these age groups. The article analyses the contribution of socio-demographic variables (age, gender, type of educational institution) to the indicators of blind and constructive patriotism in adolescents.

Materials and Methods. The study involved 463 adolescents (51.8 % female, 48.2 % male) aged 14–18: students of secondary general education schools (40.5 %), vocational schools (34.1 %) and universities (25.4 %) of Saint Petersburg and Leningrad Region. The empirical data were collected using the Constructive Patriotism Questionnaire (the adolescent version by S. V. Vasileva, A. V. Miklyaeva) and a socio-demographic questionnaire. The results of the application of the Kolmogorov–Smirnov criterion ($d = 0.08$ $p < 0.01$ for the scale of constructive patriotism, $d = 0.07$ $p < 0.05$ for the scale of blind patriotism) determined the usage of nonparametric methods for data processing.

Results. In adolescents aged 14–18, the increase in the respondents' age is associated with a decrease in blind patriotism ($H = 24.83$ $p < 0.001$; $r_s = -0.21$ $p < 0.01$) and an increase in constructive patriotism ($H = 12.85$ $p = 0.01$; $r_s = 0.16$ $p < 0.01$). The dynamics of blind patriotism is primarily provided by the changes in the male sample, and of constructive patriotism, in the female sample. The male sample in general has higher indicators of blind patriotism ($U = 24999.5$ $p = 0.05$), and the female sample in general has higher indicators of constructive patriotism ($U = 24745.5$ at $p = 0.03$). The blind patriotism was significantly higher in secondary general education school students and significantly lower in university students ($H = 24.83$ $p < 0.001$). We found no interaction between the factors 'age*educational institution' for students of secondary general education schools and vocational schools aged 15–17.

Conclusions. The results are important for interpreting the results of the Constructive Patriotism Questionnaire (adolescent version), as well as for developing psychological and pedagogical programs aimed at promoting constructive patriotic attitudes among youth and adolescents.

Keywords: patriotism, constructive patriotism, blind patriotism, adolescents, schoolchildren, secondary general education school students, vocational school students, university students

^{*} <https://rscf.ru/project/23-28-00482/>

Научная статья

Конструктивный и слепой патриотизм подростков: вклад возраста, пола и типа образовательного учреждения

С. В. Васильева¹, А. В. Микляева^{✉1}

¹ Российский государственный педагогический университет им. А. И. Герцена,
191186, Россия, г. Санкт-Петербург, наб. реки Мойки, д. 48

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Аннотация

Введение. В контексте возрастания внимания психолого-педагогического сообщества к проблемам патриотического воспитания подростков и молодежи усиливается актуальность исследований, посвященных изучению содержания патриотических установок в данных возрастных группах, а также его возрастной динамики. В статье представлены результаты анализа вклада социально-демографических переменных (возраста, пола, образовательного учреждения) в показатели слепого и конструктивного патриотизма старших подростков.

Материалы и методы. К участию в исследовании были привлечены 463 старших подростка (51,8 % девушек и 48,2 % юношей) в возрасте 14–18 лет, учащиеся школ (40,5 %), ссузов (34,1 %) и вузов (25,4 %) Санкт-Петербурга и Ленинградской области. В качестве методов сбора эмпирических данных использовалась подростковая версия опросника конструктивного патриотизма (С. В. Васильева, А. В. Микляева), для сбора социально-демографической информации использовалась анкета. Результаты проверки нормальности распределения (критерий Колмогорова — Смирнова, $d = 0,08$ при $p < 0,01$ для шкалы конструктивного патриотизма, $d = 0,07$ при $p < 0,05$ для шкалы слепого патриотизма) определили необходимость использования для статистической обработки данных методов непараметрической статистики.

Результаты. В возрастном диапазоне 14–18 лет зафиксировано последовательное снижение показателей слепого патриотизма ($H = 24,83$ при $p < 0,001$; $r_s = -0,21$ при $p \leq 0,01$) и одновременный рост показателей конструктивного патриотизма ($H = 12,85$ при $p = 0,01$; $r_s = 0,16$ при $p \leq 0,01$). Динамика показателей слепого патриотизма обеспечивается, в первую очередь, их изменениями в выборке юношей, конструктивного — в выборке девушек, причем для выборки юношей в целом характерны более высокие показатели слепого патриотизма ($U = 24999,5$ при $p = 0,05$), для выборки девушек — конструктивного ($U = 24745,5$ при $p = 0,03$). Установлено, что показатель слепого патриотизма достоверно выше в выборке школьников и достоверно ниже в выборке студентов вузов ($H = 24,83$ при $p < 0,001$), взаимодействия факторов «возраст*образовательное учреждение» (при сравнении выборок 15–17-летних подростков, учащихся школ и ссузов) не зафиксировано.

Заключение. Полученные данные необходимо учитывать при интерпретации результатов подростковой версии опросника конструктивного патриотизма, а также при разработке психолого-педагогических программ, направленных на содействие формированию конструктивных патриотических установок в подростковой и молодежной среде.

Ключевые слова: патриотизм, конструктивный патриотизм, слепой патриотизм, подростки, школьники, студенты ссузов, студенты вузов

Introduction

Patriotism in adolescents and youth has become an increasingly relevant research topic in the recent years. The increased relevance requires a better understanding of theoretical and methodological foundations of patriotism research in order to make it possible to compare plentiful empirical studies that are now available. Earlier (Vasileva and Miklyaeva 2023) we proposed a socio-psychological understanding of patriotism — specifically, we defined patriotism as a social attitude that reflects an individual's attachment to the individual's country, which attachment is based on a stable system of social values. This understanding of patriotism relies on the social identity theory (Tajfel and Turner 1979; 1986) and, following the approach by Schatz et al. (Schatz et al. 1999), makes it possible to distinguish between two forms of patriotism based on their content: blind patriotism and constructive patriotism.

Both blind and constructive patriotism are forms of an individual's attachment to the country, but they are underpinned by different socio-psychological mechanisms. Blind patriotism is most tightly linked to national identity that is part of one's social identity. Blind patriotism stems from the opposition 'we — they' and is primarily based on the need for safety and stability. In contrast, constructive patriotism is most tightly linked to civic identity. Constructive patriotism stems from an individual's understanding of the uniqueness of the individual's country and is based on the need for growth and development (Finell and Zogmaister 2015; Sahar 2008; Schatz 2020; Spry and Hornsey 2007). As a result, it is the emotional component (it reflects the degree of one's attachment to the country) that plays the dominant role in the structure of blind patriotism, while the structure of constructive patriotism is characterized by a balance between the emotional, cognitive and activity-related components: this balance underlies the connection between constructive patriotism and various types of prosocial activity (Aydin et al. 2022; Makeel et al. 2022; Nazaruddin 2019; Rupar et al. 2021; Van Bavel et al. 2022). Comparing the data available on blind and constructive patriotism with the data on the regularities of social identity development (Miklyaeva and Rumyantseva 2008), we can assume with a high degree of confidence that constructive patriotism is associated with more mature forms of social behavior regulation than blind patriotism.

According to available studies, the pedagogical practices prevailing in Russia's education system in the recent years predominantly encourage the

development of the emotional component of patriotism (Gogiberidze 2023; Sulimin 2016). These findings make it important to analyze the potential of developing the other components of patriotism — primarily, the activity-related component, which ensures that patriotic attitudes are implemented through various types of activities aimed at promoting the good of one's country. In this article, we start to analyze the factors mediating the development of adolescents' constrictive patriotism, which is the form of patriotism that determines the activity-related nature of patriotic attitudes. We compare such factors with those that mediate the development of blind patriotism, and we specifically focus on the socio-demographic parameters of adolescents — such as age, gender and type of education institution in which they study.

We chose the socio-demographic variables as factors mediating the content of patriotic attitudes for two reasons. First, the literature demonstrates that such variables influence the indicators of blind and contractive patriotism in older age groups (youth and adults). And second, there are no data about such influence for adolescents. For example, it was shown that blind and constructive patriotism in youth and adults is not mediated by age, but rather determined by the respondents' level of education (Baş 2016; Ercan 2017). Further, there are findings that the level of blind patriotism is higher in males than in females (Baş 2016; Ercan 2017; Tonga and Aksoy 2014). There are no doubts that these data require additional empirical confirmation in relation to adolescents: adolescents undergo active personality development, and male and female adolescents show quite substantial differences in their growing-up trajectories and their social situation of development (Miklyaeva et al. 2023). Studies based on other theoretical and methodological approaches also indicate that there may be significant gender and age differences in the content of patriotic attitudes in adolescents (Ivchenkov and Saiganova 2020; Piroglanov et al. 2020; Popova 2010; Sulimin 2016; Shindryaeva 2015). Further, it is the period of adolescence when one's social identity is known to actively develop (Finell and Zogmaister 2015; Sahar 2008; Schatz 2020; Spry and Hornsey 2007), along with cognitive and reflexive processes ensuring the processing of social information (Kołeczek et al. 2022; Syuhada Ginting et al. 2019; Williams et al. 2008; Yazıcı et al. 2016) — these processes, according to the literature, determine the content of patriotic attitudes.

This study seeks to analyze how socio-demographic values (age, gender and the type of education institution in which the adolescent studies) contribute to the indicators of blind and constructive

patriotism in adolescents aged 14–18 years. Based on literature review, we formulated the following research questions:

1) Are there differences in the indicators of blind and constructive patriotism between subgroups of adolescents differing in the parameters ‘age’, ‘gender’ and ‘type of education institution’?

2) Are there differences in the age-related changes in the indicators of blind and constructive patriotism between adolescents belonging to different genders and studying in different types of education institution?

Materials and methods

The study involved 463 adolescents aged 14–18 years (51.8 % female, 48.2 % male): students of general education secondary schools (40.5 %), vocational schools (34.1 %) and universities (25.4 %) of Saint Petersburg and Leningrad Region. A detailed description of the sample is provided in Table 1.

The empirical data were collected using the Constructive Patriotism Questionnaire (Vasileva and Miklyaeva 2023), and a socio-demographic questionnaire used to obtain data about the respondents’ age, gender and the education institution in which they study.

The statistical processing of the data was preceded by the application of the Kolmogorov–Smirnov

test to confirm the normal distribution. Based on the results of the test ($d = 0.08$ $p < 0.01$ for the scale of constructive patriotism, $d = 0.07$ $p < 0.05$ for the scale of blind patriotism), we decided to use non-parametric methods for data analysis: Mann–Whitney U test, Kruskal Wallis H test and Spearman’s correlation coefficient (r_s). We also analyzed descriptive statistics, such as the mean value (M), the standard deviation (S) and the median (Me).

The processing was carried out using the Statistica 10.0 software package.

Results

The analysis of descriptive statistics obtained for the indicators of blind and constructive patriotism taking into account the ‘age’ parameter made it possible to identify a general trend: in adolescents aged 14–18 years, the increase in the respondents’ age is associated with a consistent decrease in blind patriotism and a consistent increase in constructive patriotism (Table 2). This trend can be considered to be reliable, even though in the 16-year-old group there is a slight increase in the indicators of blind patriotism and a slight decrease in the indicators of constructive patriotism. The conclusion about the reliability of the trend is based on the results of the correlation analysis, which made it possible to identify significant relationships between the

Table 1. Characteristics of the sample

Age	Number of respondents	Gender		Type of educational institution		
		Male	Female	Secondary general education school	Vocational school	University
14	72	37	35	72	–	–
15	67	31	36	44	23	–
16	120	69	51	38	82	–
17	74	39	35	27	43	4
18	130	48	82	7	10	111
Total	463	224	239	188	158	117

Табл. 1. Характеристика выборки

Возраст респондентов	Всего, чел.	С учетом пола		С учетом места учебы		
		Юноши, чел.	Девушки, чел.	Школа, чел.	Ссуз, чел.	Вуз, чел.
14 лет	72	37	35	72	–	–
15 лет	67	31	36	44	23	–
16 лет	120	69	51	38	82	–
17 лет	74	39	35	27	43	4
18 лет	130	48	82	7	10	111
Всего	463	224	239	188	158	117

Table 2. Descriptive statistics of indicators of blind and constructive patriotism in subgroups of respondents by age

Age	Statistics	Blind patriotism	Constructive patriotism
14 (n = 72)	M	18.99	23.46
	S	5.48	5.13
	Me	19	23
15 (n = 67)	M	18.49	23.76
	S	5.23	5.37
	Me	19	24
16 (n = 120)	M	17.83	23.56
	S	5.61	5.57
	Me	18	25
17 (n = 74)	M	18.30	24.61
	S	5.50	5.81
	Me	19	24
18 (n = 130)	M	15.38	25.55
	S	6.51	5.81
	Me	15	26
H-criterion (p)		24.83 (p < 0.001)	12.85 (p = 0.01)

Табл. 2. Описательные статистики показателей слепого и конструктивного патриотизма в подгруппах респондентов, различающихся по возрасту

Возраст	Показатель	Слепой патриотизм	Конструктивный патриотизм
14 (n = 72)	M	18,99	23,46
	S	5,48	5,13
	Me	19	23
15 (n = 67)	M	18,49	23,76
	S	5,23	5,37
	Me	19	24
16 (n = 120)	M	17,83	23,56
	S	5,61	5,57
	Me	18	25
17 (n = 74)	M	18,30	24,61
	S	5,50	5,81
	Me	19	24
18 (n = 130)	M	15,38	25,55
	S	6,51	5,81
	Me	15	26
H-критерий (p)		24,83 (p < 0,001)	12,85 (p = 0,01)

indicators of blind and constructive patriotism and the respondents' age: a negative relationship ($r_s = -0.21$ at $p \leq 0.01$) for blind patriotism, and a positive relationship ($r_s = 0.16$ at $p \leq 0.01$) for constructive patriotism.

The analysis of descriptive statistics calculated taking into account the 'gender' parameter showed

that male adolescents have higher indicators of blind patriotism than female adolescents, while female adolescents have reliably higher indicators of constructive patriotism than male adolescents (Table 3).

We built diagrams (Figs. 1–2) to evaluate how the parameters 'gender*age' jointly contribute

Table 3. Descriptive statistics of indicators of blind and constructive patriotism in subgroups of respondents by gender

Gender	Statistics	Blind patriotism	Constructive patriotism
Female (n = 239)	M	17.05	24.85
	S	5.93	5.47
	Me	19	23
Male (n = 224)	M	18.08	23.71
	S	6.00	5.59
	Me	19	24
U-criterion (p)		24999.5 (p = 0.05)	24745.5 (p = 0.03)

Табл. 3. Описательные статистики показателей слепого и конструктивного патриотизма в подгруппах респондентов, различающихся по полу

Пол	Показатель	Слепой патриотизм	Конструктивный патриотизм
Девушки (n = 239)	M	17,05	24,85
	S	5,93	5,47
	Me	19	23
Юноши (n = 224)	M	18,08	23,71
	S	6,00	5,59
	Me	19	24
U-критерий (p)		24999,5 (p = 0,05)	24745,5 (p = 0,03)

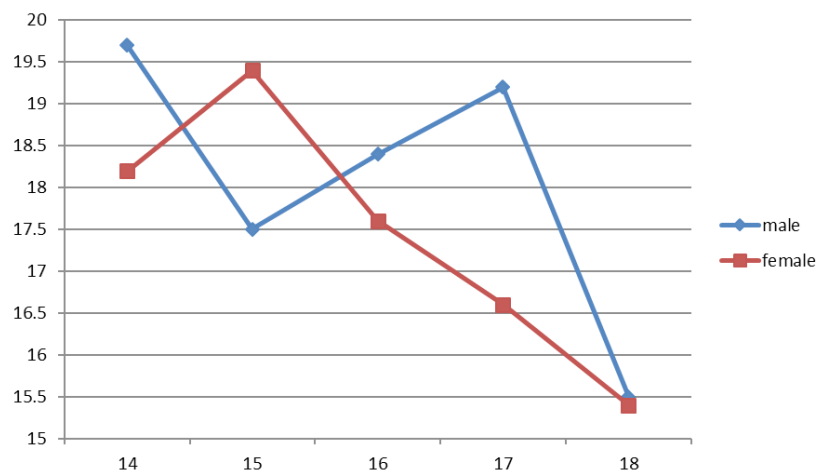


Fig. 1. The interaction of the factors 'age*gender' for the indicator of blind patriotism. Differences in the 'age' parameter: for the male sample $H = 9.10$ at $p = 0.05$, for the female sample $H = 17.92$ at $p = 0.001$. Differences in the 'gender' parameter are not significant for any of the age groups: $435.0 \leq U \leq 1638.5$ at $0.07 \leq p \leq 0.59$

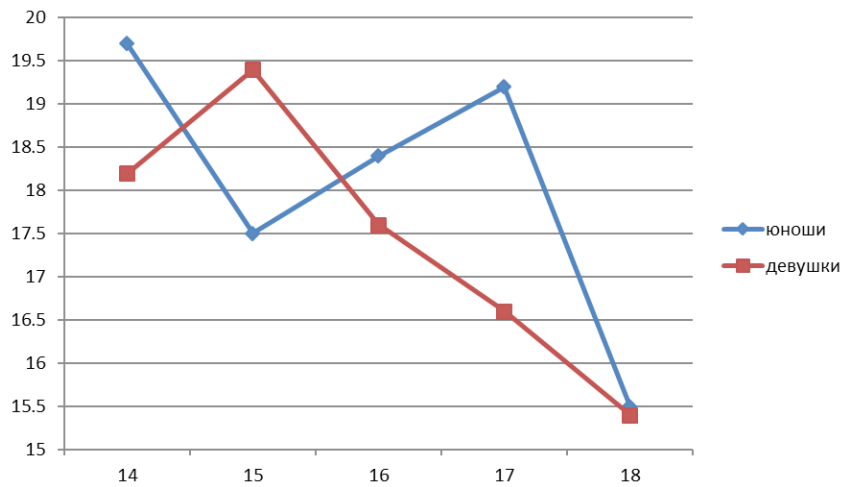


Рис. 1. Взаимодействие факторов «возраст*пол» для показателя слепого патриотизма. Различия по параметру «возраст»: для выборки юношей $H = 9,10$ при $p = 0,05$, для выборки девушек $H = 17,92$ при $p = 0,001$. Различия по параметру «пол» не значимы ни для одной возрастной группы: $435,0 \leq U \leq 1638,5$ при $0,07 \leq p \leq 0,59$

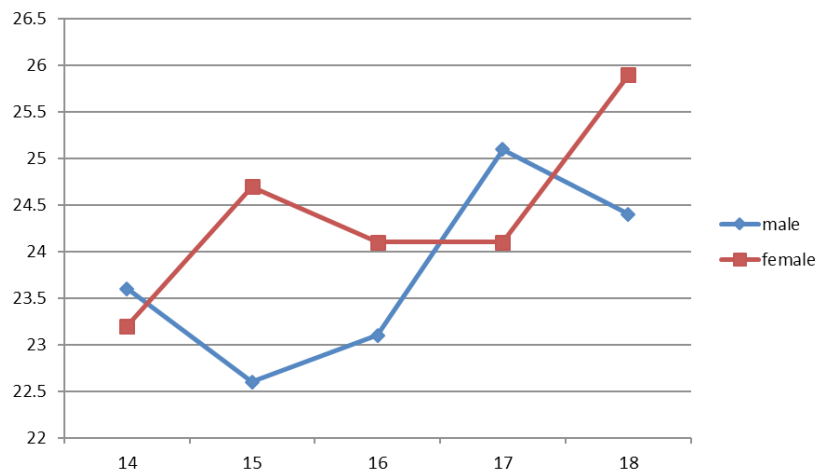


Fig. 2. The interaction of the factors 'age*gender' for the indicator of constructive patriotism. Differences in the 'age' parameter: for the male sample $H = 5.41$ at $p = 0.27$, for the female sample $H = 9.07$ at $p = 0.05$. The differences in the 'gender' parameter are not significant for any of the age groups: $545.3 \leq U \leq 3773.9$ at $0.10 \leq p \leq 0.74$

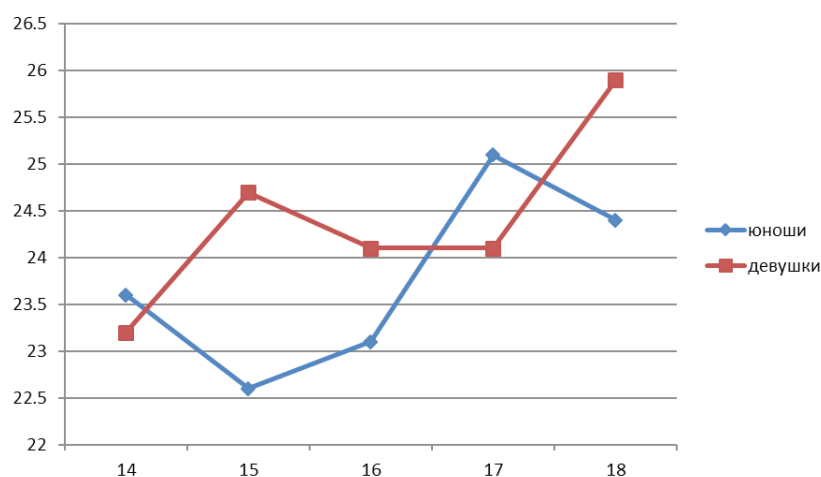


Рис. 2. Взаимодействие факторов «возраст*пол» для показателя конструктивного патриотизма. Различия по параметру «возраст»: для выборки юношей $H = 5,41$ при $p = 0,27$, для выборки девушек $H = 9,07$ при $p = 0,05$. Различия по параметру «пол» не значимы ни для одной возрастной группы: $545,3 \leq U \leq 3773,9$ при $0,10 \leq p \leq 0,74$

to the indicators of blind and constructive patriotism. We also calculated the coefficients of differences between these indicators with regard to the 'age' parameter in subgroups of respondents with different gender, and with regard to the 'gender' parameter in subgroups of respondents with different age. The results allow a conclusion that the decrease in blind patriotism with age is, in general, a universal trend that is independent from gender. The minor disruption of this trend is not observed in the female sample and is most probably determined by the age-related changes in blind patriotism in male adolescents. In contrast, the increase in the indicators of constructive patriotism mostly results from the changes of the indicators in female adolescents, while in the male sample the changes in constructive patriotism are less regular and, among other things, are characterized by a certain decrease in constructive patriotism in 16-year-old

males that was revealed by the analysis of the general array of data.

The analysis of descriptive statistics taking into account the 'type of education institution' parameter showed statistically reliable differences in the indicators of blind patriotism between students of general education secondary schools, students of vocational schools and students of universities (Table 4). The highest values of blind patriotism were found in students of general education secondary schools, and the lowest, in university students. As for constructive patriotism, we found no statistically significant differences between students of various types of education institutions.

We built diagrams (Figs. 3–4) to evaluate how the parameters 'age*type of education institution' jointly contribute to the indicators of blind and constructive patriotism. We also calculated the coefficients of differences between the indicators

Table 4. Descriptive statistics of indicators of blind and constructive patriotism in subgroups of respondents by the type of educational institution

Educational institutions	Statistics	Blind patriotism	Constructive patriotism
Secondary general education school (n = 188)	M	18.99	23.46
	S	5.48	5.13
	Me	19	23
Vocational school (n = 158)	M	18.49	23.76
	S	5.23	5.37
	Me	19	24
University (n = 117)	M	17.83	23.56
	S	5.61	5.57
	Me	18	25
H-criterion (p)		24.83 (p < 0.001)	7.85 (p = 0.12)

Табл. 4. Описательные статистики показателей слепого и конструктивного патриотизма в подгруппах респондентов, обучающихся в различных образовательных учреждениях

Образовательное учреждение	Показатель	Слепой патриотизм	Конструктивный патриотизм
школа (n = 188)	M	18,99	23,46
	S	5,48	5,13
	Me	19	23
ссуз (n = 158)	M	18,49	23,76
	S	5,23	5,37
	Me	19	24
вуз (n = 117)	M	17,83	23,56
	S	5,61	5,57
	Me	18	25
H-критерий (p)		24,83 (p < 0,001)	7,85 (p = 0,12)

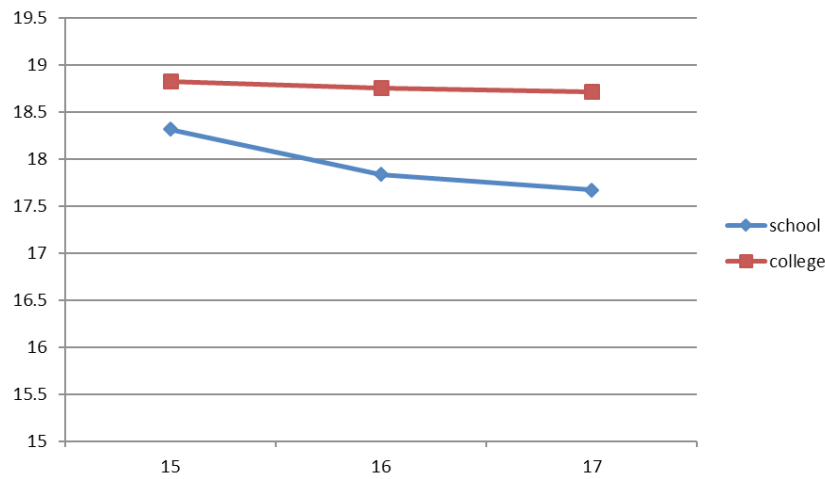


Fig. 3. The interaction of the factors 'age*educational institution' for the indicator of blind patriotism. Differences in the 'age' parameter: for the secondary general education school sample $H = 5.72$ at $p = 0.29$, for the vocational school sample $H = 5.17$ at $p = 0.16$. The differences in the 'type of educational institution' parameter are not significant for any of the age groups: $536.0 \leq U \leq 807.6$ at $0.52 \leq p \leq 0.62$

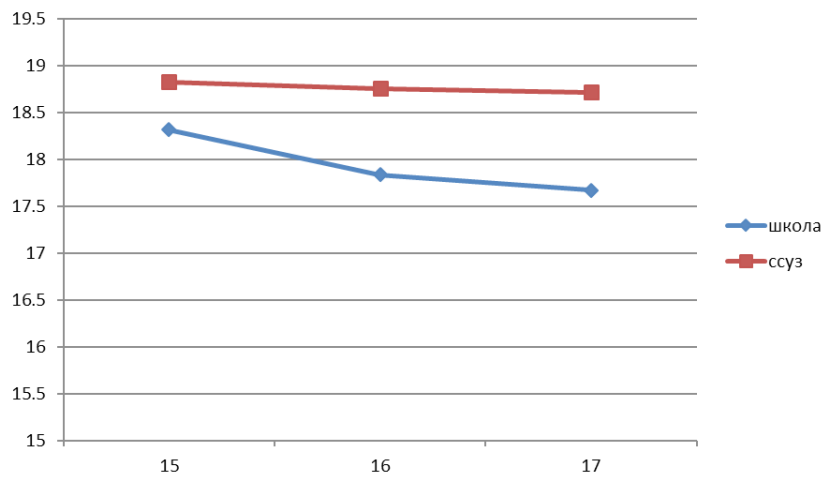


Рис. 3. Взаимодействие факторов «возраст*образовательное учреждение» для показателя слепого патриотизма. Различия по параметру «возраст»: для выборки учащихся школ $H = 5,72$ при $p = 0,29$, для выборки учащихся ссузов $H = 5,17$ при $p = 0,16$. Различия по параметру «образовательное учреждение» не значимы ни для одной из возрастных групп ($536,0 \leq U \leq 807,6$ при $0,52 \leq p \leq 0,62$)

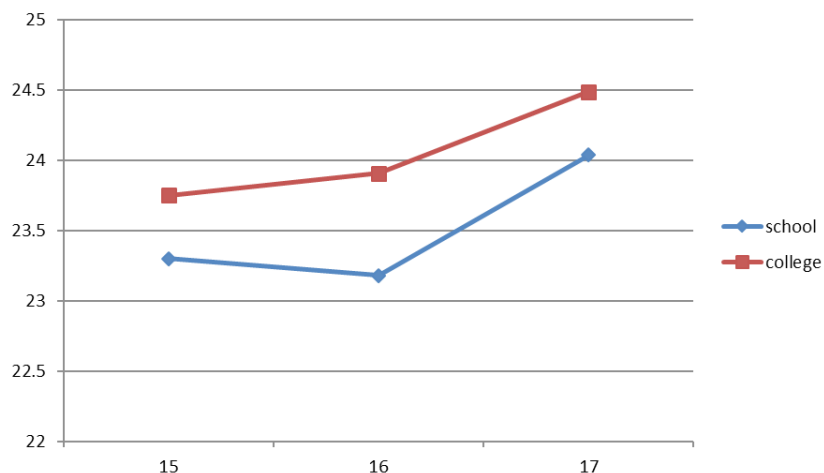


Fig. 4. The interaction of the factors 'age*type of educational institution' for the indicator of constructive patriotism. Differences in the 'age' parameter: for the secondary general education school sample $H = 2.47$ at $p = 0.43$, for the vocational school sample $H = 2.46$ at $p = 0.41$. The differences in the 'type of educational institution' parameter are not significant for any of the age groups: $535.5 \leq U \leq 1427.0$ at $0.13 \leq p \leq 0.97$

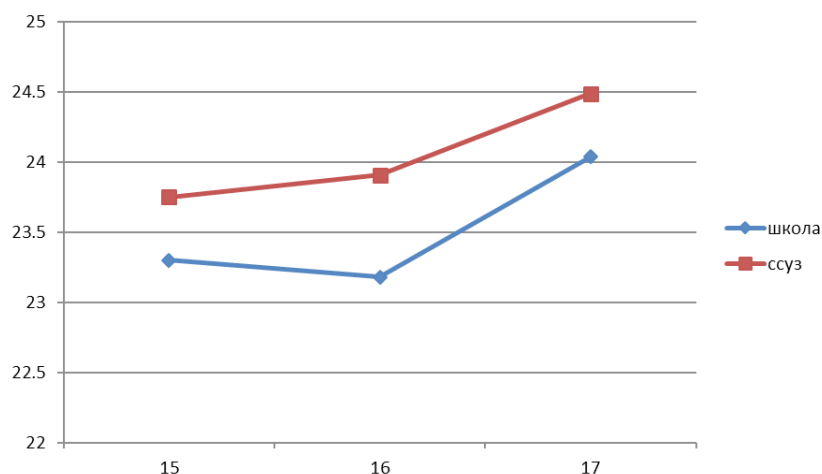


Рис. 4. Взаимодействие факторов «возраст*образовательное учреждение» для показателя конструктивного патриотизма. Различия по параметру «возраст»: для выборки учащихся школ $N = 2,47$ при $p = 0,43$, для выборки учащихся ссузов $N = 2,46$ при $p = 0,41$. Различия по параметру «образовательное учреждение» не значимы ни для одной из возрастных групп ($535,5 \leq U \leq 1427,0$ при $0,13 \leq p \leq 0,97$)

of blind and constructive patriotism with regard to the 'age' parameter in subgroups of respondents studying in different types of education institutions, and with regard to the 'type of education institution' parameter, in subgroups of respondents with different age. As the sample is not uniform in terms of the parameters in question (as shown in Table 1), our analysis included only the data from students 15–17 years old studying at general education secondary schools and vocational schools. The analysis showed that the general trend of the increase of age being accompanied by a decrease in blind patriotism and an increase in constructive patriotism does not depend on the type of education institution (general education secondary school or vocational school) in which the respondents study. However, this trend does not reach the level of statistical significance when the samples of students of general education secondary schools and students of vocational schools are analyzed separately.

Discussion

Our study focused on analyzing how the socio-demographic parameters of age, gender and type of education institution contribute to the indicators of blind and constructive patriotism in adolescents aged 14–18 years. The logic of data analysis was built in accordance with the research questions that we formulated based on a literature review.

The first research question was whether there are significant differences in the indicators of blind and constructive patriotism between subgroups of adolescents differing in the parameters 'age', 'gender' and 'type of education institution'. The results obtained in our study allow a positive answer to this question.

Specifically, it was found that in adolescents aged 14–18 an increase in age is accompanied by a consistent decrease in the indicators of blind patriotism and an increase in the indicators of constructive patriotism. These findings in respect of adolescents can be contrasted with the results of the studies that involved older age groups and identified no significant influence of age on the content of patriotic attitudes in youth (Baş 2016; Ercan 2017). We can assume that our findings reveal the changes in patriotic attitudes in the age range that has pronounced specific features: the social development of an individual is the most active; various components of an individual's social identity undergo the most intensive development; and the connections between such components are rapidly created (Finell and Zogmaister 2015; Sahar 2008; Schatz 2020; Spry and Hornsey 2007). Further, it is the age range when an individual develops cognitive and reflexive potential that ensures a better processing of social information and, consequently, encourages an increase in constructive patriotic attitudes (Koleczek et al. 2022; Syuhada Ginting et al. 2019; Williams et al. 2008; Yazıcı et al. 2016). The finding that the content of patriotic attitudes changes in adolescence is confirmed by a few studies by Russian scholars who looked into separate aspects of patriotism (Ivchenkov and Saiganova 2020; Shindryaeva 2015).

In addition to the age-related changes of patriotic attitudes, we identified the differences in the indicators of blind and constructive patriotism between the male and female samples. In particular, our study showed that male adolescents are characterized by higher indicators of blind patriotism, while female adolescents, by higher indicators of constructive patriotism — in general, these

findings are similar to those obtained for older age groups (Baş 2016; Ercan 2017; Tonga, Aksoy 2014). At the same time, the cited studies of older age groups did not find any differences in the level of constructive patriotism between different genders (Baş 2016; Ercan 2017; Tonga and Aksoy 2014) — in our view, this makes it possible to explain the gender differences identified in our study by the fact that in the age 14–18 years females become socially mature quicker than males (Miklyaeva et al. 2023). Further, studies of adolescent patriotism carried out in accordance with a different methodology confirm that there are differences in both content and strength of patriotic attitudes between males and females in the age group in question (Piroglanov et al. 2020; Popova 2010; Sulimin 2016).

In addition, our study identified differences in blind patriotism between students of general education secondary schools, vocational schools and universities (with the highest indicators of blind patriotism in general education secondary school students, and the lowest, in university students) — in general, these findings are consistent with the literature data about the inverse relationship between blind patriotism and the level of education (Tonga and Aksoy 2014). However, in our study this conclusion is a probabilistic one, as the subgroups of the respondents studying in different types of education institutions do not have the same gender and age composition. That is why it is of great interest to analyze the relationship between the factors ‘age’, ‘gender’ and ‘type of education institution’ and their joint influence on the indicators of blind and constructive patriotism in adolescents, which constitutes the second research question in this study.

Our analysis of the obtained data found no joint influence of the factors ‘age*education institution’ on the indicators of blind or constructive patriotism in adolescents. We should stress that these data were obtained not in respect of the whole sample of the study, but only in respect of the subgroups comparable in terms of age and gender composition — namely, adolescents aged 15–17 years who study at general education secondary schools and vocational schools. As the whole sample shows significant differences between the subgroups of adolescents studying in different types of education institutions, we can assume that it is the data on patriotic attitudes of university students that make the major contribution to the said differences. In this connection, we can hypothesize that the age-related changes of patriotic attitudes are determined not only by the increase in age of adolescents as such, but also by the change in the system of their social roles, which inevitably causes transformations in social identity and, consequently,

reduces blind patriotism, as blind patriotism is a primary (i. e., initial) form of patriotic attitudes and is likely to be more susceptible to a change in the system of social roles. Arguably, the same mechanism may later underlie an increase in constructive patriotism. This hypothesis certainly requires further empirical confirmation, but so far it is indirectly supported by the evidence that the changes in the indicators of blind patriotism mostly result from the changes in the male sample, while the changes in constructive patriotism, from the changes in the female sample — in general, this corresponds to the differences in social identity development between male and female adolescent aged 14–18 years.

Finally, we should note that the use of the cross-sectional method to analyze age-related changes imposes significant limitations on our study: a longitudinal study would certainly yield data that would be more reliable. However, the results of our study make it possible to assume, with high likelihood, that the development of patriotic attitudes in adolescence is determined not by the increase in age as such (i. e., by the fact that adolescents simply grow older), but by the level of development of their social identity. Further research is needed to test this hypothesis.

Conclusions

We found that in adolescents aged 14–18 years an increase in the respondents’ age is consistently associated with a decrease in the indicators of blind patriotism and a simultaneous increase in the indicators of constructive patriotism. Importantly, the decrease in the indicators of blind patriotism mostly results from the changes of the indicators in the male sample, while the increase in the indicators of constructive patriotism, from the changes in the female sample. Across the whole age range in question, the indicators of blind patriotism are higher in the male sample, while the indicators of constructive patriotism are higher in the female sample. Students of general education secondary schools, regardless of their age or gender, demonstrate higher indicators of blind patriotism as compared to students of vocational schools and especially to university students. These differences may be caused by two things: first, a lower mean age of students of general education secondary schools (and the corresponding specifics of their reflexivity and processing of social information), and second, by the stability of such students’ social situation of development, which stability stems from the absence of any substantial changes in their system of social relationships and, hence, the absence of social identity transformations and the absence

of transition to more mature forms of patriotism. These findings make it promising for future studies to analyze how the changes in the content of adolescents' patriotic attitudes are connected with the structural and functional components of adolescents' social identity and with the specifics of adolescents' social maturity. At the same time, we believe that the findings of the study presented in this article have independent value: they may be used to interpret the results of measuring the content of patriotic attitudes with the Constructive Patriotism Questionnaire (adolescent version) and develop psychological and pedagogical programs aimed at promoting constructive patriotic attitudes among youth and adolescents having regard to the differences in the content of patriotic attitudes stemming from adolescents' age, gender and type of education institution.

Conflict of Interest

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest, either existing or potential.

Конфликт интересов

Авторы заявляют об отсутствии потенциального или явного конфликта интересов.

Ethics Approval

The authors declare that the study complies with all ethical principles applicable to human and animal research.

Соответствие принципам этики

Авторы сообщают, что при проведении исследования соблюдены этические принципы, предусмотренные для исследований с участием людей и животных.

Author Contributions

The authors have made an equal contribution to the preparation of the manuscript of the article.

Вклад авторов

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Authors

Svetlana V. Vasileva, Associate Professor, Department of General and Social Psychology, Herzen State Pedagogical University of Russia

SPIN: 9387-8525, Scopus AuthorID: 57221043888, ResearcherID: N-3380-2019, ORCID: 0000-0002-6052-3431, e-mail: vasilevasv@herzen.spb.ru

Anastasia V. Miklyaeva, Doctor of Sciences (Psychology), Professor, Department of General and Social Psychology, Herzen State Pedagogical University of Russia

SPIN: 9471-8985, Scopus AuthorID: 53984860100, ResearcherID: D-4700-2017, ORCID: 0000-0001-8389-2275, e-mail: a.miklyaeva@gmail.com

Сведения об авторах

Светлана Викторовна Васильева, доцент кафедры общей и социальной психологии, Российский государственный педагогический университет им. А. И. Герцена

SPIN-код: 9387-8525, Scopus AuthorID: 57221043888, ResearcherID: N-3380-2019, ORCID: 0000-0002-6052-3431, e-mail: vasilevasv@herzen.spb.ru

Анастасия Владимировна Микляева, доктор психологических наук, профессор кафедры общей и социальной психологии, Российский государственный педагогический университет им. А. И. Герцена

SPIN-код: 9471-8985, Scopus AuthorID: 53984860100, ResearcherID: D-4700-2017, ORCID: 0000-0001-8389-2275, e-mail: a.miklyaeva@gmail.com