

## Assertiveness as a Factor of Students' Choice of Behavior Strategies in Social Interaction

### Assertiveness as a Student Choice Behavior Strategy for Social Interaction

Doctor of Psychological Sciences Olena Blynova  
Kherson State University, Ukraine

ORCID iD: <http://orcid.org/0000-0003-3011-6082> ;

Scopus Author ID: 57208207970; ResearcherID: [A-5188-2019](https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3011-6082)

Graduate student Viktoriia Moiseienko

Kherson State University, Ukraine

ORCID iD: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-5565-7059> ;

ResearcherID: AAN-1671-2020

Candidate of psychological sciences Oksana Los

Kherson State University, Ukraine

ORCID iD: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0177-9381> ;

Scopus Author ID: 57214793741; ResearcherID: AAK-3488-2020

Doctor of Psychological Sciences Iryna Burlakova

Volodymyr Dahl East-Ukrainian National University, Ukraine

ORCID iD: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6043-4359>;

ResearcherID: AAK-2623-2020

Doctor of Psychological Sciences Olena Yevdokimova

Kharkiv National University of Internal Affairs, Ukraine

ORCID iD: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4211-7277> ;

ResearcherID: [AAI-1212-2019](https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4211-7277)

Doctor of Psychological Sciences Marianna Toba

Volodymyr Dahl East-Ukrainian National University, Ukraine

ORCID iD: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-5978-2930> ;

ResearcherID: [AAN-2027-2020](https://orcid.org/0000-0001-5978-2930)

Doctor of Psychological Sciences Ihor Popovych

Kherson State University, Ukraine

ORCID iD: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1663-111X> ;

Scopus Author ID: 57208214862; ResearcherID: [F-3030-2019](https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1663-111X)

### Abstract

The purpose of the study is to examine students' assertiveness and their choice of behavior strategies in situations of social interaction. It considers assertive behavior as an ability to defend one's rights, show positive and negative emotions, overcome social anxiety and adapt to social life. The research empirically investigates the correlation between students' assertiveness and behavior strategies in *conflict* and in real situations of social interaction. Significant correlations with "competition" and "compromise" strategies ( $p < .05$ ); indirect correlations of "adaptation" and "avoidance" strategies ( $p < .05$ ) were established. The obtained results in the female sample were substantiated: between assertiveness and "compromise" (a direct correlation) and "adaptation" (an indirect correlation) ( $p < .05$ ). In the male sample, assertiveness correlates

with the “avoidance” strategy ( $p < .05$ ). We maintain that internality at a statistically significant level correlates with assertiveness ( $p < .05$ ). The obtained and substantiated empirical results about the students’ assertive behavior have scientific value. They should be operationalized into educational process. These results are useful for psychological consultancy, psychotherapeutic and training work.

### **Resumen**

El objetivo de la investigación es estudiar la asertividad de los estudiantes y su elección de estrategias de comportamiento en las situaciones de interacción social. El comportamiento asertivo se considera como la capacidad de defender sus propios derechos, expresar sus sentimientos positivos y negativos, superar la ansiedad social, adaptarse a la vida social. Se investigó empíricamente la relación entre la asertividad de estudiantes y las estrategias de comportamiento en *conflictos* y situaciones reales de interacción social. Fueron establecidas las relaciones significativas con las estrategias de “competencia” y “compromiso” ( $p < .05$ ), relaciones inversas con las de “adaptación” y “evitación” ( $p < .05$ ). Recibieron y argumentaron los resultados de la muestra femenina: entre asertividad y “compromiso” (relación directa) y “adaptación” (relación inversa) ( $p < .05$ ). En la muestra masculina la asertividad se correlaciona con la estrategia de “evitación” ( $p < .05$ ). Se constató que la internalidad del nivel estadísticamente significativo está relacionada con la asertividad ( $p < .05$ ). Los resultados empíricos obtenidos y comprobados del comportamiento asertivo de los estudiantes tienen un valor científico. Deben ser operacionalizados en el proceso educativo. Los resultados son útiles también para las consultas psicológicas, la psicoterapia y el retiro.

### **Key words**

*Conflict* – Locus of Control – University Students – Assertive Behavior

### **Palabras clave**

*Conflicto* – Locus de control – Estudiantes universitarios – Comportamiento asertivo

### **Introduction**

The definition of assertiveness first appeared in the works of A. Salter, J. Volpe and R. Lazarus on the psychology of personality. The definition of “assertiveness” is interesting both in the general psychological and social-psychological context. Assertive behavior as a means of realizing personality assertiveness is the most constructive way of interpersonal interaction and the best alternative to destructive approaches as manipulation and aggression. According to A. Salter, an assertive personality is characterized by orientation to real life events that make sense of the past and future, the independence of values and behavior from outside influences, the ability to form and express their thoughts about life independently; faith in yourself and trust in others.

A. Salter's ideas about assertiveness are consistent with the ideas of humanistic psychology researchers about self-actualizing personality<sup>1</sup>.

Now assertiveness is actively studied by domestic and foreign psychologists, since the level of assertiveness is directly related to the ability of the individual to interact successfully with others. Gaining assertiveness skills allows you to achieve personal goals without preventing other people from achieving their goals at the same time, which creates a supportive atmosphere in the team, prevents or constructively resolves *conflicts*, increases productivity and promotes a high standard of living.

Kapponi and Novak<sup>2</sup> consider assertiveness as a personality's characteristic. They define assertiveness as autonomy, independence from external influences, and the ability to self-regulate behavior. The main manifestations of assertiveness are self-esteem, a willingness to make individual decisions in one's life and to take responsibility for one's decisions.

"Great psychological dictionary" provides the following definition of assertiveness:

"Assertiveness is the ability of a person to defend his rights confidently and gracefully without violating the rights of others. Assertive is a straightforward, overt behavior that is not intended to harm other people"<sup>3</sup>.

Assertiveness is one of the components of social competence. Assertive behavior is related to the ability to defend one's own rights, the ability, when necessary, to ask others for help, to express their positive and negative feelings, to help overcome social anxiety and also to the ability of adaptation in social life.

Scientific works on the study of assertiveness and assertive behavior show the relationship of this phenomenon with different psychological characteristics of the individual. A statistically significant feedback was established between assertiveness and anxiety<sup>4</sup>, assertiveness and depression<sup>5</sup>; it was found that the development of assertiveness reduces the

---

<sup>1</sup> V. P. Sheinov, "Determinants of assertive behavior". Psychological Journal, Vol: 36 num 3 (2015): 28-37.

<sup>2</sup> V. Kapponi y T. Novak, "How to do everything in your own way or assertiveness – to life". (St. Petersburg: Peter. 1995).

<sup>3</sup> "Great psychological dictionary". General edition B. Meshcheryakov, V. Zinchenko. (St. Petersburg: Prime EUROZNAK. 2004) 7.

<sup>4</sup> N. G. Alghamdi, "Anxiety and Assertiveness in Females: A Comparison of Medical and Non-Medical University Students". Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences, Vol: 6 num 3, (2015): 84-89.

<sup>5</sup> F. Rezayat y N. D. Nayeri, "The Level of Depression and Assertiveness among Nursing Students". International Journal Community Based Nurse Midwifery, Vol: 2 num 3 (2014): 177-184.

severity of these mental states<sup>6</sup>, was shown the place of assertiveness in mental states of expectation in students' learning activities<sup>7</sup>.

On the example of students-psychologists F. Ikiz showed that regardless of gender, the measurement of their self-image at a statistically significant level affects the assertiveness of students. Students who claimed to be capable of effective audience feedback, able to speak without anxiety to the audience also appeared to be more assertive<sup>8</sup>.

B. Mueen, M. Khurshid, and I. Hassan have shown that with better level of education (research was undertaken on nurses), their level of assertiveness increases. Nurses with bachelor's degrees have more advanced assertive skills than other professionals. Individuals with a scientific degree (Doctor of Philosophy in Natural Sciences and Humanities) have the highest rates of assertive behavior<sup>9</sup>.

It was established a significant dependence of assertiveness on willingness to cooperate, integrity and culture of the individual<sup>10</sup>. It was found that assertive behavior is facilitated by communication skills (abilities); it means that assertive behavior can be learned by developing these skills. Social support and inner locus of control facilitate communication skills and indirectly promote assertive behavior<sup>11</sup>.

The study of the interconnection of internality, personal identification and attitudes with the migration intentions of student youth is very interesting in the scientific field<sup>12</sup>. In another study it was found that internals were able to find more information in situations of uncertainty. Migration processes are attributed to such situations. Also internals use the obtained information with greater efficiency which suggests that internals are more assertive than externals<sup>13</sup>.

---

<sup>6</sup> A. A. Eslami; L. Rabiei; S. M. Afzali; S. Hamidzadeh y R. Masoudi, "The Effectiveness of Assertiveness Training on the Levels of Stress, Anxiety, and Depression of High School Students". Iranian Red Crescent Medical Journal, Vol: 18 num 1 (2016): 21. y M. Parto, "Problem solving, self-efficacy, and mental health in adolescents: Assessing the mediating role of assertiveness". Social and Behavioral Sciences, num 30 (2011): 644-648.

<sup>7</sup> I. Popovych; O. Blynova; M. Aleksieieva; P. Nosov; N. Zavatska y O. Smyrnova, "Research of Relationship between the Social Expectations and Professional Training of Lyceum Students studying in the Field of Shipbuilding". Revista ESPACIOS, Vol: 40 num 33 (2019): 21.

<sup>8</sup> F. E. Ikiz, "Self-perceptions about properties affecting assertiveness of trainee counselors". Social behavior and personality, Vol: 39 num 2 (2011): 199-206.

<sup>9</sup> B. Mueen; M. Khurshid y I. Hassan, "Relationship of Depression and Assertiveness in Normal Population and Depressed Individuals". Internet Journal of Medical Update, Vol: 1 num 2 (2006): 10-17.

<sup>10</sup> N. B. Haladin,; N. A. Ibrahim y A. Rajab, "Assertiveness Among Undergraduates in a Malaysian Public University: Implications Towards Improved Employability". Journal Technology (Social Sciences), Vol: 65 num 2 (2013): 15-24.

<sup>11</sup> S. K. Maheshwari y K. K. Gill, "Correlation of Assertive Behavior with Communication Satisfaction among Nurses". Journal of Health, Medicine and Nursing, 14, (2015): 68-74.

<sup>12</sup> O. Ye. Blynova, "Labor migration of the population of Ukraine in the socio-psychological dimension". Kherson: RIPO. 2011 y O. Ye. Blynova; I. S. Popovych; H. I. Bokshan; O. M. Tsilimak y N. Ye. Zavatska, "Social and Psychological Factors of Migration Readiness of Ukrainian Students". Revista ESPACIOS, Vol: 40 num 36 (2019): 4.

<sup>13</sup> V. P. Sheinov, "Determinants of assertive ...

Therefore, there is a reason to argue that internality is a significant personal characteristic that mediates students' choice of behavior strategies in situations of social interaction, particularly in *conflict* situations.

Domestic and foreign psychologists, sociologists and scientists of different humanitarian areas dealt with the study of interpersonal *conflicts* and *conflict* situations that exist in human relations, considering *conflicts* as a phenomenon of social interaction and as a norm of social existence<sup>14</sup>.

*Conflict* behavior strategy refers to the orientation of a person (or group) to a *conflict*, the setting on certain behaviors in a *conflict* situation<sup>15</sup>. A positive correlation was found between assertiveness and rivalry style. It was proved that assertive students act in such a way to obtain maximum benefit in a *conflict* situation<sup>16</sup>. Relationship between assertive behavior and *conflict* behavior in higher education students was established<sup>17</sup>.

Hypothesis. The authors suggest that 1) assertiveness influences students' choice of behavior strategy in social interaction of a real group, particularly in a *conflict* situation; 2) internality mediates students' choice of behavior strategies in situations of social interaction; 3) there are differences in the relationship between assertiveness and behavior strategies of men and women.

Purpose of the study is to establish the relationship between student assertiveness and the choice of behavior strategy in situations of social interaction.

## 1. Methodology and methods

In accordance with the purpose of the study, the following methods are applied in the work:

1) The technique of personality assertiveness test ("PAT"), the reliability and validity of which was proved by the author<sup>18</sup>, was used for the research and evaluation of assertiveness.

---

<sup>14</sup> H. Pluut y P. L. Curşeu, "Perceptions of intragroup conflict: The effect of coping strategies on conflict transformation and escalation". *Group Processes y Intergroup Relations*, Vol: 16 num 4 (2012): 412-425; A. V. Sidorenkov; N. Yu. Ulyanova y O. Yu. Shipitko, "Modern foreign studies of the psychology of conflict in small groups". *Psychological Journal*, Vol: 38 num 6 (2017): 30-41 y V. P. Sheinov, "The relationship of assertiveness with the psychological and socio-psychological characteristics of the individual". *Bulletin of the People' Friendship University of Russia*, Vol: 15 num 2, (2018): 147-161.

<sup>15</sup> N. V. Grishina, "Psychology of conflict". St. Petersburg: Peter. 2008.

<sup>16</sup> A. Ergenel; P. B. Karapinar y S. M. N. Camgöz, "The Effect of Assertiveness on Conflict Handling Styles". *H. Ü. İktisadi ve İdari Bilimler Fakültesi Dergisi*, Vol: 29 num 2 (2011): 69-93.

<sup>17</sup> M. Caridad; N. Cadeno; E. Cardeno y M. I. Castellano, "Contributions of assertive communication in conflict resolution within institutions of higher education". *Revista ESPACIOS*, Vol: 38 num 50 (2017): 6.

<sup>18</sup> V. P. Sheinov, "Development of an assertiveness test that meets the requirements of reliability and validity". *Psychology Issues*, num 2 (2014): 107-116.

The methodology contains 26 questions that address how people behave in relation to others, to friends and people close to them; how they react in certain situations. A student indicates the point of the digital scale, after which he or she should receive the sum of points for all questions. The total score correlates with the limits of the “assertiveness range”: a score from 66 to 77 characterizes the assertive personality. If the total score is less than 66 or more than 77, then the student is not assertive: in the first case he is characterized by uncertain behavior and inability to assert his rights, in the second case – violation of others’ rights and aggressive behavior.

2) Methodology “*Conflict Behavior Strategies*” (“CBS”)<sup>19</sup>; identifies five main types of personality behavior in *conflict*: collaboration, competition (rivalry), compromise, adaptation, avoidance<sup>20</sup>.

3) Methodology “Q-sorting” (“Q-sorting Technique”)<sup>21</sup>: diagnosis of an individual's ideas about himself and the six main tendencies of an individual's behavior in a real group: dependence, independence, sociability, non-friendliness, acceptance of struggle, avoidance of struggle<sup>22</sup>.

4) The J. Rotter's scale (Scale “I-E”), which was modified in the S. Panteleev and V. Stolin<sup>23</sup> test questionnaire, was used to assess locus of control. The questionnaire aims to measure students' locus of control as a one-dimensional generalized variable. The indexes of reliability, obtained by means of Cronbach's alpha, were:  $\alpha_{PAT} = .711$ ;  $\alpha_{CBS} = .801$ ;  $\alpha_Q = .718$ ;  $\alpha_{I-E} = .921$ ). We note that the obtained values of reliability of the empirical data set by psychodiagnostic methods were within the limits of sufficient .7 and high levels .9. This indicates the high accuracy and relevance of the obtained statistics from the subject of the study.

### 1.1. Participants

The study involved 47 full-time second and third year students of Kherson State University of Social and Psychological Faculty, Faculty of History and Law, Faculty of Physical Education and Sports. The average age of the respondents is 20.3 years. The research sample included 19 men and 28 women.

### 1.2. Statistical analysis

Mathematical processing of empirical data was performed using statistical programs “SPSS” v. 23.0 and MS “Excel”. Spearman's correlation

---

<sup>19</sup> K. W. Thomas, “Introduction to Conflict Management: Improving Performance Using the TKI”. CPP: First Printing edition. 2002.

<sup>20</sup> N. V. Grishina, “Psychology of ...

<sup>21</sup> Method “Q-sorting” by V. Stefanson. “Practical psychology. Psychodiagnostics of groups and collectives”. Rostov-on-Don: Phoenix. 2006.

<sup>22</sup> “Great psychological dictionary”. General ...

<sup>23</sup> S. R. Panteleev y V. V. Stolin, “Test-questionnaire for subjective localization of control. Modification of the I-E J. Rotter scale”. Workshop on psychodiagnostics. Moscow: Smysl. 1988.

coefficient was used to determine correlation relationships ( $r_s$ ). Arithmetic mean value of parameters (M) and mean-square deviation (SD) were calculated. The normality of allocation was identified with the help of The Kolmogorov-Smirnov's criterion ( $\lambda$ ).

## 2. Results and discussion

Let us now turn to the results of the empirical study and the discussion of established scientific facts. According to the results of applying the techniques "PAT"<sup>24</sup> and Scale "I-E"<sup>25</sup> the following arithmetic mean values and standard deviations on the scales were obtained (see Tabl. 1).

Scale	Arithmetic mean, M	Mean square deviation, SD
Assertiveness by "PAT", women (n = 28)	69.82	5.94
Assertiveness by "PAT", men (n = 19)	76.31	6.82
Internality by Scale "I-E", women (n = 28)	14.96	4.68
Internality by Scale "I-E", men (n = 19)	15.79	4.71

**Table 1**

Arithmetic mean values and standard deviations on the method scales "PAT" and Scale "I-E" (n = 47)

Comparing the data with the "PAT" test standards<sup>26</sup>, we note that the mean values for men and women are within the range of "assertiveness". In particular, the male sample (M = 76.31; SD = 6.82) is higher than the female sample (M = 69.82; SD = 5.94). No statistically significant differences were observed between the study groups. On the scale of internality Scale "I-E", we obtained indicators that in both subgroups are higher than average that is, close to the pole of internality. Indicators for men (M = 15.79; SD = 4.71) are higher than for women (M = 14.96; SD = 4.68).

We have assumed that there is a significant relationship between the locus of control and assertive behavior. We assume that internals who believe that their success reflects the results of their own behavior will act in accordance with their expectations. Accordingly, the behavior of such students will have all features of the assertive. In contrast, externals who expect that their actions will not lead to a positive outcome should show fewer tendencies to assertive behavior. We have made this assumption based on the results of

<sup>24</sup> V. P. Sheinov, "Development of an ...

<sup>25</sup> S. R. Panteleev y V. V. Stolin, "Test-questionnaire for ...

<sup>26</sup> V. P. Sheinov, "Development of an ...

theoretical and methodological studies of social expectations of the personality<sup>27</sup>, the study of the relationship of respondents' expectations with internships and the relationship with the results of students educational and professional activities<sup>28</sup>. Our assumptions were confirmed by a statistically significant positive correlation coefficient ( $r_s = .289$ ;  $p < .05$ ) between the values of "assertiveness" and "internality" in the aggregate sample ( $n = 47$ ).

An interesting scientific fact is the setting of distinction between men and women regarding the relationship between locus of control and assertiveness. Because women's assertive self-expression has traditionally been disapproved, it is likely that the association between women's beliefs and behavior may be different than men's. The research of E. Cooley and Jr. Nowicki was aimed to study the dependence of locus of control and assertiveness among students of both sexes. Students were tested using the Nowicki-Strickland scale and the R. Ratus assertiveness scale to determine the internal and external locus of control among adults.

Unlike the female students, the male students had a positive relationship between internality and assertiveness<sup>29</sup>. In V. Sheinov's study was found a statistically significant correlation between assertiveness and internality, with this link being available for both men and women<sup>30</sup>, which is confirmed by our data.

Primary data by methods "CBS" and "Q-Sort Technique" that outline behaviors in social interaction are presented in Tabl. 2.

Scale	Arithmetic mean, M	Mean square deviation, SD
<b>"CBS"</b>		
Competition	5.728	1.503
Collaboration	6.902	1.259

<sup>27</sup> V. V. Khmil y I. S. Popovych, "Philosophical and Psychological Dimensions of Social Expectations of Personality". Anthropological Measurements of Philosophical Research, num 16 (2019): 55-65 y I. Popovych; A. Borysiuk; L. Zahrai; O. Fedoruk; P. Nosov; S. Zinchenko y V. Mateichuk, "Constructing a Structural-Functional Model of Social Expectations of the Personality", Revista Inclusiones, Vol: 7 num Especial (2020): 154-167.

<sup>28</sup> I. Popovych; O. Blynova; A. Zhuravlova; M. Toba; T. Tkach y N. Zavatska, "Optimization of development and psycho-correction of social expectations of students of foreign philology", Revista Inclusiones. Vol: 7 num Especial, (2020): 82-94; I. Popovych; O. Kononenko; A. Kononenko; A. Stynska; N. Kravets; L. Piletska y O. Blynova, "Research of the Relationship between Existential Anxiety and the Sense of Personality's Existence", Revista Inclusiones, Vol: 7 num Especial (2020): 41-59 y I. Popovych; L. Lymarenko; N. Tereshenko; T. Kornisheva; O. Yevdokimova; A. Koverznieva y M. Aleksieieva, "Research on the Effectiveness of Training Technologies' Implementation in Student Theater", Revista Inclusiones, Vol: 7 num 2 (2020): 104-121.

<sup>29</sup> E. L. Cooley, y Jr. S. Nowicki, "Locus of Control and Assertiveness in Male and Female College Students". The Journal of Psychology, num 117 (1984): 85-87.

<sup>30</sup> V. P. Sheinov, "Development of an ...



Compromise	7.831	1.412
Adaptation	4.827	1.392
Avoidance	5.624	1.335
<b>“Q-Sort Technique”</b>		
Dependence	10.795	1.381
Independence	8.433	1.617
Sociability	12.529	1.403
Non-friendliness	6.725	1.381
Acceptance of struggle	8.478	1.473
Avoidance of struggle	11.029	1.652

**Table 2**

Arithmetic mean values and standard deviations on the method scales “CBS” and “Q-Sort Technique” (n = 47)

In the study group of students, among the strategies of *conflict* behavior, the most frequently chosen are “compromise” (M = 7.831; SD = 1.412) and “collaboration” (M = 6.902; SD = 1.259); the average level of showing the indicator have the strategies of “competition” (M = 5.728; SD = 1.503) and “avoidance” (M = 5.624; SD = 1.335), the lowest level – the strategy of “adaptation” (M = 4.827; SD = 1.392).

According to the leading tendencies of personality behavior in the real social group it is determined that the tendency to dependence as an internal desire of the individual to accept the group standards and values: social and moral-ethical (M = 10.795; SD = 1.381), outweighs the tendency towards independence of the views and behavior of the personality from the group standards and values (M = 8.433; SD = 1.617). It was found that the tendency towards sociability, namely contact with people, the desire to make emotional ties both within their group and beyond (M = 12.529; SD = 1.403), is more frequently selected among student youth than the tendency towards non-friendliness (M = 6.725; SD = 1.381) as a desire to limit the circle of their emotional contacts.

It is stated that students tend to strive to “avoidance of struggle” (M = 11.029; SD = 1.652), that is neutrality in group contradictions and *conflicts* and tend to compromise solutions. While the tendency to “fight” as an active desire of the individual to participate in group life, to attain a higher status in the system of interpersonal relationships is less expressed (M = 8.478; SD = 1.473).

Further processing of the obtained data was to build a correlation matrix and to establish correlation between the levels of assertiveness, the prevailing *conflict* behavior strategy and the leading behavior in the real group. Correlation

of assertiveness with *conflict* behavior strategies by the “*Conflict Behavior Strategies*” method<sup>31</sup> is presented in Tabl. 3.

Scale	Competiti on	Collaborati on	Compromi se	Adaptati on	Avoidan ce
Assertivenes s (n = 47)	.369**	–	.293*	–.281*	–.308*
Assertivenes s, women (n = 28)	.378*	–	.391*	– .377*	–
Assertivenes s, men (n = 19)	.472*	–	–	–	– .459*

Note: \* – statistical significance of  $p \leq .05$ ; \*\* – statistical significance of  $p \leq .01$ .

**Table 3**

Correlations of assertiveness with student behavior strategies in *conflict* by scale “CBS”

The results of correlation analysis of assertiveness with the tendencies of behavior’s choice in real situations of social interaction on the scales of the method “Q-Sort Technique” are presented in Tabl. 4.

Behavior tendencies in real situations of social interaction	Assertiveness (n = 47)	Assertiveness, women (n = 28)	Assertiveness, men (n = 19)
Dependence	–	–	–
Independence	.311*	.378**	–
Sociability	.328*	.381**	.462**
Non-friendliness	–	–	–
Acceptance of struggle	.342*	–	.389**
Avoidance of struggle	–	–.375**	–

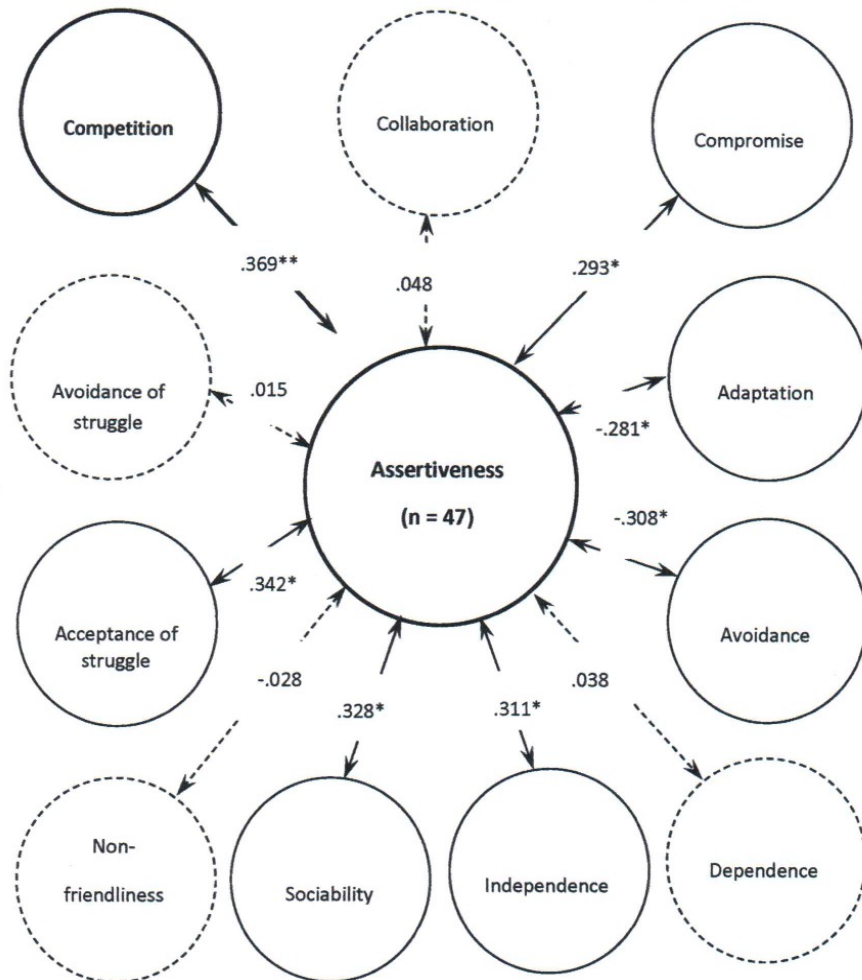
Note: \* – statistical significance of  $p \leq .05$ ; \*\* – statistical significance of  $p \leq .01$ ; “–” – statistical significance of  $p > .01$ .

**Table 4**

Correlative relationships of assertiveness with behavior tendencies in real student social interaction situations by scale “Q-Sort Technique”

<sup>31</sup> K. W. Thomas, “Introduction to ...”

Next, for better visual perception, a correlation galaxy of the assertive relationship ( $n = 47$ ) with *conflict* behavior strategies and behavior tendencies in real social interactions is presented in Figure 1.



Note: “—” and \*\* – statistical significance of  $p \leq .01$ ; “—” and \* – statistical significance of  $p \leq .05$ ; “-----” – statistical significance of  $p > .05$ .

**Figure 1**

A correlative galaxy of student assertiveness relationships ( $n = 47$ )

The most statistically significant correlation was found between the assertiveness and the strategy of behavior in the “competition” *conflict* ( $r_s = .369$ ;  $p < .01$ ). The relationship with the “compromise” behavior strategy is also significant ( $r_s = .293$ ;  $p < .05$ ). The obtained results indicate that self-confidence and self-assertiveness, which are inherent in the assertive personality, induce the person to defend his or her own interests. However, in situations that are not fundamental in content, the individual is ready to compromise. Confirmation of the initiative and active position of the assertive personality in the *conflict* situation is the presence of statistically significant

assertive feedbacks and “adaptation” strategies ( $r_s = -.281$ ;  $p < .05$ ) and “avoidance” ( $r_s = -.308$ ;  $p < .05$ ).

The correlation relationships in the subgroups of men and women in the study sample showed that in the social interactions of assertive men and women there were something common and at the same time there were some differences. *Conflict* behaviors common to men and women have a positive relationship between assertiveness and such *conflict* behaviors as “competition”: men ( $r_s = .472$ ;  $p < .05$ ); women ( $r_s = .378$ ;  $p < .05$ ).

What for the other relationships, they differ in the subgroups of men and women: in the women's sample, there is a correlation between assertiveness and the strategy of behavior in the *conflict* “compromise” ( $r_s = .391$ ;  $p < .05$ ). There is no such relationship in the male subgroup. The female group also had an inverse relationship with the “adaptation” strategy ( $r_s = .391$ ;  $p < .05$ ). The male subgroup has a significant inverse correlation with the “avoidance” strategy ( $r_s = -.459$ ;  $p < .05$ ), which is absent in the female group. In both subgroups, assertiveness does not correlate with the strategy of behavior in the *conflict* “cooperation”.

We conclude that *conflict* behavior strategies for men and women have a positive association between assertiveness and the choice of *conflict* behavior strategies such as competition and lack of co-operation strategy. Our results are consistent with similar conclusions which were found in other studies<sup>32</sup>.

According to the obtained data in the whole sample of students studied, there was a significant relationship between “assertiveness” and “sociability” ( $r_s = .328$ ;  $p < .05$ ), such a relationship was confirmed in the male ( $r_s = .462$ ;  $p < .05$ ) and female subgroups ( $r_s = .381$ ;  $p < .05$ ). This indicates that the assertive students are friendly and good-natured, overwhelmingly approve of the leader's position, agree with the main activities of the group and are proactive in establishing contacts with the group members.

A direct correlation between “assertiveness” and “independence” was obtained ( $r_s = .311$ ;  $p < .05$ ). In the female subgroup this association was reconfirmed ( $r_s = .378$ ;  $p < .05$ ) and was absent in males. In other words, assertive women are more inclined to defend their position, capable of finding like-minded people to substantiate their point of view and if necessary, may take on the role of group leader.

The tendency to “acceptance of struggle” correlates with assertiveness ( $r_s = .342$ ;  $p < .05$ ), this relationship can be seen in the male subgroup ( $r_s = .389$ ;  $p < .05$ ) and is absent in females. At the same time women have statistically significant feedback between “assertiveness” and “avoidance of struggle” ( $r_s = -.375$ ;  $p < .05$ ). It can be concluded that assertive men are more

---

<sup>32</sup> A. A. Eslami; L. Rabiei; S. M. Afzali; S. Hamidzadeh y R. Masoudi, “The Effectiveness of Assertiveness Training on the Levels of Stress, Anxiety, and Depression of High School Students”. Iranian Red Crescent Medical Journal, Vol: 18 num 1 (2016): 21.

likely to criticize others, and may exacerbate group discussions and controversies to maintain their social status; assertive women tend to be neutral in the group, tend to find compromise in group interaction.

### 3. Conclusions

1) Statistically significant correlations were established between assertiveness and behavior strategies in situations of social interaction, particularly direct links with “competition” and “compromise” strategies ( $p < .05$ ), feedbacks with “adaptation” and “avoidance” strategies ( $p < .05$ ); a direct correlation with the tendency to behave in real life situations of “sociability” ( $p < .05$ ). However, the obtained results for men and women have differences.

2) In the female group, there were correlated relationships between assertiveness and *conflict* behaviors “compromise” (direct communication) and “adaptation” (an indirect correlation) ( $p < .05$ ), in the male subgroup, however, assertiveness correlates with the “avoidance” strategy ( $p < .05$ ).

It has been found that assertiveness determines the choice of such strategies of behavior in real life situations of social interaction: “independence”, “sociability”, “acceptance of struggle” ( $p < .05$ ). In the female subgroup there is a feedback to the strategy of “avoiding struggle” ( $p < .05$ ).

3) It was found that internality at a statistically significant level was associated with assertiveness ( $p < .05$ ).

Our hypotheses are confirmed. The importance of assertiveness for the selection of adequate collaboration strategies in social group for student youth is empirically substantiated. The received scientific knowledge about assertive behavior will be useful for psychological counseling, psychotherapy and training.

### Acknowledgments

The research was conducted within the framework of the fundamental scientific and practical theme of the Department of General and Social Psychology of Kherson State University, the state registration number is 0119U101096.

### References

Alghamdi, N. G. “Anxiety and Assertiveness in Females: A Comparison of Medical and Non-Medical University Students”. *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences*, Vol: 6 num 3, (2015): 84-89. DOI: 10.5901/mjss.2015.v6n3s2p84

Blynova, O. Ye. “Labor migration of the population of Ukraine in the socio-psychological dimension”. Kherson: RIPO. 2011.

Blynova, O. Ye.; Popovych, I. S.; Bokshan, H. I.; Tsilmak, O. M. y Zavatska, N. Ye. “Social and Psychological Factors of Migration Readiness of Ukrainian Students”.

Revista ESPACIOS, Vol: 40 num 36 (2019): 4. Retrieved from: <https://www.revistaespacios.com/a19v40n36/in194036.html>

Caridad, M.; Cadeno, N.; Cardeno, E. y Castellano, M. I. "Contributions of assertive communication in conflict resolution within institutions of higher education". Revista ESPACIOS, Vol: 38 num 50 (2017): 6. Retrieved from: <https://www.revistaespacios.com/a17v38n50/17385006.html>

Cooley, E. L. y Nowicki, Jr. S. "Locus of Control and Assertiveness in Male and Female College Students". The Journal of Psychology, num 117 (1984): 85-87. DOI: 10.1080/00223980.1984.9923662

Eslami, A. A.; Rabiei, L.; Afzali, S. M.; Hamidizadeh, S. y Masoudi, R. "The Effectiveness of Assertiveness Training on the Levels of Stress, Anxiety, and Depression of High School Students". Iranian Red Crescent Medical Journal, Vol: 18 num 1 (2016): 21. DOI: 10.5812/ircmj.21096

Ergenel, A.; Karapinar, P. B. y Camgöz, S. M. N. "The Effect of Assertiveness on Conflict Handling Styles". H. Ü. İktisadi ve İdari Bilimler Fakültesi Dergisi, Vol: 29 num 2 (2011): 69-93. Retrieved from: <https://dergipark.org.tr/en/download/article-file/88753>

"Great psychological dictionary". General edition B. Meshcheryakov, V. Zinchenko. St. Petersburg: Prime EUROZNAK. 2004.

Grishina N. V. "Psychology of conflict". St. Petersburg: Peter. 2008.

Haladin, N. B.; Ibrahim, N. A. y Rajab, A. "Assertiveness Among Undergraduates in a Malaysian Public University: Implications Towards Improved Employability". Journal Technology (Social Sciences), Vol: 65 num 2 (2013): 15-24. DOI: 10.11113/jt.v65.2346

Ikiz, F. E. "Self-perceptions about properties affecting assertiveness of trainee counselors". Social behavior and personality, Vol: 39 num 2 (2011): 199-206.

Kapponi, V. y Novak, T. "How to do everything in your own way or assertiveness – to life". St. Petersburg: Peter. 1995.

Khmil, V. V. y Popovych, I. S. "Philosophical and Psychological Dimensions of Social Expectations of Personality". Anthropological Measurements of Philosophical Research, num 16 (2019): 55-65. DOI: 10.15802/ampr.v0i16.187540

Maheshwari, S. K. y Gill, K. K. "Correlation of Assertive Behavior with Communication Satisfaction among Nurses". Journal of Health, Medicine and Nursing, 14, (2015): 68-74.

Method "Q-sorting" by V. Stefanson. "Practical psychology. Psychodiagnostics of groups and collectives". Rostov-on-Don: Phoenix. 2006.

Mueen, B.; Khurshid, M. y Hassan, I. "Relationship of Depression and Assertiveness in Normal Population and Depressed Individuals". Internet Journal of Medical Update, Vol: 1 num 2 (2006): 10-17.

Panteleev, S. R. y Stolin, V. V. "Test-questionnaire for subjective localization of control. Modification of the I-E J. Rotter scale". Workshop on psychodiagnostics. Moscow: Smysl. 1988.

Parto, M. "Problem solving, self-efficacy, and mental health in adolescents: Assessing the mediating role of assertiveness". Social and Behavioral Sciences, num 30 (2011): 644-648. DOI: 10.1016/j.sbspro.2011.10.125

Pluut, H. y Curşeu, P. L. "Perceptions of intragroup conflict: The effect of coping strategies on conflict transformation and escalation". Group Processes y Intergroup Relations, Vol: 16 num 4 (2012): 412-425.

Popovych I.; Blynova, O.; Aleksieieva M.; Nosov P.; Zavatska N. y Smyrnova O. "Research of Relationship between the Social Expectations and Professional Training of Lyceum Students studying in the Field of Shipbuilding". Revista ESPACIOS, Vol: 40 num 33 (2019): 21. Retrieved from: <https://www.revistaespacios.com/a19v40n33/19403321.html>

Popovych, I.; Blynova, O. Zhuravlova, A., Toba, M., Tkach, T. y Zavatska, N. (2020). Optimización del desarrollo y psicorrección de expectativas sociales de estudiantes de filología extranjera. Revista Inclusiones. Vol: 7 num Especial, 82-94. Retrieved from: <http://www.archivosrevistainclusiones.com/gallery/1%20vol%206%20numesbrasilapha%201%202019enemarnclu.pdf>

Popovych, I.; Borysiuk, A.; Zahrai, L.; Fedoruk, O.; Nosov, P.; Zinchenko, S. y Mateichuk, V. "Constructing a Structural-Functional Model of Social Expectations of the Personality". Revista Inclusiones, Vol: 7 num Especial, 2020: 154-167. Retrieved from: <https://www.revistainclusiones.com/gallery/11%20vol%207%20num%20majaespecialleabriljunio2020revincludi.pdf>

Popovych, I.; Kononenko, O.; Kononenko, A.; Stynska, V.; Kravets, N.; Piletska, L. y Blynova, O. "Research of the Relationship between Existential Anxiety and the Sense of Personality's Existence". Revista Inclusiones, Vol: 7 num Especial, 2020: 41-59. Retrieved from: <https://www.revistainclusiones.com/gallery/5%20vol%207%20num%20especialleabriljunio2020revincludi.pdf>

Popovych, I.; Lymarenko, L.; Tereshenko, N.; Kornisheva, T.; Yevdokimova, O.; Koverznieva, A. y Aleksieieva, M. "Research on the Effectiveness of Training Technologies' Implementation in Student Theater". Revista Inclusiones, Vol: 7 num 2, 2020: 104-121. Retrieved from: <https://www.revistainclusiones.com/gallery/6%20vol%207%20num%20eabriljunio2020revincludi.pdf>

Rezayat, F. y Nayeri, N. D. "The Level of Depression and Assertiveness among Nursing Students". International Journal Community Based Nurse Midwifery, Vol: 2 num 3 (2014): 177-184.

Sheinov, V. P. "Development of an assertiveness test that meets the requirements of reliability and validity". Psychology Issues, num 2 (2014): 107-116.

Sheinov, V. P. "Determinants of assertive behavior". Psychological Journal, Vol: 36 num 3 (2015): 28-37.

Sheinov, V. P. "The relationship of assertiveness with the psychological and socio-psychological characteristics of the individual". Bulletin of the People' Friendship University of Russia, Vol: 15 num 2, (2018): 147-161. DOI: 10.22363/2313-1683-2018-15-2-147-161

Sidorenkov, A. V.; Ulyanova, N. Yu. y Shipitko, O. Yu. "Modern foreign studies of the psychology of conflict in small groups". Psychological Journal, Vol: 38 num 6 (2017): 30-41.

Thomas, K. W. "Introduction to Conflict Management: Improving Performance Using the TKI". CPP: First Printing edition. 2002.