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JOURNAL	International Journal of Innovative Technologies in Social Science
p-ISSN	2544-9338
e-ISSN	2544-9435
PUBLISHER	RS Global Sp. z O.O., Poland

ARTICLE TITLE	CORRELATIONS OF VOLITIONAL SELF-CONTROL WITH CERTAIN DIMENSIONS OF PUPIL'S PERSONALITY
AUTHOR(S)	Paladi Oxana, Lungu Tatiana
ARTICLE INFO	Paladi Oxana, Lungu Tatiana. (2024) Correlations of Volitional Self-Control with Certain Dimensions of Pupil's Personality. <i>International Journal of Innovative Technologies in Social Science</i> . 3(43). doi: 10.31435/rsglobal_ijitss/30092024/8226
DOI	https://doi.org/10.31435/rsglobal_ijitss/30092024/8226
RECEIVED	19 July 2024
ACCEPTED	17 September 2024
PUBLISHED	18 September 2024
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CORRELATIONS OF VOLITIONAL SELF-CONTROL WITH CERTAIN DIMENSIONS OF PUPIL'S PERSONALITY

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DOI: https://doi.org/10.31435/rsglobal_ijitss/30092024/8226

ARTICLE INFO

Received 19 July 2024

Accepted 17 September 2024

Published 18 September 2024

KEYWORDS

Willpower, Volitional Self-Control, Self-Mastery, Perseverance, Personality Dimensions, Pupil's Personality Profile.

ABSTRACT

In this article, the correlations of volitional self-control with certain dimensions of pupil's personality are presented. The basic concept, volitional self-control, outlines several component scales, namely the general self-control index, self-mastery, and perseverance. Moreover, this paper highlights the premise that authors state self-control as one of the key elements that define a person's willpower. In the specialty literature, we encounter a series of references to similar concepts, such as willpower, self-control, self-regulation, but these are not sufficiently integrated to generate a comprehensive picture of willpower that addresses details regarding relationships with other processes. Thus, we considered this research appropriate to identify the relationship of volitional self-control with other dimensions of personality (anxiety, depression, loneliness, somatic complaints, self-confidence, social courage, initiation of social contacts, etc.) from the perspective of contemporary societal approaches. We mention that the present study is conducted on a sample of 304 pupils from general education institutions in the Republic of Moldova.

Citation: Paladi Oxana, Lungu Tatiana. (2024) Correlations of Volitional Self-Control with Certain Dimensions of Pupil's Personality. *International Journal of Innovative Technologies in Social Science*. 3(43). doi: 10.31435/rsglobal_ijitss/30092024/8226

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Introduction.

From the perspective of contemporary societal approaches, with increased demands and perfectionist tendencies, we are often tempted to act differently, to show a different type of willpower, and to attribute internal causes to our successes. In this context, we usually ask ourselves why people behave in a certain way. Why do they do what they do? Why do some succeed while others remain only at the level of expectations? What are the relationships between volitional self-control and personality dimensions? What traits make up a personality with good self-control? The answers have sometimes been so different that a dilemma arises as to whether all authors are talking about the same thing. These sequences formed the basis of the study conducted concerning the psychosocial characteristics of the pupil's volitional personality.

Concept and Argument.

In this context, we emphasize that personality is defined by Allport as the dynamic organization of psychophysical systems that determine characteristic thinking and behaviour; it is the total sum of the effect produced by an individual on society; habits or actions that successfully influence other people [1]. David McClelland considers personality the most adequate conceptualization of a person's behaviour in all its details, which a scientist can provide at a given moment. At the same time, C.L. Rubinstein proposed the formula "reflection personality-result," to elucidate the fact that human personality manifests as a "unified whole," including the totality of internal structures for interacting with the external environment [8]. The authors emphasize that each individual has intellectual, affective, and conative peculiarities (related to willpower, and temperament), the organized ensemble of which determines the personality [9].

Many researchers and practitioners have been interested in the study of self-control, defined as the ability to act consciously; to resist impulses, to delay gratification, the control of emotions, and the management of behavior. Self-control refers to the control exercised over oneself. In this sense, the first step in self-control lies in setting realistic goals. In some sources, self-control is described as a person's ability to monitor their emotions and actions, correlating them with certain norms and rules. Additionally, speciality literature mentions the concept of voluntary self-control, which resides in setting and achieving relevant goals in performing certain activities. Involuntary self-control involves including self-control mechanisms in various contours of self-regulation that ensure the vital activity of the organism, functioning outside the sphere of human consciousness. Often, authors associate the term self-control with self-regulation, emphasizing the importance of a goal that helps the person resist negative behaviours [5].

According to Polivy, self-control is a common form of self-regulation, but also the amplification or postponement of a response [4]. However, the most common form of regulation is cancellation and suppression. Analyses conducted by Baumeister highlighted the importance of three main components in the self-regulation process: 1) clear and well-defined standards; 2) monitoring; 3) self-regulation power, otherwise known as willpower. Later, a fourth element was identified, namely the motivation to achieve the goal or meet the standard, which, in practice, is equivalent to the motivation of self-regulation [3; 4]. In this sense, motivation can be particularly effective in replacing willpower but may not be sufficient to substitute for the lack of a clear standard.

Similarly, Baumeister and his collaborators demonstrated that most personal and social problems are centred on the failure of self-control [3]. Relating to learning activities, they exemplified the following challenges: low academic performance, dropping out and lack of school motivation, violent behaviour on the first impulse, alcohol and substance abuse, unhealthy eating habits, lack of physical exercise, explosive anger, chronic anxiety, etc. Additionally, the research conducted on more than a million people worldwide revealed that out of the 20-30 positive character traits elucidated in the questionnaire, self-control was one of the least selected traits by respondents. Moreover, the lack of control was positioned at the beginning of the list [3]. Oscar Wilde mentioned that one can resist anything except temptation. It is noteworthy that the most significant advantages of self-control are observed in the long term: specialized studies show that people with good self-control are more capable of forming and maintaining safe and healthy relationships, are more empathetic, can see things from another's perspective; are more emotionally stable and less inclined to mental health problems: anxiety, depression, obsessive-compulsive behaviours, eating disorders, alcohol problems, and other diseases. The research conducted by Iu. Racu and L. Niță mention that a preadolescent with developed willpower will be an integral, responsible, self-possessed, perseverant personality capable of achieving proposed goals [10]. Other arguments brought forward by Stiggins refer to the fact that one of the factors that increases the importance of helping pupils develop and maintain self-confidence is the increased pressure on them due to the emphasis on high standards. Usually, when failures occur, some people give up on their efforts, prematurely giving up their goals, while others seek more effective strategies and strive harder. Pupils who understand the importance of constant and conscious effort will continue to make the necessary efforts to achieve their proposed goals, affirm the authors Boekaerts and Niemivirta. At the same time, Bandura supported the idea that an optimistic perspective on one's efficacy is necessary to cope with failures. This is related to components of adapting to success and failure, namely: awareness of capacities and intelligence, strategies for overcoming obstacles, creating a positive self-image, and support from significant individuals. Shortly thereafter, authors Rohrkemper and Corno

assert that it is better to teach pupils how to overcome stressful situations than to protect them from the stress of learning. In this regard, Benard demonstrated that resilient pupils have the ability to set goals, plan their future, develop social skills, and act independently [2].

Summarizing the above, we highlight several categories that, in the authors' opinion, encompass willpower, namely:

a) The control of thoughts – According to researchers Mc. Matthew, C. W. Jeffrey, and B. Jeffrey, the human mind is a thought-producing machine that emits millions of thoughts every day. For this reason, it is almost impossible to force ourselves to forget something that happened to us, but we can learn methods to distract our thoughts; and strategies to calm emotions to reflect on what to do next [3; 7].

b) The control of emotions denotes the capacity to regulate affects. It is known that the harder a person tries to suppress or stifle emotions, the more overwhelming they become. Usually, people who have problems controlling their emotions tend to overreact to certain situations and often feel overwhelmed by the intensity of their feelings [3; 7].

c) The control of impulses, which most people associate with willpower, means the ability to resist temptations such as alcohol, tobacco, sweets, etc. The fact is that most of the time people cannot control their impulses, but rather how they react – by ignoring the impulse [3].

d) The control of performance, in other words, focusing energy on the task that needs to be accomplished, identifying the perfect combination of speed and accuracy, time management, and perseverance when you feel like giving up [3].

Materials and Methods.

These theoretical components formed the basis for outlining the psychological profile of pupils with high levels of volitional self-control.

Research Design: The present study is a sequence from the research conducted on the topic "Psychosocial Characteristics of the Pupils' Volitional Personality."

Research Aim: The aim of the research was determined by the need to identify the relationship between volitional self-control (general self-control index, self-mastery, perseverance) and other dimensions of the pupils' personality.

Research Sample Description: This study involved 304 pupils of various ages, distributed as follows: 3 pupils (0.99%) aged 12-12,11 years; 35 pupils (11.51%) aged 13-13,11 years; 92 pupils (30.26%) aged 14-14,11 years; 47 pupils (15.46%) aged 15-15,11 years; 33 pupils (10.86%) aged 16-16,11 years; 58 pupils (19.08%) aged 17-17,11 years; and 36 pupils (11.84%) aged 18-19 years. Out of the total number of subjects, 37.83% are male and 62.17% are female. The experimental subjects are pupils from 7th to 12th grades. In terms of educational levels, 61.84% of pupils are from high school (grades 9-12), while 38.16% are from middle school (grades 7-8). Out of the total number of participants, 43.75% are from rural areas, and 56.25% are from urban areas. It should be noted that the sample was constructed based on the foundational requirements of the research.

Experimental Study Hypothesis: We assume that there are relationships between personality dimensions and volitional self-control in pupils.

Instruments Used: To confirm the hypothesis, the following psychometric instruments were employed: the Volitional Self-Control Diagnostic Questionnaire (A.G. Зверьков and E.B. Эйрман), Self-Esteem Study Test by V.G. Romek, Achenbach System of Empirically Based Assessment (ASEBA), and the 16 PF Cattell Questionnaire (Form C) [6]. Data from this research were processed and subjected to statistical analysis using the SPSS 20 data processing program.

Results and Discussions: The data analysis from the conducted study revealed a direct proportional relationship between self-control and certain personality dimensions. Next, we will reflect on the results of applying the Pearson linear correlation coefficient (r) to identify statistically significant associations between the level of volitional self-control and personality traits. According to the research procedure, we present the correlation coefficient indices concerning the relationship between volitional self-control and components measuring syndromes: anxiety/depression, loneliness/depression, somatic complaints, social problems, thought problems, attention problems, rule-breaking behaviour, aggressive behaviour and scales: affective problems, anxiety problems, somatic complaints, ADHD problems, oppositional behaviour problems, conduct problems. The obtained results are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Correlation between volitional self-control and scales measuring syndromes and symptoms (ASEBA, Pearson Correlation).

Scale	Correlation coefficient (r)			Significance threshold (p)		
	Volitional self-control index	Self-mastery	Perseverance	Index of volitional self-control	Self-mastery	Perseverance
Profile of YSR for girls and boys - Scales measuring syndromes						
Anxiety/Depression	r=-0,376**	r=-0,356**	r=-0,269**	p=0,001	p=0,001	p=0,001
Loneliness/Depression	r=-0,311**	r=-0,300**	r=-0,219**	p=0,001	p=0,001	p=0,001
Somatic Complaints	r=-0,319**	r=-0,269**	r=-0,257**	p=0,001	p=0,001	p=0,001
Social Problems	r=-0,350**	r=-0,307**	r=-0,298**	p=0,001	p=0,001	p=0,001
Thought Problems	r=-0,291**	r=-0,227**	r=-0,244**	p=0,001	p=0,001	p=0,001
Attention Problems	r=-0,442**	r=-0,437**	r=-0,373**	p=0,001	p=0,001	p=0,001
Rule-breaking Behavior	r=-0,075	r=-0,049	r=-0,098	p=0,194	p=0,392	p=0,088
Aggressive Behavior	r=-0,353**	r=-0,242**	r=-0,382**	p=0,001	p=0,001	p=0,001
YSR Profile for Girls and Boys - Derived DSM Scales						
Other problems	r=-0,277**	r=-0,235**	r=-0,247**	p=0,001	p=0,001	p=0,001
Affective Problems (DSM)	r=-0,382**	r=-0,351**	r=-0,290**	p=0,001	p=0,001	p=0,001
Anxiety Problems (DSM)	r=-0,358**	r=-0,353**	r=-0,231**	p=0,001	p=0,001	p=0,001
Somatic Complaints (DSM)	r=-0,244**	r=-0,178**	r=-0,198**	p=0,001	p=0,002	p=0,001
ADHD Problems (DSM)	r=-0,439**	r=-0,407**	r=-0,402**	p=0,001	p=0,001	p=0,001
Oppositional Behavior (DSM)	r=-0,349**	r=-0,257**	r=-0,385**	p=0,001	p=0,001	p=0,001
Conduct Problems (DSM)	r=-0,136*	r=-0,078	r=-0,167**	p=0,017	p=0,173	p=0,004

According to the results of the statistical analysis presented in Table 1, we highlight the presence of forty-one significant negative correlations, including fourteen negative correlations for the overall self-control index, thirteen significant negative correlations for self-mastery, and fourteen significant negative correlations for perseverance. At the same time, it should be noted that no statistical correlations were obtained between the overall self-control index ($r=-0,075$; $p=0,194$), self-mastery ($r=-0,049$; $p=0,392$), perseverance ($r=-0,098$; $p=0,088$), and the variable of rule violation issues. Additionally, we observe that no statistical correlations were obtained between self-mastery ($r=-0,078$; $p=0,173$) and the variable of conduct problems.

Analyzing the results presented in the table above, significant negative correlations are evident between the overall volitional self-control index and scales measuring syndromes: anxiety/depression ($r=-0,376$ **; $p=0,001$), withdrawal/depression ($r=-0,311$ **; $p=0,001$), somatic complaints ($r=-0,319$ **; $p=0,001$), social problems ($r=-0,350$ **; $p=0,001$), thought problems ($r=-0,291$ **; $p=0,001$), attention problems ($r=-0,442$ **; $p=0,001$), and aggressive behaviour ($r=-0,353$ **; $p=0,001$). Thus, we observe an inversely proportional relationship between these research variables: as the volitional self-control index increases, levels of anxiety/depression, withdrawal/depression, somatic complaints, social problems, thought problems, attention problems, and aggressive behaviour decrease. Additionally, significant correlations are noted for the self-mastery factor and scales: anxiety/depression ($r=-0,356$ **; $p=0,001$), withdrawal/depression ($r=-0,300$ **; $p=0,001$), somatic complaints ($r=-0,269$ **; $p=0,001$), social problems ($r=-0,307$ **; $p=0,001$), thought problems ($r=-0,227$ **; $p=0,001$), attention problems ($r=-0,437$ **; $p=0,001$), and aggressive behaviour ($r=-0,242$ **; $p=0,001$). This indicates that as self-

mastery increases, levels of anxiety/depression, withdrawal/depression, somatic complaints, social problems, thought problems, attention problems, and aggressive behaviour decrease.

Similarly, the perseverance factor shows correlations with scales: anxiety/depression ($r=-0,269^{**}$; $p=0,001$), withdrawal/depression ($r=-0,219^{**}$; $p=0,001$), somatic complaints ($r=-0,257^{**}$; $p=0,001$), social problems ($r=-0,298^{**}$; $p=0,001$), thought problems ($r=-0,244^{**}$; $p=0,001$), attention problems ($r=-0,373^{**}$; $p=0,001$), and aggressive behaviour ($r=-0,382^{**}$; $p=0,001$). This indicates that as perseverance increases, levels of anxiety/depression, withdrawal/depression, somatic complaints, social problems, thought problems, attention problems, and aggressive behaviour decrease.

Continuing to synthesize the results of the statistical analysis presented in Table 1, we deduce that no significant positive correlations were recorded between volitional self-control and scales measuring syndromes and their derivatives. This indicates that there is no direct proportional relationship between these variables and they do not directly influence the volitional self-control index.

We consider the correlations obtained between volitional self-control and the personality dimensions obtained based on the 16 PF Cattell Questionnaire. The results are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. The correlation between volitional self-control and personality traits according to the 16 PF personality questionnaire, Cattell (Pearson correlation).

<i>Variables</i>	<i>Correlation coefficient (r)</i>			<i>Significance threshold (p)</i>		
	Index of volitional self-control	Self-mastery	Perseverance	Index of volitional self-control	Self-mastery	Perseverance
Schizotypy – cyclothymia	-0,002	-0,002	0,025	0,972	0,972	0,662
General problem-solving ability	-0,046	-0,068	0,003	0,420	0,236	0,960
Emotional instability – emotional stability	0,164**	0,131*	0,155**	0,004	0,023	0,007
Submission – dominance	-0,055	-0,037	-0,079	0,335	0,517	0,170
Expansiveness – non-expansiveness	-0,099	-0,081	-0,085	0,083	0,160	0,138
Weak superego – strength of superego	0,097	0,081	0,132*	0,092	0,161	0,022
Timidity – boldness	0,127*	0,150**	0,069	0,027	0,009	0,233
Rationality – affection	-0,130*	-0,164**	-0,057	0,024	0,004	0,325
Confident attitude – suspicion	-0,135*	-0,114*	-0,081	0,019	0,048	0,160
Concern for practical matters – disregard for practical matters	-0,064	-0,064	-0,019	0,263	0,266	0,742
Insightfulness – naivety	-0,105	-0,130*	-0,021	0,066	0,023	0,712
Trust – tendency towards guilt	-0,269**	-0,255**	-0,198**	0,001	0,001	0,001
Radicalism – conservatism	-0,044	-0,047	0,022	0,449	0,414	0,702
Dependency – independence from the group	-0,105	-0,132*	-0,017	0,068	0,022	0,766
Low self-esteem – strong self-esteem	0,069	0,043	0,116*	0,230	0,450	0,043
Low ergic tension - high ergic tension	-0,261**	-0,245**	-0,180**	0,001	0,001	0,002

The results in Table 2 indicate the existence of nineteen correlations, including seven significant positive correlations and twelve significant negative correlations. It should be noted that no statistical correlations were found between the general index of volitional self-control, self-mastery, perseverance, and the following variables: schizothemia – cyclothemia, general reasoning ability, submissiveness – dominance, expansiveness – non-expansiveness, concern for practical matters – ignorance of practical matters, radicalism – conservatism, attitude of dependence and independence from the group.

For detailing the obtained results, we will refer again to Table 2, according to which we deduce significant negative correlations between the general index of volitional self-control and the variables: rationality - affection ($r = -0,130$ *; $p = 0,024$); confident attitude - suspicion ($r = -0,135$ *; $p = 0,019$); trust - tendency towards guilt ($r = -0,269$ **; $p = 0,001$); ergic tension; guilt ($r = -0,261$ **; $p = 0,001$), which means that as the general index of volitional self-control increases, scores on variables such as affection, suspicion, tendency towards guilt, and high ergic tension decrease. At the same time, correlations are observed between the self-control factor and the variables: rationality - affection ($r = -0,164$ **; $p = 0,004$), confident attitude - suspicion ($r = -0,114$ *; $p = 0,048$); ergic tension ($r = -0,245$ **; $p = 0,001$), indicating that as the level of self-control increases in pupils, variables such as affection, suspicion, and high ergic tension decrease. Additionally, for the perseverance factor, significant correlations are noted with the following variables: emotional instability - emotional stability ($r = 0,155$ **; $p = 0,007$), weak super-ego - strength of the super-ego ($r = 0,132$ *; $p = 0,022$), weak self-esteem - strong self-esteem ($r = 0,116$ *; $p = 0,043$). The obtained indices allow us to deduce that as the level of perseverance in pupils increases, the levels of emotional stability, strength of the super-ego, and strong self-esteem also increase.

Furthermore, analyzing the data presented in the same table (Table 2), we elucidate that significant positive correlation were obtained between the general index of volitional self-control and the variables: emotional instability - emotional stability ($r = 0,164$ **; $p = 0,004$), shyness - boldness ($r = 0,127$ *; $p = 0,027$). Therefore, as the level of volitional self-control increases, so does the level of emotional stability and boldness. Regarding the self-control factor, we also observe correlations with the same variables: emotional instability - emotional stability ($r = 0,131$ *; $p = 0,023$), shyness - boldness ($r = 0,150$ **; $p = 0,009$), indicating that with an increase in the level of self-control, the levels of emotional stability and boldness also increase. We identify significant positive correlations between the perseverance factor and the variables: emotional instability - emotional stability ($r = 0,155$ **; $p = 0,007$), weak super-ego - strength of the super-ego ($r = 0,132$ *; $p = 0,022$), weak self-esteem - strong self-esteem ($r = 0,116$ *; $p = 0,043$), meaning that pupils who demonstrate perseverance exhibit emotional stability, strength of the super-ego, and strong self-esteem.

In this context, in our research, we were interested in verifying if there is a relationship between volitional self-control and the factors: self-confidence, social courage, and initiation of social contacts. The results are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Correlation between volitional self-control and self-confidence, social courage, initiation of social contacts (Pearson Correlation).

Variables	Correlation coefficient (r)			Significance threshold (p)		
	The general index of volitional self-control	Self-mastery	Perseverance	The general index of volitional self-control	Self-mastery	Perseverance
Self-confidence	0,230**	0,398**	0,161**	0,001	0,001	0,005
Social courage	0,313**	0,360**	0,214**	0,001	0,001	0,001
Initiation of social contacts	0,105	0,315**	0,096	0,067	0,001	0,095

The data included in Table 3 highlight several significant positive correlations. Significant positive correlations are identified between the general index of volitional self-control and the following dimensions: self-confidence ($r = 0,230$ **; $p = 0,001$) and social courage ($r = 0,313$ **; $p = 0,001$). The next variable is self-mastery, for which we identify correlations with the following dimensions: self-

confidence ($r = 0,398^{**}$; $p = 0,001$), social courage ($r = 0,360^{**}$; $p = 0,001$), and initiation of social contacts ($r = 0,315^{**}$; $p = 0,001$). Additionally, for perseverance, we observe significant positive correlations with dimensions: self-confidence ($r = 0,161^{**}$; $p = 0,005$) and social courage ($r = 0,214^{**}$; $p = 0,001$). Generalizing the results, we deduce that there is a direct proportional relationship between the enumerated research variables. Specifically, as the general index of volitional self-control increases in pupils, so does their level of self-confidence and social courage. Similarly, as the level of self-mastery increases, so does self-confidence, social courage, and initiation of social contacts. Furthermore, the results demonstrate that as the level of perseverance increases, so does the self-confidence and social courage of pupils. It's also noted that no significant positive correlations were obtained between the factors: general index of volitional self-control, perseverance, and the variable of initiation of social contacts.

The analysis of the results obtained in the observational experiment provided an opportune premise for outlining the psychological profile of pupils from the perspective of volitional self-control. The first dimension included components from the ASEBA Questionnaire: anxiety/depression, loneliness/depression, affective problems, anxiety problems, social problems, attention problems, ADHD problems, and oppositional behaviour problems. The second dimension included components from the 16 PF Cattell Personality Questionnaire: confidence-guilt tendency, low ergic tension-high ergic tendency, and weak super-ego-strength of the super-ego. The third dimension included components from the Romek Test: self-confidence, social courage, and initiation of social contacts.

Furthermore, we present a sequence from the Pupil's Profile from the perspective of volitional self-control for the personality dimensions highlighted according to the 16 PF Cattell Personality Questionnaire (Figure 1).

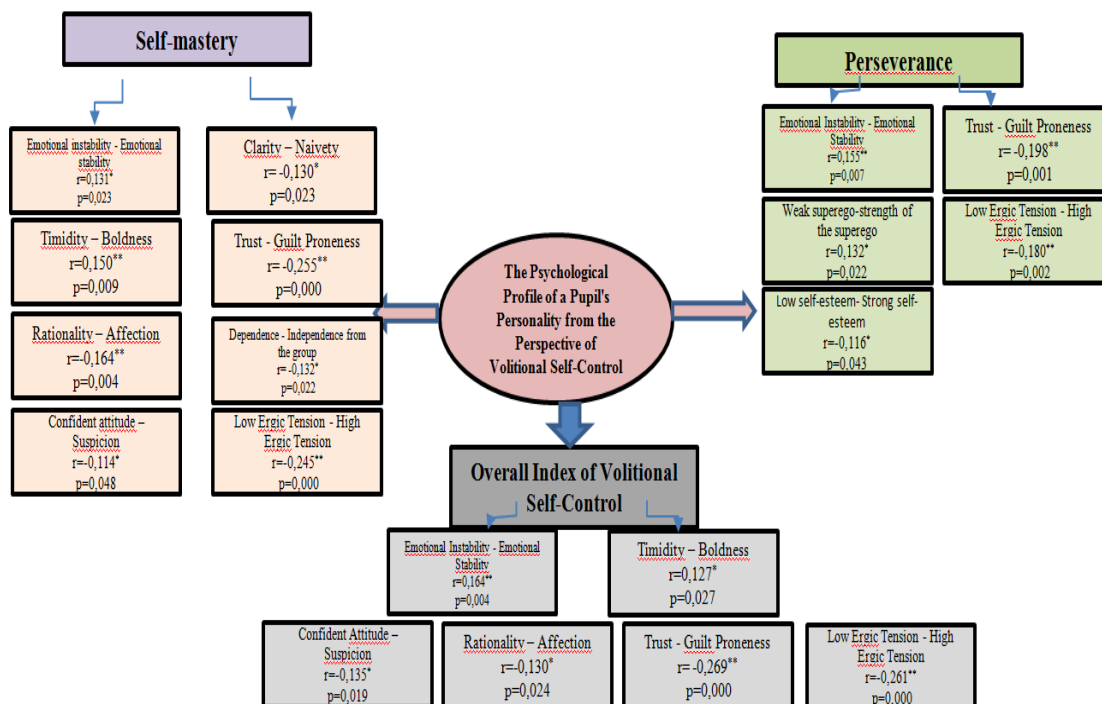


Fig. 1. The Psychological Profile of a Pupils' Personality from the Perspective of Volitional Self-Control.

From Figure 1, we observe that pupils with volitional self-control exhibit: emotional stability, boldness, a confident attitude, rationality, confidence, and low ergic tension. Pupils with self-mastery demonstrate emotional stability, boldness, rationality, a confident attitude, clear-sightedness, confidence, a dependent attitude towards the group, and low ergic tension. Pupils with perseverance show emotional stability, a strong superego, a strong sense of self, confidence, and low ergic tension.

The personality traits characteristic of pupils with volitional self-control include emotional stability (strong self, characterized by stability, maturity, calmness, consistent interests, adaptability, lack of conflicts, mental tone (lack of mild manifestations of fatigue)), boldness, confident attitude, rationality, self-confidence, low ergic tendency, clear-sightedness, independence from the group (rational person, capable of making decisions independently), the strength of the superego, a strong sense of self (self-discipline, self-demand, strong will), anxiety/depression, loneliness/depression, somatic complaints, thinking problems, social problems, attention problems, aggressive behaviour, anxiety issues, affective problems, ADHD problems (inattentive and hyperactive/impulsive types), oppositional behaviour problems, conduct problems. Additionally, pupils with volitional self-control demonstrate self-confidence, social courage, and initiation of social contacts. These findings confirm the hypothesis that there are relationships between personality dimensions and volitional self-control in pupils.

In **conclusion**, it is noteworthy that the synthesis of speciality literature presents multiple pertinent arguments demonstrating that self-control is complex and ambiguous. Essentially, people design and carry out various activities to master their environment and themselves, guiding their actions through decision-making and self-control, typically achieved through regulation and self-adjustment. At the same time, self-control is a condition of an integrated, appropriate psyche oriented towards logical goals. Consequently, it is the mission of the individual's will to establish clear objectives for learning activities and to support actions aimed at achieving them for the formation and self-regulation of the pupil's personality. Analyzing the profile of a pupil's personality from the perspective of volitional self-control highlights several priority dimensions, including emotional stability, confident attitude towards oneself and others, rationality, self-confidence, social courage, skills in initiating social contacts, independence from the group, and a strong sense of self. From the perspective of contemporary societal approaches, it is important to emphasize the significance of these dimensions highlighted in the research for the effective development of a pupil's personality with volitional self-control.

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