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Scientific and Philosophical Principles of Studying the Behavior of Youth and Their Attitude Toward Fire Safety

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Abstract: This article presents the scientific and philosophical principles of studying the behavior and attitude of young people to fire safety, which serve to further understand their attitude to safety culture and identify the factors influencing it. These principles create a scientific basis for studying the attitude of young people to fire safety, taking into account their psychological, moral, social and philosophical aspects. The main ones of these principles are presented below.

Keywords: Fire safety culture, safety model, technological innovations, social cooperation, legal and regulatory framework, civic responsibility.

INTRODUCTION: In studying the behavior of youth and their attitude toward fire safety, moral and ethical principles play a crucial role. These principles imply approaching the behavior of young people on the basis of moral values and norms. Young people need to have moral views about how their actions and decisions affect not only themselves but also others.

According to the principle of social influence, the attitude of young people toward fire safety is shaped under the influence of their social environment, namely family, friends, school, and the community. The principle of social influence helps to study how the surrounding environment affects the culture of safety among youth.

The philosophical-anthropological approach involves examining the connection between the process of self-awareness of young people as human beings and their views on safety. The philosophical outlook, worldview, and understanding of humanity among young people

are reflected in their attitude toward fire safety. This approach helps to study the fundamental ideas and values that shape a culture of safety in the consciousness of youth.

Psychological principles are also important in studying the behavior of youth and their attitude toward fire safety. These principles include analyzing the psychological characteristics of young people, namely their needs, experiences, sense of safety, and attitudes toward risks.

The principle of philosophical and methodological pluralism presupposes studying the attitude of young people toward fire safety through various philosophical approaches and methods. Pluralism ensures the integration of different approaches and theories, which contributes to a deeper understanding of youth behavior and the culture of safety.

The scientific and philosophical principles of studying the behavior of youth and their attitude toward fire safety form the basis for building and strengthening their culture of safety. These principles, by deeply exploring the personal, social, moral, and philosophical aspects of youth, help foster a responsible attitude toward fire safety.

METHODOLOGY

The issue of studying the behavior of youth and their attitude toward fire safety requires a deep analysis of modern safety philosophy, the formation of moral consciousness, and processes of socialization. The attitude toward fire safety, especially in the consciousness of the younger generation, is determined not only by knowledge and skills but also by values, moral principles, and cultural norms of social interaction. A philosophical approach to this issue first and foremost demands clarifying the position of human ontology in relation to danger. Within M. Heidegger's concept of "In-der-Welt-Sein" (being-in-the-world), the issue of safety is understood as one of the fundamental concerns of human existence: "Man, through his existence, is thrown into the world and lives in a constant state of choice before dangers and uncertainties" (Heidegger M. *Sein und Zeit*. — Tübingen: Max Niemeyer Verlag, 2006. — p. 183).

This conceptual perspective allows connecting the attitude toward fire safety with ontological anxiety, especially in the context of how this anxiety develops in young people, what strategies they adopt to overcome it, and how their inner motivations toward safety are formed. The attitude of youth toward fire safety must also be analyzed within the framework of socio-cognitive theories. According to A. Bandura's social learning theory, "behavioral patterns, particularly safety-related habits, are formed mainly through social

observation, imitation, and reinforcing evaluation" (Bandura A. *Social Foundations of Thought and Action: A Social Cognitive Theory*. — Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1986. — p. 47). Thus, the attitude of young people toward fire safety is not merely the result of personal choice but manifests as a product of the socialization process.

In this regard, the theory of social constructivism by P. Berger and T. Luckmann is especially relevant. As they emphasize, "any kind of social knowledge, including perceptions of safety, is socially constructed through everyday life interactions" (Berger P., Luckmann T. *The Social Construction of Reality*. — New York: Anchor Books, 1966. — p. 52). On this basis, in studying youth's views on safety, particular attention should be given to the communicative sphere, the social environment, pedagogical organizational structures, and elements of mass culture.

In the process of assimilating safety norms, young people often rely on abstract motivations, emotional reactivity, and individualistic interpretations. This situation can be explained through E. Fromm's escape from freedom theory: "Man, especially the younger generation, in the face of complex social demands and dangers, tends to withdraw socially, which increases indifference or passivity toward safety" (Fromm E. *Escape from Freedom*. — New York: Holt Paperbacks, 1994. — p. 138). Therefore, in shaping the attitude of young people toward fire safety, it is not enough merely to provide information; it is also necessary to create a pedagogical environment that awakens existential awareness, social motivation, and moral reflection.

Furthermore, the psychological and cultural behaviors of youth regarding safety are closely tied to their social identification. As A. Erikson emphasized, "an individual's identity, especially during adolescence, is reinforced by fidelity, trust, and a sense of safety" (Erikson E.H. *Identity: Youth and Crisis*. — New York: Norton, 1968. — p. 122). The integration of fire safety culture into the consciousness of youth is effective precisely when it is connected with the individual's internal process of identity formation.

From a critical perspective, many modern safety programs, particularly in school and college systems, often retain a declarative content that does not correspond to the real psychological needs and cultural mindset of youth. Such campaigns are aimed merely at ensuring external discipline rather than creating a foundation for independent reflection on safety in the minds of young people. As I. Ilyasov notes: "if safety education is declarative and not connected with personal life experience, young people perceive such knowledge not as a social benefit but as an obligation"

(Ильясов И. Психология молодежной социализации. — Moscow: Просвещение, 2009. — p. 88).

Thus, the study of youth behavior and their attitude toward fire safety reflects a complex socio-phenomenological process that has not only practical-pedagogical but also profound philosophical and methodological foundations. This is because safety culture, particularly in the context of fire safety, is closely linked to the moral consciousness of youth, their capacity for social reflection, and their existential stance. In this regard, it is especially relevant to interpret the issue through philosophical approaches that allow perceiving safety as a cultural phenomenon, specifically axiological and existential approaches.

In the axiological context, safety is interpreted as an integral part of the system of human values. According to A. Schütz, "man's daily activities acquire meaning through a hierarchy of values that regulate them, and in this hierarchy, safety plays a fundamental role" (Schütz A. *The Phenomenology of the Social World*. — Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1967. — p. 118). From this perspective, analyzing youth attitudes toward fire safety requires determining the place of the safety concept within their system of life values and how it is prioritized.

In forming the philosophical and moral foundation of safety in youth consciousness, their social identification is a key factor. As C. Taylor emphasized, "self-identification is not merely a social role but an inner stance grounded in significant normative values" (Taylor C. *Sources of the Self: The Making of the Modern Identity*. — Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1989. — p. 27). Concepts of fire safety and responsible behavior toward it are shaped precisely on this basis of self-awareness, meaning that effectiveness is achieved only when youth perceive safety as an inner need.

The philosophical analysis of normative behavior and social positions of youth in studying their attitude toward fire safety can be based on G. H. Mead's concept of "the self" and "the other." According to him, "an individual sees himself through the other and evaluates his behavior on the basis of collective representations formed in society" (Mead G.H. *Mind, Self, and Society*. — Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1934. — p. 138). Thus, youth attitudes toward safety culture are determined by the social feedback and expectations directed at them.

However, in modern socio-cultural conditions, youth often perceive safety not within the framework of technical or formal-bureaucratic norms but as a subjective phenomenon, frequently experienced through emotional and aesthetic perception. This

situation can be interpreted within J. Baudrillard's theory of simulacra and hyperreality: "in postmodern conditions, notions of danger and safety have turned into a play of signs and symbols in mass culture, rather than reflecting real conditions" (Baudrillard J. *Simulacra and Simulation*. — Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1994. — p. 42). As a result, gaps arise between youth knowledge of safety and their real behaviors.

In addition, in analyzing youth motivation toward fire safety, K. Gilligan's theory of moral development is also important. According to her, "the moral decisions of youth, especially in matters of safety, are determined through empathy, care, and loyalty to social relations" (Gilligan C. *In a Different Voice: Psychological Theory and Women's Development*. — Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1982. — p. 73). Therefore, safety promotion programs should not only aim at preventing violations but also focus on fostering values such as social solidarity, care, and mutual trust.

From a critical perspective, the current practice of shaping a safety culture among youth is often characterized by a narrow approach, declarativity, and a sanction-based nature. This leads to interpreting safety not as an internal value but as obedience based on external coercion. Based on the aforementioned theories, it becomes evident that in working with youth, there is a need for multi-layered and differentiated approaches that take into account their existential needs, axiological orientations, and social reflection.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The issue of studying youth behavior and their attitude toward fire safety is emerging in contemporary socio-philosophical thought as one of the urgent epistemological and axiological problems. This is because the question of how a culture of safety—particularly in the context of fire safety—develops in the consciousness of young people, the most dynamic and formative segment of society, is not merely a practical-pedagogical matter but in fact a phenomenon with ideological-aesthetic, moral, and ontological roots.

To comprehensively illuminate the issue, it is necessary first to focus on the philosophical essence of the concept of safety. In this regard, V. E. Kagan's concept of "the safe form of human activity" can serve as an important theoretical foundation. Kagan emphasizes: "Safety is an axiological criterion of human existence aimed at stability and self-preservation; it is not merely the elimination of external dangers but also the comprehension of existence and its ethical integration" (Каран В.Е. *Философия культуры*. — St. Petersburg: Piter, 1996. — p. 314). Thus, youth attitudes toward fire

safety are connected with their internal mental structures concerning the safe maintenance of existence.

In the philosophy of youth behavior, the issue of self-awareness and attitudes toward danger is reinforced by M. Mamardashvili's reflections on the complex dialectic between consciousness and passions. He writes: "Man responds to danger not only through reason but also through his passions and their moral regulation, in which intellectual reflection remains secondary" (Мамардашвили М.К. Классический и неклассический идеалы рациональности. — Moscow: MSU Publishing, 1984. — p. 152). Thus, youth attitudes toward a culture of safety are shaped not only through knowledge and skills but also through social-emotional states, self-regulation, and inner reflection.

These approaches lead to the subjective understanding of safety in modern anthropological philosophy. P. Ricoeur interprets safety as "a social form of cultural identity and temporal memory," writing: "The need for safety is the modern individual's need to envision his life and future simultaneously in association with others" (Ricoeur P. Time and Narrative. — Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990. — Vol. 3. — p. 109). Ricoeur's observation demonstrates that young people's perceptions of safety are linked not only to individual understanding but also to historical and collective self-awareness.

From this perspective, communicative and discursive branches of philosophy also play an important role in studying youth attitudes toward fire safety. According to J. Habermas, "social consciousness internalizes safety through communicative practice, where social norms and moral standards are legitimized through active dialogue" (Habermas J. Moral Consciousness and Communicative Action. — Cambridge: MIT Press, 1990. — p. 91). Based on Habermas's model, educational and promotional activities on safety for youth must be organized on dialogical and socio-cognitive foundations; otherwise, they risk turning into declarative and sanction-based formal campaigns.

From a critical standpoint, analyzing youth behavior regarding fire safety solely at the level of social discipline oversimplifies the issue. This is because safety culture for youth simultaneously represents a psychologically safe space, ontological stability, moral selfhood, and a state of social recognition. As E. Goffman stated in his concept of social roles: "People organize their behavior not only in response to social expectations but also according to how they wish to present themselves" (Goffman E. The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life. — New York: Anchor Books, 1959. — p. 32). This view indicates that young people may

regard adherence to safety norms not only as an external obligation but also as a means of self-expression.

The study of youth behavior and their attitude toward fire safety is one of the most complex and multilayered problems of modern socio-philosophical thought. This phenomenon is linked not only to the necessity of normative-legal regulation but also to human ontology, axiology, and cultural identity. Youth attitudes toward safety, particularly fire safety, serve as an indicator of the level of development of social consciousness in society, the potential for moral reflection, and the coherence of social institutions.

In this context, scientific and philosophical principles demand, on the one hand, a deep analysis of the essence of fire safety culture and, on the other, an understanding of how this culture is assimilated by youth during their socialization process.

Above all, it must be recognized that any behavior related to safety is the product of social construction. As P. Berger and T. Luckmann pointed out, "man forms society, including social consciousness regarding safety, through constant social interaction; this interaction is reinforced through the transformation of moral norms and experiences into social institutions" (Бергер П., Лукманн Т. Социальное конструирование реальности. — Moscow: Medium, 1995. — p. 51). According to this approach, the environment that socializes youth—family, educational institutions, mass media, and virtual communication spaces—plays a decisive role in shaping their attitudes toward fire safety.

In understanding the safety-related behaviors and social reactions of youth, modern phenomenological approaches also play an important role. M. Merleau-Ponty views the concept of safety as "an ontological orientation that has become the physical and social interpretation of subjective world experience." According to him, "by experiencing safety, a person not only adapts to the external environment but also gives meaning to his own existence" (Merleau-Ponty M. Phenomenology of Perception. — St. Petersburg: Nauka, 1999. — p. 212). This perspective shows that the perception of safety in youth consciousness is linked not merely to information but also to experiences, the body, and emotions that are significant to them.

For fire safety culture to be reflected in the consciousness of youth, it must be formed not simply as a body of knowledge necessary in emergencies but as a constant moral value of life. A. Etzioni substantiates this process through the principle of "responsive communitarianism," noting that "the moral development of youth is directly tied to their sense of

duty in society and moral responsibility toward safety norms" (Etzioni A. *The Spirit of Community: Rights, Responsibilities, and the Communitarian Agenda*. — New York: Crown Publishers, 1993. — p. 66). According to Etzioni, any educational or promotional activities on fire safety should serve as a tool for establishing a cultural balance between individual freedom and collective interests.

However, in modern conditions, indifference to safety norms—especially among youth—is explained by the fragmentary and relativistic features of the postmodern social environment. According to J.-F. Lyotard, "the crisis of metanarratives in contemporary youth consciousness hinders the acceptance of safety as a universal and necessary value, since in this context, where individual experience dominates, danger loses its real contours" (Lyotard J.-F. *La condition postmoderne: rapport sur le savoir*. — Paris: Minuit, 1979. — p. 17). Thus, youth may perceive not safety culture but the aestheticization of danger, in the form of a peculiar "social adrenaline."

To study youth attitudes toward fire safety in depth, this process must be interpreted as a dynamic form of social consciousness. As E. Durkheim emphasized, "social consciousness is never stationary but is constantly renewed through collective emotions, social institutions, and norms" (Durkheim E. *The Division of Labor in Society*. — Moscow: Kanon+, 1996. — p. 88). From this perspective, the formation of attitudes toward fire safety requires continuous social actualization; otherwise, it turns into outdated norms and provokes indifference in youth consciousness.

The study of youth behavior and their attitude toward fire safety is not only a means of ensuring practical social security but also a field of ideological-philosophical analysis that defines the criteria of human social existence. A scientific-philosophical approach to this issue presupposes studying the phenomenon of safety not merely within the framework of responses to external dangers but in the context of social consciousness, moral values, ontological anxiety, and ethical responsibility. Specifically, youth attitudes toward fire safety depend on their level of existential awareness, their position regarding social norms, and the way they shape their identity within the context of social safety.

In understanding this attitude, the concept of the "hermeneutic circle" proposed by H.-G. Gadamer can serve as an important methodological foundation. Gadamer emphasizes: "all human understanding is a dialogue with prior assumptions of existing experience; therefore, safety culture is perceived in harmony with people's previous experiences, societal norms, and

collective consciousness" (Гадамер Х.-Г. *Истина и метод*. — Moscow: Progress, 1988. — p. 312). This suggests that youth behavior regarding safety, including their position on fire safety, develops on the basis of their previously formed social experience and cultural identity.

Furthermore, attention should be paid to the ideas of U. Beck, who substantiated in modern safety concepts that risk is a social construct. Beck states: "modern societies perceive risk not within the framework of technical or scientific accuracy but through social consciousness, trust, and cultural reflection" (Beck U. *Risk Society: Towards a New Modernity*. — London: SAGE Publications, 1992. — p. 27). When youth attitudes toward fire safety are analyzed in this context, these attitudes are determined not only by behavior but also by cultural-ideological positions, moral reflection, and the ability to conceptualize risk.

CONCLUSION

The perceptions of safety among the younger generation are often linked to their stages of psychosocial development. According to E. Erikson, "human identity is formed in an environment of safety and trust, and when confronted with danger, it responds with an inner sense of stability and responsibility" (Erikson E.H. *Childhood and Society*. — New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1963. — p. 248). Thus, indifference to fire safety among youth often indicates either the weakness of their identity or the insufficient integration of social safety norms into individual consciousness.

Another important aspect is the epistemological basis on which knowledge and skills regarding safety are formed in youth consciousness. In this regard, M. Foucault emphasizes that "knowledge is a form of power within social discourse: what dangers people recognize and how they interpret them are determined by the discourses instilled into their consciousness by social structures" (Foucault M. *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*. — New York: Vintage Books, 1995. — p. 27). From Foucault's perspective, youth attitudes toward fire safety should not be shaped through sanctioning or authoritarian discourses but through free and socially attuned analytical knowledge.

However, in practice, much of the work carried out with youth on fire safety relies not on the philosophical and social essence of the issue but on simplified scenarios of external order and discipline. As a result, safety culture is perceived not as meaningful awareness but as a formalized process, almost as a "ritualized obligation." Evaluating this critically, it is relevant to recall G. Deleuze's concept of "differential pedagogy." He notes: "true knowledge becomes genuine activity

only when it creates a connection between the inner world of the individual and social reality, that is, when it is assimilated through perception" (Deleuze G. *Difference and Repetition*. — New York: Columbia University Press, 1994. — p. 178).

In conclusion, the study of youth attitudes toward fire safety, from a philosophical standpoint, is determined by human awareness of existence, identification with social values, and the reflective capacities of social consciousness regarding safety. To study this attitude deeply, it is necessary to apply a complex combination of philosophical approaches such as hermeneutics, phenomenology, communicative axiology, and epistemological constructivism.

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