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Longitudinal research into purpose in life in outstanding Polish actors

Streszczenie

Badania podłużne w obszarze osobowości i aksjologii mają za zadanie stwierdzać jakie różnice, podobieństwa i zmiany zaszły w tych obszarach. Artykuł podejmuje temat charakteru zmian w poczuciu sensu życia w oparciu o prezentację autorskiego Modelu Osobowościowo-Aksjologicznego (MOA) w grupie dwóch pokoleń aktorów polskich. Na podstawie przeprowadzonych badań podłużnych i zastosowanych analiz stwierdzono istnienie wpływu zmiennych pochodzących z obszaru kompetencji, relacji i autonomii (składowe MOA), na sfery poczucia sensu życia (afirmacja życia, akceptacja siebie, świadomość celu, poczucie wolności, ocena przyszłości, stosunek wobec śmierci).

Ciekawym zagadnieniem okazała się sama zawartość i poziom podobieństw i różnic w obrębie dwóch różnych generacji aktorów. Uzyskane wyniki w tym zakresie przyczyniły się do poszerzenia wiedzy na temat rozwoju człowieka twórczego.

Słowa kluczowe

badania podłużne, kompetencje, relacje, autonomia, poczucie sensu życia

Abstract

The aim of longitudinal research into personality and axiology is to detect what differences, similarities and changes have occurred in these areas over a period of time. The article examines the character of changes in purpose in life in two generations of Polish actors on the basis of the author's Personality and Axiological Model (MOA). The longitudinal studies and analyses conducted confirmed the influence of variables related to competence, relationships and autonomy (MOA components) on purpose in life spheres (affirmation of life, self-acceptance, goal orientation, sense of freedom, outlook for the future, attitude to death, univariate model). The study produced interesting results in the character and level of similarities and differences between two different generations of actors, which gives insight into the development of a creative person.

Keywords

longitudinal studies, competence, relationships, autonomy, sense of life quality

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Introduction

The need for expression which is present in every human being and which lies at the root of acting, opens a pathway to understanding actors. This psychological need to portray one's own and other people's emotions in a performance becomes a creative process in front of an audience. Conceptions of the work of actors presented in different theories of theatre in the 20th century have greatly influenced the education and formation of today's artists. A number of these theories emphasized the significance of personal values in artistic expression (K. Stanisławski, J. Osterwa). According to these theories, being an actor is not merely limited to the art of representing fictional characters, but is also a means of self-improvement, to use the title of one of the works devoted to acting (Stanisławski, 1953, 1954). Theatrologists have frequently argued that without a system of values and a holistic vision on the part of the director, the playwright and the actor, it is difficult to persuade the audience to co-participate in a work of art. After all, the theatre sometimes ensures that contrasting visions are confronted.

Psychological theories also corroborate and supplement aestheticians' and theatrologists' belief that full artistic expression can be achieved through the construction of an integrated system. The sense of difference present in the milieu of actors, which distinguishes them from other artists, offers favorable conditions for the research and analysis of a number of distinct aspects of actors' personalities (Cross, Cattell, Butcher, 1967; Barron, 1969; Arnheim, 1971; Gołaszewska, 1990).

Research into the dynamics of artists' development facilitates the understanding not only of the artists themselves, but also indirectly of their works of art. In acting the work of art is not different from the artist; the actor is at the same time material from which the work is constructed and is identical to it. To date, psychological research into creativity has been concerned with the analysis of the creative process, the manifestation of the need to create, stages of the creative process, and information gathering to the moment of realization of a particular work of art. It has been emphasized that conducting research into the very process of creation is particularly difficult due to its complexity (Hausbrandt, Holoubek, 1986; Terlecka-Reksnis, 2008). Personality has also been mentioned as an important source of information about the artist and the process of creation. It is believed that research into an artist's personality may reveal important data about the artist.

Research on artists has focused on various aspects of this broad issue. Hence, depending on the theoretical basis, it has entailed an analysis of the work of art, the psychological process, the artist's traits or the external factors influencing the process of creation (Csíkszentmihályi, 1992, 1996; Sternberg, 1999; Simonton, 2000a, 2000b; Nosal, 2010; Strzałecki, 1969, 2010; Mróz, 2008).

It seems that great theorists who developed holistic systems in psychology came closer to understanding the essence of creativity in their observations concerning artists and their world. It seems that such views are also shared by art aestheticians. Reflections on human nature and theories explaining and synthetically treating the phenomenon of creativity still have many proponents (Gołaszewska, 1986, 1990).

In considerations in the field of the psychology of creativity, it is worth referring to the wealth of information gathered and observations made by authors of various psychological theories, since they focus on the investigation of human nature and people's characteristics as well as also encompassing creativity. Hence, from among numerous trends and approaches in psychology, the author of this article has chosen an approach relating to this existential dimension. One of the notable representatives of this perspective is the Austrian researcher and practitioner Victor E. Frankl, who includes the axiological dimension in the concept the most comprehensively, emphasizing the reviving role of values in the development of human personality. Another advantage of Frankl's concept of logotherapy is its practicality, as this theory has developed its own therapeutic method called logotherapy, in which Logos does not denote 'word,' but 'meaning' (Frankl, 1971, 1978, see: Wong, 2014).

Frankl's concept, theoretically based on philosophy or more specifically anthropological philosophy, draws in practice on the therapeutic experiences of its author. Frankl frequently relates to existentialist thought and to the ideas of M. Heidegger, K. Jaspers and M. Scheler. In contrast to Freud, he believed that the motivational force and meaning in life is not in the pleasure principle (*Lust-Prinzip*), nor in Adler's will to power (*Wille zur Macht*). In his opinion the dynamics of the search for meaning and values lie at the root of human motivation (*Wille zum Sinn*).

Frankl analyses the role of values in relation to purpose in life. The search for meaning in life constitutes a basic human need. The Austrian researcher looks at the human being in the physical, mental and spiritual dimensions, which constitutes a kind of novelty in psychology. According to Frankl, apart from spirituality, freedom and responsibility are the basic attributes of human existence. Freedom denotes some degree of indeterminism: people are not merely a product of genes and the environment. After all, they themselves decide about themselves and search for purpose and meaning in life.

In Frankl's concept, possibly for personal reasons, people's mortality occupies an important place. Frankl, a prisoner in the German concentration camps at Terezin, Auschwitz and Dachau during World War II, very well appreciated the value of human life. He believed that human life is incomplete if the perspective of death is not assumed. The moment of death must be included in the unconditional search for meaning in life. In the

face of death, as the absolute end and borderline, people feel the imperative of using time to the best advantage.

While living and developing, people transcend themselves, choosing values which may bring self-realization and purpose to their lives. If this is not possible, existential frustration occurs. An individual may start doubting the sense of their own existence. When can people achieve full self-realization, Frankl asks? When they live according to their values (Frankl, 2009). An inability to fulfill one's potential and follow one's values may lead to noogenic neurosis, also called existential frustration. Its symptoms include escapism, boredom, cynicism and a diminished sense of responsibility. There are also other symptoms, called the neurotic triad by the author of logotherapy, namely: depression, addiction and aggression, which are on the increase in Western civilization. In Frankl's diagnosis, contemporary people are disoriented rather than free, as they have no grounding in a stable system of values, are influenced by fads and the media, losing their sense of individuality and their own self. Among the common symptoms of neurosis Frankl mentioned:

1. Inability to deal with practical issues, a feeling of confusion, struggling, indecisiveness;
2. Stereotypical behavior;
3. Generalization (numerous originally neutral stimuli cause anxiety);
4. Pessimistic, distorted self-image;
5. Inadequate responses to stimuli;
6. Impaired conceptual thinking.

Since the world of values is of such paramount importance for human development, the concept of value should be defined. In logotherapy, values motivate people, shaping and forming them in all aspects. Values can be followed in three ways:

- through acting, developing oneself, shaping the world;
- through experiencing, absorbing, appreciating the beauty of the world;
- through suffering and enduring one's fate (Frankl, 1975, p. 59-62).

Because of such ways of following one's values, Frankl distinguishes three groups among them:

1. Values related to creativity – work;
2. Values related to the senses (or experience) – cognition, art;
3. Values related to attitude (Frankl, 2000).

Each of these areas allows people to find purpose in life and avoid existential frustration. Work, art and higher values make human life rewarding, both in the intellectual and emotional dimensions. In this way people attain self-realization and gain a sense of security and belonging.

Purpose in life as a separate existential issue is composed of different layers:

- a) directly connected with the subject and the personal experience of the subject – an integrative function and motivation „towards” life;
- b) indirectly conditioned by an individual’s personality structure, aims and aspirations – the influence of the social and natural environment;
- c) conditioned by individual development, a high degree of stability – this is the deepest motivational force of existence (see: Popielski, 1994).

Emphasizing the need for dynamic tension in people, around them and in their relations with the world, Frankl claims that the analysis of this need may contribute to a better understanding of the underlying aims of human activity. Dynamics of development are based on assumptions made by individuals and they may oscillate between: I must, I can, I should.

Frankl’s concept addresses issues connected with both the analysis of human development and an emphasis on the meaning of work as well as the sense of holding higher values, hence its significance in the analysis of purpose in life in artists.

Materials and Methods

The current longitudinal research used: Purpose in Life Test (PIL) by J.C. Crumbaugh and L.T. Maholick, the Adjective Check List (ACL) by H.G. Gough and A.B. Heilbrun and the Value Survey (VS) by M. Rokeach.

All these methods have been widely described both in English (Gough, 1979; Sternberg, 1999; Simonton, 2000a, 2000b; Rokeach, 1967; Crumbaugh, Wood & Wood, 1980; Gough & Heilbrun, 1983, 2012; Wong, 2014), and in Polish (Juros & Oleś 1993; Płużek & Ledwoch, 1994; Popielski, 1994; Brzozowski, 2007; Tucholska, 2009; Mróz, 1995, 2008, 2011; Martowska, 2012).

The first attempt at constructing a questionnaire measuring purpose in life, a subjective value, was undertaken by Frankl himself. The questionnaire served as a basis for a qualitative description of the symptoms of existential frustration. An attempt at a quantitative approach to the issue was made by T. Kotchen, and the final version was presented by J.C. Crumbaugh and L.T. Maholick (1964). In the context of the current study, it should be mentioned that according to Frankl a creative life offers people a chance to fully develop their personality, axiological, and professional potential. A determination of the structure of „purpose in life” made it possible to verify this theory in practice. Purpose in life is a subjective mental state connected with feeling satisfied with one’s life, conditioned by the significance of the purpose, the involvement and the prospects (Frankl, 1971, 1975). Purpose in life is comprised of such spheres as: affirmation of life; self-

acceptance; goal orientation; a sense of freedom; outlook for the future; attitude to death (Popielski, 1994; Felcyn, Ogińska-Bulik, 2009; Michalska-Leśniewicz, Gruszczyński, 2010; Mróz, 2008, 2015).

The Adjective Check List (ACL) was used in the comparison of results in the three areas of the Personality and Axiological Model (MOA), that is: competence, relationships and autonomy (Mróz, 2015). They have been defined in the following way:

- Competence reflects knowledge as well as the need and ability to influence the course of events or the need to make an effort; it is concerned with the effects of the actions taken².
- Relationships are defined as the need and ability to maintain contact with others, caring for them, the need for social ties with the acceptance of an internalized system of values, and adaptation. Social relationships are defined on the basis of responsibility and autonomy³.

² The ACL offers a full sphere of competence assessments:

- A – Adult: Attitudes of independence, objectivity, and industriousness associated with the concept of a “mature adult” (0,967),
- Ord – Order: To place special emphasis on neatness, organization, and planning in one’s activities (0,948),
- End – Endurance: To persist in any task undertaken (0,940),
- AC – Adapted Child: Attitudes of deference, conformity, and self-discipline associated with the concept of an “adapted” or very dutiful child (-0,832),
- Mls – Military Leader: Steadiness, self-discipline, and good judgment of the kind required in positions of military (or related) leadership (0,806),
- A-4 – Low Origence-High Intellectence: Rationality and analysis (intellectence) valued more highly than feelings and emotion (origence). High scores suggest logicality, industriousness, and cognitive clarity (0,784),
- Ach – Achievement: To strive to be outstanding in pursuits of socially recognized significance – (0,760),
- NP – Nurturing Parent: Attitudes of support, stability, and acceptance associated with the concept of a “nurturing parent” (0,593),
- A-1 – High Origence-Low Intellectence: Feelings and emotion (high origence) valued more highly than detachment and rationality (low intellectence). High scores suggest informality, vitality, and playfulness (-0,584),
- Int – Intraception: To engage in attempts to understand one’s own behavior or the behavior of others (0,565),
- Suc – Succorance: To solicit sympathy, affection, or emotional support from others (-0,537),
- A-2 – High Origence-High Intellectence: High value placed on both affect (origence) and rationality (intellectence). High scores suggest versatility, unconventionality, and individuality (-0,525).

³ The ACL offers a full sphere of relationships assessments:

- A-3 – Low Origence-Low Intellectence: No particular value placed on either origence or intellectence. High scores suggest contentment, conventionality, and optimism (0,817),
- Het – Heterosexuality: To seek the company of and derive emotional satisfaction from interactions with opposite-sex peers (0,806),
- Nur – Nurturance: To engage in behaviors that provide material or emotional benefits to others (0,789),
- Aff – Affiliation: To seek and maintain numerous personal friendships (0,783),
- Fem – Feminine: Role-qualities such as helpfulness, sympathy, and affection associated with everyday notions of femininity (0,719),
- CP – Critical Parent: Attitudes of evaluation, severity, and skepticism associated with the concept of a “critical parent” (-0,636),
- Fav – Favorable: The number of socially desirable adjectives checked (0,607),

- Autonomy is understood as the need and ability to act with a sense of freedom and freedom of choice, self-confidence, facing challenges, the desire to learn and the range of interests⁴.

Values, according to Rokeach, can be cognitive, affective and behavioral in structure. The author distinguished them from attitudes, which – in his opinion – occupy a lower place in the hierarchy of personality, are less central, are related to a particular object and are the most closely connected with acting (Rokeach, 1967).

A hypothesis was put forward that the purpose in life level in outstanding actors will have significantly increased in relation to the results obtained 20 years ago. The hypothesis is based on greater stability in the participants' life (Goszczyńska, 2010), on the social transformations that have occurred, which have also benefitted the outstanding participants, and on the establishing of their own professional status. Goszczyńska claims that while analyzing the perception of inequalities in material status one must not disregard the changes which have occurred in Poland with respect to the increase in the significance of the personal merit of an individual (abilities, qualifications, other "investments"). Changes in the perception of other people's achievements are beginning to dominate and in some areas the principles of meritocracy apply.

It is also stipulated that there will be some variation in the purpose in life level in actors since the sense of professional success is not identical to purpose in life, as signaled in the works of E. Lukas (1972), or Popielski (1994, 2009). Although the author of the first study on outstanding actors dealt with a significantly successful group, it must be noted that it also included participants with low scores in this area (Mróz, 2008).

The study group, both 20 years ago and currently, was composed of outstanding Polish actors (honored with, among others, a *Palme d'Or*). In the first study (conducted in the period 1988–1989) the participants' ages ranged between 32 and 63 (the average

– P-Adj – Personal Adjustment: Good adjustment in the sense of the ability to cope with situational and interpersonal demands, and a feeling of efficacy (0,565).

⁴ The ACL offers a full sphere of autonomy assessments:

- Exh – Exhibition: To behave in such a way as to elicit the immediate attention of others (0,876),
- FC – Free Child: Attitudes of playfulness, impulsivity, and self-centeredness associated with the concept of a "free" or very expressive child (0,830),
- Aba – Abasement: To express feelings of inferiority through self-criticism, guilt, or social impotence (-0, 806),
- Def – Deference: To seek and maintain subordinate roles in relationships with others (-0,764),
- S-Cn – Self-Control: The extent to which self-control is imposed, and valued (-0,755),
- Aut – Autonomy: To act independently of others or of social values and expectations (0,707),
- S-Cfd – Self-Confidence: Self-confidence, poise, and self-assurance (0,701),
- Agg – Aggression: To engage in behaviors that attack or hurt others (0,691),
- Dom – Dominance: To seek and maintain a role as leader in groups, or to be influential and controlling in individual relationships (0,688),
- Cha – Change: To seek novelty of experience and avoid routine (0,632),
- Cps – Creative Personality: The desire to do and think differently from the norm, and a talent for originality (0,631).

age was 44.7; SD 9.31), in the second study (conducted over the period 2009–2013) – between 53 and 82 (the average age was 63.1; SD 8.01). The group was comprised of 17 female and 15 male participants. All the outstanding actors were professionally active, working in theatres in Poland and abroad and starring in Polish and foreign films. As longitudinal studies were conducted over a few years, hereinafter the time of the study is conventionally approximated to: "in 1989" and "in 2010."

It should be mentioned that the second study was conducted on 80% of the 40-strong sample of outstanding Polish actors: one participant did not consent to be included in the second study (2.5%), and seven actors had died in the meantime (17.5%). The famous actors were recruited from Warsaw, Krakow and Wroclaw.

The actors were divided into groups on the basis of evaluation by 7 competent judges recruited from the artistic milieu (outstanding film and theatre directors, screenwriters, producers and scenographers). The participants willingly answered the questions and showed an interest in the research results, treating it as an aid in their professional development.

Results

Below are presented the results of the tests of variance with regard to the status of the participants (first the scores of outstanding actors, next those of famous actors). The tables also contain Eta^2 statistics, a measure of effect size. The measure shows what percentage of variation of the dependent variable (purpose in life) is explained by independent variables. It is usually calculated in a multivariate analysis of variance to discover which independent variable "affects more" the dependent variable results.

Table 1 presents the results of variation in PIL scores in outstanding actors obtained in the two studies: in 1989 and in 2010.

Table 1. Variation in PIL scores with respect to professional status (outstanding actors) and time of measurement (1989 vs. 2010). Mean scores (M), standard deviations (SD), F value, statistical significance of variance, Eta² (N = 35)

Purpose in life spheres	Professional status: outstanding	M	SD	Variance (Anova)		Eta ²
				F (2.880)	p	
Total score	1989 2010	110.25 110.69	11.89 15.59	0.016	0.900	0.001
Affirmation of life	1989 2010	47.19 45.56	4.81 6.76	1.227	0.272	0.019
Self-acceptance	1989 2010	15.81 15.94	2.98 3.07	0.027	0.869	0.001
Goal orientation	1989 2010	17.62 17.50	2.50 2.94	0.034	0.855	0.001
Sense of freedom	1989 2010	9.75 10.34	2.35 2.04	1.161	0.285	0.018
Outlook for the future	1989 2010	11.47 11.00	2.34 2.90	0.507	0.479	0.008
Attitude to death	1989 2010	8.40 10.37	2.99 2.61	7.859	0.007	0.113
MANOVA F = 2.880 df ₁ = 8 df ₂ = 119 p < 0.001						

It was stipulated that purpose in life level in outstanding actors would increase significantly in relation to the scores obtained 20 years earlier. In order to verify this hypothesis, to determine the difference between the means for the total purpose in life level, the author conducted an analysis of variance (MANOVA F = 2.880, df₁ = 8, df₂ = 119, p < 0.001). The total scores obtained are high scores: the 1989 study results were M = 110.25; SD = 11.89; and the 2010 study results were M = 110.69; SD = 15.59. The result related to purpose in life level appeared to have increased by a mere 0.44 pts over 20 years. In Crumbaugh's research, professionally successful individuals scored 117.1 pts (Crumbaugh, 1968; Wong, 2014; Popielski, 2009; Felcyn, Ogińska-Bulik, 2009). In the current research, scores over 108 pts were considered high (Mróz, 1995, 2008). In the studies conducted by the above-mentioned authors, neither gender nor age affected purpose in life in a statistically significant way, hence further analyses did not include these variables. Interestingly, a similar observation was made in studies into sense of life quality (Lykken, Tellegen, 1996; Lykken, 1999; Mróz, 2011).

The longitudinal research into purpose in life in outstanding Polish actors in spheres constituting components of the total score revealed one statistically significant difference in attitude to death (F = 7.859, p < 0.001, Eta² = 11.3%). The results in this single sphere significantly influenced purpose in life in actors after 20 years.

Markedly, the results obtained in the study on outstanding actors with regard to their "attitude to death" and "sense of freedom" spheres resemble the results obtained by Fel-

cyn and Ogińska-Bulik (2009) in research on bereaved individuals recovering from grief (Attitude to death $M = 9.50$; Sense of freedom: $M = 10.23$).

Evidently, the hypothesis about changes was not corroborated, as there was no significant increase in purpose in life level in outstanding actors in relation to the results obtained 20 years earlier. This is rather surprising and reveals that neither further personality development, nor attaining professional achievements, nor the influence of the change of the socio-political system in Poland, i.e. internal and external transformations, affected this subjectively important sphere in outstanding actors. The study once again corroborates the hypothesis that there is no correlation between achievements (after 20 years the participants have greater and more significant artistic achievements) and purpose in life (Frankl, 2009; Crumbaugh, 1968; Popielski, 1994; Mróz, 2008). These results thus show that purpose in life is a constant in the personality of outstanding Polish actors.

PIL scores of famous actors in longitudinal research are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Variation in PIL scores with respect to professional status (famous actors) and time of measurement (1989 a 2010). Mean scores (M), standard deviations (SD), F value, statistical significance of variance, Eta^2 ($N = 33$)

Purpose in life spheres	Professional status: famous	M	SD	Variance (Anova)		Eta ²
				F (2.880)	p	
Total score	1989 2010	100.06 115.67	16.21 12.15	19.571	0.001	0.234
Affirmation of life	1989 2010	43.27 48.79	6.55 4.90	14.995	0.001	0.190
Self-acceptance	1989 2010	13.45 17.12	4.05 2.27	20.585	0.001	0.243
Goal orientation	1989 2010	15.97 17.91	3.69 2.36	6.451	0.014	0.092
Sense of freedom	1989 2010	9.27 10.42	2.33 2.21	4.235	0.044	0.062
Outlook for the future	1989 2010	9.88 11.57	2.46 2.25	8.552	0.005	0.118
Attitude to death	1989 2010	8.21 9.85	2.92 2.53	5.919	0.018	0.085
MANOVA $F = 2.880$ $df_1 = 8$ $df_2 = 119$ $p < 0.001$						

The total scores in the longitudinal study with respect to variation between means in purpose in life in famous actors are average scores (in the first study $M = 100.06$; $SD = 16.21$) and high scores (in the second study $M = 115.67$; $SD = 12.15$) and appeared to be statistically significant at 0.001 ($F = 19.571$; $Eta^2 = 23.4\%$). In the group of famous actors the influence of time between the 1989 and the 2010 studies on changes in purpose in life accounted for 23.4% of the explained variance, so the effect size between these variables was of the same strength.

Notably, famous actors' scores in all spheres revealed statistically significant differences. Namely, the greatest effect size (Eta^2) occurred in the following spheres in this order: Self-acceptance ($F = 20.585$, $p < 0.001$; the effect size of this sphere in the longitudinal study was 24.3%); Univariate model ($F = 14.496$, $p < 0.001$; the effect size of this sphere in the longitudinal study was 20.5%); Affirmation of life ($F = 14.995$, $p < 0.001$; the effect size of this sphere in the longitudinal study was 19%); Outlook for the future ($F = 8.552$, $p < 0.005$; the effect size of this sphere in the longitudinal study was 11.8%); Goal orientation ($F = 6.451$, $p < 0.014$; the effect size of this sphere in the longitudinal study was 9.2%); Attitude to death ($F = 5.919$, $p < 0.018$; the effect size of this sphere in the longitudinal study was 8.5%); Sense of freedom ($F = 4.235$, $p < 0.044$; the effect size of this sphere in the longitudinal study was 6.2%).

These results corroborated both hypotheses stipulating that purpose in life level will vary in groups of actors. Indeed, the results for famous actors were markedly different after 20 years.

Independent (personality and axiological) variables correlate not only with the dependent variable (purpose in life), but also mutually. Thus, the fact that some values correlated highly with purpose in life does not necessarily mean that they play an important part in the explanation of the dependent variable, even if they are mutually correlated. Therefore, the next stage is stepwise regression, a procedure in which variables which account for many more new variations of the dependent variable are selected for the model. Thus, if independent variables are mutually strongly correlated, then in stepwise regression analysis only some new ones will be selected. Hence the next table contains only the correlations of independent variables and purpose in life and its six spheres that have been determined by regression analysis. The correlations illustrate the dependence between particular variables from all the psychological tools used.

Due to the low sample numbers, a stepwise regression analysis for particular measurements and groups of outstanding and famous actors would be of little use, so the results presented are total and focus on predictors of purpose in life in actors.

Table 3 presents the results of a stepwise regression analysis, first for the total score, and then for six spheres of purpose in life.

Table 3. Significance of independent personality and axiological variables in the explanation of the total score for purpose in life in a multiple stepwise regression

Personality and axiological variables	B	Standard error	Beta	t	Significance	Pearson's r
Constant	-5.083	214.173		-0.024	0.981	
Int_Id – intraception K	0.558	0.158	0.309	3.731	0.001	0.148
AC – Adopted child K	-0.451	0.165	-0.293	-2.735	0.001	-0.590**
FC – Free child A	0.478	0.115	0.287	4.144	0.001	0.428**
A – Adult K	0.387	0.170	0.246	2.282	0.001	0.499**
Nur_Id – nurturance R	0.425	0.175	0.229	2.426	0.017	0.013
Intellect	0.621	0.201	0.194	3.085	0.023	0.209*
Unfav_Id – Negative adjectives	-0.632	0.249	-0.193	-2.543	0.024	-0.139
Wisdom	-0.472	0.223	-0.130	-2.113	0.037	-0.088

Multiple correlation coefficient: $R = 0.755$

Coefficient of multiple determination: $R^2 = 0.570$

Significance of the equation: $F = 17.698$, $p < 0.001$

$df_1 = 9$

$df_2 = 120$

K – competence

R – relationships

A – autonomy

* The correlation is significant at 0.05

** The correlation is significant at 0.01

Prior to a discussion of the results obtained in the stepwise regression, it is worth recalling that in the Value Survey in statistical analyses the results are reversed, that is they have an opposite sign. Thus, if any value has a negative sign, the significance is positive for the dependent variable in question. The Beta coefficient should be read according to the order of the independent variables presented. In addition, the table contains Pearson's r for independent variables, with a view to conducting a more detailed analysis of the results obtained.

Regression verifies if particular correlations are not spurious. A linear combination of results in eight personality-axiological variables accounts for a 57% variation in purpose in life (total score). The correlation power between the total score for purpose in life (the dependent variable) and eight independent variables is $R = 0.755$. In the prediction of the dependent variable, that is the level of purpose in life, the following variables proved to be significant in the regression equation (in the order of the extent to which they explained the dependent variable): Int – intraception; from transactional analysis AC Adopted child, FC Free child, A – Adult; Nur – nurturance; 'intellect' among the instrumental values from the Value Survey; Unfav_Id – the number of negative adjectives in ideal self; 'wisdom' among the terminal values from the Value Survey.

The study revealed that the total score for purpose in life depends to a large extent on the intensity of the independent personality variables (six), and to a smaller extent on the axiological variables (two). Similar results were obtained by the author in a study on senior personnel (Mróz, 2011). The strongest predictors of purpose in life for the total score include: Adopted child, Free child, Adult, 'intellect'; the weaker predictors are as follows: intraception, nurturance, the number of negative adjectives in the ideal self and 'wisdom.'

Psychological characteristics of personality and axiological dimensions which yield a high total score for purpose in life in actors are based on meaning and attaching importance to reliability, efficiency, autonomy and effectiveness. Significantly, this is frequently achieved, as shown in previous analyses, through the suppression of personal feelings and emotions. Undoubtedly, striving for success and real accomplishments also enhances the world of feelings and emotions. It seems that actors would not have effective and rewarding work without a strong emphasis on achievements, without risk taking, or without some kind of childlike spontaneity and impulsiveness. Hence this analysis must also underline that total concentration on their work, technical skill and ambition not only contribute to actors' success, but also affect their purpose in life.

Discussion

When Purpose in Life Test scores are presented not only quantitatively and qualitatively but also in the differential mode (e.g. they are compared with regard to the time the research was done or the professional status of the participants), the results, apart from being historically significant, are also more credible. The algorithm of longitudinal studies offers the quantitative comparisons real strength, rather than just being mere statistics.

Having conducted an analysis of PIL scores of outstanding and famous actors (with a lack of significant differences in scores in the case of the former group, accompanied by statistically significant differences in all PIL spheres in the case of the latter), one may claim that the variation in purpose in life between the two groups of actors is generational in character, as variations between approximately the 40th and the 60th year of life (in outstanding actors) and the 20th and the 40th year of life (in famous actors) are developmentally fundamental for this variable.

In conclusion, it must be emphasized that, thanks to the application of stepwise regression analysis, the following areas which play a significant part in the prediction of purpose in life have been determined from among independent personality and axiological variables :

- placing importance on reliability, efficiency, autonomy and effectiveness;

- engaging in attempts to better understand oneself and others;
- risk taking, childlike spontaneity;
- ability to cooperate with others and caring for relationships.

Relations between personality traits and values once again proved to play a role in the functioning of an important variable, in this case – purpose in life. "Values, similarly to our personality traits, have their share in the construction of our life structure and are themselves supported by this structure" – this statement about the dependence between these two dimensions was verified by McCrae and Costa (2005). A similar claim is made by Brzozowski: 'Personality traits may be regarded as internal (psychological) causes of values. Regression analyses come closer to such an understanding of the relations between traits and values as they reveal value predictors, that is variables which can be used in prediction of values (Brzozowski, 2007, p. 240)'. Finally, an observation made by Rokeach, which is a most valid one in the opinion of the author of this article: although values are close to the "I" structure, still they are not a part of it (Rokeach, 1973).

Interestingly, in the regression analysis both gender (apart from its small share in the explanation of goal orientation) and age had hardly any significance in the explanation of purpose in life. Also the ideal self from the ACL Test proved to be largely insignificant (see: Gough, 1979). Pearson's r in the values scores were noticeably low, which will be reflected in the characteristics of groups with different personality types. The hypothesis that the purpose in life level will be significantly influenced by personality and axiological variables related to the importance of professional activity and focus on work, but also by rewarding and varied relationships with others and by the ability to cooperate, appeared to be true. It was intellectual and cognitive issues, professional competence and the ability to establish and maintain relationships with others that proved to be the most predictive of purpose in life.

Additionally, all the variables from the regression analysis for the PIL total score predictive of purpose in life in actors are contained in the Personality and Axiological Model (MOA) (competence, relationships, autonomy), which proves its usefulness.

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