

Basic psychological needs and identity orientations in Serbian adolescents

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According to Self-determination theory, basic psychological needs represent sources of positive identity and optimal functioning. There is no prior research on the relationship between basic psychological needs and identity orientations in adolescents, like the ones defined in the Tetrapartite model of the self, which differentiates personal, relational, collective, and public identity orientation. The present study had two goals: (1) to investigate associations between basic psychological needs and identity orientations in adolescence; and (2) to test whether basic psychological needs contribute to the prediction of identity orientations when controlling for sociodemographic variables (gender, parental employment, and family's financial status). The sample consisted of 1,933 Serbian adolescents (62.2% females, $M_{age} = 15.66$). Results of structural equation modeling revealed that Personal identity was associated with autonomy satisfaction and autonomy frustration ($\beta = .410, .190, p < .001$), relational identity was associated with autonomy satisfaction, relatedness satisfaction, relatedness frustration and competence satisfaction ($\beta = .312, .823, .545, -.392, p < .001$). Collective identity was associated only with autonomy satisfaction ($\beta = .209, p < .005$), while public identity orientation was not significantly associated with any basic psychological need. After controlling for sociodemographic variables, the contributions of the basic psychological needs to predicting identity orientations remained largely unchanged. The only change was in autonomy satisfaction predicting public identity orientation ($\beta = -.259, p < .001$). This study highlights the significance of basic psychological needs in shaping identity orientations in adolescents. Keywords: basic psychological needs, identity orientations, Self-determination theory, Tetrapartite model of the self, adolescence.

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Primary author: ŠAKAN, Dušana (Department of Business Psychology, Faculty of Law and Business Studies dr Lazar Vrkatić, University Union Belgrade)

Co-authors: Dr LAZIĆ, Milica (Department of Psychology, Faculty of Philosophy, University of Novi Sad, Novi Sad, Serbia); Dr JOVANOVIĆ, Veljko (Department of Psychology, Faculty of Philosophy, University of Novi Sad, Novi Sad, Serbia); Ms OBRADOVIĆ, Vojana (Department of Psychology, Faculty of Philosophy, University of Novi Sad, Novi Sad, Serbia); Prof. GAVRILOV-JERKOVIĆ, Vesna (Department of Psychology, Faculty of Philosophy, University of Novi Sad, Novi Sad, Serbia); Prof. ZOTOVIĆ-KOSTIĆ, Marija (Department of Psychology, Faculty of Philosophy, University of Novi Sad, Novi Sad, Serbia); Dr TOMAŠEVIĆ, Aleksandar (Department of Sociology, Faculty of Philosophy, University of Novi Sad, Novi Sad, Serbia)

Presenter: ŠAKAN, Dušana (Department of Business Psychology, Faculty of Law and Business Studies dr Lazar Vrkatić, University Union Belgrade)

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