

## **Quality of life (QOL) the essence of social work supervision**

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### **Abstract**

*New challenges and priorities of social work modernization processes in the context of European integration and enlargement of the European Union are analysed in this theoretical article. Main attention is paid to the problematics of a person in a changing society. The priorities of citizens' activity in a society should be based on knowledge on the being of a personality, its entirety, because only by knowing the object of affection of our activity, we can allow it to create a vision of a better life and embody it in the real life.*

*The article highlights the person's search for meanings in a changed world. The essence of a person's structure, importance of culture, morale, ethics and value thinking for creating life quality is revealed on a philosophical and theoretical level.*

*The scientific problem presented in the article defines the following questions:*

- *What attitude to personality of full value is important for a social worker when creating life quality?*
- *Can a person's life quality be an essential motive of the supervision created?*

*The object of the research were the attitudes of philosophers, psychologists and the author, their thoughts on the personality, its place in a changing world and creation of life quality as a motivation of social worker's supervision.*

**Keywords:** personality, quality of life (QOL) social work supervision, social worker

### **1. Introduction**

This article discusses the context of modern, changing society, in which a need to give special attention to a person – a personality and a citizen – arises. A person faces various challenges in a quickly changing society more often than before. Futurists claim that too fast pace of technology development, quick modernization of everyday life makes the society to learn how to manage information, technologies and create their life quality in a context of changed values.

Incapability to overcome challenges personally, even for organizations, motivates the birth of new or newly approached activities, related to the help for a person and communities. Nowadays, various groups, companies, personal psychologists, pedagogues, business and leadership specialists, social pedagogues and other providers of social services and supervisors interested in particularly this area are known in Lithuania as well. Coaching specialists could be mentioned, who begin solving the person's problems in a society from these questions:

- Who are you?
- What do you know about yourself?
- What do you feel?
- What are your strengths?
- What are your weaknesses?

Are you happy?

Are you what you want to be, or are you what others want you to be?

Positive answers would most probably be one of guarantees of life quality.

Another methodology of consultations is Using Goldratt's Theory of Constraints (TOC), which is applied by a company „TOC sprendimai“ in Lithuania. It is a complex, but effective methodology of consultative work with people and organizations. The theory of constraints is comprehended as a methodology of the functioning of human systems and organizations, implementing supportive supervision. Thus, it is one or another set of tools. The theory is based on an assumption that the genes of a person are just a specific program of heritage. However, person's actions are influenced by the environment, memes (meme – cultural item or idea that is transmitted by repetition in a manner analogous to the propagation of biological genes), that are learned.

Life strategy, comprehension of life quality is often based on economical assumptions. Quality of life is the most important index of country's economy policy. However, it is a narrow attitude to the being of a personality. Its decadence is majorly influenced by the recession of moral, ethical values and culture. The article presents an attitude to a person's motivation to create life quality with evaluation to health, feeling of happiness, security, cultural values, dignity, subjective feeling of welfare, education, feeling of community, motivation of life and activity.

Therefore, the essence of all consulting methodologies, especially supervision is to understand a person by collaborating, discussing, creating a medium for dialogues, to teach him to survive in a society, create himself and a beneficial environment, enable him to act, think and feel.

Referring the works of philosophers and theoreticians, the article seeks to envisage the human nature more deeply. Not the documented orders, bookish activity schemes, but rather the entirely comprehended person's feeling will enable the activity of social work specialists to be productive and longterm.

„Effective social work practice also involves the ability to influence the organizational and community context of the provision of direct services on behalf of client groups to fill gaps in services, ameliorate oppressive social conditions, and improve social policies“, – writes A. Kadushin (Kadushin, Harkness, 2002).

The attention given to supervision is seen in scientific researches. A. Kadushin sees an importance of social work specialists' discussion on the topic (Kadushin, 1992). Supervision as a process is important in solving the problems of women and families (Aukt-Riche, 1988), creating leader as a climate of organization (Bunker, Wijnberg, 1985), topicalities of ethics (Cohen, 1987), practice of social work in the future (Bruce, Austin, 2000), etc.

A. Kadushin (Kadushin, 1992) especially emphasized the importance of supervision for influencing the maturity of professional socialization, satisfaction in work, stabilization of turnover etc.

Due to this reason, examining the essence of social work supervision, qualitative and holistical attitude to a personality is extremely important. Methods are searched for that would allow to speak with people confirming: it can help you to become happy. However, when attempting to speak to others, even specialists should more attentively look at themselves, analyze the human nature. Even articles of young scientists, methodological literature for students incorrectly use the terms *individual* and *personality*, which must be corrected.

Several assignments are defined in the article:

- to explore the fullness of a personality and its place in the society;
- person's life quality as an essential motive of supervision created

## 2. Fullness of a personality and its place in the society of a changed world

The author's scientific researches and practical work are based on the attitudes of humanistic philosophy and psychology. An emphasis is put on personality's wholeness and entirety, idea of continuous becoming, variety

of relations between the world and a person who is able to seek for freedom. Humanistic theory of personality's evolution proposes unconditional attention and respect to a personality (Rogers, 1989). It is a progressive concept, based on the hierarchy of human needs, which sees and evaluates a meaningful attitude to the process of self-evolution. The attitude of Abraham H. Maslow to a personality dashing into the future, seeking to realize its powers and actualize itself in the society is important these days. (Maslow, 1978). The striving for growth and development as an infinite process was also emphasized by Carl H. Rogers (Kirschenbaum, 1974). Not only the knowledge obtained, but also skills acquired open the human's powers to create himself and the world, communicate with the world on all levels, reflect it, comprehend the mission and meaning of his existence in this world.

The essential thought of dr. Viktor Frankl human science: a person's life cannot lose its meaning under any circumstances. It must be found. Only when a person is free he may choose values that make life meaningful. A personality is more than psyche, it is a lively spirit, creation, pursue for highest values through experience and meaning of life (Frankl, 1979). Seeking to understand the coverage of a personality, improve its relationships with itself and the society, it is firstly mandatory to improve person's relationships with the society (community) and see one's meaningful place in the culture. The actualization of person's meaning of existence through the relationship with values in the culture was also mentioned by Meilė Lukšienė (Lukšienė, 2000).

„If an ideal goal of science is to decrease the influence of human determinants to a minimum, then we will get closer to this goal not by denying the human factor in science, but rather by acknowledging it continuously and increasingly deeper“, – writes Abraham Maslow (Maslow, 1999).

Analyzing important political, economic problems and their influence on social sphere, secure life, education sphere, criminality, the object in the name of which the discussion should be held seems to be forgotten. After all, we should remember the country's citizen not only as an object of society, but as object. Analyze his needs, create increasingly better, beneficial life strategies. And while analyzing the summaries of crimes we should ask: what influences human's behaviour, his moral and social values that become setbacks in creation of better life.

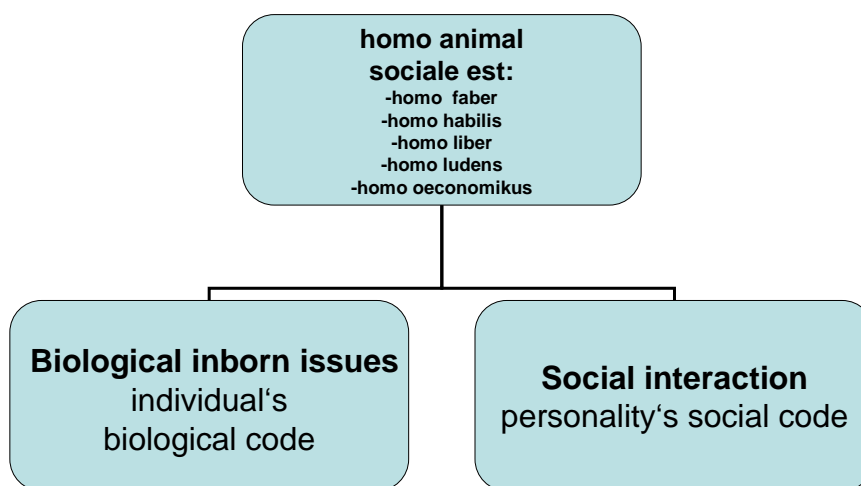
Prof. Saulius Kanišauskas sees a human problem when analyzing the debates of thinkers and scientists from the 16th and 17th age - René Descartes and John Locke: is a person really a *tabula rasa* when coming to this world, i.e. inherits only the signs written by genetics, or also brings distant echoes of society, spreading in an unknown way (Kanišauskas, 2011). This question was analyzed by scientists in the 21st century as well, but remains unanswered. „It is interesting that attention to anti-social behaviour is high, while there are very little researches dedicated to expression of high morale and spirituality. They also emphasize social and cultural environment, education and self-education, but considerably less talk about genetic inheritance, unfortunately, limited to examples“, – writes the author (Kanišauskas, 2011).

However, scientists in Lithuania also turn to Abraham Maslow, who was the first one to begin examining not the psychopathologies, but rather psychically healthy personalities of high morale and contended that *environment only helps or prevents* the person from pursuing his value ideals. And interesting though of S. Kanišauskas states that “Synergetic processes are determined by three factors: *initial program* of the system, *adaptation* to changed external and internal factors and *feedback*. When applying this for a human, *adaptation* and *feedback* is nothing else than processes of learning (tapping information) and (self-) education, while the *initial program* – *genetic* and *social codes*. [...] The fact that *genetic code* determines all the physical properties of a person has become a trivial statement nowadays. However, analogically to physical structures, *social information* lying in *mental structures* is also given and received“ (Kanišauskas, 2011). We may state that it is possible that society is as important to us and future generations as genes, because if inborn ideas were understood as „*anticipatory fundamental properties, abilities to subconsciously imbibe* not only linguistic, but also the whole cultural environment, this *subconsciously imbibed cultural environment* will become the *cultural inheritance, social code* that significantly affects person's behaviour and his scale of values (Kanišauskas,

2011). Therefore, social *code* is nothing else but „even subconsciously registered *cultural inheritance*“. According to A. Davydov (Davydov, 2006), cited in the article of S. Kanišauskas, society’s influence to person’s behaviour is limited to 38 per cent, with the remaining 62 per cent „belonging“ to what is called inheritance – i.e. *genetic* and *social codes*.

We can make a conclusion that it is likely that every citizen integrates into an existing society according to a code reflecting the past generations – not only genetic, but also social code. On the other hand, it obliges a person to be socially responsible in a society: sensitive, tolerant, moral, forbearing, public-spirited, humane and creating.

## PERSONALITY’S POSITION IN THE META-SYSTEM OF THE WORLD



**Fig. 1.** Personality’s position in the meta-system of the world (R. Bieliauskienė)

As a biological being, a person is an individual that improves his biological inborn issues, psychophysiology, while being a personality pursuing individuality and maturity in the context of social relationships: working, operating, creating (*homo faber*), clever (*homo habilis*), free (*homo liberis*), able to play (*homo ludens*), farm (*homo oeconomicus*), politicize (*homo politicus*). It is mandatory to emphasize, because in many methodical and other literature, written easy-handedly (once again, translated texts and their blind rewriting are partly guilty), *an individual* „can start“ business, „be“ a leader or „fight“ for child rights. An individual is a category related to person’s biological inborn issues. However, it is worthy to quote Povilas Aleksandravičius: „A human’s soul, which determines his *bios* is also called *psyche* and *nous*, because it inspires the life of mind, influences spiritual origins, human freedom drives and creative activity“ (Aleksandravičius, 2011).

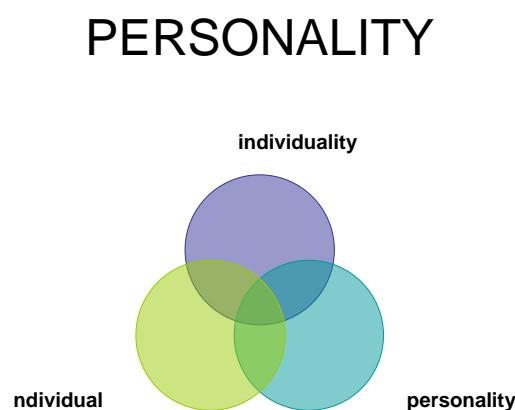
Modern science covers the variety of person’s relations with the world: a person is born as a biological being. In the area of various relations, a person is analyzed as a product of biological evolution – **an individual** and a subject and object of historical process – **a personality**. In a pursue to understand person’s essence, an interface of genetics, physiology, somatology, psychology, philosophy, semiotics, axiology, pedagogics and other sciences became significant. Therefore, personality and its process of becoming, during which the most important effective parameters, such as psychophysiology, intellect, spiritual sphere, change, are understood holistically.

In his work *Kritik der reinen Vernunft*, Immanuel Kant rises three relevant questions that define the philosophy area of a world's citizen: what can I know? What must I do? What can I expect? Maybe these are the most important questions that are answered by philosophical anthropology? „Anthropology is the acknowledgement of a human. It covers the whole nature of a person as a distinctive corporeal and spiritual being“, – explains M. Heidegger (Heidegger, 1992).

„A thinking cane“, – accurately expressed a French mathematician, physicist and philosopher Blaise Pascal. Human is the most fragile nature's creation, which is exalted by thinking (Pascal, 1986). „A human is a creation in which all stages of hierarchy merge. He is composed of two components – body and mind, the latter of which is infinitely more valuable than the first one, which is but a cane, the weakest in the nature. However, it is a thinking cane“, – wrote Wladislaw Tatarkiewicz as well (Tatarkiewicz, 2002).

In this article, without delving deeper into other concepts of personality, we will present a thought of Leonas Jovaiša, which should be known by the educators – it is “a distinctive system of individual's psychical structures [...]. In addition, a personality as a system is entire, its structural components depend on each other and compose an inseparable entirety“ (Jovaiša, 2009). A person's nature holds the primers of creativity, curiosity and emotions. V. Aramavičiūtė believes that not only through person's relations with discrete people, but also through his relations with the whole society, i.e. with lesser or wider social communities the person's primers of spirituality assert (Aramavičiūtė, 2005). Personality's criteria of values also form in the society (Aleknaitė-Bieliauskienė, 2013).

The pursue for versatile maturity of a personality covers the evolution of all its powers, while the harmony is sought by cherishing the tune of the system.

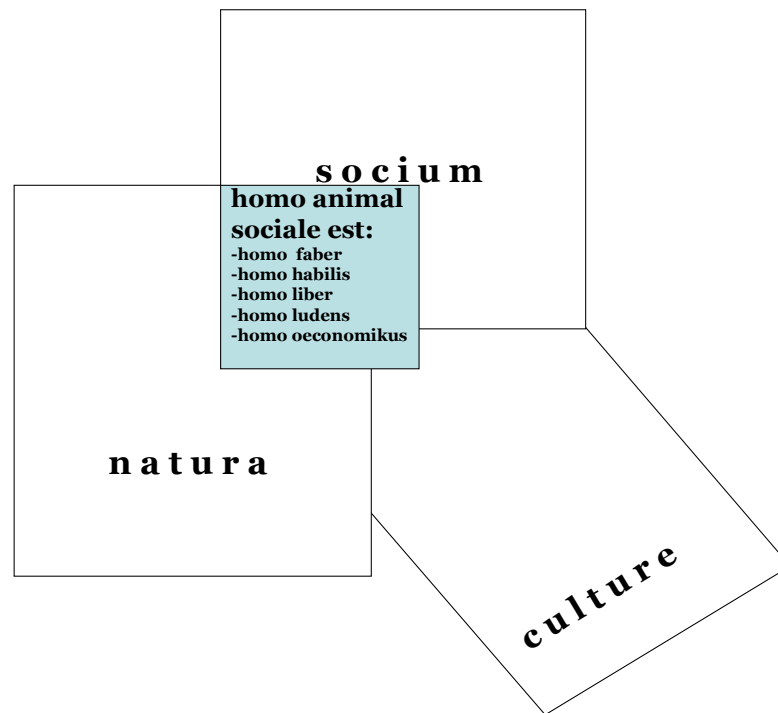


**Fig. 2.** Links of a versatile personality system (R. Bieliauskienė)

### 3. Value components of personality

An adherent of liberal education direction, philosopher T. H. McLaughlin distinguishes two types of values: social values mandatory for all people and freely chosen personal values. The first ones are embedded and materialized through law. Their expression asserts as human rights. These rights include freedom of speech, righteousness, personal autonomy, freedom to pursue more versatile welfare, tolerance and respect. Personal

properties cover a concrete person's attitude to good, elements of personal life, moral and ethical attitudes, covers the systems of values that are related to tolerance to differences etc. (Aramavičiūtė, 2005). Having analyzed the attitudes of psychologists from various philosophy schools we may state that the values of a personality as a subject and object of society are definitions and standards of the most important attitudes and existential ideals. A person searches them in historical contexts of society, follows them while acting, creating relationships, material products, forming a level of qualitative existence in the society.



**Fig. 3.** Aristotle: A person as a „civil, thinking and moral animal“ (R. Bieliauskienė)

Culture, as a qualitative indicator of absolutely every person's existence in a society makes us translucent in our relationships with other people. This indicator (wide amplitude with contradictions: how do we exist, act in a society?) is always regarded when measuring a person: creating (destroying), respectful (mocking), politicizing, enterprising etc. Every period of society's development, every social layer has its own consistently formed system of values. *Value orientations* ensure a personality's direction of operating in a society, deflects people's reciprocal relationships and even becomes an acceptable or mandatory norm of behaviour in a society. This should be based on when explaining the entrenchment of the most brutal Russian curse words in a society of youth that do not speak Russian, incomprehension of salutations in communities of students and teachers, spread of brutal text in the TV screens, movie dubs etc. A citizen balances between personal values and values that are tolerated and realized in the society. „Values are specific social definitions of the environmental world that highlight their positive or negative influence to a person and society; person's objects of interests, signs of his various relations with surrounding objects and phenomena“ (Leonavičius, 1993).

We say that in our society, unfortunately, pragmatic culture is dominating, which unmask through values that prevail in it: benefit, wealth, making a person into an item, bullying, primitive emotional sphere (TV shows, schools, workplace media), cult of brutality, disrespect to a person, his life (healthcare, social inequality, intolerance to another, egoism), infringement of moral and ethical norms, lack of intellect (in the management of organizations, business, politics, systems of law enforcement, education), dishonesty, plagiarization, compulsion (works of „scientists“, pedagogues and students that do not develop a creative thought) etc. By

presenting thoughts of various thinkers, Valdas Pruskus conveys a position of idealistic prescriptivism theory: „a value to its adherents is a rationally formed rule or a normative instruction that designates what needs to be recognized, i.e. valued and what should be avoided [...]. In this case, evaluations are understood as guidelines for self-expression of thinking, behaviour and other forms [...]. If evaluations are well-grounded, a criterion of objective truth can be applied to them“, – writes Valdas Pruskus, basing on works of (Combs, 1977) and other thinkers (Pruskus, 2005). However, we should think about the influence of before mentioned *social code* to a „civil, thinking and moral animal“ (Aristotle). Then our attitude to responsibility in a society should assume a significantly deeper meaning. A different place would be attributed to values that are nowadays pushed periphery of society, such as values that embody humanism, values of spirituality, creativity, esthetical feeling, national self-awareness, self-esteem, authenticity, expanding intellect, art, history.

Ona Gražina Rakauskienė reminds that economics is not only a sphere of material interests, while „immoral economic is not an economic, as it destroys rather than creating“, – the professor quotes a thought of Povilas Gylys (Gylys, 2008). O. G. Rakauskienė also evaluates problems existing in the society: „poverty of the majority of people, blunting cult of consumption, ecological crisis. All of these are results of spiritless farming, egoistic profit taking economy, that are pursued by any means necessary. The main reason of the crisis is the collapse of moral economy motives, disappearance of the highest goal of economics – to create a harmonious and right society. Economic cannot be effective if it is created without regarding the principles of social righteousness and responsibility. In order to successfully overcome global crisis, a serious transformation of social-economic model is mandatory, with emphasis being put on social righteousness, regarding the interests of the whole society“ (Rakauskienė, Servetkienė, 2011).

One of the most significant value changes in our society – pinched dignity – an essence of human worth. As it can be seen from the figures given (fig. 1 and 2), a person’s dignity must be recognized due to its inborn existence, personal being and significance of personality’s status in the society. A dignified person seeks to realize his human worth. Even when pursuing leadership, creating a career, improving formal competences, an emphasis should be put on living and acting honestly, communicating with sincerity, nurturing sincere feelings, empathy, altruism. Feeling of dignity inspires various forms of person’s self-control. It develops strictness for oneself which is lacking these days.

#### **4. Person’s life quality as an essential motive of created supervision**

Today the mankind is mature enough to ask: can a global catastrophe happen that would lead to the extinction of all the mankind, or will the immortality of a man will be reached? Physical immortality are the infinite interests of a person and the seek to realize them. The problem of futurists is to create an artificial intellect that would surpass the abilities of man and would be able to develop itself. „We can no longer guarantee that computer chips will keep growing smaller and more powerful. In fact, we’re getting close to capacity. What does this mean for the future of computing? The world’s most powerful computing machine is perhaps also the most ubiquitous: the human brain. It’s able to perform computations on a scale that even the most advanced supercomputers cannot hope to match. However, the circuitry underpinning our brains is surprisingly sloppy and slow. Neurons act on millisecond timescales – slow when compared to the fastest processors – and can fail to activate; one reason why the brain has so many neurons is this redundancy“, – wrote Kadhim Shubber (Shubber, 2013).

In development of neuroscience, informational technologies and theories of algorithms, an unanswered question becomes especially relevant: where are the limits of technology development? What is the position of moral, ethical and dignity problems, only relevant to people? Regarding the conception of human fullness grounded in the article, we may state that these problems are the most important in the creation of the future.

(Moore's Law: „the observation made in 1965 by Gordon Moore, co-founder of Intel, that the number of transistors per square inch on integrated circuits had doubled every year since the integrated circuit was invented. Moore predicted that this trend would continue for the foreseeable future. In subsequent years, the pace slowed down a bit, but data density has doubled approximately every 18 months, and this is the current definition of Moore's Law, which Moore himself has blessed. Most experts, including Moore himself, expect Moore's Law to hold for at least another two decades“,

We face an assignment – by evaluating the world and the future visions of 21st century, to form issues that have to be solved *in the name of better future*. Not fighting for quickly obtained and quickly lost property, but to think about the paths of human evolution, strengthening the individual's psychophysiological powers, problems of life elongation.

Human's life is the biggest value. The substance of activity of consultants applying various technologies is to show the way, how a person and the society can create the best life quality: by overcoming the challenges which biological inborn issues face (the biggest dangers to immortality: oncology, diabetes, atherosclerosis, alzheimer), depression, conflicts, behaviour anomalies in a close environment and society, how to reduce stress, aggression and develop emotional intellect, thinking, solve the dichotomy of instincts and mind. To show the ways how a person can actualize himself in a society without rendering pain and humiliation to others. We are talking about a person in a risky situation. Alongside, a global question is solved: how to avoid global risks? „The importance and relevance of risk has emerged over the past two decades for governments, policy makers, researchers and professional practitioners“ (Webb, 2006, Journal). Chemical pollution, accidents of atomic devices, terrorism, possible consequences of global warming. „The “realist perspective” on risk, conveyed in scientific, technical, economic and psychological literature regards risk as an objective fact or real phenomenon. Research attempts to identify how people respond cognitively and behaviorally to risk and how it can be calculated based on probabilities. The “cultural perspective”, however, argues that risk is socially constructed and that all knowledge about risk is dependent on belief systems and moral positions“ (Ibid).

The human's belief in future creates feedback, the probability of specific scenarios. Experiments in warfare technologies are continued (possible world war), atmosphere is being polluted (provocation of asteroid, which would lead to global pandemy), demographical change becomes increasingly inert (affected by catastrophies, technologies) etc. „It seems that we will become the witnesses of the end of history as it is“, – Francis Fukuyama pessimistically generalizes the present (Fukuyama, 2004).

St. A. Webb states that the concept of risk forms a peculiar nature of social worker's work in a society (Webb, 2006). Contradictory to the existing situation, when the problems of a person remain only as a source of information, the author sees the intention of supervision as help to a holistically comprehended person who is harmed by insecurity, anxiety and disjuncture. Antihuman mind gives birth to horror. Therefore, the essential value of supervisions should be the core formed on humanism parameters, a position of a way out. As it is seen, the person's life quality depends on the comprehension of values, their modeling and ways of realization in all areas of person's and society's activity. „The moment of euphoria after the end of *cold war* gave birth to an illusion of harmony. However, it became clear that it is indeed an illusion quite quickly. The world has become completely different from what it was in the 90s, though it was not necessarily peaceful. Change was inevitable, whereas progress was not. [...] The illusion of harmony disappeared as a consequence of many etnical conflicts, destruction of regularities and order, new principles of alliances and formation of conflicts between countries. People did not resist a temptation to divide people to *us* and *them*, members of the group and the remaining, *our* civilization and barbarians“, – claimed Samuel P. Huntington (Хантингтон, 2003).

All of these conditions confirm that the concern on the life quality of a person must be the essential motive of created supervision.



## 5. Conclusion

1. Therefore, personality and its process of becoming, during which the most important effective parameters, such as Modern science covers the variety of person's relations with the world: a person is born as a biological being. In the area of various relations, a person is analyzed as a product of biological evolution – **an individual** and a subject and object of historical process – **a personality**. In a pursue to understand person's essence, an interface of genetics, physiology, somatology, psychology, philosophy, semiotics, axiology, pedagogics and other sciences became significant. Psychophysiology, intellect, spiritual sphere, change are understood holistically.

2. The value of life is an infinite dimension. Life quality covers the entirety of individual's personal feelings, value attitudes and conditions created by the country to improve as an individuality, not only exist. Taking care of security of biological inborn issues, *sustainable balanced human power education*, improving security, trust, care, technologies ensuring collaboration technologies. To motivate for strivings of highest values, help imbibe innovations, become the successors of creative cultural values – supervision should be based on such holistical conception in the society of 21st century as a modern process leading to progress in a society.

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