

Conference Paper

Correlation between Personal Characteristics of Junior Adolescents and Their Perception of Relations with Mothers and Fathers

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Abstract

The article is devoted to the research into the correlation of personal characteristics of adolescents aged 11-12 with their perception of the relations with parents. Two hypotheses were put forward: 1) the existence of a connection between the teenagers' perception of the child-parent relations and such personal characteristics of adolescents as sociability, self-confidence, responsibility, sensitivity, social courage, risk appetite, and anxiety; 2) the differences in the correlations between the personal characteristics of adolescents and their perceptions of the relations with mothers and the relations with fathers.

The research involved 106 adolescents (52 girls and 54 boys) aged 11-12 years. All the testees study in schools in Ekaterinburg (Russia) and are brought up in two-parent families. Constructs: Children's Personality Questionnaire (12PF/CPQ) (adaptated by E.M. Aleksandrovskaia); The Parent-Child Interaction questionnaire (I.M. Markovskaya); Family Drawing Test (Burns and Kaufman).

The research results showed that contrary to the established opinion about the conflictual nature of the relations with parents during the teen years, the majority of adolescents (84%) are more or less satisfied with the relations. At the same time, they consider both their mother and father to be demanding, strict, and controlling them. Boys note the high demands by their fathers, and the girls feel more control and exactingness on the part of their mothers. The most personal characteristics associated with the relations with both parents are responsibility, sociability, and social courage. The level of anxiety among adolescents is higher the higher is the mother's authority and less acceptance of her child, and the more demanding but inconsistent in these requirements, the less accepting the child is the father. Positive correlations were found between excitability and the nervous tension of children and severity of mothers and fathers. Such personal characteristics as a child's self-confidence and sensitivity are more associated with a good relationship with their mother, and the appetite for risk is more related to the relationship with their father.

Keywords: teenagers/adolescents/teens 11-12 years old, personal characteristics, the relations with fathers, relations with mothers.

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1. Introduction

One of the key tasks of the psychological and pedagogical sciences is the creation of conditions for the successful education of children in school, diagnosis, prevention, and assistance to children with learning difficulty, inefficiency [11]. If in primary school this task can be solved through the psychological and neuropsychological correctional-developing work with the cognitive and emotional spheres of a child, then by the end of the primary school its efficiency falls sharply [1, 10]. Success in the secondary school education depends not only on cognitive development but more on the motivation and the level of development of the students' personal characteristics, such as self-control, responsibility, self-confidence, and adequate self-esteem.

Personality, according to the cultural and historical approach, is a social concept, it is not innate and arises as the result of the cultural development in the process of communicating with people [17]. The active development of the child's personality is influenced by both biological factors (such as the nervous system, temperament, and the level of physical health) and environmental conditions, among which the leading role is played by the child-parent relations, which are a system of feelings, assessments, attitudes, and behaviour patterns of children and parents in relation to each other. But this influence is different in different periods of childhood. Adolescence is considered one of the most difficult crisis gestation periods. At this time, there is active restructuring of all body systems and the personality of an adolescent, changing attitudes towards people, forming a social and personal identity. The interpersonal communication with peers becomes the leading activity, while teenagers aspire to independence and autonomy from adults. Therefore, it is at this age that a large number of conflict situations are associated with the child-parent relations. On the other hand, in adolescence, reflection and self-regulation skills are actively developing thereby allowing one to consciously form a character and control one's behaviour. At the same time, the relationship of a teenager with his/her parents is largely determined by his perception of these relations. For a child, the feeling of emotional closeness, unconditional acceptance by the parents and satisfaction with the relations with them are the favourable conditions that contribute to the harmonious development of an individual, the development of autonomy and independence [12, 14]. The adolescent's perception of the parents' attitude toward him/her as negative can have a detrimental effect on the development of his/her personal qualities, lead to deviation in the mental and physical development, in the emotional and behavioural spheres [5, 13]. R. Henderson (2016) describes potential problems arising from the

violation of the child-parent relationships. These include social problems (for example, loneliness, anxiety, depression, communication problems), behavioural and educational problems (achievement and behaviour in school). The violated child-parent relationships are a risk factor for the deviant behaviour of adolescents [4, 6, 9, 18]. The connection between these relations with anxiety, rehydration, self-control, self-regulation [2], aggressiveness [3, 16], cognitive abilities, and academic achievement (Feldman, 1998) of adolescents is proved.

That is the period when it is possible to influence the formation of the child's personality by correcting family styles of upbringing. At the same time, the relationship of adolescents with mothers and that with fathers can have different effects on the formation of the child's personal characteristics. There is not much research on the relationship between the personal characteristics of adolescents of that age and their concept of the child-parent relationships. Those works consider the relationships of children and their mothers, and there is not so much research that takes into account the relationship between adolescents and their fathers. The active role of a father in upbringing a child contributes to his/her cognitive development, social competence, improving academic achievement [7], and the formation of adequate self-esteem [9].

The aim of the research is to identify the relationship of personal characteristics of younger adolescents with their perception of the relationships with parents. The following research hypotheses were put forward:

1. There is a connection between the perception of the child-parent relations and such personal characteristics of younger adolescents as sociability, self-confidence, responsibility, sensitivity, social courage, risk appetite, and anxiety.
2. There are differences in the relationship between the personal characteristics of adolescents with their views on the relationship with mothers and the relationship with fathers.

2. Methodology

2.1. Participants

The study involved 106 teenagers/ adolescents representing two-parent families. The age of the testees ranged from 11 to 12 years. The gender composition of the sample is 52 girls and 54 boys.

2.2. Constructs and procedure

The research used:

1. Children's Personality Questionnaire (12PF / CPQ) (adapted by E.M. Alexandrovskaya);
2. Questionnaire Parent-Child Interaction by I.M. Markovskaya;
3. Family Drawing Test (Burns and Kaufman)
4. Mathematical statistics methods: descriptive statistics, φ^* -angular Fisher's conversion, Student's t-test, Spearman rank correlation coefficient.

The survey was conducted in February 2017 in the premises of schools in Ekaterinburg (Russia). In order to ensure the rights and freedoms of a child, the informed consent from the children and the permission from their parents to participate in the survey were obtained. The survey was anonymous; the questionnaires contained only the age and gender data.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. Research into the personal characteristics of adolescents

The data on the number of adolescents with different levels of personal characteristics are presented in Table 1.

The highest number of teenagers/adolescents/teens have low rates for such characteristics as sociability, responsibility, and domination (ascendance). Every fourth teenager is prone to high levels of stress, excitability, and anxiety.

A comparative analysis showed that there are significantly more girls with a low level of sociability ($\varphi^*=4.172$, $p<0.01$), and there are significantly fewer girls with a high level of sociability ($\varphi^* = 3.793$, $p < 0.01$) than boys. A high score on the factor characterises sociability, trustfulness, openness, emotionality, and good-heartedness. A comparison of the average values of sociability in girls and boys also confirmed that boys are more sociable, emotional than girls ($t = 5.1$, $p \leq 0.01$). As for the other characteristics, there are no significant differences between boys and girls.

TABLE 1: The number of adolescents with different levels of distinct manifestation of personal attributes.

Personal attributes	Number of adolescents with different levels of distinct manifestation of personal attributes (% / number)		
	Low level	Middle level	High level
Sociability	18.9 % / 20	64.1 % / 68	17 % / 18
Verbal intelligence	15.1 % / 16	60.4 % / 64	24.5 % / 26
Self-confidence	11.3 % / 12	66.1 % / 70	22.6 % / 24
Excitatory tendency	9.4 % / 10	66.1 % / 70	24.5 % / 26
Domination/prepotence	17 % / 18	73.6 % / 78	9.4 % / 10
Inclination to risk	15.1 % / 16	73.6 % / 78	11.3 % / 12
Responsibility	18.9 % / 20	69.8 % / 74	11.3 % / 12
Social courage	11.3 % / 12	67.9 % / 72	20.8 % / 22
Sensitivity	1.9 % / 2	79.2 % / 84	18.9 % / 20
Anxiety	7.6 % / 8	69.8 % / 74	22.6 % / 24
Self-control	9.4 % / 10	84.9 % / 90	5.7 % / 6
Intenseness	13.2 % / 14	62.3 % / 66	24.5 % / 26

3.2. Research into the teenagers/adolescents/teens' perception of the relationships with parents

The data on the number of adolescents with different levels of indicators of the relationships with parents based on the Parent-Child Interaction questionnaire are presented in Table 2.

TABLE 2: The number of adolescents with different levels of the relationships with parents.

Relationship indicators	The number of teens with different levels of indices of relations with mothers and fathers (% / number)					
	Low level		Middle level		High level	
	mothers	fathers	mothers	fathers	mothers	fathers
Insistence on high standards	11.3 % / 12	9.4 % / 10	51 % / 54	51 % / 54	37.7 % / 40	39.6 % / 42
Rigidity	13.2 % / 14	9.4 % / 10	49.1 % / 52	52.9 % / 56	37.7 % / 40	37.7 % / 40
Control	18.9 % / 20	20.8 % / 22	51 % / 54	56.6 % / 60	30.1 % / 32	22.6 % / 24
Emotional intimacy	11.3 % / 12	9.4 % / 10	35.9 % / 38	43.4 % / 46	52.8 % / 56	47.2 % / 50
Acceptance of a child	13.2 % / 14	18.9 % / 20	64.2 % / 68	49 % / 52	22.6 % / 24	32.1 % / 34
Collaborative relationship	13.2 % / 14	9.4 % / 10	32.1 % / 34	37.8 % / 40	54.7 % / 58	52.8 % / 56
Consentience	15.1 % / 16	9.4 % / 10	35.9 % / 38	54.7 % / 58	49 % / 52	35.9 % / 38
Consistency	22.6 % / 24	18.9 % / 20	24.6 % / 26	28.3 % / 30	52.8 % / 56	52.8 % / 56
Parent authority	11.3 % / 12	9.4 % / 10	37.7 % / 40	35.9 % / 38	51 % / 54	54.7 % / 58
Satisfaction with relationships	18.9 % / 20	13.2 % / 14	24.5 % / 26	26.4 % / 28	56.6 % / 60	60.4 % / 64

The results indicate a fairly high level of well-being of the child-parent relations in the sample of subjects, contrary to the widely held opinion of their deterioration in adolescence. The results coincide with the data obtained by N.N. Poskrebysheva and O.A. Karabanova (2011). Perhaps this is due to the age features of the testees who have only entered the younger adolescence, and the peak of the growing animosity can be attributed to the age of 14-15 years.

Most adolescents note the average and high levels of exactingness, rigour, and control on the part of their mothers and fathers. A significantly greater number of girls consider the level of exactingness ($\varphi^*=2.861$, $p < 0.01$) and control ($\varphi^*=2.359$, $p < 0.01$) with regard to their mothers higher than boys with regard to them. Only half of the teenagers note the consistency of the demands placed by their parents. Most of the testees indicate an average and high levels of emotional intimacy with mothers (80.7%) and fathers (90.6%). At the same time, significantly more boys estimate their relationship with their fathers as emotionally close compared to girls ($\varphi^*=1.66$, $p < 0.05$). Among girls, there are significantly more of those who indicate a low level of emotional closeness ($\varphi^*=2.519$, $p < 0.01$) and lack of cooperation ($\varphi^*=3.278$, $p < 0.01$) with their mothers. These results do not coincide with the data on the greater emotional closeness of adolescent girls with mothers and fathers received in the study of N.N. Poskrebysheva (2013)

Most parents to some extent accept personal qualities and behavioural manifestations of their children, cooperate with them, agree in various life situations. Adolescents mainly recognise the authority of parents (89%) and are satisfied with the relations with them (84%).

A comparative analysis according to the t-test by Student did not reveal any significant differences between the mean values of the ratio of the relationship with mothers and fathers among the girls. Boys also perceive the same attitude towards them by both mothers and fathers. The exception is the insistence on high standards. Boys reliably estimate more insistence on high standards by fathers than mothers with regard to them ($t=2.8$, $p < 0.01$).

The method *Kinetic Figure of the Family* was also used to study intra-family relations, an adolescent's perception of his/her place in the family, the relationship of an adolescent to the family as a whole and family members individually. The evaluation was based on the indicators of three symptom-complexes, a favourable family situation; conflict in the family; hostility in the family situation. The data on the number of adolescents with different levels of symptomatic complex indicators are presented in Table 3.

TABLE 3: The number of adolescents with different levels of the relationships with parents.

Symptom complex	Number of adolescents with different levels of the symptom complex (% / number)		
	Low level	Middle level	High level
Favourable family situation	7.5 % / 8	51 % / 54	41.5 % / 44
Proneness to a conflict in the family	56.6 % / 60	34 % / 36	9.4 % / 10
Hostility in the family situation	64.2 % / 68	26.4 % / 28	9.4 % / 10

The choice of the projective drawing technique was due to the fact that in the questionnaires, adolescents often give socially-expected answers. In the drawing techniques, some latent or unconscious aspects of the relationship including conflict ones can become more visible. Nevertheless, the results obtained do not contradict the data of the *Parent-Child Relationship* questionnaire. For most families of adolescents (92.5%) there is a rather favourable family situation. In 90.6% of families, low levels of the proneness to conflict and hostility are demonstrated.

3.3. The relation between the personal characteristics of adolescents with the perception of their relationship with parents

The correlation study included the analysis of the correlation between the 12 indicators of the personal characteristics of adolescents and the 10 indicators of their relationship with fathers and mothers by using the Spearman rank correlation coefficient. The data on significant correlations are presented in Tables 4 and 5.

To a greater extent, some characteristics of a personality are determined by biological factors. For example, excitability and nervous tension depend more on the type of nervous system or temperament. The development of self-control is determined by the age-related psycho-physiological characteristics of a child, the most active formation of him/her only begins at the age of 11-12 years. Verbal intelligence more depends on the skills generated in learning than hereditary factors.

The correlation analysis results do not contradict these data, as no correlation between the personal characteristics and child-parent relations was discovered. The exception was the positive relationship between the no-nonsense attitude of the parents and the excitability of the child ($r_s=0.27$, $p \leq 0.01$ for mothers and $r_s= 0.3$, $p \leq 0.01$ for fathers), as well as nerve stress ($r_s=0.22$, $p \leq 0.05$ for mothers and $r_s=0.35$,

TABLE 4: Significant correlations of the personal characteristics of adolescents with their relationships with mothers.

Sample categories	SB	SC	AR	R	SC	S	A
Rigour		-0.23*		-0.31**			
Control	-0.23*				-0.23*		
Emotional intimacy	0.21*	0.33**		0.47**	0.24*	0.41**	
Acceptance of a child	0.25**	0.38**		0.31**	0.37**		-0.20*
Collaboration				0.39**	0.25**		
Consentience		0.23*				0.23*	
Mother's authority				0.37**		0.43**	0.24**
Satisfaction with relationships		0.28**	0.20*	0.45**	0.42**	0.35**	

Note: SB – sociability, SC – self-confidence, AR – appetite for risk, R – responsibility, SC – social courage, S – sensitivity, A – anxiety; * $p \leq 0.05$; ** $p \leq 0.01$;

TABLE 5: Significant correlations of the personal characteristics of adolescents with their relationship with fathers.

Sample categories	SB	SC	AR	R	SC	S	A
Insistence on high standards					0.34**		-0.25**
Rigour			0.22*	-0.26**			
Control	-0.21*				-0.22*		
Emotional intimacy	-0.22*		0.26**	0.47**	0.27**	0.32**	
Acceptance of a child	0.26**	0.46**	0.37**	0.31**	0.33**		-0.22*
Collaboration				0.41**	0.29**		
Consentience		0.20*					
Consistency							-0.26**
Parent's authority				0.35**		-0.26**	
Satisfaction with relationships			0.24**	0.36**	0.28**		

Note: SB – sociability, SC – self-confidence, AR – appetite for risk, R – responsibility, SC – social courage, S – sensitivity, A – anxiety; * $p \leq 0.05$; ** $p \leq 0.01$;

$p \leq 0.01$ for fathers). These correlations can be explained by the fact that children with hypermotivity and hyperactivity are often characterised by behavioural problems, violent emotional reactions for the minor cause, distractability, inattention which leads to parents' having to limit them more often, punish, and make do the necessary tasks.

Such characteristic as anxiety depends on both psycho-physiological characteristics and child-parent relations. The level of anxiety is higher the higher the mother's

authority and the lower her acceptance of a child, and the more demanding but inconsistent in those demands, the less the father's acceptance of the child.

The greatest number of links with the child-parent relations is recorded for such personal characteristics as responsibility, which characterises compulsoriness, conscientiousness, following the rules and norms of behaviour imposed by adults, and social courage, that is the courage in communication, expression of feelings, and striving for achievements. The indicators of the characteristics are the higher, the closer the emotional closeness with parents, the greater the acceptance of the personal qualities and behavioural manifestations of the child from the parents, the higher the degree of their collaboration with the child as an equal partner, and the child's satisfaction with the relations with them. At the same time, the strictness of parents does not contribute to the development of responsibility. In addition, the social courage of a child is the higher, the less he/she is controlled by the parents, and the more demanding is his/her father.

The sociability of a child is positively associated with the emotional closeness, acceptance by the parents of the child, and negatively associated with the level of their control.

Such characteristic as a risk appetite is mainly determined by the relationship with the father. In the case of satisfaction with the relationship with both parents, it is the emotional closeness with a fairly strict father and acceptance of the children's desires and interests that allow the child to actively explore the surrounding world, is optimistic about what is happening.

The creation of self-confidence and sensitivity, on the contrary, is more associated with the relationship with the mother. The less strict is the mother, the closer her emotional connection with the child, the higher the level of acceptance of his/her interests, desires and the higher the child's satisfaction with the relationship with her, the more confident he/she feels. Sensitivity in a child is formed in families where there is the emotional affinity with parents, and mother's authority is higher than the father's authority, mother shows consent with the child in various life situations, and he/she is satisfied with the relationship with her.

4. Conclusions

1. The research into the personal characteristics of adolescents has shown that the largest number of adolescents have low rates for such characteristics as sociability, responsibility, and domination (ascendance). For every fourth adolescent,

high levels of stress, excitability, and anxiety are typical. At the same time, boys are significantly more open, sociable, and emotional than girls.

2. The results of the research into the child-parent relations, in general, testify to the rather high level of well-being of these relations in the sample of testees. The majority of adolescents (90%) recognise the authority of their parents and are satisfied with their relations (84%), while they consider both their father and mother to be moderately and highly demanding, strict and controlling them. Moreover, boys estimate reliably higher the insistence on high standards from their fathers than girls, and the girls more appreciate the insistence on high standards and control from their mother. In addition, a significantly greater number of boys feel greater emotional intimacy with both fathers and mothers than girls.
3. The study of the relationship between the personal characteristics of adolescents and the child-parent relationship has confirmed the hypothesis of the relationship between child-parent relations and such personal characteristics of adolescents as sociability, self-confidence, responsibility, risk appetite, social courage, sensitivity, and anxiety. In addition, the relationship between the excitatory tendency and nervous tension of children with the severity of mothers and fathers was revealed.
4. Such personal characteristics as the child's self-confidence and sensitivity are more closely related to good relations with their mother, and the risk appetite is more related to the relationship with their father. Thus, the hypothesis that there are differences in the links between the personal characteristics of adolescents and their perceptions of the relationship with mothers and relations with fathers has also been confirmed.
5. The obtained results testify to the need for the earliest possible prevention and correction of child-parent relations and the obligatory inclusion of it in the package of the psychological and neuropsychological correction of the attendance at school.

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