

EdCW 2020**International Scientific and Practical Conference Education in a Changing World: Global Challenges and National Priorities****ATTITUDE OF HIGH SCHOOL AND UNIVERSITY STUDENTS
TO FAMILY VALUES**

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Abstract

This article dwells upon the problem of attitudes towards family values among high school and university students of Veliky Novgorod. The study shows how the value attitudes of young men and women to the family are changing. Currently, the value attitude of the younger generation to the family is turning into an increasingly relevant problem for society. The traditional ideas of the family and marriage are undergoing certain transformations; this process is rooted in the changes in the political and social spheres of society. The article emphasizes the importance of having clearly shaped family values for future life in society. The research also focuses on the influence of the family environment in which a person grew up on the idea of the family that a person plans to start. The article raises questions of attitudes towards marriage, the age of marriage, the number of children in the family, the family leisure, the continuity of family values, as well as the distribution of roles between family members. The study was conducted among the students of the 10-11 grades at one of the high schools in Veliky Novgorod and 1st year students of Yaroslav-the-Wise Novgorod State University. When evaluating the results, the answers of males and females of different age groups are compared, another comparison is made between the answers of high school students and university students of different genders.

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1. Introduction

The family, as a social institution, occupies one of the central places in the life of any person. The family is the most important social institution; if it is prosperous and stable it provides the spiritual and moral education of the younger generation and ensures the sustainability of the successful development of society (Vishnevsky & Yachmeneva, 2018). The nature of the clearly defined value attitudes towards the family affects not only the future life of people, but also the state as a whole. Any state needs the institution of the family as the basis for a person's socialization, because the family provides the upbringing of the future generation. In addition, society influences the formation of a person's values in relation to the family. For example, the lack of public disapproval of divorce leads to an increase in the number of divorces. According to statistics, in 2018, if compared to 2017, the number of registered marriages in the Novgorod region decreased by 1290, at present it amounts to 3175 marriages (Kiseleva, 2016). Researchers also record the crisis of the family in Russian society, it is expressed in the transformation and devaluation of family: legalization of same-sex marriage in many European countries; an increase in the number of women and men who stay single; a decrease in fertility due to a child-free tendency; an increase in the number of single-parent families; an increase in the number of children left without parental care, etc. (Elkina, 2020).

Based on these data, we can conclude that at present the need to start a family is significantly diminishing, since the social institution itself is gradually losing its former value in comparison with, for example, a tendency among the younger generation first to satisfy the material need, to self-actualize, and to find their place in society.

2. Problem Statement

The problem of family upbringing of a child is traditionally in the center of attention of researchers who represent various areas of humanities (Zagvyazinsky & Chekhonin, 2017).

“At present, the Russian society is undergoing dynamic transformations of social relations, during which the patterns of gender interactions, marriage and family relations, the roles and statuses of men and women in society and in the family, as well as value systems are changing” (Kuchmaeva et al., 2009, p. 20). Such changes are caused by changes in society, leading to the transformation of the family model and its functional characteristics. Indeed, nowadays the Russian family differs from the traditional family model with the heterosexual partners having children, sharing the living space, leading life together, and distributing responsibilities in accordance with gender (Strokova, 2017).

This process is inevitable, as well as the further transformation of society. Despite this, the supporters of traditional and modern family models continue their disputes. “The traditional model of the family cannot keep its value unchanged in a dynamic society, but at the same time, further socio-cultural development dictates the need to preserve the value of the family as an effective mechanism” (Kiseleva, 2016, p. 81). The Russian ideas of a traditional family is disclosed in the study by Rostovskaya and Kuchmaeva (2020): “A significant part of the population considers a full family with many children as a traditional family” (p. 528). Indeed, relying on centuries of experience and well-established traditions of

family life, the overwhelming majority of Russians still adhere to the classical model of this social institution. However, it is worth noting that at present, even if people have a holistic and deep understanding of the family, they will not completely follow these ideas due to the transformations of both interpersonal relations in the family and the very pace of life, which is significantly different from previous centuries.

The idea of the family changes not only in society as a whole, but also in the life of each individual. At different age periods, a person pictures the ideal image of a family in different ways. For example, “for students, an ideal family is a union of loving spouses made legitimate in the registry office; this union allows each family member to self-actualize and to become a parent” (Rostovskaya & Zayarskaya, 2017, p. 83). Hence, we can conclude that students of higher educational institutions, first of all, consider the family from a legal point of view and recognize this social institution as an opportunity to realize themselves in a new role, while pushing into the background such psychological aspects as the need for support, love, mutual understanding, and fear of loneliness.

Values formed at a certain age affect the entire life of a person. Family values are no exception; they are laid from the first days of a person’s life. Being in the family, the child adopts the patterns of parents’ behavior. At the same time, along with positive standards of family relationships, negative ones are also formed. Thus, children who have experienced a divorce of their parents find it easier to break off relations with a partner in the future. At the same time, positive family values lead to a happy and strong family. In one of his research works, Anoshkin and Sychev (2019) defines and substantiates the importance of healthy family relationships: “A prosperous family life does not hinder, but rather promotes the enjoyment of life and the achievement of personal happiness” (p. 94). The family has significant resources to provide its members with emotional comfort, psychological security, and overall life satisfaction (Danilova & Rykman, 2018).

We can conclude that a family is essential for a person; the first personal social experience will serve as an example and guide the person throughout the whole life. The age period of 16-19 is an important stage in the formation of family values. That is why our research is focused on young people of this age.

3. Research Questions

- What age do the respondents consider the optimal for starting a family?
- What are the reproductive attitudes of students?
- What are the views of the respondents on the distribution of roles among family members?
- How do the views of respondents differ depending on their age?
- How do the views of the respondents differ depending on their gender?

4. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this article is to study the characteristics of the value attitude of university and high school students to the family, to consider the process of changing family values as the students grow up, to determine the level of readiness to create a family, to study their views on relationships within the family.

5. Research Methods

The research method was a questionnaire survey. The survey was anonymous, the surveys were based on:

- diagnostic technique “Family values” by Konstantinova and Martynova (2014);
- diagnostic materials by Zagladina et al. (2011);
- questionnaire “Family values of modern student youth” (Anketa “Semeynyye tsennosti sovremennoy studencheskoy molodezhi”, n.d.);
- methods of identifying the spouses’ ideas about the role structure of their family (Aleshina et al., 2009).

6. Findings

The conducted research shows that the majority of respondents are focused on starting a family (75%) According to the results of the questionnaire, in the 10th grade when answering the question “Would you like to start your own family in the future?” the male high school students say “yes” unambiguously, while 25% of females find it difficult to answer.

We have noticed that the desired age at marriage among males is higher than among females. So, females consider the most favorable age to be 20-30 years, and among young men the answer is “After 30 years”.

Both males and females in 10th grade agree that all family members should participate in family decision-making. This result shows that high school students are focused on democratic relationships based on joint decision-making in regards to important family issues.

The majority of 10th graders believe that a family should have 1-2 children, while 25% of females are convinced that a family can be child free. It should be noted that none of the 10th graders give preference to families with three or more children. The reason for this in most cases is that they were brought up in families with one or two children.

Both males and females believe that parents should show interest in what happens to their children if children want to share their impressions. High school students believe that a child’s personal life should be respected by parents, that the child has the right to have secrets that the parents could be unaware of.

Half of the 10th grade females when answering the question “How often should family members spend the day off together?” tend to believe that the family should spend a day off together as often as

possible. At the same time, 80% of young men say that each family member can spend the weekend as he/she wants.

60% of young men would like their future family to be similar to the one in which they live now. Half of the females surveyed most likely would not want this. This result shows that young men are more conservative in matters of building family relationships. They are not as flexible in their views on the family as females. Young men do not risk changing their usual family model, regardless of whether this model is positive or negative. The respondents' answers could mean that young men are more likely to seek advice from their parents.

The 10th grade high school students report that their families share common hobbies and traditions. Traditions and joint leisure activities contribute to the creation of family values, improvement and strengthening of relationships between family members. Traditions that are passed on from parents to children ensure the continuity of generations.

When compared to 10th grade, the 11th grade female students are more confident in their wish to start a family. In this group of respondents appear the young men who are not going to start a family. It shows that the value orientations of high school students are changing. As they approach adulthood, they change their priorities. What previously seemed necessary now becomes not so relevant.

The answers to the question about the age of marriage have changed slightly. The same situation is observed when analyzing the answers to the question about participation in decision-making. Opinions about whether the family should have children remained unchanged. This is an indicator of uneven development and change in values.

Among the 11th graders, if compared with the 10th graders, the percentage of the positive answer to the question "Should parents be interested in what happens to their children?" increased. Growing up, high school students understand the importance of controlling children, even lean towards overprotective behavior. They stop looking at the issue of upbringing from the perspective of a child and start thinking from the perspective of a parent, even though they do not have a personal parenting experience.

23% of male students and 8.5% of female students believe that a family should have three or more children. No one among the 10th graders chose this option. A remarkable fact is that older high school students begin to think about a family with a large number of children. At the same time, young men are more ready to be the parent of a large family than females.

The 11th grade females, in contrast to the 10th grade girls, are more inclined to believe that each family member should spend the weekend as he/she wants. Girls are becoming more independent, they believe that they have the right to manage their personal time on weekends as they want.

The vast majority of females see their future family similar to the one in which they live now. At the same time, the views of young men on this issue have not changed. High school students begin to reconsider the family models in which they are raised. They discover the advantages and disadvantages of the parenting style of their parents and the relationships between family members.

The 11th grade students also speak about common hobbies and traditions in their families. These include the New Year celebration, family holidays, joint vacations, and weekends spent with the family. They allow each family member to express oneself, show their love and affection, and feel needed and meaningful to the loved ones.

The 11th grade females mostly choose their parents as role models. It should be noted that the percentage of those who believe that there is no role model for them is decreasing. The young men, albeit not in large numbers, singled out their friends as models. The opinion of friends is quite important for men even in such complex issues as building a family.

Among females, the number of positive answers to the question “Do you often turn to your parents for advice?” is increasing. As we grow older, the line between the relationship “child” – “parent” is erased, the relationship moves to the level of “friend – friend” for sons and fathers and “girlfriend – girlfriend” for daughters and mothers. They no longer hesitate to discuss topics that were previously banned or about which teenagers were embarrassed to talk.

All high school students of 10-11 grades are convinced that both parents should be involved in raising children which is an indicator of the democratic family model. It is worth noting that schoolchildren are committed to the fact that their children will be brought up in a full family.

A survey conducted among 1st year students of Novgorod State University showed that more than half of the respondents are going to get married. At the same time, 11% of young men are convinced that they are not going to get married. There are always people who do not plan to enter into family relationships for different reasons. They can prioritize their own careers. In this case, the family becomes an obstacle to personal success. Such people may have a negative view of the family based on the experiences of their parents. In this case, they are afraid to repeat the mistakes they witnessed.

The overwhelming majority is neutral about unregistered marriage, while 13% of girls consider cohabitation a negative phenomenon. Young people are in no hurry to disapprove of such a phenomenon, but they do not openly support it either. This result shows the liberal attitude of society towards the informal union of a man and a woman.

The priority reason for entering into an official marriage among young men was the desire to start a family, but the prevailing opinion among girls is that love is the main condition for marriage.

About 90% of students give preference to the family, in which all members are equal and make decisions together.

Both young men and women consider work and a steady income to be sufficient conditions for starting a family, while no one sees higher education as a necessity for starting a family life. Young men and women are concerned whether they will be able to provide for their future family. They wonder how they will support their family financially. They are afraid of possible instability, so they try to protect themselves.

The primary family value for 1st year male students is love and children, while female students give preference to love and emotional and psychological comfort. We would like to note that none of the respondents considers the continuity of generations as an important family value.

When answering the question “How should family members spend their leisure time?” young men tend to answer “together if possible, but not necessarily”, while young females believe that it is necessary to spend leisure time separately. Young men are more sensitive to joint leisure, while girls are trying to preserve personal time and space.

The female students put forward family, health, and love as priorities. However, young men choose love, health, and children as the main values in their life. Young men are instinctively ready to

protect their children, even if they have not yet become parents. The idea of the role of men in the family rooted in society makes them think that they should be some kind of support for their future family.

Among the 1st year students of both genders, the prevailing opinion is that they would like to have one or two children. At the same time, one third of the females do not plan to have children at all. It can be assumed that maternal instinct has ceased to strongly influence the lives of females. They move away from the stereotype that the main role of a woman is motherhood.

The surveyed students prefer a democratic style of upbringing for their future children; its essence is that the child is given the opportunity to express its opinion and attitude. After marriage, young men and women would like to live separately from their parents.

An additional survey was conducted among students on the distribution of roles in the family. 71% of young men are convinced that the interests and hobbies of the family depend on the husband, while female students are sure that it is the responsibility of the wife. The good news is that everyone is willing to take responsibility for this role. The negative side of this result can be the sign of distrust to the opposite gender.

Answering the question “Who should mostly influence the mood in the family?” the females preferred the variant that the behavior of both the wife and the husband influences the family mood. Young men believe that to a greater extent this role belongs to the wife. All students associate the emotional side of family relations with a woman and her mood.

The 1st year students unanimously agree that creating comfort, supervising, and playing with young children are the wife’s responsibilities. In this regard, the stereotype of a woman as a housewife, a keeper of the hearth remains stable. Against the background of a general reassessment of family values, the basic guidelines remain unchanged.

The male students believe that the life principles of a husband should determine the family life. However, the female students tend to think that the attitudes of both spouses should be taken into account. As the results show, young men are not ready to give up the role of the head in the family. At the same time, females are focused on sharing life principles; they are more ready to compromise.

Young men are sure that spouses should care about each other’s well-being and mood. At the same time, young women, on the contrary, characterize this role as the role of a man. Females, despite all the statements about their self-sufficiency, want to see their husband as a defender, as a person who will take care of them.

Students agree that in case of a difficult life situation, a man should search for additional income. Apart from this, the 1st year students assign the major role in choosing the place and time of joint vacation to the wife.

The survey is presented in a more detailed way in the Table 01.

Table 1. Students' ideas about the role structure of their future family

Question	The husband's role	The role is primarily of the husband, but also of the wife	The wife's role	The role is primarily of the wife, but also of the husband
Whom should the interests and hobbies of the family depend on?	-	71 %males, 18% females	14% males, 9% females	14% males, 72 % females
Whom should the mood in the family depend on more?	-	28% males, 44% females	14% males, 9% females	57% males, 45% females
Who in the family should care about the comfort and convenience at home?	14% males, 8% females	16% females	-	85%males, 75% females
Whose life principles and rules should determine the family life?	28% males	57%males, 36% females	14%males, 9% females	54% females
Who in the family should pay more attention to the mood of another spouse?	14%males, 9% females	42%males, 54% females	-	43%males, 36% females
If financial difficulties arise in the family, who of the spouses should look for additional income?	29%males, 8% females	71%males, 91% females	-	-

7. Conclusion

From all of the above, one can conclude that the idea of family values directly corresponds to age and gender. For example, getting older, adolescents become more confident in their future plans for starting a family. It can be noted that females become ready for family relationships earlier, while males come to this later. In addition, with age, the adolescents' perception of control over children changes: from non-interference in the lives of children, they move to controlling the child and justify this opinion by the fact that parents should know everything about their children. Growing up, adolescents more and more often seek advice from their parents, and also change their ideas about their future family: they increasingly want their family to be similar to the one in which they now live. The opinion of how family members should spend their free time also depends on age and gender: together by all means or together at will.

Of the general tendencies, one can single out an orientation towards the democratic construction of family relations, which includes joint decision-making, mutual assistance and the absence of a strict division of family responsibilities. There is also a liberal attitude towards unregistered marriage (cohabitation). Young people are not focused on large families; almost no one wants to be a father or mother of three or more children. Young people prefer to live separately from their parents after starting a family. Moreover, intergenerational continuity is not seen as one of the fundamental values. The conditions for starting a family for the younger generation are having a job and a steady income, pushing the desire to start a family to the background.

All this proves that the formation of family values depends on many factors, and the values themselves are constantly changing. Not only are the individual views changing, but also the views of society as a whole.

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