

**9<sup>th</sup> ICEEPSY 2018**  
**International Conference on Education & Educational**  
**Psychology**

**THE TYPOLOGY OF MODERN STUDENTS' FAMILY SELF-  
DETERMINATION**

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***Abstract***

The family institution transformation, blurring of social norms, the absence of the courses aimed at getting young people prepared for marriage and family life in the school, college and university curriculum have resulted in placing young men and women in the conditions of independent family self-determination, understanding and choosing the system of family values on their own. On this background, the problem of substantial and structural characteristics and types of family self-determination study, detection of social and psychological factors that determine family values' development among young people is becoming particularly urgent. The goal of the research is to construct a model of family self-determination and empirically identify typological groups of respondents. To achieve this goal, a set of complementary research methods was used: theoretical and methodological literature analysis; a questionnaire survey, psychodiagnostic tests; mathematical-statistical methods of data analysis, including calculating descriptive statistics, factor analysis by the means of Principal components method, reliability analysis, and k-means cluster analysis. The sample comprised 1109 students aged between 15 to 22 years old. The article provides a two-factorial model of young men and women's family self-determination. Typological groups of respondents that vary in the extent of emotional appeal and dynamism (the factor of value and activity), influence (the factor of force) of ideas about family and marriage identified at levels statistical significance. The types (*predetermined, declared, diffusive, realized and reached*) and psychological mechanisms of family self-determination of students' youth are described and analyzed.

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**Keywords:** Family self-determination, student's youth.



## 1. Introduction

In recent decades, psychologists have repeatedly drawn their attention to the problems of actor's self-determination. Personal self-determination is one of the key socio-economic mechanisms of personal maturity development, the essence of which is forming the ideals, moral principles, system of value and life-purpose orientations and making a conscious choice of norms and rules of behavior. Researchers distinguish between different spheres of self-determination: personal (Ginzburg, 1994; Orestova & Karabanova, 2005; Vorobieva & Akbarova, 2015), professional (Klimov, 2005; Prjazhnikov, 2017; Karabanova, 2016), family (Merzlyakova, 2015; 2014; 2016; Dubrovina, 2015), economic (Zhuravlev & Kupreychenko, 2013), civil and cultural (Batarchuk, 2014a, 2017) and more. The significance of adolescent and youthful age for getting identity, the formation of world outlook and system of value orientations is conventional for modern developmental psychology. Negative tendencies of changes in moral values, loss of traditions, blurring of social norms and gender models in modern society determines the relevance of the research problem of moral and valuable consciousness features of growing generation.

The family institution transformation and the value of family and family lifestyle reduction is another issue that has noticed a growing interest within the crisis of moral and ethical values of contemporary society (Bagirova Shubat, Abdygapparova, & Karaeva, 2017). The negative phenomena in the marriage and family sphere lead to the distortion of modern youth's ideas about the meaning and content of family life. The family institution transformation, blurring of social norms, the absence of the courses aimed at getting young people prepared for marriage and family life in the school, college and university curriculum have resulted in placing young men and women in the conditions of independent family self-determination, understanding and choosing the system of family values on their own.

Despite the great importance, the problem of family self-determination has not received enough in-depth consideration as an independent object of psychological research, whereas, for instance, personal or professional self-determination, which is widely studied in psychology. Thus, in psychological theory and practice there is an urgent need to create a holistic scientifically based approach to the development of the concept of family self-determination at youthful age. In this regard, the problem of substantial and structural characteristics and types of family self-determination study, detection of social and psychological factors that determine family values and family lifestyle development among young people is becoming particularly urgent.

We define the family self-determination as a multistage active and conscious process of constructing the image of a family ("my family", "my future family", "ideal family") in temporary prospect, depending on a concrete cultural and historical situation, on the basis of which there is a structuring system of valuable orientations, attainment of sense of children-parental and matrimonial relations, development of ability to any regulation and reflection (Merzlyakova, 2015).

Karabanova and Trofimova (2013) examined the parental family influence on the development of the ideas about the future family among students. Alekseeva (2012; 2015) defined the role of child-parent relations on forming the system of family values and the image of a parent during youth. Batarchuk's (2014b) works are devoted to the analysis of value orientations and inner family relations determined by national differences. Bibarsova (2013; 2014; 2017) offers ways to optimize family self-determination

through the development of young men and women's emotional intelligence. Mukhtarova (2016) considers self-actualization as a factor of family self-determination development at youthful age. According to our previous research, structural substantial characteristics of family self-determination are influenced by social status and religion (Merzlyakova, 2016), ethno-cultural identity (Merzlyakova & Bibarsova, 2017), parent-child relations (Merzlyakova, 2014), individual psychological characteristics (Merzlyakova, 2015; 2017).

## **2. Problem Statement**

As stated earlier, despite the crucial importance of family self-determination, it has not been a focus of psychological research unlike personal or professional self-determination. There is still a lack of empirical research aimed at revealing the types of family self-determination which this study aims to address.

## **3. Research Questions**

So far, the following issues remain unsolved.

- 3.1. Are there any latent factors that allow us to measure the family image among modern students both comprehensively and compactly?
- 3.2. What types of family self-determination exist?

## **4. Purpose of the Study**

The goal of the research is to construct a model of family self-determination and to establish an empirical typology of respondents.

The research hypothesis is that the family image consisting of ideas about "my family", "my future family", "ideal family" is determined by interaction of three semantic factors of value, activity and force. To achieve the goal of the study and test the hypothesis, the following objectives were set up:

1. identification of latent variables, allowing for the measurement of the family image (concept "my family", "my future family", "ideal family" that are evaluated by three factors of value, force and activity) both comprehensively and compactly by using factor analysis;
2. distinguishing between typology groups of respondents in terms of family self-determination by k-means cluster analysis.

The study was conducted in Astrakhan state University, Astrakhan branch of the Russian presidential Academy of national economy and public administration under the President of the Russian Federation, the branch of the Russian state humanitarian University in Astrakhan, Astrakhan state Polytechnic College, and Astrakhan College of computer technology.

1109 students aged 15 to 22 took part in the survey.

## **6. Research Methods**

To achieve the objectives of the study and test the hypothesis a set of complementary research methods was utilised.

5.1. For diagnostics of substantial and structural characteristics of family self-determination, the following instruments were used: a semantic differential developed by Charles E. Osgood (2001); the questionnaire “A Value and Availability Ratio in Various Vital Spheres Technique” by Fantalova (1999); a projective technique "Incomplete Sentences"; and the “A Purpose-in-Life Test” by Leontiev (2000).

5.2. To analyze the data, mathematical-statistical methods were used to establish validity of results of the research. All calculations were carried out by means of the SPSS Statistics 21 program. The analysis included descriptive statistics, factorial analysis by the means of Principal components method, reliability analysis, and k-means cluster analysis.

## 6. Findings

6.1. On having conducted the empirical research, the types and mechanisms modern youth’s family self-determination were established. In order to detect the types of family self-determination, the algorithm suggested by Voronin (2013) was employed that involves implementation of factor analysis by the means of Principal components method, reliability analysis at the first stage and then using k-means cluster analysis.

At the first stage, factor extraction (detection the initial factors) was applied using the principal components method. The Kaiser – Meyer – Olkin indicator measure ( $KMO = 0.643$ ) shows acceptable sampling adequacy. The significance of Bartlett’s test of Sphericity  $p < 0.0001$  indicates that the data are quite acceptable for factor analysis. As a result of factorization of 9 primary variables and rotation of factors by the Varimax method, a well-structured matrix was established (see Table 1).

**Table 01.** The matrix of factor weights after rotation

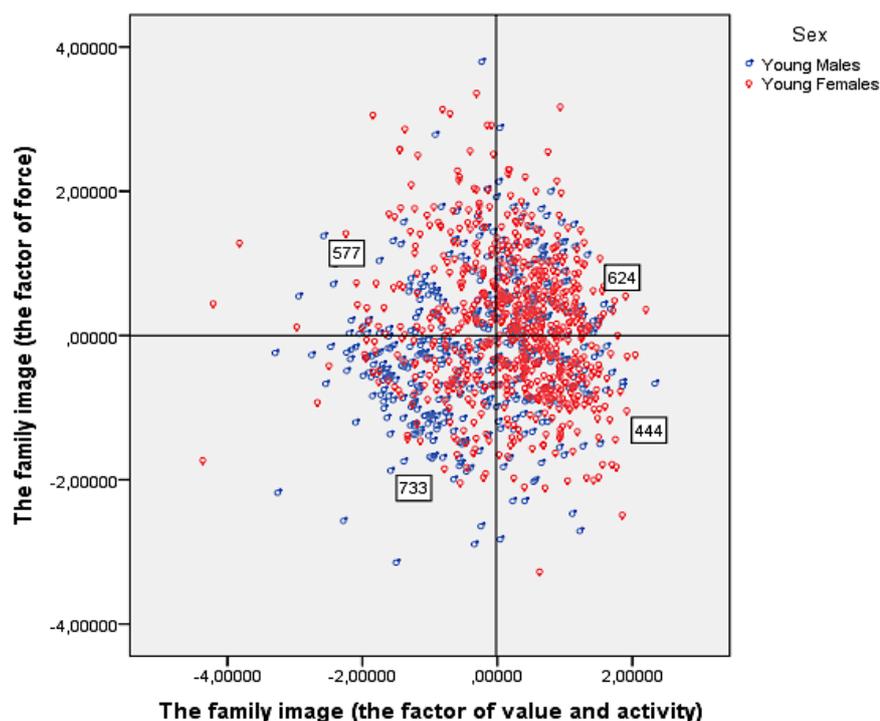
Variables	Factor	
	1	2
My future family (the factor of value)	<b>0.746</b>	0.307
Ideal family (the factor of value)	<b>0.735</b>	0.319
My family (the factor of value)	<b>0.724</b>	-0.299
My future family (the factor of activity)	<b>0.708</b>	0.297
Ideal family (the factor of activity)	<b>0.689</b>	0.298
My family (the factor of activity)	<b>0.655</b>	-0.256
Ideal family (the factor of force)	0.143	<b>0.727</b>
My future family (the factor of force)	0.066	<b>0.72</b>
My family (the factor of force)	0.029	<b>0.396</b>

The first factor includes variables that express emotional appeal and dynamism of young men and women’s ideas about family. In the zone of positive values there is the concentration of the respondents for whom such family ideas as “my family”, “my future family” and “ideal family” are of great significance and are modified with time. In the zone of negative values of the factors there is the concentration of respondents that consider family being not so important for them and the family image does not vary over time. The first factor is defined as “The family image (the factor of value and activity)”.

The second factor groups the variables where the polled estimates a subjective extent of family ideas influence on a person: within the zone of positive values of the factor there are respondents with a great effect of parental family and family lifestyle on them. Characterized by a low level of influence of marital and family relations on them, the respondents are concentrated in the zone of negative values of the factor. Similarly, the second factor is defined as “The family image (the factor of force)”.

On implementing the “reliability analysis” procedure, the quality of the obtained model was checked. Calculating the Cronbach's alpha coefficient will establish the consistency of the primary variables that form the first and second factors. For the first factor "the family image (the factor of value and activity) ", which includes six primary variables, Cronbach's alpha coefficient is 0.81 (corresponds to a good estimate of the internal consistency of the scale), and for the second factor "family Image (the factor of force)", containing three primary variables, is - 0.508 (valid estimate). The conducted test confirms the hypothesis of the existence of two latent factors fixing the level of value, activity and force of the family image.

6.2. The next phase of psychological data analysis involved the detection typology groups of respondents within the two-factor space of family self-determination. Figure 1 shows the respondents that have a certain place within the two-factor space of family self-determination. For the respondent number 624, family is very significant where ideas about family lifestyle are dynamic having a strong impact on the respondent's life. Respondent number 733 takes the opposite position in relation to respondent number 624: ideas about the family have no value, do not change over time and do not have an impact on him. The family lifestyle is not very significant for respondent number 577; ideas about the family are not transformed over time, but the family has a strong impact on his life. For respondent number 444, marital and family ideas have high significance and are modified over time, but at the same time the family does not affect him.



**Figure 01.** The two-factorial model of young men and women's family self-determination

Thus, the two-factorial model of the studied phenomenon obtained within the analysis involves distinguishing between four types of respondents' groups. On conducting cluster analysis with the use of k-means 4 clusters emerged (see. table 2).

**Table 02.** The final cluster centers

	Clusters				F	P
	1	2	3	4		
The family image (the factor of value and activity)	-0.25937	0.62071	-1.26953	0.60479	681.895	0.000
The family image (the factor of force)	1.58970	-0.99137	-0.40414	0.36278	875.511	0.000

The respondents of the first cluster have negative values of the first factor and positive values of the second factor (161 persons: 44 young men и 117 young women). The second cluster consists of the respondents with positive values of the first factor and negative values of the second factor (281 people: 90 young men and 191 young women). The third cluster includes the negative values of the first and the second factors (286 people: 177 young men and 109 young women). The fourth cluster includes the respondents with positive values of the first and second factors (381 people: 109 young men and 272 young women).

## 7. Conclusion

The two-factorial model of young men and women's family self-determination was established in this research. The family image is considered as a function of three components: my family, my future family, ideal family. Typologies of respondents that vary in the extent of emotional appeal (the factor of value), dynamism (the factor of activity), influence (the factor of force) of ideas about a family and marriage were established. The first cluster "predetermined family self-determination" is characterized by high level of family influence on the respondent's life, but at the same time the marital and family relations are not of high value and the image of the family does not vary over time. The mechanism of family self-determination development is direct transmission. The particularity of the second cluster "declared family self-determination" is that marital and family relations ideas are of high value and vary over time, but at the same time these ideas remain unimplemented, because the family has no significant effect on person's life. It may be concluded that family self-determination is developed by the means of compensatory mechanism, aimed at the correction of the parental family within the image of the future family. The third cluster "diffusive family self-determination" differs in that marital and family ideas are not significant; they do not vary over time; and they do not have any influence on respondent's life. The mechanism of family self-determination development is devaluation and rejection. The fourth cluster includes young people that are characterized by high family lifestyle significance, dynamism of marital and family ideas and high level of family influence on person's life - realized and reached family self-determination. The mechanisms of the development of family self-determination can be a direct transmission, role-playing experimentation.

It is hoped that the results of this empirical research will be useful in the development of a programme for psychological and pedagogical support of the process of students' family self-determination, that will ensure the success of the process of young people orientation towards the family as self-value in the premarital period, the development of young men and young women's readiness to marital and family relations.

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