

## Ideas and Notations of Family Structures, and Gender Roles of Youth

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### Abstract

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This paper studies the notations of students on their family and gender roles. Feminine stereotypes are prevalently established, and the masculinity of young men is less expressed. Ideas on the roles of the women and men in the viewpoint of girls and young men were respectively collected. For girls, priority of career and family were ascertained, as well as the main motive of creation of a family.

Important qualities based on the ideas on roles and responsibilities of a life-partner or future husband:

For girls, the important criteria in the choice of life partners were; the thought system, diligence, maturity, ability to provide for, and protect the family, confidence, maintaining a healthy lifestyle, and lack of addictions.

Some students also noted the need for emotional contact between their spouses and their future children, as well as the consciousness of the importance of the husband as head of the family.

From our research, were able to obtain data indicating immaturity of ideas on family structures, and gender roles. Some students entertained the possibility of combination of domestic duties, child rearing, and career growth. Some others preferred career to family.

In students, the tendency to dominate, dictate, dish out orders, and others were shown, coupled with instability of character. In difficult situations, some of them preferred to rely on opinion and the decision of their spouse.

The study subjects (youths) displayed low indicators of readiness to marriage. They understood marriage as an emotional journey, they overestimated romanticism, and most of the subjects lacked the major psychological and household skills needed in marriage. Majority of students were interested in marriage, they had plans to get married in the nearest future.

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**Keywords:** Models of future family; gender role; attitude to planning of the future family; career and family; pre-marital ideas of students of future family.

## **1. Introduction**

The family is the main institute of society life. The family is seen as the major support group of a person, and the first basis of development of socialization.

The family is a steady and significant unit in the hierarchy of vital values of a person. In a family the main social installations, views, belief, set of norms and behavior, regulations between the husband and the wife, parents and children, and siblings, are developed. Sexual and gender identification of a person is important, since it develops the personal formation of the person.

Society problems, such as the increase in the of number of broken families, growth of divorces, incidence and mortality increase, alcohol, drugs, cruelty and others all originate from the family. The demographic situation in the country worsens as a result. Therefore, it is essential to study the problem of misinformations on gender and sexual identities of youths.

A scientific concordance of theoretic-empirical knowledge of sexual and role identity are noted in the works of: I.G. Leonov (1993); E. P. Ilyin (2002); T.V. Andreeva (2004); S. Bern (2007); S.L. Rubenstein (2009), etc.

## **2. Purpose of study**

To exposure of the ideas and notations of students about sexual and gender identities.

*Tasks.*

- 1) To define students' ideas of a family.
- 2) To reveal the preferences of students concerning the models of their future family.
- 3) To reveal the ideas of sexual and gender roles.

The sample of research is made up 60 students (4<sup>th</sup> -5<sup>th</sup> year students) of Naberezhno-chelninsky institute of the Kazan (Volga) federal university, from the age range of 22-25 years, 30 females and 30 male, all unmarried. The object of research was problems of a modern family, and the subject of this research was youths, with possible problems connected with their idea of family structures, and gender roles.

Research hypothesis: The main ideas on the topic family have been formed, however there are still problems associated with gender roles.

## **3. Methods**

Tests: The test involved answering questions on topics such as; « family or career», «Leadership abilities» «Marriage preferences for girls», «attitude to love», «Pre-marital preferences of students», and many other areas.

Statistical processing of the received data allowed for the establishment of the attitude of youths to planning of their future family. So, typical for a happy family, 24,24 % of the subjects considered mutual understanding, love (19,96 %), children (13,63 %), unity, trust and consent (4,54 %). 79,2 % of students reflect on planning of the birth of a child.

The students, who did not reflect on planning towards childbirth, were more excited and focused on the relationship between spouses.

In notations of students, the family carries out the following functions:

1. Educational (paternity, motherhood, education of children etc.) 95,8 %.
2. Economic and household (material requirements of a family, health preservation etc.) 47,95%.
3. Emotional (satisfying need for sympathy, respect, recognition, emotional support etc.) 98 %.
4. Spiritual communication - 85,4 %.
5. Primary social control - 95,8 %.

In females, there is an inherent feminine stereotypes (62 %), and in males – masculine and androgyny - 56,7 % and 10 % respectively.

From the test, we discovered that females see the woman as a gentle and vulnerable creature, the hostess in the house, the mother and the teacher of children, and a loving and caring spouse for the husband. This is an approximate social ideal of a "real" woman. Also, female subjects noted that the man should be quiet and strong, sustained, able to provide for the family financially, able to protect weak ones, and able to support family members.

The technique «Unfinished sentences» revealed a prevalence in the propensity of females to the real structure of families than males (61,2 % and 54,3 %, respectively). The males were inclined to idealized structure of family life. They considered that a family should be built on mutual love, so as to overcome difficulties in life. Girls preferred to be careful in the choice of a life partner, and not eager to the acquisition of a family.

The analysis of marriage notations of female students revealed that 46,9 % would like to marry a businessman and a person of high status.

It is typical for youths to diverge the qualities of their desirable life partners, with the qualities of their current partners.

On the basis of the received data, the image of an ideal girlfriend for males (in decreasing order) was made up of: external features (62,3 %), moral qualities (57,9 %), femininity (55,4 %), mind (48,4%), sense of humour (47,2 %), communicative qualities (44,1 %), diligence (41 %), the general development (40,5 %), health (39,7 %), length of pursuit (36,4 %), steadiness (34,6 %) and financial security (31 %).

The image of future spouse differed from the image of the preferred girlfriend, but noticeably, the males paid attention to appearance (63,3 %) and moral qualities (56,6 %). Qualities, such as femininity (54,4 %), mind (52,8 %), health (49,7 %), sense of humour (47,2 %), cultural development (44,9 %), Length of wooing (44,9 %), steadiness (39,2 %), communicative qualities (38,5 %), impulsiveness (37,9 %), hospitality (36,6 %), financial security (33,8 %) were also deemed important.

The analysis of an ideal boy friend for female students showed quite different preferences to that of the male students. So, the mind 62,7 %, moral qualities (61,6 %), diligence (56,4 %), sense of humour (53,1 %), good breeding (50,8 %), self-confidence (50,4 %), appearance (47,7 %), independence (46,4 %), education (45,6 %), keenness (44,2 %), sexuality (42,08 %), strong-willed qualities (39,2 %), communicative qualities (37,9 %), financial security (37,08 %) and brightness (28,75 %) were considered important.

For the preferred future spouse these qualities were considered important; the relation to respondent (60,2 %), mind (58,5 %), diligence (54,8 %), "defender" (53,9 %), appearance (53,3 %), financial security (52,5 %), maturity (51,9 %), self-confidence (49,2 %), kindness (48,5 %), patience (46,2 %), good breeding (44,6 %), sense of humour (42,3 %), strong-willed qualities (41,9 %), sexuality (38,1 %), erudition (31,04 %) and skill to communicate (29,2 %).

The females reflected more on the future than the males. They also saw the mind, attitude, diligence and maturity as important criteria for choosing a future husband, and they paid less attention to appearance, and sense of humour. Also more than a half of the female students showed a predisposition for their future spouses to provide, protect, show confidence, and have a healthy lifestyle.

32,72 % of the students in the process of testing displayed a high knowledge of gender roles and understanding of family structures. More than half of the students mixed up the roles of their girlfriend and boyfriends, as the same as that of their future spouses (67,27 %). Thus, level of youth readiness to marriage is the low. The emotional approach to marriage, the overestimated romanticism, lack of the major psychological maturity and household skills prevails as the general ideas of youths on family structures and gender roles.

It is possible to assume that these illusions are causes of marital problems and divorce. After marriage valuable orientations change, the unity of interests does not remain, therefore, there is no capability in creating and holding of long family relations.

Research of a figurative component by means of a technique «Draw your future family» revealed big clearness and completeness of ideas of future family for females. According to students, especially females, a family should have an emotional contact with the children, and the husband should be aware of his roles as the head of the family.

Also following tendencies are revealed:

- More than 93 % of respondents have an accurate purpose in life. Thus they have a firm idea of priorities, and in achievement of these purposes, they do not want to risk neither health, nor friendship;
- With females, a career and a family are important components in life. In their representation the woman can have a family, and a working career at the same time. 6,7 % of female students prefer career to a family.

On the basis of results of the test «Do you like to dominate?», it was revealed that in a family the man prefer average tendency to dominate i.e. where it is necessary dominate (67,7 %). 23,3 % young men lack of tendency to dominate, and a 10 % tendency to dictatorship was revealed. This results comes from the fact that 76,7 % of the tested students were indifferent towards this issue, however they showed abilities to direct and organize. 16,7 % were inclined to leadership, and had a domineering character, and painfully react to councils and remarks of their companion. 6,7 % of young men did not aspire to leadership, they prefer to rely on opinion and the decision of the spouse.

Majority of female students believe in love (53,3 %). They spoke about their emotionality, ability to love deeply and true, and were not ashamed of expressing and showing their feelings.

For other half (46,7 %) the problem, love is not necessary in the forefront, but is also important. This group focused on reality, patience and pride as the leading determination of the success and failure of relationships.

On the formations of standards of masculinity and femininity, the females showed interest in their appearances, and males showed interest in being courageous and strong -this according to them was an inclination to maturity (Rean A.A., 2007). It is known that the formation of sexual consciousness begins from Sankt Peterburg first days of life, but most intensively it develops at youthful age, during students' life.

#### **4. Results**

Examined contingent of youth showed quite low indications of readiness to marriage, which was mostly the emotional approach to the marriage, the overestimation of romance, and a major lack of psychological and household skills.

1. For the majority of respondents, love is the main motive for family creation.

2. The majority of students reflects on family creation, and plans to marry in the nearest future.

However there is a slight confusion in the image of the friend (girlfriend) and future husband (wife).

There are gender differences on the issues of marriage and relationship in a family.

3. The choice of the partner is prevailed by characteristics such as, external appearance, sense of humour, communicate skills for males; mind and attitude for females.

#### **5. Conclusions**

Certainly the views of a family during the pre-marital period and real practice of the matrimonial relations is not the same. Pre-marital ideas of students on future family structures and gender roles, considerably affects the family life, especially in its initial stage.

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