

**icCSBs 2020****The Annual International Conference on Cognitive - Social and Behavioural  
Sciences****EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AS A FACTOR OF STUDENTS'  
FAMILY SELF-DETERMINATION DEVELOPMENT**

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nadiya\_mih@mail.ru***Abstract***

Emotional intelligence as a factor influencing young people's family self-determination has not been sufficiently studied, and the question of the possibility of its development among students in the sphere of family relations also remains open. The purpose of our research is to reveal peculiarities of connection between the level of emotional intelligence development and structural and content characteristics of family self-determination at youthful age. The research was carried out at the basis of Astrakhan State University. The study was attended by 300 students aged from 17 to 19 years old. There were 84 young men and 216 girls among them. With the help of N. Hall's questionnaire «Diagnostics of emotional intelligence» it was established that 65% of respondents have a low level, 31.7% - average level, 3.3% - high level of emotional intelligence development. Emotional intelligence determines the development of value and emotional, regulatory and behavioral, motivational, and reflexive components of students' family self-determination. Emotional intelligence is an important factor determining the development of family self-determination of student youth. Preparing for family and marriage of modern youth will be effective in organizing psychological and pedagogical support aimed at the development of emotional intelligence in the sphere of family relations.

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

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## 1. Introduction

For many decades, the phenomenon of personal self-determination has drawn attention of outstanding Russian psychologists. Among the most important issues, requiring specific in-depth analysis,

Feldshtein (2005) emphasized a problem of “a content of the self-determination concept and its characteristics as a social-psychological, cultural and historical phenomenon, having a universally significant meaning in the development of sociality, its differentiated representation at the individual, group, ethnic and other levels in general and in a specific ethno-historical meaning”. (pp.265-266)

The most representative research trends are personal and professional self-determination. At present, the subject of scientific analysis is insufficiently studied types of self-determination - civil, moral, economic, cultural, etc. A new trend is a family self-determination.

The current state of theoretical and empirical researches of family self-determination provides ample opportunities for informative filling and development of this concept. First of all, the structure and the content of a person's family self-determination both need a specific analysis. Researchers need to identify a set of constituents of social-psychological elements (components) of family self-determination, to establish logical links between them, their hierarchy. At present, the actual analyzed set of constituents of family self-determination phenomena - family values, image of a family, matrimony, parenthood, etc. - remains insufficiently differentiated and integrated simultaneously. Thereby, it is necessary to carry out a specific analysis of complex phenomena, based on the results of empirical research and included into the structure of family self-determination or closely related to it.

Rean (2017) gives the results of a large-scale empirical study, which shows that family is on the first place in the structure of youth's life values. Meanwhile, there is a large amount of divorces among young people. Rean (2017) stresses that young people should be specially prepared for family life. Batarchuk's (2014) researches are devoted to the analysis of value orientations and intra-family relations caused by national differences.

A number of researchers study a role of a parental family in the image formation of a future family, which is a central component of subject's family self-determination. Karabanova and Trofimova (2013) proved that “in their own images of a future family (family values, role structure, emotional relationships, future partner) young people are guided by the image of parental family functioning patterns” (p. 43). Karabanova (2010), Spivakovskaya (2000), Ovcharova (2003) pointed out that the parental family sets a certain normative model of parenthood. Karabanova and Molchanov (2017) have analyzed the mechanisms of a parental family impact on the formation of parental attitudes. Close communication and interaction in the family serve as a source of samples formation of one's own parental behaviour (Karabanova et al., 2017; Zakharova, 2015). It has been established that peculiarities of girls' attitude to motherhood and parental behavioral line are determined by the order of birth and sex of siblings (Burmenskaya et al., 2018), value sphere of a personality (Karabanova et al., 2018a), nature of children-parents relationships (Sadovnikova et al., 2018), basic concepts of the world (implicit assessment of the world in terms of its benevolence, justice, manageability, etc.) and self-identity (Karabanova et al., 2018b). Alekseeva (2012, 2015) has defined the role of children-parents relations in forming family values and the parental image at

youthful age. The empirical research, carried by Berezhnaya and Lukyanenko (2016), shows that household function, social activeness and external attractiveness are the significant indicators in the image of girls' marital partner.

A question of defining family self-determination remains unresolved today: detection and description of the main social-psychological factors, psychological mechanisms and regularities. The analysis of literary sources showed that the problem of family self-determination was raised in the context of revealing the social-psychological factors of family self-determination among higher school cadets (Melnikova & Sechko, 2016), setting the connection between self-actualization and family self-determination in youthful age (Mukhtarova, 2016). We assume that emotional intelligence affects the process of family self-determination in youthful age. This assumption requires special proof. The proposed article is devoted to the solution of the problem.

## **2. Problem Statement**

At present, there is a known contradiction between theoretical and practical significance of a problem of studying the image of family and family values of modern youth and the lack of empirical researches focused on identifying the mechanisms and social-psychological factors of forming family self-determination in youthful age. Structure components, meaningful characteristics and types of family self-determination of modern boys and girls were carried out in previous studies (Merzlyakova, 2019a). We have presented a two-factor model of family self-determination of young boys and girls. The image of a family is considered as a function of three components: a parental family, my future family, an ideal family. Typological groups of respondents that differ from each other at the degree of emotional attractiveness and dynamism (value and activity factor), influence (power factor) of marriage and family image at the level of statistical significance, are empirically extracted. The types (predetermined, declared, diffused, realized, and achieved types) and psychological mechanisms of family self-determination of student youth are described and analyzed (Merzlyakova, 2018b). It has been established (Merzlyakova, 2018a, 2019a) that boys and girls' indicators of family self-determination are prescribed by a system of different social-cultural conditions (residence, religion, ethnocultural background, type of a parental family structure, level of a family cohesion, children-parents relationships) and individual-psychological factors (cognitive abilities, typological characteristics of temperament, emotional and volitional properties of a personality, communication abilities and peculiarities of interpersonal interaction). The ideas of matrimony and parenthood (motherhood, fatherhood) depending on the gender of respondents and the type of family self-determination, are studied (Merzlyakova, Golubeva, & Eremit'skaya, 2019; Merzlyakova, 2019b,c). However, the connection between emotional intelligence and content and structural features of family self-determination in youthful age, is insufficiently explored.

## **3. Research Questions**

Today the following issues remain unresolved.

**3.1.** What level of emotional intelligence development do modern students have?

**3.2.** Are there any reliable differences in content and structure features of family self-determination depending on the level of emotional intelligence development of modern students?

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

The purpose of our research is to reveal peculiarities of the connection between the level of emotional intelligence development and content and structural features of family self-determination in youthful age. We have put forward a hypothesis, supposing that content and structural features of family self-determination are estimated by the level of emotional intelligence development in youthful age. According to the set purpose and the hypothesis we have carried out the research aimed at solving the following problems.

**4.1.** Determine the level of emotional intelligence development in youthful age.

**4.2.** Assess the reliability of differences in family self-determination indicators depending on the level of students' emotional intelligence development.

The research was carried out in Astrakhan State University. 300 students aged from 17 to 19 years old took part in it. There were 84 boys and 216 girls.

## **5. Research Methods**

To reach the purpose, a complex of intercomplementary methods of research was used:

**5.1.** theoretical analysis of literature sources, comparative and system analysis;

**5.2.** to study the level of emotional intelligence development, the method «Diagnostics of emotional intelligence» (Goetz, Frenzel, Pekrun, & Hall, 2005) was used;

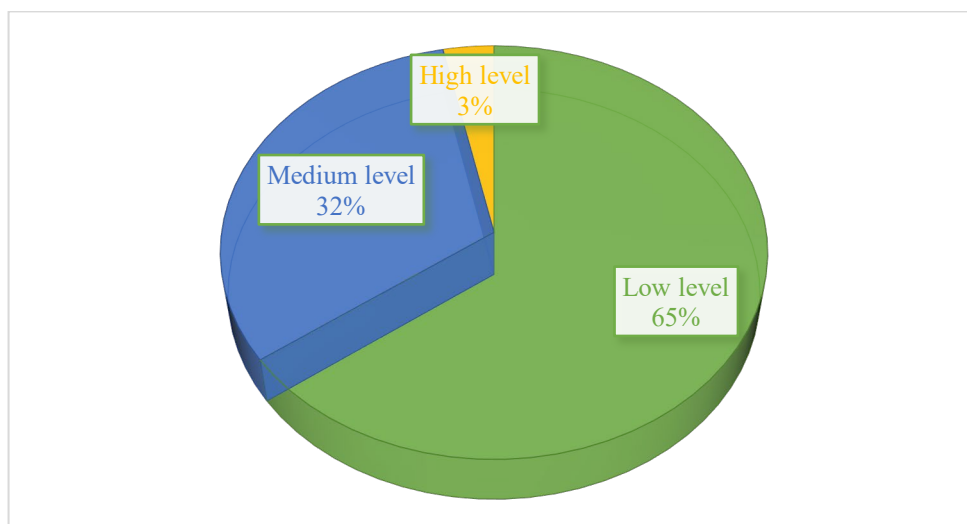
**5.3.** to diagnose content and structure features of family self-determination, the modified version of the semantic differential method developed by Osgood (1952) the questionnaire «The level of correlation between the «value» and «availability» in different areas of life» by Fantalova (2001), project technique «Unfinished sentences», «Test of life-purpose orientations» by Leontiev (2000), were used;

**5.4.** Carrying out the analytical phase, we used mathematical and statistical methods, which allowed us to establish the reliability of the results of the research. All the calculations were done by means of IBM SPSS Statistics 21. The analysis included descriptive statistics, Kolmogorov-Smirnov's criterion for one sample, Kruskal-Wallis's criterion, Levenes' criterion and one-way ANOVA for independent samples.

## **6. Findings**

### **6.1. Diagnostics of the level of emotional intelligence development in youthful age**

At the first stage of our research we determined the level of emotional intelligence development of student youth using the method «Diagnostics of emotional intelligence» (N. Hall). From Figure 1 we can see that 65% (195 people) of respondents have a low level, 31,7% (95 people) – an average level, 3,3% (10 people) - a high level of emotional intelligence development.



**Figure 01.** Diagnostic results of emotional intelligence development level (by N. Hall) in youthful age, %

## **6.2. Study of the connection between the level of emotional intelligence development and content and structural features of family self-determination in youthful age**

Carrying out a comparative analysis of content and structural features of family self-determination depending on the level of emotional intelligence development for quantitative variables, which distribution corresponds to normal rules and comply with the requirements of dispersions homogeneity, we used one-way ANOVA for independent samples (F), in other cases - non-parametric Kruskal-Wallis's criterion (H). From Table 1 we can see that there are no reliable differences in the cognitive component of family self-determination. The differences at the level of statistical significance in valuable and emotional component of family self-determination are established for such elements as life goals, life process, life productivity and general indicator of life meaning. The median values testify to that students with a high level of emotional intelligence are distinguished by life goals, the perception of life process as interesting and emotionally charged, meaningful and satisfaction with self-realization. In regulatory and behavioral component of family self-determination, significant differences in the indicators of ideas about the future, are revealed. Future has the greatest value for students with a high level of emotional intelligence development. In motivational component of family self-determination, the level of emotional intelligence development determines the development of such elements as safety, harmonious sexual relations, compensation of feeling loneliness, recognition by others and self-actualization. The importance of such marriage motives as self-actualization, recognition by others, harmonious sexual relations, safety, compensation of feeling loneliness increases at a high level of emotional intelligence development in youthful age. The level of emotional intelligence determines the peculiarities of development the elements of family self-determination reflexive component: self-identity, the locus of control – Me, the locus of control - life. Positive self-attitude, the idea of oneself as a strong personality, having freedom of choices and capable to manage one's own life, are typical for students with a high level of emotional intelligence.

**Table 01.** Assessing the reliability of differences in family self-determination indicators depending on the level of emotional intelligence development in youthful age (n = 300 people)

Structural and content characteristics of family self-determination	Median value			Criterion value	Significance level
	Low level	Medium level	High level		
<b>Cognitive component</b> (an image-making element "I am the family member")					
I am the future husband / wife	6	6.17	6.92	H = 3.416	0.181
I am the future father / mother	6.17	6.5	6.75	H = 1.895	0.388
I am the head of my family	5.67	5.67	6.25	H = 2.162	0.339
I am the son/ daughter	5.5	5.83	5.83	H = 1.351	0.509
<b>Value and emotional component</b> (values of matrimonial relations, life-purpose orientations)					
Family of origin	6	6	7	H = 1.493	0.474
Marriage	5.67	6	5.83	H = 0.897	0.639
My mother	6.5	6.33	6.5	H = 0.914	0.633
My father	5.33	5.67	6.25	H = 0.547	0.761
My future family	6.5	6.67	6.33	H = 2.698	0.259
The values of happy family life	10	10	10.5	H = 0.416	0.812
The value of love	7	7	8	H = 0.345	0.841
The value of freedom as independence	5	5	6	H = 1.345	0.511
Attitude to family	5	4	4	H = 5.013	0.082
We are family (attitude to your own family)	4	4	3	H = 3.078	0.215
Role of an individual in the family structure	3.5	2	3	H = 4.456	0.108
Attitude to the future marriage partner	4	3	4	H = 4.983	0.083
Self-attitude	2	1.5	2	H = 1.309	0.520
Attitude to future children	4	3	2	H = 5.915	0.052
Attitude to romantic love	4	3	3	H = 4.040	0.133
Attitude to sex	2	1	3	H = 2.736	0.255
Attitude to family rest and leisure	4	3	4	H = 4.385	0.112
Attitude to family of origin	3	2	2	H = 5.288	0.071
Attitude to mother	5	4	5	H = 2.784	0.249
Attitude to father	3	2.5	3	H = 0.362	0.834
<b>Life goals</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>37.5</b>	<b>F = 6.655</b>	<b>0.002</b>
<b>Life process</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>H = 19.908</b>	<b>0.000</b>
<b>Life achievements</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>30.5</b>	<b>F = 6.921</b>	<b>0.001</b>
<b>General indicator of life meaningfulness</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>127</b>	<b>H = 20.977</b>	<b>0.000</b>
<b>Regulatory and behavioral component</b> (ideas on time perspective, ways of achieving activity goals, family roles orientation)					
My past	5	5	3.58	F = 1,642	0.195
My present	5.33	5.5	5.75	H = 2.347	0.309
<b>My future</b>	<b>5.83</b>	<b>6.33</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>H = 7.965</b>	<b>0.019</b>
Accessibility of a "happy family life" sphere	6	6	7.5	H = 1.082	0.582
Accessibility of active life	6	5	5	H = 0.539	0.764
Accessibility of knowledge (the possibility of expanding the education, outlook, common culture, as well as intellectual development)	7	7	7	H = 0.105	0.949
Accessibility of creativity (the possibility of creative activity)	5	6	8	H = 5.549	0.062
Headship and responsibility in the family	4	3	4	H = 1.918	0.383
Spouses' rights and duties	4	3	4	H = 4.733	0.094
Attitude to divorce	-2	-2	-4	H = 1.376	0.503
Attitude to family conflicts	-2	-1.5	-2	H = 0.605	0.739

<b>Motivation component (marriage motives)</b>					
<b>Security</b>	<b>5.17</b>	<b>5.33</b>	<b>6.08</b>	<b>F = 3.566</b>	<b>0.030</b>
<b>Harmonic sexual relations</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5.67</b>	<b>6.08</b>	<b>H = 6.003</b>	<b>0.050</b>
Duty	4	4.08	4	H = 3.138	0.208
Achievement of success	6	5.83	6.33	H = 2.011	0.366
<b>Compensation for feeling lonely</b>	<b>3.33</b>	<b>2.83</b>	<b>3.75</b>	<b>H = 7.143</b>	<b>0.028</b>
Personal independence ("running away from parents")	5.5	5.83	6.08	F = 1.932	0.147
Love	6	6.5	6.42	H = 1.099	0.577
Material wealth	5.5	5.33	6	H = 0.629	0.730
Revenge	3.33	2.67	1.08	H = 5.738	0.057
Communication with people	5.5	5.5	7	F = 1.359	0.259
<b>Social recognition</b>	<b>5.08</b>	<b>5.33</b>	<b>6.33</b>	<b>F = 3.467</b>	<b>0.033</b>
Parenting	4.92	5	4.75	F = 2.857	0.059
<b>Self-actualization</b>	<b>5.33</b>	<b>5.5</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>F = 3.479</b>	<b>0.032</b>
Happiness	6.5	6.67	6.17	H = 1.204	0.548
<b>Reflection component (objective self-evaluation, developed self-awareness and self-comprehension, internal locus of control)</b>					
<b>I am an image</b>	<b>5.33</b>	<b>5.5</b>	<b>6.33</b>	<b>F = 3.463</b>	<b>0.033</b>
Self-confidence (freedom from internal contradictions, doubts) (accessibility)	6	5	5	H = 2.835	0.242
<b>Locus of control "Me"</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>27.5</b>	<b>H = 20.41</b>	<b>0.000</b>
<b>Locus of control "Life"</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>F = 6.692</b>	<b>0.001</b>
Expressiveness of intrapersonal conflict in "happy family life" sphere	2	2	0	H = 0.260	0.878
The index of mismatch, disintegration in motivational and personal sphere	31	33	27,5	F = 0.387	0.680

Thus, emotional intelligence determines the development of valuable and emotional elements (life goals, life process, life productivity and meaning of life), regulatory and behavioral (my future), motivational (safety, harmonious sexual relations, compensation of feeling loneliness, recognition by others and self-actualization), reflexive (self-identity, the locus of control – Me, the locus of control - life) components of students' family self-determination.

## 7. Conclusion

Emotional intelligence is an important factor establishing the development of family self-determination in youthful age. The preparation for family and marriage of modern youth will be effective through organizing psychological and pedagogical support aimed at emotional intelligence development in family relationships.

In our opinion, there can be used an active group training for emotional intelligence development of boys and girls in the sphere of family relations. Pogozhina (2012) suggests an innovative approach in forming complex communicative skills, which is developed on the basis of systematic and step-by-step formation of mental actions method made by Galperin (2005) and group work within the social-psychological training. The creation of active group training is based on the principle according to which "the portion-by-stage task and the systematic interiorization of complete, generalized approximate basis of the activity in the situation of group work" (Pogozhina, 2012, p. 130) allows to form complex cognitive skills with predetermined properties in all subjects.

Possession of developed emotional intelligence in the sphere of family relations assumes the following skills:

- ✓ ability to recognize emotions, both own and other people, correctly decode non-verbal information transmitted by other people;
- ✓ ability to appreciate, perceive and respond to other person's emotions (empathy);
- ✓ ability to demonstrate one's emotions adequately, to convey one's own emotional state precisely nonverbal;
- ✓ ability to control one's emotions consciously, hold back unproductive emotional reactions, anticipate possible consequences of showing one's own emotions;
- ✓ ability to affect the emotional state of other people, inspire and lead the way;
- ✓ ability to undertake adequate action in studied emotional scope.

The process of active group workshop of emotional intelligence development in the sphere of family relations consists of the following stages:

1. explanation of theoretical material on the psychology of emotions and the role of emotional intelligence in family life;
2. testing of material by doing tasks and exercises on emotional intelligence development in marriage and family relationships;
3. control of material assimilation at each action level and program as a whole by means of using a case study method.

The first stage of «Psychology of Emotions» is aimed at forming emotional awareness, the ability to recognize emotions. We used the eponymous N. Hall's questionnaire to diagnose the level of emotional intelligence development. Further, students learn about mimic expressions of basic emotions: surprise, fear, disgust, anger, joy, sadness. P. Ekman's workshop aimed at recognizing facial expressions from photographs (54 pcs. in total) allows us to put gained theoretical skills into practice. Training of emotional state recognition skill of other participants and our own is carried out with the help of exercises «Experience», «Transmission of feelings» and «Mirror».

The second stage «Emotional culture in the family» promotes the development of mimic expressiveness, empathy, self-regulation of emotional state. Such exercises as «Phantom», «Parrot», «Guess the Feeling», «Live Hands» allow to develop practical skills of awareness and understanding of one's own emotions and other people's emotions. To determine empathic sensitivity and to develop this ability, we recommend using V.V. Boyko's technique of diagnosing the level of empathic ability, as well as the following exercises «Imagine», «Like Everyone», «Association», «Understand the Other», «Loving Look», «Epithets». In order to optimize intra-family communication, specially developed exercises are used, that allow participants to experiment with family roles, types of interaction in the family (cooperation, parity relations, contest, competition, antagonism). According to Karabanova (2006), "high emotional congestion and intensity of communication are the main features of interpersonal communication in a family" (Karabanova, 2006, p.93). In this regard, it is important to master skills of conscious control over one's own emotions. Exercises for the emotional state self-regulation through the external demonstration of emotions, exercises for facial muscles relaxation, breathing exercises, exercises for attention concentration, for visualization and plot imagination contribute to the development of ability to control their own emotions.



At the third stage «Monitoring of emotional intelligence condition in marriage and family relations» the estimation of emotional intelligence development level in the sphere of family relations is carried out by means of a case study method assuming discussion and solution of concrete and analytical practical situations from family life with the use of obtained emotional experience.

The perspective of our further researches in this direction is the estimation of efficiency in realization an active group workshop of emotional intelligence development in the sphere of family relationships.

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