

# The Significance of Family Group Synergy in the Shaping of Self-Concept in Adolescents

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**Abstract** In the intricate fabric of society, familial bonds, especially parent-child relationships, have perennially held significance. As civilization progresses, their relevance intensifies; family ties, particularly parent-child interactions, assimilate human achievements most effectively. These relationships, conduits of tradition and spiritual heritage, profoundly shape the future of societies, populations, and nations. Synergy within families, originating from interactions between parents and children or between spouses, signifies the emergence of a 'third entity'—a shared cultural foundation embodying values, principles, and mutual responsibilities. This study, referencing psychological diagnostics, probes how parental attitudes affect adolescents' self-concept, underscoring the family's pivotal role in nurturing a mature and cohesive society.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Family bonds, particularly parent-child relationships, have been central concerns since society's inception. With societal progress, the prominence of these issues is set to escalate. This is because, compared to any other social institutions, family ties, specifically parent-child interactions, assimilate human accomplishments more effectively. These relations pass on traditions from generation to generation as part of our spiritual heritage. Thus, the future of any society, populace, and nation is significantly reliant on the state of these relationships. It necessitates a nurturing and spiritually robust family environment, where synergy plays a crucial role [Burmenskaya G.V. Karabanova O.A., (1990), 45-46].

Synergy suggests that the interaction of individual elements results in the emergence of an additional component or structure. Within a family, this added component represents the quality of interpersonal relationships. Synergy originates from the interaction between spouses and between parents and children.

Interaction stimulates creativity, new possibilities, and alternative solutions.

One can visualise this additional component as a 'third entity'. When a sense of 'us' develops in a pair, they appear to transform into not just two, but three entities - the connection between the pair becoming the 'third entity'. The same applies to the parent-child relationship. The 'third entity', produced through relationships between close individuals, represents a family culture characterised by a deeply rooted sense of purpose and a value system centred on principles.

Therefore, synergy not only implies mutual openness and the emergence of shared values and goals, innovative solutions, and superior alternatives but also fosters a sense of shared responsibility for upholding the norms and values underpinning this process. It incorporates a moral code into the family culture, encouraging individuals to be more truthful, more open, and more courageous in resolving challenging matters, rather than shying away from

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them or avoiding those with whom interaction may raise these issues.

This 'third entity' serves as a sort of supreme moral authority, representing the collective conscience, a shared system of values and goals, and familial traditions and customs. It dissuades family members from engaging in immoral activities, from excessive power lust, and from power abuse. While individuals live in harmony with this moral authority, they comprehend that status, power, wealth, and prestige do not belong to them. Instead, these are entrusted to them for the betterment of people, and they are accountable for their stewardship. However, when individuals live at odds with this supreme authority, becoming their own judge and jury, this 'third entity' feeling fades. Individuals become self-focused and possessive, distancing themselves from others. The family culture transforms from one of interdependence to independence, causing the synergy miracle to evaporate.

## 2. METHODS

Our study operates on the scientific hypothesis that the formation of the concept of "I" in adolescents can be influenced by the psychological atmosphere within the family and interpersonal relationships, parental attitudes towards the child, i.e., the degree of child acceptance and healthy psychological collaboration. The study encompassed 80 ninth-grade students and their parents from general secondary schools, making a total of 80 respondents.

It's widely recognised that a parent's personality greatly impacts an individual's self-perception. This is why the test questionnaire developed by A.Ya.Varga and V.V.Stolin takes precedence. This questionnaire serves as a psychodiagnostic tool employed to ascertain parents' attitudes towards their children.

We know from developmental psychology laws that a parent's attitude towards a child becomes apparent in the earliest months of childhood, even during infancy. This is because, according to the "recovery complex", the initial signs of socialisation in a child's life are manifested as expressions of laughter and positive emotional vocalisations within the first six weeks. However, the object of our study requires an examination of situations at a considerably advanced stage of social influences, aiming to analyse the

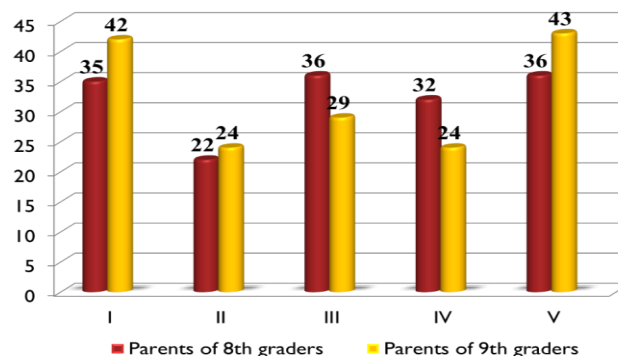
impact of family relationships on adolescents' social perception.

Parents' attitudes towards their children can be understood as a system of varying adult feelings and behaviours directed towards children. From a psychological perspective, the parents' attitude towards their children is a pedagogical social orientation established in relation to children, encompassing rational emotional and behavioural components. These components are evaluated through a questionnaire, which, to an extent, forms the foundation of this methodology. R.S.Nemov's usage of specific terms has brought about certain modifications in the processing and recommendation of the resultant data. The methodology comprises 61 questions across five scales that reflect parents' attitudes towards their children.

1. "Acceptance - rejection". This measure generally denotes an emotionally positive (acceptance) or emotionally negative (rejection) stance towards a child.
2. "Cooperation". This scale signifies adults' willingness to cooperate with the child, displaying interest in their activities and participating in them.
3. "Symbiosis" - the scale mirrors the interpersonal distance in communication with the child. This trend is described as the parent feeling unified with the child, striving to meet all of the child's needs and shield them from life's difficulties and adversities. The parent is persistently concerned about the child, viewing the child as small and vulnerable. Parental anxiety escalates when the child starts to become autonomous due to circumstances, as the parent does not willingly grant the child independence.
4. "Authoritarian hypersocialisation" - reflects the form and direction of control over the child's behaviour, indicating whether the relationship with the child is constructed in a democratic or authoritarian style.
5. "Little loser" - mirrors the attributes of a parent's perception and comprehension of the child. This final scale illustrates how adults react to the strengths and weaknesses of the child's capabilities, and to their successes and failures.

## 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of the methodology are presented below:



**FIGURE 1.** Examination of results utilising the method of diagnosing parental attitudes towards children  
 Note: I - "Acceptance - rejection"; II - "Cooperation"; III - "Symbiosis"; IV - "Authoritarian hypersocialization", V - "Little loser".

Our research is premised on the scientific hypothesis that the shaping of the "I" concept in adolescents can be influenced by the psychological environment within the family, interpersonal relationships, and parental attitudes towards the child, such as the level of acceptance and healthy psychological cooperation. The study involved 80 students from the 9th grade and their parents from general secondary schools, totalling 80 respondents.

It's well established that a parent's personality has a significant impact on forming a person's self-awareness. Hence, the primary test questionnaire is the one developed by A.Ya.Varga and V.V.Stolin, which serves as a psychodiagnostic tool used to ascertain parents' attitudes towards their children.

Developmental psychology tells us that a parent's attitude towards a child begins to manifest in the early months of childhood, even during infancy. This is because, according to the "recovery complex", the first indications of socialisation in a child's life, such as the emergence of laughter and a positive emotional tone of voice, appear in the initial 1.5 months. However, our study object requires an analysis of more advanced stages of social influences, specifically the impact of family relationships on adolescents' social perception.

Parents' attitudes towards their children are interpreted as a system of diverse feelings and behaviours from adults towards children. Psychologically, parents' attitudes towards their children is a pedagogically social setting established concerning children, which includes rational, emotional, and behavioural components. These

components are evaluated using a questionnaire that forms the basis of this methodology to some extent. R.S.Nemov's use of certain terms necessitated slight changes in processing and recommending the obtained results. The methodology comprises 61 questions, spanning five scales reflecting parents' attitudes towards their children.

1. "Acceptance - Rejection". This measure typically represents an emotionally positive (acceptance) or emotionally negative (rejection) attitude towards a child.
2. "Cooperation". This scale represents the adults' willingness to cooperate with the child, showing interest in their work and participating in their activities.
3. "Symbiosis" - the scale indicates the interpersonal distance in communication with the child. This tendency is described as the parent feeling one with the child, seeking to fulfil all of the child's needs and protect them from life's difficulties. The parent consistently worries about the child, who they perceive as small and defenceless. The parent's anxiety increases when the child begins to become autonomous due to circumstances, as the parent doesn't willingly allow the child to have independence.
4. "Authoritarian Hypersocialisation" - reflects the form and direction of control over the child's behaviour. Describes how the relationship with the child is constructed in a democratic or authoritarian style.
5. "Little Loser" - reflects the features of the parent's perception and understanding of the child. This final scale shows how adults react to the strengths and

weaknesses of the child's abilities, their successes and failures.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

As per researchers like G.S. Krasnitskaya, Y. Langmeyer, and Z. Mateychek, the primary factor in a child's personal development is the fulfilment of their need for emotional security. A significant psychological resource for an adult manifest itself in the role of competent authority, characterised by a desire for "closeness" and "common interests", as well as parental and adolescent trust. This involves being attentive to the child, supporting their successes, correctly appraising their capabilities, and essentially, accepting the child for who they are. One must also refrain from actions or words that could cause offence or anger to the child. In the context of our study, excessive emotional distance manifests as follows: adults anticipate socially approved behavioural elements from children, expect unquestioning compliance with instructions, and require obedience. Children's disobedience or defence of their own position often leads to adult discussions of their behaviour, demonstrating irritability and undue severity. From these findings, it's clear that an individual's self-perception is heavily influenced by the psychological environment within the family and the parents' personal example. The formation of the "I" concept within a teenager's personality is reliant on their family relationships and their position within the parental system. The teenager's "I" concept is directly moulded by their surroundings and their community of people. The impact of parents on a child's personality is often intertwined with the child's "I" concept, and a parent's role within the family and their status are vital in ensuring a teenager's personality maturity. Considering that breaches in the family's psychological atmosphere can create negative traits in a child's behaviour, it is recommended for parents to cultivate an environment of cooperation within the family.

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