

CHANGES IN THE IMAGE OF FAMILY IN ADOLESCENCE

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Family is an open system that is constituted by subsystems. The members of the family mutually affect each other and all acts connect to the acts of all the other members in some way (Bagdy, 1994; Kurimay, 1999; Novák, 2009). But as the structure of the family affects the life and the development of the members, including the growing child's personal development, it also has an effect on the life of the family, including changes over time. The aim of our research was to compare the perceived and idealized images of the family with one another in the case of elementary and secondary school persons. We used Tóth's (2004) survey 'Családkép, családeál', which measures three factors: hierarchy, cohesion and adaptivity. There were 49 children (age: 8-11, M: 9.286, SD: 0.607, 24 girls/25 boys) and 48 adolescents (age: 14-16, M: 15.25, SD: 0.52, 37 girls/11 boys) involved in our study. The results confirmed statistically significant differences in several cases. Regarding the adolescents, the demand for an increase in family adaptivity ($t(47)=8.763$; $p=0.000$) was remarkable. Also, the power relations inside the family (hierarchy) and the emotional connections of the members (cohesion) ($t(47)=2.406$; $p=0.020$) were sensitive points. While in case of the children correlation could be seen between the perceived and idealized family image within one dimension, regarding the adolescents the actually perceived family characteristics influenced the idealized image less, even though (at the first sight) the correlations seemed to be similar. The more uncertain responses of the adolescent age group are also worthy of note, which resulted in a higher frequency of the answers that could be grasped through the nominations of the Likert scales' middle value(s). In the future we are planning to widen the spectrum of our research and carry out longitudinal studies in order to gain a more accurate picture about the mental image of families and its changes to understand better the cognitive processes and behavioral characteristics of the given age groups.