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COGNITIVE CONTENT OF THE "FAMILY" CONCEPT IN YOUTH

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Abstract

The main goal of the research was to study the semantic and cognitive content of the 'family' concept and the determination of its differential, classificatory, and category-bases cognitive signs through the content analysis of theoretic and empiric material. The research methodology was based on the content analysis and statistics. 105 publications by 184 authors were analysed. 999 persons (whose average age was 27 years) participated in the empiric study. The frequency analysis of the occurrence of signs/indices (213 in total with the total frequency of occurrence of 6798) allowed characterizing the cognitive content of the 'family' concept. At the stage of categorization, the theoretical analysis units were formed into different categories, which were verified empirically and became the conceptual framework of research. The study of the particularities of the manifestation of signs/indices (stability/instability, distinct manifestation, and intensity) and interrelation between the categories conditioned system-based representation of the concept content. The frequency-and-hierarchy-based manifestation of the categories in their interrelation and the statistical analysis of the results (distribution, ranking, and Fischer angular transformation) allowed determining the level blocks of the categories of the 'family' concept. The main level block includes indices, which characterize the interaction between the members of the family and their interaction with their relatives, uniting bases (systemic factors) and the welfare of the family. It has been found that the most pronounced characteristics in the description of the family are the characteristics of positive and empathic feelings in the family.

Keywords: Concept "Family", young people, content analysis.

1. Introduction

In modern society, the family undergoes substantial modifications, both structural, and functional ones. First, the modern family is very often the implementation of different variations of marital relations, one of which (prevailing one) is cohabitation (common-law marriage) as a form of non-registered relations. Modern young people regard such relations as trial and less demanding ones, which is coherent with the opinion of age-specialized psychologists regarding the tendency of modern young people to infantilization. Secondly, at the present day young people more often are not ready for marriage and for the performance of the roles of man and woman, as well as the role of parents. Thirdly, the active transformation of the social roles of men and women is taking place: women are striving to manifest themselves more actively, and men, on the contrary, have begun choosing more often a more passive role in their family life.

2. Problem Statement

The mentioned transformations lead to serious consequences: families more often have different problems and family disadvantages affecting not only all members of the family, but also the society and the state in large (Golubeva, Istratova, Kibal'chenko, & Eksakusto, 2015; Bedford & Avioli, 2012; Carr & Springer, 2010). Problems of the reproductive, educational, household, and economic spheres of the family, as well as the sphere of emotional relations and relations with friends and relatives arise. Besides, different family functions, such as social functions (socialization of the younger generation, accountability and obligations to a spouse, children and parents, social and sexual control, etc.), and individual functions (satisfaction of parental needs, needs for ensuring psychological defence and emotional support, satisfaction of the need of individual happiness, love, etc.) are deformed. Such a situation is indicative of the change of cognitive constructs related to the family and family relations, which emphasizes the importance of the study of the semantic and cognitive content of the 'family' concept in young people.

In the course of the theoretical analysis, several key definitions of the 'family' concept were found (Drujinin, 2011; Umberson, Thomeer, & Williams, 2013). The family was defined as a social community, as a small group, as a group of close relatives, and as a social-and-pedagogic group of people formed for the optimal satisfaction of the need of self-preservation and self-fulfilment. It is important to notice that in most cases the family concept is considered from the perspective of two approaches consisting in considering the family as a small group and as an institute of socialization.

In case of considering the family as a specific small group, its distinctive feature is the system of interpersonal relations, which is governed by moral rules, moral standards, traditions, and values. The family as an institute of socialization is considered in the context of a stable form of the arrangement of joint activity of people performing certain functions in the society, the most important one of which is the satisfaction of social needs. In other words, the family is a specific social institute, which is characterized by three main types of family relations, which are marital cohabitation, parenthood, and kinship, and which governs interpersonal relations between spouses, parents, children, and other relatives (Malkina-Pyh, 2008).

The theoretical analysis has also shown the existence of different indices determining the family as a social unit. The mentioned indices are marital or blood kin relations between its members; mental,

spiritual and emotional kinship of its members; space and time limitation; closeness and interpersonal intimacy; duration of relations, responsibility for each other, obligation to each other, etc. (Istratova, 2015; Lee & Szinovacz, 2016).

It is necessary to point out that with increase of the number of aspects of the family study the number of its signs also increases, which, on the one hand, allows determining their specific features more precisely, and on the other hand, makes it necessary to review the existing classifications of families and their characteristics. Besides, poor structuredness of the characteristics and predictors of the modern family is observed, which is conditioned by the introduction of new norms, values, and senses into the family and family relations in the modern period.

3. Research Questions

The multidimensionality of the family concept, the multiplicity of approaches to comprehending and defining the concept, as well as to the existing transformations of its content, structure, links, relations, and functions raise the following questions: Which of the peculiarities (specific features) form the cognitive content of the 'family' concept in the current generation? Which elements of the content provide strengthening and preserving real family relations (or destroy such relations) and assure the continuity of generations? These issues conditioned carrying out the semantic-and-cognitive content-analysis of the 'family' concept based on scientific publications and empiric data.

4. Purpose of the Study

Please replace this text with context of your paper. The research hypothesis was as follows: in the process of the content-analysis of publications concerning the family and in the semantic-and-cognitive content of the 'family' concept (in young people) new tendencies and specific features are to be detected. The main goals determined the research course were as follows:

- carrying out the content-analysis of the semantic and cognitive content of the 'family' concept on the basis of complete texts and fragments of publications concerning the family;
- determining signs/indices of the cognitive content of the 'family' concept empirically;
- verification of assumptions made through statistical data analysis.

5. Research Methods

The main method of the research was the method of content-analytical study. It was used for the purpose of studying the semantic and cognitive content of the 'family' concept and determining its differential, classificatory, and category-based cognitive signs. The deductive analysis was selected from two main types of the content qualitative-quantitative analysis of the content for the purposes of testing the hypotheses made (Kibal'chenko, 2009). The research comprised of two stages.

5.1. The first stage

Carrying out the content analysis based on selected full-text publications (on psychology and pedagogy) regarding the problems of the family: its definition, structure, types, kinds, etc. The total number of the analysed publications was 105 publications by 184 Russian and foreign authors.

5.2. The second stage

Conducting "Cognitive content of the concept" subtest (Kholodnaya, 2019), the stimulus word of which was 'family'. The most of the world languages have specific parts of speech reflecting the properties of an object, which is taken into account when designing semantic tests and questionnaires (for example, J. Osgood's semantic differential is based on the pairs of adnoun antonyms). Such a part of speech in Russian language is the adnoun, which became the analysis unit reflecting the content of the 'family' concept. 999 young people with roughly equal sex distribution participated in the research. Their average age was 27 years.

5.3. The quantitative data processing

The quantitative data processing includes the use of different ways of statistical data analysis: distribution, the frequency of occurrence of signs/indices and analysis categories, ranking, and Fischer angular transformation used for the comparison of the categories based on the frequency of occurrence of signs/indices of the cognitive content of the 'family' concept.

6. Findings

6.1. Semantic and cognitive content of the 'family' concept

At the first stage of the research, the analysis of publications dedicated to the family allowed determining a wide range of the most pressing issues related to the family, which are as follows:

- **pedagogical issues** (fall of the morality and educational culture of parents (Istratova, 2015); destructive styles of children moral education (Malkina-Pyh, 2008); low level of educational competency and educational mind-set of parents, gaps in the consideration of age-related and individual peculiarities of children (Cherdyntseva, 2013; Minina, 2014);

- **psychological issues** (family development (Andreeva, 2014; Haritonov & Timchenko, 2012; Istratova, 2015; Rogers, 2012); lack of warm relations and love in the family (Hellinger, 2013); frustration of child's need of trustful communication (Migunova, 2015); children's emotional tension (aggression, anxiety, fears), gaps in the development of social emotions and social intelligence (Lopez, Perez, Ochoa, & Ruiz, 2008); emotional denial by parents (Andreeva, 2014; Istratova, 2015); formation of focusing illusion in the members of the family (Malkina-Pyh, 2008); problems of interactions and interrelations between children and parents (Gilligan, Suitor, Nam, Routh, Rurka, & Con, 2017; Lee & Szinovacz, 2016; Firestone, 2018; Suitor, Gilligan, & Pillemer, 2013); personal deformations in children and teenagers (Dekovic, Wissink, & Meijer, 2004; Istratova, 2015); family disadvantages (Istratova, 2015); mental health of the family (Schieman & Glavin, 2011);

- **economic issues** (family economy (Tseluyko, 2006); economic problems and family disadvantages (Golubeva & Golubeva, 2015; Suitor et al., 2013);
- social issues (divorces; 'return marriage' or remarriage; extramarital relations; problems of interrelations between young spouses and parents' families (Tseluyko, 2006); increase of the level of social orphan-hood (Istratova, 2015; Tihomirov, 2014); distribution of family roles (Barsukova & Chulanov, 2014; Tseluyko, 2006; Eksakusto & Cherednichenko, 2014); family householding (Tseluyko, 2006; Vagapova, 2014); family crisis (Istratova, 2015); asocial family (Rean, 2015); conflictive family (Malkina-Pyh, 2008; 20; Umberson et al., 2013).

In the process of categorization, the analysis units were formed into different categories, which were verified empirically and became the conceptual framework of the research:

1. General information of the family and its source.

2. Definition of the 'family' concept: different definitions of the concept.

3. Interaction of the family members and their relations with relatives; integrity of the family.

4. Uniting bases (foundations) of the family: systemic factors.

5. Dynamics and development of the family: criteria; signs; control of formation.

6. Characteristic of different types of families: names; sings; content.

7. Family structure: elements; components; levels.

8. Coherence (harmoniousness / disharmoniousness): internal preconditions; external preconditions; signs; criteria; peculiarities of interaction; contradictions.

9. Family problems: conditions of family disruption and development.

10. Functions of the family.

11. Basis for the development of the cognitive content of the modern family, definitions: characteristics; content; structure.

6.2. Verification of assumptions made through statistical data analysis

At the second stage of the research, as a result of the interrogation of 999 persons, 213 indices (signs) having different frequency of occurrence (the total frequency was 6798) were obtained. The summarized information on the indices/signs of the semantic and cognitive analysis of the 'family' concept shown in Table 1 was obtained empirically.

Table 01. Frequency distribution of the 'family' concept signs

No.	Characteristics of the frequency distribution of the concept signs	Indices
1	Number of signs (indices)	213
2	Signs occurrence frequency diversity	From 1 to 655
3	Signs occurrence summary frequency	6798
4	Signs occurrence average frequency	31.92
5	Signs occurrence median frequency	10
6	Standard deviation	75.43

The analysis of the empirically obtained results became a basis for detailing the categories of the cognitive content of the 'family' concept. For example, category No. 2: Definition of the 'family' concept

fell out the empiric content, because, on the one hand, the respondents did not give the definition of the family, and on the other hand, they were limited by the condition of search words (adnouns) of the instruction.

It is necessary to take into account that the links ('couplings') between the categories have a high importance in the process of the content-analysis, because they contain the most content-rich information, which conditions systemic representation of the concept signs content. The links be-tween the empirically detailed categories of the content-analysis of the cognitive content of the 'family' concept are shown in Table 2.

Table 02. The links between the detailed categories of the content-analysis of the cognitive content of the 'family' concept

		Categories of the content-analysis and number of links											
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1	General information on the family and its source		1	1	1	1			1				
2	Family functions	1		1	1	1							
3	Interaction of the members of the family	1	1		1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	
4	Uniting bases (foundations) of the family	1	1			1	1	1	1		1	1	
5	Dynamics and development of the family	1	1				1	1			1	1	1
6	Family life-cycle			1	1	1							
7	Family structure			1	1	1							
8	Coherence (harmoniousness)	1		1	1								
9	Family problems: conditions of family disruption			1									
10	Family welfare			1	1	1							
11	Emotional code or pictorial-verbal 'translation' of the 'family' concept			1	1	1							
12	Out of classification				1								
	Co-occurrence coefficient	5	3	8	6	5	3	5	3	3	6	3	1
	%	4 т	2 т	7 о	5 т	4 т	2 т	4 т	2 т	2 т	5 т	2 т	9
	Rank (grade)	5	9	1	2.5	5	9	5	9	9	2.5	9	12

Thus, in the process of the determination of the coefficients of the co-occurrence of the categories, the percentage composition of the categorical blocks and ranking hierarchic manifestation of the categories and their distribution over conditional levels was obtained (Table 3).

Table 03. Level-related frequency-and-hierarchic manifestation of the categories in reference to each other

Levels	The 1st level	The 2nd level	The 3rd level	The 4th level
	categories with ranks 1 and 2.5	categories with rank 5	categories with rank 9	categories with rank 12
Categories	3, 4, 10	1, 5, 7	2, 6, 8, 9, 11	12

In the process of statistical analysis of the results, significant differences between the frequencies of occurrence of signs in the categories of different levels were detected. The signs of different categories significantly differ (according to Fischer angular transformation): 3 and 2; 3 and 6; 3 and 8; 3 and 11 ($\varphi^* = 2.209$, $p \leq 0.05$); 3 and 12 ($\varphi^* = 3.351$, $p \leq 0.01$); 1 and 12; 5 and 12; 7 and 12 ($\varphi^* = 2.036$, $p \leq 0.05$); 4 and 12; 6 and 12 ($\varphi^* = 2.295$, $p \leq 0.05$).

As the result, the following categorical block-levels were determined.

The first level includes the categories of signs No. 3, No. 4, and No. 10 (interaction (cooperation) of the family members; uniting bases of the family; family welfare). Here indices of interaction of the members of the family with relatives (charitable, mindful, authoritative, well-mannered, teaching, responsive, supporting, hospitable, well-intentioned, tight-knit, etc.) occur the most frequently (72.7%) among the theoretically possible variations of interrelations and systemic factors of the family (intimate, understanding, the only one, faithful, supreme) occur quite frequently (54.54%).

The second level includes categories of signs No. 1, No. 5, and No. 7 (general information on the family and its source; dynamics and development of the family; family structure). Here we can observe equal occurrence frequency of possible interrelations (45.5%) of general information on the family and its origin (of Jew origin, princely family, rural (farming) family, etc.), dynamics and development of the family (active, big, growing, multi-faceted, goal-oriented, vigorous, etc.), its functions (educational, socializing, service-utility-purpose, emotional exchange function).

The third level includes categories of signs No. 2, No. 6, No. 8, No. 9, and No. 11 (functions of the family; family life cycle; coherence; problems of the family; emotional code of the 'family' concept). Here the indices of the family life cycle (young, mature, growing, etc.), coherence (adequate, safe, exemplary, harmonious, united (close-knit), happy, etc.), family problems (careless, bad, low-income, needy, boring, difficult, etc.), as well as the emotional code of the 'family' concept (the only one, nice, unusual, true, unique, needful, warm, wonderful, etc.) occur more rarely (27.3%), but significantly frequently (at $p \leq 0.05$) for the level determination.

The fourth level is not taken into consideration, because it includes only five signs (as an artefact of distribution according to possible interrelations in different contexts (9.09%)). Here the 12th category is included (not classifiable): (amusing, individual, funny, etc.).

The analysis of the most frequently occurring indices has shown that the most frequently manifested indices (occurrence frequency ≥ 60) are indices reflecting positive feelings uniting the family (loving, happy, faithful, close-knit, exemplary), its empathic properties (kind, careful, well-intentioned, understanding), favourable interpersonal relations, and complete composition (close-knit, friendly, amicable, beloved, orderly, two-parent, traditionally, big). The same group (of the most frequently occurring indices) includes indices reflecting material welfare and its preconditions (working, laborious, well-to-do, rich, etc.). It may be said that psychological comfort in the family, emotional intimacy and trust-based relations against the background of material welfare and economic stability are the most significant conditions for the younger generation.

It is significant that the group of the most frequently occurring (expressed through manifestation) signs (occurrence frequency is from 11 to 59) includes indices reflecting the ability of appreciating another person, amicably coexisting with such a person without any conflicts (respectful, amicable, kind-hearted,

careful, intimate, intelligent, educated, orderly, etc.). The same group includes indices emphasizing the significance of the intellectual resource of the family (clever, intelligent, creative, well-educated, well-read, etc.). Such distribution is indicative of young people's desire for seeing support, favourable psychological climate, as well as intellectual potential in the family.

It is has been found that the following signs have very low occurrence frequency (1-2 times), i.e. unstable in their manifestation: joint, common, developed, nuclear; promising (looking ahead / future-oriented); prestige (having a high social status); glorious (famous, worthy); supreme (the most significant); travelling (search of new and interesting things). Analysing the signs having very low occurrence frequency, it may be said that their main content intercross the key words of the family definitions (social community; joint activity or cooperation; group of people) represented in the theoretical overview carried out at the first stage of the research. It may be said that in the perception of young people the family is not related to the definitions of a community, a group and group-related processes (unity, origin, genesis, etc.), which can be explained by the predominance of the ideology of individualism declaring the manifestation of individuality and personal independence. In its turn, the existing family definitions were developed at the stage of the predominance of the ideology of collectivism, for which the most important and valuable things were unity, people's community, and group community.

7. Conclusion

Carrying out the semantic and cognitive content analysis of the 'family' concept has allowed determining indices reflecting functions, problems, and development predictors as the signs of the cognitive content of the 'family' concept and hierarchically significant categories representing the system of cognitive content of that concept. The system is an invariant of the structure as relatively stable unity of the components and their interrelations.

The content analysis of the theoretical constructs of the 'family' concept has demonstrated the predominance of definitions showing at the group organization of the family, people's community, or a group of relatives performing certain biological, social and psychological functions. The main groups of problems related to family functioning have been determined. The mentioned problems are pedagogical, psychological, economical, and social problems. Eleven categories of the family cognitive signs have been determined (general information, the family concept definition, its dynamics, structure, functions, problems, coherence, interaction and cooperation between the members of the family, etc.), which have served the basis for further empirical analysis.

The empirical analysis of the 'family' concept has shown that all the categories of signs are distributed according to the levels (depending on the indices manifestation frequency). The content of the first level (high frequency of the categories manifestation (occurrence) includes the cooperation of the members of the family and their interaction or cooperation with relatives, the integrity of such cooperation, systemically important factors, and family welfare, which is substantiated by the 'development formula' based on the experience of the family and its reflection, choice of values, way of interaction, ability of deriving sense from the experience of interpersonal relations.

The most frequently occurring (manifested) family indices are positive and empathic feelings uniting the family, favourable interpersonal relations manifested against the background of material welfare and

economic stability. They represent a significant block of young people's information base becoming actual in the process of work with the cognitive content of the 'family' concept. Manifested signs reflecting the value-based contribution of the family to the development of a per-son and to peaceful and conflict-free coexistence against the background of high significance of the intellectual resource of the family are significant for the cognitive content of the 'family' concept.

A range of signs intercrossing the key characteristics of the family, such as social community, group, or collective has been found to be unstably manifested and rarely occurring, which is indicative of the predominance of the ideology of individualism in young people's comprehension of the family and family values.

It can be concluded that striking signs and manifested signs, as well as unstably manifested signs reflect new tendencies in the cognitive content of the 'family' concept. The obtained results reflect the topicality of further study of the cognitive content of the 'family' concept using factorization of the obtained results for detailing its component composition.

8. Discussions

During the study of the semantic and cognitive content of the 'family' concept, signs/indices having high total occurrence frequency have been detected. To our opinion, this is due to the fact that new norms, values, and senses are introduced into the content of the 'family' concept. These data conform to the results of certain researches (Barsukova & Chulanov, 2014; Istratova, 2015; Rean, 2015; Tihomirov, 2014; Schieman & Glavin, 2011) regarding the change of function-and-role-based, value-based, and standard-based traditions of the modern family. The multiplicity and high total frequency of the obtained indices also attest to the fact that the cognitive content of the 'family' concept can be the determinant of its category-based arrangement (organization) and vise versa.

It is important to notice that the detected category of non-classifiable indices in the description of the 'family' concept fall in the category with destructive specific features disrupting the concept integrity. Such a result makes it possible to state the fact of intellectual immaturity, cognitive simplicity, and impulsivity in information processing typical for quite a large part of young people taking part in the research. Indeed, as it is confirmed by a range of researches, certain infantilism, as well as personal and cognitive immaturity are typical for modern young people (Drujinin, 2011; Kholodnaya, 2019), which makes it difficult to create cognitive constructs and impoverishes the life meaningfulness.

The most interesting results regard the distribution of the occurrence frequency of indices. Tendency being indicative of the hierarchy of the most significant family values (in case of the pre-dominance of the ideology of individualism) has been detected. It can be expressed through the following sequence: interpersonal attraction, empathy, material welfare, stability, trust-based and conflict-free relations, and intellectual potential. It can be assumed that in the first instance modern young people want to see emotional support and close relationship in the family, which emphasizes their need of such contacts. Modern young people, who are very often fascinated by virtual contacts, social networks, and 'remote' relations (based on using modern gadgets) above measure, probably, feel emotional hunger for real, intimate, and trust-based relations. This assumption is proved by the results of different researches (Vagapova, 2014; Istratova, 2015;

Medkova, 2003) and opens a prospect of further study of the content, structure, and peculiarities of the modern family.

Acknowledgments

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