

DETERMINANTS OF GENDER-ROLE ATTITUDES, SELF-ESTEEM AND AFFECTIVE BALANCE AT ADOLESCENCE

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The aim of the article is to trace out and analyze the influence of the personal determinants as gender, age and socio-economic status on gender-role attitudes, Self-esteem and affective balance during adolescence. The studied subjects are 257 adolescents, aged between 13 and 20 years. The applied questionnaires are as follows - Personal Attribute Questionnaire (Spence, Helmreich & Stapp, 1974, 1975), Coppersmith Self-Esteem Inventory (Coppersmith, 1967), Affect Scales: Positive Affect, Negative Affect, Affect Balance (Bradburn, 1969). The results of the investigation have shown that the girls are more masculine, more feminine and more androgynous; with higher Self-esteem in the aspect "peers"; with significantly higher affective balance and lower negative affect than the studied adolescent boys. With the increase of age the masculinity and androgyny has significantly increased; with highest Self-esteem are the adolescents in the late adolescence; the negative affect significantly decrease and the affective balance significantly increased with age. The adolescents from the Roma ethnic group are the most androgynous and with the highest Self-esteem in the aspect "school".

The researchers in the field of psychology have devoted a significant attention to the interrelation between gender-role attitudes, subjective well-being and Self-esteem during the adolescence. Of particular interest for us is the question of the relationship between the individual and the social norms and of those three personal constructs. There are different assumptions and different approaches among the researchers. One of these approaches is connected with the individual determinants and their influence on adolescent Self-esteem, gender-role attitudes and affective balance, thereby contributing to better social and personal adaptation.

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Influence of the factors gender, age and socio-economic status on gender-role attitudes of the adolescents

1. Gender and gender-role attitudes

In the psychological literature it is accepted that men and women differ in terms of the social norms and customs in the different societies. Not one and every society ascribe the one and the same behavior to the both sexes (Daly & Wilson, 1978, cited by Lueptow, 1984). It is expected that they should adhere to different positions, to demonstrate different behavior, and to manifest different personality traits. In regard to all these aspects, there are social norms and conventions, governing the ascribed characteristics and positions.

The gender is an important aspect of the adolescent identity formation (Brown, 1990; Simmons & Blyth, 1987). The adolescence girls at this age are less likely to perceive the male dominance than the adolescence boys, because it harms their Self-concept. The identification of gender, presuppose growth of the gender stereotypes.

The psychological investigations consistently showed a gender differences in relation with adolescents gender-role attitudes: *girls usually adhere to less traditional gender-role attitudes than boys* (Katz & Ksansnak, 1994; McHale et al., 1999). This model implies an intensification of the social category "gender" during the early adolescence for boys but not for girls (Hill & Lynch, 1983). In Bulgaria, the traditional social behavior model corresponds with a moderate feminine gender-role orientation, and masculine and/or androgynous gender-role orientation, that are accordingly regarded as more liberal behavioral model (Silgidzhiyan et al., 2007; Papazova, in press).

In Bulgarian investigation with adolescents' sample, the model that has been determined in respect with adolescents' boys is characterized by equality of liberal and traditional gender-role attitudes (masculinity, femininity, and androgyny) in early and middle adolescence and decline of the liberal attitudes (masculinity) during the late adolescence. The studied adolescent's girls show significant tendencies in their age trajectory in relation with their gender-role development (Papazova, in press).

2. Age and gender-role attitudes

Formation of the attitudes towards gender roles and family plays a major role. It serves as an agent of the socialization, which pass in the values, ideologies and norms from younger generation to the older generation. From an individual perspective, the family cycle is the most significant social context, that provides the necessity social framework to the small child in which he/she has to acquire its attitudes, values and knowledge who are important in our life.

The process of the socialization that forms children's attitudes, values and ideologies is mostly influenced by the origin of the parents, their religion, education and ethnic origin. The younger generation is exposed to more egalitarian ideology than the older generation. On the other hand, the perception of the child is considered as less liberal than that of their mothers' conceptions.