

**PEHPP 2019****Pedagogical Education: History, Present Time, Perspectives****TRANSFORMATION OF PATERNITY IN THE MORDEN FAMILY**

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*Abstract*

The article discusses two main approaches that analyze family change in society - a crisis approach that focuses on negative aspects of family change and a transformational one that demonstrates objective factors of family changes and emphasizes a positive impact of the changes. The attitudes of Novgorod State University students on a type of paternity is compared with the parental family. A study by questionnaire and content analysis of student essays "my father" showed that in their reproductive family, most students want to focus on the "responsible" father type. In the essay, students were asked to determine a paternity type by a given typology, to talk about father's influence on the child's personality, the most vivid impressions of interaction with father, upbringing / punishment methods used by father, and the desire / unwillingness to be like father. The article clarifies the classification of paternity types proposed by other researchers by adding mixed types of paternity - "traditional-responsible", "traditional-absent", "responsible-absent". The study, conducted jointly with students, is an example of effective educational material to demonstrate a number of positive trends in family change, such as, for example, transition to responsible and new paternity, humanization of relations between parents and children, manifested in an increase in the level of emotional closeness, trust, and the importance of psychological well-being of the family as a whole, reduction of physical violence.

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## 1. Introduction

Two approaches are mainly used in the up-to-date academic literature to show the state of the modern family. One of them says there is a crisis of the family (Sorokin, 1916) the other refers to the family transformation in connection with rapid changes in the society - from an agrarian to a postindustrial one (Gurko, 2011; Zakharov, 2007). The sociologist P. Sorokin wrote about the family crisis at the beginning of the 20th century and they continue to write and talk about the same at the beginning of the 21st century. Such trends in changing the family institution as an increase in the number of divorces, cohabitations, single parents and a decrease in the number of children in the family are perceived as negative phenomena in the crisis approach. The transformational approach shows that these phenomena have their own objective reasons associated with the fact that the family exists in a wide economic, social, political and cultural context, which are constantly changing. As a result, the family is changing as a social institution.

Over the past hundred years, the position of women in society has changed very much. Women have received equal rights with men – access to education and work, which gives financial independence and the ability to initiate a divorce. The possibility of divorce is important and good if there is violence in the family that threatens physical and psychological well-being of children and spouses, in the case of alcoholism or drug addiction of one of the spouses, as well as in the case of emotionally destructive relationships. Concern for psychological well-being of children and the family as a whole is a humanistic tendency of our time, population has increasingly turned to psychologists in case of family problems and divorces.

The decline in fertility is also a global trend that began in the second half of the 19th century in Western Europe in connection with the transition from an agricultural society to an industrial one and the spread of the nuclear family. This is an objective process that takes place throughout the civilized and developing world. At the beginning of the twentieth century the birth rate in agrarian Russia (80% of the peasant population) was one of the highest ever recorded in the world - 7.5 births per woman (Gaidar, 2005). But in the 1960s, in terms of fertility, Russia did not differ from Western countries - 1.6 births per woman. Factors that affected the small families are forced industrialization, urbanization, peasant family destruction, involvement of women in social production and military-political crises.

Another important transformation of modernity is a meaningful change in the social roles of father and mother in the context of humanistic changes in society. As our annual student surveys show, an increasingly dominant type of family is a partner or egalitarian one, in which both parents are responsible for making decisions important to family life. Modern men are becoming increasingly involved in the family sphere and raising children, which indicates serious changes in the family, which some researchers designate as “postmodern” (Stacey, 1996). At the same time, as numerous studies show, including our annual student surveys, the family remains the most important value for young people (Rean, 2017).

In the scientific field there are more and more scientific works devoted to various aspects of paternity. The relevance of these studies is related to gender transformation principle in modern society and, accordingly, the male social role (Esping-Andersen, 2002). Postmodern researchers focus on various styles of paternity, on understanding paternity as a key source of cultural resource in shaping modern heterosexual male identities (Bezrukova, 2013; Kletsina, 2009). Researchers focus not only on what modern fathers are emotionally worried about, but also on how they rationally interpret their parental behavior

strategies (Haywood & Ghail, 2003). The analysis focuses on issues of power, relationship between social, psychological, interpersonal, emotional stories and life aspirations. Paternity is conceptualized as a multifaceted experience influenced by racial, generational, class, and historical factors (Haywood & Ghail, 2003).

In modern society, there is a shift from the image of authoritarian paternity to multifaceted images, both positive and negative. A number of researchers show the existence of such negative images of paternity as “absurd, miserable, marginal, cruel, insulting, not caring, delinquent”, believing that the depreciation of paternity in Europe at the end of the 20th century is associated with a significant turn from the paternity model that existed earlier, in which the authoritarian father was seen as the central figure of the moral and political content of Western civilization (Burgess, 1997). The legitimization of the father’s figure and his authoritarianism was derived from God the father and was reflected in the existing hierarchical social relations associated with the monarch, lord, husband. In a patriarchal and monotheistic society, paternity is a kind of vertical of power, where each superior is the symbolic father of the lower authority that he generates, maintains, controls, disciplines (Kon, 2009). But in a modern democratic society, citizens do not consider their rulers to be fathers and they themselves take responsibility for their lives.

Such trends of modern societies as democratization, weakening of religion, rationalization of a social sphere, and formation of a post-industrial economy affect the change in the content of male and female roles in the family towards a decrease / disappearance of hierarchy, psychologization of relations between husband and wife, between parents and children. Relations become more emotionally intimate, communicative, trusting. In addition, in recent decades, the problem of domestic violence has been brought up for discussion in public and scientific discussions, which makes it possible to solve it to a certain extent through work of crisis centers, publication of relevant psychological literature, and preparation of state statistics.

As part of the topic “family sociology”, we conducted a training questionnaire to study students' perceptions of father’s role in the family in order to identify generation shifts in attitudes toward paternity. University students were asked to determine:

- What type of paternity in a given typology can be attributed to their father?
- What are their own attitudes towards the paternity type in their future reproductive family?

In our study, we proceeded from understanding of paternity as a social construct in which, on the one hand, the normative prescriptions of the culture of a particular society manifest and interact with the social role of father, and, on the other hand, individual attitudes that are revealed in understanding a role of father. We relied on the following typology of paternity – a traditional, absent, responsible, and new father (Kletsina, 2009).

The “traditional” type of paternity assumes that a man works hard, makes a career, earns most of his family’s income, feeds and protects children, accustoms them to discipline, order, and, if necessary, punishes them. A “missing” father is not involved his children’s lives, or has lost contact with children after a divorce, has no psychological or physical contact with his children. “Responsible” paternity is formed on the basis of adoption of a new model of masculinity, which includes factors such as emotional closeness

with children, involvement in direct care of his children, communication and play with them, caring, responsibility for physical and personal development. Such fathers are not yet ready to postpone their careers and stay at home when his child is ill and share part of maternity leave with their wife, but even being divorced, such fathers continue to communicate actively with the children. The “new” father makes constant contact with the children, is involved in their affairs and problems, spends a lot of time with the children, plays and helps in school. The contribution of such fathers to the children upbringing is approximately equal to the maternal. The father admits that homework can be an alternative to earnings, therefore, at certain periods of his life, he is ready to give up his professional activities and be a house father.

## **2. Problem Statement**

In Russian public opinion, most often there is a negative opinion about modern family - the family is destroyed, because there are a lot of divorces, cohabitations and parental families, and society needs to return to traditional values. Future teachers reproduce this alarmist approach when they are asked about direction the family is developing. Unfortunately, in modern pedagogical literature little is said about positive changes associated with the humanization of family relations.

## **3. Research Questions**

- 3.1.** What are the young people's ideas about the paternitytype in their parent family?
- 3.2.** What is the desired type of paternity in their reproductive family?
- 3.3.** To what extent does the “traditional” type of paternity remains preferable?
- 3.4.** To what extent are students inclined toward a “new” and “responsible” type of paternity in their own family?

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

This study has an educational pedagogical assignment on family sociology - to show on the example of the students themselves:

- positive changes in the modern family against the background of existing negative judgments in the public opinion that “the family is being destroyed”. Positive trends are humanization, more intimate relations between spouses, a higher level of emotional closeness between parents and children, increasing the importance of psychological well-being in a modern family, reducing physical violence, etc;
- generation shifts in understanding the content of the father’s social role and the influence of father and mother on education.

## 5. Research Methods

The empirical basis of the study was the data of a survey conducted in the spring of 2017 among 223 students of Novgorod State University aged 20-21 (58 boys and 165 girls) and a content analysis of 55 student essays on the topic "My father". In the essay, students were asked to determine the paternity type by a given typology, to talk about father's influence on his child's personality, to describe the most vivid impressions of interaction with father, the methods of upbringing/punishment used by father, and the desire/unwillingness to be like a father.

## 6. Findings

The analysis of 55 student essays showed that sometimes it was difficult for students to determine the pure types of paternity and they supplemented the above classification with a "mixed" type, and this mixture was different - "traditional and responsible", "traditional and new" or "traditional, responsible, new". Students voiced it as follows:

- *"I would classify my father as a mixed type of paternity, something from "traditional" to "new" father, because he... makes money, feeds and accustoms to discipline, and "new" because he made a big contribution in raising his children, both in school and in planned development (in evenings he read to us some excerpt from a literary work, and then he tried to convey its meaning to us)" (D., 21).*
- *"I think there is no pure type of paternity. My father can be attributed to the mixed type. It combines three versions of the paternity model: traditional, responsible, new... For me, father is an unquestioned example of behavior. I want to be the same family man, a breadwinner, a loving husband" (M, 22).*
- *"It seems to me that my father is of a mixed type, namely, a traditionally absent-responsible type... my father refers to these types, since his participation in my life depends on the circumstances that occur in life and on life periods. For example, when I was little, he often played with me, bathed and walked, was emotionally close to me - this describes him as a responsible father. Periodically, he is not at home, as he is busy with work, and we cannot communicate, but at the same time he always gives advice, which reflects him as a traditional father. But at the moment we are estranged from each other and almost do not communicate. This reflects him as an absent father" (D., 22).*
- *Most often in the essay there was a mixed type "traditional-responsible", less often - "traditional-absent" and "responsible-absent". The "traditional-absent" father sometimes believes that emotional intimacy with a child from an early age is not important and, subsequently, as they grow older, this leads to a lack of intimacy with the child:*
- *"... traditional and absent ... in terms of personal relationships, he, in part, acts as an absent father who does not have a psychological and emotional connection with his child ... When coming from work, dad believed that he did so much for the family, and messing with children is a "woman's duty" that has nothing to do with him .... Yes, he supposedly participated in shaping*

*me as a person, but all his attempts came down to only one thing - to scream, bring to tears and then ask for forgiveness for this ... Passed a lot of time. Yes, dad has changed somewhere, now he is trying to participate more in our lives. There is only one "but", I'm already used to living without him, without his emotional support."*(D., 21).

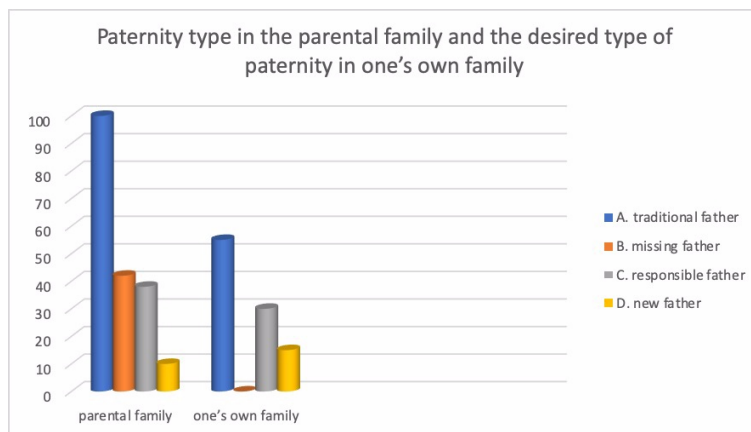
It should be noted that the pure types of paternity in the essay were presented:

- *"Personally for me, dad is a typical representative of the "newfather": it was he who had maternity leave at work and took care of me after birth, dad taught me how to cook, inculcated habits to live clean and lead a healthy lifestyle, taught various games. Our family even has a legend that .... I fell asleep only at my father's side, if he wasn't there, it was practically impossible to calm me down .... I'm very close with my father, we can understand each other perfectly, and sometimes with half a glance."* (D., 21)
- *"... Most likely, I would attribute my father to the traditional type. ... I would say that my father lives passively in our family (if compared with my mother), roughly speaking, does not take part in her development and achievement of new goals. Of course, he is not a bad, simple person ... who does not get a big salary, is responsive and is always ready to help other people, not greedy. But he does not do anything to participate at least a little in family life ... he helps little at home, often spends his time at the computer, playing his games. Almost did not participate in my school life, did not help with the lessons. "* (D., 22).

In subsequent studies, to identify a clearer picture of paternity, it is also important to consider the type of father's identity - mature, infantile, situational, or negative (Bezrukova, 2013). The paternity described above can be attributed to infantile identity. In four essays out of 55 there is a drinking father who can be attributed to a negative identity.

"Responsible" and "new" paternity refers to the "mature" father's identity. Describing the "responsible" and "new" father, students emphasize the "emotional closeness with him." Associated with the "new" father is "knowledge of all ... problems, successes and failures, the desire to help, regardless of the situation, mentally or physically, the same contribution to education as the mother". The "traditional" father is emotionally more distant from his children.

The questionnaire survey showed a shift in the attitude of young people towards a "responsible" father (Figure 01), more people want to see a "new" father in their future reproductive family, and fewer students want to see a "traditional father". Among students with a "traditional" father, half of the respondents (55%) would like to keep this type of paternity in their family, and the other part (30%) would like to change it to the "responsible" and "new" type (15%). According to international studies (State of the world's fathers..., 2015), the desire of modern fathers to spend more time with their children is a worldwide trend: the majority of fathers surveyed (from 61% in Croatia to 77% in Chile) noted that they would work less if that meant they could spend more time with their children.



**Figure 01.** Paternity type in the parental family and the desired type of paternity in one's own family, %

According to the data obtained in the survey, for 41% students, father was always a role model, for 38% - sometimes and for 20% - never. This is due to the fact that about 25% of the youth surveyed live in maternal families, mainly because of their parents' divorce and, less often, because of father's early death. 54% students noted that they are emotionally close to their father and 34% are far from him, since some of them have never seen father, for example, if mother gave birth to a child out of wedlock or father left mother during pregnancy or the child was little.

As the survey showed, mothers have the main educational impact on children. For the majority of young people surveyed, both parents were the main disciples - 43% of the respondents think so, only mother - 41%, only father - 14%. 54% of the students reported that they were never subjected to physical punishment, 44% of the students were sometimes physically punished, and 2% noted that they were beaten constantly.

## 7. Conclusion

The study of paternity types showed that, along with the proposed typology, it is necessary to take into account the presence of mixed types of paternity – “traditional-responsible” and less common – “traditional-absent” and “responsible-absent”. Adding to this study the types of father's identity (mature, infantile, negative, situational) helps to understand better the paternity practices described by students in the essay.

The prevalence in the essay of the mixed type of paternity “traditional-responsible” indicates a gradual transition in the modern family from the “traditional” type to the “responsible” and “new” one. The questionnaire also showed a shift in the generation attitudes of youth from “traditional” paternity, which does not imply a close emotional connection with the child, to a “responsible” and “new” type of paternity, psychologically closer to the child.

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