

## Gifted Students' Perceptions of Parents

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**Abstract:** The main focus of the present study is to study family interactions, how teenagers, who are identified as gifted, perceive their parents. The awkward age is known to be the most difficult time both for growing children and their parents. The questionnaire, we have had reveals how children understand and think of their parents. It was developed by E. Shaefer in 1965. This questionnaire examines parents' mindsets, behavior and parenting practices as teenagers see them. The adopted variant of the questionnaire was developed by educationists Z. Mateychik and P. Rzhichan in 1983. We conducted the written survey among 57 students of IT Lyceum at Kazan Federal University who are identified as gifted. It is the specialized high school with profound studying of natural sciences for intellectually gifted students of 7-11 grades. The results of these studies are explored. The role of parent-child interaction is one of the important factors to support gifted children to grow up, to develop their abilities, to learn and run their life. Further research is necessary to support both gifted children and their parents (contains 2 charts)

**Key words:** Upbringing, family education, family life, gifted teenagers, parents of gifted children

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### INTRODUCTION

"Upbringing, according to Longman dictionary of contemporary English, is "the care and training that parents give their children when they are growing up" (Longman, 1999). In the Oxford Dictionary upbringing is "the treatment and instruction received by a child from its parents throughout its childhood" (Anonymous, 2014). It is obvious that family has a very important and powerful impact on upbringing, education and development of children. To create the necessary life qualities is the main objective of family education. Parents being the first tutors have the strongest influence. Jean Jacques Rousseau, the French philosopher, stated in his works that each subsequent tutor had a smaller impact on the child than the previous one (Vasilieva, 2012). Mother and father teach to say the first words, help to take the first steps, push to draw the first conclusions, impart love to fine and play sports. Intelligence, physical, creative, emotional, moral and esthetic development depends on parents from the beginning. Some time later, when children attend kindergartens schools teachers, contemporaries are involved in the process of upbringing. P. Lesgaft, the Russian scientist, considered that child's family life lasts the first 7 year after the birth. During the family period a child acquires customs and habits of the region and family, his or her type, character is being built and therefore this time has a great influence on human life and etches in all future existence not only in the family but in the society as well (Khakimzyanova and Gubaydullina,

2014). Family and public education are interconnected and definitely supplement each other. Family education is, certainly, a labor-consuming, complex challenge for parents and parenting gifted children is difficult two fold. One may face a huge number of questions with possibly no answers. Gifted children are exceptional demanding special, reasonable parenting, training and education. This issue is a matter of educationalists and parents' concern. According to the latest statistical data, approximately every 5th preschool and school age child can be determined as gifted. However, they are, as a rule, deprived of the support which is necessary for development of their talents. Therefore, conditions of parenting and education conditions, the cultural environment are important components of their abilities development (Gubaydullina and Khakimzyanova, 2014). For the last years, there have been a great number of works devoted to researching how various conditions of education and upbringing influence on successful education and development of gifted children.

### MATERIALS AND METHODS

There is the IT Lyceum at the Kazan Federal University, Kazan, Russia. It is a specialized school with profound studying of natural sciences (Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry, Biology, and also Computer Science) for intelligently gifted schoolboys of 7-11 grades. We conducted the questionnaire, E. Shaefer's questionnaire "Children's Report of Parental Behavior Inventory". It

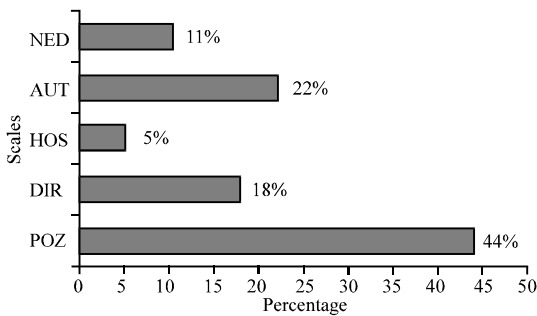


Fig. 1: Assessment of mother by son; POZ; Positive Interest, DIR; Directivity, HOS; Hostility, AUT; Autonomy, NED; Anomaly

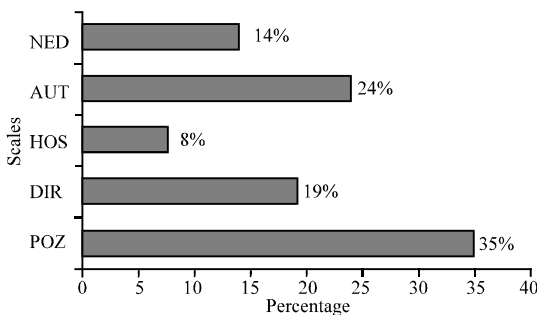


Fig. 2: Assessment of father by son

studies attitudes, behavior and methods of parenting in seeing and understanding by the teenagers. The original methodic was modified and offered by scientists Z. Mateychik and P. Rzhichan in 1983 and was approved on 13-18 year old teenagers in Russia. This technique is based on the statement that parents' educational influence (as it is described by children) can be characterized by means of three factorial variables: acceptance; emotional rejection, psychological control; psychological autonomy, hidden control; open control. About 57 boys aged from 14 till 16 were surveyed who assessed their mothers and 46 of them also assessed their fathers. The results are presented as follows in the charts "Assessment of Mother by Son" in Fig. 1 "Assessment of Father by Son" Fig. 2. The explanations are given to correctly understand the results of questioning. Each segment of the Figure is analyzed as well.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

**Assessment of mother by son:** The scale of Positive Interest (POZ). It explains, primarily, psychological acceptance of mother. It is known that all teenagers often feel need not only for the help but also mother's support. They mostly accept her opinion are inclined to agree with

it. The following forms of behavior as authoritativeness, suspiciousness, a tendency to leadership are denied. However, these sons do not wait for excessive conformism from their mothers. Nevertheless, a simply competent behavior, a friendly way of communication and normal emotional contacts are not always sufficient in order the teenager can completely claim that his mother shows any positive interest in relation with her son (Gubaydullina and Khakimzianova, 2014).

As it is shown in figure the segment of POZ is the largest one. It demonstrates rather healthy relations between teenagers and their mothers taking into account features of teenagers' behavior when awkward age.

The scale of a Directivity (DIR) explains that fact that teenagers think they are imposed the sense of being guilty in relation to mother to her claims and constant reminders that "mother endows everything for the son's sake", completely assumes responsibility for everything that her child did, does and will do. Mother as though approves the initial dependence on her status and an assessment by people around on compliance of her son to "a standard of a child", excluding thus, possibility of any other options of self-expression. Thus, mother aims to stop the wrong behavior of her son "not to lose face" in any way. Simple forms of tenderness, responsiveness, sympathy causing the positive emotional relations, correlate negatively with a directive form of mother and the teenager's interactions (Gubaydullina and Khakimzianova, 2014).

Rather high rate of the directivity in the relations between a mother and son partly indicates "special position, status" of the educational institution where the survey was conducted. This index allows us to suppose that for many parents the hidden purpose of the lyceum attending was not development of their child's talent, but it might be the compliance of the son to compliant with "a standard".

The scale of Hostility (HOS) is characterized by mother's aggression and excessive severity in the interpersonal relations. Mother's orientation is exclusively on herself, her vanity, excessive self-affirmation, as a rule, exclude acceptance of the child. Pronounced suspiciousness, tendency to excessive criticism of son and the people around the purpose of which is the aspiration to humiliate him in the opinion of people around can be observed. Along with it (mainly at the verbal level) positive activity, responsibility for her son's destiny is constantly being demonstrated (Gubaydullina and Khakimzianova, 2014).

This indicator shows 5%. Even taking into account some inaccuracy on "teenage maximalism" this rate makes us ponder the issue of the psychological climate in these families.

The scale of Autonomy (AUT) demonstrates a slightly negative indicator where mother's autonomy in the relations with her son is understood by him as dictatorship. Mother does not always perceive the child as the personality with the feelings, thoughts, ideas, images and motives. Thus, an adaptive form of mother's authority which is based on trust and respect and acceptable forms of rigidity and sharpness (when they consider a situation) as well are indistinctive for independent mothers in the relations with teenage sons (Gubaydullina and Khakimzianova, 2014).

We can see that teenagers rather painfully perceive acceptance by mother of any decisions disregarding their opinion. The result when children are dissatisfied with similar "autonomy" is 22%.

The scale of anomaly, inconsistency (NED) shows an assessment of education by mother, her inconsistent line of education and upbringing as a certain alternation of force domination and ambitions and humility (in adaptive forms), sensitivity and super altruism and mistrustful suspiciousness (Gubaydullina and Khakimzianova, 2014).

We suppose this is the most "dangerous" form of perception as it may form "timeservers" and such a considerable segment at the rate 11% can demonstrate a certain amount of these people in our world. Increasing of such a social group prejudices the positive growth dynamics of the society.

**Assessment of father by son:** The scale of Positive Interest (POZ). It shows positive interest in the relations with a son as absence of a brute force, aspiration to the inseparable power in communication with him. Teenagers tell about positive interest in cases when fathers seek to win their sympathy and honoring of fatherly authority without resorting to declarations of dogmas. The main acceptance condition of son by father is based on trust. At the similar relations, it is typical to find any truth in dispute listening to various arguments and giving preference to logic of common sense (Gubaydullina and Khakimzianova, 2014).

Despite, the sharp reduction of "positive sector", 35% in comparison with an assessment of mother which draws the attention, we should understand that the directivity at the rate of 19% of father perception has a more positive result than the segment of another assessment which is 18%.

The scale of a Directivity (DIR) in the relations with son shows father's tendency to leadership by earning a great reputation based on the actual achievements and dominant style of communication. His ascendance over

son is mainly expressed in control and timely correction of child's behavior excepting ambitious despotism. Thus, he accurately lets the child know that he endows some part of the power for the sake of son's well being that it is not a simple protection but aspiration to peacefully solve everything despite of some irritation degree.

As a rule, father's leadership does not cause rejection in sons' opinion, therefore, the directivity does not have so negative assessment. It has 19%.

The scale of Hostility (HOS) shows, according to teenagers, that cruel fathers always agree with popular opinion, seek to meet requirements of others to be the "good" father and encourage positive relations. They bring up sons according to accepted rules and ideas of an ideal child in this society and in this culture. Fathers seek to give their sons broader education, develop various abilities that often leads to excessive load for a young organism. Along with it a dependence on people's judgments, fear and helplessness, inability to resist to these opinions appear. At the same time, father is severe and pedantic to his son. A teenager constantly is in a condition of disturbing expectation of a low estimation of his activity and punishment by parental rejection on the formula: "How dare you not to correspond to what others and me are expecting you to be, after all I endow everything to make you a real man". Continual dissatisfaction and skeptical relation to son's achievements reduce motivation of his activity (Gubaydullina and Khakimzianova, 2014). We can see that this rate of father's assessment more correlates with a directivity scale in perception of mother. The index is 8%.

The scale of Autonomy (AUT) shows autonomy of a father in the relations with the son which is demonstrated in formal attitude to education, in excessive impartiality in the course of communication. An interaction is based on force and despotism positions. A father only "notices, sees" a son in cases when he does mischief, causes trouble and as a rule, there is even no time to analyze an incident. A parent is too busy by himself to understand and see his son's life and problems. He is not interested in son's hobbies, acquaintances, his study at school. He only pretends that it disturbs him. He is often simply irritated if the son talks to him, asks for something. In his opinion, son "has to know everything himself" (Gubaydullina and Khakimzianova, (2014).

Almost a quarter of teenagers points to the actual absence of father in their life and it is one of the most predictable results of the poll. We suppose that this result proceeds from external factors: many parents have to work long hours earning a living.

The scale of Anomaly, inconsistency (NED) is based on understanding by teenagers of inconsistent measures of education by father, inability to expect how father will react to this or that situation: whether he will subject son to severe punishment for small offenses or will slightly scold for something essential having simply accepted assurances of the last that he will not repeat it any more. Such father will pedantically brain wash for a long time or will trust son's assurance of being innocent, etc. (Gubaydullina and Khakimzianova, 2014). Absence of "a man's core" at the rate of 14% is compensated by more stable relations with mother.

### **CONCLUSION**

In conclusion, we should note that the results of the survey demonstrate the real necessity of correction of behavior of parents in parenting, family education. Gifted children are especially vulnerable to extreme forms of family relations. Actually one third of negative indicators can lead to the talent "fading" of these gifted teenagers. Further research is necessary to support both parents and gifted children.

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