



PSIWORLD 2013

## How children see their parents – a short intergeneration comparative analysis

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### Abstract

This research is based on Rose Vincent's 50-year-old project, showing how children live their relationships with their parents. The findings are interesting, showing that girls are more critical of their mothers, but more permissive with their fathers. The respondents' ideal parent includes not only elements that the contemporary social life finds in the family, but also elements that are found in time (friendship and the mother-friend) evidence of common necessities in ontogenesis about the intra-family relationships and the emotional climate.

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Selection and peer-review under responsibility of Romanian Society of Applied Experimental Psychology.

*Keywords:* relational needs; parenting styles; developing relationships; parents' school.

### 1. Introduction

The following issues are very important in human life: image, concept and self-esteem, beliefs and values that are passed from one generation to another; they are the most constant, hence, the most essential human psychological characteristics contributing to personality development, initiation and development of relationships, being formed during childhood under the great influence of family, persisting throughout life.

Every family has its own values, customs, patterns of functioning that are maintained by two types of constraints: one is generic, regarding the universal rules of family organization and hierarchy of power; the other is

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idiosyncratic, regarding the mutual expectations of some members, each contributing to the development and strength of these expectations. The most important influence of family environment on children's development come from the home atmosphere, which can be supporting and loving or full of conflicts. In a research on 226 families from diverse ethnical background with children of school age, marital conflict was correlated consistently with ineffective parenting, and the children exposed to the misunderstandings between parents and poor parenting tended to show a high level of internalizing behavior such as anxiety, fear and depression, and also externalizing behaviors, such as aggression, involvement in fights, disobedience and hostility. The way parents address their children's need to make their own decisions, their economic situation or work affects the well being of children, which contributes to the family atmosphere (Papalia, Olds Wendkos , Feldman Duskin, 2010). Parenting practices and parenting skills and how parents see their children and take care of them are very important in human life in its manifestation and personality development in developing relationships (Baumrind, 1991).

The goal of this project was to verify that the time has changed the perception of parents by children, referring us to a similar study of Rose Vincent, created 50 years ago in France.

The objective of this research was to illustrate how children perceive their parents and their preferences for the different parenting styles.

- Note1. We compared the different cultural spaces, in different time intervals using different illustrations.
- Note2. We worked on a narrower age range, compared to the author's reference study to not overlap two stages of development of piagetiene intelligence.
- Note3. We used the paper "Knowing Child" published and translated into Romanian language, in the practical work with the students only in the didactic-scientific purpose.

Working hypotheses have sought to ensure that:

H 1. If the real mother and father's perception is different from the image of the mother and the father's ideal;

H 2. If the images of the mother and the father's ideal is different from boys and girls;

H 3. Which parenting styles would like children.

## 2. Methods

### 2.1. Participants

For our research to represent the target population appropriately, sampling was made by random selection in such a way that each individual in the population had an equal probability of being selected.

In this *Rose Vincent* questionnaire 47 boys and 54 girls answered; they were pupils in grades 3, 4 and 5 at School No. 2 and *Unirea* National College from Braşov. Thus, the photographs were presented to 101 pupils with very diverse backgrounds, boys and girls, aged between 7 and 11, pupils of a neighborhood school and a central school.

Compared to the original research, where the children were between 4 and 14 years old, we changed the range of ages due to the following considerations: - in the psychology of age, the ontogenetic development plan is particularly important, the staging periods being realized while taking into account some fundamental needs, development tasks, types of activities and relationships; - the age interval from 4 to 14 years, which the psychologist Vincent Rose uses in his research, encompasses several age periods, i.e. between 2 and 7 years old, called 'the preoperational stage of development' by Piaget, with the substage of intuitive thinking that takes place between 4 and 7 years old, when the child performs sorting and grading operations by various properties, at this level the classification being done by only one feature. After that Piaget talks about the concrete operations stage, characterized by the development of mental operations and of reversibility, when children begin to apply logical rules to the information processing operations in order to solve the problems they are facing, the child acquiring the ability to classify things according to several features. Thus, during the operational thinking stage, the child performs a large number of intellectual tasks that adults also do provided the child has intuitive support.

Rose Vincent had included in his sample two very different stages, and we wanted to carry out this research for a single stage, i.e. the stage of concrete operations.

Numerous studies show that family relationships are more harmonious in this age range than they appear in the 'folklore' and that the children actually just seek parental approval. The tension that appears once the child enters

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