

STRATEGIC APPROACHES TO ENHANCING THE SOCIAL REPRESENTATION OF FAMILY STRUCTURES IN THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

STRATEGII DE OPTIMIZARE A REPREZENTĂRII SOCIALE A FAMILIEI DIN REPUBLICA MOLDOVA

CZU: 371.3:316.6:37.018(478)=111

DOI: 10.46728/pspj.2024.v45.i2.p71-84

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Abstract:

The goal of this study was to identify the content of adolescents' social representation of the family, highlighting the central core and peripheral elements, as well as the conditions for modification at the cognitive level. The main objectives included assessing the potential for positively influencing the peripheral elements of social representation through changing social practices, developing a psychological intervention program, and testing its effectiveness. The program, which was structured into two modules and conducted over 12 sessions, incorporated cognitive-behavioral and rational-emotive therapeutic approaches.

Post-intervention results demonstrated that adolescents in the experimental group exhibited significant changes in the peripheral elements of the family's social representation, replacing negative terms with more positive concepts such as „value” and „understanding.” In contrast, no such changes were observed in the control group, thus validating the effectiveness of the intervention. Additionally, the intervention included simulations and meetings with successful families to support positive changes in adolescents' perceptions.

Keywords: family, social representation, adolescents, psychological intervention, social practices

Rezumat

Studiul a avut ca scop identificarea conținutului reprezentării sociale a familiei la adolescenți, accentuând nucleul central și elementele periferice, precum și condițiile de modificare la nivel cognitiv. Obiectivele principale au inclus evaluarea posibilităților de influențare pozitivă a elementelor periferice ale reprezentării sociale prin schimbarea practicilor sociale, dezvoltarea unui program de intervenție psihologică și testarea eficacității acestuia. Programul, structurat în două module și desfășurat pe parcursul a 12 ședințe, s-a bazat pe terapii cognitiv-comportamentale și rațional-emotive.

În urma aplicării programului, adolescenții din grupul experimental au manifestat o schimbare semnificativă a elementelor periferice ale reprezentării sociale a familiei, înlocuind termeni negativi cu concepte pozitive precum „valoare” și „înțelegere”. Grupul de control nu a prezentat astfel de schimbări, ceea ce validează eficacitatea intervenției. De asemenea, intervenția a inclus simulări și întâlniri cu familii de succes pentru a susține schimbările pozitive în percepțiile adolescenților.

Cuvinte-cheie: familie, reprezentare social, adolescenți, intervenție psihologică, practici sociale

The Relevance of the problem. In the context of the social and economic changes that have occurred over the past few decades, the contemporary family in the Republic of Moldova has undergone a series of significant transformations. Traditions and values, passed down through generations, now intersect with modern influences creating a dynamic cultural and social landscape that contributes to the ongoing redefinition of the family concept. As the family structure evolves, so too do the social perceptions regarding the roles of its members, the balance between personal and professional life, and the general expectations of a modern family.

In the Republic of Moldova, the social representation of the contemporary family reflects both the characteristics specific to the local culture and global influences. Gender relations, migration, adaptation to new models of cohabitation and parenting, as well as economic and political changes, are factors that directly influence the way society perceives the family and its role [2]. From extended families to single-parent households or those formed by non-official partners, family structures are becoming increasingly diverse, which presents new challenges and opportunities for those living in these types of families.

To gain a deeper understanding of how the contemporary family is perceived in the Republic of Moldova, we conducted a study involving a sample of 663 participants, representative of various age groups, genders, educational levels, and geographic backgrounds. This approach enabled to capture a comprehensive view of the perspectives and attitudes toward the structure and function of the family in the current context [5].

The results obtained [4] revealed a series of important insights regarding the

values, expectations, and roles attributed to the family based on demographic factors. The observations highlighted both the persistent traditional elements and the openness to new forms of family organization.

These findings served as a significant impetus for the development of a program aimed at optimizing the social representation of the contemporary family. The proposed program seeks to transform social practices and adapt them to current realities, offering tools and resources to promote balanced family models based on equality, mutual respect, and adaptability.

The results obtained from the fact-finding experiment, which aimed to identify the social representation of the contemporary family in the Republic of Moldova, indicate a profound influence of socio-economic changes on the social representation of the family in the country [5]. These transformations have contributed to the devaluation of the family's status as the primary unit of society, favoring the emergence of alternative forms of family organization, such as cohabitation, and an increase in divorce rates. In this context, the need for a reconceptualization of the family and the identification of effective ways to transform the social representation to enhance its functionality becomes apparent. According to the specialized literature, the structure of social representation consists of a central core, characterized by stability and resistance to change, and peripheral elements, which are more susceptible to external influences [14].

As part of this research, a psychological intervention program was developed for adolescents, with the aim of shaping the peripheral elements through changes in social practices. Adolescence was chosen as the optimal age for influencing

social representations, due to its malleable nature and the process of crystallizing values and attitudes specific to this stage of development.

The goal of the formative approach: is to delineate the content of the social representation (SR) of the family among adolescents, with a focus on identifying the central core and peripheral elements, and identifying the possibilities for modifying certain specific elements, particularly at the cognitive level.

The objectives of the formative approach are:

To assess the possibilities of positively influencing the peripheral elements of the social representation of the family among adolescents, through changes in social practices, using a psychological intervention program.

To develop and implement a psychological intervention program aimed at changing the peripheral elements of the social representation of the family.

To randomly select adolescents for the experimental and control groups.

To validate the possibility of short-term influence on the social representation of the family among adolescents, particularly at the cognitive level.

To validate the psychological intervention program by verifying its effectiveness.

This program was inspired by integrative therapy [16], with a special emphasis on cognitive-behavioral therapy, rational-emotive therapy, and self-perception theory [9, 12].

The program consists of 12 sessions, grouped into two major modules. Module I is predominantly informational, while Module II is predominantly formative. The sessions of the psychological intervention program were held twice a week.

Following the implementation of the program, we conducted repeated application of methods to investigate the social representation of the family among adolescents who participated in the formative process.

Research hypothesis: We hypothesize that the social representation of adolescents is a fragmented and dynamic construct influenced by social interactions and cognitive processes specific to their age. The implementation of a psychological intervention program aimed at actively changing adolescents' social practices (through behavioral models and structured social exchanges) would result in a significant change in the peripheral elements of the social representation of the family.

Experimental group: Aiming to demonstrate the possibility of influencing the social representation of the family, we selected a psychologically "fertile" experimental group. Known as the "golden age," adolescence is a stage in life marked by profound changes across all dimensions. These changes and transformations favor the enrichment of life experience, the crystallization, and stabilization of values, ideals, and representations.

For the formative approach, we selected 40 adolescents of both genders (12 male and 28 female) who agreed to participate in the pre-intervention evaluation. They were, in turn, divided into two groups:

Experimental group (EG) – 20 adolescents; **Control group (CG)** – 20 adolescents.

The **experimental group (EG)** underwent a psychological intervention program aimed at producing changes in the adolescents' cognitions, which was expected to also lead to changes in their social representation (SR) of the family.

Following the promotion of the psychological intervention program, methods

and techniques for investigating the social representation (SR) of the family were repeatedly applied to both groups (EG and CG) following the pretest-posttest experimental design model.

To optimize the social representation (SR) of the family, a structured and gradual process is necessary, based on modifying the family schemas that influence behaviors. In the Republic of Moldova, the family is affected by socio-economic factors and migration, which reduce cohesion and distort adolescents' perceptions. The psychological intervention program uses cognitive-behavioral and rational-emotive techniques to correct these distortions, focusing on building a healthy perception of the family.

Among the methods used are rationalization, checking negative thoughts, and eliminating avoidance behaviors. These techniques help adolescents replace negative thoughts with realistic alternatives and develop adaptive strategies.

Psychotherapeutic interventions for the family include various techniques to improve communication and understanding among its members. Assertiveness training develops social skills for appropriately expressing emotions and feelings. Reframing helps reinterpret family problems from new perspectives, reducing the pressure on a single family member. Awareness of one's own disturbance shows clients that their emotional reactions depend on how they perceive situations, not on external factors. The technique of reanalyzing problem behaviors involves daily recording the disadvantages of harmful behaviors, helping to change them. Changing the reference system allows clients to observe the positive aspects of their situations. Rational-emotive imagery transforms negative emotions

into positive states by mentally rehearsing problematic situations. Role-playing brings past memories or future projections into the present to explore emotional blockages. Family art therapy, through drawing, reveals hidden perceptions of the family. Family sculpting allows members to express their perceptions of family relationships through static arrangements, facilitating a deeper awareness of dynamics.

The psychological intervention program was promoted once a week. The duration of each session was 120 minutes. In the formative approach, we focused on two major strategies included in the two modules of the psychological intervention program: information and training. As previously mentioned, Module I of the program is predominantly informational, while Module II is predominantly formative.

The methods and techniques selected by us aimed to engage the adolescents in the experimental group (EG) in well-structured, dynamic activities that would facilitate the process of knowledge, learning, and application of the acquired skills. Similarly, the proposed methods and techniques aimed at the following outcomes: developing empathy, eliminating verbal and behavioral blockages, reducing stress, and learning assertive communication strategies. Initially, we started by randomly selecting adolescents, who were later divided into two categories: the **experimental group (EG)** and the **control group (CG)**. The next step was to apply the classic methods of investigating the social representation (SR) of the family to identify its content. This will later allow us to assess how effective our program is and to determine whether the desired transformation in the peripheral elements occurred among the adolescents

in the **EG**. Thus, in **Module I**, exercises were implemented with the primary goal of engaging the adolescents in the **EG** in various working strategies, through which they would become familiar with the basic concepts of the program, such as: couple, marriage, family, types of family, functions of the family, family as a value, gender differences, family roles, conflict, aggression, domestic violence, communication, stress, etc., and, last but not least, self-knowledge and mutual understanding techniques. This procedure served as the foundation for the subsequent promotion of **Module II**.

Module I consisted of three sessions. The first session was dedicated to facilitating mutual acquaintance and the establishment of friendships among the participants. The primary objective of this session was create a pleasant, positive atmosphere that would foster openness towards knowledge and new experiences among the adolescents. Through carefully designed activities, we intended to create moments of inter- and self-discovery of personality.

Thus, we sought to created conditions in which each participant could-reflect on both their role and their importance in society. Emphasis was placed on highlighting the positive aspects of each participant and create a sense of security for them.

The subsequent two sessions aimed to familiarize the adolescents with the key concepts of the program through various strategies, methods, and techniques.

Module II consisted of nine sessions, each with a predominantly formative character. These sessions, involved various forms of implementation, such as: group work, team work, debates, homework assignments, etc. All of these were focused on changing the adolescents' social prac-

tices, with the goal of positively influencing the peripheral elements of the social representation (SR) of the family.

Throughout this module, various techniques and exercises were applied. Below are a few examples:

Family Sculpting

Premise: Contemporary society dictates new rules for life, interaction, communication, and the creation of families. Moving rapidly from traditional to contemporary, we scarcely notice the differences between traditional and contemporary families. This technique helps adolescents make a visible distinction between these two types of families by positioning other participants in a meaningful tableau.

Organization: The group is divided into two teams. Each team, in turn, chooses a leader. The leader will play the role of the sculptor. Members of each team must be ready to take any position dictated by the sculptor. The moderator asks the leader of the first team to sculpt the traditional family type, and the leader of the second team to sculpt the contemporary family type. Each leader presents their sculpture, explaining the concepts presented.

Core Transformation: The goal of this technique is to make a clear distinction between the two types of families (traditional and contemporary) and to raise awareness about what the family is, what each family member represents, and the role of each member within the family.

The War of Positions [1]

Premise: We are all taught to be fighters, and some of us are determined to win at any cost. The problem is that, although we joke about life being a game, a relationship or a family is certainly not like that.

Organization: The moderator asks two volunteers of different genders to step

forward in front of the group. For this exercise, a stopwatch will be needed. The participants are asked to stand face to face, then take two small steps to the left, distancing themselves from each other so that they are one arm's length apart. They are then asked to extend their arms and hold each other's right hand. The participants must remain still, without pulling towards each other, while keeping their feet immobile. The condition is that neither participant may move their feet. The stopwatch is set to 20 seconds and the activity begins. After 20 seconds, a debriefing of the activity follows.

Core Transformation: The moderator asks the participants, "Who won the war of positions? If you believe that one of you won, then both of you lost! When there is a winner or a loser in a family dispute, the relationship itself loses. The most beautiful and healthy option is one where both sides win. In any other situation, both sides will lose."

Case Study

Premise: The case study is a method of directly confronting participants with a real, authentic situation, taken as a typical example, representative of a set of problematic situations and events [13]. Often, personal dreams remain unspoken or secret because we assume they should be that way if we want the relationship to work. It often happens that both partners feel they do not have the right to have those dreams or consider them inappropriate. However, these labels do not stop the desire. Therefore, if the relationship does not respect the dream, conflict almost inevitably arises. In other words, when we bury a dream, it resurfaces disguised as a family conflict.

Organization: The group is divided into six teams. Each team is given a sheet

presenting conflict situations. The members of each team are tasked with reading the contents of the sheet and guessing which dream is hidden behind the presented conflict. Each team's goal is to create a small story/narrative explaining the position of each family member involved in the conflict. The teams are given the following instruction by the moderator: "Imagine that you have this attitude and that it is very difficult for you to give in. Think about what this point of view means for you and the origin of the dream you have. Imagine that your partner's dream will help you let go of what is blocking your family."

Core Transformation: This technique is creative and does not have correct or incorrect answers. However, it teaches the adolescent, based on the provided case studies, how to reveal a dream of the partner or a family member. Perhaps it is the unfulfilled dream that underlies an unresolved conflict. In the end, everything comes down to the quality of communication among family members.

Reanalysis of Problematic Behaviors Technique [8]

Premise: People are disturbed for two reasons: ego problems or low tolerance to frustration. The fast-paced life around us, work overloads, and the multitude of stress factors we are exposed to—all of these create discomfort, stress, problems, and inner conflicts. The family is supposed to be the place where you expect to be understood, accepted, and supported, but due to the aforementioned events, this becomes increasingly difficult. Family conflicts arise, often supported by aggressive, non-assertive, and even violent communication. And in the end, what do we achieve?

Organization: The group of adolescents is divided into two teams. Each team

receives a sheet of paper and a marker. Both teams are given the same task: for 10 minutes, identify the advantages and disadvantages of compulsive behavior, in our case - domestic violence. The teams will present their task in the form of a table.

Core Transformation: Since each team will present the same task, it will facilitate diversity in the evocation of responses, both quantitatively and qualitatively. The presentation of results is supported by asking questions such as: "How easy was it to identify the disadvantages, but the advantages?" "Do you think you could use this technique with your family for a concrete problem?" "Is violence (all types that can be observed in a family) justified? If so, why?" This technique will help the adolescent realize that the list of losses, i.e., the disadvantages, is much richer in examples than the list of advantages, thus reevaluating the importance and role of violence in the family and in communication.

Technique: Replacement Stories

Premise: This is a technique proposed by Guerin, who shows his clients films, video tapes, and tells them stories to teach them about the functionality of family systems in a way that minimizes their defensiveness [12]. We used this technique to teach adolescents to identify the problem, the family conflict, and to encourage them to create possible solutions to resolve the issue.

Organization: Adolescents are shown short films or stories from family settings where a conflict, argument, or problem is depicted. The idea is not to present the resolution of the issue to the adolescents, but rather to ask them to come up with their own solution.

Core Transformation: Over time, all couples experience conflict, and therefore,

learning to resolve conflicts becomes a critical skill in maintaining family harmony. Healthy families may have problems, but they possess the ability to handle these problems effectively when they arise. As such, learning the skill of problem-solving is an essential criterion for a successful family [10].

Method: Homework Assignment

Premise: Homework is defined as individual work between therapy sessions. The homework assignment increases the effectiveness of the therapeutic process and ensures continuity between sessions.

Organization: Adolescents were assigned a homework task aimed at fostering cohesion among their family members. For the next session, the adolescents are to draw their family crest together with their parents, and if they are married, with their spouses. Adolescents are encouraged to fully utilize their creativity in completing this homework. For the next session, they will present the crest to the entire group, discussing how easy or difficult it was for them to complete the task.

Core of Transformation: This exercise not only aims to build cohesion between parents and children or between spouses, but also serves as an evaluation and self-evaluation of the communication process between them while completing the task.

Impact of Social Practices on the Social Representation of Family among Adolescents in the Republic of Moldova

As previously mentioned, the experimental sample consisted of two homogeneous groups (GE > GC). By applying the free association method to 20 adolescents in the GE pre-intervention, we obtained 100 associative terms with the inductive word *family*, 28 of which were unique. After excluding synonyms and considering

associations that had a frequency greater than 1%, we obtained a corpus of 20 terms associated with the inductive word *family*.

Applying the same free association method to 20 adolescents in the GE post-intervention, we again obtained 100 associative terms with *family*, 24 of which were unique. After excluding synonyms and considering associations with a frequency greater than 1%, we arrived at a corpus of 18 terms associated with the inductive word *family*.

Data analysis for the experimental group (GE) pre- and post-intervention shows that the most frequent terms remain nearly unchanged: *sex* (15% pre-intervention, 16% post-intervention), *money* (11% pre, 10% post), *problems* (9% pre and post), and *children* (8% pre and post). In the control group (GC), the most frequent terms were *sex* (14.94%), *money* (13.79%), *children* (13.79%), and *cohabitation* (11.49%). The content of the central core of the social representation (SR)

of the family remained unchanged in both groups.

However, the peripheral terms in the GE changed post-intervention: while previously *arguments*, *separation*, *jealousy*, and *divorce* (2%), and *violence* (1%) predominated, after the intervention, new terms such as *difficulties* (3%), *value*, *cooperation*, and *understanding* (2%) appeared. In the GC, the peripheral terms remained consistent: *arguments*, *conflict*, *violence*, and *separation*.

The appearance of new terms in the peripheral content of the SR of the family indicates that the peripheral elements were influenced through the psychological intervention program. When comparing these data with the results obtained in the GE, it is evident that no changes at the peripheral level were recorded. To establish the central themes, peripheral elements, and ambiguous-status terms for GE pre- and post-intervention, Vergès [6] created Table 1 [3].

Table 1

Frequency and rank of appearance of terms associated with the inductive word “Family” for adolescents in GE pre- and post-intervention

	High Rank of Appearance (elements placed at the top of the associative chain)	Low Rank of Appearance (elements placed further down the associative chain)
GE Pre-Intervention: High frequency (greater than or equal to 5.00)	Sex, money, problems, children (central themes)	Responsibility, interests, love, joy, separation (ambiguous status)
GE Post-Intervention: High frequency (greater than or equal to 5.55)	Concubinage, freedom, habit, difficulties, home, worries, happiness (<i>ambiguous status</i>)	Arguments, jealousy, divorce, separation, violence (peripheral themes)
GE Post-Intervention: High frequency (greater than or equal to 5.55)	Sex, money, problems, children (central themes)	Cohabitation, freedom, learning, compromise (ambiguous status)
GE Post-Intervention: Low frequency (less than 5.55)	House, worries, communication, support, help, responsibility	Difficulties, value, cooperation, understanding (peripheral themes)

Before the implementation of the psychological intervention program, terms such as arguments, jealousy, divorce, and violence were identified within the content of the peripheral elements. However, **after the psychological intervention**, the peripheral themes are repre-

sented by terms such as difficulties, value, cooperation, and understanding. In order to establish the differences between the experimental group (GE) and the control group (GC) regarding the central themes, peripheral elements, and terms with ambiguous status, **Vergès**) created **Table 2**.

Table 2

Frequency and rank of terms associated with the stimulus word “Family” for adolescents in the experimental group (GE) post-intervention and the control group (GC)

	High Rank of Appearance (elements placed at the top of the associative chain)	Low Rank of Appearance (elements placed further down the associative chain)
GE: High frequency (greater than or equal to 5.85)	Sex, money, problems, children (central themes)	Cohabitation, freedom, habit, compromise (ambiguous status)
GE: Low frequency (less than 5.85)	House, worries, communication, support, help, responsibility (ambiguous status)	Difficulties, value, cooperation, understanding (peripheral themes)
GC: High frequency (greater than or equal to 7.14)	Sex, money, children, cohabitation (central themes)	Problems, love, home (ambiguous status)
GC: Low frequency (less than 7.14)	Responsibility, peace, misunderstandings (ambiguous status)	Quarrel, conflict, violence, separation (peripheral themes)

If the terms that are most likely central are identical for both GE and GC (sex and money), then at the level of terms that are more likely peripheral, there are changes. In GE, we find the terms cooperation and understanding, while in GC, the terms are violence and separation. The method of successive hierarchical sorting (Abric) [15 p. 352] is applied to verify and confirm the results obtained through the free association method (Abric 1973) [apud 7, p. 56-82].

By applying this method to 20 adolescents from GE in the pre-intervention stage, we obtained a corpus of 40 words that are characteristic of the object of study, i.e., the family, and 40 words that are uncharacteris-

tic of the family. After data verification and the exclusion of synonyms, 11 words characteristic of a family were identified, as well as 11 unique words that do not correspond to the description of a family.

We observe in **Table 3** that the terms representing the central core of the RS of the family in adolescents from GE, both before and after the implementation of the psychological intervention, remain the same: money, sex, problems, children, which confirms the validity of the results obtained through the free association method.

By applying the successive hierarchical sorting method to the post-intervention GE and GC, we obtained a corpus

Table 3

Comparative Table of Word Frequency for Family Characteristics
in GE Pre- and Post-Intervention

Characteristic words of the GE family pre-intervention	Word frequency	Percentage distribution %	Characteristic words of the GE family post-intervention	Word frequency	Percentage distribution %
Money	7	17,50	Money	8	20,00
Sex	6	15,00	Sex	6	15,00
Problems	6	15,00	Children	5	12,50
Children	5	12,50	Problems	4	10,00
Skill	4	10,00	House	4	10,00
Love	4	10,00	Help	3	7,50
Divorce	2	5,00	Responsibility	3	7,50
Responsibility	2	5,00	Difficulties	3	7,50
Argument	2	5,00	Understanding	2	5,00
Separation	1	2,50	Cooperation	2	5,00
Violence	1	2,50			

of 80 words characteristic to the research subject, i.e., the family, and 80 words that do not correspond to the research subject.

After verifying the data and excluding synonyms, for GE, 10 words characteristic of a family were obtained, and for

GC – 10. Similarly, for GE, 11 unique words that do not correspond to the description of a family were obtained, and for GC, 10 unique words that do not correspond to the description of a family were obtained.

Table 4

Comparative table of the frequencies of occurrence of characteristic family words for GE and GC

Characteristic words of the GE family	Word frequency	Percentage distribution %	Characteristic words of the GC family	Word frequency	Percentage distribution %
Money	8	20,00	Sex	8	20,00
Sex	6	15,00	Money	7	17,50
Children	5	12,50	Cohabitation	5	12,50
Problems	4	10,00	Children	4	10,00
House	4	10,00	Problems	4	10,00
Help	3	7,50	Divorce	3	7,50
Responsibility	3	7,50	Argument	3	7,50
Difficulties	3	7,50	Misunderstanding	2	5,00
Understanding	2	5,00	Separation	2	5,00
Cooperation	2	5,00	Violence	2	5,00

Examining the results obtained from applying the successive hierarchical sorting method, I identified the associations recognized as central themes for GE: money (fa=8), sex (fa=6), children (fa=5),

and problems (fa=4). For GC, the terms identified were: sex (fa=8), money (fa=7), and cohabitation (fa=5), a finding that confirms the results obtained through the free association method.

Table 5

Comparative table of the frequencies of occurrence of non-characteristic family words for GE pre- and post-intervention

Non-characteristic family words for GE pre-intervention	Word frequency	Percentage distribution %	Non-characteristic family words for GE post-intervention	Word frequency	Percentage distribution %
Violence	8	20,00	Understanding	7	17,50
Divorce	7	17,50	Cooperation	6	15,00
Separation	5	12,50	Value	6	15,00
Argument	5	12,50	Difficulties	5	12,50
Joy	4	10,00	Responsibility	4	10,00
Responsibility	3	7,50	Communication	3	7,50
Children	2	5,00	Worries	3	7,50
Problems	2	5,00	House	2	5,00
Sex	2	5,00	Children	2	5,00
Money	1	2,50	Money	1	2,50
Cohabitation	1	2,50	Sex	1	2,50

At the level of peripheral elements, some changes in their content are recorded. We observe that the terms violence, divorce, separation, and argument, identified as peripheral elements before the implementation of the psychological intervention program, were replaced with the terms understanding, cooperation, value, and difficulties, after the adolescents participated

in the psychological intervention program.

Examining Table 6, we observe that at the level of peripheral elements, changes are found in GE post-intervention as follows: associations such as understanding (fa=7), cooperation (fa=6), value (fa=6), difficulties (fa=5) were identified, while no changes were found at the level of GC (see Table 4).

Table 6

Comparative table of the frequencies of occurrence of non-characteristic family words for GE and GC

Non-characteristic family words for GE	Word frequency	Percentage distribution %	Non-characteristic family words for GC	Word frequency	Percentage distribution %
Understanding	7	17,50	Violence	6	15,00
Cooperation	6	15,00	Separation	6	15,00

Value	6	15,00	Argument	5	12,50
Difficulties	5	12,50	Misunderstanding	5	12,50
Responsibility	4	10,00	Divorce	4	10,00
Communication	3	7,50	Interests	4	10,00
Worries	3	7,50	Problems	3	7,50
House	2	5,00	Difficulties	3	7,50
Children	2	5,00	Sex	2	5,00
Money	1	2,50	Money	2	5,00
Sex	1	2,50			

The ambiguous scenario induction results obtained through the free association technique (Moliner, 1993) [11, p. 7-21] was also applied to verify and confirm the sorting method and successive hierarchical sorting.

Table 7

Comparative table on the social representation of the family among adolescents from GE and GC

Investigative stage	Structure of social representation	Experimental group	Control group
Before the implementation of the psychological intervention program	Priority central elements	Sex, money	Sex, money
	Auxiliary central elements	Problems, children	Children, cohabitation
	Overactivated peripheral elements	Violence, divorce	Separation, violence
	Normal peripheral elements	Argument, jealousy	Argument, conflict
After the implementation of the psychological intervention program	Priority central elements	<i>Money, sex</i>	<i>Sex, money</i>
	Auxiliary central elements	Children, problems,	Children, cohabitation
	Overactivated peripheral elements	Value, difficulties	Separation, violence
	Normal peripheral elements	Understanding, Cooperation	Argument, Conflict

Conclusions:

Following the implementation of the psychological intervention program, adolescents in the experimental group exhibited significant changes in their social representations of family, especially at the level of peripheral elements. Negative

terms, such as “violence” and “divorce,” were replaced by more positive concepts, such as “value” and “challenges.” Similarly, the terms “argument” and “jealousy” were substituted with “understanding” and “cooperation,” reflecting a shift toward a more harmonious perception of family. In

contrast, the control group did not show similar changes, thereby confirming the effectiveness of the proposed program. During Throughout the intervention, adolescents benefited from simulations and case studies that directly influenced their perceptions and social practices related to family. Meetings with successful families provided positive role models and exemplified effective communication within the family. Distorted social representations of the family were specifically addressed during the intervention.

In conclusion, the hypothesis formulated in the formative approach, that a psychological intervention program aimed

at shaping episodes of change in social practice over time would have a positive impact on the peripheral elements of adolescents' social representations of the family - was confirmed. Experimentally, we demonstrated that by modeling episodes of change in social practices, the peripheral elements of adolescents' social representations of the family can be influenced. Future research should focus on exploring how, by whom, where, and to what extent these episodes of social practice could be modeled to have a positive impact on adolescents' social representations of the family, especially if the family representation is distorted.

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Primit la redacție: 02.10.2024

Acceptat pentru editare: 15.11.2024