

## SOCIO-PSYCHOLOGICAL MECHANISMS OF THE MANIFESTATION OF ADOLESCENT EGOISM IN THE FAMILY ENVIRONMENT

Gadayeva Munira Muxamedovna

Affiliation: Bukhara Regional Center for Pedagogical Excellence.

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**Abstract.** This article examines the socio-psychological mechanisms through which adolescent egoism manifests within the family environment. The study is framed as a conceptual and methodological analysis based on developmental psychology, social psychology, and family psychology. Particular attention is paid to emotional climate, parenting style, family conflict, parental control, socio-economic status, digital socialization, empathy, self-esteem, and emotional security. The article argues that adolescent egoism should not be interpreted merely as an isolated personal trait. Rather, it is a dynamic phenomenon that emerges through the interaction of external family determinants and internal psychological mediators. The paper also proposes diagnostic and preventive directions for psychologists, teachers, and parents working with adolescents.

**Keywords:** adolescent egoism; family environment; socio-psychological determinants; empathy; self-esteem; parenting style; emotional security

**Annotatsiya.** Maqolada oilaviy muhitda o'smirlar egoizmining namoyon bo'lishiga ta'sir etuvchi ijtimoiy-psixologik mexanizmlar tahlil qilinadi. Tadqiqot rivojlanish psixologiyasi, ijtimoiy psixologiya va oilaviy psixologiya yondashuvlari asosida konseptual-metodologik tarzda yoritilgan. Unda oilaviy mikroiklim, tarbiya uslublari, oilaviy konfliktlar, ota-ona nazorati, ijtimoiy-iqtisodiy sharoit, raqamli muhit, empatiya, o'zini baholash va emotsional xavfsizlik kabi omillarning roli ochib beriladi.

**Kalit so'zlar:** o'smir egoizmi; oilaviy muhit; ijtimoiy-psixologik determinantlar; empatiya; o'zini baholash

**Аннотация.** В статье анализируются социально-психологические механизмы проявления эгоизма подростков в семейной среде. Проблема рассматривается на основе подходов возрастной, социальной и семейной психологии. Особое внимание уделяется эмоциональному климату семьи, стилям воспитания, семейным конфликтам, родительскому контролю, социально-экономическим условиям, цифровой социализации, эмпатии, самооценке и эмоциональной безопасности подростка.

**Ключевые слова:** эгоизм подростков; семейная среда; социально-психологические детерминанты; эмпатия; самооценка.

### 1. Introduction

Adolescence is a sensitive stage of personality development in which the individual actively constructs self-awareness, social identity, autonomy, and personal value orientations. At this stage, the adolescent's behavior is highly responsive to family interaction, peer evaluation, educational demands, and digital communication. In this context, egoistic tendencies may arise as part of the adolescent's search for independence; however, when these tendencies become excessive, they can complicate social adaptation and interpersonal relations.

Egoism in adolescence is expressed through the prioritization of personal benefit, weak consideration of other people's emotional states, resistance to shared responsibility, and reduced willingness to cooperate.

Such manifestations are especially important to examine within the family environment because the family is the first social institution where the child learns emotional regulation, communication patterns, moral boundaries, and attitudes toward others.

The relevance of the topic is connected with the need to clarify how family factors contribute to the development or reduction of egoistic behavior. Emotional coldness, inconsistent parenting, excessive or insufficient parental control, unresolved family conflicts, and low psychological culture within the family can create conditions in which egoism functions as a defensive or compensatory behavior. Therefore, adolescent egoism should be studied not as a single isolated trait, but as a system of behavioral, emotional, and social reactions shaped by family and personal determinants.

## **2. Literature Review**

The theoretical interpretation of egoism has developed through several psychological traditions. Psychoanalytic theory explains egoistic behavior as a consequence of internal psychological tension and the dominance of instinctive or self-protective impulses. Adler's individual psychology links egoistic tendencies with compensation for feelings of inferiority, while humanistic psychology emphasizes alienation, emotional deprivation, and the weakening of authentic interpersonal bonds.

Developmental psychology has also contributed to the understanding of adolescent egoism through the concept of egocentrism. Piaget described egocentrism as a developmental limitation in accepting another person's point of view. Later socio-cultural approaches emphasized that such limitations are transformed through communication, social interaction, and internalization of cultural norms. In adolescence, egocentric orientations may become stable egoistic behavior if social experience and family guidance do not support empathy and responsibility.

Family psychology provides a particularly important framework for this article.

Bronfenbrenner's ecological approach places the family within the microsystem that most directly influences development. Baumrind's parenting style theory demonstrates that authoritative parenting supports autonomy and social responsibility, whereas authoritarian and permissive styles can produce emotional resistance, dependency, or uncontrolled self-centeredness. Bowlby's attachment theory further explains that secure emotional bonds foster trust and prosocial orientation, while insecure bonds may contribute to defensive detachment and egoistic responses.

## **3. Methodological Framework**

This article uses a conceptual-analytical methodology. The analysis is based on the integration of theoretical sources, diagnostic logic, and practical psychological interpretation.

The proposed framework does not reduce adolescent egoism to moral weakness. Instead, it treats egoism as a multidimensional psychological phenomenon that can be assessed through behavioral, emotional, cognitive, and social indicators.

The methodological model includes three groups of variables. The first group consists of family determinants: emotional climate, parenting style, family conflict, parental control, emotional closeness, and socio-economic conditions. The second group includes internal mediating factors: empathy, self-esteem, emotional security, and social trust. The third group consists of egoistic behavioral manifestations: self-centered decision-making, low cooperation, conflict proneness, avoidance of responsibility, and indifference to others' needs.

For empirical application, the model can be examined using questionnaires, observation protocols, semi-structured interviews, projective techniques, and statistical analysis. Such triangulation increases the reliability of interpretation because egoism is often hidden behind socially acceptable answers and may not be fully revealed by one diagnostic method.

**4. Socio-Psychological Mechanisms of Adolescent Egoism in the Family**

The first important mechanism is emotional deprivation. When the adolescent does not experience sufficient attention, acceptance, and emotional support, he or she may begin to protect the self through self-centered behavior. In this case egoism is not only a desire to dominate, but also a psychological reaction to unmet emotional needs.

The second mechanism is inconsistent parenting. If parents alternate between strict control and indifference, the adolescent receives contradictory messages about boundaries, responsibility, and autonomy. Such inconsistency can produce unstable self-regulation and situational egoism, where the adolescent chooses personal benefit whenever external control weakens.

The third mechanism is family conflict. Continuous conflicts create psychological stress and weaken the adolescent’s sense of emotional safety. Under these conditions, egoism may become a compensatory behavior: the adolescent focuses on personal interests because the family environment does not provide stable trust or mutual care.

The fourth mechanism is low empathy development. Empathy is learned through emotional communication, modeling, and shared family experience. If the family rarely demonstrates understanding, emotional listening, and respect for others, the adolescent may have difficulty recognizing the needs of peers and family members. Reduced empathy strengthens egoistic orientations.

The fifth mechanism is distorted self-esteem. Both low self-esteem and inflated self-evaluation may support egoistic behavior. Low self-esteem can generate defensive self-protection, while inflated self-evaluation can create superiority, entitlement, and disrespect for others.

**5. Analytical Model**

The relationship between family determinants and egoistic manifestations can be represented as a mediated system. Negative family conditions do not always lead directly to egoism. Rather, they first influence internal psychological states such as emotional insecurity, reduced empathy, and unstable self-esteem. These internal changes then increase the probability of egoistic behavior.

In a healthy family environment, emotional support and balanced control strengthen empathy and social trust. In an unstable family environment, conflict, emotional coldness, and inconsistent parenting weaken these mediators and can intensify self-centered behavior.

Therefore, prevention should target both family communication and the adolescent’s internal psychological resources.

**Table 1. Family Determinants and Expected Psychological Outcomes**

Family determinant	Psychological mediator	Possible egoistic manifestation	Preventive direction
Emotional coldness	Low emotional security	Defensive self-centeredness	Emotional support and active listening
Authoritarian parenting	Internal resistance	Hidden aggression, conflict proneness	Balanced discipline and dialogue

Permissive parenting	Weak self-regulation	Entitlement, low responsibility	Clear boundaries and responsibility
Family conflicts	Stress and anxiety	Avoidance of cooperation	Conflict resolution training
Low empathy modeling	Reduced perspective-taking	Indifference to others	Empathy training and role exchange

**6. Discussion**

The proposed analysis shows that adolescent egoism is best understood as a dynamic outcome of family interaction and internal psychological mediation. It is not sufficient to label an adolescent as egoistic without examining the context in which such behavior appears. In many cases, egoistic behavior reflects insecurity, emotional deprivation, conflict experience, or low empathy development.

This interpretation has important practical implications. If egoism is treated only as a disciplinary problem, intervention may focus on punishment or moral instruction. However, if egoism is understood as a system-based phenomenon, psychological work should include family counseling, empathy development, communication training, and strengthening self-esteem in an adequate form.

The role of the family is central because everyday communication provides the adolescent with models of respect, support, responsibility, and emotional regulation. Parents who combine warmth with reasonable boundaries help adolescents develop autonomy without losing social sensitivity. Conversely, emotional neglect or inconsistent discipline increases the risk of self-protective and self-centered behavior.

**7. Practical Recommendations**

Psychologists should use a complex diagnostic package that assesses egoism, empathy, self-esteem, emotional security, and family climate. A single test cannot fully explain the mechanisms of egoistic behavior. Observation and interview data should be combined with questionnaire results.

Parents should be encouraged to establish emotionally supportive communication with adolescents. Active listening, respect for the adolescent’s opinion, consistent boundaries, and constructive conflict resolution are essential preventive conditions. The goal is not to suppress the adolescent’s autonomy, but to direct it toward social responsibility.

Schools and psychological services can implement short training programs focused on empathy, cooperation, conflict resolution, and reflection. Group activities, role-playing, moral dilemmas, and peer feedback can help adolescents understand the consequences of self-centered behavior and develop prosocial alternatives.

**8. Conclusion**

Adolescent egoism in the family environment is a complex socio-psychological phenomenon formed through the interaction of external family determinants and internal psychological mediators. Emotional climate, parenting style, family conflict, and parental control influence the adolescent’s empathy, self-esteem, emotional security, and social trust. These mediators, in turn, shape the degree and form of egoistic behavior.

The article demonstrates that effective prevention and correction require a systemic approach.

Work with adolescents should be combined with family-based interventions and psychoeducational support for parents. Developing empathy, adequate self-esteem, and constructive communication can reduce egoistic tendencies and improve social adaptation.

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