

TEENAGERS' PERCEPTIONS OF THE FAMILY CLIMATE

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This study examines teenagers' perceptions of their family climate, a critical aspect of adolescent development, particularly in relation to gender and age differences. Considering this, the climate of the family system can positively influence development or alternatively act as a risk factor. In this context, the main objective of this study was to examine how high school teenagers perceive their family climate. Specifically, we aimed to identify the quality of family relationships, establish whether there are gender-based differences in perception of family relationships, and determine whether there is a relationship between perception of family climate and age. The study involved 96 students, of whom 53 were female and 43 were male. The students were aged between 16 and 21 and were attending high school.

These teenagers' perceptions of their family climate were assessed using a sociodemographic questionnaire and the Family Climate Inventory (FCI). All quantitative analysis procedures were performed using SPSS software.

The results revealed that this group generally had a positive perception of their family climate, although they had a lower perception of their family hierarchy. Boys seemed to have a worse perception of their family climate than their female peers, particularly with regard to hierarchy and support. We also found that there is a correlation between age and a worse perception of family climate, meaning older students showed a worse perception of their family climate.

Given these results, one possible explanation for boys' more negative perceptions could lie in the influence of gender norms and roles within families. These expectations may shape how some boys interpret family dynamics, potentially perceiving them as more hierarchical or less emotionally supportive. These familial gender dynamics also lead to family members not showing overt emotional support for boys. As for older teenagers, some literature suggests that those who still live with their families have a poorer view of them and may engage in more conflict.

In terms of theory and practice the results of this study are relevant, firstly, because they deepen our theoretical understanding of how young people perceive their families. Using the Family Climate Inventory, we were able to identify the family climate factors that most affect young people. In practical terms, this study has provided psychologists with information that could help them to work with young people of various ages and their families, raising awareness of the importance of a stable and safe family environment.

Keywords: Family, Teenagers, Change, Family Climate, Perceptions.