

Systematic Review

Assessment of the Family Context in Adolescence: A Systematic Review

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Abstract: Background: Bearing in mind that the characteristics of the family system have a significant influence on the positive development of adolescents and considering that there are different measuring instruments, the main objective of this work is to review studies on the instruments for evaluating the family context, to determine which instruments are validated or adapted by researchers between 2010 and 2020 and which variables in the family context are valued during the adolescent stage. Methods: The academic search engines consulted have been Scopus, Redalyc and Web of Science. Following the criteria contemplated in the PRISMA Declaration, once duplicates were eliminated, a total of 101 studies were identified. A critical reading of the titles, summaries and a large part of the complete articles was carried out, and 56 studies were excluded. Finally, a systematic review of 45 studies that contrasted the psychometric properties of self-report measures (questionnaires, inventories, scales), between original papers and adaptations was carried out. Results: The results obtained reveal that the instruments measure different aspects of the family system: the family dynamics (variables such as parental competence, resilience, social support, parenting style and practices of leisure and free time); family functioning (variables such as problem solving, communication, roles, affective response capacity, affective participation, behavior control, cohesion, adaptability and family satisfaction); family adjustment (variables referring to parental stress, parental conflict, family health and family protection; and the parent–child relationships (variables such as quality, family effectiveness, family atmosphere and attachment). Conclusions: The most used psychological tests are: Parental Bonding Instrument, Family Assessment Resources, Social Support Scale, Parental Stress Index and Scale of Adaptation, Participation, Gain, Affection and Resources. Parental Bonding Instrument shows excellent psychometric properties. The rest of the self-report measures present acceptable reliability indices. The psychometric properties of some Family Assessment Resources, Social Systems Assessment Scale and Protective Factors Survey scales are more questionable, so new validation studies of these instruments are required. Affect (quality of relationships, manifestation, attachment bond), communication between members of the family group and parental control (behavioral and psychological) have been the main dimensions of the family context studied in adolescence. Along with these variables, others have been incorporated, such as parental resilience, family leisure and free time routines, family health or family strengths and weaknesses. The related instruments used in different psychological and cultural environments may help us to better understand the educational and parenting practices based on family dynamics, functioning, adjustment and parent–child relationships.

Keywords: adolescence; family context; evaluation; instruments; systematic review



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1. Introduction

We can all describe what we mean by family. We could even represent it with a drawing or a symbol. However, the concept of family changes and needs to be reinterpreted over time [1–3]. Most authors agree that the main function of the family is the socialization and promotion of the psychological and social development of children and plays a relevant role in the expression of feelings and the control of behavior. The family transmits the values,

beliefs, norms and behavior of a certain society. In addition, the family could be considered as a subculture, that is, as part of a larger culture that shares specific values, beliefs and norms. The family can also assume a recreational role and meet these needs of the family group [4–6]. It could be said that the concept of family is universal, the family being the social unit par excellence in all cultures. In this sense, the United Nations [7] itself, in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, adopted and proclaimed by General Assembly Resolution 217 A (iii) of 10 December 1948, indicates in Article 16 of its preamble that the family: “Is the natural and fundamental group unit of society and is entitled to protection by society and the State”. Similarly, in the Convention on the Rights of the Child [8], they state in its preamble that the family “as the fundamental group of society and the natural environment for the growth and well-being of all its members, and particularly children, should be afforded the necessary protection and assistance so that it can fully assume its responsibilities within the community”.

New values and new forms of behavior have led to a greater tolerance for family diversity (nuclear family, single parent, homoparental, reconstituted, cohabitation, adoptive, welcoming, transnational). According to the data of the study carried out by Ullmann et al. [9] in Latin America, nuclear-type households prevail (father or mother or both, with or without children), followed by extended families (father or mother or both, with or without children and other relatives), non-family type households (unipersonal or those where there is no conjugal nucleus or a father/mother-son/daughter relationship, although there may be other kinship relationships) and then compound families (father or mother or both, with or without children, with or without other relatives and other non-relatives). Likewise, this acceptance of family diversity is manifested in the different media and social networks.

On the other hand, the family is a key context for working with emotions, and spaces for communication must be created within it. Authentic communication is that which is based on dialogue, which implies that the members of the family group converse to gain consensus with the same opportunities for interaction [10–12]. According to Crespo [13], the principles for communication are the following: build positive relationships between parents and children, value vicarious learning, promote personal growth, reinforce self-esteem and facilitate the expression of feelings.

In the family context, the socialization of children is carried out through parenting styles or practices [14], which mainly refer to the ways parents act or behave with their children in the different everyday life situations. Cultural values and norms will determine the behavior of parents and, therefore, their educational practices. Baumrind [15] differentiated between parents with an authoritarian, permissive and authoritative style based on dimensions such as parental control, affective involvement and communication, based on the degree to which parents respond to the demands of their children (responsiveness) and in the degree to which parents make demands on their children (demand). Subsequently, Maccoby and Martin [16] differentiated between four types of parents based on the characteristics of their educational practices, attending to the level of demand and responsiveness: democratic (high affection and high parental control predominate in family dynamics), permissive (there is high affection and low parental control or demand), authoritarian (their parental practices are characterized by a predominance of low affect and high parental control) and negligent (low affect and low control predominate in parental practices). In relation to the dimensions of affection and control, cultural differences play a relevant role, since in some cultures some parental behaviors are considered part of their responsibility towards their children, while in other cultures these same behaviors can be interpreted as a form of interference or imposition by parents (Musitu et al., 2010) [17]. García and Gracia [18], found that the percentages of parenting styles tend to equalize, as the percentages of parents with democratic or authoritative styles (25.5%), permissive or indulgent styles (23.1%), authoritarian (25.4%) and negligent (25.9%) in family dynamics are increasingly similar. The results of the investigation by Torío, Peña and Inda [19], with a Spanish sample of 2965 families, showed that while a minority of parents (12%) had a

democratic style, in a majority of parents (87.2%) the styles were not “pure” but, on the contrary, there were “mixed” styles, which combined characteristics of various educational styles. This also changed depending on the development of the children. Similar results were obtained by Palacios et al. [20] with families from Ecuador.

Parenting refers to the activities carried out by parents to educate their children, while also favoring their socialization, and is related to attitudes and the way of interacting in parent/child relationships [21]. For Barudy [22], parenting includes, on the one hand, parental competences (mainly the establishment and development of the bond of attachment and empathy) and, on the other, parenting skills (in terms of the use of support networks and community resources). The attachment bond allows the child and the adolescent to acquire a representation of the world and the relationship with others [23]. It is favored when parents show sensitivity to the needs of their children and the ability to reflect on their own roles as parents [24,25].

In the family context, the promotion of affection and the development of emotional support will have a positive impact on the psychological well-being of its members [26], among others aspects. On the other hand, parental competence can be defined as the abilities, skills and capacities that allow parents to assume, with flexibility and adapting to changes, the different tasks associated with parenthood, trying to respond to the development needs of their children as well as their educational needs, starting from the social and cultural context in which they are immersed, and making use of the resources and supports available for the performance of their functions and the development of their capacities as parents [27,28].

There are different theoretical approaches in the study of the family context, that have led to the creation of different evaluation instruments. These theoretical approaches place the emphasis on different aspects of the family context: family dynamics, understood as parental competence, resilience, social support, parental style and leisure and free time practices [4,29–33]; family functioning, as the ability of the members of the family group to put into practice the psychological processes involved in the assumption of family performance [34–49]; family adjustment, in terms of the degree of psychological balance presented by the family group [50–62]; and parent–adolescent relationships, which refers to reciprocity in interactions between family group members [63–73]. These studies must take into account cultural validity and be focused on asking culturally valid questions [74], among others aspects.

Taking into account that the characteristics of the family system significantly influence the positive development of its members, and considering that there are different measurement instruments, the studies on the evaluation instruments of the family context will be reviewed, trying to answer the following research question: What are the measurement instruments that have been validated or adapted by researchers between 2010 and 2020 and which variables of the family context are assessed during the adolescent stage, especially in Western cultures? As previously explained, the main objective of this work is to review a decade of research (2010–2020) on the instruments for measuring the family context in adolescence, analyzing both the dimensions they evaluate and their different psychometric properties. Following the preceding scientific literature, it is expected that the instruments measure variables of the family context related to family functioning and adjustment, family dynamics or family relationships. Likewise, it is expected that the different measures of the family context show adequate psychometric properties and that they take into account the cultural variation of the families. Finally, these measures are expected to be complementary to each other when evaluating the characteristics of the family context.

2. Materials and Methods

2.1. Databases

The academic search engines consulted have been Scopus, Redalyc and Web of Science—in the case of Redalyc, due to its relevance in the educational field, in the case of Scopus, due to its wide access to publications in both Spanish and English, and with respect to Web of Science for offering a multidisciplinary approach. The search process was carried out between 11 and 14 July 2020.

2.2. Search Formulas

Some descriptors related to the fields included in our research question were selected. The descriptors in English and their corresponding search formulas used in Scopus have been: ‘family functioning OR dynamics OR relationship AND validation OR adaptation OR psychometric properties AND instruments OR scales OR questionnaires for evaluation OR measurement’. Similarly, similar descriptors in Spanish were used in the academic search engine Scopus. In Redalyc, the descriptors introduced and the search formulas were: ‘assessment instruments and family functioning’, ‘assessment instruments and family’, ‘scale and family’, ‘scale and family context’. Finally, the following search was carried out in Web of Science to delve into the following aspect of family relationships: ‘adult attachment instruments’. The recommended syntax in each of the academic search engines was followed.

2.3. Eligibility Criteria

In the paragraphs that follow, the inclusion and exclusion criteria followed in the search for bibliographic sources are mentioned taking into account our research question and following the criteria contemplated in the PRISMA Declaration [75].

2.3.1. Inclusion Criteria

The psychometric studies that were published in scientific journals evaluated by experts were selected, including, among their research objectives, to validate, develop or adapt an instrument, as a self-report measure, for the assessment of the family context during the adolescent period. Studies with abstracts available and published in both English and Spanish were included. The search was limited temporarily, so that all the studies indexed in the academic search engines cited from 2010 to 2020 were included. The search of the different bibliographic sources was limited to the field of psychology and education.

2.3.2. Exclusion Criteria

Studies that did not refer to the family context, focused on a developmental period other than adolescence, measuring characteristics of the adolescents but not of the families or presenting a theoretical rather than an empirical approach were excluded from the initial selection. Figure 1 shows the process followed for the selection of the studies consulted from the beginning to the end.

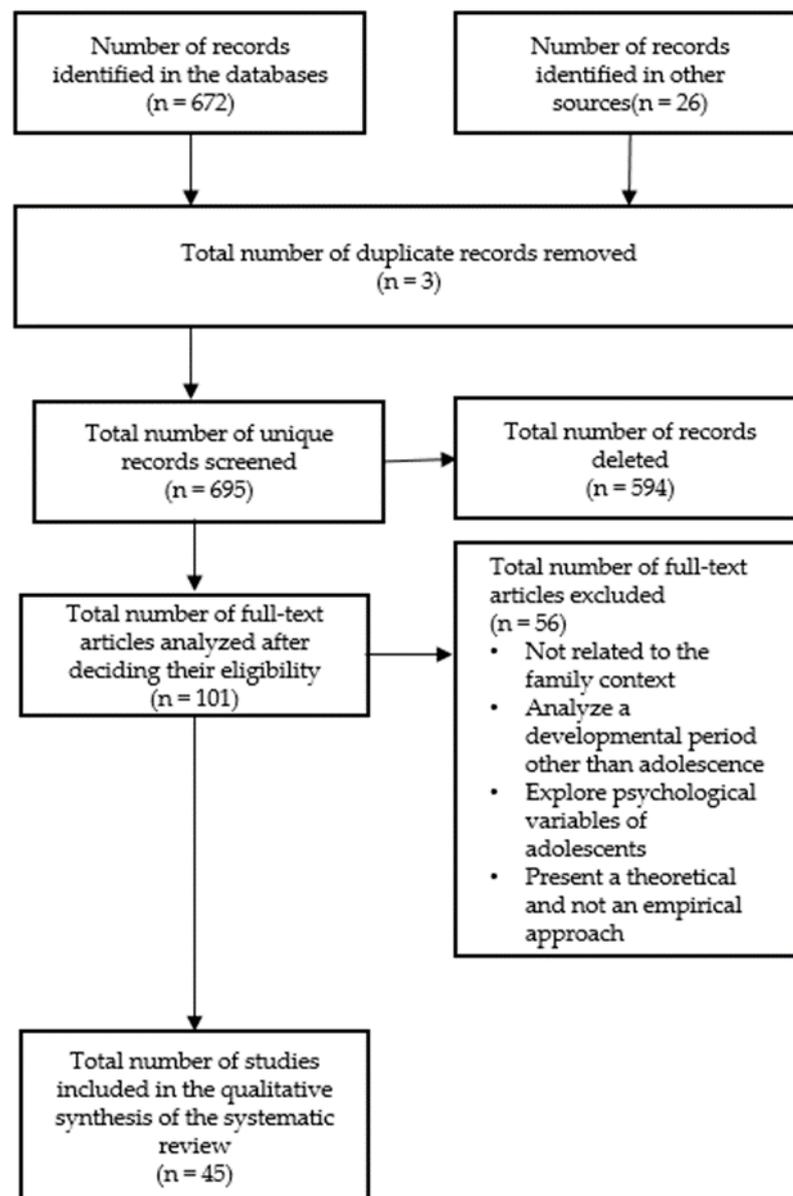


Figure 1. PRISMA flow diagram of the study selection process.

3. Results

Based on the different bibliographic sources finally included for the systematic review, the following aspects were taken into account: name of the instrument, author and year of publication (of the original instrument and of the adaptations made by different authors), dimensions or subscales it contained and main results (target population, total number of items, form of administration, assessment of the psychometric properties presented by the test).

Once the duplicates were removed, a total of 101 studies were identified, including, among their objectives or as hypotheses, the validation of an instrument for measuring different aspects of family functioning, dynamics, or family relationship and their relationship with adolescence. A critical reading of the titles, abstracts and a large part of the articles was carried out, excluding 56 studies because they were not related to the family context, because they analyzed a developmental period other than adolescence or because they explored psychological variables of the adolescents instead of the family group. The systematic review of 45 studies compared the psychometric properties of self-report measures (questionnaires, inventories, scales), between original tests and adaptations. The tests

were applicable, depending on the case, to adolescents and/or adults, and they could be administered individually or collectively in all cases (see Table 1).

Table 1. Characteristics of the included studies and main results.

Instrument/Country	Authors/Year	Dimensions and Main Results	Adaptations
Characteristics of the Studies on Family Dynamics			
Parental Competency and Resilience Scale for mothers and fathers in contexts of psychosocial risk (Spain)	– Martín et al. [31]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Dimensions: for mothers and fathers – Population: adults – Original instrument language: Spanish – Total items: 44 items for mothers and 32 items for fathers – Reliability: Cronbach's Alpha ranges between 0.68 and 0.97 	
Scale for the Evaluation of Parental Style (Spain)	– Oliva et al. [32]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Dimensions: affection and communication, promotion of autonomy, behavioral control, psychological control, self-disclosure and humor – Population: adolescents – Original instrument language: Spanish – Total items: 41 items; shorter version contains 24 items – Reliability: Cronbach's alpha ranges between 0.86 and 0.92 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Álvarez-García et al. [29] – (Spanish validation of the scale)
Social Support Scale (USA)	– Procidano y Heller [33]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Dimensions: family social support and social support from friends – Population: adults – Original instrument language: English – Total items: 20 items each scale – Reliability: Cronbach's alpha was 0.86 and 0.81 for the PSS-Fa and PSS-Fr scale, in the Mexican sample. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Domínguez y Contreras [30] (translation into Spanish spoken in Mexico and validation of the scale)
Activity Scale of Free Time (Mexico)	– Camargo et al. [4]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Dimensions: escape from routine, parental care, sports activities, cultural activities, consumption, technology, personal development and relaxation, interaction, routine activities, entertainment, extended family, outdoor activities and activities with music. – Population: adults – Original instrument language: Spanish spoken in Mexico – Total items: 66 items – Reliability: Cronbach's Alpha = 0.94 	

Table 1. Cont.

Instrument/Country	Authors/Year	Dimensions and Main Results	Adaptations
Characteristics of the studies on family functioning			
Family Assessment Resources (USA)	– Epstein et al. [35]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Dimensions: problem solving, communication, roles, affective response capacity, affective participation, behavior control and general functioning – Population: adults – Original instrument language: English – Total items: 60 items – Reliability: Cronbach’s alpha ranged from 0.47 to 0.94. – Convergent validity: test-retest coefficient ranged from 0.58 to 0.82 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Tsampanli et al. [48] – (Greek translation and scale validation)
Family Cohesion and Adaptability Assessment Scales (USA)	– Olson et al. [42]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Dimensions: cohesion and adaptability – Population: adults – Original instrument language: English – Total items 111 items – Reliability FACES IV: Cronbach’s alpha ranged from 0.63 to 0.93 – Reliability FACES III: Cronbach’s Alpha ranged from 0.37 to 0.87 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Olson [40] (American validation FACES IV) – Jiménez et al. [37] (Spanish translation and FACES III validation) – Marsac y Alderfer [38] (American FACES IV validation) – Martínez-Pampliega et al. [39] (Spanish translation and FACES IV validation) – Pereira y Teixeira [44] (translation into Portuguese and validation of the FACES IV) – Schmidt et al. [47] (translation into Spanish spoken in Argentina and validation of the FACES III)
Family Communication Scale (USA)	– Olson y Barnes [41]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Dimensions: one-dimensional – Population: adolescents and adults – Original instrument language: English – Total items: 10 items – Reliability: Cronbach’s alpha = 0.90 – Convergent validity: test-retest values 0.85 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Cracco y Costa-Ball [36] (translation into Spanish spoken in Uruguai and validation of the scale)
Family Satisfaction Scale(USA)	– Olson et al. [43]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Dimensions: one-dimensional – Population: adolescents and adults – Original instrument language: English – Total items: 10 items – Reliability: Cronbach’s alpha = 0.92 – Convergent validity: test-retest values 0.85 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Villarreal-Zegarra et al. [49] (translation into Spanish spoken in Peru and validation of the scale)

Table 1. Cont.

Instrument/Country	Authors/Year	Dimensions and Main Results	Adaptations
Family Satisfaction Scale by Adjectives (Spain)	– Barraca y López-Yarto [34]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Dimensions: one-dimensional – Population: children and adolescents, from clinical and non-clinical samples – Original instrument language: Spanish – Total items: 27 items – Reliability: Cronbach's Alpha = 0.97 for the total sample – Convergent validity: test-retest coefficient = 0.75 	– Quintanilla et al. [46] (translation into Spanish spoken in Mexico and validation of the scale)
Characteristics of the studies on family adjustment			
Parental Stress Index (USA)	– Abidi [50]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Dimensions: for the child (adaptability, demands/demands, humor, distraction/hyperactivity, acceptability and reinforcement); for parents (depression, competition, attachment, partner, isolation, health, and role restriction); stressful life events – Population: adults – Original instrument language: English – Total items: 123 items; reduced version 36 items – Reliability: Cronbach's alpha ranges between 0.70 and 0.95 	– Díaz-Herrero et al. [55] (Spanish translation and validation of the instrument)
Scales "When we disagree" (Italy)	– Cicognani y Zani [51]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Dimensions: commitment and aggression/anger – Population: parent-adolescent dyads – Original instrument language: Italian – Total items: 12 items for each part – Reliability: Cronbach's alpha ranges between 0.74 and 0.81 for commitment and 0.81 to 0.86 for aggression/anger 	
Family Health Scale (Spain)	– Lima et al. [56]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Dimensions: family climate, family integrity, family functioning, family resistance and family coping – Population: adults – Original instrument language: Spanish – Total items: 42 items – Reliability: Cronbach's alpha ranges between 0.73 and 0.89 for the different subscales – Convergent validity: test-retest values between 0.74 and 0.89 	

Table 1. Cont.

Instrument/Country	Authors/Year	Dimensions and Main Results	Adaptations
Protective Factors Survey (Spain)	– Counts et al. [53]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Dimensions: family functioning, emotional support, concrete support and nutrition and attachment. – Population: adults – Original instrument language: Spanish – Total items: 65 items original version; 20 items short version – Reliability: Cronbach’s Alpha coefficients for – the four subscales range between 0.63 and 0.94 	– Conrad-Hiebner et al. [52] (Spanish validation of the instrument)
Family Adaptation, Participation, Gain, Affection and Resources Scale (USA)	– Smilkstein [59]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Dimensions: one-dimensional – Population: adults – Original instrument language: English – Total items: 5 items – Reliability: Cronbach’s Alpha ranges between 0.86 and 0.90 – Convergent validity: test-retest values between 0.74 and 0.89 	– Díaz-Cárdenas et al. [54] (translation into Spanish spoken in Colombia and validation of the scale)
Index of Family Functioning and Change (UK.)	– Stratton et al. [60]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Dimensions: strengths, difficulties and communication – Population: adolescents and adults from clinical and non-clinical samples – Original instrument language: English – Total items: 40 items original version; short versions 28 items and 15 items – Reliability: Cronbach’s alpha ranges between 0.78 and 0.93 for the total scale. Cronbach’s alpha for the three subscales between 0.59 to 0.90 – Convergent validity: test-retest coefficients between 0.81 and 0.94 for total scores and in the three subscales 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – O’Hanrahan et al. [57] (Irish validation SCO-RE-15 and SCORE-28) – Rivas y Pereira [58] (Spanish translation and validation of SCO-RE-15) – Vilaça et al. [61] (translation into Portuguese and validation of SCORE-15 and SCO-RE-28) – Zetterqvist et al. [62] (Swedish translation and Validation of SCO-RE-15)

Table 1. Cont.

Instrument/Country	Authors/Year	Dimensions and Main Results	Adaptations
Characteristics of the studies on family relationships			
Social Systems Assessment Scal (Germany)	– Aguilar-Raab et al. [63]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Dimensions: quality of the relationship and collective effectiveness. Family consensus – Population: adults and adolescents – Original instrument language: German – Total items: 9 items. It also presents a tenth item that is not an integral part of the scale – Reliability: Cronbach’s Alpha 0.93 for the total scale – Cronbach’s alpha for the three subscales between 0.80 to 0.88 – Convergent validity: test-retest coefficients between 0.66 and 0.56 	– Grevenstein et al. [67] (German validation of the scale)
Social Climate Scales in the Family (Peru)	– Arias et al. [64]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Dimensions: one-dimensional – Population: adults – Original instrument language: Spanish spoken in Peru – Total items: 52 items – Reliability: Cronbach’s alpha is 0.73 	– Arias et al. [65] (Peruvian validation of the instrument)
Family Integration Inventory (USA)	– Moos et al. [70]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Dimensions: relationships, development and stability – Population: adults and adolescents – Original instrument language: English – Total items: 90 items – Reliability: Cronbach’s alpha ranges between 0.67 and 0.78 	– Valdés et al. [73] (translation into Spanish spoken in Mexico and validation of the scales)
Self-Questionnaire of Internal Models of Adult Attachment Relationships (France)	– Pierrehumbert et al. [72]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Attachment style: autonomous, disengaged and concerned – Population: adults – Original instrument language: French – Total items: 72 items – Reliability: Cronbach’s Alpha ranges between 0.51 and 0.84 – Convergent validity: test-retest coefficients between 0.40 and 0.86 in most scales 	– Mayorga y Koroleff [69] (translation into Spanish spoken in Peru and validation of the instrument)
Parental Attachment Instrument (Australia)	– Parker et al. [71]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Dimensions: affection and overprotection or control – Typologies: optimal parenting, parental neglect, control with affection and cold control – Population: adults – Original instrument language: English – Total items: 25 for the father and 25 for the mother – Reliability: Cronbach’s Alpha between 0.83 and 0.90 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Gómez et al. [66] (translation into Spanish spoken in Colombia and validation of the instrument) – Liu et al. [68] (Chinese translation and instrument validation)

The instruments found with the analysis obtained in the different academic search engines are described below, including the variables that measure each of them, differentiating between those instruments that emphasize the evaluation of family functioning and adjustment, family dynamics or family relationships (see Figure 2).

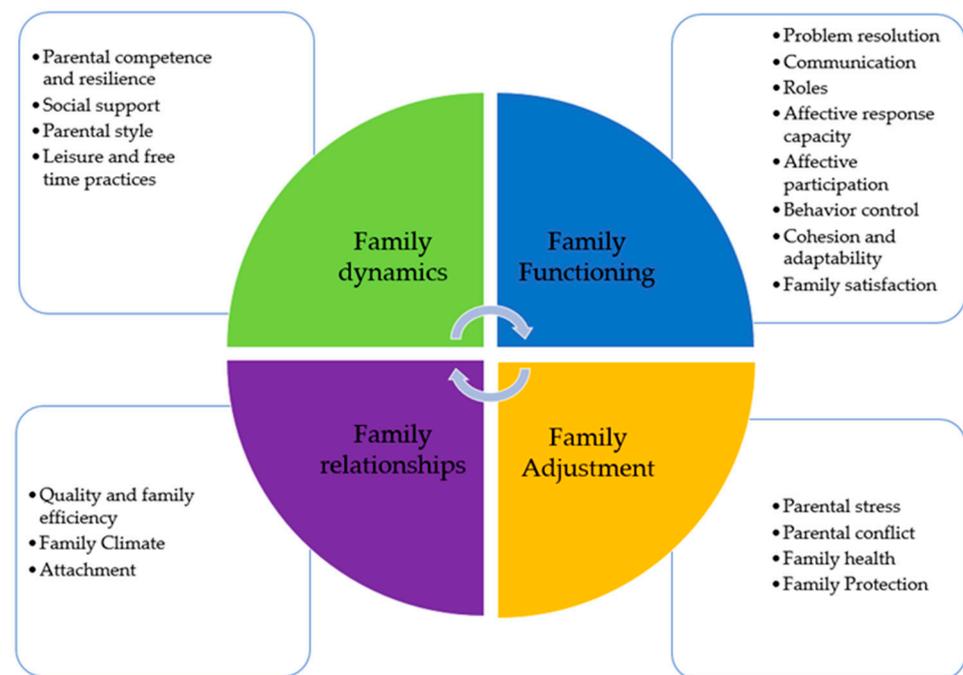


Figure 2. Family variables measured by the instruments.

3.1. Family Dynamics

3.1.1. Parental Competence and Resilience Scale for Mothers and Fathers in Contexts of Psychosocial Risk

This instrument evaluates parental competence and resilience in contexts of psychosocial risk. The scale for mothers is made up of 44 items that assess five dimensions: personal development and resilience, domestic organization, search for support, educational skills and community skills. The scale for parents is made up of 32 items and measures four dimensions: personal development and resilience, educational competencies and domestic organization, community competencies and seeking support. Both versions allow for the assessment of the role of each parent in situations of psychosocial risk and show adequate psychometric properties.

3.1.2. Scale for the Evaluation of Parental Style (EEP)

Assesses the perception of the educational style used by the parents, grouped into six dimensions: affection and communication, promotion of autonomy, behavioral control, psychological control, self-disclosure and humor, using a Likert-type scale from 1 to 4, where 1 = totally false and 4 = totally true. The duration of the scale application is approximately ten minutes.

3.1.3. Social Support Scale (PSS)

They assess the perceived social support from family and friends. These are two scales (PSS-Fa and PSS-Fr) of 20 items each, which are answered with 1 = Yes or 0 = No.

3.1.4. Free Time Activities Scale

It evaluates leisure time activities in adults. The scale comprises 66 items referring to the frequency with which different leisure activities are practiced, which is valued on a Likert scale from 1 (never) to 5 (very often). The 66 items are grouped into 13 factors that

explain 61.30% of the total variance: escape from routine, parental care, sports activities, cultural activities, consumption, technology, personal development and relaxation, interaction, routine activities, entertainment, extended family, outdoor activities and activities with music. The 66 items are grouped into 13 factors that explain 61.30% of the total variance.

3.2. Family Functioning

3.2.1. Family Assessment Resources (FAD)

This self-report contains 60 items referring to the family. It is answered with a 4-point Likert-type scale, where 1 = totally disagree and 4 = totally agree. It presents seven subscales to assess family functioning: problem solving (ability of the family to handle problems effectively and maintain its functions), communication (verbal exchange of information between family members), roles (if the responsibilities of each of the family members are clear and legitimate), affective response capacity (ability of family members to respond appropriately to different affective experiences in the family context), affective participation (to what extent family members are interested in and care for each other), behavior control (the family's ability to maintain discipline and standards of behavior within the family group), and general functioning (general family health/pathology). In the Greek version [48], a model with six subscales presented a better statistical fit, but not all the items corresponded to the same components of the theory. In addition, significant correlations were found with cohesion and adaptability.

3.2.2. Family Cohesion and Adaptability Assessment Scales (FACES)

The original instrument assesses two dimensions of family functioning: cohesion (refers to the affective or emotional bond established between the members of the family group) and adaptability (refers to the capacity for change presented by the family group). It is a longer version of the instrument made up of 111 items. A shorter version of the FACES scale (FACES II) [45] has been adapted to Spanish by Martínez-Pampliega et al. [39] and is made up of 20 items. In it, the participants rate their degree of agreement on a 5-point scale (1 = never or almost never to 5 = always or almost always). Reliability scores vary from 0.87 to 0.90 for the different subscales and the total score of the scale. In addition, there are validations of the FACES scale in Spanish in its third version (FACES III) [37]. The latest version of the FACES-IV instrument was validated by Olson [40]. The total scale is made up of 42 items, which are divided into six scales of seven items each. This version presents two balanced scales, which measure, on the one hand, balanced cohesion and, on the other, balanced adaptability. In addition to these two scales, the remaining four scales correspond to the extreme or unbalanced aspects of the dimensions of cohesion (specifically, the detached and tangled dimensions) and adaptability (in particular, rigid and chaotic). In FACES IV, the internal constancy indices range between 0.63 and 0.89 [39,40,44].

3.2.3. Family Communication Scale (FCS)

It consists of 20 items with Likert-type responses with five alternatives, ranging from 1 = does not describe my family at all to 5 = describes my family very well. The Spanish adaptation is a short version of the 10-item instrument. The higher the score, the better the family communication.

3.2.4. Family Satisfaction Scale (FSS)

It assesses the satisfaction perceived by family members about family functioning. Specifically, it measures four aspects: levels of emotional closeness, ability to adapt to changes, quality of communication and way of solving problems. It consists of 10 items with Likert-type responses, with five alternatives, ranging from 1 = extremely dissatisfied to 5 = extremely satisfied. A higher score indicates a higher level of family satisfaction. The one-dimensionality of the scale has been contracted with a sample of university students from Peru, showing adequate psychometric properties (Villarreal-Zegarra et al., 2017) [49].

Family satisfaction correlates significantly and positively with family communication, with a moderate effect size.

3.2.5. Family Satisfaction Scale by Adjectives (ESFA)

This instrument was developed in the Spanish context and assesses the global perception of one's own family situation using different adjectives. It presents 27 items on pairs of antonym adjectives on affective issues that are constructed in the verbal and/or physical interactions between the members of the family group. The test can be administered in an interval of approximately 10 minutes. Each item is scored on a Likert scale from 1 (negative aspect) to 6 (positive aspect). A score above the 50th percentile is considered acceptable. A high score on the test is interpreted as meaning that family relationships are rewarding and positive for the individual. The scale establishes significant correlations with the Family Satisfaction Scale [40] and the Family Communication Scale [41].

3.3. Family Setting

3.3.1. Parental Stress Index (PSI)

This questionnaire assesses the stress related to parenthood and can be completed by parents of children under 12 years of age. The original version contains a total of 123 items, which are answered through a Likert-type scale where 1 = strongly agree and 5 = strongly disagree. The instrument allows one to obtain a global stress score. In addition, it provides information on sources of stress associated with the characteristics of the child (adaptability, demands/demand, mood, distraction/hyperactivity, acceptability and reinforcement) (47 items), sources of stress associated with the characteristics of the parents (depression, competence, attachment, couple, isolation, health and role restriction) (54 items) and sources of stress related to the environment and stressful life events (22 items). The short version in Spanish consists of 36 items [55], presents optimal psychometric properties and assesses two dimensions: stress derived from caring for the child and personal discomfort.

3.3.2. Scales "When We Disagree" (WWD)

It evaluates the conflictive style (aggression and commitment) within the relationship between parents and adolescent children and applies to parent-adolescent dyads. The instrument includes two scales for the conflict style (Part 1 and Part 2). In Part 1, parents are asked to describe their disagreements with their teens. Responses to the 12 items are provided on a 4-point scale: 1 = not at all, 2 = not very well, 3 = fairly well, and 4 = very well. Part 2 follows the same structure as Part 1, but the questions refer to "me" rather than "he/she". The results of the application of the scale show that: WWD correlates with family communication and parental self-efficacy, the relationship is more conflictive between adolescents and mothers, parents describe adolescents as less committed and more aggressive than themselves.

3.3.3. Family Health Scale

Assesses the self-perception of the family's health status. It presents 42 items that are answered on a Likert-type scale with three answer options (0 = almost never, 1 = sometimes and 2 = almost always) and that measure five dimensions: family climate (internal environment generated by the members of the unit), family integrity (degree of union that is established between its members), family functioning (interactive and systemic relational dynamics that occur between the members of a family and measure the degree of satisfaction of the basic functions of the family system), family resistance (defense mechanisms that the family has to cope with in adverse situations) and family coping (way of coping with the appearance of stressful events). The scales have shown validity and reliability and can be used to assess the self-perception of the family's health status.

3.3.4. Protective Factors Survey (PFS)

It is a 65-item self-report measure that assesses four protective factors at the family level against child abuse and neglect (family functioning, emotional support, concrete support and nutrition and attachment) and is scored on a 7-point scale of agreement. A short version (S-PFS) [52] of 20 items measures five factors: family functioning/resilience, concrete support, social support, parenting and attachment, and knowledge of child rearing/development, which are answered on a seven point scale. Both versions of the scale include information on sociodemographic data (family composition of the caregiver, race/ethnicity, income, government assistance, housing status and marital status). This test correlates significantly with other variables such as: child abuse, stress, depression, misadjusted behaviors and social support measures.

3.3.5. Scale of Adaptation, Participation, Gain, Affection and Resources (APGAR)

It is a short test that assesses the state of family functioning in the last six months using five questions. In its original version in English, the scale offered three response options in a Likert format (0 = almost never, 1 = sometimes, and 2 = almost always). Subsequently, a greater number of response categories was proposed (0 = never, 1 = almost never, 2 = sometimes, 3 = almost always and 4 = always), to increase the psychometric properties of the scale. When scores are above 17, family functioning is adequate. Not all studies show a good fit of the model, affecting the construct validity.

3.3.6. Index of Family Functioning and Change (SCORE)

The original version is made up of 40 items (Stratton et al., 2010) [48]. It has a shorter version of 28 items and an even shorter version of 15 items. Both have adequate psychometric properties [48,55,56,59,60]. It is a self-report measure that assesses family processes and different aspects of family functioning. It can be applied from the age of 11. The 15-item version takes approximately ten minutes to administer. This test offers a score on family adjustment that is obtained from three dimensions: strengths (we are good at finding new ways to deal with things that are difficult), difficulties (we seem to move from one crisis to another in my family) and communication (it feels risky to disagree in our family). Reliability is optimal for the full scale, but lower for the communication subscale [57]. There are significant correlations with general functioning [57]. The 40-item version is more suitable for research, and the short versions for clinical practice.

3.4. Family Relationships

3.4.1. Social Systems Assessment Scale (EVOS)

This scale (with its original version in German) measures the quality of the family relationship. It has two subscales: quality of the relationship (4 items that assess the level of quality of the emotional/affective relationship) and collective efficacy (5 items measure the cognitive aspects in family relationships). The scale includes a 10th item, which can optionally be used to assess the degree of agreement or consensus perceived by the members of a family group. Each of the items value the following theoretical dimensions: communication, cohesion, giving and receiving, climate or environment, objective, resources, decisions, broadening the perspective of solutions, adaptability and consensus, from 1 to 10, respectively. Higher scores have been found for relationship quality than for collective efficacy in adults [61]. The scores obtained on this scale significantly correlate with family functioning, psychological distress, life satisfaction and effectiveness in teamwork [63,67].

3.4.2. Family Integration Inventory (Arias et al., 2013)

The original test has been developed and validated by Arias et al. [64] with a sample of 420 couples with children. It contains 52 items, which are applied to each of the members of the couple, and their responses are evaluated through a Likert scale, where 1 = never and 5 = always. It can be administered individually or collectively. The test shows adequate

psychometric properties in terms of validity and reliability. The Cronbach's Alpha index obtained is 0.739. The adaptation made by Arias et al. [65] measures four dimensions: conjugal, parental, fraternal and family subsystems, through 51 items, the reliability indexes exceeding the value of 0.8 for each of the factors and obtaining test-retest values between 0.45 to 0.68. The findings suggest that, in the process of individuation of family members, the relationships of the spouses would not hinder the process of individualization.

3.4.3. Social Climate Scales in the Family (FES)

It measures the socio-environmental characteristics and personal relationships in the family. It is composed of three dimensions: relationships (cohesion, expressiveness and conflicts), development (autonomy, performance, intellectual-cultural, social-recreational and morality-religiosity) and stability (organization and control). The approximate application time is 20 minutes. The concurrent and predictive construct validity is adequate.

3.4.4. Self-Questionnaire of Internal Models of Adult Attachment Relationships (CaMir)

This questionnaire assesses current and past family relationships in relation to attachment figures. It collects the impressions on the attitudes of parents in childhood and how they have been able to affect personal life, as well as information about family functioning. It measures the representations of adult attachment and allows for the classification of different attachment styles. The test makes it possible to specifically assess 13 attachment cognitions: parental interference, family concern, resentment of infantilization, parental support, family support, recognition of support, parental unavailability, family distance, resentment of rejection, parental trauma, memory blocking, parental resignation and hierarchy assessment. These 13 scales are organized according to three aspects of the general attachment style (concern, autonomy and detachment) and according to the level of reality (past, present and state of mind). The instrument also explores the general attachment style: autonomous, disengaged and preoccupied. It is an instrument of rapid application, which allows for the evaluation of the internal models of adult attachment relationships, aimed mainly at the evaluation of people with a medium socioeconomic level, since they generally show a higher educational level.

3.4.5. Parental Bonding Instrument (PBI)

This test assesses the history of a person's attachment relationships with their mother or father. It specifically assesses the memory of the relationships established with the main attachment figures in childhood and adolescence. It consists of 25 items on the relationship with the father and 25 items on the relationship with the mother, which are assessed using a Likert scale, where 0 = never and 3 = always. It allows one to obtain information about affect (12 items) and overprotection or control in attachment relationships (13 items). In addition, it evaluates the following typologies: optimal parenting, parental neglect, control with affection and cold control. The average application time is 15 min.

4. Discussion

The objective of this study was to systematically investigate the measurement instruments validated by researchers for the stage of adolescence in the last decade. It has been performed by analyzing the main variables of the family context that each instrument evaluates. In the first place, the results obtained in the present work review allow us to arrive to the following conclusions. The instruments (questionnaires, inventories and scales) measure different aspects of the family system: family dynamics, family functioning, family adjustment and parent-adolescent relationships. However, it is observed that these aspects are sometimes mixed or confused, making it necessary for them to be defined in order to better and effectively guide the intervention in the family context and the replication of the results. This is probably one of the main contributions of this systematic review. The most relevant findings in this regard are discussed below, establishing, according to our

judgment and based on the previous scientific literature, the variables that best define the categories contemplated in previous research with respect to the family context.

Regarding family dynamics, the main variables studied are parental competence (the ability of parents to deal flexibly and adaptively with the vital task of being parents, taking into account the needs of the children and counting on the available resources, within the social and cultural context) and resilience (the ability to emerge victorious from difficult situations), social support (help provided by another person), parenting style (set of peculiar traits that characterize the educational practices of parents) and leisure and free time practices (leisure activities carried out by individuals outside of work or school hours and that make up their own lifestyle) [4,29–33], among others.

Regarding family functioning, the instruments evaluate variables related mainly to: problem solving (the ability of the family to handle problems effectively and maintain the function of all its members), communication (verbal exchange of information between family members), roles (responsibilities assigned to family members), affective response capacity (the ability of family members to respond appropriately to different affective experiences within the family context), affective participation (to what extent family members are interested and care for each other), behavior control (the family's ability to maintain discipline and standards of behavior within the family), cohesion (the degree of emotional bonding perceived by family members), adaptability (the magnitude of change of the roles, rules and leadership experienced by the family) and family satisfaction (felt measures of well-being with respect to one's own family) [34,37–40,42–44,47,48], among others.

As for family adjustment, this can be measured by variables such as parental stress (associated with parenting practices), parental conflict (parents' disagreements with their adolescent children and vice versa), family health (ability to function effectively as a biopsychosocial unit in the context of a culture and a society) and family protection (against child abuse and neglect) [47,49,51,53,54], among others.

Lastly, parent–child relationships are assessed using family context variables related to quality (refers to affective aspects of the relationship) and family efficacy (refers to cognitive aspects of the relationship), family climate (social environment in which the members of a family develop) and attachment (intimate affective bond that basically pursues the purpose of maintaining the child's proximity with their attachment figure to feel protected and safe) [63,69–71,73], among others.

However, this work is not without limitations. Although it is a systematic and rigorous review, the data collection is subscribed to a specific period of time and under certain academic search engines. Furthermore, the studies selected are mostly in English and Spanish, covering a large number of countries, but without considering all the spoken languages. Likewise, the search strategy has focused on the Scopus, Redalyc and Web of Science databases, and might have inadvertently omitted papers published in other resources. Finally, the systematic review has focused on the study of self-report measures (questionnaires, inventories, scales) used and validated by researchers to assess the family context in adolescence, and has not analyzed, on this occasion, other psychological tests, equally valid and scientifically proven, such as the interview or observation records, among other measurement instruments which could also be more useful in certain cultural and social contexts. The information can be expanded in this direction in future reviews carried out in this context, since family life is too complex to be measured by one survey. Besides this, in order to increase the convergent and discriminant validity of different psychological tests, researchers must take into account language and cultural variation to make sure they are asking questions about family life that make cultural sense to parents and their children.

5. Conclusions

The instruments reviewed emphasize the evaluation of family functioning and adjustment, family dynamics or family relationships. Affect (quality of relationships, manifestation, attachment bond) and communication between members of the family group and parental control (behavioral and psychological) have been the main dimensions studied by

researchers. Along with these variables, others have been incorporated into the analysis of the family context in adolescence, such as parental resilience, family leisure and free time routines, family health or family strengths and weaknesses. Most of the instruments show adequate values of reliability and validity, both in their original version and in their adaptations to different languages. The psychological tests most used by researchers to study the family context are, in the following order: PBI [71], to measure the attachment to parents; FAD [35], to assess family functioning through family resources; PSS [33], to assess the support received from family and friends; PSI [50], to measure the sources of stress associated with the characteristics of the parents and with the characteristics of the child and related to stressful life events; and APGAR [59], used by researchers primarily in the clinical setting to measure family adjustment. The PBI test [71] shows optimal psychometric properties, and the rest of the self-report measures show acceptable reliability indices (Table 1). On the other hand, the psychometric properties of some scales of the FAD instrument [48], the EVOS scale [63] and the PFS test [53] are more questionable, so new validation studies on these instruments are required. However, it would be advisable to continue making cultural adaptations of these instruments by readapting or simplifying the writing of items, guaranteeing the adjustment of the test to the cultural and educational context of the population, so that they can be applied in countries where different languages are spoken and firmly compare the results obtained in different contexts, since in this way it effectively contributes to improving the reliability and validity of the different measuring instruments. Therefore, these different measures on family characteristics can be used in different environments and psychological settings to improve educational and parenting patterns in adolescence, identifying which particular aspect of the family context should be focused on, as well as advancing, for research purposes, the analysis of the influence of family variables on adolescent development from a global and shared approach.

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