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The Family Concept Approach: Perspectives for Family Research and Social Work

The presentation is based on the theoretic approach and first preliminary results of a pilot study which was carried out in Finland, Japan and Germany earlier in 2009.

In the context of family research, numerous aspects of the change of familial ways of living have been pointed out during the last couple of years. The key words individualisation and diversification of ways of life designate social processes which lead to changes of the structures and models of family life (Beck/Giddens/Lash 1994). The research project starts from the assumption that - against the background of social change - adolescents and adults deal with family concepts which they have to discuss and agree on. The development and reflection of family concepts can be understood as central aspects of familial educational/learning processes. The family concept model is a research approach concerned with subjective familial concepts of life of parents who receive support by social services (Knuth/Sabla/Uhlendorff 2009). First results and experiences shall be discussed with regard to the research method.