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Adolescent autonomy: Desire, achievement and disobeying parents between early and late adolescence

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Abstract

A population of 12-19 year-old adolescents (n=994) was selected from a pool of 7264 students in order to study adolescent's perception of autonomy. Eleven behavioural autonomy items were elected by the adolescents and used to evaluate the frequency of desire, achievement and disobeying parents in early (12-13 year-old) and late (18-19 year-old) adolescents. Statistical comparison of the two age groups of adolescents was performed for each gender. Regarding achievement of autonomy, both male and female adolescents showed significant differences between the younger and older adolescents. Progress in autonomy was achieved by male adolescents more as a result of disobeying parents than was the case with female adolescents. Narcissism, separation from family, and cognitive aspects were found to be important elements in adolescent's perception of autonomy. Desire for autonomy was present since the start of puberty, achievement lagged behind desire, and the capacity to fight for autonomy was a key mediator for the achievement of personal autonomy in the transition to adulthood.

[Link to full text paper pdf \(329KB\)](#)

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