



Quality of the Key Processes of Psychological Support of Families with Low Parental Capacity

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Abstract

Family (biological or otherwise) is central to everyone's life. As a primary and natural socializing microenvironment, it is of great importance for the birth of a person's personality and full development of his potential, i.e. – physical, emotional, intellectual and behavioral development.

Often, the key to understanding childhood problems lies in the analysis and assessment of the family situation, since the child's mental development is determined not only by his individual characteristics, but also by the characteristics of communication in the family system to which he belongs.

In the considered context, the concept of quality means understanding and fulfilling the expectations of the client (the family, with low parental capacity), the user of the psychological intervention. Quality is a set of all signs and characteristics of psychological work with parents with low parental capacity. They determine the reliability of the chosen psychological intervention to respond to and even build on awareness of the needs and demands of the client (the parenting system).

The quality of psychological support determines the expected and desired parameters of the outcome of the process of psycho-consultative interaction in the relationship "psychologist-consultant - parents with low parental capacity".

Keywords: Family with Low Parental Capacity; Key Processes of Psychological Support; Quality of Psychological Support of Families with Low Parental Capacity

Introduction

Today, the formation and functioning of the family are difficult. The wide interest in family problems by various specialists such as psychologists, sociologists, educators, social workers, etc., is dictated by the concept of sociological science that "in order for society to be stable, the family must be stable" [1].

It is an indisputable fact that the individual experience acquired in the parental family later has an impact on

the choice of partner and profession, on the intensity and character of relationships with other people, the attitude towards the future and in general - on existence as existence. On the other hand, the socio-economic problems of globalization, characteristic of the modern information society, affect both all social structures and individual human life. Referred to the family system, "the modernist dimensions of these processes are associated with a high degree of liberalization in interpersonal and intimate relationships, which leads to an increase in the variety of really functioning family models" [2].

As a community structural component of the globalizing world, the family is subjected to tension and stress resulting from the accelerated pace of change in the economic and social development of human societies. Inevitably, the crisis of the transition in society gives rise to a crisis in the family as a microsystem. The derivation of this correlation in itself defines the thesis that the modern family, which is not only in an economic but also in a deep spiritual crisis, needs both socioeconomic and professional psychological support.

This also updates the topic of the proposed analysis, namely: highlighting the key processes in providing psychological support to families with low parental capacity, with a view to promoting the growth of the child's personality in the context of functional coping with family roles and responsibilities.

The usefulness of professional psychological support provided to families with low parental capacity by psychologist-consultants depends on the selection (for the specific family) of appropriate psychological means (methods and techniques) for intervention. This process is carried out on the basis of the correct psychological assessment of the problem, the needs of the family system and its coping resources. The more information available to the consultant psychologist, the more objective will be the evaluation and selection of a therapeutic strategy for effective psychological support.

The present theoretical-analytical research work is an attempt to systematically analyze the quality of psychological support of families with low parental capacity and aims to highlight the content aspects of the key processes of psychological work as a type of social support for families, with a view to achieving a functional family environment.

Generally speaking, the interest in the study of the family in psychology is related to the practical application of the theory of the family, i.e. - finding a perspective and introducing standards for the needs of family psychological counseling.

Arguing the psychological perspective as an up-to-date scientific approach for understanding and constructive management of problems in the modern family for the proposed discursive analysis requires compliance with its theoretical procedure, according to which the focus is on the key processes of psychological support and the differentiation of criteria for evaluating effective functioning of the family.

An advantage of the psychological level of analysis is that it covers the dynamics in family coexistence in "depth". Hence, it can be boldly stated that psychological knowledge

is the universal scientific tool, through which the objective social perception of the essence, features, functioning and efficiency of the popular and unpopular, but actually existing family forms of partnership is significantly enriched. Last but not least, it is important to specify that the distinction between the psychological and the sociological approach in family research can only be made conditionally [3].

Key Processes of Psychological Support of Families with Low Parental Capacity

Client satisfaction (families with low parenting capacity) is a derivative function of the fit between what is expected and what is received as a result of the psychological counseling interaction.

When providing psychological support to families with low parental capacity, the establishment of good working relationships, expressed in:

- Unstructured exchange of opinions;
- Sharing of common goals and work methods between the parents and the specialist, as both parties are important factors in overcoming the crisis in the family.

The psychologist-consultant is professionally responsible for all this. This means that he is tasked with creating optimal conditions for self-analysis of the situation and relations in the parental system, while ensuring a high level of quality in the discussion and planning of the change in family interaction, in the direction of creating optimal conditions for the child's psychosocial adaptation (siblings) and balanced use of family resources.

The implementation of the above-mentioned requirements for the psycho-consultative interaction of the elements in the relationship "families with low parental capacity - psychologist-consultant" is related to the professional psychological competence of the specialist to provide psychological support, but is always guaranteed by conducting the consultative process in an active direction exchange of views and information between participating parties.

The key processes that facilitate interaction between representatives of the parenting system and the counseling psychologist cover the following areas:

- Determining the goals of psychological work with parents:
 - To increase parental competence (psychological knowledge and skills, organizational and management methods for effective parenting) regarding their direct role in providing an optimal environment for the child's psychosocial development.
 - To maintain the interest of the parents in the experiences

of the child, regarding what is happening in the family system and the wider social environment.

- To acquaint parents with the dynamics of normative psychosocial difficulties that the child experiences on a cognitive, emotional and behavioral level, during his age development and acquisition of self-awareness of self-identity.
- To teach parents to provide adequate support to the child by providing him with information about his understanding and interaction with others from the family as part of a whole, where everyone has their place and role, i.e. - formation in the child of knowledge about the family as a dynamic system.
- To develop skills in parents for connection with the child's sphere of needs in order to create favorable conditions for his successful psychosocial development.
- Determining the form and content of psychological support for parents, regarding:
 - The intensity and frequency of the psychological intervention;
 - The significance of the exchange of opinions between the parents and the psychologist-consultant, to identify a common and desired perspective regarding the psychosocial development of the child, in the specifics of the individual family environment (strengths and weaknesses in the functioning of the family system).
 - The parental couple's ability to realize the parameters of the human-spiritual nature of the applied psychological intervention, with a view to the healthy functioning of the family as a system.
- Analysis of effective parental interventions, in the context of the following indicative questions:
 - Are there real opportunities for the child, if necessary, to receive a full hearing from his parents?
 - Are parents active in the process of developing children's potential through:
 - ⇒ Assistance in overcoming conflicts with friends and peers;
 - ⇒ Encouragement to openly share his own interests and the activities in which he receives satisfaction of leading needs;
 - ⇒ To enrich the nature of play, study, work.
 - What are the forms of parental control over the child's problematic behavioral manifestations? – do they use appropriate cognitive elaboration and unconditional emotional response?
 - What are the parental interventions when children experience negative emotions and feelings, for example: cry, get angry, self-isolate?
- Joint evaluation of the effectiveness of the planned and implemented steps to change intra-family communication:
 - During the provision of psychological support, parents

develop their capacity, i.e. – gain confidence to navigate the functionality of the parental attitudes they use and to focus on the optimal (such as content and form) alternatives for changing intra-family communication (between parents and children).

- During the provision of psychological support, parents increasingly feel and understand the meaning of the professional interaction with the psychologist-consultant, in the direction of awareness and optimization of the parental role in the psychosocial development of the child's self-identity;
- During the provision of psychological support, parents acquire skills for autonomous assessment of changes in intra-family communication and are proactive in managing problematic situations with their children.
- During the provision of psychological support, parents have internalized the understanding that there is a dynamic in the family interaction and it is important to monitor and analyze the affective states of the child so that everyday difficulties can be solved promptly and effectively;
- During the provision of psychological support, parents gain confidence in their own achievements in the context of effective parenting, through the results of their own parental activity in the process of non-traumatic growth of their children.

Evaluation of the Quality of Psychological Support of Families with Low Parental Capacity

The quality of psychological support for families with low parental capacity is largely dependent on those involved in it. Parental capacity building/development can happen when the parents and the counselor really want it to happen.

Therefore, at the beginning of any counseling process, the development of the quality of the relationship in the psychotherapeutic alliance requires negotiation between the client (members of the parental system), the user of psychological support and the consulting psychologist, about the nature of the therapeutic alliance (exactly how it will work and if an additional problem arose, how to expand the consultative interaction with a view to overcoming it).

The clear determination of the quality of the psychological support of families with low parental capacity requires mutual efforts both on the part of the parents and on the part of the psychologist-consultant, in terms of: forming flexibility in the application of the parental capacity, by introducing the perspective, that the family is a dynamic system and the constructive coping of deficits in intra-family communication is a matter of quality management of parental interventions in the child's psychosocial development.

Completing this Task Provides Two Effects

- First: the offered professional psychological support does not allow „counseling“ or the prescription approach as a type of psychological intervention, but has the claim to motivate parents in updating their resources in terms of optimizing the organizational process of family communication both in everyday and extreme for the members of family situations.
- Second: the offered professional psychological support provides opportunities for in-depth analysis of family interpersonal interactions, which provides conditions for family members for long-term and sustainable adaptation and application of working rules of intra-family communication.

The development of skills for functional family relationships or for the effective performance of parental roles requires organized psychological work. By its very nature, psychological support of families with low parental capacity means creating a specific type of (protected) interactions between the psychologist-consultant and the family with low parental capacity, which are aimed at:

- Open discussion of parental roles and family responsibilities;
- Identification of the competences of each member of the parental system;
- Clarifying the methodical steps to achieve the goals of family change regarding meeting the needs for full psychosocial development of the child in the family system.

Professionally organized psychological support of families with dysfunctions mainly uses the tools of the psychological consultation process. But in itself it is a specific type of psychological intervention, with the help of which parents' opportunities to constructively manage the politics of their parenting are expanded and enriched.

The process of psychological intervention includes an analysis of all difficult situations that have arisen between parents and children. Therefore, at the very first meetings, the psychologist-consultant informs the parental couple that the relationship between him and them is confidential and the parents are expected to be authentic when describing and dealing with conflict situations that increase the social distance between them and the child. The psychologist-consultant should predispose parents to open sharing, i.e. – to create a working relationship through which to overcome the client's resistance, fears and anxiety towards the family institution. It is possible that parental resistance to authentic work with conflicts in the family system and problems with the child is caused by:

- Insufficient information to control the situation;

- Inability to understand the child's problem (parents not accepting it by denying it);
- Limited or ineffective skills in creating attachment (emotional connection) with the child;
- Lack of empathy skills: parents do not recognize or ignore/deprive the child's needs;
- Inability to take responsibility for the acquired skills of the child;
- Ignorance of the meaning and application of psychological reinforcements (encouragement, praise, reward, sanction);
- Lifetime burden of physical abuse, sexual promiscuity or social neglect during own childhood;
- Lack of knowledge about mental development during childhood;
- Lack of skills to recognize children's care needs;
- Bad handling of anger, tendency to violence;
- Untreated illnesses: mental illness, alcoholism, drug addiction, depression;
- Mental underdevelopment;
- Emotional or personality deficits;
- Fear of sharing the family's problem, due to the stereotype existing in the social context towards families with problems.

The quality of psychological support is most strongly manifested in the consultant psychologist's ability to deal with (overcome) parental resistance, since „the sustainable development of the parental subsystem in the (in)complete family is not an impulsive response in thoughts and behavior that is primarily determined from changing external circumstances or from primary own stimuli, but is the result of proactive behavior in subject-subject interaction within the boundaries of the family“ [4]. This means that the counseling psychologist:

- To examine the client's behavior (families with low parental capacity) by analyzing their verbal and non-verbal signals in the context of the described family dynamics;
- To give relevant (according to the psychological assessment made) feedback, through the psychological interpretation technique.
- To acquaint the parental couple, and if necessary also the representatives of the extended family, with the deficits of the current family situation, as well as to emphasize the resources of the family, which until now maintain the integrity of the family system;
- To prepare special homework tasks (behavioral experiments) that increase family collaboration/cooperation, but also stimulate the members of the family system to self-observation and the formation of skills in parents for increased sensitivity to children's behavioral reactions, cognitions, emotions and feelings.

After each held meeting (consultative session), the psychologist-consultant analyzes the achievements of the conducted psychological activity, bringing out its highlights, which are the actual factor in reducing the risks of low parental capacity of the family and achieving the goals of psychological support.

Psychological intervention is considered complete when indicators are identified that reveal growth in the improvement of communication between the child and the parenting system.

This means the child:

- ⇒ Be actively involved in family life;
- ⇒ To perform activities that are in accordance with his age characteristics and level of social experience.

The quality of the key processes of psychological support of families with low parental capacity is defined on a case-by-case basis.

In this way, two possibilities are actually provided for increasing the efficiency of the work in each individual case: First: professional development of the psychologist-consultant in providing psychological support to families with dysfunctions.

Second: professional improvement of the psychologist-consultant, in the direction of skill development, a specific interpretation of parental roles, relevant to the request for psychological support of families with low parental capacity.

The way in which the quality of psychological support of families with low parental capacity with families can be controlled is related to the proper documentation and archiving of individual case work.

The necessary documentary procedures include:

- Archiving the assessment of parental status before the intervention;
- Analytical report on the framework, duration and methods of the intervention itself (what was done);
- Description of the results (resources, deficits, risks) and corresponding measures to overcome the risks.

Only in the above-mentioned way, the professional-administrative capacity of the psychologist-consultant would respond to the need to track the dynamics in the psychocorrective impact; in the opinions of parents, and would reflect the application of new approaches in the

quality of providing psychological support to dysfunctional families.

Conclusions

The quality of the professional psychological support of families with low parental capacity contributes to marking the social ability for the psychosocial development of the personality during childhood. The professionally organized psychological support of families with low parental capacity also has a research focus related to the analysis of parental interventions in terms of stimulating the child's efforts in acquiring practical social skills for life.

Basically, the psychological support of families with low parental capacity is aimed at:

- ⇒ Analyzing the individual, social and cultural living conditions of the family and the communication between parents and children.
- ⇒ Understanding and correction of the child's existing negative experience of acting mainly according to the principle or according to the social prohibitions rigidly established in the parental system.
- ⇒ Changing the focus of parental interventions on the needs, individual qualities, interests and multiple forms of expression of adolescents.

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