

IMAGE AND FUNCTIONS OF THE FATHER IN THE CONTEMPORARY BULGARIAN FAMILY

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ОБРАЗ И ФУНКЦИИ НА БАЩАТА В СЪВРЕМЕНОТО БЪЛГАРСКО СЕМЕЙСТВО

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ABSTRACT

Променя ли се моделът на бащинство и, ако е така, какви са причините? Необходимо ли е социалната работа да разшири обхвата си и да включи в целевите си групи младежи, които да се подготвят за активно бащинство? На тези въпроси ще се спере настоящата статия. Тя се базира на изследване, осъществено в условията на фокус-групи с участници, на които предстои да бъдат родители, и чиято задача е да обсъдят и съставят съвременен образ на бащата, да формулират неговите най-важни функции, както и да съставят предложение за Модел за групова социална работа с мъже, бъдещи бащи. От проведеното изследване се прави извод, че образът на бащата и неговите най-важни функции се изменя по посока на духовната подкрепа за детето, както и по отношение на неговото личностно и интелектуално развитие. Според мнението на младите хора, участвали във фокус-групите, от бащите ще се изисква повече активност, последователност и ангажираност с развитието на децата в семейството. Ролята на ресурсен донор остава на заден план, тъй като майката в семейството е работеща жена.

Key words: Fathers, Fatherhood, Group social work, Family, Focus-group.

Actuality of the problem

In 1945 Dr. Benjamin Spock published the book "D-r Spock's Baby and Child care", in which he revolutionary discuss changing family roles and importance of fatherhood in life cycle. For the first time in the tradition of guidance for young families, the father's role was discussed as a "partner" for the mother and "sharing play" for the child. Until this historical moment the father's role is more intellectual and mentoring, "head of family" resource. Renowned pediatrician defines family as a cohesive unit of society in which children should learn security conditions for proper development, education and training of adaptability. "Children can be happy with them mother and father, with only one parent, a grandparent or foster parents, or as part of a big family," says Dr. Spock and adds "happy child is a healthy child" [Spock, 1957]. This point of view puts the importance of emotional health in leading position - holistic position in pediatrics.

In present days, new research on relationship "father-child" shows that proximity and supporting child behavior of the father are more important than the quantity of time spent together [Стивънс, 2008, Arens, 1970, Harold, 2012]. In case of separation, maintaining the relationship between parents and maintain full contact with both parents are crucial conditions for the welfare of the child [Harold, 2012]. At the beginning of the XXI century men take more active part in caring for the household and children, although in our society still haunted by the view that raising children is women's work [Стойнова, 2013, Митрева, 2014]. "There are no reason fathers to do worse than their mothers and not equal to their contribution to the security and development of children", said Mr. Svetoslav Stefanov – chairman of Union of fathers in Bulgaria [Стефанов, Св., 2014]. All in the family benefit when parental responsibility is shared - even the sharing of housework is not exactly in half. But the benefits can melt if it is done as a favor to the wife: the

implication would be that the child's cares did not father's function, but it just shows exceptional generosity. Ideally, parents should be united by the spirit of equal partnership.

Traditional family roles in contemporary Bulgarian society are those of the mother, father and children [Вълкова, Петров, 2015, Стоянова, 2013]. The extended family includes relatives and friends whose support could be called decisive for the stability of young families [Алексијева, Петров, 2015]. Complete function of the father in Bulgarian family is hampered by expectations he primarily be providing livelihood and prestige for children (teenagers) in terms of insufficient understanding by society and, accordingly, little support from institutional resources of society for those men who want to share housework, to be emotional, and to be partners in the games children [Алексијева, Петров, 2015].

In the stereotypes of Bulgarian society, women are more dependent in need of support to deal with emotions and are perceived as supporting or caring for family members [Стоянова, 2005]. Meanwhile, the exigency of life and a series of socio-economic changes created the conditions for acquiring new functions both in men as fathers and in women as mothers. In Bulgaria is not examined the views of the young people that they will be parents one day in the future.

Modern trends for more efficient and economical organization of social services for children and families in terms sections and divorce, they should be oriented towards shared parental responsibility to support conscious and responsible choice of parental behavior during the whole cycle of creation, cultivation and upbringing [Corey, 2009]. In this point of view, social services for parents should be granted by parental organizations cooperated with specialists. Services should be based on scientific evidence and best international experience. Such practices should be subjected to ongoing research on the effectiveness to assimilate only good experiences.

Study settings

The study, presented in the article, focuses on the understanding of young people aged 18 to 29 years who are not yet parents to describe a "Image and functions of the father", the obligations and the rights of fatherhood in Bulgaria. The main objective of the study is to form a concept of social work with men who are about to be fathers as the main target would be between 18 and 29 years. The vote of one participant appears approximately 3% of the total score of votes. Regulatory, legal conditions, and the administrative ways to carry out social work with men, being parents, are available through application of the law on social assistance, law on child protection, law on family benefits for children and families, as well as the law on protection domestic violence. The article dealt only traditional sexual relations in families as in Bulgaria legislature still considers that society is not ready for liberation of the legal sense of the traditional family in terms of gender roles.

The survey is conducted in a 5 focus groups of seven participants aged 18 to 29 years; 27 women and 8 men. Participants are students of specialty "Social Management" from first to fourth grade. Each focus group previously informed with the scope and regalement, instructed each other, was accepted group rules, and was distributed sources for pre-acquainted with the purpose of the session.

The cycle of work of the focus group [Bohart, 2006] is the following: introduction, warm-tasking, discussing possibilities, decision making, preparing the general presentation. Duration session of focus group of four astronomical hours with two breaks of 15 minutes each. The tasks assigned to the participants in the focus group are:

- Discuss the following questions: What are the typical imaging features of contemporary Bulgarian father; what are the main features of the father in the family; what are the main duties of fathers in the family to the family; what are the rights of fathers; what should be the behavior of the "ideal father" in a difficult situation for the child.
- Drawing up a plan for group work with men on "Responsible fathers" with the following elements: target group work, formulation of the problem to participants - future fathers proposal for a game whose main objective is warm and rallying the group's compilation

of rules of the group, compiling case in which future fathers need to get into the shoes of a child drawing up a list of topics that will be discussed with the participants in the group.

Applied value results and discuss

Generalized image and functions of the father in contemporary Bulgarian family

Physical image and health: strong or resistant to disease, powerful, taking care of hygiene, the subject of moderate physical activity, better appetite, age at first child between 28 and 45 years.

Emotional Intelligence: resistance emotions, lower levels of anxiety, coping with stress, personal confidence, apathetic to the fussiness, calms the child when he/she is upset, experiencing "gender" solidarity with other fathers.

Social Intelligence: sets rules and limits on child, take care of the hygiene of the child, leads by personal example, helping the child with school work, providing resources for child's development and care, talk and play with the child, encouraging the child.

According to 80% of young people in the focus groups essential role of fathers is to be the guide, to educate and train their children.

85% included in the physical image of the father he can be strong, durable and physically active

75% believe that fathers should be pleasant looking, cleanly, clean clothes and careful manners.

70% of young people have fond memories of childhood related to paternal care, attention or guidance

90% of women and 30% of men believe that the father must be shared housework.

80% of those who said it believed that the main argument in such a distribution of care that mothers in most cases is working women.

60% agree that the father is the one who has to take care of family material wellbeing, 30% believe that the mother is the one that should complement the budget, while 10% believe that this is a shared responsibility of both.

Participation in the focus groups ended with the development of a total of 5 presentations on "The Father role and functions"

Similar elements of presentations related to the image and function of the modern Bulgarian father are: regulating children's behavior in a given situation, to have control and self-control, teaches kids (boys) of masculine behavior and (girls) of independence, and dealing to build respect to social norms, to be protector, and to take the bigger part of the financial stability of the family.

It is impressed the participants' fixation on the role of the relationship between father and child. The main message in commenting on the image of the father is that he must bear personal responsibility for the development of the child, as well as with their behavior and with their appearance. This concept differs from the data from the survey conducted within the national campaign "Being a father" in 2014 [Петров и др., 2014]. It concludes that 90% of respondents believe that the most important role of husbands is to provide material to his family, and a woman - to take care of home and children [Петков, Д. и др., 2015]. The difference probably stems from the fact that in this study with focus groups were involved young people who are not yet parents and the study of the campaign "Being a father" in focus groups participated fathers and mothers. When comparing the results of two productions of focus groups concluded that family patterns are changing perceptions regarding future parents on the image and function of the father in the family. This finding coincides with the conclusion of the above survey, namely: "the family in Bulgaria is not in crisis, but the patterns are changing." [Петков и др. 2015]. The majority of the young people and the parents community wants to see greater involvement of fathers in the daily cares of children, and claim that society should encourage inclusion.

Thus specialists working with children and families need both to work actively with children to overcome negative gender stereotypes and to involve fathers more actively to promote the model of a strong but caring man, partner and father. Actively involved fathers raise children who do

better physically, intellectually and emotionally [Ликаде, 2006, Ликан, 2008, Harold, 2012]. These children perform better on intelligence tests, have a rich vocabulary, stronger intrinsic motivation, create lasting friendships and intimate relationships, and have better health, less often abuse alcohol and drugs or become victims of violence. Full interaction between father and child in infancy is associated with the development of good social skills later. The presence of warm and close relationship with the father affects the ability of the child to cooperate, to assert yourself without aggression and take responsibility [Поа, 2008, Abse, 2012]. These skills are manifested in the early years in school uniform for girls and boys, even if there are other limiting factors such as lower socioeconomic status or poor relationship with mother.

Summary format model "Group social work with men, future fathers"

The main objective of the group work with future fathers is to induce analytical thinking among participant, it meaning for him, and for all family members. The aim is formed on the basis of proposals including "analysis of parental models from their own childhood", "analysis of the ideal father", "friend or father?" and etc. Staging the problem to participants - future fathers will be put through several short videos about the behavior of fathers in the presence of children [EmioCreated, 2012, Motola, 2016]. Focus groups suggested in the introduction to design a clip of the participants under the title "Why I can be careful father?", in which individual members of the group shares expectations of participation.

Social group work is not psychotherapy, as it relates to mentally healthy people who need assistance to improve their status in the family and (or) in society. Group sessions begins with a warm-up participants and end by placing a task for independent homework between sessions. A session lasts maximum 60 minutes. Proposed elements of the session are following.

- a) Design and implement group rules - lasting up to 5 minutes (example):
 - At the beginning of the first meeting each member of the group gives suggestions for rules;
 - Consensus proposals are written clearly on the board or poster and remain suspended throughout the group work.
 - Rules can be printed on cards and given to the participants.
- b) Check the individual work of the previous session (15 minutes):
 - Participants must be clear to them they explained that to be a score in group sessions is required each participant to think and prepare all the time between them.
 - The presentation of independent tasks first place voluntarily, but if there is still no response group - social worker chooses Regulation, which will be sharing.
- c) Inserting a "subject" in this session (5 minutes):
 - Depending on the preset number of sessions to achieve the goals, "topics" that are dealt with in separate sessions are interrelated. Their well-selected sequence depends on how the ultimate goal will be achieved.
 - The problem raised by the social worker or a member of the group who has been charged by others in previous sessions.
 - The problem should be placed discussion. The method of insertion can be direct, through enunciation, game, by entering into or move RPG by mystery: ask a question, which the group has to find the right answers and H.T. The point is to focus on particular important for each group problem.
- d) Sample topics for group work with men, future fathers in five sessions:
 - What is (was) your father (image and functions in the family)?
 - What is the most important part of fatherhood (his greatest contribution to the family)?
 - What advice would you give to your kids and why (only from personal experience and observation)?
 - What is important to know the father to share parental responsibility?

- What advice would you give these fathers who know from your perspective?
- e) discussions and replica (20 minutes)
- It is essential to comply with group rules
 - "Replica" as the method used when no response group, each participant agrees on the discussed problem, after which it can be "replicated" but also try to reply.
- f) Summery (10 minutes)
- Moment in which the debate has ended, but needs extra touches. The social worker shares his opinion, which is also set to debate or replicas. Regulation is the same (requires application of methods "self- revelation" and "self-expression").
- g) placement of individual homework for the next session: binding element (10 minutes)

From October 2016 suggested by focus group summary format model "Group social work with women, future fathers" will be applied experimentally in terms of training in "Social Management" degree "Bachelor" and "Master " in Varna, Bulgaria.

Conclusions

Focus groups formed by participants between the ages of 18 and 29 have a different view of the image and function of the father in the family of people who are already parents. The stereotype of the gender conditioned family functions fixed on the physical and disturbed young people believe that the responsibility for raising children should be shared. Fixes and most important function of the father is that he perceived of a partner to the child in the way of its growth. It must be emphasized that the gradual social work will have to expand its scope beyond traditional groups perceived to be at risk and will need to meet the need of the society of responsible young people who grow up as responsible parents. The specialist working with children often said that each side contains a beginning. We can say that each child beards the limits of his father.

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