

DELINQUENT BEHAVIOUR OF CHILDREN FROM DYSFUNCTIONAL FAMILIES

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Abstract. The subject of my research in the paper is the children from dysfunctional families, primarily their delinquent behavior, education and moral, actually, who takes care of them and who undertakes the family roles and whether this care is sufficient for building these personalities.

This research approaches towards the study of the delinquent behavior of children from dysfunctional families. It examines to what extent the educational level of parents, the material condition, the health condition, the leisure time, the average monthly income of the family, the available permanent goods, the educational resources, the social communications within the very family, all affect the delinquent behavior of children from dysfunctional families.

Keywords: *Family, Delinquency, Children, Behavior.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Children, young people, personalities in a stage of development and their position in the society, the engagement in the society for creation of conditions of their development into creative persons, is the best indicator about the level of care of the society for its future, but also for its humanistic development and development that implies harmonization of the living conditions in the reached degree of civilization development of the modern society. On this basis and in accordance with these demands, the most important International documents were created, that strive to guarantee the legal, the social, the economic, the socio-cultural position of young people in the society, such as the Convention of the Rights of the Child. The obligations that it imposes to all signatory countries is primarily aimed,

through care, assistance, protection, education, supervision and control, to provide their proper development into personalities which in accordance with the governing norms in the society will be confirmed as personalities, and when the development is disordered and it takes place in wrong directions, to eliminate the factors with negative impact.

Subject of my research are children from dysfunctional families, primarily their delinquent behavior, education and moral, actually, who takes care of them and who undertakes the family roles and whether this care is sufficient for building these personalities.

The basic cell where the young person (the child) is born, exists, lives and develops, is the family and through the family the basic functions related to the creation and the development of the child are established. The family represents the basic cell of the society, with obligations within itself and in direction of realization of the **bio-physical functions, the economic-social functions, the pedagogic-educational and supervisory functions, the functions of protection** and security of the life of the child, and the society on the other side, the obligations of the family as a primary social group, as its base, to provide conditions for the family to successfully realize its basic functions.

The functions that are entrusted to the family are complementary and the family is confirmed only through simultaneous, complex and connected realization of all functions, bio-physical and reproductive, social-economic pedagogic and protective function. Hence, the term “DYSFUNCTIONAL FAMILY” is derived from these terms in this paper, which term, due to causes of various nature, the indicated basic functions are not in conditions to be realized in a manner and in accordance with its essence – primary group, primary cell in the society. Taking as the point of departure the determination that

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the functions that belong to the family are complementary and complex, they imply harmonized and simultaneous realization, and contrary to this, they are expressed dysfunctionally with consequences for the proper development of the minor – the child, which are expressed through his/her social behavior which is determined as deviant, delinquent, criminal etc.

Functional family is the family that shows satisfactory level of fulfillment of the basic functions

In Article 2 of the Law on Family, the family is defined as a community of parents and children and other relatives, if they live in a common household. In the Law on Family, it is stipulated that the relations in the family are based on equality, mutual respect, mutual help, support and protection of the interests of minors. This implies that in our legal system, it is stipulated that children should not be subservient to their parents and should not be only passive and obedient executors of the orders of their parents, rather they should be treated equally and with respect. (Law on Family, Articles 2,3,4).

This is responsive to the development needs of their members. It gives support and provides cooperation. The functional family has emotional balance, without the emergence of symptomatic behavior in situations of crisis in life, clear family rules, unimpaired generation limits. The members of the family have their individuality, power to determine the closeness and to establish distance, to communicate spontaneously and freely, to accept difference and sensitivity to the other integral parts of the family atmosphere with tenderness, wit and care, and conflicts are an issue of open discussion, while problems are recognized and resolve (Ajduković M, 2008). The research in this field needs to show that the functional families in this regard are rare. However, one thing is certain, all authors who directed their attention towards the functionality of the family, agree on one thing, the firm parental coalition, with mutual warm relation and mutual cooperation, are the most important factors for functionality in the family.

Dysfunctional family is the family that does not demonstrate satisfactory level of fulfillment of the basic functions.

The term child at risk implies a minor younger than 14 years of age, addicted to use of drugs, psychotropic substances or alcohol, a child with disabilities in the development, a child - victim of violence, and educationally and socially neglected child who is in a

situation with impaired or disabled realization of the pedagogical-educational function of the family or the child is not included in the system of education or has resorted to begging, wandering or prostitution, who may come into conflict with the law due to such conditions (Article 12, Law on Juvenile Justice).

The maladjustment to the social environment implies limitations in the psychological development of the individual, because specifically the social environment represents the base of this development, whereby **the realization of the social function is disabled.**

Minors with educational-social problems are considered children from socially and materially disadvantaged families (whose parents have no material and social conditions for care and education of the children, with no constant source of income, with minimal income per household member, unemployed persons, with unresolved housing issues, single parents etc.), **the functioning of the economic function is disabled**, minors with disrupted family relationships (families in which there are conflicting situations, asocial, pathological and criminal behavior of family members, irresponsibility, carelessness and neglecting of the children by the parents, the divorced parents etc.), **the realization of the protective function of care is disabled.**

Educationally neglected children are considered minors with asocial behavior that violates the accepted general norms of behavior: wandering, idleness, running away from school, indecent behavior, prostitution, alcohol use, narcotics and other forms of negative behavior. **(They do not have a built system of ethical and moral values).**

In addition to the psychological diseases and drug abuse among parents, sometimes the parents themselves decide to leave their children and abandon them, however sometimes even when they do not try to leave them, the state due to the carelessness and the neglecting of children, takes away their parental rights, **the realization of the biological function is disabled.**

In our country, the social protection and care are an important function of the country, because it is declared as a social country. Social protection is the most human dimension of the society because it has a primary function to provide assistance, protection of those in need, who can not resolve problems in life by themselves and are in need of assistance by the society, and the duty of the society is to help them and to resolve their problems. Social changes, economic changes have

also led to major changes in the relation to the family as the basic cell, the pillar of the whole society that decreasingly fulfills its basic functions, and thus contributed to new social solutions suitable for the contemporary society. In Macedonia, the number of dysfunctional families has increased. As a result, the legal framework for social protection is in need of finding new solutions to deal successfully with the modern family in the contemporary society. The legal framework in Macedonia, particularly the one that refers to children, is provided with the Constitution of RM, through the Conventions of the Right of the Child, the Law on Family, the Law on Social Protection, the Law on Protection of Children, the Law on Juvenile Justice, the Criminal Law and the Law on Criminal procedure, that constantly change according to the modern time. (The Constitution of RM, the Conventions of the Right of the Child, Law on Criminal Procedure of the Republic of Macedonia, Publishing date 18.11.2010, Official Gazette of RM, no. 150/2010, Law on Family of the Republic of Macedonia, Publishing date 22.12.1992, Official Gazette of RM, no. 80/1992, Law on Juvenile Justice of the Republic of Macedonia, Publishing date 12.07.2007, Official Gazette of RM, no. 87/2007, Law on Protection of Children of the Republic of Macedonia (Consolidated Text), Official Gazette of RM, no. 170 from 29.12.2010, Law on Social Protection of the Republic of Macedonia, Published on 03.10.1997, Official Gazette of R. Macedonia no.50/1997).

According to Article 51 of the Constitution of RM, the laws in Republic of Macedonia have to be in accordance with the constitution, and all other regulations in accordance with the Constitution and the law.

Everyone is obliged to comply with the Constitution and the laws.

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

Combined quantitative – qualitative approach is used in this research.

Method: Case Study. The case study includes in-depth research of few people, an enterprise, an organization, a small settlement (village, city quarter etc.) over time. What is typical of the case study is that the researcher examines the indicated phenomena intensively over time. The intensive observation may be within a relatively short period (several days) or relatively long period, a year and longer.

Techniques: inquiry, observation,

interview, the analysis of documents, LOBI (list of basic biographical information).

Scientific objective:

Is there connection between the family environment and the delinquent behavior of children from dysfunctional families?

Practical objective of the research:

The results obtained from this research enable to assess the relation between the family environment and the delinquent behavior of children from dysfunctional families.

Sample of the research

This research includes 20 children from dysfunctional families from the city of Skopje. The representation of female and male children is equal, mostly between 8 to 13 years of age. Of all included children in this research, 4 children are Macedonians, 4 children are Albanians, and the remaining 12 children belong to the Roma nationality.

Data processing and analysis

The results obtained from the questionnaire have been quantitatively processed, and the results obtained by means of the observation, the interview, the analysis of documents and the LOBI technique have been qualitatively processed.

On the basis of the analysis, it is determined whether there is a connection between the family status and the occurrence of delinquent behavior of children from dysfunctional families.

This research approaches towards the study of the delinquent behavior of children from dysfunctional families. It studies to what level the educational level of the parents, the material condition, the health condition, the leisure time, the average monthly income of the family, the available permanent goods, the educational resources, the social communication within the family, affect the delinquent behavior of children from dysfunctional families.

3. RESULTS

The results show that all mothers are illiterate, that is, they have no education, their father finished primary education (D. G. 38 years old. Roma nationality) and 12 fathers finished primary school to grade IV.

The occupation of parents is closely related to the social and the economic status of the family, that is, of its members. Certain occupations provide higher status, some

provide medium status, while others provide low social status. This research showed that the occupations of the parents of children without parents and parental care provide low social status. The parents of children without parents and parental care deal with collection of plastic bottles, old paper, resale of old items, wiping the windscreens of cars, begging. It was determined that the mother of only one child earns by cleaning in other people's homes.

(The money from the social aid is not sufficient for bread only, and if I do not clean in other people's homes, there will be nothing for us to eat. I. Lj., 39 years old, Roma nationality), and all the others help their husbands in the collection of plastic bottles, old paper, wiping of windscreens of cars. Usually the father wipes windscreens of cars, and on the other side of the crossroad, the mother and the children beg.

In order to meet the daily material and other needs, it is necessary for the families to realize specific income. The income level determines the level of living standard, even the position in the social structure.

Taking into consideration all families when it comes to employment, the results showed that only one parent (father) is employed (I am responsible for 5 children, although 4 of them are married, S. D., 57 years old, Roma nationality). The other families do not generate income based on employment. The basic income that families have are the assets from the social financial aid (18 families). They work as seasonal workers and collect and resell plastic bottles and old paper.

The health condition of children is determined on the basis of the insight into health care cards (those who have them) and the conversation with the parents / the guardians of children. The lack of a health care card is due to the non-existence of the children in the registry of births, and therefore the inability to get basic documents (birth certificate and health care card). Good health condition is found in all children, whereby in one child, a small problem had been identified in regard to walking with his left leg (intrinsic disease), emotional, as in most cases. These children show some specific emotional reactions, and these are not always appropriate to the emotional experiences. Mostly the children are frightened, ill-tempered, and they manifest aggression. In the conversation with the parents it has been determined that children often have respiratory diseases, and among the children various types of skin diseases are present.

The results showed that the only

institution which was visited by 8 of the children is the Day Center for street children, the others are included in a regular educational process, and one child is 4 years old.

In parallel with the recognition of the educational status of children without parents and parental care, their relationship to the school is also considered. In fact, the relationship to the school is an important indicator of the actual behavior of children without parental care.

The relationship of children without parents and parental care to the school, is globally negative. This contributes that they do not go to school or if they go to school, they have little success. Their negative attitude in regard to the school arises from their parents' attitude in regard to school. The parents consider that the education is not necessary, or that they do not have sufficient financial resources to send their children to school. This reduces the possibility to impact on the school and the school environment in the socialization of children without parents and parental care.

The results showed that only 11 children would like to go to school regularly.

Most commonly mentioned obstacles for regular presence in school, in the interview with the children and the parents include the following: poverty, lack of funds to provide the necessary material and equipment for the children to go to school, the consideration of the non-existence of benefit that the parents have in regard to sending their children to school, while children often claimed that they are not interested, they have difficulty to learn and to get up early in the morning, or that they must help their parents in the collection of old paper and plastic bottles. The results showed that even those children who want to go to school on a regular basis, are prevented to go by their parents, because their parents do not see any benefit from the school or they believe that children must help in providing livelihood by begging, collection of old paper and plastic bottles.

Although according to our regulations, it is mandatory for all children to be included in the primary education, according to the data from the State Education Inspectorate of 2001, this obligation is not being fully realized, especially in classes from fifth to eighth grade. When it comes to the structure of the family of origin, the results showed that the children come from marital relationships, but more from extramarital relationships of their mother and due to illness, mental disorders, serving prison sentence, rough neglecting and

abuse of their children, the country through the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy under the competence of the Center for Social Work undertakes appropriate measures of protection of the same and protects them with forms of social protection.

In regard to the delinquent behavior, the survey showed that of 20 children in total, 17 children show delinquent behavior, that is, only 3 children do not show delinquent behavior.

4. CONCLUSION

The conclusion from my research is that children from dysfunctional families become delinquents. In favor of this fact is the result obtained from a survey where it is observable that from 20 processed cases of dysfunctional families, 17 gave a result of delinquent behavior. This means that our country does not cope with this problem so easily. By early detection of this phenomenon and the use of appropriate forms of protection, the possibility of emergence of delinquent behavior in these children, is reduced.

In terms of the consequences on children from dysfunctional families, experts warn that most commonly these are accompanied by a deficit of the psychological, intellectual, and social development, psychological disorders to chronic depression which they carry as consequences during their whole life.

Experts with a long practice in this field of work indicate that children from dysfunctional families can get involved in other anti-social behaviors such as drug addiction, prostitution, stealing.

On the other hand, the difficult economic situation in the country which brings insecurity and uncertainty, has a negative impact on the social-health, psychological and general behavior of the individual in the environment and beyond. The consequence of the development and the dispersion of this phenomenon is the returning of modern living decades back, in the opposite direction of the messages for humane treatment and welfare of everyone in the civil society. These conditions should be as soon as possible and objectively actualize the issue of prevention of occurrence of children from dysfunctional families and their help. Work with these children should be organized on the basis of appropriate programs, providing care for them in foster families and

appropriate institutions and providing help and reintegration in the family, at school and in the immediate environment.

In our country there are several laws that deal with the issue of family and children, however they do not represent a harmonized system. Rather every law partially solves some problems and determines conditions and activities of law enforcement authorities and social authorities. We do not have a generally accepted definition of what a “dysfunctional family”, who is the children who come from these families?

Recommendations:

- Harmonization of the legislation on family and child protection.
- Building a methodology of recording and observation of dysfunctional families and children who come from these families.
- The authorities that observe this issue should prepare harmonized instruments for observation of this issue.

Conflict of interests

Authors declare no conflict of interest.

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