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PARENTING IN RESISTANCE

Summary: *This paper focuses on characteristics of parenting as key contributor to psycho-social development of a child. Family is a fundamental social group where a child learns first experiences, creates attitudes, develops personal potentials and interpersonal relationships. When taking care of child's development, it is important to support the quality of child's family life. Researchers confirmed certain parental approaches that hamper with child's good course of development. In this work, such parental approach is conceptualized as parenting in resistance. Parenting in resistance is defined in the context of parenting styles and components that determine them – parental requirements and expressing emotional warmth. The preferable parenting style is authoritative, which is presented as parenting of activity. Other parenting styles – authoritarian, relaxed and neglecting upbringing style are explained as being partially active, partially passive or completely passively resistant to the child. This work presents possible sources of negative or inadequate parenting practices. In this regard, it mentions motivation for parenting, which potentially affects parent's practical adaptation to parenthood and readiness to adequately respond to demands of parental responsibilities. The work also discusses personal characteristics of an individual that contribute to developing positively engaged parenting. It questions practical, socially contextualized possibilities for preventing parenting in resistance through social sensitization of the adult population to the complexity of parenting role and points to a need for professional interest for parents in educational institutions.*

Key words: *parenting style, parenting, parenting in resistance*

INTRODUCTION

Family is a fundamental social institution that unquestionably affects the destiny of an individual (Puljiz, Bouillet, 2003). It is a primary formative factor and a basic educational and social community in which complex emotional and social relation-ships are established, which are important for the later overall development of an individual. It is where a child acquires first knowledge, experiences norms of behav-ior and identification models (Previšić, 2003). In the sense of ethical ideal, family is a privileged area of community and participation, and a school of sociality and hu-manity at its richest (Grbac, 2003). In addition to being the first and most important child educators, first models of identification and imitation, parents are also a link for establishing social contacts with a wider environment (Ljubetić, 2007). Contents

mediated to children through family upbringing are a question of personal beliefs, worldview and lifestyle of parents (Matulić, 2003).

A parent should be able to establish contact with a child based on responsi-bility, trust, security and affiliation (Jurčević- Lozančić, 2011). The child needs to grow up with an emotionally and mentally mature adult who provides effective parental love, enables the child to expect that other people will be sensitive to it and approach peers with positive expectations. They need a "second person" who responds to their experience, who is their role- model, a cultural and ethical form that is itself in relation to the world, to others and to oneself (Bašić, 2011). Parents are children's first teachers and their actions, advocacy, responsibility, good exam-ple and general understanding of their educative role will affect overall formation and subsequent behavior of children (Previšić, 2003). Given that they are the main source of child socialization, it is often claimed that significant cause of problematic behavior of a child in the school age is bad and problematic relationship with their parents in childhood (Lozančić, 2011).

Recognizing the importance of quality parenting for healthy psychosocial develop-ment of a child, this paper discusses factors which potentially unable its realization and prevent a good family context necessary for the child's healthy development.

PARENTING IN RESISTANCE

Establishing parenting style is considered to be one of the most effective ways of observing parent and child relationship (Baumrind, 1971, according to Raboteg - Šarić, Merkaš and Majić, 2011). It can be said that parenting style reflects qualita-tively different patterns of parental values, actions and behaviors, as well as different relationships between dimensions of demands and responsiveness (Baumrind, 1991, according to Raboteg - Šarić et al., 2011). Some authors claim that parenting style is a general emotional climate within which various parental actions take place (Čudina - Obradović, 2002, according to Sremić, Rijavec, 2010). Parenting style is of central importance to success of parenting because it affects whether and how the child ac-cepts parents' actions (Čudina-Obradović and Obradović, 2003, according to Šimić-Šašić, Klarin, Proroković, 2011). In a typical family atmosphere and parenting envi-ronment, the child creates a perception of interpersonal relationships and develops patterns of social interaction which then applies in relationships outside the family, primarily in relationships with other children (Deković, Raboteg-Šarić, 1997). Consid-ering parental requirement and susceptibility to child's needs, four types of parental education style can be distinguished (Maccoby and Martin, 1983, according to Čudina – Obradović and Obradović, 2006). Authoritarian parental style is manifested in re-strictive behavior of a parent, with high appreciation of discipline and conformism, without showing much love and warmth. The permissibility of raising is an unrestric-tive, warm and accepting strategy of upbringing, but without setting clear limits to child's behavior. Indifferent style sets few restrictions, but also little care, interest, and emotional support. Authoritative parenting style involves restrictive and responsible behavior of parents, but with much warmth and understanding, according to Petana,

2011. With the level of sensitivity and complexity, parenting styles also differ in terms of psychological control (Barber, 1996, according to Darling, 1999). Thus an authoritarian and authoritative styles are characterized by an expectation that the child accepts the rules, but unlike authoritative parents who communicate with the child in dialogue, the authoritarian expect the child's irrevocable and inexplicable submission to the parent's requirements (Darling, 1999). Furthermore, it has been established how different parenting styles lead to differences in behavior and personality traits of children (Baumrind, 1971, according to Petani, 2011). Children of permissive parents are often immature, impulsive and uncontrollable, and have difficulty of accepting authority. A large number of children of indifferent parents have low self-esteem and difficulty in social adjustment, are demanding and disobedient and do not partici-pate well in games and social interactions. Research has shown that children of this kind of parents are defenseless and hostile (Žužul, 1989, according to Petani 2011). Parental authoritarian style leads to reduced social adaptation of children, reduced self-confidence, anxiety, frustration, fearfulness and suicidal tendencies. Culturally comparable, it was shown that authoritarian parenting style has a negative impact on children of all cultures, with children of Western cultures becoming aggressive and showing generally externalized forms of unacceptable behavior, while children of Eastern cultures are subject to suspensed and inward-oriented forms of emotional rebellion (Rohner, 2004, according to Čudina – Obradović and Obradović, 2006). Children of all cultures have a strong need to be accepted and loved by parents, and if child's needs remain unsatisfied, it becomes aggressive, overly dependent or rebellious, emotionally cold, with low self-esteem, emotionally unstable or prone to problematic behavior, depression, delinquency and use of addictive substances (Čudina – Obradović and Obradović, 2006).

Ineffective parenting, forcing parenting styles, inconsistency and lack of parental responsibility or involvement is in close connection with psychopathological phenomena in children or their inappropriate behavior (Karpowitz, 2000, Shaffer, 2000, Lindahl, 1998, Arendell, 1997, Bašić et al 2002, according to Ljubetić, 2007). According to socialization theory of the parent's accepting-refusing approach to a child which observes the dimension of emotional warmth that the parent verbally and physically expresses to a child, it is confirmed that parent's emotional manifestations of behavior influence the behavioral and personal dispositions of the child and their behavior in adulthood (Rohner, 1984, according to Kuterovac- Jagodić and Keresteš, 1997). The accepting parents are defined as those who show love to the child physically and verbally, by hugging, kissing, encouraging, praising. The refusing parents can be described as disapproving, resentful, inclined to depreciation and bitterness. The character of parenting behavior affects the child's dependence, his / her self-confidence, emotional stability, emotional sensitivity, and the general experience of the world (Rohner, 1984, according to Kuterovac-Jagodić and Keresteš, 1997).

Based on the above-mentioned, optimal parenting style is considered to be authoritative, democratically consistent educational style characterized by setting explanatory limits to child's behavior, conducting appropriate supervision, setting

realistic demands with emotional warmth and support to encourage curiosity, crea-tivity, happiness, motivation, and independence. It is considered to be the optimal socialization style (Bornstein, 2002, according to Raboteg - Šarić et al., 2011) which contributes to development of child's competences and promotes development of resistance to a range of negative impacts, including stressful events and antisocial peers (Glasgow et al., 1997, according to Raboteg - Šarić et al., 2011). Adopting rules and adhering to boundaries in warm and close family relationships allows the child to internalize boundaries, channel aggression and solving problems calmly. To achieve these objectives, children need an environment that is simultaneously empathic and able to set boundaries, which has confidence in child potentials and understands the child's weakness (Ljubešić, 2012). Such an environment is created by parents who are sensitive, child-oriented and supporting, willing to adapt their behavior to a child (Cox and Harter, 2003).

Apart from the authoritative style of parenting, each of the remaining parenting styles is marked by some kind of resistance to a child, in a passive or active way. Re-sistance can be described as dissatisfaction or disagreement, refusal, or opposition of surrender someone or something to someone or something (Croatian Language Por-tal, 2018). The style of an authoritarian, permissive or indifferent type implies some kind of resistance to a child because it includes a parent's refusal to accept central parental functions. These functions are systematized as the ability of an individual to realistically observe the child, the ability to accept responsibility for recognizing the child's needs, the ability to accept realistic expectations from child's potential, ability to engage in positive interaction with the child, ability to empathize with the child, to meet the child's primary needs, the ability to curb their own frustration in front of a child (Killen, 2001, according to Lipanovic and Jukić, 2012). Such a parental pattern, which is characterized by not adapting educational approach to the child's develop-mental phase, lack of adaptation to individual or specific needs of the child or ab-sence of any kind of education consequently leads to undesirable forms of behavior of children and the young (Sakoman, 2009, according to Gulin, 2012).

Authoritarian parenting style is characterized by actively present negative emo-tionality, structuring child's behavior and is expressed as parenting with active re-sistance. Emotionality does not come in the shape that a child needs, but the parent is not emotionally distant. He is emotionally present, but not in a way that child needs. Such a parent is structurally engaged in the child's upbringing, but emotion-ally is in active resistance towards the child.

Permissive upbringing implies a lack of action to form child's behavior with nec-essary boundaries and rules, with a high positive emotionality of a parent. Conse-quently, it can be characterized as parenting of partial passive resistance towards the child. Educational dimension of parenting and setting limits on the child's be-havior is potentially demanding because it requires time and energy to reach agree-ment with the child, and that implies active effort. But in the context of permissive upbringing, the argument "the child wants" is the same as legitimizing the parent's choice of action "for the child's good" (Bašić, 2009).Partially passive parental resist-

ance to a child stems from avoiding to display educational contribution necessary for the child's developmental wellbeing.

Indifferent parenting style is an indicator of comprehensive passive resistance to the child. Absence of educational contributions to child's behavior and emotionality implies parenting in exclusion, impersonal parenthood; the child is rejected.

The aforementioned authoritarian, permissive and indifferent parenting styles do not meet the needs of the child. Every child should be able to satisfy their need for love, intimacy, autonomy, achievement, freedom, and if these needs are not met, children become frustrated, violent, egoistic, anxious and depressed, which is a kind of violence against children because it endangers their psychological well-be-ing and often becomes a stimulus for deviant behavior disturbing the child's mental health (Nazor, 2012). In contrast, child-supportive and emotionally warm upbring-ing encourages child development of child's potential and research has proven that it also enhances the child's academic skills (Turner, Chandler and Heffer, 2009).

It is evident that problems of establishing a positively intonated parenting activ-ity are reflected in characteristics of child's psychosocial status. In order to under-stand outcomes and development of undesirable parental practice and the support of parenting adequate to stimulate child's developmental well-being, this paper considers a parent's motivation for parenting and parental involvement.

MOTIVATIONAL PREREQUISITES OF PARENTHOOD

It is important to understand the motivational assumption of parenting as a fac-tor potentially affecting the (non) desirable parental practice. Parenting in resist-ance, in which the parent emotionally and educationally responds to the needs of the child in an inadequate way, might have its roots in the pattern of individual's motivation that directs him towards parenting. Motivationally speaking, adult's es-timate of desirability of being in a parent role is conditioned by various criteria. Although it would be expected that positive attitude towards childbirth is derived from values related to a child (a new human- being that has value as such and as a new member of the community), it is shown that value of a child is most often in the perception of parents that it increases their value (Veevers, 1973, according to Čudina – Obradović and Obradović, 2006). It is stated that value of a child to a parent is derived from the parent's need to meet social expectations and norms, from desire to comply with moral obligations, responsibilities, natural course of life, fulfillment of gender identity and human competence, achievement and support of marriage and the need to meet the criteria of mental health and normality (Veevers, 1973, according to Čudina – Obradović and Obradović, 2006). Systematically, values that people bind to birth of a child and which encourage them to exercise their parenting role are related to parents themselves (need for self-actualization, feeling of own values and maturity), parenting (experience of parenting, care for and devel-opment of a new human being), well-being of the family (material, social, spiritual), child as such (development of a new independent being), benefit of the wider fam-ily (maintenance and continuation of the family), society in the widest sense (na-

tion maintenance, settling debt towards society or religion) (Čudina - Obradović and Obradović, 2006).

An individual's motivation for parenting is most commonly formed in one of the four basic types. Altruistic motivation implies that wanting a child is desired from our desire to provide love, care and protection to someone; fatalistic involves consideration that reproduction and prolongation of the species is an inevitable part of life; narcis-sist unites the motives of women and men in proving their value; instrumental justifies parenting through its importance in preserving marriage, extending the family line, self-affirmation or expressing patriotism (Rabin, 1965, according to Lacković-Grgin, 2011).

Considering the above, it can be shown how altruistic motivation supports the child as valuable itself. It does not look at a child as an instrument, does not strive for a higher goal than himself. Such a motivational type does not presuppose the child for other purposes and does not subordinate it to some goal beyond. It sup-ports child acceptance and readiness to direct parents' own resources to support child development. This is important because only understanding the value of a child in the context of altruistic motivation encourages the parent to positive emo-tional approach to the child and to support his development with active engage-ment. Understanding the child as a value itself encourages selfless orientation of own capacity for its development. Remaining forms of motivation, narcissistic and instrumental, put the child in anticipation of their own self-image and present a predetermined concept of a child's intended task, which encourages parenting in resistance. Fatalistic view perceives a child as an inevitability of life, implying his role as an unquestionably accomplished task of adult people.

Motivational factors possibly affect parental adaptation to role of a parent, which again affects the parenting style. The utilitarian, narcissistic approach sup-ports child's adaptation to parents' expectations. The child is satisfying parents' expectations if it fits into a desirable parent's image. Fatalistic approach is defined through necessity and does not encourage activity of consciously established and grown parenting. Humanistic motivation implies a parent who adapts to the child. The parent adapts his capacity to a child as an individual person, whose develop-ment depends on his resources. Such a form of motivation supports desirable adap-tation to parenting practice, appropriate to optimal development of a child.

ADAPTATIONAL CONDITIONS OF PARENTING

In order to understand parent's practical adaptation to parenting, it is important to understand the parent's personal characteristics and general characteristics of the context in which the parent realizes his or her role. It is discussed which factors and in what way potentially affect adaptation on parenting, especially in terms of preventing parental engagement that is constructive for child's development, and called by this paper as parenting of activity. Especially important here are charac-teristics of parents' emotionality. The paper shows a relationship between parental approaches to their own emotions and understanding of their children's emotions. Research confirmed that children whose parents learned how to cope with nega-

tive emotions of sadness and anger show externalized and internalized problems less. (Brajša-Žganec, 2002, according to Ljubetić, 2007). Depression and permanent state of anxiety of parents have a potentially pathogenic effect on children's development. Interactions of depressed mothers with their children are characterized by reduced sensitivity, lack of reciprocity, flat emotional tone, and general lack of spontaneity and interest (Ljubetić, 2007). Similarly, pathogenic influence of parents to a child development is certain if parents solely meet their needs and desires, ignoring children's, express egoism and self-satisfaction, which is why they either do not respond to children's needs or they don't agree their expectations with actual needs and wishes of their children Ljubetić, 2007).

Parents' own childhood experiences can significantly determine the quality of their parenting. Although not necessarily, early emotional deprivation of parents is a risk to development of endangering relationships with their own child (Shaffer, 2000, according to Ljubetić, 2007).

Parents' age is often a significant factor that potentially affects parenting adaptation. Adolescent period is considered to be unfavorable for exercising parental role because of psychological immaturity of individuals, lack of parental skills, greater exposure to economic stress due to difficulties in completing education, stress due to abandoning developmental tasks related to the adolescent age (Lacković - Grgin, 2011). Unresolved identity crises, tougher control of emotional states, underpinning child needs and abili-ties, are often a sign of adolescent parenthood. It is considered that younger adult age is better for parenting and is characterized by establishing love as opposed to isolation, while middle adult age is considered unfavorable due to weakening of parental health and their greater focus on actual or fictitious problems (Lacković - Grgin, 2011).

Education and social status of parents determine the values that parents want to pass on to their children. Parental values and goals determine the parent's upbringing style, and it affects the emotional climate of the family. More educated parents pay greater attention to communication, family atmosphere is democratic, and children develop healthy attitudes towards authority, while parents of lower education more often use authoritarian parental style, emphasizing the importance of respecting social norms (Družinec, 2016).

Influence of other factors concerning parent's context of living, such as poverty, also contribute to parent's adaptation to parenting role requirements in terms of establishing a preferable parenting style.

Poverty hampers with quality adaptation to parent role and establishment of authoritative style of parenting by favoring inconsistent, neglecting, emotionally indifferent and harsh behaviour of parents (Eamon, 2001, according to Čudina – Obradović and Obradović, 2006). Poverty significantly increases incidence of unacceptable behavior of children older than three years, expressed through aggression, disobedience and ruthlessness, which increases in pre-school and school age (Čudina – Obradović and Obradović, 2006). Children of poor parents are marked as "walking wounded" (Sidel, Arendell, 1997, according to Ljubetić, 2007). This emphasizes that poverty affects the quality of family life through intensification of

psychological stress that parents are exposed to, and because of which they are re-strained in expressing emotion towards a child, overestimate obedience of a child, rely on physical punishment, are inconsistent in how they discipline their child and respond inadequately to child's socio-emotional needs (Arendell, 1997, according to Ljubetić, 2007). Insufficient economic factors directly affect parental responsibil-ity of providing children with a bright and healthy family atmosphere that would develop positive personality traits and suppress provision of love and trust as basic preconditions for a healthy mental development of the child (Ljubetić, 2007).

Family structure may also affect parents' adaptability to parenting requirements through readiness to maintain a supportive emotional approach to the child. It is considered that single parenting is associated with increased depression of parents (Raboteg - Šarić, Pećnik, 2006). Divorced mothers are often more inconsistent and hostile, less aware of their children's daily activities and punish them more often (Raboteg - Šarić, Pećnik, 2006). Causes of single parent families can be multiple: death, divorce, abandonment by one parent, unmarried birth, long-term absence of parents for whatever reason (Grozdanić, 2000). Although research tried validat-ing linear causal link between family's structural deficiencies and behavioral disor-ders and developmental difficulties of a child, and to suggest the perniciousness of single parenthood to psychological, social and intellectual development of the child (Demo, 1991, according to Grozdanić, 2000), some other authors state that each family structure has the same capacity to be either healthy or dysfunctional (McKerny and Price, 1994, according to Grozdanić, 2000). Still, single parents are under greater economic pressure, which is an important indicator of stress in a sin-gle parent. Thus, they tend using methods of punishment, inconsistency and lack of support, while the present depression contributes to emotional context of child rejection and increased criticism in the atmosphere of negative emotions (Raboteg - Šarić, Pećnik, 2006). Single parents are exposed to greater burden on their roles, lack partner support; psychological stress may influence the quality of parenting and the difference in the quality of parent-child relationship is associated with de-terioration in emotional functioning of the child (Grozdanić, 2000).

Parent's perception of child and childhood, which is used for general approach to the child, is also determined by the social context of the time in which the par-enthood is realized. The form of childhood definition is associated with interests of the society, and the term child is an anthropological or social hypothesis (Bašić, 2011). In the 70s, the understanding that a child is subject of own development was actualized, which led to a child-centered perspective, and that was in contrast to seeing the child from a perspective of pragmatism and functionalism (Bašić, 2011). The child's prospect of education, dominant until the beginning of the 20th cen-tury, considers the child as a subject of educational endeavor, and the task of the educator is to encourage positive and counteract negatively perceived traits, abili-ties, values, and behavioral patterns. On the contrary, a romantic image of a child, which lead to the modern concept of a child, emphasizes individual development, finding its own sense and self-realization (Bašić, 2011). Caldwell's theory of "wealth

flows" explains the contemporary change in the value of the child - from the period of adult orientation to the child whose job was to help parents, provide them with work force, maintain their property, to a period of orientation towards the child's spiritual and material well-being; while parent sacrifice is large, and the above men-tioned potential benefit from a child minor (Čudina – Obradović and Obradović, 1999). In parallel with changing image of a child, the perception of the supportive emotional-educational context that is needed for the child's development is also changed. Seeing a child as an active person not owned by parents, but being a separate individual who has rights and responsibilities in association with parents, promotes the unacceptability of using force over a child for disciplinary purposes and does not approve physical punishment in family upbringing (Maleš i Kušević, 2011). But long-established, traditionally transferred, generationally inherited pa-rental behavior models, commonly accepted and experienced parenting, does not often change with a scientifically based perception of a child. Although in a peda-gogical sense, child is today seen as a subject of development, with its own rights shaped by the Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989), research shows that parents with their practical methods still support a scientifically overpowered view of a child. Thus, it has been found that a consensus among the adult population is about the importance of dealing with the child and communicating with it as an im-portant aspect of parenting, but there is also a great tolerance of the respondents about the physical punishment of children in situations, when for example, their safety is threatened (Pećnik, Radočaj and Tokić, 2011). This also points out that, although one can promote a good environment for a child's development, it is also necessary to direct parents and help them in self- questioning in order to improve their personal capacities in their own parenting practice.

It is therefore necessary to support the parents as a society, and in order to en-sure quality of parental educating engagement.

INSTITUTIONAL APPROACH TO PARENTING IN RESISTANCE

Experts in educational institutions monitor development of a child and encour-age it in partnership with child's basic educators – parents. Encouraging parents' activity, preventing parenting in resistance and helping in overcoming issues in real-izing their parental roles is an important task of educational institutions.

A large number of parents rely on natural knowledge about children and up-bringing, not knowing much about the basics of child development, children's needs and reactions (Previšić, 2003). It is the role of society to take care of chil-dren's upbringing and education, but also to help parents with more professional-pedagogical knowledge in this process (Previšić, 2003). Future parents should be in-formed about basic criteria and norms of "good parenting", complexity and weight of parental responsibilities, to correct misconceptions about parenting presented in the media, develop realistic expectations, teach future parents to solve problems, and teach them principles of partner parenting (Čudina – Obradović and Obradović, 2006). The following topics are suggested for programs intended for parents – fam-

ily as a system, development phases of a family, what it means to be a responsible parent, raising awareness about parental characteristics, value and goals, development phases of a child, parental stress (Lipanović and Jukić, 2012). These pro-grams seem necessary, given that some parents are not able to participate in the educational process of their children adequately, and it is therefore necessary to devise various forms of information and education for parents, in which the basic role should be placed upon educational institutions, family centers and similar in-stitutions (Puljiz, Bouillet, 2003). This is especially important given that pre-school age is considered a critical point when it is important to spot child's behavioral or emotional difficulties, and to minimize the risk of them becoming permanent or developing into real disabilities (Mrnjavac, 2014). It is therefore important to create educational programs that work with primary care-takers, in a society that supports families, because the institution does not raise the child outside of the family, but in partnership with the family and through promoting and specifically supporting ad-equate parent's approach to the child. It is necessary to refer parents to educational institutions that are professionally obliged to encourage desired family upbringing. It requires inclusion of children in the system of early childhood education.

Often mentioned are the so-called characteristics of positive (Stričević, 2011) or competent parenting (Ljubetić, 2012), but it is necessary to display ways and conditions of their development. Parental qualities and skills are worked on, improved and formed through different processes of learning, especially communication, assertion, mediation, leadership, management and calm problem- solving skills (Aren-del, 1997; according to Sremić and Rijavec, 2010). It is essential to socially support development of parenting, in order to stimulate parental engagement productive for the child's developmental prosperity.

CONCLUSION

Bad parenting style is directly associated with difficulties in psychosocial functioning of a child. Insufficient or inadequate emotionality, over-expressed or non-existent restriction in approaching the child and parenting in resistance, are influ-ences which make the child susceptible to developing socio-emotional difficulties expressed through behavioral detachment. It is therefore important to develop pos-sible influences that favor such parenting. It is essential to understand motivational outcomes that support such inadequate parenting practice. It is also important to consider personal and environmental factors that make adaptation to parenting more difficult, in the sense of developing a desirable parental approach to the child. It is necessary to consider this in order to understand the ways and possibilities of promoting good parenting. The role of parenting is to establish a context for the child's upbringing that will support the child's development. Parents need support in the aforementioned, and it is therefore of great significance that parents, as the most important children's educators, are in focus of professionals and society whose purpose is to care for the prosperity of children.

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