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Way of Life of the City Family and Its Stability

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Annotation: *In article problems of stabilization of a city family are considered. There is analysis of changes in the nature of marriage and family relations as well as revealed factors that influence urban family life as well as marriage and divorce rate. On the basis of the sociological researches of married couples conducted by the author factors influence of a way of life of a city family on level of marriages and divorces.*

Nowadays problems of family stability become relevant first of all for some negative trends of the current demographic situation namely high divorce rate, increased number of children brought up outside the family, more unmarried men and women, secondly, for evolutionary changes in family such as transition from authoritarian to egalitarian relations, restructuring family functions with spiritual and moral values being the most important ones.

The literature devoted to the family problems and its stability pays much attention to the analysis of economic (1), social and psychological (3) conditions that make family ties stronger or loose. The aim of the work is to study family stability dependence on the nature and intensity of demographic processes, to find out relationship between reproduction and family behavior, its way of life (including reproductive behavior) and stability. We claim that the best tool to study undetected impacts is the lifestyle of the given city.

The given research is based on the results of two-parent families survey, conducted by the author in different cities of Bashkortostan in 2008-2009. Full family was taken as a unit of measure, 600 families were studied, quota sampling was used. The study used survey methods, standardized interviews and document analysis (statistics). The aim was to study the functioning of an urban family, revealing influence of lifestyle on stability of marriage relations.

Urban life is characterized by the nature of employment, social and recreational activities of population. Work in large groups, more job opportunities, wider range of leisure activities, abundance of information, social networks and groups intensify lives of citizens and their families. Tendency to expand contacts and social relationships worsen neuropsychic load and interpersonal relationships that leads to concern and anger often affecting the family (3).

Family relations depend on many things such as housing conditions, presence or absence of children, age difference, values each family member, psychological and sexual compatibility and others. Let's look at some of them in terms of family stability in a city.

We believe that the main factor that contributes to family stability and harmonious relations between spouses is mutual understanding and respect for each other. Lack or absence of these things in family relationships creates a particular moral atmosphere where there is more than usual nervousness, instability not only between spouses but between parents and children.

The question of our survey “How often do you feel a sense of confusion on the part of your husband (wife)?” was answered in the following way: “very often” by 12.5% of women and 9.8% of men; “sometimes” by 38.9% and 42.6% respectively, “rarely” by 24, 3% and 15.0%, “almost never” by 24, 3% of women and 32, 6% of men.

Unsatisfaction in marriage often occurs due to different interests and ideas on family life values. Each spouse has their own model of family life, particular expectations from marriage. Influenced by the example of parents a stable image of future partner and family life is gradually formed, and for some time, especially in the early years of marriage, each spouse holds to their image. And at the very moment when mismatch in expected and real image of a partner and married life is detected there comes a state of frustration, reappraisal that sometimes lead to conflicts up to family disruption (4).

It should also be noted that the "bending" of the demographic structure of the urban population, violation of its proportions by sex and age, generates a specific social phenomenon as a "rivalry" of girls and women in creating wedlocks. If we add to that part of the women, who are doomed to be unmarried due to the lack of marriage partners those ones who are divorced and not re-married, we get a large proportion of female population that falls out of the process of reproduction of new generations. Meanwhile “excess” of unmarried women has a psychological impact on fragile families, creates additional conditions for adultery, it reduces the level of claims to potential male partners. In particular, divorces that easily occur in cities can be explained by not only the simplified procedure of divorce, but also by psychological confidence in a choice for another spouse. So, in big cities divorced men have chances to get marry again three times higher than women (5). To a certain extent women “rivalry” as a result of less marriage opportunities stimulates extramarital affairs and adulterate children.

Statistics show decreased marriage stability resulting in increased number of divorces (6). As our study of married couples applied to Ufa People's Court for divorce shows the most intensively diverge family have lived 1-4 years, they amount 36% of all respondents. Thus divorce is primarily a problem of stabilization of young families. However disturbing is divorce in families where spouses have lived together for 10-12 years, they account 22% of all divorce cases. In most cases divorce initiators are women (63.4%). These data are consistent with the results of surveys in other cities of the country.

Among the diverse motives of divorce one can distinguish between five the most common ones: alcoholism, infidelity, lack of mutual understanding, bad temper of a spouse and mismatch of values accounted for 70% of the possible causes of divorce. Thus the main reason of divorces doesn't relate to the material but moral factors.

Lifestyle is an accumulator concentrating changes in conditions and nature of city population reproduction. In turn, the way of life as a way of people's activities and typical and mass stereotypes and behavior based on it has a direct impact on a family and its stability. Lower stability, destabilized family relationships in certain parts of the population are

apparently connected to new values that can silence “marriage values” to some extent. We believe that these values are mostly of real and mythical character, but it is obvious that they are formed not only by concerted efforts of the government but also thanks to the mass commonplace sense. Hence there is need for special measures to influence the public consciousness.

Lack of harmony in marital relationship, marriage dissatisfaction with extremely high divorce rate is inversely proportional to the level of fertility. It goes without saying that one mustn't ignore all the socio-economic factors and demographic structure of the population that impact on reproduction. But they also have to take into account marriage. As L.E. Darsky notes: "increased probability of marriage breakup contributes to a lower level of marital fertility, as a woman is afraid to be alone with children and spouses do not want to “be bound” with a large number of children, taking into account possible divorce” (7). Therefore, as marriage and family experts reasonably claim one of the most important conditions to increase the birth rate, in addition to stimulating measures of demographic policy in the country (talking about maternity capital) is to take measures against divorces, to prevent family breakdowns, to higher stability of marriage and family relations (8).

Urban family as a social institution as well as a small social group performs important social functions; it reproduces new generations, moral norms and patterns of behavior, being actively involved in socialization. The challenge is to create the most favorable conditions for normal functioning of a family.

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