

FAMILY CONFLICTS: MARITAL AND INTERGENERATIONAL

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ABSTRACT

The article examines the main causes of conflicts: psychological incompatibility of spouses, differences in values and views, interference of relatives, and the lack of autonomy in young families. It highlights differences in the perception of conflict situations depending on the length of marriage, as well as behavioral strategies typical for different stages of family life.

KEYWORDS: Family conflict, marital relations, intergenerational interaction, daughter-in-law and mother-in-law, behavioral strategies, communication culture.

INTRODUCTION

Conflicts are an integral part of human existence, nature, and society. They occur at various levels, from personal disagreements to global wars. Although conflicts are often associated with destruction and suffering, they have deep rationales that can be examined from philosophical, sociological, biological, and historical perspectives. Below, I will provide a structured rationale for why conflicts exist and can even be beneficial, based on key concepts. They are rationalized as a natural mechanism for change, growth, and balance.

Family conflicts are disagreements, tensions, or confrontations between family members that may arise from differences in interests, values, expectations, or behavior. They are a natural part of family dynamics because the family is a complex system where individual needs clash with collective needs. Below is an explanation of family conflicts, considering their causes, functions, and possible benefits, as well as approaches to their resolution.

It is important to note that conflict situations may be perceived differently by spouses depending on their different length of family life. Young spouses who are at the adaptation stage perceive conflict most acutely, as their perception is dominated by the characteristics of distortion and insolubility of the situation. For this reason, the highest percentage of divorces occurs in young families, since they most often see a way out of a conflict situation in divorce (Selina, 2014). In a study by E. A. Danilova, it was found that young spouses most often use such behavioral strategies as compromise, rivalry and avoidance. The author explains this by the fact that young spouses, adapting to each other, are not afraid to talk about problems and try to resolve them. And in couples with an average marriage, cooperation and compromise were most clearly expressed, and to a lesser extent such strategies as confrontation, avoidance and adaptation. This is probably due to the fact that spouses, performing many functions by this time, one of which is parental, must coordinate their actions, negotiate and listen to each other. Mature spouses were most

often inclined to compete with each other, which is expressed in the fact that spouses primarily seek to satisfy only their own interests. The author associates this result with various difficulties experienced by partners, one of which is the departure of children from the parental home (Danilova, 2020).

The Main Findings and Results

Intergenerational conflict usually occurs between parents and children, between grandparents and grandchildren, between daughter-in-law and mother-in-law. This type of conflict can also vary in duration and stability. In some families, it is episodic, short-term, and even one-time. In others, it is long-term, relatively frequent, and stable, which leads to the emergence of conflictual relationships (Vdovina, 2008).

Among intergenerational conflicts, it is important to study the conflicts that arise between the daughter-in-law and mother-in-law, since this not only affects the relationship between the spouses, but also poses a threat to the entire family. The reasons for the emergence of disagreements include the cohabitation of the young family with the mother-in-law, which entails her high participation in the life of the young and the lack of autonomy of the spouses. Another reason is the discrepancy between the mother-in-law's ideas about her daughter-in-law, which manifests itself in criticism, dissatisfaction with the choice of the son and focusing on the shortcomings of the daughter-in-law. If the son is a "late" or the only child, the conflict can intensify, since often mothers, sacrificing their career or personal life, expect a lifetime commitment from their son and are often jealous of his daughter-in-law. The characteristic features of the mother-in-law, namely sensitivity and vulnerability, which can be associated with biological changes, can also serve as one of the factors of conflict. The desire for leadership in the family, which manifests itself in interference in various aspects of the lives of young people, the demand for unconditional implementation of her decisions, the establishment of new rules in the family can also end in conflicts. Also, factors such as the lack of work, hobbies or interests of the mother-in-law contribute to the emergence of disagreements (Koltsova, 2018). In addition to the above reasons, it is necessary to consider the causes of conflicts through the prism of daughters-in-law. And one of the most common examples in this regard can be considered a biased attitude towards the mother-in-law. Since girls often have some expectations of a negative attitude towards themselves from their mother-in-law, any word, even a neutral one, is perceived in a negative light. Another reason may be the daughter-in-law's reluctance to allow her mother-in-law to meet with her grandchildren or husband, due to fears of "setting" them against her. If we consider the general causes of conflicts in the relationship between the mother-in-law and the bride, then first of all we should include the discrepancy in family foundations, traditions, differences in views on life, everyday life, raising children, and financial management. However, despite all the reasons for conflicts between the daughter-in-law and mother-in-law, the relationship is largely determined by the culture of communication (Takhmazova, 2014).

Thus, the analysis of scientific approaches shows that the specifics of conflicts vary depending on the stages of married life: if young spouses are characterized by acute perception and a high

frequency of divorces, then in families with experience, compromise and cooperation become more stable, and mature couples more often demonstrate elements of rivalry.

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