

QUALITATIVE MEASURES OF FAMILY FUNCTIONS AFFECTING CHILD DEPRIVATION

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Abstract

The article discusses the phenomenon of child deprivation from parental care, with the aim of extracting the basic measurements of family functions that are significant in terms of child abandonment.

Specifically, the approaches proposed by Bowlby, Spence, Kadushin and Burnstein were discussed in the context of risk factors causing child abandonment. Besides, the concept of family resilience was studied as a new perspective on family functioning.

Even though there exists a range of diverse approaches in social sciences regarding family care deficiencies and child abandonment, there is still a need for additional studies to develop a more structured view of the phenomenon. Specifically, to extract the practical measurements of the classification of the phenomenon, both for research and practical purposes. In particular, a qualitative research was carried out based on the methodology of the grounded theory. In the frames of the research, about 282 registered cases of child abandonment were studied. The cases were classified into four main categories, according to the circumstance of becoming deprived of parental care: death of a parent, refusal of care, inability, or impossibility to take care of a child. As a result, it was possible to identify the essential factors that accompany each of these four circumstances and to highlight the key axes through which the guardianship vector passes.

The results of the article allow us to state that firstly, child abandonment is a multilayer phenomenon, that is why both the causes and impact of abandonment at least depend on social relations (child-parent, child-substitute parent, parent-substitute parent) and main components of deprivation (nature and quality of the relationship, circumstance of becoming deprived of care, nature of the action to deprive the child of care). Second, child abandonment takes place in cases when the above-mentioned risk factors intersect. Third, as a rule, abandonment is an intentional and voluntary action by the parent. And finally, the amount and quality of natural social ties are directly related to the outcome of child abandonment.

In addition to the findings, the proposed approach to the classification of the phenomenon of children's deprivation from parental care in the previous article has been revised, which can be useful both from theoretical and research perspectives and have an active impact upon the policy development for children deprived of basic care.

Keywords and phrases

Childhood, childhood content, family functions, qualitative measurement of family functioning, care deprivation, child abandonment, social relations, grounded theory.

ԸՆՏԱՆԻՔԻ ԳՈՐԾԱՌՆՄԱՆ ՈՐԱԿԱԿԱՆ ԶԱՓՈՒՄՆԵՐԻ ԱԶԴԵՑՈՒԹՅՈՒՆԸ ԵՐԵՒԱՆԵՐԻ ԽՆԱՄԱԶՐԿՈՒԹՅԱՆ ՎՐԱ

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ասպիրանտ, դասախոս

ԵՊՀ սոցիալական աշխատանքի և սոցիալական տեխնոլոգիաների ամբիոն

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Համառոտագիր

Հոդվածը քննարկում է երեխաների խնամազրկության երևույթը՝ նպատակ ունենալով դուրս բերել ընտանիքի գործառնման այն հիմնական չափումները, որոնք նշանակալի են երեխաների լքման տեսանկյունից:

Այս համատեքստում հոդվածում անդրադարձ է կատարվում Սպենսի, Բոուլբրի, Կադուշինի և Բարնշտեյնի՝ ընտանիքում մանկալքության տեսանկյունից դիսկալին գործոնների դասակարգմանը, ինչպես նաև ընտանիքի դիմակայության մոտեցմանը, որն ընտանիքի գործառնման նոր մոտեցում է առաջարկում:

Չնայած սոցիալական գիտություններում ընտանեկան խնամքի թերացումների վերաբերյալ տարատեսակ մոտեցումների առկայությանը՝ երևույթի վերաբերյալ կառուցվածքային պատկեր ունենալու համար անհրաժեշտություն կա լրացուցիչ ուսումնասիրությունների: Այս համատեքստում իրականացվել է որակական հետազոտություն՝ հիմնավորված տեսության մեթոդաբանության կիրառմամբ: Մասնավորապես, կատարվել է 2007-2018 թթ. երեխաների լքման շուրջ 282 գրանցված դեպքերի ուսումնասիրություն, որոնք, ըստ խնամազուրկ դառնալու հանգամանքի, դասակարգվել են 4 հիմնական կատեգորիաներում՝ ծնողի մահ, խնամքից հրաժարում, անկարողություն, անհնարինություն: Արդյունքում հնարավոր է դարձել դուրս բերել նշված չորս հանգամանքներից յուրաքանչյուրի դեպքում ուղեկցող էական գործոններն ու ընդգծել այն հիմնական առանցքները, որոնց հատման կետով է անցնում խնամազրկության վեկտորը:

Ստացված արդյունքները թույլ են տալիս պնդել, որ նախ՝ լինելով բազմակողմանի երևույթ, խնամազրկության պատճառները և հետևանքները առնվազն կախված են սոցիալական կապերից և լքման հիմնական բաղադրիչներից: Երկրորդ՝ երեխայի լքումը տեղի է ունենում, եթե նվազագույնը երեք ռիսկի գործոն դրսևորվում է միաժամանակ: Երրորդ՝ որպես կանոն, լքումը ծնողի կողմից նպատակադրված գործողություն է: Եվ վերջինը՝ սոցիալական կապիտալի ծավալը և որակը ուղիղ կապի մեջ են խնամազրկության ելքի հետ:

Բացի այդ, վերանայվել և ճշգրտվել է նախորդ հոդվածում խնամազրկության երևույթի դասակարգման վերաբերյալ առաջարկված մոտեցումը, որը կարող է օգտակար լինել երևույթի ուսումնասիրման ինչպես տեսական ու հետազոտական հարցերի տեսանկյունից, այնպես էլ գործնական նշանակություն ունենալ խնամազուրկ երեխաների վերաբերյալ քաղաքականության մշակման տեսանկյունից:

Բանալի բառեր և բառակապակցություններ

Մանկություն, մանկության բովանդակություն, ընտանիքի գործառնում, ընտանիքի գործառնման որակական չափումներ, խնամազրկություն, երեխայի լքում, սոցիալական փոխհարաբերություններ, հիմնավորված տեսություն:

ВЛИЯНИЕ КАЧЕСТВЕННЫХ ИЗМЕРЕНИЙ ФУНКЦИОНИРОВАНИЯ СЕМЬИ НА ДЕПРИВАЦИЮ ДЕТЕЙ

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Аннотация

В статье обсуждается феномен детей, лишённых опекуна с целью выявления базовых показателей функционирования семьи, значимых с точки зрения депривации детей.

В частности, обсуждались подходы, предложенные Боулби, Спенсом, Кадушиным и Бернстайном, в контексте факторов риска, вызывающих отказ от детей. Кроме того, изучалась концепция устойчивости семьи как новый взгляд на функционирование семьи. Несмотря на то, что в социальных науках существует целый ряд разнообразных подходов к проблемам дефицитов семейного ухода и отказу от детей, для разработки более структурированного взгляда на это явление

все еще существует потребность в дополнительных исследованиях. В частности, для извлечения практических мер классификации явления, как для исследовательских, так и для практических целей.

Для решения этой проблемы было проведено качественное исследование с помощью методологии обоснованной теории, в частности, было изучено 282 зарегистрированных случая лишения опеки, которые были разделены на 4 основные категории в зависимости от обстоятельств осиротения: смерть родителей, отказ в уходе, неспособность и невозможность опекунства. В результате были выявлены существенные факторы, сопровождающие каждое из этих четырех обстоятельств и выделины ключевые оси, через которые пересекается вектор лишения опекунства.

Результаты статьи позволяют констатировать, что, во-первых, отказ от ребенка является многослойным явлением, поэтому как причины, так и последствия отказа от ребенка зависят как минимум от социальных отношений и основных компонентов депривации. Во-вторых, отказ от ребенка происходит в условиях пересечения вышеперечисленных факторов риска. В-третьих, отказ от ребенка, как правило, является преднамеренным и добровольным действием родителя. И, наконец, количество и качество естественных социальных связей напрямую связаны с исходом отказа от детей.

Кроме того, был пересмотрен и уточнен подход к классификации феномена лишения опекунства, описанный в предыдущей статье, что может быть полезно как с точки зрения теоретических и исследовательских вопросов, так и для разработки политики в отношении детей, лишенных опеки.

Ключевые слова и фразы

Детство, содержание детства, функции семьи, качественное измерение функционирования семьи, лишение опекунства, отказ от ребенка, социальные отношения, обоснованная теория.

Introduction

Various sources of sociological and other social sciences clearly state that child-parent relationships, family care deficiencies, as a rule, are ultimately seen from the perspective of the child's future. Significantly, judgments about the direct effects of family care deficiencies are more often narrowly examined in the context of age and developmental psychology, specifically in the frames of the concepts of maternal deprivation, childhood fears, and trauma. (Freud, 1920; Bowlby, 1982; Adler 1985, Theodore J. Gaensbauer & Leslie Jordan, 2009; etc.). In sociology, they are discussed in

one case in terms of the development and manifestation of deviant behaviour, on the other hand in terms of the social position of the child and the social roles he/she possesses. The issue of child abandonment, the lack of care, is more discussed in the historical-sociological context, specifically how interconnected the development of childhood perceptions and child abandonment / neglect are (Aries, 1962; Kon, 2003; Qvortrup, 2005; Johnson & James, 2016). The philosophical side of the discussed issue refers to the discussion of the social philosophy as a starting point, considering the moral side of the child-parent relationship, examining it from the perspective of child's and parent's rights and responsibilities (Schoeman, 1980, Sorokin, 1994; Hegel, 1990).

Despite the diversity of studies on family care deficiencies and their implications, they are insufficient to formulate the research and practical positions needed to address child abandonment and its potential consequences. Discussions on the phenomenon of deprivation of children's care in the above disciplines require additional research, documentary data, which will allow to make the ideas about the phenomenon more structured, to specify them, separating the practical measurements of the classification of the phenomenon, both for research and practical purpose.

This article is an attempt at such an approach.

Theoretical and methodological basis

Family life, according to Spence, is one of the oldest known applied arts in the world (Spence, 1946, p. 11). Mixed with parental wisdom, it is the axis around which the content of the child's early childhood is shaped and observed, hence accordingly accumulated, to the main paradigm of later (future) life. It is necessary to discuss the issues of children care organization, their opportunities for healthy and prosperous development in the context of one of the oldest social institutions - the family, as an acceptable environment which can offer appropriate conditions for the child to become a self-sufficient individual giving meaningful content to their childhood.

Given the relatively small influence of parental care on child development compared to non-familial environmental impacts (Mekertichian, Bowes 1996; Rowe 1994), stated in the social genetics, this article considers "meaningless childhood" as an absence of the above conditions. We support the idea that although with age, the influence of the family on the child's lifestyle decreases, still the family remains the main guarantor for the child's adequate physical growth and health and provides a place for a necessary emotional experience and the opportunity to master acceptable patterns of behaviour (Spence, 1946, p. 11), at the same time, "permanent happiness in the family is a myth" (Spence, 1946, p. 38). A meaningful childhood does not assume to keep the child away from all possible dangers and negative experiences. The epitome of

childhood directly depends on the ability of the parents to survive, discuss, and interpret opportunities, difficulties, problems, ups and downs in an acceptable and protected environment for the child, in line with age and development, which instils the "wisdom" of life (Spence, 1946, p. 38, 46). From the ideological point of view, the mentioned approach is fully integrated within the framework of modern concepts of childhood, where the child is not the passive bearer of situations and the object of socialization but the active participant of his life.

What Spence describes as wisdom, Bowlby interprets as the creation of an environment that encourages, supports, and collaborates with the child's parents, allowing them to become competent in social interactions from an early age (Bowlby, 1982, pp. 377-378).

Bowlby identifies three main groups of reasons for the failure of care on behalf of a child's biological or kinship family: (1) the family was formed on illegitimate grounds, i.e. without official registration; (2) although the basis for forming a family is legal, it fails to function effectively due to economic circumstances, chronic physical disability, or mental instability of parents, (3) the family is broken up and unable to function due to the death, imprisonment, emigration, abandonment, hospitalization, divorce of the parent(s), as well as various natural, man-made disasters (Bowlby, 1952, p. 73). The proposed approach is quite broad in its scope, and the limits of the proposed classification are not clear, as the manifestations of care deficiencies, such as neglect, physical violence, lack of parental control, unsuccessful marriage, abandonment, divorce, absence of substitute caregivers (Bowlby, 1952, pp. 76-81) applies equally to all three groups.

Kadushin looks at care deficiencies from the perspective of a parent-child network and singles out seven main factors: parental physical absence, inability, and rejection of parental roles on behalf of parents, conflicts between expectations of mutual roles by parents, role conflict between different parental roles, physical or mental/emotional disability of the child, lack or insufficiency of community resources (Kadushin, 1974, pp. 12-13).

Michael Burnstein proposed another classification. When discussing the historical (western experience), sociological and psychological aspects of child abandonment, he uses the concept of "physical abandonment" to separate care from neglect. In this context, the author interprets child abandonment as an act of renouncing the child by the parent, where parent acts as an "owner" and the child as "his/her property". In his research, the author mentions the following risky or "noteworthy" factors as essential in terms of deprivation of child care: a) mother considers her own child as a burden, b) the mother has problems with adjustment, responsibility, which are the result of her own life story, c) the mother of the child can not expect support from the father of the

child, d) the child was born through an extramarital affair, e) unwanted pregnancy in a marriage characterized by volatile relationships, f) aggressive, rebellious, behavioural difficulties, child abuse experience. The author notes that these are just risk factors and do not necessarily lead to deprivation of care; however, they do lead to some type of family disadvantage (Burnstein 1981, pp. 218-219). This approach mainly is interesting, because of introducing the individual trait of a child as a possible factor of abandonment.

These and other similar approaches, as well as the entrenchment of system theory and ecological model in the field of family and childhood studies, changed the definition of a 'normal or "healthy" family, transforming the notion that families without problems are healthy and putting forward the view that families are healthy who are able to respond and to overcome crises that arise during the family life. Accordingly, the concept of family resilience or, in other words, family life crises was put forward to overcome them. The latter emphasizes especially the existence of two interrelated family processes in the resistant family: regulation and adaptation, which as protective factors allow the family to maintain its integrity and functionality (Maurovich et al., p. 3).

The concept of family resilience in our research is so important that crises in family life that lead to child abandonment (if viewed consequently) should be considered not only in terms of 'harm' but also in terms of protective factors that include family resilience and unity, the existence of shared beliefs, joint actions and governance, flexibility, access to formal and informal social support, etc. Accordingly, deprivation of childcare becomes a hindrance to the disruption of the balance of these two types of factors in the family in favour of the detrimental factors.

It is evident from the presented approaches how diverse the qualitative measurements of childhood and family life are. Simultaneously, some overlaps or intersections can be observed in them, which suggests that despite this diversity, there are still some more significant factors of influence (whether it is a protective or a detrimental factor). According to this, we believe that the initial guidelines detailing the circumstances that lead to a child's abandonment at least include the following basic measurements: the intention to have a child and the social and the family context of the birth of a child, the ability to provide physical care for the child, the quality and strength of the parent's attachment to the child. These measurements have been put forward in this study to discuss in depth their approach to classifying the phenomenon of a child deprived of care: circumstances of becoming deprived of care, the nature of resulting in deprivation of care, the existence of a relationship with the previous caregiver and the quality, as well as the existence of a relationship with the person replacing the parent (Karapetyan, 2019, p. 86).

Methods

In the framework of the research of the studied topic, the methodology of grounded theory was applied, particularly, the methodology of the constructivist grounded theory proposed by Charmaz.

As part of our study, the application of this methodology is so reasonable that it first coincides with our goal of building a new theoretical approach, on the other hand, it promotes an inductive approach to interpreting phenomena, which is essential to us in that it provides an opportunity to study and investigate phenomena, taking into account each individual case of childcare deprivation. As for the expediency of applying the constructivist direction in particular, is the fact that the procedures necessary for the researcher's freedom of interpretation of the phenomena, as well as for having valid data, are best combined here. Considering the availability of systematic factual data on cases of childcare deprivation in the database of the Child Support Center of the Fund for Armenian Relief (hereinafter referred to as the Center), the data of children sheltered in the Center in 2008-2017 were selected as the object of research. From the point of view of the research, the use of this database is so reliable that during the mentioned period the Center acted as the primary, main link of shelter for children at risk of guardianship; as a result it contains data on children at risk of guardianship from the whole country. On the other hand, the cases are well documented, which allows for in-depth analysis of qualitative data.

Taking into account that they are sheltered in the Center due to other circumstances in the child's life, in the first stage, a targeted sample of cases was made, removing from the existing 1389 registered cases under the influence of another factor, 282 cases were separated, in which deprivation of care was the main reason for the child to appear in the Center. After the clarification of the mentioned sample consolidation, the study of individual cases (by the case, we mean the family as a unit) was started, observing the requirements of the grounded theory procedure to construct a theoretical sample based on the identified initial codes (related to the aspects of the child abandonment event), then sub-categories and categories were formed, which are presented in the research results.

Given the multi-component nature of the phenomenon of childcare deprivation, the fact that the sub-categories of these categories may appear in a single case, the essential factor in the case classification was considered fundamental.

Main Results

Within the framework of this analysis, the starting point was considered to be the circumstances of the child becoming deprived of care, in particular considering the cases when the child is deprived of family care, is sheltered in Children's Support Center due to the death of the parent, the parent's voluntary refusal to take care of the child, the inability or impossibility of the parent to take care of the child.

Factor 1.1 Death of a parent/primary caregiver: This factor has at least two areas of discussion: first, it is about the death of one parent or parents or the only parent. It makes sense to consider the circumstances of the first case under the following factors of the first component. As for the second case, when the child is factually left without care, the fourth group of factors, that is, the nature of the relationship with the substitute person, acquires special importance, and the other factors are considered from the point of view of this person.

In fact, the death of the parent/s leads to the child being deprived of care and being removed from their natural environment, in cases when the impossibility of the substitute person follows it to assume the child's care, the obligatory nature of making a decision about caregiving, as well as the lack of importance given to the relationship with the parent's/primary caregivers of a child.

When talking about substitute caregivers, it is essential to consider another option when two groups of caregivers are formed: a formal substitute caregiver and an actual substitute caregiver. In this case, the nature of the relationship with the caregiver begins to change over time; although it was initially described as positive-constructive, however, a new "de facto" caregiver has appeared, whose presence has made the mentioned connection "destructive". Moreover, it is interesting to discuss this case in the contexts of the caregiver's inability and forced decision-making factors, which can be repaid even as a result of previous experience of positive relationships and professional intervention.

Factor 1.2. Refusal of care: Interestingly, in the case of denial of care, one can meet all the three characteristics that describe the nature of implementation: purposeful-voluntary, forced, chronic-repetitive. Analysis of the issues shows that these three are closely related to whether a parent/caregiver views a child in his or her future plans.

Usually, there are no constructive relationships by nature; moreover, there are cases when the caregiver purposefully leads the existing relationship to an end, in this case resulting in the final severance of the connection, even if from the beginning those relations were positive. It is especially evident when a parent of a child enters a new marriage.

In this context, the phenomenon of “perception of events” by children is interesting. Moreover, in this case, it seems that the circumstances of the child's age and seniority gain significant weight, especially when it comes to setting one's conditions before one's parents, which is more likely to be the case with siblings. In fact, in most cases, the children try to keep the relationship with the caregiver until the end. In a sense, this is an instinctive move to ensure one's own safety, which is described in detail in Bowlby's “Attachment and Loss” book (Bowlby, 1982).

It is also seen as a “normal” or an acceptable act by a parent to abandon or refuse to care for a child, in one instance. In the other instances, one of the most common typical cases is the parent's observation of the first marriage and the birth of the child from that marriage as a mistake of youth or a result of coincidence. It is especially true when it comes to early or forced marriage. Moreover, in such cases, the abandoning parent, on the one hand, tries to relinquish his responsibility for the abandonment of the child, on the other hand, there are cases when the child is accused of abandonment. Another important factor here is the attitude of the caring parent towards the child. When a child is directly associated with a father or mother, thus being targeted as a “child of the spouse” who “can not be good” and from whom it is necessary “get rid of”. As a rule, in most cases, the child born from the first marriage is at risk of abandonment, when the caregiver is the mother who is trying to remarry, in the case of male caregivers the abandonment is less frequent (if the man tries to form a second family, then the children of the first marriage are quietly transferred to the second family, regardless of the nature of the relationship, while in the case of women the children are mostly abandoned or left in the care of relatives).

Factor 1.3 Inability. This factor is interesting; in one case, it is a reason given by the parent to avoid actual care, which is at least considered more acceptable at the level of public perception. The other extreme is that the relevant officials/bodies can define the inability to provide care, and the caregiver is generally against it. This is especially true in the presence of mental health problems. Moreover, in the case of inability to discuss in its classical sense, we are usually talking about “unsuitable care” as in the form of forced “removal” - deprivation from caring, where the possibility of positive-constructive relations is relatively high. Of course, there are also destructive and damaging relations.

When talking about inability, one aspect can be singled out, which is related to the division of roles of parents in the family in terms of care of the child; this case is quite similar to Kadushin's approach to parental role conflict (Kadushin, 1974, pp. 20-21). However, we consider the issue in a slightly different dimension. In particular, based on cases where the child's father or mother leaves or simply goes to another place of work, and the other parent, although probably has the ability, however, at the

level of self-perception, she (or he) may not consider herself (himself) to combine these two main components of family problems with the provision of economic support and care. In fact, in this case, the cases succeed when there is a replacement or additional “other” - a relative, friend or colleague, who is able to share the burden of responsibilities or lighten it. In other cases, such situations usually lead to abandonment.

The other problem here is not the provision of care, but the inability to overcome the difficulties in one's own life, which is the cause of strained family relations. In extreme cases, it can also lead to child exploitation, shifting the issue to formal decision-making. In such cases, the level of development of children's self-care and social communication skills is more obvious, or in other words, the existence of survival mechanisms. This phenomenon is also known in the literature as the concept of “super competence” and “parentification” of the child (Englehardt, 2012, Earley & Cushway, 2002, pp. 163-178, Hooper, 2008, pp: 34-43.). Moreover, the interesting thing here is that in terms of abandonment or rejection, in contrast to other factors, the age of the child becomes essential, considering whether the child will be “beneficial” in the given type of exploitation or not. It is noteworthy that often in the early or later stages when the child becomes useless, he is abandoned.

Factor 1.4 Impossibility. Here we need to distinguish between the concepts of impossibility and inability. Linking inability to the presence or absence of social, physical, psychological, and emotional capacity to provide care by the caregiver, and, by impossibility, understanding the existence of circumstances preventing the presence of an adult caregiver in the child's life in the given period. In this case, we can meet three types of implementation: targeted-voluntary, forced, chronic-repetitive manifestations; however, more often, we encounter recurring stages in a chronic chain of deadlocks, which begin with the extravagance of “unrealistic” promises to the child and end with another disappointment. As with inability, impossibility is used here as a means of self-justification for the parent. In these cases, the most common is the imprisonment of a single parent (cases where one parent is imprisoned and the other refuses or avoids care should be considered in the context of inability), the second option is when the parent is abroad and is unable to return due to documentation or other issues, the third is the issue of inpatient care, and the fourth is the need to pause in family life, in order to regain the care of a child. These are cases, when the family needs some time to resolve its problems, such as employment or shelter.

As the study has shown, even in the presence of commonalities and circumstances, deprivation of care as a phenomenon is extremely multidimensional and multilevel. Therefore, a combination of one or even two factors is not enough for a child to become deprived of care. Abandonment as a phenomenon occurs when risk factors

arise in the family as an organizing unit of the children's care, in several spheres of life, in parallel, at the same time, forming a negative "synergy".

In the consolidation of the discussed cases, evidently, the most frequent cases of voluntary refusal of the care of the children are when a refusal is a deliberate act. Even if at the initial stage the child-parent relationship was characterized by a positive-constructive relationship, then gradually, often intentionally by the parent, their vector was directed towards the rejection of the child and breaking the relationship. These are mainly the cases when the most significant factors are the intention to have a child, the circumstances accompanying the birth of a child, and the attitude towards the other parent. In some cases, one can find situations of inability, but, as a rule, the mentioned circumstance is a "justification" here, not a real factor.

Incidents of deprivation of care due to the incapacity of a parent have a regular or median frequency/pattern, where deprivation of care is usually a mandatory step for the parent, moreover, the existence of mutually constructive relations is not ruled out here (the perspective of the child and the parent is so often, not that of professionals). Still, in fact, chronic-variable relations that harm the child are often found here.

In the study, the cases of deprivation of care due to the death of a parent or only parent are the least common.

In general, it should be noted that from the point of view of the study of the phenomenon of deprivation of care, it is about the social relations of the parents and the child, including qualitative characteristics, in terms of volume, and the quantitative characteristics. The study of cases shows that deprivation of care, as a phenomenon, depends significantly on the existence of "family social capital" in the family (Coleman describes it as a set of interactions between parent and child) (Coleman, 1988) on the one hand, and its qualitative characteristics, and on the other hand, the connections of the family as a social unit and the family members outside the family with the environment and their qualitative characteristics (the concept of Putnam community social capital may apply here, given the broad understanding of the concept of the community) (Putnam, 2000). Therefore, when talking about deprivation of care and the circumstances leading to it, it is advisable to separate the two main areas of study:

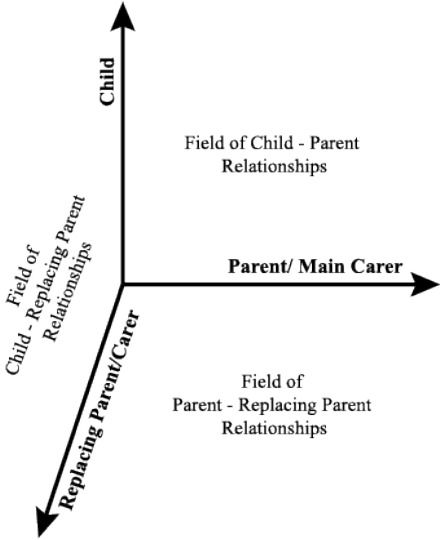
1. social relations,
2. main aspects of deprivation of care.

Let us look at social relations from the point of view of the risk of a child becoming deprived of care. Suppose we try to describe the trajectory of deprivation of care. In that case, we will see that abandonment is a result of circumstances incompatible with the child's care in the life of the child's primary caregiver. They can be both objective, such as death, illness, imprisonment, etc., as well as subjective, which are more about the caregiver, his/her abilities, opportunities in the current reality, the

child's birth circumstances, perceptions and ideas about the child's and his/her role in future plans. And these also become the direct characteristics of deprivation of care, from the point of view of abandonment, the nature of action, etc. The analysis of the cases showed that the set of objective-subjective factors ultimately leads to deprivation of care when accompanied by the presence of “cracks” in the parent-child relationship (regardless of at which stage of deprivation the gaps arise).

One of the possible actors in the field of relationships is the “substitute parent”. In our proposed classification, we considered it only in terms of the relationship with the child. However, here it becomes clear that at the same time, the nature of the relationship between the child's parent (biological/kinship) and the substitute parent is significant. Accordingly, it turns out that the field of social relations, represented by the entities involved in the process, has at least three axes: the child, the parent, and the substitute parent (See Diagram 1.). Of course, formal networks are also important here and how professionally they respond to the situation, but these are additional factors and not fundamental.

Diagram 1. Fields of social relations in the context of deprivation of care



Concerning the approach proposed in the above article, there is a need to review one aspect. This refers to the characteristics of the parent-child and substitutes parent-child relationship. Based on the results obtained, it should be noted that the nature of the relationship in the context of the care of a child can be described by the same measurements. At the same time, there is a need to separate this block of relationships, as we mentioned the nature of the parent-substitute parent relationship (it should be noted here that the substitute parent is a person who is part of the child's or his/her

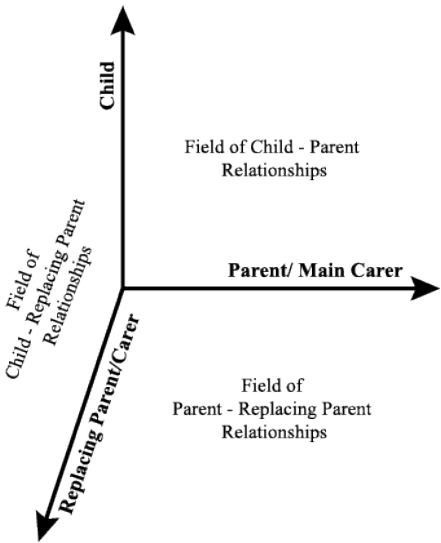
family environment and who takes care of the child before he/she enters the care system, the foster parent is not considered here yet).

Accordingly, from the point of view of interpretation measures of the caregiver-child relationship, the following scale is most applicable: positive-constructive, chronically-variable, destructive, lack of connection.

As for the interpretation of the parent- substitute parent relationship, the following scale is more applicable here: firm and stable, unstable - evasive, negative, lack of connection.

Discussing the main aspects of deprivation of care, we see that the three axes identified within the framework of our proposed approach are: the circumstance of becoming deprived of care, the nature of the relationship, the nature of the deprivation of care process, are really fundamental and it is through the intersection of these three axes that the phenomenon of deprivation of care is manifested (See: Diagram 2.).

Diagram 2. Main aspects of deprivation of care



We have already talked about the relationship; let us talk about the other two axes. Separate measurements characterizing the fact of becoming deprived of care were, in fact, quite effective from the point of view of the application, as they allowed to standardize the cases without losses, considering the peculiarities of each.

As for the nature of the process of deprivation of care, the three measurements proposed here: targeted-voluntary, forced, chronic-repetitive, need to be supplemented with an additional one, which we will call inactivity-indifference.

The above implies the implementation of some revisions and adjustments of the measurements in the classification of deprivation of children' care presented in the previous article, which can be summarized in Table 1.

Table 1. Measurements of classification of deprivation of care

Components of the process of deprivation of care	(1) Circumstances that place children “at risk” of deprivation of care	(2) The nature of the implementation and the process of deprivation of children's care
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Death of a parent • Refusal of care • Inability • Impossibility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intentional-voluntary action • Forced action • Chronic-recurrent • Inaction-indifference
Nature of relationships	(3) The nature of the relationship with the caregiver (parent and substitute parent)	(4) The nature of the relationship between the parent and the substitute parent
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive-constructive • Chronic-variable • Destructive • Absence of communication 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong and stable, • Unstable - evasive, • Denial, • Absence of communication

The study of specific cases from the perspective of the mentioned measurements from the point of view of determining the content of a child's childhood experience and predetermining the risk of abandoning a child. The use of qualitative measurement scales can be of significant practical importance for forecasting abandonments, preventing further impacts, and organizing an early intervention. Because almost ten per cent of vulnerable children in the country are yearly endangered by the deprivation of childhood and, in some cases, are abandoned at this stage, in the context of the radical changes taking place in the sphere of response to the occurrence of deprivation of care and child protection in the country, in-depth discussions on the content of this phenomenon, evidence-based generalizations and patterns can become important guidelines for the specialization of systemic change and approaches, whilst maintaining the specifics of the local context, and therefore being culturally sensitive to practical solutions to these vital issues. The issue is genuinely relevant given the differing interpretations and conflicting opinions in society regarding the systems in place to protect abandoned children.

As a continuation of this topic, it is interesting to consider the phenomenon of deprivation of care, deprivation of childhood and abandonment, as its extreme manifestation, within the context of child resilience, which is a subject of another study.

Conclusions

Thus, as a result of theoretical-research analysis, we can single out the following main conclusions:

- **Prerequisites for the possible outcome of deprivation of care.** The phenomenon of deprivation of childcare is characterized by two main aspects *a. Social relations* (child-parent, child-substitute parent, parent-substitute parent) and *b. Main aspects/ components of deprivation of care* (nature and quality of the relationship, circumstance of becoming deprived of care, nature of the action to deprive the child of care). The probable outcome of deprivation of care, is dependant upon the steps and interventions taken between the intent for the reunification of the child with the family to the point of abandonment by the parent, is all dependant on the intersection of these two aspects. Except in cases of deliberate refusal due to the death of parents and the impossibility of objective circumstances, all other manifestations are subject to intervention and recovery of the family and care arrangements.

- **The density of risk factors.** Deprivation of care or child abandonment is a multifaceted and multilevel phenomenon, which from the perspective of the child puts them “at risk” of a minimum of the above mentioned three risk factors in terms of childcare (except for the death of one or both parents and the lack or absence of social ties).

- **Making a decision to abandon the child.** As a rule, abandonment is a deliberate action by the parent, which is an outcome of a voluntary decision. The cases when it is a forced decision and an appeal is required is less frequent.

- **The circumstance of social ties or capital.** In the context of care deprivation, the nature of the relations between the child and substitute parent, the parent and substitute parent, or the relations of a child with the adults with a positive influence is equally important. The amount of social capital and the quality of natural social ties are directly related to the outcome of care deprivation: the more positive the relationships with the substitute persons, the less likely it is that the child will be abandoned.

The results of this article can make a significant contribution to the areas of response to children’s deprivation from care, child abandonment prevention policy, and practical implementation.

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