THEORY AND IMPROVEMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY

THE PSYCHOLOGICAL CHARACTER
OF THE SOCIAL ROLES OF YOUNG AND ELDERLY FAMILY MEMBERS

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Abstract. The article highlights that the current psychological environment of young families is shaped by family roles and mutual relationships regulated through new traditions that arise from the variation between traditionalism and modernity. The role of the elderly in forming the family environment is mostly grounded in national customs, values, conventional interactions and ethnocultural perspectives. In contemporary young families, where the old and the new cultural elements are intertwined and mutual understanding between the generations is anticipated, the psychological atmosphere tends to be favorable. The author underlines that the psychological environment of a family is determined by the conditions created for social development of youth, children and the elderly, positive interpersonal relations within the family, the leadership style of the head of the family, hierarchical connections among members, individual character traits, behavioral norms, the extent to which role expectations are fulfilled and other factors. A favorable psychological atmosphere in a young family depends not only on the elderly but also on the young themselves. In families where young members openly express their inner emotions are able to voice and share their needs and desires, the interpersonal relations and consequently the psychological climate tend to be more harmonious. Likewise, whether a woman or a man, having the intention and ability to reflect on their behavior, thoughts, and the mistakes or correct actions within relationships plays a regulatory role in the social-psychological environment of the family. In such a context, mutual understanding, empathy and compromise emerge within the family, both parties become more reflective, tensions and conflicts decrease. Whether the psychological environment of young families is favorable also depends on whether the family is nuclear or extended. Psychological disruption may occur less frequently in nuclear families compared to extended ones, but this is not always the case. Some extended families may have a more favorable psychological atmosphere than nuclear ones. This implies that the factor regulating the psychological environment of a family does not necessarily stem from the direct presence of elderly individuals, but from the influence they exert.

Key words: psychological environment, family, family subjects, mutual relationships, social-psychological environment.

Introduction. The article examines the theoretical aspects of the role of elderly people in shaping the psychological atmosphere in young families. It explores the philosophical, sociological, socio-psychological, and pedagogical-psychological dimensions of the issue. The areas of influence of the psychological characteristics of elderly individuals on the family environment are analyzed. Socio-cultural factors affecting the formation of the psychological climate in young families are identified. The article also describes the changes in the psychological atmosphere of family life among young people caused by modern globalization. The socio-psychological characteristics of the roles of both young and elderly family members are explained. Additionally, the content of conflicts that negatively affect the psychological atmosphere within the family is revealed.

The socio-psychological aspects of the influence of elderly people on the formation of the psychological atmosphere in young families are studied through an analysis of the attitudes of both young

and elderly family members toward the family's psychological climate, and the results obtained are generalized based on this analysis. The article also outlines ways to regulate the mutual relationships between young and elderly family members with the aim of creating a favorable psychological atmosphere in young families.

In social psychology, the topic of the family is one of the most studied issues. However, depending on the social, political, and economic characteristics of the era, as well as the mindset of the people living during that time, the essence, directions, and scope of this topic change. In each era, it acquires new content and new directions. Currently, the family topic remains at the center of attention in social psychology and other branches of psychology (such as personality psychology, educational psychology, gender psychology, etc.) and is the subject of numerous studies. In recent years, interest in studying the psychological characteristics of family planning, development, and preservation has significantly increased. The reason for this is the rise in divorces caused by the influence of global processes in the world and society on the family institution. One of the main causes of divorces is considered to be the disruption of the psychological climate within the family. For this reason, the issue under consideration is particularly relevant.

Although a young family is a union of two people-a man and a woman who have entered into marriage – they do not live their lives in isolation. The family is influenced both directly and indirectly by other family members, their communication and relationships, as well as by a range of socio-psychological factors. Therefore, especially in the Eastern world, which includes our society, the family is perceived as a social group based on mutual relationships between the man and woman, their parents, siblings, and, in some cases, other close relatives who jointly manage the household. After the birth of a child, the functions of the family become even more complex. Against the backdrop of all these interactions, the psychological climate of the family is formed.

The nature of the family environment largely depends on the relationships between its members-both young and elderly-as well as their values and motivation for activity. On the other hand, in the modern era of globalization, rapid development of science and technology, the emergence of new communication tools, the virtual world, and artificial intelligence, when significant differences arise between generations not only in worldview and thinking style but also in tastes and material aspirations, the study of factors that disrupt or, conversely, normalize the family atmosphere becomes especially relevant.

The family is also a protective and nurturing environment. At different stages of life, each person may need family support for various reasons. From this perspective, the family environment should provide protection not only materially and spiritually but also physically. However, this is not always the case. Sometimes, an undesirable atmosphere develops within families that can become a real threat to its members. For this reason, specialists (Abbasov, 2011, p. 118–120; Alizade, 2015, pp. 201–202) believe that a stable and harmonious lifestyle within the family is one of the most important factors in creating a favorable environment. After all, a strong society is built only by a strong and harmonious family. Therefore, in modern families, it is necessary to find ways to create, maintain, and develop a stable and harmonious atmosphere and promote this in society. However, the psychological atmosphere is not created solely by the young members of the family. Other family members, especially the elderly, also influence it.

Discussion. In psychology, a classification of old age has been developed. In the family context, elderly people usually refer to the parents of the young spouses, as well as (if they are alive) their grandparents. The psychology of elderly people differs from that of the youth, which often makes age-related characteristics the primary cause of disruptions in the family's psychological climate. Following these are differences in character and cultural attitudes. These differences, acting in two directions, can influence the family atmosphere both positively and negatively. On this matter, A.A. Alizade has important thoughts: "In the family space, interpersonal relationships are formed

within psychological boundaries and diverge over time. It is in the light of these relationships that the psychological climate of the family is formed. In the spiritual life of the family, the mother-in-law and father-in-law, as well as close relatives of the bride and groom, play a significant role. They not only affect the relationship between husband and wife but can sometimes even change the fate of the young family" (Alizade, 2015, pp. 210–212).

It should also be noted that old age has its own distinctive psychological characteristics. Unlike young people, elderly individuals no longer make new plans, nor do they strive for career advancement, raising children, or embarking on serious new endeavors. They are more concerned with maintaining their health, ensuring material and spiritual well-being in old age, creating a calm and measured living environment, and deciding with whom and where it would be most comfortable to live.

As D. Whitman notes, starting from around the age of 50, these concerns begin to dominate a person's life. He writes: "It is necessary to monitor the health of the elderly, ensure their safety, minimize risks, and also understand what their needs are, what gives meaning to their lives, and what brings them comfort and joy" (Whitman, 2024, pp. 86–89).

Unfortunately, some young people, after getting married, focus exclusively on their own concerns, showing indifference to the interests and preferences of the elderly, considering their lives to be over. Very often, one of the reasons for the disruption of the psychological climate in the family is the youth's unwillingness to understand, accept, and appreciate the inner world of the elderly. In such cases, both mutual relationships within the family and the distribution of family roles suffer, which in turn disrupts the psychological atmosphere in the family.

The analysis of the scientific sources reviewed during our study of the problem showed that the role of elderly people in forming the psychological environment in a young family encompasses quite broad and complex issues. On one hand, the problem is considered as a small social group; on the other hand, it involves the personality, character, and interpersonal relationships of family members, while also defining the distinctions between the family and other social groups, as well as changes in relationships depending on family types, etc. It was also found that the young family consists of spouses and children, while the older generation includes grandparents, and in some cases great-grandparents, as well as aunts, uncles, and other relatives who may not be married or live with the young family for various reasons (Aliyev, 2010, pp. 42–44).

The article clarifies the theoretical issues concerning the role of elderly people in shaping the psychological environment of young families. It explores the philosophical, sociological, social-psychological, and pedagogical-psychological aspects of the problem. The directions in which the psychological characteristics of elderly people influence the family environment are analyzed. Sociocultural factors affecting the formation of the psychological environment in young families are identified. The changes caused by modern globalization in the psychological environment of young families are discussed. The social-psychological features of the roles of young and elderly family members are explained. The content of conflicts negatively affecting the psychological environment is revealed. The social-psychological aspects of the influence of elderly people on the formation of the psychological environment in young families are studied, including the attitudes of both young and elderly members towards the family's psychological environment, and the results are summarized. Methods for regulating relationships with elderly people during the formation of the psychological environment in young families are demonstrated (Jabbarov, 2016, pp. 30–31).

The main direction of the study on the role of elderly people in shaping the psychological environment of young families is an ethnocultural approach to family traditions, values, and relationships. The research focuses on traditional and modern aspects of family relations, the coexistence of old culture and modernity within these relations, as well as gender issues. However, the role of elderly people in forming the psychological environment of contemporary young families significantly differs from the traditions, customs, and norms that have existed in our national culture for centuries.

The conducted analysis also showed that just as modern youth do not have a positive attitude toward the presence of elderly people in the family, the elderly themselves feel similarly. The main issue here is to find ways to structure relationships with the elders, role behavior, and role expectations even within the nuclear family, so that these relationships have a positive impact on the psychological environment of the young family.

Conclusion. Based on this, we have drawn the following conclusions:

It was established that although the role of elderly people in forming a favorable environment in young families has been studied in various branches of social psychology, different aspects of modern relationships, as well as the state of the problem in nuclear and extended families, have not yet been sufficiently explored. Moreover, research conducted in this field tends to have a national and regional character, as it has been carried out by specialists from different countries.

It has been determined that in the studies, the family is primarily examined as a small real group. In this context, the main focus is on defining intrafamily relationships, issues of socio-psychological climate and management within small groups, as well as identifying signs of sympathy and antipathy among family members. The object of the study is the formation of the role structure in a young family, the distribution of roles between women and men, grandmothers and grandfathers, the influence of elderly people on relationships and the personal development of family members, including family management.

During the research, factors that disrupt a favorable socio-psychological environment in the family were also identified. These are related to both the material-physical and spiritual-psychological spheres: difficult economic conditions of the family, unemployment, living in rented housing, presence of debts, interpersonal conflicts, struggle for leadership in the family between husband and wife, between the younger and older generations, incompatibility of family members' characters, differences in worldview, religious and political beliefs, lack of trust between family members, difficulties in understanding and perceiving one another, external interference in the family, negative influence from the relatives of the husband or wife, mutual alienation in the family over time, different approaches to child-rearing, etc. Among the factors that hinder the development of a healthy family environment, the negative impact of modern information and communication technologies also comes to the forefront. One of the main ways to protect the family environment is to avoid the influence of technological means, which is one of the primary causes of the breakdown of traditional relationships in modern families – both between spouses and between younger and older generations (Aliyeva, 2023, pp. 78–82).

The analysis showed that in the modern world, the role of a favorable environment created within the family in a person's life is determined not only by social, economic, demographic, and other criteria, but also by personal self-protection, self-development, self-identification with the experiences and values of family members and society, and ultimately, by self-realization. The process of personality formation continues within the young family. Elderly family members have a significant influence on this process. Therefore, the conditions created by older people for the personal development of young family members are also considered one of the key factors in establishing a favorable psychological family environment.

It has become clear that the formation of the psychological environment in a young family involves multiple parties: the men and women in the young family, their parents, as well as their children. The family environment is influenced by the woman's relationships not only with her husband and children, but also with the elders. The nature of this influence depends not only on the current situation but also on how well young people are prepared for family life. Although analyses show that the upbringing of girls in families often references national traditions, these views do not dominate in the personal opinions of the girls themselves. They tend to prefer more gender-equal relationships in the families they build and, in some cases, do not take the roles assigned to them seriously. As a result,

tension between young women and the elders in the family becomes inevitable. The assessments made by elderly parents regarding the women in young families have further confirmed this.

The study showed that the degree of favorability of the psychological climate in the family, the spiritual and psychological state of the marriage, and its duration are determined by the mutual efforts of the family members to adapt. This is confirmed by both research in the field of family development and the theories and concepts that have been developed. Thus, as a result of primary and secondary influences on the family, its psychological environment may be disrupted. The primary influences include the adequacy or inadequacy of the spouse in the young family, the level of emotional attachment, differentiation or generalization within the family, self-attribution to the family, strong self-assertion or adaptability. Other influences involve emotional processes occurring within the family nucleus and relationships with the mother and father. When these relationships deteriorate, tension and conflicts gradually increase, identification with negative examples within the family occurs, as well as comparison and low self-evaluation, poor performance of family roles, and so on.

It was found that the main impact of modern globalization on the family environment is its nuclearization. A large number of young families now prefer to live separately from their parents, independently address their needs, and raise their children according to their own preferences.

In families that are more influenced by elderly members, women expressed greater dissatisfaction with the family environment than men. This factor is more prominently observed among young women in extended families. Moreover, men show a greater tendency to reduce tension in the family than women, which is reflected in their more positive approach to situations, avoidance of gossip and petty discussions, not exaggerating minor incidents, etc. These approaches also reveal mutual accusations in the assessment of those who do not fulfill their roles properly within the family. In both nuclear and extended families, most parents tend to show respect to the elderly, while the elderly, in turn, show respect to the younger generation. This also indicates the existence of contradictions in role expectations between the two generations. However, among adolescents in families, there are more individuals who believe that everyone is failing in their roles. Apparently, they do not include themselves in the term "everyone," but instead refer to both their parents and their grandparents (Baker, 2022, pp. 94–96).

Among the proposed options for improving the psychological environment in the family, the most preferred by respondents is the proper fulfillment of responsibilities by each family member. The highest indicator for this factor is among mothers in nuclear families. Grandparents in both family models also agree with this opinion. The second most prioritized factor is the increase in family income and improvement of social conditions. There are also those who would like to change everything in the family, but they are in the minority (Amrahlı, 2023, pp. 72–74).

The study also revealed that although family conflicts are currently the most significant cause of divorce, the root cause of these conflicts lies in the gradually deteriorating psychological atmosphere within the family. The role of older family members in regulating the psychological environment is considerable. It was determined that the contribution of elderly people to the deterioration of the family's psychological environment is manifested in several ways. These include, first and foremost, moral and psychological factors. Another group of factors is social in nature, while a third is linked to the economic situation of the family. Regardless of the reason for their emergence, the nature of these factors – those that disrupt the psychological environment in the family and lead to conflicts – can be seen in two forms:

Intrapersonal factors, which stem from conflicts between personal interests and familial obligations.
Interpersonal factors, which arise between different family members.

Thus, the results show that in the early stages of life, relationships satisfy both parties. Later, the sphere of relationships extends beyond sexual interaction and begins to include other family members. At this stage, everyone in the family must take responsibility for their roles and perform them

adequately. When this does not happen, family roles- and subsequently relationships -begin to blur. When young people start their own families, they often carry over the model of family relationships they observed in their parents. This model, which also includes their own individual structure, is significantly influenced by natural and social environmental factors.

For a deeper study of the problem, it is possible to enhance the positive influence of elderly people on the formation of a positive psychological climate in families by familiarizing them with family systems, identifying factors that shape family psychology, and developing appropriate methodologies based on practical examples created in this field. Alongside this, a positive psychological environment can be formed through the youth's attention to the needs of elderly family members, ensuring their interests, protecting their health and safety, creating activity directions to motivate their personal development, and providing equality and voluntariness in family management.

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