

## SOCIAL ASPECTS OF GENDER DIFFERENCES IN THE VIEWS OF MODERN YOUTH ABOUT MOTHERHOOD AND FATHERHOOD

<sup>a</sup>VALENTINA A. SUSHKO, <sup>b</sup>IRINA V. VASENINA, <sup>c</sup>MARIA E. LIPATOVA

*Lomonosov Moscow State University, Leninskie gory str., 1, Moscow, Russia*

*email: <sup>a</sup>valentina.sushko@gmail.com, <sup>b</sup>irvasenina@mail.ru, <sup>c</sup>lme-tatarintseva@mail.ru*

**Abstract:** The problem-focused investigation of the attitudes of young people to motherhood and fatherhood, parental mindsets and expectations remains open in terms of science. In the article, we considered the study of the concept of parenthood along with the attitude of the modern youth toward it. A questionnaire survey was used as a method of empirical research. Based on the analysis of empirical data, the nature of changes in the value paradigm of family and marriage, depending on the degree of religiosity, and the role of internal and external factors of the social environment are shown. The mechanism of their influence is revealed. The significance of religiousness of youth as a factor of formation of attitude to family and marriage is defined, and the probability model of its formation is developed.

**Keywords:** family values, motives and norms of behavior, motherhood, fatherhood, family values, religious values, installation, standby.

### 1 Introduction

The modern world is conditioned by constant change and improvement. The things that seemed familiar and undeniable in the past, may be subject to doubts and rethinking today. Thus, gender stereotypes ("sustainable perceptions that put women at a disadvantage in society compared to men in terms of achieving status, power, and access to resources") are also changing. These perceptions concern all spheres of life, the most common of which are those according to which the home and children are a traditionally female sphere, and the work is a traditionally male field. It is worth noting that gender stereotypes are fairly stable, but at the same time, under the influence of modernization and emancipation of modern society, they gradually change, as well as real practices related to parenting. In this regard, the problem of choosing the type of role interaction in a family is becoming increasingly stronger for men and women. Changes are also taking place in the value priorities of men and women. The value of career and self-esteem step forward, the value of the family goes to the background. There is a change in the attitudes of women to have children. All these aspects contribute to the emergence of new views on the family and the distribution of gender roles. In this regard, the change of life values and attitudes of modern men and women to the family, the birth of children and the distribution of gender roles in the family becomes a topical issue of our time.

The study of these aspects of perceptions of the family and parental roles is of particular importance in the historical context, since gender policy had a huge impact on the basic areas of life, including the family. With the advent of market relations and the absence of rigid gender policy in the field of family relations, the ideas about motherhood and fatherhood change mainly among the younger generation. The study of the perceptions of the younger generation is relevant due to some circumstances. The end of the XX century is associated with the appearance of the so-called Y generation: people born and brought-up in new socio-political conditions.

At present, values of young people are changing, which is typical of a moral crisis. This is promoted by the lifestyle of modern society: belittling of the importance of motherhood and fatherhood in comparison with career success leads to the fact that the creation of a family and the birth of a child is not a happy planned stage of people's lives. For young people, family is one of the tools to overcome the moral crisis. Relying on them, young men form a special system of values where the family and marriage play an important role (Vasenina & Sushko, 2018, pp. 451-459).

### 2 Literature Review

An empirical study of gender differences in the views of modern youth on motherhood and fatherhood implies the determination of theoretical approaches and a system of concepts that allow describing and explaining, based on the results, what reasons form the ideas about the distribution of father and mother roles in modern families.

In Russian and foreign sociology, there is a sufficient theoretical base in the field of research of gender and the distribution of gender roles in the family. The distribution of roles in the family between husband and wife, between father and mother is studied from the point of view of several theoretical and methodological approaches.

Family values, and the family as a whole, have passed a long way in historical evolution and had their own special characteristics at different times.

From the second half of the XIX century, holistic theories began to appear on the problems of family and marriage, where values that hold together family members were concerned.

One of the first special works in the field of family and marriage relations was the research of J. J. Bachofen "Mother Right" (1861). He proposed the concept of hetaerism as an evolutionary state of society through which all nations passed towards monogamous marriage and family, based on the high position of women in society (mother right).

Gender roles as constructs created by actors in everyday reality were considered by representatives of the constructivist paradigm - P. Berger, T. Luckmann (1995, pp. 50-60), E. Goffman (1976). The very notion of gender is considered by sociologist Voronina (2000, p. 12) from the point of view of three approaches: theories of social construction of gender, gender as a stratification category and gender as a cultural metaphor. Representatives of the unifying paradigm, P. Bourdieu (2005, p. 528), A. Giddens (1984), R. Connell (1995) integrated the provisions of structural-functional and constructivist theories with regard to the study of the distribution of gender roles. Thus, for example, R. Connell's "unifying paradigm" combines "social construction of gender and gender composition" (Zdravomyslova & Temkina, 2000, pp. 20-21).

Based on this theory, it is possible to analyze gender relations in Russia. R. Connell (1995) builds a structural-constructivist approach on the interaction of the agent and the social structure, where the structure is stated historically, and the agent performs the practices, creating the identity of masculinity and femininity within a given structure.

Practices of femininity and masculinity, created in institutions, reproduce or transform the structure. Consequently, changes in everyday interactions ultimately lead to the transformation of gender composition. The structural-constructivist approach allows us to understand that the general ideas about parenthood also change under the influence of various practices implemented in the context of modern Russian society.

In Soviet sociology, the process of distribution of roles in the family was studied from functional positions in the context of the contradiction between work and everyday duties assigned to women (Kharchev, 1960, p. 121; Yankova, 1969, pp. 76-87).

E. A. Zdravomyslova and A. A. Temkina in their work "History and Modernity: gender order in Russia" (2006) consider how "patterns of femininity and masculinity, which are often considered natural or biologically given, were created by Soviet state policy and various organizations, and then underwent changes in the course of post-Soviet reforms" (p. 57). They note

that in Russia a gender order has been created, for which a clear distribution of roles in the family into male and female is characteristic, namely, men are assigned the role of head of the family, and the woman reserves the organization of life, which includes taking care of children and implementation of main household responsibilities. Due to the constant dynamics of society, gender roles are changing. The authors draw attention to the fact that female roles change much more slowly than male roles. The features of the existing post-Soviet gender relations are analyzed in the work of I. N. Tartakovskaya "Gender Sociology" (2005). Among them: the preservation of male dominance in the public sphere, in the labor market and the asymmetric distribution of responsibilities in the family; the sustainability of patterns that emerged during the Soviet gender order; problems of men and women in the implementation of roles: combining the role of a professional in the workplace and the family breadwinner for men and combining work and family for women in the absence of institutional support (p. 133).

Within the framework of the theory of structural functionalism, the transformation process of the family institution and its consequences are analyzed by A.I. Antonov, V.M. Medkov (1996, p. 304).

According to scientists, the family institution is in a state of crisis, the patriarchal model of the distribution of gender roles is a condition for the stable functioning of the family institution. Within the framework of foreign and Russian sociological researches, typologies were developed for ways to distribute gender roles in families.

American researcher A. Hochschild (Hochschild & Machung, 1989) identifies three types of gender roles, based on the distribution of housework between spouses: traditional (a woman is responsible for housework, a man keeps a family), egalitarian (equal division of responsibilities for family and child care), mixed (demonstration of traditional roles in practice, but following egalitarian views).

German researcher B. Pfau-Effinger (2000) identifies six types of gender roles, depending on the combination of paid and domestic work by spouses: 'the gender model of the family economy, the model of a male breadwinner and a housewife, the model of male breadwinner and a part housewife, the two breadwinners model with state childcare, the two breadwinners / two housewives model, the two breadwinners / hired woman-housewife model" (pp. 27-28).

Russian sociologists E.A. Zdravomyslova, A.A. Temkina (2002) use the concept of a "gender contract" to describe the methods of assigning gender roles. They distinguish contracts of "housewives", "working mother", "career-oriented woman", "sponsor", "equal statuses".

In general, the concept of parenting is analyzed in the works of such researchers as L. L. Shpakovskaya and J. Chernova (2013), who define the concept of "parenthood" from the point of view of sociology, and also highlight the models of parenthood: parenthood as reproduction, as proof of a gender-normative role, as a duty, as one of the vital projects, as self-realization (p. 15). Parenthood as an integral psychological education of the individual is considered by R.V. Ovcharova (2008), who highlights the stages of the formation of parenthood: theoretical (before marriage) and practical (birth of a child) (pp. 45-50).

In more detail the phenomena of motherhood and fatherhood were studied by such sociologists as Olga Isupova and Igor Kon, who presented the collaborative work "Motherhood and Fatherhood: sociological essay" (2009, p. 124). They also note the changes taking place in the institution of motherhood and fatherhood in modern society.

The father is associated as the breadwinner, discipline holder, role model, mentor of sons. He is a symbol of power and discipline, both for children and for his wife. But gradually there is a reorientation from the authority of the father to his influence.

The importance moves from the display of restraint towards the child to the preservation of his image in the memory of children, mostly boys.

Based on foreign studies, primarily German, the emergence of new fathers is analyzed in the work of the Russian sociologist E. Yu. Rozhdestvenskaya (2010, pp. 75-89). In her article "From Father to Dad: the liberal trend?", she identifies three types of post-patriarchal father that exist today.

There are also studies in Russia that note a tendency towards transformation of the institution of motherhood and fatherhood in recent decades: studies conducted by A. V. Avdeeva (2012), Turetskaya (2001, p. 68). So, A. V. Avdeeva (2012) notes the trend of greater participation of fathers in the upbringing of children. It shows that there is dissonance of trends in gender relations in Russia: new practices and traditional patterns and stereotypes are facing each other. In addition, she identifies 2 types of new fathers: fathers-executors and fathers-managers. O.N. Bezrukova (2013) identifies 4 types of fathers, depending on the practices of support, resources, and identity: active rejecting, passive rejecting, passive accepting, and active accepting (pp. 118-130). G. V. Turetskaya (2001) identifies three types of combining work and motherhood by women: "forced", "professional" and "innovative". Important components that stand out among the ideas of parenthood are values (p. 68).

### 3 Research Methodological Framework

The aim of the study was to identify gender differences in the views of modern youth about motherhood and fatherhood. The objectives of the study were as follows: first, to determine the ideas of modern youth about motherhood and fatherhood, the role of the father in the family, the role of the mother in the family, readiness for a family and the birth of children; secondly, to determine what differences exist and what views among young men and women about the role of father and mother in the family take place; thirdly, to build a probability model of formation of the attitude of modern youth towards family and marriage.

The study was conducted at the Faculty of Sociology of Lomonosov Moscow State University. A survey questionnaire was developed, as well as the sample of the survey. The survey was conducted in 2018. The combination of the interviewed people was formed using quota sample approach. Sampling error is within  $\pm 5\%$ . The source of the initial empirical research data was young people living in Moscow, aged 18-30, unmarried, without children at the time of the survey. The online questionnaire survey was used as a method for collecting primary empirical data. The questionnaire used closed and open questions. 476 persons were interviewed by the method of personal questionnaire. The totality of the respondents was formed using the method of targeted sampling using the "snowball effect". The main condition for the construction of the sample was compliance with quotas by sex, and it was necessary to interview 51.1% of women aged 18-30 years and 48.9% of men aged 18-30 years. Quotas by gender were met in the sample. As a result, 51.1% of women (141 people) and 48.9% of men (135 people) were among the respondents, which correspond to the data of the general population of this category of respondents.

### 4 Results and Discussion

First of all, it was necessary to determine the readiness to enter into an official marriage. More than half of respondents are ready to marry in the future (57.2%). A tenth of the respondents (10.5%) plan to marry, but cannot do it for certain circumstances. A quarter of respondents (25%) is not ready to marry at the moment, but this is possible in the future. 7.2% of respondents have not yet decided or are not ready to marry. The majority of respondents (42.4%) plan to enter into marriage at the age of 26-30. Approximately one-fifth of the respondents believe that age is not the most important issue in this matter (19.2%), and the same number is ready to marry before the age

of 25 (22.8%). A slightly smaller proportion of respondents (12.3%) are ready to marry at age of 31-35. 3.2% of respondents will be ready to marry after the age of 36.

Thus, the majority of respondents are ready to enter into an official marriage at the age of 26-30. In addition, they plan to have children in the family at the same age when they create a family. For respondents, the ideal model in terms of children is a family with two children and in their future family young men and women want to have two children.

Generally speaking, the majority of young men and women (84.4%) plan to have children in the future. 10.9% have not yet decided, and 4.7% do not plan to have children in the future.

From the point of view of the preferred (desired) number of children in the family, 38.8% of respondents answered "it doesn't matter, as luck would have it." That is, for most young men and women the number of children in a family is not very important since probably they consider the birth of children not a matter of planning, but rather of nature. Among the respondents who indicated a specific number of children, the majority (49.1%) consider a family with two children an ideal model in terms of children. In the second place, there is a large family with three children and more. 32.5% chose the answer option "three children" and 7.7% chose the answer option "even more". A smaller proportion of respondents (10.7%) believe that a family should have only one child. Thus, among the young men and women, the family model with 2 children prevails and the youth is oriented, both from the point of view of the ideal family model and from the point of view of adjusted attitudes on the number of children in a family, on a family with 2 children. Also, the majority of respondents do not indicate a specific number of children in a family, since they believe that there will be as many children as possible. A smaller proportion of respondents prefer single-child and large families.

Since the study included a gender aspect, it was necessary to analyze the relationship between gender and indicators of the object of study. According to the results of the analysis, significant differences at the level of the confidence probability are observed in 95% of cases to test the relationship between the respondent's gender and the following variables: age of marriage, preferred number of children, age for childbirth. For the remaining indicators, the significance of the Pearson's chi-squared test exceeds the significance level of 5%, which indicates the absence of a statistically significant relationship.

Among those who are willing to marry before the age of 25, women are more common than men. Among those who are ready to marry at the age of 31-35 years, there are much more men than women. Men and women are represented approximately equally among those who are ready to enter into marriage at the age of 26-30, over 36, and among those who believe that age is not the main thing.

Among all the representatives of the younger generation who are ready to marry up to 25 years, there is a statistical "overrun" of women and a "shortage" of men. Among all respondents willing to marry at the age of 31-35 years, there are significantly more men than women. A standardized residue value of approximately equal or greater than  $\pm 2$  indicates a statistically significant difference. Among those who are ready for the birth of a child under the age of 25 years and from 26 to 30 years, as well as among those who believe that age is not the main thing, men and women are represented approximately equally. Among those who are ready for the birth of a child over the age of 31, men are more common than women.

Thus, men are more ready than women to enter into marriage at the age of 31-35, and women are much more likely than men to enter into marriage at a younger age of 25. That is, men are ready to marry at a later age than women. Among those who believe that there should be as many children in the family as possible, much more women than men. Among those who believe that the family should have one child, two children, three

or more, men and women are represented equally. This means that men and women have a different understanding of the ideal family model in terms of children. Summarizing the differences in attitudes to marriage and the birth of children, we can say that women are more likely than men to enter into marriage before the age of 25, men are more ready to marry after 30 years. With regard to the number of children in the family, no significant differences in number have been identified, but it is noted that much more women than men indicate that there should be as many children in the family as possible. Also, men are ready to have children at a later age than women. Men are more willing to have children after the age of 30 than women.

One of the important points is to determine the significance of family values for respondents. Respondents rated the importance of each value according to a scale from 1 (not important at all) to 5 (extremely important). In general, it is worth noting that all family values are assessed as important for respondents. Such values as taking care of a husband/wife and children, mutual understanding, marital fidelity, the ability to rely on a spouse in a difficult life situation, mutual trust are evaluated by the majority of respondents as extremely important. At the same time, the share of people evaluating these values as "not important at all" or "rather not important" is extremely small. It can be said that young people consider it extremely important in family life to show concern and understanding towards each other in the family. That is, those values that relate to harmonious, trusting relationships between partners.

As for such values as patience for the husband's/wife's shortcomings, regularity of sexual relations, spending a lot of time in the family, raising children together, feeling confident in the future, mutual assistance in performing household duties, respondents considered them as important, but comparing with the values mentioned above, respondents also choose the answer option "absolutely unimportant". That is, respondents do not consider these values as clearly extremely important.

For such values as patience for the shortcomings of the husband/wife, regularity of sexual relations, spending a lot of time in the family the majority of respondents chose the answer option "important, but not the most significant". The proportion of such respondents is higher than those who rated these values as extremely important.

It can be concluded on the basis of this that such values as patience for the husband's/wife's shortcomings, regularity of sexual relations, spending a lot of time with the family are considered not very important for respondents.

Thus, the values of raising children together, care and attention to the spouse are essential for young people. The values of joint leisure in the family, sharing responsibilities in the family, regularity of sexual relations, patience for the disadvantages of the spouse and a sense of confidence in the future are less important.

The focus of the study is on young people's ideas about the distribution of roles between father and mother both in their future family and their ideas about the traditional roles of father and mother. The main task is not only to answer the question of how gender stereotypes are expressed about the father's and mother's roles in the family in the youth's perceptions, and how young people transfer these stereotypes to the distribution of roles in their future family, but it is also important to consider gender differences in these ideas. To measure gender stereotypes about the traditional distribution of roles, respondents were asked to choose who should, according to the traditional distribution of roles in the family, fulfill certain responsibilities: mother, father or parents together.

Most respondents believe that parents should perform all duties together. The duty to walk with the child, attend cultural events is considered to be performed by both parents by 93.5% of respondents. For such duties as "accompanying the child to/from an educational institution, doing homework with the child,

choosing an educational institution for the child, teaching the child the rules of behavior, punishing for wrong actions" about 80-90% of respondents chose the option of joint implementation by both parents. As for childcare, homework and family material security, less than 70% of respondents chose the option "together".

Since it is important for us to identify the severity of gender stereotypes about parental roles in the perceptions of young people, it is worth paying attention to the ratio of the "mother" and "father" answers options for each duty. This will make it possible to conclude which duties are perceived as exclusively "feminine" and exclusively "masculine". If the share of respondents who chose the "mother" option is greater than the share who chose the "father" option, then the duty is perceived as "female". And vice versa. In the perceptions of young people, all household duties and childcare are on the shoulders of both parents.

So, purely "male" duties are: the obligation to bring income to the family (39.1% chose the answer "father", 0.7% chose the answer "mother"), punish the child for wrong actions (10.9% chose the answer "father", 3.3% - "mother"), teach the child the rules of behavior (5.4% chose "father" 4.7% chose "mother"). The remaining duties "to do household chores, care for the child, organize leisure activities with the child, accompany the child to kindergarten, school, choose a kindergarten/school/additional education for the child, do homework with the child/read/play" are recognized as "female".

Thus, it can be concluded that in the perceptions of the majority of young people about the proper distribution of roles in the family, we can note a tendency towards the dominance of egalitarian views, where mother and father must jointly fulfill all the duties of care and upbringing of children, as well as housework. It is also worth noting that the responsibilities of material support for the family and teaching the child discipline are traditionally male. The rest of the responsibilities for the care of the child, upbringing and housework are performed by the mother. That is, youth mostly have egalitarian views on the distribution of roles in the family. However, there are also expressed views on traditional roles in the family, where the mother performs housework and raises children, and the father supports the family financially and teaches the child discipline. Now let us turn to the ideas of young people about the distribution of roles in their future family.

At the first stage, we will conduct a descriptive analysis of the respondents' answers to the question of who will perform the duties in their future family. Since the respondents were asked this question specifically for young men and women, we first turn to the distribution of answers separately for young men and separately for young women. It is worth noting that the majority of boys and girls believe that in their family all duties should be performed by mother and father together. But as it was noted earlier, it is important to trace how gender stereotypes are expressed about the distribution of roles in the family in the perception of roles in their future family. Therefore, it is important to analyze the ratio of the proportion of young men who believe that the husband should perform the responsibility and the proportion of young men who believe that the wife should fulfill the responsibility. The same ratio should be considered for girls. From the point of view of young men, such duties as how to bring income to the family, punish the child for wrong actions, teach the child the rules of behavior, do homework/read/play with the child, should be done by the man to a greater extent, not by the woman. The remaining responsibilities for raising a child and performing household work, to a greater extent, in the opinion of the young men, must be performed by the wife. Thus, the young men mostly have traditional views on the distribution of roles in the family; however, they undertake a small role in the upbringing and development of the child.

From the young women's point of view, such responsibilities as housework, care for the child, organize leisure activities with the

child should be performed by women in full. In this case, the husband is not considered responsible for these activities (0% of the women chose the answer "my husband" for each responsibility). The young women completely give the obligation to bring income to the family to their future spouses. They also believe that men should punish a child for wrong actions more than a mother (7.1% of girls chose the answer "my husband" vs. 2.1% who chose the option "I"). Regarding other duties, girls assume a greater role for women than for men. Thus, traditional views of the family prevail for girls, because they believe that the father's responsibility is to provide material support for the family and discipline the child, and the woman should take care, educate the child, and keep the household.

Thus, the analysis of young people's perceptions of the traditional roles of the father and mother in the family was carried out, and modern ideas about the distribution of roles in the family were revealed. But since it is important to analyze gender differences in these perceptions and the degree to which young people follow gender stereotypes in their perceptions of the future family, it is necessary to identify the relationship between the respondent's gender and the ideas about the distribution of roles in the future family, and between perceptions of traditional roles of father and mother and roles of father and mother in the future family.

In order to check the relation between gender and young people's ideas about the roles of father and mother in the future family, it is necessary to construct contingency tables and, using Pearson's chi-squared test, to find out whether there is a statistically significant relationship between variables.

Since the performance of duties in the future family was considered separately for men and women, it is necessary to recode the variables that will be measured in the nominal scale with the answer options "mother", "father", "together". Thus, today's youth aged 18 to 30 plans to create a family between the ages of 26 and 30 in the near future. Also, young men and women are planning to have children. The ideal family model in terms of children is a family with two children. Young women and men want to have the same number of children in the future. The most important family values are mutual trust and support of spouses and the joint upbringing of children in the family.

In the perceptions of young people, there are gender stereotypes on the distribution of roles in the family: a man must bring income to the family and teach the child discipline, a woman must keep the house and raise children.

The ideas of young people about the distribution of parental roles in their future family are egalitarian as a whole, which implies an equal division of roles between father and mother. At the same time, gender stereotypes are firmly rooted in the minds of young people, as they are reflected in their ideas about their future role as father or mother. For those who specifically attributed duties to the mother or father, it is typical to follow gender stereotypes: childcare and participation in a child's development fall on the mother's shoulders, and the material support of the family falls on the father's shoulders.

Gender differences are reflected in ideas about the future distribution of roles in the family and in attitudes to marriage and the birth of children. So, men are ready to marry and have children at a later age than women. Women are ready to marry and have a child under the age of 25; men are ready for this after 30 years.

For men, the birth of a child is a planned question; for women, it is rather not important how many children there are, the presence of children is important.

There are also differences between men and women in ideas about the future distribution of roles.

Men have more traditional ideas about the distribution of roles in the family, at the same time, there is a desire of men to

participate in the process of child development (to do homework with him/play/read). Women have more egalitarian ideas about the distribution of roles in the family. They believe that many of the duties that were previously gender-oriented can now be performed jointly by both spouses.

## 5 Conclusion

In our view, the main problem of youth, regardless of religious preferences, is that young people do not have a proper understanding of the normal, spiritually healthy family and value system (Vasenina & Sushko, 2018, pp. 451-459).

The aim of the study was to identify gender differences in the views of modern youth about motherhood and fatherhood. The most significant values within the framework of family values are the demonstration of care and attention of spouses to each other and the desire to raise children together. The values of joint leisure in the family, sharing responsibilities in the family, regularity of sexual relations, tolerance towards the disadvantages of the spouse and a feeling of confidence in the future are less important for young people. Gender differences are reflected in ideas about the future distribution of roles in the family and in attitudes to marriage and the birth of children. So, men are ready to marry and have children at a later age than women. Women are ready to marry and have a child under the age of 25; men are ready for this after 30 years.

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The young men mostly have the traditional view of the gender distribution of roles in the family. That is, they believe that the obligation to bring income to the family is the father's duty, and child care, the obligation to accompany the child to the kindergarten or school are women's responsibilities. At the same time, there is a desire of men to take part in the development of the child, to play with the child, to read for the child. As for women, they mostly have egalitarian views on the distribution of roles in the family. They consider gender-specific duties as gender-neutral, that is, performed by both spouses, more often than young men do.

The data obtained as a result of a sociological survey can be used to develop social policy measures to support families who have a first child between the ages of 26-30. In particular, measures can be developed to help both spouses combine the role of a parent and employee, to provide the possibility to use maternity leave not only for mothers, but also fathers, to create all conditions to successfully fulfill the role of father and mother in the family, make more efficient use of parents' time, to adapt the activities of public institutions for more effective fulfillment of the role of each parent in raising children.

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## Primary Paper Section: A

## Secondary Paper Section: AM, AN, AO