

Social Problems Of Family Upbringing

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Abstract

This article is dedicated to the social problems of family upbringing. It analyzes the changes occurring within the institution of the family in modern societies and their impact on socio-economic and moral aspects. The essential role of the family environment in the socialization of children is emphasized; however, the article also highlights the deformation of family values and the influence of social crises on the family in recent times. Research indicates that the spread of social networks and technologies weakens family relationships and leads to conflicts. The decline in parental supervision exposes children to negative social influences. Among the main causes of family conflicts are socio-economic problems, financial difficulties, misunderstandings in parent-child relationships, and an increase in divorce rates.

Sociologists and educators argue that the institution of the family is undergoing a global crisis. The main reasons for changes within the family include urbanization, socio-economic instability, and the spread of new family models. To preserve the value of the family, it is considered essential to strengthen social support mechanisms and improve intra-family communication. The study explores various aspects of problems occurring within the family. Issues such as family conflicts, increasing divorce rates, the influence of social networks, economic difficulties, and communication problems within the family contribute to the erosion of family values. Observations show that the preference for smaller family models in modern families negatively affects the socialization process of children. It is particularly noted that urban families tend to favor one-or two-child households, with reasons including economic conditions, housing issues, and parents' employment. The article offers several recommendations for the future development of the family. Measures such as enhancing intra-family communication, strengthening social support mechanisms, and expanding social programs targeted at families by the state are considered important. It is proposed to promote a culture of compromise and mutual understanding for resolving family conflicts and to increase psychological and pedagogical support. All these factors can contribute to the strengthening of the family institution and the maintenance of social stability in society.

Keywords: Family upbringing, social problems, modern family, globalization, pedagogical programs, family crisis, conflict, upbringing methods.

INTRODUCTION

Today, family problems and the formation of children's personalities are issues of great significance and urgency for social life. The deformation of the family institution—which has always played a vital role in human development—the collapse of true national family models, the weakening of the psychological climate within the "small state" (the family), and the emergence of a sociological crisis have become central topics of public debate, especially in developed countries.

The sociology of the family began to emerge as a distinct field of social knowledge in the 1840s–1850s. The empirical research conducted by Rilza and Le-Pin played a particularly important role in the development of this field. "The family holds great importance in every person's life. Children are born into families and are raised there. Just as in other countries of the world, modern Azerbaijani families are also experiencing certain forms of erosion (Jabbarova, 2020)". In modern sociology, the family is studied both as a small group and as a social institution. Globalization, acute social crises, and unstable socio-economic conditions worldwide affect not only the material well-being of families but also the development of their socio-moral foundations. As the primary system for the biological and social protection of children, the family is in crisis. Therefore, interest in family and family upbringing has increased in developed countries.

"The family holds great importance in every person's life. Children are born into families and are raised there. It is within the family that the younger generation is first introduced to moral, ethical, and cultural values and receives psychological support. The family, in any form, is the foundation of the state. The strength of the family is the strength of the state. There is no doubt that, just as in other parts of the world, modern Azerbaijani families are also undergoing certain erosions (Jabbarova, 2023)".

Researchers highlight one additional difficulty that arises in family upbringing: the family has always been characterized by a certain level of ambition. In other words, as an autonomous unit, it tends to conceal its pride, dignity, and self-esteem. State intervention in family matters becomes possible only in cases of family dissolution—such as divorce—when the normal structure of the family is disrupted and thus subject to legal evaluation. Therefore, to prevent the emergence of such negative situations, it is necessary to prioritize the state's interests, take preventive measures, and support the development of socio-pedagogical foundations and moral values. It should also be noted that the issue of the family concerns not only specialists in various professional fields but also the general public and all members of society. Family problems reflect the close interdependence between the family and society. The family performs essential social functions in the life of the community, and for this reason, both the state and public organizations are interested in creating the necessary socio-pedagogical conditions to solve these problems (Jabbarova, 2023).

The family does not exist independently on its own. It exists together with all its members in cities, villages, settlements, and, in a broader sense, within a specific country and within the context of moral values, economic, and political factors. The family is a part of a larger organism. It perceives and senses all processes occurring in society and, in turn, can influence societal events itself.

Modern socio-pedagogical research identifies the following more precisely defined stages in the life cycle of a family:

1. Preparation for family life – motivation for marriage, feelings of anxiety, insecurity, and hope;
2. Formation of the family – psychological symbiosis of the newlyweds, the issue of independence and dependence;
3. Anticipation of childbirth – the birth of a child;
4. The child's entry into external institutions – evaluation of parental competence;
5. The child's choice of life path and the possibility of leaving the family;
6. Death of elderly relatives;
7. The end of the family – the death of one of the partners (Khalilov, Aliyev, Guliyeva & Babayeva, 2024).

Sociologists view the family as a living social organism, the fundamental unit of society, and a social educational institution. All changes occurring in the socio-economic life of society are reflected in the family. However, unlike other social collectives, the renewal of the family takes a long time. This process is also very complex and contradictory. While changes and new economic relations emerge quickly in society, new moral norms take much longer to find their place within the family. This stems from the family being a socially closed and conservative group.

Alongside socio-economic factors, psychological, demographic, and biological factors also play a role in the formation and existence of the family. This is the primary reason for the presence of old and persistent patterns within families.

In modern families, a portion of men and women spend most of their time not in real interaction with their families, but rather engaged in virtual communication through social networks. According to current statistics, one in every 5 to 6 families breaks down due to conflicts arising from the secret use of social networks.

Although social networks are one of the greatest technological achievements of our time, their misuse, despite broad communication capabilities, brings misfortune and disasters to families. The excessive and inappropriate use of social networks leads to "internet addiction," which creates obstacles in the roles of both educators and those being educated.

According to scholars, preschool-aged children should watch television for 15–20 minutes at a time (considering both daytime and evening broadcasts); young schoolchildren – 20–30 minutes (2–3 times per week, up to one hour); grades IV–VIII – 35–40 minutes (sometimes up to 1 hour); and grades IX–XI – 1–1.5

hours per day. It is recommended that evening television viewing occurs in a well-lit room. The distance between the television screen and the viewer should be 2.5–3 meters. Otherwise, the electromagnetic field and radiation created around the TV can have a damaging effect on the eyes, brain, and nervous system (Khalilov, 2004).

In families where social network addiction is present, naturally, gaps emerge in meeting children's communication needs.

"Where does addiction to multimedia tools originate from? Let's try to answer this question first. Children who watch television unsupervised, enjoy playing computer games, and show excessive interest in social media often turn to the most accessible tools to fill the void in their lives – multimedia devices that are constantly connected to the internet (Jabbarova, 2021)".

When communication breaks down within the family, the influence of "street groups" on children increases significantly. In their quest to fulfill the need for communication, children are forced to seek companions, allies, and friends outside the family. Over time, they begin spending time with children of various age groups and potentially harmful habits, who then become important and irreplaceable figures in their lives.

Children and adolescents spend all their free time with these groups, enthusiastically trying to fulfill group tasks, and even skipping school or returning home late just to comply with the group's rules. Since these groups are often formed randomly, they can have a highly negative impact on the social activity and development of children and adolescents.

From a pedagogical standpoint, the weakening of parental supervision reduces the role of the family in meeting the child's communication needs and increases the influence of negative external factors. The occurrence and persistence of such situations within families contribute to the deterioration of intrafamilial relationships.

Socio-pedagogical studies clearly show that the lack of parental control holds general pedagogical significance and must be studied in depth.

There are various reasons behind the weakening of parental supervision over children. These may include:

- A parent being ill for a prolonged period;
- Both parents being employed full-time;
- Children being raised for extended periods under the care of grandparents;
- Declining parental authority;
- Parents not being involved in their children's upbringing or not using effective methods (Khalilov, Aliyev, Guliyeva & Babayeva, 2024).

When any of these circumstances occur and children do not feel the presence of parental control, they are more likely to join attention-seeking playgroups, become estranged from the home, engage in loitering, and form relationships with individuals possessing undesirable qualities – all of which negatively affect their personal development and upbringing.

The emergence of negative tendencies affects not only the relationship between parents and children but also leads to the deterioration of relationships between siblings.

Due to such reasons, many researchers discussing family issues refer to the crisis of the modern family. It is worth noting that this "family crisis" is a widely discussed topic in many countries. In this context, the term "crisis" often carries a negative connotation.

In research, this is presented as one of the pressing issues of the modern family – the idea that the family, as the core of society, seems to be losing its value in recent times. Sociologists and social pedagogues alike confirm that the crisis of the family institution exists at a global level.

Based on literature analysis and observations conducted on the lifestyles of families living in Nakhchivan city, Sharur, and Babek districts of the Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic, several factors have been identified as contributing to the current undesirable crisis in family values:

- The beginning of mass migration from villages and settlements to cities since the 1950s and the process of urbanization;
- The plunge into the "quagmire" of perestroika in the 1980s;

- The emergence of unstable socio-economic conditions in the 1990s;
- Acceleration of legal and illegal migration into and out of the country;
- The challenges created by new economic relations – namely, the transition to a market economy (Khalilov, Adilzade, Rzaev, Guliyev & Yusifova, 2024).

It is important to note that this crisis situation is considered to have objective causes. Naturally, these objective causes have a certain impact on the moral climate of the family. Other contributing factors include housing conditions, nutrition, health, alcohol dependence, and more. A lack of adequate living standards, fluctuations and delays in family budgets (such as sharp price increases, inflation, and delayed salary payments during the early stages of economic transition) further deepen the family crisis.

Unresolved family conflicts, tensions, and disruptions create favorable conditions for social crisis. A lack of trust among family members, the absence of strong, faithful bonds, further entrenches this crisis. Improper communication within families, rough behavior in relationships between spouses, and the use of force signal the onset of psychological distress, anxiety, and a sense of threat. Constant quarrels and disputes in the family foreshadow "tragic days" and ultimately pose a serious threat to the health and well-being of family members. It should be noted that summaries regarding the family crisis in developed countries indicate that in a globalizing world, the family crisis is intensifying, and to varying degrees, this crisis is also manifesting itself within Azerbaijani families.

Literary scholar and critic Aydın Khan Abilov, who sheds light on the essence of these processes, writes: "The family has always played an important role in the history of our civilization and our path of national development, as a socio-political institution where our nation's high moral values are preserved and our gene pool is safeguarded. It is no secret that the formation of every civil society and stable state, as well as the development of democratic values, greatly depends on the family. A physically and morally healthy family is the foundation of an intellectual society and a strong state. Unfortunately, the processes taking place in the world today – globalization, the integration of nations, the influence of television and the internet on our lives, the expansion of social networks, and the development of various technologies – have not spared Azerbaijani families either. While these developments have brought some positive innovations, they have also led to the erosion of national-moral values and the deformation of the family institution" (Abilov, 2014).

This trend began approximately 25 years ago and is associated with several factors:

- The characteristics of urban lifestyles – housing problems, the employment of women, and the necessity to raise educational and professional levels;
- The increase in the urban population (currently, around half the population lives in cities), the socio-economic development of rural areas, and the acceleration of urbanization;
- Parents having a certain level of education (at least secondary) and medical knowledge, including the ability to use contraception to avoid unwanted pregnancies;
- The psychological maturity of spouses;
- Financial difficulties in raising and educating multiple children to a desirable standard.

The erosion of our family values, the trivialization of national family ideals, and the indifference of youth toward these values are bitter realities. One alarming statistical indicator is enough to illustrate the consequences of this bitter truth:

According to data from the State Statistical Committee of Azerbaijan in 2024, 42,073 marriages were officially registered in the country. However, a disturbing fact is that, during the same period, 17,907 divorces were also registered. Further statistics reveal that the number of marriages per 1,000 people was 4.9%, while the number of divorces stood at 2.1%.

On the other hand, there are also concerning tendencies and trends in modern Azerbaijani family upbringing that negatively affect family values. These trends include:

1. The dominance of one- or two-child family types in urban areas, and to some extent, in rural and suburban regions;
2. Young families living separately from their parents (the older generation);

3. A marked departure from folk pedagogy, with children being raised in strollers instead of cradles accompanied by lullabies;
4. Barriers to communication between children and the older generation – particularly older relatives – under urbanization conditions;
5. Social and economic hardships (families having to work day and night to secure their material needs);
6. The negative influence of TV series, videos, computers, and technological advancements.

In the city of Nakhchivan, as well as in the villages of Yukhari Dasharkh and Siyagut in the Sharur district, and the villages of Jahri and Zeynaddin in the Babek district of the Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic, a survey was conducted among 180 families on this issue. The results are as follows:

Urban areas:

Table 1

Number of Families	Prefer Large Families	Prefer Two Children	Prefer One Child
110	20	60	30

Rural areas:

Table 2

Number of Families	Prefer Large Families	Prefer Two Children	Prefer One Child
70	10	40	20

Some characteristic responses to the “Why?” question:

Those who answered “Large families are better” expressed the following views:

- Children help and support each other, do not become jealous, selfish, or arrogant, and they learn to share and develop positive qualities.
- It fosters habits such as cooperation, sharing, and love being distributed among more people.
- When they grow up, they serve as a support system for one another.

Those who said “Two children are ideal” were mainly parents with one son and one daughter. Their reasons included:

- Since they already have both a son and a daughter, there is no need for a third child.
- Financial constraints.
- Housing problems.

Among those who answered “One child is best,” young families predominated. Their perspectives included:

- Raising a child requires a lot of time.
- Having a child distances them from many of the habits and activities they enjoy.
- Inadequate salaries, unemployment, and lack of housing (Khalilov, Aliyev, Guliyeva, & Babayeva, 2024).

Let us draw attention to some of these observed trends. It should be noted in advance that today in Azerbaijan, there are proponents of the small family model. They justify their stance by claiming that the small family model is economically more advantageous. Children raised in such families can benefit more from available opportunities such as education, healthcare, and organized leisure activities.

Those who base their views on this aspect mainly focus on the economic side of the issue. However, the feeling of loneliness experienced by a child growing up and developing in a small family is often overlooked. It should be remembered that the small family model deprives the child not only of grandparents, uncles, aunts, and other relatives, but also of brothers and sisters with whom the child could grow up together as peers. Additionally, in such families, depending on the parents’ work schedules, childcare often falls to nannies, which from a psychological standpoint does not seem to be an optimal relationship. The warmth, love, care, supervision, and communication—a set of psychological factors necessary for the child—are often replaced by cold indifference.

Regarding economic difficulties, today every family has to spend most of the day working to support their material well-being. In Azerbaijani families, the desire of every parent is to raise their children well and provide them comprehensively. The tradition of parents "cutting from their own bread" to give to their children has persisted and strengthened for years. This aspect was more prominent in the large family model. Behind this family model lies love, trust, equal sharing, shared joy in the success of family members, mutual communication, and other humane qualities. Our observations show that in economically better-off families, loneliness, depression, excessive use of social networks for communication, false friendships, distrust, unreliability, and even cases of suicide occur more frequently.

It should also be noted that in Azerbaijan we face problems such as early marriages, domestic violence against women, violations of children's rights, family conflicts, and so forth. As we know, the Azerbaijani family model is changing. In contemporary times, compared to other family types, nuclear families (consisting of parents and children) are more common. According to experts, the family of the new era is characterized by a higher incidence of conflicts. It is reported that serious conflicts occur in 80 out of every 100 families. In the other 20 families, parent-child relationships are almost non-existent. At present, the most common form of family problem is family conflicts.

Our observations and analyses show that family conflicts manifest in different forms and have various causes. These mainly include:

- Limiting the activity and freedom of self-expression of family members;
- Behavior of one or more family members deviating from accepted norms (alcoholism, drug addiction);
- Presence of conflicting interests and tendencies, limited capacity to meet the needs of one family member, and generally harsh interpersonal relationships within the family;
- Direct interference of relatives (parents, in-laws, siblings-in-law, etc.) in husband-wife relations in new families;
- Sexual disharmony between spouses;
- Differences in education levels, perspectives on life and reality, and large age gaps between partners;
- Presence of difficult-to-resolve financial problems;
- Excessive workload of one or both partners at work;
- Inability of one or both partners to secure regular employment;
- Long-term lack of permanent residence, inability to enroll children in kindergartens;
- Efforts by one party to dominate the family or struggle for leadership;
- Insufficient fulfillment of demands for positive emotions (kindness, care, attentiveness, mutual understanding, striving for beauty and neatness, etc.) (Khalilov, Adilzade, Rzayev, Guliyev & Yusifova, 2024).

Family problems are reflected within the context of the family's close dependence on society. The family performs a very important social function in society, which is why the state and public organizations should give special importance to social-pedagogical efforts to create the necessary conditions for families. It is a fact that all areas of human life are filled with conflicts. A conflict in the family is a clash of opposing interests, views, and tendencies. This leads to serious disagreements and sharp disputes, which can cause very dangerous situations. Family conflicts create unpleasant feelings and anxiety, which are observed in disputes, disagreements, and sharp contradictions.

There are several types of family conflicts: conflicts between parents and children, conflicts between spouses, conflicts between grandparents and children or parents, and so on. It should be understood that both sides share responsibility and blame for conflicts. A conflict often arises when one party (father or mother) adopts a particular behavioral "model" for themselves.

Conflicts rarely arise from a single cause; more often they have multiple, complex reasons. Causes of family conflicts include attempts by any party to fulfill personal demands, differences in opinions about the roles of the family head, mother, father, husband, and wife, inability of parties to communicate effectively with each other as well as with relatives, friends, acquaintances, or colleagues, refusal or unwillingness of one party to participate in child-rearing (or using lack of time as an excuse), disagreements in views and methods used in child upbringing, and similar reasons. These factors often cause family conflicts to reach a peak.

All this shows that in order to meet the requirement of cohabitation, the parties in a family must first be ready to compromise, always be prepared for such situations, rationally arrange their personal interests, respect each other's feelings and thoughts, demonstrate mutual trust, and achieve mutual understanding. This is the only possible way to resolve family conflicts.

Family conflicts involving parents (father and mother), other family members (grandparents, siblings, uncles, aunts), and children are serious sources of family problems. Psychologists confirm that problems in mutual understanding between parents and children arise at the earliest stages of upbringing. Even when a child is one year old, it is as if they are "standing face to face" with the parent, which is connected to very important initial impressions and feelings. Usually, the daily care provided by parents has a significant psychological effect.

Most conflicts between parents and children are related to the fact that during childhood and adolescence, children do not want to consider their parents' opinions. One of the main causes of conflicts between parents and children is the new generation's desire for freedom and independence. During adolescence, the child's wish for freedom and independence surpasses all accepted norms within the limits of allowed power and possibilities. Children at this age want to be completely free and strive for maximum enjoyment. This attitude and viewpoint are common among many young people.

Renowned psychologists A. Varga and V. A. Smakhov identify four types of causes in parent-child relationships that lead to conflicts and are ineffective and unhelpful:

1. Lack of pedagogical and psychological agreement and coordinated action between parents, and their lack of understanding of the psychological characteristics of children at this age.
2. Use of incorrect stereotypes in child upbringing and uncritical attitude toward the child's behavior.
3. Parents' personal problems and characteristics negatively affecting communication with children, and attempts to solve child upbringing problems at the level of their own difficulties and challenges.
4. Improper organization of communication with other family members as influences in relation to the child (Galazunova, 2001).

It should be noted that parents, by constantly giving advice and admonitions, often forget that children may have their own unique opinions and views. If a child is still shy or hesitant to express their thoughts, and if there is a contradiction between the parents' statements and the child's "ideas," misunderstandings and conflicts become inevitable. The issue does not end with parents reacting to these conflicts at various levels. The key question is whether the parent truly understands the child, can help them, and guide them toward correct thinking and attitudes.

Family conflicts can be either overt or covert. Conflicts may remain hidden and unresolved for years. However, certain actions or behaviors can trigger the conflict, causing it to surface openly. Psychologists point to tension as the final stage of conflict. Tension is considered the decisive moment of the conflict. At this stage, a serious confrontation arises between the parties, often resulting in the "victory" of one side. During this process, the "enemy image" formed over many years becomes a reality.

It is true that conflicts have always existed, exist now, and will continue to exist in family relationships. However, the ability to resolve family conflicts requires finding the right solutions, and the capacity to change one's position and views. This requires studying the conflict situation in detail – its scope, nature, and specifics – identifying contradictions, determining disagreements, and, finally, discussing them openly. It is important to foresee and take preventive measures to resolve conflict situations in the family. Achieving harmony and mutual understanding between parties, as well as considering and understanding children's personal interests and opinions, significantly reduces conflicts and allows the family to live a healthy life.

In pedagogical and psychological research on family conflict theory, compromise is considered the best way to resolve conflicts. Compromise in family trends, based on mutual concessions and agreements, helps correct habits and relationships between spouses and between parents and children, preventing conflicts. This work requires individual conversations, interviews, group psychotherapy, and play therapy treatments. Of course, there are many causes of conflicts, so the problem must first be carefully and thoroughly studied.

Modern families have certain characteristic features in terms of their development and interactions. Some specific features of modern families include:

- The social structures of urban and rural families differ. In large cities, supervision over children is much less compared to children growing up in rural families, where children often feel strong supervision from neighbors and villagers.
- Social stratification causes sharp differences in the material living standards of different social groups, which negatively affects the nature of relationships between parents and children.
- In many affluent families, even from a very young age, children develop a consumerist attitude toward everything. Children growing up in such families become indifferent to material and spiritual values.
- There is a direct correlation between the educational level of parents and the academic performance of their children. Children of parents with higher education levels tend to perform better in school. Since many modern parents work, children are often raised under the care of nannies or grandparents, which sometimes results in lower educational achievements.
- Most modern families are nuclear, which causes parents to face difficulties in child-rearing, resolving family problems, and taking children to school or kindergarten. These problems are more evident in families with young children and working mothers. The increase in such cases is a societal problem.
- The number of single-child families is increasing. Children growing up as only children lack the care and support of siblings. Since all parental attention, care, and affection are focused on one child, such children may develop egocentrism and lack a sense of collectivism.
- The rate of divorces is increasing. Psychologists and sociologists agree that, regardless of the cause, divorce is a traumatic blow to a child's psyche.
- A decline in birth rates among family members is a major demographic problem observed in both urban and rural families. This is due to several reasons: lack of preschool childcare facilities, parents working, high material costs for child-rearing and care, and the many responsibilities of women and mothers.

CONCLUSION

Research shows that the family crisis has become a global problem in the modern era, affecting all members of society. Family structures are changing, and parent-child relationships are weakening. The increase in divorces and single-child families are negative trends impacting the family institution. To reduce conflicts and preserve family values, it is necessary to strengthen social support systems and develop pedagogical approaches. The results of the research indicate that the modern family crisis is a complex and multi-causal process. Factors such as globalization, economic instability, the influence of social networks, and urbanization have contributed to the weakening of the family institution. There has been an erosion of family values. Whereas the collective family model used to predominate, nowadays the number of nuclear families (families consisting only of parents and children) is increasing. This leads to the weakening of kinship ties and deprives children of social support systems.

Unemployment, financial difficulties, and housing problems seriously affect family life. Surveys show that the decrease in the number of children in families is mainly related to economic constraints. Two-child and single-child families prevail because parents find it difficult to care for more children.

In the modern era, since parents work more, gaps arise in child-rearing. Children left unsupervised tend to turn to social networks and "street groups." This leads to negative social influences, communication problems, and conflicts within the family.

The rise in divorces undermines family stability. Statistics show that the divorce rate is 2.1% per 1,000 people, which is a high figure. The main causes of conflicts within families include financial problems, psychological incompatibility, and interference from relatives.

Analysis of the results shows that lack of communication among family members, decreased supervision, and the influence of social networks increase conflicts. Tension especially arises in parent-child relationships, as the new generation demands more freedom and independence. Modern families struggle to adapt to socio-

cultural and economic changes. To strengthen the family institution, social-pedagogical support systems must be developed, parents need to be educated about child-rearing methods, and social programs should be implemented to strengthen intra-family relations. Increasing communication within the family, enhancing emotional support, and preventing conflicts require joint efforts from society and the state.

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