

Conceptual Model for Diagnosing Parent-Child Relationships in Psychological Science

Концептуальна модель дослідження батьківсько-дитячих взаємостосунків у психологічній науці

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of the article is to analyze psychodiagnostic methods for assessing parent-child relationships and develop a model for empirically studying parent-child relationships in the context of scientific research.

Methods of the research: theoretical monitoring of scientific research on the problem, analysis of psychodiagnostic tools, comparison of the conceptual foundations of domestic and foreign psychodiagnostics, and modeling.

The results of the research. In the context of the presented scientific research, the main directions of the problem are analyzed. Based on the outlined directions, the components of parent-child relationships are characterized, among which cognitive, motivational, individually oriented, communicative, emotional-evaluative, problem-oriented are distinguished. Within each component, the tasks of a psychodiagnostic examination are formulated and psychodiagnostic methods are selected taking into account the research tasks. New approaches to assessing parent-child relationships, developed in the modern scientific paradigm, are analyzed. Tests, projective techniques, questionnaires, which are widely used in the work of a psychologist to study various aspects of the interaction of parents and children in the process of upbringing, are thoroughly described. Based on the conducted research, a model for assessing parent-child relationships is developed.

Conclusion. The analysis of psychodiagnostic and scientific research tools made it possible to determine the main components, indicators, and structural scheme of studying parent-child relationships, which made it possible to develop a model of scientific research, which is presented as the basis for psychological diagnostics of parental educational influence. The components of the empirical study were identified as cognitive, motivational, individually oriented, communicative, emotional-evaluative, problem-oriented spheres. The criteria were parental competence, parental attitude, upbringing style, communicative tactics of

parents, humane relationships, psychological climate of the family and conflict interaction.

Key words: *parents, children, upbringing, educational influence, parent-child relationships, psychodiagnostic tools, research methods.*

Introduction

Psychological research of parent-child relationships in the context of the social paradigm is aimed at identifying problematic trends in upbringing and creating conditions for socio-psychological support of families. Based on the obtained psychodiagnostic data, state programs are developed to provide assistance to families in crisis situations. Knowledge of the most common difficulties is a motive for the implementation of educational components, the development of trainings, and the preparation of methodological recommendations for parents on the effective upbringing of the younger generation. Among such nationally known programs are strategies for preventing domestic violence, reducing the level of orphanhood and neglect, preventing deviant behavior, and forming healthy family values.

Today, due to military aggression, the number of families who find themselves in dire life circumstances is increasing. Thanks to the rapid development of psychodiagnostic technologies (Бернс, & Кауфман, 2015; Терлецька, 2003; Хворова, 2015; Schaefer, 1981), specialists are able to identify them and provide targeted assistance to families to improve the mental health of children and ensure their full personal development. In particular, psychodiagnostic screenings presented in the research of scientists make it possible to carry out early diagnosis of psychological deviations in behavior (Вагра, & Столін, 2019), timely identify the risks of developing psychoemotional problems (Цуркан, 2018; Gennari, Tamanzaa, & Accordini, 2015), anxiety disorders (Robinson, Mandelco, Olsen, & Hart, 2001), post-traumatic stress states (Павлова, 2023) and other psychological characteristics of children's behavior. No less important are the assessment of emotional burnout in parents (Марценюк, 2018), the establishment of facts of psychological or physical

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violence against children (Гончар, 2018; Ткачова, 2025), which requires the provision of urgent measures. According to this, preventive psychodiagnostic assistance contributes to the formation of positive parent-child relationships and the preservation of many families.

The purpose of the article

The purpose of our article is to analyze psychodiagnostic methods for assessing parent-child relationships. The main tasks are to identify areas of empirical research; develop criteria, indicators and levels of formation of parent-child relationships; master the system of processing and interpreting the results obtained using the presented psychodiagnostic methods. Solving these tasks makes it possible to theoretically substantiate and develop a model of empirical study of parent-child relationships in the context of scientific research.

Research methods and techniques

The solution of the outlined tasks is facilitated by strategies, methods, psychological techniques used to collect data in order to identify relevant information about the features of parent-child relationships.

The analysis of theoretical principles and empirical methods for studying parent-child relationships is the fundamental basis of this study. Their thorough analysis allows us to clarify the subject of the study, determines its key elements, outlines the conceptual models and structure of the topic under study. Within the framework of the theoretical study, methods of analysis of psychodiagnostic methodological tools were used, conceptual aspects of domestic and foreign psychodiagnostics were compared, and data were systematized according to the direction of the study of parent-child relationships. The cornerstone of our scientific article was the analysis of the conclusions obtained and the creation, on this basis, of a theoretical model for assessing parental and child behavior in a complex system of social interaction.

Results and their discussion

The study of parent-child relationships is necessary for their better understanding, since they lay the foundation for personal development, emotional well-being and social adaptation of children. The issue of studying parent-child relationships in psychology allows us to identify the main areas of studying this problem in the context of professional psychological activity. The most popular areas of psychodiagnostics are: 1) analysis of the education and pedagogical competence of parents regarding the upbringing and development of children; 2) clarification of the features of parental attitudes in interaction with children; 4) research into the style of parental influence; 5) diagnostics of parent-child communication; 6) research into the psychological climate in the family; 7) assessment of methods for preventing conflicts in the family, which is important for preventing emotional burnout in parents and reducing stress levels in children. The constant search for ways of self-development and self-actualization concerns various areas of personal formation, including parent-child interaction. Naturally, the decisive factor in psychodiagnostics is the analysis of the *cognitive component* of the educational process, which concerns issues of competence in raising children. The cognitive component is represented by the formation of primary pedagogical skills, as well as the ability to assess children's abilities. This involves the widespread use of psychodiagnostic methods aimed at identifying knowledge, attitudes and the level of parental education.

The monitoring of the problem and the characterization of parental competencies were presented in her work "Content and levels of parental competence in the correctional and pedagogical aspect" by researcher G.M. Khvorova. She developed a psychodiagnostic screening of parental functions, in which she described the requirements for knowledge, skills and abilities of parents in assessing the development of their children at different age stages. The scientist analyzes parental competencies in detail in terms of how children develop, as well as how it is neces-

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sary to form parent-child relationships, including relationships with adult children. Within the framework of diagnostic screening, the author describes five types of parental competence: highest, high, average, low, very low (Хворова, 2015).

No less effective in the context of analyzing the cognitive component of parent-child interaction is the test “Your Child’s Abilities” (author: L.G. Terletska). It makes possible to understand how parents assess children’s abilities. Mothers and fathers are offered to assess children’s abilities on a five-point scale according to the following scales: 1) “Intellectual abilities”; 2) “Artistic abilities”; 3) “Musical gift”; 4) “Ability to engage in scientific work”; 5) “Literary abilities”; 6) “Artistic talent”; 7) “Technical abilities”; 8) “Sports abilities”. Based on the testing, 3–4 indicators with the highest scores are identified. Based on them, parents have the opportunity to create conditions for the development of their children’s abilities in these areas (Терлецька, 2003).

The modern scientific community is constantly developing new approaches to assess cognitive abilities. Among them there is the use of the projective technique “Parental Work” by V.V. Stolin (in the form of unfinished sentences). This approach makes it possible to identify the parental vision of problems and difficulties in the development of children. The proposed methodology consists of thirty unfinished sentences, which are distributed according to eleven scales: open scale, comparative assessment of the child, significant characteristics, positive features of the child, ideal expectations, possible fears, apprehensions, real requirements, causes of difficulties, allergies, interests, preferences of the child, the situation of “we-interaction”. These scales are grouped into three blocks: “Image of the child” (intellectual development, personal qualities, appearance); “Image of relationships in the family” (positions in interaction, joint activities); “Me as a father” (educational competence). The conclusion is formulated based on an assessment of emotional relationships in the family, parent-child interaction, the child’s

psychological characteristics, and the parents' educational competencies (Цуркан, 2018).

A fundamentally important issue is the ability of parents to see problems in the education and development of their own children. For this purpose, "A Child's Life and Its School Success" test (Борисова, 2005) is widely used. The content aspects of the questionnaire are presented by 30 questions that should be answered "yes" or "no". The test is assessed according to three level characteristics: high (level 1), average (level 2); low (level 3) success.

A key role in the formation of parent-child relationships is played by *motivational factors* that characterize the system of parental attitudes. They reveal the parental orientation in interaction with children and characterize the level of support provided in the family. If parents are motivated by love, understanding, care, children feel protected and accepted. Accordingly, the task of psychodiagnostics in this context is to clarify the features of parental attitudes and their impact on the development of the child as a personality. Parents who responsibly treat the performance of parental functions become an example for the child, helping him to form positive attitudes towards himself/herself and the world.

The most common in this group is the parental attitude questionnaire by A.Ya. Varga and V.V. Stolin. It is used to assess the parenting style, the emotional attitude of parents towards the child, and behavioral stereotypes practiced during parental influence. The results are processed using five scales: "Acceptance-Rejection", "Cooperation", "Symbiosis", "Authoritarian Hypersocialization", and "Little Loser". The "Acceptance-Rejection" scale is assessed using the criteria of the "Rejection" pole and describes the perception of one's own children as unadapted to life and insufficiently successful in development. The "Cooperation" scale indicates a sense of pride in the success of children, a desire to take their position on any issues. The "Symbiosis" scale confirms the feeling of being one with children and

a desire to limit them from difficulties in life. “Authoritarian Hypersocialization” reflects the desire to subordinate children to one’s requirements, disciplinary prohibitions, and unrelenting control. The “Little Loser” scale measures parents’ belief in the development of their children’s abilities and capabilities. The negative end of the scale is assessed as a devaluation of their children’s achievements and a lack of faith in their children’s future (Вапра, & Столін, 2019).

In relation to the above problem, we can present the PARI (Parental Attitude Research Instrument) methodology, developed by E. Schaeffer and R. Bell. It is designed to analyze parental attitudes (primarily mothers) to various aspects of family life based on identifying parents’ educational orientations. The methodology includes factors that reflect various aspects of family relationships and interaction with the child. The family role is assessed based on seven characteristics: 1) a woman’s focus exclusively on family responsibilities; 2) a sense of self-sacrifice in the maternal role; 3) conflicts in the family; 4) dissatisfaction with the role of a housewife; 5) a man’s passivity in family affairs; 6) a woman’s dominant position; 7) her dependence and lack of independence. The attitude towards children is viewed through the prism of emotional instability, which is manifested in the mother’s hot-temperedness and irritability. The assessment of each of these aspects is measured using five judgments, to which the respondent expresses his attitude in the form of active or partial agreement (disagreement) (Schaeffer, 1981).

Among the psychodiagnostic tools for studying parent-child relationships, psychological techniques are widespread that help determine *the individually oriented component* of parental influence. In this context, it is worth considering those that investigate the style of upbringing and typological differences in the educational influences presented in parent-child interaction. Analysis of relationships helps to understand which style of upbringing prevails in the family (authoritarian, democratic,

liberal, etc.), which makes it possible to adjust educational approaches and make them more effective

Those methodological tools are of particular interest and attempts were made to systematize parental positions in upbringing according to certain criteria. Accordingly, we can recommend the questionnaire "Psychological Types of Parents" (author B.B. Tkacheva), which is presented for the study of parents (guardians) raising children with special educational needs. It consists of 21 statements, each of which must be supported or refuted. According to the study, dominant, authoritarian, neurotic, psychosomatic types can be identified. Dominant indicates an active life position, a desire to constantly manage and control. Authoritarian describes a tendency to be guided only by one's own beliefs and to use harsh forms of punishment. Neurotic is an indicator of a passive personal position, which consists in an anxious desire to protect children from all problems. Psychosomatic indicates frequent mood changes in relation to children, which causes them insecurity and emotional instability (Ткачова, 2025).

The scientific sources we have reviewed contain different positions on the characteristics of parenting styles. At the same time, the most common in world and domestic practice is the identification of three main styles of educational influence (authoritarian, democratic and liberal). Brazilian psychologists (Robinson, Mandleco, Olsen & Hart, 2001) add authoritative and permissive styles of education to this list. The questionnaire they proposed contains 32 questions to which one of the following five answer options must be given, which is evaluated by points: never (1 point); occasionally (2 points); sometimes (3 points); often (4 points); always (5 points). Results are processed using the following scales: a) authoritative style of education – establishes a balance between positive parental attitude and structured influence, emphasizing support, affection, and promotion of autonomy; b) authoritarian education – is characterized by high demands and low empathy in relation to children; c) permissive

upbringing – defined as indulgence, permissiveness, granting freedom and the absence of clear boundaries.

The “Analysis of Family Relationships” method (authors E.G. Eidemiller, V.V. Justickis) makes it possible to analyze the impact of parenting style on children and identify possible parenting mistakes of parents. The questionnaire is presented with the following scales: overprotection (P+); underprotection (P–); indulgence (N+); ignoring children’s needs (N–); excessive demands on children (D+); insufficient demands (D–); excessive prohibitions (Pr+); insufficient prohibitions (Pr–); excessive sanctions (cruel parenting style) (S+); minimal sanctions (S–); instability of parenting style (IPS). Based on the results of combining these scales, researchers can determine the types of ineffective parenting. In particular, the following combinations are likely: 1) indulgent overprotection (P +, N+, D–, Pr–, S); 2) dominant overprotection (P+, N+/-, D+/-, Pr+, S +); 3) emotional rejection (P–, N–, D+/-, Pr+/-, S+); 4) increased moral responsibility (P+, N–, D+, Pr+/-, S+/-); 5) neglect (P–, N–, D–, Pr–, S+/-) (Марценюк, 2018).

As psychodiagnostic practice shows, for a more thorough understanding of parent-child relationships, it is necessary to study the features of mutual communication and the specifics of the formation of social skills in children. Parent-child communication plays a key role in the development of children and the formation of their personality. A sincere and frank dialogue helps children feel supported and protected, which is important for their mental health. That is why the communicative component of parent-child relationships is the starting point for the development of various aspects of the personality. Communication is the upbringing of values, moral principles, the formation of emotional security, the ability to make the right decisions in different situations. At the psychodiagnostic level, it is important to determine the formation of social skills in children, namely: to assess their ability to listen, build a dialogue, be empathetic and tolerant during communication, and be able to form

healthy relationships with parents. The presence of these communicative qualities contributes to the harmonious development of children and the strengthening of family ties.

Modern psychological research presents many psychodiagnostic methods that study the features of communication between parents and children. They help to assess the level of mutual understanding, communication style, the presence of conflicts, and the degree of emotional closeness. The questionnaire of parent-child relationships, developed by I.M. Markivska, requires special attention. It characterizes the use of various tactics by parents in communicating with children. The questionnaire is intended for parents of preschoolers and younger schoolchildren. They are offered 60 alternatives with which they must confirm agreement or disagreement on a 5-point system: 5 – without a doubt, yes (absolute agreement); 4 – in general, yes; 3 – both yes and no; 2 – rather not so, than yes; 1 – no (absolute disagreement). Scoring is carried out on a number of scales: "lenient-demanding"; "soft-strict"; "autonomy-control"; "emotional distance-closeness"; "repulsion-acceptance"; "lack of cooperation-cooperation"; "anxiety for the child"; "disorganization-consistency"; "educational confrontation in the family"; "satisfaction with relationships with children" (Марценюк, 2018).

At the current stage of development of psychodiagnostic science, priority is given to the study of competence. Within the framework of this issue, I. Zabrodina developed a methodology for diagnosing communicative competence, which reveals the level of formation of parents' knowledge about the basics of humane relationships with children of different ages. According to the results of testing, it is possible to determine: knowledge and ideas about the age and individual-characterological characteristics of children; ideas about effective ways of humane interaction with them; knowledge about the most rational ways of regulating behavior, means of resolving and preventing conflicts; awareness of the relationship between children's problems and

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the style of parental attitude; awareness of the real image of the child and their expectations regarding it. The generalization of the results aims to assess the level of competence of parents in matters of upbringing and building humane relationships with children with the following distribution of points: from 30 to 50 points – high; from 20 to 30 – medium; from 0 to 20 – low level of competence (Гончар, 2018).

An important indicator of effective parent-child communication is the psychological climate in the family, which reflects the emotional atmosphere and quality of relationships. Assessment of psychological climate is widely used in psychological diagnostics to study the emotional-evaluative component of relationships, namely: the level of emotional well-being and possible emotional problems. On the one hand, the study of psychological climate helps identify hidden or open conflicts that can negatively affect all family members. On the other hand, establishing the presence of a comfortable psychological climate in the family will indicate the harmonious personal development of children, their self-confidence and orientation towards healthy relationships.

Today, in psychodiagnostic practice, there are various methods that study the emotional and evaluative component of parent-child relationships. To assess the atmosphere of family relationships through art therapeutic drawing, the projective technique “Family Life Space (FLS)” is used (Gennari, Tamazaa, & Accordini, 2015). This is a graphic psychodiagnostic tool that helps assess the emotional nature of family relationships. Its feature is that it involves all family members in a joint recreation of the family system, which makes it possible to collect psychological information about emotional relationships in the family and assess key indicators of family relationships. Family members are asked to draw a circle that represents the family space. Everyone who is considered part of their family should be drawn inside the circle, and everyone who is not considered should be placed outside it. In order to indicate the quality of

relationships between family members, three types of lines are used: straight – positive, dotted – tolerant, wavy – conflicting relationships. Parents and children together describe the symbolism of the drawing and represent emotionally significant events.

Another well-known projective method in psychodiagnostics is the test "Kinetic Family Drawing" (KFD) co-authored by R. Burns and S. Kaufman, which makes it possible to characterize the system of emotional and socio-role relationships in the family. The subjects are offered a sheet of paper, pencils of different colors and are asked to draw a family. The sequence of drawing, actions, poses of the characters, the presence of groups and emotional relationships between family members are analyzed. The colors, symbolism, sequence and size of the images, the nature of the lines can determine the psychological climate of the family, which makes it possible to understand the dynamics of family relationships (Burns, & Kaufman, 2015).

Among the questionnaires that investigate the psychological atmosphere in the family, the Family Adaptation and Cohesion Scale by D.H. Olson, J. Portner, I. Lavie occupies a significant place. The following parameters are used to analyze the level of family cohesion: "emotional connection"; "family boundaries"; "decision-making"; "time"; "friends"; "interests and recreation", for the diagnosis of family adaptation - "leadership", "control", "discipline", "family rules". The questionnaire allows you to analyze how parents and children perceive their family and how they would like to see it. The greater the discrepancy between ideals and real perception is, the greater the dissatisfaction with the existing family atmosphere (Павлова, 2023).

In the context of *problem-oriented approaches*, when considering the issue of parent-child relationships, it is appropriate to mention the role of psychodiagnostics in preventing conflicts in families. Open communication is the key to the harmonious development of family members and building healthy relationships. It allows you to avoid many problems, helping parents bet-

ter understand the needs and difficulties of children. In turn, children who grow up in a tense atmosphere find it difficult to adapt to the conditions of society. Psychodiagnostic study of conflict behavior makes it possible to find out its factors and, on this basis, develop strategies for psychological assistance to families. Establishing harmonious relationships in parent-child interaction will help reduce the level of stress in children, contribute to their emotional well-being and raise confident, psychologically stable members of society.

Without a doubt, the most popular in the study of this component in adult family members is the method of identifying the characteristics of behavior in a conflict situation (Thomas, & Kilmann, 2008). It identifies five main styles: a) rivalry, which consists in defending only one's own interests; b) cooperation, during which the interests of all family members are taken into account; c) compromise as a partial satisfaction of needs, which involves mutual concessions; d) avoidance, which consists in the desire to evade active participation in resolving the conflict; e) adaptation as a weakening of the conflict situation by giving up one's own interests. Parents are offered 30 pairs of alternative judgments, among which they need to choose those that most closely correspond to behavior in a conflict situation.

Empirical data on the ability of children to constructively resolve conflict situations are essential for assessing the degree of conflict in the family. This problem is helped by the questionnaire "Assessment of one's own behavior in a conflict situation" by A. Adzhiev, created for adolescents and young men. Children are asked to honestly answer the question: "How do you usually behave in a conflict situation or during an argument?" The test is designed to process 15 statements, which are rated in the range from 1 to 3 points. According to the test data, characteristics of different types of behavior in a conflict situation are obtained: "A" – tough conflict resolution style; "B" – "democratic", "C" – "compromising", "D" – "soft", "E" – "avoidance" style (Gonchar, 2018).

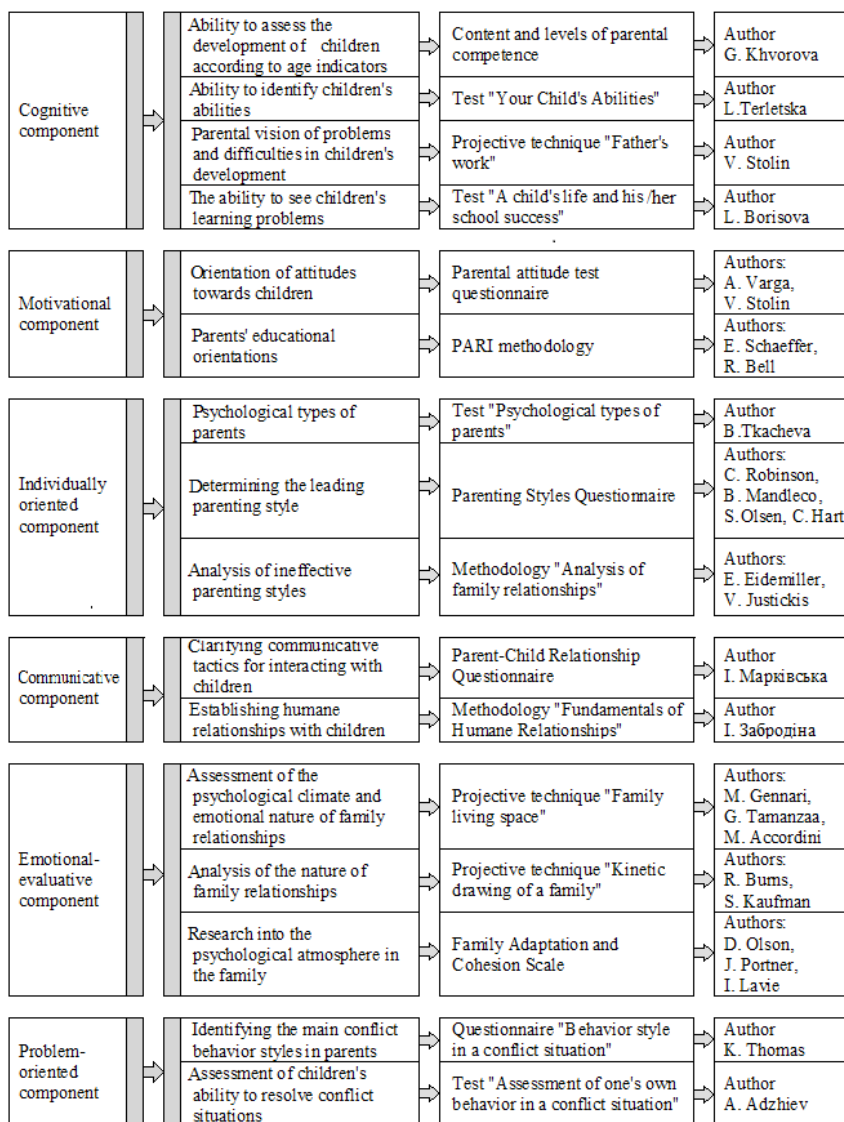


Fig. 1. Model for researching parent-child relationships

Based on the analysis of scientific approaches to the problems of parent-child relationships in psychology, we have identified the main components, directions, and methods of psychodiagnostic research, which are reflected in the model we have proposed (see Fig. 1).

Conclusion

Thus, the psychological study of parent-child relationships plays a significant social role, as it is a key mechanism for assessing family upbringing, identifying the main psychological difficulties in parents and developing effective approaches to raising and supporting the mental health of children. Many parents do not have sufficient knowledge of modern methods of upbringing, which often leads to flawed educational practices. Therefore, in accordance with the objectives of the study, we have identified areas of empirical research (cognitive, motivational, individually oriented, communicative, emotionally evaluative, problem-oriented); we have developed criteria, indicators and levels of formation of parent-child relationships according to the presented psychodiagnostic methods. The most significant criteria were parental competence, parental attitude, upbringing style, communicative tactics of parents, humane relationships, psychological climate of the family and conflict interaction. The indicators were the formation and expressiveness of the presented functions, which is reflected in diverse level characteristics.

Conducting psychodiagnostic screenings as an express method for identifying hidden psychological problems contributes to improving the psychological culture of parenting, helps educational establishments and public organizations create educational and correctional and developmental programs for parents, as well as make effective decisions aimed at ensuring the well-being of future generations.

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Гончарук Андрій, Гончарук Наталія. Концептуальна модель дослідження батьківсько-дитячих взаємостосунків у психологічній науці.

Метою статті є аналіз психодіагностичних методів оцінки батьківсько-дитячих взаємостосунків і розроблення моделі емпіричного вивчення батьківсько-дитячих взаємостосунків у контексті наукових досліджень.

Методи дослідження: теоретичний моніторинг наукових розвідок з проблеми, аналіз психодіагностичного інструментарію, порівняння

концептуальних засад вітчизняної та зарубіжної психодіагностики, моделювання.

Результати дослідження. У контексті представленого наукового дослідження проаналізовано основні напрями проблеми. На основі окреслених напрямів охарактеризовано компоненти батьківсько-дитячих взаємостосунків, серед яких виокремлено когнітивний, мотиваційний, індивідуально зорієнтований, комунікативний, емоційно-оцінний, проблемозорієнтований. У межах кожного компоненту сформульовано завдання психодіагностичного обстеження та здійснено підбір психодіагностичних методів з урахуванням завдань дослідження. Проаналізовано нові підходи до оцінки батьківсько-дитячих взаємостосунків, розроблені у сучасній науковій парадигмі. Ґрунтовно описано тести, проєктивні техніки, анкети, які широко використовуються у роботі психолога для дослідження різних аспектів взаємодії батьків і дітей у процесі виховання. На основі проведеного дослідження розроблено модель оцінки батьківсько-дитячих взаємостосунків.

Висновок. Проведений аналіз психодіагностичного та науково-дослідницького інструментарію дав змогу визначити основні компоненти, показники та структурну схему вивчення батьківсько-дитячих взаємостосунків, що уможливило розробити модель наукового дослідження, яку представлено як базову основу психологічної діагностики батьківського виховного впливу. Компонентами емпіричного дослідження визначено когнітивну, мотиваційну, індивідуально зорієнтовану, комунікативну, емоційно-оцінну, проблемно зорієнтовану сфери. Критеріями стали батьківська компетентність, батьківське ставлення, стиль виховання, комунікативна тактика батьків, гуманні взаємини, психологічний клімат сім'ї, конфліктна взаємодія.

Ключові слова: батьки, діти, виховання, виховний вплив, батьківсько-дитячі взаємостосунки, психодіагностичний інструментарій, методи дослідження.

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