

DIFFERENTIAL DIAGNOSIS OF PSYCHOLOGICAL PARAMETERS OF SIBLING RELATIONSHIPS IN THE FAMILY

Kravtsova Marina Viktorovna

candidate of Psychological Sciences, associate professor of the Department of andragogy

Belarusian State Pedagogical University named after M.Tank (Belarus, Minsk)

(e-mail:marina.v.kravtsova@gmail.com)

Annotation

The article presents diagnostic tools, namely: " The Brother - Sister Questionnaire " adapted by M.V. Kravtsova and "Sibling communication diagnostic technique" modified by M.V. Kravtsova, which expands the possibilities of obtaining information about the psychological parameters of relations between siblings by practical psychologists and thus create additional conditions for identifying the causes of family difficulties, violations of the psycho-emotional state of children in the family, as well as the search for additional resources in the family system.

The psychological well-being of the modern family today is mainly associated with the degree of harmony of marital and child-parent relations in the family. The issues of sibling relationships, their significance for the development of the child and the general psychological atmosphere of the family have been little developed and are often omitted from scientific discussion, or are considered very impoverished, only through the prism of the phenomenon of rivalry associated with the birth of a second child in the family. However, sibling relationships are included in intra-family processes, they are characterized by their dynamics, have their own goals, structure, perform specific psychological functions, both in relation to the personal development of the child and the family as a whole [4; 5].

A certain difficulty for practical psychologists is the question of studying the characteristics of sibling relationships. This direction of psychological diagnostics exists mainly within the framework of the general practice of studying interpersonal relationships, which cannot be called a sufficient measure. The lack of necessary diagnostic tools to study the dynamics and features of this kind of relationship, of course, affects the quality of psychological support for the family. In order to solve the problem of psychological study of sibling relationships within the framework of the dissertation research, the author of this article carried out work on the adaptation of the American questionnaire "Sibling Questionnaire" (BSQ), developed by S.A. Graham-Bermann, S.E. Culter, and also created and standardized a modified questionnaire "Methods of diagnosis of sibling communication" (modified a variant of the method of diagnosis of marital communication by Alyoshina Yu.E., Gozman L.Ya., Dubovskaya E.M.) [1; 2].

These questionnaires were included in the methodological support of the study of the dynamics of sibling relationships in situations of traumatic experience and underwent the necessary psychometric assessment procedure, namely: validation, reliability assessment and standardization. The aim of the study was to study the role of sibling relationships in overcoming emotional experiences in the situation of loss of parents by children, since it was assumed and confirmed that there is a dependence of the emotional state of the personality of children in the situation of loss of parents on the nature of sibling relationships.

Methods of psychological diagnostics "Fraternal-sisterly questionnaire" (adaptation by M.V. Kravtsov) and "Methods of diagnostics of sibling communication" (modification by M.V. Kravtsova of methods of diagnostics of marital communication by Alyoshina Yu.E., Gozman L.Ya., Dubovskaya E.M.) [1; 2] expand the possibilities of obtaining information about the psychological parameters of relations between siblings by practical psychologists and thus create additional conditions for identifying the causes of family difficulties, violations of the psycho-emotional state of children in the family, as well as the search for additional resources in the family system.

The "Brother-Sister Questionnaire" (The Brother-Sister Questionnaire) was proposed by American scientists Sandra A.Graham-Bermann and Susan E.Culter in 1994 [1; 2; 3], and has sufficient capabilities to characterize four aspects of sibling relationships, including empathy, maintaining boundaries, similarity of views and coercion in relationships. The questionnaire, like other methods of such a structure, by its organization is focused on the analysis of subjective data and has the character of a self-report. The methodology includes 35 points in the form of statements, which are compiled in such a way as to be able to reflect a subjective assessment of the relations that exist between siblings in the family. When the subject evaluates the parameters of relations reflected in a particular statement, a gradation on a 5-point scale is used from "not at all suitable" to "absolutely true", the subject describes the degree of severity of each proposed statement. All statements are grouped into 4 scales, designated as "Empathy", "Maintaining Boundaries", "Similarity" and "Coercion".

Analyzing the sibling relationship parameter indicated in the "Empathy" scale, we focus on fourteen points that determine the level of empathy and care in the relationship between siblings. This includes an assessment of the level of care for each other, the degree of attention to the interests, thoughts, beliefs, values, deeds and deeds of a brother / sister, the degree of empathy for each other, the degree of openness, which can be expressed in frank conversations, the ability to share secrets and secrets with each other, the desire to spend time together is evaluated. This parameter also studies the presence of a feeling of spiritual closeness, emotional attachment. High scores on the scale indicate a high level of empathy development in relationships.

The parameter reflected in the "Maintaining Boundaries" scale evaluates the degree to which siblings maintain interpersonal boundaries. Here the degree of proximity / remoteness of siblings from each other is diagnosed. This parameter is evaluated both in the field of material property, and in the field of individual interests, emotional relationships. The criterion is, on the one hand, the sibling's ability to respect the physical and psychological space of the other, on the other, the ability to establish and maintain close personal relationships.

The "Similarity" scale determines whether siblings have common interests, the unity of their views and values, attitudes to basic life situations and phenomena. The unity of life experience and experiences is diagnosed. Nine points of the scale also relate to the presence of siblings of mutual friends, interests in sports, hobbies, school subjects. High scores on the scale determine a high level of similarity of views in the interpersonal relationships of siblings. Low indicators may indicate a strong differentiation or even de-identification.

Finally, the scale designated as "Coercion" creates conditions for assessing the elements of power and control of one sibling over another, dominance. This scale also includes questions about the behavior of not just domination, but also exploitation, coercion in relationships, deviant behavior towards sibling, isolation of sibling in relation to his friends. High indicators on this scale indicate a high level of dominance and control of one sibling in relation to another.

The "brother-sister questionnaire" also allows us to characterize the features of four types of conflict sibling relationships in which the subject is represented: a) a victim of a pronounced conflict, b) the initiator of the conflict, c) a sibling involved in a mutual conflict, d) a participant in a relationship with a moderate level of conflict, which is considered as an acceptable norm.

The methodology is based on the concepts of normative and dysfunctional sibling relationships based on the concepts of development, a systematic approach to the analysis of family problems, the theory of object relations. This conceptual understanding of sibling relationships determined the structure of the questionnaire scales. Among the signs of normative sibling relationships were identified: sufficient individual boundaries, some similarity between siblings, a low level of coercion in the relationship and a high level of empathy.

When working out the first position, S. Minukhin's theory of family systems is used, which, when analyzing interpersonal relationships, is based on an understanding of the need to maintain boundaries for the development of stable relationships. The development of sibling relationships takes place in the general system of family interaction. Ideally, the boundaries between family members are semi-permeable, flexible and adaptive. Family dysfunction, according to S. Minukhin, occurs when the boundaries are either too rigid and therefore impenetrable, or too open, which leads to symbiosis and loss of identification and

control. Within the framework of sibling relations, learning to establish and respect mutual boundaries with sibling can be considered as a task of sibling development.

M. Bowen's concept complements the idea of psychologically healthy relationships based on the concept of "differentiation", we are talking in this case about differentiating oneself from others. This representation includes common interests and some unique or individual characteristics of both siblings. The opposite plus in the qualitative assessment of sibling relations by this parameter involves the analysis of sibling deidentification processes, when the process of individual separation from sibling takes the form of active acceptance of the oppositional or opposing role of sibling. Identification most often occurs in dysfunctional families.

The authors of the methodology also identified the third component necessary for the development of healthy sibling relationships – a flexible distribution of power between family members. The presence of physical or emotional abuse in a relationship is always characterized by an imbalance of power. The fourth parameter, empathy, is considered an essential characteristic of psychologically healthy sibling relationships. In this case, we are talking not only about the feeling of empathy, but also about the ability to express it in relation to sibling. Representatives of the theory of object relations emphasize the role of the empathic other in the development of the I-Other identity.

The listed components of the sibling relationship analysis allow us to describe psychologically healthy, mutually supportive and balanced relationships between siblings. These include those siblings of the dyad, triads that are adequately differentiated, are able to express empathy towards each other, respect each other's boundaries and do not use tactics of forced control against each other.

Another diagnostic tool that can be recommended for work is the "Sibling communication diagnostic technique" (a modification of M.V. Kravtsova's method of diagnosing marital communication by Alyoshina Yu.E., Gozman L.Ya., Dubovskaya E.M.) is designed for psychological diagnostics of sibling interaction and allows you to characterize the features of sibling communication by indicators of trust, mutual understanding, similarity of views, the presence of a family language, ease and psychotherapeutic communication [1].

In the course of the study, the subjects are presented with instructions, according to which they are invited to answer the proposed questions and try to make the chosen answer most fully correspond to the situation in the family of the subject. An index is calculated on each scale, the value of which is equal to the arithmetic mean of the values included in the scale of questions. The higher the score, the more pronounced the scale indicator is. The characteristics of trust and mutual understanding in sibling communication, similarity of views, presence of common family symbols, ease of communication between siblings,

psychotherapeutic communication are determined by the degree of severity of the scale indicator.

So, the scales of "Confidence of communication" and "Mutual understanding between siblings" are divided into two subscales, and assume: a) the respondent's assessment of himself on this basis, b) the respondent's assessment of the partner. This allows us to trace the real family situation, as well as the degree of adequacy of its subjective assessment. The questionnaire has the character of a standardized self-report, respondents present a subjective assessment of what is happening in their relationship with their brother / sister.

The parameter of trustfulness of communication reveals and evaluates the degree of trust in sibling communication, expressed in the functioning of the motives of the ability to rely on faith, on the conscience of another, entrust yourself, your secrets, your affairs to your brother/sister, rely on him fully. This psychological parameter of the relationship is directly related to agreement about beliefs and values.

The scale "Mutual understanding between siblings" reveals the level of understanding by siblings of each other, knowledge of the interests, moods of the other, the ability to predict and understand the behavior of a brother / sister in certain situations, reactions to certain events.

The scale "Similarity of views" is designed to determine the unity of views or disagreements in the assessment of issues related to value choices, ideological position, range of interests, attitude to life, perception of the environment (people, cultural objects, etc.), and the indicator of the scale "Common family symbols" evaluates the existence of siblings objects, statements that have for they have the same meaning, evoking the same feeling, memory, attitude. In communication between siblings, this property can be expressed in the existence of "their own language", a sense of unity, cohesion, the so-called "we".

The indicator of ease of communication implies the emergence of a sense of community between siblings, mutual understanding in interaction, lack of stiffness, tension, ease of communication.

An important parameter in the interaction of siblings is the "Psychotherapeutic nature of communication". When studying the role of sibling relationships in situations of traumatic experience, their psychotherapeutic function was proved, which allowed to preserve the mental stability of children in situations of life shocks. In the "Sibling Communication Diagnostic Methodology", this scale evaluates the extent to which communication with a brother / sister is supportive, brings relief in situations associated with troubles, difficult life circumstances. However, it is important to remember that the psychotherapeutic function of communication is impossible without a certain level of trust and mutual understanding. In this regard, the results of the diagnostic examination are

analyzed only in relation to the parameters presented in the scales of the questionnaire.

The criteria of trust and mutual understanding in sibling communication, similarity of views, the presence of common family symbols, ease of communication between siblings, psychotherapeutic communication allow us to assess the degree of well-being of the relationship between brother / sister.

Thus, the methods of the "Fraternal-sisterly questionnaire" by Sandra A.Graham-Bermann and Susan E.Culter (adaptation by M.V. Kravtsova) and the "Sibling communication diagnostic technique" (modification by M.V. Kravtsova of the marital communication diagnostic technique by Alyoshina Yu.E., Gozman L.Ya., Dubovskaya E.M.) [1; 2; 3] They can be used for psychometric assessment and differentiation of dysfunctional and qualitatively functioning psychologically healthy sibling relationships. These methods can be recommended for use in the work of practical psychologists who provide psychological support for families with children, and for solving scientific research tasks of scientists.

List of sources:

1. Kravtsova M.V. The influence of sibling relationships on the emotional state of adolescents deprived of parental care. // Abstract of the dissertation for the degree of Candidate of Psychological Sciences – Mn., 2004.
2. Kravtsova M.V. Fraternal-sisterly questionnaire in the diagnosis of dysfunctional sibling relationships. // Materials of the eighth international conference "Socio-psychological rehabilitation of the population affected by environmental and man-made disasters"/ Editorial Board: L.A. Pergamenshchik (Chief Editor), etc. - Mn.: NIO RB, 2001.
3. Graham-Bermann S.A., Culter S.E. The Brother - Sister Questionnaire: Psychometric Assessment and Discrimination of Well - Functioning from Dysfunctional relationships // Journal of Family Psychology Volume 8, No. 2, 1994.
4. Hetherington E.M. Siblings, Family Relationships, and Child Development: Introduction // Journal of Family Psychology Volume 8, No. 3, 1994.
5. Newman M., Black D., Harris-Hendriks J. Victims of disaster, war, violence, or homicide: psychological effects on siblings // Child Psychology & Psychiatry Review Volume 2, No. 4, 1997.