

CULTURAL INFLUENCE ON AIMS OF THE INCLUSION OF MOTHERS IN PRE-SCHOOL CHILDREN'S PLAY

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Child is introduced with the contents of culture at first through numerous influences culture has on family life, especially on defining parenting roles. Patriarchal culture, still strong in Yugoslavia, is full of norms that clearly define roles of elders and men, and excellently demarcates differences between father's and mother's role in bringing up their children, defined by the level of responsibility attached to parents in upbringing and educating a child.

Research conducted in Novi Sad, Yugoslavia in January 2002, with the primary aim of diagnosing differences in frequency and quality of parent-pre-school children play concerning many relevant correlates, most important of which is the sex of the parent.

Data show high distinctive quality difference in types and approaches to play in regard of the parent in question. Differences show that patriarchal culture's influence is still very strong. The results show that mothers are burdened with the higher level of responsibility, inevitably leading to higher parenting stress. The level of parenting stress can then influence the quality of meeting the requests put to parents, as well as raising level of general anxiety in all the activities concerning the child, therefore the play itself as well.

Keywords: parenting stress, culture and play, pre-school children

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INTRODUCTION: PARENTHOOD

Reasons for having a child are different not only in different times of our lives, but also in different people in the same time. Birth of the first child is sometimes considered as a sign of maturity or as the moment of the final departure from the primary family. (Kapor-Stanulović, 1978) Today, in most cases, birth of a child is considered more of a natural chain of events and cannot be directly linked to the maturity, nor to the separation from the parents, as economic dependence from the parents, at least in Yugoslavia, is never higher than when the grandchild comes. Child is often the factor that strengthens or re-establishes shattered relations by creating a new field of mutual interest to mother and father alike. A desire to have a child is not necessarily combined with the readiness to have it. Motives for having a child can also be the same factors that will complicate the upbringing of the child when it arrives. (Kapor-Stanulović, 1978). Being a good parent means a lot in the world today. Psychology and pedagogy offer a wide spectrum of different advices on how to bring children up. Parents' task is "only" to find the right one for their child. Almost all of the people can have a child, most of them want to, but none of us is taught how to be a good parent.

Birth of a child leads to the sequence of events: caring about an infant, then about the child, and finally by growing up, accepting them as equals. Inevitably, a somewhat romantic relation husband-wife, evolves into less romantic connection between a mom and dad, and with that three new relations: mother-child, father-child and mother-child-father. All of these relations are tightly interlinked and make the family atmosphere as it exists. Expectations after the child's birth are not rarely shattered and parents find themselves in situation they did not expect and are not prepared for, forcing them to adjust and to give more of themselves than they are willing or more than they are capable in the moment in question. Adjustments are usually aimed on forming an individual into new role of parent, especially if we talk about a first-born, or accepting that the second (or third) child is different than the first and again adjusting to the new situation. Of course, financial conditions and the support of the family are also a new aspect of the life a parent needs adjusting to. Events as big as these ones are always a reason of changing the relations between a husband and wife, but also between parents and a child, and can develop, if not solved in the right time, a constant point of potential emotional problems and behavioral changes in children. Parenting stress has a remarkable influence on emotional development, emotional stability and a sense of safety in child, but also on the child-parent relation. Researches in the field of development of behavioral disorders in children revealed a set of children's qualities that can be stressful for a parent. It is thought today that there are three major origins of parenting stress: qualities of a child, qualities of a parent and a situational or life stress. (Abidin, 1983)

Quality of parent-child interactions depends therefore on the qualities of a child (his temper), qualities of a parent, parenting stress and on the developmental stage a child is on as well as on the cultural norms related to the mother or father roles in the society. However, we must not forget one more relevant factor-emotional

relations in the family itself. The authors of the Family Relations Test (Bene & Anthony, 1952) emphasize Bolby's opinion that the rule in solving the problems a child has is actually in finding the source of tensions in the family (most often in the already mentioned relation between a parent and a child) and its resolve.

The other fact they stress out is that the basic emotional relations that play a significant part in the parent-child relation are strong emotions such as love and rage, somewhat less strong than these (liking/disliking) and jealous reactions. All these relations include a perception of treatment of others toward the child as well as the perception of child's emotions towards its surrounding.

Other authors also emphasize the importance of emotional exchange in the family. Rhona and Robert Rapoport and Z. Sterliz see the necessity of the proper emotional response from the angle that says: parent is equally a person as is a child, and its parenting is not guided solely by intellectual assessments of the situation, but a major part in them have their needs and emotional exchange that transcends feelings of obligations and responsibility towards the child and are much more linked to basic human joy and disappointment. Ideal situation would be if the needs of a child and parents can be the same or at least adequate and mutually supportive, but in real life much more often these needs are totally or partially opposite, and with that create the situations that are both frustrating and hard to endure. The process of adjustments becomes an imperative rather than a willful decision (Rapoport, Rapoport, Sterliz, 1977)

Great influence on emotional exchange in parenting has the fact that pre-schoolers have not yet well developed vocabulary and therefore cannot express feelings well enough, as well as their egocentric view of the world leading to the inability of the child to see that the same situation can be interpreted in different ways and can evoke different emotions in different people and often attach their own emotions to other people in the situation as well. Strength and stability of the parent-child relation at this age is crucial and is a foundation of the good interactions between them in the future. Creation and maintenance of stable relations, along with the recognition of the child's perspective and its emotions can very well, perhaps the best be served by playing with a child.

MOTHERHOOD

If you look at the books from several decades ago, a term "mother instinct" pops every now and then. It was the factor that guided the relation between a mother and a child towards the unconditional, permanent love and affection, child nurture and care for him. But, as life showed us, in numerous situations this instinct does not appear and therefore we cannot talk about an instinct as we usually do. Abasement of a child, child murders, neglecting a child, and even statements of some mothers after the child is born that they have "no emotions what so ever" towards the child, are the best reasons, but not the only ones, to question existents of this instinct. The fact remains that in most families soon after the child is born a special and very close relation is formed between a mother and a child, where father remains neglected, at least for a

little while. Creation of this relation is usually explained by the appearance of the child itself and its cry as a call for mother's reaction making it the most important "communication device" between a child and its surroundings at that age. Whatever the reason, the relation between a mother and child works both ways. Behavior of one participant always influence the behavior of the other – mother can be ready to love her child, but in light of some unexpected and uncontrollable occurrences can become unsatisfied and disappointed by the child itself and its behavior (for example, inadequate emotional reactions of a child). On the other hand, a mother willing to leave her child can change this attitude by something as little as child's smile. (Ekerman, 1958)

We can see that bond between mother and child depends on many factors; it is not always equally emotional nor fulfilling. Schefer talks about "mother's sensitivity" defined as "heighten consciousness about child's existence, readiness to immediately react on child's signals and higher receptiveness for those signals". (Kapor-Stanulović, 1985, pg. 66) Einsworth tries to measure this capability with the mother sensitivity scale, defining it as capability to see things as child does. She emphasizes that this capability is not inborn and equally developed in all women, but that it does exist in most mothers. Source of sensitivity reduction can be weariness, depression, preoccupation with other obligations, but some of them are in the mother herself-they can receive child's signals, but wrongly interpreted. This false interpretation is usually caused by mother's own needs or defenses, by their need to control the child and to subject child to their own rhythm of activity. Results Einsworth collected showed that children of sensitive mothers are also more secure and free to explore, they perceive mother as a source of security they can return to, but they do not fear to separate from them from time to time. Children of insensitive mothers either cannot function without them, or do not perceive them as source of stability and security. (Kapor-Stanulović, 1985)

PLAY BETWEEN PARENT AND A CHILD

Clause 31 of the Children Rights Convention says children are entitled to play, rest and to have a free time. Among other principles of the United Nation (UN) there is at least one that enables elders to have fun and to rest. If we merge these two principles together we can make a "legal" basis for the parent-child play.

We cannot forget at least four developmental characteristics that make this play both possible and desirable:

- adults need to teach, children need to be taught
- adults want to share their cultural and social experience, children are just forming their social identity
- adults need to take care for someone, children need to be taken care of
- adults try to make a positive role model, children need those kind of role models (Davis, 2001)

Even without these legal and scientific approaches to the playing activities between a parent and a child, parents themselves, very early in their new life with a child begin the activities that are often referred to as playing with the baby: they tickle

it, move their feet pedaling, rub their nose with baby's, swing it, pat them on their knees, spin it, play throw-and-catch, make funny faces to amuse it, etc. The question is if the baby actually participate in games like these, but it can learn and interact with the other players through it. The reactions get more frequent in time, child is reacting more fully and more variously and finally becomes the one that starts the game itself, which of course is much more mature than the original arrangement.

In 1976, Bruner and Sherwood introduce the game known even today as "Peek-a-boo". This game is played at the baby's age of about nine months. Mothers try to initiate the game by putting the dipper on baby's face, immediately pooling it down and says "boo" (or something similar). The baby tries to imitate mom's face expression, or with the joyous sigh and a smile expresses its own pleasure and surprise. At about 12 months baby starts to pool the dipper of its face by itself, and when it starts walking it becomes the initiator of the game. (Saton-Smith, 1989). Naming games, throwing and catching, imitation, musical-rhythmical games, playing with different objects (mostly cubes) are most common games with a child up to 3 years old, and later on the most important aim is to wake the curiosity for themselves, separating themselves from the environment - physically (body boundaries) and psychologically (reacting to the environment and conflict resolution). What is probably most emphasized with these games is cognitive development through play introducing tasks based on combination of objects and creating qualitatively new ones. (Vukomanovic et al., 1989) Often very simple games are the ones that bring parents and children more closely together. Playing with the child gives the parents a chance to revive their childhood memories, but also to fulfill fantasies without fear they would look silly in the eyes of the others. In the article "Parents at Play " Man gives many ideas for the parents-child play, adjustable to the developmental stadium of the child:

- building brick towers
- walking in the rain and splashing in the rain puddles
- making caves, castles, blanket tents
- making paper toys
- collecting interesting stones
- a picnic and feeding the birds etc. (Mann, 2000)

The role of the adults, and parents too, is very important in the development of the cooperative group play in children. Children at age 4 to 7 have a very strong urge to join the group play, but do not manage in it very well and often return to the side-by-side play fulfilling their aim (the one they are interested in) and changing it when they are bored with it. At the same time they are watching other children play and sometimes find the ideas for their own play in their. We must highlight again-parents should not create the whole game their selves including the roles and activity for the child, but only to try to adjust the content of the game for the abilities and needs of the child, as well as harmonizing individual needs and ideas of the children in play (Smiljanić, Toličić, 1992)

Play between a parent and child is a form of interaction that enables two way influence, transfer of thoughts and emotions. It has already been mentioned how many roles and functions the play has for the child, but also for its parents. Taking part in it, parents find things out about their child and, allowing the child to influence them as well as themselves to influence the child, create deeper and more profound relations to it.

Beside all that has already been said, the involvement in the child's play enables the parent to learn about child's interests and to use that knowledge in child's upbringing, but also in experience exchange with child's teachers and by that participating in creation of new educational ideas, all with one aim in mind-better and more qualitative development of the child (Šain et al., 2000)

QUALITY OF PLAY- THE PURPOSE AND WAY OF RESEARCHING

Main aim of this research was to determine characteristics of the parent-child play with the preschoolers.

Questions it was designed to answer were:

- Do quality and quantity of play correlate (and how) with the parenting stress level and its components
- Do quality and quantity of play correlate with the parents' assessment of the importance of play as a child's need
- Do quality and quantity of play correlate with the child's assessment of the emotional relationship with the parent
- Is there a difference in quantity and quality of play concerning the gender of the parent
- Is there a difference in quantity and quality of play concerning the gender of the child
- Is there a difference in quantity and quality of play concerning the order of the child birth
- Does quantity of play correlate with the quality of play

Research variables

Independent variables were:

- All the domains of the parenting stress, measured by the Parenting Stress Index (feeling of parent's competency, frustration of parent role, social isolation and parent depression, parent's health, relations with the spouse, child's requests, activity of the child and its ability to pay attention, adoptability of the child to the new situations, ability of the child to animate the parent and finally, mood of the child)
- Assessment of the child's need (measured by Parenting Questionnaire)
- Quality of parent-child emotional relationship, assessed by the child (measured by the Family Relation Test)
- Parent's gender

- Child's gender and
- Birth order (first born, later born)

Dependent variables were:

- Frequency of the parent-child play, assessed by the parent (assessments were – everyday or more times a week, weekends or 2-3 times a week and finally, less than once a week)
- Quality of the parent-child play (measured with the test constructed for this research)

The sample of the research and the techniques used

Research had been conducted with a group of children (nine girls and five boys) age three to six from a Novi Sad (Yugoslavia) kindergarten, and their parents (11 mothers and 8 fathers) at the beginning of 2002. Beside numerous, already mentioned, questionnaires used (Parenting Stress Index – PSI (Abidin, 1983), Family Relations Test – FRT (Bene and Anthony, 1952) and Parenting Questionnaire (Kapor-Stanulovic), an interview and standardized observation were also used. For the purpose of measuring the quality of the play, the author composed Scale for Measuring Quality of Play, based on the rules given below. The whole scale (in Serbian) can be found in the author's graduation paper at the University of Novi Sad.

Scale for Measuring Quality of Play

For the play to be exploratory for the child and informative on what the child thinks, how it thinks, how it sees the world, what interests it and why, what it feels, for the parent, it is essential that the parent:

- follow the lead of the child – child's initiative for the beginning of the play, roles that child gives, changing the game;
- adjust the game to the developmental stadium of the child so that it can a challenge, and not the frustration (shapes, terms and relations used by the parent in the game);
- imitate child's play linking its ideas in the same frame, and not to force his or her ideas not accepted by the child;
- give enough time for creation of the game to child and not to rush it;
- give ideas to expand the game in play, but not beyond what child can accept and understand;
- follow interests of the child – toys it chooses, roles it gives and space it uses for the game (Van Lue, 2001)

Qualitative play rules named above were given by E. Van Lue at the 2001 IPA/USA Conference in New York (USA), but the idea of the parent as "partner in play" with almost the identical rules can also be found in Yugoslav authors' books.

In accordance with these rules, Scale for Measuring Quality of Play assesses the capability of response to the child's need to play, proper use of, to the child, unknown words and relations, creative use of objects (e.g., cubes and puzzles), ability to connect child's ideas for play, acceptance of space and roles to play given by the child and following fluctuations of the child's attention as well as parent's own.

Statistical methods used for the result interpretation were: descriptive statistics, Chi-square test, t-test for independent samples, Pearson's correlation and analysis of variance. Both Statistica and SPSS were used.

Most of the variables used in the research proved to be relevant for the parent-child play. Many of the factors were actually interlinked and we can talk about their combined influence, rather than their individual. One of the most important one was the culture that surely influenced the quality of the play and type of the play that were different in mothers and fathers, but also the parenting stress of mothers and quality of emotional exchange with the children concerning the gender of parent. Due to the large amounts of data, only some of the results will be shown in this article.

MOTHER IN PLAY

Frequency of mother-child play

Research this author had conducted showed that there is a statistically significant ($p < .01$) difference in frequency of play with the child, concerning the gender of the parent. Mothers are, expectedly, the parent that plays with the child more often (average frequency is 3-“every day, or more times a week”; whereas fathers play mostly “only on weekends”).

Importance level of play with the child compared to other developmental needs

Most of the parents put play as a developmental need only at the third place (out of five needs given) compared to other developmental needs. Play with the mother has also been ranked as third need, but interestingly, play with the father is at the second place, where the other needs were educational experiences, physical needs of a child, social development care, emotional development care.

Quality of play

Average score at the Scale of quality play is $M=27.44$ (where 32 points is maximum) and standard deviation $Sd=2.56$. Score as high as this one is very encouraging because it says about good fulfillment of basic functions play has in children. Minimal score was 21, the highest 31.

As for the gender of the parent, mothers have average score of 26.92 ($Sd=2.68$), and fathers slightly higher ($M=29$; $Sd=1.41$). This difference, however, is

not statistically significant which tells us both mothers and fathers play with children equally good (Table 1).

Table 1: Average scores on the Scale of quality of play

	M	Sd
mothers	26.92	2.68
fathers	29	1.41
total	27.44	2.56

Emotional exchange and relations with the child

Correlations between positive attitude toward a child and the gender of the parent exists and the results show that children receive more positive emotional messages from mother (in their own estimation). In contrast, negative attitude correlate with the fathers, so we can conclude that children more often see fathers as a parent who sends them negative messages. These correlations, however, are not statistically significant, but we can notice the trend as significance was $p=.12$ (for the mothers) and $.16$ (for the fathers).

We also tried to determine which of the parents a child is more dependent to. Although in this case we could not get significance high enough ($p=.15$), the results show that children are more dependent on mothers, than they are on fathers.

Games parents play

Although there is no difference in quality of the parent-child play, we could see the difference in the type of games and objects use parents use in the play with their children. (Table 2)

Table 2: Games parents play with the children

MOTHERS		FATHERS	
GAME	FREQ.	GAME	FREQ.
Role playing	9	Social games	4
Reading and writing	6	Puzzle	2
Social games	4	Playing with shapes	2
Puzzle	4	Role playing	2
Memory games	4	Talking	1
Playing with shapes	4	Reading and writing	1
Musical games	1		
Talking	1		

As we can see from the table above, mothers tend to play different games involving role playing with their children and fathers are more involved in social games. Some type of games are “exclusive” to mothers (such as musical and memory games). In play with different shapes mothers use much more imagination so they use, not only paper and blocks, but also pastry, cloth, fruit and vegetable etc.

But, the greatest difference has been noticed in the perception of children’s qualities and children’s development by the parents. (Table 3)

Table 3: Perception of childrens` qualities

IN PLAY WITH THE CHILD PARENTS NOTICE:			
MOTHERS	Frequencies	FATHERS	Frequencie
Creativity and imagination	6	Intelligence	3
Temperament and personal qualities	20	Personal qualities	1
Openness-closeness	2	Curiosity	1
Impulsiveness	1	Creativity	2
Tendency to lead	3	Movement development	1
Exclusivity	1	Memory development	1
Qualm	2	Relations with older sister/brother	1
Profoundness	2	New findings	1
Kindness	2		
Stubbornness	2		
Composure	1		
Sociability	1		
Endurance	2		
Precision and perfectionism	1		
It’s own oversights	2		
Interest development	2		
Memory development	1		
Relations with older sister/brother	3		
Pace of thinking	1		
Game preferences	1		

Parenting stress level

With this research, we tried to see how stressed parents are. The average score at the PSI for mothers was 147.57, and for the fathers 124.90 (Table 4). Again, significance level is not high enough ($p = .17$), but we can see that there is a tendency for the mothers to be more stressed by parenting than the fathers are. On the other hand, frequency of play correlates with the higher total PSI scores (correlation is 0.47, $p = .03$), as well as with some of the sections of the scale (parent health, frustration of parenting role and changes in marriage relations; correlation ranges from 0.48 to 0.55). This result can tell us that parents often turn to play with the child when they have troubles either in the marriage, or in some other aspects of their lives.

Table 4: Average scores at the Parenting Stress Index Scale

	M	Sd	Min	Max	p= 0.17
mothers	147.57	46.57	108	296	
fathers	124.90	20.95	98	170	
total	138.13	39.09	98	296	

CONCLUSION

It is noticeable that parents whose stress source is in their health, marriage relations or frustration with their parenting role, tend to play with their children more often. Everything said here points out the fact that the play is a way to escape from problems, frustrations, or at least, a good way to eliminate them for a little while to "catch a breath" from the reality. The play is also an excellent way to show themselves, or to try and to learn how to be a good parent. The question remains, however, if the need to learn about the child itself and to understand it, a need that can be fulfilled in play, is actually heightening the parenting stress levels in parents playing with the child more frequently, or is the parenting stress cumulative effect of everyday micro stressors, and in that case the play can be a relaxation that helps reduce this stress. Another research should be conducted to answer this question, a research that could determine and compare levels of parenting stress and stress induced by other factors, and afterwards to link these two with the quality of play. We must keep in mind that stressed parents are more anxious in the play so the quality of this play is probably much lower.

The quality of play can be linked to some elements of the family life, most of all with the positive emotional exchange between a parent and a child. Research data show that more positive relation means more frequent play. On the other hand, child tends to play more with the parent he is more dependent on. Dependence in this case means total and unconditional acceptance of the child, even its not yet well developed

abilities (which make him look for assistance), as well as total giving of the parent and care for the child. All said points to the conclusion that a child see this relation as a culmination of the positive attitude toward it, and with that in mind ask for contact and intimacy more often than with the other parent. However, this relation of dependency can transpose to the play itself, and the play loses its challenging quality, its requests to take control and to adjust, as well as its ability to create and to solve problems, and hence, to loose on its quality more.

The other interesting thing our data tells us is that mothers, although do play with the child more, do not reach the quality of the play expected. This can lead to the conclusion that the old, patriarchal family model lost its strength, that fathers are more empathetic and mothers are more “masculine”, or that in some other way mothers succeeded in leveling the differences between them and fathers. In one older study, fathers are perceived as a parent who seldom laughs, avoid any emotional outburst, who is serious and dignified, and above all, the parent that develops moral judgment in a child by toughness and principal. Mother is a parent who is full of understanding, love, warmth; she is lenient, caring and kind (Trebješanin, 2000). It seems today we can no longer speak about these patterns. Fathers are equally excited when they talk about their play with the child, they are equally good in it, and lesser frequency can be explained by their absence due to work hours. The truth however seems to be well covered and resembles the patriarchal family much more than it looks. Mothers are still the ones a child is more dependent on, meaning they are more lenient, more caring and more kind. Mother is therefore more often chosen as a partner in play. If we return to the type of games played, we can see that mothers play games that allow them to deal with the child in more ways than one. These games are usually role- playing type, that allows them to work through different situations from the family life. Beside this, mother can learn about their child’s emotions, personal qualities, new things it learns and ways it combines them. As we saw earlier, mothers do not use this opportunity as well as they could, but the fact remains they could do all this by playing with the child, where fathers choose games where they can remain “respected adults” (and not to debase to child’s level as these games can be played with the children and grown-ups in the same way), and at the same time can inform themselves on child’s memory, attention levels and cognitive abilities, and to concern themselves with emotional aspects at all.

Some of the fathers evade role playing with saying that “my wife is more skillful in those things, so why bother”. In some families it is a “quiet rule” that everyone obeys. One mother justifies that by saying that “father teaches them other stuff. He is the pillar of the house; I am a creative one”. What misses the point in these comments is that a child wants to play with both parents equally. One father notices: “I never ask her (daughter) if I play with her enough. I guess I am afraid my own child would say I do not give her enough attention and time. In that case I would try to give more, but I am not sure I am ready for that kind of commitment”.

The question of culture and play can be seen here more clearly than ever. Cultural pattern of mothers as caring parent (in Serbian culture more than usual), inevitably links her to empathy and an ability to see things in child’s perspective. What

is even more difficult is that it is considered that these relations prepare a child for the emotional relations in its future. And as emotional fulfillment is one of the main keys to happiness-mother has a very difficult task to learn her child to be happy! (Tripković, 1997). So, to know a child, to see the world in its eyes, to teach him to communicate with the others, is an imperative a society gives to mothers. Is this the reason why mother gives herself more, and tends to find out much more about her child through playing with it than father does? If so, then it is quite possible that "cultural pressure", as we can call it, is a big factor that contributes to parenting stress level. On the other hand, father is the one who uses play to check his child's knowledge-they say they notice new terms a child uses, new skills, and ways of combining these into new integration. Playing with the father, for a child is a very stressful situation as he must show new things he had learned, which can explain why children see mothers as ideal play-partners.

The fact that no correlation has been found between quality of play and gender of the parent, makes us ask ourselves if the scale used is adequate enough. But, actually, every game played and described by parents in this research does fulfill many of the child's developmental needs. Family is often described as a "training ground" where a child can test its abilities, its relations with others, and that leaves many pleasant, but also many less pleasant memories, as the real life does, too. A child should, through different relations within a family, learn as much as he can about the outside world. From that point of view, differences in play as one of the possible ways of interaction are quite understandable. Engaging the play with a father, child gets feedback about his development, incentive to carry on his own, but also on ways and norms of evaluating success. Therefore father can, if he uses his moments of play wisely, fulfill the important role he has in moral development, but also can be very important in motivational development, social skills, cognitive development, formation of competitive individual which is in today's world more than useful. A father can make an influence on forming a positive and strong self in a child, as well as on strengthening child's personality and his self esteem.

What poses to be a very important task is to reduce parenting stress in mothers so that their play with a child would not be a frustration, but a relaxation and source of learning and joy for the mothers and children alike. This can be achieved through parent education, especially education about importance and purpose of play in child's development. This would emphasize possibilities play offers for the role of a good mother, but would also allow parents to see what is the real source of some aspects of their stress- a culturally determined role especially manifested in playful activities with a child.

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REZIME

**UTICAJ KULTURE NA RAZLOGE UKLJUČIVANJA MAJKI
U IGRU SA DECOM KOD PREDŠKOLACA**

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Psihologija i pedagogija nude veliki dijapazon različitih vaspitnih saveta. Zadatak roditelja je "samo" da odabere pravi za svoje dete. Najveći deo ljudi može da ima dete, veliki broj to i želi, ali nikog od nas ne uče kako se postaje dobar roditelj. Ranije se govorilo o postojanju "materinskog instinkta" kao faktora koji usmerava odnos majke i deteta ka bezuslovnoj, stalnoj ljubavi i nežnosti, negovanju deteta i brizi za njega. Ipak može se naći veliki broj pojava koji postojanje jednog takvog instinkta pobija, ili ga bar čini manje verovatnim. Kapor-Stanulović navodi neke od takvih pojava: fenomen zlostavljanje dece, čedomorstva, zanemarene dece predate drugim ženama na dojenje i čuvanje, kao i izjave majki neposredno nakon rođenja deteta, da ne osećaju ništa prema tom detetu (Kapor-Stanulović, 1985.). Činjenica je da se u većini porodica, već samim rođenjem stvara veoma blizak odnos između deteta i majke, dok otac neko vreme biva prilično zapostavljen. Načini na koji se ta bliskost ostvaruje objašnjeni su samim izgledom deteta, i plaćem kao pozivom na reakciju i time jednim od najbitnijih načina komunikacije deteta sa okolinom. U svakom slučaju odnos između deteta i majke je dvosmeran. Ponašanje oba aktera ovog odnosa utiče na ponašanje drugog- majka može biti spremna da voli svoje dete, ali da usled nekih događaja koji su nepredviđeni i ne mogu se kontrolisati postane nezadovoljna i razočarana svojim detetom i njegovim ponašanjem (napr. usled defektne konstitucije afektivnih reakcija deteta). Isto tako može se desiti da majka, koja je spremna da odbaci dete izmeni takav emocionalni odnos zbog prirodne privlačnosti detetovog osmeha (Ekerman, 1958.). Dakle veza između deteta i majke zavisi od velikog broja činilaca, ona nije uvek jednako emocionalno potpuna niti ispunjavajuća.

Roditelji veoma rano započinju oblik aktivnosti koji se često naziva-igra sa bebom: oni je golicaju, mrdaju njenim nogama kao pedalama, trljaju svoj nos o bebin, ljuljaju je, pevaju joj, cupkaju je na kolenu, vrte, bacaju u vis, prave grimase pred njom i slično. Pitanje je da li beba u punom smislu te reči učestvuje u ovakvim igrama, ali kroz nju ona uči i ostvaruje kontakt sa svojim "saigračima". Reagujući sve češće, celovitije i raznovrsnije na podsticaje roditelja, beba postaje sve potpuniji učesnik igre, da bi na kraju postala i njen inicijator, što je kvalitativno daleko razvijenije od prvobitne angažovanosti.

Igra između roditelja i deteta je oblik interakcije kroz koji se, kao i kroz druge interaktivne aktivnosti, ostvaruje dvosmeran odnos, prenos misli, afekta. Prethodno je već naznačeno koliko funkcija detetova igra krije u sebi. Učestvujući u njoj roditelj saznaje o svom detetu i, dozvoljavajući detetu da utiče na njega jednako kao i sebi da utiče na dete, stvara dublji i temeljniji odnos sa njim.

Osnovni zadatak koji je istraživanje predstavljeno ovde trebalo da reši jeste da utvrdi karakteristike igre dece predškolskog uzrasta sa njihovim roditeljima. Poimence,

istraživanje je trebalo da odgovori na pitanja veze između kvantite i kvaliteta igre, ali i ovih varijabli sa polom deteta, odnosno roditelja, emocionalnim vezama između dece i roditelja, kao i redom rođenja deteta.

Za potrebe istraživanja napravljena je nova skala, Skala procene kvaliteta igre (Lisul, 2001) koja se zasniva na kriterijumima kvalitetne igre (Van Lue, 2001). Celokupna skala može se naći u pomenutom diplomskom radu. Pored nje korišćene su i skale Parenting Stress Index (PSI) Abidina i saradnika (1983), zatim Family Relations Test (FRT; Bene i Anthony, 1952), kao i Parenting Questionair (Kapor-Stanulović), kao i intervju sa roditeljima. Istraživanje je sprovedeno početkom 2002. godine na 14 dece koji su tada pohađali vrtić Žil Vern u Novom Sadu, kao i sa njihovim roditeljima (11 majki i 8 očeva). Za ovaj rad odabrani su samo neki, najzanimljiviji podaci, naročito oni vezani za pol roditelja.

Rezultati ovog istraživanja govore, da i pored veće učestalosti igre sa detetom, majke ne ostvaruju bolji kvalitet igre sa njim. Ovo može da navede na razmišljanje o tome da se izgubio stari patrijarhalni model porodice, da su očeви postali empatičniji, a žene dobile više “muškog” u vaspitanju, ili da su na neki drugi način uspeli da uravnoteže i izjednače svoje uloge u porodici.

Podaci pokazuju da su majke te za koje deca vezuju osećaj zavisnosti, okarakterisan popustljivošću, prihvatanjem, brigom i nežnošću. Majku zbog toga češće biraju za “saigrača”. Ako se pogleda izbor igara sa detetom lako je uočiti da majke biraju igre koje im omogućuju da se bave detetom na mnogo raznolikije i dublje načine. To su igre ulogama, kroz koje se prorađuju razne porodične i životne scene, koje osim što pružaju mogućnost vaspitanja i učenja kroz igru, mogu da pruže informacije o detetovim emocijama, osobinama ličnosti koje razvija, novim saznanjima i načinu njihovog kombinovanjima. Majke, međutim, ovu mogućnost ne koriste u potpunosti, ali imaju šansu za to, dok očeви biraju društvene igre u kojima mogu da ostanu “dostojanstveni odrasli” (u kojima se ne spuštaju na “nivo deteta” jer ih na isti način igraju i sa svojim odraslim prijateljima), a koje im daju informacije o detetovom pamćenju, pažnji, brzini razmišljanja, dakle sferama koje ne zadiru duboko u emotivno.

Takođe, istraživanje pokazuje da je učestalost igre sa detetom povezana pozitivno sa ukupnim nivoom stresa roditeljstva, kao i sa nekim njegovim aspektima kao što su zdravlje roditelja, osujećenje roditeljske uloge i promene u bračnim odnosima, što može ukazivati na terapeutsku ulogu igre kad su u pitanju problemi koje imaju roditelji postavljajući kao značajni zadatak. Međutim kako majke pokazuju viši nivo stresa roditeljstva, kao značajan zadatak nameće se omogućavanje majkama da snize nivo stresa sa kojim ulaze u igru sa detetom, kako bi ona bila relaksacija i izvor učenja i uzivanja jednako za dete kao i za majku. Ovo se može postići edukacijom iz oblasti roditeljstva i uloge igre sa roditeljima u razvoju deteta. Time bi se ukazalo na mogućnosti koje igra daje u ispunjenju uloge majke, ali bi se i omogućilo saznavanje o pravim izvorima stresa koje kod majki uslovljava njihova kulturom data uloga, a koje se ocito manifestuju i u igrovnim aktivnostima sa detetom.