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ScienceDirect

Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences 143 (2014) 288 – 293

Procedia
Social and Behavioral Sciences

CY-ICER 2014

Influence Of Personal Factors To The Problem Of Social Orphanhood

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Abstract

This article investigates the causes of social orphanhood due to the increasing number of abandoned and neglected children. The article focuses on studying the influence of personal factors on social orphanhood, namely the problem of mother abandoning the child. The issue must be discussed diligently and action must be taken in order to stop the increase of the consequences that arise as a result and feature of phenomenal social abandonment of newborns by their mother. Become victims of circumstances such as poverty, lack of education, unemployment thereby giving rise to deviant and delinquent behavior which in turn becomes the basic unbalanced behavior of an individual. This has a very negative effect on social institutions and the society in general. In this article we studied the personal factors of child abandonment and tried to show them in two ways: based on maternal deprivation of mother and on their socialization in childhood. Problems that women abandoned a child are not only the result of the lack of property, money, work. But mostly it is based on a legacy of personal and family matters related to disadvantage of previous generations and forgetfulness of immediate needs of people and especially children.

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Peer-review under responsibility of the Organizing Committee of CY-ICER 2014.

Keywords: social orphanhood, implementation of international norms, personal factors of child abandonment, socialization in childhood;

1. Introduction

Over the last decade of XX century as a result of wars and civil unrest around 1 million children were orphaned or separated from their parents, 12 million left homeless and about 10 million have been traumatized psychologically. Only in developing countries there are 143 million orphans, tens of millions of children live on the

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streets, one million are in prison (Kapdevel,2013). In Kazakhstan today there are more than 37 thousand orphans left without parental care, almost 11 thousand of those children live and are brought up in boarding schools and orphanages (Kazakhstan truth,2013).

There are 1600 children at the age of 0 to 3 years are placed in specialized orphanages houses of health system. On average 65% of them are abandoned children, those whose parents dead and no one is able to take care of them, 35% of children have both parents or only mother who are not able to take care of them due to lack of access to social and health services of a child with disabilities.

The problem of child abandonment is not the problem of our society only but the whole world. Importance of the study is determined to make people understand the need of appreciating and changing the life attitudes and approaches in society.

Nowadays the society and the state pay special attention to this issue. Since the early 90-ies the active legislative process of protection the rights and legitimate interests of minor children has been developing in the Republic of Kazakhstan. Recognizing the priority of generally recognized principles and norms of international law and the importance of international cooperation due to improve the conditions of children the Republic of Kazakhstan ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child in 1994. The Convention expressly recognizes that parents have the most important role in the bringing up children. The text encourages parents to deal with rights issues with their children "in a manner consistent with the evolving capacities of the child" (Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1994). In 2002 a law "On the Rights of the Child in the Republic of Kazakhstan" which became a kind of national declaration of children's rights was adopted. Besides, the international norms were implemented in the laws "On Education", "On State Youth Policy of the Republic of Kazakhstan", "The marriage and family act".

However, today reforming the legislation system is not enough to change the problem of society. The institutionalization of infants is a serious concern because of the damaging effect it has on the young child's health and development. Across the region, the loaded term 'abandonment' is often used to describe the reason these babies are in residential care (UNICEF, 2011).

In this article we have tried to study the effect of the personal underlying factors of the child's abandonment from the mother. During the survey work the following questions were investigated: What determines the motive for child abandonment? How are the personal biography of mother, her emotional state and features of socialization determined the decision of child abandonment?

Literature review

Social orphanhood is a complex multifactor phenomenon, on which theoretical and methodological study basis can be found in various branches of sociological knowledge. Thus, within the family sociology social orphanhood appears as a destructive phenomenon updated in periods of social and economic crises and other macro and micro social upheaval, leading to an exacerbation of the problem. It should be noted that the problem of social orphanhood has not been investigated completely, in particular the problem of child abandonment from the view of personality factors of its exacerbation.

In our study we based on the theoretical idea of A.Giddens, in particular on his theory of structuration, the theory of social action by M. Weber, the theory of anomie by R. Merton, E. Durkheim, the theory of family systems by M. Bowen. (Durkheim E.1984, Canon, 1996, Merton, 2003 – 528p, Veber, 1990)

In the theory of structuration of A. Giddens we studied the personality factors of abandonment, and considered them as stratification model which includes three levels: motivation of actions, rationalization of actions and reflexive monitoring of action (Giddens, 1984).

The level of motivation of action refers to those conscious and unconscious desires that motivate an agent to act. In our work under the act we mean child abandonment. Motives are only appeared when the agent is faced with a relatively unusual "problematic" situation, in this case we have studied and explained the "problematic" situation of child abandonment. Therefore, most of the "routine" acts of daily living are not directly motivated. Basically, on the motivational level those common "projects" action in frame of which a common course of behavior related to personal biography of mother-abandonment have appeared. This biography had distorted upbringing by her own mother who had abandoned her children and who had experienced the effects of childhood neglect by their parents.

Rationalization of action means intrinsic ability of agents to maintain a constant "theoretical understanding" on the bases her acts routinely and easily. Rationalization of actions rather denotes a mutual agreement of participants: people know what they are doing and are usually able to explain their actions. In our case it is the understanding of the fact of abandonment by mother, it is the development of rational motivation. A woman's decision to leave the

baby is accompanied by a feeling of mental stress, guilt and sin. In case of abandonment, the behavior of women during pregnancy can be regarded as a form of psychological defense of rationalization actions which is visibly evident in the narrative interviews with women telling about their actions.

Reflexive monitoring of action is a constant and continuous monitoring of the actions, the actions of others, as well as physical and social conditions of the action by the individual. He suggests that agents not only monitor their own actions but also expect a similar monitor from other agents. As the highest level of stratification model of an agent the monitoring depends on rationalization. Giddens argued that every action is a reaction which brings or produces something new, a new action; but at the same time every action there is a continua from the past, providing the means for its beginning. In this regard, socialization plays a crucial role in making life strategies and plans of a person, a mediator, and is a base in building of social relations.

Interpretation of the behavior of mother-abandoner we considered using a typology of social action of M. Weber (Weber, 1990)

1. Purposeful action. In this case mother abandons baby rationally weighing the "pros" and "cons." Possibly, the child was not a "purpose" for her, something another was in the priority. Consequently, the woman overcomes an obstacle to reach another, more meaningful purpose.

2. Value-rational action. Abandonment from a baby cannot be considered as value-rational action because it is not in accordance with the standards and requirements of society where there exists the value of childhood, parenthood, family. However, on the other hand, in our modern society there are very definite standards of success: wealth, stable income, autonomy in making on socially significant decision. A woman who raises a child along cannot claim on these status symbols, therefore, she is forced to abandon the child in favor of the potential achievement of the desired status.

3. Traditional action. Here we are faced with a dilemma: on the one hand, in the society the newborn abandonment has not been adopted as certain setting realized by all women. On the other hand, the effect can be understood as traditional if a woman had the experience of abandonment and she acquires this pattern of behavior as quite familiar.

4. Affective action. Under the influence of fear and despair she can just run away from the perinatal centre without issuing a formal denial.

In the theory of anomie by Emile Durkheim and R.Merton we considered a violation of the functioning of the family system, a complete perversion of the reproductive, educational, household, emotional and psychological and family functions that affect on the behavior of the mother-abandoner (Durkheim E, 1984, M. Canon, 1996, Merton, 2003 In the paper of the American psychiatrist M. Bowen "Family Systems Theory" we studied the tendency of past traumas tend to be transferred to the next generation where there are many emotional stresses and which have the tendency to increase from generation to generation (Baker et al., 2008).

Methods

We think that in the analysis of such social spheres as children abandonment the qualitative method of data collection is the most suitable one. This method is unique for us because it helps us to study the life situations of mothers-abandoner who have had specific social experience, special feelings and suffering and which together create their specific "life-world". The qualitative methodology helped us to focus on the subject, on the agent of social action and showed us her everyday personal experience and its interaction with other stories about her life. The analysis of online information, such as words, gestures, communication symbols helped us to understand and interpret the specific forms of local people social existence; summarize the observations and transmit them into the language of scientific terms for the theoretical interpretation of the hidden social meaning or functioning mechanisms of this aspects of social reality. Using qualitative methods such as narrative interviews we studied the certain people in certain situations; we discovered the meaning of the individuals emotional experience, saw the world in which they live.

To conduct narrative interviews we have developed a guide which consisted of four blocks with open form questions as well as questions with some proposed variants of possible answers. The first block of questions included the demographic information about the respondent, the second block included the questions of marital status of the respondent, the third block are the questions about the living standards of the respondent, the fourth block are the factors of abandonment of the respondent. To fix the conversation during the interview we used audio record. The conversation with a respondent expected to be in relaxed atmosphere, with keeping the interest of the

interviewee. To consolidate the contact in the interview, it was stressed that the result of information is important and interesting to us: "It is very important that you have just said. Would you tell it in detail?", "This is very interesting, we did not think that this is the case". Then, we asked the main questions, which was accompanied by introductory words, stressing the importance of the following conversation: "What are your feelings after the baby born?", "What factors influenced the abandonment of a child?". In conclusion, the logical outcome of the conversation was made (Yadov, 2003).

Carrying out of narrative interviews allowed respondents to tell without restraint about their life. Thus, during the conversation in memory of social agents firstly those episodes and moments that were the wealthiest for them had been appeared, the respondents were thinking over their life, their "I" separating it from the aggregate "we." It let us to find out the most important "significant" moments of their life, moments which make their biography. As shows the practice of the interviewing by Russian researchers such self analysis and selection of "I" is given with the most difficulties to the respondents with low level of education, which is typical in our study, when mothers - abandoner are used to think in term "we". The interview situation forced them to think of themselves as a separate historical and social subjects. Through the depth interviews we studied the fate of in mothers-abandoner, their past experiences, practices and experiences of everyday worries. Experience of these people is like a special "fragment" of common social experience. The collection of such private practices as a mosaic allows us to represent the social picture of society in general (Giddens, 2005).

Thus, the qualitative method in our research practice is an indispensable means of collecting, processing and analyzing the information about specific individuals and their personal meaning. In the study, we focused on the agent of social action, their personal everyday experience and interaction with others which were emphasized in words, sayings, stories about their own life.

Findings and Discussion

In the interviews the sample of women / girls aged 17-38 years was determined. The sample is characterized by the fact that most cases of abandonment in Astana falls on this age. On the basis of perinatal center 1 in Astana we interviewed 52 women / girls who abandoned from children. The information of interviewees was processed in the program MAXQDA.

The following results of investigation has been given:

The average age of the mother at the time of abandonment: 28 years old, the youngest is 17, the oldest is 36. Age data indicate that the "mothers - abandoner" are not teenage girls but women of natural maternal age of 22-28 years and according to their age characteristics they are able to be the full-fledged mothers.

The regions of residence of mothers-abandoner: 17 of them are from the South Kazakhstan region, 11 of them are from Akmola region, 8 of them are from Kostanay region, 7 of them are from Karaganda region, 4 of them are from the North Kazakhstan region, 3 of them are from Kyrgyzstan, 2 of them are from Mongolia.

Out of the 52 interviewees only 1 respondent has a higher education, 8 respondents do not have a complete secondary education, 12 respondents have a secondary special education, 31 respondents have secondary education.

Most women abandoned from children are from regions where there is a high rate of unemployment, who arrived in Astana with the purpose of income and employment. During pregnancy the women worked for individuals in the service sector, such as baker, waiters, kitchen workers, sale assistants, sales representatives, charwomen, street cleaner, kindergarten teachers or handymen. Their income was from 40 000 to 100 000 tenge per month (260-660 dollars).

Marital status: 25 women were not married, 12 women lived in a civil marriage from 2 months to 3 years, 9 women were married, 6 women were divorced or widows.

In 37 cases the pregnancy of women was not planned. Number of primiparas were 36, 16 of them were multiparas.

According to the interviewees, causes of child abandonment was firstly: lack of housing, employment, education, income source; secondly - to hide an illegitimate child from parents, relatives and friends, lack of support from the child's father; the third - women had antisocial lifestyle, death of loved ones, the birth of a child with disabilities.

During the narrative interviews the deep personal factors caused the women to abandon the children were studied. They are the parent deprivation of women abandoned from children and their socialization in childhood. In our investigate practice 26 interviewees socialized outside the parental home, the women who had no parental care. They were upbringing by their grandparents, relatives, step-parents.

Maternal derivation is the deep root of abandonment, where for women the family roles were replaced. Maternity function was carried out by performed relatives or often it was a grandmother who was not able to become a "good enough" mother. The woman who abandoned from her child had been rejected by her mother in childhood and for her parent-child relationship were characterized with a high level of "emotional, psychological coldness" that than threw into this act. Memories of Dinars K.: "I was little, when my mother gave me to the grandmother for upbringing, I do not remember her, my grandmother said that she had not being kept in touch with her" Elmira D.: "I was upbringing by my grandmother, my mom had her own family and she did not keep in touch with us. When I was 21 my grandmother died and my aunt brought me up." In the cases described above, derivation did not give the opportunities for women to carry out the identification with her mother on the level of maternal role formation and which did not allow women to become a mother herself.

How did the socialization of grandparents affect on women abandoning children? To answer this question, we studied their upbringing style. Here are the examples of stories of some respondents. Bayan A.: "My grandma never argued me, she always let me do whatever I liked." Indira A.: "My grandma and grandpa let me do what I wanted and they always were saying that I was their favorite granddaughter." Gulzhan R.: "My grandma loved me, she always agreed with me" The tendency of socialization of children by grandparents has been becoming more popular from day to day. Leaving the children, parents distant from them. In the future such socialization may affect negatively on the children relationships. Mother-abandoners describe poorly their mother's family but in detail talk about family of grandmother. It seems that a functional mother, at least, the person who was caring after those women in childhood was the grandmother. In the socialization of grandchildren the grandparents share their experiences observing the customs and traditions that involve respect of family where the older generation is closely associated with the category of experience. But due to the rapidly changing world this style of parenting are not relevant to today's grandchildren as it assumes overprotective, excessive care to grandchildren, as result of which children become dependent, self-centered, infantile and not adapted to modern society. As the speed of modern society development the knowledge and experience of the old people often cannot find the use and bring sometimes even harmful effect because of completely changed conditions, circumstances, laws. Therefore, a person rather should be socialized in a society and considers their opinions, rather than authority of old people who cannot be the main support for them.

The analysis of the data received allowed us to make some conclusions about women abandoning children. Thus, a characteristic feature of these women is their psychological and emotional immaturity, which expressed in infantilism, egocentrism, affective incontinence, maternal deprivation. Distinctive features were inadequate self-rating, increased personal and situational anxiety, unresolved complexes and fears, emotional instability, uncertainty in the successful execution of the maternal role. In some cases there were personality disorders associated with conflicting relationships in the family whose members were often emotionally and financially unprepared for the birth of a child or because of the social status of the women they were not able to have a complete family, due to the refusal of men to fulfill the role of father.

Modern lifestyle makes us look for individual ways to survive and output of the problem situation. Alvin Toffler notes : " Now lifestyle has become a way by which an individual identifies himself with a particular subculture." Lifestyle becomes a way of social adaptation to modern conditions of civilization (Toffler, 1970. p 306).

Conclusion

Today in modern society of Kazakhstan as a transitive society the system of social norms loses its boundary, the old system of values has been destroyed and the new one has not been established as a common one. Certain social groups such as family and child no longer feel their involvement in the society that subsequently leads to socially significant problems such as increasing the number of abandoned and neglected children, factors associated with personal character.

Today we can say with confidence about macro factors such as unemployment, lack of housing, income sources which form the problem of "social orphanhood ", but they are only secondary factors, not the main, personal ones inherent in the woman herself.

Study of family history and family situation, that occurred in childhood of women abandoned from the child, showed the importance of investigation the causes of child abandonment. The particular importance is the image of her own family - mother and father, as it forms a model of the behavior of women and an expectant mother.

To sum up, it should be noted that the role of parents in the upbringing of children is multifaceted and impact on formation a child personality from the early childhood. The socialization of the individual, family social status,

occupation of its members, financial support and parental education are predetermined the way of life of the child. In addition to conscious, meaningful and purposeful upbringing which is given by parents the family atmosphere play an important role in the personality formation. (Kolesnichenko ,2005 – p.360)

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