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## **ПРОФІЛАКТИКА НАСИЛЬСТВА НАД ЖІНКАМИ В НЕБЛАГОПОЛУЧНИХ СІМ'ЯХ**

**Анотація.** У статті авторами визначено актуальність проблеми насильства над жінками та його профілактики в неблагополучних сім'ях; розкрито заходи щодо соціальної допомоги їм та превенції ускладнення наслідків насильства у сім'ї. Уточнено зміст дефініції «неблагополуччя» сім'ї та статус, який розкрито через зв'язок з конкретною ситуацією функціонування сім'ї та її окремих членів. Схарактеризовано феномен насильства над жінками у площині фізичного, психологічного, сексуального та економічного змісту.

Виявлено та розкрито зміст першопричин насильства з точки зору ретроспективного огляду проблеми та з урахуванням думок прибічників психологічних теорій та теорій соціальної причинності. Перелічено причини неблагополуччя сімей, як-от: економічна нестабільність, безробіття, правова неграмотність, алко- та наркозалежність членів сім'ї, нерозуміння життєвих цілей й засобів їх досягнення, а також обґрунтовано їх вплив на ризик та скоєння насильства над жінками в неблагополучних сім'ях.

Акцентовано на множинності першопричин насильства та їх зумовленість сукупністю взаємопов'язаних чинників. Доведено можливість впливу одних на вирішальне значення інших у неблагополучних сім'ях.

Обґрунтовано необхідність надання фахівцями в галузі соціальної роботи, соціальними педагогами, психологами кваліфікованої допомоги жінкам, які стали жертвами домашнього насильства. Соціальний захист жінок, зокрема в неблагополучних сім'ях, у статті представлений як цілісна система соціальної профілактики, яка базується на чітко сформульованих принципах та нормативно-правових актах.

Окреслено можливості та доцільність соціальної профілактики насильства над жінками в неблагополучних сім'ях; виявлено зміст та мету її трьох рівнів: первинного, вторинного, третинного. Окреслено ресурси розвитку та вдосконалення профілактичної діяльності щодо попередження насильства над жінками в неблагополучних сім'ях.



Зроблено висновки, що ефективності соціальної роботи із жінками, які стали або потенційно можуть стати жертвами насильства, сприятиме комплекс профілактичних заходів із превенції жорстокого поводження з ними чоловіків та напружених зусиль з подолання наслідків домашнього насильства над ними в неблагополучних сім'ях.

**Ключові слова:** соціальна профілактика, неблагополучні сім'ї, соціальна робота, попередження, насильство над жінками, домашнє насильство.

## PREVENTION OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN IN DISADVANTAGED FAMILIES

**Abstract.** In the article, the authors determined the relevance of the problem of violence against women and its prevention in dysfunctional families; the ways of social assistance to them and prevention of complications of the consequences of violence in the family are revealed. The content of the definition of "disadvantage" of the family and its status, which is revealed due to the connection with the specific situation of the functioning of the family and its individual members, have been clarified. The authors also characterized the phenomenon of violence against women in terms of physical, psychological, sexual and economic content.

The content of the root causes of violence is revealed and revealed from the point of view of a retrospective review of the problem and taking into account the opinions of supporters of psychological theories and theories of social causation. The causes of family dysfunction are listed, such as economic instability, unemployment, legal illiteracy, alcohol and drug addiction of family members, lack of understanding of life goals and means of achieving them, and their impact on the risk and perpetration of violence against women in dysfunctional families is substantiated.

Emphasis is placed on the multiplicity of root causes of violence and their conditioning by a set of interrelated factors and factors. The possibility of influence of some of the crucial importance of others in dysfunctional families has been proven.

The need for specialists in the field of social work, social pedagogues, and psychologists to provide qualified assistance to women who have become victims of domestic violence is substantiated. Social protection of women, in particular in dysfunctional families, is presented in the article as a holistic system of social prevention, which is based on clearly formulated principles and legal acts.

The possibilities and expediency of social prevention of violence against women in dysfunctional families are substantiated; revealed the content and purpose of its three levels: primary, secondary, tertiary. Resources for the development and improvement of preventive activities to prevent violence against women in dysfunctional families are outlined.

It was concluded that the effectiveness of social work with women who have become or could potentially become victims of violence will be facilitated by a set of preventive measures to prevent men's cruel treatment of them, and directions of work to overcome the consequences of domestic violence against them in dysfunctional families.

**Keywords:** social prevention, dysfunctional families, social work, prevention, violence against women, domestic violence.

### INTRODUCTION

**The problem formulation.** In recent decades, despite the civilizational progress of society and many countries, the issue of violence against women has not shown signs of diminishing relevance. Despite the urgent need to address the problem of violence in the medical, psychological, social and public spheres, it has persistently been marginalized and disregarded by society. Until recently, there were almost no prevention programmes or services to protect victims of violence. Misconceptions about the importance of the problem of violence against women and the inadequacy of the system of their social and legal protection led to the silence of these situations and the spread of violence, especially in the world.

The focus on this matter in Ukraine is presently intensified due to the socio-political changes brought about by the war on its territory. The huge number of victims, the shocking details of brutal crimes in the modern world, the increasing number of suicides, the loss of the meaning of life and its devaluation among the younger generation contribute to an even greater shift of emphasis from family obligations to non-family relations, such as political life, economic anxiety and the material security of families. As a result, the family experiences a significant psychological strain, which cannot but affect the transformation of its social status as an institution towards dysfunction in the form of violence against individual family members, including children and women.

Thus, violence against women in families, especially dysfunctional ones, remains one of the most pressing issues in the field of gender studies. Statistics on both registered and anonymous cases of violence against women show that it occurs in dysfunctional families, whose members "neglect their functions, where they ignore ties with society, intra-family relationships and the family structure is broken" (Spirina, Lyakh & Klishevych, 2022, p. 247). This problem is characteristic of different segments of society, regardless of cultural, racial, economic and other aspects, but it is the dysfunctional families, where economic and material problems are mostly caused by psychological and social problems, that are a key risk factor for abuse and domestic violence against women.

**Analysis of recent research and publications.** The phenomenon of domestic violence and its prevention is reflected in the works of domestic researchers and scientists, including I. Bandura, A. Halai, S. Hrechaniuk, N. Shamruk (theoretical and methodological aspects of combating violence), T. Honcharova, A. Miroshnychenko, V. Ogorenko, T. Pertseva (conditions and causes of violence in the family), N. Maksymova, O. Moiseieva, M. Moskovka, O. Naumenko (socio-psychological aspects of violence), O. Bandurka, O. Dokukina, V. Rolinsky, I. Trubavina, N. Shcherbak (socio-pedagogical aspects of overcoming and preventing violence in families), I. Dubrovinska, N. Zaveriko, O. Karaman, L. Koval, L. Kononenko, V. Orzhekhovska (social prevention of child abuse in dysfunctional families and overcoming cruelty to children), K. Babenko (work with parents). Babenko (work with parents to prevent violence), T. Veretenko, N. Klishevych,



Y. Klymchuk, T. Lyakh, H. Skipalska, T. Spirina, T. Tsyganchuk and others (the problem of violence against women and technologies for its prevention and overcoming).

Many studies and scientific researches of domestic scientists, including A. Blaga, N. Zabroda, O. Pavlyk, K. Levchenko, V. Mushynsky, T. Liakh, H. Khrystova and others, are devoted to solving the problem of dysfunctional modern families and preventing its consequences.

Despite a significant number of publications on various areas of the problem, today we notice that scientists do not pay enough attention to the problem of violence against women in dysfunctional families.

#### **THE AIM AND RESEARCH TASKS**

The purpose of the article is to reveal the problem of violence against women in dysfunctional families, as well as social support and prevention of complications of the consequences in the family.

#### **RESULTS OF THE RESEARCH**

In today's social, psychological and pedagogical literature we can find a lot of different information from those sections that reflect the specifics of the problem of the article. Modern scientific sources consider domestic violence as one of the main factors of destructive behavior of spouses.

Violence, cruelty and aggression have long been the subject of research in more than one scientific and theoretical field. Representatives of different scientific schools interpret violence, its types and causes depending on their perspective on the phenomenon of violence. The existing theories make it possible to study and explain a particular aspect of the problem. Summarizing the scientific research of psychologists and educators, we can distinguish several approaches to defining and considering violence (Sultanova, 2023).

Reference sources describe violence as "an act by one or more persons against another person that violates the civil rights and freedoms of the latter or causes physical, mental or moral suffering" (Tlumachnyy slovnyk-minimum, 2017, p.104).

Violence is directly related to "the use (threat) of physical force or psychological influence as an unlawful expression of will by a person or group of persons against others" (Entsyklopediya dlya, 2012, p. 287).

Therefore, violence is often understood primarily as a physical impact on a person, but according to its classification, there are no less destructive types of violence: sexual, psychological, economic. However, any violence against a person "is a psycho-traumatic factor that can create a significant imbalance between the state of internal adaptation mechanisms and the external challenges posed by the life situation" (Actual problems, 2021, p. 10).

In the explanatory dictionary of social work and social pedagogy, L. Lokhvitska defines the concept of "domestic violence" as "any intentional physical, psychological, sexual or economic actions of one family member against another, which violate the constitutional rights and freedoms of a person and a citizen, cause moral damage, as well as damage to physical and mental health" (Tlumachnyy slovnyk-minimum, 2017, p.104). Violence in the family is often manifested in a combination of its forms, physical and sexual, or emotional and economic.

A deeper understanding of this phenomenon leads to the identification and disclosure of its root causes. For example, a retrospective look at the development of the problem of violence against women has proven that it is gender stereotyped. For a long time, the behaviour of girls was more restricted than that of boys, they were taught to be "inferior" because of their inherent physical vulnerability, while boys were taught to be superior and stronger in character.

The causes of violence are the circumstances that lead to its manifestation. There is currently no consensus on the root causes of men's violence against women. The main disagreement is between supporters of psychological theories, who considers such mental factors as frustration, aggression, poor instinctual control, psychopathology, etc., as main causes of violence and supporters of the theory of social causation, who connect the emergence of the problem with cultural norms that provoke violence and the patriarchal social structure, in particular the dominant role of men.

However, there are many causes of violence against women. They are determined by a combination of different factors and drivers, each of which can be crucial and key. Hence, we will examine the interconnectedness and combination of factors contributing to violence against women.

Firstly, violence as a socio-cultural phenomenon may be an integral part of spouses' stereotypical ideas about the nature of family relationships, connected to upbringing and social values, and thus presented as the only possible model.

Secondly, acts of violence and abuse can be the result of a person's personal life experience, which creates a moral and psychological basis for them to consider this type of relationship as universal or acceptable.

The next group of violent factors is particularly associated by psychologists with the destructive experience of early life, 'childhood trauma', which forces a person to take out their childhood complexes on their loved ones, including through violence and cruelty.

As a result of external pressures and impacts that exceed the limits of a person's personal stability and affect the nature of social and psychological decompensation, they are forced to assert themselves at the expense of weaker people who are unable to protect themselves.

Among the listed causes and factors of violence, we would also like to mention the personality features, which can lead to the overdevelopment of dominant character traits, not compensated by adequate childhood education and appropriate parental attitudes.

The above-mentioned issues, factors and causes are fully and even more expressed in dysfunctional families, where the characteristics of its members and the socio-cultural determination of the problem of violence against women in particular are emphasised. The state of family disadvantage, accompanied by chronic social stress, is a factor that significantly increases the risk of violence against individual family members. Thus, among many problems that can increase tensions



and lead to violence are money disagreements, unemployment, the need for long-term medical care, long-term anxiety about unresolved problems, discrepancies between desires and opportunities, and so on. An important factor in violence that is typical of dysfunctional families is isolation from social activities and limited social support from society. It is known that men who use domestic violence tend to isolate their victims from others and control their relationships with friends, colleagues or relatives.

Given that the status of a "dysfunctional" family is determined by "the specific situation of the family's existence, which determines the nature of the process of personality formation and contains elements of dysfunction" (Dubrovynska, & Kononenko, 2018). Its causes can be psychological, educational, legal illiteracy, alcohol and drug addiction of family members, economic instability, unemployment, lack of understanding of life goals and means of achieving them, etc." (Spirina, Lyakh & Klishevych, 2022, p. 247).

For example, chronic alcoholism of family members is a sign of family dysfunction, resulting in physical abuse. After all, alcohol or drug abuse deprives people of control over their instincts on the one hand, and serves as an excuse on the other.

However, whatever the causes and factors of violence against women, its consequences can be both short-term (depression, physical injuries, violation of intimate life, etc.) and long-term, including mental disorders, neuroses, post-traumatic stress disorder, substance abuse, as well as unwillingness to rebuild a family, unwillingness to have intimate relationships, etc.

When women are victims of their husbands' violence, they do not always choose to make dramatic changes in their lives and continue to live with their abuser. As a result, they develop feelings of hopelessness or powerlessness, guilt, loss of self-confidence, depression, intrusive painful memories, phobias, suicidal thoughts and self-blame.

Therefore, the issue of providing qualified assistance to women who have become victims of domestic violence is of great importance. An interdisciplinary team of specialists should use the entire arsenal of methods aimed at providing assistance in preventing threats to health and life, promoting the establishment of intra-family relations and restoring the family's full social functioning through social, psychological, social and legal assistance, as well as support and social patronage of dysfunctional families.

Social protection of women victims of domestic violence should be presented here as a holistic system of social work based on scientifically sound principles and considering the regulatory and legal framework. The activities of the system of social institutions should be aimed primarily at preventive work with families and women in particular. In the field of combating violence against women, it is important to create interdisciplinary teams (teams should include all specialists relevant to the solution of the problem) and to create a more effective system for reporting cases of violence against women in the family to law enforcement and social protection authorities.

The Law of Ukraine "On Preventing and Combating Domestic Violence" provides for a number of special measures in the field of domestic violence prevention, including: monitoring and analysis of data of violence; research of conditions, causes and conditions of its spread; organisation and implementation of educational work among the population; development and implementation of training and educational programmes on preventing and combating domestic violence, etc (Pro zapobihannya, 2018).

Thus, measures to prevent domestic violence should include a systematic approach to the use of social and special methods aimed at "eliminating the causes and conditions that contribute to the commission of domestic violence, stopping domestic violence that is being prepared or has already begun, bringing the perpetrators of violence and the family to justice, as well as medical and social rehabilitation of victims of violence" (Entsyklopediya dlya, 2012, p. 284).

Prevention of violence against women, as well as prevention of other socially significant problems, traditionally and according to WHO recommendations (1990), includes primary, secondary and tertiary levels. Thus, at the primary level of social prevention, the most important and effective area of specialists' work is the prevention of women's victim behaviour. The aim of this stage is to develop the ability to make independent decisions in conditions of risk of violence, emotional balance, critical thinking and situation assessment. Methods that can help achieve this goal include suggestion, persuasion, information, counselling, peer-to-peer, training, role-playing, watching special films and others. Particularly useful at this level is educational work with husbands on the prevention of violence against family members and women in particular, as well as social prevention programmes that help to reduce family stress and improve the family atmosphere in general. Primary prevention of domestic violence is "the most effective type of preventive intervention" in dealing with this problem (Entsyklopediya dlya, 2012, p. 285).

However, in order to identify the initial stages of maladaptive behaviour of men in the family under conditions of conflict and stress, early intervention by specialists is essential, as provided for in the secondary type of social prevention of violence. At this stage, it is already necessary to intervene and provide psychosocial assistance and support to women victims of violence in order to rehabilitate them, change their behaviour, develop responsibility for its consequences, etc.

In situations where there is an increased risk of relapse, tertiary social prevention is appropriate, helping to normalise family relationships through social education and the monitoring of dysfunctional families. The key areas of social work with women victims of domestic violence are the activation of their intrapersonal resources in order to restore their ability to function in a normal life, the organisation of social training in vital skills to protect and counteract abuse in the family and, most importantly, the promotion of the victim's awareness of her own resources and opportunities for self-realisation and return to the normal social environment.

Social support for women who have suffered violence against themselves consists of providing them with various types of assistance: informational (providing information about their rights and responsibilities, available coping strategies and ways



of implementing them), mediational (establishing relationships, normalising intra-family relations), educational (acquiring new knowledge and developing the necessary skills and abilities, improving psychological and social competences), accompanying (visiting the family and supporting them on the way to harmonising relations) and rehabilitative (restoring their health and social life).

The choice of the appropriate area of social work, the methods and the level depends on the nature of the violence against women and the psychological or physical trauma caused, as well as the degree of complexity of the situation and the risks that threaten to aggravate it. Therefore, for women who are victims of domestic violence, especially in dysfunctional families, a system of social and preventive measures is provided in the form of assistance, support, social services to overcome or mitigate the consequences of abuse, to restore their mental health, social status and ability to function in society and in the family.

The problem of social support for women and prevention of violence against them in dysfunctional families requires the professional skills of specialists from all institutions involved in solving this problem. The improvement of their competence will be facilitated by internships, mentoring in work with young professionals, improving the certification system and raising the qualification category of specialists; introducing new forms of professional communication between social workers and managers of the social sector. Finally, "the training of non-specialist staff in institutions providing assistance to victims of domestic violence in psychological skills to support victims is an important way of improving the mental health of survivors" (Actual problems, 2021, p. 152).

### CONCLUSIONS AND PROSPECTS OF FURTHER RESEARCH

In conclusion, we would like to summarise the issues involved in dealing with violence against women, particularly in dysfunctional families. In our opinion, the effectiveness of social work with women who have been or may be victims of violence is facilitated by a series of preventive measures to prevent men from abusing and areas of work to overcome the consequences of domestic violence against them in dysfunctional families. These include, in particular: the implementation of measures, especially among young people, aimed at promoting healthy family values in society, strengthening the spiritual and moral principles of family functioning, educating young people to respect law and tolerate violent behaviour in civil society; the implementation of legal education programmes for families aimed at explaining the rights (especially the right of the victim to seek help) and responsibilities of its members in various areas of life and improving legal culture; Increasing the availability of counselling and crisis social and psychological support for all family members; developing a network of organisations providing support in crisis situations, including domestic violence; and expanding the list of educational activities in educational institutions, especially for high school students, in order to develop zero tolerance for cruelty, aggression and violence against another person, and to develop their ability to meet their needs and opportunities in a safe way.

Undoubtedly, the most important thing in preventing and combating violence against women is to address key socio-economic issues of family well-being, improving the standard of living and spiritual culture of its members, and ensuring social and legal protection of people without discrimination based on gender.

Undoubtedly, the issue of social support for women in situations of violence and violence prevention in dysfunctional families requires further research focusing on the development and implementation of mechanisms for coordinating the efforts of interagency cooperation between social protection, health care and law enforcement agencies to overcome the consequences of violence and eliminate the risks of its recurrence in the family.

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