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The concepts of "prosocial behavior" and "altruism" as psychological characteristics of mothers raising children with Down syndrome

Abstract. *The problem of staying socially active without losing the usual way of life with a "special" child in the family has always been and remains relevant. In our country, the number of children with Down syndrome is increasing every year. According to preliminary data from the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Kazakhstan, in Kazakhstan for 3 years (2014-2016) there is an increase in the incidence rate of Down syndrome per 100 thousand children under 14 years of age by 15%. The incidence rate in 2014 was 11.3% per 100 thousand children under 14 years old, in 2015 - 11.1% per 100 thousand children under 14 years old, in 2016 - 13.05% per 100 thousand children under 14 years old. In total, in Kazakhstan, according to preliminary data as of 2017, the number of registered patients diagnosed with Down Syndrome at the age of 0 to 18 years is 3863 persons, of which 707 with a diagnosis established in the first days of life. In most cases, the organizers and employees of organizations supporting parents and families of children with disabilities are mothers of "special" children. In this regard, today in Kazakhstan there are 6 organizations to support children with Down syndrome and their parents. These foundations and organizations popularize pro-social attitudes aimed at providing disinterested assistance to mothers with similar problems or to society as a whole. In this theoretical article, we examine various definitions of prosociality, altruism, and empathy of mothers raising children with Down syndrome.*

Keywords: *prosociality, prosocial behavior of mothers, altruism, Down syndrome.*

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Introduction

The problem of the vital functions of a child with Down syndrome and his parents is not only medical problem. Improving the quality of life of a «special» child and his family should be handled by the state, social workers, lawyers, educators, and psychologists who can provide the necessary support for the child and his family. The need to create special psychological programs to help parents raise «special» children is long overdue. Such programs, adapted to conditions in Kazakhstan, should be pro-social in nature. Kazakhstani and foreign scientists are engaged in the study of psychological problems in inclusion and education (Ermentaeva A.R., Mambetalina A.S., T.A. Aristova, E.R. Isaeva, D.F. Ramziya, E.RLrskaya Smirnova, etc.), Disabled children (T.N. Adeeva, Zh.V. Porokhina, A.V. Smirnov, S.V. Stepukhovich, and others), including disabled children (M.S. Golubeva, I.I. Mamaichuk, E. M. Mastyukova, N. M. S. Raeva, and others), their parents and family members (I. S. Bagdasaryan, T. V. Butenko, I. Yu. Levchenko, N. V. Mazurova, B Yu. Okuneva, etc.). But some aspects of the life of these categories of people have not yet been fully studied; these include the psychological problems of mothers raising

a child with disabilities. In Kazakhstani science, there is also little information and scientific works to support parents raising children with Down syndrome. The birth of a child with Down syndrome, with a low rehabilitative potential creates a work-life situation, changes the mother's entire lifestyle, causing mental tension, which some researchers refer to as "parental stress" (OB Charova). Klimov, the conditions for the activity of helping professions are associated with the fact that the mother of a "special child" is the bearer of a special role, which is responsible for the development of the child, including ethical and moral norms, as a result of which it becomes prosocial.

General definitions of prosocial behavior

Questions of human behavior aimed not at satisfying solely their interests, but for the benefit of other people, have long been of concern to representatives of various fields of science. Features of prosocial behavior are studied from a variety of complementary positions. In social psychology, prosocial behavior (generally socially oriented activity) is explained as a systemic set of actions that are useful and necessary for society, including helping behavior, altruism, and cooperation. In psychology, attempts are made to link prosocial behavior with individual personality characteristics, as well as to study it from the point of view of personality orientation (as a stable motivational value system, in combination with an emotional component) [1].

Psychologists are interested in the manifestation of altruistic personality traits - the psychological characteristics of a person, which are the reason for helping others. Altruism refers to individuals with characteristics such as empathy, selflessness, kindness, compassion, and sensitivity (Eisenberg et al. 1999; Oliner and Oliner 1988). The research field of prosociality has many controversies. On the one hand, the study of prosocial behavior, altruism, and cooperation began by addressing the question of why people, as social beings, do not help each other in emergency situations (as in the classic Kitty Genovese situation [2], why they refuse to cooperate, even if it is mutually beneficial. On the other hand, scientists for a long time were suspicious of the very existence of selfless help, "pure" altruism, explaining prosocial behavior exclusively by selfish motives. And for a long time, they tried to solve the "riddle of altruism", given the reality of competition, the struggle for existence, economic benefits, personal and related interests [3].

The twenty-first century has brought a lot to the understanding of prosocial behavior. Modern data and sources offer a more optimistic view of personality formation than before, arguing that altruism exists, that man, as a «social animal», is easily adapted to the partnership. The desire to help another is instinctive [4] "prosocial behavior is universal, intuitive and has deep biological roots" [5]. Moreover, there is something that distinguishes a person - a social, public (communal) interest, or concern for the common good [6], it is also called altruism of the second level [7]. Researchers turned to the concept of social interest when it became clear that evolutionary theories could not explain cooperation in large, genetically unrelated groups of people. The Prosociality of a person goes beyond the bounds of related altruism, mutual altruism, and authority, taking the form of "strong reciprocity" [7].

Cognitive models of prosocial behavior [8] reflect the sequence of decisions that must be made by an individual for the desire to help to turn into reality. For example, it is a decision about whether the current circumstances are a situation in which help is needed; decision on personal responsibility in this situation; decision on the method of assistance, etc. Each of these cognitive events can represent an obstacle to the implementation of a prosocial act. For example, a person may regard a situation as hopeless (how can I help here?), Not concerning him personally (what have I to do with it?), Beyond his competence (what can I do here?) And opportunities (how to do it?).

Specialists in the field of neuropsychology hypothesize that a special "explanatory module" functions in the human psyche, which is always active and works to create a convenient,

comfortable, but not accurate explanation of one's actions. People, for example, tend to think they are more ethical than the average person: more likely to donate blood, cooperate in a prisoner's dilemma, and distribute collective goods more equitably. When this does not happen, many cognitive tricks that are available in the arsenal of the psyche are involved, which can preserve positive self-esteem - reframing unethical behavior into harmless or even worthy («but ...»), dispersing responsibility, minimizing negative consequences, attributing guilt to the victim, dehumanizing the victim, and others [9]. In addition to cognitive processes, there are at least three other types of different processes in prosocial behavior - biological, motivational, and social. They represent various sources of prosocial behavior. Knowledge of the patterns of their functioning will allow the formation and stimulation of certain types of helping behavior. As a specific example, it can be pointed out that even in donation, despite a significant share of prosocial motives, selfish motives prevail - to gain experience, opportunities for personal and career growth, reputation, improve mood and self-concept, get rid of guilt [10]. This means that to motivate a potential donor, you can use various strategies: focus on achieving personal goals; remove cognitive barriers that oppose altruistic motivation when making a donation decision; to learn to recognize cognitive "justifications" for non-participating behavior, etc. At least three groups of mechanisms for activating prosocial behavior are known: learning (acquiring help skills and forming attitudes about helping); social and personal standards (various kinds of norms, including norms of reciprocity and social responsibility; in addition, maintaining a positive identity, meeting needs); as well as excitement (anxiety, empathy that occurs as a result of the work of mirror neurons). For example, identity manipulation, in particular, the induction of «common group identity», allows you to increase the likelihood of prosocial actions [11]. The same effect is achieved when empathy [12] or other emotions, including unpleasant ones - anger, fear, guilt [13].

From the point of view of learning and individual inclinations, a competency-based model of prosocial behavior is proposed [14]. It developed a typology of help, including emotional, instrumental, and material types of help. Each of these types requires specific competencies, is associated with specific dispositions, and develops at different ages. Like many other complex phenomena of human nature, which are of interest to specialists in various fields, prosocial behavior must be considered comprehensively, at several levels of analysis. For example, Penner and colleagues distinguish three of them [15]:

1. **Microlevel,** at which the origins of prosocial behavior and its variations are analyzed by the efforts of neuropsychologists and evolutionists.
2. **Mesoscale,** the focus of which is directed to the dyad «object-subject of assistance» and the specific situation of their interaction, the conditions, and motives for providing personal assistance, including unconscious ones, are studied.
3. **And the macro level,** at which prosocial behavior is considered in the context of groups, and the main subject becomes intra- and intergroup cooperation, volunteering, and similar phenomena. Macro-level analysis of prosocial behavior, including situations in which self-interest and group benefit are interconnected (for example, volunteering, or volunteering, as well as cooperation). Social behavior as a phenomenon of the multifaceted manifestation of a person's personal qualities in communication with other people is the subject of analysis in several sciences. Summarizing the existing concepts in this direction, it is necessary to highlight several positions that form general ideas about the essence of the analyzed phenomenon. One of the key points in the implementation of social behavior is the individual's focus on meeting the interests of another person or social community. The presence or absence of such orientation, the degree of its severity, largely determines both the individual vector of personality development and the level of social well-being of micro-and macro-societies. Knowledge of the mechanisms of the formation of prosocial and asocial behavior opens the possibility of creating systems for assessing, monitoring, and correcting undesirable forms of

behavior in the regime of current social support, primarily of organized groups of the population [16].

The concepts of prosociality and asociality presented in modern scientific literature do not have a single coordinate system.

Prosociality is generally associated with altruism. In turn, altruistic behavior is more focused on the well-being of other people than on the well-being of the person who implements it. The range of potential altruistic actions has no clear boundaries, there is no scientifically substantiated typology and classification of these forms of human behavior [16].

Quite often, prosocial behavior is considered either as a single phenomenon, with the involvement of examples from various areas of human behavior, or immediately on the example of any individual manifestation, without taking into account its specifics.

Vaccination is not one of the behaviors traditionally included in several prosocial behaviors. Usually, it appears as an action about one's health or the health of one's children, but it can also be considered as socially responsible (or even altruistic) behavior, leading to a population effect, that is, a decrease in morbidity among unvaccinated children and adults due to the formation of herd immunity (vaccination «for the benefit of others») [17]. Thus, actual, regardless of motivation, this behavior is prosocial, however, the role of prosocial and/or altruistic motivation in it can be different.

So, prosocial behavior can be carried out in various manifestations: interpersonal (helping behavior), group (volunteering, civic behavior), and interdependent (cooperation). Cooperation is a special form of prosocial behavior at the group level. It is distinguished from other types of pro-social activity (interpersonal assistance, volunteering) by a high degree of interdependence of the relations of the parties. In helping behavior, there is an inequality of participants - one needs, and the other patronizes, provides assistance. In cooperation, two or more people are interdependent in working towards a common goal, the achievement of which will be a blessing for everyone. Much research on collaboration is conducted using social dilemmas, where 1) each participant benefits more significantly from non-collaboration (from acting in the interests of the group in favor of individual interests); 2) everyone in cooperation is better if everyone cooperates.

1. Individual differences in orientation towards prosocial or egocentric behavior. Four types of behavior in social dilemmas are exemplified: "altruistic investing", "normative partnership", "pragmatic cooperation" and "personal advancement".

2. Motivational factors - the prospect of further cooperation, empathy increases the likelihood of cooperation, even if it is known that the partner did not cooperate, empathy also increases the choice of targeted assistance, even if this is contrary to the interests of a wider group.

3. Social influence - the ability to avoid cooperation without financial and reputational losses, a large number of people in a group, anonymity enhance selfish behavior, giving rise to the phenomenon of a free rider.

4. Social identity (the role of the donor or recipient of aid, identification with the group, in-group favoritism) [18].

Despite the considerable amount of research already conducted on prosocial behavior, several issues are still not well understood. These are, first of all, questions about possible connections between prosocial behavior and personal characteristics, about the search for individual differences in helping people, and predictors of appropriate behavior. Models and methods for diagnosing prosocial behavior have been developed even less precisely [1].

Diagnostics of the prosocial behavior of an individual is a difficult task, the solution of which is possible based on the use of modern mathematical methods and information technologies [19].

Active pro-social behavior reflects the maturity of the individual, the scale of volunteer movements in various spheres of our society - productive educational work in it, the intensity and productivity of socially oriented activities of volunteer groups - the social activity of humanity as a whole [20].

The role of prosocial motives proper remains controversial. Theoretical models do not always stand up to empirical testing, since the parameters highlighted in them predict the attitude towards prosocial behavior (readiness for it) rather than the behavior itself, its implementation. One of the fundamental tasks of modern science is the development of an integrative model of prosocial behavior that would describe the interaction of various processes and mechanisms at different levels of analysis and would give a holistic vision of human prosociality [18].

Methods

The research is based on the theory of moral foundations, the theory of social norms of prosocial behavior, and the theory of social and psychological security or "helping behavior" H. Heckhausen and H.E. Luck, Altruistic Behavior by R. Bergius, D. Schnieder, W. Herkner; E.A.Klimov «Unselfish help».

Theoretical Methods for Researching Prosocial Behavior

There are many definitions of prosocial behavior and altruism.

1. According to H. Heckhausen and H.E. Luck «Actions to promote the well-being of others apply equally to helping behaviors, altruistic behaviors, and prosocial behaviors.»

2. Do not share the concept of helping and altruistic behavior, and such authors as R. Bergius, D. Schneider, W. Herkner (Kim VE Diagnostics of altruistic attitudes of personality: author. Dis. 1980. - 20 p.).

3. M. Eysenck's theory says that behavior that benefits another person includes actions that are collaborative, expressing love, or helping others (Psychology for Beginners / M. Eysenck - 2nd ed. 2004. - 384s).

4. Behavior with positive social consequences and contributing to the physical and psychological well-being of other people (I.J. Vispe (Yanchuk V.A. Introduction to modern social psychology 2005. - 768 p).

5. Actions that benefit other people, ways of reacting to people who show sympathy, cooperation, help, assistance, altruism (V. Zanden, V. James).

Discussion

The study aims to identify the dominant moral foundations and norms of prosocial behavior of mothers, which characterize this behavior as altruism. The conducted theoretical research has shown that the prosocial behavior of mothers with children with Down syndrome acquires the character of activity and becomes meaningful, motivated, and conscious. Thereby increasing their altruistic behavior. A child with Down syndrome requires efforts from the parents, family members, and society. The unmet needs of parents of special children are directly related to stress in general. There may be specific factors that directly affect parents and their quality of life, which encourages them to be prosocial.

Conclusion

The role of a mother raising a child with Down syndrome cannot be overemphasized. She makes a lot of effort to develop her child. Often she lacks knowledge and skills, sometimes the ideas of others about her child interfere. It happens that a mother is ashamed of her "special" child. This is aggravated by the fact that in our state for a long time the personal needs of each person were ignored, the collective was put above all, there was no individual approach that is necessary for such a child and the proper psychological support of mothers. her values. The revealed relationships allow us to predict the level of readiness of mothers raising children with Down syndrome to provide assistance and show altruistic behavior in relation to other mothers with a similar problem in our society, depending on moral norms and norms of prosocial behavior. Thus, the results of the study indicate that the degree of prosociality does not directly depend on the nature of the disease or the severity of intellectual pathology. The influence of a pathological factor (of course, to a certain degree of its severity) is significantly mediated by the personal characteristics of parents, especially mothers, attitudes, the nature of the prosocial psychological atmosphere, and several other variables.

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Даун синдромы бар балаларды тәрбиелеп отырған аналардың психологиялық сипаттамалары ретінде «просоциальды мінез-құлық» және «альтруизм» ұғымдары

Аңдатпа. Отбасындағы «ерекше» баламен әдеттегі өмір салтын жоғалтпай әлеуметтік белсенді болу проблемасы әрқашан өзекті болып қалады. Біздің елімізде Даун синдромы бар балалар саны жыл сай-

ын артып келеді. Қазақстан Республикасы Денсаулық сақтау министрлігінің мәліметтері бойынша, Қазақстанда 3 жыл ішінде (2014-2016 жж.) 14 жасқа дейінгі 100 мың балаға шаққанда Даун синдромымен аурушаңдықтың 15% -ға өсуі байқалады. 2014 жылы сырқаттану деңгейі 14 жасқа дейінгі 100 мың балаға шаққанда 11,3%, 2015 жылы - 14 жасқа дейінгі 100 мың балаға шаққанда 11,1%, 2016 жылы - 14 жасқа дейінгі 100 мың балаға шаққанда 13,05%. Жалпы, Қазақстанда 2017 жылғы мәліметтер бойынша 0-ден 18 жасқа дейінгі Даун синдромымен диагноз қойылған науқастар саны 3863 адамды құрайды, олардың 707-сіне өмірінің алғашқы күндерінде диагноз қойылды. Көп жағдайда мүгедек балалардың ата-аналары мен отбасыларына қолдау көрсететін ұйымдардың ұйымдастырушылары мен қызметкерлері «ерекше» балалардың аналары болып табылады. Осыған орай, Қазақстанда Даун синдромы бар балаларды және олардың ата-аналарын қолдайтын 6 ұйым жұмыс істейді. Қорлар мен ұйымдар осындай проблемалары бар аналарға немесе бүкіл қоғамға риясыз көмек көрсетуге бағытталған просоциалды мінез-құлықты танымал етеді. Бұл теориялық мақалада біз Даун синдромы бар балаларды тәрбиелеп отырған аналардың әлеуметтілік, альтруизм және эмпатия туралы әртүрлі анықтамаларын қарастырамыз.

Түйін сөздер: просоциалдылық, аналардың просоциалды мінез-құлқы, альтруизм, Даун синдромы.

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Понятия «просоциальное поведение» и «альтруизм» как психологические особенности матерей, воспитывающих детей с синдромом Дауна

Аннотация. Проблема оставаться социально активным, не теряя привычного образа жизни с «особенным» ребенком в семье, всегда была и остается актуальной. В нашей стране с каждым годом увеличивается количество детей с синдромом Дауна. По предварительным данным Министерства здравоохранения Республики Казахстан, в Казахстане за 3 года (2014-2016 гг.) наблюдается рост заболеваемости синдромом Дауна на 100 тысяч детей в возрасте до 14 лет на 15%. Уровень заболеваемости в 2014 г. составил 11,3% на 100 тыс. детей до 14 лет, в 2015 г. - 11,1% на 100 тыс. детей до 14 лет, в 2016 г. - 13,05% на 100 тыс. детей до 14 лет. Всего в Казахстане, по предварительным данным на 2017 год, количество зарегистрированных пациентов с диагнозом «синдром Дауна» в возрасте от 0 до 18 лет составляет 3863 человека, из них 707 с диагнозом, установленным в первые дни жизни. В большинстве случаев организаторами и сотрудниками организаций, поддерживающих родителей и семьи детей с ограниченными возможностями, являются матери «особенных» детей. В связи с этим на сегодняшний день в Казахстане действуют 6 организаций по поддержке детей с синдромом Дауна и их родителей. Эти фонды и организации популяризируют просоциальные взгляды, направленные на оказание бескорыстной помощи матерям с аналогичными проблемами или обществу в целом. В данной теоретической статье мы исследуем различные определения просоциальности, альтруизма и эмпатию матерей, воспитывающих детей с синдромом Дауна.

Ключевые слова: просоциальность, просоциальное поведение матерей, альтруизм, синдром Дауна.

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