

CHARACTERISTICS OF COMMUNICATION AND INTERACTION WITH CHILDREN FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF PARENTS: SOCIOLOGICAL RESEARCH

Zorana Šuljug Vučica

Assoc Prof., Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences in Split, CROATIA, zorana@ffst.hr

Abstract

Numerous studies confirm that for the socialization and healthy psychosocial development of children, a quality relationship between children and parents is more important than the family structure itself. By communicating with parents and other family members, the child adopts patterns and norms of behavior and constructs his/her own identity. The relationship between the family environment and the child's development is not one-way but a reciprocal relationship in which the parents influence the child and the child influences the parents. Mutual respect, healthy communication, and a feeling of support are necessary aspects of a quality family environment.

The goal of this research was to examine the characteristics of the relationship and communication between parents regarding the raising of children and making decisions, as well as the relationship and communication between parents and children. The research was conducted on a targeted sample of single-parent and two-parent families in the city of Split (Croatia) in 2022. An online survey method was used, and a total of 200 parents aged 20 to 59 participated.

The results of the research show that most parents try to expose their children to healthy environments that encourage fun and creativity. Most parents use more positive methods that encourage children to self-reflect and learn from their own mistakes. At the same time, they try to be honest with their children and show them trust through everyday conversations. They also spend a lot of time together by gathering for daily meals at home. However, the results showed that partners in two-parent families more often agree on educational methods than in single-parent families. Regardless of their relationships with current or former partners, parents often question their role as parents but rarely attend seminars or workshops on parenting.

Keywords: sociological research, communication, interaction, parents, children, partners

1 INTRODUCTION

In modern society, the nuclear family consisting of parents and their children still prevails, but families without children or one partner are becoming increasingly common, which affects the dynamics of family relationships (Petak, 2004, p. 6). According to the data of the census 2001, as well as of the 2011 population census, in the total number of Croatian families, the dominant type of family is the nuclear family consisting of a married couple with children, followed by a family consisting of a married couple without children, while there is the smallest share of families in which one parent lives with a child/children.¹ The reasons that led to the single-parent type of family can be diverse, from divorce, the death of another parent, or the birth of a child out of wedlock (Giddens, Sutton, 2021, pp. 618-619). This type of family is considered an alternative to

¹ https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Marriages_and_births_in_Croatia&oldid=252070

the nuclear type. What is significant for the single-parent type of family is that only one parent (mother or father) organizes and builds a new way of family life (Raboteg-Šarić, Pećnik, 2010, p. 6).

The functions of the family are conditioned by internal and external social factors and are equally important for the individual, its members, and society as a whole. The family as an institution fulfils many functions, of which the emotional, biological-sexual, reproductive and socialization functions stand out. The emotional function of the family is crucial for the creation and survival of the family. A new life is being created in the family and for his/her growth and development emotions must be shown from the very birth of the child. The biological-sexual function of the family used to be equated with the reproductive function in traditional societies, but these two functions were separated when the family became a part of the ever-increasing structural reproduction. In other words, one is important for meeting human needs and the other is crucial for human reproduction. The reproductive function of the family is the extension of the role of the family. It is particularly important for society as a whole because a strong effort to maintain favorable rates of population growth is expected. On the other hand, socialization is a concept that is closely related to the family and has two directions. The first direction refers to family socialization. A family is a social group that is organized in such a way that it can function independently even if the wider society were to disappear. The second direction represents the socialization of new generations (Janković, 2008).

There is no doubt that parents are responsible for the existence of children or the reproduction of society, which makes history flow. However, the question arises as to how much parents are responsible for children's success, for children's ability to join society in a successful and useful way, while being happy and developing their parental role, thus extending the goals of society. Also, the question arises to what extent parents are to blame if children avoid their duties, are unmotivated, fail at school, become addicted to drugs and alcohol, are insensitive to family and society in general, etc. Society, school, and medical experts, as Obradović and Čudina-Obradović (2003) point out, are ready to blame the parents exclusively. On the other hand, parents most often blame society, school, and peers, but also themselves by often asking questions such as what went wrong, what it means to be a good parent, what quality parenting is, etc. Also, society considers and analyses how and when to help parents fulfil their parental function. However, the answers to all these questions are not at all simple because the relationships between parental actions, the environment, and the child's developmental results are extremely complex, and at the same time depend on the context and historical period (Obradović, Čudina-Obradović, 2003, p. 45).

The relationship between parent(s) and child is seen as one of the most important, meaningful, and influential relations in a child's life (Runčan, Constantineanu, Ielics, Popa 2012; Kranstuber Horstman, Hays, Maliski, 2016). The term parenthood appeared when the idea developed that both mother and father are equally important for the development and upbringing of a child (Pernar, 2010, p. 256). The term parenting includes many terms that need to be distinguished to study and examine parenting itself, such as the experience of parenting, parental care, parental actions and activities, and parenting style. The experience of parenthood implies making decisions about children and for children, assuming and accepting the parental role, consciously or intuitively setting educational goals, and experiencing one's value in investing efforts in emotional connections and the child's success. Furthermore, parental care includes the birth of children and care for their life and development. Parenting actions and activities are those that the parents undertake to achieve parental goals and fulfill their role. Finally, the parenting style or the emotional atmosphere in which interrelationships and interactions between parents and children take place can be equally important factors in parenting (Čudina-Obradović, Obradović, 2003, p. 46).

In other words, parenting is the result of hard work and effort to develop good relationships between parents and children. Good parenting is a long-term investment and is the key to great success in the emotional, psychological, and physical development of children. It provides a warm and loving environment in which children can progress. Such an environment is necessary for creating relationships that improve communication and bring children and parents closer together. Successful communication requires positive attitudes, not harsh or judgmental ones. Parenthood thus represents the most demanding but also the most fulfilling experience that someone goes through. Good parenting is not easy and cannot be without mistakes. Thus, children would probably try and test their parents' patience and firmness of attitudes, and even when they are not around, they will occupy their parents' hearts and minds (Altalib, AbuSulayman, Altalib, 2013, p. 4).

Conflict between parents is a significant risk factor for child development (Segrin, Flora, 2005; Zhao, 2021). The quality of relationships and communication between partners affects not only them but also their children. For example, there is certainly a level of mutual respect and consideration between the partners of two-parent families because the partners are close enough and trust each other enough to decide to share their lives and make important life decisions. In this sense, it is also logical that a two-parent family will be more efficient considering that each parent provides both their time and economic resources to the child

(Miljević-Riđički and Pavin Ivanec, 2008, pp. 555-556). Thus, due to the divorce or abandonment of the family by one parent, single-parent families are created where only one parent organizes and builds a new way of family life. In such relationships, both partners must show a certain level of respect for each other to maintain a sufficiently high-quality relationship and not affect the happiness of their children. Besides talking about children, partners do not necessarily have to communicate or maintain friendships. Their contact and communication can be reduced to taking care of the child and nothing more. Such cases are common nowadays, where the child is the only connection between the parents. There are also relationships where two partners who have broken off intimate relationships, decide to maintain friendly relationships in which a better and more pleasant environment is created for the children and the partners themselves. In addition to communication related to children, partners can spend their free time together as friends and even enjoy each other's presence. It can be concluded that the quality of the relationship between partners of single-parent families can vary from the worst cases where one of the partners almost ignores the other, to a relationship where both partners show high respect for each other, regardless of history of their relationship (Grozđanić, 2000).

In addition to the quality of family relationships before the separation, the nature of the relationship after the separation can also affect the child's adjustment, as well as influence the quality of the child's relationship with the parent with whom he/she lives, the intensity of the parents' conflict and the way it is expressed, the financial situation of the family, and the quality of the child's relationship with the other parent (Laklija et al., 2005, pp. 5-6). Petak, for example, presents lots of examples of research that confirm that for good adaptation and healthy psychosocial development of children, a quality relationship between children and parents is more important than the family structure itself, because the child establishes standards and norms of behavior, as well as his/her own identity, through communication with parents and other family members (Petak, 2004, p. 9). The relationship between the family environment and the child's development is not one-way but a reciprocal relationship in which the parents influence the child and the child influences the parents. The influence of the mother's adjustment on the child's cognitive development is cumulative and long-term. The relationship between a mother's life satisfaction and children's performance is bidirectional and interactive. More satisfied mothers, for example, encourage children's success, which in turn makes them more satisfied (Miljević-Riđički and Pavin Ivanec, 2008, pp. 557-558). In this sense, single parenthood as a form of family organization places numerous demands on parents and children in many specific areas. At the same time, it is a challenge for experts who deal with them. The successful functioning of single-parent families lies in the internal dynamics, processes, and relationships within the family. This potential can be further developed and positively directed by creating a stimulating environment for the family and by developing ways and strategies to intervene in this extremely sensitive segment of family life (Grozđanić, 2000, pp. 14-15).

Contemporary observations of the phenomenon of parenting, as Obradović and Čudina-Obradović point out, emphasize the reciprocity of the relationship and influence of the child and parent, because the child also influences the parent with its characteristics, encouraging a parent to change his/her behavior and actions. Also, the birth of a child, as well as the child's temperament, adaptability, and other characteristics can affect the parents' relationships, so the child, father, and mother are connected by a dense network of interrelationships and interactions that create a general emotional climate and general conditions of development. Whether they will have a destructive or stimulating effect on development will further depend on the wider environment in which the family is located, i.e., whether the family has the support of relatives, friends, the neighborhood, the workplace, and society as a whole (Obradović, Čudina-Obradović, 2003). In other words, parents and children are trying to maintain appropriate levels of attachment and control, especially in life stages such as toddlerhood and adolescence (Segrin, Flora, 2005, p. 165).

1.1 The importance of interaction and communication in parenting

Communication is the basis of relationships and family functioning (Zapf et al., 2022). Segrin and Flora point out that even though the study of family communication has a long tradition, studies of a family starting from the beginning of 21. Century have offered new developments. They have put an emphasis and increased focus on problems such as child abuse, divorce, domestic violence, and mental health problems realizing that these problems are communication problems. Therefore, by researching and analyzing the forms, functions, and processes of family communication, people would be able to understand, solve, and even prevent such problems. Also, such an approach would allow people to understand issues such as happy marriage, positive child development outcomes, and meaningful and supportive relationships that again are based on communication between family members (Segrin, Flora 2005, p. 3).

Quality of communication influences the intensity, duration, and quality of relationships as well as mutual relations between parent(s) and children. In contemporary families it is not only important if the parent or

child engage in the communication process, but if they know how to communicate and if they succeed to mutually understand each other. Communication involves speaking, listening, availability, understanding, mutual respect, and emotion. Besides, it “means to know how to give and to know how to receive”. Therefore, communication is seen as a process that requires certain skills, availability, as well as time. Parents should for example use appropriate vocabulary and/or calm and appropriate body language suitable to the message since they for instance imply a degree of appreciation or lead to comfort, and the message will probably be faster and better understood than with parent’s angry tone. Anger in communication usually leads to feelings of panic, fear, misunderstanding of the message, and blocking of the communication process. The harmonious development of children is seen as a result of good interaction between family members allowing children to define themselves and offering them a “favorable position in the social universe”, good family atmosphere, and emotional support. In that way, interaction positively influences a child’s behavior as well as the development and his/her mental health (Runcan, Constantineanu, Ielics, Popa 2012, pp. 904-906).

It appears very important for parents to balance warmth and control in the parent–child relationship. Their warmth messages should be sensitive and consistent and at the same time not overly intrusive. Also, their control messages in communication are “most effective when they provide a well-reasoned structure that prompts the child to internalize right and wrong behavior, as opposed to controlling, coercive directives that do not enhance the child’s self-competence and emotion regulation” (Segrin, Flora, 2005, p. 165). In that sense, views on parenting and the parent-child relationship perceive and approach parents as active managers of the child’s social environment. A healthy interaction between parents and their children represents a good family environment, an affective dimension of a positive nature, and the presence of effective support. This interaction positively influences the child’s state and behavior and plays a great role in the child’s normal, physical, and mental development. Although some studies show negative effects of divorce on father-child relationships, it is unclear if these effects are additive from the children’s point of view. The question of whether children who experience a decline in their relationship with their father also experience a decline in their relationship with their mother calls for further research. Good and supportive relationships between parents and their children have been shown to reinforce the general well-being of children resulting in a better social life, offering protection against emotional distress and suicide, and preventing children from engaging in risky unhealthy and maladaptive behavior (Popov, Ilesanmi, 2015, p. 259)

2 METHODOLOGICAL ASPECTS OF RESEARCH

The subject of this research is communication and relationships in the family in the context of children’s socialization. Therefore, the main goal of this research was to examine the characteristics of the relationship and communication between parents regarding the raising of children and making decisions, as well as the relationship and communication between parents and children. We were also interested in whether there were differences between single-parent and two-parent families in terms of method of upbringing and ways of communicating with children. Accordingly, the following hypotheses are set: H1 – In two-parent families, partners agree on methods of upbringing more often than in single-parent families; and H2 - One-parent families use conversation as a method of upbringing more often than two-parent families.

The research was conducted on a convenient sample of single-parent and two-parent families in the city of Split (Croatia) in 2022². The research sample included a total of 200 parents aged 20 to 59 who participated. An online survey method was used. The survey was constructed using a Google Form. Participation in the survey was anonymous and voluntary, and the participants were asked to cooperate and fill out the questionnaire carefully and to answer honestly. The questionnaire was distributed via the social network Instagram, the mobile application WhatsApp, and by e-mail to available one-parent and two-parent families in the area of the city of Split (Croatia) and surrounding area who were interested in participating in the research.

For this research, a survey questionnaire was constructed that consisted of several sets of questions. The first included the sociodemographic characteristics of the participants. The second included an examination of the attitudes and opinions of the participants about the quality of the relationship with their partner through certain indicators such as frequency of seeing each other, features of mutual communication and conflicts, agreement on upbringing methods, and mutual support. The third set included the examination of attitudes

² The research is part of a wider research project that was carried out under my supervision at the courses Sociological Research Workshop 1-6 at the Department of Sociology, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences in Split. I would like to take this opportunity to thank my colleague Larisa Hrčić, who participated in the project as collaborator, as well as the students of sociology who participated in the field phase of the research.

and opinions about the quality of relationships with children through indicators of the frequency of seeing and ways of spending free time with them, then the frequency of confiding and conflicts, and ways of mutual communication. The fourth set of questions examined parenting experiences and educational methods, as well as parents' attending seminars/workshops on education and parenting.

3 RESULTS

3.1 Socio-demographic Characteristics of Participants

A total of 200 participants took part in the survey, of which 65.7% were women (mothers) and 33.8% were men (fathers). The participants are almost equally distributed in both age groups, 48.8% of them are between the ages of 20 and 34, and 50.7% of them are between the ages of 35 and 59. Regarding the place of residence, most of them live in the city (78.6%), while the rest live in the countryside (10%) or on the islands near Split (10.9%). Regarding the level of education, a little more than half (56.2%) of participants have completed high school, while 25.5% of them have completed undergraduate or graduate studies, and 4% have completed postgraduate studies. The majority (82.1%) of the participants are employed. Furthermore, regarding religiosity, slightly more than half (60.2%) of the participants declared themselves religious, while 27.9% of the participants declared that they were not religious or that they did not know if they were religious or not (11.4%). Considering the target sample of parents (participants), almost half of them are married (45.8%), 28.4% are divorced, 9.5% are cohabiting and 15.9 are single (not in a relationship). The data also show that 44% of the participants have one child, 40.5% have two children, 13% have three children and only 2.5% have four or more children. Slightly less than half (46.5%) of the participants have children with the person (partner) with whom they are married or with their ex-partner (44%).

3.2 Participants' Relations with the Father/Mother of Their Child/Children in the Context of Their Raising

Many research results confirm that children are under the influence of negative parental relationships, and parental conflicts. For example, the separation of parents helps children to release the stress and tension in the case of a parent's toxic marriage. For children whose families do not have intense parental conflicts, such family breakdown can on the other hand negatively affect them. Furthermore, "parental conflicts may also cause children to be emotionally insecure and affect children to suffer from forming friendship affiliation. Emotional insecurity increases the possibility of social problems in children" (Zhao, 2021, p. 401). Therefore, we were interested in how often participants see their partner or ex-partner (considering that slightly less than half of the participants are not married to the partner with whom they have children), what kind of communication the participants have with their partner/ex-partner, i.e. the father/mother of the children, regarding raising children, then whether they have the support of their partner/ex-partner (the father/mother of their child) regarding childcare, and how often they argue with their partner/ex-partner (the father/mother of their child).

The data show that slightly more than half of the participants (51%) see the father/mother of their children every day, and it can be assumed that these are the participants who are married to the father/mother of their child/children. Furthermore, 22.5% see their children's father/mother at least once a week, and 9% at least once a month. It is also noticeable that 11% do not see the father/mother of their children at all. Accordingly, 21% of participants rate communication with the father/mother of their child/children as bad, about 34% rate it as good, 28.9% as very good, and 16% of participants rate communication as excellent. The participants were also asked how much the father/mother of their child/children agreed with them about the methods of upbringing and how much support they had in raising the children. In this regard, 69% of the participants point out that the father/mother of their child/children agrees with their educational methods. However, regarding support, slightly more than half of the participants point out that they have the support of the child's father/mother, 24% state that this support is only sometimes manifested, and 20.5% of the participants point out that they do not have the support of the father/mother of their child/children. Based on the obtained data, we were interested in whether there was a difference between single-parent and two-parent families. Accordingly, we set hypothesis H1 that there was a statistically significant difference between single-parent and two-parent families regarding the agreeing with the father/mother of their child/children about the methods of their upbringing. The hypothesis was confirmed by performing the chi-square test (Fig. 1). In other words, in two-parent families, partners agree more often on the methods of upbringing than in single-parent families.

Figure 1. Participants regarding the type of family in which they live and agreeing with their partner (ex-partner) regarding methods of raising the child/children

		agreeing on education methods			
			no	yes	Σ
Type of family	two-parent families	Σ	27	85	112
		%	24.1%	75.9%	100%
	one-parent families	Σ	35	53	88
		%	39.8%	60.2%	100%
	Σ	Σ	62	138	200
		%	31%	69%	100%
$\chi^2=5.654, df=1, p=0.010$					

However, it is also noticeable that regardless of their relationship and (dis)agreement with their partner/ex-partner, participants avoid arguing with their partner/ex-partner in front of their children. The data show that 86% of parents point out that they never or rarely argue with their partner/ex-partner in front of their children.

3.3 Communication and interaction between participants and their children

Most of the participants (76%) see their child/children every day and it can be assumed that they live with them. On the other hand, 17.5% of participants see their children at least once a week, and 5% of them at least once a month. At the same time, 81% of them most often communicate with children face to face, although they tend to communicate in a virtual environment as well because 51% of them point out that they often or sometimes communicate virtually or by using certain media. Therefore, as social media expands and changes, so too will the ways parents and children connect through this medium. It seems very important for the researchers dealing with such topics to keep up with understanding these changing trends (Kranstuber Horstman, Hays, Maliski, 2016, p. 18).

We were also interested in whether participants talk with their children about stress, and negative emotions, then about the actions of either the child or their own, and about the relationship with the child or relationships with partners, whether former or current. The largest percentage of participants point out that they sometimes or rarely talk about stress or negative emotions, which can lead us to the conclusion that talking about these topics depends on circumstances and situations that are stressful or negative. However, the participants (58%) point out that they sometimes and often talk to their children about their mutual relationship, but more than half of them avoid talking to their children about their other parent. On the other hand, parents (41%) often or sometimes (27%) talk to their children about their actions, and somewhat less often (although still more than half of participants) talk to their children about their actions. Participants also point out that their children confide in them often (42.5%) or sometimes (37.5%).

By considering the way of spending time with their children, the participants point out that they often go to nature (43.5%), and spend time gathering around the table for a meal (67.5%) or at home (71.5%) with their children. However, more than half of the participants (63%) rarely or never go to the cinema or theatre with their children. It is evident from the results that the emphasis of the relationship is still on gathering around the table and the regular practice of gathering over meals. In comparison to other types of relationships, family members spend a lot of time together. Segrin and Flora state that after some time, family members develop a regular communication climate in which certain communication activities have symbolic meaning in the form of family rituals in which the actual interaction or activity becomes less important than what it symbolizes and usually acts as positive stabilizing and therapeutic forces in the face of family stress (Segrin, Flora, 2005, p. 66). For example, Dunbar's study (2017) also confirms that people who eat socially are more likely to feel better about themselves, and are provided with social and emotional support in such social networks developed by such activities.

Regarding the parenting methods which they use, participants are asked to estimate how often they use yelling, punishment, ultimatum, silence, self-reflection of the child, redirection of attention, conversation,

compromise, learning through play, or rewards as parenting methods. Data analysis shows that parents avoid silence and ultimatums, as more than 65% of them rarely or almost never use the mentioned methods. Sometimes they shout (40%) or punish children (48%). However, they often use talking as a method of raising children, with almost 65% of them talking to their children often and 23.5% sometimes. Here we tested the second hypothesis H2 that one-parent families used conversation as a method of upbringing more often than two-parent families by the use of the Mann-Whitney U Test. The hypothesis is rejected ($U=4619,000$, $Z=-,901$, $p=0.367$). There is no difference between two-parent and one-parent families regarding the frequency of the use of conversation as a method of upbringing.

Also, more than 70% of parents sometimes or often use the methods of compromise, rewards, and learning through play. In the process of raising their children, 53.5% of respondents educated themselves about parenting by reading appropriate literature on it or consulting with other parents about parenting (78% of participants). However, the majority (81%) of them never attended seminars on child upbringing and never (81.5%) attended courses or workshops on child upbringing. Regarding the process of raising children, the results show that more than 80% of parents sometimes or often question their methods of upbringing children or themselves as parents. On the other hand, they less often question the child's trust in them as parents, their relationship, and their sincerity with the child because the data show that around half of parents rarely do that. In the process of raising of child/children, participants often (58% of them) rely on the help of their partners or occasional help from their partners (19.5% of them). Also, 55% of them sometimes or often use the help of their parents. On the other hand, around 65% of them rarely or never use the help of the parents of their current or former partner (i.e., the father or mother of their child/children).

4 CONCLUSIONS

Family, as well as parenthood, is a very complex social phenomenon that needs to be approached, analyzed, and interpreted from varieties of perspectives and disciplines. Since communication is the basis of relationships and family functioning (Zapf et al., 2022) studying it proves to be very important, especially in understanding, solving, and even preventing different problems in family members' relations. On the other hand, it also should be perceived as a prism for understanding positive issues and favorable conditions such as happy marriage, positive child development outcomes, and meaningful and supportive relationships that are again based on communication between family members. Every family member's communication has a unique history, present, and future since past experiences in the family influence present interactions. Present interactions are constructed through current communication and future interactions are negotiated between family members. Parents and children through interaction and communication mutually influence each other. But at the same time, they are trying to maintain appropriate levels of attachment and control, especially in very sensitive life stages such as toddlerhood and adolescence (Segrin, Flora, 2005).

In contemporary families it is not only important whether the parent or child are engaged in the communication process, but if they know how to communicate and if they succeed to mutually understand each other. Thus, the harmonious development of children is seen as a result of good interaction between family members allowing children to define themselves and offering them emotional support and a good family atmosphere. In such a way, interaction positively influences a child's behavior as well as the development and his/her mental health (Runcan, Constantineanu, Ielics, Popa 2012). Different studies have shown that a good and supportive relationship between parents and their children reinforces the general well-being of children and is much more important than the structure of the family itself (Popov, Ilesanmi, 2015).

The results of this research show that most parents try to expose their children to healthy environments that encourage fun and creativity. They spend lots of time gathering for daily meals at home or going out to nature and doing different outdoor activities. Such interactions and activities are not only family rituals but might have symbolic value and fulfil the function of positive stabilizing and therapeutic forces in facing family stress. In communication with their children participants try to be open and talk to them as much as possible mostly about children's actions and behavior trying to offer them a supportive atmosphere. This is also seen in a higher percentage of those participants who point out that their children confide in them. These data are also consistent with the data showing that most parents often use more positive methods such as compromise, rewards, and learning through play that encourage children to self-reflect and learn from their own mistakes. At the same time, they try to be honest with their children and show them trust through everyday conversations.

On the other hand, the communication of the participants and their partners or ex-partners is not seen as positive as their relationship with children. Accordingly, 21% of participants rate communication with the father/mother of their child/children as bad. But on the other hand, almost 70% of their partners/ex-partners agree with their educational methods. The testing of the hypothesis shows that partners in two-parent

families more often agree on educational methods than in single-parent families. This is also consistent with the support of the partner/ex-partner since around 70% of them rely on their support but rarely rely on the support of the parents of their current or former partner. Regardless of their relationships with current or former partners, participants often question their role as parents, as well as their methods of upbringing children. Despite that, they rarely attend seminars or workshops on parenting but rely more on communication with other parents and their experiences.

REFERENCE LIST

- Altalib, H., AbuSulayman, A., Altalib, O., (2013). *Parent-Child Relations: A Guide to Raising Children*. London, Washington: The International Institute of Islamic Thought. doi: 10.2307/j.ctvktvqn.
- Dunbar, R. I. M. (2017). Breaking Bread: the Functions of Social Eating. *Adaptive Human Behavior and Physiology*, 3:198–211. DOI 10.1007/s40750-017-0061-4
- Eurostat: Statistics Explained (2015) *Archive: Marriages and births in Croatia*. https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Marriages_and_births_in_Croatia&oldid=252070 (10/1/24)
- Giddens, A., Sutton, P. W. (2021). *Sociology*. Cambridge, Medford: Polity Press.
- Grozdanić, S. (2000). Jednoroditeljske obitelji prema uzrocima njihova nastanka. *Ljetopis socijalnog rada*, 7(2): 169-182. <https://hrcak.srce.hr/3730>
- Janković, J. (2008). *Obitelj u fokusu*. Zagreb: Studio Moderna d.o.o.
- Kranstuber Horstman, H., Hays, A., Maliski, R. (2016) Parent–Child Interaction. In Jon Nussbaum, J. (ed.) *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Communication*. 1-30. Oxford: Oxford University Press. DOI: 10.1093/acrefore/9780190228613.013.278
- Laklija, M., Pećnik, N., Sarić, R. (2005). Zaštita najboljeg interesa djeteta u postupku razvoda braka roditelja. *Ljetopis socijalnog rada*, 12(1):7-38. <https://hrcak.srce.hr/2130>
- Miljević-Ridički, R., Pavin Ivanec, T., (2008). Životna prilagođenost majki u različitim tipovima jednoroditeljskih majčinskih obitelji te kognitivna uspješnost njihove djece. *Društvena istraživanja*, 17(3): 553-571. <https://hrcak.srce.hr/25492>
- Obradović, J., Čudina-Obradović, M. (2003). Potpora roditeljstvu: izazovi i mogućnosti. *Revija za socijalnu politiku*, 10(1): 45-68. <https://doi.org/10.3935/rsp.v10i1.139>
- Pernar, M. (2010). Roditeljstvo. *Medicina Fluminensis*, 46(3): 255-260. <https://hrcak.srce.hr/59248>
- Petak, A. (2004). Obitelj u promjenama: rezultati istraživanja u Hrvatskoj. *Sociologija sela*, 42(163-164): 5-10. <https://hrcak.srce.hr/34106>
- Popov, L. M., Ilesanmi, R. A. (2015). Parent-Child Relationship: Peculiarities and Outcome. *Review of European Studies*, 7(5): 253-263. DOI: 10.5539/res.v7n5p253
- Raboteg-Šarić, Z., Pećnik, N. (2005). Neformalna i formalna podrška jednoroditeljskim i dvoroditeljskim obiteljima. *Revija za socijalnu politiku*, 12 (1): 1-21. doi: 10.3935/rsp.v12i1.18
- Raboteg-Šarić, Z., Pećnik, N. (2010). Stavovi prema samohranom roditeljstvu. *Revija za socijalnu politiku*, 17(1): 5-25. DOI: 10.3935/rsp.v17i1.889
- Runcan, P. L., Constantineanu, C., Ielics, B., & Popa, D. (2012). The role of communication in the parent-child interaction. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 46: 904 – 908. DOI: 10.1016/j.sbspro.2012.05.221
- Segrin, C.; Flora, J. (2005). *Family Communication*. New York, London: Routledge.
- Zapf, H., Boettcher, J., Haukeland, Y., Orm, S., Coslar, S., Wiegand Grefe, S., & Fjermestad, K. (2022). A Systematic Review of Parent–Child Communication Measures: Instruments and Their Psychometric Properties. *Clinical Child and Family Psychology Review*, 26:121–142 <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10567-022-00414-3>
- Zhao, H. (2021). The Effect of Parental Relationship on Children Psychological Growth. *Proceedings of the 6th International Conference on Modern Management and Education Technology*. 399-402. DOI: 10.2991/assehr.k.211011.072