

# Father's and Mother's Roles and Their Particularities in Raising Children

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**Abstract:** We live in the era, when a lack of understanding the elementary family's functions and ineffectiveness in creating lasting and open relations within the family backgrounds are a frequent phenomenon. The breakdown of the family is often caused by immaturity and inadequate conditions for the parental and marital role. Personal tragedies, as well as the consequences in the upbringing, are serious effects of divorce and family breakdown. In this article we are attempting to point out an importance of the family in our current society with an emphasis on the particularities of the father's and mother's role in child rearing.

**Key words:** family, upbringing, father's role, mother's role.

## 1 Introduction

Presently, father's and mother's role in children's upbringing is an up-to-date issue. The correct understanding of various roles and the educational impact of the parents are extremely important. Both parents, who responsibly fulfil their roles and conscientiously approach, not only the physical needs of their children, but also their adequate psychological and emotional development, are required for positive development and the best complete care. Very commonly we come across the negative effects of inadequate upbringing and generic stereotypes. Generally those negatives become evident later on and their rectification is difficult, if at all possible. The family is a place where we live and feel secure, a place with a unique atmosphere. A kind home is one of the conditions for a happy harmonious childhood and a healthy development of a child's personality. A woman represents various social roles within the family. The two most important and fundamental roles are to be a mother and a wife.

## 2 Discussion

For every human, the family is the first social environment to step into, and this significantly influences their further existence. It represents the so called 'atelier'

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where the children's personality is created in a way which is individual and inherent to the family as a whole and to all its members. It is here, where the child obtains their first picture of behaviour, an apperception, realizing the values which will most intensively attribute to their personal growth and direction. All factors which affect the child in this environment become important elements in the future and cannot be compensated for any other environment which will influence the children's personality throughout life. The child enters the family as a new entity without any skills and the family's main mission is to provide all learning experiences which will contribute to the best development.

People experience various social roles during their lives. The current hectic age often brings many situations of conflict. The family has huge and unrepeatable importance. Since birth, it shapes a person physically and intellectually and thus it is very important. It creates a foundation for the formation of a good personality. It is the very first place where humans prepare themselves for life in society. Family relationships are also very important. Lately, strong family bonds have decreased and deep emotional relationships among a parent and a child is few and far between. Often erroneous educational parental influence means negative consequences which are difficult to eliminate. Therefore it is very important to understand correctly all roles in family life. A mother, as well as a father, is unsubstitutable and a child needs both parents for his complete development. We are right to say, the importance of family consists mainly in the parents' influence of their children. They form their personalities and attitudes. Parents are an example of the behaviour, whether in a positive or negative way. A child has a tendency to accept that behaviour which they are in contact with. The way we approach the upbringing of children is therefore significantly affected by parental methods. Regardless of their positivism or negativism, in most cases we project those onto our children. It is absolutely essential for both parents to complement each other. Despite the particularities of a father's and a mother's role, they represent the complex entity which is necessary for the right upbringing and creating a healthy personality.

"A role is a socially acceptable model of behaviour; it is a set of rights and responsibilities which are related to certain positions within the group. A role is a dynamic aspect of a status. When a person executes his rights and obligations arising from his position, he or she accomplishes their role. Every role is assigned in the context of other roles, without them it is inconceivable." (Hargašová, 1991, p. 97) "A role model's behaviour is extremely important. It has its own characteristics. Within the family, the mother's role is specific, so as is the father's role and children's role. They depend on the overall structure of personalities of the mother, father, and child as well as on the quality of the outer environment." (Višňovský, 2007, pp. 8-9) The father and the mother have two different roles. A child needs, for his fulfilled development, both parents, father and mother, to an equal extent. The children's upbringing is often assigned as a

mother's task only. The father, as well as the mother, is required to participate in the same way but their roles cannot swap. The father's and mother's role varies as a family develops. With the children growing the parents roles take different forms:

- In the prenatal period, the role of a mother is the most important, she is absolutely connected with the child. Her body and psychic changes are transmitted to the child. Love and a positive approach to the child are key factors which impact the healthy child development. The main role of the father is to support and nurture the mother.
- In the new-born, baby and toddler period, the mother's role remain primary. The mother satisfies the child's needs and stands in-between child and the outside world. The child latches emotionally to the father mainly through the play.
- In the pre-school period, both parents help the child to adopt social roles within and beyond the family. During this period the roles of both parents adjust and level out.
- In the junior school period, for the girls, a mother represents a model of a woman's role. The importance of a father's role grows during this period; he gradually becomes a stronger authority, because he intervenes in solving more serious problems. He is also a model of a man's role, which is a role model for the boys.
- In the pubescent period, refusing the parent's control and striving for independence are typical for children. Roles of both parents are more influential. A mother's role towards her daughter is to acquaint her with the woman's role and be a confidant. A father shall mainly be a trustworthy partner for the children. He shall rectify and encourage his children's self-assurance and help them to change over from a child's role to an adult role.
- In the adolescence period, it is vital for children to be accepted and treated like adult family members. This period requires from parents a significant level of patience and tact in interactions. The parents' role in relation to growing children depends on the relationships formed during previous periods (Oravcová, Ďuricová and Bindasová, 2007, pp. 17-19).

One of the serious problems caused by the absence of one of the parents during the upbringing process is a missing opportunity to achieve sexual identity by identification with the parent of the same gender and differentiation from parent with the opposite gender. "Child needs both parents, especially due the differences between the genders, the mental selfhood of man and woman, who complement each other as two halves forming one whole unit. A child, who is, for any reason, brought up only by a father or mother, is literally lacking the second half. And this can originate to a miscellaneous life and personal complications." (Štrbová, 2004, p. 17). However, the determining factor shall be the responsibility and the individuality of both parents, that both of them have their important and irreplaceable position. "Looking after the children means a

new role for a man and new relations between man and woman in distribution of their duties, which do not threaten, but enrich and give the man an opportunity to experience more interactions with a child. Parents look within the child for a source of happiness, a gratification of their emotional needs and a meaning of their lives." (Chaloupková, 2000, p. 14). A good father cannot be described only by listing the characteristics and qualities he should have. It is necessary to see a close connection with social relations. Fatherhood, which is seen as a sensitive relation of a man to his children, to a certain degree reflects his relations to his parents. It is impossible to look apart from father's role especially in the pubescence and adolescence period. A child finds a friend and an adviser in the father. His authority cannot be replaced. It is as essential as a mother's love. By complementing each other, they create one entity necessary for healthy child development. A deficit of fathers or mothers influence can denote defective backgrounds with implications for the rest of their lives. A father's role is as important for boys as much as for girls. A father represents for the son a model of himself and for the daughter an example of her future husband. The father's commitment is as necessary as the mother's commitment. Extremely powerful is the way a father treats the mother because the son's behaviour towards his future wife is greatly influenced by it. Positive examples of how to act and handle day to day situations cannot be superseded by any other educational approach. Admittedly, the father's manners have a strong impact and lay the foundations of a son's individuality. He is determined by several dynamic factors, which affect the man's character. The most important one is that the father is elementary model of life roles.

According to Ľ. Višňovský (1998, p. 89), the father is characterised by:

- protection, guidance and support towards the outside world;
- discipline of the child;
- assist in the initiative, independence and freedom;
- encourage the quality of accomplishments.

There is no reason to have doubts about the importance of a father's role. When he is present in the family, his feedback seems so natural we are at times unaware of it. His presence evokes the sense of security and protection. Also the support and help which he provides to the woman - mother reassures her that she can rely on him and does not need to raise children on her own. The mother's comfort and satisfaction then positively affect the child's growth. Only when father is not present, we truly appreciate his contribution to the family and development of the child.

"A father plays key role in forming the male character of his son. He is an example and effects the son's mannishness in three main directions:

1. approach and behaviour towards a woman - for the son, it is meaningful how the father treats his wife, how he behaves towards his sister and what his relationships to other women look like. When the son himself looks for a partner, his childhood experiences will subconsciously guide him and he

will copy his father's manners and strategies. For a father, the easiest way to gain son's love and respect is to love his mother;

2. typical male activities - mainly sport, practicality, manual skills, abilities to handle equipment, cars, machines and household DIY works;
3. status and self-esteem resulting from father's common position and social standards - within their fathers, boys look for a friend and a strong man who is capable to protect, support, brace them up, encourage, cheer them up during hard times and burden them with their worries a little bit." (Potočárová, 2003, p. 85).

"A daughter who did not experience a father's love may arrive at a conviction that it is normal and can end up in the relationships which will not satisfy and fulfil her. The father's role consists in the fact that:

1. a daughter looks for the acceptance of her individuality, protection and support. She needs to find a begetter within her father, feel important and loved;
2. a daughter sets him as an example when choosing her future husband. Regrettably, in many families, the current situation on the relationship level is very sensitive and defective exactly due to the lack or failure of this role. The girl within her woman's role naturally identifies with her mother, but her familiarity with necessary man's characters is an enormous experience;
3. he presents her opportunity to test and practise behavioural patterns and attitudes towards men in various interpersonal relations, the father exposes the world to his daughter through his eyes, so her urgency to react in a certain way can be activated;
4. a girl learns to harmonise her typically female manners with male behaviour, understands them more deeply and senses diversity of the world." (Potočárová, 2003, p. 87).

"A woman's role as a mother within the family is very unique, treasured and important. Women enrich the family with a sparkle that lightens when she gets home after work to her family as a wife and as a mother. The mother is a keystone of the family and the whole household. She provides and ensures emotional background to her husband and her children, because it is essential especially for healthy child development and the emotional stability of adults." (Štrbová, 2004, p. 18). The mother's presence and care is irreplaceable during the first months of a child's life. A little child is entirely vulnerable and for his survival he needs somebody to look after him. According to L. Višňovský (1998, p. 90), mothers satisfy the need for safety and love via:

- tenderness;
- cuddling;
- attention and care - by ease and encouragement when facing frustrating situations;
- patience;
- acceptance and appreciation of her child;

- setting reasonable requirements.

The way a mother responds to her child behaviour affects their further growth and manners. A mother, who does not take care of her child responsibly, interacts inappropriately or does not accept him, can cause serious disorders during his development.

### **3 Conclusions**

Family is often described as the most important educational unit. You can deeply know somebody by understanding their family backgrounds. Almost certainly they will establish the same values and manners in their own lives and families. It is not right to say that one parent is more important than another one, while the mother certainly has the most important role in children's lives in the prenatal period, later on the fathers and the mother's roles gradually balance. The particularity of both roles consist in the fact that a father with his highest effort is not able to provide what needs to be provided by a mother and vice versa. Each one of them has their own characteristics. "The father's behaviour towards the mother is an open book of life experiences for both, a son and a daughter. He is a source of their thoughts about men. A good father is an ideal for his daughter and an example for his son." (Štrbová, 2004, p. 18). "A mother plays one of the most social roles and expressions of human towards human. This requires a lot of self abandonment, generosity and kindness. That is the reason "mother" is the most beautiful word, the symbol of love and self-sacrifice. Children shall be thankful to their mother. She is not only a creator of new life but also helps to form future generations." (Rozinajová, 1990, p. 161). Mother is a symbol of heart, love, tenderness and care.

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