ABSTRACT

of the dissertation submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)
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«Social readaptation of young single mothers
(on the example of Almaty)»

General information of the dissertation research. This dissertation research focuses on examining the problems of social readaptation (socio-readaptation) of young single mothers in Kazakhstan. The study involved an analysis of scholarly works and articles published between 2010 and 2025, with particular attention to methodological aspects and institutional practices of socio-readaptation, including the activities of the «Ana Uyi» initiative and other crisis centers in Almaty. Within the framework of the empirical research, methods such as in-depth interviews with experts, case studies with single mothers, and surveys were employed, which made it possible to identify the level of adaptation and the challenges faced. Furthermore, based on a comparison of international and national experiences, a digital platform for the social readaptation of young single mothers was designed and proposed. The research findings include a set of recommendations aimed at improving the system of social adaptation for this category of women.

Relevance of the research topic. In Kazakhstan, approximately 500,000 single mothers are officially registered. Behind these figures lie various reasons: childbirth out of wedlock, divorce, widowhood, separation from the child's father, or adoption. The main factors contributing to the increase in the number of single mothers include economic crises; the weakening of family and cultural values; global challenges (the internet, information flows); early initiation of sexual relations; the spread of unregistered marriages; the growing number of divorces; the erosion of national values in Kazakhstani society, and others. As a result of these crisis phenomena, the number of divorces and unregistered marriages in the country continues to grow, which, unfortunately, reflects an indifferent attitude toward the institution of family and marriage. Kazakhstan ranks 24th in terms of divorce rates, with about 87% of single parents being mothers. These circumstances highlight the need to improve the effectiveness of social support and readaptation mechanisms.

Although researchers have studied the economic and material difficulties of single-parent families, as well as the causes of their emergence and development, the problem of the social readaptation of young single mothers as an independent object of research remains insufficiently explored. These circumstances confirm the relevance and necessity of a comprehensive analysis of this issue.

Subject of the dissertation research. The process of social adaptation of women aged 18-35 who raise children alone; the factors influencing this process; the analysis of existing methodologies and programs; and the study of international experience. The analysis also covers the work of social support services and crisis centers.

The object of dissertation research. . The social readaptation of single mothers aged 18 to 35 in contemporary Kazakhstani society.

Purpose of the study. To determine the methodological aspects of social readaptation of single mothers aged 18 to 35 in Kazakhstan, to study the experience of crisis centers, to evaluate their effectiveness, and to develop an innovative model of social readaptation-a digital platform based on both international and domestic experience.

In order to achieve this goal, the following theoretical and empirical tasks were set:

To define the content and socio-psychological significance of the concept of "social readaptation of single mothers" and to characterize the single-mother family as a distinct socio-psychological group;

To identify all aspects and parameters of the social readaptation of single mothers aged 18-35 in Kazakhstan;

To study international experience in the social readaptation of single mothers under modern conditions and to analyze its methodological tools;

To analyze the activities of governmental and non-governmental organizations that provide support to single mothers in Kazakhstan;

To assess the work of crisis centers as institutions of social readaptation for young single mothers;

To identify the factors determining the process of social readaptation of single mothers;

To propose effective approaches to the social readaptation of single mothers aged 18-35 under current conditions;

To develop a digital social adaptation platform for single mothers.

Chronological framework of the study. The study covers data from 2015 to 2025. This time frame makes it possible to analyze the dynamics of the increase in the number of single mothers in Kazakhstan, changes in legal and social policies, as well as trends in the development of rehabilitation services. During this period, changes in social policy, statistical indicators, and trends in social adaptation practices were examined.

Theoretical and methodological foundations of the dissertation work. The study was grounded in the analysis of scholarly literature, international standards, national reports, sociological research, and articles from the Scopus database. Existing programs of social readaptation applied in crisis centers and Ana Uyi centers were also examined. Within the empirical part of the research, in-depth interviews were conducted with 13 experts (employees of crisis centers, family support centers, healthcare professionals, and psychologists); case studies were carried out to analyze the level of adaptation of 8 single mothers; and surveys were administered to women temporarily residing in crisis centers and «Ana Uyi» homes (including the use of V. V. Boyko's test and etc.).

Scientific novelty of the dissertation. The scientific novelty of the study is determined by its relevance, objectives, and research tasks. The dissertation yielded the following scientific results:

- The analysis of urban and rural population data demonstrated that the number of single mothers is higher among urban residents. The growth of the youth population in cities directly influences demographic structures, the institution of

the family, and reproductive behavior. Urbanization and the increase in unregistered relationships among young people contribute to the rise in the number of single mothers;

- The concept of «social readaptation of young single mothers» has been clarified within the context of Kazakhstan;
- A set of problems associated with incomplete families has been identified, and their hierarchy has been proposed;
- International experience in the social readaptation of single mothers has been examined, and ways of adapting it to Kazakhstani realities have been suggested;
- The social significance of crisis centers as institutions of social readaptation, including «the Ana Uyi» model, has been analyzed. These institutions perform the following functions: a space for emotional recovery – an opportunity for reintegration into society – a school for developing employability – a stage in the process of assuming maternal responsibility – and a stimulus for adopting a new outlook on life;
- Factors influencing the process of social readaptation of single mothers have been identified, and recommendations for their improvement have been provided;
- An innovative model of social adaptation-a digital platform-has been developed.

Provisions submitted for defense:

1. The social readaptation of a young single mother consists of interrelated and interconnected components of values. Successful adaptation is possible only when the generally accepted cultural values of society coincide with the individual life orientations of the young mother.
2. In the process of social readaptation, priorities should include: expanding psychological assistance (working with women prone to postpartum depression, suicide, or harmful habits); increasing the number of infrastructural facilities for women with children; and developing resource centers that facilitate employment after obtaining a profession.
3. Thanks to the activities of Ana Uyi and crisis centers in Kazakhstan, the number of orphans has been significantly reduced. These institutions play an important role in preventing social orphanhood and in raising children within a family environment. According to experts, the level of socialization of women who passed through these centers reaches 80–85%.
4. There is a need for the following measures: an increase in the number of nurseries and priority access to kindergartens for children; stricter legislation regarding fathers who evade child support; provision of free legal consultations and training; expansion of access to free psychological assistance; creation of communities, clubs, and mutual support groups; development of online assistance (chats, forums, Zoom); adaptation of vocational training programs to the circumstances of single mothers (flexible schedules, online formats); legislative expansion of part-time and remote work opportunities; and the creation of social jobs.

5. The social readaptation of single mothers is not merely a social issue but an important state task that directly affects demography, social justice, and women's rights.

6. The digital social support platform, developed as a result of research work, is considered a new, effective tool for social workers. This, of course, does not replace personal work carried out directly with a single mother, but is used as an addition to it. The digital platform model is a modern convenient way to work with single mothers who are under psychoemotional stress and are not ready for direct, face-to-face communication, and are set up for online communication in accordance with modernity. This model facilitates their process of adapting to the social environment and paves the way for systematic support. The digital platform is a modern tool that ensures continuous communication between mothers and professionals.

Theoretical and practical significance of the study. The theoretical significance of the research lies in the examination of the key problems faced by single mothers aged 18 to 35 as an independent subject of social readaptation, as well as in the identification of a set of factors influencing the process of their social adaptation within the framework of incomplete families.

The dissertation materials may serve as a theoretical foundation for the development of specialized courses in family sociology, gender sociology, social work, and family policy. Furthermore, the results and research tools obtained can be applied as an information-technology platform for conducting monitoring and other studies, as well as for optimizing the processes of social readaptation of young single mothers. The provisions and conclusions proposed in the dissertation may contribute to the improvement of mechanisms of social governance in the field of family and gender relations, as well as in the practice of social work and family counseling.

Justification of the Novelty and Significance of the Dissertation Results. The novelty of the research lies in the fact that the process of social readaptation of young single mothers has, for the first time, become the subject of comprehensive scientific analysis. The study identified both best practices and existing shortcomings in the practice of social adaptation of this category of women in Kazakhstan. Through a comparative analysis of international and domestic experiences of readaptation and social support, an innovative model was developed-a project of a digital platform. The purpose of this model is to facilitate the social adaptation of young single mothers through the use of modern digital technologies. The digital platform expands access to social services and facilitates communication between social workers and users.

Thus, the dissertation research possesses not only profound theoretical elaboration but also a strong practical orientation and significant potential to influence social policy.

Contribution of the Doctoral Candidate to Each Publication. The research was conducted in accordance with the principles of academic integrity and scientific ethics. The research findings were published in the form of scientific articles in 4 domestic journals recommended by the Science and Higher Education Quality Assurance Committee of the Ministry of Science and Higher Education of the

Republic of Kazakhstan, 1 article in a scientific journal recommended by the Higher Attestation Commission of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation, 1 article in a journal indexed in the Scopus database, and 5 articles in the proceedings of international scientific and practical conferences. In total, 11 scientific articles were published based on the results of the dissertation research.

Structure of the Dissertation. The dissertation consists of an introduction, the main body, a conclusion, a list of references, and appendices. The total length of the dissertation is 161 pages.