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TECHNOLOGIES OF SOCIAL WORK IN RESOLVING FAMILY CONFLICTS: THE ROLE OF SOCIAL INTERVENTION UNDER CONDITIONS OF UNCERTAINTY

Abstract. The article examines the problems of the emergence, course, and consequences of family conflicts in contemporary conditions, particularly during the wartime realities in Ukraine. Special attention is given to the analysis of socio-psychological factors that contribute to tension within families and to the possibilities of overcoming these issues through modern models and technologies of conflict resolution, including the involvement of a social worker. The material is based on a combination of theoretical sources and practical context, making it relevant for interdisciplinary application.

The article will be of interest to a wide audience – from scholars in the fields of psychology and social work to practitioners who encounter family dynamics problems on a daily basis. Its content may serve as a guideline for social workers, counseling psychologists, educators, and other professionals seeking to develop effective mechanisms of family support in crisis situations.

The aim of the article is to characterize the importance of targeted scientific and practical research in the field of family conflicts and to substantiate the need for integrating knowledge from various disciplines to create a comprehensive system of socio-psychological assistance. Particular emphasis is placed on the search for a balance between scientific analysis and practical strategies that can enhance family resilience in complex social conditions.

The article explores the main causes of family conflicts, their typology, and possible consequences for marital relationships and child development. Special focus is placed on the specifics of conflicts during wartime, when forced separation, emotional exhaustion, and constant stress significantly complicate communication between partners. The dual nature of conflict is also emphasized – it may destroy family relationships or, conversely, direct them toward a constructive path through the resolution of accumulated problems. The paper presents an overview of modern models and technologies of conflict management, as well as the role of the social worker as a mediator and facilitator in the processes of reconciliation and strengthening family unity.

The scientific novelty of the article lies in combining a theoretical overview of family conflict issues with practical approaches to their resolution. In particular, it is proposed to view conflict not only as a destructive phenomenon but also as a potential resource for development, provided it is timely directed into a constructive course. For the first time in the Ukrainian context, attention is drawn to the specifics of conflicts during wartime and their impact on the stability of marital relations.

Keywords: family conflict, social work, social work technologies, marital relations, war, psychological assistance, mediation, social support.

Introduction. Modern social transformations associated with war, forced migration, economic instability, loss of housing, changes in social roles, and the psychological consequences of prolonged stress have a significant impact on family functioning. In Ukraine, the problem of family conflicts has become considerably more acute under conditions of uncertainty, characterized by the unpredictability of the future, a lack of resources, the disruption of established social ties, and increased psycho-emotional strain on family members. Under such circumstances, modern social work technologies become particularly important, as they provide comprehensive support to families, facilitate the constructive resolution of conflicts, and strengthen family resilience and capacity [8; 9; 15].

A family conflict is a type of social conflict that arises from a clash of the interests, needs, values, or expectations of family members [8]. According to the World Health Organization (WHO, 2023), prolonged crisis situations significantly increase the risk of family conflicts, domestic violence, psychological disorders, and the breakdown of family relationships [8].

The family serves as a fundamental social institution that ensures not only the reproduction of society but also the formation of personal values, social orientations, and the psychological stability of the individual. However, current conditions of economic, social, and cultural uncertainty significantly complicate the functioning of the family, increasing the likelihood of conflict situations. Family conflicts thus become not only a private issue for individuals but also a factor influencing the overall social well-being of society.

Scientific literature emphasizes the multifaceted nature of family conflicts: they have both objective and subjective preconditions, manifest in various forms, and lead to ambiguous consequences—from the escalation of interpersonal tension to the breakdown of family relationships. At the same time, they can also perform a constructive function by encouraging the re-evaluation of family members' roles, needs, and values.

Given this, there is a clear need for an in-depth study of the theoretical foundations of family conflict research. In particular, it is important to define their essence and specificity, analyze their causes and typologies under socio-economic uncertainty, identify their socio-psychological consequences, and review the methods and technologies of social work in the field of family relations. These aspects form the content of this study.

The issue of family conflicts in Ukraine has been extensively studied by numerous Ukrainian scholars, psychologists, and social work professionals. Among the most prominent researchers are T. Aliksieienko, I. Bekh, O. Bezpalko, I. Humeniuk, O. Zvierieva, A. Kapska, T. Kotsiubynska, H. Laktionova, I. Martynenko, S. Maksymenko, T. Semigina, V. Trubavina, L. Tsybulko, and others, whose works have made a significant contribution to the study of the causes, characteristics, and constructive approaches to resolving family conflicts.

The main goal of the present study is not only to outline the causes and typology of family conflicts but also to comprehend their deeper significance for the development of modern social and psychological science and practice. The importance of this article lies in its ability to combine theoretical approaches with practical tools that can be applied in family counseling, social work, and psychological support. The article also aims to identify the key issues related to family conflicts and to reveal their socio-psychological consequences. Moreover, it seeks to provide important scientific and practical recommendations for constructive ways of resolving family conflict situations, making it relevant both for the academic community, practitioners, and individuals who face these problems in their daily lives.

Theoretical Foundations of the Study. The family represents one of the most important social institutions, as it provides emotional support, stability, and contributes to the formation of the individual's personality. However, it is within the family environment that conflicts often arise, posing a serious threat to relationship harmony. Their origin results from a combination of internal and external factors, which becomes especially evident under current social challenges, particularly during wartime. When one family member – most often the husband – is at war or forced to stay away from home, psychological tension within the family increases, accompanied by feelings of anxiety and uncertainty that create preconditions for misunderstandings.

Among the main causes of family conflicts, communication problems occupy a special place. Family members often struggle to express their needs and emotions openly, avoid dialogue, or fail to provide each other with adequate support. This is compounded by differences in values and role expectations: partners may have divergent views on child-rearing, the distribution of household or financial responsibilities, and under wartime conditions, such differences become even more pronounced. Economic difficulties also play a significant role, as they accompany the instability of modern life. Decreased income, job loss, or forced financial dependence intensify stress and lead to mutual reproaches. Psychological aspects – such as jealousy, distrust, aggressiveness, or a low level of emotional regulation – further aggravate the situation and, under external stress, may escalate into open conflict.

By their nature and content, such conflicts can be classified into several interrelated types. They are often communicative in nature, when misunderstanding and a lack of genuine dialogue lead to relationship strain. Equally common are role-related conflicts that stem from discrepancies in expectations regarding parental or marital functions. Material and domestic conflicts arise from financial difficulties or household management issues, while moral and value-based conflicts are linked to differences in worldview and life orientations. Particular attention should be paid to emotional and psychological conflicts, which

often intensify during wartime: the wife may experience loneliness, while the husband, upon returning, may struggle with post-traumatic stress that complicates his adaptation to family life.

Thus, family conflicts in today's social realities cannot be explained solely by individual psychological traits. They are the result of a complex interplay of personality characteristics, intra-family dynamics, and broader social factors, including war. Understanding their causes and typology allows for a deeper comprehension of the nature of such contradictions and serves as an essential prerequisite for developing practical recommendations aimed at preventing and overcoming destructive consequences in family relationships.

The consequences of family conflicts are multidimensional, manifesting both on individual and interpersonal levels. For couples, they often result in emotional exhaustion, alienation, and loss of trust, which over time may develop into chronic marital dissatisfaction. Constant tension in relationships frequently evokes feelings of loneliness even in the partner's presence, lowering overall psychological well-being and potentially leading to depressive or anxiety disorders. In extreme cases, unresolved conflicts result in divorce, the breakdown of family ties, and social isolation.

According to official data from the Civil Registry Office (DRATsS), Ukraine has shown an annual increase in the number of divorces, indicating a deepening of family crises. As illustrated in the diagram below, a temporary decrease in divorce rates was observed in 2022 compared to the pre-war period. This can be explained by the state of societal shock during the first months of the war, when couples sought to preserve family bonds despite external circumstances.

At the same time, in 2025 the number of divorces already exceeded the pre-war level, reflecting the growing tension as well as the emotional and physical exhaustion of married couples during the war. This dynamic shows that prolonged instability and constant stress place a serious burden on marital relationships, which do not always withstand the strain caused by wartime conditions.

Equally significant are the consequences for children growing up in a conflict-ridden environment. Constant quarrels between parents negatively affect a child's personality development, create a sense of insecurity, lower self-esteem, cause learning difficulties, and hinder interpersonal relationships. A child often takes on the role of a "mediator" or "culprit," which adds an additional psychological burden. In the future, this may affect their own relationships, as the conflict behavior learned in childhood is often repeated in adulthood.

At the same time, it should be emphasized that conflicts are not always purely destructive. When handled constructively, disputes can become a catalyst for positive change, as they help uncover hidden problems, express dissatisfaction, articulate one's needs, and find common solutions. Thus, conflict can, in a positive sense, contribute to better mutual understanding, greater trust, and the development of new forms of interaction. In a negative scenario, however, conflicts intensify contradictions, create resentment, foster alienation, and lead to destructive behavior patterns. Therefore, the outcome of a conflict depends on how willing family members are to engage in dialogue, compromise, and emotional self-regulation.

In the context of wartime, the consequences of conflicts become even deeper. The husband's absence due to military service or forced separation increases the risk of emotional distance and mutual misunderstanding. The return of a soldier is often accompanied by adjustment difficulties and possible post-traumatic stress disorder. This creates additional pressure on the family, as the wife, who has long assumed double responsibilities, expects immediate support from her partner, while he himself needs psychological help and time to recover. Under such conditions, conflicts—depending on whether the couple chooses cooperation or confrontation—can either serve as an impetus for strengthening family relationships and overcoming difficulties together, or lead to divorce, emotional isolation, and even acts of violence.

Thus, the consequences of family conflicts go far beyond personal experiences. They affect the emotional state of all family members, the quality of children's socialization, and the preservation of family unity as a whole. Therefore, the important task of modern science and practice is not only to analyze the causes and types of conflicts but also to recognize their dual nature—as both a potentially destructive and constructive phenomenon that can contribute to relationship development. This awareness should form the basis for developing effective strategies for managing and preventing conflicts, taking into account the specific conditions of modern life, especially the realities of war.

Experimental Section. Family conflicts have always remained an integral part of human interaction, as wherever there is emotional closeness, shared expectations, and mutual responsibilities, clashes of interests, views, and needs inevitably arise. However, under current circumstances—particularly in times of war—the issue of family conflict acquires special significance. Forced separation of spouses, when the husband is far away or directly involved in combat, leads to emotional strain, alienation, communication breakdowns, and the emergence of new psychological barriers to mutual understanding. In

such situations, even minor domestic disagreements may gain deeper meaning, becoming symbols of unexpressed support or unspoken emotions, which complicates the process of relationship restoration.

Analysis of the issue demonstrates that family conflicts are not exclusively destructive. Their impact is twofold: on the one hand, disputes can damage relationships, cause alienation, and even result in family breakdown; on the other hand, they may act as a catalyst for personal and relational growth, encouraging open discussion of problems and the search for compromise. The positive function of conflict lies in its ability to reveal hidden contradictions, allowing partners to reassess their expectations, establish a fairer division of responsibilities, and improve communication. The negative aspect manifests when conflict becomes chronic—characterized by recurring arguments, mutual resentment, and loss of trust—which often leads to separation or psychological violence. Therefore, family conflict can be viewed as a phenomenon with the potential for both destruction and constructive development.

From a socio-psychological perspective, it is essential to note that the consequences of family conflicts are experienced not only by the spouses but also by their children. For them, an atmosphere of constant quarrels becomes a source of stress, insecurity, and fear of losing parental affection. During wartime, these risks are amplified, as the child simultaneously faces the absence of one parent and instability within the family. Under such conditions, children of military personnel encounter serious psychological challenges that can have long-term effects on their emotional development, behavior, and social skills. Continuous stress, fear for the parent's safety, separation, social isolation, and economic uncertainty create an environment that significantly affects the child's psycho-emotional state [4].

In adulthood, this often results in a tendency toward conflict-prone behavior patterns or, conversely, avoidance of relationships due to fear of repeating past negative experiences. Therefore, unresolved family disagreements have long-lasting consequences for all family members, which justifies the need for effective mechanisms to address such issues.

An important prerequisite for constructive resolution is the use of various conflict management models. Below are the three most common models (Figure 1).

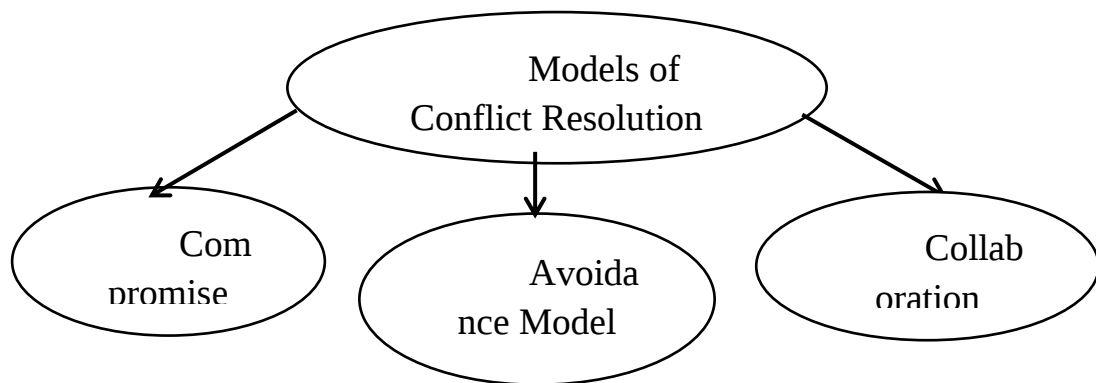


Fig. 1. Models of Conflict Resolution

This model involves each party giving up part of their demands to reach a mutual agreement. The collaborative model, in contrast, emphasizes open dialogue, exploration of underlying causes of disagreements, and the development of joint solutions. Finally, the avoidance model is applied when the issue is minor or requires additional time for reflection and emotional stabilization. In real-life situations, couples often combine these strategies, choosing the most appropriate one depending on the specific context.

Modern social work employs integrated technologies that combine psychological, educational, socio-legal, and mediation-based methods to provide comprehensive support for individuals and families experiencing social and interpersonal difficulties.

One of the fundamental technologies of social work is social counseling, which is aimed at analyzing the causes of conflict, developing effective communication skills, identifying family resources, and promoting constructive patterns of behavior. Crisis counseling is of particular importance, as it helps stabilize the emotional well-being of family members following traumatic or crisis-related events [12; 16].

The main objectives of social counseling include:

- analyzing the causes of conflict;
- identifying the family's internal and external resources;

- developing constructive communication skills;
- teaching emotional regulation and emotion management;
- exploring alternative strategies for conflict resolution.

Crisis counseling has proven to be particularly effective in helping families regain emotional stability after experiencing traumatic events.

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An important area of contemporary social work is the application of the case management approach, which involves a comprehensive assessment of a family's needs, the development of an individualized intervention plan, the coordination of interagency cooperation, and the monitoring of social support outcomes [11]. The comprehensive nature of this approach ensures the effectiveness of interventions for families experiencing difficult life circumstances.

According to the Global Social Service Workforce Alliance (2023), case management includes:

- an initial assessment of the family's needs;
- the development of an individualized service or intervention plan;
- coordination of interagency collaboration;
- monitoring and evaluation of service outcomes;
- completion and closure of the social support process.

The main advantage of the case management approach lies in its comprehensive and coordinated provision of services,

Social support is one of the core social services provided to families that require long-term assistance and are experiencing difficult life circumstances. Its primary objectives include stabilizing family relationships, preventing recurring conflicts, strengthening parental capacity, and ensuring the safe and healthy development of children. The organization and delivery of social support services in Ukraine are regulated by the State Standard for the Social Service of Social Support for Families (Persons) in Difficult Life Circumstances [6].

The main areas of social support include:

- stabilizing the family's psychological climate;
- improving communication and interaction between parents;
- providing support to children;
- restoring family functioning;
- preventing the recurrence of family conflicts.

In Ukraine, the provision of social support services is governed by the State Standard for the Social Service of Social Support for Families (Persons) in Difficult Life Circumstances.

One of the most effective contemporary technologies for resolving family conflicts is mediation. The Law of Ukraine «On Mediation» defines mediation as a voluntary and confidential out-of-court dispute resolution procedure conducted with the assistance of a neutral third party (mediator) [5]. The practice of family mediation contributes to reducing emotional tension, achieving mutually acceptable solutions, preserving constructive relationships among family members, and protecting the best interests of the child [14].

According to the Law of Ukraine «On Mediation», mediation is a voluntary and confidential procedure for conflict resolution with the assistance of a neutral mediator.

The main advantages of mediation include:

- reducing emotional tension;
- identifying mutually beneficial solutions;
- preserving family relationships;
- protecting the best interests of children;
- preventing litigation and court disputes.

In the post-war period, family mediation has increasingly been used in cases of divorce, determining child residence and custody arrangements, and resolving property disputes.

During the war, Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) interventions have become increasingly widespread and are strongly recommended by international humanitarian organizations. These interventions include psychological first aid, family counseling, self-help and peer support groups, art therapy, cognitive behavioral techniques, and stress resilience training programs [9; 10]. Their implementation helps restore families' psychological resources and strengthens their capacity to adapt to crisis situations.

MHPSS interventions include:

- psychological first aid;
- self-help and peer support groups;
- art therapy;
- family therapy;
- cognitive behavioral techniques;
- stress resilience training.

According to the recommendations of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC, 2021–2024), psychosocial support constitutes the foundation of work with families in crisis and emergency settings.

Resolving family conflicts requires effective interagency collaboration among social workers, psychologists, lawyers, educators, child protection professionals, and healthcare providers. A multidisciplinary approach ensures a comprehensive response to families' social problems and enhances the effectiveness of social interventions [12; 13].

A multidisciplinary team typically includes:

- a social worker;
- a psychologist;
- a family physician;
- a lawyer;
- an educator;
- a child protection specialist;
- a community police officer.

This approach promotes integrated service delivery, improves coordination among professionals, and helps prevent the duplication of services.

One of the leading models of contemporary social work is the family-centered practice approach, which is based on partnership with the family, recognition of the family's strengths, the active participation of all family members in decision-making, and the development of internal family resources. This approach is widely endorsed by international organizations and is increasingly being implemented within Ukraine's social service system [8; 12; 16]. Family-centered practice is also recognized by UNICEF and international professional associations as one of the most effective models of social work with families.

The main principles of family-centered practice include:

- partnership with the family;
- respect for human dignity;
- recognition and utilization of the family's strengths;
- active participation of all family members;
- shared decision-making with the client.

Today, this model is being actively implemented within Ukraine's social service system.

Following the COVID-19 pandemic and under the conditions of war, the use of digital social work technologies has expanded considerably. These technologies include online counseling, remote social support, electronic case management, mobile mental health applications, and video mediation. The use of digital tools enhances the accessibility of social services regardless of individuals' place of residence or the prevailing security situation [8; 9].

Digital social work technologies include:

- online counseling;
- video mediation;
- remote social support;
- electronic case management systems;
- psychological support chatbots;
- mobile mental health applications.

Digital services ensure access to social assistance even in communities where social service providers are temporarily unable to operate.

Social work under conditions of uncertainty is based on the following principles:

- rapid response;
- flexibility;
- individualized intervention;
- multidisciplinary collaboration;
- a strengths-based approach;
- trauma-informed practice;
- ensuring the best interests of the child.

Particular attention is given to families of military personnel, veterans, internally displaced persons (IDPs), as well as the families of those who have been killed or reported missing.

A particularly important role in the modern context is played by the social worker, who can act as a mediator between family members and help them break the cycle of mutual accusations. The social worker's activities are aimed at creating conditions for constructive communication, restoring trust, and forming new patterns of interaction. By applying social work technologies—such as mediation, individual and family counseling, and group training focused on developing emotional intelligence and communication skills—the social worker helps couples not only resolve a particular conflict but also acquire tools for independently managing future disagreements.

An equally effective method is psychoeducation, which involves explaining to partners the psychological mechanisms of conflict behavior, teaching them to recognize emotional triggers, and distinguishing constructive expressions of disagreement from destructive ones. In crisis families, where conflicts are intensified by the consequences of war, it is advisable to involve mental health specialists to address trauma, post-traumatic stress disorders, and aggressive reactions.

Thus, overcoming family conflicts requires a comprehensive approach that combines the individual efforts of spouses with professional support. The key task of social workers and psychologists is not only to resolve current disputes but also to form a new culture of interaction within the family—one based on openness, empathy, and mutual respect. Only under these conditions does conflict cease to be a destructive factor and instead become a resource for development, helping families not only endure difficult circumstances but also strengthen their unity.

Conclusions. In summary, family conflicts are an inevitable part of marital life; however, their nature and consequences largely depend on the conditions in which the family lives. In modern Ukrainian realities—especially during wartime—the issue becomes more acute due to forced separations, constant stress, and psychological exhaustion of partners. Conflicts can have both destructive and constructive potential: they may either destroy relationships or encourage couples to address underlying problems. The consequences of such contradictions affect not only adults but also children, for whom an atmosphere of quarrels creates risks of emotional instability and negative modeling of future relationships.

The search for effective models and technologies of conflict resolution is therefore of particular importance. Compromise, collaboration, mediation, psychoeducation, and the involvement of social work and psychological specialists are vital tools for preserving families. The social worker's role lies in creating a safe space for dialogue, facilitating reconciliation, and assisting couples in developing a new culture of communication.

Hence, both scientific and practical interest lies not only in the analysis of the causes and typology of conflicts, but also in the development of comprehensive strategies for their resolution. Only by combining theoretical knowledge with practical mechanisms can the negative effects of conflicts be mitigated, their potential directed toward constructive outcomes, and family relationships strengthened—even under the most challenging social conditions.

Prospects for Further Research. The insufficient understanding of the socio-psychological mechanisms of family conflicts, especially under conditions of war and social uncertainty, highlights the need for continued scientific exploration in this field. It remains relevant to study the underlying factors influencing spousal behavior, interaction strategies, and ways of coping with emotional tension in crisis situations.

Future research should focus on identifying the interrelationship between social support, emotional intelligence, stress resilience, and the effectiveness of social work technologies. Understanding this relationship will allow for a deeper insight into how social, psychological, and economic factors affect the dynamics of family conflicts.

Modern social work technologies for resolving family conflicts under conditions of uncertainty are based on comprehensive, multidisciplinary, and family-centered approaches. The most effective interventions include social counseling, case management, social support services, family mediation, mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS), multidisciplinary collaboration, and digital social work technologies. The integration of these approaches contributes to reducing the level of family conflict, restoring family resources, strengthening families' resilience to crisis situations, and promoting their overall well-being. In the context of Ukraine's post-war recovery, the further development and implementation of these technologies represent one of the key priorities for improving the national system of social services.

Based on the findings, future studies should also analyze the factors determining the success of mediation, psychoeducation, and other social support methods in families affected by war or prolonged stress. Such analysis will help identify the barriers and resources influencing families' ability to cope

constructively with conflicts and contribute to the development of new, effective social work technologies aimed at supporting families in complex social conditions.

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