

THE DEVELOPMENT OF PARENTING WORKSHOPS IN FAMILY COURTS: POSSIBILITIES AND CHALLENGES



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Andressa Mehret Graeff¹ and Lucimaira Cabreira dos Santos²

ABSTRACT

The family is constituted by a group of people considered as a systemic whole. This structure establishes relationships between its members and their environment. The systemic whole is dynamic and contains other subsystems, performing important functions in relationships. Within the family system, there are the parental and marital subsystems, which are the relationships established between the members. Conjuality refers to the union of a couple, while parenting refers to the care of parents with their children. Marital relationships may come to fall apart – divorce – but parenting is a bond that does not break down. Divorce is an event that runs through families and requires new organizations in the family system. When this restructuring after marital dissolution results in conflicts and family members are unable to organize themselves, the need for judicial interventions is visualized. In this sense, a new look of Justice, careful with parental relationships impacted by marital dissolution, seeks to promote an environment of conflict resolution, in order to produce a territory that aims to expand dialogue. Thus, the National Council of Justice (CNJ) proposes parenting workshops, in order to help parents and children to deal more peacefully and positively with the results of divorce, from the perspective of coparenting. In view of these considerations, the objective of this research is to investigate the applicability and effectiveness of parenting workshops in the Family Courts in several districts of Brazil. This study has a qualitative field research. Initially, a narrative literature research was carried out to support the understanding of the themes. Following the production of the bibliographic review, a field research was carried out, whose target audience was professionals who work in the Justice System in several districts of the country and who carry out parenting workshops. Data were collected between July and August 2023, with the application of a virtual questionnaire. The data assessment was based on the thematic analysis of Minayo (2012). Thus, based on the analysis of the information, three categories were systematized: the lack of systematization and ordering of the execution; demands presented by the participating families; and the perception of the effectiveness of the workshops by the professionals. In view of the discussion of the categories, it was observed that the workshops meet the demands arising from the families – such as communication, power struggle and management of routines. The workshops have recognized effectiveness, especially with regard to the development of coparenting; however, they do not present a systematization of the practice, that is, they do not have a parameter of times, days, distributions and professionals. For the consolidation of this systematization, the workshops need to be considered a priority in the Courts so that, thus, they can expand their interventions and actually measure their effectiveness.

¹Graduated in Psychology from University Center UNIVEL (2024)
andressagraeff.psi@gmail.com

²Master's degree in Biosciences and Health from the State University of Western Paraná (2024)
lucimairac@gmail.com

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INTRODUCTION

Throughout the historical process of contemporary society, the family has undergone changes both in structural terms and in the functions performed by its members. The family is considered an open system, in which there is a relational dynamic. However, the family goes through contradictions in actions, feelings, tensions and conflicts present in the environment, which contribute to this system remaining dynamic and in constant transformation (Minuchin; Colapinto; Minuchin, 1999).

This dynamism of the systemic whole contains other subsystems that play important roles in relationships and provoke movements. The family is considered a system that has a marital subsystem and a parental subsystem that influence each other, and it is through conjugality and parenting that the family is formed. Thus, parenting is understood as the expectations of parents about their children – such as care, protection and also the way parents and children build this relationship. Conjugality, on the other hand, is the presence of the "I", the "you" and the "we" (husband and wife); and the union of a couple requires agreements on various aspects of (co)existence (Koprowski; Galindo; Gomes, 2020). The marital system can sometimes experience the dissolution of this relationship, a fact called "divorce" by the judicial system of Brazil.

Divorce is an event that requires structural, emotional, economic, and procedural reorganizations in relation to all members of the family system (Lamela; Figueiredo, 2011). Throughout the separation process, the parents' difficulty in managing the modification of the family structure and dissociating conflicts from conjugality and parental exercise is seen (Silva; Chapadeiro; Assumpção, 2019). In fact, conjugality is the union of two subjects who form a couple, while parenthood refers to the exercise of parental care.

When the family nucleus is unable to dissociate conjugality and parenthood and conflicts become prominent – and the members of this family are unable to control the resolution of possible conflicts – the intervention of the Judiciary is necessary with resources that can support and help families to organize themselves in a functional way.

In addition to the functions of decisions and sentences, the Justice also seeks to develop mediation spaces that favor dialogue and the solution of the disputes presented. Therefore, considering conflict resolution as one of the actions of the Judiciary, in the search to act on these territories and support families, parenting workshops were created – which enable conflict resolution and bring together families involved in legal proceedings of

marital dissolution, custody disputes and payment of child support, among other litigations (Kostulski; Arpini, 2018).

The National Council of Justice (CNJ) is the regulatory body for this practice, which creates guidelines and methodologies to be adopted in the conduct of parenting workshops, being formulated by booklets, videos and recorded testimonies used during the meetings. The workshops proposed by the CNJ are linked to the Family Courts and have the purpose of helping parents and children to deal with the results of divorce in a more peaceful and positive way, with a view to a preventive nature (Kostulski; Arpini, 2018).

In this context, this research arises from the following question: how are parenting workshops developed in the Brazilian judicial system and what is their effectiveness in the face of litigation situations experienced by the participating families? Therefore, the main objective is to investigate the applicability and effectiveness of parenting workshops in the Family Courts in several districts of Brazil.

In order to achieve the proposed objective, this study intends to identify which professionals develop the workshops, the resources and methodologies used to carry out these actions and compare the practices developed with those proposed by the National Council of Justice. In relation to the public served, it is sought to ascertain what are the conflicts and problems presented by the participants. The present work aims to understand the perception of professionals about the effectiveness of parenting workshops in the face of litigation situations experienced by families, as well as to understand their internal flows and routines for a greater understanding of how workshops are practiced in the Justice System.

DEVELOPMENT

FAMILY ORGANIZATION AND DYNAMICS: CONSIDERATIONS ON THE CONCEPTS OF PARENTING AND CONJUGALITY

Throughout the construction of contemporary society, the concept of "family" has undergone some changes due to historical changes in behaviors such as affection, love, sexuality, religion and culture. The family followed such social transformations and went through several changes.

In the Middle Ages, the family was represented and organized differently from today. In this period, men had a strong influence and were responsible for the work and support of the family. Later, in the sixteenth century, women gained space and began to work

alongside men. Since then, the figure of the woman has been fixed in society and a relationship is established that is named and portrayed as a "couple". From this, ceremonial rituals such as engagement, marriage and baptism are made official, linking a value to the family image. With these changes, from a domestic and private perspective, families gained prominence and became a priority of social institutions (Ariès, 2006).

Around the sixteenth century, the child began to be recognized as a member of the family and, in this way, the model of a nuclear family was drawn in the social scenario, supported by bourgeois principles, which originated the socially expected model and referenced by current family arrangements. In the course of this historical path, there was initially no intimacy between the members; however, with the passage of time and since the recognition of the child's figure, the construction of an intimate family feeling among the participants is visualized, which resulted in the creation of a family routine (Ariès, 2006).

According to Dias (2011), economic, political, social, cultural, demographic and technological factors have incisively influenced the changes in family structure and dynamics. These aspects had an impact on the organization, functions, relationships, complexity and globality throughout family development, which reflects the evolution of the social era and its different stages.

Consequently, with the transformation of the family, it has become one of the main social and cultural institutions that dictate values and principles, that is, social norms and rules. The family starts to have responsibilities such as caring for and protecting the child and adolescent, leading the first learning and habits for the course of life. On the subject, Bock, Furtado and Teixeira (2002, p. 249) present the conception that "it is in the family that the exercise of the rights of children and adolescents is materialized, in the first instance: the right to essential care for their physical, psychic and social growth and development".

In the face of so many changes in the midst of the perspective presented, the contemporary family can be configured in various ways, enabling new family arrangements. However, the responsibility of the members for the children continues to be focused on care and protection. In this sense, as much as the nuclear family is used as a reference, many other models materialize in everyday social life: "there are many and innumerable forms of family structure: the family of separated parents who enter into new unions that result in a coexistence between the children of the previous marriages of both and the children of the couple" (Bock; Stolen; Teixeira, 2002, p. 247). All social and cultural

changes, in addition to impacting the organization of the family group, produce emotional and subjective needs, experienced from the field of the relationship that has been built.

Regardless of specific configurations and functions, the family is made up of a group of people considered a systemic whole, which structures relationships between its members and their environment. Each system is essentially characterized by three aspects: interdependence between the members of the system, that is, the fact that a change in one of the participants generates changes in an entire chain; the regulations that permeate the relations between the members, and their ties may follow a regularity; and awareness of these regulations, which means that, within their behavior, each individual is aware of the regulations that influence the maintenance of relationships (Relvas, 1996; Gimeno, 2003; Amaro, 2006).

Thus, it is understood that this systemic whole is dynamic and contains other subsystems, performing important functions in relationships. The family has a marital subsystem and a parental subsystem that influence internally and externally in a broad way all the members of the family nucleus – and it is through conjugality and parenthood that it is formed (Dias, 2011).

As already mentioned, conjugality is understood as the presence of the "I", the "you" and the "we" (husband and wife). It arises when two adults come together in an interdependent and complementary relationship and form a couple, identifying the relationships between the spouses that can mean a loss of individuality but a gain in the sense of belonging, complementarity, cooperation, symbiosis. The union of a couple supposes that several aspects of experiences are agreed, which materialize a pattern of marital functioning – the forms of language, communication and conflict resolution strategies (Koprowski; Galindo; Gomes, 2020).

On the other hand, parenting is constituted from the parents' expectations about their children, such as care, protection and the way they build this relationship. Essentially, it is responsible for education, socialization, protection at all levels and parental obligations in general (Silva; Chapadeiro; Assumpção, 2019). Therefore, the construction of parenthood begins with the desire to have children, expands during pregnancy and is maintained after the birth of the child.

In this way, both subsystems, in view of their differences, intersect and affect each other. Thus, it is observed that both the construction and the exercise of parenting are influenced and marked by the marital system, but do not necessarily depend on it to

constitute themselves – as in the case of single mothers. The way in which each subsystem organizes itself and develops relationships within its configuration is called "family structure". All families are established through a structure of relationships, whose organization is specific and unique to each family (Dias, 2011).

From the understanding of families in which conjugality is established, its functioning impacts and influences the way parenting is experienced and experienced by this family group, thus being a two-way process. Under the perception that conjugality and parenthood are interconnected, it is important to demarcate their boundaries in order to protect children and avoid inserting them in the conflicts and tensions of the marital environment (Dias, 2011).

When there are situations in which conflicts become prominent and the members of this family are unable to control the resolution of conflicts, the conjugality may dissolve due to the decision of the adults to end the bond. From the decision of a marital dissolution, it is essential that the parenting relationship is protected by the members, as the way the parents experience the divorce can impact the exercise of parenting.

IMPACTS OF MARITAL DISSOLUTION ON THE EXERCISE OF PARENTHOOD

Conflicts permeate human relationships and, therefore, are also part of the life and development of families. The way families manage their disagreements and disagreements is what differentiates the impact on family development and on the evolution process of each of its members (Merrifield; Gamble, 2013; P; Seidler; Silva, 2019).

Similarly, marital conflicts influence the entire family system, especially the relationships between the marital and parental subsystems, which can affect the quality of life of families (Bolze *et al.*, 2017). The confrontation between the spouses can occur during relational coexistence and progress to a marital breakdown. Féres-Carneiro (2003) points out that from the moment that these disagreements cannot be resolved by the family nucleus – that is, the couple is unable to adjust their conflicts – the marital relationship can be dissolved by the decision of the adults to end this bond. Thus, dissolution results in divorce.

Divorce is understood as a process that interferes in the family cycle as it reorganizes its structures and dynamics, allowing a redefinition of individual identity. Diniz Neto (2005, p. 105) points out that, from a systemic point of view, marital dissolution is considered "a process in which the patterns of maintenance of the marital relationship are

modified, until the moment when the relationship can no longer be defined by the spouses, as a marital relationship". The author also points out that this is not a simple process and that it can have an indefinite time.

According to the National Council of Justice (2015), marital dissolution is one of the most stressful events in an individual's life and can cause feelings such as disappointment, frustration, hurt and sadness. It is considered a process similar to grief and, therefore, needs to be elaborated because it is a transition previously unknown to the subject.

Separation brutally modifies the routine of family members, generating various emotions. It is a difficult phase due to the need to rebuild new references. If this process involves children, it can become even more complex when parents focus their energy elsewhere or disperse in distress, which can decrease parental availability until a new arrangement is arranged (Maldonado, 2009).

According to Juras and Costa (2016), in the contemporary social environment, the idea that when a marital bond is broken, parental ties and responsibilities are also broken, especially in relation to the parent who does not live with the child. However, it is important to differentiate the rupture of conjugality and parenthood, which is indissoluble, regardless of the family modality. Parental indissolubility refers to parental intersubjective ties, that is, to the condition of father and mother, which does not dissolve, no matter how much the feelings resulting from the separation make it difficult to visualize this distinction. This is because the child needs to continue to have the figure of the father and mother as references of personality and psychological development. Ziviani, Féres-Carneiro and Magalhães (2012) discuss parental indissolubility:

It is important to make the theoretical distinction between the intersubjective bonds of conjugal and parental. In the intersubjective marital bond, separation can be admitted, given the frequent separation of couples in contemporary times. But if the couple, in addition to being conjugal, is also parental, the bond, in this condition of father and mother, is indissoluble. As in the three conditions of the indissolubility of the bond between parents, children and siblings, the outcome of conjugality does not imply the outcome of parenthood. The theoretical postulation of the indissolubility of the intersubjective bond is, therefore, added to the indissolubility of the parental couple. We propose, therefore, the family theory of the indissoluble bond between the members of the parental couple, based on the notion of indissolubility of the bond between parents, children and siblings. (Ziviani; Féres-Carneiro; Magalhães, 2012, p. 166).

While the changes caused by a separation occur, and new patterns are built, the family system can organize itself in a mature and peaceful way, avoiding inserting children in unpleasant situations. However, when this reorganization is connected to conflicts and

hostilities, many children occupy the role of their parents' attack, increasing the difficulty and complexity of the moment. As feelings emerge and distort situations, it is common for parents to infect the parental relationship, causing children to suffer tension and overload (Maldonado, 2009).

Cervený (2006 *apud* Juras; Costa, 2016) highlights some terminologies used to demonstrate the functioning of the child as a form of attack on the ex-spouse: the children used as "glue" to keep the parental pair close; as "bullet", in the sense of hitting the other; and as a "carrier pigeon", for the exchange of messages and information between parents. Intergenerational conflicts of loyalty can still arise when a child allies with one parent to the disadvantage of the other. Brazil (2022) presents the conflict of loyalty as a common symptom of the divorce process, in which the child joins one or both parents at different times to protect themselves from the threat of lovelessness, which can be based on real situations or those arising from the child's imagination.

Parental alienation is another form of attack on the other parent. It consists of the affective separation of the child or adolescent from one of his or her parents for issues related to parenting and conjugality. It is considered an act of moral coercion against the child and can be understood as psychological abuse in which the individual who practices it views the child as a manipulable object, disregarding their individual wishes (Brazil, 2022).

In this way, children can manifest symptoms as a form of language and expression of anguish in the face of the troubled experience of their parents or the adaptation of new arrangements. Maldonado (2009) points out some common manifestations in this period such as pain, stomach and intestinal problems, loss or excess of appetite, sleep dysregulation and emotional instability – aggressiveness and irritability, for example.

From the losses related to marital disagreements in the children's lives, the parental figure stands out as essential for the child, and its functional organization is necessary. In the child's imagination, if the parents do not have a good relationship or do not like each other, the relationship with the child can be affected by generalist thoughts that provoke fear and insecurity. This situation can intensify when, in moments of hatred and fighting, parents become unavailable to their children (Maldonado, 2009).

Maldonado (2009) points out the importance of dialogue about separation, in an enlightening way, which explains what the changes in the routine will be and presents openness in the communication of feelings. After all, despite the separation, the former

couple is united by a parental bond and, therefore, it is necessary to remodel and redefine the roles, rules and common issues of the children.

Since the redefinition of roles, it is essential that parental figures have assertive communication and create new routines for the parental system. When this becomes a reality and this new functioning is functional and proactive, the parental exercise is called "coparenting". Coparenting is about the way parents share the responsibility of caring for and supporting their children, even if they are not together as a couple. This includes values, ideals, and expectations, with a focus on the well-being of the youngest, and does not focus on how each parent individually cares for the child; but, rather, in the synchronized collaboration between them to meet the needs of their children. Thus, a coparental subsystem is created, in which responsible adults exchange information and coordinate their efforts to ensure the healthy development of children (Lamela; Figueiredo, 2011).

Van Egeren and Hawkins (2004 *apud* Grzybowski; Wagner, 2010) cite four types of coparenting:

(1) solidary coparenting, characterized by affection between parental figures, promoting a joint growth of the pair and a unified parental execution; (2) coparental support, formed by strategies and actions that enhance the efforts of the partners to benefit the child; (3) destructive coparenting, in which strategies and actions are aimed at mitigating the partner's attempts to achieve parental goals, including criticism and lack of respect; and (4) shared parenting, characterized by the degree to which each parent is responsible for setting boundaries and fairness in the division of responsibilities. (Van Egeren; Hawkins, 2004 *apud* Grzybowski; Wagner, 2010, p. 78).

When the good aspects of the bond are preserved, the impact of the separation on the children is minimized, as "children are unfinished beings and the parents' conflicts interfere a lot in the way the child will be constituted in adulthood" (Brazil, 2022, p. 44). It is crucial to recognize that the way a couple faces the end of their marital relationship has a significant effect on the exercise of parenting – a lasting relationship that does not dissolve with separation.

Divorce may require the creation of a new balance and the transformation of the parental system into a coparental system. This transition requires parents to work in sync to ensure the healthy development of their children, because when they receive affection, assistance, protection and recognition, children are able to readjust to coparenting in a healthy way (Maldonado, 2009).

When situations are observed in which marital conflicts reach more intense levels, without the establishment of a new routine and dialogue, and family members find it difficult to manage the resolution of these conflicts, they tend to turn to the Justice System in search of resources that can support the functional organization of the family. Faced with scenarios like these, the National Council of Justice (CNJ) proposes interventions aimed at helping families in dilemmatic moments. Parenting workshops are configured as one of these alternatives.

PARENTING WORKSHOPS AND THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF JUSTICE (CNJ)

Family courts are responsible for processing and adjudicating disputes, a term used to describe legal actions submitted to judicial authorities that apply the law in matters related to topics such as probates, legal separation, divorce, marriage annulment, paternity investigation, alimony action and custody dispute. It is possible to resort to conciliation and mediation as alternative means for resolving conflicts, thus avoiding the slowness of a prolonged judicial process (São Paulo, 2001).

Throughout history, the Judiciary has performed three distinct social functions. First, it assumes an instrumental function of conflict resolution; then, it carries a political burden of promoting social control; and, finally, it plays the role of motivating the socialization of expectations related to the interpretation of legal norms, thus presenting a symbolic function. The legal environment evokes these actions because it is the main way to resolve conflicts, ensuring the integration of society and the effective application of methods of intervention in conflict situations (France; Andrade, 2019).

Thus, by assigning one of the functions of the Judiciary, which is the resolution of conflicts, in the search for acting in situations such as divorces and supporting families, parenting workshops were conceived. They have the purpose of enhancing conflict resolution, inspired by techniques used in other countries, such as Canada and the United States. They bring together families involved in legal proceedings for marital dissolution, custody disputes and payment of alimony, among other litigations. The main objective is to help parents and children to deal with the consequences of divorce in a more peaceful and positive way, including with a preventive approach (Kostulski; Arpini, 2018).

The parenting workshop project was introduced in Brazil by Judge Vanessa Aufiero da Rocha, at the time coordinator of the Judicial Center for Conflict Resolution (CEJUSC) in São Vicente, São Paulo, where it was initially established with the support of a

multidisciplinary team. In view of the positive results achieved, the project obtained support from the National Council of Justice (CNJ), which implemented it as an institutional policy – according to Recommendation No. 50 of 05/08/2014, also offering training methodologies for employees and judges (Brito; Silva, 2017).

According to Mesquita (2015), a team was trained through courses and qualifications. The main proposal is to offer support to families as workshops are promoted that involve discussions aimed at helping parents to better deal with the changes experienced and feelings associated with acceptance.

When investigating parenting workshops in Brazil, the experience in the state of Ceará stands out. According to information provided by the Court of Justice of this state, the workshops in Ceará have already been recognized as a reference in the country. They even received civil servants from Courts in other states for training and visits to the facilities where they are held, in order to replicate the model in their respective judicial centers (Ceará, 2017).

The workshops reflect a preventive and educational character, aiming to lead parents and children to understand that separation concerns only the parents, not breaking family ties with the end of the marriage. The bond between the members remains a function of the shared responsibility in raising children and promoting a good coexistence for all. Therefore, the end of the marital relationship should not be seen as a dispute or revenge, but as the beginning of a new cycle, with different formation and dynamics (Brito; Silva, 2017).

According to information from the National Council of Justice (2015), the dynamics developed in the workshops aim to stimulate reflection on the understanding of the present situation and the relevance of dialogue, seeking a family understanding. The didactic material made available by the CNJ consists of booklets, videos and recorded testimonies, which are used during the meetings.

The workshops are conducted by a team made up of psychologists, pedagogues, social workers and legal professionals. The meetings are segmented between parents (men and women), adolescents and children, in order to provide more appropriate approaches to each group. Parenting sessions focus on encouraging dialogue and understanding the distinction between conjugality and parenting. This involves guiding parents about the repercussions for their children; provide information on parental alienation, custody, visitation and alimony; and to cultivate the understanding that, although

the marital relationship has an end, parenting remains. There is an incentive for co-parenting actions between the parties, with a focus on valuing the well-being of children (Brito; Silva, 2017).

In relation to children, the workshop intends to address the feelings experienced by children and adolescents in the face of the consequences of the end of their parents' relationship. This includes situations in which, for example, one of the parents asks excessive questions about visits, when the child is used as a messenger between the parents, and the guilt associated with the cultivation of feelings towards the parent who left the home (Brito; Silva, 2017).

According to the research conducted by Silva, Chapadeiro and Assumpção (2019), which involved family members participating in parenting workshops, it was observed that, after participating in these practices, parents began to understand the importance of protecting and prioritizing their children after marital dissolution. This understanding was achieved through reflection on unconscious attitudes carried out unintentionally, as well as by the preservation of parental bonds.

Based on positive results, the workshop project has been expanded throughout Brazil, and is currently carried out in several Courts in the country. As presented in the studies by Silva, Chapadeiro and Assumpção (2019), participation in parenting workshops reverberates positively in the family system, enabling both parents and children to broaden their understanding of actions and behaviors, which contributes to the maintenance of affective bonds.

In consonance, Schmidt, Staudt and Wagner (2019) point out that the literature has revealed positive results in interventions aimed at strengthening parenting and encouraging coparenting after the divorce process. These actions provide valuable evidence to guide professional practices and establish requirements for the formulation and improvement of programs and public policies in favor of families. Thus, work proposals aimed at families after marital dissolution are visionary and should be encouraged.

METHODOLOGY

This study is a qualitative field research, duly approved by the Ethics Committee under the CAAE registrations: 70008723.2.0000.0231 and the opinion number: 6.131.743.

This work was based on a narrative research of literature, in order to provide support for the understanding of the themes addressed and to assist in the construction of the data

collection instrument, since it is extremely important to conceptually elaborate the themes studied.

After the production of the narrative literature review, the field research began through data collection. The target audience of this study consisted of five professionals who work in the Justice System in various districts of Brazil, involved in the realization of parenting workshops. The selection of participants was independent of criteria such as form of hiring, time of service, gender, age and economic range. The identification of these districts was done through research on the official websites of the country's Courts of Justice, the National Council of Justice (CNJ) and reports that contained information about the workshops.

To carry out the data collection, 11 counties that develop parenting workshops were contacted, namely: Curitiba (PR), Ponta Grossa (PR), Londrina (PR), Maringá (PR), Cascavel (PR), Toledo (PR), Canoas (RS), Primavera do Leste (MT), São Vicente (SP), Igarapé (MG) and Porto Velho (RO). The information was obtained through the communication channels of the Courts of Justice and indication of professionals. After this mapping, the first contact was established directly with the Family Courts of the districts and the sectors responsible for the workshops. Subsequently, there was direct communication with the professionals responsible through calls, WhatsApp and emails. Of the counties contacted, Londrina (PR), Cascavel (PR), Toledo (PR) and Primavera do Leste (MT) showed feedback, totaling five professionals, while the others did not respond.

The criteria that guided the present research encompass higher education professionals, specifically psychologists or social workers, who work at the Court of Justice and develop the methodology of parenting workshops – regardless of the form of hiring, time of work, gender, age, economic range and place of residence and work. On the other hand, the exclusion criteria involve professionals who did not meet the aforementioned requirements (characteristics of the population), as well as those with whom it was not possible to establish contact by telephone and/or e-mail, and also professionals on leave, sick leave and/or vacation.

After these professionals accepted to participate in the research, the Informed Consent Form was sent. After signing the document, the research instrument was sent, which consisted of a virtual questionnaire.

The present study was based on the thematic analysis of Minayo (2012), considered a qualitative method of data analysis that aims to identify, evaluate, interpret and report

models (themes) from the data collected. Thematic analysis allows the construction and detailed description of a set of data, being collaborative for the formulation of an interpretative analysis of the data (Braun; Clarke, 2006).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

This research is structured based on the thematic analysis of Minayo (2012) and organizes the collected data into categories to enable a detailed analysis and contribute to the interpretation of the results and the information obtained. Thus, the distributed categories comprise: the lack of systematization and ordering of the execution; demands presented by the participating families; perception of the effectiveness of the workshops by the professionals.

CATEGORY 1: LACK OF SYSTEMATIZATION AND ORDERING OF ENFORCEMENT

This category brings discussions about the lack of systematization of the practice of parenting workshops, highlighting their routine and daily organization, in addition to the forms of applicability in different districts. From the analysis of this category, some aspects were identified, namely: to which sectors the workshops are linked; the difference in the systematized routine of the workshops; and who performs them.

The data that supported this analysis allow us to perceive a differentiation in relation to the sectors and judicial courts that are responsible for parenting workshops. There is a clear difference in the way each district carries out the workshops, with particular characteristics. Since the National Council of Justice is the regulatory body for the practice, its recommendations do not include a specific sector. Therefore, it was observed that each district is linked to a different sector or court. The statements of the participants, who answered the virtual questionnaire and were transcribed – without alterations – below, elucidate this aspect:

"(...) the workshop was an initiative of the Juíza coordinator of CEJUSC and is linked to CEJUSC" (P4)

"(...) 1st Court of Childhood and Youth" (P5)

"(...) linked to the 1st and 2nd family court" (P1)

"(...) the sector was idealized by the judge of the children's court, but the judge of the family court took over, so it was a partnership between the NAE and the judge of childhood, serving the two Family and Childhood Courts" (P2)

It is evident that the Child and Youth Court and the Judicial Center for Conflict Resolution and Citizenship (CEJUSC) have a significant participation in the workshops,

while the Family Court showed a lower link to the practices. Of the four districts contacted, only one uses the Family Court exclusively. Although the demands and recommendations of the CNJ are typical of Family Courts, considering problems correlated to marital dissolution and parenthood, it is used by other sectors of the Judiciary. This data raises the question of why the practices are not so present in the Family Courts, since the common demands addressed in the workshops are directly linked to the themes of these sectors (separation, divorce, child custody). However, in this data collection, there are not enough elements to answer this question more conclusively.

One of the factors that may justify the greater connection of the workshops to the Child and Youth Court in comparison to the Family Courts refers to the more frequent presence of a technical support team, composed of psychologists and social workers, justified by other activities already carried out later. This includes, for example, actions related to adoption processes, which include a program to prepare applicants for adoption, as well as psychosocial studies. Therefore, the practices of these teams were rooted in interventions that go beyond the technical scope, establishing contact with the community in a differentiated way and moving integrative actions for the families involved in the Judiciary. These practices encompass educational and preventive initiatives (Montenegro; Rock; Francileudo, 2017).

The path of psychologists in the Family Courts, on the other hand, is strongly associated with expert work. The expert opinion is materialized through psychological assessment techniques and requires specific knowledge, such as: understanding the demand initiated and its relationship with the corresponding legal domain; definition of a strategic plan and choice of instruments appropriate to the demand in question; verification of the questions presented in court to the expert; and elaboration of psychological communication from documents such as the report (Maciel, 2002).

Thus, it is observed that, in the Court of Justice, the construction of the two sectors (Childhood and Family) occurred through different trajectories, with different purposes and spaces, which can influence the implementation and receptivity of parenting workshops by professionals. Courts that already offer similar practices may be more likely to link easily. The Children's Court, in addition to evaluations, tends to be closer to families in the sense of protection, as in cases of adoption, going beyond the restricted role of expert evaluation. On the other hand, the Family Court is based on expert actions, that is, the contact with the families is punctual and aims at objectives that end quickly. In this sense, it is essential to

change the perspective of the technical teams themselves, which must, in addition to the reports, look at and act on and with the families, also supporting them through educational actions.

The workshops go beyond reports and expertise since they are built from dialogue and mediations. The Judicial Center for Conflict Resolution (CEJUSC) is another official instance that emerges as the body that conducts the workshops. It is a body belonging to the Judiciary whose function is to provide mediation and conciliation through sessions held by trained people, in order to assist the parties in question towards the resolution of the conflict. The intervention techniques and tools used go beyond the evaluative place and promote spaces for dialogue and reflection (Lima; Galvão; Serrat, 2018).

Regarding the routine of the parenting workshops, different forms of execution were identified, including variations in the schedules and in the number and distribution of meetings. These aspects were perceived in the participants' statements, which show the diversity of approaches:

"(...) 1 time a month for a period of 4 hours" (P3)

"(...) It happens twice a month" (P4)

"(...) A meeting, which is divided into two parts" (P2)

"(...) Two meetings for the parents, two meetings for the mothers and four for the children" (P1)

Although there is no specific sector responsible for the systematization of the workshops, the National Council of Justice (CNJ) remains the regulatory body for this practice, making materials available to be used during the intervention. However, throughout this research, no materials made available by the CNJ were found that referred to the number of meetings or the recommended duration, suggesting guidelines instead of imposing requirements.

Under this same panorama, it can be seen that the professionals responsible for conducting the workshops are also diversified, according to the following statements of the participants:

"(...) social work, psychology and psychology trainees" (P1)

"(...) A psychologist and 4 psychology interns linked to an institution" (P2)

"(...) They are volunteers (we have psychologists, lawyers and social workers)" (P4)

"(...) Psychologist, social worker, lawyer and others". (P3)

"(...) Forum servers" (P5)

As mentioned earlier, the CNJ, in its role as a regulator of the practice, does not provide specific guidance regarding the need for interventions to be conducted by specific professionals. Likewise, in relation to the routines of the workshops, there is no systematization that provides an exact model of execution, and the professionals involved follow diversified approaches, without the imposition of specific requirements on who should conduct them. However, it is important to emphasize that this diversification does not imply non-compliance with the requirements, since, for the most part, the practices are in accordance with the recommendations in terms of applicability.

The workshops involve preventive and educational practices, focusing on the public composed of parents and children, leading them to the understanding that the separation is only of the parents, and that family ties are not broken with the end of the marriage. Although the CNJ mentions parenting workshops for both parents and children, the analysis of this research reveals that only one district performs this modality with the children, as evidenced in the following participant's statement:

"(...) And it was always easy for the judge to understand the importance of the project, it was accepted and has this continuity, it was even through this experience with the parents' workshops that the proposal for the children's workshops emerged as a suggestion, which today is carried out with interns from an institution" (P1)

The workshop aimed at children aims to explore the feelings experienced by children and adolescents in relation to the end of their parents' relationship. The CNJ highlights issues to be addressed, such as when one of the parents asks excessive questions about visits, when the child is used as a messenger between the parents and the guilt of cultivating negative feelings for the parent who left home (Brito; Silva, 2017). Thus, it is observed that the practice of workshops with parents is widely recognized and widespread among the districts surveyed, but, with regard to children, this practice is not so recognized and applied, as evidenced by data collection – in which it was found that only one district mentions holding the workshop with children.

The analysis of the data in this category highlights the lack of systematization and the diversity of practices, resulting from the particularities of each district surveyed. It was noted that each one created its own approach, adapting to the requirements established by the National Council of Justice. The disparities between the districts range from the responsible sector to the form of performance and the professionals involved, and the aspect that most resembles each other is the profile of the workshop drivers.

CATEGORY 2: *DEMANDS PRESENTED BY THE PARTICIPATING FAMILIES*

This category addresses the demands presented by the families and observed by the professionals questioned. Emphasis is placed on the way parents and children internalize the contents and difficulties faced by the family with the new reorganization after divorce. From the analysis of the data in this category, the themes that gained prominence are: dialogue between the former couple, power struggle, change of routine and coparental system.

As already highlighted throughout this study, the experience of divorce by a couple affects the balance of the entire family system (Silva; Gonçalves, 2016). It is perceived that, several times, parents face challenges when dealing with the new family configurations resulting from marital dissolution. Therefore, the need to develop educational and reflective interventions aimed at maintaining the exercise of parenting after the rupture of marital ties is emphasized.

When a marital bond comes to an end and there is a child present in the family, it is imperative to build dialogue between the parties, since the family does not cease to exist; but, rather, it is reconfigured into a new organization. In the participants' statements, it is highlighted that one of the most frequently identified issues is the lack of dialogue between parents:

"(...) difficulty in communication" (P2)

"(...) The lack of dialogue and respect between the parties" (P4)

"(...) Difficulties in communication and resentment" (P5)

With the rupture of marital ties, often permeated by conflicts, the challenge is to distinguish parenthood from conjugality. As the parental bond lasts, there is a need for communication between the parents. However, this dialogue is often hampered by difficulty in understanding terminological distinctions and marital disagreements. Maldonado (2009) emphasizes the importance of open dialogue about separation, that is, explaining the changes in routine, the agreements that parents need to build, as well as the communication of feelings.

During the research, the professionals highlighted that parents still seek a search for power, considering their children as an object to exercise this dominance, as pointed out by participants 4 and 5:

"(...) Everyone wants to come out as 'winners' in the process and this undermines the vision of different perspectives, especially the perspective that puts the child/adolescent first" (P4)
"(...) power dispute over the child" (P5)

On this issue, Maldonado (2009) points out that the family can reorganize itself in the midst of conflicts and hostilities, and children often occupy the role of attack by their parents, intensifying the difficulty and complexity of the moment. Ziviani, Féres-Carneiro and Magalhães (2012) highlight the importance of demarcating the boundaries between conjugality and parenthood, so that the demands of the children can be preserved, avoiding involving them in conflicts and tensions in the marital sphere.

Considering that separation brutally modifies the routine of family members, parental educational practices become essential. They refer to the strategies and modalities used by parents to fulfill specific goals at different levels (academic, social, affective) under certain contexts. These practices aim to "guide the behavior of children in the sense of making them acquire certain behaviors and also to suppress or reduce other behaviors considered socially inappropriate or unfavorable" (Grzybowski, 2007, p. 36).

When a family goes through the process of marital dissolution, this new organization can affect parental educational practices, as there will be two residences with different routines, which impacts the children's behavior. This aspect can be observed in the following notes from the participants:

"(...) The change in the children's behavior due to the difference in house, difference in habits, more affronting children, do not want to follow the routine, days and times to live together" (P1)
"(...) Complaints about the other parent's parenting practices" (P2)

Therefore, it is important to note that, despite the separation, the former couple remains united by a parental bond. Therefore, it is necessary to remodel and redefine the roles, rules and common issues of the children (Ziviani; Féres-Carneiro; Magalhães, 2012).

Based on the answers scored in the survey, it is observed that families still face difficulties in adopting a coparental practice between parents. This refers to how parents share the responsibilities of caring for and supporting their children and how they establish (or not) an open dialogue – in order to share routine activities. Coparental practice does not focus on the way each parent takes care of the child individually, but on the synchronized collaboration between them to meet the needs of the children (Lamela; Figueiredo, 2011).

With the redefinition of roles, it is essential that parental figures maintain assertive communication and create new routines within this parental system. These themes are worked on in the workshops as one of the main agendas. It is observed that these topics, arising from the situations experienced by the families during the development of the workshops, are aligned with the methodology proposed by the CNJ, which highlights the importance of dialogue, the creation of a safe environment and the sharing of responsibilities.

Thus, as a new functioning is established and becomes effective and proactive, the parental exercise becomes "coparenting", which generates positive impacts on the children – a direct result of the practices of the parenting workshops.

CATEGORY 3: *PERCEPTION OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE WORKSHOPS BY THE PROFESSIONALS*

This category addresses the perception of professionals about the effectiveness of parenting workshops. The analysis of this category reveals some prominent themes, such as: the accountability of parental functions contributing to the improvement of dialogue, the identification and prioritization of the child in the process and the emphasis on prevention and education as a whole.

Parenting workshops assume, in general, a preventive and educational character, whose objective is to help parents and children understand that separation does not lead to the rupture of family ties. The end of the relationship between the spouses should not be seen as a dispute or revenge, but as a new cycle, with a different formation and dynamics (Brito; Silva, 2017). In this sense, during data collection, the professionals highlighted the reflection and awareness of parents about their children:

"(...) To raise awareness that in the midst of adult conflict there are children involved and they are often not considered" (P3)

"(...) After the workshops, we have received a lot of positive feedback from the participants about developing skills for a conversation and putting their children first, thinking about the children's needs and not just what they want or do not want to gain in divorce" (P4)

According to Maldonado (2009), when reorganization results in conflicts and attacks, children often feel lost and out of place in the midst of their parents' arguments. The awareness of ex-spouses that there is a child involved in this situation, which needs to be

prioritized, is one of the relevant factors in relation to parenting workshops, as highlighted by the professionals.

Another highlight is the stimulation of coparenting as a way to exercise the parental bond, bringing accountability to both parties. The professionals briefly highlight this element in the following statements:

"(...) There have already been some testimonies in which the peers changed their behavior, because often what was missing was this reflection of the context in relation to custody" (P1)

"(...) The clarification about custody, especially shared custody, in the sense that one can have a fixed residence but the responsibilities are divided" (P2)

The participants' statements reiterate the need for awareness and information about shared parenting, aiming at an effective practice. Awareness of shared parenting occurs when each parent assumes responsibilities and care in an equitable way, with explicitly defined limitations, ensuring an equivalent contribution in raising children. This practice involves strategies, actions and efforts of parents for the benefit of the child, demonstrating a continuous commitment to the well-being of their children (Van Egeren; Hawkins, 2004 *apud* Grzybowski; Wagner, 2010).

According to the National Council of Justice (Brasil, 2015), the dynamics developed during the workshops intend to stimulate reflection on the understanding of the present situation and the relevance of dialogue. Thus, based on the professionals' reports, it is concluded that the workshops are being developed in a congruent manner and have achieved the objective of performing reflective, educational and preventive functions.

However, despite their effectiveness, the professionals pointed out some challenges related to the execution of the meetings, mainly from the Court of Justice itself. They said the following:

"(...) The financial resources, often the technicians financed the materials, perhaps a different reception could be made in relation to offering a snack since the workshops are held after work" (P1)

"(...) Speak the same language as the judge and the team, have the same communication with their own co-workers. For the continuity of the work, the lawyers show the importance of the workshops, as they realize that the lawyer himself often undermines the activity" (P2)

"(...) The way people are 'invited or summoned' to participate" (P3)

"(...) The biggest challenges have been communication with the family courts and the children's court for the referral of the parties" (P4)

"(...) Snack Financial support" (P5)

The professionals recognize the effectiveness and reach of the workshops, but report the lack of structure and material resources. It is verified that difficulties such as financial support, assertive communication with the sectors involved, the way families are summoned and greater recognition of the practices are highlighted.

In the analysis of the first category, it was observed that, in some districts, the interventions are conducted by volunteers. This data highlights the need for an effective institutionalization of the practice, giving it prominence in official instances. This would allow the interventions to be consolidated as a concrete response to the social and emotional demands that arise in the divorce process, contributing significantly to adults, children and adolescents who face the challenge of rebuilding their lives. This process becomes crucial as it provides safe spaces of support and support for families seeking guidance.

In view of this, it is emphasized that professionals recognize the effectiveness of the practices and highlight them as an instrument of conflict mediation. However, they also point out difficulties, which demonstrates that parenting workshops, at the present time, are not institutionalized and do not occupy a priority position in the Justice System.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

Through this study, a field research with a qualitative character, professionals who carry out the practice of parenting workshops were interviewed to investigate their applicability and effectiveness in several counties of Brazil. It was observed that the workshops meet the demands arising from the families and demonstrate effectiveness, but do not present an instrumental systematization of their practice. This indicates difficulties in expanding interventions, with a more concentrated focus on workshops with parents, while reports on workshops with children, proposed by the National Council of Justice (CNJ), are less frequent.

With their educational and preventive character, the workshops, according to the narrative of the professionals interviewed, meet the demands of families facing litigation. Issues such as the difficulty of communication between the parties, the power struggle as a form of revenge against the ex-partner and the complexity of managing different routines stand out, since each family system has its own way of dealing with daily life.

Based on the demands of the families, the effectiveness of the workshops is materialized by offering guidance on shared parenting, emphasizing that both parents have

mutual responsibilities in relation to their children. The importance of dialogue as a fundamental tool of coparenting is also highlighted, especially in the management of the routine and in the awareness of the existence of a child in the middle of the process, and should be a priority during the deadlocks.

Despite these positive points, there is a lack of systematization of this practice, since the workshops are conducted in different ways – with different times, days, distributions and professionals according to each district, without a defined parameter. This lack of systematization does not directly impact the effectiveness of the workshops, but it makes it difficult to objectively evaluate their power, which makes it challenging to measure the data due to the various forms of application.

Another relevant aspect at the end of this study refers to the researcher's difficulty in establishing contact with the districts and professionals who carry out the workshops. In the present study, 11 counties were contacted, but only four responded. This fact generated a difficulty in data collection, which may be related to the lack of systematization and organization of practice.

Finally, it is concluded that the professionals recognize the effectiveness of parenting workshops and highlight them as an important tool in conflict mediation. However, reports of difficulties in the application of interventions suggest that, at the moment, workshops do not have the necessary priority within the Justice System. Thus, in order to consolidate and systematize its practice, it is crucial that these interventions are treated as a priority within the scope of the Judiciary. This shift in perspective would not only expand the role of justice as a place for trials, but also as a key support to families, empowering them to manage and care for themselves.

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