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CONTENTS

GENDER EQUALITY AND CHILDREN'S EQUALITY IN LIBERAL AND CONSERVATIVE DISCOURSES: IMPLICATIONS TOWARD LANGUAGE AND SOCIETY

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ABSTRACT: This introductory article is intended to open the volume of work prepared by the participants of the 12th UNESCO Janusz Korczak Chair International Summer School. The participants presented these papers at the RC25 ISA Interim International Conference in Warsaw, entitled: "Language and Society. Research Advances in Social Sciences" (26-27.09.2019), exploring the concepts of gender equality and children's equality in liberal and conservative discourses and practices invested in language. The papers in this volume primarily use the methodology of discourse analysis and a range of tools and methods within this framework. The purpose is to shed light on how discourses inform preferences, behaviours and representations, towards the positioning of individuals in society, based on their respective gender and their individual status - whether an adult or a child. It is interesting to explore what is expected of the holders of these positions and whether they are able to confront and renegotiate their situation. The authors look into gendered childhood, analysing if differences can be found in so-called conservative and liberal discourses. The gender aspect of childhood and the resistance towards children's expected positions interlinked to their gender, is visible to diverse degrees in this selection of papers. The concept of social positioning due to one's gender is at the heart of this volume. Therefore, this Editorial forms a theoretical backstage for the volume of works included in the special post-conference issue of Society Register.
KEYWORDS: family unit, ideology, political orientation, sociology of religion, power, social positioning

INTRODUCTION

One of the aspects of this project is looking into the conservative or liberal orientation resonating from public discourses. The authors engage in defining and identifying the distinctive factors responsible for classifying certain discourses as liberal or as conservative. The next step is to link the influencing culture, social structures and micro-level factors such as family relations, treating these macro and micro instances as mutually conditioning and reproductive. The authors of the 12 papers in this volume, discuss various aspects of the social positioning of individuals within family and society, whilst linking them to political ideologies and produce direct and indirect evidence from discourse analysis of materials from numerous countries, covering five continents.

In this introductory paper, the author links internal relations within 'family units' to ideologies, treating the role of religious factors as the mediating aspect between political conservatism and family power relations and thus, decision-making processes and the division of labour within the family at home. So infused, the family may act as a force that reproduces the conditions of radical conservatism or liberalism. Furthermore, the social positioning of family members, based on their gender and on whether they are an adult or a child, may establish certain patterns, characteristic of the conservative or liberal orientation of a family unit. The concept of gender positioning within the family unit derives from an earlier study by Odrowaz-Coates (2019), dedicated to self-positioning and positioning by others, based on linguistic ability in English. A key finding of this study was that the soft-power relations based on language skills, permutated into the intimate relationships of partners and spouses, becoming an area of power struggle and the negotiation of gender positioning at home.

WHAT CONSTITUTES CONSERVATIVE OR A LIBERAL POSITIONING?

Definitions of conservatism or liberalism may be found for instance in works by Everett 2013, Feldman & Johnston 2014, Hirsh et al. 2010, Hunter 1992, Kanai et al. 2011, or Knight 1999. The identification of sources and mechanisms of conservatism and liberalism in family units is of great interest to the global community, which questions traditionalism and the recent rise of radical movements worldwide. This is not to say that conservatism is responsible for radicalization. The papers in this volume attempt to draw a demarcation line between conservative and liberal power distribution within families (c.f. Kanai et al. 2011; Everett 2013).

Conservative or liberal orientation, to an extent can be measured by a person's political alliance and their participation or not, in religious observance. The array of studies presented in this volume looks at public discourse and its social representation in family units and explores connections to conservative or liberal orientation. This is done to identify interrelations between the mechanisms of the reproduction of gender power relations within family units and with those of a wider social nature that lead to the liberalization or radicalization of social groups. A children's rights perspective is considered, and this helps to acknowledge their position in the repro-

duction of social systems (Greene&Hogan 2005, Greig et al. 2007, Warming 2011) and the strengths or weakness of their position in relation to domestic chores, domestic violence and corporal punishment. Children are considered to be a factor in positioning and self-positioning, contributing to certain power distribution at home.

Haidt & Graham (2007) and Graham et al. (2009) justify simple division into two opposite groups of liberals or conservatives, due to the differences they express in their orientation towards core values. Traditionally, liberally oriented people focus on the protection of human rights and individuality, whilst the conservatively oriented, focus on binding people into groups and institutions. 2007 CBOS (Public Opinion Research Centre) data, shows that Polish people associate certain political parties with conservatism (PiS - Law and Justice) or anti-conservatism (PO - Civic Platform) therefore the researching of political preferences of family members is deemed appropriate. Liberalism per se, finds more support amongst larger cities dwellers and people with higher education, although data shows that 'liberalism' is often not fully understood by respondents. The CBOS (2007) survey of public opinion indicated that regularity of church observance is linked to a more conservative orientation and lack of such to a more liberal one, consequently expressed by political preferences towards the right or the left. Moreover, respondents declared a binary perception of liberalism as linked to anti-conservatism and conservatism as linked to anti-liberalism. Therefore, this simplified binary opposition seems logical for the purpose of this collection of works.

Continuing with Poland as an example of a country with strong religious movements, attendance at faith related ceremonies may be one of the factors accounting for conservative orientation. Despite ongoing secularization, Poland is still considered to be a hub of traditional Catholicism. Poland is a signatory of a concordat with the Vatican (1998) on the legal validity of church marriage. Therefore, the definition of marriage is shaped by the Roman Catholic church and it has some influence on social norms around marriage in a traditional sense. In Europe, only Italy, Slovakia and Malta have also signed this concordat with the Vatican and are distinctive from other European countries that have a completely secular approach to marriage (France, Russia) or with a more open definition of who may get married (e.g. Belgium, Denmark, France, the Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Sweden and Britain). The socializing impact of the RC church in Poland is a factor in power distribution within family units, with gender norms and a conservative political orientation (c.f. Odrowaz-Coates 2015) and conservatism is linked with paternalistic family organization by Long (1997). Examples of such organization may be found in countries strongly reliant on tradition, such as Saudi Arabia (c.f. Odrowaz-Coates 2015a).

SOFT POWER WITHIN FAMILY UNITS - A REPRESENTATION OF CONSERVATIVE OR LIBERAL ORIENTATION

Power distribution in families as an object of scientific enquiry is discussed at length by Odrowaz-Coates (2019) drawing from Boudon (1974), Harre (2012), Harre and Lagenhove (1999), who may be considered classical writers about social positioning. Their work was expanded on, establishing links to knowledge of certain language by

Eadem.

The redefinition of "family" has evolved from the concept of a union between two people in order to have offspring (c.f. Gonzalez-Arnal et al. 2014), towards wider and more inclusive models. Heteronormativity and kinship in a traditional family model, connected to conservative ideal (Oswin 2010 Lévi-Strauss 1969; Schneider 1980) proved to be insufficient when drawing a family unit definition in XXI century, which is generally much more liberal. However, this would not apply to deeply conservative countries such as the above-mentioned Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (Odrowaz-Coates 2015a). Recent cross-disciplinary readings dedicated to domestic spheres can be found in *Home Cultures* (Buchli et al. 2004), yet no relevant family definition was offered there. The conservative constraints of conventional models of family (man, woman and child) leads to the exclusion of the non-traditional groups evolving in today's modern societies, especially in the West. A liberal definition of a family unit may be constructed as two people living together in a long-term, intimate relationship (with or without children). In Poland, an average of 2,69 people per household was reported by Main Statistical Office (GUS, 2017), indicating the likely scenario of 2 plus 0, 1 plus 1, 1 plus 2 or 2 plus 1 as predominant family models. In cases where there are children in the family unit, their presence is without a doubt reflected in the family power matrix. Whilst children were already included as a factor in power alliances in conflict situations within family units (Caplow 1968, Jory et al. 1996, Stockard 2002) and in an imbalance of tasks when providing care for children and other family members (Fraser 1994, Crompton 1999, Corell et al. 2007 & Gornick &Meyers 2008), to enrich and further the current discourse, a children's rights perspective has been considered as it is clearly valuable (c.f. Clifton & Hodgson 1997, Lake 2011, Dyke 2014). In a study by Campione & Smetana (2003), the position of children within family unit was connected to four parenting styles, distinguished as: authoritarian, authoritative, liberal and negligent. A longitudinal study by Sharma et al. (2011), suggests that forceful parenting by fathers, with punitive measures and aggressive approaches (stereotypically considered as masculine) to their children's misbehaviour, have a direct correlation with future antisocial behaviour of their children. It is interesting to look into discourses on children's upbringing to identify which styles prevail in conservative or in liberal discourses. Moreover, under the social norm of a male breadwinner in the family (Ridgeway & Correll, 2004), becoming fathers may have an impact on men's motivation to work longer, harder, or to look for more lucrative employment in order to increase their earnings to provide for the growing family (Baranowski & Odrowaz-Coates 2018; Lundberg & Rose, 2000; Percheski & Wildeman 2008). However, this is very often achieved with detriment to the gender balance at home, with wives taking on the majority of unpaid work at home to support their husbands' increased earning efforts (Becker, 1981). Hodges & Budig (2010) showed that becoming a married father and having a university degree gave significantly larger financial benefits to white men. Therefore, in a North American context, a traditional and therefore conservative division of labour in middle class families of professionals, aided the men in their careers and raised their earnings. Szulich-Kałuża & Wadowski (2014) and Janowicz (2017), argue that Polish fathers are slowly adopting increasingly involved parenthood

models, yet lag behind in domestic chores, following a typical traditional and therefore conservative family model. An interesting source of observations in regard to the changing roles of fathers in the USA may be found in a paper by Dara Purivs (2019), who has observed a shift since the 1970s from conservative to more democratic forms of fatherhood and therefore a more liberal attitude towards models of parenting by fathers.

BLURRING THE BOUNDARIES

When considering the issues of power within a family, symbolic violence may come to mind. Symbolic violence within family has so far been associated with invisible means of gendered domination through stereotyping, stigmatizing and gender roles (Montesanti & Thurston 2015). These may be noticeable in more traditional, more conservative settings. It is interesting to pursue this aspect in order to find if a conservative or liberal orientation brings any difference in the power distribution between people of different gender at home. Okin's (1989) concept of a one-sided exploitative relationship, which through marriage reduces female agency and prosperity in the labour market, reflected a feminist approach to marital power relations. Although Breen et al. (2009) show that educational inequality between genders and between classes in western countries has been on the decline, the overall time spent in unpaid work is still much greater for women than for men, especially in Poland, Ireland, Italy and Portugal. This is alongside limited access to affordable institutional childcare in these countries (ec.europa.eu 2016). These countries are predominantly Catholic, and as mentioned before, Poland and Italy signed a concordat with the Vatican, setting a marital template indicating that religious observance may have an impact on power distribution in family units and on positioning according to gender and child-adult distinctions. It is of value to observe in the papers if the boundaries between conservative and liberal orientations of family units are indeed noticeable and strongly defined, or if they are in fact blurred and soft [note1]. The attempts to do so is made by scholars from: Argentina, Iran, the Republic of Moldova, Nigeria, the Russian Federation, Turkey, Ukraine, USA and Poland. The volume is an interdisciplinary contribution not only to family studies in sociology, psychology and educational science, but also to the micro and macro-sociological research on the relations between.

NOTES
[1] On soft boundaries and soft gate please consult Odrowaz-Coates 2015a.

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BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

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ROMANIAN LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE: INTERCULTURAL EDUCATION IMPLICATIONS

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ABSTRACT: The study approaches the new curriculum documents for pre-university education in the Republic of Moldova from the intercultural education perspective. In the 2019-2020 school year, the schools in the country are carrying out the education process based on a new curriculum, which represents the result of the third reform after the country's independence in 1992. The author analyses the correspondence of the curriculum texts to the stipulations of the Education Code, and the extent to which they respond to the demands in the development of the students' intercultural competence. The findings of the study reveal that the texts are focused not only on the promotion of the national values and identity, but are open, at the same time, to the intercultural education and to the dialogue with representatives of different cultures in the multicultural divided society. Literature and policy review supplemented by discourse analysis are the main qualitative methods applied.
KEYWORDS: Curriculum text, Romanian language and literature, school subject, intercultural education, intercultural competence, students, teachers

INTRODUCTION

During the last three years in the Republic of Moldova there has been an extensive process of curricular development reform, involving several educational actors: students, parents, teachers, managers, researchers, decision-makers and activists in the associative sector. The ministries of two ministers of education and several development partners were involved, carrying out logical stages of public consultation, university

and pre-university teachers cooperated in working teams to produce qualitative reg-ulatory documents. Despite many difficulties and misunderstandings, we believe that it was an important democratic exercise and that the third curricular reform in the country, after the proclamation of independence, is a higher quality stage and the cur-ricula, presented and analyzed in our study, will demonstrate this. The most important issue is that the new developed documents should contribute in a significant way to the achievement of the educational ideal, declared in the Educational Code (EC) – "the formation of personality with initiative spirit, capable of self-development, possess-ing not only a system of knowledge and skills necessary for employment in the labor market, but also independence of opinion and action, being open for intercultural dialogue in the context of assumed national and universal values" (EC 2014, art. 6). Apparently, the intercultural perspective of the Romanian language and literature in the national school curriculum may seem paradoxical. The primary goal of our paper is to answer some public discourses spread in our society regarding the ethnocentric character of the school documents and the educational process. According to the Ref-erence Framework of the National Curriculum (RFNC 2017), the development of the National Curriculum cannot be effective without taking into account the challenges of the contemporary world: globalization, internationalization, digitalization, tech-nology, value crisis; national context, marked by social-political, economic and de-mographic crisis; the state of the current curriculum: the high degree of theorization of the curricula by disciplines, the low level of achievement of the interdisciplinary approach within the curricular framework, the lack of consensus in approaching the notion of "competencies", the synchronization between the formative/current and the final evaluation, etc. Therefore, the need for curricular changes was determined by adjusting curricular policies to the national and international educational standards; by ensuring continuity in curricular reforms and educational policies, the functional-ity of curricular cycles in relation to the trends of curricular development at national and international levels; by adjusting the curricular framework in relation to the dys-functions identified in its piloting and monitoring processes. (RFNC 2017: 3) Based on this, from the point of view of the role and importance of the curricular system, the RFNC stipulates the curricular products, materialized in three categories of curricular documents:

- conceptual/policy documents: national curriculum reference framework; the educational framework plan and educational standards;

- projective documents: study plans for pre-school, primary, secondary, high school; curriculum for disciplines (programs); long-term and short-term teach-ing projects;

- methodological documents: school textbooks; methodological guides; multi-media sets; educational software; assessment tools/ tests (RFNC 2017: 8).

From the list above we will analyze one general regulatory act – RFNC and three specific ones concerning the key subject in the school plan – the Romanian language and literature (RLL), as integrative discipline. Starting from the general situation pre-

sented by us, we consider that it is important to carry out a theoretical exercise, with explicit practical aims, for the critical analysis of the given documents, from the intercultural perspective. It can contribute to the increase in the quality of implementation of the projective documents, as well as to the initiation of a new public debate and scientific research in the field. In the EC and in RFNC the key competencies needed to be achieved by the students, that are integrated into the compulsory education process are the same as the ones stipulated in the European framework of competencies:

- Communication skills in the Romanian language;

- Communication skills in the mother tongue (for minorities students)

- Communication skills in foreign languages

- Skills in mathematics, science and technology

- Digital skills

- The competence of learning to learn

- Social and civic competencies

- Entrepreneurial skills and initiative

- Competence for cultural expression and awareness of cultural value (RFNC 2017: 17).

From the European Union perspectives and policies, the discourses of our educational documents, developed in the last 10-15 years, are politically correct, and they offer multiple opportunities for decision makers and for teachers, students and researchers in their activity, even though the social and political context does not support and contributes enough with his part to the common updated educational work. The intercultural education (ICE) issue is relevant for all educational documents because our context is multiethnic and multilingual. According to the 2014 census, ethnic minorities represent 17,93 % of the population. The most numerous ethnic minority groups are Ukrainians (6.57 %), Gagauzians (4,57 %), Russians (4,06 %), Bulgarians (1,88%); the native predominate (82,7 %) (Recensamant 2014). The national minorities and a big part of Moldovan (more than 30% of the population) overwhelmingly use Russian as the main language of communication. This fact creates two largely separate linguistic spheres. Behind the linguistic division are two principal factors: first, an uncertain Moldovan national identity, which undermines the role of the state language, that as a result lacks its prestige and full acceptance as the unique official language of Moldova. As for the Russian language, the dominant language during the Soviet period, it enjoys a residual prestige, which however does not mean that its speakers do not feel menaced by the loss of their language official status in 1989. According to the statistical, but also to the historical and current facts, Moldova is a divided society, based not only on the multiethnic and multilingual structure of the population, but also because of the identity crisis of the inhabitants – a big part of them are not considered themselves as Moldovan citizens with different ethnical roots, but as Russians, Moldovans, Romanians etc. This is an important argument to

educate the cultural and intercultural values through the all school subjects and the Romanian language and literature is one of them. The correct scientific name of our/ state language is Romanian and Academia of Science of the country, as the highest scientific authority, signed a special declaration on this issue, but the political name of the language, used starting with the Russian/soviet occupation of the country (1812, 1940), and used in the Constitution (art.13) is Moldovan. This fact is one of the causes of the interethnic conflicts in the society – a big part of the Russian speakers and some of the Moldovan citizens name the language Moldovan, but intellectuals people and a great majority of Romanian speakers named it the Romanian language, and they have fought to maintain and to promote the historic and scientific truth for more than 30 years, but the results are not yet visible at a large social scale. Despite the political debates and the daily life conflicts, the school must carry on its activity, promoting general human values and the historical and scientific truth, especially because in this respect, the article 6 of the Education Code of the Republic of Moldova stipulates the fundamental principles of education, such as: a) the right to education, without any distinction of race, color, sex, age, health status, language, religious belief, political or other type of opinions, nationality, social origin or ethnicity, material situation and property, etc. ... and j) interculturality and a guarantee for ethnic and cultural identity (EC 2014).

In conclusion to the introductive part of our paper, we underline that the intercultural competence (ICC) is necessary to be formed through the all the dimensions of education, and also through the "new educations", which respond promptly to the needs of the contemporary world. The disciplinary / curricular levels on which the intercultural education is carried out, with the aim of the specific competency, are varied, including linguistic and literary education, civic education, religious education, moral education, etc. Based on the education of tolerance of cultural, ethnic, linguistic, social, denominational, etc., intercultural education is carried out throughout the compulsory school level, continuing, in a varied and contextual way, throughout the entire lifetime.

A THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The school curriculum has a dual significance in the Moldovan education system. In a broad sense, the curriculum designates all the educational processes and learning experiences that the student goes through during their school career. In a narrow sense, the curriculum includes all the regulatory documents of the school, in which the essential data regarding the educational processes and the learning experiences that the school offers to the student are recorded. This set of documents is called a formal or official curriculum; at the same time our scholars use "curriculum" thus replacing the well-known "program of study". In the last 30 years, in the European context, especially in our geographic zone a lot of books and articles were written on this topic, a lot of doctoral dissertations were defended, and numerous public debates took place, at different levels (Crisan et al. 2006; Potolea and Manolescu 2006; Neagu and Achiri 2008; Marin 2012; Pogolsa 2013; Singer et al. 2014; Bocos, Jucan 2017). The curricu-

lum paradigm focuses on asserting the priority role to the purposes of education, at the level of any pedagogical project. The other elements of the curricular model of the training approach are structured depending on the purpose such as teaching-learning methods, assessment strategies and contents. In S. Cristea's (1998) vision "the emergence of the paradigm of the postmodern curriculum is due to the need to resolve conflicts between the psycho-centric and socio-centric approach to education, between education and training, between teacher and student'' (p. 14).

Developed according to the provisions of the Education Code of the Republic of Moldova (2014), of the National Curriculum Framework (2017), of the Basic Curriculum: Competence System for General Education (2018) and of the Recommendations of the European Parliament and the Council of the European Union, on key competencies from the perspective of lifelong learning (Brussels 2018), the curriculum on the subject of the Romanian Language and Literature is a regulatory document, which provides the interconnection of conceptual, theleological, content and methodological approaches, the focus being placed on the system of competencies as a new frame of reference for educational ends. The National Curriculum in RLL is the foundation and the guideline of the teaching staff, it facilitates the creative approach to long-term and short-term didactical design and the actual achievement of the teaching-learning-evaluation process. As the main subject in the study plan, presented/valorized in the school curriculum, RLL plays an important role in the development of pupils' personality, in the formation of lifelong learning skills, as well as in the integration into a knowledge-based society. The structure of a curriculum involves the following elements: preliminaries, curriculum conception, administration of the discipline by years of studies and number of hours, learning units, competencies(skills) versus competencies units, recommended contents, didactic strategies/learning activities, strategies for evaluation and bibliography. The administration of the discipline within the „Language and communication" curricular area, as acompulsory subject is presented in the table below acoording to the number of hours per week.

Table 1. Numerical and precentage proportion of RLL hours

Grades	Number of RLL hours per week	Total nr of hours per week	Total number of hours of RLL in the school year
Ist grade	8 (36,3%)	22	231
II-IV grades	7 (31,81% -30,43)	22/22/23	264
V-VI grades	6 (23,07%-22,22%)	26/27	204
VII-IX grades	5 (16,66%-17,24%)	30/30/29	170
X-XII grades	5 (Humanistic profile) and 4 (realistic profile) – (18,52 – 14,28%)	27/28	156/136

Source: own elaboration based on RFNC and of RLL curricula texts

Thus, a subject represented by such a big number of hours, spent by students and teachers in the classroom, should be able to develop all cross/transversal competencies, mentioned above, because the communication in the Romanian language and the competence for cultural expression and the awareness of cultural value and literary skills remain the main outcomes in the whole process. The intercultural competenceis is to be perceived as a part of the last one. In this respect, as it was stipulated in the recent normative acts, the students must actively face the multiethnic and multicultural character of the Moldovan society, in order to report in a constructive and positive manner this diversity; to show respect for their own and the others' rights, regardless of their ethnicity, language, culture, religion, gender, age or social status; to respect the social and cultural beliefs of others, rejecting any kind of intolerance, extremism and racism; to demonstrate responsibility for oneself and the others, for the society and the environment; to actively and responsibly exercise their own rights, while respecting the rights of others; to value the diversity; demonstrate tolerance and an inclusive attitude; to practice and promote human values in daily life (respect for personal dignity; fighting against prejudice and discrimination of any kind, against poverty and marginalization; promoting gender equality, etc.). In the specific objective no. 9 - The development of international relations and the promotion of intercultural policies in education - from the Education Strategy (ES) - 2020 the following strategic orientations are provided:

(i) the connection to the European educational values and standards;

(ii) the promotion of advanced international standards and experience in the field of multilingual and multicultural education;

(iii) the creation of partnership mechanisms with the respective structures at an international level;

(iv) the promotion of intercultural education at all levels of the educational system;

(v) the creation of the legal framework regarding the implementation of international reforms in the educational field;

(vi) the sociolinguistic integration of the students studying in educational institutions with training in Russian, by expanding the number of school subjects in the Romanian language. (ES 2014)

Our research is focused on respecting by the political discourse of the main policy documents of the Article 29 of Children's right Convention, which stipulate (c) "the development of respect for the child's parents, his or her own cultural identity, language and values, for the national values of the country in which the child is living, the country from which he or she may originate, and for civilizations different from his or her own;(d) the preparation of the child for responsible life in a free society, in the spirit of understanding, peace, tolerance, equality of sexes, and friendship among all peoples, ethnic, national and religious groups and persons of indigenous origin". In the direct sens, the childrens rights, upon the political and educational discourses are

respected, but in the indirect one, there are a lot of problems which negativelly affect the children and we analyse them in our paper.

The multicultural society, in which different people coexist, needs the promotion of constructive interactions, intercultural education and the maintenance of a balanced intercultural dialogue in the school curriculum. Upon Romanian professor, "performing intercultural education implies that the educational process itself is carried out in an interactional environment, by putting together, face to face, the bearers of different cultural expressions" (Cucos 2000: 7). Synthetically, intercultural education aims at a pedagogical approach to cultural differences, a strategy that takes into account spiritual or gender specificities (gender differences, social or economic difference, and others), avoiding, as far as possible, the risks resulting from the unequal exchanges between cultures or, even worse, the tendency of atomization of cultures. The intercultural approach, shown in a paper edited by the Council of Europe, is neither a new science, nor a new discipline, but a new methodology that seeks to integrate, in the interrogation on the educational space, the data of psychology, anthropology, social sciences, politics, culture, history (cf. Perotti 1992: 191). Thus, we can say that intercultural education is an important topic of the educational discourse, that extracts its raw material from the perspectives opened by the disciplinary links.

The term *intercultural* is perceived as stressing the process of interaction competencies. "There is a tendency in Europe to see multicultural as a less dynamic concept and as describing a situation which has a diversity of cultures while intercultural is used to indicate the interaction of and relationship between different cultural groups in a culturally diverse setting" (Gunilla and Zilliacus 2009).

Moldovan professor Vl. Paslaru (2003) found that the identity crisis and the property crisis are two sequels of the past that the national school is about to root out, in order to educate new generations of citizens aware of this (p. 39). These adversely affect the openness to intercultural dialogue of many generations of citizens from our country, but also from other areas occupied/colonized during recent history. In this sense, the school is going to assume multiple cultural roles, and such tasks can often exceed the teachers trained in the past, with an inherited mentality from the old regime.

In the postmodern context, intercultural competence is imposed as a necessity and an actuality for the citizen of each country, from Europe or from other parts of the world, as the process of globalization is expanding. Conscious, to a greater or lesser extent, of this phenomenon, our children are to be carefully guided in order to acquire vast and functional knowledge about national and universal culture, in the broadest sense of the word. They try multiple learning experiences for skills acquisition and, at the same time, should be helped to form correct skills, to manifest openness and availability to communicate and interact in a civilized way with anyone on the planet, including the person who is nearby, to cooperate with them in order to solve common problems. All current curriculum documents must underline the intercultural education perspective, with its inherent advantages and problems. In this respect, teachers from all stages of schooling need continuous training in the field, awareness and appropriate guidance. Registered in the area of civic competencies, as well as personal and interpersonal competencies, intercultural competence includes all forms of be-

havior that allow each person to participate effectively in the social and professional life, being directly linked to the individual and collective well-being. These competencies are related to the democratic citizenship, the use of the knowledge, skills, values and attitudes necessary to promote inclusion, justice and sustainable development, while respecting all human rights and fundamental freedoms.

Intercultural education is directly connected with education *through and for values* /axiological which passes as a red thread through the curriculum in all school disciplines, and also through the curriculum of RLL, Moral-spiritual education, Religion, History and Education for society. In this sense, the Religion Curriculum mainly promotes Christian values, which are the defining ones for any human being, manifested by faith, hope, love, identity, family, education, friendship, preferences, relations between people, but also other general human values: life, truth, holiness, good, beauty, love, patience, purpose, willingness, dignity, uprightness, cleanliness, forgiveness, mercy, oriented towards moral-religious perfection. According to the curricular provisions, the implementation of these values will contribute to establishing a coherence between the content of education and the socio-cultural environment; knowledge / promotion of the cultural heritage of the people; formation and development of appropriate social integration and adaptation behaviors; formation and development of a positive, autonomous attitude that harmonizes the relationship with oneself and others, with the environment (RFNC, p. 3-4). In the same sense, Const. Cucos (2000) states that "the school must be cultural first, then intercultural" (p.5), and the cultural basis on which intercultural dialogue takes place is welcomed, in the relevant book, where the problem of intercultural education starts from the description of the axiological implications.

As a reference work on the given topic, in the Romanian area, but fully connected to the recent international approaches, we mention the research of the Nedelcu (2007) dedicated to the specific interrelated topics such as diversity, minorities, intercultural competence, intercultural curriculum, pedagogy of diversity with "the triple opening to practitioners (teachers, for whom there are concrete suggestions, practical ideas, content analysis, etc.), decision makers, responsible for the elaboration of specific educational policies (for example, suggestions for curricular construction, development of training programs for teachers, etc.), field theorists and students of the faculty profile" (p. 3). The practical issues of the mentioned research, with multiple practical functions, reveal our school realities, on the one hand, sensitive to maintaining the national identity of the growing generation, and on the other hand, aware of the immanence of cultivating the openness to the diverse and constantly changing intercultural social relations.

METHODOLOGY

The integrated literature and policy reviews supplemented by discourse analysis are the main qualitative methods applied in this paper. Document analysis indicators are developed based on the mission of education, as declared in the Code of Education, which consists of the measure/level through which the national curricula guides/con-

tributes to the promotion of *intercultural dialogue, tolerance, non-discrimination and social inclusion.* The underlined words will serve as key terms for the text analysis as a specialized discourse, supplemented by other affiliated words, as *differences*, *diversity*, *cultural values*, *identity, conflict resolution, problems solving, democratic, participation, community, society.* These selected words define the ideology/philosophy of the texts from the perspective of the intercultural education, which is essential for determining the ideology /orientation of the curriculum reform. It is important to deduce if the thematic issues direct the educational actors to the development of intercultural competencies at each school level. The main reason for the research is to analyze how the key concepts contribute to the description and to the enlargement of the other concept – *identity/ national identity*, *culture (national and universal)* because of the Romanian language, as a basic trait of the titular nation. All translations in the paper were done by the author. The research question for our study is if the texts of the main curricula documents are ethnocentric/ focused only on the promotion of the national values and identity, or are open, at the same time, to the intercultural education and to the dialogue with representatives of different cultures in our multicultural divided society and how they contribute to the development of students' intercultural competence.

QUALITATIVE RESEARCH ISSUES AND FINDINGS

So, in the main curriculum document – *RFNC* - key term for our research- *intercultural* - is used 4 times: in the citation of the educational ideal from the Educational Code, in the innovative table with the generic attributes of the school graduates, as a characteristic of the people who are civically engaged and responsible (p.27), as a feature of young citizens of the Republic of Moldova, who have to demonstrate, at the end of the high education process, the "interest and involvement in intercultural dialogue" (p.29) and as one of the modern principles of quality assurance of textbooks and teaching materials – "socialization, through the development of social skills and the promotion of intercultural education" (p.55).

From the same lexical family, the term *tolerance* is used among the characteristics of the high education graduate, who "knows and appreciates their own cultural identity; shows understanding, respect and tolerance for cultural, ethnic and confessional diversity; is involved in activities to promote the national cultural identity, in relation to the European cultural identity and the cultural diversity of the world" (p.32).

The *social inclusion* term is used in a definition of the competencies, as a "transferable and multifunctional package of knowledge, skills, abilities, values and attitudes that allow the individual to achieve their professional fulfillment and development, social inclusion and professional insertion in the respective field" – (p.15) and as a condition of a successful educational process, related to respecting "the principles of individualization, differentiation, personalization in the learning process, efficiently ensuring the inclusion process (p. 62).

The terms *conflict* and *conflict resolution* are used as an element of the transversal competencies, among characteristics of people who can work in a team, who "can pos-

itively resolve conflicts that arise through their recognition and work on them together with dialogue partners", and among the characteristics of the responsible citizens, who can "use conflict resolutions strategies" (p.20). In a society in which students grow up seeing and feeling many interpersonal, social and ethno-linguistic conflicts, these skills should be developed and extended in various contexts, through all the school disciplines.

Other affiliated terms in the analyzed documents are *differences* and *diversity* which are frequently used, and we consider it relevant to point out the context of introducing them on the curriculum framework agenda: in the chapter with the presentation of the transversal competencies for the educational system in Moldova, among the responsibilities implied by team work there is one referring to "the appreciation of the diversity of ideas, the respect of ethnics and cultural differences and their use as resources in group processes" (p.20), for primary school graduates as main characteristic are to" know the main popular traditions and customs of the Republic of Moldova in their cultural diversity and participate in activities dedicated to them"(p.32) and, in the same context, the characteristics for secondary school graduates are: "they know and appreciate the cultural and spiritual treasure of the Republic of Moldova in its diversity and participate in initiatives to protect the national historical, cultural and spiritual heritage."(p.32) It is important also to mention that diversity is an indicator for evaluating the content of learning, from the scientific, cultural and social perspective (p.37), for methodology of the lessons (p.49), and for textbook designs (p.55).

The relevant context of the other term – *respect* – is concerned to the same characteristics of the school graduates who should" participate in activities that promote the public good, identify community needs and act to meet them; engage in activities to improve social life; demonstrate global responsibility, understanding and appreciation for different cultures" (p.26)

We did not find the term *intercultural competence* in the text of RFNC, it is clear that it is included in the key competence for cultural expression and awareness of cultural value, but, nevertheless, we consider that it is better to offer more explicitly, especially since in the previous curricular reform there was a great emphasis on this and innovative teaching materials were developed and disseminated in our school, including with the support of development partners in international resonance projects (Goras-Postica 2015, Gutu 2007, Cadrul de referinta 2015).

Other terms, which create the favorable pedagogic framework for the intercultural competence development, at conceptual and operational levels in the regulatory document – RFNC (in parentheses their frequency is given), are: *social/society* (45), *culture/cultural* (29) *problem solving* (35), *participation* (15), *free/freedom* (14), *open/openness* (14), *community* (9), *rights* (9), *responsibility* (8), *civic* (6), *democratic* (4), *identity* (3). All these connotations are evident in the context of a national curriculum focused on the *student* (92) and its *needs*, on the *competencies* (247) and on the *values* (51), which supports the intercultural approach of the whole educational process.

As the intermediary conclusion related to this regulatory act, we can underline the importance of creating a multicultural community/school with a well conceptualized intercultural perspective. The RFNC text is not ethnocentric or focused only on the

promotion of the national values and identity. It is open to the intercultural education and contributes at conceptual and operational levels to the development of students' intercultural competence. The liberal discourse of the text helps us to be optimistic in relation to the applying aspects, even we have a lot of the cases in our past and current practice when on paper, in the policy documents, things are very good, but in practice, in quotidian school life, they are not well enough understood, promoted and applied. It is crucial to initiate more public dialogues on this topic, to materialize it in the curricula for disciplines and in the textbooks and in other learning materials. Also, this subject should be obligatorily included in the programs for pre-service and in-service teacher trainings, in order the intercultural perspective to become an element of each school culture and of each community life. As a synthesis, we present the following figure:

Figure 1. The cloud of terms on ICE perspective in RFNC

Source: own elaboration based on MAXQDA

In the Curriculum of RLL for primary classes, *intercultural education* is presented as a topic for transdisciplinary educational activities, which include didactic excursions, thematic trips, field, documentation and study visits, with the subject for each grade, as follows: *Children's games and toys around the world; From the mysteries of museums; Tell me who you are, tell me what you love; Tourist expedition: Together through our Moldova*. Also, *tolerance* as a predominant specific attitude is expected to be demonstrated during the discussion of the reading texts in each class, among other positive attitudes and values – attention and tolerance towards dialogue partners in different communication situations (p.25). *Social inclusion* in the primary classes is requested to be assured through the school inclusion of the children. At the chapter of the curriculum – *recommended literary texts and books from children's literature* – there are a lot of books by national classical writers and from universal literature, there are more from Russian literature, but none by the Ukrainian, Bulgarian or Gagauz writers, or by other minority cohabitants in our country. It is necessary for other ethnicity children learning Romanian language in national schools to find themselves in the messages of

the taught texts. That is why is advised that the thematic list, as part of school documentation, is carefully selected. Many causes could be evoked: in school libraries and on the book market, in general, we do not have recent and well-translated editions of these writers, and also, publishers do not include them in editorial plans, because they are not requested by schools and readers. This situation, however, creates premises for the ethnic minorities to consider themselves neglected and marginalized, a thing which should be taken into account by the authors of textbooks and of the other educational materials, by the teachers and by the whole school communities, in order to cover the existing gaps.

Among six specific competencies of the integrated discipline RLL in secondary school classes/gymnasium, the first is: perceiving personal linguistic and cultural identity in a national context, showing curiosity and tolerance (p.6) The principles for selection of literary texts for study and reading offer openings especially for the achievement of educational values, citizenship education, education for democracy, personal and social education, global education, development education, education for environment / ecology, education for peace and tolerance, education for all and for everyone, education for media etc. (Apud Paslaru 2013: 35). From those analyzed by us, it seems that this document is less open to the intercultural education, because the key terms for the qualitative analysis cannot be found, but, indirectly, teachers and students can be guided by the specific competence stated above and they can act to develop the intercultural competence too.

The first specific competencies of the integrated discipline RLL for high school classes/lyceum is formulated as the expression of their own linguistic and cultural identity in a European and global context, demonstrating empathy and openness for linguistic and cultural diversity (p.14) In the conceptual framework chapter intercultural communication is given as a factor which contributes to the development of the whole scholar curriculum (p.3). Another important aspect in the same documents is referred to the units of the content for XII grade (p.26-27), which it concretizes on a horizontal basis the intercultural didactic approach and operationally presents the curricular elements that the teacher applies directly to the class.

Table 2. Example of ICE in projected curriculum for high school

Competencies units	Content units	Recommended learning activities and products

1.1.   Arguing the concepts of plurilingualism and interculturality
 	
1.2.   Expressing their own linguistic and cultural identity
	- Linguistic and cultural identity
	- Plurilingualism and interculturality
	- Dialogue of cultural values
	- National consciousness in the formation of modern personality through the values of Romanian language and literature
	Transdisciplinary topics:
	- The Romanian language - part of the European linguistic heritage
	- The linguistic behavior of the generations of speakers of the Romanian language: common values and differences
		Activities:
		    Terminological and contextual elucidations of the concepts of plurilingualism, interculturality.
		    Creation of blogs promoting the natives by highlighting the linguistic, literary and folkloric specificities and influences from the surrounding geographical areas.
		    Debates on the specificity of national culture and other cultures.
		    Publication in the media (school, local, national) of products that reflect the attitude of the cult speaker in relation to their own linguistic and cultural identity (optional)
		Products:
		    Case study: Tolerance and plurilingualism, thematic synthesis.

Source: own elaboration based on RLL curriculum for XII grade

The terms *conflict, conflict resolution*, *education for peace* used 2-3 times in all 4 documents, we think it would be important for our context to include and to promote them more. They are used more frequently in the curriculum texts of History, Personal development and Education for society, and the texts from the textbooks and other learning materials should be taken into account this perspective. The most used terms in the all analyzed texts are *value/values* and *students*, so the current curriculum reform is one centered on the values and on the individual and social needs of our children, as future citizens of the Republic of Moldova and of Europe. In order to be more convinced, we offer some statistic data:

Table 3. Frequency of the key term Value in the curricula texts

Name of the document	Frequency of the term *Value*	Total number of the pages in the document
RFNC	51	74
Curriculum of RLL (elementary school)	36	35
Curriculum of RLL (Gymnasium)	75	51
Curriculum of RLL (Lyceum)	65	44

Source: own elaboration based on curricula texts

In this context, we can conclude, that it is relevant and easy to interpret this issue, which successfully complete the intercultural perspective, because one of the function of the national curriculum, upon the RFNC, is the *value function,* for guiding the educational actions (p.10) and because of the three-dimensional structure of the competence centered curriculum: knowledge (to know), abilities (to know how to do); attitudes and values (to know how to be and how to interact with others) – (p.15). As a rule, transversal competencies derive from the key competencies, expanding and developing them. In this sense there are several models of taxonomies. From the intercultural perspective one of these is as follows: *Works with a variety of individuals and groups*: enhances the similarities and differences of the members of a group; separates the individual from his/her place/ role in the group; respects ethnic and cultural differences and uses them as resources in group processes; shows compassion towards others. *Responds adequately with regard to complex interrelations*: achieves a balance between personal and group needs; builds consensus; recognizes and uses the role of group dynamics; resolves positively the conflicts that arise by recognizing them and working on them together with the dialogue partners working in a group. And other transversal competence is related to the responsible citizenship, which must assume the following roles: demonstrate individual responsibility: recognize their own talents and competencies and use them for personal and social purposes; demonstrates integrity and dignity; uses conflict resolution strategies; raises awareness of how individual choices / decisions affect their own person, family and wider community; manifests initiative to inform and to act on problems and events of social interests; (...) understands and promotes the democratic principles of freedom, justice and equality: is aware of the fact that every human being has an innate value; demonstrates respect for human dignity, human needs and rights; promotes order and legality at the social level; respects and defends the rights and property; participates in democratic processes. d) participates in activities that promote the public good: understands the economic, political, social systems and ecosystems; identifies the needs of the community and acts to meet them; engages in activities to improve the social life; demonstrates global responsibility, understanding and appreciation for different cultures. (RFNC 2017: 21)

Moreover, other opportunities for educating the intercultural competence are offered by the optional/elective courses recommended by MoE for different curricular areas, especially for *Language and communications* and *Social sciences* areas. In each school year students have the opportunity to opt for the elective subjects (1-2 per

classes), which are the flexible component of the educational framework plan, that contributes to the development of the cross/transversal competencies and priority areas, for example: civism, education for health and quality of life, entrepreneurship, creativity and innovation, education for sustainable development and intercultural education. The specific skills referring to the last one "understanding and recognizing the values of representatives of different cultures; collaboration, in the spirit of mutual respect, with other people from different environment, from an ethnic, cultural, religious or life-study point of view (learn to live with others)" (Plan-cadru 2018: 10-11). In this respect, we would like to mention the big contribution of the educational NGO, which developed a large area of optional subject, especially through the support of the international projects (http://prodidactica.md/en/optional-curricula/), even though it was not so easy to include them in the official list, now we have a very good situation, from the point of view of the written curricula. We hope, that the social impact will be more visible in the next years. The picture of these possibilities is represented in the table 3.

Table 4. List of the optional subjects which promote ICE in Moldovan schools

Elementary school	Gymnasium	Lyceum
- Culture of good neighborhood - Intercultural education - Media education - One hour for reading (with a vast diversity of the texts for reading and discussing) - Religion - Education for human rights	- Intercultural education - Education for tolerance - Religion - Education for human rights - Media education - Education for community development - Gender education - Elements of French/ Spanish cultures and civilizations - History and traditions of American people - Film education: a world to be seen - Local history and culture - Holocaust: stories and life lessons - By reading, I learn to be	- Let us know each other better - Intercultural Education through the literature of the main ethnicities of the Republic of Moldova (Ukrainian, Russian, Gagauz and Bulgarians) - By reading, I learn to be - Religion - Elements of French/ Spanish/German cultures and civilizations - History and traditions of American people - Film education: a world to be seen - Education for European Integration - Holocaust: stories and life lessons - Gender education

Source: own elaboration based on the Framework Plan for 2019-2020 school year

DISCUSSION

As we can easily observe, the situation in the policy documents looks good, decision makers and authors/experts benefited in the last 30 years from a lot of the international training programs and have a good expertise in the field, but in reality there are a lot of problems with regard to the teacher professional development in order to ensure the good teaching of the issued topics and subjects. There are some main causes: almost half of the school teachers in the country are retired or very close to the retirement age and few of them are open to learning new and innovative approaches to the problem of intercultural education; the large fluctuation of teacher population (many teachers trained in projects give up the pedagogical activity and leave to work abroad). For young people trained in universities, the pedagogic profession is not attractive - modest social status and low salaries. The didactic materials published in the projects are few, insufficient for all the schools, and the ministry of profile does not have the necessary means, and it has not taken any initiative to supplement the book publishing for the optional subjects. The vast majority of the teaching materials on the subject are in electronic form, available on the official website of the ministry or of the other profile institutions, but not all teachers have sufficient digital skills to use them, many schools and universities do not have the ICT equipment in the classrooms so that could be used at the lesson, during teaching, in order to become functional for the students. So, we insisted on these aspects, because from the point of view of social pedagogy, the social context plays "a fundamental role in the design and development of education, and this role is valid at two reference levels – at projected goals and at means of achievement. The position of the educated person, though not neglected, is subordinate to the social, as a component part of it" (Cristea 2010: 53). The ambiguous political discourse of the politicians, the obvious polarization of the opinions of the officials and the long-term economic crisis, which greatly affect the quality of education, do not seem to us to be of minimal importance. We speak here about the education carried out daily in the school, in the family, in the society, not only the one projected in documents, which must comply with international standards. Just one example of recent discourse from mass media can offer clarity on the discussed situation:" The change would take years, because in 28 years of independence everything was destroyed and demolished. We are trampled into a world where injustice and inequality have grown sharply. This explains why thousands and thousands of citizens are looking for a job abroad. The locals show a relative optimism regarding the future of their children's perspective. Few are those who put more value on what politicians say or write in documents or in the press." (EL 2019) So, even the though discourse of the political documents and of a lot of mass media channels is liberal, the contradictions are easily observed and this situation generates confusion for young generation and distrust in the educational message transmitted by school.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The present study was aimed to explore the intercultural education perspective of the main official documents which guide the educational process of the Moldovan

students in the pre-university/secondary education level. It copes with the misunderstandings of the multiethnic and multilingual context, influenced in the past by the communist and soviet ideology, and nowadays by Russian imperial propaganda. The results suggest a variety of conceptual terms used by legacy and curriculum authors to build a new/modernized reality adapted to the 21st century, and to introduce the values of the national and European identity and of the constructive interaction with others in order to enrich the horizon of knowledge, life skills, of tolerant and respectful attitudes towards all citizens, regardless of ethnicity, language, religion or social status. We have identified that all the analyzed terms characterize the liberal discourse of the curriculum reform, and they will help teachers, students and parents to be educated as citizens with national dignity, open to a constructive dialogue and to face the challenges of diversity as a key characteristic of nowadays Moldovan context. It is important to create more learning materials and to initiate more school activities aimed to develop intercultural and multilingual competencies, based on national values and on native language, that are rooted in the historic and scientific truth, free of politics and ideologies. Also, it would be desirable for the scientific research in the field to address at a qualitative pragmatic level the problem of intercultural education from the perspective of students, teachers, parents, but also of the immediate, and of the lasting impact, felt by the society. At the same time, other curricula should be analyzed from the EIC perspective, in order to ensure the balanced didactic discourse at all levels of education, offered by different school subjects and through the school culture as a holistic approach.

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BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

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LANGUAGE AND DISCOURSE IN NIGERIAN EDUCATION: HISTORIC IMPLICATION OF GENDER ISSUES

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ABSTRACT: This paper examines the influence and power of language in education in Nigeria from the pre-colonial to colonial and post-colonial times. This is with regards to the effect of language on gender issues within the country. Nigeria, a country on the west coast of Africa is multi-ethnic with over 150 (one hundred and fifty) ethnic groups with their different indigenous languages and cultures. As a colony of the British, the Christian missionaries who first introduced western form of education in Nigeria used the British English language as a medium of communication and subsequently with the establishment of colonial administration in the country, English language was made the official language of the country. This paper contains a critical analysis of the use of English Language in the country and its implications on communication in social and economic interactions of individuals within the various communities across the country. It argues that the proliferation of the English language was through education of which the male gender benefitted more than their female counterparts due to the patriarchal dominance in the country. The data for the study was collated from random interviews and other written sources. The research discovered that the knowledge and ability to speak fluently and write the English language had a direct influence on the socio-political and economic status of individuals within the country. The women who benefitted from this were comparatively fewer than the men due to some prevailing conditions of what could be called in the present the subjugation of women the society. Critical discourse analysis is adopted for this study. It argues that English language dependency by Nigerians shows that forms of the colonial experience is still evident, and these were all initiated during the past interac-

tions with west through the transatlantic slave trade and colonial rule. This is because discourse as a social construct is created and perpetuated by the persons who have the language power and means of communication. The Nigerian family being of a conservative orientation derives its power directly from the father who is the patriarch of the family as obtained in the traditional set up of communities and the Nigerian society in general. This has grave effect on the opposite gender

KEYWORDS: English Language, Power, Education, Gender, Communication, Discourse

INTRODUCTION

The goal of this research is to examine the relevance of language and discourse in Nigerian education and its historic implication of gender issues. Using the historical descriptive analysis method of interrogation, the paper will be based on desk analysis of some relevant discourses on the subject matter and a small collection of random interviews conducted by the researcher during interactions with women in various groups across the country. The objectives of the study include, an analysis of the historical background and features of education in the different periods of Nigerian education, the relevance of the knowledge of language in order to participate actively and contribute to social discourse within the society and mention will be made of the challenges the females encounter in their participation in this social discourse.

METHODS

Analytical approach-critical discourse analysis

This research uses the historical descriptive analysis method of interrogation adopting the critical discourse studies in which languages plays a powerful role in reproducing and transforming power relations along many different dimensions (of class, culture, gender, sexuality, disability and age etc) and is sanctioned. It also asserts that 'Discourse transmits and produces power, it reinforces it, but also undermines and exposes it, renders it fragile and makes it possible to thwart' (Foucault 1998: 100).

Language and discourse in education are powerful instruments through which a society or individuals can be controlled. The individuals that possess the knowledge determine the exclusion and inclusion of others. Foucault explains that 'we must make allowance for the complex and unstable powers whereby discourse can be both an instrument and an effect of power (Foucault 1978: 101).

The historian is interested to know what happened or was that happening, what was it that was happening the time events or processes occurred in the past under study, the historian further 'aims to characterize, evaluate, to explain… and therefore in the last analysis narrate actions performed in the recorded past'. (Pocock 2018) 'The historian, then, maybe thought of as scrutinizing the actions and activity… and asking questions about what it has been and done, answers to which will necessarily take the form of narrative, of actions and their consequences. (Pocock 2018) This research

method of the historian is what is adopted in this paper.

DATA AND PROCEDURE

The paper is based on desk analysis of some relevant discourses on the subject matter. Two books and three articles make up the primary data for the study. *African women; sentenced by tradition* by N. M. Majekwu Chikezie, (2011). *Gender mainstreamism in Nigeria's political development; from hindsight to foresight* by S.A Effah-Attoe, 2018, *the Historical Legacy of Gender Inequality in Nigeria* by E. B. Ikpe, *Educational Policy in Nigeria from the Colonial Era to the post -independence period* by Hauwa Imam (2012), and *soft power language in social inclusion and exclusion and the unintended research outcome* by A. Odrowaz-Coates 2018. The reference to the social and political conditions within the society that influenced language and education in Nigeria during our period of study were analysed and documented as it relates to the topic of this paper.

Language as a tool for communication within any community is useful and necessary for information, expression and issuance of directives. The language in use at any point in time; spoken or written must be comprehensible to the sender and the receiver of the message for effective communication to take place. In Nigeria there are over two hundred (200) indigenous languages. The tree major ones are Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba while the official language of the country is English. This enables socio-economic and political interactions amongst both nationals and non-nationals. The knowledge and competence to speak and write English Language within various communities "enabled individuals to gain self-confidence and community pride, enhancing their language skills and communicative skills in both languages" (Odrowaz- Coates 2018, cf. Cosaro 2018). This made such persons to be considered as literate and educated in Nigeria. The knowledge of English Language over the years has equipped individuals with linguistic skills superior to their counterparts and made them to command more power, aided their empowerment and made them to be perceived as more competent in some spheres of life. Thereby strengthening their positions in their various communities (Odrowaz-Coates 2018, Cosaro 2018). Also being able to communicate effectively in the English language offers considerable advantages (Odrowaz-Coates 2018).

Nigeria is a country on the west coast of Africa. The country is made up of about Two hundred and fifty (250) ethnic groups with their different languages and cultural heritage. The largest of these ethnic groups are Hausa/Fulani, Igbo and Yoruba. (Nig @ 50, 2010). With the subjugation and subsequent colonization of the country in the late 19th century and early 20th century, the country came under the colonial rule of the British. English language was therefore adopted as the language of communication for all official matters. Before the establishment of colonial rule, the Christian missionaries had already introduced the use of English language as a medium of teaching and instruction in schools and for preaching in churches. English language thus became a requirement for communication and socialisation with the new institutions within the communities namely – the schools, churches, European trading agencies and government parastatals. The knowledge of this language determined ones' social inclusion or exclusion' (Odrowaz-Coates 2018). Several years after independence, Nigeria as a

country is still using the English language as primary mode of communication. This 'reveals the influence of one political entity on another without military power but through economic and cultural influence' (Odrowaz-Coates 2018) Nigeria being a predominantly patriarchal society experienced the situation where mostly the males who were the initial beneficiaries of the activities of these institutions(schools, churches and government agencies) within the society gained more and several advantages over their female counterparts as a result of several social and cultural practices thereby perpetuating the gender issues within the family and society. Also, within the country, power distribution in the family is highly conservative and conventional referring to the man, wife/wives and child/children.

Gender 'may be defined as a socially constructed feminine or masculine identity of an individual enforced through socialisation process which becomes a basis of social division and a set of every day social practices (Idyorough 2005, Odrowaz-Coates 2015). The process of socialisation involves ones inclusion or exclusion and the knowledge of the mutually intelligible language determines this. Therefore, in gender relations within families or the community people without the requisite knowledge are usually secluded while those that possess the knowledge are included. There are several definitions of education using a basic one, education is defined as "the art of making available to each generation the organised knowledge of the past' (Good 1959). Within the Nigerian society the males were the bulk of first group of knowledgeable ones (educated or literate) when formal education was introduced, while the females lacked the knowledge and were considered (illiterate and uneducated). The scenario has not changed much particularly among the rural community dwellers.

Michel Foucault's discourse theory has been a veritable tool on which educational debates, social policies and academics have focused and this is the theory that shall be adopted for the analysis of this topic. In the social contexts, discourse theory is concerned with issues of power and domination. It illustrates a tendency within critical conditions to focus on knowledge as a material element in social life (Popkewitz 1977). For Foucault, (1977) It is through discourse (through knowledge) that we are created; and that discourse joins power and knowledge, and its power follows from our casual acceptance of the reality with which we are presented .' Discourse being a social construct is said to be created by individuals who possess the power and means of communication. According to (Weedon 1977) Discourse transmits and produces power, it can undermine it, expose it, make it fragile and can thwart it. Foucault (1972) explains that discourses are about what can be said and thought and about who can speak when and by what authority, Discourses can be in written and oral form and are discernible in the social practices of everyday life within the society (Weedon 1977) Foucault observed that language plays a vital role in the reproduction and transformation of power relations in many dimensions (of class, culture, gender, sexuality, disability, age and others) and is sanctioned. Thus, the language, thoughts and desires of individuals within any given community are regulated and managed through discourse.

In considering language and discourse in Nigerian education, the concepts of discourse, power, culture and language are said to be dialectically interrelated with each complementing the other. None is more powerful than the other, each one equally

shapes the other (Foucault 1977). Corson (1995) sees language as an instrument of power and a useful tool for deconstructing power discourse. Bourdiew (1977) observes that language is not only an instrument of communication or knowledge, it is also an instrument of power. In Nigeria, western formal education with English language as the medium of communication was initially controlled by the missionaries, followed by the colonial government and now the Nigerian government. Thereby, the official discourses of the Christian missions and the state in respect of educational policies (namely core curriculum, modes of assessment and school management) are obvious instances through which discourse and language became instruments of power. In the larger society the men possessed this power aided by these institutions and the traditions and cultures of the communities.

In this paper, language and discourse in Nigerian education and its historic implication of gender issues will be analysed during the following periods: Pre Colonial period, Missionary and Colonial period and Post-Colonial period.

PRE-COLONIAL PERIOD

The language and education of people in pre-colonial Nigeria was varied amongst the various ethnic groups across the country. In the pre-colonial period, the territory today called Nigeria was made up of highly influential and diverse communities North, South, East and West. These include the North Eastern kingdom of Kanem Borno, the Hausa kingdoms of Kano, Katsina, Zaria, Gorbir and others. And in the 19th century the Sokoto Caliphate. In the North Central there were the Tivs, Idoma, Igalla, Jukuns and others. The Yoruba kingdoms are in south western Nigeria and there are the Kingdom of Benin in the mid-west, the Igbo communities of the East and several other communities in the south eastern part now known as the South-South geo political region.(Obaro:1980) All these communities had their different languages and traditional forms of education and practices which varied from one community to the other. Educational activities usually entailed the learning of some traditional gender specific crafts and cultural instructions through initiation or puberty rites. The curricula were informal and comprised of lessons for developing the child's physical skill, character, intellectual skills and sense of belonging to the community as well as inculcating respect for elders and giving specific vocational training and the understanding and appreciation of the community's cultural heritage (Fafunwa 2014). In all the communities, the leaders (males and females) taught the younger ones individually, in groups or under a formal apprenticeship some skills and what was expected of them as adults in the society. Education was therefore the process of cultural transmission and renewal, the process whereby the adult members of a society carefully guided the development of infants and young children, initiating them into the culture of the society(Adeyemi &Adeyinka:2002) In view of the fact that the society was predominantly patriarchal, the men made the rules and it was naturally expected that all others that is the females and children must obey these rules. Furthermore, the country can be conveniently described as possessing a conservative orientation, that is, the people "focus on binding people into groups and institutions" (Odrowaz-Coates 2019). This

is because within the country, the three main religious inclinations namely African Traditional Religion, Christianity and Islam are very traditional in their approach to issues concerning males and females. The religious and social norms of each religion is followed to the later and in all these religions, females are subordinate to males as such anything outside of that is a misnomer and an anti-religious or anti-social behaviour which attracts repudiation.

Common features of female education among the different ethnic group included the domestically oriented teachings and the range of social and economic activities that the different communities reserved for the proper orientation and socialisation of women. This seemed to have made women in pre-colonial societies to hold a complementary position to men whereas patrilineal and patriarchal kinship structures predominated these societies. The women were taught how to care for their husbands and children that is basically the art of home management as they were expected to have or bear children particularly sons who will ensure the future of the families and communities (Mojekwu 2012). The women were also engaged in farming activities and craft making. The type of craft depended on the communities or ethnic group. This allowed the women to provide the material resources and support needed for the care of the family. On the whole the female in pre-colonial society was trained for the domestic sphere, marriage and motherhood while the males were trained for leadership, warriors, hunters and other positions of authority. The various communities determined what should be taught to each gender. It has been asserted that "societal discourse mediates its power and control through institutions and elites who are charged with saying what counts as true" (Talbani 1996). According to Foucault, each society has what it considers as truth, its "general politics of truth, that is the type of discourse it accepts and makes function as true" (Piscoe & Letseka 2013). He considers society as a space for a struggle to establish and transmit a regime of truths, develop techniques and procedure to inculcate and transmit cultural values which are considered to be true. Thus, the leaders within any community use political, economic and social apparatuses to control and dominate (Talbani 1996). Language and discourse in pre-colonial Nigerian society was therefore mainly determined by the leaders of the various communities. They determined what should be taught to and inculcated in the males and females. This produced gender role stereotyping by which certain social roles are attributed to men and women based on the traditional gender division of labour in a particular society even when such attributes are not built on reality and are discriminatory. Gender role stereotyping supports the existing structural arrangements under the patriarchal system which are discriminatory and are in favour of men and portray such roles as "natural and normal" for women (Idyorouhg 2005).

From birth males and females are raised differently and made to experience different environments, they are led on different paths before they are able to choose their own. These paths set by their parents or other adult figures in their lives set them on certain paths (Cordier 2012) leading to a difference in personality, career choices or relationships. Thus, throughout life males and females are perceived as two different personalities and should stay on separate paths (Brescoll:2013). The silent but rigorous education into the patriarchal and matriarchal stereotypes was ingrained in the

traditional institutions of Nigeria. Men and women grew up to know what was expected of them and accepted their gender roles as given. According to Ocitti (1971):

> Pre-colonial education, even in the most centralised and stratified societies, was gender-based, with boys and girls receiving that kind of education which enabled them to fulfil social defined masculine and feminine responsibilities respectively. Male education thus produced farmers, warriors, blacksmiths, rulers and other male dominated occupations from which women were excluded. On the other hand, female education was predominantly designed to produce future wives, mothers and home makers.

UNDER MISSIONARY PERIOD

Christian missionary activities that impacted on the education and language in Nigeria began in the 1840s in Yoruba land (south west) and Efikland (south south) (Ajayi 1965, Ayandele 1966, Aye 1967). One major mode of evangelism by missionaries was through the establishment of schools. The schools were opened by the various missionary bodies who operated in the country as they considered the schools as "the nursery of the infant churches, the principal hope for the success of their work" (Ajayi 1965). The attendance in the schools established initially in some areas was encouraging and in others poor. Over the years, as the communities witnessed the result of missionary activities in the schools, attendance began to improve steadily and with time several communities within which the missionaries operated had schools. The language of instruction was English language. Attendance of school therefore brought a new status to persons in the society as those who could read and write in English language were considered as literate and others who not were termed illiterates. In most Nigerian Communities, female attendance of these formal western type schools established by the missionaries was not patronized at all. In some communities it was a taboo or considered as waste of time and family resources to educate female children who were said later would discard the family name for their husband's name. In Efikland, a prominent community leader Henry Cobham, had stated that" Book (Bible) no good for women, and women no fit saby book" (Aye 1967). This was the general view of his fellow men in the society in the 1850s. For others, education of the girl child delayed her marriage and most girls were usually withdrawn from school to marry. It was also believed that formal education affected the morality of the female child because of the claim that in the formal school system, the girls become exposed to sex and sexuality matters. Such exposure they imagined will lead to promiscuity which will rob the girls of their chastity, which was a highly valued moral quality of the girl child and her parents moral training to be rated at marriage. As a result of these and other stereotypes several women were therefore denied access to education in Nigeria. The scenario was worse in northern Nigeria where the prevalence of Islam had restricted the activities and spread of the missionaries to this region. Islamic laws governing the conduct of men and women prevailed in the north. The women across the country could therefore not be educated in this new language to be part of the new

discourse because of the limited access to education and the training of women. The few who had the privilege of attending these early missionary schools were trained for either nursing, teaching or other domesticated disciplines (Mojekwu 2012). The missionary schools for a period of time were the only institutions of western education. The schools were however criticized for their rudimentary nature and content, the insistence on moral Christian education and Bible lessons. The schools served as institutions of modernization and learning of the English language before colonial administration. The Christian mission schools first established were used for evangelization and the training of religious indoctrinators, the education of women was less important to them as they were not clergymen nor teachers necessary for church growth except for the few who were later trained as nurses and teachers in subsequent years. The introduction of colonial administration did not alter the limitation of women in the educational institutions.

From available records, colonialism was a male dominated venture in view of the fact that all colonial officers were male. Being products of the Victorian society's family philosophy, the home was regarded as a place of refuge from the pressures of public life. The women were expected to keep the home and make it a safe place of escape for the men from the vicissitudes of public and working life while the men were to provide for the homes, protect the women from the harsh labour of the industrial era and generally from the pressures of public life. As a result of this, British women did not participate in politics, had no voting rights and could not contest election. It was by the late 19th century and early 20th century that women in Britain began to fight for their political rights.(Jaggar 1983, Ikpe 2004) Coming from such cultural milieu, the colonial administrators did not regard women as in anyway suitable for administrative positions in Nigeria except as producers of agricultural products. Colonial administration by the British officially introduced the English language as the lingua franca of the country Nigeria. English language was not only used in schools and churches but was the official language for all economic, social and political transactions throughout the country. This introduction further alienated individuals who were not knowledgeable in the language.

The pattern of colonial rule using the indirect rule policy did not help matters. The indirect rule policy placed emphasis on administration through or based on existing traditional political institutions. The dominance of men was therefore re-enacted, emphasized and perpetuated. Even in circumstances where new chiefs known as "Warrant Chiefs" were to be appointed, colonial officers did not consider women as capable of occupying such offices (Ikpe 2004). The introduction of western education was inadvertently used to perpetuate the inequality of genders. The males benefited more as compared to the females. The establishment of government schools did not improve the situation. Colonial education was aimed at training men for clerical jobs in the lower cadres of the colonial service and the commercial houses. Effah-Attoe (2018) opined that

during the colonial period, education was functional. School curricula reflected what the British considered functional for their needs. Thus, the curricular for

girls enabled girls to become good housewives, rather than income earners for a living. The curricula for girls were made up of mainly subjects as needlework, domestic science and singing.

Pereira (2007) buttressing the above discussion had stated that,

the primary goal of girl's education according to the prevailing belief of the time (with respect to colonial era) was to instill correct morals and teach girls on modest behavior. (Female) education was not supposed to offer training for jobs or in the academic subjects. Colonial administrators, missionaries and Christian parents agreed that mission schools were best suited to provide such trains – until the 1930s when their perceptions changed slightly.

The neglect of female education was attributable to the government's opposition to the employment of women in the colonial civil service. This attitude was discernable when the Lagos Women's League in South western Nigeria, appealed to the colonial government for the employment of women, the then Chief Secretary replied; "It is doubtful whether the time has arrived when women could be employed generally in the clerical service in substitution for men. In future they may be employed as telephone operators, counter clerks and book binders" (Mba 1982).

Gleaned from the above, the few educated women during this period encountered challenges of employment outside their perceived "traditional" careers as teachers and nurses. The general situation was that education for girls where available emphasized character training, domestic science and marriage training. Throughout the colonial period, the proportion of girls that received any form of western education was low particularly in the rural arrears as compared to the boys. As for northern Nigeria,

British policy of indirect rule restricted the activities of the missionaries in the predominantly Muslim northern protectorate thereby, curtailing the spread of Christianity and Western education leading to a considerable educational gap between the North and the Southern part of Nigeria (Imam 2012).

Throughout this period the education of girls was comparatively low in all parts of Nigeria. According to Anya (2003) the ratio of girls to boys in the colleges was 1:35 or a 2.7 percent. The percentage is said to have dropped in the 1930s to 2.1 percent or 559 boys to 12 girls. The situation started to change in the 1950s with more girls being educated. "However, till the end of colonial rule, female education remained the exception rather than the rule" (Ikpe 2004). The introduction of western education brought in a new principle of differentiation which led to salaried employment, prestige and access to positions of responsibility. As a result of the prestige now attached to employment, traditional parents still preferred to finance the education of their sons more than that of their daughters. Women education was still considered as a waste of money in view of the fact that they were expected to get married. Most of the early educated women ended up marrying and staying at home as housewives. This further convinced many already reluctant parents of the undesirability of educating women (cf. Ikpe 2004). This resulted in the majority of the women not being empowered to be active participants in the language and discourse of the society. In view of

the fact that a knowledge of the language determined inclusion or exclusion, the bulk of the women folk are excluded from the discourse within the society as a result of this challenge. Even "though the situation has been changing gradually and more women are acquiring different levels of education, the majority of the women still remain illiterate vis-à-vis the men (Akpan 1996) within the country Nigeria.

The need for the knowledge of the English language in order to be able to communicate in the general public was so pervasive that there developed in the country a language known as "Pidgin English ʻ. This is a grammatically simplified form of English which developed as a result of the contact of the indigenous people with the English language with words and sounds they could not pronounce correctly as they had no opportunity to learn it within the right environment of a school setting. The pidgin English developed from the coastal cities and has spread across the entire country. Today people who are not literate in the English language manage to communicate with others using the pidgin English though there are no written texts on it. The knowledge of the pidgin English has aided the majority of the illiterate women folk to communicate and interact within the society generally but not in official government circles where the knowledge of spoken and written English is required.

POST-COLONIAL EDUCATION

Nigeria gained political independence from British colonial rule on the 1st of October 1960. After this date the English language has remained as the official language of the country. During the missionary and colonial education period the Bible and other literary books were translated to and written in many indigenous languages namely Efik, Hausa, Yoruba, Igbo (Ajayi 1965, Ayandele 1966, Aye 1967), and others latter. After these pioneer works, several other indigenous writers have written some literary works in some indigenous languages. In spite of all these, no texts on different subjects have been fully developed and written in any of the three major languages viz. Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba in order that such may be used for learning and instruction in schools in replacement of the English language. According to Woolman (2001)

> Nigeria has in all, 270 indigenous Nigerian languages that may qualify as instructional tongues for early primary classrooms. Many of the smaller languages have no written orthography, which makes materials production quite difficult.... It is for this reason that English is still largely used, and the language was adopted as the language of instruction since independence.

The 1981 revised policy on education only prescribes that each child should be encouraged to learn one of the three major languages in the country other than their mother tongue (Federal Republic of Nigeria 1981). Education in the country is controlled by the government with the three tiers of government controlling each tier accordingly. The Local governments are in charge of primary education, the States are in charge of secondary education although the Federal government controls some secondary schools and at least one or two of such institutions are located in each state of the country across the 36 (thirty six states) and in the Federal capital territory, Abu-

ja. The Federal government is in charge of tertiary education which includes the Universities, Polytechnics and other special institutes located is states across the country. State governments also own universities and there exist several privately-owned educational institutions (primary, secondary. Tertiary) within the country. In all these institutions from the primary to the tertiary levels, the English language is the main language of learning and instruction. In order to be eligible for admission to study any course in any Nigerian university the potential candidate must possess a minimum pass at Credit level in English language from the Senior School Certificate examination normally conducted by the West African Examination Council (WAEC) and the National Examination Council (NECO) Candidates without the requisite qualification are usually not admitted.

The education of girls continued to suffer even after independence, according to Effah-Attoe (2018)

five years after independence (from the colonialist), women participation in 'administrative governance' reflected a grim picture, as only 6.9% of wages and salaried labour force in Nigeria were women; by 1970, only 8.7% of the total number of established staff in the Federal Civil Service were women, and by 1980 the figure rose to a paltry 12.6%.

The argument here is, how can women become policy makers when they struggle to make their presence felt in the administrative governance of the country, Nigeria. A situation partly birthed by traditional values, missionary and colonial education policy on the girl child, and the lack thereof, of education for female children who developed into the women of the 1960s and 1970s.

Effah-Attoe (2018) further submitted that:

By 1979, about 72.9% of urban girls were not attending schools. And only 6% of adult were literate, according to the censor conducted by Population Reference Bureau. However, by 2008, women literacy level in Nigeria, according to UNESCO Institute of Statistical Report, October 2015, was placed at 41%. The social attitude of Nigerians towards women is one which suggests that, women needed only to be educated to be good housewives (a trend which colonial education instituted). Thus, when financial issues arise, most parents prefer to withdraw girls rather than boys from school.

As Foucault (1972) stated that "every educational system is a means of maintaining or modifying the appropriateness of discourses with the knowledge and power they bring with them". Education can be as of right the instrument whereby individuals in the society can gain access to any kind of discourse. Thus, every education system is a political means of maintaining or of modifying the appropriation of discourse, with the knowledge and power it carries with it. The power that the English language carries in Nigeria, is what can be termed as "Soft power". Soft power according to (Nye 2004, as cited in Odrowaz-Coates 2018) is a theoretical concept established to study the influence of political entities on one another. This political concept can be applicable in the analysis of language and power where English language is as a me-

dium of soft power. The knowledge of and possession of competent skills in English language gives individuals within the society great advantages of opportunities and further empowers them to participate in discourses thus English is the main language of communication within the country while the indigenous languages are used for private discussions and at some socio-cultural events which the locals celebrate. However, whenever such celebrations involve the invitation of persons from other ethnic groups, there is always a translation to English through an interpreter.

Parents at home particularly in the cosmopolitan and other cities within the country use the English language in communication with their children even at home. They take it for granted that their children must speak good English and they believe that their knowledge of English will have an impact on their future and the opportunities available to them (Odrowaz-Coates 2018). The soft power impact of the language is so overwhelming that the ability to speak English is said to create a soft hierarchy amongst persons in the social, economic and political spaces based on the level of knowledge (Odrowaz-Coates 2018). Generally, people are appreciated, admired and consulted as a result of their eloquence and level of articulation of the English language.

Effah-Attoe (2018) in explaining some of the problems that hindered the political development of women in Nigeria and the future prospect reiterated that:

> Another problem facing women is lack of adequate education. Women constitute a larger percentage of the illiterate group in Nigeria. This could be attributed to the fact that in most families, parents prefer their sons to go to school instead of their daughters, since the later will get married and be incorporated into another family. Thus, a larger percentage of the girls remained uneducated and unexposed in Nigeria, especially prior independence.

Policy making requires sound education, especially in the area of issues being under review. With a systematic and institutionalized trend of not adequately educating the girl child on subjects that prepare them for jobs, public offices and consequently policy making, the women who emerged from such historical trend by these periods, female enrollment into schools was still very poor as Effah-Attoe (2018) submitted.

On the issue of male-female enrollment in education by level and by sex from 1960. to 1990. Pereira (2007) provided a tabulated statistic on the issue, which is presented and analyzed accordingly:

Table 1. ENROLLMENT IN EDUCATION BY LEVEL OF SEX in 1960

1960	FEMALE	MALE	Widening Percentage Disparity on Females
Primary Education	1,087,147 (37.2%)	1,829,471 (62.8%)	-25.6% (percentage disparity)
Secondary Education	28,528 (21.1%)	106,826 (78.9%)	-57.8% (an increased disparity)
University Education	196(7.7%)	2,349 (92.3%)	-84.6% (an increased disparity)

Source: Self-generated, based on Pereira 2007.

I included the 4th column titled "Widening Percentage Disparity on Female" in the above table for the purpose of analysis. Accordingly, one can see clearly the widening disparity in male-female educational enrolment as soon as the level of education goes higher. Thus, in primary education the percentage was -25% against females; and by secondary school level, it increased to - 57.8% against females and a ridiculous- 84.6% when it got to the university education level. NB: to obtain the above figures I simply subtracted boys against girl's percentage presented by Charmaine Pereira in the 3rd and 4th columns of her table. This widening gap in male-female education enrolment was a trend throughout the time frame under analysis (1960-1990). And is anchored on the wrong socio-academic phenomena wherein parents often send and stop the education of their female children mostly at "standard six" i.e. primary education. Thus, the number of female enrolment schools decreases as the level of education increases.

The statistics for 1970 to 1990 followed this worrying trend as will be discovered in the following tables:

Table 1. ENROLLMENT IN EDUCATION BY LEVEL and SEX (1970-1990)

1970	FEMALE	MALE	Widening Percentage Disparity on Females
Primary Education	1,295,000 (37%)	2,205,000 (63%)	-26% (percentage disparity)
Secondary Education	119,200 (32.7%)	244,800 (67.3%)	-34.6% (an increased disparity)
University Education	2,074 (14.3%)	12,394 (85.7%)	-71.4% (an increased disparity)

1980	FEMALE	MALE	Widening Percentage Disparity on Females
Primary Education	5,970,244 (43.3%)	7,807,729 (56.7%)	-13.4% (percentage disparity)
Secondary Education	821,784 (35%)	1,523,829 (65%)	-30% (an increased disparity)
University Education	17,099 (22%)	60,692 (77.8%)	-55.8% (an increased disparity)

1990	FEMALE	MALE	Widening Percentage Disparity on Females
Primary Education	5,877,572 (43.2%)	7,729,677 (56.8%)	-13.6% (percentage disparity)
Secondary Education	1,243,669 (42.8%)	1,664,797 (57.2%)	-14.4% (percentage disparity)
University Education	48,855 (27.0%)	132,016 (72.0%)	-45% (percentage disparity)

Source: Self-generated, based on Pereira 2007. [The above tables were obtained from Pereira (2007) who quoted the Longe Report of 1992]

One can see clearly that there exists a contrasting trend in the gender (male -female) disparity in education enrolment in Nigeria. Thus, while from the 1960s to 1990 there was an upward (increase) in female enrolment at all levels of education-primary, secondary and tertiary (i.e university). For instance, girl's enrollment into universities were 7.7 %, 14.3 %, 22 % and 27.0% by 1960, 1970, 1980 and 1990 respectively; and so, it was in primary and at the secondary school levels as well thus signifying a plausible increase in the number of females enroll led in universities. The contrasting and unfortunately persistent trend was that, the gender(male-female) disparity as the level in education increases, always widen between both gender in favour of the male against the girl child. A look at all the 4th columns from 1960 to 1990 proves this fact. And like already argued in the course of this script, it is tied to the socio-academic misnomer where in parents usually prefer to further the education of male children as against females, either due to financial constraints, or the fact that "it might seem wasteful since the later would be married off" Effah-Attoe (2018).

By the last decade of 20th Century (or just before the turn of the fourth republic of 21st century) in Nigeria, the Nigeria University Commission (NUC) 2001 report in Pereira (2007), provided a statistical account on male - female disparity in education enrolment in the country between 1995 and 1998. Accordingly:

1995/96	FEMALE	MALE	Widening Percentage Disparity on Females
University Enrolment	78,087 (30.3%)	181,213 (69.7%)	-39% (percentage disparity)
1997/98	FEMALE	MALE	Widening Percentage Disparity on Females
University Enrolment	89,984 (33.1%)	181,724 (66.9%)	-33% (percentage disparity)

Source: self-generated. Data obtained from Pereira (2007).

The above NUC report, when juxtaposed with the Longe report on education enrolment (both of which are in Pereira2007:130-132), did reveal a positive and obvious trend; that by 1960, 1970, 1980, 1990, 1996 and 1998 there was a decrease in the tertiary (i.e. university) education enrolment disparity ratio between boys and girls as follows: -84.6%, -71.4%, -55.8%, -45%, -39% and -33%. A cursory look at the tables proves this fact.

Hopefully, currently or in the nearest future, there may be a balance in the ratio of male-female enrolment in schools across Nigeria, especially at the tertiary level of education, where the gap seems to widen when compared to secondary and primary educational levels.

The continual use of English language for all social, economic and political interactions and transactions shows that Nigeria as a country has not and cannot easily disconnect itself from its past colonial experience. The continual use of English language is a form of 'language dependency', colonialism is far from over, it has just changed the dimension and the social mask it had been using to maintain the global power relations that were initiated right from the 15th through the 20th centuries (Odrowaz-Coates 2017). Thus, the power of English language to maintain a leading position in Nigerian education, confirms that the term "soft power" may be used in relation to language (Odrowaz-Coates 2018). It can be asserted that the soft power influence could be a source of additional power in personal relations and the negotiation of self-positioning. This is said to be true in both private and formal relations and the cultural influence of English language on the perceived roles and rights of women increased the awareness of "gender egalitarianism and provided a notion of empowerment" (Odrowaz-Coates 2019). This awareness so created has increased agitations from women within the society. It has also empowered them to speak up on gender issues of concern which have been perpetuated through the various traditional and cultural practices within the country. The society is undergoing some changes "for not all men are successful patriarchs and not all women passive victims" (Silberschmidt 1999). However, the gap still exists remains as the country though influenced by the cultural norms brought in from abroad through the English language still has a strong conservative approach to gender issues as a result of the influence of Islam in the northern parts and Christianity and traditions in the southern states. Gender issues involving inequality and marginalization still persist and are far from being solved.

The awareness so created is prevalent in the cities and among people of a particular class. The poor urban dwellers and the rest of the rural community dwellers still

discriminate against the females in access to education. This has left several females uneducated and without any other skills. This perpetuates a condition of inequality and the continual dependence of females on males in most relationships and in the larger society. These women can easily be manipulated because, similar to Odrowaz-Coates research findings: "realizing the importance of possessing English language skills, but through lack of opportunity, they are not able to linguistically catch up in order to participate, so they give up and accept the situation positioning them in a less favorable place in the social hierarchy" (Odrowaz-Coates 2019). The barriers that keep girls out of school are well known and are still prevalent in the society. According to the "US Agency for International Development and the World Bank, 57 percent of the72 million primary school aged children who do not attend school are females, additionally, girls are four percent less likely than boys to complete primary school" (Gender Statistics 2010).

CONCLUSION

The paper has traced the historical process of the development of education in Nigeria. It has observed that educational instructions and learning had been gender specific in the pre-colonial period. The pattern and conditions did not change much during the missionary education period except that a new variable which was the English language was introduced. During the colonial era, access to and attendance of formal western educational institutions still continued to be limited and not accessible to most females particularly those in the rural communities. The gender ratio of attendance still favoured the males. The new language of instruction in schools now became the new language in the entire society and a very limited number of women possessed the knowledge of the English language.

In post-colonial Nigeria, the use of English language has been further legitimized thereby widening the gap between those with the language power and those that have not. The ratio of female attendance at school is still poor as a result of cultural and traditional practices prevalent in the society. The urban women now empowered by education and their knowledge of the English language have been making efforts at drawing the attention of the government and other agencies to these inequalities and disparities. However after obtaining the necessary qualification and language power as the case maybe, the core religious practices of the major religions within the country namely African Traditional Religion, Christianity and Islam inhibits the powers and abilities of the women to press for anything outside the norms of the various religious faiths which if for nothing else have one thing in common, the subordination of women to men in the society. This has been the scenario of the discourses on gender issues within the Nigerian society in the past years. Knowledge and language power has given the women that possess it a voice to speak out however what happens to such opinions raised by those voices with regards to implementation as it affects gender issues remains a challenge within the country.

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GIRLS' EXPLOITATION IN THE TRIPLE BORDER AMONG ARGENTINA, BRASIL AND PARAGUAY: BETWEEN COLONIALISM AND HUMAN RIGHTS NARRATIVES

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ABSTRACT: This article focuses on the narratives and underlying ideologies that enable the persistence of girls' sexual exploitation in the region of the Triple Border among Argentina, Brazil and Paraguay, where field work was conducted. We argue that the persistence of colonial practices has contributed to the reproduction of subalternity positions for girls and women – especially from impoverished sectors – enforced by the conservative and patriarchal discourse present in many countries of the region. This scenario enables the persistence and naturalization of certain practices that became "invisible" or even accepted and justified as being "cultural". In this sense, we propose that human rights narrative, although being a Eurocentric construction, can comprise a platform for raising issues on gender inequality and all forms of violence and exploitation taking place in the peripheral regions of the world.
KEYWORDS: girls' sexual exploitation, human rights, Triple border, discourse analysis

INTRODUCTION

The primary goal of this article is to examine the underlying ideologies that enable the persistence of girl's sexual exploitation in peripheral regions of Latin America. We highlight the potential of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) as an approach that can help us understand this ideologies and the role they play in the reproduction or resistance against dominance and inequality, since, as Van Dijk (1995) states; CDA

attempts to uncover the discursive means of control and social influence; along with an oppositional stance against the powerful.

The conservative discourse has gained prominence since the Latin American "turn to the right" expressed in the neoliberal tendencies of current administrations. Worldwide, these phenomena can be compared to the waves of totalitarian and conservative governments that support right-wing anti-gender politics, which have contributed to reinforce children's and women subaltern position, in line with colonial and patriarchal logic.

As Odrowaz-Coates (2019) states in the introduction to this work, discourses inform preferences, behaviors and preferences towards positioning of individuals in society, based on their respective gender and their individual status. Conservative orientations may be linked or allow the mechanisms of reproduction of gender power relations and the positioning of children according to power distribution in society.

Faced with this, feminist movements such as "Ni Una Menos"[1] ("Not One Less") have proliferated in Argentina and other countries of our region. However, the rates of violence, which involves domestic violence, homicides, rapes, exploitation and even the gap in wage disparity and access to the labor market, continues to be   significant. According to the UN, Latin America is the deadliest region of the world for women. There, more than nine women are killed daily, victims of gender violence, making it the most violent area in the world for women outside a context of war.

This article focuses on the political, discursive and ideological aspects that cross girls' sexual exploitation in the Triple Border Region (TBR) between Argentina, Brazil and Paraguay. We argue that conservative and patriarchal discourses enable their reproduction, since they are ideological constructs that conceal the subaltern –material and symbolic- position of girls and women. Added to that, we propose that human rights could overtake these narratives since they constitute a platform from which to address and revert issues such as violence, exploitation, gender and age inequality and other problems faced by girls in impoverished peripheral regions of the world. In order to do so, this work is structured as follows: the first section briefly describes legal framework referring to commercial sexual exploitation of children, specifically the international treaties and conventions incorporated in the normative corpus of Argentina, Brazil and Paraguay, since they are the countries that constitute the Triple Border Region. This *racconto* shows the relevance of child labour and exploitation in human rights international agenda that nowadays seems to collide with the proliferating conservative discourses, and even hate speeches towards women rights and gender equality. Next, we analyze the specificity of the material anchorage since we believe it conditions the forms that acquire certain practices, making it possible for instance, the trafficking of persons due to the "porosity" of the national frontiers in the region. Afterwards, we outline the forms of exploitation of girls and women in the aforementioned Triple Border, especially commercial sexual exploitation, considered a serious violation of human rights. Although this form of exploitation is not the only one, we focus on it due to its prevalence across the region and the gender bias that enables its continuity sheltered by conservative and patriarchal discourses. Following that, we address sexual exploitation of girls as described by former members of

a program aimed at reversing these crimes in the region. The program was finally dismantled, due to –in part- the way it began to operate and uncover the powerful networks that hide behind crimes such as trafficking for sexual or labor exploitation. These narratives show that girl's exploitation is represented as some sort of "natural" or "cultural" (being almost synonyms here) phenomena as if they were the only possible life trajectory for impoverished girls of these regions.

Finally, we discuss the potential of the human rights narrative in these peripheral contexts, since they are a Eurocentric construct. Nevertheless, we argue that the very possibility to address this practices supply evidence of the value of human rights narratives -as a platform for raising issues on gender, violence, exploitation and other issues- since "it is impossible to name human rights violations in the absence of human rights norms and standards" (Baxi 2007: 189).

METHODOLOGY

In order to approach the underlying symbolic and political struggles that shape child labour and exploitation in this peripheral region of Latin America we combine research field work with critical discourse analysis around gender and conservative discourses. The research was conducted in the Triple Border Region between Argentina, Brazil and Paraguay between 2013 and 2016 [2]. The field work took place in the main cities that make part of the region: Puerto Iguaçu in Argentina, Ciudad del Este in Paraguay and Foz do Iguaçu in Brazil. Participant observation and interviews were conducted in public schools, hospitals, social welfare offices and homes for children. Here we present some observations concerning sexual exploitation as they were registered throughout the field research.

The analysis is framed within Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), as described by Fairclugh et al (2003). As Van Dijk (1995) addresses, CDA can help us understand how the forms of inequality are expressed, legitimated or reproduced in texts (all kind of texts), by dominant elite groups or institutions who use and abuse their power through a display of different discursive structures.

Finally, any phenomenon that takes place in a trans-border region must be address considering its transnational anchoring, therefore the emphasis on the regions and the particularities that enable children exploitation. Frontiers constitute material but also epistemological borders that forced us to rethink the meaning of many categories and to verify the need for creative thinking in spaces that escape the contours established by the academy. These frameworks will help us provide a better understanding of the persistence of violence and exploitation of girls and women in a peripheral region of the world-system [3], and interpret how this practices and narratives are inserted in the dense social and political processes that cross the region.

RESULTS

The basic postulate that arises from our research is the validity of the idea that the coloniality of power persists after formal decolonization (Quijano 2000). Coloniality, as

constitutive of our peripheral region, seems to have similarities, or to fit in the ideology of the conservative discourse, which addresses girls and women from a perspective that enables the continuity of exploitation due to their assigned –subaltern- position in society. In this context, sexual commercial exploitation can be regarded as the corollary of a trajectory signed by the deficiencies and indifference of public institutions, especially those operating at a national level (in the capital of each country). Among other reasons, we highlight the deficiencies of educational and sanitary infrastructure, the lack of social policies, and ultimately, a system that reproduces oppressive and exploitative conditions affecting impoverished women and children in peripheral regions of the world, which continue to provide cheap workforce, as well as women and girls who are addressed as highly sexualized-objectivated subjects.

Field work conducted in the region demonstrates that the interests that operate covering up these crimes have primacy over current human rights treaties, and over any other consideration that transcends the strictly monetary. Field work also shows that the extension and distinctiveness of these practices is not sufficiently documented in the Triple Border. Here again a strain for policy makers is the lack of updated data that account for the real magnitude of child exploitation, which leads to the impossibility to conduct a fair diagnosis. This vacuum is due to several causes, being one of the main the power relations that cover the occurrence of these phenomena. In cases such as the worst forms of child labour and trafficking obvious difficulties arise for their study due to their clandestine nature and the powerful monetary and politic interests that enable their reproduction. This is linked with certain dynamics of the region that allows the reproduction of exploitation in all its forms; one of the main features of the TBR is its "porosity", which enables an intense circulation of persons and goods that do not always occur within the legal frame. In this region, state limits seem to be rather abstract due to highly interconnected urban spaces. The faint limit between legal and illegal practices, and the rather precarious articulation between institutions of the three countries, set up a privilege scenario for trafficking of persons for either sexual or labour exploitation.

On the empirical level, it became clear that the subjectivity of children is rarely apprehended in adult discourse. The actions implemented are limited to "harm reduction" programs that in the long term tend to reproduce those same conditions that they should seek to reverse. In this sense, the convergence of child labour and exploitation in the social, economic and cultural fabric of the region requires actions that tend to reverse the naturalization and invisibility and, in the case of the worst forms of child labour and exploitation, arise consciousness around the fact that they do constitute serious crimes and such be addressed as such.

In a context signed by poverty and inequality, we highlight the instituting power of children's rights treaties as the materialization of a power struggle for the imposition of "meanings". The analysis of the legal frame is fundamental since laws are the result of negotiation processes for obtaining legitimacy from certain narratives; they constitute "true and important symbolic struggles" (Segato 2006). In line with this position Bourdieu addresses that the law not only regulates certain practices, but also gives status to social groups whose rights it recognizes, establishing their existence from

the "mere act of nomination" (Bourdieu 1989: 238). We are aware that the passing of a law does not necessarily imply a social commitment to its enforcement; however, it provides a valid platform for addressing social demands.

On the other hand, this legal recognition does not lack contradictions: as Pecheny states: "the very language of human rights generates this tension: while speaking in terms of rights allows for these struggles to be heard and incorporated in the legislative agenda, doing so also implies boxing them inside the institutional frameworks of (neo)liberal democracies" (Pecheny 2009: 459). Finally, it is important to avoid both celebratory and paternalistic narratives concerning child labour, and as for its "worst forms" the need to conduct further research to understand, address and explain how forced labour has become, once again [4] an issue on international relations and in human rights narratives and politics.

DISCUSSION AND DATA

Legal framework and human rights conventions concerning exploitation

The International Labour Organization (ILO) defines commercial sexual exploitation of children "as the exploitation by an adult with respect to a child or an adolescent – female or male- less than 18 years old; accompanied by a payment on money or in kind to the child or adolescent (male or female) or to one or more third parties" (ILO/ IPEC) [5]. ILO also considers this form of exploitation as an abhorrent violation of the human rights of children and adolescents and a form of exploitation similar to slavery and forced labour.

Commercial sexual exploitation in children includes the use of girls and boys in sexual activities remunerated in cash or in *kind* - commonly known as child prostitution - in the streets or indoors, in such places as brothels, discotheques, *massage parlors*, bars, hotels, restaurants, etc; the trafficking of children and adolescents for sex trade; sex tourism; the production, promotion and distribution of pornography involving children and the use of children in sex shows (public or private) [6].

Similarly, the Stockholm Declaration adopted at the World Congress against Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (1996) defines the commercial sexual exploitation of children as "a form of coercion and violence against children (that) amounts to forced labour and a contemporary form of slavery," while the UN Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children (the Palermo Protocol) defines the term "exploitation" to include "the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs" (ILO).

In line with the above, the 2006 *Report of the Independent Experts for the United Nations Study on Violence Against Children* also recognizes that the exploitation of children under 18 in prostitution, child pornography and similar activities constitutes violence. Equal importance has ILO Convention 182 on the Worst Forms of Child labour, that includes slavery or slavery-like practices; the sale and trafficking of children, debt servitude, the status of "servant", forced or compulsory labour and the use of children in armed conflict. It also covers the recruitment and use of children for prostitution and por-

nography; and for the production and trafficking of narcotics. According to ILO (2002, 2006) "they are all those jobs that, due to their nature or the conditions in which they are carried out, can damage the health or safety of children, and work that endangers their physical, mental or moral development". Such forms can be also assimilated to the notion of "modern slavery", as they are described in the 2014 Protocol on the Forced Labour Convention.

Some figures that account for the global scale of trafficking in persons estimate that it generates annual revenues of more than 32 billion US dollars worldwide; in Latin America and the Caribbean alone, it captured 100,000 victims during 2008, according to a survey by ILO (2002) According to UNICEF, some two million children between the ages of five and fifteen are introduced annually into the sex trade worldwide. The phenomenon of child sexual exploitation, in recent years, has also increased in Latin America, due to economic and socio-cultural factors among which ILO (2002) highlights the lack of education and economic opportunities, the relatively high benefits they believe they will obtain, the cultural obligation for children to help their parents by earning money through any activity and the "disintegration" of families.

However, these factors should not ignore that the persistence of commercial sexual exploitation is due to the existence of a demand that is even greater in the tourist centers of "developing" countries, as evidenced by research carried out in the region (UNICEF 2005, ILO 2005, IOM 2010, Cilleruelo 2008).

The Triple Border: Inequality and poverty in the periphery of the world system

Social phenomena acquire a particular dynamic according to the geographical context in which they take place, in this sense we argue that the Triple Frontier between Argentina, Brazil and Paraguay enables dynamics that allow the persistence of the so-called worst forms of child labour alongside with exploitation. In this sense, we believe that the approach of the theoretical perspective of the world system, as mention above, is appropriate. The categories of center and periphery account for the operation of the capitalist system and the mechanisms through which the centers continue to exploit and expropriate the resources of the peripheries, against orthodox visions that believe that the benefits of economic development would have a positive impact on the peripheries.

In a system whose objective is to maximize profit through the difference between labour and raw material costs and the exchange value of a product, poverty, disease, malnutrition, lack of access to drinking water, basic adequate sanitation, among other shortcomings, are a constant. The inhabitants of the impoverished regions are the counterpart of the prosperity of a minority; according to Jeffrey Sachs, eight million people die each year "because they are too poor to remain alive" (2005: 29).

In this work and in line with the above, we consider that poverty and exclusion are intrinsic to the logic of a market economy. This proposal corresponds to the postulates of dependency theory and to Karl Marx's proposal about the need for a "reserve industrial army": a nucleus of unemployed that enables cheap and flexible workforce to keep wages low and perpetuate the necessary conditions for the reproduction of

capital.

Although this may appear to be obvious in the peripheral regions, diversity of views on the Triple Border coexist, embodied in the media and technical and academic reports, each of which builds a discourse about the region that tends to emphasize its unity and harmony, or its fragmentation and conflict. Beyond the different interpretations, the area is well known for its notorious inequality, which is clearly expressed in the asymmetries between a city for tourists-consumers and another for the inhabitants of the periphery. Although exploitation, trafficking and connected crimes are typified in the regulatory frameworks of the three countries that make up the region, as well as in multiplicity of international treaties, it is a recognized route of trafficking of human beings for exploitation in neigh boring countries or even in other continents. The occurrence of these practices was not acknowledged by most of the informants, who refused to talk about the issue, on occasion out of fear since various aggressions occurred towards journalists and researchers who tried to approach these crimes.

The forms of exploitation in the region

For the purposes of this paper, we use the categories of exploitation, forced labour, slavery and worst forms of child labour as synonyms since we consider that the subtleties of each category are subsumed in the fact that they all represent violations against the very basic rights of children.

However, due to their characteristics/particularities they can be simply defined as crimes against humanity.

As for the figures, since these crimes take place with the complicity of politicians and officials of the law are very complex to investigate, the only available data consist on estimations about women and girls who fall into trafficking networks or became victims [7] of other forms of exploitation for sexual or labour purposes.

The enormous economic revenue from these practices/crimes, such as commercial sexual exploitation of children, trafficking, sex tourism and others, is recognized in the region, although their invisibility and the network of complicities that enable their persistence to make their study extremely complex. More detailed studies in conjunction with the security forces of the three countries could greatly contribute to have a reliable diagnosis that could lead to take actions aimed at reversing and preventing these crimes and take pertinent legal actions towards recruiters, intermediaries and exploiters who take advantage of the vulnerability of the victims, although here we do not think of victims in terms of individual injustice, but as an injustice "rooted in a structure of social and historical conditions that determines the situation and renders it intelligible" (Pecheny et al. 2019: 457) The physical and psychological consequences of exploitation (in all its forms), are extensively documented by multiple studies carried out by ILO, UNICEF, and other national and international organizations specialized in this problematic issue. However, commercial sexual exploitation is not the only form of exploitation, or the only one that can be part of the "worst forms of child labor", as it is typified in the above-mentioned Convention.

Other forms of exploitation with a presence in the TBR have to do with servitude

(criadazgo), an extended practice in Paraguay but also in the Northeast of the Argentine Republic. *Criadazgo* refers to a form of exploitation that takes place in the private sphere of a domicile, so its detection through labour inspections is practically unfeasible. In this practice, children (usually girls, but also boys) are handed over, at ages as early as two years old, to a "caretaker" family, almost always living in cities, which will be "responsible" for their education and support it in exchange for the domestic work of the little "maid".

However, frequently this is not the way things go, and girls and boys are exposed to long hours of work, that can include cleaning, washing, taking care of the elderly or sick persons, amongst other tasks which prevents them from attending school or makes their schooling be truncated due to absences, fatigue or even the lack of school supplies and appropriate equipment to attend educational institutions. Most of the times girls come from extremely vulnerable rural environments, from large families who are unable to provide support for their sons and daughters and who may really believe that by "sending them to the city" they are giving them the opportunity to move forward in their lives through access to the education that their parents, for a variety of reasons, could not access or could not complete.

Although exploitation is conditioned by gender issues, we also consider the age variable, since girls are more exposed to suffer violence in all its forms, due to the distribution of power in our society, in which girls from impoverished backgrounds have less opportunities to access to formal education, or to complete it, even compared with boys of the same age and background, since girls are most likely to perform domestic work and other tasks associated to domestic reproduction. As Cioban discusses, these types of activities are considered by society to have a limited economic value and they are underestimated. We must also notice the gender division "between jobs undertaken by children, a fact that further marginalizes activities done by girls, which are considered as ´not so important´" (Cioban 2018: 108). These differences are conditioned by gender issues, but here we focus on the double *drawback* that girls go through not only because of their gender, but also because of their age, that could make them lack same tools that adult women may possess to defend themselves against certain abuses or to make their voices heard.

The experience of a Program aimed at eradication of commercial sexual exploitation of children

This program, which will be addressed as "Happy Childhood" aimed at the eradication and prevention of commercial sexual exploitation of children and was operative between 2004 and 2012, financed by the Argentinean government along with an international organization. The actions were originally focused on psychological support, informative talks, and reintegration into the formal education system for victims of trafficking and sexual exploitation.

        The testimonies presented in this section come from interviews with members of the Program. A former coordinator, Graciela [8], reminisces about the beginnings: "In 2004 the program was created to conduct survey about children living in the

street, in situations of violence, victims of abuse and especially to eradicate commercial sexual exploitation of children. Those were the formal intentions. For this, a work team was formed".

The "team" was integrated by a psychologist, a teacher and a law student whom they called "our lawyer": a rather humble team if we take into account the magnitude of the objectives they pursued and the powerful interests operating to guarantee the continuity of exploitation and linked crimes.

Anyway, the planning organized in the very beginning was short-lived;

When we installed the office and said ok, we are going to start the talks [9] in the neighborhoods, we began to receive lots of complaints. So, we had to forget about the initial planning. I was very surprised because I had been a teacher for 35 years. So, I thought, I have lived for 35 years in this city, inside a bottle, because I never thought there were so many aberrations and ugly things that were committed against children.

Graciela recalls the initial frenzy, of receiving complaints, of going to the police stations, but she immediately began to glimpse the network of complicity behind a crime as lucrative as commercial sexual exploitation;

At the time there was a police officer that helped me a lot, and I think it cost him his job. Then I began to see the other side. How officials, police, authorities, who sympathized with the Program´s initiative, were being fired from their jobs, left aside, reassigned... of course, it is one thing to talk about the child who is begging for coins in the street, selling pebbles [10] or whatever, and something else is to talk about sexual exploitation where tourism industry and authorities are involved...

In this context, the first threats did not take long to come, although in a veiled way, they were still "warnings".

Estela, another former member, recalls: "I was going to the crash, I was facing everybody. Then they *(the authorities)* told me *to slow down*... and then I realized that authorities themselves were the ones who come here to ask for children *(for sexual exploitation)*. I was very distressed, I didn't sleep (...) I didn't know how to get out of it."

The first "clash" was with a minister "who was being of great help", and who told her to "stop a little" because the people of the city "were very offended". She explains the causes of this anger:

I talked a lot, I was very mediatical, I was on television every day, and I said please don't turn this city into a "sexual paradise", things like that. Because where there is a five-star tourism there is behind a very poor population with exploited people, not only children ... some taxi drivers told me about parents who gave them the phone number in case a tourist asked for a child, a girl, no matter the age, call him ... then I thought, this cannot be. Everything is wrong here. Everything.

And she adds:

It seems such hypocrisy to me... when I began to know reality, it surpassed me.

When a new government assumed, they called us and asked not to clash with the people; instead of that, to give a lot of talks ... and we said yes, we were going to give talks. And raise awareness and raise awareness. I told children at school how the traffic works, when the police catch a drug dealer who is also a human dealer, because a kilo of marijuana is equivalent to so many girls ... then the transaction is done with zero investment, they just kidnap and take the girls.

On the role of the family and the responsibility of adults in the commission of exploitation Estela comments:

There were mothers who offered their children in exchange for drugs, because they were addicted... A 20-year-old girl who let her little girls be abused in exchange for a joint, crack, whatever... a dad who gave her little daughter for money or whatever ... the little girl was 9 years old and when we rescued her because the neighbors told me; look at that child, she is being abused by many people, I took her to the doctor and he told me that she would never have babies, because she was shattered, shattered inside and also at the level of the mind.

The narratives allow us to infer that the participants of the Program inquired more thoroughly than perhaps - tacitly - they had been "allowed" to do by political authorities. The initial idea of the Program was to give prevention workshops; however, it ended up exposing the plot of complicities of public officials and security forces, which eventually led to the dismantling of the Program.
As Graciela states:

I first made the complaints, and then I realized how silly I was, because what was I going to gain? If the commissioner himself told me; you are attacking important people. So, defense of the children, zero. Then they began to corner me from all sides, until one day a senior official told me: "there are no more contracts for you.

Despite of this, the Program formally continued. A young student was put in charge, "with very precise orders: all had to be very *light*, very *quiet*", until its definitive closure in 2012.
About raising awareness around commercial sexual exploitation, Estela comments: "I think we have to try to make people realize that a crime is being committed, that the taxi driver, who takes a girl to Brazil or Paraguay hidden in the trunk of the car to be abused on the other side, is committing a crime, that is being involved (*as an accomplice*). People need to see that, but they never understood these practices constitute severe crimes. They think impoverished girls are there for that: to be abused, to be raped, and in return, give them some coins".
It is worth noticing in the fragment the representation of social actors, since their inclusion or exclusion in the discourse is quite significant, as Fairclough (2003) points out, there are many motivations for exclusion, but "this may be politically or socially significant" (Ibid.: 149). In this case, the exclusion of the kidnapers/recruiters/exploiters in the discourse mirrors the way impoverished girls are represented in social imaginary, as if sexual exploitation was "something which happens to people rather

than something which is done to people-a calamity rather than a crime" (Ibid.: 149). This absence of the perpetrators contributes to place the blame in the victim, rather than in the criminals, which is a symbolic way in which patriarchal and conservative discourses conceal these practices.

As for the places of destination,

Sometimes they convince the girls and took them to Buenos Aires, with a false job offer... or to the south, many girls went south. The majority returned with babies, (product of abuse)... A 12-years-old girl was given a brutal beating because she did not want to prostitute herself and ended up in hospital. There the doctor realized that the 18-year-old document had nothing to do with the physical structure of the little girl who was in the hospital.

Another case that highlights the multiple logics that cross these crimes and enable their persistence had to do with three little sisters who *were taken* to Buenos Aires:

When I reported a mother, who took her three daughters to a brothel (prostibulo), they (the lawyers) told me "it can't be true". But yes, it was. The mother took them to a prostíbulo in Buenos Aires. I had to go from Misiones [11] province for the trial and this time I got really mad at the judge (…) one of the little girls was my first-grade student, now she was 16 years old. She was taken by her own mother who told her that she was going to work as a babysitter but instead she locked her in the brothel and said here you will do what I tell you. The owner of the brothel, who was indicted, had taken these girls as his "wife", he tattooed her arm with his name, took her to some tourist places and so on. So, the (female) judge of the cause tells me, well I didn't see her sad and crying in the photos, she was very smiley. But when this same girl came to see me, she was really distressed and in panic. But the judge told me: you are only a teacher. How can you define the panic situation if you are not a psychologist?

And the same judge added: "In Puerto Iguazú you *put little girls to dance at the carnival*" (as if implying that they *want* to be abused, or that if this happens, it is *their fault, the victims' fault,* as pointed out above).

To which Graciela responds:

Listen to me; they are customs of a population that girls dance at the carnival. That is, that macho thought … and I saw the face of the other (male) judge, who was surprised that the woman judge attacked me. I thought about hitting in her face, but I didn't want to go to jail. So, because this girl was poor, because she was smiling, is she doomed?

We can see this fragment in terms of a maybe rather unconventional gender discrimination, since this attitude comes from another woman, even worse, a representative of the law (in the figure of the judge), who assumes that girls who take part in certain social practices (*Carnival*, here) shape their trajectory since they *voluntarily expose as* potential victims of sexual exploitation.

As a corollary:

She (the girl) returned (to her home in Iguazú) because she learned that recruiters were coming to take her little sisters, of 11 and 14 years old. As a result of the trial, the mother of the girls was given house arrest; the kidnapper was sentenced to ten years in jail. As for the police officer who collaborated with this cause and many others on sexual exploitation of children, he was dismissed from the force. They just fired him... It's like I'm carrying a backpack full of people thrown away, pushed out, left aside... but I think we're all adults and we all knew there would be consequences.

The dialectic of the previous fragment highlights many aspects of patriarchal and conservative discourse, specially the fact that those –male or female- who *try* to act within the legal framework expose themselves to be dismissed, or, in this region and due to the crime we address, to be threatened, or worse.

Finally, the main defender of this girl was not the law or any other institution, but it was *herself*, who returned home to protect her younger sisters. This clearly shows not only the inaction but also the complicity of the actors who supposedly should defend children against exploitation and all kinds of abuse. But it also shows the agency of children, their capacity to make their own decisions, and in this case, protect her little sisters when all the system and even her mother, failed to do so.

Other aspects that contribute to the complexity of these crimes relate to the consent of the victims [12], informants mention that sometimes they claim to have *offered* themselves "voluntarily". But once they were taken to the first destination, the recruiters would take away their identity document (ID) and they knew "that leaving the brothel or going to the police would be of no use since nobody would believe them. In addition, they threaten them with their families since the recruiters knew where they lived".

Some examples of recruitment through deception, and the consequences of these actions on the girls, on their families and even on the members of the program are mentioned by Graciela:

A girl told me: I went to Buenos Aires because they (the recruiters) told me I was going to be a bar tender. Can you imagine? A young girl from the villa, she didn't have much of an idea. They told her she could go with her four-year-old daughter. The first thing they did was to take the little daughter away. Then she had no choice but to accept everything, because her daughter´s life was at risk. They do whatever they want. We recovered this girl because his brother contacted me, and with a friend commissioner we went to this brothel...The little girl is now 10 years old and is undergoing psychological treatment, because she remembers. She remembers what happened to her and her mother when she was 4 years old.

Estela adds "we had cases of girls of 13 years old; *they* promised that they would be able to buy a car, to buy fancy clothes. You have to make them –the girls- understand that what they are doing is wrong, that it is a crime, that they are going to be exploited, abused. Many times, the girls felt that we ruined their future (by saying these things). Another girl was going to Buenos Aires, the father made the complaint that she was being kidnapped and she said "no, no, no, I'm going to get married". And when the

Gendarmerie took her off the bus, she felt that I had ruined her life. We won many enemies also among the victims".

I asked Estela if the girls were warned about the risks to which they exposed, because in this socioeconomic system, victims seem to be more accountable or responsible for their situation than abusers for committing these crimes.

Her answer:

We explained, did a lot of workshops and talks. But at the moment they do not understand. They think it is their opportunity to improve their lives. Their place of origin is very humble, with many needs. Although there are schools in all neighborhoods in this city...But when you find out that a 14-year-old girl ran away with a truck driver who promised that she would dance in an (Argentinean well known) television show there you say, everything is possible. Everything. Instead, he took her to another province, where she was exploited and later rescued. She thought she was going to dance in a television show. There are things that...how do you handle them? Because that's a magnet, it's an attraction. To dance, to be famous.

The closure of *Happy Childhood* program accounts for the double standard with which some highly sensitive problems such as trafficking for sexual and labour exploitation are handled. Although concern is expressed at the discursive level, actions that have a certain impact and can contribute to preventing or reversing the consequences of these crimes are finally dismantled as they conflict with powerful interests that allow and require the continuity of these practices.

Fallen by the wayside are the physical and psychological integrity of the victims, the work and even the lives of many officials who tried to do "the right thing" and the frustration of those who dedicated their time and training to attempt to reverse the plots of power and complicity, with all the risks it involved. About fear and threats, Estela comments that "at any moment a stranger could insult you or beat you up. This is difficult because you have everything against you, everything."

During the interviews conducted on my field work, the reluctance of many informants (especially politicians and security forces) to answer questions about these issues was evident, so I asked Graciela if the official strategy was denial. She answered:

Total denial. To talk about this is to attack tourism, against the city. It is a bad word. It became very difficult ... in the 35 years as a teacher I was with so many children from very adverse backgrounds ... it was a preparation to face this. Because it is very hard, it is a terrible reality. A social worker told me 'you need a psychologist' and I said no, what I need is justice. I need justice. If there were justice none of this would happen. But things keep happening.

These fragments account for the way discourse functions not only to "disguise, emphasize and legitimate, social position and hence power of speakers, but also to control the minds of recipients in desired ways" (Van Dijk 2005:18). All of this in the interest of the powerful and against the interests of the less powerful. And here, we believe, lays the potential of discourse analysis for revealing these relations of power,

dominance and inequality.

CONCLUSIONS

Colonial and conservative discourse: all roads lead to Rome

Specialized agencies construct discourses and narratives based on a Eurocentric conception [13] of childhood and family. But in Latin America things did not develop in the same way as they did in the central regions: "while in Europe children received an increasing pedagogical and medical attention, family and school, the children of the European colonies, converted like their parents into subordinates, entered the productive circuits of servility and slavery" (Pedraza 2007: 83). Likewise, European children were gradually freed from work and families became bourgeois families, education became obligatory and free and basic medical services were made available to the working classes, while children under colonial regimes continued to be part of the work resources of a world population that is racially hierarchical (Ibid.: 83).

That is, the coloniality of power appears as constitutive of our region, rather than as a consequence of the conquest and colonization of America. As stated above, in words of Anibal Quihano, coloniality of power persists after formal decolonization (Quijano 2000). Also, as Lilia Monzó states, "colonialism became and continues to provide the greatest form of hyper-exploitation, with significantly cheap labor and horrific working conditions" (Monzó 2019: 51). This process extends even after independence when the Creole bourgeoisie, elite of the new nation-states, perceived their interests as equals to those of the former European rulers. This ideological assimilation renewed the colonial character of the new nations and established social mechanisms to reproduce differences in all spheres, including the labour market and education.

For instance, as Odrowaz-Coates points out, "the initial economic and social dependencies remain in the conditions of the neoliberal, free market economy, maintaining cheap or enslaved labour in the previously exploited areas" (2017: 15).

In line with this idea, Lilia Monzó argues that "the greatest myth of our time is the notion that we inhabit a postcolonial world, that when the global south rose up against the horrors inflicted upon them by the colonial powers and victoriously proclaimed their independence, the economic, social, and political assault on the so called developing world and its people ceased but colonial relations have and continue to persist" (Monzó 2017: 15).

Coloniality -as constitutive of our region- seems to have similarities, or to fit in the ideology of the conservative discourse, which addresses girls and woman from a perspective of subalternity that enables the continuity of exploitation situations due to their assigned position in society. Domestic violence, child abuse, sexual abuse and the early breakdown of family ties are often the triggers of sexual exploitation of children. Cultural issues include the consideration of girls and women as an object and property, as Schiavoni (2003) points out, we live in a society where the patriarchal discourse and practices are much more present than we think and where men feel with the right to take women as objects.

As for children, they were not always assessed, considered, approached, or recog-

nized in the same way. For as long as the notion of "childhood" has existed, it has frequently been equated with lacking or shortcoming. This idea has only relatively recently changed, at least in the legal aspect. But still, children are far from having a voice in our adult-centric world. Thanks to the narrative of the rights of the child, progresses have been made; however, gender inequalities persist in peripheral regions like Latin America. This gap has implications in the occurrence of many crimes whose victims are, most of the time, women and children.

In this scenario it seems difficult to think of an alternative to capitalist hegemony and the market economy, but there are interstices from which alternative proposals can be produced. And here again we highlight the importance of human rights narratives as potential tools from which recreate practices tending to reverse violence against children.

The fundamental challenge for human rights is, as Hanna Arendt argues, that despite being conceived as belonging to all humanity, from the moment of enunciation human rights only make sense within the areas of sovereignty, so refugees and stateless persons represent "the very end of human rights", expelled not only from their communities but also from humanity, what she calls "human rightlessness" (Arendt, cited by Baxi 2007). That is to say, the people who most need the protection of human rights are those to whom these rights are denied, a statement that can be extended to children in situations of vulnerability, poverty, exploitation.

Yet, human rights could be operative since they constitute a symbolic rhetoric with practical consequences, and could, as such, be incorporated in the social fabric of the triple border and reinforce actions in favour of the welfare of children in the region. A creative reading of human rights narratives could enable the conditions for the (re)appropriation of rights, and the mobilization of marginal narratives based on the specificity of Latin American societies.

We believe it is essential to rescue the theoretical, epistemological and methodological frameworks to adapt them to the new social dynamics, which requires resignifying the categories of childhood, child labour and exploitation, but also rethinking our own logic as social scientists and the way in which we could contribute to recreate practices and discourses tending to guarantee children's rights. It is necessary to face these challenges decisively and urgently to guarantee their well-being, their survival and their happiness. Finally, in line with Monzó (2019: 271) we believe that "in this world where millions of people live in dire poverty and endure unimaginable suffering and humiliation, there is still hope ad beauty and goodness".

NOTES
[1] A campaign against femicide that began in Argentina, in 2015.
[2] Research conducted for my PhD in Social Sciences (Universidad de Buenos Aires, 2017). [3] The theoretical perspective of the" world system" is based on Lenin's proposal (1916), who used the categories of *center and periphery* to account for the functioning of capitalism and understand the mechanisms through which the centers exploit and expropriate the resources of the peripheries. These theses were reworked

by various authors, among whom is Immanuel Wallerstein (*The modern world-system, 1992).*

[4] Let us remember that ILO´s Forced Labour Convention dates from the year 1930. Its full title is "Convention Concerning Forced or Compulsory Labour," and it is one of the eight fundamental conventions of the International Labour Organization.

[5] https://www.ilo.org/ipec/areas/CSEC/lang--en/index.htm

[6] https://www.ilo.org/ipec/areas/CSEC/lang--en/index.htm

[7] Although we do not feel very comfortable with this term, we believe that girls who suffer abuse and exploitation can be regarded as "victims" in many levels. First, victims of a system that was not able or willing to guarantee their rights to safety and their integrity, nor to provide opportunities for their development. Second, a legal, cultural and economic frame that enables recruiters, traffickers and consumers of child pornography and of child prostitution to operate with impunity and even to justify these practices based on an ideology that regards girls and women as –merely- highly sexualized objects.

[8] All names have been changed.

[9] Talks *(charlas)*: Informal presentations about certain issues.

[10] Small semiprecious rocks taken from the nearby mines of Wanda.

[11] Misiones is the province located in the northeast of Argentina and it limits with Brazil and Paraguay. *Puerto Iguazú, Puerto Libertad* and *Puerto Esperanza* are three of the main Argentinean towns of Misiones that integrate the Triple Border. The distance to Buenos Aires is about 1,300 km.

[12] Although such consent is not considered valid within the frame of the actual legislation.

[13] "Europe" here is used as a metaphor rather than a geographical area, and refers to "everything that was established as a racial, ethnic and cultural expression of Europe, and as a extension of it, that is to say as a distinctive identity subject to the coloniality of power" (Quijano 2014: 69).

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SKOLOMBO AND THEIR CONTINUED EXISTENCE: REVISITING LOST HUMANISM AND PARENTIFICATION IMPULSE

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ABSTRACT: This paper examines the Skolombo-street children of Calabar. It also investigates the reason for their continued existence, the derivatives in form of social and economic insecurity, inequality and other monstrosities visible in their presence. It questions the oblivious role of the institutions responsible for the care of the child, and parentification impulse as well as the lost humanism which existed in high premium in traditional African society resisted and reflected by text and language. The study is anchored upon Theo Van Leeuwen's perspective on Critical Discourse Analysis which primarily studies the way social-power abuse and inequality are enacted, reproduced, legitimized, and resisted by text and talk in the social and political context. The study is a qualitative research conducted with the eclectic research methodologies such as biography, Participant Observation and Conversation. Among other findings, this study reveals that the Cross river state government has not provided enough fair ground to fully tackle the social and economic needs of the street child, that the desired comfort has not been provided for the girl child and that they have not been able to fully integrate the Skolombo into the echelon of the privileged. Conclusively, this has created spaces for youth delinquency, thievery, moral laxity and decadence. In the light of the findings, it is recommended that the government needs to put alternative and effective measures to play with the aim to curbing the menace of Skolombo and the street child culture. There ought to be an implementation of the child right

act in the global space in order to reduce the molestation and marginalization of the boy and girl child. Stringent punishment should be meted on parents, religious leaders and guardians who subject children to unnecessary molestation. Religious leaders and parents should be sensitized about the need to integrate their children within the family, intervention should be made compulsory.

KEYWORDS: parentification, integrative humanism, language, CDA, binaries of power, capability deprivation

INTRODUCTION

Street children in Nigeria: From general to the Scolombo and Lacasera girls

Nigeria has her fair share of the street children phenomenon. This tradition holds sway in almost all her regions. Children whose lives are abused from home as a result of religious and cultural belief and due to poverty (Okam 2019: 2) are commonly found in the country. In Southern Nigeria, one witnesses innumerable group of children and adults (who started as children) infiltrate the streets of cities, roaming the corners of villages and taking solace in inhuman places unworthy for a child born by parents that belong to a community. Some of these people are tagged *Agberos, Boys Oye, Skolombo*, and so on as the names vary in different geographical spaces in the south. In the same vein, in Northern Nigeria, there abounds the Almajiri culture, where children who ought to be in their parents' homes but due to religious practices are displaced at tender ages of five years and above to live with their religious instructors. In his seminal research on the Almajiri tradition, Zakir, Abubakar, Lawal, Imrana, Habibu, Hassan, & Harande (2014:129) affirms that "in almost every street, corner, junction - especially in the north are young, homeless, poor, neglected and maltreated children seen roaming the streets begging for food and alms. These children are called the *Almajiris* (a student who leaves his parents for quranic education...when such Almajiris return to their villages, they participate in the act of selling and taking drugs". Zakir states further that "the Mallams/Alaramma *(both female and male instructors)* do not allow their children to mingle with the Almajiris to the extent that they allow their own children to attend formal school (Zakir et al. 2014:129). This fully captures the exclusion of the street child from the society in Northern Nigeria-what Jurgen Herbamas, Gayatri Spivak, Homi Bhabha, Ranajit Guha, El Habib Louia and Antonio Gramsci in their studies on power, ideology and subaltern postcolonial discourse articulate as the degradation and dehumanization of the other. The other, are those categories of people who have been dwarfed by those in the center of discourse. They are women, the black race, LGBT, and minor ethnic nationalities that have been placed at the margin for ages. Children in this category could also be situated within this context since they are also prone to the dehumanisation of the other. This dehumanisation on the other hand, constructs the view of the life to approaching socio-cultural issues. This manifestation is fully captured in social vices and moral decadence perpetuated by these children. The Skolombo experience in Cross River State, Nigeria is not an exception.

In fact, PIND report (2017:1) makes us understand that:

> The Cross River State capital has been faced with rising insecurity as a result of violence and criminality attributed to street children locally called "Skolombo Boys" and "Lacasera Girls." These homeless children beg for alms and scavenge for recyclable materials on the street and have become a problem to residents of the state. From roaming the street for survival in bands, some have formed into criminal gangs. They have been associated with incidents of robbery, kidnapping, rape, pick-pocketing, and drug abuse.

The adverse effect of the street child on the socio-economy therefore cannot be overemphasized. The absence of care distorts and obscures the future of the child who grows to become a menace to the society. This is what Amartya Sen (1999:14) terms "capability deprivation". The major challenges the Skolombo child faces are lack of money, inadequate parental care and ideological excesses that prepare them toward a future of inhumanity, hate and dispassion and above all to see nothing worth existing for when death could mean a better beginning for them.

This brings us to the concept of inclusion and exclusion, as drivers of the continued existence of the Skolombo. By inclusion we mean the bond of unity that exists between individuals and their social environment. This is created by a condition where people find a space in the society. In their study on the inclusion and exclusion dichotomy, Gidley. J. M, Hampson, G.P., Wheeler, L., & Bereded-Samuel, E. (2010:47) aver that

> from the perspective of social justice ideologies, increasing social inclusion is about human rights, egalitarianism of opportunity, human dignity, and fairness for all. It may or may not be linked to economic interests, but its primary aim is to enable all human beings to participate fully in society with respect for their human dignity.

This requires the creation of a good atmosphere with infrastructure and specific activities together that enables one to respond meaningfully to his felt needs and those of his immediate community and avoid the derivative of being a threat to the society. We examine the opposite of social inclusion as social exclusion. This stems from the fact that the terms are relatively categorical binaries that either suggests a person's vulnerability or capability. The quote below fully articulates a contradiction.

> We live in the state and in society; we belong to a social circle which jostles against its members and is jostled by them; we feel the social pressure from all sides and we react against with all our might; we experience a restraint to our free activities and we struggle to remove it; we require the services of other [people] which we cannot do without; we pursue our own interests and struggle for the interests of other social groups, which are also our interests (Allman 2018:1).

Allman went further to expound that

social exclusion describes acts of social stratification across human and animal societies, as a principle to reflect the ordering that occurs within societies to determine social position, and as a narrative to explain and at times justify why

one or more groups merit access to the core or the periphery, to the benefit or expense of others (Allman 2012: 7).

The "elements of exclusion like deprivation and inequality as phenomena that occur at the very margins of society, and by extension, are to ignore social structures that influence the included as well as the excluded" (Bowring quoted by Allman 2012: 9). It is against the background of inclusionism that we deduce the appropriateness of what social exclusion portends. Thus, our discussion of the term inclusion and exclusion investigates the society and how the deprived have found a way to be included in the systems that ostracizes them.

However, we must understand that precursory to the colonial experience, traditional African societies were characterized by proper establishment of families.

Family functions were patterned by pathways, governed by mores and reinforced by moral codes for proper child socialization and upbringing... community opinion and spirit governed the behavior of parents in terms of child rearing practices and so parents tended to conform to the standard so as to avoid the sanctions from the community (Geertz 1975: 144).

However, colonial and neocolonial processes coupled with capitalist and religious culture(s) displaced the ever favourable Nigerian cum African norms and ethos. Against this backdrop, the questions that emanate from these studies are, how have religion and the family affected the exclusionist and inclusionist culture characteristic of the street child in Nigeria-especially as it relates to the Skolombo practice in Cross rivers state? And what measures can be used to humanise and parentisise the Skolombo child in Cross River State? What measures can be used to involve every stakeholder in the resocialisation, and humanisation of the Skolombo? Furthermore, this study examines how these children understand their situation in the street and how they identify themselves in the homeless experience. It investigates how they can access social assistance.

The street child lives in slums and ghettos in the cities. Paradigms of the rigours of the life experienced by them - the Skolombo inclusive are well captured in popular culture-film, on television drama, theatrical performances, poetry, music among others. The street child malaise forms the crux of films such as *Totsi, Jonny Mad Dog, New Jerusalem,* among others. Their homelessness makes them take solace in having abodes in uncompleted buildings, markets, motor parks among other odd places. While walking on the streets is the norm for them, they also engage in some kind of economic activity including scavenging in dustbins, carrying loads for people in the marketplaces and all sorts of menial jobs. They also live on the street (of the street) and children from street families (abandoned) these ones live outside the normal family environment and maintain occasional ties with their families and fending for themselves outside the family homes (UNICEF 2007: 2).

According to PIND (2017: 3) report, "in recent times Calabar, the Cross River State capital has been faced with the problem of Skolombo. The skolombo (scolombo) is a name for street children in Calabar the capital city of Cross River State-Nigeria. But what led to the emergence of the Skolombo? A lot of issues led to their emergence. Ak-

pan (2015:1) affirms that "the major cause or origin of Scolombo could be traced to the family and the church". The accusations of witchcraft by mostly Pentecostal churches and traditional religion practitioners are some of the prime causes of Skolombo practice. Lack of parental care, high poverty rate, maltreatment and abandonment of children when a parent dies have also been major reasons for this Miasma. This makes these children to go to the street and mix up with miscreants who introduce them to the hard way of survival. They have also been linked with incidents of kidnapping, rape, cult clashes, and political violence among other vices. Some children are also of single parenthood. Paradigmatically, in cases where their mothers are unable to fend for them, such children tend towards taking to the street. In a conversation with a social worker, Mr John Ekpe, (Akpan 2015: 1) states that:

> Some parents are running up and down looking for what to eat. Some leave children with housemaids. How they dress or grow up do not matter again to parents. In those days, parents check, but now we harbour anything in our home. These help to spoil our home. All of us are responsible for these problems, including the church. You go there, they will call a child a witch. There is no job and poverty has taken over. There is poverty in the midst of plenty, but there is money in the hands of a few. Some people even sell their children to make money. There is a total breakdown in the family system.

According to PIND Report (2017: 1), "in 2015, the Cross River State government inaugurated a special security task force code-named *Operation Skolombo* to address the menace of street children in the state capital. This initiative, however, has not been able to effectively address the problem as violence and criminality associated with street children is still prevalent, particularly in Calabar". With the failure of the government in curbing this menace, the question that emanates in the next section of the paper is, what measures can be used to humanize the Skolombo child in Cross River State?

METHODOLOGY OF RESEARCH AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The study adopts an eclectic research method- a conglomeration of diverse methodologies of research (Kumar: 2013: 1). This includes such methodologies as observation, conversational and biographic tools. Furthermore, in order to analyze the emerging issues and answer the key questions arising from this research, the frame of parentification and humanism provides an understanding of the monstrous derivatives of the Skolombo as each concept places a strong emphasis on the causal elements of their condition. The research also proffers ways in which normalcy through platforms that enable liberal and conservative discourses using soft power and other conversational methodologies can be restored.

To create basis for the argument in this study, it is necessary to situate it within a methodological stance/s that could complement the foregoing. Thus, the adoption of eclectic approach is pertinent. Ozumba (2010:41) describes eclecticism as the "systematic joining of ideas or facts for the purposes of meaningful picturing of reality. It

involves *borrowing*, n*etworking*, *sifting* and *gluing* ideas or facts together. Eclecticism is derisive of other methods thus not foreclosing free participation and articulation. The import of this method is because of the complexities of the population of study regarding their orientation and context of study. If a strict formal research method is applied, getting the Skolombo to participate will end in energy dissipation. Thus, the justification of combining these tools. The methodological plurality we will be looking at are: Observation, Biographical and Conversational methodologies. On this premise, it is pertinent to examine the views of scholars on the observation orientated form of research. Participant observation serves as an instrument for this research. This enables the researcher to generate themes systematically by being involved in the context of the research as well as observing the behaviors of the population of study.

At the level of biographical methodology, it is the basic way to get to know the social reality through the study "of the personal relationships through which the individual expresses his experiences and communicates ways of understanding the social reality (Gorzko 2004:1). The subject of research in the biographical approach is life of a particular person presented by him or her in a narrative form (Bednarz–Łukaszewska 2012 quoted by Babara Chojnacka 2008). This helps the subject in learning the reality in which he functions and which he co-creates (Trzebiński 2002 quated Babara Chojnacka 2018). By telling about events from his life, the individual can reflect upon his experiences and interpret them. The biographical narrative interview helps the researcher with gathering information about the individual perception of the world, the closest surroundings, and experiences by the participant of the research. The subject presents his past – the course of his life from his own point of view.

Furthermore, the study also involves conversation with the street children. "Conversation suggests a connection that is sustained" (Feldman 1999:1). Amongst the characteristics of conversation is an 'exchange of views... that consists of connected remarks. Another characteristic of conversation is cooperation and a will to participate. Buchmann (2002:4) notes that "people do not insist that partners follow, it is enough that they enter into conversation". The validity of conversation in research cannot be overemphasized. Personnel engaged in with interview in the study are in the Skolombo of Lemna Camp Calabar. They are this researcher, three members of the Non-Governmental Organization offering the Skolombo help through preaching of the word of God, feeding, and general welfare within their capability. In addition, a student of the university where the researcher works also comes to the fore in the conversation process.

The study is anchored upon Theo Van Leeuwen's perspective on Critical Discourse Analysis. CDA "primarily studies the way social-power abuse and inequality are enacted, reproduced, legitimated, and resisted by text and talk in the social and political context" (Van Dijk 2015:466). Critical Discourse Analysis abbreviated CDA, "provides the reader with valuable and pertinent results" (Allagbe and Amoussu 2018:11). Fairclough and Woodak (1997:259) in *Critical Discourse Analysis* summarize Van Leeuwen's main tenets of CDA viz:

1 CDA addresses social problems
2 Power relations are discursive

3 Discourse constitutes society and culture

4 Discourse does ideological work

5 Discourse is historical

6 The link between text and society is mediated

7 Discourse analysis is interpretative and explanatory

8 Discourse is a form of social action

The eight tenets provided by Fairclough and Woodak are used to interrogate the place of power and dominance in the examination of the Skolombo street child in Cross River State. Furthermore, integrative humanism serves as the theoretical base for our emotional and mental discourse.

REFLECTIONS ON POSITIONING: CAPABILITY DEPRIVATION, LOST HUMANISM AND PARENTIFICATION

Parentification is a salient attribute of the street child phenomenon. The term parentification refers to "the process through which children are assigned the role of an adult, taking on both emotional and functional responsibilities that typically are performed by the parent. The parent, in turn, takes the dependent position of the child in the parent-child relationship" (Engelhardt 2012: 45). In this context, there is a distortion of positions where the child is not only independent, he also plays the role of the parent whose biological parents become dependent on them. Parentification is most times disadvantageous. This stems from the fact that it becomes a burden on the child who does not enjoy the benefits of dependency. Due to the dislocation of positions, the child is made to believe that he/she must fend for himself and also for the parents and those around him. He becomes conscious of the obligation(s) the society has placed upon him. Globally, and especially in third world countries, parents who encounter financial difficulty sometimes turn to their children for financial assistance. Mehta (2019: 11) argues that parentification is a "form of child labour". This transcends the physical manhandling of the child. It also encompasses the psychological. Emotional and even spiritual distortion of the humanity of the child.

In Nigeria, some parents promote the street hawking tradition. While they sit in the confine of their homes, they compel the children to take a particular commodity into the street for sale. Paradigmatically, some of the interviewed Skolombo and Lacasera children make us understand that they prostitute, steal and indulge in other vices in order to fend for the aged parents and grandparents. Most parentified children amongst the Skolombo and Lacasera girls are deprived of their capability in the formal sector. They are not given the opportunity to explore the formal education which in turn inhibits and deprive them from bringing their capability to the fore. The parentified child is a child who is dispossessed of humanity. This dehumanisation in turn caused isolation and depression. Isolation and depression set in when the child at such a tender age is unable to cope with the rigours of life created by the society. Parentification therefore could be "instrumental (physical) or emotional" (Mehta 2019:13). While the former involves the child being assigned tangible tasks, in the latter, the child becomes the parent's confidant or intermediary.

This notwithstanding, any attempt to reintegrate the child back into the fold of humanism would otherwise amount to applying what Ozumba calls "Njikoka" - Integrative humanism - a rational construct that attempts to vouchsafe man's ultimate happiness through proper and authentic earthly existence (Ozumba & Chimakonam 2014:7). It is about being an "agent of penetrating and pervading harmony in the community of humans whether at the family, village, state, tribe, national international or institutional levels" (Ozumba and Chimakonam 2014: 8). The fundamental of this is teamwork "Ijikota aka onu" or "Ofu Obi" (Ozumba and Chimakonam 2014: 8). This is why Theatre for development method is advocated in this work as a veritable platform to actualize the rehumanisation.

REHUMANIZING THE STREET CHILD: THE CASE OF THE SKOLOMBO

The United Nations' Child's right act has always advocated for the protection of the child. It has always reiterated that "domestic courts can be a powerful catalyst for enforcing claims of rights holders and promoting accountability on the part of duty bearers. Efforts should be made to promote public interest litigation on behalf of women and children" (Goonesekere and Alwis 2005:47). Appropriate measures must be taken for children such as the Skolombo to be integrated into the society. This is an integrative humanist model where the society must absorb these street children by first teaching them the moral and accepted socio-cultural norms of the society. Then integrating them back into their families as well as creating a capability ground for their survival since one of the reasons of their continued existence is the recourse to economic opportunities.

Humanism believes in an ethics or morality that grounds all human values in this-earthly experiences and relationships and that holds as its highest goal the this-worldly happiness, freedom, and progress—economic, cultural, and ethical—of all humankind, irrespective of nation, race, or religion…in a far-reaching social program that stands for the establishment throughout the world of democracy, peace, and a high standard of living on the foundations of a flourishing economic order, both national and international… with full freedom of expression and civil liberties, throughout all areas of economic, political, and cultural life (Lamont Corliss 1997: 14-15). Ozumba (1997:58) also presupposes that integrative humanism is key to the rational construction which attempts to vouch for man's ultimate happiness through proper and authentic earthly existence.

Conversation with Skolombo: 14 samples

It is very pertinent to clarify that 30 conversations where held with the skolombo with the help of the members of the Non Governmental Organization taking care of them and a Master's Degree student of the Department of Theatre, Film and Carnival Studies, University of Calabar-Nigeria. Out of the 30 samples 14 were taken as they reflect the concerns of the others not stated here.

Sample 1. My name is Effiong Edet Effiom. (Male) I am from Ikot Ansa in Calabar municipal. My Aunt told me I was born in the year 2000. I used to stay with my parents. My father is late. My mother abandoned me and travelled to Lagos as I was told. My father has a house he left behind. My uncles said they were going to be paying my fees from the rent of the rooms, but my uncles did not pay. They took my father's properties. That is why my mother's brother took me to Odukpani. My father's friend took care of me, then my maternal uncle later took me to Odukpani. But my uncle's wife didn't take care of me much. She was always accusing me of stealing even when I didn't commit the offense. She was always keeping me hungry. Then a friend of mine named Shola, told me about this camp. Then I was attending Comprehensive Secondary School, Odukpani. I was in Junior Secondary Class 1. Here in Lemna Camp, we only feed by selling scrapes. We scavenge for plastics, aluminum, bottles, irons, rods, etc. We pack them and heap them until the heap reaches the level of selling. For the metals, it's sold #30 per kilo. For the disposable empty water bottle containers, it goes for #15 per kilo. We sell it each week; sometimes we could make up to 5 or 10 thousand naira in a month. But before then, we borrow #2000 from Obongowan- our master to feed, then, refund after selling. We have four masters here. My own master's name is Island. Each of us belong to them respectively. Also, I give part of my money to a food vendor, so that I can be getting food to eat, and when I don't have money, she will be giving me food on credit.

On Saturdays, these people (pointing to the NGO team) come to feed us and discuss with us to know how we are doing. Some of us give them our money to keep for us. Also, some people come here to give us clothes and shoes. The greatest challenge we have is hunger, because we stay hungry too much, especially when there is nothing to pick. Mosquitoes bite us so much. Our houses at times drip water when the rain falls. Then bigger ones intimidate us too. We don't really have time to sleep because those refuse trucks come mostly in the night, and we have to be awake to struggle for the scraps, if not no food for us and no money too. People also abuse us when we go out to pick scraps too. At times, I fall ill. I would like to go back to school to be able to have a certificate. I don't like this place (He ended the conversation when a friend of his distracted him with a drink).

Sample 2. Esther Edet Udo (female), Ikot Ekpene LGA, Akwa Ibom State. I am ten years old. I stay with my mother; my father is late. He died in Ikot Ekpene, so mummy relocated to Calabar. It's been up to three months since I came here. My siblings are here with me. We used to live at Ikot Enebong, around 8th mile. We had a house there. When my daddy died, my uncles had a dispute with my mummy over our house. It was a big quarrel which resulted in the arrest and imprisonment of my mum. It was not easy for us. So, when mummy returned, she could not afford to rent a house, so we came here to live. My mum is inside the camp working as I am talking to you. I used to go to school. I was in primary four.

The name of my school was Nassarawa Primary School, Calabar. We select refuse objects and sell to feed. We gather them until it gets to a certain level, then we sell them. At times we sell up to a thousand naira, at times up to three thousand. After selling, we give our money to Obongowan – our leader here to keep for us. My challenge is that I will have to make money to feed my siblings too. This place is too cold, and we do not have enough clothes. Sometimes we stay hungry and we will have to go and beg for money or pick foods from refuse bins in town to feed myself and my younger ones. Mosquitoes bite us so much. I want to go back to school so that I can read and write. If you can, please help me.

Sample 3: My name is Iniobong Akpan John (male). I am from Ibiono local government area, Akwa Ibom State. It's like I'm up to 12 or 15 years (From his look, he is above 18). My father is late, and my mother left us while we were still young. We reside here in Calabar. Our house is quite close. Most times I go home when I finish selling my goods. We are nine in number, and I am the first son. I try to support my siblings that are in school financially and provide food too. I came to this camp in December 2017. We feed by selling objects - plastic disposable water containers, aluminum, irons, rods, etc. I keep them for up to a month before selling them at the price of #12, 000. Within the month, while I wait, I pick disposable bottle water containers to sell as to be able to feed. The measurement for the disposable water plastics is, when we collect it, we fill it in a mosquito net, and that goes for #1,200 for 20kilos. It's not easy to gather up to that amount to sell. I don't have much challenges because I go home often. Others don't intimidate me because I am also big. Nobody steals here, because we have not heard that anybody's wares have been stolen before. Obongowan does not want anybody to fight because we are like a family here. My major challenge is waiting to sell off my wares because that is when I get money. I had to struggle to get this boot I am wearing when an NGO came to assist us with few, it wasn't easy at all (smiles mischievously). I would like to go to school up to university level. I am coming (He ran away with a shout out to his friend).

Sample 4. My name is Eunice Christopher Edet (aka Mma Ette). I am from Idep Offiong Umoh, Akpabuyo LGA of Cross-river State. I am 14 years old. My father is still alive. He stays at Uwanse Street, Calabar. Nobody pursued me from home; I came to see my brother and since then I have not decided not to go back home. My parents are alive. My mother comes here at times to check on us. Me too, I visit them once in a while. How we feed is that "Obongowan", my master gives me wares to go and sell. Only few clothes that I have. I don't like here, I would like to go back to school (interference in a friendly manner from one of the NGO members), *You don't like here and you are still here because of your BF. Mmmh HIV is real oo.* (Eunice runs away) *You can see how she is flaunting her well-manicured nails. In the night she and others go to sleep with those lorry drivers over there. And when the return, their boyfriends here take some of the money from them and still sleep with them unhindered.*

Sample 5. My name is Ezekiel Anietie Okon (male). I am from Ikono LGA, Akwa Ibom State. I don't know my age. I have been here in this place since 2010. My mother left me in Ikot Ekpene; my father abandoned me in the hands of my (paternal) grandmother. Then my brother died and I'm the only one left. So one day I accompanied a friend to Calabar. It was my first time. I lived on the street before I came here. Since then, I don't even know where my father is. Every morning, we wake up very early to wait for the refuse trucks. We scavenge for scraps we sell to make money. We also look for clothes, shoes, even foods that are not completely spoilt - we eat them. People used to come and give us food always, but not anymore except this people (NGO) who come when they can. It hasn't been easy. As you can see, we are many here. If you go up there (in the camp), you will see we are more than 100 or 200 people. We are all attached to different Masters who look after us. At times, I fall ill, and when we fall ill, we buy medicine from the pharmacy, but like now I'm having cough and catarrh. I'm waiting to sell my wares so I can go and buy medicines. And there is too much mosquitoes and cold, but we are used to this harsh situation now *(If I buy medication for you will you take? I won't give you money because... don't you smoke?)*. I will (He smiled) we (gesticulating smoking) just do a little. (Pointing at the boys that were smoking by the plantain trees). Sometimes we need to do hard things to allow us to do the hard jobs in the camp. I would like to learn a trade. Something like bag making or blending of soup condiments. I'd like to learn any handwork (craft).

Sample 6. My name is Favour Asuquo Edet (female). I am from Idundu village in Akpabuyo LGA, Cross River State. I am 14 years I am an orphan. I grew up with my grandmother. So, while staying there, my big aunty whose children were not living with her (because I didn't meet any) took me to her house to stay with her. I used to attend Bishop King Inyang Primary School, close to Edgerly Street, Calabar South. So, I continued schooling at my Aunt's place. I was not always given food, and I was always driven for fees. So, I started going out and returning late. My aunt got angry and accused me of associating with witches and stopped me from eating her food. I was starving and started taking her money to feed. Then she pursued me from home completely. In this place that I am Obongowan gives us wares to hawk and make returns. We feed from it. My only problem is that I don't have clothes and I don't feed well. I need money. I'd like to go back to school. There is a place at Queen Duke Street I could stay with my friend there and be attending school. That my friend, I once stayed with them after my aunty pursued me from home. While staying there, I used to hawk boiled groundnuts. I once accompanied that my friend to Anambra to (silence) ...when we returned, I decided to come here and stay because I was not getting money. But, now its school that I want (She was given a pat on the back by their NGO friends, in relation to the unsaid. But I needed to know in clear terms what that description is, so from her explanation, I got that prostitution couldn't favor them in Anambra).

Sample 7. My name is Esther Effong Edet, I am fourteen years old, from Oduk-

pani Local Government area of Cross River State. My parents are dead. I was staying with my uncle who accuses me always of killing my parents. This accusation is like a threat because he usually tells me to sleep with him before he pays my school fees. I refused his sexual advances and left the hose when I discovered the Lemna Dump site. I joined other children to pick scrapes from the refuse bins. I don't like this job, but I rather stay on it than going back to my uncle.

Sample 8. I won't tell you my name. My parents are in Ikang. I just need help. I don't want to stay in the dump anymore (She *has been raped many times by bigger boys outside the camp. Even the lorry drivers sometimes sleep with her without giving her money. She is facing a lot of subjugation from the boys here because she doesn't have a permanent big boy friend here*).

Sample 9. My name is Gift Michael Okon. I am from Ibekue in Uyo axis of Akwa-Ibom State. I came from a family of three girls and two boys. Our parents are dead. I was living with a man and one day in 2017 my brother came and beat him up because he has not paid my bride price. Out of anger, the man left me, and my child and I was pregnant with the second child. So, I came to the Waste management site through the help of a friend called Promise. My first child is 9 years old. His name is Moses ThankGod Ibiang, the second is David ThankGod Ibiang. He is five months old   People usually come here to give us aids. They call us skolombo and that name is derogatory because of what the society ascribe to it. *(Looking fiercely into my eyes)* I am a hustling woman. The way you teach to earn a living is the way I pick scrapes to earn a living. People who eat Nigeria money are not skolombo but a group of people who come together under one interest to do legal business is skolombo. By the way who gives the boys gun for thuggery. Just leave me alone. I am tired of all this stereotyping and insult. (I embrace her, wiped her tears with my towel and she relaxes. After a while the conversation continues). I am saving my money now to train my children. I can't watch them suffer here.

Sample 10: My name is David Eyo Okon. I am from Ikot Nakanda in Akpabuyo Akpabuyo local Government Area of Cross River. I am 15 years old. My mother returned one day and told me that she was told by the Church (author withheld name) said that I am a witch. I joined some people I know to do this job of picking scrapes. I make #500 daily with a woman that collects daily contribution from us. When I get that money, I will run to my paternal grandmother's house.

Sample 11: Peace Bassey Okon. 17 years old. I don't know my father. When my mother died, my grandmother always maltreats me after taking alcohol. She did not put me in school. I saw one of my friends called Favor and she brought me here. I was deceived that some people will help us go to school, but that was not the case. I sleep with Tipper drivers and other men and they pay me N1000 every night. When they don't want to pay, they beat me up. I use condom to protect myself, but when I miss my period, I take drugs. I was once raped by three of our boys at Watt Market Complex Centre. They took turns without condom. If I

shout, they beat me, after raping me, they left with my money. Even these ones here sleep with us any time they are in need, they beg us, and they don't beat us. I have spent five Christmas here. I have tested for HIV and I am not positive. I am afraid and will like to leave here.

Sample 12: My name is Emmanuella Bassey Ason (she withheld where she came from). I am 14 years old. I used to pick scrapes and I stopped. I am not doing anything. (Interference by one of them… "Say what you do"). Leave him, the bigger boys have sex with us forcefully. If you refuse, they choke you. Three of them can sleep with you in a day if you refuse to give them (interference from a regular caregiver… "Ma they sleep with each other. But it shocked them when Alice died of HIV/Aids. But they still do it"). Ma please take my phone and call me anytime you want to take me out of here. (I took the number and dialed to confirm). (Her tears and expression made me to call her afterwards to ask how she didn't stay long with me, but discovered that she was assaulted by a boy that day who forced her into sex when she is feeling sick and hungry, I am still in contact with her).

Sample 13. My name is Emmanuel Samuel David. I am from somewhere in Oron, Udesiegieti in Mbo LGA I am eighteen years old. I collect Scrapes, I do laundry for people too. I live in Afokang by Okon Inyang I make an average of #1000 daily. Sometimes I don't get a kobo (Nigerian coin) I live in katakpo. I had a girlfriend before but now no. I want to be alone (Interference) (Why will he have a girlfriend when he can sleep with anyone, he likes… eeh!). My dad is a timber dealer with two wives and 12 children. And my mum a petty trader. She has six of us. I stopped school at SSI. The Oga here buys our goods (Scrapes) some of these girls you see leave us here and go to tanker drivers to prostitute. (Grins mischievously) Anyway I use condom on them. (Walks out like a giant oppressor).

Sample 14: My name is Happiness Victor Edet, I am from Ikpe in Ibiono LGA of Akwa-Ibom State. I am 18 years old (Interference. You? Eighteen?) (… no! they are lying because they know you are no more a child when you are above 18. You will find out, says the lady with the NGO), I am pregnant for somebody, but we are not married. His name is Idongesit, he is also from Akaw-Ibom. I don't know if we will marry, I can leave the child for him after birth but on the condition that he settles my elder brother because my parents are dead. I don't like the character he is showing me now, so I can't marry him. I am seven months pregnant, when I struggle, he will eat from it, have sex with me any time he feels to. As I am, I have 4 children, two boys for him and two girls for my late husband. He said he is not the owner of the children so he cannot feed them. My parents are dead, my partner is living in my mum's house. I come here with these children, most times we sleep here, and when it's convenient for us we go home. I don't want to farm. I like picking scrapes with my children, and I make twenty to fifty thousand naira per month. I save greater part of the money so that I will send my children to school. (She protects here children, but the girl wants freedom and the boys are all willing to be the first to give her independence). (Have they given her? I

asked. She spoke to a male there and he laughs and immediately frown his face).

A DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF THE SKOLOMBO INCLUSION AND EXCLUSION IMPULSES

This discourse analysis looks at the language of the skolombo in the presented conversation. Van Leeuwen articulates that the link between text and society is mediated. This mediation is facilitated by language-the medium through which ideas are passed across by an encoder to a decoder. Asouzu (2007: 87) contends that "Language is a cognitive act of the mind". To understand the skolombo perception of their reality, we have to look read their language. This is because, "It is in language that coherence and order that characterize a man's action as something logical are objectified and made evident. It is not restricted to mental discourse but stretched out to all modes of communication as something meaningful both to us and our world" (Asouzu 2007: 86-88).

I implore a sympathetic and experiential understanding to the narratives of the skolombo. This sis because of the challenges in the country resulting in hunger, strain in parental and family relationship (Okam 2019: 38). Thus, producing a reason for the skolombo recourse to destructive inclusion.

Van Leeuwen's perspective on critical discourse analysis posits that power relations are discursive. The discursivity of power articulates that power is in the hands of the privileged.

In the conversation with Effiong Effiom Edet, an occupant of the Lemna Camp, the Skolombo narrates how he is being maltreated and accused falsely by his aunt led to his venturing into the street world. His statement below fully captures the fact that power is in the hands of the priviledged (from Sample 1).

It reflects that the child's lack of power leaves him at the mercy of the powerful in the society. Furthermore, Van Leeuwen notes that Critical Discourse Analysis addresses social problems. In other words, the Skolombo menace is a social construct. These street children are constructed by the society. This researcher's conversation with the some of the street children reveals that their parents are still alive while they - the street children endeavor to fend for themselves. This is an exemplar of parentification- a situation where the child is excluded from a life of humanism and included into a harsh reality that serves a better course for him at the immediate. The parents' inability to cater for the children pushes them into the street to source for means of livelihood. In a conversation with Eunice Christopher Edet, the researcher realizes that the girl's parents are still alive. In so far, the state of poverty in the home, which is a product of the society, forces her into prostitution. She reveals that she is 14 years old and that she sleeps with lorry drivers for financial gratification. In fact, she states that:

> Eunice: My father is still alive. He stays at Uwanse Street, Calabar. Nobody pursued me from home; I came to see my brother and since then I have not decided not to go back home. My parents are alive. My mother comes here at times to check on us. Me too, I visit them once in a while. How we feed is that "Obon-

gowan", my master gives me wares to go and sell.

Like the parents of some other street children, Eunice's father and mother have no choice than to allow their daughter engage in prostitution and drug abuse. Girls such as her are popularly known as Lacasera girls. This stems from the fact that it does not cost a man more than offering them a bottle of Lacasera or its financial equivalent to sleep with them.

Van Leeuwen's perspective on critical discourse analysis posits that Discourse is a form of social action. While the Skolombo miasma is a social action, the Cross River State government has also taken measures with the aim to curbing this social malaise. One of such measures is the inauguration of a special task force created in 2015 "code-named 'Operation Skolombo' to address the menace of street children in the state capital. This initiative, however, has not been able to effectively address the problem as violence and criminality associated with street children are still prevalent, particularly in Calabar" (PIND Report 2017:1). This punitive measure is not what is really needed. Socio-economic exclusion is linked with poverty, and deprivation. Here deprivation is seen within the ambit of capability deprivation- lack of capability to live a minimal descent life. It is the function of the community-the government to provide the capability ground that all its citizens should strive on (Sen: 2000:4).

 The Skolombo and Lacasera street children in Cross Rivers State are part of the historical process. In traditional African societies, there is the belief in witchcraft. It is the norm for children to be initiated into the witch cult with the food items. Many a time, a witch confesses that she was initiated into the witch cult by an older female neighbor, an aunt, a cousin, stepmother or even a family friend with a meal. This socio-cultural and historical process has led to the exclusion of such children from becoming part of the family, exclusion from family activities as well as parentification. In an interview, a Skolombo, named Favour Asuquo Edet makes us understand that her grandmother who she lives with sends her out of her (The grandmother) home on the ground that she (Favour) eats from outside the house, and must have been given witchcraft to eat. The grandmother's belief in Witchcraft from the traditional setting vis-a-vis her church and the society lead to her depriving Favour from eating her food. The history of havoc wrecked on the family and society by witches leads to Favour's exile from home. David Eyo Ekon, a victim of witchcraft accusation narrates his ordeal thus:

> David: My name is David Eyo Okon. I am from Ikot Nakanda in Akpabuyo Akpabuyo local Government Area of Cross River. I am 15 years old. My mother returned one day and told me that she was told by the Church (author withheld name) said that I am a witch. I joined some people I know to do this job of picking scrapes. I make #500 daily with a woman that collects daily contribution from us. When I get that money, I will run to my paternal grandmother's house.

Children such as Favour who have been degraded socially and psychologically, end up suffering from "low socioeconomic status, low educational achievement, mental illness including depression and substance abuse" (Allman 2013:8-10). The Skolombo female counterpart-the Lacasera girls end up engaging in early sexual behavior, which

on the other hand could metamorphose into contracting sexually transmitted diseases such as HIV and AIDS. Van Leeuwen's perspective on critical discourse analysis posits that discourse constitutes society and culture. Discourse is gotten from the society and culture. Culture determines the way discourse is approached. The relativity of culture portends that discourse is particular and must be approached as such. Discursive approaches change since societies and cultures are in a constant state of flux. The Skolombo discourse must be interpreted from within the African ambit and context. Africa within which Cross River State is situated detests incestuous relationships. Esther Effiong Edet, a fourteen years old's attempt to fend away her uncle's attempt to start an incestuous relationship with her, leads to her resorting to living in the Lemna Dump site for. Esther is accused of the death of her parents. This fully captures the rigors the child, especially the girl child goes through in the society Expectedly, the societal expectations of each gender predict such patterns of heterosexual behaviors he exudes (Onuekwe and Okam 2017: 37) but this has transcended normalcy to incestuous act. "The history of humanity shows that people seek power and tend to capitalize it and extend power over more and more territory, more subjects if they are able to". The event under discussion is an extension of such inhuman and immoral power (Anna Odrowaz-Coates 22017:17) Statements lends credit to this. In fact, Esther expatiates that she would rather remain in the Lemna camp site than go back to her uncle.

Most of the street boys and girls do not want to be called the name, Skolombo. They see the name as derogatory. Gift Michael Okon, a Skolombo complains about the manner in which people refer to them. Her interpretation of the name suggests her awareness that they are looked down upon in the society. They are being considered the dregs of the society. Their displacement and feeling of unhomeliness make them think they have been ostracized from the society and integration is almost impossible. Despite their almost helpless situation, they take solace ostracizing themselves from the oppressors. This fully reveals the reason some of them refuse to divulge their identity. In an interview with the researcher, a particular Lacasera girl (a female Skolombo) refuses to give her name. The conversation goes thus:

> Lacasera Girl: I won't tell you my name. My parents are in Ikang. I just need help. I don't want to stay in the dump anymore. (She has been raped many times by bigger boys outside the camp. Even the lorry drivers sometimes sleep with her without giving her money. She is facing a lot of subjugation from the boys here because she doesn't have a permanent big boy friend here).

In the bid for survival, the street child becomes a tool in the hands of the society which has facilitated his dehumanisation. In a broader spectrum, it has come to the fore that the populace's abuse of the Lacasera girls holds sways more to that of the Skolombo boys. While their male counterparts indulge in delinquency, petty thievery and other forms of social vices, the Lacasera girls are sexually abused by the Skolombo boys, lorry drivers, and other sex perverts. It is explicit that contracting HIV and AIDS, and carrying out abortion becomes the aftermath of such experiences.

HARMONISING RESOURCES FOR SKOLOMBO REHUMANISATION: THE CASE OF THEATRE FOR DEVELOPMENT

The idea of bringing stakeholders on a platform to engage their action would produce success towards humanising the Skolombo. The fact that the construction and reconstruction of a fair society occur when democratic situation, collectives cannot be overlooked in the discourse of cutting barriers of development. Children should be given the chance to air their position, as Smaradan Cioban posits that "liberation and emancipation perspective give greater value to children's ability to choose what is right in their interest, claiming that society should grant them the right to participation (2018:80). Thus, the author suggests a platform that stimulates participation, ownership, learning, negotiation, consensus, empowerment and accountability. I make bold to state that Theatre for Development has the capacity to mitigate the required culture needed for this function.

> It is a communication tool accessible to divergent community with simple engaging processes that can access their previous actions in order to inform their innovative techniques and avenues in how to bring specific activities together to respond meaningfully to his needs and that of his immediate community (Okam 2014: 75).

The TFD process includes but is not limited to these processes, familiarizing with issues and stakeholders. Using popular forms of communication which can help people identify problems and reflect on it and devise solutions towards making change in a particular initiative. Mda (1993: 181) acknowledges that through Theatre, people were able to analyse the structure of domination and dependence, to make their own resolution in response to and to decide the best methods of implementing the resolution because the messages come from their own perspective. This leads to Abah et al's (2009: 1) assertion that "TFD is a methodology for understanding complex problems while at once providing a tool for overcoming them".

Thus, this paper suggests that any individual or group should use this platform which progresses from community (of concern: ideological or cultural) participatory research, to analysis, to performance of issues generated before the various relations to the interrogation of the content of the performance. This progressively moves to stating categorically issues that enhance a particular situation and one that counters it. Having gone through these processes, actions are planned and interested stakeholders locate the action point of their preference for implementation. Monitoring and evaluation are required to ensure that actions identified are realised.

This fully captures how TFD encourages accountability to produce required development. As Shortall and Shucksmith (1998:75) posit that "development is about enabling communities to have greater control over their relationship with the environment and other communities". One will no doubt contend the fact that TFD can raise a discourse platform that levels the binaries of power for inclusivity, through the social positioning of all as humans in search of the good of their society whether as a receiver or capability provider. It is imperative to note that the aim of performance

in TFD is to reach consensus. "A consensus when it is not possible, the process at the very least exposes and clarifies the different views and allows the building of agenda for negotiation" (Guba &Lincoln 1989: 1).

CONCLUSION

The Cross-river state government has not provided enough fair ground to fully tackle the social and economic needs of the street child. The desired comfort has not been provided for the girl child. They have not been able to fully integrate the Skolombo into the echelon of the privileged. Molestation and marginalisation of the street child still hold sway in the Nigerian society. This has created spaces for youth delinquency, thievery, moral laxity and decadence. In the light of the above, the government needs to put alternative and effective measures to play with the aim to curbing the menace of Skolombo and the street child culture. There ought to be an implementation of the child right act in the global space in order to reduce the molestation and marginalisation of the boy and girl child. Stridgent punishment should be meted on parents, religious leaders and guardians who subject children to unnecessary molestation. Religious leaders and parents should be sensitised about the need to integrate their children within the family circle. Parenting intervention should be made compulsory.

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'NO ONE KNOWS ANYTHING': KINSHIP CAREGIVERS AND THEIR EXPERIENCES WITH SOCIAL SERVICES IN POLAND

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ABSTRACT: This paper provides a window into the ways kinship caregivers of elderly persons and people with disabilities describe their experiences with social services in Poland. Kinship caregivers in Poland, the majority of whom are women, often struggle with inadequate access to social services dedicated to people with disabilities and the elderly. One of the major issues faced by caregivers who try to secure these services, are complex rules and regulations which frequently make it very difficult to access information and assistance. By the way of critical discourse analysis, this paper examines letters by and interviews with kinship caregivers in Poland. These two data sets present the problems faced by kinship caregivers of elderly persons and people with disabilities who are frequently left frustrated by their interactions with the social services system and its gatekeepers. Therefore, the authors hope that this study will provide policymakers responsible for social policy in Poland with some useful insights and suggestions.
KEYWORDS: aging, caregiving, disability, family, gender

INTRODUCTION

The neoliberal reforms introduced in Poland after the collapse of state socialism in 1989 have resulted in the outsourcing of much of state's responsibility for providing care to children, people with disabilities, and the elderly to ordinary citizens, mostly women. Glass and Fodor (2007) argue that after 1989 policymakers in Poland have "pursued a form of 'private maternalism' in which the market and the family have become the primary institutions of welfare provision" (2007: 325). Nowadays, as a result of these neoliberalizing efforts, people with disabilities and elderly persons as well as their kinship caregivers have very limited access to assisted care, even though this type of support is recommended by European disability policies (Priestley 2007). Consequently, elderly people and people with disabilities who require daily assistance can usually only count either on their relatives (mostly mothers and daughters) or (rarely) nursing homes. Due to this lack of state support in the area of assisted care, about two million Poles act as caregivers for their elderly or disabled family members (Żebrowski 2019).

The question of who is responsible for providing care to those people with disabilities and elderly persons who require daily assistance remains one of the thorniest issues of Polish social policies. Therefore, the primary goal of this paper is to analyze, by the way of critical discourse analysis, the ways kinship caregivers of people with disabilities and elderly persons describe their experiences with social services in Poland. In order to achieve this, this paper asks the following questions: How do kinship caregivers rate their access to such vital information as applying for benefits among others? What are their experiences of dealing with the gatekeepers of the system, that is social workers and medical professionals among others? And, finally, how, in their opinion, social services available to people with disabilities, elderly persons and their kinship caregivers in Poland could be improved based on their lived experience? In addition, this paper will attempt to trace the effects caring for an elderly or disabled relative with little to no support from the state has on the wellbeing of caregivers.

DATA AND METHODOLOGY

This study will employ discourse analysis as a way of examining two data sets. The first data set consists of fourteen letters, editorials, and interviews that appeared in the online edition of *Gazeta Wyborcza*, one of the biggest Polish news outlets, and its affiliated portals in Spring 2018. We decided to look at these particular sources because they were published in the midst of two events that stirred a national debate on people with disabilities in Poland at that time. First, in March 2018 the conservative Life and Family Foundation announced their plan to ban abortion on the grounds of the irreversibly damaged fetus. Second, in April 2018 people with disabilities and their kinship caregivers began a forty-day occupation of the hall of the Polish parliament building demanding better benefits for people with disabilities and their caregivers. Hence, the majority of the sources in this data set were authored by or were written about people, mostly women, who act as kinship caregivers for their relatives, usually their children, with disabilities.

The second data set consists of twenty transcribed interviews with kinship caregivers of elderly persons collected by one of us (Katarzyna Szostakowska) in 2015. She conducted these interviews as a part of her doctoral research with kinship caregivers of elderly persons in Toruń, Poland. It has to be underscored that the data analyzed for the purpose of this study constitute just a small part of a larger research concerned with kinship caregivers of elderly persons in Poland. The analysis of the interviews was performed with the help of MAXQDA - a data analysis software used by researchers who collect qualitative data. Similarly to the sources from the first data set, the majority of the interviews collected in the second data set were conducted with women (eighteen out of twenty interviews), who were daughters, daughters-in-law, and wives of elderly persons who required their assistance. It has to be underscored that the sources in both data sets were originally provided in Polish and therefore some of them were later translated to English for the purpose of this study.

In order to answer our research questions, we will analyze both data sets by utilizing critical discourse analysis (CDA) defined by Baker and McEnery (2014) as "a way of doing discourse analysis from a critical perspective, which often focuses on the theoretical concepts such as power, ideology, and domination" (2014: 465). This implies that the analysis of linguistic features of secondary data cannot be conducted without an analysis of wider social context, which, in this case, are laws and regulations regarding the question of caregiving for people with disabilities and elderly persons as well as gender roles associated with certain types of labor such as caring.

CAREGIVING AS A GENDERED ISSUE

Across cultures, caring for children, people with disabilities, and elderly people is often considered women's work. Discussing this gendered division of care, Stacey (2011) argues that "the social organization of care is an outgrowth of the emotional and occupational sexual division of labor" (2011: 6). Poland is no exception in this regard. In the 1990s the postsocialist government of Poland engaged in the "re-reforming" of their citizens who were now expected to act as "individuals… 'actively' responsible for their own lives and the welfare of their families" (Gal and Kligman 2000:74). However, as Gal and Kligman accurately point out, the withdrawal of subsidies as a way of relieving state budgets meant that it was women, not abstract "individuals" and "families", who "[took] up even more of the slack in sick care, elder care, and child care" (2000:74). Much of this work remains grossly undervalued, a consequence of socialist definitions of household work performed by women as lacking value, in contrast to wage work associated with men (Gal and Kligman 2000). For example, as a result of the systematic devaluation of women's labor that persisted long after the collapse of state socialism, Polish caregivers of family members with disabilities not only receive a very small allowance for their work, but they also cannot take any extra jobs that could improve their and their family members' financial standing without risking their meager state allowance (Jabłonowska 2017; Klukowska 2017). In Poland, mothers are responsible for the majority of care provided to people with disabilities (Sekułowicz 1998). Mothers are the ones who usually have to give up their careers in order to take care

of their disabled children, since many fathers have trouble with coming to terms with the birth of a disabled baby (Sekułowicz 1998). Many of them abandon their families. For instance, in the 1990s the rate of students in "special" schools who did not live with both their parents was higher than average (Sekułowicz 1998). Sekułowicz (1998) argues that the stereotype of women solely responsible for caring for and raising children is particularly strong in Poland.

In Poland, women are also responsible for the majority of caregiving required by elderly persons who need assistance with their day-to-day activities. This assistance is usually provided by elderly persons' daughters or daughters-in-law who, at the same time, not only care for their aging parents, but often are also responsible for supporting their own children. Therefore, these daughters constitute what is referred to by some researchers as sandwich generation (Szatur-Jaworska, Błędowski, and Dzięgielewska 2006). However, it has to be underlined that women increasingly refuse to act as main caregivers to their aging parents, parents-in-law, and other family members requiring daily assistance (Giddens 2012). This may be caused by the strenuous and demanding, both physically and mentally, labor which constitutes a major part of the act of caregiving. Some researchers argue that due to the multitude of their duties kinship caregivers are often afflicted with the Sisyphus syndrome meaning that they eventually become burned-out as a result of fatigue and stress (Grochmal-Bach 2007). Ultimately, as a consequence of women's changing attitudes toward caregiving as well as their increasing awareness of difficulties and risks associated with providing care, the responsibility for caring is sometimes outsourced to paid professionals (Giddens 2012), however it has to be underscored that not every family can afford this type of external support (Zięba-Kołodziej 2014).

REGULATIONS

Assisted care and people with disabilities

Some researchers argue that since the collapse of state socialism in Poland, the country has been overly focused on economic issues, while ignoring social problems, which has ultimately led to the lack of coherent social public policy (Woźniak 2008). Similarly to Mladenov (2017), who points out that after 1989 formerly socialist countries of Central and Eastern Europe followed the path of neoliberalization of their social policies, Woźniak (2008) argues that the new social policy developed in Poland after the collapse of the socialist regime was largely focused on partial dismantling of laws introduced under state socialism. New authorities, however, failed to replace the old "socialist" approaches toward social issues with new legislation that would form the basis of consistent social policy (Woźniak 2008).

This lack of coherent social policy creates confusion for people with disabilities in Poland, as well as their caregivers. The question of who is responsible for providing care to those people with disabilities who require daily assistance remains one of the thorniest issues of Polish disability policy. For instance, the Charter of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities adopted in 1997, which is the most important legislation regarding people with disabilities in Poland, does not address the question of caregiving

at all. The Charter, which contains four paragraphs and is less than two pages long, declares that people with disabilities have the right to an "independent and active life" and that they cannot be discriminated against (Karta 1997). It further specifies that people with disabilities have the rights to medical care, education, psychological support, employment and accessible environment and public spaces among others (Karta 1997). It does not define, however, how exactly these rights are to be executed. Even though the Charter begins with the statement that people with disabilities have the right to independent living, it ignores the question of how people with disabilities who require care and assistance on a daily basis are expected to access this right. For example, even though the position of aide for people with disabilities ("asystent osoby niepełnosprawnej") was first officially recognized by the Ministry of National Education in 2001, and regulated in 2004, Polish disability rights activists argue that the access to this type of service is still very limited (Próchniewicz 2015). In addition, there are several limits as to who qualifies for the support of an aide. First, state-covered aides can be provided only if the household income does not exceed PLN 524 (USD 138) per person (Próchniewicz 2015). Second, for instance in Warsaw, a person requesting the support of a personal aide needs to be over eighteen years old and in possession of either a disability certificate stating that their disability level is either significant or moderate (which means that people with the mild disability level are not eligible for these services) or belong to the first or second "invalid group", or be certified as a person who has lost their capacity to work (Asystent 2013).

Even though since 2004 Poland has been a member state of the European Union, which requires its member states to provide people with disabilities with assistant care (Próchniewicz 2015), the country continues to lag behind the older members of the European Union. Poland entered the European Union at the time when disability policies were high on the agenda of the European Union and new binding conditions of membership had been introduced in terms of "nondiscrimination and structural adjustment towards disability equality" (Priestley 2007:69). Despite these slogans, the harmonization of disability policy within the European Union is hampered by differing social, political, and economic circumstances of its member states. Poland is an example of a member state which, in comparison with the older European Union members such as Germany, Sweden or Denmark among others, has limited economic resources that can be devoted to the task of implementing the objectives of European disability policy (Priestley 2007). Some researchers admit that "the combination of subsidiarity and EU enlargement means that the pursuit of a hard policy approach to disability… is not easily implemented through EU institutions" (Priestley 2007:70).

Social services and the elderly

In Poland, there exists a system of providing care and assistance to elderly persons. This system encompasses various forms of activities, whose main goal is to increase elderly people's participation in the social life of their communities as well as to enhance their physical and mental health. These various forms of public support are managed and administered by Family Support Centers (Ośrodki Pomocy Rodzinie

- OPR) and Municipal Social Support Centers (Miejskie Ośrodki Pomocy Rodzinie - MOPR) among others. According to the Social Welfare Act elderly persons (as well as people with disabilities) are also eligible for such forms of public support as cash benefits, material support, and assisted care among others (Pikuła 2011). In case these forms of support are not sufficient, an elderly person can apply for a placement at such institutions as day centers, nursing homes, and hospices (Zych 2010). However, it has to be underscored that such institutions are not always available to those who are eligible for this type of support, since the demand for those services exceeds the capacity of the institutions. In case an elderly person cannot secure a place at a nursing home or when a family is reluctant to place their elderly relative at an institution, one of the family members (usually a female one) can become her/his kinship/informal caregiver defined by Savage and Carvill as "someone who is unpaid and provides ongoing and regular assistance and support (physical or emotional) for a person with a physical and/or intellectual disability, mental illness or is frail aged" (2009: 87).

GATEKEEPERS AND ACCESS TO INFORMATION AND SERVICES

"*Bureaucratic conundrum*"

Nie ma takiego miejsca, żebyśmy poszli i ktoś nam przedstawi procedurę, nie ma takiego człowieka. Bo mąż dzwoni do MOPR-u (Miejski Ośrodek Pomocy Rodzinie – K.Sz.), pani mu powiedziała coś, potem ja poszłam i ona coś innego powiedziała. Dała papiery. Potem powiedziała, że czegoś brakuje. A ona do nas: poradźcie sobie (…). Tak więc my mamy sobie wszystko załatwić i jeszcze domyśleć się, co ta pani chce z MOPR-u. Od pani z MOPR-u dostaliśmy jedno ze wskazań między innymi do domu opieki na Podgórzu (dzielnica Torunia – K.Sz.). Po prostu trafiamy na matnię urzędniczą w postaci MOPR-u, gdzie pani posiada wiedzę zupełną i my nie jesteśmy w stanie się przez nią przebić bo ona nie jest zainteresowana udzieleniem informacji, pomocą. Tylko na zasadzie, że wy musicie spełnić warunki, a jak nie to trudno, to zaczynacie od nowa. No ale, kurde ja nie będę prawa administracyjnego studiowała (…) [Opiekun 19].

[There's no such place where we could go and learn about the procedure, there's no such person. Husband called MOPR [Municipal Family Support Center] and the lady [who worked there] told him one thing, then I went there and she told me something else. She gave [us] the paperwork. Then she said that something was missing. And she told us: deal with it. So we have to take care of everything on our own and try to figure out what that lady from MOPR wants from us. From the lady at MOPR we got a direction to a nursing home in Podgórze [a neighborhood in Toruń]. We're simply faced with that bureaucratic conundrum in the form of MOPR, where the lady has all the knowledge and we're not capable of getting through her because she's not interested in sharing that knowledge, helping us. You have to fulfill the requirements, and if you don't, then hard luck, you have to start from scratch. But, damn, I won't go and study administration

law (Caregiver 19)].

The excerpt above is a fragment of one of the interviews conducted with caregivers of elderly family members in Toruń in 2015. In this piece, a family member describes her experience of trying to access vital information pertaining to a nursing home placement in Toruń. In the excerpt, the caregiver underscores the difficulties she faced while trying to interact with a social worker from her local Municipal Family Support Center. Her narrative shows that according to her experience social workers can be indifferent in the face of the difficulties and challenges caregivers of the elderly struggle with. By referring to the way of accessing information and services as "bureaucratic conundrum" ("urzędnicza matnia") the caregiver underlines the difficulty of communicating with those social workers who are responsible for placing an elderly person in a nursing home. The word "damn" ("kurde") seems to underline the frustration with the system, whereas the comment about having to study administration law in order to comprehend various rules and regulations highlights the complexity of obtaining and understanding the information crucial for securing a placement at a nursing home for her elderly relative.

"*No one knows anything*"

Nikt nic nie wie. Nie wie, gdzie cię kierować. Jak już mniej więcej trafisz na dobry kierunek, okazuje się, że terminy są w przyszłym roku. Liczba godzin terapii dla dziecka jest śmieszna (...), musisz wywrócić Internet do góry nogami, żeby dołożyć liczbę godzin wczesnego wspomagania za własne pieniądze (...). A jeśli ktoś mieszka w małym mieście, na wsi, nie ma samochodu i jest samotną matką, to jej życie i życie tego dziecka się skończyło. [Anonim 2018]

[No one knows anything. No one knows where to direct you. And if you finally find the right direction, it turns out that the next available date is next year. The number of therapy hours for a child is ridiculous, you have to comb through the Internet to find more early therapy hours and pay for them out of pocket. And if someone lives in a small town or in a rural area, doesn't have a car and is a single mother, then her life and the life of her child is over (Anonymous 2018)].

This is an excerpt from a Facebook post by a mother of a child with a disability, which was reprinted and discussed in an editorial that appeared in March 2018 on eDziecko.pl, a portal affiliated with *Gazeta Wyborcza*. Similarly to the excerpt above, the author expresses her frustration with the system in which "no one knows anything". She, too, feels trapped in the "bureaucratic conundrum" when trying to access services for her disabled child. In addition, the author acknowledges that there are certain groups of people in Poland, for instance single mothers and those who live in small towns, who are particularly vulnerable to the lack of state support. In order to highlight the difficulties faced by these demographics, she states that if you are a single mother of a child with a disability, then your life and the life of your child are over.

CAREGIVERS' WELLBEING

"*I'm on my own*"

Boję się (…), tak jakoś to już psychicznie ja chyba z tym sobie nie radzę, nawet nieraz to się wkurzę, przyjdę do Anny (sąsiadka – K.Sz.) i tak gadamy sobie. To już jest za długo i jestem sama. Bo gdybym tak ktoś wziął, na miesiąc, ja bym odpoczęła, trochę się zrelaksowała, czy nawet samą tą pracę miała już bez tej osoby, to może byłoby mi tak jak po urlopie, takim wiesz, jak byłam we Włoszech dwa tygodnie, ja naprawdę odpoczęłam wtedy [Opiekun 3].

[I'm scared, I think that mentally I can't deal with it anymore, sometimes I even get angry, and then I go to Anna [a neighbor – K. Sz.] and we talk. It's been too long and I'm on my own. Because, if someone took [her] for a month, I could rest, I could relax a bit, and maybe even if I only had my job without [having to care] for that person, then maybe I would feel like I'm on vacation, you know, like when I spent two weeks in Italy, I really rested then (Caregiver 3)].

In this excerpt, the interviewee discusses the effects the longtime labor of caring for an aging relative has had on her wellbeing. At the time of the interview, the woman had been taking care of her aging mother for thirteen years already. As discussed above, kinship caregivers often experience the burnout syndrome caused by the lack of support. The burnout syndrome makes caring for an aging relative even more difficult and challenging, since kinship caregivers, who oftentimes do not receive any support not only from the state, but also from other family members, experience low energy, depression and feel stuck in a situation with no easy way out. However, kinship caregivers frequently neglect their physical and mental health. The interviewee seems to display the signs of the burnout syndrome, but she cannot take time off in order to take care of her own needs. When she says: "I think that mentally I can't deal with it anymore" ("tak jakoś to już psychicznie ja już chyba z tym sobie nie radzę") she expresses how tired she already is with the entire situation in which she acts as the sole caregiver of her mother. The interviewee feels like she has to deal alone with all the problems life throws at her. She points out that the possibility of sharing her concerns with the neighbor provides her with a necessary mental respite. At the same time, the interviewee is aware that she needs to rest. She would like to find someone who would take care of her mother for a month, so she herself could finally get some rest. However, those who promised her to help, left her alone with her problems.

"*I need to be here everyday*"

Nagle mój ojciec zachorował na ciężką chorobę. Zmarł bardzo szybko i w ciągu dwóch tygodni musiałam rzucić pracę, wyprowadzić się z miasta, zająć (…) wszystkim, co zostawił. I siostrą. Mama była załamana. Wróciłam do domu, a z moich marzeń nie zostało nic. Stałam się szoferem, psychologiem, organizatorem i reprezentantem spraw mojej siostry (…). Ostatnio zgłosiła się do mnie

firma. (…) dostałam pracę, o której tak marzyłam (…). Odmówiłam, bo wymogiem byłby powrót do miasta. Kto zająłby się mamą i siostrą? Jak miałabym im spojrzeć w oczy? Pomoc raz na jakiś czas to za mało. Muszę być tu codziennie (Ewa 2018).

[Suddenly my father got very sick. He quickly died and within two weeks I had to give up my job, move from the city, take care of everything he had left. And [take care of] my sister. Mom was devastated. I returned home and nothing was left of my memories. I became a driver, a psychologist, an organizer and my sister's representative. Recently I got a call from a company. I got a job offer which I had dreamt about for so long. I refused because I would need to return to the city. Who would take care of mom and sister? How could I look them in the eyes? Helping once in a while is not enough. I need to be here everyday (Ewa 2018)].

This is an excerpt from a letter that appeared in the online edition of *Gazeta Wyborcza* in March 2018. The author had to give up her career and return home in order to help caring for her disabled sister. Similarly to the interviewee (Caregiver 3) from the excerpt above, the author feels like she is trapped in the situation with no easy way out. Even though she dreams about returning to the city and starting a new job, she is aware that without her daily assistance her mother and sister would have to make do without „a driver, a psychologist, an organizer". At the same time, it seems that it is not just the sense of duty that keeps the author with her mother and sister, but also potential guilt. When she comments on the reasons for turning down the job offer, she claims that she would not be able to look her mother and sister in the eyes.

This excerpt shows the effects „private maternalism" (Glass and Fodor 2007) has had on people with disabilities and their families in Poland. As a result of the lack of state support, it is not only parents (mostly mothers), who are responsible for providing daily care to people with disabilities, but, in some cases, also their siblings. However, kinship caregivers of people with disabilities are becoming more vocal about their needs and struggles. Karolina Hamerska, a Polish disability activist and a Paralympic athlete, points out that until recently, disability had been considered a private matter in Poland, confined to the realm of one's home and family. She says that "a child with a disability was born and since that moment everything has happened in the private sphere" (Kowalska 2018:81). This notion was challenged in April 2018, when people with disabilities and their parents and caregivers began a forty-day occupation of the hall of the Polish parliament. By bringing with them to the parliament building, which is considered a public space, such personal items as mattresses, pillows and bed linen among others, and making public and visible the presence of people who are expected to stay at home, they crossed the line between the public and the private (Lipko-Konieczna 2018). They also made visible the labor of their kinship caregivers, usually their mothers, in the everyday practice of care. To sum up, the protests and the letters like the one discussed above are a proof that the attitudes toward the level of support the state should provide to people with disabilities and their families in Poland are slowly changing.

HOW TO IMPROVE THE SYSTEM?

"*Our regulations suck***"**

Politycy powinni dać dużo większe pieniądze opiekunom (…), bo nikt nie będzie chciał. To moje pokolenie to jeszcze, jak ja i Anna (sąsiadka badanej – K.Sz.), ale to młodsze jak usłyszy za jaką kwotę ma iść opiekować się swoją matką lub ojcem to myślisz, że pójdzie? Nie pójdzie, i będą musieli, ja odnoszę takie wrażenie, po doświadczeniach swoich w domu, po doświadczeniach w pracy, że muszą budować dużo więcej domów opieki, ale i muszą się zastanowić nad wynagrodzeniem bo w domu nie będą chcieli trzymać dzieci, wnuki takich osób, bo to są strasznie śmieszne pieniądze dla tych opiekunów (…). Te przepisy nasze są ciulowe, dobrze, że w tym sejmie trochę ruszyli (…), ja nie wiem, czy któryś z nich w ogóle się opiekował matką, czy jakimś ojcem, czy oni tam zdają sobie sprawę, a jak mają chorą matkę czy ojca to na pewno zajmują się obce osoby ale nie oni bo nie wierzę w to, że ktoś z rodziny to robi [Opiekun 3].

[Politicians should give caregivers more money, because otherwise no one will want [to be a caregiver]. [People of] my generation, like me and Anna [the interviewee's neighbor], are more likely [to be caregivers], but if the younger ones hear how much money they can get for caring for their mother or father, do you think they will do it? They won't, and they will have, I think after what I experienced at my own home, to build more nursing homes, but they also have to consider the allowance [for caregivers] because otherwise children, grandchildren of those people won't keep them at home, because caregivers receive some ridiculous allowances. Our regulations suck. Good that they finally took up some initiative at the Parliament, I don't know if any of them [members of the Parliament] has ever had to care for a mother or a father, if they are aware of anything, and if their mother or father are sick then for sure some strangers care for them, but not them [politicians], because I don't believe that any of their relatives actually does that (Caregiver 3)].

In this excerpt, the interviewee, who acts as a caregiver of her elderly mother, discusses one of the thorniest issues of the Polish caregiving system, that is inadequate financial resources. In Poland, caregivers of elderly persons usually struggle with financial problems. The interviewee, who cares for her mother with diabetes, points out that due to inadequate financial support received by caregivers from the state, the younger generation, in her opinion, will be less likely to give up their careers in order to act as poorly paid caregivers of their aging parents. According to the legislation issued by the Council of Ministers on July 31, 2018, persons who give up their careers in order to care for their aging parents can receive 620.00 złotych per month (Dz.U. 2018 poz. 1497) which translates to about $155.00. In order to express her opinion on the amount of money paid to kinship caregivers of the elderly, the woman calls the benefit "ridiculous" ("śmieszny"), since she is aware that this amount does not allow caregivers and their aging relatives to meet many of their needs such as buying

medications or paying for physical therapy. Therefore, many caregivers decide against giving up their careers to care for their aging relatives and as a result they have to tap into their own financial resources in order to pay for caregiving services provided by professional home aides.

Moreover, the woman points out that members of the Parliament are not aware of the difficulties faced by caregivers of the elderly. She is certain that they themselves do not need to perform caregiving labor and suggests that politicians have enough money to pay for external caregiving services and therefore they lack understanding and empathy when it comes to caregivers of elderly persons. The woman therefore believes that the amount of money paid to caregivers of elderly persons is so low because politicians, due to the lack of their own experience in this area, do not understand the challenges kinship caregivers of the elderly struggle with on a daily basis. Furthermore, in order to underscore the inadequacy of currently existing regulations concerned with kinship caregivers of the elderly, the interviewee points out that they simply "suck" ("są ciulowe"), which further underlines her frustration with the currently existing laws.

In her research conducted with home care aides in the United States, Stacey (2011) identifies "caring trajectories" of home care aides which usually begin with an unpaid care in their own home, taking care of their family members in an informal manner. Following that trajectory, some of those "informal" caregivers transfer to low-wage care work, which demonstrates "an important link between division of labor in the home and the labor market" (Stacey 2011:7). Pursuing the caring trajectory, according to which a person, usually a woman, transfers from an informal caring job at home to low-wage care work, Stacey (2011), adopting the term coined by Arlie Hochschild, refers to work performed by home care aides as "marketized private life" in which the lines between work and family space are blurred (9). However, it seems that in Poland caring trajectories are inverted. Kinship caregivers, usually women, have to give up their careers in other fields in order to perform low-wage care work on behalf of aging or disabled relatives. In this excerpt the interviewee points out that, unlike the previous generations, young people may be more hesitant to give up their careers to become full-time kinship caregivers due to financial concerns.

"*Society is getting older***"**

U nas nie ma dużo domów pomocy społecznej a społeczeństwo się niestety starzeje a młodzi ludzie muszą niestety pracować (…). Ja bym chciała bardzo chętnie też pójść do pracy między ludzi, brakuje mi tego. (…) Nawet kiedyś z koleżanką się zmówiłyśmy i stwierdziłyśmy, że to nasze pokolenie jeszcze nie jest przyzwyczajone, że starsze osoby oddaje się gdzieś do domu opieki. Nie jesteśmy jakoś tak wychowani. (…) W Polsce nie ma rozpowszechnionego systemu opieki nad ludźmi starymi, to dopiero zaczyna się rozwijać [Opiekun 7].

[There aren't many nursing homes here and society is, unfortunately, getting older while young people, unfortunately, have to work. I really would like to go to work, among people, I miss that. Once I talked to a friend and we figured out that our generation isn't used to giving the elderly away to some nursing home. This is not how we were raised. In Poland there is no wide caregiving system for elderly people, it's just beginning to develop (Caregiver 7)].

In this excerpt, the interviewee observes that while Polish society is getting older, there is no coherent and nation-wide system of caring for elderly people in place. She points out that there exist certain stereotypes that may hamper the development of such a system. The woman theorizes that the lack of nursing homes in Poland may be caused by the fact that placing the elderly under institutionalized care is considered by society at large as inappropriate. In Poland, traditionally, the responsibility for caregiving for either the elderly or people with disabilities, is outsourced to their families with little to no state support. Institutional care is often perceived as being equal to abandoning or even getting rid of elderly or disabled relatives. However, the interviewee notes that there exists a generational difference in how people perceive institutional care. She claims that her generation was raised in a way that does not allow them to place their aging parents or other relatives at nursing homes. On the other hand, she recognizes that placing a relative in a nursing home is not necessarily an easy decision to make, since „young people have to work" („a młodzi ludzie muszą pracować") and therefore sometimes they may be forced to „abandon" their elderly or disabled relatives due to their life circumstances. At the same time, she admits that building more nursing homes would help to alleviate this dilemma.

It has to be underscored, however, that due to the lack of personnel, residents of nursing homes frequently experience inappropriate care and treatment. Oftentimes, their individual needs are not taken under consideration by the overwhelmed personnel (Szarota 2004). This resonates with the research conducted by Nancy Foner with aides working at a nursing home in New York City. Foner (1995) points out that "nursing homes are institutions that aim, in a sense, to bureaucratize or rationalize affective care" (p. 53) with aides having to adhere to strict rules and schedules. Unlike home care aides, the aides studied by Foner hardly ever stay after hours in order to perform what Stacey (2011), who studied home care aides, acutely calls "surplus care" (2011: 79). Foner (1995) observes that "the nature of the nursing home environment makes it hard even for devoted workers to consistently offer sympathetic care" (1995: 2). Those aides who tend to be harsh or sometimes even brutal toward their clients are often awarded for their efficiency, whereas those who are attentive and gentle end up being punished for not adhering to the strict rules governing the nursing home (Foner 1995). That is not to say that the aides studied by Foner are in their majority insensitive and cruel: many of them respect their patients and care about them. The problem is that due to the "tyranny of regulations" (Foner 1995:58) in nursing homes, aides are encouraged to do their tasks quickly and efficiently instead of spending too much time on "emotional work" with clients. This rationalization of "affective care" can be observed in Polish nursing homes as well. It is reported that residents of nursing homes

often experience the sense of isolation and alienation. Moreover, nursing homes are frequently crowded which can lead to the lack of privacy, conflicts between residents and personnel, as well as to loneliness and inadequate sense of safety (Mielczarek 2010).

CONCLUSION

"*The minimum subsistence level*"

(…) zawitaliśmy więc do opieki społecznej. Dowiedzieliśmy się, że pomoc nam nie przysługuje, bo zarabiamy powyżej ustalonego minimum socjalnego. A pomoc niematerialna? Odciążenie od opieki choć na kilka godzin? Nie – bo stać nas na opiekunkę. Zapewnienie Oli dodatkowych zajęć, warsztatów – nie, bo jest za bardzo "uszkodzona" (…). Ostatnio zapytaliśmy w DPS w Sopocie o możliwość zaklepania miejsca dla Oli w nowym domu pomocy społecznej w Sopocie (…). Niestety (…), [d]om jest przewidziany dla osób starszych i z chorobami nieuleczalnymi. Nigdy nie będzie dedykowany Oli. Dlaczego? Od kiedy Ola będzie uważana za osobę starszą i schorowaną? Dostaliśmy informację, że pewnie gdzieś na południu Polski znajdzie się dom. Wykaz na stronie internetowej takiej i takiej (Lewandowska 2018).

[So we went to the social welfare (center). We learned that we aren't eligible for any support, because we earn more than the minimum subsistence level. What about some other type of support, like respite care for a few hours? No – because we can afford a home care aide. Signing Ola up for some extra classes or workshops? No – because she's too "damaged". Recently we asked a nursing home in Sopot [a city in northern Poland – M. G.] if we could secure a place for Ola in a new nursing home in Sopot. Unfortunately, the home is dedicated to terminally ill and elderly people. It will never be dedicated to Ola. Why? When will Ola be considered old and sick? We were told that probably somewhere in southern Poland we could find a [nursing] home. The list is available on the website so and so (Lewandowska 2018)].

We decided to conclude our paper with the excerpt from a letter that appeared in the online edition of *Gazeta Wyborcza* in 2018. We believe that this fragment is reflective of many problems faced by kinship caregivers and discussed in this study. The letter was authored by mother of a seventeen years old girl named Ola who was born with a disability. First, the fragment presents the lack of understanding and empathy experienced by both kinship caregivers of elderly persons and people with disabilities when interacting with gatekeepers of the system such as social workers. For example, Ola is refused additional classes and workshops because she is considered too "damaged" as if she was an object and not a living person. Second, similarly to other excerpts discussed in this paper, the fragment cited above highlights the difficulties experienced by kinship caregivers when trying to access information about benefits and nursing homes. Since "no one knows anything", Ola's family is sent to the Internet in

order to find a nursing home for her instead of being provided with assistance of social workers. Finally, the family cannot access respite care because they make too much money, the regulation which is reflective of the larger "bureaucratic conundrum" in which people who do not fit within narrow brackets of financial requirements are left to fend for themselves.

This paper provides a window into the challenges faced by kinship caregivers of elderly persons and people with disabilities in Poland. As a result of the conundrum of insufficient state support and societal expectations toward women, kinship caregivers and their elderly and disabled relatives occupy a uniquely precarious position within society. In order to change this situation, the state needs to start listening to their opinions on how social services in Poland frequently fail them and their family members and how, instead of support and advice, they are often met with indifference and lack of understanding.

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BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

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THE VISION OF THE EDUCATIONAL PROCESS IN POLISH AND UKRAINIAN CORE CIRRICULA. ANALYSIS BASED ON THE HOFSTEDE 4-D MODEL

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ABSTRACT: National curricula are documents describing the knowledge, skills and social competences that students should acquire at the appropriate stages of education. In our article, we assume that these documents have the power to buttress the existing status quo or to change reality. Generally speaking, they are an attempt at transforming selected areas of culture in a deliberate, planned, and systemic manner.

This paper, by means of Hofstede's 4-D model of cultural differences among societies (viz power distance, uncertainty avoidance, individualism versus collectivism, masculinity versus femininity), is aimed at studying the way Polish and Ukrainian national curricula define the educational processes and Teacher-Student relations, in order to reveal the correlation between the cultural differences and learning/teaching process in Poland and Ukraine. A critical discourse analysis of the two state curricula has been done to interpret their contents.

KEYWORDS: educational process, teacher-student relations, cultural dimensions, discourse analyses, core curriculum

INTRODUCTION

Education is the basis of the intellectual, spiritual, physical and cultural development of an individual, their successful socialization, economic well-being, key to the development of a society, united by shared values and culture, and the state (Ukraine, Law "On Education" 2017).

The plot of the world-famous Houellebecq (2016) novel *Submission* (French: *Soumission*) takes place in a fictitious space and presents a vision of the future, but selected elements of the reality contained therein could happen. It is 2022. The Muslim Brotherhood wins the elections. The winning party is particularly interested in that area of state apparatus which is education. Controlling this ministry, controlling schools and colleges and dictating the content of the national curriculum allows for the rapid implementation of major social changes.

Education is an integrative part of the development of every child in the majority of countries. Primary and secondary education are compulsory till the age of 18 in both Poland and Ukraine (Ukraine, Law "On Education" 2017, Art. 12, Poland, The Law on School 2016, Art. 31). Education is the "state priority that provides innovative, socio-economic and cultural development of society" (Ukraine, Law "On Education" 2017, Art. 5). The central requirements concerning the education process in a country is determined by law at a national level, whilst the specific conditions of learning and teaching are presented in other regulations. In Ukraine, the educational process is defined by the Decree "The State Standards for Primary Education" (2011) and "The State Standards for Basic and Complete Secondary Education" (2011); in Poland its defined by the Regulation of the Minister of National Education of Poland of 14 February 2017 on the core curriculum for pre-school education and the core curriculum for general education in primary schools.

One of the key purposes of students' learning is to educate and carry the national, historical and cultural values of the country (Ukraine, Law "On Education" 2017, Art. 54. Poland, The Law on School 2016). On the other hand, the learning and teaching processes are determined by the existing values of society, and ecological factors (Hofstede 2001) such as historical background, geographical position of the country, ethnic composition, etc. The organization of the learning and teaching processes is greatly influenced by cultural differences. Geert Hofstede, a Dutch social psychologist, conducted studies on modern cultures and defined four primary cultural dimensions, which despite much criticism (e.g.: Baskervilleon 2013, Jones 2007, Boski 2010, Strelau and Doliński 2008) provide a comprehensive and widely applied models of the cultural differences in different parts of the world. Moreover, he described the role of cultural differences in learning and teaching process, which is pertinent to this article. In his work, Hofstede refers to some perplexities that may arise when teacher and students come from various cultural backgrounds (Hofstede 1986). The indicators of the four cultural dimensions (The Power Distance, the Uncertainty Avoidance, Individualism versus Collectivism Dimension, Masculinity versus Femininity Dimension) for Teacher-Student interactions are used for the analysis of the national curricula in order to study the way Polish and Ukrainian educational laws define the learning and teaching

processes and Teacher-Student relations. Additionally, the goal of this article is to study the correlation between the national curricula and Polish and Ukrainian cultural differences in their teaching and learning processes, as well as their management and organization styles.

To provide a comprehensive analysis, four valid documents were studied - the Regulation of the Minister of National Education of Poland of 14 February 2017 on the core curriculum for pre-school education and the core curriculum for general education in primary schools, and three Ukrainian documents that regulate the educational process in the primary and secondary schools, The State Standard of Primary Education in Ukraine, Decree from November 23rd, 2011, The State Standard of Basic and General Secondary Education in Ukraine, Decree from April 20th, 2011, The Concept of the "New Ukrainian School".

CULTURAL DIMENSIONS

Learning and teaching processes, including teacher-student relations are determined by various factors, such as the role and social status of teachers, management and the organizational styles of schools, cultural differences, etc. Culture and values play an essential role in the functioning of the T-S dyad (Hofstede G., Hofstede G. J. and Minkov 2010). Many scientists (Myers and Tan 2002, Gutterman 2016, Kluckhohn and Strodbeck 1961, Hall 1976, Trompenaars 1993 in Wackowski and Blyznyuk 2017) tried to define factors that would allow cultural characteristics to be identified.

Hofstede defines culture as a "collective programming of the mind that distinguishes the members of one group of categories of people from another" where mind is "feeling, thinking and acting with consequences for beliefs, attitudes and skills" (Hofstede 2001: 9). Culture determines the uniqueness of a certain collectivity in the same way values and personality characterize an individual.

Differences and similarities between the cultures depend on the historical background and experience of a society. Hofstede points out several mechanisms, presented in Figure 1, that let a group preserve their own culture for following generations.

Figure 1. The "Onion Diagram": Manifestation of Culture at Different Levels of Depth
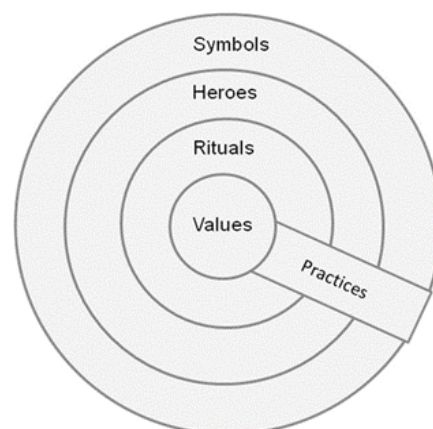
Source: Hofstede (2001).

The value systems that are shared by most of the population are at the center of the diagram. They, on the one hand, are rooted in the certain ecological factors, such as geography, history, demography, technology, etc., while on the other, specify the structure and functioning of the institutions, e.g. family patterns and educational systems, religion, etc., in a society. The established institutions support and reinforce the social norms and values of its community. Moreover, they rarely change or influence the norms within a relatively close society.

The outer layer of the diagram represents symbols, characterized by words, gesture and pictures that carry some meaning recognized in the culture. The following mechanism represents real or imaginary heroes who are prized and followed in the group. The final one is rituals, that is the activities needed to achieve goals and these are essential for individuals to be part of the culture. Practices, which connect all the mechanisms, are visible to outsiders and have considerable meaning to the insiders of the culture (Hofstede 2001).

These mechanisms and practices are necessary for preserving a society's history and identity, as well as to passing the culture on to posterity. Hofstede (1986) analyzes cultures through four primary dimensions: power distance, uncertainty avoidance, individual versus collectivist cultures, femininity versus masculinity. **Power distance** characterizes the level of the inequality which less powerful individuals tolerate and consider its normality. **Uncertainty Avoidance** characterizes the extent to which people from one culture are made nervous because of an unpredicted, unstructured or unclear situation that requires other that traditional solutions. **Individualist cultures** assume that a person minds own (and his/her immediate family) interests and matters, while in the **collectivist cultures** a person belongs to the integrated groups and protects their interests. **Masculinity and femininity** within a culture defines the social roles attributed to men and women. The masculine cultures strive to set a clear distinction between man, being ambitious, competitive, big and strong, and woman, being small and weak (Hofstede 1986).

These dimensions were brought up after the study conducted in more than 50 countries in 3 regions, the main aim of which was to gauge the impact of the differences in national culture and management. The researchers used a survey (Values Survey Module) to run the study (Hofstede 1980). As some Central European countries didn't take part in the main research, Kolman et al. (2003) conducted the supplementary one including the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia. The Netherlands was surveyed to conduct a comparison. As Ukraine was not surveyed in the primary research, the scores were estimated comparing Ukraine to the rest of the European participating countries. Prykarpatska (2008) provided the estimated scores of the cultural dimensions in Ukraine basing on the comparison of the cultural dimensions ranking list for European nations composed by Mikułowski-Pomorski (Mikułowski-Pomorski 2006 in Prykarpatska 2008) [The results can be seen in the Appendix 1]. The scores are largely corresponding to the ones published on the webpage https://www.hofstede-insights. com/. The scores are rarely updated because the dimensions of the culture are changing very slowly, from generation to generation (Hofstede 2019).

As a result of the following studies Hofstede (Hofstede G., Hofstede G. J. and Minkov

2010) added two more dimensions Long-Short Term Orientation, which defines the plans for future, and Indulgence- Restraint, that shows "the extent to which people try to control their desires and impulses, based on the way they were raised" (Hofstede Insights 2019).

Four primary dimensions, viz Power Distance, Individualism versus Collectivism, Femininity versus Masculinity and Uncertainty Avoidance, which Hofstede refer to the learning and teaching processes, are used in this paper and make the background for the critical discourse analysis of the national documents in Poland and Ukraine.

THE IMPACT OF CULTURAL DIFFERENCE ON EDUCATIONAL PROCESS IN PO-LAND AND UKRAINE

This article analyzes the characteristics of the educational process defined by the national curricula through the Hofstede's 4-D model of cultural dimensions. The two countries were chosen for their numerous similarities: Poland and Ukraine are neighboring states with a common border of 535 km; both countries were influenced by the communist regime (Poland till 1989, Ukraine till 1991); the end of the communist regime caused many social, cultural, economic, educational changes in both states. Moreover, the Education expenditure GDP in Poland and Ukraine in recent years has been similar with 5,0% [1] and 5,1% [2] respectively. Despite the geographical and historical similarities, Polish and Ukrainian cultures differ a lot. The figure bellow presents the results of the survey of cultural differences in Poland and Ukraine presented by the Hofstede Institute.

Figure 2. Cultural Differences (in %) Between Poland (blue colour) and Ukraine (violet colour) (estimated) by Hofstede Insights 2019
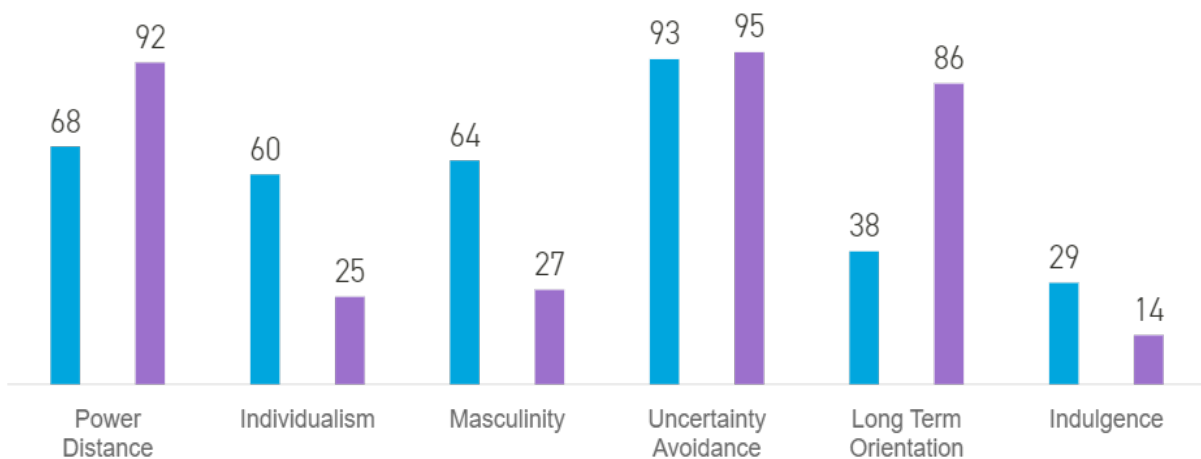
Source: Self-generated, based on Hofstede 2019.

According to the survey results, Poland revealed a relatively large **Power Distance** in comparison to Western Countries, though the lowest indicator among the four Central European countries. At a score of 62 in Kolman's et al. (2003) and 68 in Hofstede Insights, Poland is a hierarchical country. It indicates that "[Polish] people accept a hierarchical order in which everybody has a place, and which needs no further justification" (Hofstede Insights 2019). Poles used to have good relations with their superiors, who tended to have an autocratic management style (Kolman 2003). Poland still maintains authoritative, less democratic and participative, business relations than the Western European countries (Odrowąż-Coates 2017).

Ukraine scored 92 on this dimension. Its historical background of the XX century strongly influenced the centralization of power and authorities, where the power holders put great emphasis on social status and national symbols (Hofstede Insights 2019). Corruption Percentage Index (CPI) is among the indicators of Power Distance. In 2016, the Index for Ukraine was 131 and 29 for Poland (maximum 176). CPI in a way explains the 92 and 62 Power Distance Dimension scores in the Ukraine and Poland (Wackowski and Blyznyuk 2017, Woldan 2009). Large Power Distance, hierarchical order and autocratic attitude may increase the fear and lack of trust among employees (Baranowski and Odrowąż-Coates 2018; Odrowąż-Coates 2017). The hierarchical position of teachers at school also cause fear and distrust among pupils. The table below presents the indicators of the level of Power Distance in educational institutions.

Table 1. Differences in Teacher/Student Interactions related to The Power Distance Dimension (Hofstede 1986: 313)

SMALL POWER DISTANCE SOCIETIES	LARGE POWER DISTANCE SOCIETIES
- knowledge can be obtained from any competence person or source	- teacher is the only reliable source of knowledge and a "guru" to the students
- student-centered education	- teacher-centered education
- the teacher respects the students' independence	- the teacher is the one who set the paths and starts communication
- the teacher gives students the chance to start a conversation	- the teacher is not publicly criticized
- students can contradict the teacher	- Students speak when the teacher invites
- teachers are treated equally outside the school	- the learning effectiveness depends on the teachers' excellence
- parents support students' side	- parents rather support the teachers' side
- young teachers are more liked by the students	- students show the teacher respect outside school
- the teacher expects students to find their own paths	- older teachers are more respected than young ones
	- students expect teacher to outline the paths

Source: Self-generated, based on Hofstede 1986.

On the **Individualism** dimension Poland scored 60. This means that Poland is average among the Central European countries, but more collectivistic than Western European countries, though much more individualistic than Asian countries. Ukraine, on the contrary, scored 25 on this dimension, that demonstrates the influence of being a part of the Soviet Union for quite a long time. The main postulate of the USSR was to create the community and perceive an individual as an integrative part of it (Wackowski and Blyznyuk 2017, Hofstede Insights 2019). In the collectivist countries, employees are more likely to cooperate than to work individually. Additionally, relations in business are very important and must be built carefully. Poland, however, has a unique culture with a high level of PD and high level of IDV, that requires lots of skill in managing the companies where "the manager is advised to establish a second "level" of communication, having personal contact with everybody in the structure, giving the impression that "everybody is important" in the organization, although unequal" (Hofstede Insight 2019).

In terms of school Individualism-Collectivism, these cultures are illustrated in the learning programs and materials, which are developed to educate and raise some values, and perceive students either as an individual or a part of the group. The table below shows level indicators of Individualism and Collectivism in educational institutions.

Poland has a highly **masculine** culture with a score of 64, where business is driven by competition, achievement and success. In masculine cultures the main motivation for employees is a desire to be the best and admired (Kolman et al. 2003, Hofstede Insight 2019). Whereas, according to the study, Ukraine is rather a feminine country with a masculine score of 27. Feminine culture is characterized by modest behavior, great care for others and the importance of relations (Wackowski and Blyznyuk 2017).

A low score at a masculine might be related to the large Power Distance in Ukraine, where the superiors show their dominant behavior, whilst is not appreciated among the peers (Hofstede Insights 2019). This dimension illustrates the way the school specifies the reward and punishment systems, along with the purpose of the education.

Table 2. Differences in Teacher/Student and Student/Student Interaction Related to the Individualism versus Collectivism Dimension (Hofstede 1986: 312)

INDIVIDUALIST SOCIETIES	COLLECTIVIST SOCIETIES
- positive association in society with whatever is "new"	- positive association in society with whatever is rooted in tradition'
- one is never too old to learn; "permanent education"	- the young should learn; adults cannot accept student role
- students expect to learn how to learn	- students expect to learn how to do
- individual students will speak up in class in response to a general invitation by the teacher	- individual students will only speak up in class when called upon personally by the teacher
- individuals will speak up in large groups	- individuals will only speak up in small groups
- subgroupings in class vary from one situation to the next based on universals criteria (e.g. the task "at hand"	- large classes split socially into smaller, cohesive subgroups based on particularist criteria (e.g. ethnic affiliation)
- confrontation in learning situations can be salutary: conflicts can be brought into the open	- neither the teacher nor any student should ever be made to lose face
- face-consciousness is weak	- education is a way of gaining prestige in one's social environment and of joining a higher status group ("a ticket to a ride")
- education is a way of improving one's economic worth and self-respect based on ability and competence	- diploma certificates are important and displayed on walls
- diploma certificates only have symbolic value	- acquiring certificates, even through illegal means (cheating, corruption) is more important than acquiring competence
- acquiring competence is more important than acquiring certificates	- teachers are expected to give preferential treatment to some students (e.g. based on ethnic affiliation or on recommendation by an influential person)
- teachers are expected to be strictly impartial	

Source: Self-generated, based on Hofstede 1986.

The table 3 displays the indicators of the Feminine and Masculine types of running the educational institutions.

Poland scored 93 at the **Uncertainty Avoidance** (UA) dimension, which is relatively high, while Ukraine 95 respectively. A high Uncertainty Avoidance indicates rigid beliefs and practices, where citizens are against sudden and unexpected change, have a strong attachment to established rules and norms and used to plan the nearest future (Hofstede Insight 2019). A high level of Uncertainty Avoidance is also characterized by the rigid hierarchical management structure and conservative rules and procedures in business relations (Wackowski and Blyznyuk 2017). A UA level directly outlines the management style and structure of the institutions, for example schools. It also determines the learning programs and the approach to teaching styles. The table below presents the indicators of Uncertainty Avoidance typical for educational institutions.

Table 3. Differences in Teacher/Student and Student/Student Interaction Related to the Masculinity versus Femininity Dimension (Hofstede 1986: 315)

FEMININE SOCIETIES	MASCULINE SOCIETIES
- teachers use average student as the norm	- teachers use best students as the norm
- system rewards students' social adaptation	- system rewards students' academic performance
- students admire friendliness in teachers	- students admire brilliance in teachers
- corporal punishment severely rejected	- corporal punishment occasionally considered salutary
- male students may choose traditionally feminine academic subjects	- male students avoid traditionally feminine academic subjects
- students choose academic subjects in view of intrinsic interest	- students choose academic subjects in view of career opportunities

Source: Self-generated, based on Hofstede 1986.

Table 4. Differences in teacher/student interactions related to the uncertainty avoidance dimension (Hofstede 1986: 314)

WEAK UNCERTAINTY AVOIDANCE SOCIETIES	STRONG UNCERTAINTY AVOIDANCE SOCIETIES
- students feel comfortable in unstructured learning situations: vague objectives, broad assignments, no timetables	- students feel comfortable in structured learning situations: precise objectives, detailed assignments, strict timetables
- teachers are allowed to say "I don't know"	- teachers are expected to have all the answers
- a good teacher uses plain language	- a good teacher uses academic language
- students are rewarded for innovative approaches to problem solving	- students are rewarded for accuracy in problem solving
- teachers are expected to suppress emotions (as are students)	- teachers are allowed to behave emotionally (as are students)
- teachers interpret intellectual disagreement as a stimulating exercise	- teachers interpret intellectual disagreement as personal disloyalty
- teachers seek parents' ideas	- teachers consider themselves experts who cannot learn anything from lay parents-and parents agree

Source: Self-generated, based on Hofstede 1986.

The aforementioned cultural differences with the indicators listed state the basis for the analysis of the national curricula of Poland and Ukraine.

RESEARCH DESIGN

The purpose of our article was to show whether and to what extent the individual indicators of the cultural dimensions described by Hofstede are "reflected" in Polish and Ukrainian laws which define the learning and teaching processes, and teacher-student relations. The legal documents we have analyzed function as national curricula. Let's remember that the additional goal of this article is to study the correlation between the national curricula and the cultural differences of Polish and Ukrainian cultures in teaching and learning processes, as well as their management and organizational styles.

In Polish education law, the applicable teaching content and skills that must be included in the curriculum are presented in the Regulation of the Minister of National Education of 14 February 2017 which contains the core curriculum for pre-school education and the core curriculum for general education in primary schools. This is the main document that organizes the learning process in Polish schools. There is no exact equivalent of the Polish core curriculum in Ukraine, but there are other national documents regulating the learning and teaching process. They are: The State Standard of Primary Education in Ukraine, Decree from November 23rd, 2011, The State Standard of Basic and General Secondary Education in Ukraine, Decree from April 20th, 2011, and The Concept of the "New Ukrainian School" from 2018. All three documents are currently in force and regulate the educational process in primary and secondary schools in Ukraine. The concept of the "New Ukrainian School" has been implemented since the 2017/2018 school year, firstly for the first graders, and is expected to supersede the other two Decrees by 2021. The listed documents in their original languages - Polish and Ukrainian - were the subject of our analysis. We chose critical discourse analysis as the research method. We remained aware that there are two approaches to discourse analysis popularized among researchers from around the world: the so-called French concept of discourse (Foucault, Habermas, Ducrot) and the Anglo-Saxon concept of discourse (van Dijk). According to *the French school*, linguistic layers of the text are the primary subject of analysis. According to the Anglo-Saxon school, discourse analysis falls within the socio-cultural current and its purpose is to recognize the social and political structure, as well as to identify current social problems that are reflected in the discourse (Grzymała-Kazłowska 2004).

Critical discourse analysis has now grown into one of the most popular interdisciplinary research perspectives. It covers a rich and diverse range of methods and positions (Ostrowicka 2014), and, for several reasons, proved to be the suitable for our studies. First, we treat national curricula as specific statements on education that are communicatory in character yet contain elements of persuasion (Śliwerski 2009). Secondly, specific indicators of cultural dimensions which appear in national curricula are an expression of what from the outset is considered important in educational reality. (Generally speaking, "the creators of national curricula have decided what is

important"). It can also be assumed as that the contents of national curricula are conveyors of belief systems and values, and even of presumed visions of a certain social order. The belief system and values in question have been analyzed by us using Hofstede's cultural dimensions: power distance, uncertainty avoidance, individual versus collectivist cultures, femininity versus masculinity. We want to discover how visions from national curricula coincide with reality. Thirdly, we want to show the manipulative role of national curricula. The documents which we will analyse oblige – at least formally – Polish and Ukrainian teachers and students to understand learning and teaching, and the organization of these processes in accordance with national curricula. Critical discourse analysis will allow us to take a "new" look at the analyzed documents. We will see which elements of Hofstede's cultural analysis are particularly strengthened and which are not found in the analyzed documents. Fourthly, we assume that as researchers we are not axiologically neutral. Each of us will analyze documents from our country of origin. We realize that we are representatives of different cultures and identify with different Hofstede's dimension indicators. As reflective researchers, however, we are aware of this and try to make it an asset, not a disadvantage (Bourdieu and Wacquant 2004; Giddens 1993)

Most often, critical discourse analysis consists of three stages. These are: 1) analysis of the text that is the subject of the research, 2) analysis of discursive social processes involving the analysis of the reception and interpretation of text by people, 3) research on the impact of discourse, i.e. reflecting on discourse as a key factor in the construction of social life (Darłowicz 2016). We will briefly touch on the first two stages because of the limited volume of our text. Given the objectives of our article, we focus primarily on the third stage.

RESULTS OF RESEARCH – NATIONAL CURRICULA SEEN THROUGH THE HOFSTEDE'S 4-D MODEL OF CULTURAL DIMENSIONS

Most definitions of culture contain a material and a spiritual aspect. Culture is defined by Hofstede at al. (2010) as a collective mind programming that distinguishes members of one group or category from members of another. National cultures are defined as collective mind programming resulting from growing up in a particular country. Culture contains specific dimensions (described as Hofstede's 4-D model) that are subject to observation and measurement.

Let's look at the contents of core curricula through the prism of **Power Distance**. In both Ukrainian and Polish core curricula there is a clear advantage to *small power distance*. One of the indicators of this dimension *is societies-knowledge can be obtained from any competence person or source*. The ability to independently search for information, critically evaluate it and form independent judgments is emphasized. For example: a student is to: "critically analyze and use information from various sources" (Regulation of the Minister 2017: 12), "formulate judgments on selected social problems of the modern world" (Regulation of the Minister 2017: 109); "student's ability to use information and communication technologies and other means for performing personal and socially important tasks" (The State Standard of Primary Education in

Ukraine 2011: 2). However, we did not notice a single entry affirming that *the Teacher is the only reliable source of knowledge and a "guru" for the students*. Polish and Ukrainian national curricula entries support student-centered education. A personalistic concept of education manifests itself, for example, in the "ability to express one's own expectations and social needs" (Regulation of the Minister ...: 32), "encouraging students to self-assess their own work" (Regulation of the Minister 2017: 81). "The most nurturing teaching methods are those that mobilize the student, enabling him to build knowledge by himself" (Regulation of the Minister 2017: 129). In Ukraine: "there isn't any administrative control that limits pedagogical creativity, children's active participation in the educational process, interests and experience-oriented education" (The State Standard of Primary Education in Ukraine 2011: 18). Students are to have the opportunity to experiment, work with projects, their cognitive activity is to be stimulated (Regulation of the Minister 2017: 150). Education –applied to the subject of preparation for family life – concerns the ability to adopt an integral vision of an individual as well as the choice and implementation of values serving personal development (Regulation of the Minister ...: 197). Despite the general attitude towards *student-centered education*, there are manifestations of teacher-centered education in the Polish national core curriculum. These are noticeable at the education planning level – those responsible for this sphere are the teachers, who 'by organizing classes plan the education process (Regulation of the Minister 2017: 54). However, teachers are not *the ones who set the paths and start communication*. On the contrary, in both national core curricula we find many regulations supporting *respecting students' independence by teachers*. Let's give some examples. Teachers are obliged to: "support the student in identifying his own predispositions and determining the path of further education" (Regulation of the Minister 2017: 11), "encouraging <students> to organized and conscious self-education based on the ability to prepare their own workshop (Regulation of the Minister 2017: 11).

Ukrainian curriculum states: „distributed leadership (productivity, making a choice and responsibility for it)"; also "[the educational institution] needs to ensure freedom and children's rights in all aspects„ (The State Standard of Primary Education in Ukraine 2011: 17,19).

Education, therefore, has as its task: "to awaken and develop a student's reflexivity and axiological sensitivity and to nurture an attitude of respect, openness, cooperation and responsibility" (Regulation of the Minister 2017: 30). Whilst in the Ukrainian curriculum "[teachers] need to make the educational environment as a bright element of childhood" and "[a teacher] needs to take into account the individual abilities and skills of every pupil" (The State Standard of Primary Education in Ukraine 2011: 18, 19). Polish and Ukrainian national core curricula contain many records proving that a *teacher allows students to start a conversation and choose a path*. However, there is no record that a *teacher cannot be publicly criticized, and that student can only speak when the teacher invites them to*. We discovered indications of *giving the students the opportunity to choose their own education path and the unfettered voice* in the following narratives: "encouraging organized and conscious self-education based on the skill of preparing their own workshop" (Regulation of the Minister 2017: 11), "the student

attains the need and the skill of independent, reflective, logical, critical and creative thinking "(Regulation of the Minister 2017: 33)," the student... agrees with or disputes other people's opinions, substantively justifying his own opinion (Regulation of the Minister 2017: 68), "the student 1) recognizes his/her own needs and the needs of others; 2) plans further education, taking into account his/her skills and interests; ... 4) presents his/her own rights and obligations "(Regulation of the Minister 2017: 104). Additionally, Ukrainian documents inform of „ensuring the possibility to make choices and independent decisions while realizing their consequences" (Bibik 2018: 45); "provide time and opportunities for critical thinking; appreciate this, allowing children to think freely" (Bibik 2018: 62).

Some of the indicators listed by Hofstede on both the small and large power distance were not identified by us in the Polish and Ukrainian national core curricula. These were indicators that the parents were either for or against the teacher and related to the importance of the teacher's age - *neither are young teachers more liked by the students, nor are older teachers more respected than the young ones.*

Our analyses of the Polish and Ukrainian core curriculum from a small-large power distance perspective in the context of research on national cultures allow us to draw some conclusions. Firstly, the hierarchical nature of Polish society is reflected in the Polish core curriculum to a negligible (practically imperceptible) degree. Similarly – though not so clearly – it is presented in the Ukrainian core curriculum, with greater attention to child-centered education with respect to children's rights, voice and choice. Secondly, teachers and children are treated as partners. "[The educational process] is realized by the joint participation of teachers and students, teachers and parents, which involves understanding, shared interests and aspirations for the personal development of students" (Bibik 2018: 17). Moreover, the partnership principals are defined as: "respect, goodwill and positive attitude, trust, dialog, cooperation, shared leadership (pro-activeness), and social partnership (equality of parties, voluntary commitment, and an obligation to fulfill agreements) (Bibik 2018:17).

Let's remember that Polish culture, according to Hofstede research, is characterized by a fairly high degree of **individualism** and the Ukrainian culture is more **collective**. Is this result reflected in the core curricula we analyzed and if so, to what degree? What do the Polish and Ukrainian core curricula say about interpersonal relations; social networks; sources of identification – "I", "we"?

The authors of the Polish core curriculum repeatedly refer to social collectivism and try to show the importance of tradition. Specific and easily identifiable examples are: 'Education and upbringing in a primary school are conducive to developing civic, patriotic and social attitudes of students.' The school's task is to strengthen the sense of national identity, attachment to national history and traditions" (Regulation of the Minister 2017: 14). " In the implemented didactic and educational process, the school undertakes activities related to places important for national memory, forms of commemorating figures and events from the past, the most important national holidays and state symbols" (Regulation of the Minister 2017: 15), "The awakening of a sense of love for the homeland through respect and attachment to the tradition and history of one's nation and its achievements, culture and mother tongue is shaped during the

implementation of the history subject" (Regulation of the Minister 2017: 22), "The teacher's task ... is above all ... to develop a sense of national identity and respect for tradition" (Regulation of the Minister 2017: 70) and many others. A similar position is taken by the Ukrainian educational system, noting that it's important "to be able to cooperate with various partners in groups and pairs, play different roles and functions within a group" (The State Standard of Primary Education in Ukraine 2011: 2).

In the light of the analyzed documents, *positive association in society with whatever is "new"* is also noticeable, but to a lesser extent than traditionalism, Contents of the core curriculum relating to modernity are limited to the "technical" side of education and relate to the latest technologies, e.g. "The student ... distinguishes between modern forms of messaging (e.g. e-mail, SMS) and uses them properly, observing the rules of language etiquette" (Regulation of the Minister 2017: 64), "Programming and solving problems using a computer and other digital devices: arranging and programming algorithms, organizing, searching and sharing information, using computer applications" (Regulation of the Minister 2017: 175). Meanwhile similar content can be found in the Ukrainian curriculum: "[pupil can] search the necessary information using search engines and expert systems, including the Internet" (The State Standard of Primary Education in Ukraine 2011: 13). At one point of the core curriculum, we noticed a provision about *permanent education*, namely: "The student plans further education, taking into account his own interests, abilities and skills as well as advice of other people and the situation on the labor market" (Regulation of the Minister 2017: 105). In the Ukrainian curriculum, lifelong learning makes up one of the key skills of the pupils: "there should be provided the possibility for individual development of pupils, who will be able to self-realize and participate in the life of a democratic, social, legislative and civil society of the today's diverse world with a help of the gained skills and knowledge" (The State Standard of Primary Education in Ukraine 2011: 8).

An indicator of Hofstede's collectivism is the following category – *students expect to learn how to do*, and of individualism the following category – *students expect to learn how to learn*. Both are clearly displayed in the Polish core curriculum and it is difficult to discern which is the more predominant. Clearly the authors of the core considered both categories equally important. The following fragments may be taken as indicators of *learn how to do*: "To understand the essence of life science, practical knowledge is also indispensable" (Regulation of the Minister 2017: 25), "Therefore, they should learn the basic methods of IT so that they can use them in the future in practical situations in various fields" (Regulation of the Minister 2017: 27), "The student attains ... the ability to ask questions, perceive problems, collect information needed to solve them, plan and organize the activity, as well as solve problems" (Regulation of the Minister 2017: 33), "It is necessary to implement the content of teaching in such a way that students understand the usefulness of individual issues in the everyday life of a human being – a member of individual social groups and communities (Regulation of the Minister 2017: 109). *The how to learn* category was noticed by us in the following – selected – fragments of the Polish core curriculum: "Even the best school will not teach everything. However, it will provide tools to expand knowledge independently, while maintaining the necessary criticism and ensuring the reliability

of the communication" (Regulation of the Minister 2017: 22), "The student ... uses acquired skills to solve problems and explore the world, taking care of (their) own development and creating individual learning strategies" (Regulation of the Minister 2017: 36), "Developing skills of independent information access, selection, synthesis and evaluation. Developing habits of systematic learning and of organizing acquired knowledge and deepening it" (Regulation of the Minister 2017: 60). The Ukrainian educational program also tends to teach pupils how to learn: "[pupil] has an ability to learn - prove their own opinion and shared thoughts" (Bibik 2018: 17).

In the Polish core curriculum, we found an entry indicating collectivism, indicated by *individual students will only speak up in class when called upon personally by the teacher*. This entry read: "The student ... listens and waits his turn, controls the urge to speak suddenly (Regulation of the Minister 2017: 34).

The Polish core curriculum contains individual entries which we have identified as manifestations of individualism, but which are difficult to relate directly to indicators distinguished by Hofstede, e.g. "The project method assumes a significant independence and responsibility of participants, which creates conditions for students to individually manage the learning process" (Regulation of the Minister 2017: 14) or "The school and individual teachers undertake actions aimed at individualized support for the development of each student, according to his needs and abilities" (Regulation of the Minister 2017: 13).

Ukraine is defined as a collectivist country, whereas the New Ukrainian School, which provides the foundation for a new Standard of the Primary and Secondary Education, presents proof of both dimensions – individualism and collectivism. It's said that it's important, on the one hand, to "build skills of collective work and cooperation" (The State Standard of Primary Education in Ukraine 2011: 2), while on the other, "[develop] critical thinking: pupils learn to question, doubt and assess opinions, which are different or similar to theirs" (Bibik 2018: 49). The new program also promotes teachers' impartial treatment, noting: "fairness and impartial treatment ... a teacher and children perceive the contribution of every child equally, with kindness and respect regardless of their abilities, social background or gender" (Bibik 2018: 49).

Another dimension of Hofstede's 4-D model of cultural differences among societies is determined by **masculinity** at one extreme and **femininity** at the other. In fact, we didn't find any references to *masculinity* in either of the core curricula. The exception is the provision in the Polish core, testifying that *students admire brilliance in teachers*, which reads: "The student: listens carefully to the teacher's statements ... shows respect to the speaking person" (Regulation of the Minister 2017: 34). There are references to *femininity* in the Polish and Ukrainian cores, but in trace amounts. Examples from the Polish core curriculum are: the school ensuring safe conditions and a friendly learning atmosphere (Regulation of the Minister 2017: 11) and "introducing students to the world of values, including dedication, cooperation, solidarity and altruism" (Regulation of the Minister 2017: 11).

The Ukrainian curriculum stresses the necessity of taking into account the abilities and skills of every child: "...refusal to focus on the educational achievements of the average student and compulsory consideration of the interests of each child"

(Bibik 2018: 19). The new Ukrainian Standard of Education is based on the following principals that qualify the country to the feminine dimension group: "Recognizing that every child is talented. Ensuring equal access to education, prohibiting all forms of discrimination. Separation of children based on pre-selection at individual, group and institutional levels will not be allowed" (Bibik 2018: 22). Moreover, the curriculum prohibits psychological or *corporal punishment* by stating "Security. Creating an atmosphere of trust and mutual respect. Making the school a safe place where there is no violence and harassment" (Bibik 2018:23). Additionally, the core curriculum gives advice to the teachers about how to choose and realize the topic of the lessons, taking into the account every child's interests. It is said that "Additional training sessions for assistants may be held throughout the year, depending on the needs and interests of the assistants …Make a list of tasks for each assistant, including their interests in the skills and needs of the teacher" (Bibik 2018: 112).

The categories of femininity and masculinity are associated with consent or lack of it to show concern for others, friendly or competitive relationships; valuing or not material success and progress, and clearly divided into male and female roles. Both countries promote the feminine approach to the learning and teaching processes, highlighting the importance of perceiving each child as an individual with their own needs, ideas, and opinions; free of violence and corporal punishment at school.

Societies with **weak uncertainty avoidance** have few rights and principles. If existing regulations are often unobserved, they should be changed. These societies are tolerant and friendly to young people. Societies with **strong uncertainty avoidance** abide by many detailed laws and principles. Conservatism, law, order and a hostile attitude to young people dominate. It is easy to conclude that these societies are intolerant and marked by religious, ideological and political fundamentalism. The discovery of manifestations of both *week uncertainty avoidance societies* and *strong uncertainty avoidance societies in national core curricula* was a major research challenge.

In the Polish national core curriculum, there is relatively little content that can be related to the analyzed dimension, and if it is present then it is rather on the week and not strong avoidance societies' side. Interestingly, according to Hofstede, the fact *that teachers are allowed to behave emotionally (as are the students)* is an indicator of *strong uncertainty avoidance*. References to the emotional aspect of education and upbringing are revealed in the selected quoted narratives: "The school's tasks include … understanding of emotions, own feelings and those of others, conducive to maintaining mental, physical and social health" (Regulation of the Minister 2017: 18), "Emotionality is an important factor shaping the development of the student and determining the perception of themselves, other people and the world" (Regulation of the Minister 2017: 21), "The student achieves … the ability to realize the feelings experienced by other people while trying to understand why they occur, as well as differentiating forms of their expression depending on age" (Regulation of the Minister 2017: 32) "The student uses the names of emotions and feelings to describe his own experiences and the experiences of other people in the context of various moral experiences; uses these concepts to characterize the experiences, actions and attitudes of the characters in novels, stories, films, theater performances and computer games" (Regulation of

the Minister 2017: 203). A closer look at the fragments concerning feelings and the expression of emotions, recorded in the Polish core curriculum raises some doubts as to the assignment of these descriptions to the category of the *strong avoidance societies*. In social practice, the free expression of emotions is after all an expression of tolerance and friendship in interpersonal contacts, i.e. it is equivalent to *less avoidance societies*. Undoubtedly, this very dimension, i.e. of *less avoidance societies* - is reinforced by the indicators of the category: *students are rewarded for innovative approaches to problem solving* written in the Polish national curriculum. Examples: "General education in primary school aims to: ... 4) develop competences such as creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship; 5) develop the skills of critical and logical thinking, reasoning, arguing and inferring" (Regulation of the Minister 2017: 11), "The most important skills developed as part of a general education in a primary school are: ... 4) creative problem solving in various fields with the conscious use of methods and tools derived from computer science" (Regulation of the Minister 2017: 12), "The subject of physics is above all an opportunity to constructively verify students' views and a time in which to build the foundations of scientific thinking - asking questions and looking for structured answers" (Regulation of the Minister 2017: 159). The Polish core curriculum contains individual entries that can be indirectly referred to the category – *teachers interpret intellectual disagreement as a stimulating exercise*. These read as follows: "Teachers ... should aim for students to shape within themselves an attitude of dialogue, the ability to listen to others and understand their views (Regulation of the Minister 2017: 29-30). We also have an indirect reference to the category – *teachers seek parents' ideas.* "Raising a younger generation is the task of the family and the school, which in its activities must take into account the will of the parents" (Regulation of the Minister 2017: 15). The same category also appears in the description of the subject of preparation for family life – "The school's tasks in the field of preparation for family life include in particular: supporting the educational role of the family "(Regulation of the Minister 2017: 201). The Polish core of the programs does not contain a single record stating that *teachers interpret intellectual disagreement as personal disloyalty* nor that *teachers consider themselves experts who cannot learn anything from lay parents – and parents agree.*

In the comparison, Ukrainian curriculum promotes the ideas of open-minded teaching styles, that give more freedom and accounts for everyone's needs. The school day is planned, and the lessons are conducted based on chosen topics, as the curriculum points out all the topics that should be covered at the primary and secondary school. The new core curriculum, however, suggests a more flexible approach towards lesson plans. It is mentioned that "the educational tasks and time for their [primary pupils] implementation depend on the individual characteristics of the students ... training should be organized through activities, by means of play both in the classroom and beyond" (Bibik 2018: 20, Nychkalo 2017), what's more "It is recommended that 20% of the planned study time must be reserved to enable students to meet their educational needs, balance their achievements, develop transversal skills, etc." (Bibik 2018:25). It is also mentioned that *teachers are allowed to say "I don't know,* that characterizes the weak uncertainty avoidance cultures, "[teachers] should be honest and admit

their mistakes" (Bibik 2018: 45). In the category *students are rewarded for innovative approaches to problem solving*, the national curriculum of Ukraine says that "a creative self-expression ... critical thinking and creative thinking" (The State Standard of Primary Education in Ukraine 2011: 3, 8) is appreciated. In order to prove that *teachers interpret intellectual disagreement as a stimulating exercise*, the core curriculum of Ukraine highlights that "A child may not agree with the ideas of others, then these issues are considered in the process of free discussion. Various ideas are listened to and discussed because there is mutual trust among children" (Bibik 2018: 49). And finally, the new Ukrainian program advises *teachers to seek parents' ideas* and support in educational process. It is mentioned that "Teachers invite parents and other family members to join the learning process ... Teachers regularly interact with parents and other family members to increase support for children in their learning" (Bibik 2018:110).

Attempting to summarize the *weak – strong uncertainty avoidance dimension*, we note that in the attitude of the Polish program the *weak uncertainty avoidance dimension* category is reinforced. Let us note, however, that the documents analyzed were quite poor in describing the behavior and attitudes of students and teachers that could directly refer to this dimension. However, based on what we have, we can say that the most important Polish documents regulating the processes of education and upbringing support student innovation – and therefore they support the young. They allow those who are subject to education to express their feelings freely and – to a limited extent – allow students *disagreement* understood as *a stimulating exercise*.

Ukrainian educational standard, with a high score of the strong uncertainty avoidance of the culture, almost completely organizes the learning process with a little share of self-study time. Though, it points to the necessity of teacher-parent cooperation and anticipates that teacher should admit own mistakes if there are so. The mentioned issues prove the new orientation the Ukrainian schools.

CONCLUSIONS

This article introduced the critical discourse analysis the Polish and Ukrainian national curricula through the prism of four cultural dimensions defined by Geert Hofstede. It was aimed to study the way both national standards of education define teacher-student relations and support/contradict the data of the cultural dimensions presented by the Hofstede Institute.

Although close geographical position and cultural and language similarities, Poland and Ukraine have divergent history, including the history of education and core curricula, and refer to different cultural dimensions. According to the data, Polish culture is more individualistic and masculine than Ukrainian one. Though, has a less power distance and similar uncertainty avoidance.

National curricula bare reciprocal objectives, on the one hand, to present and cherish the national culture and values, while on the other, to delineate the teaching/learning process with the high standards and contemporary orientation of education. Poland and Ukraine have very different paths of educational programs and institutions, that are determined by the time of becoming independent. Poland became a

sovereign country in 1918 and began to implement the unification of the secondary education and compulsory education in 1919 through the first educational programmes, published in 1918-1922. Since then, Polish national educational programs have come through many reforms and changes (Osiński 2010).

Meanwhile, Ukrainian educational standards were determined by the USSR policies for seventy years. The first independent Ukrainian law on education was passed in 1992, while the first concept of the national standard of education was adopted in 1996. The national curriculum of Ukraine had been developing till 2018, when the concept of New Ukrainian School, that supports contemporary educational standards of many European countries and Children's Rights, was legislated.

The history of the national curricula greatly affected the orientation of the education processes in both countries. Polish curriculum with its larger history presents greater attention to the student-centered education, that tend to provide space for individual work and development, while at the same time, respect and support pupil's rights and views.

Ukrainian recently adopted educational standards of a "New Ukrainian School" promotes child-oriented teaching/learning process to a greater extent than the previous ones. It stresses the necessity to provide time and space for self-study and self-evaluation of the students. Moreover, similarly to the Polish core curriculum, the new educational law of Ukraine reorganizes the learning process in the primary school. Education during the first three years lets pupils educate at own pace and does not anticipate any grades but description evaluation of the students' progress. This approach provides no pressure but motivation for the pupils.

Poland with its individual culture stresses individualism in the learning process of the pupils with cultivating skills of cooperation and ability to work in a group. Although Ukraine is an example of a collectivist culture, it promotes very similar approach towards the individual work and cooperation of the pupils of the primary and secondary schools.

Both Ukrainian and Polish curricula assume rather feminine approach to the teaching/learning process, despite the different result of the culture statistics from the Hofstede's study. Similarly, the two curricula foresee the low uncertainty avoidance of the educational process, that contradicts the results of the culture studies.

The aim of this article was to evaluate at what degree the national core curricula of Ukraine and Poland go with or contradict the indicators of the four cultural dimensions by Geert Hofstede. As a result, we can state that in the most cases the orientation of the national educational documents do not reinforce and prove the results of the cultural studies.

We would like to stress that the presented analysis concerns the study of the national documents, but not the factual situation of the teacher/learning process and teacher-student relations in Polish and Ukrainian school. In order to verify whether the actual educational process in the schools uphold the orientation of the core curricula, a distinct study should be provided.

NOTES

[1] Monitor edukacji i kształcenia. Retrieved September 20, 2019 (https://ec.europa.eu/
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land_pl.pdf).
[2] Ukraine-Government Education Expenditure. Retrieved September 20, 2019
(https://countryeconomy.com/government/expenditure/education/ukraine).

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LEGAL ACTS

Regulation of the Minister of National Education of Poland of 14 February 2017. In: ROZPORZĄDZENIE MINISTRA EDUKACJI NARODOWEJ1 z dnia 14 lutego 2017 r. w sprawie podstawy programowej wychowania przedszkolnego oraz podstawy programowej kształcenia ogólnego dla szkoły podstawowej, w tym dla uczniów z niepełnosprawnością intelektualną w stopniu umiarkowanym lub znacznym, kształcenia ogólnego dla branżowej szkoły I stopnia, kształcenia ogólnego dla szkoły specjalnej przysposabiającej do pracy oraz kształcenia ogólnego dla szkoły policealnej.

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Appendix 1.

Table 1. Value Dimensions for Ukraine (estimated by Prykarpatska)

Dimensions	Ukraine
Individualism	~ 38
Power Distance	~96
Masculinity	~40
Uncertainty Avoidance	~93

Source: Prykarpatska 2008.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

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THERE IS NO DISCRIMINATION BETWEEN GIRLS AND BOYS![1]

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ABSTRACT: This paper refers to a selected fragment, which is about children's gendered behaviours and children's thoughts on gender issue, of an ethnographic study on children's subjectivation processes through digital technologies. For this whole study, philosophy for children approach was used as a technique to conduct focus group interviews with children in a periodical basis. The selected parts for this paper are based on three different sections of those interviews; first one is about children's opinions on gender roles, referring to gendered occupations and plays for kids, the second one is also conducted to reveal the hidden discourses on gender in real society and virtual world which has been built on the existed world, and lastly adult-children hierarchical relations, was debated with children in order to connect this distinction to gender differences, will be mentioned.
KEYWORDS: gender differences, gender roles, asymmetric power relations, adult-children distinction, children's voices

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[1] This paper is based on an ethnographic fieldwork study in a private secondary school in Istanbul, Turkey for a Ph.D dissertation in Sociology Department at Mimar Sinan University.

INTRODUCTION

Childhood as a research area has been disregarded in social sciences for an extended period of time, because the period of childhood is temporal and a common experience of all people, which would be left behind. For this reason, recognisability of children is one of the basic topics for childhood studies in order to define a child as a subject, an agent, an individual, and even a human being. While agency of children plays an important role for childhood studies, less is known about how their agencies differ from each other. Ethnographic studies with children are worthwhile to understand children's peer cultures, which will be amplified next chapters. However, it is necessary to underline that increasing importance about childhood studies becomes to focus on different childhood experiences.

For instance, children's peer groups are separated by gender according to Thorne (1993), and she focuses on gender in childhood, and tries to understand why and how two gendered worlds is created by peer relations in such young ages. While Thorne claims children have two peer cultures upon their gender, Harris (1998: 423) mentions how children create plays differently: as boys are interested in hierarchical roles in plays, girls need to find out intimacy in their face to face relations. These are like imitations of real world's gender roles in their daily routines, staying strict to traditional discourses on gender. Moreover, Buckingham (2000: 179) claims their agenda might be different from each other, since "girls were more likely to dwell on the 'human interest' aspects of political issues", while boys' are more enthusiastically address the mechanism on politics, which advocates Corsaro's (2009) claim that children are "co-constructors of society".

Therefore, the primary goal of this paper is to reveal how that group of children in Istanbul construct their social life as individuals of the new generation of Turkish society by focusing on gender differences between. Furthermore, these children's attitudes to authority, and their opinions about existing gender roles in Turkish society are investigated by observing 'peer cultures' of them as a methodological tool. In the one hand 'cultures' term is important to emphasize gender differentiations among the children, in the other hand, the concept of 'authority' which includes both adult authorship and power relations deriving from gender, will be used to analyse boys' and girls' distinctive attitudes and habits against adults and between themselves as well. During next chapter, usual approaches and new paradigms on childhood will be mentioned, and owing to peer cultures, theoretical frame will be related to methodology part, then finally, in the main chapter, "a case study in a private secondary school in Istanbul" I will share my research findings, underlining children's genders whom I worked with.

THEORETICAL FRAMING

Childhood studies is becoming a prevailing trend for social sciences, moreover, children's subjectivation is still an important debate issue in sociology of childhood. According to Prout (2005), in addition to childhood's being a concept which is "socially constructed", their existence on whether they should be accepted as human becom-

ings or human beings has been argued for more than twenty years. This well-known contradiction is derived from human development perspective, whereas the dichotomy also continues to point out power relations between adult "beings" and children. For a child, to be a subject seems as the main problem, while it is directly related to subjection to author [adult] in a Foucauldian perspective. In his famous writing on power and knowledge, Foucault (2000) addresses the relation between subject and subjection; while relating the concept of subject to "self" as a reflexive pronoun, he also underlines (1988) that constitution of subjectivity means governing self.

Children's subjectivity is a remarkable issue to study on, since new paradigm for both sociology of childhood and childhood studies in general, is children's being seen worthy to understand. Prout and James (1997) mention that "new paradigm" to reconstruct childhood studies according to several points to be considered, such as social factors children have, their social positions, attending to a research as independent persons. Social position is related to class, ethnicity, and gender which we will focus on. Like any other human beings, children are also affected by the inequal situations in the world, that's why their positioning in daily life seems important. It can also be developed to another study about inequalities, since childhood is not a monolithic concept. In addition to its history, and changing perspectives for it, childhood(s) are being reshaped by circumstances, changing discourses in our lives. Gender issue is directly related to this basis. Another important factor is children's independency, which is more about methodology actually, because research "with" children is necessary, instead of research "on" them. Children are also needed to become subjects and individuals, as James (2009) emphasizes, in order to take part in social life and in history as well.

Jenks (2005) addresses that having realist judgment on children is only possible to observe peer relations, which leads us to peer culture concept that Corsaro and Eder (1990) discussed decades ago, underlining children from different ages and genders probably develop different cultures according to their group dynamics; collective ideas might be built up, even bullying can exist among peer groups. To conduct an ethnographic study in order to realize research with children, observation on these kinds of relations seems necessary. In addition to the conception of "children's peer cultures" developed by Corsaro and Eder (1990) with an impression from any other age groups' peer cultures, Harris (1998: 399) focuses on children's cultures by defining it as "a mixed bag" filled with plays, words, and strategies. Corsaro (2005) also defines children's peer culture as all children's interactions with each other, their developing routines, artefacts, values, and so on. Mouritse (1997) exemplifies the artefacts of children, by separating their cultures to three distinct segments: there could be cultural products which is made up by adults "for" children, others might create "with" children, and some cultural items can also be produced "by" children for themselves. That separation can also be perceived as the stages of children's subjectivity, in relation to adult authority. When adults create something "for" them, children are not seen as subjects enough, whereas they can create cultures by their own, that means they become real individuals.

In his work on future of childhood, Prout (2005) underlines democratic participa-

tion perspective as the specific approach of 21. century, children also need to become active participants for their own lives to take place in society, therefore, children's rights can be rebuilt through their own perspectives, adult and children can involve in collaborative and cooperative manners to live together, and researchers can become more innovative and reflexive while studying with children. Mayall (2001) also addresses that adult researchers should learn knowledge of children and develop new techniques to understand their thoughts and point of views. Despite that traditional discourse gives more value to old generations' knowledge and admits authorship of adults, generational order is needed to be reconsidered in this digital era where new generations are natives, while older generations become immigrants of the new world order. Alanen (2009) used "generational order" concept referring to Mannheim at first in order to use generation as "an analytic tool" to analyse distinctions deriving from their age differences, she also emphasizes old generations' authorship as an issue on power, or empowerment. On the other hand, technological developments create another side of power relations we are already used to, for instance, Postman (1982) mentioned the connection between childhood concept and technological devices at first, according to him, the invention of press had separated children's worlds, then the invention of television combined those separated worlds of children and adult to each other again.

In recent decades the internet is our new agenda to define children as "digital natives", that Palfrey and Gasser (2008) especially use the distinction between "natives" and "immigrants" to replace the generational order through power relations. Tapscott (2009) also refers to the relation between knowledge and power to advert the "asymmetric knowledge relations" of different generations, because first time during history children might find themselves in an advantageous position in face of older generations by having more knowledge on technological issues, which may lead them to be aware of adult's agenda more, besides, they already have opinions on existing inequalities in the world, they can develop more awareness on power, discrimination, rights, justice in order to become subjects and active participants for their own lives.

Children's Peer Cultures and Intersubjectivity

According to Crossley (1996), intersubjectivity is important to product knowledge through inter-personal relations, and peer groups' knowledge production is directly related to that perspective, just like Hardel (1988: 176), as a researcher for especially methodology for studies with children, addresses that child socialization in their peer groups can be revealed by symbolic interaction. Thus, Corsaro (1988: 189) refers to Goffman's (1974) methods, like 'secondary adjustments' for his fieldwork experiences, with an emphasis on children's imitation of adult roles in their peer cultures, however, to transform social norms by means of both collective and individual roles is possible through intersubjectivity. Transforming social norms means changing existing discourses for this study, which I tried to realize, after content analysis of the fieldwork, I selected the parts which are related to gender differences to reanalyse them in terms of discourses underlying the sentences of children, and even mine.

Furthermore, I would like to advert the child-oriented approach I had benefit from: Wall (2010: 3) defines "childism" as "the effort to respond to the experiences of children by transforming understanding and practices for all" which means also self-critique for humanism, to rethink ethical norms in our society. With a "childist" perspective, Damon (1988: 9) addresses children as active participants of their own can be understood by both their socialization and individualization processes. In this study, I tried to observe children whom I studied with in their general group conversations, in their gendered group attitudes and manners, and their reactions to me as a researcher who has kept her positioning in between a 'teacher' as they called me, and only a human being with "childist" approach.

Methodology of Research

In order to observe children's peer cultures and their various peer relations, an ethnographic study was conducted. During 2018-2019 semester, I encountered with around forty students (20 females and 25 males) who are 11-12 years-old, in three different classes of sixth grade in a private secondary school in Istanbul, Turkey. We met together with children every couple of weeks and realized workshops on specific topics respectively. The reasons I chose that school to study are its location, its being private, and its higher academic success in comparison to other private schools. Because I would like to study with children whose parents have higher SES in order to focus on their interaction to technology more, and their differentiations on peer groups without any other variables, such as economic difficulties, ethnicity, or disabilities. Therefore, I encountered with a homogenous group of children to lead my ethnographic fieldwork a case study. Briefly, my research aims were to concentrate on children's peer cultures, and to observe their gender segregation, and interaction to digital technologies as well.

I used philosophy for children (P4C) which was developed by Lipman (1992) as a critical pedagogy tool to create a way for emancipatory education as a research technique to understand children's opinions and approaches to the topics we argued with. Besides, I changed and recreated my research plan according to children's interests, and I adapted the subjects I wanted to discuss, to their own wishes. Although we made focus group interviews by P4C workshops, it became more like discussions 'with' children. By this means, phenomenology was used as a sociological research method for the study, like Schütz (2018) points out, since we rebuilt the concepts together with children in our face-to-face encounters. Goffman (1963: 15) also adverts that face-to-face interactions enrich knowledge in a fieldwork, referring to Schütz, it might be a better way to use these methods for childhood studies, to provide them to belong to the community, and simultaneously, for me as a researcher to become a part of their community.

A Case Study in a Private Secondary School in Istanbul

From the first encounter, I have tried to observe children's relations, and the first thing

took my attention was their friends groups' gender separation. At the beginning of ad-
olescence, even it's quite understandable for children to make groups of girls and boys
apart, I realized more differences about their actions at break times. While girls prefer
talking to each other and make up plays by acting physically, most of the boys stay in
the classroom in front of their tablets to play online games. This difference between
them just pushed me to study more on gender differences. Besides their perspectives
on gendered worlds, I also tried to conduct our conversations on gender issue. For this
paper, I'll mention three of them respectively based on the content analysis, then in
discussion part, critical discourse analysis will also be used as a tool to underline the
changing worlds of children owing to their gender identity.

Is there gender equality?

New-designed board games on gender are generally based on gender stereotypes in so-
ciety. Although they include traditional discourses deriving from usual circumstances
on gender, to use the way how gender stereotypes have built up, according to games
during childhood period and occupations during the rest of our lives, would be useful
to reveal our deeper judgements. Therefore, I made up several [1] open-ended short
stories to focus on children's opinions about the topic "does gender equality exist in
real world?" Despite I did not share our main topic with students, when I distributed
them the very-short stories in small papers, a few of them just found 'the problem'
by saying loudly "now, we are discussing the gender equality!" 'Gender equality' term
belonging to adult world actually, was known and be used by a 11-year-old boys, which
is quite related to both wide-spreading educational perspectives, and children's agen-
da's becoming closer to adults.

The first story is about a male ballet dancer kid, whose parents don't let him to do
that dance, since they think it's not convenient for him. There are two options for
children to end the story on their own; first one is (choice A) about the character's ly-
ing and doing whatever he wants, and second choice (B) is listening to his parents for
his life because to lie is always wrong. That ethical conflict made children reason so
carefully that reasoning levels of 11-year-old children is also important as an indica-
tor for philosophy for children technique is beyond the development stages of Piaget.
According to Piaget (1971: 68), children at 12 age can leave thinking egocentrically,
however they are still not able to build up reasonable relations. Furthermore, Kohl-
berg's analysis (1984) on Heinz dilemma also addresses that at 10-year-old, children
tend to obey to law as being at first moral stage, when they get 16, they leave egocen-
tric perspective and have empathy with other humans, declaring some concepts like
care, love, and trust. On the other hand, our focus group interview shows children at
11 years-old can also behave properly to fifth and even sixth moral stages, because
they give examples about when people don't have to be honest for others' sake on
social contract (which points fifth stage), and some of the children defend to be hon-
est any time as a universal value (which points sixth stage as a Kantian perspective of
deontological ethics). Although most of them thought the first choice (the character's
behaving upon his desire) was the 'right' end for the story, they changed their mind to

create another solution.

G1 [2]: We did not agree with these either, but if we choose one, we think A is better.

B1: He shan't lie. He shall say to his parents, "everybody is free to do what they want. There is no discrimination between girls and boys", if his mother insists to object, he continues what he does.

G2: He doesn't have to lie. So, our common decision is C: a new choice.

Despite I did not use a concept like 'discrimination', children found out it, and they positioned the problem as discrimination. From this perspective, it can be claimed that children can create gender equality, they are all against to 'discrimination', even they don't accept the existence of that concept, whereas, especially boys still find "a boy who dance ballet" strange. When I asked them to adapt this story to a drama, the boys acted kiddingly, one of them also asked me "can you imagine me dancing ballet?" Then boys defend themselves as telling they don't find anything strange about male-gendered ballet dancers, but they are not interested in ballet themselves. The ballet's belonging to an upper-class cultural tendency is another subject to mention, the important point here is while boys were having fun on the topic, only girls said, "men also dance ballet", "there are lots of ballets."

In addition to the common opinion that the character should be decisive on what he desires, there was another C option, such as 'gender transition.' When a girl said, "he should change his sex", a boy replied "yes, he shall take hormones, male hormones." Gender identity is also another important topic about gender education, because self-identity construction is based on traditional gender roles, which is open to criticize. Since children are unaware of the difference between sex and gender, and we always use the word *cinsiyet* which means "sex" during our conversation in Turkish, "gender" is more an academic word which is used neither in everyday speech, nor in education. The child's idea about gender-transition as a solution for a male to dance ballet seems a risky thought to deconstruct traditional gender discourse and recreate a new (genderless) one. As a result of this, gender equality education should be re-built without any existing discourse.

Another argument also occurred about the conflict between character's obeying to his family or being decisive on his passion that he is supposed to live in accordance with his parents' rules owing to both economic and legal reasons. When one asked "why don't they let him go to a ballet school?", another child replied "because, they are discriminatory!" [3]. On the other hand, some of them had to be convinced that the character should listen to his parents for a while, because they would pay for the school, the parents have the power, since they have the money, not the kid.

B2: [he talked in behalf of the character] I will wait until I'm 18, and then I won't listen to even one word of yours.

Then they argued whether becoming 18 means transition to adulthood or not. One of them gave some examples about his older brother's getting 18-year-old and became

able to do whatever he wanted that time. And most of them defined being above 18 as "to leave childhood". The comparison between children and parents also made them think on having experiences, which I will discuss more specifically at next section. To clarify the gender differences on children's reaction to adult authority; while boys seemed to accept adults' knowledge because of having more experiences, girls generally underlined intelligence as non-related to age. [One of the girls used the idiom "Akıl yaşta değil baştadır", which means "wisdom doesn't come with age", can directly be translated as "intelligence is in the head, not in the age", as well]. In other respects, their common judgment about adults' authority seems limited to leaving childhood at 18.

B3: He may lie to his parents until 18.

B4: Parents can't intervene. That time [since 18 years-old] they don't have to provide our needs. Not legally. They don't have to. But they can.

G3: His parents do wrong.

G4: He should follow his dreams. His mother can't decide what his occupation will be. Unless he wants, he may not.

At the end, family authority was turned upside-down by the sentence "life is his life, nobody can intervene. It's my opinion". They also seemed to prefer taking their own responsibility both emotionally, and economically in order to decide by their own, rather than becoming strict to their family and staying under their protection.

Second open-ended story was about two siblings who have difficulty to share Barbie toys. The older sister doesn't want to share 'her' Barbies with her brother, because she thinks it's not proper for him. Here property and siblings-sharing construct the ethical conflicts of the narrative, while the main issue is toys' being gendered. The choices for the story are to approve the girl and expect the boy to find another toy appropriate for him (A); or addressing the idea that "toys don't have genders or colours" (B). It seems clear for children to choose option B, but then, they need to create a solution for siblings. On the other hand, even all the children thought option B is the 'right' answer, their reactions showed a different tendency: when I distributed them the papers, the boys who had that story wanted to exchange it to another one, which is about Fortnite, a battle video-game, that generally boys are fond of it. Barbie was just like a test paper for them to react according to a gender spectrum, which is full of stereotypes deriving from traditional discourses. When children came to board to tell the story and how they continued, the girls in the group read and talked, as the boys were quite silent.

G5: We decided B.

G6: If his sister doesn't let him take her toys, he shouldn't take. Anyway, toys have no colour or gender at all.

G7: If he takes them without permission, I'd get angry with him. But if he asks for permission, I'd share. To share is nice.

G8: Yet, she doesn't have to share. They belong to her. But Barbie is not a toy for girls. Boys, even grown-ups can play with it.

As I thought the ethical issue is about property and sharing, they underlined the sister "doesn't have to share her belongings" but she "should share". Because only the girls continued to speak, I provoked the boys by pointing one of them as a Barbie-player. He started to shout like "Noooo", then everybody laughed at him. When we turned back to our debate, one of the girls hold the floor again:

G9: If it was the opposite, if boys played with Barbie dolls, and girls played with "boys' toys", it would be strange too. There is discrimination. I think, there would be again.

G8: I think so. There would be girls-boys discrimination yet. I think they make Barbies like girls, I mean, they look like girls, that's why girls play with.

Then we talked about Action Man, and other "boys' dolls". They had a definition as "boys' and girls' toys", however they didn't accept there is any difference between toys for girls and boys. They thought the differences were derived from the people who had invented those toys. And one said that all those distinctions still exist because of "thoughts from past", such as "girls stay home and cook etc".

B5: I think, if the first one who plays [with Barbie] were a boy, boys would play [with Barbie]. The first must be a girl, that's why girls play.

B6: If we dress up Barbies with men's clothes, and make them fight to each other, then they become toys for boys.

In addition to boys' relation to battle games comparing to girls' softer dolls, boys also addressed their different attitudes:

B7: Girls and boys see everything differently. You cannot see any boys like, "ooh, my clothes!", but girls gussy up.

G9: Girls and boys are different from each other for sure. Yet, it's more related to one's personality.

Finally, when we were back to our main topic, children tend to create another option one more time. They made a compromise that "any person can play with whatever they desire" without any distinction deriving from age or sexuality. It's quite remarkable that even they thought there was no discrimination, or differences between girls and boys, as long as we continued to reason, the hidden opinions behind their words came to light, just as one child's declaring "thoughts from past", it's clear the children were under the pressure of traditional discourse on gender differences.

The last story was about Fortnite. When boys didn't want to take place in ballet or Barbie stories, now they were quite eager to read the story beginning on Fortnite. There is a girl character in the story who is exactly keen on battle games, and her brother complains about her playing Fornite all the time, and her insisting on being

better than him at this play, as well. So, the first option (A) for the following part is to admit the brother's feelings and to address the idea that "battle games are produced for boys", the other option (B) is girls' interest in such plays also makes sense, and the sister in the story might even be better than the boy actually. The sentence of "battle games are for boys" itself made the boys in the classroom object to that judgment, one said "No, teacher, there is a channel for girls, and they play great!" then he shared the name of the channel with his friends, they agreed the girls there were the best players.

Although all of the children admitted that girls would be better than boys at battle games, all girls chose the second option, while the boys were a bit suspicious about which girls could play really well. After that, when a girl shared her opinion as "I though B is right from the beginning", one of the boys pointed her and said, "because you have ever played Fortnite during your life!" It sounded like a blame, and the girl also needed to defend herself as a battle-game-player, saying "I played. And I also have so many girl friends who plays battle games". Playing battle games seems 'cool' for children as we understand, there might be two different reasons: One is adults' bias for that kind of games, and even they might ban their kids from playing, which made battle games more attractive in kids' point of views. In addition to rejecting adult authority is cool, the second reason might be about accepting an authority rather than any rejection, that boys' tendencies have become desirable ones, even they might settle up new norms for children's cultural habits. In order to focus on children's thoughts about these differentiations, the discourse behind the interviews we had, is needed to be revealed:

> **B8:** The games for girls and the games for boys are always different. Fathers and mothers are also different. Just think, if there are Barbie dolls or something like that, B option also makes sense, you see. There are female characters then, some dances for girls...

It's clear that the boy who made those sentences thought that girls and boys had natural differences. Even girls could play some battle games, there should be other things which are more related to girls, not only plays, but also dances are convenient for girls, according to that kid. After his words, a girl mentioned family effects: "everything is actually related to your family. However, they lead you..." Then they started to talk about their families' reactions on gender differences.

> **B9**: Not only family. You can also learn so much things from your friends.

> **B10**: You may learn how to be discriminatory, for example.

> **G10**: Except family, girls are given pink, bloomy things which butterflies on, and boys are given blue coloured things. Then one likes something at first, s/he finds it closer.

> **G11**: I think we should change the situation. Because everybody can enjoy with everything. For example, I give up playing boy-games, but I still play with my cousin sometimes. And teacher, I think there is another point... as if girls do the

things the boys usually do, while boys can't do what girls are supposed to do.

That difference she underlined was important to indicate the pressure on men in society, they were asked to make norms actually, although they didn't want to. Therefore, it can be claimed that children are exactly aware of the situations of men and women in society, however they tend to deny their having differences in their every-day lives, self-awareness seems insufficient. Here the norm is playing battle games, which boys have created, and girls try to adapt themselves to build a status in that world – it's also their strategy to have a position in digital world, as well. Children tend to build up their identities upon the things they'd like to do, and gender identity as a part of the whole subjectivity, girls might behave like boys to become cooler / more charismatic, whereas boys were just afraid of being seen like girls, not only physically, but also emotionally. In the end, we can address that the differences between girls and boys during childhood is just similar the gender differences in adulthood; while men need to maintain their positions in society, women need to behave like men, even they should force themselves to transform into 'man-like' to achieve better positions for both their professional careers and everyday lives.

Gender roles in digital world

In another focus group interview of us, we discussed gender roles deriving from occupations through knowledge we gained from internet. As a starter for our P4C conversation, I showed the children the translations of Google Translate, such as: she is a nurse, he is a doctor. Turkish is a gender-neutral language that we don't have to indicate the sexualities of subjects, that's why we use same pronoun for 'He / She / It' as 'O', in translation they get gendered as traditional judgements in between gender and occupations.

B1: Why doesn't it say "it" [rather than he or she]?

G1: Cause it is discriminatory.

B2: The artificial intelligence?

G2: The internet looks at the average, if men are 1% higher than women for it, it is written "he".

G3: If I were it, I would indicate as her/his with slash (/) [4].

B3: It has the algorithm actually for one sentence, but when you write more than one, it becomes confused.

The statements related to technology, such as "artificial intelligence", "algorithm" belongs to the boys, whereas the girls are more interested in real world issues on gender-based facts. For instance, one of them mentioned "In Germany or some other countries, women drive buses", and another girl continued to it "but we are surprised here when we see a taxi driver who is a woman", then the third girl added "I claim that

there are ten women taxi drivers at most in Turkey!" And the girls are right about their observations, even the number is not ten for sure, the average of women drivers is really low in Turkey, comparing to any European countries. Furthermore, that observation led the children to talk about 'woman' as an adjective: because 'women drivers' are rare in Turkey, that statement has suddenly transformed into a specific pattern.

G4: I will say something that takes my attention: they say football player, for example, but they say, "woman football player, woman engineer", as if the normal must be man.

G5: Then, let them say "man football player" for male ones.

B4: [objected to the girls' statements] I never heard something like that, they aren't named as "woman…".

G4: [got angry with the boy] Oh teacher, they never heard!

Then, only the girls talked about gender differences on occupations, with an increasing temper:

G6: They need to declare woman; I think it's not necessary.

G5: If there is no occupation like "woman driver".

G7: They made a discrimination as if women are abnormal.

G8: They code Google Translate according to men.

G9: Everywhere, you can see gender discrimination, for example in sports, teams are separated by for women and for men.

G10: Perhaps, artificial intelligence imitates the society, everybody uploads something to the internet, if there are more women cook, then it becomes…

From that moment, our debate turned back to the main issue, which is more related to technological devices, however, it was quite clear that the topics children tend to argue changed upon their genders. Even they claimed there is (or shouldn't be) any differences at all, their reactions were exactly different from each other. Another example can be given as girls' interest on the distinctive sentences "she is married – he is single", one of them expressed her opinion as "they show men for being single in movies, but married ones are women", even boys objected that "the number of married women has to be equal to men" girls continued to argue by adverting the differences between spaces: "for example, men wander around with their friends outside, do whatever they want, while women work at home". It was just like a radical feminist argument of the separation of private and public spaces through genders.

G11: [objected to the boy who mentioned about "number equality"] It's not about numbers. They think a woman will marry, cook, do this and that, whereas men just stay as his single position. Women may also quit their jobs when they

get married, they work when they are single, but then, they will make babies…

B5: How can I tell? As if… especially in Turkey, as if women have to get married…

B6: But there is another discrimination among families, for example, fathers be-have daughters… well… they get angry with sons more.

B5: Especially about the money issues. When boys are 18, they are supposed to leave home, but they pay for girls' school.

In Turkey, when parents, especially father of the household passed away, daughters can have the salary until they get married, while sons can have it until they get 18, actually. Even the boy who said the words above didn't know the situation, he was right about the observation he had in a way. Then, boys began to talk on their gendered positions on their parents' minds. They thought girls had more freedom than themselves, because they weren't supposed to go somewhere the fathers wanted.

B4: Girls are given to choose to go or stay somewhere. But boys are under pressure, fathers say "be a man".

It's actually girls' not being taken seriously about their actions, while boys are wanted to become subjects. However, children interpreted girls' being ignored positions as 'freedom.' When they compared their parents' status, their awareness of the inequality between women and men on occupations, and salaries as well came to light. Girls complained about women's having less salary than men if they both work for same jobs for same durations. They defined such circumstances as "sexist, discriminatory, inequal".

Gender differences in power relations

This section is about adult-children distinction, with this basic question "who has a voice in the world / who should have a voice in the world? Children or adults?" It was quite sure that children tend to declare whether they had a voice by their own, or not, the ones who should have a voice are children rather than adults, because they have the future. However, different opinions occurred during the focus group interview that I analysed the findings on gender basis.

B1: Adults have a voice; they have more experiences and they know what to do.

B2: They made rules, but if they are wrong, we'll change them in the future.

G1: I think children can imagine better, since their imagination is wider.

While the boys seem to accept adult authority because of their experiences, girls tend to deny it, addressing their powerful sides, such as imagination, self-confidence, "ways of thinking". Children have better ways of thinking as they said, whereas boys underlined their positions through adults' perspectives again, by creating a distinction between "baby and child". When one said, "adults see us as babies", another boy replied as "they see us as the things that cannot think". Moreover, both girls and boys

began to give examples from their everyday lives in order to emphasize how they are ignored by adults in public spaces, like restaurants, shops, even public transport.

> **B3:** I will tell you something about "they see us as babies", every time we go to a restaurant, my father wants me to order something, he told me "you're grown enough", but when I say something, the man [waiter] asks someone else.

> **B4**: Workers in the places go to adults when we ask for something, because the ones who will pay the money are adults.

Therefore, we can claim even children seem as individuals for their parents, they are ignored all the time in public spaces by adults as if they are 'babies' which means ones who are not able to think according to them. That competency matter is important to emphasize the power relations between children and adults, because children are meant to be defined as their being "incompetent" to say, act, have a voice, etc. In other aspects, children related this issue to 'children's rights' by pointing out "they don't regard our rights, children cannot say 'I have right to word.'" During our discussion on children-adult distinction deriving from 'competency', girls were more willing to speak, and they usually underlined that children should speak for their own. For boys, the asymmetric relation seemed more remarkable, because they tend to determine their advantages in face of adults, such as they had "the experience of a technological device".

> **B5:** Grown-ups, for example... there was no internet in the past. So, they don't know it.

> **B6:** Yes, they don't have experience on technological things.

> **B7:** Even they live longer than us, they don't have the experience of a new produced smart phone, then.

Gender differences were also clear about children's tendencies to technology. Although girls seemed to defend themselves more than boys against adult authority, they didn't show interest about their advantages on technology. They talked about "governing" of adults mostly, and would like to share power, for "small decisions" at least. They needed to be taken their opinions about family issues for a beginning. One of the girls also said, "it is [having children's opinions] necessary to provide confidence for them", another added "they should be asked, I agree, if they [children] don't decide for themselves, they never learn how to take decisions".

While girls were so certain about their having right decisions, boys accepted they might be wrong, because children might behave irrationally. When I asked them, who decide what is rational, the boys reminded adults' knowledge and experiences. They thought adults had lessons from their mistakes, and they could decide more reasonable according to their past. I provoked them their perspective was "adultist", then they made compromise that adults may also be unreasonable, sometimes. One of the boys said at the end: "they must force us so much that they even made me believe [that they are always reasonable]".

DISCUSSION

Children are protected by adults and their needs are provided by them, adults are the ones who have authorship and right to govern according to traditional discourse, which recreates the hierarchy between two different polarizations. In order to change that hierarchical dichotomy to an emancipatory relationship, Freire's (2014) suggestion on developing critical consciousness might create an alternative for critical education possibilities. Thus, Lipman's P4C method as a pedagogical tool can also be transformed into an equal communication way with children in order to empower them to express themselves. The important point is to empower children is related to one side's having the power already, in her writing on a children's movie, Odrowaz-Coates (2016: 72) underlines children's salvation is only possible by "self-empowerment". Actually the text (2016: 69) refers to the plot of an animation for children [Boxtrolls], which we may see a cultural product "for" children, on the other hand, those kinds of creative products have a serious potential to become a "material to enhance critical thinking" through children's interpretations. On that account, I made up little scenarios to develop with children in order to motivate them to share their ideas. Instead of empowerment discourse, I attempted to create a "childist" one.

This case study put forward children's levels of self-awareness, their familiarity with the agenda of the world issues, and some concepts belong to the adults' milieu as well, and their tendencies to imitate existing social roles eligibly to Corsaro's peer culture approach. According to the results, it is seen that all the concepts such as, "gender equality", "discrimination", honesty as a "universal value", "sexist", "discriminatory" are familiar for children. In addition to their daily conversations with these concepts, they also use "sexist, racist, discriminatory" words as insults. In other parts of our fieldwork, most of the children expressed their discomfort feelings about government or people's "exclusivist" behaviours to the "others". On the one hand, they constitute their subjectivity by identifying "the other", on the other hand, they don't have self-awareness enough to define their gendered divisions in their daily lives. They usually insist on that although there is gender discrimination in social life, they don't have such experiences. When they try to open their own experiences, they realize boys and girls are different in their everyday lives, too, whereas, they claim that the situation is unique: they may not have better relationships with "the others" having opposite sex, it is about their personalities, not about their sexualities.

To get to the main topic, the results show us several differences between girls and boys; for instance, while the girls are close to build face to face relationships and create plays upon physical acting and facial expressions, the boys' preferences are more related to digital world. Furthermore, in our conversations on gender issue, the girls are more related to real world circumstances comparing to the boys. Both girls and boys have same opinions about internet's reflecting the existing biases of the real society: some of them expressed that situation through conservative discourses of society. They are also aware of the differences between countries, most of the children needed to advert "especially in Turkey", or different nations' specific "discriminatory behaviours". Children's awareness of agenda is derived from achieving knowledge

through internet rapidly and easily, which is their basic advantage against older generations. Korczak (2017: 27) pointed out that "we say that they are future people, future workers, future citizens" decades ago, and nowadays children are exactly aware of their becoming future citizens, thus, their reactions to adult authority is another important topic to debate on in the frame of this case study.

For this study, there are also different understandings of children revealed upon their genders against authority; the boys seem more advocating authorship, while the girls have desire to defend themselves. The main reason of that specific segregation might be about their "future" identities, the results already show that all the children accept becoming 18 means "leaving childhood" and becoming free to what they really want to do. Another aspect is also the boys' interpretations on freedom as "doing whatever you want", while girls tend to relate the concept of freedom to other concepts, like empathy, responsibility, taking care of others, etc. Within those distinctive interpretations, it can be claimed that boys are only interested in becoming adults, thus, adult authority doesn't seem as a real problem for them, they already know childhood period they have been experiencing is temporal. On the other hand, girls might be aware of power relations more in comparison to the boys, because they already interpret many existing issues in real world about gender discrimination. In addition to self-awareness they have, from their potential women-positions, they also comment on the boys' feeling pressured to become 'a man' in a society where men should be authors and have power to govern; while the boys rarely interpret on girls' and women's positioning in everyday life.

Furthermore, power relations among genders effect family relations, as children addressed father-son relationship differently than relationships building with daughters. Socialization of boys seem more necessary than girls according to families within conservative discourse. Except boys' commentaries about girls' becoming free from those obligatory social events, there are many similar misunderstandings on girls' positioning in social life. For instance, boys' relation to technological devices is seen as a problem for parents and teachers as well, thus, girls reach to a privileged position in the eyes of adults. However, girls' distance to digital technology is another side of gender inequality, just like the children emphasized that artificial intelligence imitates people, and digital world is like a reflection of our existing society; thus, if girls are separated from digital technologies, it would create a new kind of gender discrimination. Besides, gender positioning in digital world means construction of future power relations. The differences between public and private spaces as a previous gender segregation, related to women and men positioning within society and personal lives, which the girls pointed out, the differences between real and virtual spaces may lead the children to potential inequalities.

Lastly, I would like to point out another observation I have, which is more related to educational basis: children tried to choose the "right" option for the story-endings, instead of developing them in the beginning, that's why I adverted 'right' words in quotation marks. As long as they reasoned on the plot, and investigated the character's choices to continue the story, they began to create new –third- choices. That shows children have powerful imaginaries and reasoning capacities, as they have already

declared, however the existing educational system only have led them to 'choose/find' the 'right' answer/solution, which kills their creativity, and desire to search for different solutions. In this respect, critical pedagogy seems necessary to rethink about by children's experiences, such as McLaren (2011: 355) addresses that pedagogy should be based on childhood experiences. Vucic (2017: 171) also underlines deconstruction of power relations is only possible through a radical approach like Korczak's, which is "centred on the agency of each person to individually resist in the smallest of ways, even against themselves". To interpret that statement for gender equality education, according to families' traditional point of views I adverted above, gender equality can only be built by a possible solidarity between children and adults. It is clear that both parents at home, and teachers at school from older generations who are filled with prejudices on gender roles, that's why to recreate new perspectives on gender requires a "childist" approach, which should be purged from stereotypes.

CONCLUSION

To sum up, this case study with children on gender differentiations and adult authority revealed their various perspectives on several topics, such as adult-children relations, women-men positioning in society, differences between girls and boys, and how digital space reflects people's usual behaviours. According to the main topic, which focuses on differences between boys and girls, the research's findings can be summarized within six different theme, which are more or less related to each other: children's preferences for communication and plays; their reactions to adult authority; potential awareness on 'the other'; self-awareness they already have; their attitudes on real world and/or digital world and technologies; their willingness to recreate existing social roles, to "change situation".

The limitation of the study is that the group of children I encountered with is a homogenous group, because it is an ethnographic fieldwork, research findings are only valid for that small group interactions, and their peer relations. On the other hand, following studies could be conducted on both basis, children's imitations of gender roles (and reconstructing them), and changing power relations upon to asymmetric knowledge relations as well. Furthermore, comparative case studies would be also beneficial to reveal different childhood experiences among various ethnic communities, nations, or social classes.

This study is an attempt to focus on childhood matter with children themselves, thus following studies need to be realized based on different children's needs, like Engel (2013: 123) reminds Korczak's writing on children's right as "the child's right to the present and the right of the child to be what he is". They are here around all over the world, to communicate, to understand, and act together through their perspectives in order to deconstruct stereotypes to rebuild the world as one of the children said "there is no discrimination between(…)" not only girls and boys, among any of children, who are people of today.

NOTES

[1]. Actually, there were four different stories, two of them were about girls, on plays & occupations, two of them were about boys, on plays & occupations; whereas we couldn't use one of them, which was related to a girl's occupation choice, because it was understood in another aspect by children according to the occupational prestige.

[2]. I separated the speakers according to their sex, by naming them as Girl1- Girl-2 & Boy-1, Boy-2 respectively. It is actually objectionable to separate children upon their sex, because it may re-produce the settled gender distinctions pointing their subjectivity according to gender issues. However, my purpose is to observe what they experience about this problem and how they interpret that. In order to investigate where the settled distinctions have been arising from, possible "unspeakable" things are also needed to be revealed in following studies through feminist epistemology.

[3]. Here, it should be addressed that "discriminatory/discrimination" is the most equalivalent word for "ayrımcı/ayrımcılık" which seems to belong adults' world mostly (furthermore, children's using this word as an invective is a remarkable finding). However, it's not very clear to point out the difference between "marginalize(d)" and "exclusive(d)", since we use same word, "dışla(n)mak" for both, in Turkish. If we focus on the words' roots, "ex" and "dış" have similar meanings, that's why I'll prefer to translate all these words as "exclusive", and the meanings would be shaped according to the context.

[4]. Merriam-Webster dictionary (2019) has made the update about "they" as a singular "gender-neutral" pronoun in September 2019, after we had the discussion with the children. It may be concerned that if we have a discussion like from now, children can mention about "they" pronoun instead of suggesting to put slash (/). That's why that part of the study might be repeated with a group of children.

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CHILD PARTICIPATION IN FAMILY DECISION-MAKING: THE CONTRIBUTION OF THE RUSSIAN PARENTS' FORUM

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ABSTRACT: The topic of children's participation in various issues was updated in the second half of the last century. It was largely due to the adoption of an important international document such as the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. Children are as important participants in social life as adults, so they have the right to express their opinions on various issues related to their activities, as well as to take into account these opinions by adults in decision-making in the family, in school, in the community, etc. Russian society is dominated by the traditional discourse of the perception of children as human becoming, socially and mentally immature, not-yet-an-adult. To study the parental discourse of children's participation in family issues, empirical material of the network discussion organized at the parental forum called Vladmama (Vladivostok, Russia) is used. In order to organize the discussion, an information injection was carried out. It was the description of the imagined problematic situation of child-parental relations on the issue of child's participation in family affairs. The 81 messages received from 25 users were analyzed according to James Gee approach. Seven Gee's "building tasks" (Activities; Identities; Relationships; Politics; Connections; Sign Systems and Knowledge) are researched on the materials of mother's forum. The process of creating value is always connected with the exercise of power. In our case, mothers using their power as parents redefine the meanings of children's participation. The main resource that opens the way for adults to power is money. Earning money is interpreted by the participants of the forum as a way for a child to involve in the adult's world, an opportunity to legalize the child's right to express his/her own opinion and defend this opinion. Other sources of parent's power are their own life experience, knowledge and social skills.

INTRODUCTION

The topic of child participation in solving various issues gained in relevance at the end of the last century. This happened to a large degree due to the adoption of a number of international instruments, primarily the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. The Convention established the child's right to express his or her views in all matters affecting the child, including the freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds (articles 12 and 13).

The ideas of identifying forms of civic participation have been actively developed by researchers since the second half of the 20th century. Sherry R. Arnstein (1969) outlined eight rungs of the ladder of citizen participation: manipulation, psychotherapy, informing, consultation, placation, partnership, delegated power and citizen control.

Subsequently, researchers offered different classifications of participation. Gerison Lansdown discusses children's decision-making in the terms of the four elements (Lansdown 2005): (a) ability to understand and communicate relevant information; (b) ability to think and choose with some degree of independence; (c) ability to assess the potential for benefit, risk, and harm; (d) achievement of a fairly stable set of values. Roger Hart (Hart 1999) presents a modified version of Arnstein's "ladder of participation". Hart's ladder includes eight rungs, or stages of child participation: "manipulation", "decoration", "tokenization", "assigning, but informing", "consulting and informing"; "adult initiative and shared decision-making with children"; "children's leadership and initiative"; "children's initiative and shared decision-making between children and adults".

The topic of children's participation in addressing issues that affect their interests have been actively explored by researchers all over the world (Handley 2005; Holland & O'Neil 2006; Jones &Walker 2011; Sinclair 2004). A considerable amount of methodological literature (brochures, guides and manuals) has been published by UNICEF, commissioners for children's rights and ministries of social development of various countries: "Save the children", "Involving children in decision making", "A journey in children's participation", etc.

In Russia, a certain amount of experience in assessment of child participation and involvement has been gained (Kalabikhina, Kuchmayeva, Kochnev, Vasilyeva, Odinokova, Rusakova, Filipova etc.). Irina Kalabikhina et al. (2014) researched the models of child's participation in decision-making on issues that affect their interests in Moscow and Krasnodar, the two Russian cities that have joined the UNICEF Child Friendly Cities Initiative. On the one hand, the researchers note the diversity of aspects of urban life that involve children: sports, culture, leisure, social advertising, social assistance to the needy, environmental protection and urban planning. On the other hand, they identify problems of children's access to information, paternalistic attitudes of participating adults, creation of elite groups of "child professionals", low expectations from child participation, mass passivity of children, etc.

As the child grows up, he or she obtains more experience of social participation at all levels, from families to schools, communities, cities and countries. Family is a small social group in which the child gains his or her first experience of social interaction, learns a set of social roles and participates in decision-making that is relevant for his or her family.

The first document that promoted the idea of child participation in the life of the society in Russia was the National Strategy for Action in Children's Interests. The Strategy was in force in 2012-2017. It contained a special section titled "Child participants of the National Strategy". Children were referred to as participants in social relations. The section enumerated the main organisational forms contributing to the realisation of the right of the child to express his or her views: children's and young people's civic associations, youth councils, chambers, parliaments and school self-governance bodies.

Prior to the adoption of this document, children were viewed as subjects mostly under family law, when it came to the right of the child to express his or her views on family matters where the interests of the child were at stake (the choice of residence in the event of the parents' divorce, agreement or disagreement with the selection of adoptive parents, etc.). Under the Russian family legislation, it is mandatory to take into account the views of children aged 10 or older. However, the situations related to family every-day life that are not covered by family law remain the responsibility of parents and other adult family members.

This publication deals with parent interpretations of child participation in addressing issues of family every-day life.

Research questions:

(1) How do parents understand "the involvement of children in family matters"?

(2) Which practices do parents use to involve children in decision-making?

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study is rooted in CDA – Critical discourse analysis, which is a problem-oriented interdisciplinary set of theories and methods that are widely used to analyse texts of various kinds.

Discourse reproduces the society through social structures of the latter, relations and value structures. Discourse is also involved in transforming the society, as people use discourses for the pursuit of their daily and creative activities.

The empirical data for studying the discourse of child participation in addressing issues that affect their interests has been collected using the method of online discussion on a Russian parents' forum, Vladmama.ru. The forum is hosted on the portal for parents of Primorsky Krai, a Far Eastern region of Russia. The portal exists since 2006.

We have suggested an online discussion as a method of data collection in social networks. We "injected" information – a message that provoked users to discuss the proposed topic (Abrosimova et al. 2019). In order to initiate a parent discussion of the topic of child participation in family decision-making, a researcher under the nickname "Mask" (we use this nickname to preserve anonymity) described a problematic

situation of relationship with her child. The situation had been invented for research purposes.

The topic of child participation was "injected" on the Vladmama forum through the following message that reflected parent-child relational problems: "Hello! I don't know if my problem is a serious one, but it makes me feel pretty sore. I have two kids, a 12-year-old boy and a 7-year-old girl. I have constant problems with my son: he's become very independent. He doesn't really care about our parental opinion, and he wants to decide everything for himself at that. It's about everything: from what we make for dinner to the colour of our future car! We are constantly bickering and quarrelling about that! I think he is still too young for expressing his views on how the parents spend their earned money! What is this?! Is this the problems with all kids today? Are they all grown up and independent? I am tired of incessant quarrels! I'd appreciate objective opinions on my situation".

The researcher's message received active feedback from forum members. Most messages (33) were received on the first day as the main message was posted. This is typical for a forum discussion. On the second day, another 30 messages were posted. As the discussion saw a significant decline in intensity, three days after the discussion started, another message was written in order to "revive" the forum: "Thank you for your opinions! Maybe my child's behaviour doesn't come out of nothing. But on the other hand, I understand he is at a difficult age and the like. But I really don't get the point beyond which I should consider my child's views on family matters. It is clear that he has the right of choice when it comes to oatmeal, but what about something big, such as appearance or clothing?"

The additional message provoked 21 more comments posted in the following two days.

A total number of 25 users took part in the discussion, and 81 messages were posted. Table 1 lists their summary statistics.

Table 1. Summary statistics of the forum's participants

	Nickname	Number of messages	City
1	Cac|tus	12	Vladivostok
2	Barbie na pensii [Retired Barbie]	11	Unspecified
3	Svetlyachok [Firefly]	7	Vladivostok
4	Lebed' belaya [White Swan]	6	Vladivostok
5	karapuzik L [toddler L]	6	Unspecified
6	Aystre	4	Vladivostok
7	Energy	4	Unspecified
8	Mamo	4	Unspecified
9	Zhemchuzhny mix [Pearly mix]	3	Unspecified
10	Olchik_1980	3	Unspecified
11	Samaya [the most]	3	Unspecified
12	@vok@do	3	Vladivostok
13	Cat	2	Unspecified
14	Treugol'nik [Triangle]	2	Vladivostok
15	Lipka	1	Vladivostok
16	Ferari	1	Unspecified
17	Valiko	1	Unspecified
18	Belladonna	1	Unspecified
19	BO yarova	1	Vladivostok
20	Macau	1	Unspecified
21	Vintage	1	Unspecified
22	Capuchin	1	Unspecified
23	Dinka15	1	Vladivostok
24	Anatolyp	1	Vladivostok
25	Yarilochka	1	Vladivostok

Source: Self-generated 2019.

For the analysis of messages Gee's approach is used. It is based on seven positions; the researcher calls them "building tasks": Significance; Activities (Practices): Identities; Relationships; Politics (the distribution of social goods); Connections; Sign Systems and Knowledge (Gee 2011: 30-33).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

To answer the first research question, it is important to discuss Gee's building tasks of creating "Significance" and "Identities".

Significance is what matters for a participant in a group discussion. For most participants in the online discussion, the debate on child participation moves into another plane, i.e., discussing issues of earning money, sharing of domestic responsibilities or relations with adolescent children:

> The neurologist smiled and said: wait, be patient, this is the prepubescent period that lasts from 9 to 13 years in boys. Their hormones are starting to change; it's different for everyone (Svetlyachok [Firefly])

> As regards money, that's another story. I think children should learn to spend money wisely since they are babies. Otherwise you'll never teach them. (Retired Barbie)

Olchik_1980 demonstrates visibility of participation:

> Ok, he expressed his view (by the way, it's not bad at all); you listened to him and did it all your way… so what's the problem?

This remark contains a contradiction. On the one hand, its author admits the relevance of participation (the child should be able of expressing his/her opinion). On the other hand, she neglects the child's right to participate in family decision-making.

An apparent contradiction of another comment demonstrates the complexity and ambiguity of the topic of participation and the lack of established practice of child participation in family decision-making:

> And why shouldn't children have the right to voice their views in principle? Why do you do all your way after listening to him? I don't suggest you do as children tell you. I mean joint discussions and joint decisions that will certainly be the way parents need.

First, the author of this remark advocates children's right to have their views ("voice"), but she ends up with a "joint decision" that is still a decision made by adults. It is the same as in the above-quoted comment, but it offers a greater semblance of participation.

According to the forum's comments, participation can be interpreted as "being part of the family". They do not specify whether this part is bigger or smaller. It probably implies equality.

> Your problem is actually that children attempt to be part of the family… (Retired

Barbie)

With significance it is strongly connected identities. *Identities* of a child-participant are related to the peculiarities of perception of children by their parents.

An overwhelming majority of comments posted by female participants of the on-line discussion is related to a peculiar perception of children as "not-yet-adults". Here, social roles of children vary from objects of parental attention and care, whose opinion does not decide anything, to imaginary subjects whose participation is reduced to a possibility of expressing their views, although these views mean nothing to adults.

The "growing up" role has been emphasised on many occasions in the discussion by comments on puberty, prepubescence, etc.

The role functions of "Adult" and "Child" are distributed so that, for example, the child asks questions and the adult answers them or the adult does something and the child repeat the actions:

And we always provide answers so as to make the children understand that cheaper doesn't always mean better, neither does expensive mean better (Retired Barbie)

Moreover, the adult demonstrates behaviour patterns, teaches, shows restraint, etc. Performing the role of a "Child", on the contrary, includes inability to govern one's emotions, lack of sufficient competences and knowledge for independent decision-making.

A comment by a female forum member contains recognition of child expertise, albeit with some reservations, in the IT sphere:

His opinion and arguments can be listened to… <u>maybe he will also suggest something worthy</u>. Nowadays, kids are so… tech-savvy (Dinka15)

The underlined part of the phrase points to the domination of an adult that does not want to admit fully the capacity of the child to be more competent than him in certain matters.

A rigid hierarchy is discernible in relationship-building. The child appears to be an immature and unexperienced object of influence that has no financial self-sufficiency. The adult is viewed as elder sophisticated educator and mentor. The relationship is built on the paradigm of dominance, where a subject endowed with public goods, and with the right to make decisions in particular, finds himself in a stronger position:

I don't see what all this quarrelling is for… Reply him calmly: you will spend money when you earn your own money… (Dinka15)

Sometimes I am leaving him with no choice: please eat what I have cooked, but I still explain why I serve him a meal he doesn't like. He is sitting silently and eating. Before buying a new car, I remember we also consulted with him , and of course we bought what we saw fit, but again we convinced him in a calm conversation that it was better that way. (Svetlyachok [Firefly])

To answer the second research question, it is necessary to share family's questions,

adult's questions and child's questions. They are three different spheres of power and power relationships, supposing or not children's involvement in the process of decision-making. Child's questions are connected with the child's interests. Parent's discourse follows legal discourse. The commentary to the article 57 of Family Code of Russian Federation ("the right to express the opinion") contains an interpretation of the interests of the child: "The interests of the child should be understood as ensuring a healthy lifestyle, normal mental and physical development, education, adequate material and living conditions and other needs". But parents incompletely interpret "child's right to express his/her opinion" and "child's interests", family's practices proved it.

Participatory practices developed in the online discussion were grouped around two topics initially set by the initiator of the discussion, cooking and buying a car.

The topic of cooking is therefore mentioned much more often than car purchase and finds its elaboration in dishwashing, taking out the trash, etc. So, we can use "cooking" as a concept collecting family affairs. Through it, female respondents express their relations to daily domestic work.

In Russia, home environment and its organisation are traditionally considered a women's job. Hence, female participants of the forum (sometimes ironically) men's rights are regarded as equal to those of children:

> Does the husband have the right to voice his opinion with regard to what he wants to eat for dinner? (Retired Barbie)

> …. if my children and my husband come and tell me "oh, please cook this and that, because we miss it / haven't eaten it for a long time, etc.", no problem, but if I should… (Cactus)

Or there shows up a remark related not only to the children, but also to the remaining family members:

> I often ask, "What do we cook for tomorrow? Options include chicken cutlets with buckwheat, pilaf and pollock cutlets with rice!" We reach an agreement by a majority of votes or through persuasion. (Retired Barbie)

While cooking can be referred to group of family affairs, buying of the car and everything connected with it - it is the sphere of competence of adults. To be more precise it is the scope of masculine authority:

> The husband chooses the car himself. For him and for me. This is not discussed (@vok@do)

According to the forum comments, the most widespread participatory practice is a joint discussion with children on adult matters. Such discussion allows adults to influence children's views:

> (…) And we were making our decisions together with children!!! Of course, the final decision is ours, and their opinions can always be changed, directed elsewhere, pointing out the advantages of the second option (Retired Barbie)

Retired Barbie is the most active in demonstrating participatory practices in the discussion. She enumerates various participation situations of both her children in family decision-making:

As for children, I have been consulting with them since they were born, as regarded where we would go on vacation; and before buying a flat, we went with our 4-year-old daughter to look whether she liked trees and playgrounds in various areas of the city. I also consulted with my daughter when planning my youngest son. We also choose our newest car on the computer at Drom.ru as a family. And right now, we are all deciding en masse where and when to go on vacation. And even before buying our second flat, we sat down with our kids and discussed what we wanted to buy: on the one hand, it was an advantage, but, on the other hand, it was also a disadvantage, because, perhaps, we should live more economically in terms of entertainment and travel for a couple of years (Retired Barbie)

This statement demonstrates a shift in participatory practices for children: one type of practices applies for pre-schoolers (visibility and game) and another type of practices applies for schoolchildren.

The possibility of participation correlates with the age of children. Children are likely to defend their right to express their opinion more actively in their adolescence, and parents are forced to listen to them:

It is my eldest son whom I myself often ask what to cook; he doesn't care, though (Svetlyachok [Firefly])

Maybe you always present him with a fait accompli and don't consult with him on anything, although he is 12, not two years old... And he is already a personality to be reckoned with in the family, whose opinion should be taken into account (Svetlyachok [Firefly])

Here the effect of legal discourse can also be found – according to the same article of the Family Code (article 57) "taking into account the opinion of a child who has reached the age of 10 years is mandatory".

In allocating public goods, parents follow two approaches. The first one is an approach of overt or explicit dominance, and there can be no doubt in whose favour the public good of participation in family life through decision-making is allocated:

Well, perhaps I am "a mother after all" It never even crossed my mind to ask children what kind of car my husband and me should buy, let alone choosing its colour. They didn't even know we were going to purchase a car, they only learned it after the fact (Cac|tus)

Ha ha. I can't imagine consulting with children regarding what kind of car, what kind of TV set or what kind of fridge we should buy or to what area we should move (Lipka)

The second approach to allocation implies a more latent dominance. Parents pretend their children have the public good to take part in family life through de-

cision-making, but all decisions are in reality made by parents independently. The availability of public good thus turns into a semblance, a phantom or a simulacrum:

I can't understand how a kid can decide what colour car you buy? And the same regards dinner.

I mean a joint discussion, a joint decision that will be, of course, the way the parents need it. (Retired Barbie)

Parents associate child participation with upbringing, delegation of responsibility, right to choose and financial autonomy. But here again, adults apparently dominate, as they seek to set boundaries to child participation because of their seniority. In one case, participation is limited to the purchase of personal items:

We only listen to their opinions with regard to their personal items: motorbikes, tablets, mobile phones or the like (Lipka)

The division into personal and family-wide issues is apparent in the following statement:

They are independent and grown-up where they are mature enough to be grown-up and independent: what to wear, which club to attend and how to spend their free time. The rest can be discussed as well, for instance, where to go on vacation, but the decision is up to the parents anyway (Cat).

Sharing out spheres of influence between adults and children is a possibility to solve a conflict in interactions:

We share out degrees of responsibility, and still we don't consult with our children what kind of car or flat we should buy. These issues are solved by my husband and me. But when it comes to choosing a summer camp, the children decide. We also consult with them with regard to what they wear, especially with our son who is 13. Our daughter is 7; we don't consult with her, but we sometimes tell her: just take on whatever you like today. Most often, everything works out normally (Lebed' Belaya [White Swan])

In another case, the respondents go so far as to state the dependent status of children. The financial dependence of children on their parents is the decisive argument in this regard.

In other words, equality implies financial autonomy. Money is a resource that opens the child's way to the adult world.

Meanwhile, adults work, get tired and they are not up to child participation:

Let them eat what I cook. If they don't like it, then they will have dumplings for dinner. And it's okay, everyone's happy. Mother gets tired, she is dreaming of vacation, and on top of that she gets this pain 😁 No way, thank you. 😁 (Lipka)

It should be noted that this applies not only to food choices. Information cause to start the discussion referred to the two points of opinion clashes between parents and

children, cooking and buying a car. Adults perceive child participation as a game, as an amusement that disturbs and annoys them; this is one of their associations. Another association refers to puberty: parents perceive children's defence of their opinions as an inherent difficulty of the transition to adulthood.

Participation interpreted by parents as children's inclusion in the adult world is also associated with household duties. It appears that only adults have a right to voice their views, whereas children only may strive to obtain this right through performing household chores. The child has a limited choice within household duties:

Your child wants to be part of your family, so impose responsibilities on him: not one-off, but permanent ones. All dishes are his duty, and let him decide on his own what colour sponge and what scent Fairy dish detergent you use. Let him take out the garbage every day (Karapuzik [Toddler])

In so thinking, some adults are certain that, after having tasted a little bit of adult life in the form of the aforementioned duties, children will choose to return to their childhood, free from the burdens of problems and concerns, as well as from participation in everyday family decision-making.

As children grow older, as already mentioned, they are increasingly defending their right to express their opinion:

The girl is growing up, her character is shaping up. She is less suggestible and expresses her views more often... And I am in crisis because of that I am trying to play it cool, but I am in a real crisis: I find it difficult to accept that the girl becomes adult and independent. And she wants to have a right to her own opinion and to her own mistakes... (Retired Barbie)

The possibility to express their views matters to children. It is important to be listened to, heard and noticed by the people around them:

It is important for children to feel involved in choosing, and we give them such an opportunity. Still, we make distinctions, since there are issues that are really beyond their level of competence (Lebed' Belaya [White Swan])

Female participants in the discussion are projecting the existing child-parent power relations upon adult relationships with their grown children. In some instances, they reproduce the discourse on "children as parents' support in old age":

If it is inconsistent with the position of the parents, it is more honest to explain that the child doesn't have the right to voice his or her opinion in this family, than to "listen to him and do it all your way". Explain to him that he will decide on himself when he grows up. And, with such a stance, get prepared that, in principle, as your child grows up, he or she can also exclude parents' opinions and desires from his/her priorities (Retired Barbie)

Beside means of natural language, the participants in the discussion make active use of emojis, a language of ideograms and smiley faces that appear in electronic communications and on web pages. This graphic language, where combinations of pictures stand for words, appeared in Japan and spread worldwide. Emojis are often used

to imitate spoken language. Studies have revealed that women use more emojis in their messages than men do.

The emojis used in our discussion can roughly be divided into four groups: embarrassment and doubt emojis; fun emojis; disapproval emojis; and sarcasm emojis. They appear 33 times in our discussion.

In some cases, emojis provide additional visual means to emphasise that conversations about child participation and possibilities of children to influence family decisions cannot be serious:

My eldest son was in crisis when he was about 15… My younger children happen to be in crisis every full moon 😁. I agree that much depends on adults. (@vok@ do)

Emojis often appear also when various crises are discussed: transition to adulthood, personal development and midlife crises. Crises affect not only children, but also their parents.

… Now the situation at home improved. So, if such behaviour is out of character for your son, maybe, well, hello, prepubescence… I wish you patience, wisdom and strength. 😊 (Svetlyachok [Firefly])

Prepubescence, puberty, postpuberty 😆😆😆 I probably wouldn't survive such amount of puberty, and I still have to survive crises 😁(Cac|tus)

I've recently listened to a webinar, and they said that crisis affects parents, not children. Well, that's right 😊 (Ferari)

Increases in frequency of emoji usage during discussions on certain topics may indicate a high degree of emotional involvement of interlocutors, their wish to express one's point of view as comprehensively as possible and relevance of the topic under discussion.

CONCLUSION

Female participants in the discussion predefine the child as immature, incompetent and unexperienced. Accordingly, even when the child is given voice and opportunity to discuss family issues with his or her parents, "the decision will suit the parents' needs", not the situation.

Everything is limited to the child's possibility to express his or her opinion. Different scenarios are then possible, but all of these end up in parents' ignoring the child's opinion: after listening to it, they do it all their way or convince the child to change his or her mind.

The discussion on child participation in family decision-making lapses into reasoning about age crises of child development and distribution of household tasks. Therefore, it is understood as inclusion in adult life through performance of domestic duties, where children are given a certain choice.

Critical approach to discourse analysis is peculiar because it always studies the pro-

cess of creating a meaning in relation to exercise of power. In our case, parents that exercise power redefine meanings of child participation. Money is the main resource that opens the adult's way to power. Earning money is interpreted by female forum members as a way of inclusion into the adult world, a possibility to legalise the right to express one's own opinion and defend this opinion. Another source of power, also invoked by the parents, is one's own life experience, knowledge and skills that are essential for life in society.

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JUSTICE FOR CHILDREN IN ARGENTINA: A BACKLASH TO CONSERVATIVE DISCOURSES

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ABSTRACT: The author uses Critical Discourse Analysis to compare two legal documents of critical relevance for the rights of children in conflict with the law in Argentina: the current law no. 22,278, called *Régimen Penal de la Minoridad,* and the project named *Sistema de Responsabilidad Penal Juvenil* which was under consideration by the National Congress during 2019. This project was proposed by the government so as to establish a new juvenile justice system in Argentina, following a widely spread tendency in the Latin American region. The purpose of the article is to show that, even though the language of human rights is used in official discourse and in the legal text submitted to Parliament, many of its features represent a clear backlash to a more conservative regime.
KEYWORDS: juvenile justice, critical discourse analysis, human rights, children's rights, Latin America

INTRODUCTION

In Latin America, and particularly in Argentina, the media and the public discourse pay a lot of attention to children in conflict with the law. It is said that children -the majority of whom are in a situation of socio-economic vulnerability- are violent and cruel, that they have no respect for institutions, and that they are not attached with

the consequences of their acts. Therefore, in this understanding, if children commit a crime, they should be held responsible and punished as adults.

The bill that regulates the judicial procedure in cases of children in conflict with the law in Argentina – bill no. 22,278 *Régimen Penal de la Minoridad* (Minority Criminal Regime) [1] copies the U.S. model of juvenile courts. This model was introduced in Latin America in 1919 and is known in the region as the "Tutelary System". Under this model, youth crime had to be approached differently than adult crime, and the goal of the interventions on youth was supposed to be rehabilitation, not punishment.

The Tutelary System used to be a regional tendency. While at the beginning of the twentieth century Latin American laws conceived children and adolescents as subjects to be saved and treated, over the last thirty years -with the incorporation of international human rights law into domestic law-, the laws in many countries in the region have been modified with the argument that children and adolescents should be considered as rights bearers who have the same due process rights as adults and can be held criminally responsible, though subject to special regulations (Beloff & Langer 2015). This was called the "Integral Protection System" or the "Rights System".

From a constitutional point of view, the *Régimen Penal de la Minoridad* bill has some important flaws. On one hand, it was enacted in 1980, during the last military regime in Argentina. Even though the legal doctrine has ratified the legislation passed during that period in order to ensure legal security [2], it can be argued that this piece of legislation lacks democratic legitimacy.

On the other hand, this bill was sanctioned nine years before the General Assembly of the United Nations adopted the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). This is of paramount importance because, since 1994, this international instrument is part of the argentine legal system by its incorporation to the National Constitution [3].

This illegitimacy is even worse if we consider that a large group of the population -children- which is directly affected by these regulations, is normally left aside of public discussions because of the way in which society understands the meaning and purpose of citizenship. In traditional political theory, the citizen has been conceived as a person with capacities for public reason, autonomy or rational reflection and deliberation. Having these complex language-mediated capacities -which I will call (following Gary Steiner) "linguistic agency" (Steiner 2013) - determines whether a person is considered as a citizen with rights to participate in the political community or as a passive object to whom society owes duties of care (Donaldson & Kymlicka 2016).

Including children in political participation requires us to rethink citizenship theory, and indeed democratic theory, from the ground up (Donaldson & Kymlicka 2016). Although it is not the main purpose of this article, I will come back to the question about how power and decision-making are negotiated in these places and spaces between adults and children later.

International human right´s institutions have urged Argentina to change the law in order to make it compatible with the CRC. For example, while considering the state's last report, the Committee on the Rights of the Child has inquired Argentina about "life imprisonment for juvenile offenders" and about the reason why detention of children was used as the first response (United Nations 2018). Also, the Inter-American

Court of Human Rights has considered that life imprisonment for children was equal to torture and inhumane treatment and has found Argentina responsible for violating the right to be protected against torture (articles 5.2 of the American Convention on Human Rights and 37 of the CRC). Consequently, has ordered the State to change its legislation on that issue (Inter-American Court of Human Rights 2013).

However, there was never enough political momentum to undergo those required changes. This situation changed in early 2019, when the government sent to Congress a project about a new juvenile responsibility system entitled *Sistema de Responsabilidad Penal Juvenil* (Juvenile Criminal Responsibility System). In the explanatory statement sent to Congress, the government said, amongst other arguments, that this new bill comes to meet the requirement of the Inter-American Court of Human Rights that Argentina should adjust its legal framework to international standards in juvenile criminal justice. It also relies on the assumption that children should be responsible for their actions (Argentina 2019).

One of the main reasons stated for this legislative change is that it is the state's responsibility to maintain social peace and to respond to extreme cases of crimes committed by adolescents because of their extreme vulnerability. Likewise, the government has declared that this vulnerability must be also addressed by the state (Argentina 2019).

This preoccupation about children being involved in criminal activities does not seem to have a relation with an increase in juvenile crime rates, which appear to be descending over the last years. According to the information provided by *Base General de Datos de Niños, Niñas y Adolescentes* (General Data Base of Boys, Girls and Adolescents), an official institution that is a part of the Federal Supreme Court, in 2016, there were 1564 cases of children in conflict with the law; in 2017, 1520 and in 2018, 1493. In addition, in 2018, the immense majority of them were prosecuted because of crimes related to property and, in 2018, only 1.08 % were serious crimes e.g. assault and murder (Argentina 2016, 2017 & 2018).

Therefore, the primary purpose of this article is to explore the way in which conservative discourses shapes official public response to children in conflict with the law in Argentina. I will demonstrate that, even though Children's Rights Discourse is used in official discourse and in the legal text submitted to Parliament, many of the features of the project represent a clear backlash to a more conservative regime.

For that purpose, firstly, I will explain the methodology used to conduct this research and my theoretical starting point. Secondly, I will summarize the results I obtained, and, after that, they will be discussed in light of the theoretical approach explained above. Finally, I will share my conclusions and some possible lines of investigation for future research.

METHODOLOGY

This brief research was conducted using MAXQDA software to analyze both the current law and the project. I have designed two colored codes: "Tutelary System" -in red - and "Rights System" – in yellow. Afterwards, I conducted a lexical search (both

electronically and manually) for words and expressions related to those systems and coded them.

Under the Tutelary System code, lexical search was conducted to find the words *imputabilidad (*criminal responsibility), *privación de libertad (*imprisonment) and *menor* (minor), or some variations of those. Instead, under the Rights System code, the words *protección (*protection), *medidas alternativas/educativas (*alternative/educative measures) and *niños, niñas y adolescentes* (boys, girls and adolescents), or some variations of these, were searched.

Plus, Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) theoretical framework was used both for designing the codes and for interpreting the data collected from the comparative legal study of the vocabulary used in the current bill no. 22,278 and the project about a new juvenile responsibility system. To do this, I followed Norman Fairclough`s approach in terms of considering that CDA is an analysis of the dialectical relationships between discourse (including language but also other forms of semiosis) and other elements of social practices. As a consequence, we cannot take the role of discourse in social practices for granted, it has to be established through analysis (Fairclough 2003). This analysis must start with the identification of social problems with at least some partially discursive aspect which could be researched by means of a situated analysis of texts (Fairclough 2003).

Although legal scholars are not very familiar with qualitative research methods, both legal and discourse analysis concern reading and interpreting texts, both are preoccupied with the meaning of texts, and both seem to assume that texts have a life of their own that is independent of their authors. Law is, after all, an inherently societal discourse, whereas quite a specific one. Therefore, it seems appropriate to look at those sociological methods that analyze how language is used by, and in relation to, law and its institutions (Niemi-Kiesilainen, Honkatukia & Ruuskanen, 2007).

Using CDA approach was fruitful for the analysis of legal discourse and for an understanding of the relationship between what is normative and what is factual, and what lies beneath the words of the law.

Besides, for the purposes of this piece of work, I followed, as Anna Odrowaz-Coates (2019) in the Introduction to this volume, Haidt & Graham (2007) and Graham et al. (2009) in their categorization of a certain discourse as conservative or liberal. According to these authors, these political approaches can be differentiated by the orientation people express towards core values: liberally oriented people focus on the protection of human rights and individuality, whereas the conservatively oriented focus on binding people into groups and institutions (Odrowaz-Coates 2019).

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

As my perception of law and legal knowledge is significant for the analysis, I will briefly explain the theoretical background and the assumptions on which that analysis is based. To begin with, from a post-feminist approach (Hunt Federle 1993), an adequate rights theory must account for power. Power is the cause of social oppression and political inequality, for it implies hierarchy and status. Rights, however, mitigate the

exclusionary effects of power by allowing the powerless to access existing political and legal structures in order to make claims. Permitting rights claims has the valuable effect of redistributing power and altering hierarchies.

The real value of rights lies in that point because rights require that we respect the marginalized, empower the powerless, and strengthen the weak. However, as long as we view children as undeveloped or underdeveloped beings evolving into adulthood, we can discuss individual rights only in terms of hierarchy and exclusion.

That is why, in my view, we can take lessons from the work of another subordinated group to help us understand the condition of childhood and how to amend it (Mayall 2000). Women over two centuries, and with considerable force in the last decades, have worked towards deconstructing the assumptions that lie beneath the dominant accounts.

The spaces and times of childhood are proposed as, ideally, protected from politics. Children are to be protected, in an a-political arena of thought and practice. Just as women have been assigned to the private and the domestic, so we are taught to think of children as growing up there too, far away from public life.

Additionally, I have a critical view of criminal law as a way to deal with conflict in society. Following Louk Houlsman (1986), I believe that "[c]rime has no ontological reality. Crime is not the object but the product of criminal policy. Criminalization is one of the many ways to construct social reality".

There are forms of human diversity which, in modern capitalist societies, are labeled and processed as criminal but which would not be subject to control in different societies. Other controls on "anti-social" behavior (and other definitions of what that might constitute) could be designed (Taylor, Walton & Young 1974). What is more, the criminal justice system has always drawn its clientele mainly from the most disadvantaged sections of the population and still does so. Those who are officially recorded as "criminal" constitute only a small part of those involved in events that legally are considered to require criminalization. Among them, young men and women from the most disadvantaged sections of the population are heavily over-represented (Houlsman 1986).

That is why, for a meaningful approach to the Latin American context, I will consider intersectionality as both a theory to identify, analyze and articulate the complex social forces that influence the lives of young people in the region and as a practice to support their collective action in tackling the intersecting inequalities that they experience by virtue of their age and socio-economic class (Konstantoni &Emejulu 2016). By "intersectionality", I mean "the simultaneous and interacting effects of gender, race, class, sexual orientation, and national origin (and others) as categories of difference" (Bassel & Emejulu 2010, 518).

RESULTS

Bill no. 22,278

Régimen Penal de la Minoridad is a short text: it has only twelve articles. The analysis of the vocabulary used in it shows a predictable result: 95.45 % of the vocabulary was

coded as related to the tutelary system and only 4.55% alludes to a child´s rights approach (see graphic no. 1).
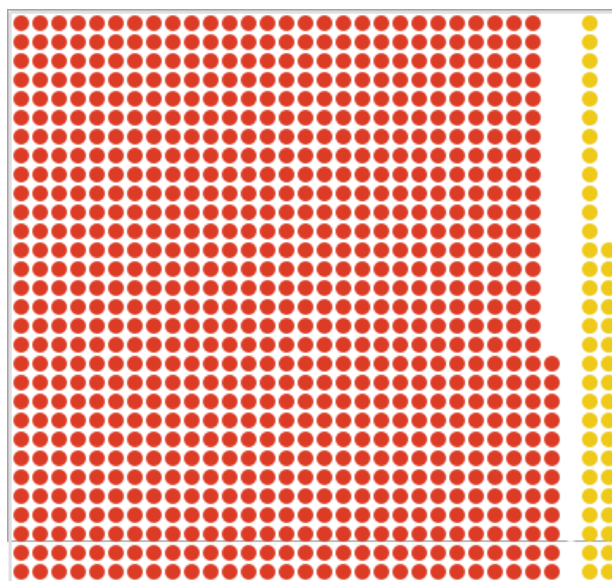
Graphic no. 1 - showing the segments coded as "Tutelary System" in the left (red tiles) and the segments coded as "Rights System" in the right (yellow tiles).

The bill refers to children as *menores*. This word appears nineteen times, in ten of the twelve articles that compose it. While the strict translation of this word in English would be minors, in the Latin American context it does not refer to children, in general, but to poor children who are in some kind of danger, because of their socio-economic vulnerability.

This bill and has no allusions at all to the right of children to be heard during the procedures. The system it creates gives judges the possibility to *disponer definitiva-mente* (institutionalize*)* children if they find that they are "abandoned, lacking assistance, in material or moral danger, or presenting behavioral problems" (article 2). In addition, there are no dispositions regarding educational or re-socializing measures.

Moreover, and in accordance to its -in theory-protective purposes, article 6 of the bill states that the custodial sentences on minors will be made effective in specialized institutes, separated from adults. It also establishes the minimum age of criminal responsibility (MACR) in sixteen years old. It does so by stating that minors between sixteen and eighteen years old will be *punibles* (punishable) if they commit a crime (Article 2).

Sistema de Responsabilidad Penal Juvenil project

The project sent to Parliament is a long text; it comprises one hundred articles and one annex. The analysis of the vocabulary used in the project shows that 67.31 % is connected to the "Rights System", whereas 32.69 % refers to the "Tutelary System" (see graphic no. 2).
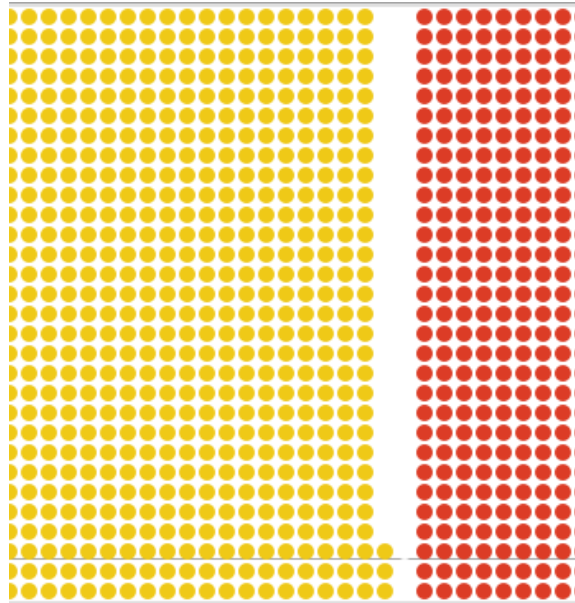
Graphic no. 2 - showing the segments coded as "Rights System" in the left (yellow tiles) and the segments coded as "Tutelary System" in the right (red tiles).

In clear opposition with the current bill, the project refers to the subjects of juvenile criminal system as *adolescentes en conflicto con la ley penal* (adolescents in conflict with criminal law) -instead of *menores*- while, when regulating the rights of children below the MACR, it speaks about "boys" and "girls".

The project enumerates a long list of rights that will be guaranteed to these adolescents: to privacy, to respect their best interest, to keep in contact with their families, to access to books, music and information, to receive job training and all the rights connected to the right to due process (Articles 6 to 14).

Some alternatives to imprisonment are contemplated e.g. to be obliged to offer a reparation to the victim and some socio-educative measures. These measures consist in participating in community programs and different types of training. Besides, the project also strongly states that life imprisonment will be prohibited for adolescents (Article 50).

The new system eliminates the possibility for judges to order institutionalization; in case they find that the adolescent does not have a family or, although having one, it represents a threat to his or her best interest, judges can order a provisional accommodation in a specialized institution (Article 30).

As the current bill, the project states that the custodial sentences will be made effective in particular institutions. However, there is one major difference between these two legal texts: the project establishes the minimum age of criminal responsibility in fifteen years old for serious crimes [4]. For minor crimes, the MACR remains in sixteen years old (Articles 2 and 14).

DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

I will concentrate the discussion on three main aspects. The first one will be the resort to institutionalization of children as a way to deal with social conflict, the second will be the relation between vocabulary and ideology and, finally, I will make some remarks about the MACR.

To begin with, I would like to comment on the possibility of the state to institutionalize the child in case it is found that he or she does not have an adequate family or is perceived to be in some kind of danger. Even though the project establishes some limits to institutionalization and the right of the child to be heard during the procedures, this institution is making, at least, two assumptions. Furthermore, it is important to note this because "[t]exts inevitably make assumptions. What is 'said' in a text is 'said' against a background of what is 'unsaid' but taken as a given" (Fairclough 2003).

On one hand, under the humanist slogan of "taking the minor away from criminal law" (criminal law understood fundamentally in a retributive sense), the tutelary system was supposed to adopt protective and educational measures for the benefit of the youth that aimed at their rehabilitation (Beloff & Langer 2015). These criminological trends are supported by the older and well-established idea in civil and common law countries that the state should act in *loco parentis* – that is, subrogating the parental functions- in cases in which the child did not have parents or the parents were considered incapable of carrying out their parental duties (Beloff & Langer 2015). This regulation, which is clear in the current law and still present (though, mitigated) in the project, is associated with the concept of the child`s need of protection and presupposes that children are vulnerable objects and not autonomous right bearers.

On the other hand, this emphasis on the importance of family is overlooking children's own perception as a social group (Mayall 2000) and the importance of their community of peers. It assumes that children are not part of society and that they should be kept out of it and it gives adults (families or the state) an enormous amount of power over them. This power is also shown by the creation of educative measures as sanctions. In a Child's Rights Approach, education should be a universal right for all children, not a sanction to impose in case they commit an offense.

Familiarization and individualization imply that where childhoods go wrong and deviate from norms, the problem and its cure are located at individual case level, rather than at socio-economic levels. Thus, children are understood as individuals within the family (rather than as a social group) and their success is deemed to depend on what the family provides. The child's development is seen as the product of individual relationships -rather than, for instance, of structural factors (Mayall 2000). What is more, in the Latin American context, structural factors refer to socio economic conditions of poverty which is the main reason why children are without adult supervision or in danger.

The second aspect I would like to point out is the relation between vocabulary and ideology. The project manifestly uses a vocabulary that relates to human rights discourse in a strong manner. Not using the word *menor* anymore is a demonstration of the intention to differentiate from the Tutelary System. As I have mentioned above,

menores is the word used by public institutions in the Tutelary System to imply a category of vulnerable children, because of their social or familiar situation. It does not refer to children as a universal category but to children who live in the street, are alone or poor. This category has a strong relation with socio-economic structures as it implies the criminalization and institutionalization of poverty.

In this regard, it is interesting to point out that, in Spanish, the word *menor* has also another meaning. It refers to "something which is inferior to something else in quantity, intensity or quality" [5]. This meaning denotes, again, the power relations that are present and assumed in the legal text, naturalizing the domination over (poor) children, who are perceived as inferiors.

However, the chosen word *adolescentes* (adolescents) shows the authority of adult world over children, once more. The concept of adolescence (itself an adult construction, and not a term used by young people themselves) extends beyond childhood the idea that young people are human becomings, rather than people (Erikson 1965) and shows that they are not still ready to fully exercise their rights as human beings and their citizenship.

In addition to this, the long list of rights that adolescents in conflict with the law are supposed to have under this new legislation is a clear intent to demonstrate the state's affiliation with a liberal, human rights´ discourse. This can be seen in the intertextuality relation between the project and the CRC: all the articles containing rights for adolescents in conflict with the law are copied from the text of Convention.

Moreover, this enumeration of rights was unnecessary. Children are human beings and that, in a liberal society that is - allegedly - devoted to human rights´ protection, should be enough to guarantee their right to, for instance, access to information.

Similarly, intertextuality relations are also present in the prohibition to sentence a child to life imprisonment stated in the text of the project. This statement relates to texts produced by of two important human rights bodies: The International Committee on the Rights of the Child and the Inter-American Court of Human Rights. The Committee has stated many times in its reports on states, and now in the new general comment, that no child who was below the age of 18 at the time he or she committed an offence should be sentenced to life imprisonment without the possibility of release or parole (Committee on the Rights of the Child 2019). Furthermore, as mentioned before, the Inter-American Court of Human Rights had commanded Argentina *in re* Mendoza that the state should change its legislation regarding this issue.

Both the vocabulary used in the project and the intertextuality relations exposed above, seek to demonstrate the government's commitment to Human Rights Discourse and its intention to achieve legitimacy. Also, they show the state's willingness to follow the international institutions recommendations.

However, and this leads to the last aspect I would like to discuss, the project establishes a MACR of fifteen years old for serious crimes. First of all, lowering the MACR is a retrogressive measure. According to the Committee on the Rights of the Child (2019), those states having provisions that are more conducive to the rights of children than those contained in the CRC should not take any retrogressive steps, as article 41 of the CRC states.

Once again, this has a particular effect in the Argentine context. Juvenile institutions are very similar to adult correctional facilities and the conditions in which imprisoned children live are, in most cases, inhumane and constitute a violation of the rights established in the CRC.

In addition to this, lowering the MACR is also a deceptive measure, since the problem of the involvement of children and adolescents with crime would not probably be solved by it. Actually, one of the outcomes may be the co-optation of increasingly younger children and adolescents by criminal organizations (De Melo Resende 2009) in order to avoid prosecutions.

The necessary relationship between the marginalization of adolescents and the socioeconomic exclusion of their families -to which I referred before- and the social precariousness and the lack of services is not addressed. Lowering the age of criminal responsibility is not about solving the problem of urban violence in the country, it is about criminalizing poverty, and hiding it behind Human Rights discourse.

Finally, because I cannot go any further on this topic here, this measure was probably designed to respond to public pressure. In accordance with a Child's Rights approach the state should set one standardized age below which children cannot be held responsible in criminal law, without exception. Once again, as Alessandro Baratta has argued, criminal law (understood as punitive power) is certainly not an "equal" law (Baratta 2001).

CONCLUSION

A comprehensive liberal discourse on children in conflict with the law would propose that all juvenile law is abolish. If we want to take children`s rights seriously we should question why we need a specialized criminal system and, instead, we should develop a restorative justice system that focuses on the pedagogical potential of the procedures, respecting the rights of children to participate in the proceedings. And this potential is not only important for children but, because children are a social group, it would be relevant for society as well.

A liberal, children's rights, approach would not be directed to treat children as adults, by lowering the MACR and sending them into the criminal system. It will engage in protecting and accompanying them so they can achieve their highest potential while they gain experience in public and social matters. This approach would have strong socio-economic consequences and it will require a public debate about making economic resources available for children and a new understanding of citizenship.

However, more critical studies on children's rights and children in conflict with the law are needed in Latin America, specially to determine the influence of the media and the official discourse on the society's perception of young delinquents.

Changes are always good opportunities. Moreover, the debate about children in conflict with law is urgent and cannot be postponed. We, as adults, have the possibility to reconfigure the relation between our judicial institutions and childhood. This opportunity will be missed, once again, if this project is accepted and it will represent a retrogressive step towards a discourse that is even more conservative than the tute-

lary system discourse.

NOTES
[1] All translations were done by the author.
[2] The doctrine of *de facto* governments is a doctrine of jurisprudential origin developed by the Supreme Court of Justice of Argentina to validate the normative acts of military dictatorships that were installed in the country during the twentieth century and thereby legitimize them.
[3] The Argentine Supreme Court has adopted a monistic position towards international human rights law. This implies the existence of a single legal system. In case of conflict between constitutional law and national laws, the first one prevails. As the CRC is part of the National Constitution (by its article 75. 12), it has priority over bill no. 22,278, which is domestic law.　[4] "Serious crimes" refers to crimes sanctioned with twenty five of fifteen years of imprisonment.
[5] According to *Diccionario de la Real Academia Española* available at https://dle.rae.es/srv/search?w=menor

CONFLICT OF INTEREST: The author declares no conflict of interest.

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TEXTS ANALYZED

Bill no. 22.278. *Régimen Penal de la Minoridad* (minority criminal regime), from http://servicios.infoleg.gob.ar/infolegInternet/anexos/110000114999/114167/texact.htm

Project of a Bill *Sistema de Reponsabilidad Penal Juvenil* (juvenile justice responsibility system) presented on March 1st, 2019, from https://www.diputados.gob.ar/prensa/noticias/noticias-podio/noticias_0912.html

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

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SOCIETY
REGISTER

THE WRETCHED OF THE AFRICAN EARTH.
AN ATTEMPT AT DECONSTRUCTING THE STEREOTYPE
OF AFRICANISED MIGRATION DESTINED FOR EUROPE

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ABSTRACT: The aim of the article is to deconstruct the Africanization of migration destined for Europe, to disprove several cognitive scripts on migration from Africa, most frequently quoted in the conservative media discourse. In the introduction, the migration of Africans destined for Europe in relations to the migration of Asians via Africa destined for Europe were characterized inter alia on the basis of the official documents, UNHCR and FRONTEX reports. Then, the dynamics of transcontinental and intra-Africa migrations – in synchronous and diachronic approach, with the reference to the research results of scholars specialized in the demography, social policy, history of migration – were discussed. Finally, the cultural meanings of migration among Africans is presented.
KEYWORDS: migration, Africans, discourse, stereotype

INTODUCTION

According to the survey conducted by the International Organization for Migration, since the end of the Cold War the number of African migrants living outside of the region has more than doubled, with the growth in Europe most pronounced (World

Migration Report 2018: 44). Authors of this report have paid close attention to the lack of the reliable statistics confirming how many Africans migrated to Europe. On the contrary, there are lots of pseudo-statistical summaries describing the scale of migration in current political commentators' statements. Moreover, this non-scientific manner is overexploited in the official parliamentary discourse- mostly by right-wing 'conservative' politicians all over Europe. Theses groups have created an image of growing threat from the waves of African migrants, massively and illegally crossing the Mediterranean Sea. This perception is embroiled in numerous postcolonial stereotypes, in which "The Wretched of the African Earth" – to travesty the title of the significant book by Frantz Fanon – are exposed to protectional subjection, sometimes demonised, and not that seldom – even animalised (Ząbek 2007). In such approach Europeans' Occidentalist fears and prejudices against "the Aliens", are reflected. Yet, it specifically reveals the lack of knowledge about the context in which Africa-Europe migration occurs. It is, as well, a result of the Global North's policies towards the South, that Zygmunt Bauman called *securitisation*, which relies on explaining political problems by referring to the security-related discourse: "Securitisation – it is a magic trick, and this is what it is supposed to be. It depends on shifting our attention from problems, that governments do not want to, or cannot, deal with, to issues, that governments can present – daily, and on thousands of screens – as the issues efficiently solved, and sometimes even favourably" (2016: 38).

Therefore, the aim of the article is to deconstruct – or at least to make an attempt at doing so – the stereotype of Africanisation of migration destined for Europe. Thus, the authors intend to abolish several most frequently quoted cognitive scripts and "epitomes" related with African migration to Europe visible in both liberal and conservative media discourse: share of Africans among migrants travelling to Europe, the scale of intra-Africa and transcontinental migrations, and cultural meaning of migration to Africans themselves.

METHODOLOGICAL APPROACHES

Teun A. van Dijk, a prominent scholar in the fields of text linguistics, and discourse analysis, in one of his researches stated: "Closely related to these conservative and more liberal ideologies are the ideologies about who belong to Us, and who do not — ideologies of nationalism, race and ethnicity. We have seen that much of the debate is controlled by the usual polarization, first between Us British and Them Foreigners and especially refugees, and secondly between genuine (good) and bogus (bad) refugees (2000a: 32). According to van Dijk, political discourse is eminently ideological. Van Dijk – using the Critical Discourse Analysis – have explored the relations between media and political discourse and racism in general, and between parliamentary debates in Western Europe and European racism in particular" (1997, 2002b). He pointed that Europeans – during the transnational debate concerned on migration challenges - have roughly divided into an open-armed leftist liberal camp and a right-wing conservative one. The Dutch scholar emphasizes that defining refugees as a political problem is classic topos of anti-immigrant discourse. Nowadays xenophobic attitude

towards migrants is more associated with the conservative ideology than with the liberal background. Anti-immigrant conservative discourse gives special importance to the financial burden, the economic situation and cultural homogeneity. The liberal discourse, on the contrary, will orient to the international community and stress symbolic values such as tolerance, a good international reputation and cultural diversity.

Van Dijk, and other scholars specialized in discourse analysis (cf. Bennett 2018; Zanfrini 2019), were investigating how societal power relations are established and reinforced through language use. It is worth to transduce these sociolinguistic findings into the African context. It will allow to deconstruct as well liberal as conservative perspectives on the migration process.

PROFILE OF THE MIGRANTS

A stereotypical view of black African men attempting at crossing the Mediterranean on tiny boats to southern Italy or making a landing operation in over-loaded pontoons on rocky beaches of Greece has rather unconvincing confirmation in the statistical data gathered by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and by the European Border and Coast Guard Agency (FRONTEX). Migrants endeavouring to reach Europe are both and almost equally from Africa (among them the majority from so-called failed or fragile states: the Eritreans, Somalians, Egyptians, Libyans, Malians) and Asia (particularly from Syria, Afghanistan, Iraq; but also, from Pakistan and Bangladesh). It must be noted that many the left leaning newspapers tend to list exact countries of origin, while the right-wing titles are more likely to speak of general regions such as Africa, Sub-Saharan Africa, and not to list country of origin at all. It effectively serves to detach refugees from an identified country of origin. This kind of narration also "Africanizes" image of the migration (Berry, Garcia-Blanco, Moore 2015: 36).

Furthermore, share of Asians in the total numbers increases together with escalation of crises and armed conflicts on the continent's hot spots (like e.g. in Syria, from Yemen yet to be expected), and slow but steady stabilisation of the situation in the North Africa after the so-called 'Arab Spring' events. Worth noting, that increased controls on the Turkish border's forces more and more migrants from the Levant to avoid the Eastern-Mediterranean route and instead choose the Central one to Europe through the North Africa (UNHCR 2017, FRONTEX 2018).

Conducting a reliable analysis in the area of declared and practised religion by African migrants is hardly a feasible task. First of all, we lack reliable statistical data in this matter. Secondly, people asking for the political asylum often portray themselves as persecuted religious refugees – which not always is true. Thirdly – what will be also discussed later on – very often migration is connected with an identity-related choice and allows a certain identity-based cognitive opening of migrants, i.e. facilitates conversion to a different set of believes, their 'update' in accordance with culturally new environment, or entirely abandoning religious believes. Under such circumstances, it is not possible to state that majority of migrants is religious radical, like conservatives' European politicians used to announce. It is safer to assume that

the religious profile of migrants equals to that of their country of origin, which – as the liberal-minded media rightly point out – is in most cases multicultural, multi-ethnic, and multi-religious.

DYNAMICS OF MIGRATION

In his *Introduction to the Lectures on the Philosophy of History* Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel stated: "Here we part with Africa, not to come back there anymore. It is not a part of the world in the historical meaning, as neither movements nor development can be perceived there" (1956: 119). Hegel's vision of Africa's stagnation and torpor, formulated two centuries ago, seems to be surprisingly enduring nowadays. Most Europeans – both liberals and conservatives – perceive Africa as a war-torn continent full of plagues and misery, a place from where people want to escape. Such perception, however, entirely marginalises dynamics of intra-continental migration, and without considering it, it is hard to properly and contextually characterise migration towards Europe.

The North Africa, due to its direct contact with the Mediterranean Sea and outcomes of the so-called Arab Spring, plays a crucial role as a transit area for migrants from the whole African continent attempting at making it to Europe. From the historical perspective, though, such migrations are hardly a novelty – they can be considered as a continuation of peoples' movements between the colonies and the colonial metropolises (cf. the Algerians leaving for France in the first half of the 20th century).

In the West Africa, on the other hand, the phenomenon of the internal migration is dominant. It is connected to legal and economic regulations of the member-states of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), as well as the health and sanitary situation (e.g. Ebola epidemy in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone in the years of 2014-2016), the state politics (e.g. civil war in Côte d'Ivoire between 2002-2007 and 2011), and traditional, ethnically-based migration chains initiated in the precolonial period (Iliffe 2011: 256).

In Southern Africa, we can observe, both, economic migrations, that are continuation of the colonial-time peoples' movements for work in mines and intensive agriculture (Iliffe 2011: 258), and politically-induced migrations (as waves of people fleeing the Zimbabwean economic collapse). In this region, the most popular host country is the Republic of South Africa (RSA) – the wealthiest Sub-Saharan state.

The greatest number of refugees – which overall figure is estimated at several up to a dozen or so million (Flahaux, De Hass 2016: 3) – lives in the Central and East Africa. This number is related with political crises affecting states situated in the African Great Lakes region (especially Ruanda, Burundi, Democratic Republic of the Congo), the youngest state of the world – South Sudan, and the Horn of Africa (Somalia, Eritrea, Ethiopia). The country accepting the higher number of refugees is Kenya, where the biggest refugees' camps are located: Dadaab and Kakuma. This region has the world's lowest development and education index, the highest poverty and corruption index, and has visible ethnical and tribal clientelism.

Disastrous quality of governance, crisis of postcolonial elites and disintegration

of Sub-Saharan states forces some of region's inhabitants to resolve to migration as a strategy of survival ("migration for survival", Baldwin-Edwards 2006). According to Polish political scientist Robert Kłosowicz, atrophy of state institutions, civic society, and delegitimization of elites increase waves of migration. Thus, Kłosowicz claims as follows:

> These people run not only from the war, but also from the extreme poverty and lack of perspectives for development and chances for a better future. They run from states of deep disfunctionality, and easiness with which they cross states borders only further prove how incapable the governments are at guarding them (Kłosowicz 2017: 224).

A conservative political scientist view on the phenomenon often reduces migration to an escape from threat. However, it is worth looking at the migratory processes in a broader context, from a perspective of mobility transformations and dynamics in Africa within last decades – like liberal politicians often do. Thus, in the last half century we can observe a rise in departures from Africa (specifically from countries of the Maghreb region and relatively developed states as Nigeria and RSA) and a growth of intra-continental migration (mostly in West Africa; to lower extent in Southern Africa, Central Africa; and the lowest in northern parts of the continent, and among countries of the greatest population and area size such as Nigeria and Egypt).

A half century ago, in times when most of the African states were just acquiring their independence, 2.8 million people was arriving to Africa, while 1.8 was leaving the continent. Intra-continental migratory scale amounted to ca. 6.2 million people. In the 1980s the number of Africans leaving their homeland tripled, while number of immigrants to Africa dropped by one-third. Simultaneously, a scale of intra-continental migration rose by almost 30%. On the turn of 20th and 21st century, almost 9 million people was leaving Africa, while only 1.5 million was arriving, and intra-continental movements amounted to 10.5 million Africans (Flahaux and De Hass 2016: 7).

Migrations inside the continent, between multicultural countries, are frequently related to the ethnical identity of migrants, what – to some extent – looks like uniting families living in different states. For example, for decades inhabitants of Burkina Faso massively migrate towards the south, to Côte d'Ivoire, where they relatively easy find an occupation on cacao plantations. Those who migrate are mostly representatives of the Mossi ethnicity, whose members live on the both sides of the border. Despite their significant scale, it would be highly inaccurate to group these inter-state migrations together with flows of the people fleeing from war or state crisis – these Burkinabés' movements are exemplary cases of seasonal economical migration, and their scale stems from the strength of the ethnical bonds.

Another determinant of intra-continental migration is the phenomenon of the so-called 'urban magnetism' – inhabitants of less-urbanised areas are attracted to major urban areas (usually to the former colonial capitals situated on the coast, as Nigerian Lagos, Ivorian Abidjan, Tanzanian Dar Es-Salaam; Whitehouse 2012). These cities, called the "de-facto capitals", are multi-ethnic and multinational entities. For example, in Lagos, whose population exceeded 15 million people, dwell Nigerians, as well

as migrants from Benin, Togo, Ghana, Niger and other African countries, mostly members of ECOWAS. This phenomenon is hardly unique. Similar movements are observed e.g. in the biggest European metropolises – what liberal-oriented researchers used to stress.

A significant role in increasing internal African mobility has been played by the regional organisations considered as the pillars of African economic community, especially that of the West of Africa such as ECOWAS (Lizak 2012: 377), yet also – though to a lesser extent – from the south of the continent, like Southern African Development Community (SADC), Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA). Organisations from Eastern part of the continent, among which we can name the East African Community (EAC), are the least efficient in that field. It is worth noting that the dynamics of the migration within regional communities are to large extent dictated by the migratory policies of the most powerful state within given regional community, cf. the active role of Nigeria within the ECOWAS and RSA in SADC, or that rather limited of Kenya in EAC). Profiles of these migrations are fairly similar to these observed within the European Community among people looking for employment of studies abroad.

Here, we should note that the pace of immigration towards Africa is diminishing due to decreased numbers of people flowing from the Indian Peninsula and Lebanon, comparing to the colonial times. The Asian diaspora played an important role in the commercial, bank and service sectors. Presently, though, due to xenophobic policies of some African elites (cf. exodus of Hindu people from Uganda, or the Lebanese from Côte d'Ivoire), the Asians more and more often decide to return to their countries of origin (except for the Chinese). These processes negatively impact the economy of many African states.

Another factor that impacts the numbers of Africa-bound migration is a gradual drop of demand for qualified workers from Europe (the so-called expatriates) and restrictions of visa policies in most of Northern, Eastern and Central Africa states implemented in the second half of 20th century. These phenomena can be tied to a sui generis anticolonial resentment observed in decisions of the African policymakers, looking for economic partners outside of the circle of the former colonial powers – for example among the BRICS states (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa).

Clear-cut categorisation of Africans' reasons for migration – both in case of intra-continental and outside-bound migration – is barely possible. Although, among reasons for migration of Africans we should underline the significance of demographic factors: progressive age structure, very high rate of natural increase (RNI), relatively low average life expectancy, high mortality rate and high number of HIV-infected (Lutterbeck 2006; Bakewell 2008). These factors ought to be taken into account while examining the migration phenomenon and its dynamics. Though, we should be very careful while using them, like conservative thinkers and publicists used to do, exclusively to create a profile of an African migrant, as it may lead to a biased outlook and stigmatisation of Africans as young and unexperienced people infected with lethal diseases or carriers of extreme ideologies.

It is the safest to conclude that among causes of migration waves, the key role is

played by inter alia the system transformation and development pace. This perspective is more connected with liberally-oriented commentators. The push factors here are therefore the outcomes of economic policies of the authorities of African states (e.g. agriculture policy of the authorities in Harare), as well as GDP fluctuations related with market reactions on the stock exchange in London or Paris. Factors such as rising extremism and terrorism (cf. Boko Haram and as-Shabaab), coups d'état, rise in organised crime, etc. – however dreadful – are frequently exaggerated in their scope and impact in the European media discourse. Most of all, though, these phenomena should be analysed in the economical context. As a Cameroonian philosopher, Achille Mbembe stated: "local terrorism (…) is born at the crossroads of the caravan, nomadic and sedentary systems. It happens so, because the space and the people are in the constant move. The space is being cut by the movements, and at the same time, it is in the move itself" (Mbembe 2018: 61-62). For example, from the Horn of Africa people migrated much before the rise of as-Shabaab, and the terrorist activities of Boko Haram has a lower impact on migration than the country economy – more people move to Lagos in search for an employment than due to the persecution.

Let us note here, that pro-emigration policies for many decades have been supported by numerous African leaders, who considered them as a tool to reduce social tensions inside the country and limit the unemployment (Fargues 2004), or as a strategy aimed at acquiring additional EU funding, as it was the case of Libya at the beginning of 21st century. As the result, waves of immigrants, including high-qualified workers, have been reaching Europe, what in consequence further contributed the so-called brain-drain of Africa (el-Khawas 2004).

We must remember that – against the conservative media stereotypes – Africans migrate more and more often because of economic and education reasons, and their countries of destination are situated not only in Europe, but also in the North America, or in the Persian Gulf states. More and more Africans graduate from renewed universities and work for global and prestigious enterprises – these are no runaways, but rather members of the growing and aspiring middle-class (Bakewell and Jonsson 2011).

RITUALISATION OF MIGRATION

In the conservative media discourse concerning migration from Africa to Europe, the image of uncoordinated, uncontrollable and unpredictable "invasion of Barbarian hordes" flooding "the civilised world" is dominant. Such narration, reminding us colourful passages from Edward Gibbon's *History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire,* supports stereotypes on the low life-quality of inhabitants of the "Third World", their alleged primitivism and atavism. This discourse lacks a reliable assessment of the phenomenon of migration, and hence pays no attention to the complex social, economic and cultural contexts of the process.

Presently, the majority of Africans migrating to Europe move through the Western Mediterranean route via Morocco to Spain, including via Spain's little African enclaves of Ceuta and Melilla – the number of illegal border crossings in 2018 (Janu-

ary-October) on this route amounts to 45,924 people (FRONTEX 2018). Yet, most of the migrants used to travel via the Central Mediterranean migratory route, as it was the most accessible way to the south shores of Italy, namely the tiny island of Lampedusa, which is closer to Africa (113 km to Tunisia) than to Sicilia (123 km). They were called "Mediterranean boat people" (Pugh 2001), as they crossed the sea on fragile rubber pontoons, rafts, called by the Italians *gommani*, or little and unreliable boats, called *scafi* – both of them always dangerously overloaded (Forgacs 2008). In the time of the peak of the so-called migration crisis (2014-2016), the numbers amounted to over 181.000 people in 2016, out which 4579 died in this deadliest year for migrants. In these years of 2011 (the fall of the Libyan authoritarian leader, Muammar Qaddafi) to 2016, ca. 630,000 irregular migrants crossed the Mediterranean via this route to Italy, more than 13,000 died attempting to do so, and many other lost their lives trying to cross the Saharan desert (EPSC 2017). In 2018 (January-October), this route has been used by 21,575 people (FRONTEX 2018). Here, let us divide migrants into two categories: these who travel willingly (and therefore are smuggled) and those who are virtually enslaved by criminals and forced to travel to execute unpaid jobs upon their arrival (these people are trafficked; Andersson 2012). We should not therefore put all of the non-refugee migrants into the same category, as some of them may be found in the perilous conditions of modern slavery.

The price for migrants to cross the sea on a tiny boat with an engine (that often goes off during the trip – e.g. due to lack of essence, or an engine failure) cost from a few hundred to dozen or so thousand Euros – depending on smuggler, the departure spot, negotiating skills, but also nationality and ethnicity of the migrant (Di Nicola and Musumeci 2016: 62). Precise value of a place on a boat is hard to tell and assessments provided by various NGOs monitoring the scale and the phenomenon of so-called "pirogue migration" varies (Hernández-Carretero and Carling 2012).

Nonetheless, few migrants can pay for themselves, especially when they already had to have crossed the desert before reaching the North African shores. Therefore, for many of them whole families or communities collect money (Goldschmidt 2006). It is thus a societal decision, legitimised by the group (family, or the clan) from which the migrant comes. In such a context, migration is a strategy of the community to increase its well-being or even survive through the chosen one, who – in consequence – bears the weight of responsibility. It can be also a specific *rite de passage* for the usually young migrant – as already quoted Achille Mbembe says: "To become a man in the world is not a matter of birth, or origin, or race. It is the matter of route, movement and transformation" (Mbembe 2018: 197).

In the 21st century, for many young Africans migration has become a fashionable cultural pattern, that leads to transformation of the social identity of the man himself, and in consequence many African communities. Wojciech Tochman and Katarzyna Boni in their reportage on migrants from the Middle East say that "[the migrants] from citizens became refugees" (Tochman and Boni 2014: 10). This observation contains not only a legal dimension, yet also an ontological and epistemological. The status of migrants is *ex definitione* renegotiable. Migration changes their way of perceiving the world, is a social initiation, confirmation of their maturity and independence. Phi-

losopher Paweł Mościcki describe this phenomenon in the following words: "His [i.e. migrant] aspiration was not to overcome the strangeness, but making from it a new point of view, a new way of experiencing" (Mościcki 2017: 33). On the other hand, an Italian journalist, Stefano Liberti, observes:

> Swelling with pride and cultivating their desire for revenge, the candidates to Europe [...] never felt defeated. They developed an inclination to willingly take the most difficult challenges, what is more – they were delighted with the potential obstacles in their paths. In other words, the final value of success increased correspondingly to the difficulty of achieving it. The trip to Europe was becoming an initiatory journey. [...] Additionally, it was associated with an element of revenge – for many people emigration was a compensation for wrongdoings, a type of Africa's revenge on Europe, which first exploited it and then left it to its fate (Liberti 2013: 120).

Liberti compares migrants to adventure seekers (2013: 8), and the families supporting their trips to financial (savings) cooperatives and investment funds (2013: 16). Africans' migration to Europe "start to be perceived through romantic lenses viewing it as a universe full of fantastic projections – their perilous travels become adventures, and they themselves become rallystes – the participants of Paris-Dakar Rally à rebours" (Liberti 2013: 183). A German journalist, Klaus Brinkbäumer similarly refers to the interpretation of the phenomenon through the perspective of a rite of passage by observing: "[migrants] cannot turn around, they are not allowed to. They would be rejected by their families and ridiculed in the village. Perhaps the mother would even hug them, but – stained by failure – they would feel shame. They would be like dead men alive" (Brinkbäumer 2009: 155).

Dramatic decision about leaving their homeland for Europe is motivated not only by the situation in their country, but also by a conviction that beyond the north shore of the Mediterranean Sea jobs and wealth awaits the migrants. The mass culture that creates an illusion of the Global North's wealth, contrasting it with the striking poverty of the South, plays a substantial function in rooting such *topos* in migrants' minds, and thus ritualising the phenomenon of migration. Mościcki, analysing the changes of migrants' perception, stated: *The paradise is inter alia a specific way of montage* (Mościcki 2017: 100). This montage occurs upon crumbs of knowledge, but generally upon rumours. Underlying this element of migration, Ben Rawlence in his captivating reportage entitled *City of Thorns* on the Kenyan refugee camps wrote: "Routes of migrations led through trails of memory, through places they knew or had visited, or somebody had told them about" (Rawlence 2017: 72).

The need of survival, or just to increase the social status, pushes Africans to departure towards Europe. Considering lingering effects of the economic crisis, especially affecting the border countries (such as Greece, Spain and Italy) this promising assumption becomes a painfully disappointing myth. Yet, it does still resonate in the minds of millions of Africans, believing that in the former colonial metropolis they can find peace and wealth.

CONCLUSION

Identifying migrants coming from Africa with terrorists, carriers of lethal diseases who are taking over Europeans' jobs and developing the black market of goods is a common practice in the numerous European media outlets (De Hass 2008), in majority – associated with the conservative perspective. "The refugee has become – as Mościcki writes – a key figure of today's politics based on security discourse" (2017: 154). This discourse stigmatising the figure became a tool eagerly used by the populists and nationalists. Such politicians negate the posteriority of colonial relations and the tradition of peoples' movements between the metropolis and "the peripheries" of the former empires. Furthermore, they use the social discontent stemming from the experiences of economic crisis, by forging Europeans' fear of unknown into their election capital at the peril of the society itself.

Europeans' prejudices against Africans, as all stereotypes, have some cognitive component. Numerous migrants indeed find an employment in the 'grey zone', do not pay the taxes, live in suburban ghettos undermining (already dubious) urban aesthetics. Many of them emphasise "the martyrologic aspect" while concealing the real reason behind the migration, i.e. the economic one (Hamood 2006). These facts cannot be omitted. Yet, to properly research on the aetiology of movements, first we need to change the language of description, by dropping the tabloid-like conservative narration saturated with Occidentalism, and instead introducing a more liberal discourse that takes into consideration political, economic and cultural elements of the analysis (Zaccaria 2007; Aggestam, Hill 2008). After all, peoples' movements will not stop, and we should keep pace with them – at least and primarily cognitively.

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BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

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A THINKING PIECE.
THE ROLE OF LANGUAGE IN EDUCATION FOR PEACE

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ABSTRACT: Iran is a country of great ethnic diversity. Although the official language of the country is Farsi, more than 8 other languages and hundreds of dialects are spoken throughout the country. This great ethnic diversity has led to emergence and growth of different cultures and religions (both official and non-official). This great diversity has potential for cultural growth and development. In recent years, many non-governmental organizations have made great efforts to teach children peace in different ways. The biggest motivation for these trainings are: to end misbelieves toward education, and professing to equal citizenship rights for all the ethnic groups. In the past 20 years, the issue of the right to equal education has been a hot topic of discussion in most non-governmental children's researches. This refers to the promotion of peace culture, by peace-based educational programs for all age groups, from the beginning pre-school education stages. A group of active consultants and educational planners did a lot of work in this way. They held lots of workshops and meetings, and achieved successful programs with positive results.
KEYWORDS: culture of peace, ethnic group, ethnic diversity, non-governmental organizations, equal education

INTRODUCTION

My contribution is a thinking piece from an Iranian educational researcher, who works towards peace and intercultural dialog, aiming to create the best opportunities for children's rights development and hoping to enable them to flourish. In this paper I will discuss some of the efforts for peace relevant to my country but also in a wider context. For instance:

- Organizing educational trips to different regions of Iran and meeting with relatives and familiarizing them with the peace programs.

- Forming a literature group to collect stories based on peace and friendship and promoting these books in educational settings.

- Organizing celebrations for relatives to introduce their culture and traditions to others, and to get to know one another.

- Holding workshops in remote areas of Iran for parents and teachers.

After completing these workshops and meetings, results show that not all people think or share the same beliefs but can live a peaceful life by getting to know each other. Becoming familiar with other nations and taking interest in the lives of different people, has encouraged acceptance and created close friendships. Ultimately, this allows children to experience a safer and happier living environment. In order to achieve these values, the non-governmental organizations worked hard and selflessly, without any benefit or expectations.

In recent years, most non-governmental Iranian organizations have made great efforts to teach children the act of peace in various ways. The main motivation for having these trainings is to achieve the best possible solidarity and equal citizenship rights among Iranians.

Even though the differences between these ethnic groups led to conflict and oppression throughout history, most of these ethnicities all tend to value and promote education. As a result, for the past 20 years, the issue of the right to equal education has been a hot topic of discussion amongst most non-governmental children's research and educational organizations in Iran. Most of the experiences created and projects executed by these organizations have focused on the promotion of peace between nations, and peace-based educational programs for all age groups starting with children as young as pre-school level.

Children Research Institute is an independent, specialized, and non-governmental organization, which has been active in Iran since 1994 with the aim of Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD). This institute was established with the efforts of a group of experts in education and training, academics, researchers, educators and the administrative staffs of educational centers for early childhood development. Since 1994, as active members of ECCD, we have undertaken several projects and programs throughout Iran with the participation of governmental and non-governmental departments, and international organizations. Due to the promotion of the holistic

needs and support for young children from birth till the age of 15, the institute was given a special promotional award by the Organization for the Promotion of Science. Many experiences are created through workshops and meetings that are held in most cities in Iran, which are organized by a group of active consultants and educational planners of active organizations.

THE CREATION OF THE PEACE GROUP

The creation of the peace group within children's research institute was aimed to organize all programs within the framework of co-existence, tolerance, acceptance and respect for all the differences, and the eradication of violence as a solution to problems.
"Peace must be taught from childhood" (Nassrinpay 2007), was the motto the group included in its agenda from the beginning, because if children learn peace-mindedness and Peace Culture, they will better play their part as peace promoters in the society as adults. During its first year, the Peace Group devoted time to the theoretical studies concerning peace and the identification of related areas. (Nassrinpay 2009) At the same time, the following activities were undertaken:

1. Collecting poems and songs with the theme of peace for the children.

2. Collecting stories and books with the theme of peace for children and compiling a list for kindergartens.

3. Identifying the rituals, beliefs and ceremonies that promote the concepts of co-existence, tolerance and arbitration.

4. Introducing peace defending national and international figures.

5. Distributing the statement by Federico Mayor, UNESCO Secretary-General, on the International Year of Tolerance on a wide scale.

Holding 28 meetings in 1999 and following the identification of various aspects of peace, the Peace Group drafted the Declaration of Peace Culture (Children's research of Donya 2006b).

DECLARATION OF CULTURE OF PEACE

The Declaration of Peace Culture, formulated in 15 sections, and stresses the need to respect the rights of refugees, senior citizens, children, women, and the disabled, and the need to protect the environment, cultural heritages, individual rights, freedom, and to avoid all kinds of violent behavior (Children's research of Donya 2006b). The Declaration addresses parents, educators, writers and experts in children's issues, and it urges and encourages them to teach Peace Culture to children while complying with the contents of the Declaration. We sent the Declaration to more than four thousand members of the institute, non-governmental organizations, kindergartens, newspapers, and also child related government centers all over the country (Children's re-

search of Donya 2008).

The Declaration is one of the most lucid and clearly spelled out documents related to the teaching of Peace Culture, which understands peace through justice, freedom, equal rights of citizens, development, and the negation of war.

It has so far been printed in five prominent newspapers and in 23 general and special publications in Tehran and other cities. To date, 8,000 copies have been published and distributed.

BOYCOTTING VIOLENCE PROVOKING TOYS

In January 2000 we raised the question, of toys that provoked violence, for the first time in Iran. A declaration with six clauses was prepared by our group and distributed among educational centers for young children as well as the media.

In this document, it is recommended that families, instructors and caretakers of young children regard the boycotting of violence provoking toys as an effective way of controlling violent behavior (Children's research of Donya 2006).

The above-mentioned declaration was published in two official newspapers of the country as an important item.

On September 21, 2001, the International Peace Day, volunteer kindergartens in Tehran and other provinces collaborated to clear their premises of such toys.

On this day the children who brought their war making toys received gift toys provided by UNICEF.

143 kindergartens in 18 cities of the country were cleared of war toys on this day.

The activities of this program were:

1. Designing the badge of peace.

2. Preparing an introductory pamphlet on the preliminary steps to remove violent provoking toys.

THE INTERNATIONAL DECADE FOR CULTURE OF PEACE NON-VIOLENCE FOR THE CHILDREN OF THE WORLD (2001-2010)

Following the UN proclamation of 2001-2010 as the decade for Culture of Peace non-violence for the children of the world (and Rejection of Violence against Children), we more than any other institution in Iran, focused on this program.

On March 4th, 2000, in a coordinated plan, we held simultaneous events (same hour, same day) called "Proclaiming the Decade culture of peace non-violence for the children of the world" in 11 provinces. In this program, all colleagues, in collaboration with the representatives of the institute, traveled to different cities to introduce strategies and objectives to the participants.

Reading the Declaration culture of peace non-violence for the children of the world and our Announcement on the Decade were amongst the common programs in all the 11 cities. In each city, regional authorities also presented their views on Peace Culture (Children's research of Donya 2006b).

Among the addressees of these sessions were parents, instructors and administrators, and others interested in issues concerning children who joined the authorities in these events. More than 6,000 participants took part in these coordinated and well-organized events from all over the country.

The objectives of these simultaneous events were:

1. Broadcasting the Decade of Peace Culture on a wide scale

2. Attracting the participation of all interested groups

3. Sensitizing government officials to Peace Culture

The program was well received in both national and local media.

YOUNG PEOPLE PEACE GROUP

With the development of our activities regarding Peace Culture, an experimental course was organized in 1999 for about 40 young persons between the ages of 14 and 17 years old (Children's research of Donya 2006b).

For one year the group met once a week with a group of specialists and followed the Living Value curriculum geared towards their needs.

During this one year, the group received workshop trainings on:

1. Living Values.

2. Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

3. Convention on the Rights of the Child.

4. Declaration of Peace Culture.

5. Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women.

6. Convention on the Protection of Refugees.

7. Ethnic and religious groups in Iran.

Participants also took part in the following activities:

1. Visits to churches, synagogues and other worship places of Iran's religions.

2. Festivities of Iran's Armenians.

3. Ceremonies launching the Decade of Peace Culture.

4. The Day of Solidarity with Afghan Mothers.

By the end of the year 2000, two more groups (of about 60) participated in these programs.

The Day of Solidarity with Afghan Mothers

Moreover, in August 2000 the children research institute for the first time held a program called the Day of Solidarity with Afghan mothers. On this day Afghan mothers exhibited their handicrafts, artworks and also their national foods.

The money collected from this program was given for the support of Afghan migrants kindergartens (Aminaee 2010).

PUBLICATIONS RELATED TO PEACE CULTURE

In February 2000 we produced a special publication on Peace Culture. The articles focused more than anything on Peace Culture and the need for education to promote and live by this important concept. The publication is considered to be one of the important sources for studies on Peace Culture.

Council for the Development for Culture of Peace

In May 2001 Children Research Institute sent the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Provoking Toys to all non-governmental organizations active in small children issues. The Institute also forwarded a letter asking the organizations to sign the statement and form a group with the boycotting of violence provoking toys on its agenda.

An overall of 30 non-governmental organizations signed the declaration and officially started a new society called "Council for the Development of Peace Culture" (Children's research of Donya 2008).

The Council for the Development of Peace Culture held a seminar in October 2001 on "Peace, Children and Toys" for the first time in Iran. On this occasion, representatives of all organizations presented their views on children and peace. The council is at present active within the framework of the following work groups:

1. Research committee.

2. Family education committee.

3. Communication committee.

So far, each committee has planned and carried out several programs.

PEACE IN THE AFTERNOON

In order to widely introduce the Decade of Peace Culture, we arranged five afternoon programs which provided cultural, educational and recreational activities for children and their families (Yossefi 2009).

Amongst the objectives of this program were providing opportunities for family members to be together, introducing joyful, healthy and educational programs free from any kind of violence and introducing the fundamental concepts of peace.

A total of 4,000 people took part in this program in 2001.

Due to the success of these afternoon events, we suggested that all non-governmental organizations to undertake the programs. In the summer of 2002, in 11 programs, more than 25 non-governmental organizations each week held several events for children and their families within the framework of peace, understanding and friendship. More than 10,000 people participated in these events. In other words, all participants declared solidarity with the programs of Peace Culture and of rejection of violence against children.

CONCLUSIONS WITH OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS TOWARDS PEACE

Peace had a political meaning in Iran's society, as a consequence of an eight-year war. Therefore, talk on peace could have somehow been perceived as a reflection on the country's strategic issues. The children's research institute's efforts since 1999 for drawing attention to Peace Culture has finally led to the extrication of the term "peace" from the red list and to its use by all sections of the community. Right now, many non-governmental organizations in their programs for children mention peace and benefit from it (Children's research of Donya 2005: 61, 98). We have attracted the support and cooperation of 30 non-governmental organizations for the development of Peace Culture within the framework of a common program called "The Council for the Development of Peace Culture among Children." We have attracted the participation of governmental departments for sustaining Peace Culture programs. As an example, today the Institute for the Intellectual Development of Children and Young People has undertaken the task of removing violence provoking toys in Iran (Children's research of Donya 2006b).

Another precious achievement of these years has been getting the support of families, teachers, instructors and child care-takers for Peace Culture programs. Iranian families are eager and ready to cooperate with and support the development of peace. We have created the mindset that peace should be learned from childhood, and along these lines we have mobilized many governmental departments and non-governmental organizations for the education of this concept to the children.

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BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

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