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CHILDREN’S RIGHTS AND CHILDHOOD STUDIES AS A CHALLENGE AND A DRIVER OF SOCIAL CHANGE

URSZULA MARKOWSKA-MANISTA¹ & ANNA ODROWĄŻ-COATES²

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ABSTRACT: This paper contains an introduction to a selection of papers across social sciences and humanities, based on empirical explorations and theoretical conceptualizations. Authors highlight the issues of parental roles, parental styles, child and family positioning in the family and society. The lens of children’s rights and participatory approaches is also discussed. Authors focus on diverse practices in parenting, different approaches to children’s agency and freedom of choice, family as a negotiated space mediated by culture, children’s position in family and society, life chances and wellbeing, critical approaches to children’s rights perspectives, early intervention, socio-political context, finally Freire’s and Korczak’s pedagogies.

KEYWORDS: social pedagogy, education, socialization, participatory research, childhood

This collection of papers dedicated to children’s rights, childhood studies and the use of children’s rights pedagogical lenses, creates a special space to explore both nature and culture, and their interplay with the ideals of childcare, children’s wellbeing and children’s upbringing. At the same time, it draws attention to new topics and approaches to research in contemporary interdisciplinary social studies, in which a key

role is played by childhood and children's rights together with early childhood studies. We started working on the collection of papers prior to the COVID-19 pandemic and whilst the situation remains serious in many parts of the world, the contributors and reviewers have made tremendous efforts to prepare the issue in good time. We are very grateful to them and inspired by their commitment to the cause.

Early childhood is of paramount importance for a child's development and later success in life, yet parents often do not have the knowledge and support to be the best parents for their children at this critical stage. Tired, exhausted and confused, anxious about their changing roles and changing obligations, parents may miss out on the positive aspects of parenthood and at the same time unknowingly affect their children in a negative way. Every developmental stage brings new challenges and questions for parents that often remain unanswered or inadequately addressed by pseudo-experts and heresy. This is an area for social pedagogues, social workers, psychologists, medical professionals and social politicians to explore and clarify. The effects of natural and cultural pressures give us an interesting opportunity to reflect on the roots of traditions and praxis of childcare, and parental practices observed in different cultures in different parts of the world and in different epochs (c.f. Bernheim 1989). There are so many areas that researchers can explore, starting with Korczak's innocent novel *Bobo* from 1914 (Odrowaz-Coates & Vucic 2019), followed by Buber's (1984) concepts of dialogical thinking, Freeman's (1992) ideological underpinning of child socialization, Gest et al. (1999) and on early intervention and the changing patterns of fatherhood worldwide (Hofner et al. 2011). These issues pertain to formal and informal socialization and also to educational systems. Baranowski (2020) brings attention to changes in education post the neoliberal turn through the introduction of the 'worthless education' idea to highlight the consequences of the ongoing educational transformations that underpin all levels of societies and have an impact on children's upbringing.

In a world built on distinctions: us and the other, a child and an adult, rights and duties, this volume is also a path to togetherness and overcoming the discourses of 'othering' (Odrowaz-Coates 2015, 2018) and an opportunity to look at written and unwritten children's rights (Markowska-Manista 2017). We oppose the practices of coercion in children's upbringing and advocate for participatory models of working and being with children and young people (Percy-Smith & Thomas 2009). The papers explore not only the issues highlighted above, but also the research praxis in the field of childhood studies. Markowska-Manista (2018) asks: "whose participation?" when considering participatory research with children and youths. This approach seems particularly necessary today, in fact it is indispensable in researching children and matters that concern them, as well as their activism (Torres-Harding et al. 2018; Budde, Markowska-Manista 2020) and was postulated by Judith Ennew in her research and activities with children. As Ennew stressed, children, like adults, have the right to be properly researched (Ennew, Plateau 2005). Participatory research and praxis enable a broader insight into children's situations and their activism, while impelling us to reflect on changes in approaches to research conducted with children, on childhood and children's rights (Markowska-Manista 2020: 9). Much has changed in the recent

decade, both in theory and practice of children's and youth's participation, both in a local and global dimension. Today, 'adultist' or 'tokenist' approaches to research and praxis concerning children, the largest minority of the world, seem misplaced. The world in an era of pandemic, forces us to look at children's right to participation (Collins et al. 2021). It obligates us to consider participation within important transformative praxis, praxis that decolonises stereotypical approaches and opens adults' eyes to new challenges.

In this collection of papers, the authors explore a range of topics. The paper by Dr Offiong and Uduigwomen, dedicated to socio-cultural values in Calabar, contains analysis of the history and value system that was associated with child upbringing in Nigeria. Communalism, as the authors demonstrate, ensured child socialization from birth, and was considered a common practise in the African context until European colonialization and the eventual introduction of capitalism, which, in the authors' view, contributed to the negative impact on overall children's rights in Nigeria. Magdalena Roszak writes about the phenomenon of parental alienation based on the netnographic study of parental conflict, whilst Megan MacCormac and Katherine MacCormac explore the issues of language policy for children with a migrant background in Canada. The MacCormac article is based on an in-depth empirical study and is embedded in a children's rights perspective. The contribution of the Sudanese researcher, Dr Nagmeldin Kraramalla-Gaiballa focuses on solutions to violence against children in the context of FGM, underage marriage, trafficking and laws that violate the dignity of Sudanese children, allowing for punishments such as flogging, imprisonment and death. Dr Turczyk writes about the child's right to a family and the participatory character of human development using an overview of local and international policy documents. A contributor from Turkey, Dr Seran Demiral, focusses on children's rights to protection, provision and participation. The author introduces a fourth area to add to the discussion, the area of children's power and merges it in Korczak's children's journal context. Furthermore, the empirical study of narratives from sex workers follows. Their experiences are linked to the socialization processes in childhood. Dr Gardian-Małkowska reveals issues of male prostitution and the motivation of clients, viewed through the sex workers' eyes. Moreover, the issue contains two contributions from early-stage researchers. In the first one, Sandra Kwaśniewska-Paszta focuses on evoking empathy in children from an early age. This is followed by Joanna Pawłowska, who writes about gender stereotypes in popular fairy tales. The issue closes with the book review by Professor Mark Bernheim. The reviewed book is dedicated to the unknown history of Jewish-Finnish paradoxes of identity conflict and survival during the World War II and was recently translated into English and published in the US.

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BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

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SOCIO-CULTURAL VALUES AND CHILDREN'S RIGHTS IN CALABAR

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ABSTRACT: This paper on Socio-Cultural Values and Children's Rights in Calabar analyses the history and value system associated with child upbringing in the city of Calabar. Communalism, which ensured child socialisation from birth, was a common practice in Calabar like in other areas of Africa and Nigeria until European incursion and eventual introduction of capitalism during colonial times. This change resulted in the diminishing of communal lifestyle and reduction of family sizes to nuclear forms. It also necessitated the population increase and related social problems. Although historical in content and analysis, the paper adopted the multidisciplinary approach of reconstruction with data gleaned from primary and secondary sources. Findings showed that right from pre-colonial times, inhuman practices that abused children's rights like child pawning and killing of twins characterised this study area. Population increase and the rise of urban poor and slums resulted in the breeding of abused children, with most homeless on the streets of Calabar. Witchcraft labelling and child trafficking were also highlighted as other significant and recurring causes of child abuse in Calabar. This paper concluded by reiterating that as Calabar flouts its status as a 'restful city', children must not be denied of this 'restful' lifestyle. Child rights must be implementable and child right violators prosecuted.

KEYWORDS: culture, Children's Rights, common practices, social problems, inhuman practices, child abuse

INTRODUCTION

History, as a discipline, and knowing about the human past, is unique. Without history, the understanding of contemporary issues or realities will certainly be hazy and unenriching. The knowledge of history has undoubtedly gained as a society and also as an individual scholar. At contemporary times, countries or continents of the world are now profiled or stratified, and this is due to actions and inactions of man in such areas in the past. It is now a norm that nations are regarded as developed and underdeveloped (developing), First World and Third World, Global North and South, etc. The knowledge of the world's history can best understand this.

It can no longer be debated that specific studies on children or childhood history began globally in the twentieth century due to events that necessitated this (Western Civilisation, World Wars, European Imperialism etc.). However, this does not insinuate that there were no studies on children before this era. It is important to stress that most developed or First World countries of today had their civilisation early, which in turn enabled early documentation of literature. This also enabled the rise of Eurocentric or Western methodologies and views of the human past before the nineteenth century. Although it had documented analysis majorly from the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, Africa or Africans had their own unique form of documentation or accounts of events that most African historians termed as the unwritten source or primary sources. From the early twentieth century, historians and scholars writing about Africa had cited or based their analyses on this source/methodology over time. Therefore, it will be wrong to assume that issues relating to children in African societies were unknowledgeable or were unavailable before European interference. This explains the methodology used in the documentation of this paper. Primary sources, therefore, are simply unpublished sources. They are diaries, minutes of meetings, letters, newspapers, oral evidence etc. (Majuk 2001: 59). In comparison, secondary sources are usually interpretations and judgements based on primary sources and are in the form of journals and books resulting from original research (Majuk 2001: 59). It is imperative to note that there must be coherence or compatibility among all disciplines in the documentation of African history. African historians found themselves logically concatenated in a system so tight that subtracting one item from the whole was to destroy the whole structure (Uya 2009: 12). Hence, "the result of this was the insistence that African history has to be approached from the interdisciplinary angle" (Uya 2009: 12).

Aderinto (2015) is of the view that although "historians generally agree that the publication of *Centuries of Childhood*, by Philippe Aries in 1962, originally in French titled *L'Enfant et la vie familiale sous l'Ancien Régime* (1960); ... no one before him placed childhood as a significant component of Western civilisation and history" (Aderinto 2015: 4). This made his publication novel and pivotal in subsequent studies and decisions on children's welfare in most nations and organisations. It is, however, important to stress at this point that African historians will also agree with Aderinto (2015) that due to the nature of African history, as compared to European history, any serious historical work on Africa (especially Nigeria) would not subscribe to Aries' idea of the

absence of childhood or the notion of its “invention” at any period in African history. Neither would it accept the notion that the persistently high mortality rate prevented parents from emotionally investing in their children (Aderinto 2015: 4). This instigates a foreknowledge that children played a central role in Africa’s history and that this view should not be restricted to the West. Furthermore, issues on child upbringing or welfare highlighted subsequently will affirm this place of children in Africa’s history and civilisation, although marred by some inhumane behaviours that abused children’s rights. This does not underscore the centrality of children in Africa’s history, as seen in contemporary literature.

The discourse on Child’s Right is not relatively new and is not geographically restricted. It is a global discourse because of the sensitivity of the individuals involved (children). More so, issues relating to children are not so contemporary as subsequent records prove that even before international laws were enacted, children’s welfare and development were topmost priorities for families, clans, villages, empires, states, etc., in Africa. However, this paper’s main thrust is to historically appraise the implementation of universal law (Child Rights) in Nigeria and Calabar, Cross River State (specifically). This cannot be done without adequate knowledge of the history of Calabar, with a clear emphasis on her socio-cultural history in tandem with the values and practices that accompanied child upbringing and welfare.

According to Child Right Act, 2003, a child, as cited in Azi and Saluhu (2016: 23) is a boy or girl between infancy and adolescence and is anyone who has not attained the age of 18 years. A child can also be classified as an infant, toddler, pre-adolescent or adolescent. However, the central literature which serves as a guide to this Paper – *A Child’s Right to Respect* by Korczak (2017), has this to say that: “there are no children – there are people” (Korczak 2017: 6). This insinuates that in an ideal society, dichotomy or class division should be non-existent because it may result in discrimination and unwarranted abuses. Everyone in society should be seen and treated as equals. The above literature targeted the audience of professionals working with children like teachers or educators and social workers. Although the text seemed empathetic and sympathetic to children, it portrays a supposed global standard of child upbringing as ideal, which slightly is different from that of Africa and does not mean that Africans should disregard this literature’s content.

A BRIEF HISTORY AND OVERVIEW OF THE SOCIO-CULTURAL SETTING OF CALABAR

Calabar is the capital city of Cross River State, Nigeria. Calabar is located at latitude 04°57' North and longitude 08°20' East and comprises of two Local Government Area Councils – Calabar Municipality and Calabar South. The area now known as Calabar was formerly known as Old-Calabar in pre-colonial times. It is well known to inhabitants and scholars that to the North of Calabar is Ogoja and the Cross River’s Oban regions; to the immediate and distant West are Ibibio and Ibo countries respectively; to the near East stretch the regions of West Cameroon (Aye 2000: 1). The city of Calabar is a tripartite capital for the Efik, Qua and the Efut (three ethnic groups). The Efik on

one side “applies to all descendants of Eburutu tribe, who have retained the originality of their tribal identity” (Aye 2000: 21) and are commonly known as ‘EfikEburutu’. On the other side, the Qua are also part of the more prominent Ejagham people’s group of the Bantu race and the Ekoi origin and speaks a practically identical dialect with that of the Ejagham (CADIST 3/3/372 1983: 1). While the Efut in the middle, “originally linked ethnically with the Cameroonians” (Aye 2000: 246), had “a long-standing Efik sphere of influence” (Latham 1973: 51) and “can be regarded as Efik in culture and language.”

Calabar was stratified into families, houses – group of families, aliens or sojourners and clans of different peoples or ethnic nationalities in pre-colonial and colonial times. Hart (1964), commenting on the Efik, posited that “from the earliest times, therefore, the Efik social structure conformed to the patriarchal system. Society was based on the House or family to use the Efik term Ufok. Each of these houses had an “Akwaetekiet” or common ancestor (...) to whom all the free members of the House here technically related by Blood” (Hart 1964: 46). The Qua, according to Qua Intelligence Report, “consists of 9 towns – Big Qua, Ikpai, Akim, IkotAnsa, IkotOmin, IkotAkasuk, Eta Ekpini, AkimAkim and Odukpani” (CADIST 3/3/372 1983: 2). They live in Clans which are indigenous administrative units with their satellite villages, and the Qua also are grouped into “groups of families or households related by blood who lived in one or more compound formed the ward or house, also known in Qua dialect as Nyo” (Itakpo 1988: 26). The above insinuates that the Qua and Efik practice a similar system (House System). On the Efut, Noah (1980) is of the position that “they were organised on the basis of family and succession passed from father to son” (Noah 1980: 64). As an entity, “the heads of the various families formed the village council which acted as a court whenever the need arose” (Noah 1980: 64). Furthermore, these ethnic groups all had their kings who were later made Paramount Rulers for government control. The Efik have the Obong, the Efut have the Muri Munene, and the Qua have the Ndidem (Ekpe 2016: 112).

Polygamy was generally practised in Calabar before the British colonisation of the area. Polygamy was generally practised in many areas of present-day Nigeria, and the sole reason was purely economic. In recounting on this study area, Imbua (2012: 30) was of the position that:

Politically, the number of wives and children a man had determined his social standing. Socially, relationships were cemented by marriage alliances, and there was much prestige in begetting many children. A man’s wives and children formed his labour force in the economy, and many wives and in-laws made trading transactions easier.

The polygamous nature of Calabar also enhanced intergroup relations and strengthened inter-communal ties. As this study entails, “the Efik, Qua and Efut, despite their varied backgrounds, evolved similar social patterns that acted as an integrative factor for the three groups and facilitated their peaceful stay in Calabar” (Akoda 2002: 62). However, it is essential to establish that aside from this ideal practice associated with this present city in much of the 1900s, it should be noted that traditional practices

against children were formerly in place. Although Talbot's account during the early years of colonialism suggested that "at the present state of affairs at least no one is left uncared for, and beggars are unknown through the length and breadth of the Ekoi country" (Talbot 1969: 326), the issue of killing of twins or the abandoning of twins or triplets by parents was a common practice in this area during pre-colonial times. This lays a thoughtful foundation that truly, child abuses occurred in the area now known as Calabar. Secondly, from the above, issues relating to child upbringing were relatively effective in Africa. However, traditional practices that abused children's rights were issues that Christian missionaries uncovered and vehemently tackled upon their arrival in Africa. Documentaries were written in this regard, which led to the emergence of existing literature on children in Africa. This then strengthens Aderinto's claim that there is no better place to trace the emergence of modern Nigerian childhood than within the four walls of mission houses that began to spring up along the West African's southern fringes coastline in the first half of the nineteenth century. History books have examined Christianity's introduction to West Africa and the numerous anti-slave trade activities. However, they have refused to acknowledge that mission education laid the foundation of the modern conception of childhood (Aderinto 2015: 5).

Although this precedence as seen above was associated with Calabar's history, the contacts between Calabar and the Europeans, particularly the British and eventual colonisation, made this city to be regarded as a "model of European civilisation for most of South-Eastern Nigeria, gaining its reputation as the granddaughter of the Atlantic" (Aye 2000: 8). The transformation that made Calabar internationally famous was heralded by agents of radically cultural backgrounds whose quest for development did not accord ethnicity and nationality any deterministic role (Imbua & Offiong 2011: 131). Thereby bringing to bear that Calabar had strong socio-cultural values, which made for the actualisation of its cosmopolitan nature by the middle of the seventeenth century because Calabar was "a crossroad for trade, culture, civilisation and administration" (Imbua & Offiong 2011: 132). In fact,

Calabar was an excellent corridor for the trans-Atlantic Slave Trade... The first indigenous sovereign to be crowned with regalia sent by Queen Victoria in the whole of colonial Southern Nigeria in 1878 was King Archibong III of Calabar... The first military barracks; first General Hospital (St. Margaret Hospital, presently University of Calabar Teaching Hospital (UCTH) Annex); the first Social Club in Nigeria – The African Club established in 1903; hosted the first-ever competitive football, Cricket, and Field Hockey games in Nigeria; first Roman Catholic Mass celebrated at 19 Boco Street, Calabar in 1903; host the oldest Secondary School in Eastern Nigeria- Hope Waddell Training Institute in 1895. (Odey 2016: 390)

This section has revealed the importance of this study area and the necessity of this study. The history (political) of Nigeria and the Atlantic Slave Trade is incomplete without an extensive mention of this study area. This area, which was known as Old Calabar, was a significant slave depot and also served as the capital of the Oil Rivers Protectorate (1885-1893, the Niger Coast Protectorate (1893-1900) and Southern Ni-

geria (1900-1906). More so, much has been written about the history of Calabar by scholars from various disciplines. However, an in-depth analysis of childhood history, welfare and children's rights appears scanty; hence, the necessity of this study.

CHILD RIGHT ACTS IN NIGERIA: A HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

Children make up a large percentage of the human race, population, nation, inhabitants, fellow citizens, and permanent comrades. They have been, will be and are. (Korczak 2017: 27)

Child rights are fundamental freedoms and all children's inherent rights below 18 years irrespective of race or sex. These rights are in two categories: specific child rights and basic child rights (Obiechina 2014: 152). According to UNICEF, the core-specific child rights are birthright, right to a name, family right, and nationality. The following are excerpts of every Nigerian child's fundamental rights documented by Obiechina (2014): developmental right, participation right, right to information, the right to recreation, and protection right.

Developmental Right: Children have the right to an adequate standard of living, health care, education, service, play and recreation.

Participation Right: Children have the right of freedom to express opinions, to have a say in matters affecting their own lives, to join the association and to assemble peacefully.

Right to Information: Every child has a right to know his basic rights and position in society. Children need information and knowledge for their protection. Also, children need to be provided with safe and protective channels for participation and self-expression.

The Right to Recreation: Every child has a right to spend some time on recreational pursuits like sports, entertainment and hobbies to explore and develop. Some children in Nigeria are not allowed time for recreational activities.

Protection Right: All children have the right to be protected from all types of violence, including physical, emotional, verbal, psychological, sexual, political, gang, domestic, school, township, state, street, community, racial, self-destruction such as drug abuse, smoking, alcohol among others. Childhood should be allowed free, spontaneous expression. (Obiechina 2014: 153-154)

Although Nigeria, like many nations of the world today, has had "permanent comrades", it is sad to note that the issue of child protection came to a dim light from this 21st century. During the colonial era, the Nigerian child's welfare was not mainly a significant concern to the British colonial government. The first legislation of child protection in Nigeria was in 1943 when the Governor-in-council promulgated the Children and Young Persons' Act (CYPA). It is on record that the term 'young person' apparently first appeared with the Children and Young Person's Ordinance (CYPO),

promulgated in Nigeria in 1943, which defined two categories: a child is under 14. A young person is over 14 and under 17 (Patterson and Annual Reports, the Nigerian Police Force in Fourchard 2006: 122). The Children and Young Persons Ordinance promulgation from Lagos extended to the rest of the geographical entity called Nigeria, and this juvenile justice system was universal.

According to Uduigwomen (2019), between 1943 and 2003, international and regional laws were regulated to avoid children's exploitation. The end of colonialism led to the dominance of the United States of America, championing capitalist ideology worldwide. This move towards capitalism was accompanied by efforts made to regulate children's role to avoid exploitation in this new capitalist order (91). These efforts were seen in 1959, when the United Nations – UN came up with the Declaration on the Rights of the Child and in 1981 when the Organization of African Unity – OAU also came up with its African Charter on Human and Peoples Rights. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) declares that "All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights." Article 25(2) of UDHR provides that motherhood and childhood are entitled to special care and assistance and, all children, whether born in or out of wedlock, shall enjoy the same social protection. The African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights provides that States parties should protect the child's rights as stipulated in international declarations and covenants. By this provision, the African Charter effectively endorses internationally accepted principle on Children's rights, including all the provisions on the administration of juvenile justice. Thus, the United Nations and the OAU called for respect for a child's life, emphasising the importance of providing opportunities and facilities for the healthy and dignified development of the child and requested for the child's protection (Uchendu 2007: 117).

To Aderinto (2015: 201), the CYPA OR CYPO was intriguing and innovative, in that the first innovation, which was roundly lauded, concerned the establishment of juvenile courts and a juvenile justice system... and the second innovation... that restricted street trading by children. This innovation implied that child offenders were to be punished, and the government regulated hawking on streets to curtail children hawking. The regulations prohibited all children under 14 from selling petty goods in the street and from "playing, singing, or performing, for profit" (Aderinto 2012: 202).

In 2003, the Nigerian government enacted the Child's Rights Act (CRA), to bring into law the primary role enshrined in the United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child and the African Union charter on the child's welfare. This act protects the Nigerian child, appropriates penalties for Child Rights abuses and violations, amongst others. However, it is unfortunate to state that the Child Rights Act signed into law by the federal government of Nigeria is yet to be fully functional; also, the implementation and enforcement of the CRA in the state of the federation are slowly functional, and the contents of the CRA has not been made known to the majority of the populace, to know what constitutes an offence and the punishment in the developmental training of the Nigerian child. The judicial arms of government and the police force are yet to be fully conscientized on the CRA, making enforcement and implementation of the CRA difficult (Obiechina 2014: 156). The Child Rights Act 2003 was promulgated into law and was passed by the state assembly and assented to by the state governors

in twenty-four states: Abia, Akwa-Ibom, Anambra, Benue, Cross River, Delta, Ebonyi, Edo, Ekiti, Imo, Jigawa, Kwara, Lagos, Nassarawa, Ogun, Ondo, Osun, Oyo, Plateau, Rivers, Niger, Bayelsa, Kogi and Taraba (UNICEF 2011: 2).

The general framework within which human rights are protected in Nigeria is enshrined in the 1999 Constitution of Nigeria. The Constitution requires the government to provide free compulsory and universal primary education, free secondary education, free university education, and free adult literacy programs when practicable (Section 18 of the 1999 Constitution in Tajudeen 2015: 47). Furthermore, the structure and contents of the Child Rights Act 2003, coupled with the analysis of state obligations to promote and protect children's rights, that in its rights/responsibilities approach, the act is constitutionally and culturally sensitive, progressive, compatible, relevant, problem-solving and above all, in the best interest and welfare of the Nigerian Child (Tajudeen 2015: 51–52). At this point, it must be noted that although the provisions of the Child Right's Act of 2003 are contemporary and unique, which made provision for the protection of the rights of children, its implementation has been defective. Nigerian laws are very catchy, but the operators are very weak. Once this defect is handled, the Nigerian child would enjoy all their fundamental rights provided by the Child Right's Act. The subsequent section of this paper will elaborate on these defects, specifically in Calabar.

SOCIO-CULTURAL VALUES AND CHILD'S RIGHTS IMPLEMENTATION IN CALABAR: AN APPRAISAL

The culture of a people is what marks them out distinctively from other human societies in the family of humanity... As it is usually understood, culture entails a totality of traits and characters peculiar to a people to the extent that it marks them out from other peoples or societies (Idang 2015: 97–98). These traits include the people's language, norms, taboos, religion, music, dressing, arts, work, dancing, values etc. On the other hand, values may be ideas that propel man's daily actions, standards that members of the community adhere to in their personal and communal interaction towards achieving the goals (Igboin 2001: 98). Values also determine the appraisal or reprimand of human actions within a geographical entity. In another sense, values refer to 'good' or 'desired' (Igboin 2001: 98). As stated earlier, the city dwellers (Calabar) had a high sense of socio-cultural values that aided in the city's progress. However, this has been marred by some socio-cultural values like twin killing.

Furthermore, it should be noted that Calabar also has a history of the presence of street children. Uduigwomen's study of "History and Impact of Child Streetism in Calabar, 1943-2015" documented this history, stating clearly that it arose, apart from other reasons, from the city's new status as a cosmopolitan town, and right from then, has been a pressing issue. Thus, social values can simply be seen as those beliefs and practices that are practised by any particular society (Idang 2015: 103).

The birth of twins or triplets was accepted as an ill omen in many parts of Nigeria until the intervention of missionaries in the 19th century, notably Mary Slessor in Calabar. Multiple births were regarded as procreative features of animals only, and infants

so born were usually hidden away or abandoned. This belief is still held in some ethnic groups of the country (Okeahialam 1984: 70). Prior to the arrival of missionaries and particularly Mary Mitchell Slessor (1848-1905) in Africa, ignorance, superstition and negative values made multiple births to be seen as a harbinger of evil. Expounding on this practice in this area, it was posited that “one of the twins was said to be genuine, the other, an impostor. They were both infected and cursed by sharing the same cradle bed; their parents were equally guilty of defilement, particularly the mother” (Udoh 2007: 103). The birth of twins was seen as an evil omen. In order to save the community from the anger and wrath of the deities, the twins were killed together with their mothers. Since Mary Slessor stopped this custom, multiple births are now seen as multiple blessings (Idang 2015: 109). Although this practice ceased to exist, it must be re-emphasised that this cultural belief of the people of Calabar was abusive to children, hence, dented the image of this city’s history.

Historically, it was observed that during and even before the Atlantic Slave Trade era, of which Calabar was a significant slave depot due to its proximity to the Atlantic, “the incessant raiding for slaves definitely transformed the lives of children, limited their playtime and choices, and placed the fear of disappearance from parents at the centre of their existence” (Aderinto 2015: 2). In her account of South Eastern Nigeria, Calabar was also inclusive; it was posited that children “were pawns, slaves, serfs, servants, subjects, clients and child brides” (Chapdelaine 2016: 52). Child pawning was a temporal agreement, which could take years pending when agreements are met. It is of record that “Calabar and Bonny were rivals for pre-eminence among the slave ports of Africa, and few places in the world can have seen more misery” (Talbot 1969: 325). This no doubt affected the lives of children in Calabar. This was so serious that the “Colonial authorities began to examine and critique ways in which the Igbo, Efik and Ibibio speaking people in South-Eastern Nigeria set up systems to transfer children” (Chapdelaine 2016: 54), usually as pawns. Internal slavery was in existence during this period; therefore, pawning, child stealing, prostitution, child labour and exploitation were prevalent. Child pawning was an antecedent form of child abuse that characterised Calabar’s history.

One major cultural value of Africans and also Calabar dwellers was communal child upbringing. Communalism was also an instigative drive of this polygamous lifestyle by most Africans, including Calabar, and saw many children’s birth mainly due to economic reasons. Thus, communalism was eventually replaced by capitalism during the late 1800s and early 1900s. This resulted in many social problems to grapple with. The population increase was due to rural-urban rift without corresponding social amenities and welfare, especially in colonial administrative areas like Calabar. Instead of the cherished communalism, which defined the life of the African, a burgeoning societal construct was introduced, alienating and destroying the organic fabric of the spirit of we-feeling (Igboin 2008: 101). Most African scholars have attributed this to the disintegration of families, child abuses and most importantly, the rise of homeless children in urban cities. The traditional African system of child upbringing was termed as child socialisation by Uchendu (2007) where she argued that “Parents, older siblings, and members of the extended family jointly participated in the nurturing and socialisation

of a child... this ideology of child socialisation as a communal responsibility pervaded nearly all the Nigerian cultural groups during the colonial period” (Uchendu 2007: 118–119).

The sporadic rural-urban drift that accompanied colonialism instigated a change. Okeke (2005: 398), arguing on the changes in traditional institutions and systems due to colonialism and urbanisation, posited that before this change, members of the society were made to “imbibe the ideology of mutual obligations and contribution toward the maintenance of the collective. Because the entire clan is (*sic*) concerned with maintaining the good name or image of the family, children’s activities are closely monitored, and any misbehaviour is swiftly dealt with”. Thus, areas with colonial presence were bound to possess dysfunctional families and breed abused children due to a monogenic system’s institutionalisation. The impression that child abuse could not occur in traditional African societies as fostered by some sociologist which in their view portray that the extended family as a system provided profound love, protection, security and care to the child within the cultural milieu; hence, no cause for child abuses, stands debatable. Okeahialam (1984: 70) believes that the social advantages of this system tend to minimise the effects of some traditional practices that are abusive to children. Besides, little attention is focused on child abuse due to the prevalence of malnutrition and infections, major paediatric problems. From the preceding, it can be understood that although such views are present, child abuse cannot be changed, and instances highlighted in this study tends to disapprove of this view, as some cultural beliefs in Africa encouraged child rights violations. Thus, various forms of child abuse were inherent in paediatric practice. Many of these are related to the culture and tradition of society. Some are the effects of urbanisation and rural-urban migration, which have resulted from socio-economic and political changes in the country (Okeahialam 1984: 70).

On economic value, child birthright from pre-colonial times and even present in some families were/are purely economically driven. The economic values of traditional African society are marked by cooperation. The traditional economy, mainly based on farming and fishing, was co-operative, and children were seen to provide the primary labour force. That is why a man took pride in having many of them, especially males (Idang 2015: 105–106). Children were also social security and economic assets, and parents took pride in having many of them (Idang 2015: 108). Because of this, polygamy was encouraged. Polygamy was considered right because of the civil conditions concerning childbearing in the traditional society (Talbot 1969: 136), and childlessness was seen as a curse and the failure to give birth to male children was blamed on the woman since it was believed that she determines the sex of the child (Idang 2015: 109). Although this practice (Polygamy) is not as prevalent as before in Calabar, child labour persists. With the increase in children hawking goods and providing services in Calabar, child labour has become a deterring factor in implementing the Child Rights Act of 2003. The presence of urban poor and low-income earners in most urban cities has encouraged child rights violations. It is on record that in the mid-80s, hundreds of abused children were living in abandoned public buildings, motor parks, markets and gutters in Calabar, residents, government officials and the police told premium times”

(Isine 2017: 1).

In the 1990s, this phenomenon still persisted in Calabar, with a report of Premium Times serving as evidence. In 1998, hundreds of abandoned children were roaming the streets of Calabar. While many children hawked food items for their parents and guardians, she said many others scavenged refuse heaps for recyclable plastics, metals and aluminium (Isine 2017: 1). This report suggests the reoccurrence of child abuse in Calabar from pre-colonial to colonial and then post-colonial or independence. Could redemption be near? It is uncomfortable and disagreeable to be small (Korczak 2017: 7), therefore in Calabar. Children are small, insubstantial; there is less of them... what is worse, children are weak (Korczak 2017: 8), the reason they are easily exploited. Because children are poor and trapped in material dependency, adults' relationship to children is unjust (Korczak 2017: 12). Children believe life is simple and easy (Korczak 2017: 13). Sadly, what Korczak (2017) has highlighted reoccurs and assumes different forms in the contemporary. Poverty has made more children live and work in the streets, which has increased their vulnerability to the detriment of an appropriate lifestyle. A child who has been physically or sexually abused grows up with deep shame about self and family (Obiechina 2014: 151).

Child labour remains a serious concern in Nigeria, that despite legislations, children of school age are seen daily trading goods on the streets, herding animals, tanning serving as domestic help, selling wares at kiosks, harvesting crops in family farms or commercial plantations, amongst other activities during school hours. In a report issued in 2002, the International Labour Organization maintains that the most significant number of working children between the ages of 5 and 14 live in Asia and Africa. A total of 107 million or 60% of the world comes from the Asia Pacific region; 48 million or 23% comes from Sub-Sahara Africa; a total of 17 million or 8% live in the Caribbean's; 13 million or 6% are found in the Middle East and North Africa, and 2 million or 1% is found in the advanced industrialised countries (Ndem & Michael 2012: 150). In Nigeria, children face the menace of abuse ranging from physical injuries, abandonment, sexual abuse to child labour. In fact, child abuse is becoming alarming in the country. The government's efforts to combat the problem have yielded little or no result (Akpan & Oluwabamide 2010: 189). To back up this point, it was revealed that Calabar Municipality is not left out because we notice a daily rise in the number of children who litter the streets searching for a living since the Council Area was created in 1991. Its attendant consequences have increased social vices such as drug addictions, robbery, rape, thuggery, prostitution, and alcoholism (Ndem & Michael 2012: 151).

Street hawking is a negation of the international convention on the rights of the child. It is indeed inhuman for anyone to engage a child in a money-making venture. Such a child is denied primary education, which is another right of every child. Apart from those consequences of child labour we have discussed, there is still the problem of wear and tear (Akpan & Oluwabamide 2010: 192). Street hawking is relatively common, and child hawkers can be seen in busy areas like the University of Calabar, Marian, Watt, Mount Zion, etc. It is more worrisome in any public gatherings like burial, marriages, school events, carnival (Carnival Calabar, which is a yearly event); child

hawkers are visibly active, and the government and individuals see no wrong in it. Thus, millions of Nigerian children face particular problems of disadvantage, discrimination, abuse and exploitation, sometimes in appalling circumstances. These problems not only compound the risks of survival and create formidable obstacles for the development of children but are significant challenges in their own right, requiring special protective measures if they are to be addressed effectively (Tajudeen 2015: 47). The changing life pattern, particularly in the cities with inadequate accommodation, lack of recreational facilities, irregular water and electricity supplies, creates a new psychosocial problem, urban stress, which erodes marital harmony. This is worse if the parents are unemployed or have financial difficulties. The child in a large family living in overcrowded one-room accommodation in the peri-urban slum is likely to be abused by an irritable and stressed parent. Lack of provision of adequate educational and recreational facilities in society contributes to the child's emotional and social neglect (Okeahialam 1984: 71–72). A study on child labour and its consequences on the Nigerian economy using 500 respondents revealed that 52 per cent of children are abused in Calabar city (Azi & Saluhu 2016: 26). Therefore, this figure is worrisome and alarming and dents the hospitable image Calabar has been exporting to the world.

Religion (the belief in God) and other religious beliefs is one of Calabar's salient values. It is inarguably that pre-colonial Africa was religiously inclined. Almost every aspect of the African way of life was supernaturally interpreted. The belief that the ancestors played prominent roles in maintaining morality in the community hardly dies, even today (Igboin 2011: 96). However, it is relatively accurate that colonialism altered the Africans' belief and values significantly, just as its structure was almost completely eroded (Igboin 2011: 96). Most religious beliefs and values that trampled or still trample on children's rights existed and still exist. Topmost on the ladder is the belief in witchcraft, which has characterised this area.

The belief in witches' existence and powers has a long and diverse history and are found across a vast range of cultures and traditions. Such beliefs have commonly – although by no means always – resulted in persecution, social rejection, discrimination and violence towards those who are believed to be or who identify themselves as witches (Secker 2012: 22). Secker's research highlighted that accusations of witchcraft usually target already vulnerable groups, such as women, children and the elderly, and have been documented in a large number of countries around the world, including Papua New Guinea, Nigeria, India, Ghana, Uganda, and Tanzania (Secker 2012: 22–23). This practise is common in Africa and has yet received a corresponding reaction to quell this avenue of child abuses from the last assertion. Secker further elaborated that “over the past decade, children have been increasingly falling victim to allegations of witchcraft and suffering significant violations of their rights as a result” (Schnoebelen in Secker 2012: 23). Religious beliefs play a major role in increasing witchcraft accusations against children. Children are primarily accused of witchcraft by either their immediate families or clergy. The key rights affected are the right to be free from violence, abuse and neglect, the right to life, the right to be free from torture, the right to non-discrimination, the right to respect for the views of the child, the rights to food and shelter, and the right to education, although other

rights, including the right to health, the rights to play and to cultural life, the right to family life and the right to protection against trafficking are also affected (Battarbee, Foxcroft & Secker in Secker 2012: 26). The possibility of not having children in, on or of the streets in most urban areas of Nigeria seemingly is impossible because as years, decades and centuries pass by, new and emerging conditionings aside unchecked birth rates/procreation and unaffordable housing/urban slums may emerge (like in the case of witchcraft labelling by some churches) (Uduigwomen 2019: 124). From the analysis above, this form of child abuse is worrisome and rather prevalent, and an end seems to be a noble dream. This no doubt has hampered the implementation of the Child's Rights Act. It is important to note that Calabar city dwellers know of personalities and churches that label children as witches. Moreover, this has resulted in an increasing number of street children in Calabar.

Human trafficking, which is the recent common form of child abuse globally, is not left out as one of the ills faced in this city. Recall earlier that child pawning had existed in Calabar during pre-colonial times. This act also necessitated child abuse and human trafficking. As Uduigwomen (2019) highlighted cases of children on the streets in other areas of Nigeria who were trafficked to places like Lagos and Onitsha, human trafficking is the use of deceit and coercion to recruit and transfer persons either internally within the domestic borders of a country or externally across international borders for exploitation. Trafficking in women and children is the illegal trade of human beings for transfer, commercial sexual exploitation forced labour, and it is known as a modern-day form of slavery. Trafficking violates all known standards of human rights and dignity of human. It violates the right to health, right to liberty, equality, and security (Ukwayi et al. 2019: 1). Traffickers target the less privileged and vulnerable people with promises of higher incomes to improve economic situations, support parents and families in villages women and children are the key target group because of their marginalisation in many societies. The United Nations Children Emergency Fund (1998) reported that more than 4000 children were trafficked from Cross River and Akwa Ibom States to other parts of the nation and been trafficked across the border to other nations. States such as Cross River and Edo rank among the main providers of external trafficking in persons to Italy, Spain, Gabon, Benin Republic and Cameroon (Ukwayi et al. 2019: 3). The above illustrates the gravity of child trafficking, and this goes to show that although politicians and lawmakers make tentative efforts, they fail time and time again. When it comes to children, they advise and reflect, but who would naively ask a child for their opinion or approval? What could they have to say? (Korczak 2017: 9) These children have a future, but they also have a past: unforgettable events, memories, many hours if essential solitary reflection (Korczak 2017: 30). If we continue to accept child abuse instead of abhorring it, then the future of protecting the child in Calabar and indeed Cross River state is uncertain. The fact that issues concerning children are handled with no seriousness in Nigeria confirms earlier claims that Nigeria legislates unique laws but do not practice them the way they are grafted.

CONCLUSION

To conclude, there is a general saying that “children are the future” of any nation. Nevertheless, how do we handle our “future” at present? From this paper, it was highlighted that children have not generally fared well in Nigeria. Although most children are privileged to be brought up properly, the fact remains that Nigeria, as a developing nation associated with a high poverty index, makes incidences of child abuses seemingly inevitable. This study has brought to the limelight that in Calabar, socio-cultural values and belief systems have aided child rights violations right from the pre-colonial era. Although Calabar eventually became a beautiful cosmopolitan area, child rights violation continually dents her image. To this extent, government and society have to ensure that children are given every care, help, protection, training, and education they may need to grow into valuable citizens and members of society. For child welfare to be effective, a combined effort of dedicated social workers, innovative social security system, implementable policymaking, strong advocacy for children, and family and community partnerships is required. A child’s right tied with the government’s responsibility, family, school, and others will advance Nigeria’s status on the international scene. Child’s rights should be part of the curriculum from the primary section to know their rights while tender. Children possess seriousness, sagacity and stability, unwavering commitment, expertise in their area, a wealth of fair judgements and assessments, tactful restraint in their demands, sensitive intuition, and an unfailing sense of right and wrong (Korczak 2017: 46). Children demand uniformity of virtues and moments – a universal respect for children’s rights.

Let us strike a balance, let us estimate how much of the general budget belongs to children, what share falls to them, but not as a favour, not as charity. Let us thoroughly examine how much we set aside for the use of children’s race, the nation of the immature, the class of the serfs. How much is their inheritance, how should it be divided, have we dishonest caregivers not deprived them of it, expropriated it? (Korczak 2017: 28) Therefore, things must be done right in Calabar to live up to its acronym of C – Come A – And L – Live A – And B – Be A – At R – Rest. Children need rest while growing up in Calabar. Their rights should be implemented and abusers prosecuted.

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NAVIGATING THE CUMULATIVE EFFECTS OF FAMILY LANGUAGE POLICY DURING CHILDHOOD FOR IMMIGRANT YOUTH IN CANADA

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ABSTRACT: One of the most influential decisions that immigrant parents must make for their children involves establishing a set of rules and norms governing what language(s) they will be raised with and how they will acquire proficiency in the dominant languages of the host society, a process known as family language policy. Such decisions can have long lasting effects for immigrant children into adulthood by influencing their integration into the host society and transition towards adult life. Using retrospective, in-depth interview data collected from young immigrant adults, this study explores the ways that parental decisions made throughout an immigrant child's life course regarding language use and learning shape their multilingual identity and attitude towards the use of multiple languages in their everyday adult life. Findings suggest that the linguistic decisions parents make in the early years of an immigrant youths' life have lasting impacts on them in terms of connecting to family members and culture in adulthood. We found that when parents created either a flexible or strict family language policy, such policies produced more positive experiences in the migration and early settlement process for immigrant youth compared to those whose parents did not form a family language policy. **KEYWORDS:** Family language policy, Migration, Language shift, Parent-child relations, Childhood inequality, Language maintenance

INTRODUCTION

Immigration, family language policy, and social factors impacting language maintenance goals

As immigrant children and their families adjust to post-migration life, they must make quick decisions regarding their children's future in order to propel them towards upward social mobility. Such decisions can have long lasting effects for immigrant children into adulthood by influencing their integration into the host society and transition towards adult life. Operating at the family-level, one of the most influential decisions that immigrant parents must make involves establishing a set of rules and norms governing what language(s) their children will be raised with and how they will acquire proficiency in the dominant languages of the host society, a process known as family language policy (Canagarajah 2008; Curdt-Christiansen 2009; Schwartz 2010; King and Fogle 2013). The assimilative pressures associated with the immigration process are one of the main reasons why immigrant families opt to create a family language policy (Fishman 1965).

Underlying the development of family language policies are parental beliefs about language which are formed through interactions with different social structures, institutions (i.e. social, political, and economic), dominant language ideologies (Canagarajah 2008; Curdt-Christiansen 2009; King & Fogle 2013) as well as the parents' past childhood experiences being raised in a completely different social context than that of their immigrant children (Bodvarsson & Van den Berg 2010). Also influencing parental decisions about language use and maintenance goals are agentic power dynamics between immigrant parents and their children. Here, such dynamics can cause families to either change or modify language policies to meet the needs of the family unit. In this case, family language policies are viewed by family members as fluid rules that can shift overtime as parents and children adapt to wide-ranging societal and linguistic norms encountered in their everyday lives (Gafaranga 2010; Schwartz 2010). From a cultural development standpoint, the early decisions that parents make regarding the development of family language policies largely determine if heritage languages are transmitted from generation to generation or whether a shift in language(s) will take place (Fishman 1991).

Despite their best efforts, the demands of the migration process do not always represent an easy path forward for immigrant parents when it comes to developing policies for the use and maintenance of languages within the family unit (Bacallao & Smokowski 2007; Kim, Conway-Turner, Sherif-Trask, & Woolfolk 2006). In some cases, the planning and development of family language policies within immigrant families hinges on whether the increased demands of economic and social survival in the host society will take greater priority over language maintenance goals. When economic survival becomes part of the family language planning process, immigrant parents often find themselves in the difficult position of shifting their parenting strategies to adapt to their new lives and social roles in the host society (Bacallao & Smokowski 2007; Kim, Conway-Turner, Sherif-Trask, & Woolfolk 2006).

Studies have shown that shifts in parenting can have a direct and cumulative impact

on the relationship and attachment that immigrant children form with their mother tongue(s) (Fishman 2001). For example, as less parental guidance and time is devoted to maintaining linguistic customs from the country of origin, immigrant families are more likely to experience a linguistic shift to the majority language of the host society. As such, the parental role in transmitting linguistic skill sets to children is positively associated with the transmission of inequality across generations as diverse multilingual repertoires become replaced by a shift towards monolingualism (Stevens & Ishizawa 2007; Nesteruk 2010). Parental decisions to reduce the use of heritage language(s) post-migration is often strongly related to the needs of social acceptance of the family in the new society and economic survival of being disadvantaged prior to migration (Canagarajah 2008).

Language shift shaped through linked lives and generational forces

Although the terms “immigrant” and “migrant” are often thought of as statuses describing an individual, research on the immigration process shows that it is an important life course event linking individuals over multiple generations (see Glick 2010; Jasso 2003; Elder 1994). For instance, when young children migrate with their parents, the distinctive parental roles that mothers and fathers perform during the migration process greatly impacts the child during the migration and resettlement process. Both Elder (1994) and Hagan, MacMillan, and Wheaton, (1996) identify that strong parental support during and after the migration process is positively associated with successful adaptation to the new host society for immigrant children. Conversely, when fathers exhibit indifferent or unsupportive parenting styles during and after the migration process, children are far more likely to have difficulty coping in their new surroundings (Hagan, MacMillan, & Wheaton 1996).

Evidence overwhelmingly suggests that mothers play an integral role in fulfilling the family’s language maintenance goals by not only reinforcing language use through family interactions, but also by supporting the linguistic development of their children both inside and outside the home (Nesteruk 2010; Tannenbaum 2003). The primary motivation behind this role is often fueled by maternal beliefs that the maintenance of the family’s mother tongue(s) will aid in intergenerational communication with extended kin and provide their children with an added linguistic skill for increased academic and economic success. For many immigrant mothers, they see their role in the process of family language policy and planning as being that of a gatekeeper who provides a bridge for the family between their pre- and post-migration linguistic selves (Kwon 2017).

Childhood inequality and cumulative processes of dis/advantage strongly influence an individual’s life-trajectory and later life socioeconomic position (Calasanti & Slevin 2001). Theories of cumulative inequality explain that “childhood conditions are important for explaining adult functioning and well-being” (Ferraro & Shippee 2009: 335) and that the decisions made by parents for their children in these early developmental years accumulate over the life course and can impact the child into adulthood (Dannefer 2003; Elder, Johnson, & Crosnoe 2003; Garbarski 2014). As argued by

Willson, Shuey and Elder (2007), individuals with high levels of cumulative inequality can compensate for “early disadvantage [which] can shift individuals onto different trajectories, as studies of resilience in the face of disadvantage have shown” (p. 1913). The pathway to doing so, however, is often challenging and difficult.

In terms of family language policy and planning in childhood, decisions made regarding the process of learning languages can impact the quality of life the family has in the new host society. For example, Hurtado and Vega (2004) find that when immigrant children migrate to a society with a different language than that of their mother tongue, higher levels of competence in the new host society language is associated with increased social acceptance by their school peers. Additionally, evidence suggests that families with low linguistic competence of the dominant language of the host society face several issues regarding access to proper medical services, health insurance, and doctor visits which can impact the health and development of children during the critical early developmental stages (Yu, Huang, & Schwalberg 2006). Canagarajah (2008) finds that for “previously disadvantaged groups, the new life in the West and the possibilities of acquiring English freely in both everyday life and in formal settings [serve] as a source of empowerment” (p. 159). Consequently, these studies demonstrate that the lived experiences of immigrant families prior to immigration has a strong influence over the structure of the family language policy post-migration.

Role of education in transforming language policies and priorities

Not only do economic factors both pre- and post- migration influence the way that immigrant families make decisions about the structure of their family language policies, but the contact that immigrant children make with languages at school can have a direct impact on transforming and shifting the priorities of such policies. For example, as young immigrant children become immersed in new social environments through education, they are more likely to acquire the dominant language(s) and cultural norms of the host society much quicker than their parents (Canagarajah 2008). Research shows that increased contact between immigrant children and the dominant language(s) of the host society (i.e. schooling and new peer groups) often results in children choosing to distance themselves from or reject established family language policies and practices (Kwon 2017). In some cases, immigrant children experience a significant amount of pressure through schooling and peer relationships to assimilate to the linguistic and cultural norms of their classrooms. Here, knowledge of the dominant language(s) of the host society increases the child’s chance of social survival as they form new social relationships (i.e. student-teacher; peer groups) and encounter contrasting ideas about language (Zhang & Slaughter-Defoe 2009).

Over time, it is very common for immigrant children to develop the belief that knowledge of a minority language is of little value for their future success in the host society. Interestingly, this belief runs counter to established research findings (see Brown 2009; Lee 2002; Shin 2005; You 2005) which indicate that maintaining an immigrant child’s mother tongue is crucial for promoting “academic achievement, ethnic identity, and integration into wider society” (Kwon 2017: 496). Often against

their parents' best efforts at supporting language maintenance goals, these children are more likely to self-initiate the process of language shift as an adaptation strategy (Kang 2010; You 2005), a practice which is particularly prevalent among immigrant students from minority language backgrounds and those who experience different forms of linguistic discrimination at school (Park 2017; Tse 2001). As such, school experiences contribute to generational differences between the linguistic abilities and cultural sensibilities of parents and children (Tuominen 1999).

In a study of immigrant children living in multilingual households, Luykx (2005) finds that children possess a strong sense of agency in the family unit by assisting parents in the socialization process. Here, children serve as language brokers and communication facilitators imparting their school-based knowledge of basic vocabulary and societal norms to their parents. Corsaro (2018), as cited in Odrowąż-Coates (2019), finds that being in such a position can bolster a migrant child's confidence in their linguistic abilities by shifting the balance of power from their parents to themselves as the primary communication facilitator. In fact, although parents often create family language policies aimed at the transmission and usage of certain languages for their children, such policies are heavily influenced by the children themselves through their increased daily contact with the language and culture of the host society (Luykx 2005).

It is important to note, however, that despite their influence in the language policy making process at the family-level, there are relatively few studies which are solely dedicated to exploring the role that immigrant children play in forming, maintaining, and changing family language policies. The gap in knowledge comes despite it being known among language and migration researchers that children do in fact play an active role in developing, shifting, and maintaining family language policies through their interactions both inside and outside the home (Canagarajah 2008; Fishman 2001; Luykx 2005; Corsaro 2018 as cited in Odrowąż-Coates 2019). In fact, research demonstrates that when immigrant parents acknowledge and support their children's active participation in the family language policy making process (i.e. desires for acquisition, maintenance and use of multiple languages during their childhood), these youth are less likely to drop out of school than children raised in monolingual families and have lower levels of emotional and behavioural problems (Feliciano 2001; Han & Huang 2010).

Creating family language policies among Canadian immigrant families within the context of officially bilingual Canada

In recent years, Canada has transformed itself into a vibrant multilingual and multicultural mosaic through increased transnational migration. Today, 2.2 million Canadian children, totaling 37.5% of the population, come from an immigrant background with over half tracing their heritage back to Asia. Based on current immigration rates, by the year 2036, this number will rise to 39%-49% of the population (Statistics Canada 2017).

Recent migration research in Canada reveals that despite increases in linguistic diversity within Canadian society, Canadian immigrant youth from minority lan-

guage backgrounds often face widespread discrimination when it comes to the use of non-official language knowledge in Canadian schools. As they shift between home and school worlds, these youth often encounter conflicting sets of beliefs about language between the policies established at home by their parents and the dominant norms and expectations concerning acceptable language use and learning established in Canadian schools. As a result, many find themselves in the difficult decision of having to leave their rich linguistic knowledge at the classroom door to compensate for the linguistically segregated nature of their education where little value is placed on knowledge of multiple languages. The conflicting nature of their language experiences post-migration can have long lasting negative effects on how these youth see themselves as multilingual Canadians and their attitudes towards the use of multiple languages in the transition to adulthood (Mady 2012; Cummins 2014).

Despite the linguistically segregated nature of Canadian classrooms, research has shown that when parents promote the utilization of multiple linguistic competencies among their children, it can have several positive outcomes for immigrant children in later life especially when navigating linguistic norms between home and school worlds. For instance, when immigrant parents support their children's language acquisition, maintenance, and use of multiple languages during their childhood, these children are less likely to drop out of school than children raised in monolingual families and have lower levels of emotional and behavioural problems. As such, family language policies which focus on cultivating both mother tongue languages and the dominant languages in the host society, positively assist immigrant youth with their transition from childhood to adulthood (Feliciano 2001; Han & Huang 2010).

OBJECTIVES AND PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

Although research has been conducted on the cumulative effects of family language policies and planning on the linguistic and identity development of immigrant youth, studies examining early childhood experiences of immigrant youth are limited in their scope by focusing largely on immigrant youth from the same ethnic group, country or socioeconomic background. As a result, a significant gap exists in our knowledge of the sociocultural environments that immigrant youth grow up in and the role that families and parents play in shaping the migration process and experiences of their children (Glick, Walker, & Luz 2013). Similarly, there are few studies that show the role that children play in forming, negotiating, or modifying the family language policy despite strong evidence that children play an important role in this process.

Accounting for the role that families and parents play in the migration process, our study contributes to the conversation by examining the cumulative impacts of parental decisions regarding language use and learning on the development of Canadian immigrant children's linguistic identities and attitudes towards the use of multiple languages throughout their life courses. Additionally, our study pushes the conversation forward by accounting for the role that children play in the family language policy making process. To explore this issue, we framed our investigation around the following research question: In what ways do parental decisions made throughout an

immigrant child's life course regarding language use and learning shape their multilingual identity and attitude towards the use of multiple languages in their everyday adult life?

STUDY DESIGN

Examining the migration process from the life course perspective

The life course perspective was used to frame the analysis of this study. According to Elder, Johnson, and Crosnoe (2003), the perspective "guides research on human lives within context" (p. 10) by accounting for change in life course patterns while considering historical time and sociocultural context (Mayer 2009). The guiding principles of the life course perspective, as outlined by Elder (1994), are strongly embedded in the study of migration and assist data analysis by focusing on how transitions, relationships, and socio-historical processes shape an individual's life trajectory (Hutchinson 2007). There are five principles that give rise to the life course perspective which are: 1) the principle of life span, 2) the principle of agency, 3) the principle of time and space, 4) the principle of timing, and 5) the principle of linked lives.

Of utmost importance to the framing of our investigation are the principles of time and space and linked lives. By applying the principle of time and space to our study, it aids our understanding of the familial context shaping the migration process and provides important contextual background regarding the conditions that immigrant youth grew up in pre-migration and were raised with post-migration. Framing our analysis with a focus on context also helps to identify differences in the experiences for immigrant children who are being raised in different historical and cultural environments compared to that of their parents. The life course principle of linked lives provides context for understanding how developmental and life trajectories are shaped bidirectionally by both parents and children. An important aspect of studying linked lives is through the examination of the social convoys which highlight the "historical, cultural, and structural risks, resources, and constraints shaping life chances and life quality. Social convoys are a key part of the contexts in which individuals' beliefs, behaviors, and strategic adaptations play out" (Moen & Hernandez 2009: 266). For immigrant youth, their lives are typically shaped through contact with parental and extended family bonds that can be either geographically close or distant to the individual. Accordingly, by exploring the principle of linked lives through the role that parents play in shaping the linguistic repertoires of immigrant youth, this study provides a more comprehensive understanding of how the migration process impacts the life trajectories of immigrant youth overtime.

Participants

Our study involved the analysis of in-depth interview data from 13 participants. Prior to recruiting participants to take part in the study, ethical approval was obtained through the Non-Medical Research Ethics Board at a research-intensive university in South Western Ontario, Canada. Participants were recruited using a combination

of mass-recruitment student emails, recruitment posters placed in high traffic areas within university departments and libraries, email recruitment through student cultural clubs on campus, and email and poster recruitment through university departments and faculties. To participate in the study, participants had to be: 1) 18 years of age or older; 2) born abroad and immigrated to Canada as a child, adolescent or young teen; 3) previously enrolled in a French second language program for a minimum of three years (i.e. Core French; French Immersion, etc.); and 4) currently have knowledge of one or more of Canada's two official languages (English and French) and one or more non-official languages. In total, 13 participants were recruited and gave their written informed consent to take part in the research all of which identified as female.

Table 1. Interview participant demographics

| Participant demographics | | |
|---|----------|----------|
| | N | % |
| Age at immigration to Canada | | |
| 0-4 | 4 | 30.80 |
| 5-7 | 6 | 46.15 |
| 8-9 | 1 | 7.70 |
| 10+ | 2 | 15.38 |
| Immigrant status on entry to Canada | | |
| Economic immigrant | 10 | 76.92 |
| Refugee | 3 | 23.07 |
| Country of origin | | |
| China | 5 | 38.46 |
| Taiwan | 1 | 7.70 |
| Pakistan | 1 | 7.70 |
| Colombia | 3 | 23.07 |
| Korea | 2 | 15.38 |
| Singapore | 1 | 7.70 |
| Number of languages known before migration | | |
| 1 | 4 | 30.74 |
| 2 | 6 | 46.15 |
| 3+ | 3 | 23.07 |
| Language plan pre migration | | |
| Yes | 8 | 61.50 |
| No | 5 | 38.50 |
| Maintained mother tongue in Canada | | |
| Yes | 10 | 76.90 |
| No | 3 | 23.10 |
| Family language policy | | |
| Flexible policy | 6 | 46.20 |
| Strict adherence policy | 4 | 30.80 |
| No established policy | 3 | 23.10 |

Table 1 shows demographic characteristics for the participants who took part in our research study. The 13 participants ranged in age from 18-30 years old and immi-

grated to Canada between the years of 1998-2010. At the time of their immigration to Canada, the participants ranged in age from 2-12 years old. Their countries of origin included China, Taiwan, Pakistan, Colombia, Korea, and Singapore. Three of the participants immigrated to Canada with their families as refugees and ten immigrated within their parents for economic/work related opportunities. Upon arrival to Canada, many of the participants settled with their families in the province of Ontario with only two participants settling in the provinces of Québec and British Columbia respectively before making Ontario their permanent home. Among all of the participants, three were multilingual before immigrating to Canada (i.e. knowledge of three or more languages), six were bilingual (i.e. knowledge of two languages) at the time of their immigration and became multilingual while growing up in Canada, and four were raised monolingual (i.e. knowledge of one language) but became multilingual while growing up in Canada.

Methods of data collection

Data were collected in two phases beginning with an initial in-depth interview followed by a subsequent follow-up in-depth interview. The approach taken to conduct both interviews followed the narrative interviewing method. As a data collection method, narrative interviews involve collecting stories about an individual's life experiences which are then used to understand the phenomenon under study (Ayres 2008; Kartch 2017). Due to their open-ended nature, narrative interviews are "the least structured type of interview and tak[e] a different type of pre-interview planning" (Kartch 2017: 1074). Here, the "researcher is not looking for answers to questions; rather, he or she is looking for the participant's story" (Kartch 2017: 1074). Narrative interviewing "[r]epresents a shift in the way roles are conceptualized: from interviewer-interviewee into narrator-listener" (Kartch 2017: 1074). Throughout the interview, the researcher acts in the role of "facilitator" (Kartch 2017: 1074) whose job is to provide a space for participants to explore the underlying meanings which define their personal narratives (Kartch 2017).

Since the interview was conducted using the narrative interviewing method, as the participants were sharing their story, improvised follow-up questions were asked for clarification purposes or to extend conversations on topics of interest which arose throughout the course of the interview. Each initial interview lasted between an hour and an hour and a half in length and was audio-recorded. It was important to the researchers to take a participant-centered approach when collecting the data by including a follow-up interview. The follow-up interview not only served as a way to incorporate another layer of participant voice into the interpretation process, but it was also important for reducing the potential for researcher bias by grounding the analysis/interpretation in the participants' voices, knowledge(s), and life experiences. As was the case with the initial narrative interview, each follow-up narrative interview lasted between an hour and an hour and a half in length and was audio-recorded.

Methods of data analysis

Data analysis took part in four phases and all data were organized and analyzed using the mixed-methods data analysis software MAXQDA. Phase one of the analysis involved using MAXQDA's coding tools to complete a lexical search of both the initial and follow-up interview transcripts for each participant. The lexical search included words related to family members such as: family, mom or mother, dad or father, parent or parents, brother, sister, sibling(s), cousin(s), aunt(s), uncle(s), grandma, grandpa, or grandparents. Once the data were coded using the lexical search function, the memo function was then used to record analytical summaries about the memories which the participants attached to certain family members. The process involved creating a series of memo notes while reviewing the moments in each participant's set of interview transcripts when they mentioned a family member or a particular family interaction of significance to the investigation.

Once all the notes were recorded in MAXQDA for each participant's set of transcripts, they were then compiled together in a separate document in MAXQDA and used to create a series of family case summaries. According to Knafl and Ayres (1996), family case summaries "enable the investigators to reduce a large qualitative data set in a way that preserves the family focus of the research" (p. 350). In the case of our investigation, utilizing this technique provided the contextual background necessary to develop the thematic codes for further in depth analysis that maintained both the viewpoint of the interviewee while accounting for the familial context of their migration journey and integration into Canadian society.

The family case summaries were created individually for each participant based on the analytical notes for their interview responses and later cross-compared to look for similarities and differences in how each participant talked about their family in relation to their language and adaptation experiences. The notes used to create the family case summaries were organized under the following subheadings in order to create a family narrative from the perspective of the interviewee: 1) pre-migration experiences, 2) family efforts to prepare for migration, 3) early experiences in Canada, 4) cultural continuity learning mother tongue, 5) school experiences, 6) role as a translator for parents in Canada, 7) mother's influence, 8) father's influence, and 9) extended family influences.

After the case summaries had been created for each participant, they were then coded to examine how each interviewee felt during the moments where they mentioned different family members. These memories were coded with a simple experience scale of positive, indifferent, and negative to rate the emotions attached to the different life experiences each participant chose to reflect on during their individual interviews. Coded segments which were rated positive often mentioned feelings of being supported, happy, or proud. By contrast, those coded segments which were rated negative, included feelings of sadness, loneliness, and confusion. Lastly, coded segments rated as indifferent referred to memories that were shared which did not have a clear indication of how the participant felt at the time or what emotions they attached to a childhood experience.

FINDINGS AND RESULTS

Importance of Incorporating a Family Language Policy into the Migration Process

The analysis of the data produced several results which were both consistent with the literature and pushed the conversation forward in new directions. Of noteworthy mention is differences which were observed between the experiences of those immigrant youth whose families had a flexible or strict family language policy pre- and post-migration and those who had no established family language policy. As seen in Table 2, when comparing the experiences of those participants who did not have an established family language policy and those who had a flexible or strict family language policy prior to migration, a significant difference was noted in reporting negative memories pre- and early post- migration to Canada (31.6% and 14.3% respectively). When analyzing our data, we discovered that 66% of the coded family case studies associated negative emotions with their migration experience when no established family language policy was present during and after migration. Similarly, if participants did not have a family language policy guiding the migration process both pre- and post- migration, they were also more likely than their peers to mention lasting negative cumulative effects impacting their transition to adulthood (i.e. difficulty relating to their immediate family members and to their heritage).

To illustrate the negative cumulative effects of having no established family language policy, one can look at the narrative of Eliza, a participant in our study who immigrated to Canada from her native China when she was seven years old. Throughout both of her narrative interviews, Eliza felt that her transition to Canadian society was rendered more difficult because there was no strategy put in place for learning either of Canada's two official languages prior to migration and no structured plan developed for maintaining her heritage language of Mandarin. Growing up as an immigrant youth in Canada, Eliza's parents did not force her to learn Chinese culture because they thought Western society was better from both a cultural and financial perspective. Eliza's story reflects the literature because when combined with the migration process, language often plays a complicated role in terms of relationships among immigrant families. Here, language has the ability to both "bin[d] and divid[e] family members" (Bammer 1994:100) because "not only do parents and children often end up with different native languages, their different relationships to these languages can have notable social consequences" (Bammer 1994:100). In Eliza's case, the parental decision not to provide language support to maintain her mother tongue had lasting cumulative effects by diminishing her ability to communicate in her native language and preventing her from fully connecting with her parents from a linguistic and cultural standpoint.

In addition to the frustration that Eliza experienced from not being able to connect with her native language and culture, she also believes that the lack of language support she received from her parents while adapting to life in Canada left her floundering to survive in a new linguistic and social environment. While reflecting on her migration experience, she described her mother's support for language learning as that of the 'sink or swim' model which left her feeling abandoned:

I remember my mom buying a dictionary from the bookstore for me to kind of like be like oh yeah you've got a dictionary, you're good. It'll be fine. I was like ah no I don't want like...I was quite hesitant because I was like what I am going to do. I don't have any French background. There is no one in my family that speaks French. I just felt like I was going to suffer because I had zero supports at home. I spoke English, but like my parents barely even speak that so I just thought it was like a trap for me. Um, and then I went in and surely enough the first day I had no idea what was happening.

Table 2. Percentage of the case summaries coded in relation to the interviewee' pre and post migration experiences by family language policy

| <i>Percentage distribution</i> | | | | |
|--|-------------------------------|------------------|-----------------|------------------|
| | FAMILY LANGUAGE POLICY | | | Total |
| | Flexible | Strict | None | |
| <i>Experiences pre-migration</i> | | | | |
| Positive | 10.5 | 14.3 | 0.0 | 7.9 |
| Negative | 10.5 | 0.0 | 25.0 | 13.2 |
| <i>Migration preparation</i> | | | | |
| Positive | 10.5 | 28.6 | 8.3 | 13.2 |
| Negative | 5.3 | 0.0 | 8.3 | 5.3 |
| <i>Early experiences in Canada</i> | | | | |
| Positive | 10.5 | 28.6 | 8.3 | 13.2 |
| Negative | 15.8 | 14.3 | 33.3 | 21.1 |
| <i>School experiences</i> | | | | |
| Positive | 10.5 | 14.3 | 0.0 | 7.9 |
| Negative | 26.3 | 0.0 | 16.7 | 18.4 |
| Total | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% |
| <i>(N) *number of coded family case summaries</i> | 6 (46.2%) | 3 (23.1%) | 4(30.8)% | 13 (100%) |

For Eliza, and other participants in our study who did not have an established family language policy pre- and post-migration, they found the lack of linguistic support or strategies provided by their parents to be detrimental to their transition into the new society. Table 2 illustrates that for those who did not have an established family language policy, there were not any family case studies that were coded for positive experiences pre-migration. This finding is compared to 10.5% of coded family case summa-

ries which were coded for positive experiences for those participants who had a strict or flexible language policy and successfully transitioned to life in Canada. When the participants discussed their early memories in Canada, those without an established family language policy were also nearly twice as likely than their contemporaries to report negative experiences in their early life growing up in Canada (33.3%, 15.8%, and 14.3% of the coded family case studies respectively).

In contrast to those participants who did not have an established family language policy guiding the migration process, those participants whose parents employed a strict or flexible family language policy pre- and post-migration were more likely to report having a smoother transition to life in Canada. The data from Table 2 show that the family case summaries for participants with a strict family language policy were five times more likely to be coded for positive experiences in their early experiences in Canada and school experiences compared to those family case summaries for participants with no established language policy (42.9 % and 8.3 % respectively). Amy's case is illustrative of the contrast which was noted in the experiences of those immigrant youth who were raised with an established family language policy in place and those who had no established family language policy. While recounting her migration history, Amy, a participant in our study who immigrated when she was ten from her native Colombia explained that prior to immigrating to Canada at nine years old her grandmother took her to the local library where she took out books on Canada. As she explained, this experience was positive for her in terms of transitioning to the host society:

When I turned nine, umm we were in the...in the thinking of coming to Canada. When that occurred, I remember I was living with my grandma and I remember umm signing up for the library card and just taking out all the Canadian books. All of them. I was like they're all mine. I have to learn everything about Canada.

In her interview, Amy explained that in addition to the pre-migration linguistic support provided by her family, her mother's flexible approach to family language planning upon arrival to Canada helped her to maintain a strong sense of being a native Colombian while also learning what it means to be and become a Canadian. She described her home life as being a place where her knowledge of Spanish, English, and French were all valued and where she could truly be her authentic multilingual self:

The nice thing about at home was because my Mom did create a like a...a...judgment free zone—where like I could...at home I could just pretty much...if I wanted to build a fort, I'll build a fort.

The freedom to express herself in all capacities of her life was beneficial for Amy in terms of building strong bonds with her family members and helped her to foster a strong desire to experiment and learn different languages while transitioning to life in Canada. The sense of linguistic freedom and parental support for family language planning that Amy expressed in her interview shared many parallels with another participant in our study who grew up in Columbia and immigrated when she was two years old to Canada. For Lucia, the fact that her parents encouraged her to maintain

her heritage language and gain proficiency in both of Canada's two official languages offered her a sense of pride of being a multilingual Canadian:

I guess that I could speak three languages was pretty cool...I know like when I would go to Colombia, like my [extended] family would be like wow! You can speak three languages.

For both Amy and Lucia, the strong linguistic support provided to them by their families both pre- and post-migration helped to foster a sense of pride in having a strong linguistic toolkit to draw on both as a child and in adulthood.

By comparing Amy and Lucia's stories to the other sets of coded family case summary data, we observed that the establishment of a family language policy plays a vital role in the successful transition of immigrant youth post-migration. As we learned from listening to our participants, when immigrant parents integrate a flexible or strict family language policy into the migration process, their children are better able to adapt to the increased linguistic demands of the migration process, to connect to their heritage language and culture, and are far less likely to experience lasting negative cumulative effects. Our results indicate that the creation and enactment of such policies aids in promoting a more positive migration experience for immigrant youth by providing them with the necessary linguistic and cultural support to successfully adapt to life in the host society. These results are consistent with established findings in the field of language and migration research which argue that when immigrant families implement a family language policy as part of their migration experience, their children have better educational and developmental outcomes than those immigrant children raised without a family language policy. Additionally, those immigrant youth who have a family language policy guiding their migration experience are also better able to maintain their heritage language into adulthood (King, Fogle, & Logan-Terry 2008).

Importance of Adapting Family Language Policies to the Evolving Needs of Immigrant Youth

Surprisingly, and in stark contrast to those participants in our study who experienced positive support from their family's established language plans both pre- and post-migration, some participants whose parents created strict or flexible family language policies struggled in their transition to Canadian life. For example, although these participants had a strict or flexible family language policy guiding their migration experience, their parents did not seek input from the children themselves in the planning of the policy. As a result, the design of such policies failed to provide support for these youth to help bridge the gap between home and school worlds. One participant, Maya, who immigrated from Pakistan when she was seven years old, remembered her early days in Canada as those in which she wanted to only be a Canadian and remove herself from any association to Pakistani culture. She explained that she chose to adopt this policy as a coping mechanism to be better accepted by her peers. Since the language policy put in place by her parents did not incorporate any supports to help

her with her with the daily challenge of striking a balance between the maintenance of her heritage language and culture and being accepted as ‘Canadian’, she felt that crafting her own personal policy helped her to adapt to the evolving situation of being an immigrant youth growing up in Canada:

I remember when like after...before it was just you know like when my family was watching that show I...I would not watch it, I wouldn't participate...I just felt like I remember at that time like some people would be like oh yeah I listen to like Punjabi music or this—and I...and I would like very proudly say oh I've never listened to it in my life— like you know it was a sense of pride to say oh I've never done that. Oh, I've never listened to that music like I've never watched that movie, I've never done this. So, it was always like a sense of...and I actually stopped doing those things even though I quite liked them. Like I refused to watch dramas, I refused to listen to music— I refused to do anything that was related to that part of me.

For Maya, it was very important for her to be seen by her peers at school as a Canadian in order to avoid being considered an outsider. Growing up, Maya's siblings all had peers who were South East Asian in their classes, however, for Maya, there was not a single student in her classes who shared a similar background to her. As a result, she chose to pull away from the cultural activities that were associated with her Pakistani heritage that her family was partaking in so that she would be seen among her peers as a true Canadian. In doing so, Maya resisted the family's language policy and refashioned it to better meet her immediate linguistic and cultural needs as an immigrant youth adapting to life in Canadian society.

Having listened to Maya's story and those of the other participants who expressed struggles with having a strict or flexible language policy, it is evident that incorporating the experiences of immigrant youth into the design of family language policies is just as important as having an established policy in the first place. Nevertheless, to be the most effective, such policies must be adaptable to the evolving linguistic and cultural challenges experienced by these youth as they move between home and school worlds. In doing so, such policies have the potential to act as an agentive tool for immigrant children by providing them with the linguistic and cultural support to successfully transition to the host society. Our findings are confirmed by the established literature which sees that through language learning, immigrant children are equally embedded in the process of creating a new sense of self (Canagarajah 2008; Espín 2006; Fishman 2001). As we found through analysis of our data, by acknowledging and incorporating the process of self-transformation within family language policy planning decisions, immigrant parents can better support the evolving needs of their children as they transition to life in the host society.

Language Brokering and Feelings of Resentment Among Immigrant Youth

In addition to discovering that having an adaptable family language policy aids in the migration process, we found that language brokering represents a significant source of

frustration for many immigrant youths. For many of the participants in our study, the frustration came from the fact that these youth were children at the time of serving in the role of language translator, and just like their parents, were still learning the languages of the host society. Studies show that immigrant youth often find themselves in the role of language broker because they have more opportunities through schooling and peer groups to learn languages compared to adults (Ewart & Straw 2001). By thrusting children into this role, “The power of children is increased because they become ‘cultural brokers’, whereas the power of parents is decreased because they depend on their children’s assistance to survive in the new world” (Espín 2006: 248). Recent studies in the field of language and migration research have found that for some immigrant youth language brokering represents a source of agency and empowerment by placing greater value on the child’s linguistic knowledge (Luykx 2005; Corsaro 2018; Odrowąż-Coates 2019). Nevertheless, as our results show, not all immigrant children view this role in a positive light. Some harbor feelings of resentment into adulthood from being forced into a role that they view is meant for adults.

Rose, a participant in our study who immigrated when she was three years old from China, provides an illustrative example of the frustration felt among those participants who served in the role of language broker while transitioning to life in Canada. In her interview, Rose explained that she felt the pressures of her translator role most prominently when she was in a school environment. She described the role of language broker as being very awkward for her, a constant source of embarrassment, and another aspect of her immigrant life which separated her from her peers:

I think just mostly just being a translator and that was a challenge for me because I didn’t see how my classmates weren’t with their parents on parent-teacher night, but I was because my parents didn’t understand my teacher’s feedback. Yeah and so [my classmates] they were out playing and I was yep got to go do parent-teacher night. It was just really awkward.

Upon arrival to Canada, Rose quickly observed that her Canadian-born classmates were free to be children during school and did not have the added pressures of having to translate for their parents. Rose felt that the translator role impeded her from fully being a child and was more of an adult job.

Similarly, while reflecting on her past childhood experiences of being a translator for her parents, Eliza also expressed strong feelings about this role arguing that it was not a job a child should have to fulfill:

Not only did I not speak the best English, but I’m like my parents don’t know what’s going on either. You know you may have noticed that some immigrant families have the child at the forefront of everything. Whereas the parents stand back...they don’t know what’s going on so they have to send the child to do interpretation or whatever. I had that experience, but I also felt like you know I shouldn’t have to be in that role like I’m still a kid. I want to be taken care of instead of doing the opposite.

For both Rose and Eliza, having to serve in the role of language broker not only pre-

sented immediate challenges during their childhood (i.e. source of embarrassment/confusion), but the effects of being in this position were felt long into adulthood. More specifically, in each case, serving in this role had long-term impacts on how each participant constructed their identity, their relationship with their parents, and how each related to members of the broader society.

When it comes to childhood language brokering, the findings from our study are consistent with the literature concerning the negative cumulative effects of serving in such a role. As we found, those participants who served in this role reported feelings of depression (Love & Buriel 2007) and altered identity formation (Kam & Vanja 2013) more so than those participants who did not provide translation services for their family. Contrary to findings which suggest that language brokering results in heightened feelings of agency and empowerment among immigrant youth (Luykx 2005), the results of our analysis demonstrate that not all children view the role in a positive light. Instead, for some youth, serving in such a role has negative long-term impacts upon how they relate to others in the host society, how they view themselves as immigrants, and how they experience migration.

Importance of Maternal Support with Family Language Policy Planning

The final area of interest which emerged from our analysis of the family case summaries was the observation that mothers play an integral role in determining whether heritage language learning and maintenance is continued post-migration. Table 3 presents the results of the coded family case summaries in terms of the experiences that the interviewees had by whether they maintained their mother tongue in Canada and the support they received for maintaining their mother tongue from their various family members. The participants in our study who maintained their mother tongue post migration were over four times more likely to express that they received positive support from their mother's while transitioning to Canadian society compared to those who did not maintain their mother tongue in Canada (46.7% and 11.1% of the coded family case summaries respectively). When participants did not maintain their mother tongue in Canada, they often looked to their fathers or extended kin for positive support in the migration process. Our data shows that of the participants who did not maintain their mother tongue in Canada and who had low levels of positive support from their mothers, 33.3% of their family case summaries were coded for receiving positive support from their fathers and 22.2% were coded for receiving positive support from their extended kin. Supporting the existing literature on the role of family in learning heritage languages (see Melo-Pfeifer 2014), in our study, extended kin family members were nearly twice as likely to contribute to language maintenance goals than the child's immediate family.

Angela's story, a participant in our study who immigrated from Korea at age 12, is reflective of the struggles faced by immigrant youth when maternal support for family language planning is absent from the migration process. While describing her early days in Canada, Angela reflected on the challenges that she experienced with the support received from her mother in terms of heritage language maintenance. For

Angela, because her mother provided little support for language maintenance, she felt that she had to hide the desire to preserve her native language and culture from her mother. During her interview, Angela stated that she believed her parents wanted her to integrate and settle in as fast as possible, so they provided very little support for her to maintain contact with her native Korean language and culture. However, feeling isolated from her new peers in Canada due to her lack of knowledge of English and French, Angela longed to have a connection back to Korea and her sense of being Korean. As a result, she sought out covert methods in order to hide this desire from her parents and circumvent the language policy that they adopted as a family:

calling my friends over the...over the phone early in the morning because that would be like nighttime in Korea. I didn't want my parents to know that I was calling my friends in Korea so I put myself in my closet but my Mom happened to be in the bathroom and the closet and the bathroom were connected so just and there's a wall between...only a wall between us. She heard all our conversations and so she was like "Angela what are you doing!"

Table 3. Percentage of the case summaries coded in relation to the interviewee's experiences by family member support

| | <i>Percentage distribution</i> | | |
|--|---|-----------------|------------------|
| | MAINTAINED MOTHER TONGUE IN CANADA | | |
| | Yes | No | Total |
| <i>Mother's support</i> | | | |
| Positive | 46.7 | 11.1 | 33.33 |
| Negative | 13.3 | 22.2 | 16.67 |
| <i>Father's support</i> | | | |
| Positive | 20.0 | 33.3 | 25.00 |
| Negative | 6.7 | 11.1 | 8.33 |
| <i>Extended family support</i> | | | |
| Positive | 13.3 | 22.2 | 16.67 |
| Negative | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 |
| Total | 100% | 100% | 100% |
| <i>(N) *number of coded family case summaries</i> | 10 (76.9%) | 3(23.1)% | 13 (100%) |

Through sharing this memory, Angela described herself as living in-between worlds having to present herself one way to her parents while seeking ways to gain access to her previous pre-migration life.

By contrast, Joanna, a participant in our study who immigrated when she was seven years old from Korea, remembered feeling as though her father feared his children

were losing their knowledge of Korean. As such, he chose to adapt the family language policy put in place pre-migration so that the family unit only spoke Korean at home while adjusting to life in Canada. To achieve this goal, he went so far as to:

...put a sign on the wall that says Speak Korean! in the house—We [my brother and I] would like mess around with the sign and write different stuff on it. So I guess it was more like our parents were trying to like force the Korean language onto us so we don't like forget it. But, yeah by that time I think we were trying... we were maintaining also like our Korean identity culturally.

As seen in this example, Joanna and her brother rebelled against their father's strict language policy by destroying the sign outlining the family language policy. In her interview, Joanna explained that their response to the family language policy was fueled by the observation that the Korean language held very little value outside their home where all their daily interactions were conducted in English or French.

For participant's whose parents did not form a solid language policy either pre- or post-migration, they often looked to extended kin to support their personal linguistic goals. For example, Eliza, an immigrant from China, felt that she did not have any support at home from her parents to learn either English, French or Mandarin. Growing up in China prior to immigrating to Canada, she saw her aunt develop linguistic skills for her job at a Japanese company and dreamed of being like her one day. Reflecting on her childhood she said:

I had like my aunt for example worked for a Japanese company so she learned a lot of Japanese so I would say like on the languages front there was a strong influence. I would say I had a passion for different cultures or curiosity towards different cultures even at a young age. Um, I don't know if that was ah typical of the Chinese person, but you know I would always look up to my aunt and be like 'Oh she's always going to a Western restaurant and eating with a fork and knife' and that's so cool and I want to be like that you know.

In this case, because Eliza lacked the linguistic support at home to navigate her new life in the host society, the example set forth by her extended kin served as inspiration to learn new languages. By examining Eliza's story, and those of other participants, we find that our results are consistent with the literature on language and migration which suggests that mother's play an integral role in maintaining heritage language learning post migration. Just as these studies have found, our participants were forced to seek out support from their father's or extended kin when their mothers did not provide direct guidance on learning languages or maintaining heritage languages post-migration (Kwon 2017).

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Our study examined the ways that parental decisions made throughout an immigrant child's life course regarding language use and learning shape their multilingual identity and attitude towards the use of multiple languages in their everyday adult life. The results of our study suggest that the linguistic decisions parents make in the early

years of an immigrant youths' life have lasting impacts upon how immigrant youth connect to family members and their native language and culture in adulthood. From working with our participants, we found that when immigrant parents create either a flexible or strict family language policy and adapt it to the evolving needs of immigrant youth, such policies produce more positive experiences in the migration and early settlement processes. Consistent with the literature (see Bammer 1994; Fishman 2001), we conclude that when parents do not create a language policy or provide linguistic support to their children pre- or post-migration, immigrant youth are more likely to experience a negative transition to the host society and find it difficult to connect to their parents in adulthood.

A significant finding shared with the majority of participants in our study was that early childhood experiences as a language broker created residual feelings of resentment by the immigrant youth towards their parents. Our findings support those in the literature, (see Kam & Vanja 2013) which show that the role of language brokering for immigrant children has several negative effects in terms of role reversals and identity formation processes. For the participants in our study, the childhood pressures of having to translate for their parents in school settings made them feel separated from their Canadian-born peers. From listening to their migration stories, we believe that schools can play an important role in creating a smoother transition for immigrant youth to life in the host society by 1) validating the diverse linguistic and cultural repertoires of immigrant youth in Canada through the incorporation of multilingual practices into curricular planning and 2) providing translation services to facilitate communication between home and school. In doing so, immigrant youth will have access to the linguistic tools and support that they need to successfully transition to their post-migration lives.

In our study, gendered differences were found in terms of the adult family members which immigrant children relied upon to seek positive support in maintaining their mother tongue. In accordance with previous findings, we found that when immigrant children lose their mother tongue in the host society, they will increasingly seek support from their fathers and extended kin to support their continued language learning of their heritage languages and connect to their past identity. As such, just as previous studies have found, we concur that mothers play an important role in maintaining and encouraging the use of heritage language learning post-migration (Nesteruk 2010; Tannenbaum 2003). From working with our participants', we too found that when immigrant youth lack linguistic support from their mothers in their transition to the host society, they often feel that they are living in-between worlds as they try to maintain a connection to the past while imagining their post-migration lives. Consequently, to better support their children in the transition to the host society, we argue that it is important for immigrant parents to recognize the unique identity processes and struggles involved in their children's post-migration lives and be prepared to adapt family language policies to meet their evolving linguistic and cultural needs. In doing so, they will provide their children with the necessary linguistic support to transition to life in the host society.

LIMITATIONS

Our study had two main limitations the first being that we only had participants who identify as female take part in the research. During the recruitment process, participation in the study was open to all those eligible participants who met the inclusion criteria regardless of their gender identification. In the end, the recruitment process resulted in a higher proportion of females consenting to take part in the research than those who identified as male (13:3). Although three male participants were enrolled in the study, all three were removed as a result of being lost to follow-up. In the end, thirteen participants, all of which identified as female, remained in the study and completed all phases of data collection. The second limitation involved the participants having a similar demographic history in terms of settlement patterns upon arrival to Canada. Of the thirteen participants who completed all stages of data collection, only two settled with their families outside the province of Ontario namely in Québec and British Columbia, Canada respectively. However, due to parental decisions regarding settlement/economic opportunities after immigration to Canada, both participants eventually relocated with their families to Ontario, Canada where they completed the remainder of their schooling.

FUTURE RESEARCH

Based on our findings, future research in the area of language, migration and youth identity studies might involve combining survey data with in-depth follow-up interviews in order to gather and compare a wider range of experiences stories from multilingual students who grew up in different Canadian or global social contexts. Furthermore, there are few studies within the field which have focused on the impacts for adults with low linguistic abilities living in a bilingual nation. As such, we believe if future research combined multigenerational data from grandparents, parents, and children, the field of language, migration, and youth identity studies research would have a better understanding of the processes involved in the creation of family language policies and the effects these policies have over several generations.

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BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

Katherine MacCormac is a PhD candidate in the Applied Linguistics program at Western University. Katherine's research involves examining the intricate relationship between language, identity, and power in bilingual Canada and its impacts on how multilingual immigrant FSL students negotiate their identities while acquiring proficiency in Canada's official languages. Katherine's research has important implications for the future of Canadian FSL education by highlighting the increased need, from the multilingual immigrant student's perspective, of working towards more inclusive FSL curriculum and pedagogy.

Megan MacCormac is a PhD candidate in the Department of Sociology at the University of Western Ontario. Her research interests include historical sociology, whole family methodology, aging and the life course, and multigenerational mobility. Currently, her doctoral research addresses the lack of three-dimensional models for family research. By expanding the boundaries of whole-family methodology, Megan's work advocates for the use of new research strategies which better reflect the lived experiences and social mobility patterns of whole families and extended kin throughout their life courses.

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VIOLATIONS OF CHILDREN’S RIGHTS IN SUDAN AND THEIR CIRCUMSTANCES: THE CURRENT SITUATION AND THE POSSIBILITY OF SOLUTIONS

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ABSTRACT: This paper aims to demonstrate the main aspects and weaknesses of children’s rights in Sudan and describe how to work towards enhancing the immediate response to violations against children. This discussion will help develop future plans to strengthen the enforcement of children’s rights in Sudan and create an environment that protects children’s rights against all kinds of violations. This paper presents the current situation of children’s rights violations in Sudan and factors that have a great and direct impact on these situations, especially social and cultural factors concerning female circumcision, genital mutilation, and marriage of underage girls; and laws that violate the dignity of Sudanese children, such as laws related to flogging, imprisonment, and death. The article also addresses issues of wars and internal conflicts and their impact on children, including their recruitment and trafficking. It also discusses the weaknesses of laws in place to protect children in Sudan and the changes these laws have undergone in recent years, especially the fundamental changes following the revolution that broke out in Sudan in 2018, which replaced the dictatorial military regime with Islamic orientations and trying to find objective solutions.

KEYWORD: Sudan, Darfur, children’s rights, child labour, FGM/C, underage marriage

INTRODUCTION

The number of children exceeds half of the population. The results of the Fifth Population Census in 2008 showed that the number of children under the age of 18, according to the definition of the Child Law of 2010, reached 15.5 million, representing 50% of the population in Sudan, compared to their number of 10.9 million in 1990 (Ahmed 2018).

Statistical estimates indicate that the number of children in 2018 has reached 20.9 million, and it is expected that the number will increase to 24.7 million children in 2025 and 27.1 million children in 2030 (See: Voluntary National Review 2018). These high numbers and steady increases indicate that childhood is growing at a rate of 2.4% annually. This is due to the increase in fertility rates, especially in rural areas (Cunningham, Mubarak, & Hosen Mohamed Farah 2016).

These growth projections do not mean that children in Sudan will enjoy prosperity, progress, and development. However, they will face many difficulties and obstacles due to the steady increase in the number of children from 20.4 million in 2018 to 27.1 million in 2030, accompanied by stability and urban and rural expansion. This situation will lead to an increase in the demand for education and health services and development, care, and protection services (United Nations 2019).

Among the expected difficulties is the increase in security threats to the safety and development of children, the most important of which are the safety of food and medicine, intellectual and cultural conquest, the spread of drugs of all kinds, the asylum of children and women from neighbouring countries, and human trafficking. All these are among the factors that threaten the well-being of children in Sudan (UN 2019).

The current reality of children in Sudan is fraught with violations of their human rights. The conditions of children in Sudan are not hidden from anyone, not only through reports and the media, but they are crystal clear through observations and daily scenes in the street and in various social services institutions such as health, education, and social services, and the annual budgets of the state. Violations of children's rights in Sudan are visible and pose ethical challenges to the campaign of responsibility towards children, and this reflects the weak role of children's rights mechanisms that prevent and respond to abuse, neglect, exploitation, violence, and discrimination against children and other violations, as evidenced by the absence of monitoring and accountability when violations occur or by not responding to dangers. Related to protection, there is also an absence of an environment that promotes and advances children's rights (Palmqvist 2006).

PREVIOUS STUDIES AND DIFFICULTIES FACING RESEARCHERS

Studies of the child's rights and the laws that regulate the rights of the child in Sudan mainly rely on the open interview method as a primary tool for data collection. These interviews usually ask a number of questions related to the development of children's laws, focusing on the tasks and responsibilities of official institutions and voluntary organizations in relation to the protection of children and the role of the law in protecting them through the function and functions of these institutions and

organizations of all kinds and individuals interested in and their participation in child protection (Tostensen et al. 2011). In this respect, “the ethical aspects (...) as well as the limits of such research come as particularly important issues” (Markowska-Manista 2018: 63), focusing especially on children’s rights in Sudan. It should be noted that these issues are not widely articulated nor treated as crucial elements of such important research challenges as children’s rights and their protection.

Among other difficulties facing researchers in their study on the child’s rights in Sudan is the lack of references for children’s laws due to the absence of laws specifically for children (except in recent years). Consequently, researchers tend to rely on volumes of Sudan’s laws to collect texts on children in other laws and then on workshops (United States Department of State 2017). Child rights working papers and brochures are also used. One of the difficulties facing researchers in their field studies is the multiplicity of agencies. It is necessary to visit their sites, gather information about them, and conduct interviews with some of their workers in all of Sudan’s distant cities regarding the difficulty of transportation. There is also great difficulty in obtaining statistics, especially from the Sudanese government agencies, regarding study cases under the pretext that this information is confidential. It is forbidden to extract this information from within the body or institution (Al-Aqib Hasab Alrasul 2009).

Many studies have been conducted in Sudan regarding the protection of children’s rights and related laws. Imam Muhammad’s (2005) comparative study in light of international conventions deals with the traditional and evolving concept of criminal policy and asks what the criminal policy goals are? His study also dealt with criminology and criminal policy and reviewed the historical background of criminal policy in Sudan in different periods, from the formation of the Sudanese state until after independence in 1956.

Muhammad’s (2005) study was exposed to care institutions in Sudan, where the researcher was exposed to the introduction of several opinions in various justice institutions that have a direct relationship to juveniles, the role of education or reformatories, and so on, and how children are placed in those homes. The researcher concluded a study that these institutions do not serve the purpose they were established, which is discipline and reform. Besides, these institutions are considered the last resort in the measure because many juveniles are deposited for minor crimes or need community care more than society’s isolation. In addition to the effects of the social and economic crisis, war and poverty are major causes of juvenile crime, and thus placing the juvenile in the role of education does not change the degree of their deviation. The rehabilitation programs have been suspended for a long time, and they have not kept pace with global developments and methods of care (Tamashiro 2010).

Ahmed Al-Tayeb’s (2005) study on the reform and rehabilitation programs, and their impact on modifying juvenile delinquency in Sudan following international standards, focused on the explanatory reasons for deviant behaviour and examined the factors that lead to juvenile delinquency. He asked how to prevent and treat juvenile delinquency. He also dealt with the emergence and development of the role of education and treatment of children in international legislation within the framework of the legal and institutional protection of juveniles, as well as the treatment of

children according to the Islamic approach, exposure to reform policies and aftercare for delinquent juveniles, the practice of social and psychological work within those institutions that care for juveniles, and the appropriate and followed-up correctional and rehabilitation programs. He concluded that the lack of material and human capabilities and training prevent the success of juveniles' reform and rehabilitation programs. He recommended that the authorities provide them with qualified cadres while providing training opportunities in various fields of childhood.

Hasab Alrasul Al-Jack's (2002) study dealt with the rights of the Sudanese child regarding child labour and employment in Khartoum State, including a statistical study of child labour in Sudan (Khartoum), a comparison with international statistics, and a study of the population census in Sudan. Al-Jack (2002) studied the monitoring and analysis of child labour in different age groups and the extent of its impact on the child in terms of health and growth, their exposure to criminal activities, deprivation of the right to education, and their exposure to the worst types of exploitation. This study also compared international conventions on the child's rights with Sudanese laws and examined the weakness of their mechanisms for implementing legislation for children.

Several studies have dealt with children exploited in hard labour, employed, or deprived of education and the exercise of their fundamental rights in some articles. Several international treaties on child labour and some crucial laws were issued to minors in 1997. They concluded that these laws are not sufficient to protect the child and address their issues. There is no detail of local laws and international agreements on child labour.

Abdullah Mohamed (2000) presented the causes of homelessness and its negative effects. He examined the types of homelessness and methods of polarization to address homelessness, the vision in the future to address this phenomenon that occurred in Sudanese society during the last two decades. This study found that the philosophy on which the institutional treatment relied is mainly focused on providing a normal life for the homeless and helping them develop solutions to their problems. However, it is unclear if these children and their values can be understood—do we impose our values on them? Moreover, will they return to society?

CHALLENGES IN CHILD PROTECTION IN SUDAN

According to the latest UNESCO reports, despite the positive changes that have taken place in recent years, Sudan still faces several challenges in terms of child protection. More than 33% of children under the age of five are not registered at birth in Sudan, and these children face difficulties in enrolling in school. There are also significant discrepancies in birth certificates between states (30.9% in Central Darfur compared with 98.3% in North Darfur) (Bhatia et al. 2017).

Many children are not living with their families, mainly attributed to armed conflict, displacement, and poverty. Only 82% of children in the 0–17 age group live in a family environment, with 3.5% of them living with only one parent. This percentage does not include homeless children, who are involved in armed groups, who are in-

volved in child labour such as gold mines, or who live in institutions (UNICEF 2020).

The abandonment of children born out of wedlock is another major challenge, as three-quarters of children are delivered every day to the only residential care facility in the country (more: Bérenger and Verdier-Chouchane 2015). In 2009, about half of the Khartoum displaced children died before they could receive treatment, while most of the survivors were adopted under the Islamic adoption system. In addition, a quarter of children in Sudan participate in child labour, as the proportion of child labour is higher among the poorest, rural, unaccompanied, and separated children. There is significant variation between states (49.4% in East Darfur and 11.2% in the Nile River region). Child labour is associated with poverty, insufficient social protection and services, and school dropout rates (UNICEF 2020).

LAWS REGARDING DEATH SENTENCES, IMPRISONMENT, AND FLOGGING OF CHILDREN

About 100 Sudanese children are awaiting execution. In Sudan, a special law for children has been in place since 2010. However, this law has been almost idle, and there has not been a positive change in the reality of Sudanese child protection. The reason for this is the legal inconsistency in the definition of the child, and the power of criminal law and its vague texts, especially in determining the age of criminal responsibility (McVeigh 2018).

The dominance of the 1991 Criminal Law with all its loopholes and its adoption by the judicial organs and the courts, without observing the provisions of the Child Law, led to a disruptive situation in which 100 children are now facing death sentences, in addition to five others under final implementation. Although Sudan signed the Child Law Convention of 1991, measures were not taken to harmonize domestic laws with the convention (OHCHR 2007). The observations and comments received from the ICRC and the relevant local and regional organizations regarding Sudan's report on children's rights were not considered. This situation exacerbated the injustice that children continued to suffer due to the waste of their natural and legal right to justice. However, there is a package of proposals for amendments to the Sudanese criminal law, submitted by the Child Welfare Council in Sudan, approved by the current cabinet, and awaiting approval by the Sovereignty Council and the Council of Ministers, which now constitute the legislative authority (Fadil 2019).

The ratification of these amendments allows for reviewing of death sentences and amending the charges against children in Sudan. The proposed amendments include stopping the execution of children under the age of 18, adopting this age as a criterion for defining the child, and raising the minimum for criminal responsibility to 12 years instead of 7 years, in accordance with the recommendation of the International Committee on the Rights of the Child, and in line with the measures specified by the Child Law of 2010 to deal with misdemeanours (Limon 2020).

According to the proposals, the punishment of flogging children stipulated in the Criminal Code will be abolished and replaced by measures that are not freedom-negative or degrading to human dignity, such as community service and enrollment in ap-

appropriate professional, cultural, sports, and social training courses. The amendments suggest alternative penalties for imprisoning mothers with children under the age of five and pregnant and lactating women for other than serious crimes. The proposals give the prosecution or court the right to refer delinquent children to institutional bodies. The amendments include removing any consideration of children's consent in the event of female genital mutilation or any harm resulting from any form of violence (Sadek 2020).

CHILDREN'S RIGHTS DURING CONFLICTS IN SUDAN

The conflict has had a particularly devastating impact on children. The United Nations Task Force on Monitoring and Reporting about Children in Armed Conflict has documented 194 incidents related to grave violations against children by armed groups and state security services, including the recruitment and use of children in combat and auxiliary roles as porters, cooks, and spies; killings; and mutilation, rape, and other forms of sexual violence and abduction. The task force also recorded 13 incidents in which schools were seized for military purposes, in addition to five attacks on schools (Markowska-Manista 2019).

Despite the release of at least 150 children from armed groups and the army during the year, armed groups and government forces abducted children. They recruited them as fighters to increase their numbers before placing them in camps to gather government and opposition soldiers in separate specific locations. In the Darfur region, around two million people have been forced from their land and live-in displacement camps in western Sudan. More than one million of them are children under 18, with 320,000 aged five and under (UNICEF 2005).

Children, especially boys, take an active part in armed conflict (see: Aptel 2018). Children in detention have reached 238 / 100,000 children out of the total number of children in Sudan. Over 32,407 boys and girls across the 18 states (19,224 boys; 13,183 girls) were dealt with by law enforcement as victims, witnesses, or alleged aggressors. With the increase in referrals outside the judicial system, children with whom the law has dealt still face lengthy judicial procedures and may be placed in pretrial detention even for minor offences (UNICEF 2020).

Sudan is also considered a country of origin, transit, and destination for children. More than 2.2 million internally displaced persons and refugees from neighbouring countries and countries are affected by war. There is an increasing movement of children in Sudan due to conflict, economic pressures, child trafficking, and migration. Children who move frequently are often unaccompanied or separated from their families and are vulnerable to violence, abuse, and exploitation (Heltne et al. 2020).

FEMALE CIRCUMCISION / FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION AND UNDERAGE MARRIAGE

Sudan is considered one of the countries in which the prevalence of this phenomenon is high. According to the 2014 Multiple Indicators Group (MICS) surveys, the preva-

lence of FGM / C in Sudan is 87% among women in the age group 15–49 years and 31% among girls in the age group 0–14 years. Female genital mutilation is a violation based on gender and a harmful social habit. Therefore, there is a need to work collectively in Sudan to abandon these harmful traditional practices, which pose risks to children's physical and psychological health and well-being (UNICEF 2020). The percentage of marriage before reaching 18 years is 38% among women in the age group from 20 to 49 years, while the percentage of women who got married before reaching the age of 15 years is 12%. This matter has attracted much attention at the regional and global levels (UNICEF/RCW 2017).

According to the World Health Organization, female circumcision includes all procedures that involve partial or complete removal of the female's external genitalia or any injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons. This practice has no health benefits, but it may cause ongoing physical and psychological problems. A 2014 report by the United Nations Agency for Children estimated that more than 87% of Sudanese women and girls between the ages of 15 and 49 had undergone this procedure (see UNICEF 2021; AP/ABC 2020).

The states in Sudan with the highest FGM prevalence are in the north-west: North Kordofan (97.7% of women aged 15–49), North Darfur (97.6%), and Northern (97.5%). The state with the lowest prevalence is Central Darfur, in the southwest, at 45.4%. Women aged 15–49 who live in rural areas are slightly more likely to undergo FGM (87.2%) than those who live in urban areas (85.5%). FGM is least prevalent among women aged 14–59 with 'no education', at 76.8%, and 52.8% of women aged 15–49 who have heard of FGM believe it should be discontinued (see MICS 2014) (Thiam 2016).

The first national committee to follow up on criminal law reform was established in 2006. A group of diverse groups of women joined efforts to review the law and work to criminalize female genital mutilation (Wahba 2010). In 2010 the Child Law 2010 was approved; this law introduced Article 13, which criminalizes, for the first time, female genital mutilation. In the absence of a political will, Article 13 was repealed. Since that time, six Sudanese states have passed state-by-state laws criminalizing female genital mutilation. Efforts continued, and in 2018, national laws and female circumcision laws were reviewed in the state of Khartoum. They were presented to the National Assembly and the Khartoum State Legislative Council. They were subjected to various revisions, but they were not submitted for final discussion until the parliament was dissolved in December 2018 (Tønnessen, El-Nagar, and Bamkar 2017).

The spirit of the December revolution, coupled with strong political will, paved the way for legal reforms guiding the ban on female genital mutilation. The historic step taken by the transitional government to criminalize FGM / C in Sudan, by adopting an amendment to Article 141 of the Criminal Code by the two councils, the sovereign and the ministerial, on April 22, 2020, and ratifying all the amendments proposed by the National Council for Child Welfare (NCCW) is considered a very important matter in this regard (UNFPA Sudan 2020). The abandonment of this practice is not limited to legal reform or legalization and criminalization. Instead, there is a need for serious work with local communities to help implement this law. Further efforts should be

made to raise awareness of modification among different groups, including midwives, health service providers, parents, and youth (Wambui 2020).

CONCLUSIONS

To ensure the protection of children in Sudan, the state must ensure equality and human rights as the basis for the basic principles of children's dignity. The state must also ensure a broader and greater involvement of the main actors involved in children's approaches and all other sectors of society to enhance the role of the family and related communities (Markowska-Manista 2012).

The vision for change in Sudan is for children to be protected from violence, abuse, neglect, and exploitation. The priority is to implement an action plan for the reintegration of children associated with armed conflict and monitor, report, and respond to violations of children's rights in armed conflict situations (See: UNICEF 2018).

Addressing the root causes of migration and child trafficking is also based on addressing the root causes of the problem, not just laws, that is, working seriously to end conflicts or armed conflicts in Sudan, which are the main factor in the emergence of these negative phenomena, especially internal migration, child trafficking, and children's recruitment to fight in those wars (cf. United Nations 2008).

No child can face the death penalty or life imprisonment without the possibility of release. Children found guilty of breaking the law must be treated with dignity and respect and in a manner that considers their needs as children. The Sudanese judicial system must abide by its legal obligations by providing measures commensurate with the ages of children who commit crimes.

Ending harmful practices, predominantly female genital mutilation and child marriage in Sudan, cannot be addressed through laws and parents' criminalisation because they are linked to cultural aspects and pseudo-religious social beliefs. These practices are empowered by society, especially rural society, since these customs are sometimes transferred to societies that used not to practice these kinds of harmful behaviours. This situation happens due to social, economic, or ethnic motives, as some displaced communities see the necessity of practising the same rituals practised in the new environment to which they were displaced to be entirely accepted (Bedri and Mohammed 2020).

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BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

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REALISING CHILDREN'S RIGHTS IN EARLY CHILDHOOD IN THE CONTEXT OF THEIR SOCIAL PARTICIPATION: THE CASE OF THE CHILD'S RIGHT TO A FAMILY

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ABSTRACT: The article discusses the need to make the culture of children's rights fundamental from the earliest years of their lives, given the idea of children's social participation. Creating and practicing a culture in which children's rights are observed is a task that requires not only a thorough knowledge of children's rights among both parents and teachers but also a wider acceptance of these ideas. Equally important is the creation of an environment for sharing the knowledge of these rights and advocating for them, at home and in early education settings. The academic and colloquial discourse on parental practices and institutional childcare often overlooks the significance of recognizing children's share in safeguarding their human rights. Meanwhile, the processes of early normative socialization are of great importance to children's development, their future attitudes towards law in general, and also towards their human rights and the rights of others. Social participation is where the child can experience his or her rights and learn about respecting the rights of others. With this in mind, the question must be asked as to whether children's rights are realized in early childhood in the context of their participation in the socialization process. The author uses the example of the child's right to a family as a lens through which to observe how the idea of the children's participation in securing children's rights may be realized or violated. The article is based on an analysis of the literature, in which legal discourse and teachings on child-rearing and early education are used as the interpretative context.

KEYWORDS: children's rights, children's participation, early education and upbringing, law

INTRODUCTION

A child cannot 'think like an adult', but in a childlike way, he/she can reflect on adults' serious problems; the lack of knowledge and experience imposes another way of thinking. (Korczak 2012: 47)

Early childhood is a time of continuous change and developmental challenges for the individual and their family. At various stages of development, the child is thrown into experiencing new dimensions of reality, learning about the world and entering the domain of social life. At the same time, parents and carers constantly face changes and uncertainty regarding the child's personal, social, and cultural development within the normative dimension of parental reality. Living in a family where the culture of respecting the rights of every person is formed and shared is an important challenge in contemporary child-rearing processes. Family and parenting are subject to scrutiny by many researchers from the area of social sciences and humanities, including sociology, education, psychology, law or philosophy. For this paper's purposes, we will focus on the normative character of everyday family life as experienced by children in the early years of their life when their human rights are either respected or not. I apply the context of securing the child's right to family life as a unique perspective from which the possible areas of children's participation and normative socialization, so essential to their functioning in later life, are examined.

RESEARCH METHOD AND PROCEDURE

The main organizing issue is focused on the possible ways in which the child's rights are realized and observed in early childhood in the context of their participation in the socialization process. The paper is structured into three parts:

- (1) analysis and interpretation of research material related to the protection of the child's rights in early childhood. The purpose of these theoretical considerations is to present the legal foundations for the implementation of children's rights in the family, as well as point us in the direction of the responsibilities of the state and parents in the process of securing the child's rights,
- (2) analysis of the category of 'child participation' and how important it is to protect it in the process of early normative socialization,
- (3) and, finally, bringing this idea together with the actual situation related to the safeguarding of the child's human rights in the family and the possible dimensions of realizing the idea of child's participation in this sphere.

The purpose of the article is to indicate the importance of the realization of children's rights during early normative socialization for the whole process of participation, so as to develop children's knowledge, understanding and acceptance of their rights. The practical purpose is to inspire the creation of educational practices based on realizing the child's rights and participation.

The method of content and normative analysis was chosen in Polish and interna-

tional legislation to protect the child's right to being brought up in a family, highlighting several specific problem areas. The author's interpretation of the material gathered was carried out based on a literature review related to child-rearing, early education, and the related legal literature. It references the legal discourse and the use of pedagogical instruments that constitute the background for the analyses. Thanks to applying the content analysis technique, the interpretive context of the research has been enriched with the author's professional experience of working for the Committee on the Rights of the Child and the analysis of documents and reports related to the protection of children's rights in Poland. The social experience of the COVID-19 pandemic further highlights the issue, as it interferes with the realization of the children's right to contact with their loved ones in the case of their separation.

THE RIGHT OF THE CHILD TO A FAMILY IN THE LIGHT OF THE ANALYSIS OF NATIONAL LEGISLATION AND INTERNATIONAL LEGAL STANDARDS

The child's right to a family upbringing, broadly understood, and parents' corresponding rights and duties to make a personal effort to safeguard the child's best interests (Kusztal 2018) are part of a human being's private and family life, protected both by international law and national legal regulations.

The protection of family rights, including the child's right to be brought up in the family, is also one of the Republic of Poland's basic constitutional principles. Children and parents' rights constitute principles protected by the Constitution of the Republic of Poland of 1997 (Articles 18, 72, paragraph 2, 48). Their particularization is contained in acts of parliament, such as the Act of February 25, 1964, the Family and Guardianship Code (Journal of Laws 1964 No 9, item 59), the Act of October 26, 1982, on proceedings in cases of minors (Dz.U. 1982 No 35, pos. 228). The Act of June 9, 2011, on family support and the foster care system (Dz.U. 2011 No 149, pos. 887) and the Act of July 29, 2005, on counteracting violence in the family (Dz.U. 2005, No 180, pos. 1493).

The European Convention on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms states in Article 8 that:

“(1) Everyone has the right to respect for his private and family life, his apartment and his correspondence.

(2) Public authorities may not interfere in the exercise of this right unless it is lawful and necessary in a democratic society in the interests of national security, public safety or the economic well-being of the country to prevent disorder or crime, to protect health or morals, or to protect the rights and freedoms of others.”¹

The legislator has used the general term “everyone” means that both parents and

¹ Art. 8 of the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, JoL 1953, No.61, item 284. The Convention was adopted by the 12 member states of the Council of Europe in 1950 and entered into force in 1953. Forty-seven states are parties to the Convention (June 2015) to say all member states of the Council of Europe. Poland ratified the Convention in 1993.

children have the right to have their family and private lives respected. In the case of this law, any interference from the public authorities is inadmissible - except for the cases specified in the act, related to the protection of rights and freedoms of others or preventing crime. The European Tribunal of Human Rights (ETHR), founded in 1959, is a guarantor of the convention. It extends the right to submit an official complaint to individuals and states that are party to the Convention (international complaint) to pursue the rights and freedoms guaranteed by the Convention. The Tribunal is obliged to investigate each submitted case to determine whether the interference of an individual or the state with family life was necessary, compliant with the binding laws, and whether it secures individuals' rights. The extensive jurisdiction of the European Tribunal of Human Rights includes many situations in which the right of the child to life in the family² may be considered to have been violated. Importantly, however, the European Tribunal takes the view that the "relationship between the parents and the child is of such considerable value that all necessary steps must be taken to provide help to the child without depriving him or her of the family environment. Besides, both parental rights and the interest of the child linked to the family are elements of private and family life, which public authorities should consider before making any decisions regarding the family" (Smyczyński 1999:159). Therefore, any decisions about possible interference in the area of the child's rights should be thoroughly investigated in terms of the child's best interest under the circumstances and aim to secure the child's right in the family environment.

Also, other international legal documents point us in the direction of the special protection measures for the family and the child. The doctrinal achievement of the human rights movement and growing interest of the international community in a particular need to protect the child's rights as part of the protection of family life led to creating the document which directly refers to the safeguarding of the rights of children. The Convention on the Rights of the Child of November 20, 1989 (Dz.U. 1991 No. 120, item 526). This comprehensively tackles the issues related to protecting children's rights and how they can be promoted. It also refers to the rights realized in the family context discussed in this paper. The Preamble of the Convention sets out the idea of the protection of the child's rights in the family by providing that "The family, as the fundamental group of society and the natural environment for the growth and well-being of all its members and particularly children, should be afforded the necessary protection and assistance so that it can fully assume its responsibilities within the community. It should be recognized that the child, for the full and harmonious development of his or her personality, should grow up in a family environment, in an atmosphere of happiness, love and understanding." The Convention's regulations that follow make the general provisions of the preamble even more specific, which allows for an interpretation of the existence of the child's right to a family (Smyczyński 1999:151). This category contains such normative areas of competence as:

- (a) Respect for the responsibilities, rights and duties of parents/guardians "to provide, in a manner consistent with the evolving capacities of the child, appro-

² https://www.echr.coe.int/Documents/FS_Childrens_ENG.pdf, accessed on September 15 2020.

appropriate direction and guidance in the exercise by the child of the rights recognized in the present Convention” (Article 5 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child).

(b) Ensure that a child shall not be separated from his or her parents against their will, except when competent authorities subject to judicial review so determine, following applicable law and procedures (Art 9, section 1). Significantly, however, Article 3 of the article provides that “States Parties shall respect the right of the child who is separated from one or both parents to maintain personal relations and direct contact with both parents regularly, except if it is contrary to the child’s best interests.” The legislator also ensures that the child as well as the parent have the right to information on each other’s place of residence if the separation is due to an action initiated by the state, such as detention, imprisonment, exile, deportation or death (including death arising from any cause while the person is in the custody of the state) (Stadniczeńko 2015:86)

The Child’s formulated Right to be Raised in the family is a set of rights that derive directly from Articles 5 and 9 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The normative content of Article 18 is relevant to this area, indicating specific obligations/tasks on the part of the state to secure the rights of the child in the family.

Article 18

“1. States Parties shall use their best efforts to ensure recognition of the principle that both parents have typical responsibilities for the upbringing and development of the child. As the case may be, parents, or, as the case may be, legal guardians, have the primary responsibility for the upbringing and development of the child. The best interests of the child will be their basic concern.

2. For the purpose of guaranteeing and promoting the rights set forth in the present Convention, States Parties shall render appropriate assistance to parents and legal guardians in the performance of their child-rearing responsibilities and shall ensure the development of institutions, facilities and services for the care of children.

3. States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to ensure that children of working parents have the right to benefit from childcare services and facilities for which they are eligible.

The obligation on the part of the State Party to take special care of supporting the family in fulfilling its child-rearing functions and securing the child’s rights is an important challenge for the state’s family assistance system. The combined fifth and sixth reports on the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child in Poland (Report 2018) indicate that these objectives are pursued by the Family 500+ program adopted in 2016. The program’s primary goal should be to invest in human capital - through money transfers, children can be provided with better education, food, and access to medical treatment. The relationship between securing children’s

rights in early childhood and investing in young children's education seems to have been evident for years. Good education and securing the child's fundamental rights in education pays off, contributes to building social capital, and equalizes each child's educational opportunities. Unfortunately, in the program's promotional materials, more emphasis is placed on reducing the financial burden associated with child-rearing, supporting families in their childbearing plans and encouraging decisions about having a larger family than about building social capital by securing fundamental rights. The report also points to the "Good Start" Program, introduced in 2018, which assumes a once-a-year benefit of PLN300 for each child in education, which helps families manage the expenses related to the beginning of the school year.

The state's tasks in supporting parents who work, and developing institutions for the care of young children, are supported by the Act of February 4, 2011, on the care of children up to 3 years old (Journal of Laws 2011, No. 45, item 235) and the program for the development of childcare institutions for children up to 3 years old "Toddler +" (*Maluch +*). Subsequently, in the years 2011-2018 the number of places in crèches, children's clubs and also the number of day carers increased from 32, 000 to 145, 900, and the percentage of children up to 3 years old in day care rose from 4.4% to 19.8% (Report 2018). Additionally, as of 2013, parents may take paid annual leave due to a child's birth. In 2016, a parental benefit was also introduced for PLN 1,000, paid to parents who are not entitled to maternity benefit. The report also indicates the ban on trading on Sundays, introduced in 2018, to enable families to spend quality time together.

The questions formulated by the Committee on the Rights of the Child after the analysis of the Polish Report indicate the need for the Polish government to specify the actions taken to create a system for the identification of budget allocations and expenditure on children by individual ministries in order to ensure the objective assessment of the adequacy and effectiveness of public spending in this area. The lack of specific mechanisms for ensuring a transparent and participatory budgeting process, particularly with children's participation (UN 2018), was also pointed out.

Securing the realization of children's rights early in life undoubtedly requires state institutions' support and increased spending on social and pedagogical projects of preventive and compensatory nature (Segment 2010:135). Safeguarding the needs of the child at this early stage of development and creating favorable conditions for proper child-rearing and the meeting of the educational needs of children, as part of the concern for the child but also for the future of society as a whole, must be supported by the state following Article 18 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Such support should be comprehensive and carried out in a considerate and thoughtful manner, involving the allocation of funds and, perhaps above all, the participation of specialists and other persons supporting families and children in the difficult process of education respect of human rights.

PARTICIPATION OF CHILDREN IN THE REALISATION OF THEIR HUMAN RIGHTS IN EARLY CHILDHOOD

When studying children, we should bear in mind that we have before us a permanent class, more significant than the adult population... As members of society, we find they have received almost no attention. They are... not recognised as belonging to society. (Gilman 2009: 43)

Even though the study of the discourse on child and youth participation has a long tradition in sociological, pedagogical, and historical research, the participatory discourse's evolution is still an exceedingly dynamic process (cf. Jarosz 2020; Lansdowne 2010; Wyness 2012; Liebel 2017). It is useful for these considerations to explain how child participation and its role in bringing up a child to respect human rights are understood. Thinking of small children and childhood, adults and educators often believe that they know best what is good or bad for the child. The child's voice in matters concerning him or her is often not heard because the culture of respect for the child's rights in early childhood is not being created or observed. Social impulses to listen to the child's voice have, over the years, been motivated by the theories and practices of pedagogical and social education and care for children. Here we might mention the pedagogical theory and practice of Janusz Korczak, for whom a child is a human like any other: "A child - already a resident, citizen, man... not will he be, but already is" (Korczak 1928), and he continues by saying "One of the worst blunders is to think that pedagogy is the science of the child; no! It is the science of man ... There are no children, there are people, but with a different conceptual scale, different range of experience, different urges, different emotional reactions" (Korczak 1967: 248). For Korczak "The child is a rational being. He knows full well what his needs, difficulties and obstacles in life are. Needed is not a despotic order, imposed discipline and distrustful control but tactful understanding, faith in experience, cooperation and coexistence" (Korczak 1992: 176).

The development of movements calling for social equality and the definition of children as a minority group which is discriminated against, manifestos concerning children (Concerning Children 1990), and the emergence of manifestos and declarations protecting children from exploitation and violence (Geneva Declaration 1924, Declaration of the Rights of the Child 1959) paved the way for the normalization of the pedagogical idea of the protection of children's rights. This way of "creating order in the world of children" that Korczak spoke for as early as 1933 when he wrote, "what a contemporary tragedy life is and what a disgrace to this generation, which passes on to children a disordered world" (Korczak; Liebel & Markowska-Monista 2017: 28) took the form of an international agreement, ratified by almost all the countries of the world.

The sense of the idea of child participation was defined in more detail in the normative language of the 1989 Convention on the Rights of the Child, as the following rights:

- (a) the right to formulate and express one's views freely, and on the part of the

adults to give these views due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child:

- (b) the right to freedom of expression.
- (c) the right of access to appropriate information.
- (d) the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion.
- (e) the right to freedom of association and freedom of peaceful assembly.
- (f) the right to have one's privacy fully respected.
- (g) the right of access to information, including the information on the child's rights.

Researchers of child participation emphasize the crucial role of the normative proclamation of rights in children's case. The Convention on the Rights of the Child, confirming in the language of legal norms the right of each child to self-determination and to be listened to and heard, at the same time defined the child's status as an equal citizen, a social partner capable of expressing his or her position and taking co-responsibility (Wyness 2012; Liebel & Markowska-Monistra 2014; Smolinska-Theiss 2012). In this perspective, the child's rights are no longer merely theoretical declarations based on lofty ideals and the good or bad will of adults towards the child but they become principles of law aimed at protecting children. Legislation alone is not enough to create a living environment in which the child experiences true protection and the possibility of realizing their human rights. The real participation of children is essential for the development of their knowledge and acceptance of their rights.

DIMENSIONS OF PARTICIPATION IN THE REALISATION OF THE CHILD'S RIGHTS IN EARLY CHILDHOOD

The child's right to be listened to and heard is externalized and objectified through the act of speech. In this way, the child realizes his or her essential ability as a human being, creating their world and accumulating knowledge (Rancière 1991). Exchanging words with others builds new dimensions in the relationship between the child and his or her immediate environment, which is based on respect for the child and respect for the child's human rights. Arguing in this vein, McLamon's approach to the child's rights (2008) proposes that every child, regardless of age, can convey to adults what is important to them. It is up to the adults to listen and understand what the child has to say and respond appropriately. It is only an attentive adult attitude towards the child that enables the child to find a complete expression for his or her voice and influence the surrounding reality.

Swedish researchers who studied the culture of children's rights at school have identified four elements necessary for its existence in the educational environment (Brantefors, Tellgren & Thelander 2019). Based on their theory, I propose to further

specify the four dimensions of childhood participation in the period of early childhood, both in the family and early childhood care institutions such as crèches and nurseries. Still, the author proposes that if we were to speak of the full protection of the rights of the child in early childhood, our approach to the child, the issues relating to child-rearing and educational environments should be rooted in the following aspects and dimensions:

- (1) Participation - a dimension of the child's full involvement in the life of the family or institution.
- (2) Empowerment - i.e., creating conditions for children to get involved in the matters and events relevant to them.
- (3) Awareness of rights - this refers to introducing the child into the world of law in general and accompanying him/her in the processes of his/her legal socialization. This attribute is realized by being attentive to the child's relationships in his or her daily life and acquisition of experiences in the world, including those of human rights.
- (4) Respect for rights - this dimension permeates the other three and becomes the point of reference for them. This is the aspect that children in early childhood feel and model more than acquiring the knowledge of.

The culture of children's rights formed from early childhood arises from treating children's and human rights as a category not only declared in pedagogical practices but lived through as a value in itself. The child's rights must not be treated as a separate, theoretical part of the child-rearing and educational reality. Parents refer only to difficult situations or in confrontation with state authorities. They should constitute an inherent part of the child's upbringing and educational environment and must be reflected in all children's activities and areas and the family's life. The significance of the rights of the child in early childhood becomes real in everyday educational practice, but also through relationships and family and group norms; through showing everyday interest in the child, taking the trouble to hear and understand the child's voice, respect their opinions, create space for making decisions together and creating a shared reality along with the child. This is when the child's rights become a natural vehicle for their development. Simultaneously, respect for human rights is experienced as a norm of interpersonal relations as an unquestionable principle. This is when child participation becomes factual as the principle of cooperation in the child-rearing and educational space. In this way, the conditions for engaging children in matters and events important to them are created, which helps build an awareness of their rights and others' rights. This in itself creates natural cognitive constructs in the child's mind, as he or she experiences the safeguarding of his or her rights and learns to respect those of others. The processes of normative socialization are then carried out as they should be. The child enters the heteronymous world of norms and learns about the law. At the same time, the process of growing up in respect of human rights is fully initiated, which can be presented with the following diagram:



Illustration 1. Dimensions of child participation in the realization of human rights in early childhood.

CONCLUSIONS

The full realization of children's rights in early childhood is crucial, not only as seen from the perspective of the entire child-rearing process, but mainly from the point of view socialization and the creation of social capital, in terms of having trust in the rule of law. The research undertaken by sociologists of law with regards to knowledge of law and adult attitudes towards law demonstrates that the knowledge of and ideas about law, along with the attitudes towards it that are formed in early childhood (in the phase of primary socialization), constitute a fixed basis for the person's whole future system of ideas, beliefs and approaches to law. These are essential foundations even if the system itself becomes reorganized during the human experience (Borucka-Arctowa and Kourilsky 1993). Moreover, the way children experience the legal system and understand it during childhood can play a significant role, affecting their later tendency towards antisocial behaviors (Niemi 1973). Early childhood is, therefore, a crucial stage in forming the child's attitudes towards law and for the process of internalizing social values; the sources of these values and mindsets can be found in these childhood experiences (Cohn, White. 1990). The role of legal and other social norms in social exclusion or inclusion is clear and well discussed in the literature on the subject (Durhheim 1990; Chambliss 1973; Świd 1960; Buss 2011).

Therefore, the respect for and realization of children's rights from the earliest years of their lives, creating space for their social participation by involving them in the processes of co-determination and co-responsibility for all matters concerning them, can be the best prevention of deviant behaviours, offences or crimes. Some researchers have stressed the role of an appropriately secured process of legal socialization of children even more emphatically, presenting it as a guarantee of compliance with the law in adulthood (Buss 2011). By adopting the sociology of law, we can understand and explain how adults and adolescents respond to law and the reasons behind such

responses.

It is worth bearing in mind that children “learn the law through experience; they learn equality through the ways they are treated in the classroom, not from the dogmatic analysis of laws. The same applies to the right to express opinions, respecting the dignity of others. We teach children rights leading by example rather than by dictating norms and writing out standards on boards, which does not mean that the latter has no value in itself” (Utrat-Milecki 2012: 140).

ORIGINALITY/VALUE

The research presented here may help understand the importance of early normative socialization of the child to safeguard the child’s rights and human rights. The results of the conducted analyses show how important it is to create a proper educational environment from the first years of the child’s life in the sphere of securing their rights, taking into account the principles of participation and education regarding the rights of others. The raising and early education of a child rooted in participation and empowerment principles lead to the experience and awareness of rights and help develop overall respect for legal norms. The experience of one’s legal subjectivity and the agency in realizing other people’s rights may become the factors protecting children from getting involved in behaviours incompatible with the binding legal norms later in life. The article’s theoretical and practical aspects may become an inspiration and a source of information required to create appropriate support mechanisms for families with young children and develop recommendations for local authorities and educational institutions.

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BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

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PARENTING IN CONFLICT – PARENTAL ALIENATION: NETNOGRAPHIC RESEARCH

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ABSTRACT: Parental alienation is a phenomenon that appears after the divorce or break-up in a situation, where there is high conflict between the separating parents accompanying the termination of the relationship. It includes actions intentionally taken by one of the sides, who is seeking to distort the relationship between the child and the other parent. As a result of the alienation, the child starts to excessively prefer the custodial parent and intensively reject the non-custodial parent. The discussion concerning parental alienation was initiated by Richard Gardner, a psychiatrist, who introduced the idea of PAS '*parental alienation syndrome*'. His concept was widely commented by its supporters as well as by sceptics and opponents, as a result of which its modified version, PA '*parental alienation*', was developed. Published research concerning the subject can be found in English-language scientific articles as early as in 1998. However, in Polish academic literature parental alienation is almost non-existent. The objective of this article is to open a discussion on this subject. Apart from theoretical analysis of the phenomenon, the narratives of parents who believe to experience PA were analysed. The analysis regarded aspects such as: definition, characteristics and sources of parental alienation. The article analyses also actions, which are the alienated parents' reactions to PA. The performed analysis was of netnographic nature.

KEYWORDS: parental alienation syndrome, parental alienation, divorce

INTRODUCTION

A divorce strongly influences the individuals, that participate in it; it rates second on the Social Readjustment Rating Scale by T. H. Holmes and R. H. Rahe among the most stressful life events (after the death of a spouse). It constitutes a series of changes modifying the life of the member of a family unit. Source literature describes it as a negative and undesired event (Tyszka 2002; Graniewska 2004; Balcerzak-Paradowska 1999). According to the authors, it causes disorganization in life, negatively affects psychological, physical, financial and social spheres of adults' and children's lives. However, the most difficult situations are cases, where the divorce is connected with a high conflict between the spouses. Sometimes the antagonisms between the parents do not stop even after the break-up or divorce, because shared custody and bringing up children are the area, where the conflicts are constantly revived. Lack of trust and anger between the parents – fighting for custody over children before family courts, are elements which additionally cause the problems to escalate. An extreme example of such antagonism is the phenomenon of parental alienation.

PARENTAL ALIENATION – THEORETICAL ANALYSIS

Parental alienation (PA) is a controversial subject in the scientific world. The discussion between researchers concerns the very fact of existence of PA as well as its theoretical and scientific grounds, tools for diagnosis and treatment methods in case it is identified. The first person who opened a large scale discussion on parental alienation was a psychiatrist, Richard Gardner, who described the concept of PAS (*parental alienation syndrome*) (Gardner 1998, 2001, 2002, 2004). The author assumed, that PAS is a *'disorder that arises primarily in the context of child custody disputes. Its primary manifestation is the child's campaign of denigration against a parent, a campaign that has no justification. It is caused by a combination of a programming (brainwashing) parent's indoctrinations and the child's own contributions to the vilification of the targeted parent'* (Gardner 1998). R. Gardner distinguished symptoms shown by children in regard to the non-custodial parent (guardian). These include:

- (1) A Campaign of Denigration
- (2) Weak, Frivolous, or Absurd Rationalizations for the Depreciation
- (3) Lack of Ambivalence – unambiguous hostility towards the non-custodial parent
- (4) The “Independent-Thinker” Phenomenon, where the child denies the influence of the alienation parent, he/she is convinced of expressing their own opinions
- (5) Absence of Guilt Over Cruelty to and/or Exploitation of the Alienated Parent
- (6) Reflexive Support for the Alienating Parent in Parental Conflict

(7) Presence of Borrowed Scenarios regarding past events, that is the child copies the alienating parent's argumentation

(8) Spread of the Animosity to the Extended Family and Friends of the Alienated Parent (Gardner 1992).

Gardner distinguished three forms of alienation: mild, moderate and severe. He created their characteristics and described legal and therapeutic solutions for each case (Gardner 2001, 2002, 2004).

Gardner's concept caused a wide discussion in the scientific community. It was claimed to:

(a) not have scientific value: lack of precision of basic terms; no validation in specialist literature; lack of full dichotomy of Gardner's division – lack of evidence that would make it comprehensive and the importance of the symptoms is imprecise; PAS is not included in International Classification of Diseases;

(b) disregard (covering up) for incestuous actions;

(c) Gardner's antifeminism (sexism) in using the term 'mother' and main guardian interchangeably, therefore suggesting that only mothers alienate their children;

(d) one-sidedness in presenting the parents: excessive simplifying in pointing at the custodial parent as the only person responsible for an improper relationship with the other parent and assigning personality disorders to the alienating parent (Czeredecka 2018).

Alicja Czeredecka (2018) widely addressed the claims toward PAS concept indicating at the same time the fact, that many of them could be dismissed. The author emphasized, among others, that colloquial language used by Gardner does not discredit the concept itself and it only indicates, that it requires further development. She listed many examples from psychological literature confirming the phenomena observed by the psychiatrist. The author also pointed out, that the existence of other characteristic symptoms, that were not included in PAS, has not been proven so far. Additionally, including PA (parental alienation – a modification of PAS) in ICD-11 dismissed another one of the claims. However, the author emphasized also, that symptoms described by Gardner were included only on the level of behaviour and they did not refer to their underlying mechanisms. She also drew attention to the validity of the claim of one-sidedness in presenting the parents. According to Czeredecka (2018), practice and research show, that in case of a high conflict between the parents, that results in alienation, both parents show disorders and parenting mistakes. In this respect, important differences were not found between the sexes. Moreover, Gardner did not include unconscious reasons for custodial parents' actions, the systems of defence mechanisms, that they developed and altruistic aspects of their motivation (serving a higher – according to the alienating parent – just purpose for the good of the child).

Therefore, the concept of PAS required modifications, which in turn led to the con-

cept of parental alienation (PA). Douglas Darnall and Wiliam Bernet contributed to its development. P. Darnall defined PA one of the parents conducting conscious actions, which result in anger, reluctance and opposing to court decisions, consciously or unconsciously denigrating the other parent in the eyes of the child and interfering with their relation with the intention of breaking it up (Czeredecka 2018:50 as cited in: Darnall 2008). The author pointed out, that the problem concerns the parents. Meanwhile, W. Bernet emphasized the significance of disorders visible in the child. According to him, parental alienation is a mental state, where the child usually involved in the legal conflict between the parents related to their divorce or separation strongly allies with the alienating parent and rejects the relationship with the other parent without justification. PA is characterized by unnormal, non-adaptive behaviour caused by a false opinion on the alienated parent (Czeredecka 2018:51, as cited in: Lorandor and others 2013:5).

The concept of PA differs in some aspects from PAS. In PA the outside source in the form of the alienating parent and a set of dysfunctions in the relationship is considered to be the point of gravity and not as in PAS: the child's own participation in the occurrence of the phenomenon. What is more, in PA alienating activity is examined on both sides of the conflict, and not only in reference to the custodial parent (Czeredecka 2018). Parental alienation in a modified form is described as a process and the changes that occur within in as dynamic. The alienators are not only parents, but they can also be the child's grandparents, relatives, new partners (Darnall 2008).

Polish scientific literature lacks research and publications devoted to parental alienation (Czeredecka 2018). However, there is an increase in scientific articles published on the subject in the United States and Great Britain. Aforementioned Wiliam Bernet and Douglas Darnell as well as Ronald Rohner, Nilgun Gregory and Amy Baker all have made important contributions to the development of the discussion on the analysed subject.

The authors point out practical aspects of parental alienation related to legislation, diagnosis and therapy. They observed two objectively identified and quantitatively measured traits visible in children experiencing parental alienation: rejecting the non-custodial parent (Huff, Anderson, Adamsons & Tambling 2017) and lack of ambivalence in idealizing the custodial parent (the alienating parent) and devaluation of the non-custodial parent (Kelly & Johnston 2001; Lee & Olesen 2001; Ellis 2007; Bernet, Gregory, Rohner, & Reay 2018). Analysing the second indicator, the authors point out, that children usually see both parents in an ambivalent manner, they see their strengths and their weaknesses. A high conflict between the parents makes it difficult for them to maintain the same level of affection for both parents. Children resolve this cognitive dissonance with a dividing mechanism – entering an intense relationship with one parent and rejecting the other. The child's behaviour results from a false belief, that the rejected parent is bad, dangerous, undeserving of love. As a consequence, children have a particularly positive image of the custodial parent and an extremely negative image of the non-custodial parent (Bernet, Gregory, Rohner, & Reay 2020).

Parental alienation is described as a complex form of violence in the family. It is a result of force, control and generating fear used by the custodial guardian (Harman

and others 2018). Alienating behaviours have been documented in scientific research. Denigration of the other parent, accusing him/her of not loving the child, controlling the child, forcing an alliance on the child, discussing grown up issues with the child, limiting contact with the other parent which infringes court decisions on parent's time and communication with the child and even false accusations of sexual abuse (Baker 2005; Baker & Darnall 2006; Harman et al. 2018).

The conducted research did not give an unequivocal answer to the question which of the sexes demonstrates a larger tendency for alienating behaviours. Fathers as well as mothers are guilty of that type of parental violence (Harman, Leder-Elder, & Biringen 2016; Balmer et al. 2017). However, as indicated by Harman and others (2016), women and men, that are alienators are viewed differently by third parties: fathers definitely more negatively than mothers. The authors see the influence of these discrepancies on the functioning of social institutions, such as family court, law enforcement or psychological pedagogical clinics. Moreover, these institutions have important impact on the discussed issue contributing to the development and prevention of parental alienation.

The authors emphasize, that alienating a child has consequences to his/her development and functioning. Long-lasting and unresolved conflict between the parents results in, among others, post-traumatic stress, disturbances in psychological and social functioning, low self-esteem, substance abuse, depression, difficulty in building relationships, fears and phobias (Harman, Bernet, & Harman 2019). Moreover, children are not the only ones considered to be victims, but also the parents, who suffer from: depression, fear, social isolation, emotional difficulties (Balmer, Matthewson, & Haines 2017; Harman, Bernet, & Harman 2019), and a high suicide rate (Balmer, Matthewson, & Haines 2018).

An important moment in the development of research and in strengthening PA in science was introducing the terms of: *parental alienation* and *parental estrangement* into International Classification of Diseases in 2018. It allowed for official use of the term of parental alienation in scientific publications. However, as A. Czeredcka (2018) notes, even though ICD-11 recognised the phenomenon, the discussion on scientific value of PA was not closed. Meanwhile, the need for deeper analysis of the phenomenon of parental alienation, standardisation of methods of diagnosis, longitudinal study and development of legal support and therapeutic system are emphasized.

PARENTAL ALIENATION IN POLAND

In Poland, every year more than 60 thousand marriages end in divorce, in this group around 40 thousand are families with children (Central Statistical Office 2019). The scale of break-ups of non-marital cohabitation, where there are children, is not known (it is not included in statistical data). However, regardless of whether the relationship was a marriage or non-marital cohabitation, many people break-up in conflict, that the children are involved in. How many of them experience parental alienation? In the United States it is estimated, that around 1% of all children are victims of PA (Bernet 2010; Warshak 2015). However, other research indicates, that there are many more,

that is even 29% of all children from divorced parents (Hands & Warshak 2011). Polish statistical data do not include the phenomenon. Expert opinions, psychotherapists' reports or stories of alienated parents indicate, that parental alienation is strongly present in Poland. It takes on different forms: from organizing the child's free time in a way, that meeting with the other parent collides with fulfilling the needs, pleasures or responsibilities of the child; refusing to give the child to meet with the other parent; unfounded accusations of physical, psychological violence, addictions or even sexual molestation of the child (Czeredecka 2018) and in extreme cases parental child abduction and multiannually, completely preventing the child from seeing the other parent. The motives for alienating parents' actions are usually: revenge, the need for control, financial matters, demonstrating the superiority of their parenting competence, self-presentation in an environment and fear of being abandoned by their child (Czeredecka 2018).

The phenomenon of parental alienation still was not widely discussed in Polish scientific literature. There is a lack of research and practical solutions in form of diagnosis, therapies and legislative aspects. The few considerations appear mainly in the fields of law and psychology, pedagogy does not address the issue.

Patriarchal system, which is dominant in Poland, glorifies the significance of the mother in raising and taking care of children (Hryciuk & Korolczuk 2012), which collides with the change in modern paternity, negating the patriarchal patterns. More and more often men are increasingly present in the sphere of raising and taking care of children. They also more and more often demand their parental rights in case of a separation or divorce. Bogusława Budrowska (2008) talked about gradual redefinition of the father figure and calls this qualitatively new fatherhood *paternity*. Modern, manly parenthood is based on a strong, emotionally deep connection with the child, built from the earliest moments of life (Kubicki 2009). Such a model of fatherhood has educational competences similar to the mother's (Sikorska 2009). However, in the society and judiciary still dominates a belief, that mothers are more predisposed to take care of children. Because of that stereotype, it seems logical, that after the divorce it is the mother who is awarded custody. Analysing court decisions on parental authority and custody over minor children in years 1980 – 2018, we can see some changes occurring in this sphere. They are shown in the Table below.

Table 1. Parental authority and custody over minor children awarded after divorce according to court decisions in Poland in years 1980-2018

| Year | Parental custody after divorce was awarded to (in percentage): | | | |
|------|--|------------|---------------------------------------|---|
| | The Mother | The Father | Together to the Mother and the Father | Separately to the Mother and the Father |
| 1980 | 77,4 | 2,6 | 17,7 | 1,2 |
| 1990 | 72,7 | 3,4 | 21,6 | 1,3 |
| 2000 | 65,0 | 3,6 | 29,2 | 1,1 |
| 2010 | 57,3 | 4,2 | 36,5 | 0,9 |
| 2017 | 41,0 | 3,8 | 53,5 | 0,7 |
| 2018 | 36,8 | 3,5 | 57,9 | 0,7 |

Source: own work based on Statistical Yearbook 2019, Central Statistical Office

The above table shows a quantitative increase in parental authority and custody from a formal viewpoint, awarded to the mother and the father together after the divorce. At the same time, formally there are less and less cases where custody is awarded solely to the mother. Nonetheless, the area of fathers having full custody does not significantly change. However, by comparing these data with the number of children aged 0-17 raised in families (from 22% of children raised by one of the parents 20% was raised exclusively by the mother and only 2% were raised by their fathers (Central Statistical Office 2015) it can be assumed, that after the divorce children typically live with their mothers (custodial parent) and meet with their fathers (non-custodial parent) in a place determined by the court and in an extent agreed upon by the parents. Therefore, since after the divorce children usually live with their mothers, it can be assumed that in Poland statistically they will be alienating parents more often than fathers.

METHOD, OBJECTIVE, DESCRIPTION OF THE GROUP

The following study of the phenomenon of parental alienation was conducted with the use of qualitative research paradigm. The leading method was netnographic. Netnography is a method of research by performing participant observation, used to work in the virtual world. It uses forms of mediated communication through the computer as a source of data in order to reach ethnographic understanding and to show the chosen cultural and social phenomena (Kozinets 2012:93). The method was created by Robert V. Kozinets, who dates back its beginning to 1996. However, the concept of online social life itself comes from Howard Rheingold (Kozinets 2012). Netnography began in the area of marketing and consumer studies and was then adapted to, among others, cultural, social, legal, communication studies and anthropology (Kozinets 2012). Netnography is a qualitative and interpretative research methodology, which adapts traditional ethnographic techniques, among others, observation and interviews for researching *online* communities and cultures. Furthermore, unlike ethnography, where it is impossible, it allows to have an insight view into archive data, which significantly broadens the analyzed perspective, giving us the possibility to observe even years

of the changing process. Netnographic research develops accordingly to the steps of ethnographic research: planning, entering the area, gathering data and interpreting it, while maintaining appropriate ethical standards, and then presenting the research. The basic matter of interest of researchers who use netnography are online communities, which are groups of entities that share the same goal, hobby or interest, interacting with each other on the Internet. Such a community creates content, develops relationships and forms a community culture based on its unique norms. One example of such a community are parents experiencing the phenomenon of parental alienation, who create groups on Facebook. The netnographic method used in this study allowed to present and explain the phenomenon of parental alienation existing in Polish families through the examined community.

The researcher in order to see and understand the mechanism and the process of parental alienation joined a Facebook group – *Kocham, szanuję, nie alienuję. Dziecko (przed, w trakcie, po) rozstaniu rodziców* (eng. *Love, respect, don't alienate. The child (before, during after) the break-up of parents*) on 31st May 2019. The group brings together non-custodial parents, who, in their opinion, are experiencing parental alienation, their partners and people interested in the subject.

Archived and published posts were observed and commented by the researcher. Having obtained the consent of the administrator and other members of the group they were analysed together with the published comments. Collecting the materials took from June 2019 to May 2020. In June 2020 the researcher analysed the collected narratives using manual analysis of qualitative data, that is manual techniques of coding, categorising and classifying (Kozinets 2012:182) and quantitative analysis of discourse (Gruber 2011).

The objective of research in this article is to show the phenomenon of parental alienation through the perception of non-custodial parents, who believe to be experiencing it.

The researcher formulated the following research areas:

1. What is parental alienation and what does it mean according to the subjects?
2. What are the reasons for parental alienation?
3. What actions are taken by members of the group to reduce or eliminate PA?

The group was started on 21st March 2015 on Facebook social platform, as a place for discussions, exchange of views and experiences regarding divorce, conflicts between parents, activity of Family Courts and shared custody. The leading thought developed in the group is: *'the child has a right to have both parents!'*

'Kocham, szanuję, nie alienuję...' has the status of a private group (only members can publish and see other posts; in order to become a member, one must obtain the consent of the administrator). It gathers 3070 people (information as of 20th May 2020), amongst who there are observers, commentators and people, who publish posts. Around 60% of group members are men.

PARENTAL ALIENATION IN THE NARRATIVES OF NON-CUSTODIAL PARENTS

In 'Kocham, szanuję, nie alienuję...' group, every day there is a discussion regarding the phenomena related to parental alienation. Analysed posts include narratives describing experiences and views on subjects relating to PA; and apart from that films, auditions, photographs and pictures and information about events related to the subject (among others, scientific conferences, lectures, congresses, meetings, happenings, manifestations).

Most popular subjects discussed in the group:

1. Violence of Parental Alienation (46 posts written from the moment of creating the group included a # marked with this topic, it does not mean, that there weren't more posts published about this subject, data as at 20th May 2020)
2. Family Court and Family Law (39)
3. Parental Child Abduction (29)
4. Shared Custody (28)
5. Rights of Children (27)
6. PAS (26)

Moreover, discussions were held on subjects such as: The Hague Convention, parental conflicts, divorce, parental planning, false accusations, trial, court-appointed family guardians, psychologists.

Parental alienation in the analysed group is experienced directly by the parents (but also guardians – e.g. grandparents) and children, or indirectly observed by the partners of alienated parents. The subjects describe it as a form of violence, which is well-illustrated by what was said by one of the group administrators: "This is violence towards the other parent, but especially towards the child". And also: "this monstrous, destructive machine which is parental alienation, it only becomes bigger and makes more and more damage, because there is no one, who would impose any sort of restrictions on that machine, and even if there are restrictions, you can't enforce them, even worse, there is silent permission for breaking these restrictions." Such a standpoint – PA is violence, is present in the narratives of many of the research subjects and it is confirmed by source literature (Harman, Leder-Elder, & Biringen 2016; Balmer & others 2017; Harman et al. 2018).

From the point of view of the analysed subject matter, what is important is the size and diffusion of the phenomenon. Members of the group who were asked within the forum: 'How many people (children, parents, their relatives) in Poland are affected by Violence of Parental Alienation?' commonly responded that the number is very high. Among the comments, there were answers such as: 'an immensity'; 'a bunch'; 'many'; 'too many'; '95%, 90-95% that is the truth, everybody has some one, but they don't always know about it'; 'I would even say, that there is no one who doesn't have around them a person related to PA'. This shows that the subjects consider parental alienation a common

phenomenon. It is not surprising considering their personal involvement in the analysed subject matter. However, it is difficult to address this assessment in a scientific manner due to the lack of statistical data on the subject.

Group members were asked about the extent of alienation, that they have experienced themselves, in a post of the following content: *'How many of you has an isolated child and since when?'* 234 comments were published under the post (information as of 20th May 2020), that showed many alienated guardians: fathers, mothers, grandmothers and grandfathers. They determined the time with no contact with the child in years (the longest time of isolation was 15 years of no contact, the shortest was 4 months, most commonly it was 2-3 years without the possibility to meet with the child/children).

Alienating behaviours experienced by the analysed parents and guardians refer most of all to isolation from the child. The scale of the phenomenon is laid on a certain, noticeable axis. On one of its ends there is organising the child's time by the custodial parent in a way, that it collides with the time when meeting with the other parent was scheduled (extra-curricular classes, tutoring, interest groups, attractions, doctor appointments). The next point on the axis is failure to carry out court orders regarding the time of meetings and no contact between the parent and the child, which is accompanied by the custodial parent changing their phone number or blocking calls or even parental child abduction. The last point is a complete lack of meetings, which the analysed subjects described as lasting for years.

Parental child abductions are often described by the subjects. They involve the custodial parent moving together with the child/children, without the consent of the other parent and without informing the non-custodial parent about that fact and about their future place of residence. One of the fathers described it as follows... *'I come to visit my boy and the child is gone... and I don't know where he is, the phones are dead (...) and me, the father, well, I supposedly have rights to the child, but they exist only on paper...'* In their statements, the subjects often emphasize, that current legal arrangements in Poland do not prevent parental child abductions and even treat them as legal. It is showed by one of the narratives... *'the mother performed a classic and legal in Poland parental child abduction...'* The subjects' stories of what they directly experienced told in the group together with published fragments of films, documentaries and press articles depict parental child abductions.

Another aspect of parental alienation described by the subject is not giving and even blocking access to information about health, education and future of the child. One of the fathers described it as follows... *'for the last 2 years a complete lock on information about the child and none, not even one decision was made together. I send e-mails with questions about health issues and life decisions...ostracism...'* The subjects describe it as a complex phenomenon, in which teachers or headmasters of educational establishments are often involved. Referring to the position of the Minister of Justice, one of group members wrote... *'school and pre-school are obliged to make the child's documentation available to the parent, even when one parent's parental authority regarding co-decision-making on important matters relating to the child is limited...'* However, according to the subjects that is often not respected and they have to apply for infor-

mation through legal channels.

Lack of information from the custodial parent spreads also into the area of the child's important life events. The subjects indicate, that they are not being informed about dates of ceremonies (e.g. Christening, First Communion, child's birthday party, child's participation in contests and competitions, shows and sport events) or they receive that information from third parties. It makes it difficult to participate in them and excludes non-custodial parents from their children's important life events.

One of the most burdening forms of parental alienation, next to not having contact with the child, are false accusations towards the non-custodial parent regarding domestic abuse, addictions, sexually abusing the child, mental diseases, bullying and stalking. The phenomenon is described several times in the analysed group. The alienated parents present a similar pattern: the custodial parent files a complaint with the court regarding domestic abuse, sexual abuse of the child etc. The accusations turn out to be groundless. However, slowness of Polish courts makes the process very long. As written by one of the persons... *'Us, for 3 years under art. 207 Criminal Code [abuse] – we never leave the court, same false accusations, no evidence'*.

"Educating" the child, programming, manipulating, brain washing are terms used in discussions describing further alienating behaviours. They include ... *'teaching the child what he/she should say to the next 'specialist'...*' especially when the subject is the other parent and the child's relationship with him/her. However, they also include badmouthing the other parent to the child, lying about them and talking about the conflict between the parents, in which the child should not be involved. Next to the narratives of parents experiencing such behaviours, films and articles in Polish and English on the subject are often published in group.

Summarising the result of seeking an answer to the question: *'what is and what does parental alienation mean in the opinion of the subjects'*, it is violence towards the child and the other parent. It usually involves isolating the son/daughter from their non-custodial parent and not informing the parent about the child's health, education, interests and future. Relatively less frequently the subjects wrote about false accusations and 'programming' of the child as well as negative reactions to the non-custodial parent; however, those aspects of parental alienation were also present in the narratives. Considering that these are topics of a 'delicate' nature, it seems necessary to continue the thread in individual interviews. It is especially indicated by the fact, that it was this aspect of child's behaviour, that confirms the existence of parental alienation.

Analysing the posts published by members of the group in terms of seeking the answer to what are the reasons for parental alienation, the researcher reached the following conclusions. The subjects see the reason for PA in a few sources: the alienating parent himself/herself, family law, the functioning of Family Courts.

Alienating parents are described by the subjects only pejoratively. Members of the group use (mostly in reference to mothers) terms like: *'owner'*, *'madka'* (a commonly known mocking form of the Polish word mother – matka), *'alienator'*, *'torturer'*, *'criminal'*, *'the executioner of her child's mental health'*. They often accuse them of having mental diseases, emotional disorders, psychopathy, borderline personality disorder,

narcissistic personality disorder. There are also suggestions like: *'The alienator should be sent to a psychiatric/psychological assessment and then to long-lasting treatment and therapy'*. What is more, the alienating parent is accused of having economical motivations. As said by one of the subjects: *'sadly, the main motivation is money instead of the child's wellbeing, the conflict is purely economical, the mother does not agree to shared custody, because she wouldn't get alimony and social benefits.'*

The actions of an alienating parent, according to the subjects, are supported by family law, which does not include equal rights for the parents in the situation where they are both awarded custody over the child. As written by one of the subjects: *'awarding full custody together to both parents is a paradox in my view, the above slogan is FICTION'*. Apart from that, Polish law is also accused of making parental child abductions legal.

The great majority of posts published in the group regards the actions of Family Court. It is described by the subjects as an institution that supports parental alienation, that divides parents into *'dominant'* (custodial) and *'visiting'* (non-custodial), where the main task of the latter is to pay alimony. As described by one of the fathers: *'there is so much said about the equality of partners (dividing responsibilities) in a relationship (marriage). Funny how it is all forgotten in the court room. Suddenly, it turns out, that the child needs the other parent (usually the father) only to a residual extent'*.

Accusations present in the narratives of the examined persons, regarding Family Courts, are mainly:

- No reaction and silent permission for the violence of parental alienation (being pro violence);
- Idleness and lack of protection for the child victim;
- Resistance to deciding on shared custody, where *'the children would have two equally valuable parents'*;
- Corruption *'among legal corporations and court expert witnesses'*,
- Low level of competence and ethics among court expert witnesses giving opinions on family situations;
- *'Impunity of family court judges and practically no independent, social control over the functioning of family courts'*;
- Feminization, bias and treating fathers as second category parents.

The last issue analysed in the study was answering the question: What actions to eliminate PA or its results are proposed by members of the group? Analysis of published narratives indicated few categories of answers.

1. Offensive actions. Active counteracting and fighting PA by:

Trials in Family Court regarding the extension of custody,

Reporting the custodial parent's failure to fulfil obligations set by the court to

the law enforcement or the court;

Spreading awareness about parental alienation (organizing manifestations, happenings, scientific conferences, publications, writing petitions to the government and state legislative authorities),

Fighting for legal presumption of shared custody,

Acting on the verge of legality or against the law.

2. Reactive actions. Reacting to PA in a balanced manner, clarifying without attacking the other side. As said by one of the subjects *‘actually, the only strategy is to nurture the relationship with the child. You don’t have power over what the child’s mother is doing and saying. It is often horribly frustrating, that you have to explain and untwist the manipulations from her side, especially after longer absences’*

3. Defensive actions. Focusing on building a relationship with the child, not referencing to the alienating person. *‘The children will get older, such nonsense about their father coming from their mother will be shrugged off, what counts are meetings, to laugh together, tell fun stories, not talking about their mother!’*

Shared custody is a commonly appearing topic in the narratives of the members of the group. It is viewed as a remedy for parental alienation. In the words of one of the members of the group *‘this should be the norm, for the vast majority of children!’* Its benefits for the development of the child and valuable means of its implementation are often mentioned. However, in most narratives of members of the group there is a visible and emphasized lack of shared custody within Polish realities of after-divorce functioning of families and the consequences of that state. The perspective is shown through other countries (e.g. Sweden, France or Germany) where shared custody is the standard solution, where the mother and the father both have the child, who has equal rights to both of his/her parents.

CONCLUSIONS

Parental alienation, after many years of discussion currently has got the status of a scientifically proven phenomenon, registered in international classification of diseases, ICD-11. Over the last decade, increasingly numerous research and articles on the subject occurred in Great Britain, the United States, Italy and Spain, where an example, among others, could be the articles of the leading researcher in the field, William Bernet. However, despite strong interest in the subject of parental alienation, it still needs deep analysis, standardisation of methods of diagnosis, longitudinal study and development of legal support and therapeutic system.

The phenomenon of parental alienation is little represented in Polish scientific community. There is a lack of studies, research, publications in domestic scientific literature. The few considerations on the subject appear in the fields of law and psychology, pedagogy does not address the issue. In order to fill that void, there is a need

for quantitative and qualitative research showing the extent of the phenomenon and its impact on the family with particular regard to its impact on the functioning of children. There is a necessity for scientific discussion on the subject. It is particularly needed in the situation, where more and more Polish families are broken, because of divorce or separation, at the same time remaining in a long, high conflict, the victim of which is the child.

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BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

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CHILDREN'S POWER TO CHALLENGE AUTHORITY

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ABSTRACT: Child rights can be considered through the different characteristics of human rights, according to the classification “3P” as Protection, Provision, and Participation. The (potential) distinction between child rights and human rights recalls the former perspective about children’s not seen as human beings. The development of the fields on childhood studies such as “children’s participation” and “agency” are also related to the concept of “empowerment,” which indicates the power relations between children and grown-ups. The main purpose of this paper is to debate all those notions through the children’s own experiences by referring to various examples in the frame of Power of children as the Fourth-P right. After discussing how children have the power to “challenge the authority,” I will indicate some examples from *Little Review*, as a remarkable experience of children’s participation. Lastly, I will try to reveal what today’s children consider the topic of child rights by sharing the findings of pilot research with children, which I realized in 2019 December. In this study, twelve children who were 11-year-old then, wrote their commentaries about children’s rights and the requirements to have the rights. Thus, in the final part of this paper, the rights will be addressed through children’s perspectives.

Keywords: child rights, participation, children’s newspaper, children’s power, Janusz Korczak, childism

INTRODUCTION

In the Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC 1989), several statements are classified as participation rights, like the child's right to be heard (Article 12) or freedom of expression (13). Participation is assumed as one of the children's rights, whereas it is only mentioned five times as a word in the Convention; Article 9, Article 23, Article 31, and Article 40, respectively. Moreover, only the content of Article 31 is considered to be related to "participation" with its meaning. To clarify; Article 9 is about the child's right to live with parents, and Article 40 is about juvenile justice so that both of them can be classified as the principle of "protection," while Article 23 is about disabled children's right to enjoy and live with dignity, which is related to "provision." These three principles help us to classify and understand child rights easily. For instance, providing shelter, education or health are all included in "providing" as the main principle because they seem essential for living. On the other hand, "protection from neglect and exploitation" (Franklin 2002:19) is as important as "providing" something to them. Thus, these two principles are seen as fundamental rights. So, what about "participation;" is it already a right for children, or is it something grown-ups "provide" to them?

According to the 'Ladder of Participation' (Arnstein 1969), to reach the stages of participation, the levels of tokenism, where the steps of informing and consultation stand, must be passed over. Participation as the "fundamental right of citizenship" (Hart 1992: 5; Arnstein 1969). Suggests the ways to overcome tokenism to achieve citizen participation. (Hart 1992: 8). Reorganizes Arnstein's ladder for children's participation, and the first two stages before tokenism are manipulation and decoration there. Only after tokenism, which is quite similar to children's rights' staying as 'decoration' for politics, 'informed' and 'consulted' steps finally come. Participation can be realized after children being "consulted and informed" at the three last stages: "adult-initiated: shared decisions with children," "child-initiated and directed," and "child-initiated: shared decisions with adults." In contrast, indicating the developments of children's potential to participate in the decision-making process (Hart 1992: 5). It also addresses that participation itself is a "naive notion for children who do not have the decision-making power of adults." Thus, it is clear that children's participation 'rights' can not be discussed independently from power relations. In this paper, children's power to participate is reviewed through the 3P approach to children's rights based on the theoretical frame. In the following chapter, some methods of children's participation are indicated, for instance, Little Review as a prior experience for children's newspaper in the 1920s. Children's opinions about whether child rights are different from human rights and how child rights can be realized, will be shared to continue the debate through children's voices.

CHILDREN'S POWER TO PARTICIPATE AS AN ESSENTIAL PART OF CHILD RIGHTS

Wall (2010: 123) briefly explains the six participation rights as: "to be heard (article 12); to freedom of expression (13); to freedom of thought, conscience, and religion

(14); to freedom of association and assembly (15); to privacy (16); and to access to appropriate information and mass media (17).” Article 16 and Article 17 seem as the requirements to participate to be classified as the other providing rights. In the Convention (UNCRC 1989), while Article 12, Article 13, Article 14, and Article 15 are directly about children’s agency and participation, ‘participation,’ as both a word and content, only exists in Article 31 as the right of play and leisure, which can be seen as ‘providing to’ children rather than ‘participating by them.’ It is indicated that the child has the right to participate in cultural life and artistic life, and every child needs equal opportunities. However, opportunities differ in real life, and distinctions deriving from social class cause children to participate at different levels unless they are completely excluded. (Franklin 2002: 26) indicates the possible reasons behind “children’s exclusion from decision-making,” such as “incapability of self-maintenance; self-sufficient,” not been able to take responsibility, and their “future-oriented concern.” Children’s exclusion from the decision-making is the ground for their being incapable or irresponsible in fact. Besides, the idea of the child’s having a lack of competence or responsibility is deriving from an adultist point of view.

Childhood studies recently have a brand new perspective against adult-centrism. For instance, (Wihstutz 2016) suggests “difference-centred approaches” based on Freire’s theory of “pedagogies of the oppressed.” The basic opinion here is children’s agency, which can be discussed through other concepts, like subjectivity and/or competency; as (Bollig & Kelle 2016: 37) claim, “the acting subject or the competent actor is replaced with a concept of participation in practices.” Based on children’s participation in practices, research with children, and participatory action research by children have become important topics in childhood studies. Wall (2019: 3) also addresses that “placing children at the centre of research” would provide not only “children’s agency and experiences in their own right, but also to develop critical understandings of child-adult relations and social practices.” He used the concept of *childism* “in analogy to concepts such as feminism, womanism, postgenderism, postcolonialism, decolonialism, environmentalism, and transhumanism” by suggesting it as an analytical tool for critical studies and even for the activist movement. While explaining the suggestion of *childism* as an analogy of feminism for childhood studies, he (Wall 2019) underlines the similarities between Spivak’s “subaltern” and feminism through the necessity of subjectivity, and to hear the unheard voices, just like children’s.

As a result, not only feminism or gender studies but also post-colonial approaches, queer and transgender perspectives can be included in those “difference-centred” fields. Childism can be understood through (Harding 1999). “Standpoint theory,” which has the potential to transform the subaltern into a competent subject for its own sake. According to their population, children have the characteristic of minority groups, just like women in the face of male-centrism or all people from peripheral places against several anglophone countries in the world. The debates on gender, class, ethnicity can be continued on that kind of distinctions, whereas, increasingly consensual value has become to respect differences, encountering the alter, et cetera. Moran-Ellis & Sünker (2013: 44) draw attention to the “competence gap,” which is not only an issue of the adult-children relationship, it seems more related to all types of differences

among human beings. Children's becoming empowered is so important that they are the future of society according to traditional discourse; on the other hand, children's participation is necessary for "socialization, adaptation to new conditions of the transition of the world" (Markowska 2018: 62) and it is the only visible way to take place in the decision-making process, and eventually to become competent.

Meacham (2004: 83) states some provisions to be able to participate, such as "self-reflection self-organization, behaving, interpreting," while Hartung (2017: 53) almost defines participation "as a way of 'empowering' or 'liberating' the subject." She also points out the increasing "value of personal freedom through self-realisation and self-determination" so that it seems like one needs to become empowered and achieve the freedom to participate, and one needs to participate to get the power and freedom simultaneously. Moreover, children's changing positioning in our world reveals the individualist and self-governmental discourses. Being productive and responsible is still required to become a reasonable citizen; besides, it is necessary to have universal humanistic values; children and young people's participation must reflect these thoughts. To provide children's active participation in society, the Gulbenkian foundation indicates that the governments should take responsibility and develop strategies (Freeman, Henderson & Kettle 1999: 43). By this means, participation can be long term, and children are exactly seen as citizens for today, not only for the future. Therefore, participation may become a fundamental right for children. According to Roche (2002: 72), children's rights are about "rethinking and redefining adult-child relations" that academics and researchers in the field of childhood have already considered the nature of rights.

Wall goes a step further through the "childist ethical grounding," he claims that human rights can only be expanded "the actual humanity of societies" through childism (Wall 2010: 113) because this critical perspective for childhood studies through children's standpoint can provide deconstruction of adulthood. If so, the actual humanity of human rights is only possible to take over the settled power relations. With a very critical review of the Convention, John (2003: 45) calls the fourth 'P' for children's autonomy: Power. Both children's becoming autonomous being and freely participating in the community they belong are considered to be integrated with empowerment; that's why it is quite remarkable to mention 'power' as a right of the child instead of power-relations or empowerment. Empowerment is an interesting word to be chosen, probably on purpose: its basic structure indicates the meaning: the prefix "em" means "to cause to be/to be in," while "ment" is corresponded with "an act or a result" (McCarthy, Holbrook & Freeman 2008; cited in Hartung 2017: 55), and Hartung defines empowerment as "an act of entering power into children and young people." Thus, the challenge is the act of carrying power from a powerful (adult) being to another vulnerable (child). Furthermore, adults, who provide children and young people "necessary skills, knowledge and inspiration to take control" (Hartung 2017: 55), are called "empowerer." The word's etymology clearly shows us the settled one-way directional relationship, based on the common hierarchical structure instead of reciprocal dialogue based on interaction and equity.

HOW TO HAVE THE POWER: JANUSZ KORCZAK AND CHILDREN'S PARTICIPATION

Although it is not simple to create an interactive relationship where equity exists, there are many experiences located in different places during modern times (since childhood perception used to be quite different in the pre-modern era, the period before the 20th century is another topic to discuss various childhood experiences). Janusz Korczak, whose consideration about children would become the main inspiration of the CRC, dedicated his life to children and their well-being in between two world wars. In addition to being one of the delegates for the Declaration of the Child's Rights in 1924, his perspective was much wider than that text: The Declaration only consisted of children's survival needs and their potentials. However, Korczak was aware of children's individuality from the beginning of his intellectual life so that he drew attention to the child's dignity and the right to be respected. On the one hand, he wrote novels for children and advice to teachers on education and caregivers about child-rearing as well; on the other hand, he built up a place for children, "Our Home" as a real home; "not a shelter, not a boarding house, it is a 'wychowawca' institution" (Vucic & Sekowska 2020:111), which means an institution of raising and educating.

In Korczak's approach to children and society, raising children or cultivating young people is not only preparing them for life, but the fundamental purpose is also to reorganize the society by creating the children's society according to the principles of "justice, brotherhood, equal rights and responsibilities." (Vucic and Sekowska 2020: 112) The orphan's home is a very outstanding experience owing to its main aim, and coming Korczak's pedagogical ideas and social perspectives to real life. Today, various methods are mentioned for children's participation (Freeman, Henderson & Kettle 1999: 62); such as conferences, survey and/or researches, focus group (with children), council, forum, newsletter (probably children themselves or with adult mentorship), and Korczak realized most of them at Our Home [Nasz Dom]. While playing games with children, he "could note the child's capabilities within the community, attitude towards others and motivations behind that attitude" (Vucic & Sekowska 2020: 100) states, which is a kind of participatory research in terms of childhood studies. Children had their court and council, so it was one of the greatest steps for children's agency and the power to make decisions. Children in Our Home could both consult their games unsupervised by adults; despite their differences, they "all involved in the collective activity" (Vucic & Sekowska 2020:100), and those experiences can still give a response to our continuous question that "which children" or "whose participation" (Markowska-Manista 2018) are we talking about.

In Our Home [Nasz Dom], there was no place for "philanthropy" and the children were not seen as "poor orphans," and that standpoint has always been the essential view: one ought to respect the child, not to pity them. It is also the widespread politics for our everyday lives against subalterns; that's why to have a voice is still significant to exist; your voice or another tool to express yourself is mandatory to survive. And the children who were the parts of both Orphans' Home [Dom Sierot] and Our Home had the chance to have a voice almost a century before. While "Our Home" was becom-

ing a prior example for a child council and an experiment for equal rights, *Little Review* [*Maly Przegląd*] as the supplement of Our Review, Jewish daily journal, appeared for children to be heard by more people. The experience of Little Review indicates two important distinctions between children: age and gender. Even they were both Jewish in Warsaw and probably had similar socio-economic conditions, “Korczak explained that adolescents had more opportunities to express themselves – they had books, discussion groups, and theatres, and were less controlled by adults, so did not have as great a need for the magazine as did the younger children,” states (Landau-Czajka 2019: 345). So, it was known that younger children needed a place to express themselves more. Korczak cared about younger children’s right of expression; besides that, two editors were invited from the first issue of the magazine in addition to Korczak himself.

Just before the first volume of the newspaper, in 1926, on the 7th of October, the announcement of Little Review was published by Janusz Korczak with the title, “To My Future Readers!” as a calling for children and school youth from the paper’s mouth. In that announcement, it is clearly stated that “There will be three editors. One old (bald, wearing glasses) to make sure everything stays in order. A young editor for the boys, and a girl – an editor for the girls,” which reflects Korczak’s fair approach and attempt to encourage all children to write both their ideas and observations, by continuing his words as “So that nobody’s ashamed and everyone speaks honestly and clearly what they need, what’s hurting them, what are their worries and cares” (*Little Review* announcement 192¹). Korczak’s well-known character, King Matt also discovers that he should not be embarrassed by someone’s laugh at him (Korczak 2005), so, Janusz Korczak tried to lead children to find out a strategy to overcome their vulnerability and to find the power themselves. To take a start, he suggested a permanent section called “I want to know” by making a mention at the end of the announcement so that it would be a start to give a voice to children and to awake their curiosity as well.

Since the first few volumes, *Little Review* realized children’s participation at almost the highest level of Hart’s ladder of participation (Hart 1992) because it was child-initiated despite Korczak. In the beginning, there was stated that “any fairy tales, fables, or novellas” cannot be included in the newspaper (Landau-Czajka 2019: 341), and in the first volume, the first part of a serial column, “An Orphan’s Diary” appeared by beginning with this statement that it was not a novel, it was a diary. However, in the following papers, children published poems and short stories as they had desired. Therefore, the experience of Little Review was adult-initiated in the very beginning, and then it rapidly changed into the way which children would like to write. The newspaper correspondents could even critique the newspaper, where they had a chance to have a word, itself. As Korczak promised, permanent correspondents had their desks, and they invited new correspondents to the place of Little Review. From readers who sent letters to the magazine to correspondents, from contributors to permanent contributors, Little Review was quite like a school for children to learn, express ideas, share their troubles and worries, ask for help, build up solidarity, and develop strategies to struggle.

¹ The volume in English is accessible via <https://labiennale.art.pl/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/1-MP-1348-1926-ENG.pdf>

Sometimes, a correspondent addressed the big-scaled world issues, like “There is no solidarity. If it is, people would work together not to kill each other,” meanwhile, another wrote that “I don’t know what happens in the whole world because I’m too young, but I know very well what happens at school” (LR 1927, 10 June), thus, he revealed school issues and shared his everyday problems, which the others might find familiar. Children generally told their troubles, such as ‘boys’ harassment to girls’ that indicates gender issues, or “bad students” as a matter of bullying, which is still a great problem for children and teenagers. On the other hand, their everyday problems sometimes became an injustice matter: for example, a letter to the director of city transportation in Warsaw was published in the 53rd volume (LR 1927, 21 October), questioning why students in public schools ought to pay for transportation, while there was transportation card for the private school students, by declaring that “a great injustice has been done to public schools.” So, just as (Landau-Czajka 2019: 353) emphasizes “both in Korczak’s time and later,” the effect of Little Review was an opportunity “to challenge the authority of adults.” There were also commentaries that “Aunts and grandmothers hate the Little Review” in the newspaper because it must have been difficult for them to give ear to the ‘weak’ ones. Moran-Ellis & Sünker (2013:35) underline that intergenerational trust is important for children’s participation so that school councils may be helpful to children nowadays, from the milieu they attend to the city council where they keep living, participation can be expanded.

CHILD RIGHTS THROUGH CHILDREN’S EYES

My first ‘official’ encounter with children as a grown-up occurred in 2012 when I started to write novels for children. That time as a 23-year-old extremely young lady, I was feeling like one of them as if there was no hierarchy in our dialogue. However, our relationship could not be horizontal due to its nature: I have been the writer, who was invited there by teachers, the other grown-ups, and the children/students had to call me ‘siz’ [you as the plural pronoun and singular at formal communication, like ‘Sie’ in German] instead of ‘sen’ [singular version of ‘you’ pronoun]. In Turkish, younger kids call grown-ups ‘sen,’ but as soon as they come to the school-age, they learn to say ‘siz.’ Young people can call only their family members as ‘sen,’ besides that, if they talk with ‘sen’ pronoun to a foreigner, it is supposed that these children are too spoiled to respect anyone. Interestingly, I began to consider this nuance just after I tried to hear the children’s voices, trying to become a real equal one, not the writer, teacher, or academic. On the other hand, writing for children and researching with children both prompt me to look inside myself, my past, my childhood. I remember I was ‘that spoiled one,’ because I used to think that I was as a competent being as adults, I had rights and freedom. The point is that I never recognized myself as a child, just as Korczak (2009: 29) said: “Boys and girls don’t like to be called children.”

Through this perspective, it is apparent that a child must recognize him/herself as a human being at first rather than a child. If so, how do they perceive the distinction between human rights and child rights? To understand child rights through their eyes, I decided to conduct very small-sized research that I share its results in this chapter.

It was realised through participatory research methods, by which the children provided their experiences and opinions to express themselves during our investigations. I asked three simple questions to the volunteer 11-year-old students in a classroom, and twelve children shared their responses with me. The questions were respectively: “what are child rights? Do you think are human rights and child rights different? Are there any requirements for child rights?” For the ‘child rights’ section, almost all of them wrote “the right to live, shelter, food, etc.” the basic needs to survive. A few of them caught the nuance while starting, or noticed the focus of the second question that they mentioned “education, play, the right to enjoy, to express themselves/their ideas, etc.” At the first glance, the basic needs seem to belong to all human beings, but children may need something more. While writing, children talked among themselves, discussed with each other, and acknowledged several different statements, which I will tell by indicating the main points they mostly drew attention to. But before that, I would like to touch upon ‘which children’ I was together with, and ‘when’ we met.

We had come together several times since October 2019 for philosophy workshops, and I chose the main topic to start an argument, then mentored the discussion by children. By that time, our agenda was different, and then the school principal asked me to conduct a workshop about child rights because of *World Children’s Day* on the 20th of October. It is called *Child Rights’ Day* in Turkish since we have another children’s day on April 23, *National Sovereignty and Children’s Day*, which is a public holiday in Turkey to commemorate the foundation of the Grand National Assembly of Turkey. Despite the relation between the council, where democracy would (ideally) be experienced, and the children, whom the others need to hear, is quite revolutionary, children’s participation during National Children’s Day cannot go beyond the level of tokenism. Children take the seats of the ministers or members of the parliaments for the day and declare their demands; however, everything has done a part of the ceremony. Unfortunately, children become a game for the serious politics of the adults’ world. Therefore, both National Children’s Day and World Children’s Day as ‘our’ day of Child Rights, which is also just before Human Rights’ Day on December 10, are seen crucial to discuss human rights and freedom with children and young people.

There is an increasing number of child rights’ activists in Istanbul. For instance, the editors of (Parlayan & *Çocuklar* 2018:18) interviewed children, living in Tarlabası district in Istanbul, where different ethnic groups of people, families having low socioeconomic backgrounds, and many refugees live, about child rights for World Children’s Day. Except “the right to live, shelter, and education,” which was also indicated by the other children from higher classes, whom I worked with, children from Tarlabası said that the child has the right to have a “homeland,” play in “clean streets,” to have “brothers and sisters.” Rather than a family, demanding to have siblings is probably deriving from cultural traditions. Desire to have a “homeland” must be due to being away from the homeland. Although not indicated in the magazine, it is possible to say that statement belongs to a refugee kid. The other children’s request of “playing in clean streets” shows us another problem: unequal conditions for different ethnic groups and potential discrimination children and young people have already face. That is why the question “which children (can) talk about children’s rights and partic-

ipation?” becomes more significant. For instance, child labour is still a drastic matter, and the ratio of seasonal agriculture child worker is high in Turkey. When we consider those children, even protection rights endanger.

Incidentally, I have been visiting various primary and secondary schools in different cities of Turkey for my sign days to meet and have conversations with children. As a result of this, I realized how children’s interest, interpretation, and expression differ due to their various experiences. Their awareness of the circumstances in the world is also quite different according to children’s tendencies and interests; that is why it is not possible to generalize awareness or knowledge of children about child rights. On the other hand, let me explain an observation about children’s participation experiences: some upper-class children may be interested in new childhood movements, like climate activism, naturalism, and so on. However, children from lower classes or children with another disadvantage due to ethnicity, residence, etc., usually have more chances to participate in various platforms in their neighbourhood, in the favour of child rights activists. As Hartung (2017:56) reminds that “There is also an assumption that the children and young people not only have the capacity to take control but the desire,” which I agree with. Perhaps, children with disadvantages need this ‘desire to take control,’ or ‘have the power’ to challenge the authority, which they would ever have, more than the others.

Although the magazine *Parlayan Çocuklar*² I mentioned above, is not completely written/produced by children (but they are the main contributors for sure), it is a remarkable platform for children to say their word. For example, a child’s letter to the president, asking for “peace” was published with the motto “no more violence in the country” (Parlayan & Çocuklar 2018:8). Another kid’s letter appealed to the minister of education, telling about the difficulty they had to access educational devices in the school. And the writer of that letter was also the delegate of his school, explaining that the school administrator had wanted money from the children’s parents but they could not afford it. The child could find a way to write a letter, whether it would work or not, he apparently found out how to struggle with difficulties using having the power from his position, by taking control –and responsibility as well- in the school council.

Whereas, to be a delegate in the school council does not seem as ‘cool’ as the other things in privileged schools so that upper-class children have a chance to be engaged in something else, except fighting for their rights. So, the children, who participated in the child rights workshop I mentored, were those kinds of kids. They have access to many cultural and artistic events, they can attend various activities in the city, and they experience childhood just like me. But they are different about the matter of awareness: they do know what child rights are, while I never cared about being a child. I am telling this by comparing my childhood experience to show how the perception of child rights changed. In recent years, the raising of civil society and volunteers

² For more information: <http://www.tarlabasi.org/yayinlar> There are many remarkable issues mentioned in the magazine *Parlayan Çocuklar* [Shining Children] for instance, “Violence Perspection of Children,” “Women Rights,” “School,” “Disabled Rights,” and “Environment Rights” are several titles of the volumes published so far.

working with children has raised the awareness of all children as far as I observed. Therefore, the students, who can go to prestigious colleges, private schools, and even middle-class children in general terms, have commenced knowing what the child officially means and what kind of rights children have. Regardless of age and gender differences, most of the children from the middle and upper classes have an idea about what child rights mean.

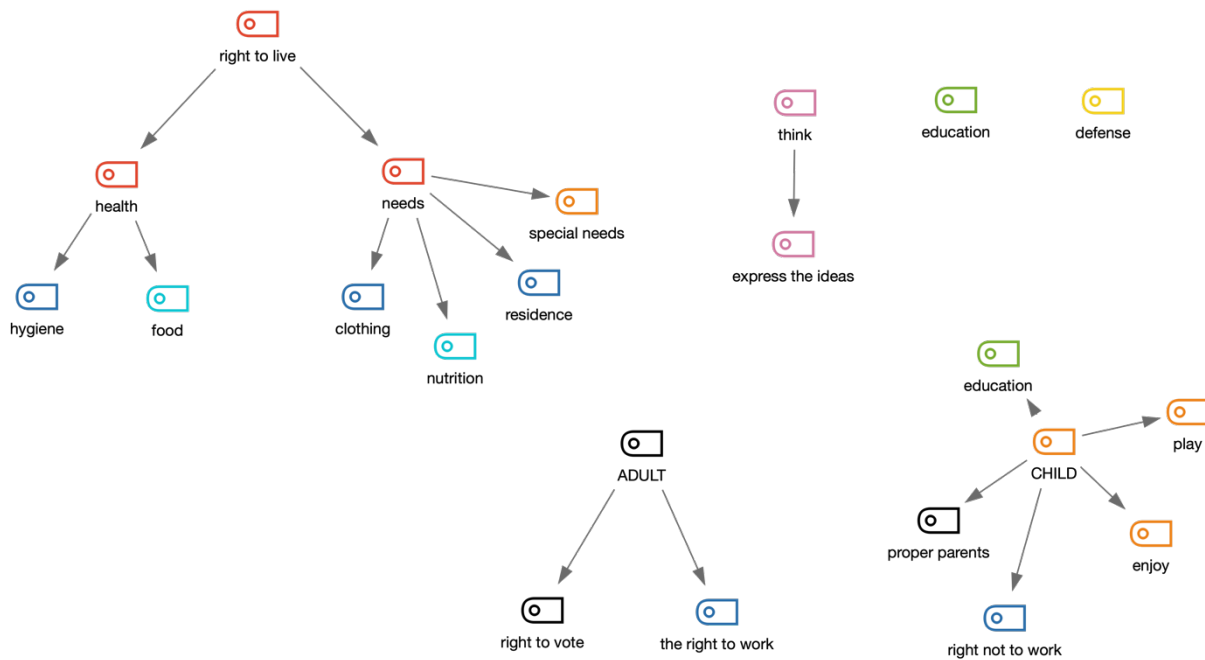
In my opinion, internet access and the usage of digital platforms of children have also impacted children's knowledge about those issues. On the other hand, children do not engage in politics unless they have specific problems, just like all other humans who have various ages. Thus, there are significant differences between people deriving from the cultural and social conditions they experience. While girls in Tarlabaşı or the other specific districts have trouble walking in the streets comfortably, the children I did this case study with have no problem due to gender differences. (Because most of them live in protected areas, like gated communities, they may have a lack of freedom to go outside as much as lower-class children. It is apparent that so many variables impact those differences among children's experiences, so I cannot achieve to address through this limited study.) Plus, I did not encounter any specific differences deriving from gender in our research. Those twelve children were five boys and seven girls, which I have chosen not to indicate while referring to their statements.

When we look at the responses of the children about the rights, we see that all of them mentioned "the right to live," as human rights or child rights, which is expected. As child rights, "education" comes after, children mostly indicated "education" or "the right to access education/to be educated" or "go to school" because it is the basic difference in comparison with human rights. In other respects, it is clear that they distinguish the fundamental rights as "sheltering/shelter/house," "eating/food/eating food/drinks," "clothing," "hygiene," and "health." Health mentioned only twice; whereas, if we remake the same brainstorming, the frequency of 'health' might increase due to coronavirus. "Hygiene" is stated as "to be clean" or "live in a clean area," in a more childish way, while most of them wrote "sheltering" instead of home/house. Two of them tried to mention other rights that are not as vital as "personal things" and "private needs." In addition to the vital rights, briefly "the right to live," and all the other common and private needs; "education," "play," and "enjoy" were the top three. Then, those came after according to the frequencies: "the right to think," "expressing the ideas," "defence," "proper parents/family." Finally, each of those was mentioned once: "freedom of expression," "the right not to work."

Although most of them dislike the school, all children in the classroom are aware of the positive sides of the school. It is apparent that they care about education as the fundamental right for child rights, and it is specifically for children; that's why children mostly must have claimed it. "The child is a rational being. He knows full well what his needs, difficulties, and obstacles in life are" (Korczak 2009: 34). Explains, thus, they are satisfied with the school, where they play and enjoy. Almost none of the children like school because of the lessons, after time passes, everybody remembers school time as the period of playing games and having fun with friends. School is important to socialize, to make friends, as a result of this fact, we are in trouble with

online education today, which is another subject to mention.³

For “the right to play,” children wrote different statements, such as “playing games,” “to play without ignoring homework,” and “to play until a specific age.” The second is an indicator that play and homework are just the opposite and that a child probably plays to escape homework, like many others. The last is interesting to refer to the temporary of childhood. Every child knows that they will grow up and become adults, whereas “to play until a specific age” means “not to play after this specific age.” Perhaps, it is a kind of fear of growing up, escaping from adulthood, the ‘boring’ world filled with responsibility and mandatory. Childhood is preferable for children themselves because they also know they have “the right to enjoy.”



Creative coding outline (via Maxqda) to show the relations of the rights. While adults distinct from children through “voting” and “working,” children specifically have the rights of “education, play, enjoy, having family, not working” that adults do not.

“The child knows nothing of the difficulties and complications of adult life, the sources of our excitement, disappointments, let-downs; what ruins our peace of mind and sours our humour; he knows nothing of adult reverses and losses.” (Korczak 2009: 25)

As Korczak said, children may not know anything about adult life, but they are aware of what they will encounter. They do not know “the difficulties and complications,” but they do know that the difficulties and complications exist for the adults waiting for today’s children. So, some of the children noted another right for the child: “the right not to work,” which is both understandable and true; it is understandable because the school distinct children’s world from adults, while adults’ world includes “working,” differently from children’s; and it is true because Article 32 (UNCRC 1989)

³ In the meantime, there is a children’s music band in Turkey, the most well-known song by them is called “Dersler çok uzun, teneffüsler çok kısa [the lessons are long, the breaks are short]” the video-clip is: <https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=529793170765416>

protects children from economic exploitation. Most of the children know that they can not be forced to work, and I think it is one of the best ways to adapt this information (with the statement of a child “Children don’t have to work!”) to a “right” is the invention of the statement as “the right not to...” which also contains Article 31, the right of leisure, play, free time.

Children already replied to the differences between child and human rights. However, when it transformed into a question referring to the potential child-human distinction, some of them gave some responses, like “There mustn’t be any difference between the child and human rights!” Except this, the children mostly indicated the specific characteristic of children; for example, the vulnerability was declared through various statements, such as “Children are not as smart and strong as grown-ups and, their psychologic characteristics are also weak;” “I think there is no mercy for adults, but for children.” Those two statements by two different children sound like reflections of the adult-centred society; children may not be as physically ‘strong’ as adults, but being smart should be another topic. Some of the children see themselves as ‘too childish’ to be smart. The second is true; people have mercy for children because of the same reason: their vulnerability, weakness as the first kid underlined. However, I am not sure that he noted this sentence through whether positive or negative aspects. The children in Our Home did not want to be seen as “poor orphans” declining people’s philanthropy. On the other hand, “having mercy/being merciful” is sometimes seen positively by people. Thus, it would be better to conduct new studies on this topic with discussions about different aspects of the others’ behaviour, adults’ attitudes against children, etc.

Furthermore, some children drew attention to the neglect. One said: “If we talk about the present, child rights are neglected much more.” One of the children tried to underline the significance of the child: “Child rights should be valid for children, to catch children’s interest, and to provide children’s need,” while another touched upon the subject by the definition of the child: “Child rights would end when one gets 18, but human rights stay with us forever.” These are understandable to distinguish ‘special’ child rights, whereas that child-human separation of one of the children is remarkable: “Human rights are not only for children; the rights are valid for every human being in the world.” That sentence reminds Wall’s claim that human rights “need to be fundamentally rethought in light of childhood” (Wall 2010: 113). The recent crisis about humanity can be overcome only through an alternative perspective from the subaltern or ‘the alter-subjects,’ whatever we call it. According to Wall, it is the perspective of childism so that he adds “Childhood must save human rights from itself.”

In the last part, only one child claimed that “Children don’t need anything else, they can already use the rights they have,” about “the requirements,” while they mostly focused on the issue of “support.” Half of the children directly wrote that children “need support” to “use the rights.” One said, “They can use their rights, but sometimes, it is necessary to have permission,” with the ‘permission’ word, she referred to a grown-up. Most of them indicated the adults themselves: by writing they would need “family,” “a good family,” “parenting,” “teacher,” “somebody to defend.” The ‘defence’ notion also seems interesting as it was declared by most of the children as the require-

ment to benefit from child rights. A kid wrote that “Children need someone to defend them in order to use their rights,” while another said, “Children should have the right [to consult] a lawyer for free.” The ‘defence’ issue is more than a requirement for child rights, I think most children meant self-protection; for example, one of the kids stated that “Children should learn emergency numbers.” It is apparent that children do not feel safe, instead, they mostly feel frustrated or neglected.

In addition to support, “knowledge” was written frequently: for example, “Children should know all the rights they have,” “They need to have the knowledge,” “Education is needed.” After knowledge, education/training was used in their sentences. Korczak said that the children need “a guide who will politely answer his questions” (2009: 35) by indicating both support and knowledge. They need “respect for the effort of learning!” As “a sizeable portion of the population, of the nation, residents, citizens – constant companions” (Korczak 2009:33), children are also aware of the relationship between rights and freedom. Some of the children wrote that they need the freedom to use the rights, one stated as “life that preserving freedom.” Moreover, a few of them indicated the official issues, such as “to have an identity,” “laws to protect them,” “council,” “consensus.” More childishly, two children wrote that “to use child rights, it is mandatory to be under 18!” and “to be a child.” In the end, one propounded an opposite idea: “Children do not need anything else, they can already use the rights they have,” which is true as well, at least, officially.

DISCUSSION: DO CHILDREN HAVE THE POWER TO SAVE HUMAN RIGHTS?

While analysing this little research, new questions have appeared in my mind. On the one hand, I tried to reconsider children’s present situation in comparison with the children who had the chance to attend the children’s council or to write for children’s newspaper; on the other hand, I attempted to match the children’s interpretations to the participation rights. Protection and providing, the first two P are more understandable and acceptable since they are based on adults’ point of view. It is simple to act adaptable to the settled authority. Whereas, participation is problematic due to its real meaning: children should become subjects to participate, while they usually cannot. As researchers and child rights activists from Turkey, we usually noticed that children’s participation was always discussed as a very serious issue by adults more than children, which means there were almost no children to participate. Children are also aware of this conflict that some of them criticise the ‘events’ on child rights, and in the last couple of years, we have begun to see more children expressing their ideas, talking about their problems at several panels and forums.

To conclude the pilot research by thirteen of us, me and the children, although we did not separate participation rights from the others, they realized that separation unconsciously: after indicating the “survival needs,” they mentioned “freedom of expression” (Article 13), “thought” (14), “access the knowledge” (17). Moreover, two children’s assessments about “council,” and “consensus” might become also related to “freedom of association” (15). As the fundamental participation right for me, “children’s voice to be heard and respected” (Article 12) was not declared clearly; however,

all the words they said were their attempt to be heard and respected for sure. Meanwhile, there is much news about children's reviews and critics about online education on various internet platforms and social media, nowadays, so that I find the ongoing situation is quite favourable for children's participation. Step by step, at first, creating a space for them to have a voice, then listen to them; we can eventually 'support' the children to become competent subjects.

Cassell (2004: 136) ended her paper about a children's forum with a commentary of one of the kids: [this project] "has made us feel more secure about ourselves" that recalls the 'empowerment' of the children with the statement to feel 'secure.' However, I prefer to consider through brand new conceptualizing to replace "awareness" with "empowerment" by respecting the children's desire to access knowledge and to build associations through the internet. Just like the section "I want to know," which Janusz Korczak suggested for the newspaper, children with curiosity and questioning the world have the power to change the world. In the end, turning back to the question inspired by Wall (2010) claim: Do children have the power to save human rights? It is hard to respond to it for now, but why not? I prefer keeping my childish hopefulness.

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MALE AND FEMALE CLIENTS OF MEN PROVIDING SEXUAL SERVICES: RESEARCH REPORT

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ABSTRACT: The aim of the research was to gain knowledge of who the people using sexual services are, why they do it and what their relationship with men offering paid sex looked like. Results show that the people who used sexual services were both men and women of different ages and with different professional status. The main reasons for using paid sex services were: unsatisfactory sexual contact,; a sense of loneliness and being neglected by the life partner, partner's infertility, heartbreak or betrayal of a partner, problems with finding the right partner, unusual sexual preferences, change of gender and treatment of sex-meetings as a form of entertainment.

KEYWORDS: male prostitution, sexual services, clients, violence

INTRODUCTION

Male prostitution is a phenomenon little-known, and recognized as undertaken primarily for money. Male prostitution, both in Poland and worldwide, has not been the subject of comprehensive and systematic research and the results present negative and falsified image referring mainly to young "innocent" boys practicing prostitution on the street. However, not only boys provide such services, and not exclusively on the street. Weitzner (2005: 214) believes that only 10-30% of people do prostitution on the street¹. The vast majority of men in the sex-business operate more

¹ The best-known places to use sexual services are, among others, 53rd Street in New York, Santa Monica Boulevard in Los Angeles, Piccadilly Circus in London, Polk Street Gulch in San Francisco, The

discreetly and male prostitution is almost always presented as a trade transaction. Marlowe (1997) points out that this transaction is ambiguous, because people who enter into it are not perceived as the exploited and the exploiting.

Nowadays, the phenomenon of male prostitution is experiencing its renaissance. New places are created where anyone can use the services of paid lovers. There are bars, nightclubs (Weitzer 2005), private flats (Kurzępa et al. 2008; Smith & Grov 2011) and escort agencies (Schifter 1998; Smith & Grov 2011), there are advertisements in the press and Internet (Smith & Grov 2011; Kurzępa 2012). Clients can take advantage of the different resources offered (Kurzępa 2012: 300).

When analyzing the phenomenon of prostitution, people using the services of male sex workers should not be overlooked. Clients are both men and women. According to the literature, men who practice prostitution are of homosexual and bisexual orientation. A large group of them are married with children. Some of them are heterosexuals – they and use social services occasionally. Other clients are lonely people who cannot satisfy their sexual and non-sexual needs (Smith & Grov 2011).

Clients can be divided according to age categories: clients of the same age as male prostitutes; older than sex workers (age difference lower than 10 years); much older clients (10 and more years). This was also confirmed in study by West and De Villiers (1993) which shows that men aged 40-50 constitute 39%, over 50 - 33%, and 20-30 - 20% of clients of male prostitutes. The surveyed clients most often pursued the following sexual services: mutual masturbation, oral and anal sex. Anal sex is offered by 50% of sex workers, half of which are in active form (Pospiszyl 2008: 237). Customers, especially those looking for services in bars, are called “Johns” or “Tricks.” Schifter (1998: 74) indicates one more type of customers who are referred to as “Pagadors”. Such clients are usually pederasts who like young boys with hairless skin and a large penis. Sometimes it is also enough that they are exceptionally handsome and have great sexual skills (Schifter 1998: 105). Customers using the services of young boys are convinced that sexual activity with them is safe, because it carries the smallest risk of getting infected with sexually transmitted diseases. Some of their clients are often addicted to perverse sex (Schiffer 1998: 61). Others have problems with their own identity, which affects the sense of self-esteem, their sexuality so buying sexual relations is one of the ways of “self-healing” (Śpila 2006: 94-95). Some clients tend to be intellectually or physically disabled, and thus, cannot enter into “normal” partner and sexual relationships. For some, paying for sexual intercourse is a way to satisfy the desire (Śpila 2006: 94).

In order for the customer to be satisfied with the sexual service he purchases, certain conditions must be met, such as punctuality, communicativeness, discretion and courtesy, as well as adherence to the basic principle that the client is to enjoy sexual pleasure, and the pleasure of a prostitute is only a nice addition (Smith & Grove 2011: 134). Frequently, homosexual clients are not fully satisfied, because they need more sex and are more aggressive in their behavior. Sadomasochism preferences are often

Drug Store and Rue Saint Anne in Paris, County Route 527 in New Jersey, Taksim Square in Istanbul, ZOO Train Station Berlin, while in Poland these are: Park Książęcy, Park Skaryszewski, Pl. 3 Krzyży at Żurawia Street, so-called “Grzybek” or “Avenue of Stars” in Warsaw.

rejected by male prostitutes, although some clients use abuse and violence (West & De Villiers 1993).

Customers sometimes create their own websites and assess their level of satisfaction with the services of a particular boy. Their appearance, personality and behavior are evaluated. Other clients pay attention to such features as communication skills and listening skills (Smith & Grov 2011: 10,70). Clients compare male prostitutes with each other also in terms of prices. It often happens that escorts themselves contact a dissatisfied customer in order to mitigate the bad impression, because they realize that a bad opinion can spoil their reputation and they might earn nothing (Smith & Grov 2011: 10). Customers buy people who will listen to them, talk in a designated way. They control the course of the meeting, which could not be possible in a non-commercial interaction with a man (Smith & Grov 2011: 10). However, before the boys are sent to the client, they are thoroughly instructed and informed about what the client likes, what expectations they have about the appearance or sexual preference, and what they can expect from that client. The boy receives tips on how to develop relationship with the client while maintaining dignity and security, and learns how to deal with the negative effects of the work. In escort agencies, experienced escorts are combined with new employees, who learn to work with clients in this way (Smith & Grov 2011: 63). First of all, they learn to set boundaries that are necessary. Being careful when meeting with a client has a significant impact on the quality of experience with the client. The more enjoyable the experience, the more the customers will feel the pleasure of the meeting (Smith & Grov 2011: 68). Most clients contact the agency one or two days in advance. Therefore, the agency manager can determine which escorts he will send.. Agency asks the client about his/her preferences regarding appearance (eg, hair color, size of the penis, body structure, etc.) and sexual preferences, in order to meet their expectations in the most optimal way. The client also sets the time and place. The service fee is charged in advance at the beginning of the meeting. Escort, although he is ordered for one hour, in fact spends more time with the client. Escort could end the meeting by leading the client to orgasm and leave, but the client is satisfied with the meeting which satisfies the non-sexual needs, too (Smith & Grov 2011: 140). In bed one can release anger or confirm their masculinity or femininity or heal their emotional wounds (Hajcak & Garwood 2001: 17). Customers often hire escorts with whom they had previously established a "positive relationship" and believed that they devoted their time to meet their needs (Smith & Grov 2011: 140). Escorts can also be ordered to stay longer or travel with the customer, eg on holiday trips. This customer is responsible in such cases for covering all costs. Also, in this case, escorts are forced to provide their real personal details as well as their dates of birth. Escorts always inform their clients that sexual intercourse requires using a condom. Most of them are open to oral sex, they often put a limit on anal sex. However, some men who provide sexual services decide to have anal sex when they know the client longer, trust him, and feel comfortable with him (Smith & Grov 2011: 145-146).

As I mentioned earlier, male sexual services are also used by women, which may come as a surprise, because at the end of the last century there was a widespread belief in our society that women are not interested in the sexual sphere, but mainly in love, a

sense of security and a happy and stable relationship (Orliński 2013: 38). But there are women who use such services. And there is no age limit here (Orliński 2013: 38-39).

Some female clients are tired of suppressing their sexual needs. Their life partners do not usually realize them or show a certain “disability” in intimate matters. Despite disappointment with the sexual lives with their partners, women do not want to leave them. Therefore, one can say that the sexual desires of both male and female clients are unmet and this is one of the reasons for using the services of male sex workers. There are also female clients who are inhibited, fearful, inexperienced, those who do not want to disappoint their future sexual partners, and decide to first gain sexual experience with a male sex worker. There are also women who are excited about the fact of paying a man for sex, which is more important than just taking pleasure in a sexual act (Imieliński 1990: 135-136). This type of female client Andy Collins (2004: 212) described as “women intoxicated with power.” It is a group of women who know what they want; they pay and require. Collins also discusses older women, lonely women and women of menopausal age. The latter is the type of women who, when young, did not allow themselves to realize their crazy ideas and fantasies. Currently, some women are tired of looking for love that may turn out to be a disappointment. It is much easier to hire someone for an hour or an evening. The female clients are usually wealthy women and in some way unhappy. The next group are women whose husbands leave for long business trips (Imieliński 1990: 135).

In 1969, in the magazine “Jasmin”, the ads of escorts agencies were published. People working in these agencies later admitted that some women, just like men using paid lovers, ordered their services over the phone. Some of them asked about the details of the physical appearance, the size of the genital organs, as well as the skills and sexual potential. In Italy, *Donne e Qualità di Vita* carried conducted internet surveys among 1,500 women in the 18-50 age group. These studies show that 19% of women paid for sexual services, while every fourth considered such a possibility. The largest group of these women were aged 30-40 (38%), another group aged 40-50 (25%). They were mostly living in large urban agglomerations (37%). Regarding their marital status: 35% were unmarried, 27% were divorced and 21% were married. Most of them were professionally active: 23% were businesswomen, 19% women were managers, 14% were female artists and journalists, 13% were clerks, 8% women worked part-time and 5% were housewives. The examined women indicated the following reasons for using sex services: seeking satisfactory sex (22%), emotional closeness (18%), satisfying their sexual needs (16%) and entertainment (9%) (cf. Gardian-Miałkowska 2016: 52).

The female clients are young, middle-aged and older women. They are single women, married divorcees and widows. They do not only expect to have their sexual desires fulfilled, but they also want to feel adored. Some of them are women who are successful in their professional lives, while others are bored and in the absence of their husbands look for consolation (Gardian-Miałkowska 2012: 300). For most female clients, sexual intercourse is a complement to intimate, cultural meetings that are filled with long conversations, eating good meal and savoring a good wine. If it comes to sex, it will depend on women’s preferences (Rot 2009).

The men offering paid sex, have developed abilities to talk properly with such women. It is not recommended to discuss topics such as religion or politics that would somehow force the female client to present an opinion. The female client is not looking for debates or sophisticated conversations during paid meetings. The only thing that is expected is frivolous conversation and flirting. The most secure topic of conversations are various types of gossips (Imieliński 1990: 134-136).

RESEARCH PROBLEM

The sexual services provided by men worldwide have not yet been subject to comprehensive research and should be made the matter of special social significance and systematic interest by scientists and social rehabilitation pedagogy activists.

Therefore, the subject of the analysis in this article will be the answer to the following questions: Who are the people using paid sexual services? What are the reasons for using paid sex services?

Sociographic features of this group and the properties related to their sexual lives have been the subjects of detailed analysis.

ETHICAL ISSUES

The presented study takes into account the ethical principles of conducting the scientific research. Prior to the study, potential respondents were informed about its purpose and scope. The anonymity and modification of respondents' personal data were secured. The research was carried out as part of a research project², which received positive evaluation of the Research Ethics Committee of the Academy of Special Education Maria Grzegorzewska.

RESEARCH ORGANIZATION

The research was carried out from January 2012 to June 2013, while one interview was conducted in June 2014. The study covered 27 men providing sexual services. They were users of such websites as: www.gejowo.pl; www.sponsorazukam.pl; www.ea-more.com.pl; www.sponosrujmnie.pl; as well as two non-profit organizations (Social Committee on AIDS and Lambda Warsaw).

For the information and time given, men received previously negotiated financial gratification, only if they participated in the full interview. Six men gave up the fee.

The interviews took place in cafes and restaurants; three times in the respondents' car, two in the shopping center, another three in the Social AIDS Committee and two at the Lambda-Warsaw residence. The research was carried out in the respondents' cities (Warsaw, Radom, Katowice, Żywiec, Poznań, Cracow and Łódź). The conversation usually lasted from 45 minutes to 95 minutes. The average talk time was 60 minutes.

² Project entitled "Psychosocial conditioning of male prostitution". Project manager: Renata Gardian-Miałkowska. The project was implemented in the period July 2012-June 2013, at the Academy of Special Education Maria Grzegorzewska BTSM 9/2012.

The interviews were recorded with the consent of the respondents, one man refused to record the interview. Then transcriptions were made and analyzed. Interviews were conducted in Polish, and the quoted fragments were translated into English by the author of the article.

RESEARCH SAMPLE

In the study group there were 27 men, including 6 people defining their sexual orientation as homosexual and 21 people as heterosexual. The study involved men 17 to 43 years of age. The majority was 21-30 (12 people), 31-40 (7 people), 18-20 (5 people), 41-50 (2 people), 17 (1 person) years old.

| Age | Sexual orientation | | Together | % |
|----------|--------------------|-----|----------|-------|
| | HOM | HET | | |
| up to 18 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 3,7 |
| 18-20 | 1 | 4 | 5 | 18,52 |
| 21-30 | 1 | 11 | 12 | 44,44 |
| 31-40 | 2 | 5 | 6 | 22,22 |
| 41-50 | 2 | 0 | 2 | 7,41 |
| over 50 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0,00 |
| In total | 6 | 21 | 27 | 100 |

Table 1. Men's age

Source: own research

HOM – men who declared homosexual orientation

HET – men who declared heterosexual orientation

Among the respondents, 16 men had secondary education. One man had primary education (Mark, 43). Three men were students (Lucas 23, Krystian 22, Damian 21), two of them were master-degree students (Krystian 22, Lucas 23), and one was a first-degree student (Damian 21). Four men were higher educated (Adam 26, Patrick 29, Hubert 36, Alexy 26). Three young boys were still secondary school students (Christopher 18, Borys 18, Charles, 17), who lived with their parents.. Two men had graduated from high school (Jarek 20, Robert 20) and basic vocational school (Louis 36, Greg 32). Most of them treated the income obtained from prostitution as additional (17 people), while three men were unemployed (Oscar 25, Louis 43, Aleks 23).

Table 2 presents a short characterization of respondents. Each person has been assigned a fictitious name. The alphabetical order is not related to the order of data analysis and did not reflect any hierarchy or evaluation.

| Name | Age | Education | Region of Poland | City population | Marital status |
|-------------|-----|-----------------|------------------|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Adam | 26 | Higher | eastern | from 20 to 100 thousand residents | single |
| Aleksy | 26 | Higher | north | from 100 to 500 thousand residents | single |
| Arek | 22 | Post-secondary | western | over 500,000 residents | single |
| Borys | 18 | Secondary | eastern central | capital city | single |
| Cyprian | 24 | Secondary | central | over 500,000 residents | single |
| Damian | 21 | Secondary | North | from 100 to 500 thousand residents | single |
| Greg | 32 | Vocational | south | from 100 to 500 thousand residents | single |
| Hubert | 36 | Higher | eastern central | capital city | married |
| Jack | 36 | Secondary | eastern central | capital city | single/in a partner relationship |
| Jarek | 20 | Middle school | eastern central | from 20 to 100 thousand residents | single/in a partner relationship |
| Charles | 17 | Secondary | south | over 500,000 residents | single |
| Konrad | 43 | Secondary | middle | over 500,000 residents | single |
| Krystian | 22 | Higher | eastern central | capital city | single |
| Christopher | 18 | Secondary | south | over 500,000 residents | single |
| Louis | 36 | Vocational | eastern central | from 100 to 500 thousand residents | single/in a partner relationship |
| Lukas | 23 | Higher | eastern central | capital city | single/in a partner relationship |
| Maciej | 30 | Secondary | western | over 500,000 residents | married |
| Marcin | 33 | secondary | western | from 20 to 100 thousand residents | single |
| Mark | 43 | Elementary | eastern central | from 20 to 100 thousand residents | single |
| Matthew | 19 | Secondary | eastern central | capital city | single |
| Michael | 36 | Secondary | central | over 500,000 residents | divorced/ in a partners relationship |
| Norbert | 36 | Secondary | western | over 500,000 residents | single |
| Oscar | 25 | Secondary | eastern central | od 200 do 500 thousand residents | single/in a partner relationship |
| Patrick | 29 | Higher | eastern centrale | capital city | single |
| Peter | 30 | Secondary | south | from 20 to 100 thousand residents | married |
| Robert | 20 | Lower secondary | southeastern | od 100 to 200 tys. residents | single |
| Zenon | 27 | Secondary | eastern central | from 20 to 100 thousand residents | single |

Table 2. Characteristics of study participants

Source: own study

ANALYSIS OF RESULTS

When examining the phenomenon of male prostitution, special attention should be paid to people interested in using these services. The surveyed men were asked about them. What are their requirements? Why do they use this kind of services? Additionally, respondents were asked about their opinion on people using their services. It was one of the most elaborated topics of conversation with respondents and is evidenced by many replies. In general, any inhibitions during the interviews were not observed. The openness and honesty of the respondents were rather characteristic.

Four groups of people using paid sexual services were selected based on respondents' statements. The first group consists mainly of women, mostly married ones as well as in the age range 30 to 45. Occasionally there were women, both younger than 23 and older, women over 45:

In general, I met women up to 45. From 30 to 45, this was an age range. (...) 30-year-old women usually had a home, family, husband and they also just wanted a springboard from everyday life. (Maciej 30)

Mostly people much older. The record is sixty-four, but usually thirty, forty-five. Most of them are married women. (Borys 18)

Women in their forties, probably 43 years old. Two women were 35 years old. (...) For the most part, I saw the ring. Married? Well, there were married women. (Louis 36)

Differently, they were 25 and 45. (...) I can honestly say that married women dominate. Well, this is also a good group in terms of the fact that they are already experienced and solvent women, so they often propose a system on the basis of sponsorship. (Damian 20)

From 23 to 45. (...) they are married women. Mostly, maintained by the spouse, although there are, of course, independent women, about 40, who have their own company, etc. But it's just, well, they do not tell me that about themselves And yes, they look for good sex. (Peter 30)

Three men emphasize that they avoid meeting with younger women, because it is connected with complications such as exceeding the set limit of emotional engagement. Maciej (30) had similar situations with clients who expected him to divorce:

I was not interested in younger ones, younger women ... because usually, you know how it ended, they fell in love, or wanted me to divorce. Therefore, with the younger ones, I said that I would not meet.

Similarly, Hubert (36) says:

Younger women can fall in love and there is a problem. Although with women aged 40 or so it also happened, (...) however, these women are more, as I would say, realists.

Arek (22) was surprised that young women are looking for paid sexual partners. He cannot imagine meeting such women:

It is also surprising that for some time I have noticed that younger girls are looking for paid sex partners. What used to be, for example two years ago, unthinkable for a girl who is 19 years old to look for paid sex. I personally would not agree to meet a woman under 26, 27.

Among the clients using paid sexual services, there were also women with different marital status:

Divorced women:

As a rule, they say that they are either divorcees or husband moved out, husband was an alcoholic. (Hubert 36)

A divorcee, some old ladies, whom husbands abandoned. (Adam 26)

Widows:

Or there are many single women because their husbands died. (Hubert 36)

When it comes to the material status of clients, they were usually middle-income or very wealthy women. Here are some examples:

I think that these are mainly women who are unhappy and very rich. They are not middle class, only rich people. (Arek 22)

They were educated women, like some kind of academic teacher around 40, something like that, such medium-wealthy women. (Adam 26)

The second group of people using sexual services are men. In this group of clients, the majority of surveyed men pay attention to the sexual orientation of clients.

Men buying sex are both homosexual and bisexual people, as reported:

Mainly they are gays but also bisexuals, often married. (Christopher 18)

Mostly these were married guys at the age of 50, 40, sometimes younger. (Marcin 33)

Clients of escort agencies are men over 30, which Robert reveals (20):

Those who use the agency are aged 30+. I had a client, a very well-known actor, who was 82 years old. But he just wanted me to undress. He looked at me. We laughed, talked and I sat naked, he was wearing clothes, I was naked, and that was enough for him, yes.

Borys (18), points out that he meets men with so-called “necessity”:

With men, as I said before, I do not meet more than twice. I do it very rarely i.e. if there are no other orders, or money finishes, then I decide on them. I meet them the least often.

On the other hand, men in the age range 30 to 55 most often use street prostitution: From 40 to 55 years of age. (Marcin 33 & Marek 43)

There are clients, they are young like 30 years old. They occupy high positions, they earn really good money. And also over forty. (Zenon 27)

In Berlin, customers were much older says Jack (36):

There, it's different, there gentlemen are even 60 or 70 years old, and they go after sixteen or seventeen year old boys, gypsies like that. I will tell you one thing: they pay well. I never wanted such old ones, I always had those from 20 to 40 and usually went with them to their home or hotel.

When it comes to customers' professional lives, the clients were men running their own business.

Most often they dealt with various things in life and changed their jobs, these were mainly businessmen. (Christopher 18)

Clergymen were also mentioned as clients:

I also had priests as lovers. Listen in Wroclaw I had a sponsor Marcin, who was a priest, listen, rich priest, rich monk, yes. (Marcin 33)

Others were clerks:

Sometimes, either a bank employee or somebody, for example, who is the manager. (Konrad 43)

Clients were also people from the medical industry, the legal industry, as well as from the so-called show business:

Lawyers, doctors, as well as a judges and prosecutors, I had a client, a very well-known actor, well-known designers. (Robert 20)

Another group of people using paid lovers are couples. Three men met with them. Peter (30) meets men together with their wives, but these sex-meetings take place sporadically. However, he noticed that the demand for the implementation of sexual fantasies like the threesome is more often pursued by men, this is what he says:

A man wants to meet with me more than the wife. The partner forces the woman to do it, because he has some fantasies in a threesome, he wants some things, but doesn't ask his partner what she wants.

Michael (36), in turn, emphasizes that during these meetings he does not have sex with a man:

Couples are 30 and over, and 50, too. I do not meet with the guys themselves, because it does not interest me at all, I did not have a relationship with a guy. I mean, you know, for specific sex, but not for a relationship with men, as I have never been seeing a man, but I have met with couples or with mixed company.

Borys (18) claims that meetings with couples are interesting:

Couples are very cool, open, they care about their acquaintance. Cool people, different than the rest of society. They are not boring and are expressive. (...) With

pairs it is very interesting, because men usually only look how I do their partners.

The fourth and last group are people after gender change, so-called shemale. Borys (18) also meets such a person. She is his peer:

Shemale is young, my age, we are friends, only that I have sex with her for money and she is not quite a normal girl after sex change, strangely, but tolerably. I like her, she is my peer, so I can talk to her about everything and I think she understands me the most. Maybe because she does not feel very confident in this world herself. I meet her for sex, because it's difficult for her to find a partner who would accept it. And it does not bother me.

Here are some more statements from the surveyed men:

Married women are mainly neglected by their husbands and they have their needs. They usually arrange one-time massages. You know like for 100 PLN... (Lukas 23)

Neglected emotionally. Their husbands are not interested in them, they do not care about their needs, only, you know, he comes home, wants to eat dinner and like this. He does not care about her, he does not take her anywhere, you know, he does not care. He will not even say, you know, "honey, you look good." Even such a small stupid thing. (Peter23)

Some women also have the opportunity to talk or hug during these meetings. In other words, they buy the closeness of another human being. This is what the other respondents are talking about:

Some also want me to talk to them, they cry on my shoulder, because at home, for example, they are treated badly. They are looking for some approval. They want to talk more about themselves, because, for example, they do not have it at home, because the husband, for example, goes away for business trips, nobody is at home. They are looking for someone who will satisfy them. (Maciej 30)

They were waiting for hugs, they were waiting to talk about more than just cars. Yes, a smart conversation about something that ... they are interested in. (Cyprian 24)

Women also satisfied their need for adoration:

They would like to be adored, and their partner does not even know how many teaspoons of sugar she takes in her tea, right? Such a stupid example. He never brought her a flower, because today is Friday. He never did anything crazy for her, etc. The older ones needed such appreciation more. (Cyprian 24)

Another reason was the unmet sexual needs. What Matthew (19) says:

Because he cannot satisfy her. Fuck I don't know, he cannot get it up or what?

Peter (30) also gives other, specific reasons:

One of them, for example, does not get along with her husband, he has a small

penis, and she just cannot enjoy sex. The guy is not big enough, not experienced enough, and the woman has no satisfaction.

Life partners are not able to meet the expectations of women, which is also reflected by Patrick (29):

They have a weak sexual partner. Well, in my opinion. And also just want to experience something new.

Krystian (22), The client wanted to experience sexual pleasure:

She just told me she wanted to try. And she said she was fed up with, bluntly saying, weaklings. She wanted someone who can perform, in short, she wanted to have orgasms.

Maciej (30) also talks about it:

You know what, I think they just need good sex.

Damian (20):

Above all, satisfying sexual needs, escaping boredom and routine in bed, they like, so to speak, good fucking.

And also like Peter (30):

But half of them are just sexually unsatisfied. Because they could do it all the time, and the guy can only drink beer, eat chips, and maybe she can encourage him twice a month. This is a different sex drive. Everyone has a different sex drive.

He notices that women buy sex because they like it, but in cultural terms they do not want to be perceived as “easy”:

They really like sex, but they do not want to look in their own group as so-called “easy sex” that’s why they are looking for discreet people with whom they can experience something new.

Similarly, Aleks (26) also points out that sex is the main reason for using his services:

I think around 70 % buy services because of sex, and 30%, for good company.

On the other hand, non-heterosexual³ clients expect mainly sexual satisfaction, which the surveyed homosexual men pointed out. For example:

They want to satisfy themselves and go home. Blowjob, anal, for men it is mainly about sex. Mainly it’s anal and oral sex, this is the most common. (Zenon 27)

Another reason mentioned by the respondents was the treatment of these sex-meetings as a form of fun and entertainment. Cyprian (24) claims that they are usually

³ Non-heterosexual (non-heteronormative) - the term derives from the queer theory of people who do not boil down to sexual heterosexuality. The general concept includes homosexual, bisexual, asexual, transgender and queer people. In the case of my research, they are homosexual men according to their declaration of sexual orientation.

mostly younger women:

The younger ones are more bursting, we go out somewhere together and while having good fun, we make passionate satisfying sex. Then it comes out naturally.

Although, in this form of entertainment, women in the age range of 40-60 are also interested Hubert (36) says:

Most often these women say that they just want to have fun. They just want some fulfillment, they need heat.

Michael (36) says:

I'm just for their company, whether you are naked or dressed, it depends on the situation and the company. Mostly, they want to have fun.

Cyprian (24) points out that some women need company at meetings:

Typically, the social events or going to the cinema, then sex. I travelled all over Poland. These ladies covered the travel costs etc.

But also the man's company was necessary at business meetings:

Sometimes these meetings are integrative, where the owners, directors have to show someone, because it must look good. In the same way, like in the Oscars gala, these ladies and gentlemen come with somebody, it seems to me that this is a standard in business.

Reasons for using sexual services may also be A method of retaliation. Two respondents indicate that although women do not always have evidence of betrayal they intuitively feel that their husbands are cheating on them:

She could sense that her husband was cheating on her while on delegations, so it could also be treated as a retaliation on her husband. (Norbert 36)

Borys (18) says:

It's surprising, but most of them are really hot. They just feel unappreciated or are cheated on. They probably have caught them or just sensed infidelity.

Whereas Oscar (25) declares that his sponsor did not want to have a life partner, but only a sexual partner:

(...) she did not want to have a boyfriend, because she went through it a few times, she just wanted to have a sexual partner. She had a dozen or so from what I remember. She did not say exactly how many.

Borys (18) confirms:

(...) they have quite a lot of men. I am something fresh, untainted, I don't know if it's true, they say so. And I'm good at sex, because I am a long-distance runner. And I'm passionate.

Another reason for using the sex services is the problem in finding a suitable life partner, Robert (20) draws attention to it:

It's hard to find a partner, (...) gays have a problem with that, right? Because gay has a problem with finding a partner of any kind, whether for sex or for life, because there are not many of them. And here age doesn't matter, even if they are old.

Also men who prefer sexual contacts with young immature boys, have a problem with finding a partner, as Robert points out. For them, the escort agency prepares an offer of this type of services:

A boy, who is very tiny and slim. He looks like such an innocent child, he is 18 years old, but he is more for those pedophiles you know. They find it amusing that he looks like a child. There are not many pedophiles, but for those who want, there is this guy.

Borys (18) mentions another reason – partner's infertility. He offers the fertilization of the female sex clients. In this way, he has made eight women pregnant and explains the course of such a transaction:

Generally, I am very cautious, I do not want to get into alimony and being dragged to the court. I hold back everything for a very long time. Minimum a month of acquaintance. A lot of conversations and questions, then we meet for coffee. She checks her fertile days and we arrange to make sex until the anticipated result.

For fertilization:

I fertilize at the fourth meeting, when the chances for pregnancy are the highest.

First, I make sure that the woman has conditions for raising children, then we write a contract in which everything is concluded.

In the contract:

I waive the rights to the child.

The reason for using sexual services by women is also boredom. Since they have financial resources, they can also buy sex whenever they want, as Damian (21) says:

There are also those who do it out of boredom, they don't know what to do with cash. They want sex, so they buy it, whenever they want it, and if they have this option, they use it.

Such a picture is confirmed by Lukas (23):

If you buy somebody, it is because you want to have no limitations, and want to steam off the way you like it.

He says that if he refuses to fulfill specific desires, he will lose customers:

There are some guys out there who do the same things as you. They are even more handsome. They're bigger, they're better in bed. You are aware that if you refuse something, she will say thank you and find another one.

In sex-business there are also abuses and acts of violence. When the client decides to buy sexual services, they want to fulfill their own fantasies and expectations. They

usually do not pay attention to the sexual needs of a paid lover, treating them objectively. This is manifested, for example, by humiliation and ordering. That is what Patrick (29) felt:

It happened that they treated me like an object. If he pays, he requires.

After these negative experiences, he avoids clients from whom he might expect negative reactions:

Now I do not even enter into such relationships. If I feel that someone has a pre-disposition to it, then I immediately break the relation.

He also says that he meets such women:

Well she orders me to be here and there, do this and that (...) She says that she pays and she requires it. There is no equality principle, she considers herself better.

Similar observations are also made by Greg (32):

They think that they have money and can change somebody, because they pay and require (...) They have a lot of requirements. Well, that they think that I am their slave.

Krystian (22) described his client more vulgarly:

It is awkward for me to talk about it, but she was such a bitch.

Although he saw advantages:

Yes, she had charisma, she could talk (...) She was sometimes so cold (...) Sometimes you can tell that they have big money. Looking at some people you can see that they have class (...) something more than just money.. And it's nice talking to them.

Another abuse highlighted by respondents is humiliation and challenge. Arek (22), experienced that with one of the clients:

I am looking for another one, a stable one, but one of these four I would quit. (...) I am not satisfied with her ... hmm... character and I do not like the payment form. And she treats me a little like a rag (...) She swears, she offends me during intercourse (...) He calls me names, a male whore, she shows who's the boss here, because she pays (...) She gets such a great satisfaction from that. I noticed that it turns her on, but not necessarily me.

Mark (43) met with similar behavior by the clients, mainly when he refused to perform some services:

Sometimes I heard that I was a whore.

Another abuse was violating of the contract provisions set out at the beginning:

He wants to do what I do not want to do. There are small conflicts.

Marek (43) also did not always agree to meet the client's expectations:

Many times it was so that the client does not know what he wants from me. I did not always agree.

He definitely refused the following:

Something with violence, tying, gagging. I never agreed to this, or some group sex, it was out of question. (...) I was afraid of violence.

Although some customers, despite refusing, did not give up:

I said: no, and he did not let go.

In such situations he tried to escape:

I managed to escape once or twice. Those clients had flats on the first and the ground floors. It was not high, I could escape through the window.

Zenon (27) considers abuse cases when the client does not pay for the service provided:

There were such situations that he did not pay for the service (...) I went home with him, I would tell him he should pay that and that much, and he did not pay (...) He said he would pay in the morning, and he did not pay at all, and in the morning he wanted sex, then I said no (...) They usually want the same price for sex, but then I say no, because they have to pay more.

Jack also confirms such situations (36):

Two guys, I do not know if they were a couple or some psychopaths, but they used me and they did not pay me.

He did not receive payment for the service and was sexually abused:

They raped me. They tied me to bed and then raped me a few times, but it was the worst case. So they try to get you drunk and use you or not pay for the service.

However, such situations might even end up dramatically like for his friend. He was abandoned in an unknown and dangerous neighborhood:

They took him to the forest and he was there without clothes, nothing, he was beaten up. After a week, they found him.

Jack is afraid of meetings with clients at their homes:

I can still go to the hotel, but I've always been afraid of going home, and there, from behind the door, two or three might jump out.

Robert (20) presents different faces of clients:

Usually, there are people who order us about (...). Perverted for sure, yes they are very perverted, because no-one normally uses such an agency. (...) I'm talking about other boys who are unfortunately passive and are unfortunately treated differently (...)

He gives the example of a friend who was drunk:

There was one boy one time, who was such a fag, he was hetero, but... One client

got him so drunk, this guy. He was so wasted so the client knew he could anything with him. So he fucked him and made him passive.

For sexual exploitation the client uses force or deception. They also abuse the boys by forcing them to have an intercourse without a condom. Robert informs us:

Nobody knows if he used the protection or not. Theoretically, he could have infected a boy with a disease.

In addition to the fact that men are victims of physical, emotional and sexual violence on behalf of the clients, they also experience it from other people, eg homophobes:

Mainly by “jocks”. They were bothered by the fact that two guys went to bushes, they went there and beat them up. They shouted: “There are two faggots going there, you have to beat them!” There were about two, three or even four of them. They walked with sticks or glass bottles.

Sometimes there are also casualties:

Well, they killed many of them there. You heard that some time ago they killed one boy there. Last year, they attacked them in Skaryszewski [the name of the city park], one of them even cut off their heads and they put them in the pool. Well, the worst is going on in this Skaryszewo.

To sum up, violence is a deliberate abuse of power or authority that violates the rights of respondents. Four types of violence have been reported:

Psychological violence: humiliation, ridicule, calling names, demanding obedience, lack of empathy, imposing one’s own opinion and preferences, using threats, etc.

Sexual violence: forcing unacceptable sexual behaviors, failure to keep contracts, forcing intercourse without a condom, sex without paying, sexual abuse, raping, etc.

Physical violence: kicking, incapacitation, bonding, beating, abandonment in a dangerous area, entrapment, homicide, etc.

Economic violence: haggling, no payment for the service (Gardian-Miałkowska 2013: 147).

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

In summary, people using sexual services of male prostitutes are women, men, transgender people and couples. The main reasons are unsatisfied sexual needs or partner’s infertility or insufficient sexual skills. Some women do not want to be perceived as sexually liberated. Each of these group satisfies more than only their sexual needs. Women usually feel the lack of interest from their partners and they still need to be adored, cuddled and desired. The use of sexual services becomes a way of dealing with

the deprivation of these needs. Some women treat sex with male prostitutes as a form of retaliation against an unfaithful partner. A large group of clients cannot find a suitable life partner. Some because they have unusual sexual preferences, and others because of gender changes. An additional advantage for clients is spending nice time with fun companion.

These persons, according to the information provided by the respondents, were lonely people, including divorced and widowed; well-off people who occupy high positions or have well-run business. There were also clergymen.

I found that people who use sexual services are:

- (1) Women (young, middle-aged and older) mostly married, 28-55 years old;
- (2) Men of similar marital status and age like women using paid sex services;
- (3) Heterosexual couples - contact with a sex worker was usually initiated by a man who tried to realize his own erotic fantasy (eg controlled betrayal);
- (4) People after gender change.

The people using paid sexual services are usually middle-income and wealthy people, although there were people with lower material status. These people represent professions such as are clerks, businessmen, artists etc. It is worth paying attention to women who have adopted male behavioral patterns. Currently, under the influence of social changes, women are much more aware of their sexual needs and are not afraid of talking about them and satisfying them, while such attitudes and behaviors were previously reserved mainly for men.

It was established that both women and men who use sexual services treat prostitutes as objects to satisfy their needs. It was also found that during sex-meetings, both male and female clients use various forms of abuse against men involved in prostitution. Differences can be seen depending on the gender. Women much more often use emotional sexual abuse, violating the established rules of sexual intercourse. However, men use all forms of violence - physical, emotional, sexual and economic violence. Some violate personal rights of male prostitutes. Some respondents mentioned physical violence such as: beating, bonding, incapacitating, entrapment, abandonment in dangerous areas, murder, etc. Some of them reported: humiliating, threatening, lack of empathy, demanding obedience, imposing one's own opinion and preferences, etc. Others spoke about sexual violence, including: sex without payment, failure to keep contracts, enforcing unacceptable sexual preferences, forcing intercourse without a condom, raping, etc. Economic violence was mentioned as not paying for a service or haggling. Although some men experienced various forms of abuse and violence, they did not give up their services. In this way, they obtain financial and material benefits.

It was noticed that the reasons for using paid sexual services were as follows (in terms of their prevalence): 1) unsatisfactory sexual contacts; 2) a sense of loneliness and neglecting by the life partner; 3) partner's infertility; 4) heartbreak or betrayal of a partner; 5) problems with finding the right partner; 6) unusual sexual preferences; 7) change of gender; 8) treatment of sex-meetings as a form of entertainment.

Male and female clients use the services of male prostitutes depending on their individual needs. Some of them meet each time with someone else, while others occasionally meet with the same man, and still others propose the so-called sponsorship system. They can also pay for the availability of a lover, and some cover the costs of trips. Both male and female clients can be found in various places, such as: discos, clubs, escort agencies for men, streets.. However, the most common is the internet, which offers a wide range of possibilities in choosing a potential sexual partner. A large group of men post photos of their figure and penis, describe their dimensions. Phone or email is only needed when using the information included in the sex-ads.

Undoubtedly, it is worth paying attention to women who have adopted male behavioral patterns. Under the influence of social changes, the role of man and woman have changed and even become similar. Nowadays women are much more aware of their sexual needs and are not afraid to talk about them, much less to satisfy them, while such attitudes and behaviors were previously reserved mainly for men. It was established that both women and men using sexual services treat prostitutes objectively, perceiving them as a tool to meet their needs. It was also established that during sex meetings both clients and clients use various forms of abuse against men involved in prostitution. The differences can be seen by gender. Women are much more likely to use emotional and sporadic sexual violence, violating established rules of sexual intercourse. Whereas men use all forms of violence, because it is both physical, emotional, sexual and economic violence. Relatively little is known about couples and people after sex change. The author does not know the research in this area. It is worth considering this aspect in further research and expanding the state of knowledge in this area. The author's research is a good start.

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DEVELOPING EMPATHIC SENSITIVITY IN YOUNGER CHILDREN

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ABSTRACT: The article presents a review of theoretical concepts on empathic sensitivity. The text demonstrates correlations between empathy and moral development and presents empathy in children and its conditions. The article is also aimed at pointing to the significance of empathy in human relations, and it introduces several factors which influence bringing up children to have empathy. Moreover, it presents the methods of working with children aimed at developing their empathic sensitivity. These include, among others, drama, working with literary texts and art techniques.
KEYWORDS: empathy, children, upbringing, emotions, moral development, early childhood education

INTRODUCTION

Empathy is considered to be the fundamental mechanism of human interaction and communication (Rembowski 1989b). It enables accurate interpretation of other people, acts of communication, personality, making it possible to anticipate human behaviours. It also constitutes one of the most important factors determining personality development (Tomczuk 2004: 105). The already mentioned empathic sensitivity is associated with the ability to recognise, name and express emotions, as well as with

readiness to help others (Hoffman 2006: 31).

Most often, empathy has been related to the cognitive and emotional sphere. In the context of the former, empathy has been treated as the process of responding emotionally to other people's emotions. On the other hand, in terms of the cognitive sphere, empathy has been perceived as an understanding of other people. Over time, empathy has started to emerge as a complementary, emotional and cognitive process. Some researchers also identify the behavioural component of empathy, which includes, among other things, communicating of the perceived state of the other person (Tomczuk 2004:106).

This article presents a review of empathic sensitivity concepts by such researchers as Theodor Lipps, Mark H. Davis, or Martin L. Hoffman. The theoretical models of empathy selected and analysed, reveal its multifaceted nature. The article presents the difference between empathy and compassion, as well as the origin of the concept of empathy. Moreover, correlations between empathy and moral development have been pointed out. The article discusses the conditioning of childhood empathy and attempts to emphasize the need for its development in children, proposing specific methods of working with them in this regard. The described factors that influence empathy development have been complemented with selected results of scientific research, conducted, among others, by Jean Decety and Christian Keysers. This article is addressed in particular to educators, namely, junior-grade teachers who would like to develop empathic sensitivity in their students.

One of the important components of globalisation processes is migrations, which contribute to changes in European countries and communities' political, cultural and social structure (Markowska-Manista and Pasamonik 2017:7). An increase in the number of migrants coming to Poland results in a growing number of migrant children attending Polish kindergartens and schools (Barwiński 2016:149). To ensure these pupils' successful integration and education, teachers have to have both cultural and social competencies, including empathy (Białek 2015:12). Research conducted by Morgan has shown that emphatic teachers are more eager to express their feelings and create an atmosphere of openness and trust in the classroom (Morgan 1983).

Moreover, the 21st century is characterised by an intensive pace of life, technological progress, urbanisation and an increase in the prestige of science and technology (Strumińska-Doktor 2008). Like in the second half of the 19th century, scientific discoveries are made, and many inventions emerge (Piechota 2019). The global range of the Internet has influenced the way we communicate. Research conducted by Sherry Turkle has shown that the modern generation of teenagers is emotionally addicted to smartphones (Jędrysik 2015). The boundary between the real and virtual world has been blurred, exerting a destructive impact on the emotional development of young people, who tend to avoid direct contact, are unable to hold conversations, while being online makes them feel tired, lost and frustrated (Jędrysik 2015). It should also be added that the multitude of problems and stress faced by people often lead to treating altruistic behaviours as something of minor importance. At the same time, the individual empathy levels tend to decrease (Wilczek 2002:17).

Many researchers interested in empathy state that it determines the strong, emo-

tional bonds between people (Kliś 2012:152). In scientific literature, it has been pointed out that empathy conditions altruistic behaviours (Aronfreed 1970) are strictly correlated with willingness to cooperate and influence the process of controlling and inhibiting aggressive behaviours (Feshbach 1969). Moreover, empathy is coexistent with the tendency to solve conflicts and the sense of responsibility for self and others (Kaliopuska 1992). It also facilitates conveying of information in the course of human communication (Kliś 2012:152).

In the light of the listed functions of empathy and challenges of the modern world, including, among other things, the development of ICT tools and the Internet (Kwasek 2018:210). As well as clashing of social and cultural differences, and attitudes such as intolerance, lack of knowledge of others, ignorance, or helplessness (Markowska-Manista 2016:322). Empathic sensitivity becomes of particular relevance. Undoubtedly, the development of empathy should start at an early age. It is the parents who are mostly responsible for the upbringing process. They are the child's first and most important teachers. From the start of their child's life, they should develop their pro-social attitudes (Więclawska 2018:46). Teachers also play an important role in the process of development of childhood empathy. By creating specific educative situations, they may cause significant changes in how the child perceives the world of people and feelings. A number of methods are used to develop childhood empathy, which will be described in the further part of the article. These include working with literal texts, art techniques, drama, as well as inductive reasoning.

EMPATHY AND COMPASSION

The term "empathy" comes from the German word *Einführung*. For the first time, the term appeared in German aestheticism. Initially, it was understood as the ability of the observer to identify themselves to some extent with the object being observed – usually, it was a physical object which influenced the way a person experienced beauty. Over time, the term was introduced into the psychological context and used in research on optical illusions. Eventually, it was on processes that make it possible to get to know other people. The English term *empathy* was established as a translation of the term *Einführung*. It was believed that the mechanism which makes us deal with empathy is "an internal imitation of the person or object being observed" (Gulin 1994:36). This process is known today as motor mimicry. It means that while witnessing another person's emotional state, we receive certain hints which induce us to internal mimicry of the signs of the state observed. One example is the tensing of muscles when looking at someone who is under stress, which ultimately leads to similar – albeit weaker – reactions experienced by the observer. How can we then distinguish between compassion and empathy? Undoubtedly, compassion was understood as a much more passive phenomenon – it was focused on how the observer got to feel the same as others or what could make him feel moved by someone else's feelings. On the other hand, empathy seemed to be more active and focused on another person's feelings (Gulin 1994:36).

SELECTED CONCEPTS OF EMPATHY – LIPPS, DAVIS, HOFFMAN AND OTHERS

Theodor Lipps made empathy the foundation of almost all possible emotional and social processes. He distinguished between positive and negative empathy. The former is strictly related to similar emotional states of the observer and the observed, which translates mainly to pro-social activity. The second type of empathy is related to various emotional states of the empathiser and the object resulting from empathy. In other words, positive empathy is nothing but the fulfilment of the need to empathize, which brings us internal satisfaction. On the other hand, negative empathy is about a lack of fulfilment of this need, which, in turn, leads to a sense of distress (Gulin 1994:36). An example here may be a situation when one person is joyful and the other – sorrowful. These opposite states make it impossible to fully empathise, resulting in a sense of distress in one of the subjects (Gulin 1997:30).

The concept of empathy by Lipps enables to distinguish six types:

- (a) Mood empathy – the subject attributes emotions to a work of art being observed; the ultimate effect of human interaction with a work of art is a specific experience, which is brought down to the reflection of mood;
- (b) Aesthetic empathy – related to mood empathy and pertaining to the aesthetic experiencing beauty;
- (c) Retrospective empathy – based on a memory which is triggered by a reminder;
- (d) Apperceptive empathy – based on visual and auditory apperception;
- (e) Intellectual empathy – serving as a developmental foundation for speech, which mirrors the development of intellect;
- (f) Ethical empathy – related to altruistic acts which serve as a basis for the development of societies (Gulin 1997:30).

Summing up, it should be stated that Theodor Lipps perceives empathy not only as the core psychological, but also sociological mechanism (Gulin 1994:36).

On the other hand, according to Mark H. Davis, the introduction of the term ‘empathy’ has resulted in the phenomenon of perception of emotional states being given a different, more active character. More emphasis has been put on the so-called intentional cognitive processes. Much earlier, affect sharing was usually perceived as a passive learning process or functioning of a biological mechanism. It is also worth noting that research on empathy, initiated by Theodor Lipps and Edward Titchener, has clearly defined the observer as acting consciously and, additionally, making an effort to go beyond the self, into the sphere space of the burden of human experience. In this manner, the active process of “empathising” has undoubtedly become an issue that interested many researchers, who started to focus on it in their works. In his book on empathy (Davis 1994). Has proposed a research model in which the starting point is the definition of empathy as a set of theoretical constructions related to an individual’s responses to experiences of others, connected to processes taking place in

the observer and their effects. The model assumes that the so-called typical empathic “episode” occurs as follows: the observer meets the observed, resulting in a response of the observer. The response may be affective, cognitive, or behavioural. This model has led to a breakthrough in the perception of empathy. It encompasses many phenomena and serves as an attempt to provide a broad, comprehensive perspective of the concept of empathy, which is undoubtedly a great achievement.

For Martin L. Hoffman (2006:38). One of the modern theoreticians of empathy, the most significant condition of an empathic response, is the involvement of emotional processes, making a given person feel emotions that fit another person’s situation better than their own. The processes that trigger empathy very often trigger the same feelings in the observer as those experienced by the victim, although – according to the researcher – this does not always have to be the case. An example here is empathic anger, for instance, by witnessing an attack, while the victim feels sorrow or disappointment. Hoffman has often underlined that to him; it is much more important to define empathy not in terms of the result but in terms of processes that serve as the basis for the correlation between the feelings of the observed and the observer. Moreover, empathy was understood as emotional learning to empathise with another person and has been considered an emotional response triggered by emotions by another person, which results in a much better understanding of various emotional states or complex social behaviours. Empathy has also been defined as the emotional communication link between people, or an emotional response to perceptible and at the same time emotional experiences of others. In this case, the observer responds emphatically because they are aware of the other person going through or experiencing specific emotions (Rembowski 1989a:48). According to another theory, empathy is an emotional-cognitive response in the first place, which constitutes communication between people regarding their current feelings (Wilczek-Różyńska 2002:12).

We can distinguish the following four components of empathy (Wilczek-Różyńska 2002:12).

- (a) the emotional component – the ability to subjectively feel the emotional state, feelings or internal emotions of others;
- (b) the moral component – an internal belief that makes us ready to use empathy in practice;
- (c) the cognitive component – the ability to recognise/understand the feelings of others and the ability to objectify these;
- (d) the behavioural component – a response that shows an understanding of the point of view of another individual.

Another significant component of empathy is related to communication and social skills. The factors listed should not be analysed separately, as all processes are correlated and complement one another (Baron-Cohen 2014).

In this place, worth noting is also the Altmann and Roth model, presenting the four stages of the empathic process.

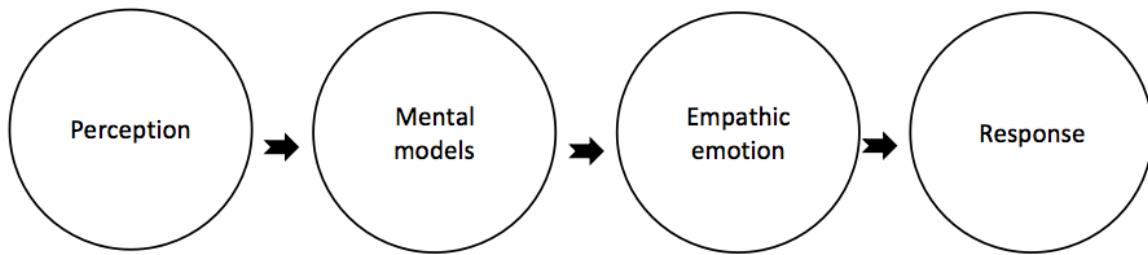


Figure 1. Phases of the process-based model of empathy by Altmann and Roth (2013: 171).

The first stage of perception refers to emotional sensitivity, perceptive readiness and attention processes. Depending on the level of sensitivity of a given person, a specific response of another individual may be considered relevant or not by this person. Some people may fail to notice the emotional expression of another individual or remain unmoved by it. To sum up the above, the observer may, but does not have to, get to the next stage of the empathic process (Ciechomski 2018:70).

The next phase is the development of mental models by the observer. In this stage, we refer to the interpretation of emotional arousal triggered by the earlier observation. Knowledge, experience, and cognitive skills, play an important role in this phase (Ciechomski 2018:71).

Interactions between emotional and cognitive processes influence a specific empathic emotion, which is motivating. Depending on the course of the previous processes, this emotion may direct a given person towards assistance, coordinated responses or withdrawal (Ciechomski 2018:71).

The empathic processes described in the above model always result from the observer-actor interaction. The last phase of the process is the empathic response, that is, the response of the individual, conditioned by the course of the previous stages, as well as the skills and abilities of the observer (Ciechomski 2018:71).

Summing up the above, it should be stated that the most frequently presented concept of empathic sensitivity pertains to the attempt of empathising with another person or of taking their role.

EMPATHY AND MORAL DEVELOPMENT

The development of empathic sensitivity in children is related to moral development. This is because empathy makes it possible to reach full moral autonomy. Moral upbringing refers not only to the acquisition of the ability to tell good from evil but also to shape moral behaviours. According to Mieczysław Łobocki, moral education should focus, in particular, on sensitising others to harm and strengthening their sense of dignity. All moral norms should be based not only on externally acquired principles but also on internal choice. This is particularly important in older children above ten

years of age (Łobocki 2002). Moreover, another significant component of moral education is “referring to autonomic emotional (empathic) processes that develop in the course of social interactions” (Łobocki 2002).

On the other hand, life stories of empathic persons, analysed by Kristen Monroe, show that these individuals considered their own stance to be an obligation. One of the methods that shape pro-social attitudes in children is based on rewarding children for such behaviours that shape their sense of identity as a person helping others. This is very well illustrated by a situation in which the adult addresses the child, saying, “you did this, because you are a person who helps others” (Ciechomski 2018).

Jean Piaget, a Swiss psychologist, understood moral development as a process in which human personality undergoes changes that lead to the emergence of a specific system of values and the associated rules of conduct. This process takes place on two levels: cognitive, related to reasoning and moral assessments, and behavioural, related to all moral acts (Birch 2005:165). On the cognitive level, we refer to reasoning and moral assessments. On the other hand, all moral acts belong to the behavioural level (Birch 2005:165).

Jean Piaget differentiates between two stages of moral development – heteronomous morality (moral realism) and autonomous morality (moral relativism). During the first stage, the child considers all principles to be unquestionable, sacred and unchanging. Everything that is good or evil is perceived as either black or white, and activities are assessed from the perspective of potential material benefits and not motives or intentions of individuals (Birch 2005:165).

The second stage commences when the child is 7 or 8 years old. All principles are perceived by the child as being established, maintained through a contract between members of a given community. All moral assessments and whether something is good or bad is based on motives behind specific acts and related material benefits (Birch 2005:165). Moreover, getting from the first stage to the second is warranted by growing up, that is, cognitive development of the child and all social situations experienced (Birch 2005:165). The first stage is influenced by egocentrism, that is, the inability to perceive the situation from the perspective of others and the fact that children are dependent on adults (Skorupka 1969:157).

The Swiss researcher studied empathy; however, it should be noted that in his works, the term closest to empathy was decentration, that is, the ability to go beyond “self” and to notice the concept of “you”. It is the ability to place oneself in the situation of another person and realise their emotional states. Jean Piaget stated that it is not possible to differentiate between an individual or emotional processes in decentration, as these processes constitute a certain whole. Another concept that this renowned psychologist refers to is sympathy, identified with empathy for others, which is present in the world of children. According to Piaget, the child’s behaviour towards others “reveals – from the first days of life – the tendency to sympathise and display emotional responses, which can clearly be seen as the raw material which serves as a foundation for further moral behaviours” (Rembowski 1989a:29). Although the Swiss scientist did not write directly about empathy, his reflections on sympathising, egocentrism, and decentration undoubtedly served as the starting point for future psy-

chologists, dealing mainly with developmental psychology, who used and developed this knowledge (Rembowski 1989a:30).

Lawrence Kohlberg formulated the theory of moral reasoning. According to this American psychologist, moral development takes place on three levels. These are (Birch 2005:167).

(1) Pre-conventional morality – level typical of children aged 2 to 7. The child acts to avoid punishment and to achieve what they consider to be pleasant. Kohlberg recognises two stages here. The first one is the *orientation of obedience and punishment*, in which egocentrism is typical. The consequences of the act determine whether it is good or bad. The child does not consider the needs, interests or perspectives of others (Łobocki 2006: 59).

The second stage is *egotistic orientation*, which is characterised by moral relativism. An act that can be considered good at the stage of egotistic orientation is aimed at own good and not that of others. The needs of others are considered important only if their acts are beneficial to the individual's good (Birch 2005:167).

(2) Conventional morality – typical of children aged 7 to 11. At this level, the individual fits into social conventions and adapts their own desires to them. Two levels of conventional morality are distinguished. The first one is *the good boy/girl orientation*. Moral behaviour is the one that meets the expectations of family or other groups. Therefore, socially accepted behaviours are valued and repeated. The second stage is the *law-and-order orientation*. At this stage, the child is convinced that the rules of social life must be followed as much as possible, and respect for authorities emerges. Moreover, not only the motives for action are considered, but also the present external standards (Birch 2005:167).

(3) Post-conventional morality – this level is displayed by girls and boys around 12 years of age. The individual becomes morally autonomous, able to compare their own moral principles with those of other people. Post-conventional morality consists of two stages. The first one is the *social contract* orientation – whatever is good or right depends on the majority's opinion. The basis for morality is the defence of human rights. The social system is important as it warrants the defence of these rights (Vasta, Haith & Miller 1995: 485). The second stage is that of the orientation of *universal ethical rules* – the individual follows the ethical standards in which they believe. When the law comes into conflict with these principles, the individual remains faithful to them (Birch 2005:167).

Developing this theory of moral development, Lawrence Kohlberg followed the views of Jean Piaget on the stages of moral development (Łobocki 2006:59). Experiments have confirmed Lawrence Kohlberg's theory. It has been proven that the moral development of children takes place in stages (Vasta et al. 1995:494).

Summing up, it should be said that moral development consists of a gradual transition from the stage of heteronomy to moral autonomy (Buksik 1997:165). In the theory of Kohlberg and Piaget, moral development results from improving cognitive skills and repeating encounters with specific problems of moral nature (Olek-Redlarska 2015). Moral development, as described above and its course, is relevant in developing empathy, which contributes to the achievement of full moral autonomy. Therefore,

both the sphere of education and upbringing should emphasise the development of empathic sensitivity in children.

DEVELOPMENT OF EMPATHIC SENSITIVITY IN CHILDREN

Biological processes partially influence the development of empathy. People are by nature sensitive to other human beings. This trait is displayed in a primitive form in childhood, although children are unable to differentiate between their feelings and those of others. In cognitive development, they learn to understand the feelings of others better and to identify their causes. First empathic responses are displayed as early as 2 to 3 (Vasta et al. 1995:503). Full development of empathy takes place later in childhood, making it possible to transfer empathic responses to more general groups, e.g., of the poor.

The child's experience also influences the development of empathic sensitivity. Acceleration of empathy development may occur if the parents teach the children to recognize their own emotions and those of others. Explaining the impact of the child's inappropriate behaviour on the feelings of others may also contribute to the development of empathy. Moreover, verbalisation by the parents of their feelings results in increased attention of the children to these processes. This leads to their better understanding (Vasta et al. 1995:503).

An empathic child, apart from recognising the emotions of others, lives through them, although not so intensively. While observing a person in need, they feel emotional uneasiness. It is possible to get rid of this uneasiness by empathising or providing assistance. If pro-social behaviours lead to positive feelings in others, such as joy or happiness, an empathic child may also feel them (Vasta et al. 1995:503).

In early childhood, the perspective of "self" takes precedence over that of "others". Therefore, children's altruistic behaviours are rarely displayed and have to be triggered and strengthened (Klus-Stańska & Szczepska-Pustkowska 2009:378).

Discussing the development of empathic sensitivity in children, it is impossible to disregard the model of empathy developed by Martin L. Hoffman. According to the American psychologist, in the first year of their life, a child feels *global empathy*. No sense of "self" characterises this period in the child. Any suffering of any other person leads to an undifferentiated response of distress. At this stage, the child cannot tell who is experiencing suffering: them or perhaps somebody else. M.L. Hoffman refers to this as empathic suffering. By the end of their first year of life, children become able to understand that they are individuals, separate from other people. They start to develop psychical representations of themselves and others, and separateness of suffering experienced by them or by others becomes increasingly recognisable (Davis 1994:56). The second level of empathy is referred to as *egocentric empathy*. The child achieves this level more or less at the end of the first year of life. They realise that others are human beings separate from them but are still unaware that they may differ from them, also in terms of internal feelings. At this stage, children often respond to the suffering of others, proposing ineffective assistance, which they consider to be things that make them feel better. The researcher also points to the so-called empa-

thised suffering, which is characterised most by the expression of compassion for the observed. The child has two different motivations, strictly related to the perception of the suffering of others. The first motivation is the purely egotistic need to reduce their sense of distress. In contrast, the other motivation is related to the need to reduce distress felt by others, which is associated with helping (Davis 1994:57). At the egocentric empathy level, the attempt to provide assistance may often fail, which changes as the child develops.

The penultimate stage is referred to as *empathy concerning the feelings of others*. It is characteristic of children aged 2 to 3, and lasts until late childhood. As the child acquires a better sense of social orientation at this stage, they gradually assume roles. It means they can place themselves in the position of a person being observed in a given situation and making this effort results in an affective response similar to that of the observed. At this stage, the child can properly assess the type of assistance that would be most suitable for someone in a given situation (Davis 1994:58).

The last level of empathy is known as *empathy in response to someone's overall situation*. This level is achieved in late childhood or in the early adolescence period. Over time, humans become more aware of others as those who have a certain past and specific traits. All this results in taking into account the aspects of the life of the observed person (Davis 1994:58).

Awareness of the course of development of empathic sensitivity in children, presented above, is significant in the upbringing process, both in terms of the parent-child and the teacher-child relationship. Knowledge about phenomena described in the above subchapter may be used to understand the motives of children's behaviours.

CONDITIONS OF EMPATHY

In terms of development, empathy is a process strictly related to ontogenesis. On the other hand, it is undoubtedly a specific trait, developing individually in the social context. The development of empathy depends on several factors. Some of these include:

- (a) features of the empathising subject
- (b) family environment of the subject
- (c) conditions of living of the subject
- (d) the situation and time of the process (Wilczek-Różyńska 2002:16).

In terms of the first factor, it should be said that people inherit only affective components of empathy – the tendency to experience empathic care and personal distress (Davis 1994:369). Individual differences in empathising are determined by emotional sensitivity and responsiveness, which, on the other hand, are strictly related to inherited temperamental characteristics. Simultaneously, it should be noted that temperament does not condition the ability to assume a perspective (Czerniawska and Dolata 2005:125). Moreover, a correlation has been discovered between gender and the level of empathy. Research conducted (Wilczek-Różyńska 2002:16) has shown that

girls are more empathic than boys. Similar differences have been noted in women and men (Wilczek-Różyczka 2002:16). In the context of the factor being discussed, worth mentioning is also research by Jean Decety, who has shown that people characterised by high psychopathy levels are characterised by abnormal neuron connections and neural activity in areas related to empathy (Denworth 2018:68). Psychopaths understand what other people feel but are characterised by lack of empathic care (Skorupka 2019:46). On the other hand, researchers conducted by neuropsychologist Christian Keysers using magnetic resonance on persons with anti-social personality have proven that psychopaths are capable of empathy, but, unlike people with a shaped personality, they must employ a conscious intention to display it. According to the researcher, this discovery may be of great relevance in developing a therapy that would automatise empathy in psychopathic persons (Keysers 2011).

The development of empathy is also influenced by history of the child-parent relationship. The level of attachment of infants to their parents and early childhood experiences influence the transmission of feelings and expectations to social relations at further stages of life (Czerniawska and Dolata 2005:125). In environments characterised by social pathologies, conflicts, or inappropriate attitudes of the parents, the level of empathy will be inhibited. Empathic communication between the child and their environment results in internalisation of values, behaviours and patterns. It is also of great relevance for developing the child's personality, free of any neurotic or psychosomatic traits. Any delay in communication development leads to emotional problems (Wilczek-Różyczka 2002:17).

The conditions of living of the individual also shape the mode of development of their empathic sensitivity. The modern world is undoubtedly characterised by an intensive pace of living, technological development, urbanisation etc. Life, mostly in big cities, leads to indifference to one another. This, among other things, is a consequence of the scale of problems and stress which cause individuals preoccupied with their own matters to remain far from the development of empathic sensitivity or altruistic behaviours (Wilczek-Różyczka 2002:17).

The last of the listed factors that influence the development of empathy is the situation and time in which it takes place. The process of empathy is strong whenever one person perceives the other as similar to them, e.g., in terms of age, gender or race. A higher level of empathy is related to the object being a close friend or relative. However, not all studies have confirmed this thesis (Wilczek-Różyczka 2002:17). In terms of the factor being discussed, one may refer to the research conducted by C. Daniel Batson and J. Darley, which has shown that placing people in a situation that requires them to hurry significantly reduces their willingness to help others. Decades later, C.D. Batson established that those who empathised with others helped more frequently than those feeling distressed due to the suffering of others (Denworth 2018:71).

EMPATHY IN HUMAN RELATIONS AND THE NEED TO DEVELOP IT IN CHILDREN

Empathy is necessary to achieve good relationships with others. In the context of the

already mentioned friendly human relationships, the following traits of character turn out to be of utmost importance:

- (a) the ability to anticipate the possible situations in the course of the interaction,
- (b) awareness of the impression one makes on the other partner/ interlocutor,
- (c) ability to assess the motives of the partner's actions properly,
- (d) ability to analyse own motives and consequences of actions chosen,
- (e) the capability of social perception focuses on events that may be of interpersonal significance (Wilczek-Różycka 2002:20).

One of the dimensions of task-based empathy is the activity of an individual for the benefit of society. Human relations based on empathy lead to such feelings as friendliness, tolerance, hospitality. Therefore, it is very important to develop empathy from the youngest age. According to psychologists, there are three groups of factors that can improve one's ability to perceive a given situation from the perspective of another person. These are:

- (a) inductive reasoning, which consists in the fact that the student is presented with positive or negative consequences of their acts to others,
- (b) training – based on seeing all possible modes of action of persons participating in a given event,
- (c) treating the child empathically, relationships with parents based on partnership, lack of any punishment or experiences which might make the child feel rejected (Łobocki 1998:126).

In upbringing, it is necessary to provide the child with as many proper experiences as possible, as children are shaped by experience. One of the proposals is to conduct lessons on the development of empathy. It would be good if the students got to know themselves in two spheres: "myself" and "myself-others". The first sphere should provide children with knowledge of their own emotions, while the second should focus on relations with others (Minkiewicz-Najtkowska 2003:115). However, it is necessary to keep in mind that the development of empathy in children requires patience from both teachers and parents, as it is known that successes in upbringing never come immediately (Łobocki 1998:159).

The parents also play an important role in the development of empathy. They should serve as role models of pro-social behaviours for their children. Their task is also to express compassion and empathy in relation to other people in an open, natural manner. The parents may support the development of empathy in children by allowing them to experience various emotions and playing with children to assume various roles (Hoffman 2006: 31).

According to Maciej Ciechomski, upbringing for empathy should be analysed holis-

tically. In his opinion, factors that contribute to the development of empathy through upbringing include:

- *emotional sensitivity*, which determines the strength of emotional excitation under the influence of emotional triggers. We experience the emotions of others as we observe their responses. The intensity of these feelings depends on the sensitivity of the observer. Empathic sensitivity is necessary to take over the emotional states of others and to show compassion to other people. The shaping of empathic sensitivity undoubtedly depends on early experiences encountered at home (Ciechomski 2018:70).

- *the ability to imagine another person's perspective*, which refers to the understanding of the way of thinking of the other person, also allowing to understand the given situation better. This is mainly a cognitive process, which nevertheless triggers affective processes;

- *knowledge of emotions*, which is one of the important tasks of emotional education of children. The ability to name emotions makes it possible to define the feelings of another person better and gain a better insight into one's experiences. It is very important to present the functions of emotions to children, that is, why we need them and the potential consequences of emotions felt (Ciechomski 2018:68).

- *communication skills*, which are useful in the last phase of emotional interaction. A full emotional reaction requires assuming of another person's perspective and showing emotional support to them. Communication skills in empathy refer mainly to the communication of emotions, verbalisation of one's feelings and needs. Exercises aimed at developing these skills contribute to shaping assertive attitudes in children, giving them the right to feel and communicate their feelings (Ciechomski 2018:80).

- *group norms* are related to supporting the development of empathy. These are norms that support children in open communication. Worth noting is the fact that it is not about developing codes of conduct for groups but about the component of this group's culture or atmosphere. The child should be sure that speaking about their emotions is natural. Thus, the atmosphere in the group should be friendly, open and supportive. Another type of norms that support empathy is norms related to the cultivation of responsibility for others, friendliness or care (Ciechomski 2018:88).

- *personal courage*, which refers to speaking and acting following one's beliefs regardless of the consequences. It also serves as a factor connecting the internal dispositions, situational conditions and behaviours of a given person in various social situations. It should be noted that internal dispositions of an individual, that is, for instance, empathic sensitivity and assuming of perspectives of others, are not a sufficient prerequisite to provide someone with assistance. In many

cases, people lack the courage necessary to join an action actively. The decision to withdraw may be influenced by fear, a sense of guilt, lack of belief in own abilities, fear of being rejected by the group, etc. (Ciechomski 2018:83).

In the context of moral courage, described above, worth noting is the Heroic Imagination Project (HIP) (Markowska-Manista 2014). It is an educational project based on the newest discoveries of social psychology and aspects of the social capability model of Lynne Henderson, Ph. D., which make it possible to oppose any negative situational and social impacts in the context of the educational sphere of pupils and students. This programme, developed by Professor Phillip Zimbardo, aims to shape pro-social behaviours among children, adolescents, and adults. The HIP project affirms the so-called everyday heroism. According to the concept of Zimbardo, it is important for every person to be aware that they can become heroes, as they can make significant and lasting changes in their everyday life environment. We can distinguish two components of preparation for heroic acts. The first one pertains to pro-social practices based on a change of thinking and behaviour. The second refers to situational awareness, or a thorough analysis of the situation, which is based on acquired knowledge and ability to deduce. Thus, people become more aware and ready to act responsibly (Markowska-Manista 2014:56). The program provides knowledge, proper tools, strategies, as well as exercises helpful in overcoming passiveness which prevents pro-social activity. Examples are exercises based on expressing own opinions, discussing, role-playing (Markowska-Manista and Zimbardo 2014:58).

In an interview conducted by Urszula Markowska-Manista, Ph. D., Professor Zimbardo stated that the evaluative research conducted showed that the HIP programme exerted a positive influence on students' attitudes, including social involvement (Markowska-Manista 2014:63).

The HIP project aims to shape pro-social attitudes, which are also particularly relevant in the context of developing childhood empathy. Undoubtedly, upbringing should include strengthening of the child's courage to make them able, among other things, to help others selflessly.

The work methods that enable broadening of the range of experience of the child in the context of the above factors that contribute to upbringing to develop empathy include, for example (Łobocki 1998:159).

The circle of feelings – the teacher and the students sit together in a circle. It is aimed at encouraging the children to express their feelings and to listen carefully to others. It also contributes to visual and emotional contact (Hoffman 2006).

Completing of sentences – this method allows for the development of the ability to express oneself and communicate in a group. The children get to know each other by completing each other's sentences while noticing their similarities and differences (Hoffman 2006).

Drama – a form of play which is based on assuming of fictional roles; it enables children to experience themselves in a given context, helping them understand the attitudes and emotions of others; it helps shape such social skills as empa-

thy, ability to listen, change of perspective, openness and respect for rights of others; it allows for learning through action and activation of emotions that fit the situation; drama classes make children pay attention to the needs and feelings of others; the drama techniques include: switching of roles, making it easier to understand the feelings and thoughts of a given person in a given situation, since in playing their role, the child feels and interacts with other children, and after they have withdrawn from the role, they can analyse their experiences and conclude (Szafrńska 2006:264).

Working with literary texts – tales and stories make it possible for children to learn to identify emotions, as well as to differentiate between good and evil; fairy tales provide children with new experiences and develop their personality; thanks to them, children are motivated to fantasise, solve specific problems, as well as think analytically; many stories have motives which are very close to children and their sensitivity, as they match their problems and provide the space to express themselves; fairy tales and stories play an important role in education through play in the context of the environment of kindergarten children; thanks to such literary texts, as well as play and mobility games, children learn communication, values, cooperation, they gain knowledge of the world and develop their imagination; the examples of play modes which can be used while working with stories are mobility games, artistic plays, role playing, discussions, pantomime (Markowska-Manista 2019:46).

Art techniques – these include drawing, painting, sculpture or graphics; free artistic expression through cutting out shapes, modelling clay, drawing, painting allows the child to spontaneously depict their experiences as well as their knowledge of the world; use of specific art techniques allows the child to release emotional stress, to intensify cognitive processes or human interactions, as well as to develop their interests and creative abilities; the course of work using art techniques is strictly related to emergence of a problem situation, drawing, discussion of the content of drawings and use of the pieces of art created (Bogucka and Turaj 2004:119).

Based on the factors listed above, which influence the development of childhood empathy, and the associated methods of working with children, it can be said that education through play performs a significant role in this context. Moreover, analysis of various conflict situations that emerge between children and pointing out to children the experiences and emotions of others in various everyday situations is a natural way to shape pro-social attitudes.

SUMMARY

This article aimed to point out the importance of developing empathy in children and reviewing and analysing theoretical issues related to the term empathy. To sum up, one must state that empathy is an elementary social concept. Empathy develops grad-

ually from the moment of birth and with the support of adults present in the child's environment. The most intense development of empathic abilities takes place in early childhood. Empathic experiences of an individual are influenced by, among others, developmental and social contexts, interactions of cognitive and emotional processes, etc. (Ciechomski 2018). There is no doubt that the correct development of empathy is conditioned by the correct socialization process of the individual, during which moral orientation plays a crucial role (Szczepańska-Pabiszczak 2015).

Analysis of the origin of the concept of empathy has shown that what distinguishes it from compassion is its active nature, which makes it focus on the experiences of others. On the other hand, compassion is more passive and refers to analysis of the process of reception of the emotional states of others by the observer (Gulin 1994:36).

On the other hand, selected concepts of empathic sensitivity of such researchers as Lipps, Hoffman or Davis have revealed its multifaceted nature. The most frequently used definition of empathy referred to empathising with another person and assuming their role.

Moreover, analyses of the correlation between empathy and moral development have shown that empathy allows for the achievement of full moral autonomy. Analysis of moral development models of Piaget and Kohlberg has proven that moral development takes place in stages, as a consequence of two factors – the improving cognitive skills and repeated encounters with specific moral problems (Olek-Redlarska 2015). Given the above, one must emphasize the importance of both education and upbringing, which should consider the development of empathic sensitivity in children.

Concerning the described development of empathic sensitivity in children, it should be stated that it is influenced by biological processes and the child's experiences. Analysis of the course of development of empathy in children according to Hoffman's model has distinguished its four levels: *global*, *egocentric*, *related to one's feelings* and *response to someone's general situation*. According to this model, the development of empathy takes place in stages, as in the case of the analysed moral development. Here, it must be noted that the knowledge of the process of empathic sensitivity development in children is fundamental from the perspective of upbringing. This refers to both the teacher-child and the parent-child relationship. Furthermore, the knowledge of the discussed contents may contribute to a better understanding of children's behaviour motivations. This knowledge could also be shared during various types of workshops for parents or in on-line webinars.

In the context of conditioning the empathy, several factors have been distinguished and discussed, such as traits of the empathising subject, their family situation, living conditions and the situation and time of the empathy process (Wilczek-Różyńska 2002:16). Analysis of each of the factors has been complemented with selected social research by such researchers as Jean Decety, Christian Keysers, Wilczek-Różyńska, or Czerniawska. Their research is interesting from the point of view of the importance of the development of empathy in children, especially in today's world with its technologically progressive nature, which contributes to the fact that children spend more and more time in front of computers or tablets, which, in turn, has a negative impact on their wellbeing, correct development and health, including the emotional sphere.

Among the presented studies, there are those that point out the significance of childhood experiences for empathic communication between the child and its environment. It impacts both the internalization of specific values, patterns and behaviour, and on the sphere of feelings and social relations in later life. The environment in which various conflicts or improper parental attitudes emerge and social pathology results in suppression of the empathy level in a child (Wilczek-Różycka 2002:17).

Empathy in human interactions and developing it in children is the final issue discussed in this chapter. The development of empathy in children is of utmost importance, as it influences, e.g., the quality of human relationships. Empathy enables proper recognition of emotions – our own, as well as of those who surround us. Thus, a proper reading of the emotions of others contributes to better social relations. Empathy inhibits aggressive behaviours and exerts significant influence on compliance with moral norms that warrant better social functioning. The role of the school and the parents in the development of empathy has been underlined. The participation of adults at the stage of early childhood experiences in the caregiver-child relationship is equally important as in later experiences, closely related to proper stimulation of social development of children during kindergarten and school education. Adults who provide positive social experiences simultaneously create conditions for further development, working through and strengthening relations between children (Ciechomski 2018). Both in school and family life, the organisation of the upbringing environment to contribute to the development of empathic sensitivity is important. An open, friendly atmosphere, allowing the child to express their opinions and speak freely of their feelings and emotions, is one of the components of this environment. Moreover, many working methods with children exist, which aid the ability to name, recognise, express emotions, and shape the readiness to help others. These methods include working with literary texts, drama, training, inductive reasoning or art techniques, which – through play, action, creation or discussion – strengthen the skills of empathising, communication, creative thinking and open expression of feelings, experiences and knowledge of the surrounding world.

All activities of educational nature will contribute to the creation of personality potential in children, thus providing them with suitable tools. Equipped with such tools, they will be able to experience their self-agency and find joy and satisfaction in building empathic relations. Thanks to comprehensive actions that influence the whole community's life, the child can reach its full sensitivity (Ciechomski 2018).

Children brought up in the spirit of empathy have the courage to defend victims and are willing to display altruistic behaviours. Moreover, they are responsible for themselves and others, and they are not indifferent to anyone. The development of empathic sensitivity becomes particularly important in the context of various challenges and problems of the modern world, such as cultural and economic differences and the associated anti-social behaviours, for example, aggression (Davis 1994).

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GENDER STEREOTYPES PRESENTED IN POPULAR CHILDREN’S FAIRY TALES

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ABSTRACT: The article aims to contribute to the discussion on gender stereotypes in stories for children by mapping gender stereotypes in traditional fairy tales. The article presents fairy tales’ value in children’s education and indicates potential dangers in traditional cultural transmissions, paying special attention to gender stereotypes. A selection of texts was analyzed in terms of their stereotypical gender portrayals. The methodological framework represents an interpretative paradigm in social sciences, using a qualitative method of analysis. The texts were purposely selected, and the most popular fairy tales were chosen: Cinderella, Snow White and Sleeping Beauty, which despite the passing of time, are still popular, widely read and also used in film adaptations. It was shown that in all analyzed fairy tales, there was a stereotypical division of roles according to gender. The article also presents possible ways to counteract gender stereotypes. A limitation of the article is that the analysis is limited to three fairy tales only, but the overarching value raises awareness of gender stereotypes in fairy tales for children.

KEYWORDS: gender, gender stereotyping, fairy tale, childhood literature, education, socialization, critical pedagogy

INTRODUCTION

A fairy tale as a literary genre presenting in a simple and compact form the universal experiences of mankind, including existential problems and their desired

outcomes (Bettelheim 1996), is an important part of most societies' culture. According to a dictionary of literary terms (Głowiński et al. 2008), "fairy tale" belongs to the basic epic genres of folk literature and means "a small-sized work with a fantastic content, saturated with the wonder of magical beliefs, showing the history of human characters freely crossing the boundaries between the world subjected to realistic motivations and the sphere of operation of supernatural forces." (p. 61). The fairy tales capture the main elements of the folk worldview: belief in the continuous interference of extra-terrestrial forces, an anthropomorphic concept of nature, an unwritten moral code, patterns of social relations and proper behavior (Głowiński et al. 2008). The presence of supernatural, magical and fantastic elements and phenomena is a characteristic feature of the genre in question (Rutka 2012; Tychmanowicz 2018). It is also distinguished by a simple plot (which mainly boils down to the fight between good and evil), uncomplicated characters and an unspecified time and place of the events presented (Bednarska 2017; Garbuzik & Garbuzik 2018; Tychmanowicz 2018). A rich collection of similar fairy-tale motifs and threads appear in texts from all over the world, reflecting cultures that are distant both in time and space (Bettelheim 1996; Głowiński et al. 2008). The combination of these features makes the universal, rich in intrigue motifs, but at the same time easy in reception, fairy-tale message attractive to every recipient, especially a child (Molicka 2002; Tychmanowicz 2018).

The importance of fairy tales for society and individuals is the subject of interest of representatives of many scientific disciplines, including sociology, psychology and pedagogy (Bednarska 2017). One of the best-known authors analyzing the subject of fairy tales in terms of psychology and pedagogy is Bruno Bettelheim (1976, 1996), an Australian-American psychiatrist, whose publications have been groundbreaking on this issue. In his famous publication, *The Uses of Enchantment. The Meaning and Importance of Fairy Tales* (1976), he analyzed fairy tales from a psychodynamic perspective, presenting their educational and therapeutic significance (Bednarska 2017; Tychmanowicz 2018). This author is considered the pioneer of the field commonly referred to as "fairytale therapy" (Bednarska 2017), i.e. the therapeutic use of fairy tales. In Poland, noteworthy are the analyzes carried out by Stefan Szuman (1928) from 1928, which show the results of research on the influence of a fairy tale on the mental functioning of a child (Bednarska 2017; Tychmanowicz 2018), as well as the highly popular works of psychologist Maria Molicka, published from the late twentieth century, in which she writes about fairy tale therapy (Bednarska 2017; Tychmanowicz 2018).

THE VALUE OF FAIRY TALES IN EDUCATIONAL WORK WITH A CHILD

According to Bettelheim, "a fairy tale is a primer from which a child learns to read in his own mind, a primer written in the language of images. It is the only language by which we can understand ourselves and others before we mature intellectually" (Bettelheim 1996: 256) and "A fairy tale is something unique and specific, not only among literary forms; it is the only piece of art so completely understandable to a child" (Bettelheim 1996: 35). The attractiveness and accessibility of a fairy tale's message for

a child is largely to the specific features of the world presented in fairy tales: simplicity, one-dimensionality, clarity, personification, anthropomorphization of phenomena and the presence of magical elements (Bettelheim 1996; Tychmanowicz 2018). The unique nature of fairy-tale characters also contributes to the accessible perception of fairy tales by children - they are expressive (it is immediately clear whether they are representative of good or evil), their age is not precise and their names are either ordinary or replaced with a nickname emphasizing their features or position (e.g. Little Red Riding Hood, prince) (Bettelheim 1996; Zawadzka & Rawa-Kochanowska 2015; Tychmanowicz 2018). Identification with the main characters may also be helped by the fact that these characters are often presented as the “weakest link”, as the youngest, neglected or bullied people, which may match the child’s perception of their place in the world (Tychmanowicz 2018). Presenting difficult situations connected to childhood fears in fairy tales has a therapeutic effect because, firstly, it shows the young recipient that he/she is not alone in his/hers problems, and secondly, it shows him/her how to deal with such situations effectively. By identifying with the protagonist, who through his/her own determination and attitude solves their problems, the reader gains courage and hope in dealing with his/her adversities (Bettelheim 1996; Rutka 2012; Tychmanowicz 2018).

Due to its numerous educational and pedagogical values and accessible form, a fairy tale can and should be used in educational working with children. This genre’s advantages in question include supporting and stimulating the child’s development on a range of levels: cognitive, emotional, social and moral. In terms of cognitive development, contact with a fairy tale stimulates the processes of attention, perception, thinking, memory and assists the stimulation of language skills (Ratyńska 1982; Tychmanowicz 2018). A fairy tale adjusts to a child’s perceptive abilities whose cognitive schemas are not fully developed and develops the ability to compare, analyze, and recognize cause-and-effect sequences (Rutka 2012; Garbuzik & Garbuzik 2018). It provides the opportunity for that child to increase their knowledge about the world, influencing their concentration and exercises memory function. Fairy tales show correct linguistic patterns, enriches the child’s vocabulary and encourages them to formulate their statements. In addition, it stimulates the imagination and creativity of a child and can often serve as an inspiration for that child to undertake their own creative activities, thus shaping their creative attitude (Rutka 2012; Tychmanowicz 2018). The fairy tale is also of great importance in the emotional and social development of a child. It provides rich material, showing possible ways of interpersonal interactions, which assists one’s understanding of social relations and the motives of human activities and extends the repertoire of one’s own behavior (Ratyńska 1982; Pertler & Pertler 2012; Tychmanowicz 2018). It enables to experience a wide range of emotions, to name and understand them, and develop empathic and anxiety coping skills. (Garbuzik & Garbuzik 2018; Tychmanowicz 2018). Expressiveness and one-sidedness in presenting good and evil simplify the orientation in moral principles and the consequences of individual behaviors, which contributes greatly to the moral development of a child (Tychmanowicz 2018). A fairy tale is also of great importance in shaping aesthetic sensitivity of the beauty and form of language (Rutka 2012) and introducing

a child to a fairy tale is a good preparation for their reception of other literary forms (Muchacka 2014; Tychamnowicz 2018). Fairy tales should also be treated as a significant element of the sphere of cultural heritage - they contain a record of the experiences of previous generations, rich in commonly known symbols and metaphors, the knowledge of which facilitates functioning in a given socio-cultural context (Och 2003; Rutka 2012; Tychmanowicz 2018).

THE THREATS FROM THE FAIRY TALE MESSAGE

Nevertheless, are there some problems behind all these fairy tale qualities? Some authors who deal with the problem of fairy tales answer this question in the affirmative. For example, Grzelka (2019), analyzing fairy tales in the way they present disability, showed that except for *The Happy Prince* by Oscar Wilde, all the fairy tales she analyzed (*The Twelve Brothers*, *Our Lady's Child*, *Cinderella*, *Rapunzel*, *The Frog King*, *The Three Feathers*, *The Girl Without Hands* by Grimms, *The Little Mermaid*, *Thumbelina*, *The Brave Tin Soldier* by Andersen, *Ricky of the Tuft*, *Little Thumb* by Perrault, *The Happy Prince* by Wilde, *Beauty and the Beast* by de Beaumont and *Crazy Pietro* by Straparola) showed disability as a trait that exposes that person to abuse, ridicule and other negative experiences. According to the author of the analysis mentioned above, these fairy tales reflect the social reality in which, when a happy ending comes, it is associated with the transformation of the disabled person, and not the environment in which the person functions. Most of the transformation into a fully fit person results from prayer and/or good deeds, which may indicate the association of disability with evil and sinful deeds. Even in stories that emphasize the importance of what is "inside" over appearance (for example, *Beauty and the Beast*), there is a message that by transforming ugly characters into handsome men at the end of the story, it shows that appearance does matter after all (Grzelka 2019).

Some authors also note the limitations of a fairy tale message by presenting motives of cruelty (Zawadzka & Rawa-Kochanowska 2015) and strengthening attitudes of conformism, obedience and trust towards authority (Czerepaniak-Walczak 2003). Tychmanowicz (2018) strongly refutes the accusations about the appearance of brutal motifs in fairy tales. It turns out that, firstly, the impact of cruel content is not as detrimental to a child's mental development as was initially thought (Pertler & Pertler 2012; Tychmanowicz 2018), and secondly, cruelty is rarely presented directly, e.g. in the form of blood (Pertler & Pertler 2012; Tychmanowicz 2018). In addition, it is worth noting that, apart from the fairy-tale message, such content is present in our everyday reality, and there is a high risk that, despite our efforts to prevent this, the child will come across them in their daily activities. It must be considered whether reading fairy tales together with a child is a suitable space to discuss such cruel, brutal motives and to accept them as part of everyday life. Regarding the acceptance of conformist attitudes in fairy tales (Tychmanowicz 2018). Points out that there are also numerous examples in fairy tales of characters who show courage and independence in action. Here, however, the question arises, is this the accurate behavior to evaluate conformism to power/authority? It seems that the phenomenon of conformism is in itself nei-

ther good nor bad; the situation to which the individual decides to adapt should be analyzed with greater weight.

GENDER STEREOTYPES PRESENTED IN FAIRY TALES

Another objection to fairy tales is the stereotypical depiction of female and male characters in them, and it is this issue that will be given special attention in this work. Despite raising this issue in Polish (e.g. Slany 2011; Lasoń-Kochańska 2012; Śmiałowicz 2013) and foreign (e.g. Peterson & Lach 1990; Haase 2004; Kuykendal & Sturm 2007; El Shaban 2017) publications, there are still misunderstandings and rejections about the harmfulness of such messages in fairy tales, and the efforts made to achieve gender equality do not seem to bring satisfactory results.

Śmiałowicz (2013) in her publication *Fairy tales and asymmetrical gender relationships reproduction* indicates the relationship between the patterns of “femininity” and “masculinity” shown in the cultural message and the problem of unequal treatment on the basis of gender. At the beginning of her work, the author provides examples showing that despite the legal prohibition of discrimination in Poland, equality in Polish society is still a matter of wishes, not facts. She cites, inter alia, studies that show that women, despite better cooperation with each other in same-sex groups than in groups with men (Carli 2006). When asked about the gender of people with whom they prefer to work, they choose to cooperate with men. According to other studies (Budrowska, Duch-Krzysztof & Titkow 2003), both women and men are equally reluctant to place women in managerial positions, with men, who constitute the majority of people holding prestigious positions, forming subgroups and coalitions, serving their interests, while women, when asked about female solidarity, prefer to answer this question with minimal commentary. The research conducted by Pawłowska (2019) among students and academic staff of a pedagogical university showed that discrimination on the basis of gender, manifested, inter alia, in the reluctance to fill women in managerial positions, is still a current phenomenon.

According to Śmiałowicz (2013), the tendency of men to support each other and the lack of solidarity among women, while at the same time striving for men’s favor, are culturally constructed features internalized during socialization. The material that exemplifies this gender issue is chosen by the fairy tale as a timeless genre, the threads of which are common to most cultures, and the symbolic motifs are internalized from an early age, shaping the recipient’s identity (Śmiałowicz 2013). Claims that:

(...) certain content of selected fairy tales and the lessons derived from them do not correspond to contemporary social reality, because they are the result of 19th and 20th century modifications, introduced at that time in order to raise children with the sense of morality at the time. Thus, the patterns instilled in girls prepare them to perform roles considered appropriate in a patriarchal society, but unjustified in contemporary democratic societies, whose basic feature is equal opportunities and equality. (p. 342)

Tychmanowicz (2018: 107) refutes this argument by referring to the position of the

authors who “notice that despite the fact that the plot is embedded in a certain order of social norms and rules, the characters of fairy tales are often brave girls” (Pertler & Pertler 2012; Zawadzka & Rawa-Kochanowska 2015).

These counter-arguments do not undermine Śmiałowicz’s thesis. Firstly, at the very beginning of Śmiałowicz’s statement, it is noted that it refers only to “certain content of selected fairy tales”. Secondly, the mere presence of brave girls in some stories does not dispel the harmful impact of presenting gender stereotypes in other fairy tales, especially since the latter are still the most popular, the motives of which are also willingly used in other cultural messages. It is widely known that the traditional canon of European fairy tales, which has survived to this day, reflects and reproduces the systems’ patriarchal values from the times in which these fairy tales were created (Kuykendal & Sturm 2007). Based on a number of studies (Key 1971; Weitzman et al. 1972; Lach & Peterson 1990; Demarest & Kortenhaus 1993) that discovered patterns of male dominance and female submission in fairy tales, researchers concluded that repeated exposure to gender stereotyping can have a detrimental effect on children’s self-esteem, as well as on the perception of their own abilities and potential (Peterson & Lach 1990; Kuykendal & Sturm 2007). Since fairy tales can significantly impact the formation of gender identity, it is important to look at the message portrayed in them.

The most famous fairy tales were propagated as the desired model of a woman: weak, subject, dependent, passive, enslaved, silent and self-sacrificing, while the men they portray are powerful, active and dominant (Kuykendal & Sturm 2007; Slany 2011; Śmiałowicz 2013). The popular fairy tales about *Sleeping Beauty* and *Cinderella* lead the way in this presentation of women. In both of these stories, innocence and goodness are equated with beauty, which, as a trait worthy of envy, ultimately guarantees the success of the person who possesses it (Śmiałowicz 2013). For example: bad, ugly sisters lose to the beautiful and good Cinderella in a fight for the favor of a powerful man. The reward here is, therefore, the love, attention and recognition of the man, as well as the possibility of getting married as the primary goal of every woman’s actions. A handsome, young man is presented in fairy tales as “a trophy, a prize, the embodiment of the highest value instilled in women from childhood, which causes them to copy behaviors resulting from cultural oppression without thinking” (Slany 2011: 277).

However, in order for Cinderella to be noticed by the prince at all, she must undergo a metamorphosis, which is a literal metamorphosis, because it is only a physical, bodily transformation (Slany 2011). The protagonist “dressed in her gender” by fairy-tale stylists, symbolized by high heels, dress or makeup, comes down to the role of a “mysterious seductress” sending, during the ball, signs perceived by society as a lure to be “acquired” and “owned” (Slany 2011). Thanks to all these endeavors, a woman becomes noteworthy by the subjective male figure, while acting on the male senses only through her appearance, her “body”, she becomes objectified. (Slany 2011).

The spells of good fairies uttered to neutralize the evil spell cast on the *Sleeping Beauty* tell a lot about the desired model of femininity in fairy tales (Śmiałowicz 2013: 347).

“The youngest ordained that she should be the most beautiful person in the world; the next, that she should have the temper of an angel; the third, that she should do

everything with wonderful grace; the fourth, that she should dance to perfection; the fifth, that she should sing like a nightingale; and the sixth, that she should play every kind of music with the utmost skill (Perrault)”.

In fairy tales, we can also find other models of female characters who are powerful, talkative, enterprising, but these traits are also accompanied by that character being evil, ugly and/or stupid (Evans 1996; Kuykendal & Sturm 2007). The exception to this rule may be the good fairy who helps Cinderella, but she does not appear in all versions of this fairy tale, and importantly, she is not fully human (Mendelson 1997; Kuykendal & Sturm 2007).

So far, the models of femininity presented in traditional fairy tales have been presented. It is also worth looking at the proposed patterns of relationships built by women. When analyzing the fairy tales mentioned so far, one cannot help but get the impression that in most of them, relationships between women are based on jealousy and competition. In the fairy tale *Cinderella*, the main character competes for the favor of the prince with her sisters who are jealous of her beauty. She does not get any support from other women, on the contrary – the stepmother is also not on Cinderella’s side; she mistreats her, supporting her own daughters in every situation Bettelheim (1996: 368) interprets Cinderella’s tale as “a story about jealousy and fights related to rivalry between siblings and about the heroine’s victory over her persecuting and degrading sisters”. Bettelheim adds that there are fairy tales in which boys experience similar events, but as Śmiałowicz (2013) rightly notes, “it does not change the fact that the most popular fairy tale, if read it literally, is about girls’ rivalry” (p. 343), and also that the prize in this competition is the favors of a powerful man.

A similar image of the difficult girl-stepmother / mother relationship can be seen in the popular fairy tale “Snow White”. As Bettelheim notes: “in the most widespread version of the fairy tale, a jealous adult woman is Snow White’s stepmother, not her mother, about a person whose love creates a competitive situation between two female characters (i.e. about Snow White’s father and her stepmother’s husband) is not mentioned at all. So, the fact that the Oedipal problems are the source of the conflict in the story is up to our imagination” (Bettelheim 1996: 314). Based on this fairy tale, one can see that the mother will compete with her rival for the favor of men (Śmiałowicz 2013). Since the figure of a man is obliterated in *Snow White*, beauty becomes the battlefield, as evidenced by the well-known phrase “Mirror mirror tell me, who is the most beautiful in the world?” (Śmiałowicz 2013). Ultimately, the girl wins this competition as a young and good person, in contrast to her jealous, older stepmother, who is even ready to go so far as to kill her younger rival (Śmiałowicz 2013).

No better picture of female relationships emerges from another popular fairy tale - *Sleeping Beauty*. In the most popular version of this fairy tale, an evil fairy who felt rejected by the lack of an invitation to the princess’ baptism, decides to cast a killing spell on her in the act of revenge, which will start working when the princess pricks herself with a spindle. Although the kingdom would be ordered to get rid of all the spindles, there is an old spinner in the castle, which, unaware of the danger, shows the young girl this item. In this case, the old woman made a mistake and refused to do evil deliberately. Nevertheless, in Charles Perrault’s version, other women are the cause of

the young protagonist's suffering, and they are presented either as chimerical, offensive like an evil fairy or simply stupid or unaware of the situation, like an old spinner (Śmiałowicz 2013).

Based on the review of these fairy tales, a portrait of the mother/stepmother/queen/fairy emerges as destructive and vindictive, striving to destroy her younger rival (Slany 2011). In his analysis, Bettelheim combined this type of rivalry with jealousy for a man - a leader who wields power in a patriarchal order (Slany 2011). The older women guardian perceives the young, adolescent girl character as another rival in the race for male recognition and the most valuable award – marriage (Slany 2011). Women do not fight each other directly, their weapon in competition is most often manipulation or intrigue, and so “older women order to poison, kill, lock in a tower or put them to sleep one hundred years younger ones” (Slany 2011: 284).

As one can see, fairy tales in which the main characters are women, rarely have friendly, cordial, cooperative and supportive relations with other women. However, it is not difficult to mention examples of fairy tales full of such relationships between men, e.g. fairy tales about wise brothers, *Peter Pan*, *Arthurian legends* (Śmiałowicz 2013), or Tolkien's trilogies such as *The Lord of the Rings* or *The Hobbit*. The fact that cordial relations in the Polish cultural message are reserved mainly for boys, while in the case of girls, they are neglected, also shows that there is no equivalent for the word “brotherhood” in Polish (Śmiałowicz 2013). Currently, however, it can be noticed that the Polish term “siostrzeństwo” [„sisterhood”] despite not appearing in Polish language dictionaries, began to be used in feminist discourse both in the press and in scientific publications, as evidenced by e.g. publication by K. Sikorska (2019) “Siostrzeństwo i jego dyskursywne użycia” [„Sisterhood and its Discursive Application”].

The patterns of femininity and masculinity presented so far, and the models of relationships built by women and men are only some examples of gender stereotypes presented in traditional fairy tales, included here only to highlight the problem. A broad study of this issue in a similar convention in Poland can be found, for example, in the publications of Slany (2011), Lasoń-Kochańska (2012), Śmiałowicz (2013), while in the English-language literature in the publications of Lieberman (1972), Yolen (1977), Rowe (1979), Zipes (1995; 2006; 2007; 2012, 2014), Bacchilega (1997), Haase (2004), England, Descartes, and Collier-Meek (2011), Heerspink (2012), Nanda (2014), Samuel (2015), Shaban (2017), Meland (2020), Zabrzewska (2019) in the article *Gender in Literature for Children: Feminist 'Body, Voice, and Story' Methodology* lists the latest studies on children's and youth literature based on the feminist theory: Curry (2013), Kokkola (2013), Ratelle (2014), Flanagan (2014), Jaques (2015), Feuerstein, Nolte-Odhiambo (2017), Trites (2018).

HOW TO COUNTER GENDER STEREOTYPES IN FAIRY TALES?

What measures can be taken to prevent harmful gender stereotypes from spreading throughout fairy tales? One of the proposals was presented by the Taber school authorities in Barcelona, establishing a commission whose aim was to find sexist content in the collections of the school library (Flood 2019). As a result of the commission's

activities, about 200 titles (including *Sleeping Beauty*, *Little Red Riding Hood* or *The legend of Saint George*) were removed, which accounts for 30% of books for children in these collections. The decision to remove these items was argued because of the presence of strong stereotypes and the lack of pedagogical value (Flood 2019). While such radical actions may evoke objections at first, it should be noted that eliminating the items concerned books addressed to preschool children, i.e. in the period in which gender identity is formed. Only primary school students have a greater ability to think critically compared to preschool children, which also translates into the possibility of greater reflection on the content presented in the literature. So, it seems that the solution in this case, instead of completely eliminating some items from the library's collection, would be to address these books to an older audience. The drastic, complete liquidation of the items belonging to the canon of fairy tales may be harmful, because it deprives us of valuable material for working on gender stereotypes, which are present not only in fairy tales, but also in the "non-fairy-tale" reality that surrounds us (e.g. in animated cartoons, movies, commercials). Many cultural messages, including film scenarios, are based on patterns typical of fairy tales, which result from the influence of the centuries-old patriarchal order. Changes in the perception of what is "feminine" and "masculine" will not be achieved by an attempt to "erase" the existing patterns that have been functioning for hundreds of years from the "reading list". These should be seen as part of our history, and fairy tales depicting gender stereotypes can be seen as valuable material for preventing duplication of gender stereotypes.

In the publication by Śmiałowicz (2013: 355) we can read that "(...) if you believe words that the meaning of a fairy tale is given by the person telling it, you only need to re-read them, so as not to repeat harmful stereotypes. It is the interpretations of fairy tales and how they have been *adapted* to perform an educational function that is discriminatory, not fairy tales or their message, which is universal not because it does not change, on the contrary - precisely because it is subject to change". On the basis of these words, it can be concluded that it is the person who acquaints the young reader with the fairy tale, and therefore most often the teacher, parent or guardian, that is the key to the proper reception of the fairy tale. Therefore, it is very important that each person introducing a child into the world of fairy tales is aware of the potential dangers hidden in the fairy tale message and that he/she knows how to counteract these potential dangers. Teacher's awareness can be raised during the academic stage of teaching studies by sensitizing to gender stereotypes in cultural transmission, as presented by Odrowąż-Coates (2016) in her article „Lessons on social justice: a pedagogical reflection on the educational message of *The Boxtrolls*". Moreover, it seems important to familiarize guides of the world of fairy tales with publications on gender stereotypes both in the fairy tale message and in other cultural messages. In addition to the previously presented publications on the subject in the context of fairy tales, interesting texts to read may be the works of such authors as: Bell (1995), Cuomo (1995), Wells (1998), Sun and Scharrer (2004), Brode (2005), Kirkorian, Wartella & Anderson (2008), Schiappa (2008), Storey (2010), Höijer (2011). Suggestions for working with fairy tales showing gender stereotypes include replacing the names of characters with names of the opposite sex in traditional stories or using neutral terms (such as "hen")

for characters so that children can imagine the gender of the character themselves (Odrowąż-Coates 2015). The teacher may also encourage children to try to create alternative versions of events or the ending of a story from the perspective of real-life (Slany 2011). In addition to changing the names of the characters with names of the opposite sex, other elements of the fairy tale can be modified, e.g. the character traits of individual characters, as proposed by (Śmiałowicz 2013): “It would be enough for Cinderella’s sisters to be as beautiful and good as she, and their only offense was the lack of empathy for the youngest sister and this behavior would be punished at the end of the fairy tale” (p. 355). Finally, a solution may be to create new fairy-tale propositions yourself.

As these solutions may raise doubts and concerns about destroying the original, traditional versions of well-known stories, it should be remembered that although the European canon of fairy tales is called “original fairy tales”, there is no such thing as “true, authentic version of a fairy tale” (Parsons 2004; Kuykendal & Sturm 2007). A fairy tale, like the culture it is a product of, evolves (Śmiałowicz 2013), confirmation of which can be found in the words of Molicka (2011): “You cannot talk about authentic, primal fairy tales - they constantly evolved along with the development of the community that created them” (p. 177). Sometimes there is also a misconception that the fairy tale grows out of oral tradition, folklore, but in the following words of Molicka (2011: 177-179) we learn that: “(...) the fairy tales consisted of local legends, beliefs, stories repeated from mouth to mouth, and on the other hand, literary works. Today it is already known that original folklore fairy tales do not exist, as they were usually inspired by literary works, which in turn were created on the basis of traditional oral communication, therefore the emerging and known literary and folk works of this type had a mutual, reciprocal influence” (p. 178). Therefore, the proposals described in the previous paragraph should not raise objections from the supporters of “traditional fairy tales”.

Other examples of preventive actions against the reproduction of stereotypical femininity and masculinity patterns include selecting texts that do not contain gender stereotypes (Odrowąż-Coates 2015). In terms of fairy tales, an interesting proposition may be *The Tales of Beedle the Bard* by J. K. Rowling (2008), about which the author herself writes in the introduction as follows: “Another notable difference between these fables and their Muggle counterparts is that Beedle’s witches are much more active in seeking their fortunes than our fairy-tale heroines. Asha, Altheda, Amata and Babbitty Rabbitty are all witches who take their fate into their own hands, rather than taking a prolonged nap or waiting for someone to return a lost shoe. The exception to this rule – the unnamed maiden of “The Introduction xiii Warlock’s Hairy Heart” – acts more like our idea of a storybook princess. However, there is no „happily ever after” at the end of her tale.” (p. 12). On the Polish “literary scene”, there are also many examples of this, including the works collected in the volume *Polish Fairy Tale*, which with their origins go back to the Middle Ages, being one of the oldest and most valuable monuments of Polish literature (Slany 2011). They present the realities of rural life and the humorous adventures of peasants who strive for happiness, trying to deceive their destiny through activity and cunning (Slany 2011). The devil’s figure is

an antagonist towards the peasants and their aspirations, who is the embodiment of all evil. Outsmarting him and fate is the main goal of the heroes of Polish fairy tales, and despite the fact that in the peasant hierarchy, a woman is placed lower than a man, it is a rural woman who is go-getting, clever, enterprising, witty and resolute, the devil is most afraid (Slany 2011). Thanks to the protagonists' colourful personalities, *Polish fairy tales* are an interesting alternative to traditional fairy tales in presenting patterns of social and cultural gender.

In order not to be limited only to fairy tales, children can be offered to get acquainted with other literary, musical, theatrical and film forms free from these stereotypes. An interesting alternative to traditional fairy tales can be, for example, the stories by the famous writer, screenwriter and publicist Roald Dahl. In addition to his most famous books for children, such as *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* or *The BFG*, he is also the author of *Revolting Rhymes*, *Matilda*, *The Witches*, *Fantastic Mr Fox*, *The Enormous Crocodile*. On Polish ground, for example, you can find works by Andrzej Sapkowski, in which the "warrior", "fighter" type of woman is promoted, in opposition to the models of femininity presented in traditional fairy tales (Slany 2011). Among the cinematographic proposals, the American animated film *Brave* directed by Mark Andrews deserves attention. The main character, Princess Merida, despite objections from some people around her, has been interested in archery and horse riding from an early age, showing an aversion to court etiquette. It is a production that is not about love for the prince, and the happy ending is not synonymous with the upcoming marriage, which skillfully breaks stereotypes about women's aspirations.

That being said, it should be noted that "subversive gender representations are not about making a one hundred and eighty degree mechanical turn" (Zabrzewska 2019: 13). So, the goal is not to present all male characters as passive, submissive, dependent, emotional or silent, and female characters as active, powerful, dominant, rational or talkative. The presented treatments are intended to show that each person can choose the appropriate model of behavior depending on the circumstances, their predispositions and preferences, and not due to belonging to a given gender (Zabrzewska 2019).

SUMMARY

According to the presented considerations, a fairy tale is an invaluable tool in children's education due to its numerous advantages. However, it is not a tool without its drawbacks; many authors point out some dangers resulting from the message flowing from the fairy tale. One of the charges against fairy tales raised by researchers is the stereotypical representation of male and female characters. Based on studies (Key 1971; Weitzman et al. 1972; Lach & Peterson 1990; Demarest & Kortenhuis 1993) that discovered patterns of male dominance and female submission in fairy tales, researchers concluded that repeated exposure to stereotypical gender representation can have a detrimental effect on children's self-esteem as well as their perception of their own abilities and potential (Peterson & Lach 1990; Kuykendal & Sturn 2007). Therefore, it becomes advisable to undertake activities that could counteract the

harmful influence of the stereotypical representation of gender in the fairy-tale message. Such actions, which have been described in more detail in the article, include: replacing the names of characters with names of the opposite sex in traditional stories or using neutral terms for the characters so that children can imagine the gender of the character themselves (Odrowąż-Coates 2015); encouraging children to try to create alternative versions of events or the ending of a story from the perspective of real-life (Slany 2011); modifying other elements of the fairy tale, e.g. the character traits of individual characters (Śmiałowicz 2013); independent creation of new fairy-tale proposals; selecting texts that do not contain gender stereotypes (Odrowąż-Coates 2015); introducing children to other literary, musical, theatrical and film forms free from the stereotypes discussed.

The examples listed here are just a handful of suggestions that can counteract the harmful gender stereotypes presented in fairy tales. However, in order for all these preventive actions to take place and bring the desired result, it must be kept in mind that it is necessary, in the first place, to raise awareness of the issues discussed among the people who have the greatest impact on shaping the attitudes of the youngest recipients of fairy tales. These people include adults who are important to the child, i.e. teachers, parents, guardians introducing children to the world of fairy tales and explaining the surrounding reality to the child. Suppose these people themselves are not sensitive to the issues of gender equality. In that case, they will not see any legitimacy in applying these preventive measures against the harmful effects of gender stereotypes. Therefore, it is important to undertake all actions aimed at raising awareness of the problem.

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SIMON, JOHN B. 2019. *STRANGERS IN A STRANGER LAND: HOW ONE COUNTRY'S JEWS FOUGHT AN UNWINNABLE WAR ALONGSIDE NAZI TROOPS... AND SURVIVED*. LANHAM, MARYLAND: HAMILTON BOOKS, ISBN: 978-0761871491, 473 PP. (PAPERBACK)

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This is a massive and ambitious work with an important aim in Jewish historical knowledge. At first thought, the idea of almost 500 pages on one of the smallest and newest Jewish communities in Europe, one that had neither deportations or casualties or roundups during the Shoah period, seems unlikely and quixotic. Finland is not a country extensively known for its Jewish traditions or population, even less so than Scandinavian or Baltic neighbors Sweden, Denmark, Lithuania, Latvia. Never more than 2000 Jews lived in Finland over the last two centuries since its separation from both Sweden and Russia as a dependent territory, and today the population is barely half of that, and diminishing. We know of no heroics or famous Jewish Finns, and the country does not usually figure on touristic itineraries for Jewish sites and culture.

Why then did author John B. Simon write almost 600 pages for a Finnish translated edition (called “The Impossible War”) in 2017, the centennial of the country’s actual independence, then in English published two years later at almost 500 pages without many of the original illustrations but still lavishly fitted with maps? Any echo of the famous sci fi novel “Stranger in a Strange Land” is false. Sixty years ago Robert Heinlein’s fantasy of alien life had a huge audience. But John Simon’s evocatively similar title is for a saga that has no real parallel in any story, real or imagined, Jewish or not. In an interview he explained he could not have used the term “a strange land” for Finnish readers lest they be offended. Why would Finns find Finland ‘strange’?

To begin, the handsomely printed hefty paperback is adorned on the cover with four Jewish soldiers looking anonymously like any second world war personnel. You might

guess almost any identity for them – British, Italian, American – but who would think Finnish? And as the subtitle further teases the riddle, these men “fought alongside Nazi troops.” so the mystery deepens. Twenty years ago independent scholar Bryan Rigg published “Hitler’s Jewish Soldiers,” also a comprehensive work detailing large numbers of men with (mixed) Jewish backgrounds who actually fought undetected in the Wehrmacht. But John Simon’s book is definitely something else.

Simon is an American Jew who has lived in Finland for four decades as a communications executive for the worldwide KONE elevator and people-mover company. He published one of the best-selling books in Finnish history, a biography of Pekka Herlin, the ultra-wealthy CEO of KONE, which uncovered a controversial personal history of the family. Around that time, in 2009, he also chanced upon the startling record of three openly Jewish soldiers, one a woman, who had been awarded (but declined) the coveted Iron Cross for their service rendered to the combined German/Finnish war effort against the Soviet Union in the bloody war launched in 1941 as part of Hitler’s Operation Barbarossa!

Apparently not one to shy from unknown territory, Simon devoted the next seven years to exhaustive research and interviewing in the Jewish community of Helsinki. Himself unobservant but with a strong interest in Jewish history, he was able to contact the last remaining Jewish soldiers of the 327 (23 perished) who had served in the Finnish army together with German troops invading Soviet territory along the Finnish-Russian border in the Karelian Isthmus leading to Hitler’s planned annihilation of Leningrad. He made contact with their families and descendants to gather the data on their service to the Finnish nation.

But at the same time, he made another startling discovery of how he felt compelled to tell the story. Not only would he provide a capsule history of Finland for readers unfamiliar with the remote country, but as he explained, he needed something much more personal and to him, meaningful. His solution is unique, and makes the book something of a challenge. In the Finnish edition, he found that most readers were interested solely in the wartime narrative. His innovative use of fictional characters mixed together with the actual history went largely unnoticed. Simon had used his extensive research to create three interlocked characters – Benjamin, Rachel, and David.

This trio are not actual Finnish Jews, but a sort of composite drawn from what he learned in his research about the development of the small community. Former drafted Jewish youth in the Czarist Army when Finland was part of imperial Russia, Jews originally settled in parts of today’s Finland but had no rights at all. Only after the Communist revolution did Finland gain separation, and in all of Europe, the small number in Finland were the last to gain citizenship. A proportion continued to speak Swedish but rank and file adopted Finnish characteristics. Soviet influence remained strong and the threat of a tactical invasion was constant.

War broke out in 1939 and continued on and off for years. The Finns held their own, helped by the patriotic Jewish soldiers, but when exhaustion and starvation threatened, Finnish leaders succumbed to the German desire to use Finland as a staging point for conquering the Soviets. Even today, Finns are uncomfortable remembering

German control of the country and their role as co-combattants until the Nazi regime collapsed. They were severely punished by the Soviets in the peace treaties ending the war in 1945.

Simon gives extensive detail of the actual Jewish personnel lauded and protected by the German army, but these three are totally distinct from the fictional saga he tells over hundreds of pages. In interview, he stated, “I felt I had to explore how it felt for the actual people of the community to have been so menaced by both sides.”

The book manages to achieve a comfortable balance of detailed Finnish history and the role Jews played in the new nation throughout the last century, along with a romantic triangle of the three fictitious characters whose lives represented the achievement of maintaining identity with a comfortable assimilation. Finland remains the only country in Europe where German soldiers did not kill any residents. And in the end the proportion of Finns who fought for Israel in the War for Independence of 1948 was the single highest proportionally of any country.

Simon makes the point of Finland being a ‘strange’ country sandwiched among three dominant powers during its history, and its Jewish citizens similarly fighting for acceptance and survival. His book intertwines in a highly original fashion these shared fates. You will not soon forget the photo of the makeshift field synagogue in the Finnish forest standing unmolested next to Nazi war lines!

Mark Bernheim
Oxford OH
24 October 2020

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