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ul. Wóycickiego 1/3,
budynek 14, pokój 1419,
01-938 Warszawa

Principal Contact

Maria Ryś,
Editor in Chief,
Cardinal Stefan Wyszynski University
in Warsaw

m.rys@uksw.edu.pl

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Charity and its relation to wisdom by Saint Thomas of Aquinas

Miłość caritas i jej związek z mądrością według Świętego Tomasza z Akwinu[1]

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Irena Grochowska[a]

[a] *Irena Grochowska, PhD, https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6927-6772*
The Cardinal Wyszynski University in Warsaw (UKSW)

Abstract: Reflection on charity (*caritas*) and its relationship with wisdom requires an understanding and knowledge of the essence of Christian love; therefore, this paper presents an analysis of charity in the perspective of love in general and its connection with other gifts, especially the gift of wisdom. In order to fully accept and realise charity, one must first know the truth about man, who was created in the image of the One God, in the image of the whole Holy Trinity. The identity of man, according to Thomas, can only be recognised through the awareness of man's vocation to friendship with God, to be a friend of God (Galuszka, 2021, p. 82). Arriving at the essence of charity and its inseparable connection with wisdom required a reflection on the meaning of one of the theological virtues – the virtue of love. Since the theological virtues are God's endowment to man, it was also necessary to mention the gifts of the Holy Ghost in order to indicate the essence and fullness of charity and its relation to God and people. For this purpose, the reflections of Saint Thomas Aquinas were drawn upon, which seem to be increasingly relevant and interesting to people in search of truth and love. Charity is beautiful because it consists in loving another human being – not necessarily the one endowed with affection or sympathy – in God and with God. Such love can only be realised in an intimate encounter with God. The analysis of the texts of St. Thomas allowed us to confirm the thesis on the relationship between love and wisdom. Love is the principle of all virtues and the source of human action. Love enhances wisdom, creating it for itself. Love manifests itself to the highest degree in wisdom. The true union of love and wisdom bears fruit in the form of contemplation, which is the result of the cooperation of intellect and will.
Keywords: virtue, gift, wisdom, love, charity

Abstrakt: Refleksja nad miłością *caritas* i jej związku z mądrością wymaga zrozumienia i poznania istoty miłości chrześcijańskiej, dlatego w artykule podjęto analizę miłości *caritas* w perspektywie miłości w ogóle i jej łączności z innymi darami, szczególnie z darem mądrości. Aby w pełni zaakceptować i realizować miłość *caritas* trzeba najpierw poznać prawdę o człowieku, który został stworzony na obraz Jedynego Boga, na obraz całej Trójcy Świętej. Poznanie tożsamości człowieka, jak twierdzi Tomasz, to uświadomienie sobie jego powołania do przyjaźni z Bogiem, do bycia przyjacielem Boga (Galuszka, 2021, s. 82). Dojście do istoty miłości *caritas* i jej nierozerwalnego związku z mądrością wymagało podjęcia refleksji nad sensem jednej z cnót teologalnych – cnoty miłości. Ponieważ cnoty teologalne są Bożym obdarowaniem człowieka, konieczne było też przybliżenie darów Ducha Świętego, aby wskazać na istotę i pełnię miłości *caritas* i jej odniesienia do Boga i ludzi. Do tego celu wykorzystano myśl Świętego Tomasza z Akwinu, która wydaje się być coraz bardziej aktualna i budząca coraz szersze zainteresowanie wśród ludzi poszukujących prawdy i miłości. Miłość *caritas* jest piękna, bo polega na kochaniu w Bogu i z Bogiem również innego człowieka, niekoniecznie tego obdarzonego uczuciem czy sympatią, ale każdego. Taka miłość może być urzeczywistniona tylko w dążeniu do intymnego spotkania z Bogiem. Podjęta analiza znanych tekstów Świętego Tomasza pozwoliła potwierdzić postawioną tezę o związku miłości z mądrością. Miłość jest zasadą wszystkich cnót i źródłem ludzkiego działania. Miłość potęguje mądrość, sama sobie stwarzając tę pomoc. Miłość w najwyższym stopniu przejawia się w mądrości. Prawdziwe zjednoczenie miłości i mądrości owocuje kontemplacją, która jest wynikiem współpracy intelektu i woli.
Słowa kluczowe: cnota, dar, mądrość, miłość, miłość caritas

Introduction

For the reflection on the highest level of love – charity (*caritas*) and its relationship with the gift of wisdom - it becomes important to understand and know the essence of Christian love in the perspective of love in general and in connection with other gifts, especially the gift of wisdom. This topic, therefore, was developed on the basis of the thought of St. Thomas Aquinas, mainly *Summa theologiae*. The fundamental option for the life of a Christian is to believe in the love of God. The words from the Gospel according

1 Artykuł w języku polskim: https://www.stowarzyszeniefidesetratio.pl/fer/2022-1Groch.pdf

to St. John are a guarantee of charity: “For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him might not perish but might have eternal life” (John 3:16). The Christian’s task is to recognise love as his main principle, as the form that shapes the virtues, the motor and root of all supernatural life (Przanowski, 2018, p. 217). *Caritas* is a key word in the New Testament, defining the identity of the first Christians. Recognition of the essence of charity is hindered by the influence of strong materialistic currents and sentimentalism and the presentation of it often only in the natural dimension. The lack of differentiation in the human psyche between activities of the will at the mental level and similar effects at the emotional level greatly confuses and hinders knowledge of the essence of love itself. Love in psychological terms began to be reduced to a purely affective (bodily) level and assessed according to a higher spiritual love (Woroniecki, 2013, p. 195). Distinguishing between sensual and spiritual love is not easy, as there are many similarities and common factors between these phenomena, which often intermingle. It is not possible to identify the meaning and essence of charity without its philosophical and theological analysis. Such a perspective is presented in the thought of St. Thomas Aquinas and this paper is an attempt to interpret it. In order to clearly see the difference between affective and spiritual love, we will focus on the fullness of Christian love, namely the supernatural friendship with God in the Holy Ghost called *caritas*. Knowing what God’s love is and what the gifts of the Holy Ghost are, especially the gift of wisdom, leads us to the acceptance and practice of true Christian love.

The order of our considerations was arranged in such a way as to clarify the very concept of love, its varieties and types as well as characterise as accurately as possible the thought of St. Thomas on charity. The starting point is the virtue of love and its sense, followed by the reflection on the gifts of the Holy Ghost in order to undertake the analysis of charity itself and to characterise its features in relation to God and people. It is important for the Christian to affirm Thomas’ conviction that love is the principle and source of all the virtues and the first cause of all that man does, and thus its connection with the gift of wisdom.

1. On the passion and virtue of love

1.1. On love itself and the powers of the soul *potentiae animae*

The terms related to love have always been a difficult subject because, outside of academic fields such as philosophy, theology and literature at large, the terminology pertaining to love has been in common use, in different times and environments. For St. Thomas, love is the adherence of man to good. The good of any thing is its purpose, and the purpose of charity is supernatural friendship with God, orientation towards the Supreme Good (St. Thomas Aquinas, 2000, p. 131). St. Thomas defines love in general and presents it as the principle of the pursuit of the good, that is, according to him, love is simply a dilection for good (Sth, I-II, q. 24, a. 2, co). According to him, good itself which one pursues is the cause of love. Love, then, consists in a certain transformation of the appetitus under the influence of the appetible object itself. The appetible object, as good, is the cause of complacency in it (Sth, I-II, q. 26, a. 2, co). Consequently, the good which the object constitutes becomes the cause of love, since it is good which prompts yearning and gives pleasure and satisfaction (Sth, I-II, q. 25, a. 2, co).

Woroniecki enumerates three dispositions towards good and three dispositions towards evil. He divides the appetitive power into the concupiscible part and the irascible part, and ascribes the following potentialities to the concupiscible one:

1. love – hatred,
2. desire – aversion,
3. pleasure – sadness (Woroniecki, 2013, p. 196).

The absence of good arouses a desire to possess it; if this desire is satisfied, it gives pleasure, satisfaction, delight. Appetite (desire) or repose always precedes the concupiscible tendency, which Thomas calls dilection. The tendency of passion or will to an object is the source of all passions and affections of will as a basis. The anthropological approach is important for Thomas; he presents the hierarchy of love against the background of the organisation of human being. Skilfully drawing on Aristotle's concepts and Augustine's inspiration, "Aquinas's great achievement was to show how a view of the human person as a soul-body unity was compatible with the religious view of the person as ordered to eternal life with God" (Shanley, 2017, p. 153). It is important to note that man does not have the fullness of being within himself and therefore cannot satisfy his desires by himself. He seeks fulfilment in the world in various dimensions: material, sensual, mental, cognitive. For him who seeks, dilections are the result of various objects and the desire to possess them (ibidem, p. 154). "Love is something pertaining to the appetite; since good is the object of both" (Sth, I-II, q. 26, a. 1, co). Hence love has different aspects following the differences of appetites. The human spirit is capable of performing different actions (the so-called *potentiae animae* or powers of the soul). Aquinas enumerates five of them:

1. vegetative powers that provide physiological functions (nutrition, growth, reproduction);
2. locomotive powers that enable the change of location in space;
3. sensitive powers – a. through the exterior senses (sight, hearing, taste, smell, tactile senses (heat, cold, balance, pressure, etc.), b. through the four interior senses (common sense, memory, imagination and estimation);
4. intellectual cognitive powers, or reason;
5. appetitive powers (*appetitus*).

For further analysis of love, appetite needs to be discussed. Thomas divides the appetitive faculties into three categories:

Natural appetite, inherent appetite (*appetitus naturalis*), does not result from what the desiring being apprehends, but from nature. Each being naturally desires what corresponds to its nature. The object (love) is pursued if it shares nature with the desiring being. Six characteristics of natural appetite can be found in the texts of Thomas:

1. Natural appetite is not a separate power of the soul separated from the others (Sth, I, q. 6, a.1, ad. 2),
2. Each power of the soul has a natural inclination and tendency to the something extrinsic (Sth, I, q. 78, a. 1, ad. 2.),
3. Natural appetite is irremovable (Sth, I, q. 83, a. 1, ad. 5., Sth, II-II, q. 148, a. 1, ad. 3),
4. Natural appetite does not obey the judgement of reason (Sth, I, q. 83, a. 1, ad. 5),
5. "Natural appetite tends to good existing in a thing" (Sth, I-II, q. 8, a. 1, co),
6. Natural appetite is given to things by the Creator of nature (Sth, I, q. 6, a. 1).

According to this characterisation, natural appetite may be said to be the essence of things taken as the principium of its action. Natural appetite serves the most basic good of beings, i.e. the preservation of individual life and the life of the species (Sth, I-II, q. 28, a. 1).

Sensitive appetite, also called the passion of love (*appetitus sensitivus*), arises from the cognition of the desiring being himself and results from necessity and not from free choice. This power is characteristic of animals, whereas it is voluntary in humans and obeys the reason. The subject of sensitive love is the concupiscence power.

The cognitive or intellectual appetite or will (*appetitus intellectualis seu voluntas*) results from the cognition of the desiring being according to his free choice. The will is the subject of mental love.

In each of these three kinds of appetite, "the name 'love' is given to the principle movement towards the end loved" (Sth I-II, q. 26, a. 1, co).

In the rest of the article, intellectual appetite will be highlighted, since it is embedded in the will and leads to charity and the Holy Ghost. On the occasion of discussing *amor* there will also be the need to mention the sensitive appetite[2].

1.2. On the varieties of love

The differentiation of appetites presented in the previous section allows us to assign the appropriate types of love.

- Natural (inherent) love characterises all beings and is an inclination towards the proper good. Both human emotionality and spirituality are connected with the will.
- Sensitive love is contained and compliant with sensitive appetite.
- Intellectual (mental) love is contained in intellectual appetite.

Saint Thomas presents the order of love resulting from the fact that everything that has a beginning strives to reach an end in a specific order; he presents its division according to various conditions. Analysing the order, he mentions respectful love, to which he gives priority, and affectionate love, which is stronger. St Thomas also explains love in general terms, dividing it into rational, animal and innate (natural) love (Sth, I-II, q. 28, a. 6). The term 'love' thus covers a wide range of meanings. St. Thomas also orders the ranges of superior and inferior kinds of love and gives names to particular kinds of love, distinguishing four of them: dilection – preference with the verb 'to like', love – loving with the verb 'to love', charity with the verb 'to love with benevolence', and friendship (*amicita*). Andrzejuk (2012, p. 267) presented Thomas's levels of love in the following order, with comments to clarify the Latin names:

- *amor* as a desire,
- *dilectio* as a choice,
- *amicita* as friendship,
- *caritas* as loving something higher, more perfect, more precious,
- *caritas Dei* as the love of God. St. Thomas defines it as a kind of friendship between man and God, which is included in *amicita*.

Amor of the widest scope includes both *caritas*, *amicita*, and *dilectio*. Thomas calls the acts of these loves *amare* (to love). He also points to *dilectio* as a conscious choice of persons, which also includes friendship. *Amor* thus includes love at all levels of appetite, while the other kinds of love concern only personal love.

St. Thomas speaks of four dimensions of love (Sth, I-II, q. 26, a. 3, co). He begins with *amor* (dilection) as *passio*[3]; for him, this kind of love has a broad meaning, it includes not only love in the broadest sense, but also any dilection to good things or inclination towards things that correspond to it. *Amor* is the activity of the concupiscible appetite in the sensual sphere. Dilection is the common love for *amor* and charity. *Amor/Eros* includes *dilectio*, *caritas and amicita,* but not the other way round. Dilection has a very wide scope, *amor* and charity also belong to dilection. Dilection implies a choice, which is why Thomas does not qualify dilection as the concupiscible power but situates it in the will of rational beings. Charity implies a certain perfection; what is loved is also valued, according to the root of charity from *carus*, meaning 'dear'. Dilection and charity are mental activities of the appetitus, and in this sense charity can be tantamount to dilection.

Aquinas distinguishes four goods worthy of love (*diligibilia*) and reveals their hierarchy: God, soul, neighbour and body. The bodily life is, after the soul, the most valuable thing in man's earthly life (Przanowski, 2018, p. 197). The intricacies of

2 In Thomas's writings the sensitive appetite *(appetitus sensitivus*) is twofold: 1. *Vis concupiscibilis* - the concupiscible power also called the "inclination for pleasure", which refers to good or evil known through the senses in an absolute way, without reference to hardship. In this appetite, the feelings are assigned to mental power. 2. *Vis irascibilis* – the irascible power referring precisely to hardship. Anger and passion are assigned to mental power (*passiones*) – Sth I-II, Introduction.

3 *Passio* is translated both as passion or desire and as a feeling associated with some kind of sensation, a physiological process.

Thomas's explanation of the kinds of love can be explained if we stick the order of the characteristics of these kinds of love and the relations between them.

Dilection (*dilectio*) is not located in concupiscence but in the will and concerns only the rational nature. *Dilectio* as rational love is not discussed separately by Thomas but is concretised in the form of friendship and charity. However, it is possible to characterise *dilectio* on the basis of Thomas's reflections. Aquinas links the etymology of *dilectio* with *deligere* 'to choose'. *Dilectio*, in other words, loving by choice, may exist only between rational beings. Making a choice is connected with the will. *Dilectio* is connected with the acts of will that are analogous to passions (Andrzejuk, 2012, p. 279).

In his discussion on charity, St. Thomas links the habit of friendship (*amicita*) with the acts of *amor* and *dilectio*. Charity, which can be considered both an act and a virtue of love, adds to dilection a certain perfection of love, directed to a highly valued, dear object – *carus*. Hence the name of this kind of love. Charity will be more extensively presented in the following chapters, since it is the kind of love more extensively discussed in this article. On the other hand, when speaking of friendship (*amicita*) in the second part of *Summa*, Thomas had already developed a deeper analysis of Aristotle's teaching on friendship than at the time of writing the *Commentary on the Sentences of Peter Lombard*, thanks to the new translation of the *Ethics.* Aristotle in the *Nicomachean Ethics* (Woroniecki, 2013, p. 206) listed three conditions for true friendship: benevolent love, reciprocity, unity. The Philosopher raised the question about the possibility of friendship between humans and gods, to which he answered in the negative, pointing to the lack of something common that unites friends. St. Thomas, on the other hand, analysing the Aristotelian factors of friendship, drew the opposite conclusion, claiming that friendship can be even more perfect with God than with humans (Sth, II-II, q. 23, a. 1, co., Woroniecki, 2013, p. 207-209). He came to this conclusion through Christian revelation and not just through natural reason, as Aristotle did. St. Thomas seems to attribute charity exclusively to God, although he did not declare this explicitly. St. Thomas justifies his conclusion on the grounds that only God can be the object of such an absolute love, because only God can ensure the fidelity and perfection of love. All other goods can be lost when the "good" indicated is misidentified and directed towards an apparent temporal end. According to St. Thomas, the love corresponding to the human condition is friendship, which also has a multifaceted dimension (Andrzejuk, 2012, p. 313).

Aquinas referred to passages from Scripture – Old and New Testaments – pointing to several of them and focusing more on the Gospel of John[4]. From this passage, Aquinas reads three important premises concerning the manifestations of the kinds of love presented by him (Przanowski, 2018, p. 194): these are:

1. *agape/dilectio*,
2. love "for friends" – love supplemented with friendship,
3. the giving up of one's life (self-emptying (*kenosis*) and humbling).

Thomas Aquinas recognises friendly love as the basis for understanding love in general and presents charity as friendship with God above all. Przanowski touches on some difficulties related to the translation of biblical texts, in this case the passage "He gave his life for his friends". In various translations one may come across the terms "to give one's soul" or "to give one's life". For the purposes of this article, these terms can be considered synonymous[5].

Christ's promise of friendship and giving his life for "us" is the starting point of Christian reflection. Christ's loving action is salvific, and his sacrificial acts are a sign of the most perfect and supreme love. The elevation of man to a supernatural state, giving him a share in the divine nature, gives man a relation-

4 John 15:13-15 – "No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends. You are my friends if you do what I command you. I no longer call you slaves, because a slave does not know what his master is doing. I have called you friends, because I have told you everything I have heard from my Father."

5 For more on this topic, see M. Przanowski, *Uniżony Bóg* w *myśli św. Tomasza* z *Akwinu [Humble God in the Thought of St. Thomas Aquinas*], Wyd. Naukowe Uniwersytetu Mikołaja Kopernika, Toruń 2018, p. 194–198.

ship with God which can be called true friendship, in the literal sense of the word, not only figuratively. The foundation of friendship is the subjective treatment of the other person. The other person is a good in itself. If the other person is treated for the sake of pleasure, friendship cannot exist objectively. The love of friendship is subjective, because the lover refers to the loved one as a good in itself. Przanowski lists the characteristics, or rather conditions, of true friendship. Friendship is subjective, benevolent, mutual, participatory, unifying, free, active and lasting. In addition, he completes the characteristics of friendship by further characterising it as: revealing, sympathising, consensual, actualising, rejoicing and consoling, broad and sacrificial (Przanowski, 2018, p. 213–215).

1.3. On charity (*caritas*)

The root word of charity is, as already mentioned, Latin *carus* 'dear'. In charity, St. Thomas points to the exceptional significance of the object of love, to something precious (*carus*). St. Thomas counts charity among the virtues, and among the supernatural virtues – the infused virtues (*virtus infusae*). A kind of friendship arises from the union of man with God as charity (Sth, I-II, q. 24, a. 2, co). This love, and the friendship that unites man with God, relates everything else to this love. All the other relations between man and beings are to be established for the sake of man's love for God (Sth, II-II, q. 23, a. 1, co). There is a communion between man and God (God grants eternal happiness) and through it and on it this kind of friendship should be based. Charity consists in the unity of eternal happiness, which is a gift freely given (Sth, II-II, q. 24, a. 2, co).

St. Thomas, commenting on Peter Lombard who claimed that love for God in man is the Holy Ghost Himself, insists that love for God is a specific virtue created by God (Andrzejuk, 2012, p. 261–265). God creates *virtus* as an operative habit (*habitus*), which serves to build a relationship with Himself. Virtue adds to the habit a direction towards good, i.e. it is a habit that cannot be used for evil purposes. *Caritas* is thus a habit and a virtue, originating in the supernatural, but perfecting spiritual powers in man's intellectual powers and functioning in a similar way to other habits and virtues – consciously and voluntarily. Charity is used to define every virtue, because all virtues depend on it (ibidem, p. 261–265). Charity is the mother and form of all the virtues as its cause and end; it directs all the virtues to its end (STh, II-II, q. 23, a. 8, ad. 1 – ad. 3).

The intensity of love is revealed in the giving up of one's soul for one's friends, and then it manifests itself to the highest degree and is all the more valuable the less it results from any obligation (Przanowski, 2018, p. 198–199). The first stage of love of neighbour consists in sharing or giving away material goods. The second stage already requires consenting to hardship and suffering out of love for one's neighbour, and the third and final stage involves giving one's soul, or life, something most precious in this world. *Caritas* is not obligatory, the giving of one's soul for the salvation of one's neighbour is only necessary if it flows from the function. *Caritas*, then, is the giving of one's life, even when it is not required. The unsurpassed model becomes Christ, who dies for sinners and not only for the just (ibidem, p. 199), as it is written in the Letter to the Romans[6]; an example of Christ's amazing love. Love is contained in the mystery of human redemption and the incarnation of Christ as a work of love (*opus caritatis*). Charity is, in its depths, unknowable, for with its fullness and perfection it transcends all created intellect and human knowledge (ibidem, p. 201).

Saint Thomas, analysing the text of Saint Paul's[7] Letter to the Ephesians, lists the four dimensions of charity contained therein (Breadth, Length, Height, Depth), finding a metaphor for the most important characteristics of charity *found in the* saints.

6 Rom 5:8 – "But God proves his love for us in that while we were still sinners Christ died for us."

7 Ephesians 3:17–19 – "and that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, rooted and grounded in love, may have strength to comprehend with all the holy ones what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, so that you may be filled with all the fullness of God."

1. *Breadth* (*latitudo*) – means "breadth of *caritas*", which reaches even the enemies;
2. Length (*longitudo*) – expresses the permanence of love beginning from earthly life until eternity;
3. Height (*sublimitas*) – refers to supernatural intentions, not for one's own benefit but for the sake of God;
4. Depth (*profundum*) – symbolises the source of *caritas*, which is the Holy Ghost. Man's love for God is made possible by the Holy Ghost.

Thomas inscribes the four dimensions of *charity*: love of enemies, permanence, orientation towards eternity and origin from God in the plan of the Cross[8].

2. The Holy Ghost as Love and Gift

The Holy Ghost is the person to whom the names of Gift and Love correspond (Sth, I, q. 33-38). "The Holy Ghost is the person who possesses what the Father and the Son possess; all three are holy and are spirit" (Levering, 2016, p. 360). The Holy Ghost, who is uncreated love, can be in a person who possesses created love. The Holy Ghost stimulates the soul to acts of love. In both *Summa theologiae* and *Summa contra gentiles,* Aquinas relies on the understanding of love that God loves Himself (Emery, 2021, p. 53). St. Thomas compares the appearance in the will of a loving predilection directed (the will loves what the mind has conceived beforehand) towards a concupiscible being to a property of the Holy Ghost. This property makes it possible to show the distinctness of the Holy Ghost and to see the presence of "God loved in God who loves himself" and makes it possible to call the Holy Ghost personified love, with the reservation that this name does not reflect his fullness (ibidem, p. 54). The "seal" of love appears in the loving will (immanent origin), it refers to the will from which it comes and to the Word, which is presupposed before love. The motif of love is also present when St. Thomas explains the concept of "Gift", which also refers to the Holy Ghost. Gift implies a relation of origin, as does love (Sth, I, q. 37, a. 1). Saint Augustine argued that the gift of the Holy Ghost is none other than the Holy Ghost. "But the Holy Ghost is a personal name; so also therefore is 'Gift'" (Sth, I, q. 38, a. 1, co). St. Thomas explains that the very name "gift" "imports an aptitude for being given". All things given involve both parties, the giver and the recipient. The divine person is both given and is a Gift; only a rational creature can accept such a gift and have a divine person.

Thomas speaks of charity[9] in many places in *Summa* and in his other works in which he addresses the subject of man's relationship with God. "charity is a friendship (*amicita*) of man for God, founded upon the fellowship of everlasting happiness" (Sth, II-II, q. 24, a. 2, co). The fellowship reaching eternity is not a natural good, but a gift freely given, i.e. *caritas* is neither innate nor acquired by natural forces, but poured in by the Holy Ghost, being the *amor* of the Father and the Son, it is the fruit of the act of loving (Andrzejuk, 2012, p. 263). St. Thomas explains the understanding of the Holy Ghost, referring to the question of Love.

2.1. Specificity of the gifts of the Holy Ghost

The gifts of the Holy Ghost make it possible to act differently than when directed by the natural powers. The Holy Ghost moves the will to love in such a way that it cooperates in the accomplishment of the act. "But it is evident that the act of charity surpasses the nature of the power of the will, so that, therefore, unless some form be superadded to the natural power, inclining it to the act of love, this same act would be less perfect than the natural acts and the acts of the other powers; nor would it be easy and pleasurable to perform" (Sth, II-II, q. 23, a. 2, co). All the gifts are attributed to the Holy Ghost, because the Holy Ghost, being Love, has the character of the first Gift. Some gifts are attributed to the Son

8 Description and wider explanation in: M. Przanowski, *Uniżony Bóg* w *myśli św. Tomasza* z *Akwinu,* Wyd. Naukowe Uniwersytetu Mikołaja Kopernika, Toruń 2018, p. 200.

9 The term *caritas* is the Latin translation of the Greek *agape.* Charity, loving, the virtue of supernatural love; in Christian theology and philosophy, one of the three theological (infused) virtues, directed to God as the supreme Good, itself worthy of love, and to all other beings for God's sake, (from:) http://www.ptta.pl/pef/pdf/c/caritas.pdf.

by appropriation[10]. These are the gifts that concern the intellect (Torrell, 2003, p. 222). The origin of the Holy Ghost according to love, which has the power to move and to keep in motion, makes it possible to attribute to the Holy Ghost the works of movement, and thus the mastery over the course of created life. Confirmation of this thinking can be read from the words of Genesis (Gen 1:2) where the Spirit is "sweeping over the waters". Life manifests itself above all in movement; it is the Holy Ghost who sets things in motion and keeps them in motion, and so we might say that the Holy Ghost rules over life[11]. God himself is everywhere, and his effects are everywhere. One such effect is the love with which we as human beings love God. Love for God is found in the human soul through the Holy Ghost, which means that the Holy Ghost dwells in man. The first effect as love-*caritas* is the presence of the Giver Himself, that is, the Holy Ghost, and with Him the whole Trinity in the soul of the just. St. Thomas emphasizes that it is clear that God loves most those whom he has made his friends through the Holy Ghost (Torrell, 2003, p. 230).

The gifts of the Holy Ghost are abundant in their effects on all creation. And the cause of creation is Love, as the cause of the creation of things. The gift is not only the unilateral dwelling of the Spirit in man, but, according to Thomas, that which is loved is present in the one who loves, it is also necessary that through the Holy Ghost not only God may be present in the soul of man, but also man in God, as St. John announces (1 John 4:16,13): "and whoever remains in love remains in God and God in him".

2.2. On love in the Holy Ghost

Caritas is the work of the Holy Trinity, but in the greatest degree it represents the Holy Ghost. In charity the Holy Ghost as a person takes the names of Love and Gift. Charity is something unique in man. In the chapter on friendship, the characteristic features describing the Holy Ghost were listed. St Thomas divides charity into a natural love between people and a supernatural love, which is friendship with God. Thomas compared the characteristics of human friendship and drew the conclusion that they are included in the supernatural charity. In supernatural friendship with God, the features of natural (human) friendship are present in an analogous way (Przanowski, 2018, p. 217).

Charity as an effect of the Holy Ghost can be characterised as:

1. Subjective – man, who receives everything freely from God, is able to love Him for God Himself, in the likeness of God who loves man also for man himself.
2. Benevolent – wanting good for man will be different from wanting good for God, for one cannot want the same for God, for He is perfect and needs no more good and perfection. Wanting good for God involves the breadth of friendship and wanting good for all who are associated with Him and belong to Him. The highest degree of God's benevolence consists in granting such good that has a supernatural dimension (Sth, I, q. 21, a. 1 and 2).
3. Reciprocal – charity is characterised by reciprocity in its subjective relations and benevolence towards both God and man, with regard to ontological differences.
4. Participatory – man's friendship with God requires participation in something commonly shared. What is common to man and God is God-given eternal happiness, initiated on earth in the form of grace.
5. Uniting – the Holy Ghost granting charity unites man with God in that love. The highest expression of earthly union with God is contemplation (SCG, IV, c. 22).
6. Free – charity is both the free act of man and God's gift, making people free. *Caritas* is an infused, supernatural love linking man to God.
7. Active – the act of supernatural love provides the greatest incentive for action and activity. Charity as the mother of all virtues affects their acts.

10 Appropriation is a way of showing the Divine Persons by the use of essential attributes.

11 Some passages of Scripture may be quoted in confirmation of these words, e.g.: "It is the Spirit that gives life" (John 6:63), "I will make breath [Spirit] enter you so you may come to life" (Ezek 37:5).

8. Permanent – *caritas* as a virtue is a permanent, supernatural habit that can be lost through mortal sin.
9. Revealing – Thomas sees in the act of revelation the most important proof of God's friendship towards man. The Holy Ghost as a friend reveals the greatest mysteries.
10. Sympathising – God shows sympathy and compassion towards man. On the part of man, this compassion makes man unite with God with regard to the appetible object.
11. Compatible – under the action of the Holy Ghost, man's will is transformed into one that is compatible with the will of God. God's will becomes man's love.
12. Actualising – the Holy Ghost, who inspires charity, is also present in the soul of man. Charity causes the presence, the mutual abiding in each other of God and man.
13. Joyful and comforting – just as in friendships between people a friend is present when needed, in difficult situations he becomes a comforter. The joy of a friend's presence is great. Similarly, in charity, God dwells in the soul of man and brings comfort and joy in adversity.
14. Broad – because of God's friendship man is able to love others. Charity enables us to love God for God Himself, but also to love others, even our enemies.
15. Sacrificial – God gave his life in the sacrifice of the cross out of love for man. Because of charity, man may also be capable of spiritual sacrifices and even acts of martyrdom.

To sum up, one can say, according to the words of the Holy Scriptures, that "charity makes it possible to be friends with God and to transfer this friendship to other people. He who loves God discovers that he has been invited to the company of God's friends. God's love is poured into our hearts by the Holy Ghost who has been given to us" (Giertych, 2019, p. 31).

3. *Caritas* and the gift of wisdom

Love and wisdom are considered by Aquinas to be the most important in ordering the hierarchy of importance of human endowments. Love is first and most important when it comes to human actions and pursuits. Wisdom is the most important fruit of knowledge. Thomas concludes that wisdom is conditioned by love, which means that there is no wisdom without love. Wisdom thus transcends cognition and also refers to human action (Andrzejuk, 2012, p. 332).

As an intellectual, St. Thomas seeks the perspectives that open up opportunities for reason at the moment of Revelation (ibidem, p. 70). Charity enables an attitude rooted in reason and will towards the other person, whom it sees as a value.

3.1. The relation of the gift of wisdom to the virtue of love

On a par with the gifts of the Holy Ghost, the theological virtues are gifts of God, and they too refine the person, making them capable of acting in accordance with God's will. In Scripture, the words "rest upon him ... the spirit of wisdom and understanding" allow us to understand that the gifts and virtues are given by divine inspiration, which implies a certain movement from outside (Torrell, 2003, p. 287). "For God loves nothing so much as the one who dwells with Wisdom" (Wis 7:14 and 27–28). In the gift of wisdom the virtue of love manifests itself in the highest degree and is the fruit of the gift. Saint Thomas did not immediately see the connection between the virtue of *caritas* and the gift of wisdom; he first examined love itself and its relationship to the object, then linked the gift of wisdom to it (Sth, II-II, q. 23, a. 1). At first, he linked wisdom only with reason and knowledge and then he combined them with faith. He based his considerations on the attribution of wisdom, reason and knowledge to the power of speculative cognition. After careful analysis, he changed his position, linking the virtue of love with the gift of wisdom. The reason he so decided was that wisdom, reason and knowledge belong to the category of speculative cognition. Therefore, after deeper analysis, he discussed the gift of wisdom together with the virtue of love. Love precedes cognition, the gift of the Holy Ghost animates wisdom with a direct experience of God (Woroniecki, 2013, p. 235).

3.2. Reinforcing the gift of wisdom through love

Love in its highest degree is manifested in wisdom. The nature of God is itself love, wisdom and goodness – "the charity whereby formally we love our neighbor is a participation of Divine charity" (Sth II-II, q. 23, a. 2, ad. 1).

The gift of wisdom, like the other gifts, grows through love. It is intensified by the love of light in reason. This intensification of the gift of wisdom, given by love, has a beneficial effect on love itself, thus enabling it to accept more deeply the mystery of God hidden in the soul and consequently to unite more fully with God (Woroniecki, 2013, p. 235). St. Thomas proclaims the primacy of reason over the will, but at the same time sees the superiority of the will in apprehending the object of predilection. The dependence of the will on reason is not manifest in that the will always chooses the more perfect cognition; the tension of the will is often determined by the perfection and greater value of the object rather than the perfection of the cognition. The will has the capacity to overtake reason, to attract it, which is illustrated precisely by the relation of the virtue of love to the gift of wisdom. Woroniecki writes: "this pulling of reason upwards by an otherwise subordinate will nowhere appear more clearly" (ibidem, p. 236).

Love comes from the Holy Ghost who moves the human mind, but not in a passive and compelling way, but in accordance with the choice of the will. *Caritas* is not just an act, but a gift that gives freedom (Przanowski, 2018, p. 217). In the process of the soul loving the God who dwells in it, one can see what help the gift of wisdom gives to love. Love creates this help for itself in order to refine the power of reason. Love improves the intellect to love and know God ever more deeply. The refining of reason is the possibility of a deeper penetration, a simple insight into truth. Intuitive insight is more perfect than complex analysis, but it is only available in a limited way. Woroniecki comments that there is nothing strange in the fact that, under the influence of love, the human soul desires to know God better in His infinite form (Woroniecki, 2013, p. 236). In this desire man can get help in the form of the gift of wisdom, which improves reason to obey God and makes man judge everything from God's point of view. There is then a chance that a ripening towards contemplation will slowly begin to appear and that discursive reasoning will gradually begin to disappear. At the peak of the action of the gift of wisdom, the soul can reach mystical union. Reason will be reduced to a quiet, peaceful insight into God, and the soul will begin to experience His loving action. The gift of wisdom manifests to the highest degree that which is contained in the gifts of reason and knowledge, namely, affective cognition, in which the judgments of reason follow human affectivity, are the consequence of the will's adherence to an object with which it is united by love. The deeper the union with Love caused by the gift of wisdom, the deeper the inner peace that radiates outwards as it grows (ibidem, p. 237).

From the culmination of the union of love and wisdom arises contemplation, which is the joint action of intellect and will. In contemplation, intellectual cognition and the judgment of wisdom meet. The contemplative life, although rooted in the intellect, begins with the will, because charity stimulates and activates contemplation (Sth, II-II, q. 180, a. 7, ad. 1). Analysing the union between love and wisdom, Thomas also emphasises peace, referring to the active life, which is the fruit of this union. With regard to the theoretical life, the fruit of the union of love and wisdom is precisely contemplation[12]. "Of all the activities of the virtues, the most pleasant is the contemplation of wisdom (...). Philosophy assigns the

12 The matter of the active life is temporal things, to which human actions turn. The matter of the contemplative life, on the other hand, are the cognisable principles of things, at which the contemplative persists, Thomas Aquinas, *Kwestie dyskutowane o prawdzie*, vol. 1, transl. A. Aduszkiewicz, L. Kuczyński, J. Ruszczyński, Wydawnictwo Kęty, 1998, p. 526.

contemplation of wisdom admirable pleasures because of its purity and permanence"[13]. The perfection of contemplation as the fruit of the union of love and wisdom consists in not only seeing God's truth but also loving it (Andrzejuk, 2012, p. 335).

Conclusions

The statement that Saint Thomas's intellectualism is realised in love may be quite accurate, since for Thomas the summit and end of reflection was to know God's Love.

The fulfilment of man's rational life equates with the loving contemplation of God Himself and the relationship with Him. Man's love for God is a kind of friendship, based on man's union with God, through which God grants his eternal happiness and on which he builds this friendship (Sth, II-II, q. 23, a. 1, co). This does not mean that *caritas* cannot exist between human beings; it can, but under certain conditions. *Caritas* comes, as explained above, from *carus* (dear, precious, more excellent), so that there arises a necessity of liking the right object, because if the object is inappropriate, in the sense that it does not arouse admiration, true love will not exist. *Caritas* is characterised by different degrees of intensity. St. Thomas recognizes that *caritas* adds some perfection to love in the general sense because of the great value of the object of love. The value of the object of love implies a certain particularity, but not a uniqueness. Man need not have only one object to which this love applies (Andrzejuk, 2012, p. 314).

Love strengthens all the virtues and thus ignites itself. The gift of wisdom is intensified by love (light) in reason. The reinforcement of love by wisdom, the interaction of the virtue of love with the gift of wisdom, enables man to know God ever more deeply and to unite ever more closely with Him. Becoming like God by seeking wisdom directly contributes to union with God through love (Przanowski, 2015, p. 35). It is difficult for man to mature in love due to his weakness resulting from self-love. However, despite these obstacles, he is able to love God for Him alone, thanks to charity, which is a supernatural friendship with God. Charity also fulfils all the conditions of natural (human) friendship. *Caritas* is an infused virtue and has two objects of predilection: God and man. It is important to emphasise that *caritas* directed towards man can only exist for God's sake and includes all people, because God has loved everyone. In *caritas*, therefore, there is room for what is not found in friendship, the love for enemies (Sth, II-II, q. 23, a. 1, co). For Thomas, the supernatural character of man's love for God remains important. Love exalts man in a special way, it turns a servant into a friend, because the gift of love surpasses all gifts. For all the other gifts can be possessed without love and the participation of the Holy Ghost, but if they are to be accompanied by love, then the Holy Ghost is absolutely necessary. The Apostle in the Epistle to the Romans (Rom 5:5) says: "the love of God has been poured out into our hearts through the holy Spirit that has been given to us" (Torrell, 2003, p. 502). Man's charity for God is rooted in the Trinity, in which the Holy Ghost is Person, Love and Gift. Charity unites the created being (man) with the Creator so that as friends they share life together (Turner, 2017, p. 198). In the intellect (*intellectus*) of the rational creature was imprinted the origin of the Son from the Father, and in the will (*voluntas*) the origin of the Spirit through the Son from the Father. We are sons of "all God." The Father is our origin, through the Son we were created, and the Holy Ghost animates and transforms us (Gałuszka, 2021, p. 76).

Abbreviations

Rom – Letter to the Romans
Wis –Book of Wisdom
Eph – Letter to the Ephesians
1 John – First Letter of St John the Apostle
John – Gospel according to St John
Sth – *Summa theologiae*
SCG – *Summa contra gentiles*

13 Purity is understood as pleasure caused by immaterial things, permanence refers to those which come from immutable things, A. Andrzejuk, *Metafizyka obecności: wstęp do teorii relacji osobowych*, Wydawnictwo UKSW, Warsaw 2012, p. 314.

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The Movement of Pure Hearts as the symbol and the road of maturing for pure love

Ruch Czystych Serc znakiem rozpoznawczym i drogą dorastania do czystej miłości[1]

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Rev. Marek Kluz[a]

[a] *Associated Professor Rev. Marek Kluz, PhD, https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2255-1431*
The Pontifical University of John Paul II in Cracow

Abstract: Destructive tendencies inside our civilisation affect the virtue of purity in an unprecedented way. Various arguments are being put forward against living a life in chastity. The life in purity is frequently associated with "rejection" of one's own freedom. It is also argued that chastity is an element of an bygone era. For this reason the issue of sexual purity becomes currently a challenge – there is a need for a strong opposition against the distortions concerning the virtue of purity. For it is purity that provides for the maturing and deepening of love and prepares best for the bodily and spiritual union of woman and man in matrimony. Thus, it is essential to show the beauty and value of chastity. It has to be noted that the Church faithful to the teachings of Jesus Christ promotes all initiatives which in today's world present chastity as a positive moral value. One of these initiatives is the *Movement of Pure Hearts* which through appropriate formation helps young people to fight for the purity of heart and body.
Keywords: virtue of purity, love, value, youth, moral teaching of the Church, *Movement of Pure Hearts*, formation

Abstrakt: Destrukcyjne tendencje wewnątrz dzisiejszej cywilizacji w sposób szczególny dotykają cnoty czystości. Wysuwane są różne zastrzeżenia przeciwko zachowywaniu czystości. Życie w czystości często kojarzone jest z „wyrzeczeniem" się własnej wolności. Funkcjonuje również pogląd, że czystość to „przeżytek. Dlatego temat czystości seksualnej staje się współcześnie wyzwaniem – potrzebny jest sprzeciw wobec fałszowania prawdy o cnocie czystości. Czystość bowiem zapewnia rozwój i pogłębianie miłości oraz najlepiej przygotowuje do duchowo-cielesnego zjednoczenia kobiety i mężczyzny we wspólnocie małżeńskiej. Niezwykle ważnym zadaniem jest zatem ukazywanie piękna i wartości cnoty czystości. Należy podkreślić, że Kościół, wierny nauce Jezusa Chrystusa, promuje wszystkie inicjatywy, które w dzisiejszym świecie prezentują czystość jako pozytywną wartość moralną. Do tych inicjatyw zalicza się *Ruch Czystych Serc*, który poprzez właściwą formację, pomaga młodym ludziom walczyć o czystość serca i ciała.
Słowa kluczowe: cnota czystości, miłość, wartość, młodzież, nauka moralna Kościoła, *Ruch Czystych Serc*, formacja

Introduction

The moral attitude which makes it possible to read correctly one's own sexuality as the vocation for love is purity. The Holy Father Francis in his Apostolic Letter *Patris corde* emphasised that "only when love is chaste, is it a true love" (Franciszek, 2021, no. 7). The sexual revolution of the 1960's, whose aftermath came also to Poland, and popular these days, so called, stress-free upbringing made that there is little understanding of the need for teaching the virtue of purity as a life attitude and a style of life which would speak for freedom and courage. The mass media make the task of teenagers' parents and teachers even harder. Yet when teenagers are asked if they would like their future spouses to be sexually abstinent until they enter marriage relationship, it turns out that their answer is positive. They are surprised to learn that the ridiculed virtue of chastity is actually important for them, and virginity may come as the most beautiful wedding gift which they may receive from the loved person.

1 Artykuł w języku polskim: https://www.stowarzyszeniefidesetratio.pl/fer/2022-1Kluz.pdf

Therefore striving for purity is indispensable for being able to give oneself to the other person in love in future marriage. This has been clearly pointed out to the young people by Pope Francis on the 22nd of June 2015, in Turin: "I don't want to be a moralist but I would like to say a word that isn't liked, an unpopular word. Sometimes the Pope must also take risks to speak the truth. Love is in works, in communicating, but love is very respectful of people, it does not use people, that is, love is chaste. And to you young people in this world, in this hedonistic world, in this world where only pleasure, having a good time, and living the good life get publicity, I say to you: be chaste, be chaste. All of us in life have gone through moments in which this virtue has been very difficult, but it is in fact the way of genuine love, of a love that is able to give life, which does not seek to use the other for one's own pleasure. It is a love that considers the life of the other person sacred" (Franciszek, 2020). That is why love is the "soul" of purity and only thanks to love purity becomes meaningful. It is purity, that lets a person to fulfil their greatest destiny and concurrently the most fundamental desire, that is, experiencing a mature and responsible love (Przybyło, 2017, p. 52-54). At the same time, this virtue helps young people to avoid certain situations of sexual tensions or to overcome them if they should become an obstacle on the way to develop such a mature personality which would be able to offer oneself and to receive this gift from the other person.

From this point of view it is extremely important to show the beauty and the value of the virtue of purity. It seems that today – more than ever before – there is a need for the positive vision of purity. Purity is a moral attitude positive in character, in the sense, that it shows what to do. It must be stressed that the Church faithful to the teaching of Jesus Christ promotes all the initiatives which in today's world depict purity as a positive moral value. Among these initiatives perfectly matching the moral doctrine of the Church one can find the *Movement of Pure Hearts* which via an intellectual and spiritual formation helps young people to fight for purity of their heart and body and to realize God's vocation to holiness. In spite of the fact that the *Movement of Pure Hearts* is totally different form the predominant permissive trends and styles of life, it has a positive influence on young people and it develops dynamically leading to God ever greater number of those who desire to live in purity.

1. Christian value of purity

In Christianity the virtue of purity plays a vital role. On the tablets of stone which Moses received on the Mount Sinai there was also an inscription that read: "Thou shalt not commit adultery" (Ex 20:14). The teaching of Christ included in the New Testament refers to this issue as well: "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall not commit adultery.' But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart" (Mt 5:27-28). A virtue of chastity is of extraordinary value for individual and social life. When the purity is not respected, then the family and social life is ready to fall as a result of the lack of true love (Kaźmierczak, 2017, p. 162-164).

Purity is defined as a moral virtue thanks to which a person abstains from any kind of sexual activity whether external or internal, leading to disordered sexual pleasure. Purity is one of the forms of moderation (abstinence) which is one of the gifts of the Holy Spirit (cf. Gal 5:23). In its basic meaning it is understood as sanctity and the remaining in the state of sanctifying grace (Kowalczyk, 2017, p. 29-32). *The Catechism of the Catholic Church* states that "chastity means the successful integration of sexuality within the person and thus the inner unity of man in his bodily and spiritual being. Sexuality, in which man's belonging to the bodily and biological world is expressed, becomes personal and truly human when it is integrated into the relationship of one person to another, in the complete and lifelong mutual gift of a man and a woman. The virtue of chastity therefore involves the integrity of the person and the integrality of the gift" (Katechizm Kościoła Katolickiego, 1994, no. 2337). In further articles *Catechism* teaches that "Whoever wants to remain faithful to his baptismal promises and resist temptations will want to adopt the means for doing so: self-knowledge, practice of an ascesis adapted to the situations that confront him, obedience to God's commandments, exercise of the moral virtues, and fidelity to prayer. Indeed it is through chastity that we are gathered together and led back to the unity from which we were fragmented into multiplicity" (ibidem, no. 2340). In the maturing for purity psychical and emotional maturity is equally important. "All of these – as Pope Francis points out – prepare them for an integral and generous gift of self that will be expressed, following a public commitment, in the gift of their bodies. Sexual union in marriage will thus appear as a sign of an all-inclusive commitment, enriched by everything that has preceded it" (Franciszek, 2016, no. 283).

Chastity in its positive meaning is portrayed as a sensible order which directs "how a person should react to sexual drive, defines when and in what circumstances it can be actualized, and creates the space of requirements for love stemming on its ground" (Marcol, 1995, p. 104). Within the Christian approach towards sexuality purity is the protection of love, it also helps to overcome sexual desire which leaves no space for love, but it also liberates love form the attitude of use and exploitation. It does not reject either corporeality or sensuality, but it integrates them in personal love (Wojtyła, 2001, p. 151-154). Pope Benedict XVI clearly emphasises this truth in his address to participants in the meeting promoted by the Pontifical John Paul II Institute for Studies on Marriage and Family: "The true appeal of sexuality is born of the vastness of this horizon that opens up: integral beauty, the universe of the other person and of the «we» that is born of the union, the promise of communion that is hidden therein, the new fruitfulness, the path towards God, the source of love, which love opens up. The union in one flesh then becomes a union for the whole of life, until the man and woman become one spirit as well. Thus a journey begins in which the body teaches us the value of time, of that slow maturation in love. In this light the virtue of chastity takes on new meaning" (Benedykt XVI, 2011, p. 26-27).

Therefore, acquiring the state of purity is a great formative task for every human who faces the alternative: either to check their temptations and find peace, or let them to prevail and succumb into misery (cf. Sir 1:22). "Is this not perhaps the drama of that sexuality which today remains enclosed in the narrow circle of one's own body and emotions, but which in reality can only find fulfilment in that call to something greater?" – asks Benedict XVI in one of his speeches (ibidem, p. 27). Therefore man's dignity "requires him to act out of conscious and free choice, as moved and drawn in a personal way from within, and not by blind impulses in himself or by mere external constraint. Man gains such dignity when, ridding himself of all slavery to the passions, he presses forward to his goal by freely choosing what is good and, by his diligence and skill, effectively secures for himself the means suited to this end" (Katechizm Kościoła Katolickiego, 1994, no. 2339).

In His sermon on the Mount (cf. Mt 5:1-11,28) Christ calls on man to return to original innocence, emphasising that this state summons him to "discover what is human, the living form of the new man" (Zyga, 1999, p. 170-171). The form of the new man, according to John Paul II, can emerge from the holistic way of being and acting "to the extent to which the ethos of the redemption of the body dominates the lust of the flesh and the whole man of lust. Christ clearly indicated that the way to attain this must be the way of temperance and mastery of desires, that is, at the very root, already in the purely interior sphere ("Everyone who looks at a woman lustfully..."). The ethos of redemption contains in every area – and directly in the sphere of the lust of the flesh – the imperative of self-control, the necessity of immediate continence and of habitual temperance" (ibidem, p. 172). Saint John Paul II refers to what stands for the value of Christian purity, indicating the fact that in human life a certain habit can emerge which allows for lusting after the body to which man has got used to (ibidem, p. 170-171).

Christianity, which is the guardian of purity, emphasises the special value of human body. It was especially accentuated by Pope Francis in post-synodal apostolic exhortation Christus vivit addressed to the youth and all the People of God: "Young people are aware that the body and sexuality have an essential importance for their lives and for their process of growth in identity. Yet in a world that constantly exalts sexuality, maintaining a healthy relationship with one's body and a serene affective life is not easy. For this and other reasons, sexual morality often tends to be a source of 'incomprehension and alienation from the Church, inasmuch as she is viewed as a place of judgment and condemnation'" (Franciszek, 2019, no. 81).

It is necessary to realise that Christ came to earth when the eternal Word was incarnated in the womb of the Virgin Mary. In his catecheses reflecting upon the subject of chastity Pope John Paul II refers to the words directed to the fellowship of Corinth by Saint Paul (cf. 1 Cor 12:18-27) and points out that the contemporary scientific and biological approach often does not take into consideration the fact that human body is an essential part of a person and situates it at the same level as any other element of material world. Simultaneously, the Pope teaches that the source of the dignity of the body is the fact that it was sanctified by the Holy Spirit: "But even more so it is the supernatural reality constituted by the indwelling and the continual presence of the Holy Spirit in man – in his soul and in his body – as fruit of the redemption carried out by Christ. It follows that "man's body" is no longer just "his own". It deserves that respect whose manifestation in the mutual conduct of man, male and female, constitutes the virtue of purity. This is not only because it is the body of the person. When the Apostle writes: "Your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, which you have from God" (1 Cor 6:19), he intends to indicate yet another source of the dignity of the body, precisely the Holy Spirit, who is also the source of the moral duty deriving from this dignity" (Broszkowski, 2011, p. 165). In the First Letter to the Thessalonians Saint Paul elucidates the truth that God wants them to be sanctified. It means that they should take care of their body by avoiding lustful deeds, so that it could stay holy and honourable, since this is how God summons them to holiness (cf. 1 Th 4:3-5). Paul the Apostle emphasise the great value of the human body once again when he writes the letter to the community of believers in Rome. In this epistle he calls upon the faithful in Rome to live according to the Spirit, reminding them the fact that Christ dwells in them and that: "although the body is dead because of sin, the Spirit is life because of righteousness" (Rm 8:5-10), (Skawroń, 2017, p. 62).

The value of Christian purity is an issue which encompasses marriage and family life as well. All the aspects connected with procreation and human sexuality should be analysed in the light of a dignity of a human person and in accordance with the truth of holiness of family (Papieska Rada ds. Rodziny, 1995, no. 20-21). The Biblical tradition of the Old Testament conveys the truth about the creation of Man as a woman and a man (cf. Gn 1 and 2). Man and woman were created by God separately, however they are united in their equal resemblance of the image of God (cf. Gn 2:27). The act of procreation, involving a man and a woman generates a new life. As a result, marriage appears not only as a natural law, but first of all as God's institution, a covenant of human love which is warranted by God Himself (Drożdż, 2001, p. 231).

In certain circles, especially in erotic subcultures, purity carries a pejorative meaning. The value of this virtue is considered as a negation of sexual liberty, a negation of the right to sexual release, but also as an obstacle in making love. Moreover, purity is depreciated by depicting it as a psychical and moral restraint, which as a consequence, may lead to complexes, neuroses or personality disorders. The aforementioned phenomena constitute an evidence of a great misunderstanding which has a seriously detrimental effect on the shaping of erotic culture (Piotrowski, 2021, p. 68-69; Grabowski, 2012, p. 168). The problem of deprecating the value of the moral attitude (virtue) called purity was noticed by Karol Wojtyła, who called this tendency a resentment. According to him "resentment consists in deprecating of what objectively requires us to recognize it as good, while on the other hand, we minimize its significance and deny it the respect it deserves in order to spare ourselves the effort or excuse our failure to obtain this value" (Kokoszka, 2005, p. 28). Nonetheless, it has to be noted that chastity as a spiritual attitude has its roots in a clear and unspoiled perception of love, that is in the relation with a person of the opposite sex. This relation is characterized by the affirmation of the person of the opposite sex, or in other words, by recognition of the value itself (not utilitarian, instrumental, or absolute) (Koszyka, 2017, p. 9-17). Therefore it has to be emphasised that the value of chastity makes it possible to discern in the sexual urge, and in the feeling which is aroused as a result, a significant and potentially creative or even creationistic (causative) element of God's work, precious gift from God, vested in people at the very basis of their existence. This gift – like all God's gifts – is inseparably connected with responsibility. It constitutes a call which has to be answered consciously and freely (Franciszek, 2021, no. 7)

Christian perspective on chastity simultaneously puts to an end the mentality which constitutes the aftermath of the old gnostic and Manichean heresy according to which all that is spiritual, truly pure and disinterested cannot be carnal, sensual, sexual, and hence everything truly "spiritual" cannot be "material" (Brown, 2006, p. 216-218). Such an approach degrades man and his body in a sense that "should he aspire to be pure spirit and to reject the flesh as pertaining to his animal nature alone, then spirit and body would both lose their dignity" (Cencini, 2005, p. 82-85). While accentuating the importance of chastity Christianity emphasises that it is not the level of satisfaction related to sexual pleasure that decides about the moral good and purity of hearts of husband and wife. They depend on the intrinsic values by which man lives and which influence the way how he develops deeper relationship between a man and a woman. Chastity is born and matures within the intrinsic perception of values. Therefore, in such circumstances love appears as a gift directed at discovering God (Jan Paweł II, 2008, p. 81).

Practising the virtue of chastity with a frank heart constitutes a condition of love and indissolubility of marriage and provides an appropriate environment to welcome the gift of life. Chastity cannot be treated as the rejection of or contempt for human sexuality. Chastity appears as a kind of spiritual energy which is ready to fight against the threats of selfishness and aggressiveness, and correspondingly it is able to direct it to complete realisation (Paweł VI, 1999, no. 21; Jan Paweł II, 2000, no. 32-33). Chastity is what makes that personality is harmonious, and that it matures and fulfils itself with an internal peace. Chastity also helps a person to develop a genuine respect towards themselves and enables them to respect their neighbours and perceive them as those who deserve respect since they were created in the image of God. If a man's purity is lessened, their love becomes more and more egoistic and leads to the urge of satisfying sole pleasures. This is why chastity calls for self-control which constitutes a pedagogy of human freedom. Therefore, a man is summoned to pursue the virtue of chastity and to build the foundation of life upon it (Benedykt XVI, 2007, p. 8).

That is why it has to be noted that Christianity emphasises the great significance of the virtue of chastity and requires the believers to observe it in their everyday life (Skawroń, 2017, p. 66). The Old Testament testimonies provide first instructions regarding life in purity without concupiscence. This teaching was developed by Christ who was conceived in the womb of Virgin Mary. The Holy Father Francis observes in his apostolic exhortation Gaudete et exsultate that: "Jesus promises that those who are pure in heart 'will see God'. Keeping a heart free of all that tarnishes love: that is holiness" (Franciszek, 2018, no. 86).

Apostolic letters of Paul the Apostle are another example in the pages of the Bible, where the believers are summoned to live in purity and abstain from promiscuity and behaviour which is not compatible with the dignity of God's children. Moreover – as Pope Benedict XVI observes – "Paul is also an apostle who, in accepting God's call to chastity, gave his heart to the Lord in an undivided manner to be able to serve his brethren with even greater freedom and dedication (cf. 1 Cor 7:7; 2 Cor 11:1-2). Furthermore, in a world in which the values of Christian chastity were far from widespread (cf. 1 Cor 6:12-20) he offered a reliable reference for conduct" (Benedykt XVI, 2009, p. 20).

And finally there is the Church who guards chastity today and emphasises its importance in a life of a Christian, promoting issues such as premarital chastity, faithful conjugal life and cultivating chastity in different circumstances of life. Nevertheless, it is essential to bear in mind the truth that man is a being composed of a spirit and a body. That is why a certain tension already exists in him; a certain struggle of tendencies develops between "spirit" and "flesh", which in fact is the struggle that belongs to the heritage of sin (Katechizm Kościoła Katolickiego, 1994, no. 2516).

2. The model of youth formation in the *Movement of Pure Hearts*

The way of pure love is available for every Christian whose task is to train oneself in holiness and to follow the commandments, which is summarised in the Greatest Commandment. This is the road of fight, on which one must practise strong will, fight for the pure heart through practical realisation of love, gradually retreat from addictions, sins and selfishness. Especially important in this respect will be observing of the sixth and ninth commandments which protect human love from disgrace (Kwiek, Nowak, 2010, p. 300-301).

There are certain examples which indicate that even in the 21st century world permeated with eroticism, it is possible to struggle for a pure heart and by the same token, to realise God's vocation to holiness. One of such initiatives is the *Movement of Pure Hearts* meeting the criteria of the valid moral Church doctrine (Olczyk, 2015, p. 208) This initiative has its roots in United States. In 1990s a lot of organisations were established whose end was to promote the attitude of refraining from sexual activity before entering the Sacrament of Marriage, since: "this way young people wanted to express their deep believe in love and fidelity to their future spouse. The movement was an answer to the promiscuity which spread across America in 1960s and to its dramatic consequences" (Kwiek, Nowak, 2010, p. 324). In 1993 the True Love Waits movement was created by a Southern Baptists pastor, Richard Ross. The movement was addressed to young people with the object of: "promoting sexual abstinence outside marriage, but also the avoidance of all kinds of behaviour that may induce sexual desire" (Olczyk, 2015, p. 208).

At the end of 1980's, Poland witnessed radical socio-economical changes connected with the so called political transformation. One of the results was a diversification of the media market. Apart from the positive aspects of this process, such as the activity of catholic media, a free market enabled the expansion of multifarious producers of pornographic and contraceptive industry who were but interested in maximalisation of their profits. Media market has been "suffused with content that is highly corruptive and erotising for children and youth. Youth periodicals such as *Popcorn*, *Bravo*, *Bravo Girl* or *Dziewczyna*, were exceptionally popular in that time. These glossy magazines promoted deceitful liberty (laxity) drifting far away from any moral values, and sexuality (sexism) having nothing in common with personal love" (Szafraniec, 1996, pp .70-75). Feedback to those alarming circumstances was given by Fr. Mieczysław Piotrowski SChr, the editor-in-chief of bimonthly magazine for young people *Miłujcie się!* The newspaper, whose editor was Fr. Piotrowski, was published as an answer to the wave of demoralisation which started to pour into Poland. Articles appearing in the paper discussed mainly liberation from sexual addictions. The magazine featured also articles "disclosing sexual demoralisation (fornication, prostitution, abortion, pornography, masturbation and other sexual addictions) and portraying the beauty of love" (Kwiek, Nowak, 2010, p. 327). The *Miłujcie się!* magazine initiated the activity of the Movement of Pure Hearts, which associates the youth in different parts of Poland. The *Movement of Pure Hearts* is the organisation of young people devoted totally to Jesus, whose greatest desire is to offer themselves as a gift for their future spouse after entering the Sacrament od Marriage. That is why they struggle to follow such values as chastity, modesty, intimacy, virginity, love, respect, and mastering of body and heart.

The statute of the *Movement of Pure Hearts* emphasises that "the spirituality of the *Movement of Pure Hearts* is deeply rooted in the Bible and *the Catechism of the Catholic Church*, it originates from the heritage of the teachings of John Paul II and from the message of the Divine Mercy reported by Saint Faustina (...). The spirituality of the *Movement of Pure Hearts* derives inspiration from the unfathomed richness of the spirituality handed down through the Tradition of the Catholic Church, but also from the spirituality of the greatest mystics, such as Saint Teresa of Avila, Saint John of the Cross, Saint Ignatius of Loyola, Saint John Bosco, Saint Faustina, Saint Maximilian Kolbe, Venerable August Cardinal Hlond or Blessed Karolina Kózka – the patron saint of the *Movement of Pure Hearts* – and other saints who gave their life for chastity" (Statut Ruchu Czystych Serc, 2017). The biblical foundations of the *Movement of Pure Hearts* centre around the issues which Jesus Himself taught in the Sermon on the Mount: "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God" (Mt 5:8). Those who decide to join the *Movement of Pure Hearts* follow God's design revealed already in the Book of Genesis: "Therefore a man leaves his father and his mother and cleaves to his wife, and they become one flesh" (Gn 2:24). It is noticeable, how Jesus Himself confirmed these verse preaching that: "What therefore God has joined together, let not man put asunder" (Mt 19:6). That is why young people choose Jesus Christ as their Guide. It is Him, who becomes their only Teacher, Counsellor, but first and foremost their Saviour (Kwiek, Nowak, 2010, s. 239, Kiciński, 2004, p. 48). Saint John Paul II, in his book *Crossing the Treshold of Hope*, observed that "young people are always searching for the beauty in love. They want their love to be beautiful. If they give in to weakness, following models of behaviour that can rightly be considered a "scandal in the contemporary world" (and these are, unfortunately, widely diffused models), in the depths of their hearts they still desire a beautiful and pure love. This is as true of boys as it is of girls. Ultimately, they know that only God can give them this love. As a result, they are willing to follow Christ, without caring about the sacrifices this may entail" (Jan Paweł II, 1994, p. 19). The teachings of John Paul II constitute a permanent inspiration and a guidepost for the members of the *Movement of Pure Hearts* (Piotrowski, 2021, p. 67-68).

Members of this community follow the truth that from the moment of baptism their "body is a temple of the Holy Spirit and that they are not their own any more" (1 Cor 6:19), hence their task is what Saint Paul said: "For this is the will of God, your sanctification that you abstain from immorality; that each one of you know how to control his own body in holiness and honour, not in the passion of lust like heathen who do not know God" (1 Th 4:3-4). They become concerned about their marriage as well as about their marriage bed (cf. Heb 13:4) and their essential formative task becomes self-control.

New members of the *Movement of the Pure Hearts* take Jesus as their guide and decide to walk every day the difficult road of faith, the road of maturing for love, thus they decide to abstain from sexual intimacy until marriage, since they desire to obey God who shows how to find the only way to indestructible love and how to become an integral gift for the future spouse in Jesus Christ. They do so because they are aware of the fact that Christ allows sexual intimacy only within the Sacrament of Matrimony. Sexual intimacy within marriage becomes then the source of mutual sanctification and a visible sign of this sacrament and leads to the experience of reciprocal love in the love of God. It is also a manifestation of God's care about the young, so as to protect them from suffering through the demands of 6th and 9th commandments (Piotrowski, 2021, p. 71-75).

However, the Members of the *Movement of Pure Hearts* have a great example and a guide on the road of faith in the person of Mary whose every stage of earthly life was characterised by heroic obedience of faith, therefore the members of the Movement desire to live in communion with Mary since this is the most reliable way to unite in love with Christ and to learn purity and beautiful love from the Virgin Mother (Kongregacja ds. Wychowania Katolickiego, 1984, no. 47).

The evidence of true love, oriented to eternity, was given by the patron saint of the Movement of Pure Hearts, Karolina Kózka who was born on the 2nd of August 1898 in the village of Wał-Ruda, near Radłów, within Tarnów County. The everyday life of her family was centred around hard work, help for their neighbours, prayer at home or in the parish church. She would frequently go to church, not only on Sundays but also on weekdays, and always received Holy Communion. She recited rosaries every day (Kania, 1989, p. 6). She loved her siblings and arduously instructed them in catechism. She especially cherished the virtue of purity and prayed eagerly for it. In the time of World War I, on the 18th of November 1914 a Russian soldier forced himself upon her attempting to rape her. In her biography Fr. Kania wrote: "She tried to defend herself. In the struggle she was stabbed with a knife multiple times receiving several deep wounds. All the time, in her hand cut deep to the bone, she was keeping a kerchief – a symbol of girl's dignity. With the last effort she managed to escape and ran towards the village through bogs and thorns, but exhausted after the fight and as a result of massive blood loss she fell dead in the swamp (ibidem, p. 14).

Karolina Kózka was beatified on the 10th of June 1987 to constitute an example for young people. During the beatification Mass in Tarnów, John Paul II taught in his sermon: "that young daughter of the Tarnów Church, whom we shall call blessed from today on, speaks with her life first of all to the young. To boys and girls (...). She speaks of the great dignity of the woman, of the human being; of the dignity of the body which in this world is indeed susceptible to dying and is destructible, in the same way as her young body met death at the hands of a murderer; yet this human body has in itself the sign of immortality that man is to attain in eternal and living God, attain it through Christ" (Jan Paweł II, 2005, p. 421). The community of the *Movement of Pure Hearts* chose her in 2002 as their patron saint because the virtue of purity was a priority in Karolina's life. Through this virtue she felt a strong bond with Jesus Christ and His Virgin Mother. The attitude of the patron of the *Movement of Pure Hearts* proves that vocation to chastity is not only for consecrated people, but Jesus addresses this summon to everyone regardless of age and life vocation. God chose Blessed Karolina to be the witness also in our times when there is an urgent need for the fight and brave defence of purity of heart. The youth may follow in her footsteps, that is why the formation in the *Movement of Pure Hearts* is centred also around the Sacrament of Penance which is an essential support on the road of chastity. This sacrament helps to achieve the most significant goal for the members of the Movement: "The centre of life for the members of MPH is Jesus present in the Eucharist, who lets us have share in His ultimate victory over Satan, sin and death. Therefore, the members of the Movement make effort to attend the Holy Mass every day and adore Jesus present in the Blessed Sacrament" (Statut Ruchu Czystych Serc, 2017).

The road of education for chastity, which is proposed within the Movement of Pure Hearts, may be followed by ever young person who wants to walk the path of pure life, together with Christ and truly intends to offer Jesus their heart, so that He could heal and purify it and make ready for true love. This kind of formation stays in opposition to the hedonistic style of life. In this context young people frequently become ensnared by propaganda of false liberty and succumb to the widespread immorality. What begins in that moment is the process of: "degradation of the truth about the exceptional vocation of the whole man, and about the fact that body and sexuality are bestowed upon man so that they serve for interaction with God in the act of bringing a new life into this world. At the end of this road of degradation, there is debauchery, promiscuity and all other phenomena of the «civilisation of death», that is contraception, killing of the unborn children, pornography, pathology, violence" (Sołtyk, 1998, p. 235-236). These are the reasons why members of the *Movement of Pure Hearts* struggle to gradually change the society from within through the example of their pure life.

Another point on the way of shaping the behaviour and sensitivity of young people is the answer to the threat resulting from the unrestricted access to pornography in the Internet and television. The main task for the *Miłujcie się!* magazine and for the entire *Movement of Pure Hearts* is a resolute opposition to the "civilisation of death". The Movement conveys a definite programme of maturing for real love which was revealed by Christ Himself (Piotrowski, 2011, p. 179). Thanks to effective initiatives of evangelization a lot of young people in Poland and all over the world, encouraged by the example of their peers, decide to defend Christian values including the virtue of purity. The *Movement of Pure Hearts* answers to Christ's call to spread the kingdom of God on earth. Although the Movement is diametrically opposite to currently predominant trends and styles of permissive life, it significantly affects the youth, and develops dynamically bringing to God ever greater number of those who desire to lead the life of purity of heart and body (Piotrowski, 2021, p. 75). This call summons them to make a commitment that they will keep the following promises:

- not to engage in sexual acts until they are united with their spouse in the Sacrament of Marriage.
- not to read, buy or watch pornographic materials.
- to meet Jesus every day in prayer, scriptural meditation, frequent reception of Holy Communion and Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament.
- to avail themselves regularly of the Sacrament of Penance
- to control their sexual desires and emotions
- to avoid everything that weakens and enslaves the will: nicotine, alcohol and drugs
- girls may wish to add that they vow to dress modestly so as not to arouse lustful thoughts or desires in others in any way (Kwiek, Nowak, 2010, p. 301-303).

The evangelisation and the identification with the virtue of purity as well as the membership of the *Movement of Pure Hearts* are all manifested by a ring of Blessed Karolina worn by the youth on their finger. "It constitutes an evangelical sign that God is waiting for everyone, He wants to "get them back on their feet" and restore the lost values. It is and external symbol of what should take place first of all in one's heart" (Pabis, 2014, p. 42). It is received by those who desire to entrust their life to Blessed Karolina, and especially their desire and care for keeping the vows of purity until marriage, and later, of faithful and pure marital love or pursuing other vocations in pure love of their neighbours throughout their life (ibidem, p. 42).

Human sexuality needs to be educated (Ryś, 1997, p. 89-99). Pope Francis recalls this sentence in the aforementioned exhortation *Christus vivit*: "Marriage requires preparation, and this calls for growing in self-knowledge, developing the greater virtues, particularly love (...). It also involves maturing in your own sexuality, so that it can become less and less a means of using others, and increasingly a capacity to entrust yourself fully to another person in an exclusive and generous way (Franciszek, 2019, no. 265; Ibid., 2016, no. 280-284). The Movement of Pure Hearts, which pursues intellectual and spiritual formation, helps the youth to prepare appropriately for marriage and family life. For young people this stage of life is fundamental for establishing certain moral attitudes, as well as for shaping their own characters, since sexual education constitutes a process in which the young gradually discover the mystery of their own sexuality (Benedykt XVI, 2007, p. 8-9; Benedykt XVI, 2011, p. 27). Another stage is science which is supposed to make sexuality more "humane", so that it serve man instead of destroying him and his bonds with other people, and to make him "pure", that is – in religious sense – "holly". For a Christian, purity is a gift from God. Jesus Christ invites everyone, especially the young, to follow this path. The end of this road is marked by the reward which is the eternal life: "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God" (Mt 5:8) (Franciszek, 2018, no. 83-86).

Conclusions

All the reflections above lead to the conclusion that the sphere of purity is a great gift bestowed by God upon every man. However, this gift is related with difficult tasks such as mastering one's thoughts, desires, and inner-self, and controlling the outer purity. Living in a world beset with numerous pitfalls of sin, Christians should study their own nature which is inclined towards transgression; they should act in accordance with God's grace and take advantage of the appropriate safety precautions which can protect them from sin. Regardless of the situation in which man may find himself he must learn to master his reactions, urges and passions since otherwise he won't be able to live being torn by destructive compulsions.

The decision about living in purity is even more difficult to be made today than it has ever been before because the contemporary world is being engulfed by a wave of pansexuality which distorts the most essential truths about the nature and vocation of man. The control of passions over the body is called freedom and concurrently self-control is seen as an example of enslavement by harmful ideology. That is why there is such a great need for the testimony of those who through their pure lives will show that they take great care of the issues of today's world. Walking the road of purity as the members of the *Movement of Pure Hearts* do is not a manifestation of contempt for human sexuality, but a sign of hope expressing that so much can be given to others as a result of true and generous love.

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Ways of shaping love for God and people and historical memory during the Year of St. Stanislaus Kostka

Sposoby kształtowania miłości do Boga i ludzi oraz pamięci historycznej w czasie Roku św. Stanisława Kostki[1]

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Rev. Wojciech Kućko[a]

[a] *Rev. Wojciech Kućko, PhD, https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4271-8478*
Faculty of Family Studies, Cardinal Stefan Wyszynski University in Warszaw

Abstract: The aim of the article is to show the many various ways in which the Year of St. Stanislaus Kostka, announced in 2018 on the occasion of the 450th anniversary of his death, was celebrated, and how were the ways of shaping love for God and people during that time. The article presents a review of the most important facts about the main jubilee celebrations in Poland and abroad which were also possibilities to build the historical memory. The year of St. Stanislaus Kostka was part of a long tradition of celebrations marking the anniversaries of this patron saint of Poland, held since the year of his beatification (1602/1605), and more solemnly since his canonization in 1726. The text discusses the worldwide and nationwide events commemorating the Saint of Rostkowo, and presents the main publications and conferences devoted to this saint. It also mentions the exhibitions and various pastoral initiatives taken during the year. Particular attention has been paid to celebrations in the Diocese of Płock, where Rostkowo, the birthplace of St. Stanislaus Kostka, is located. On this basis, the pertinence of the saint's message has been discussed as well.
Keywords: hagiography, Jesuits, Poland, Year of St. Stanislaus Kostka, St. Stanislaus Kostka

Abstrakt: Celem artykułu jest ukazanie bogactwa obchodów Roku św. Stanisława Kostki, ogłoszonego w 2018 r. z okazji 450. rocznicy jego śmierci, a także w jaki sposób kształtowano miłość do Boga i ludzi w tym czasie. Artykuł ma charakter przeglądowo–problemowy, zebrano w nim najważniejsze informacje o głównych wymiarach jubileuszu w Polsce i za granicą, które były także okazją do budowania pamięci historycznej. Rok św. Stanisława Kostki wpisał się w długą tradycję świętowania rocznic tego patrona Polski, obchodzonych od roku jego beatyfikacji (1602/1605), a bardziej uroczyście od czasu jego kanonizacji w 1726 r. W tekście przywołano wydarzenia o zasięgu światowym i ogólnopolskim związane z upamiętnieniem Świętego z Rostkowa, następnie opisano główne publikacje i konferencje, poświęcone temu świętemu. Wskazano również wystawy i różne inicjatywy duszpasterskie tego roku. W szczególny sposób zwrócono uwagę na obchody w diecezji płockiej, na terenie której leży Rostkowo – miejsce narodzin św. Stanisława Kostki. Na tej bazie została również opisana aktualność przesłania św. Stanisława Kostki.
Słowa kluczowe: hagiografia, jezuici, Polska, Rok św. Stanisława Kostki, św. Stanisław Kostka

Introduction

Since 1674, Stanislaus Kostka has been one of the five main patrons of Poland, the first Jesuit to have been beatified, awarded this title already in 1602 by the Pope, which was officially confirmed in 1605. Throughout the 17th century, the *fama sanctitatis* of the Saint of Rostkowo was the subject of many studies and procedural investigations. The devotion to St. Stanislaus was popularized in the Republic of Poland, and the Jesuits spread his fame to the ends of the world through their missions, which culminated in his canonization, along with his Jesuit fellow brother, Aloysius Gonzaga, by Benedict XIV on 31 December 1726 in Rome. In the following centuries, the subsequent anniversaries of birth, death, and canonization of St. Stanislaus Kostka were commemorated. During the years of partitions and occupation of Polish lands, the proper commemoration of this patron saint of Poland was not possible. It was not until after 1918 that interest in the figure of St. Stanislaus Kostka was reborn on a broad scale,

1 Artykuł w języku polskim: https://www.stowarzyszeniefidesetratio.pl/fer/2022-1Kucko.pdf

particularly in 1926 when a portion of his relics was brought to the place of his birth on the occasion of the Catholic Congress in Warsaw. Nevertheless, for centuries St. Stanislaus was seen as an intercessor for the Republic, and many believed he had interceded during numerous battles, including the battle of Chocim in 1621 and the battle of Warsaw in 1920. Until the times of St. John Paul II, St. Stanislaus Kostka was one of the best-known Poles in the world.

Another important occasion to honor the Young Man of Rostkowo was the Year of St. Stanislaus Kostka announced on the occasion of the 450th anniversary of his death (August 14, 1568), which coincided with the Aloysius Gonzaga Jubilee Year marking the 450th anniversary of his birth (see: Bałabuch, 2018). The entire year 2018 thus became an appropriate time to recall the history and revive the devotion to this saint in many dimensions of church and social life in Poland, as will be discussed further on in the article.

1. St. Stanislaus Anniversary Traditions

The 450th anniversary of the death of St. Stanislaus Kostka (1550-1568), falling on the 100th anniversary of Poland's independence, became an opportunity to bring to light the person of this somewhat forgotten patron of Poland and patron of children and young people. At the request of the Bishop of Płock, Piotr Libera, during the 377th Plenary Meeting of the Polish Bishops' Conference held on October 13-14, 2017 in Lublin as a follow-up to World Youth Days in Panama and the Synod on Youth in Rome, the year 2018 was declared the Year of St. Stanislaus Kostka (cf. KEP, 2017, p. 989).

Anniversary celebrations in honor of the Saint of Rostkowo have been organized numerous times in Poland. In 1918, 350 years had passed since his death. November 11th fell during the novena in honor of the saint, whose memorial in the liturgical calendar at that time fell on November 13. It was two years later, however, in the context of the Polish-Soviet War, that Poles fervently turned to God through the intercession of the holy Young Man of Rostkowo. The decisive battles of the war took place on August 15th, the anniversary of his death (*Adoracja*, 1920, p. 1; *Dziękczynne*, 1920, p. 3).

On the occasion of the 200th anniversary of his canonization celebrated in 1926, the saint's relics were brought from Rome to Warsaw (cf. Kućko, 2018a; Kućko, 2019a). At the end of August that year, on the occasion of the First Catholic Congress a reference was made to the person and life of the saint in a commemorative note, including information from Cardinal Camillo Laurenti, then Prefect of the Sacred Congregation of Rites, about the founding in Rome of a Committee of the 200th Anniversary of St. Stanislaus Kostka (cf. *Jednodniówka*, 1926, p. 55; *Księga pamiątkowa*, 1926; Knyspel-Kopeć, 2016).

During the difficult Stalinist period, efforts were made in the Church to commemorate the 400th birthday anniversary of St. Stanislaus Kostka (Cegłowski, Gretkowski, 2014, p. 97-102). Large celebrations were organized in Poland on the occasion of the 400th anniversary of Kostka's dearth in the years 1967-1968 as an extended part of celebrations marking the Millennium of the Baptism of Poland in 1966 (Celmerowski, 1967, p. 9-27; Cegłowski, 2012, p. 203-225). Recent historical analyses have shed more light on the circumstances of these celebrations and on how their organization was affected by the then Security Service of the Polish People's Republic (cf. Zygner, 2018, p. 111-184).

The 250th anniversary of the canonization of Stanislaus Kostka was celebrated in 1976-1977 on a somewhat smaller scale, mainly in the Diocese of Płock (the shift in the date was due to the peregrination of the Black Madonna of Częstochowa icon; cf. Sikorski 1977, p. 59-60; Żebrowski, 1977, p. 146-152). As the 450th anniversary of the saint's birth fell in the year of the Great Jubilee of Christianity, celebrations related to St. Stanislaus were not very impressive; one important highlight, however, was the naming of the parish church in Rostkowo as a diocesan sanctuary (cf. Wielgus, 2000, p. 287-288).

The year 2018 offered a new opportunity to popularize and disseminate knowledge about the person of St. Stanislaus Kostka. The extensive pastoral work performed during that time, as well as the numerous scientific initiatives, symposia and exhibitions contributed to discovering the richness of Polish history, which included the life and veneration of the Saint of Rostkowo.

2. Worldwide and nationwide events

The Year of St. Stanislaus Kostka was symbolically opened by the reading in all churches in Poland of a letter of the Polish Episcopate, entitled *Kostka znaczy więcej* (Kostka Means More), presenting the figure of the forgotten saint (cf. Pastors of the Church in Poland, 2018, p. 203-205). In addition to basic biographical data, it talked about the context in which the young nobleman from Rostkowo, a future Jesuit novice, grew up and was educated. According to Polish Bishops, Stanislaus of Rostkowo teaches the love of God and one's homeland, piety in the spirit of his life motto Ad *maiora natus sum*, as well as perseverance in professing faith. It is worth noting that the letter erroneously attributes the passage it quotes from the poem *A ty się odważ…* to Cyprian Kamil Norwid (the text of the poem, without stating the author, can be found in: Warszawski, 2002, p. 151-153). Katarzyna Janus believes that the poem has been erroneously attributed to Norwid, particularly in the Internet, while its artistic form suggests its contemporary origins (cf. Janus, 2019, p. 88-89).

On the occasion of the anniversary of the death of St. Stanislaus Kostka, Pope Francis, the first ever Jesuit to sit on the throne of St. Peter, sent a special letter to the Bishop of Płock, Piotr Libera, in which he called the young novice "one of the most excellent sons of the Society of Jesus" Poland gave to the world (Francis, 2018a, p. 8). Quoting the words spoken by the Polish Pope at the Quirinal on November 13, 1988 about the "cross-country race" of St. Stanislaus's life, from Mazovia through Vienna to Rome, Pope Francis referred to his intercession for young people and his life motto: "*Ad maiora natus sum*," encouraging them to live a life of truth and authentic freedom (cf. English text: Francis, 2018b).

It is worth mentioning also other initiatives of the Year of Kostka outside of Poland. One of them was a meeting organized on June 6, 2018 at the Polish Institute in Rome (Istituto Polacco di Roma) entitled "San Stanislao Kostka (1550-1568): sulle tracce scritte del santo a Roma" (Saint Stanislaus Kostka (1550-1568): Roman traces in written sources"). During the meeting, Professor Waldemar Turek of the Università Pontificia Salesiana in Rome presented letters of Polish kings on the canonization of Kostka; their Latin texts and Polish translations had previously been the subject of scientific research (cf. Turek 2019, p. 84-108).

Another initiative was the "St. Stanislaus Kostka. Patron of Children and Youth" knowledge competition for children, young people and adults held under the honorary patronage of the Embassy of the Republic of Poland at the Holy See and the St. Stanislaus Kostka Parish in Rostkowo. It was organized by the Social and Cultural Association "Le Rondini" in cooperation with the pastoral care ministry to the Polish community at the St. Stanislaus Bishop and Martyr Church in Rome. The competition was held in October 2018 (cf. Kućko, 2019b, p. 23-24).

On November 9, 2018, a concert entitled "Heiliger Rebell – Elżbieta Towarnicka zu Ehren des hl. Stanislaus Kostka" ("The Holy Rebel. Elżbieta Towarnicka in tribute to St. Stanislaw Kostka") was held in the capital of Austria on the occasion of the 450th anniversary of the saint's death, under the honorary patronage of Professor Piotr Gliński, Minister of Culture and National Heritage of the Republic of Poland, Archbishop of Vienna Christoph Schönborn, and President of the Polish Bishops' Conference Archbishop Stanisław Gądecki (cf. Łukaszuk-Ritter, 2020a). Vienna was the place where St. Stanislaus Kostka and his brother Paul continued their education. At Kurrentgasse 2 there is a room where they both lived from 1565 to 1567; since 1742 it has been the chapel of St. Stanislaus Kostka.

On the occasion of the Year of St. Stanislaus Kostka, Poczta Polska S.A. (Polish Post) issued commemoratory publications. The first to appear in a new series of postage stamps called "Patron Saints of Poland" was the saint from Rostkowo. On August 19, 2018, the Polish Post's Philately Office published a postage stamp with a special leaflet containing an explanatory text in Polish and English written by Fr. Wojciech Kućko.

The 43 × 31.25 mm PLN 2.60 stamp, rotogravure printed on fluorescent paper, was designed by Bożydar Grozdew and issued in 120 thousand copies. The main motif of the stamp is a contemporary painting showing St. Stanislaus Kostka in the uniform of a Jesuit college student, painted by Elżbieta Pleca-Hoffmann in 1996 at the commission of Fr. Jan Cegłowski (the painting can now be admired in the sanctuary in Rostkowo). It is accompanied by a decorative floral motif with the inscribed silhouette of a white eagle wearing a crown (cf. Grzybowska, Kamiński, Malczyk 2019, p. 206-207). On the first day of circulation the stamp was accompanied by a first day cover (FDC) with a commemorative stamp of the post office in Przasnysz. Stanislaus Kostka was baptized in the parish church in Przasnysz shortly after his birth in 1550; his parents and siblings rest in the same temple in the Kostka Chapel (cf. Bońkowski 1986, p. 48-52). The envelope designed by Bożydar Grozdew features photographs of documents and places related to the life of St. Stanislaus: a fragment of the saint's handwritten request, dated October 27, 1567, for an interview and admission to the Jesuit novitiate in Rome, bearing his authentic signature, stored in Archivum Romanum Societatis Iesu in Rome in the Armadio Ne Pereant (cf. Latin text and Polish translation: Danieluk, 2019, p. 61-62; cf. also Danieluk, 2018, p. 50-52), and a photograph of St. Andrew's Church at the Quirinal in Rome where there is a chapel with the saint's relics (more about the church and the artistic decoration of the saint's chapel: Terhalle, 2011, p. 93-120).

In addition, two postcards were published. One presented the picture of St. Stanislaus of Rostkowo painted by Elżbieta Plewa-Hoffmann, an outline of the tower of the present church in Rostkowo, and a photograph of a fragment of the Latin letter of St. Peter Canisius to St. Francis Borgia on admitting Kostka to the novitiate, containing the famous phrase: "*Nos de illo praeclara speramus*" (cf. Danieluk, 2019, p. 58-61). The other postcard, issued on the occasion of the 380th Plenary Meeting of the Polish Bishops' Conference in Płock, features a photograph of the oldest cultic image of St. Stanislaus Kostka from the Diocese of Płock without the gilded silver shields, currently stored at the Diocesan Museum in Płock. This 17th century 170cm × 105.5cm image was associated with the first place of the veneration of Blessed Stanislaus Kostka in the church in Kacice. On the back of the nimbus there is an inscription with the date 1667 (more about the history of the painting and its renovation, see: Karpińska, 2018, p. 91-98; Kućko 2019b, p. 14, footnote 2).

3. Scientific conferences and publications

A very important element in the development of research on the heritage of the saint of Rostkowo were scientific conferences presenting the pertinence of the figure of St. Stanislaus and new areas of historical exploration. On September 21, 2018 in Pułtusk, as part of celebrations organized on the 21st Days of St. Matthew, patron of the city of Pułtusk, a conference was held entitled "Saint Stanislaus Kostka. Aspects Related to Pułtusk, Mazovia and the Catholic Church," under the honorary patronage of the Bishop of Płock Piotr Libera, organized by the City of Pułtusk, Aleksander Gieysztor Academy of Humanities, and the Polish Community House in Pułtusk. The conference discussed three aspects: the life and spirituality of the Young Man of Rostkowo, his cult and its pertinence as a model in educational work with youth. The findings were presented in a collective scientific publication *Saint Stanislaus Kostka – the Perspective of the Catholic Church and the Church in Płock* (Lolo, 2018). Two other symposium meetings were held on November 13, 2018, formerly celebrated as the liturgical memorial of St. Stanislaus Kostka in Poland, still appearing under this date in the Roman Calendar. At the University Library in Toruń a conference entitled "*Ad Maiora natus sum*". The Road to Holiness of Stanislaus Kostka SJ (1550-1568)" was held, co-organized by the Jesuit fathers from Toruń and the Vice-Chancellor's Office of Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń under the honorary patronage of Fr. Tomasz Ortmann SJ, Provincial of the Wielkopolska-Mazovia Province of the Society of Jesus (cf. "*Ad maiora natus sum*", 2018, p. 4). The other scientific meeting, entitled

"Saint Stanislaus Kostka: History, Spirituality and Cult," was held on the same day at the Historical Museum in Przasnysz.

The most extensive discussion of the Young Man of Rostkowo was presented during the 41st International Symposium of the Scientific Society of the Higher Seminary in Płock organized on November 15, 2018. Its title, "St. Stanislaus Kostka, Patron Saint of Poland. On the 100th Anniversary of Regaining Independence," provided a framework of looking at the saint from different perspectives: from history and archival resources, through iconography in Polish and Italian art, to poetry, film, theatre and youth ministry. Thirteen speakers from Poland and abroad gathered at the Bishops' Hall of the Higher Seminary in Płock delivered lectures which shed new light on the figure of the only canonized saint from the Diocese of Płock (cf. Kućko, 2019c; Kućko 2020, p. 206-208).

The person of St. Stanislaus Kostka was also discussed during the symposium "Patron Saints of the Republic of Poland and Pomerania on the 100th Anniversary of Regaining Independence" organized by the Pomeranian Academy Institute of Polish Studies and the Central Pomerania Museum in Słupsk at the Knights' Hall of the Castle of Pomeranian Princes in Płock on December 11, 2018. Pola Pauba, one of the speakers, delivered a lecture on "The Image of St. Stanislaus Kostka in Ancient and Recent Literature. A Reconnaissance," referring also to less known poetic works about the Saint of Rostkowo, such as "The Kashubian March" from the 1880 poem *O Panu Czôrlińsczim, co do Pucka po sécë jachôł* by Hieronim Derdowski (1852-1902) (more on this subject, see: Krawiec-Złotkowska, 2019, p. 387-390).

An important element of the Saint's Year were new publications, devoted essentially to his cult and presence in Polish history. They may be divided into several categories in terms of theme and content. The first, largest group, are books in popular, illustrated form, presenting the history and interesting facts about the life of St. Stanislaus Kostka, the circumstances of his canonization, as well as the known and less known prayers in his honor (cf. e.g. Cegłowski, 2018; Grochowski, 2018; Kaczmarek 2018; Kućko 2018c; Kwiatkowski, Stefaniak 2018; Kwiatkowski, Wilczewski, Zakrzewski, Dudzik 2018; Mazur, 2018; Pabis 2018; Paterek 2018; Wójtowicz, 2018; Zdunkiewicz, 2018; Żyśko, 2018, p. 23-36).

Among other books that shed new light on the history of the Saint of Rostkowo it is worth mentioning the publication of mostly poetic or dramatic works about him. Bishop Piotr Libera published a poetic work by Grzegorz Wigilancius of Sambor (c. 1523-1573) *Vita Divi Stanislai Costuli Poloni* (Stanislaus Szarffenber excudebat, Cracoviae 1570) in the well-known 1894 translation by Wincenty Stroka (cf. Stroka, 1894), with editorial comments by Bożena Leszczyńska, Ph.D. OCV (Libera, 2018, p. 13-74). In addition, the publication also includes works about Kostka by Maciej Kazimierz Sarbiewski (1595-1640) and Cyprian Kamil Norwid (1821-1883).

An interesting and entirely new translation of Samborczyk's poem, the first poem written in verse to have been dedicated to Stanislaus Kostka, with literary and critical editorial notes, has been presented by Elwira Buszewicz and Wojciech Ryczek (cf. Buszewicz, Ryczek, 2018). The text has been accompanied by numerous explanations and a critical commentary, which makes it an important contribution to further research on this work and the popularization of the cult of St. Stanislaus of Rostkowo.

Poetry is also related to art and theatre, which was another important part of promotional projects organized by the Jesuits. Plays presented at Jesuit colleges had a didactic and moralizing purpose, and were often staged in connection with religious and patriotic celebrations (cf. Maliszewski, 2019, p. 168-169). This current also includes earlier as well as more recent theatrical plays devoted to the saint, published and staged on the occasion of the Year of St. Stanislaus Kostka.

Alberto Macchi (1941-), a Rome-born playwright and theatre director, created a play entitled "St. Stanislaw Kostka. A Performance-Itinerary Based on Motives from the Biography of St. Stanislaus Kostka," which was staged by seminarians on November 15, 2018 at the Higher Seminary in Płock, directed by Piotr Adamiak, with suggestions and in the presence of the author (text of the play, see: Macchi, 2019, p. 250-278). Its first public performance had been on May 25, 2003 at St. Andrew's Church at the Quirinal in Rome.

The Płock Publishing Institute published the Polish translation of a play about St. Stanislaus Kostka written by St. Therese of Lisieux (cf. Maria Lucyna od Krzyża, Seweryniak, 2018), based on a 2015 translation by an unknown author, entitled *St. Stanislaw Kostka. A Pious Recreation*. The script by St. Therese of Lisieux was an inspiration for the performance, staged during the 18th Christian Culture Days on September 19, 2019 at the Browar B. Cultural Center Concert Hall by pupils and teachers of the Father Jan Długosz Catholic School Complex in Włocławek. Title of the play: *Saint Stanislaus Kostka – a Pious Recreation According to Długosz* (cf. Kędzierski, 2018, p. 175-179).

Theatre stages are part of the long tradition of Carmelite monasteries and their practice of "pious recreation" or "joint recreation". Although these performances are not mentioned in the Constitutions of the congregation, various occasions, such as holidays, anniversaries, patron saint's days, provide an opportunity to stage such plays. St. Therese was responsible for organizing performances at the Monastery of Lisieux for three years (1894-1897). In 1897, the golden jubilee of religious vows was celebrated by Sister Stanislaus of the Sacred Hearts (Marie Rosalia Guéret, born 1824), who bore the masculine religious name Stanislaus according to the custom common in French Carmelite monasteries where also women adopted masculine names of saints. By order of the Prioress, on the occasion of the jubilee St. Therese wrote her eighth, and last, theatrical recreation on February 8, 1879, this time, of course, in honor of the patron saint of the jubilarian, St. Stanislaus Kostka. The play tells the story of one day in the life of the saint on which he was admitted to the Jesuit order in Rome (October 28, 1567). Kostka turned out to be important in the life of St. Therese's, who was to die at a young age just like the Polish saint (cf. Maria Lucyna od Krzyża, Severyniak, 2018, p. 23-34).

4. Exhibitions

Anniversary celebrations are often accompanied by commemorative exhibitions. This was also the case on the occasion of the Year of St. Stanislaus Kostka. Probably the largest exhibition of the year, entitled "Kostka means more – the Cult of St. Stanislaus Kostka," opened at the Diocesan Museum in Płock on February 2, 2018. It presented exhibits related to the 400th anniversary of the saint's death and the celebrations held in Rostkowo in 1968, as well as reliquaries, paintings and other articles of devotion from the collection of the Diocesan Museum of Płock, the Diocesan Archive, and the private collection of Fr. Jan Cegłowski from Mława. A special exhibit was a 1536 monstrance founded by Fr. Jan Krętkowski, brought from St. John the Baptist Parish in Węgra, before which St. Stanislaus Kostka may have prayed (Grzybowska, Kamiński, Malczyk, 2019, p. 183-184).

The Historical Museum in Przasnysz, the city where Stanislaus Kostka was baptized in 1550, organized a mobile exhibition *A Brief History of Holiness*, with the script written by Bartosz Drejerski and Monika Miłoszewska, and the artwork designed by Joanna Strękowska. The exhibition consisted of 16 boards depicting the most important facts of the life of St. Stanislaus with numerous illustrations. It was displayed, among other places, in the square in front of the parish church in Rostkowo, and presented materials from the collections of the Historical Museum in Przasnysz, Archivum Romanum Societatis Iesu, the Archive of the Southern Poland Province of the Society of Jesus in Cracow, the Museum of the Southern Poland Province of the Society of Jesus in Stara Wieś, the Diocesan Museum in Płock, the National Museum in Cracow, the Czartoryski Princes Library in Cracow, the Scientific Library of the Polish Academy of Sciences and the Polish Academy of Arts and Sciences in Cracow, and the National Digital Archive. The exhibition was co-financed by the Museum of Polish History in Warsaw as part of the Patriotism of Tomorrow program (cf. Brykner, Drejewski, Miłoszewska 2018).

Waldemar Krzyżewski (b. 1953), veterinary physician and social activist, co-founder of the St. Stanislaus Kostka Gallery in Rostkowo (cf. Otłowska, 2018), presented his collection of religious pictures of St. Stanislaus from all over the world in a commemorative exhibition consisting of more than a dozen boards. It was presented in November 2018 at the Higher Seminary in Płock, as well as abroad, in the St. Stanislaus Kostka Chapel in Vienna at the intersection of Steindlgasse 6 and Kurrentgasse 2 (Łukaszuk-Ritter, 2020b).

Another commemorative exhibition accompanied the symposium in Toruń mentioned above. It was composed of two parts. One presented the life of St. Stanislaus Kostka and publications related to his stay in Vienna and Rome. The other presented 19th and 20th century studies on the saint. In addition, large boards were prepared depicting the history of his life. The exhibition was open from November 13 to December 9, 2018 at the University Library in Toruń (cf. Dejneko-Białkowska, 2020).

5. Various pastoral initiatives

By decree of the Apostolic Penitentiary of November 20, 2017, St. Stanislaus Kostka was proclaimed the main patron saint of the Diocese of Płock (cf. Grzybowska, Kamiński, Malczyk, 2019, p. 20-21). The same dicastery issued a rescript with indulgences for the entire Year of St. Stanislaus and the associated special papal blessing (cf. Grzybowska, Kamiński, Malczyk, 2019, p. 22-24).

During the year, two folders about the Saint of Rostkowo were prepared. One was handed out to the faithful of the Diocese of Płock during the 2018 pastoral visit. The other, entitled "Saint Stanislaus Kostka (1550-1568)," with a text in English by Fr. Wojciech Kućko, was distributed to the participants of the 9th World Meeting of Families in Dublin (August 22-26, 2018) and during the 34th World Youth Day in Panama (January 22-27, 2019; cf. Grzybowska, Kamiński, Malczyk, 2019, p. 253).

The main jubilee celebrations in honor of the Saint of Rostkowo were organized on August 19, 2018 at his birthplace, and were presided over by Cardinal Stanisław Dziwisz (cf. Dziwisz, 2018). These events were accompanied by a special thanksgiving service celebrated in the parishes of the Diocese of Płock (cf. Kućko, 2018b).

Another historic event was the 380th Plenary Meeting of the Polish Bishops' Conference, organized by the Diocese of Płock in the diocese's capital on September 25-26, 2018. It was devoted to the pastoral care of young people, the issue of family ministry, and sexual abuse of minors (cf. Grzybowska, Kamiński, Malczyk, 2019, p. 151-172).

In two dioceses, Płock and Rzeszow, peregrinations of the relics of St. Stanislaus Kostka were organized. In the Diocese of Rzeszów, this initiative was coordinated by the Catholic Youth Association (cf. Peregrination, 2018). In the Diocese of Płock, the peregrination began in St. Matthew's Parish in Pułtusk on April 6, 2018, and ended on December 7, 2018 in St. Bartholomew's Parish in Płock (cf. Grzybowska, Kamiński, Malczyk, 2019, p. 189-190, 248-249). These initiatives were organized by the diocesan youth ministry with Fr. Krzysztof Ruciński.

An original way of reaching out to children and young people to popularize the life message of the Saint of Rostkowo were comic books which presented the complex history of Kostka's life and vocation in an accessible graphic form (cf. Kaczmarek 2018; earlier this form had been used by: Wysogląd, 2011)

6. Celebrations in the Diocese of Płock

By decree of the Bishop of Płock Piotr Libera of December 27, 2017, sixteen station churches were appointed in the Diocese of Płock where the faithful could receive a plenary indulgence in the Year of St. Stanislaus Kostka (cf. Libera, 2017). The year began with an inaugural service held on January 6, 2018 in all parishes of the diocese, prepared by Fr. Wojciech Kućko (cf. Kućko, 2017).

The 2nd Synod of Youth of the Diocese of Płock, organized at the Higher Seminary in Płock on September 1, 2018, culminated in the publication of a special message on the identity of the Church, the parish seen as a place of growth for young people and responsibility for life (cf. Grzybowska, Kamiński, Malczyk, 2019, p. 141-146).

The culmination of celebrations held in the Year of St. Stanislaus Kostka was the Holy Mass celebrated in St. Stanislaus Kostka Parish Church in Rypin on November 25, 2018, during which fourteen "Youth Confessionals" were inaugurated in the Diocese of Płock (cf. Grzybowska, Kamiński, Malczyk, 2019, p. 238-239).

As part of the "Write a Letter to St. Stanislaus Kostka" project launched by the New Evangelization Faculty of the Diocesan Curia in Płock received about 200 letters written in the traditional form, 10 in electronic form, and 153 from Polish community youth. They were all published as a collection (Zielonka, Zdunkiewicz 2019; cf. Grzybowska, Kamiński, Malczyk, 2019, p. 252-253).

Among other pastoral projects aimed at promoting the cult of St. Stanislaus Kostka and attitudes based on the model of his life, the Diocese of Płock organized, among other events: the 3rd Diocesan Pilgrimage of Altar Servers to Czerwińsk (June 16, 2018); the 37th "Made For Greatness" Pilgrimage from Płock to the Jasna Góra Monastery; the 36th Pilgrimage of Children and Youth to Przasnysz and Rostkowo which gathered 9,500 pilgrims (September 15, 2018); a Jesuit pilgrimage to Rostkowo (October 13, 2018); as well as a diocesan pilgrimage to the tomb of St. Stanislaus Kostka in Rome (October 20-23, 2018); and the 25th anniversary of the Catholic Youth Association of the Diocese of Płock in Rostkowo on November 24, 2018. In addition, the town of Drobin, the birthplace of St. Stanislaus's mother, was committed to the patronage of the Young Man from Rostkowo on December 19, 2018. In Przasnysz, the city where St. Stanislaus Kostka was baptized, a mural with the likeness of the saint, designed by Tomasz Jakubowski, was unveiled on September 15, 2018 on the façade of the parish building at św. Wojciecha Street (cf. Grzybowska, Kamiński, Malczyk, 2019, p. 194-251).

7. The pertinence of the message of St. Stanislaus Kostka

The celebration of the 450th anniversary of the death of the patron saint of Poland, children and youth certainly provided an opportunity to look at the saint with fresh eyes and consider the pertinence of the message of his life. One of the fellow students of Saint Stanislaus Kostka at the Imperial College in Vienna reminisced that although it was difficult for him to recall his face, he had known him by the nickname he was given: "The Best" (Majkowski 1965, p. 193). It seems that this trait of the young man's character, full of ambition and enthusiasm, may be relevant especially for youth at the beginning of the third millennium. Stanislaus Kostka appears as a man of action who was not deterred by any obstacle or adversity. Although his membership of the clerical state may not be understood very well among young people today, in the age of rivalry and competition St. Stanislaus may certainly be a bright example of fairness in competition and making choices in which one reckons not only profits and losses, but also values. Such perseverance in pursuit of one's goals and determination in the realization of one's vocation in life may impress the followers of St. Stanislaus (cf. Łabendowicz, 2018).

Secondly, it is worth paying attention to the context of the life and work of the Saint of Rostkowo. After the painful years of Reformation and the regrettable divisions in the Catholic Church, much hope was placed in the Council of Trent (1545-1563) which set itself the goal of renewing the Catholic faith and committed to the evangelization of the world as it was then being discovered. In this task the Pope was to be supported by the many religious congregations that were being founded at the time, among which the Jesuits, special "soldiers" in the battle for man, had a special place. Members of the Society of Jesus (Latin: Societas Iesu), established in 1534 by St. Ignatius of Loyola and his companions, made great efforts after the Council in the field of Catholic education and explaining faith through Christian art, making a significant contribution to the birth of the new era of Baroque. It was not without reason that Stanislaus of Rostkowo chose first to study at Jesuit colleges and then to join the Jesuit novitiate. He probably saw the great zeal and commitment of the Jesuits to guarding the purity of the Catholic faith. If modern times are marked by the many effects of moral relativism, post-truth and ethical subjectivism, then certainly the example of St. Stanislaus may be looked up to in the context of commitment to truth and a faithful interpretation of the Catholic faith. Interest in the history of the Jesuits and in St. Stanislaus Kostka as a son of this congregation in the year dedicated to him showed the need to explain the faith through publications, symposia, as well as art. All these dimensions were reflected in various initiatives launched that year. Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński, whose teaching may be invoked as an inspiration for young people to live in the light of higher values, has left a valuable contribution and proposals for the formation of children and young people following the example of St. Stanislaus Kostka, according to the motto of the Saint of Rostkowo: *Ad maiora natus sum*, taken from ancient philosophers (cf. Bednarczyk, 2018).

Jesuit novices once used to practice a form of prayer called Pactum Sancti Stanislai, which aimed to popularize the devotion to St. Stanislaus Kostka and the values associated with him (cf. Comb, 1996, p. 638). The year 2018 showed that it is also worth recalling today the time-tested example of the life of the patron saint of children and young people – St. Stanislaus Kostka, especially in the context of a rational and well-planned care for the vocational discernment of young people.

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The family and the values of family life in the science of the Catholic Church – analysis of selected sources

Rodzina i wartości życia rodzinnego w nauce Kościoła katolickiego – analiza wybranych źródeł[1]

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Zofia Frączek[a]

[a] *Zofia Frączek, PhD, https://orcid.org/0000-0002-4572-5123*
Institute of Pedagogy, University of Rzeszów

Abstract: The aim of this text is to show the place of the family and related values of family life (such as e.g. marriage, child, mother, father, senior citizen), in the Science of the Catholic Church. A qualitative analysis of selected sources has been made, including documents of synods and councils, papal encyclicals and other statements of popes. Some monographs and scientific articles, thematically related to the subject, were also used, including electronic sources. The source materials analysed show the great commitment of the Catholic Church in proclaiming the truth about the family and in shaping the social awareness of its value, as well as the value of marriage as the basis of the family community and of the mother (wife) and father (husband), who are the guardians and guides of the child in life. The Church also draws attention to the value of the child and the need to protect its rights, placing it at the forefront of social and family life, especially sick children, disabled children, children deprived of parental care, victims of war and cataclysms. It attaches great importance to the elderly generation, which acts as a witness to the past and as a source of wisdom for the young, as well as a link between generations and a safeguard for the continuity of the family. Despite the ongoing changes in the Science of the Catholic Church, its constant concern for the family and the values connected with it can be visible.
Keywords: Catholic Church, child, family, marriage, senior citizen

Abstrakt: Celem tego tekstu jest ukazanie miejsca rodziny i związanych z nią wartości życia rodzinnego (takich jak np. małżeństwo, dziecko, matka, ojciec, senior), w nauce społecznej Kościoła katolickiego. Dokonano w nim analizy jakościowej wybranych źródeł, a w tym dokumentów synodów i soborów, encyklik papieskich oraz innych wypowiedzi papieży. Wykorzystano także niektóre monografie i artykuły naukowe, tematycznie związane z podjętą problematyką, z uwzględnieniem źródeł elektronicznych. Poddane analizie materiały źródłowe wskazują na wielkie zaangażowanie Kościoła katolickiego w głoszenie prawdy o rodzinie i w kształtowanie społecznej świadomości jej wartości, a także wartości małżeństwa, jako podstawy wspólnoty rodzinnej oraz matki (żony) i ojca (męża), którzy są opiekunami i przewodnikami dziecka w życiu. Kościół zwraca również uwagę na wartość dziecka i potrzebę ochrony jego praw, stawiając je na pierwszym miejscu w życiu społecznym i rodzinnym, a w szczególności dzieci chore, niepełnosprawne, pozbawione opieki rodzicielskiej ofiary wojny i kataklizmów. Wielkie znaczenie przypisuje pokoleniu seniorów, które pełni rolę świadka przeszłości i inspiratora mądrości młodych oraz ogniwa łączącego pokolenia i zabezpieczającego trwanie rodziny. Mimo zachodzących zmian w nauce społecznej Kościoła katolickiego, widoczną jest ciągła jego troska o rodzinę i wartości z nią związane.
Słowa kluczowe: dziecko, Kościół katolicki, małżeństwo, rodzina, senior

Introduction

A significant influence on the shaping of the awareness of the family importance and the values connected with family life is exerted in the Polish social reality by the Catholic Church. Through its Science, it brings the Catholic family model closer and shows the family, marriage and the child as special goods.

The sources of Catholic Science include: Scripture of the Old and New Testaments and Tradition, the rulings of councils and synods, the social papal encyclicals and other statements of the popes and the social rulings of papal congregations, the Code

1 Artykuł w języku polskim: https://www.stowarzyszeniefidesetratio.pl/fer/2022-1Fraczek.pdf

of Canon Law, papal letters and other statements of the bishops on social issues, the results of the scientific investigations of Catholic scholars and activists (Bełch, 2007, p. 16)[2].

The family occupies an important place in the Science of the Church. In the history of the Church, the way of understanding the family and marriage has undergone some changes, however, the Science on the family has always emphasized its sacramental dignity, the uniqueness of the spiritual community of all its members and the indissolubility of the marriage union. The truth about the family as a natural community was emphasized (Borutka, Mazur, Zwoliński, 1999, p. 182). The genesis of the Catholic Science on the family and marriage can be found in the Bible. In the Old Testament, marital love and marriage are repeatedly presented as a model and symbol of God's connection with His people (Aubert, 1986, p. 248-254). In the New Testament, the development of science is evident and the religious significance of gender and marriage is emphasised. Despite the different roles of the spouses, their persons are equal in the right to grow, in human dignity and in the Divine Filiation (Borutka et al., 1999, p. 183).

1. The family in the preconciliar Science of the Catholic Church and in the documents of the Second Vatican Council

The Church of the preconciliar period (before the Second Vatican Council), preferred the Catholic model of marriage and family, referred to today as the "traditional", "patriarchal" family, and this was due to several reasons, which are mentioned by M. Skawińska:

- it was consistent with the interpretation at the time of the teachings of the Old Testament and the Evangelical messages concerning the position of husband and wife in the family, and with the acceptance of the sacred and religious character of marriage and the family;
- particular emphasis was placed on the indissolubility of the marriage knot, the purity and sanctity of the family. It was pointed out that the value of marriage is defined by three goods: the sacrament, marital fidelity and offspring. The sacrament of marriage determines that the marital union cannot be broken, marital fidelity does not permit adultery, and offspring dictates that children be raised with love and piety;
- the family was treated as a limited and hierarchical structure in accordance with the social doctrine of St. Thomas Aquinas, which was dominant in this period and recognized by the Church. The husband and father occupied the supreme position in the family community. Wife and children were subordinate to him;
- the family, being not only an element of civil society but at the same time a microstructure of the Church, had a religious function to fulfil, consisting in participation in religious practices and, above all, in giving birth to and bringing up children. This function was the main purpose of marriage and the family, to which all actions of spouses and parents were to be subordinated;
- the husband and father was the main and sometimes the only breadwinner in the family, while the primary task of the professionally unprepared mother was to take care of the home and the children. A woman was to be above all a good wife and mother, submissive and obedient to her husband;
- equality between a man and a woman was accepted in the sphere of dignity, personality, but not in the sphere of fulfilling family functions and duties. Only in one case was it allowed to swap roles in the family in such circumstances when the husband neglected his duties;

2 All the contents quoted in the article are translations from Polish language. The article was translated into English by a professional translation agency.

- the family was placed above the state, which was ascribed the duty to protect life, including unborn children. The state was also supposed to support the family in fulfilling its important educational function (Skawińska, 2001, p. 31-50).

Reassuming, one can say that the family in the preconciliar Science of the Church was a value based on the marital union, while the most important aim of marriage was to give birth to and raise children. Among the most important functions of the family was the religious function. The man was the sole breadwinner and head of the household, while the woman fulfilled household and child-rearing duties. Children were an asset for parents to protect, but they had to be obedient to their parents, especially to their father.

Economic and political changes and the democratisation of social structures have led to the devaluation of the traditional family model. A breakthrough in family life occurred when women and mothers started working. The relationship between spouses has changed fundamentally. These changes were rarely reflected in the Science of the Church until the second half of the 20th century. The Science of the Church on marriage and the family was largely defined by the Second Vatican Council (which lasted from 11 October 1962 to 8 December 1965). It brought about a change of emphasis in the interpretation of papal teaching on the family. There has been a change in the approach to the goals of marriage and the mutual position of family members - husband, wife and child. The role of love in marriage and in the family was noticed and emphasised, and the role of women was appreciated (Skawińska, 2001, p. 50-52). The family was defined as the first school of social virtues, and the parents' duty was to create a family atmosphere imbued with love and respect for God and people, which would foster the coherent, social and personal upbringing of children (Second Vatican Council, Constitutions, Decrees, Declarations, 1968, p. 316). The well-being of the person and society was linked to the well-being of the marital and family community. It was accepted that a deep community of marital life and love is created by the marriage covenant, i.e.*irrevocable personal consent. It was pointed out that marriage was not established only for the purpose of bearing children, but also for the mutual love of the spouses to develop and mature. Marriage was seen as a lifelong union, retaining its meaning and indissolubility, while children were seen as the most wonderful gift of marriage, contributing to the well-being of the parents themselves. It is assumed that the active presence of the father and the home care of the mother are helpful in the upbringing of children, especially in the case of younger children. However, the care a mother gives to her children should not limit her access to legitimate social advancement. The tasks of parents include supporting the younger generations with advice and a listening ear, as well as guiding them in the establishment of the family. It was accepted that the family, in which different generations meet and assist each other in attaining greater wisdom and in combining personal rights with the other needs of social life, constitutes the foundation of society (Second Vatican Council, Constitutions, Decrees, Declarations, 1968, p. 575 - 582).

2. The family as a value and values connected with it in the documents of the 2nd Polish Plenary Synod and in the teaching of John Paul II

A great contribution to shaping the social awareness of the family value was made by the Second Polish Plenary Synod (held from 8 June 1991 and lasting until 11 June 1999). The synod resolutions were approved by the Holy See on 22 December 2000 by the Congregation for Bishops. They took effect on 28 February 2001 (Tymosz, 2005, p. 341-342). Referring to many documents of the Church, the Second Polish Plenary Synod presented the Science of the Church on marriage and family. It drew attention to the issues of human corporeality, as well as sexuality, responsible parenthood, the right to life, preparation for marriage and family and the tasks of the family. Expressing their concern for the family value, the participants of the Second Polish Plenary

Synod, in the documents they had prepared, wrote that already after World War II, state institutions as an instrument of ideology tried to take over the educational functions of the family, lower the authority of parents and spread liberal models of life disregarding moral and ethical principles. Other threats included: the dissemination of amoral behaviour patterns by the media and the ubiquitous presence of television, which divides rather than unites family members; material and housing problems; migration and economic emigration; the undermining of the position of the husband and father in the family as a result of unemployment, alcoholism and drug addiction. Also noticed were the issue of undervaluing marriage and the wrong understanding of love and the lack of responsibility for the spouse, the increasing number of divorces, as well as people living in so-called free relationships and the neglect of parenthood (Second Polish Plenary Synod, Working Documents, 1991, p. 292-301).

An expression of the Church's concern for the good of the family is also the appeal of the Second Polish Plenary Synod to the state authorities to recognize the fundamental value of the family for the proper development of social life in the country and to conduct pro-family social and economic policies, especially in the sphere of work, housing and services. The Synod also appealed to those responsible for culture and the social media to create and disseminate a positive image of the family and to oppose demoralisation and anti-family propaganda. The legislator also called on local authorities to cooperate with parishes in organising leisure time for children and young people. He proposed that local authorities cooperate in establishing or activating institutions preparing for life in marriage and the family, family counselling and assistance to families (Second Polish Plenary Synod, Working Documents, 1991, p. 304-307).

The importance of the family as a social value, as well as values related to the family, was particularly strongly emphasized in the teaching of John Paul II. Pointing to the rank of the family, the Pope wrote: "Among these many ways, the family is the first way and for many reasons the most important. It is the universal way, remaining each time a special way, unique and unrepeatable, just as each man is unique". (John Paul II, 1994, p. 3-4). In an Apostolic Exhortation addressed to the people of Europe, John Paul II pointed out: "In every case it is necessary to encourage, assist and support individual families and their associations so that they may play their rightful leading role in the Church and society, and to strive to ensure that individual states and the European Union pursue a real and effective family policy" (Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation of the Holy Father John Paul II, Ecclesia in Europa, no. 91)

John Paul II included among the basic tasks of the family: "forming a community of persons, serving life, participating in the development of society, participating in the life and mission of the Church" (Apostolic Exhortation of the Holy Father John Paul II on the Tasks of the Christian Family in the Modern World Familiaris Consortio, No. 17). In marriage the Pope saw a value unique to the family community, for he wrote: "marriage is the foundation of the wider family community, since the very institution of marriage and conjugal love are directed towards the bearing and rearing of offspring, in which they find their culmination". (ibidem, no. 14). "The <communion> of spouses gives rise to the <community> that is the family" (John Paul II, 1994, p. 16). John Paul II also spoke on the role of husband and wife and father and mother in the family community. Turning his attention to marital relations he explained: "Within the communion-community of marriage and family, men are called to live in awareness of their gift and their role as husband and father" (Apostolic Exhortation of the Holy Father John Paul II ... Familiaris Consortio, no. 25). "Love for a spouse who has become a mother and love for children are the natural way for a man to understand and realize his fatherhood" (ibidem, no. 25). "The absence of the father causes psychological and moral imbalances and considerable difficulties in family relations, as does (...), the abuse of the preponderance of male authority, which humiliates the woman and does not permit the development of healthy family relations" (ibidem, no. 25). On the other hand, referring to responsible parenthood, John Paul II stressed that: "Responsible parenthood concerns directly that moment in which a man and a woman, joining together <as one flesh>, can become parents" (John Paul II, 1994, p. 35). The Pope pointed out the special value of the child and pointed out that: "In the family, a community of persons, special care must be given to the child; a profound respect for his personal dignity must be developed, and his rights must be served with reverence and generosity. This applies to every child, but it becomes particularly important with regard to the young child, the child in need of complete care, the sick, suffering or handicapped child" (Apostolic Exhortation of the Holy Father John Paul II ... Familiaris Consortio, no. 26). The Pope drew attention to the fact that many children are deprived of family warmth. "Sometimes their family is simply absent: parents, absorbed in other matters, leave their children to themselves. In some cases, the family does not even exist: as a result, thousands of children have no home other than on the street and can count on no one but themselves. Some of these street children die a tragic death. Others are led to take drugs, or even to trade and prostitution, and are often drawn into criminal organisations (...). A community that rejects children, marginalises them or forces them to live in hopeless situations will never know peace". (John Paul II, 2007, p. 779). John Paul II warned that: "no country in the world, no political system can think of its future except through the vision of those new generations who will take over from their parents the manifold heritage of values, tasks and aspirations both of their own nation and of the whole human family" (Apostolic Exhortation of the Holy Father John Paul II... Familiaris Consortio, no. 26). The Pope also dealt with issues related to the role of ageing people in the family, he saw their contribution to the development of this environment. He attributed to me the fulfilment of the precious mission of witness of the past and of inspiring wisdom for the young and for the future and explained "the life of older people helps us to be aware of the hierarchy of human values; it shows the continuity of generations (...). Older people also have the charism of transcending the barriers between generations before they exist". (ibidem, no. 27). Seniors bring extremely valuable values to the family, they make it possible to perceive many issues in a deeper way, they unite the past with the future in the present, and their experience gives confidence to the younger generation and builds its sense of security.

Externalizing his concern for the family, the Pope appealed: "Indeed, no one should know peace until the problem of poverty, which plagues families and individuals, has found a proper solution. Poverty is always a threat to the social order and to economic development (...)" (John Paul II, 2007, p. 780). "As the first cell of society, the family has the right to expect every assistance from the State in order to fulfil its proper mission. State laws should express concern for the best possible living conditions for the family and help it fulfil its tasks. In the face of an ever-increasing tendency today to legitimize those substitutes for marriage, that is, forms of union which, because of their essential characteristics or their deliberate lack of permanence, can in no way express the family or serve its good, it is the duty of the State to support and protect the authentic institution of the family (...). It sometimes happens that, for lack of adequate resources, young married couples are forced to postpone the decision to have a family or even to abandon it, while families living in poverty cannot participate fully in the life of society or are pushed to its margins altogether". (John Paul II, 2007, p. 780). Speaking about human behaviour that harms marriage and the family, the Pope stressed that "The first abnormal situation is the so-called 'trial marriage', which many people today would like to justify by attributing certain advantages to it. Human reason itself suggests the impossibility of accepting it, indicating how unconvincing it is to <experiment> on human persons whose dignity demands that they be always and exclusively the object of loving endowment without any limitation of time or other circumstances" (Apostolic Exhortation of the Holy Father John Paul II... Familiaris Consortio, no. 80).

3. The family in the teaching of Pope Benedict XVI

Pope Benedict XVI continued the work of supporting the family initiated by John Paul II. He proclaimed the necessity of caring for the family, so that it could be what it should be in its essence and identity. He stressed that it is an important element of the Church's mission towards the world and humanity. He was involved in promoting the truth about the value of marriage and family and invited to reflection all those who cared about the good of the family based on the union between a man and a woman (Proniewski, 2012, p. 31). Pope Benedict XVI argued that the family based on marriage is the heritage of humanity, a fundamental social institution, a vital cell and a pillar of society, which applies to both believers and non-believers. The Pope taught that in today's world, where some ambiguous concepts of man, freedom and human love are spreading, we cannot stop reminding the truth about the family. He also noticed other problems of the modern family - the increasing number of separations and divorces, which tear the unity of the family apart and create many problems for children, who are the innocent victims of such situations (Benedict XVI, 2006, no 8, p.18).

Benedict XVI called for support for the family, for closer cooperation between family and school, and advocated such a process of education in which, apart from imparting knowledge, there would also be a place for promoting a Christian image of man and society (Benedict XVI, 2006, no. 2, p.13). He stressed that the family needs a home, work and proper remuneration for work, as well as a school for children and health care. He pointed out that society and those in power should try to help the family, because depriving it of these essential resources endangers its well-being. He also recognised the role of the mass media in educating society and showing the importance of the family in human life, in providing information on its problems and rights (Benedict XVI, 2008, no. 1, p. 45).

Pope Benedict XVI also saw the dangers of depreciating the value of marriage and family in the media, spreading egoism and axiological chaos (Benedict XVI, 2006, no. 3, p.18). He warned against the consequences of secularisation of life and legislation violating the fundamental rights of the family. He pointed out the dangers connected with the promotion of alternative concepts of marriage and family, distorting nature and alien to national cultures (Benedict XVI, 2006, no. 1, p. 31).

4. Pope Francis's concern for the family and the values of family life

The constant concern for the family and the values of family life can also be seen in the teaching of Pope Francis. "The pontificate of Pope Francis falls in a particularly difficult period of existence for the Catholic family and a very demanding one when it comes to the Church's pastoral care of the family. On the one hand, more and more visible are the expectations of liberal circles concerning the relaxation of Church discipline, if only with regard to divorce, admitting people living in non-sacramental unions to Holy Communion, the increasingly weakened condition of the Catholic family manifested in a wave of hatred, egoism, departure from God; on the other hand, the desire to live in love, in accordance with the commandments and with the natural vocation of man to happiness, the desire to establish a family in a sense of security, acceptance and love" (Sobczyk, 2016, p. 201).

Pope Francis stresses that the sacrament of marriage is the foundation on which the family is built, gives married love permanence and strength to overcome crises. He points out that family love involves all persons, including children to the elderly. He teaches that a society that abandons children and marginalises the elderly undercuts its roots and obscures its vision of the future (Francis, 2013, p. 28-29).

He has presented many of the problems associated with the functioning of the family in his teaching during the so-called "Wednesday catechesis". It shows his concern for the family and the values associated with it - marriage, motherhood and fatherhood, the value of children and seniors.

Speaking about the value of marriage, Pope Francis pointed to its true meaning and explained that it is an act of faith, love and the beginning of a family community. He argued that: "it is not simply a ceremony held in a church, with flowers, costumes, photographs. Christian marriage is a sacrament which takes place in the Church and also builds up the Church, giving birth to a new family community (...). The sacrament of marriage is a great act of faith and love: it testifies to the courage to believe in the beauty of God's creative act and to live a life of love that urges us always to go further, beyond ourselves and even beyond our own family. The Christian vocation to unconditional and measureless love is what, by the grace of Christ, also constitutes the basis of the free consent on which marriage is based". (Francis, Marriage Requires Courage).

On the other hand, referring to the value of motherhood and the role of the mother in human life and society, the Pope proclaimed: "Every human person owes his life to his mother and almost always also owes her a great deal in his further life, in terms of human and spiritual formation. However, although the mother is highly praised in symbolic terms - there are so many poems, so many beautiful things said about the mother in poetic language, but she is little listened to and little supported in daily life, and her central role in society receives little recognition. In fact, mothers' willingness to sacrifice themselves for their children is often exploited in order to "save" on social expenses (...). It also happens in the Christian community that mothers are not always valued enough, that they are not listened to enough (...). Mothers are the strongest antidote to the spread of selfish individualism (...). A society without mothers would be an inhuman society, because mothers are always able to bear witness to their tenderness, their devotion, their moral strength, even at the worst moments". (Francis, Hymn to Mothers).

Just as important as the role of the mother is, in Pope Francis' view, the role of the father. The Pope explained that: "Every family needs a father (...). The first need is therefore precisely this - for the father to be present in the family. That he be close to his wife, to share everything, joys and pain, hardships and hopes. And to be close to his children as they grow: when they play and when they toil, when they are carefree and when they are fearful, when they speak and when they are silent, when they are bold and when they are afraid, when they make mistakes and when they get back on track; the father must be present, always. Present is not the same as controlling! Fathers who are too controlling destroy the personality of their children and do not allow them to grow up (...). A good father knows how to wait and how to forgive, from the bottom of his heart. Of course he can also discipline firmly: he is not a weak, submissive or sentimental father. The father who knows how to discipline without humiliating is the one who knows how to protect without sparing himself." (Francis, What the Father teaches).

Recognising the problems of modern families due to the lack of a father's presence in the family, the Pope argued: "We must be more careful. The absence of the father figure in the lives of children and young people causes emptiness and injuries that can be very serious. As a result, the deviance of children and young people can largely be attributed to this phenomenon as a lack of example, a lack of a guide with authority in everyday life. The sense of orphanhood that many young people live is much deeper than we think" (Francis, On the role of the father in the lives of children and young people).

Pope Francis also pleaded for the protection of children and their rights, and pointed out the value of the child in the life of the family and society. During a catechesis he preached: "Many children are rejected from the beginning, they are abandoned, robbed of their childhood and future. Some - as if to justify themselves - dare to say that it was a mistake to give birth to them. This is disgraceful! Let us not blame our children, please! Children are never a 'mistake'. Their hunger is not a mistake, just as their poverty, their fragility, their abandonment - so many children are abandoned on the streets - is not a mistake; nor is their ignorance or lack of skills - so many children do not know what school is. At most, these are reasons to love them more, more generously. What use are solemn declarations of human rights and children's rights if we then punish children for the mistakes of adults? (...). (...) Every marginalised, abandoned child who lives on the street, begging and eking out a living in various ways, without school, without medical care, is a cry that rises up to God, accusing the system created by us adults. And unfortunately, these children fall prey to criminals who exploit them in disgraceful trade and other kinds of business or who prepare them for war and teach them violence. And also in so-called rich countries, many children experience dramas that leave deep marks in them, because of the crisis of the family, the educational vacuum and the sometimes inhuman living conditions". (Francis, Children are never a mistake).

The Pope also drew attention to the social value of senior citizens, representatives of the third generation, so often marginalised today because of the prevailing fashion for youth, fitness and external beauty. He argued that "thanks to medical progress, life has become longer: but society has not become 'roomier' for life! The number of elderly people has increased considerably, but our societies have not reorganised themselves sufficiently to make room for them with proper respect, truly taking into account their frailty and dignity. As long as we are young, we tend not to think about old age as if it were a disease (...). Yet the elderly are a resource, they cannot be ignored (...). Older people are abandoned, and not only in terms of material deprivation. They are abandoned because of a selfish inability to accept their limitations, which reflect our limitations, because of the many difficulties they have to overcome today in order to survive in a civilisation that does not give them the opportunity to participate, to express themselves or to be a point of reference, according to a consumerist model that assumes that only the young can be useful and enjoy life. Instead, these elderly people should be for society as a whole a treasury of wisdom for our people!(...). Where there is no reverence for the elderly, there is no future for the young". (Francis, Older People Are Us).

In October 2013, Pope Francis announced his decision to convene a Synod on the family. An Extraordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops was held from 5-19 X 2014, followed a year later by an Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops from 5-24 X 2015. As a result of these deliberations, Pope Francis signed the post-synodal exhortation Amoris Laetitia on 19 March 2016.

5. Extraordinary and Ordinary General Assembly on the family and the teaching of Pope Francis in the post-synodial exhortation Amoris Laetitia

The Extraordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops, which met in Rome in October 2014 and was dedicated to the family, was a pastoral synod, not a doctrinal synod. This was already indicated by the title of the deliberations – "Pastoral challenges related to the family in the context of evangelisation". The aim of the synod was not to develop a new doctrine on marriage and the family, but to reflect on how to help contemporary marriages and families, especially Christian ones, so that they can preserve their identity and fulfil their tasks today (Olczyk, 2016, p. 59).

Among the problems discussed that families face were unemployment and poverty, which do not encourage young people to marry, as well as the secularisation of life and the depreciation of the value of marriage, the increasing number of divorces, separations, the diminution of the value of the child, discrimination against women, but also selfish individualism and the commercialisation of the body. It was recognised that the crisis of marriage and the family has its source in a crisis of faith and attention was drawn to the need for committed implementation of family pastoral care. Attention was drawn to the need to accompany separated, abandoned and divorced persons, victims of violence, to the implementation of pastoral care for reconciliation and mediation. Emphasis was placed on the need to renew the formation of priests, deacons, catechists and other pastoral workers (Relatio Synodi of the Third Extraordinary General Assembly).

The 2014 synod described the situation of marriage and the family, not shying away from difficult or morally questionable situations either. However, describing them did not mean accepting these controversial trends. Issues of divorce, remarriage, free unions and partnerships, and homosexuals were addressed. It was pointed out that there was no basis for comparing or assuming analogies between homosexual relationships and the family, but that persons with such inclinations should be treated with respect (Relatio Synodi of the Third Extraordinary General Assembly).

In the final report of the Ordinary Synod of Bishops to the Holy Father Francis on 24.10.2015, both the problems and the importance of the family are presented. In it we read that: "The family, the fundamental human community, is painfully aware of its weakness and fragility in today's cultural and social crisis. Nevertheless, it shows that it can find the courage to confront the inadequacy and insufficiency of institutions with regard to the formation of the person, the quality of the social bond, and the care of the most vulnerable. It is therefore particularly necessary to appreciate the real strength of the family in order to support its fragility. This strength lies essentially in the fact that the family is capable of loving and teaching love. No matter how wounded a family may be, it can always grow by starting from love" (Final Report of the Synod of Bishops to the Holy Father Francis, p. 13).

The Synod emphasized that the family is the most important human community, a school of humanity, love and the foundation of society. Kinship relations within it shape the conditions helpful for raising children, transmitting values, building and strengthening intergenerational ties. The family, however, needs the support of the state through the design and implementation of appropriate pro-family policies that would ensure its dignified existence (Final Report..., p. 13-15).

The Synod referred to the value of the child, the woman, the man and the ageing person in the family. Speaking of the value of children it accepted that: "They must come first in family and social life, and be a priority for the pastoral activity of the Church" (Final Report..., p. 21). It stressed the key role of women in the life of the family and socjety and insisted on the need to protect the dignity of women, who in many countries of the world are discriminated against and abused, and are victims of violence (Final Report..., p. 22). On the other hand, referring to the importance of the father, the Synod accepted that: "The absence of the father seriously marks family life, the upbringing of children and their integration into society. His absence can be physical, emotional, cognitive and spiritual. This absence deprives children of an adequate model of paternal attitude". (Final Report..., p. 22-23). Speaking on the elderly, the Synod stressed that one of the most serious and urgent tasks of the Christian family is to protect the elderly, to guard the links between generations in order to transmit the faith and the fundamental values of life. Grandparents are the link between the generations and ensure the psychological and emotional balance by passing on traditions and customs, values that allow the recognition of family roots (Final Report..., p.16-17).

It is important to emphasize that by showing the vocation and mission of the family, the synod wants to help all families. It referred to the various situations of contemporary marriages and families. It did not ignore the problem of divorced spouses who have entered into civil marriages again. However, it did not resolve the issue of admitting them to Holy Communion (Dyduch, 2017, p. 79).

The post-synodal apostolic exhortation "Amoris laetitia" contains the results of the work of the two synods on the family presented above. Its official announcement took place on April 8th, 2016. It is a comprehensive document, consisting of 9 chapters, which refers in its content, among other things, to the final documents of the two assemblies, as well as the teaching of Pope Francis' predecessors and his own catechesis on the family and the values associated with it.

In it, the Pope emphasized the importance of the good of the family and the fact that it plays a key role in building the future of the world and the Church. He also presented the ongoing anthropological and cultural changes affecting all aspects of human life and contributing to the humanization of family life (Exhortation Amoris laetitia 32 - hereafter referred to as Al), but also bringing with them certain dangers, such as: tensions caused by the individualistic culture of possession, the attitude of distrust, arrogance, slipping into comfort, avoidance of obligations. The Pope pointed out that the freedom of choice for which people so often clamor can be an opportunity to cultivate in oneself what is noblest, but if noble goals and discipline are lacking, it becomes a reason for living alone or in concubinage (Al 33).

He explained that it is easy to confuse true freedom with the idea that everyone judges as they see fit and that there are no superior truths, values, or principles. Sometimes the above-mentioned dangers spill over into the family and make it a passable place where we go when it is convenient for us, when we want to assert our rights or fulfill some need. And when they affect the marriage they become a disturbance of its stability. It is very interesting that on the one hand people today fear loneliness and want protection and fidelity, and on the other hand there is a growing fear that they will be trapped in a relationship that will limit them in achieving their own aspirations (Al 34).

Pointing to the essence of the marriage, the Pope explained that marriage transcends any passing fad. Its essence is rooted in the very nature of the human person and his social character. It entails a series of duties that flow, however, from love itself, which is capable of risking the future (Al 131). Engaging with another person in an exclusive and definitive way always entails certain risks and challenges. However, to refuse to take on such responsibility is selfish, self-interested, and unable to see the rights of the other person (Al 132).

Pope Francis calls today's culture a "culture of temporariness," accompanied by people moving quickly from one emotional relationship to another, entering into and maintaining interpersonal relationships calculated to obtain benefits or services. Many young people postpone their marriage for reasons such as: economic; educational; spreading ideology that diminishes the value of marriage and family; experience of failure by other marriages and families; fear of losing freedom and independence and being reduced to an institutional and bureaucratic creation (Al 40). These are also determinants of marital crises that destabilize the family and contribute to separation and divorce, negatively affecting not only the adults but also the children and society as a whole. These failures give rise to new relationships that further complicate family situations (Al 41). In addition, rampant social consumerism, the sexual revolution, global policies pointing to overpopulation, among others, contribute to a decline in fertility rates, as well as demographic troubles for societies (Al 42).

An important problem Pope Francis has also pointed out is that many children are born into incomplete families, or into extended or transformed family environments in which their welfare is not always protected. Children who experience violence, sexual abuse, and abandonment are particularly at risk and must be cared for without fail (Al 45). Many children are rejected from the start, robbed of their childhood and future. What is the use of solemn declarations of human rights and children's rights if we then punish children for the mistakes made by adults. If a child is born into unwanted circumstances, the parents, or other family members, should do everything in their power to accept it as a gift from God and take responsibility to welcome it with openness and love (Al 166). Help, the pope writes, is also needed for children with disabilities and their families who face unexpected difficulties in reorganizing family life and new situations that sometimes surpass their previous experiences and financial capabilities. Such families need to be cared for carefully, since they offer to the Church and to society a living witness of fidelity to the gift of life (Al 47).

The Pope recognized the importance of parental roles - that of mother and father. The mother is the strongest antidote to the spread of selfish individualism. She can bear witness to tenderness, devotion, moral strength. She also often conveys the deepest sense of the practice of religion (Al 174). The father, on the other hand, helps the child to understand the limits of reality, facilitates the exit into the wider world, encourages effort, struggle. The father, with his masculine identity, is as necessary as maternal concern (Al 175).

Pope Francis pointed to the role that the senior generation plays in the family. He wrote that there are cultures that relegate the elderly to the margins of life (Al 192). He also strongly opposed euthanasia. He gave special recognition to the activities of associations, family movements, and church institutions that support seniors. (Al 48).

The Pope also referred to pastors and spoke of the challenges they face and reminded them that the family is not the object but the subject of evangelization and stated that priests often lack adequate formation to address the complex problems of modern families (Al 200). He said there is a need for an evangelization that pays attention to cultural, social, political and economic conditions and protects families from discrimination, poverty, exclusion and violence (Al 201). According to the Pope, the psychological and emotional formation of seminarians should be improved and the family should be more strongly involved in the preparation for the priesthood (Al 203).

Every passage of the exhortation "Amoris Laetitia" reveals Pope Francis' great concern for the family and the values associated with it - marriage, parenthood, the value of the child and the elderly person. Above, only selected problems are presented and the pope's indications are approximated. The president of the Pontifical Council for the Family, V. Peglia, wrote: "The Apostolic Exhortation is not simply aimed at creating a new pastoral strategy towards families. It demands much more from everyone - clergy, monks and laity - namely, the elaboration of a new way of being Church in the world" (Paglia, 2017, p. 11-22).

Conclusion

The ongoing socio-cultural transformations influence the functioning of individuals and entire societies. They shape new lifestyles and the climate of interpersonal relations. One of the most important environments, because it influences a human being from the first days of his/her life, is the family. It is not an ordinary environment, it is a community in which we experience support not only informational or material, but also emotional and spiritual. It is a particularly important value, because it is in the family community that comprehensive human development takes place. The family also creates space for the realization of other important values such as: marriage, child, parenthood. The analysis of the content of the above presented sources indicates that there are certain changes in the Science of the Catholic Church regarding the family, but also its continuous involvement in the activities for the benefit of the family and the values related to it. The Church recognises its contemporary problems and does not avoid very difficult issues, nor does it rejects anyone, but tries to care for and provide the necessary help to people caught up in complex life situations.

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Family, material and worldview values and the process of intergenerational transmission

Wartości rodzinne, materialne i światopogląd a proces transmisji międzypokoleniowej[1]

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Katarzyna Kamila Walęcka-Matyja[a]

[a] *Associate professor Katarzyna Kamila Walęcka-Matyja, PhD, https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8222-729x*
Institute of Psychology, Department of Social Psychology and Family Study, University of Lodz

Abstract: The aim of the research was to analyse the relationships between family and material values and the worldview of parents and their adult children. 68 parents (34 women and 34 men) and their 51 adult children (33 women and 18 men) participated in the study. The parents were in middle and late adulthood (41-67 years), while their children were in early adulthood (18-30 years). The following psychological questionnaires were used: the Material Values Scale (MVS_PL) in the Polish adaptation of Górnik-Durose (2016), the World Assumptions Scale in the Polish adaptation of Załuski and Gajdosz (2012), the Familism Scale in the Polish study by Walęcka-Matyja (2020) and a questionnaire. The obtained research results indicate a significant stabilization in the parental transmission of family values and beliefs about the world. Intergenerational differentiation was observed in terms of materialistic values.
Keywords: familism, family, materialism, intergenerational transmission, worldview

Abstrakt: Celem badań była analiza związków między wartościami rodzinnymi, materialnymi i światopoglądem rodziców i ich dorosłych dzieci. W badaniu uczestniczyło 68 rodziców (34 kobiet i 34 mężczyzn) oraz ich 51 dorosłych dzieci (33 kobiet oraz 18 mężczyzn). Rodzice znajdowali się w okresie średniej i późnej dorosłości (41-67 lat), natomiast ich dzieci były w okresie wczesnej dorosłości (18-30 lat). Wykorzystano następujące kwestionariusze psychologiczne Skalę Wartości Materialnych (MVS_PL) w polskiej adaptacji Górnik-Durose (2016), Skalę Założeń Wobec Świata w polskiej adaptacji Załuskiego i Gajdosza (2012), Skalę Familizmu w polskim opracowaniu Walęckiej-Matyja (2020) oraz ankietę. Uzyskane rezultaty badań wskazują na znaczną stabilizację w rodzicielskim przekazie wartości rodzinnych i przekonań na temat świata. Zróżnicowanie międzypokoleniowe zaobserwowano w zakresie wartości materialistycznych.
Słowa kluczowe: familizm, materializm, rodzina, światopogląd, transmisja międzypokoleniowa

Introduction

The intergenerational transmission process is defined as continuity (similarity) in transmitting, beliefs and behaviour patterns existing in the family environment. It also refers to values and norms as well as personality traits or even a physical similarity between parents and children (Farnicka, Liberska, 2014). Within the intergenerational transmission process broadly defined experiences and support are passed on between family generations. That enables realization of tasks considered as valuable even if the previous generations did not take them up at all or performed them in a way different from the previously accepted one (Farnicka, 2016). Family specialists agree that the intergenerational transmission process is a complex phenomenon and count it among the psychological phenomena classified as ambiguous (Elżanowska, 2012; Farnicka, Liberska, 2014; Rostowska, 1995). It is worth adding that the subject matter of family transmission was first taken up by Bowen (1978), who paid attention to family determinants of takeover of structures, treated as the foundations of identity and affecting the way of perception and reaction in response to the changing reality.

1 Artykuł w języku polskim: https://www.stowarzyszeniefidesetratio.pl/fer/2022-1Matyja.pdf

In the related literature there is a prevailing view that it is the socialization process that is of a key significance for the course of the intergenerational transmission (Godawa, 2020; Rozenbajgier, 2016; Rostowska, 1995). Defined as a complex, non-spontaneous process of learning, it causes a human person to turn from a biological being into a social one, belonging to a specific cultural circle and a community. During this learning process a human person acquires, among other things, the skills which are the basis for shaping and demonstrating proper social interactions, learning social roles, understanding a language and the symbols existing in a given society (Szlendak, 2015). In addition, a person learns the norms, behaviours and values present in the culture, which definitely affect the development of their system of values, the level of aspiration and their life goals. As Rostowska indicates (1995), the long-term effects of the intergenerational transmission process show up in the choices we take and the behaviours demonstrated in the future by the next generation.

It is assumed that within the intergenerational transmission process parents transmit the values which they consider to be the most important to their children through a specific (having axiological features) contact with them. It is also assumed that in the family environment interpersonal relationships and situations are marked with axiological features and values are transmitted continuously in every moment of everyday life. The members of a family system are connected by strong, mutual relationships of a positive nature, have a specific position and play many roles (Elżanowska, 2012). The quality of family atmosphere is considered an exceptionally important factor facilitating or reducing the adoption of values transmitted in the family. The manifestations of the beneficial family atmosphere include the parents' proper attitudes, both ideological and educational, as well as a positive interpersonal relationship between them (Pokrzywnicka, 2011). To a great extent, it is its quality that is responsible whether or not the values important for the parents shall influence the behaviour of the child, regardless of their age, due to the fact that the family is the primary reference group for them (Walęcka-Matyja, 2013).

From the psychological perspective, an especially important factor is the course of the intergenerational transmission occurring in the area of values since the system of values of a human being is a specific cognitive filter used to describe and evaluate the world. Moreover, values perform a regulatory function for taking conscious and deliberate actions. Therefore, it is important to adopt the interpretation of the concept of value. In this study, it is assumed that a *value* shall mean beliefs concerning desired target states or behaviours beyond standard situations. They affect choices that are being made as well as valuation (of events, behaviours). They are systematized according to the hierarchy of importance (Wojciszke, 2014, p. 546).

The subject matter taken up in the study includes reflections on the intergenerational transmission process covering family and material values and the worldview.

Familism is defined as a cultural value describing the way in which the family members express their attachment to the family and appreciate its value. It is stressed that although close family relationships are considered as important and hard to be replaced in all societies, families are different in terms of the expression, strength and range how their values are being expressed, depending on embedding in a given culture (Campos, Ullman, Augilera, Schetter, 2014). Familism is considered as a value emphasizing warm, kind, supportive family relationships and putting the needs of the family as a whole over one's individual needs (Campos et al., 2008). The researchers think that it can be described as more universal than specific for a given group (Hardway, Fugini, 2006; Campos et al., 2014) as it includes social norms, attitudes and behaviours (Sabogal, Marin, Otero-Sabogal, Vanoss Marin, Perez-Stable, 1987). A high level of familism in family members means that they feel responsible for the family, treat it as the main source of emotional and instrumental support, appreciate the importance of mutual interpersonal relationships, and while making important decisions, take the other family members' opinions under consideration. Family members also try to behave in such a way as not to bring shame to the family and agree to subordinate their individual preferences to the needs of the family (Sabogal et al., 1987). The research on Latin families indicates that there are differences in the intergenerational transmission of familism. It has been found out that mother's familism affected daughters to a greater extent. On the other hand, father's familism in a greater degree influenced sons. It is believed that this is related to the socialization process, in which fathers tend to give more freedom to sons and allow them to develop their individualism, whereas mothers form a belief in their daughters that they should play the role of a domestic goddess and sacrifice their time and individual development for the benefit of the family (Flook, 2011). It has been observed that in respect of the strength and quality of demonstrated family values there are differences between genders. Women are more often than men oriented towards family relationships, which is connected with taking many actions important for maintaining family ties (Updegraff, McHale, Whiteman, Thayer, Delgado, 2005). The research done by Farnicka (2016) confirms the differences between men and women in their approach to acknowledging values passed down by older generations. It has been noticed that women would rather pass down traditional values, i.e., those which, in their opinion, were present in their family house, whereas men are more inclined to introduce changes to their approach to parenthood. In women, there was consistency in the continuity of three generations and in man such consistency and cohesion never occurred. This fact indicates a much weaker transmission in case of men.

Another psychological variable analysed in the aspect of intergenerational transmission is materialism. Defined as a belief in the excessive significance of material possessions and strongly related to a consumerist attitude. A person can be called a materialist if they accumulate goods in an excessive way, consume services and products, mainly taking care of their material well-being. As research results show, materialism is strongly and negatively correlated with happiness, well-being, satisfaction with life and values from intra- and interpersonal levels (Kasser, 2002; Kasser, Ryan, 1996). It is assumed that materialism in terms of a value which guides people's choices and behaviours in different circumstances is mainly acquired in the family environment, in the process of consumerist socialization (Dykalska-Bieck, Lipowska, Zawadzka, 2019; Górnik-Durose, 2007). Psychologists think that decisions made by parents in the sphere of economy have a significant influence on their children's decisions in the future. Watching the parents' patterns of economic behaviour, their children develop knowledge how to save money, manage their finances or look for products of good quality and in reasonable prices (Dybowska, 2019). The previous results of the research on the subject matter of intergenerational transmission in respect of materialism mainly concerned the correlations between parenting styles and materialism (Carlson, Gossbart, 1988; Poraj-Weder, 2018) or between parental attitudes and materialism (Dykalska-Bieck et al., 2017; Górnik-Durose, Dziedzic, 2013).

The last of the discussed psychological variables subject to intergenerational transmission is the worldview. It is defined as a collection of beliefs and opinions which an individual has in respect of the surrounding world, which they perceive as relatively stable. The opinion source is a broadly defined environment, i.e., other people, views coming from different fields of culture, philosophy, religion or science. The worldview contributes to the quality and course of the cognitive adaptation of a human being in respect of experienced situations and events. To interpret the concept of *worldview* adopted in the study after Załuski and Gajdosz (2012), the following dimensions were distinguished: justice, benevolence of the people, randomness, benevolence of the impersonal world, self-worth, luck, controllability and self-controllability (Gajdosz, Załuski, 2012). In the period of early ontogenesis, the world view is shaped by behaviours demonstrated by the parents. They not only affect the children's behaviours but also shape their systems of beliefs, e.g., the world is safe and people are kind (Schaffer, 2021).

1. The aim of the study

The aim of the study was to determine if transmission occurs between parents and their adult children in respect of family and material values and the worldview. In connection with the aims set in the study, the following research questions were formulated:

1. Do the family values, materialism and the worldview of the parents condition the values of their adult children and to what extent?
2. Do the family values, materialism and the worldview of the mothers condition the values of their adult children and to what extent?
3. Do the family values, materialism and the worldview of the fathers condition the values of their adult children and to what extent?

In relation to the presented research questions, the following research hypotheses were formulated:

- H1. There is intergenerational transmission of family values between parents and their adult children.
- H1.1. There is intergenerational transmission of family values between mothers and their adult children.
- H1.2. There is intergenerational transmission of family values between fathers and their adult children.
- H2. There is intergenerational transmission of the worldview between parents and their adult children.
- H2.1. There is intergenerational transmission of the worldview between mothers and their adult children.
- H2.2. There is intergenerational transmission of the worldview between fathers and their adult children.
- H3. There is intergenerational transmission of material values between parents and their adult children.
- H3.1. There is intergenerational transmission of material values between mothers and their adult children.
- H3.2. There is intergenerational transmission of material values between fathers and their adult children.

2. Method

2.1. Surveyed group

119 adult people participated in the study. This group included 68 parents (34 women and 34 men) and 51 adult children (33 women and 18 men). The parents were in middle and late adulthood (41-67 years), while their children were in early adulthood (18-30 years). The majority of the respondents, i.e., 76% (n=90) of the people declared that they lived in the city, whereas 24% (n=29) of the surveyed people answered that they lived in the country. As far as education is concerned, 57.2% (n=68) of the respondents declared having higher education, 30.3% of the people (n=36) had secondary education, and 12.5% (n=15) secondary vocational education. Considering the work situation of the surveyed people, it was found that 71.4% (n=85) of them were professionally active, whereas 28.6 % (n=34) were students. The analysis of the material situation showed that 46.3% (n=55) of the respondents assessed it as good, 32.7% (n=39) as average, and 21% (n=25) as very good.

2.2. Procedure and materials

The research was done in years 2020-2021, using the CAWI method. The respondents were given specially generated Family Codes[2], which enabled grouping the families participating in the scientific project. Information about anonymity and voluntariness of the survey, its scientific purposes as well as guarantee that it was conducted in accordance with the ethical rules of the psychologist profession were placed on the site where the codes were generated and on the title page of the questionnaire, where the respondents could agree to take part in the survey, being aware that they could withdraw from it at any moment without any consequences.

Three psychological questionnaires with good psychometric properties as well as a general questionnaire were used.

2 The surveys were conducted by the participant of the M.A. Seminar.

Material Values Scale (MVS_PL) by Richins, Dawson (1992) in the Polish adaptation of Górnik-Durose (2016) allowed us to examine materialism. MVS_PL consists (depending of the version) of 6, 9 or 15 statements. They make up three subscales – Centrality, Success, Happiness. Centrality refers to placing material possessions in the centre of your life activity. Success depicts perceiving material possessions as a life success. The last of the mentioned subscales – Happiness defines possessing material goods as a guarantee of happiness and life satisfaction. In this study the 9-item version of the tool was applied. Reliability of MVS_PL, measured by the Cronbach alpha coefficient is satisfactory, especially with regard to the full scale in all the tested versions (0.74 – 0.84) (Górnik-Durose, 2016).

World Assumptions Scale (Janoff-Bulman, 1989) in the Polish adaptation of Załuski and Gajdosz (2012) was used to assess the influence of an important life event on the cognitive structures of a human being and on the applied adaptational processes. This tool consists of 32 statements and measures eight beliefs, i.e., Justice, Benevolence of the People, Randomness, Benevolence of the surrounding world, Self-worth, Luck, Control of negative events and Self-controllability. The respondent gives an answer on a 6-item scale. The Cronbach alpha coefficient for the whole scale is 0.861 (Załuski, Gajdosz, 2012).

Familism Scale (Knight, Gonzalez et al., 1987) in the Polish study by Walęcka-Matyja (2020) allows us to measure six dimensions of family values, which include: Respect, Religion, Family support (values from the traditional trend) as well as Material Success and achievements and Individualism (values from the individualistic trend). This tool consists of 44 items referring to what people can think and believe. The Cronbach alpha coefficients reach high levels for the dimensions of Respect (0.91), Material success and achievements (0.87) and Religion (0.95). The reliability of the Individualism scale is 0.63, and for the Family support scale 0.70 (Walęcka-Matyja, 2020).

The general questionnaire allowed us to collect the following data: the role in the family of origin (parent, child), gender, age, place of residence, education level, employment, assessment of importance of close family relationships, assessment of satisfaction with material situation.

The analysis of the intergenerational transmission of values was carried out in two stages. In the first of them the intraclass correlation coefficient values were calculated. The intraclass correlation coefficient values not only refer to a linear relationship between the analysed variables but also verify the existence of systematic differences in respect of the level of the compared results. Therefore, a statistically significant value of the intraclass correlation coefficient between the results obtained by the parents and the ones obtained by their adult children shall not only mean the occurrence of a linear relationship between these results but also a similar level of the results in both groups. The intraclass correlation coefficient value was analysed as an indicator of intergenerational transmission. For the variables for which no statistically significant values of the intraclass correlation coefficient were obtained, in the second stage of the analysis, the following analyses were carried out: the correlation analysis based on the Pearson's correlation coefficients or the Spearman's correlation coefficients (depending whether the assumption of a normal distribution of analysed variables was fulfilled) and the analysis of differences in the level of the analysed variables based on the Student's t-test for dependent samples or the Wilcox's test value (also depending whether the assumption of a normal distribution was fulfilled). The analyses were carried out separately for the pairs: parents – adult children, mothers – adult children and fathers – adult children. In the analysis the computer software IBM SPSS 27 licensed by University of Łódź was used.

3. Results

3.1. Verification of the assumption of a normal distribution of analysed variables

Table 1 presents the values of the Shapiro-Wilk test, which allowed us to verify the assumption of a normal distribution of the analysed values. The analyses were conducted for the whole surveyed group,

Table 1. Verification of the assumption of a normal distribution of analysed variable

		Parents		Children		Mothers		Children		Fathers		Children	
Questionnaire		*S-W*	*p*	*S-W*	*p*	*S-W*	*p*	*S-W*	*p*	*S-W*	*p*	*S-W*	*p*
SF	Respect	0,97	0,502	0,98	0,745	0,96	0,178	0,98	0,721	0,97	0,370	0,98	0,772
	Material success and achievements	0,92	0,018	0,96	0,217	0,94	0,067	0,96	0,309	0,96	0,239	0,97	0,551
	Individualism	0,87	0,001	0,78	0,001	0,95	0,081	0,79	0,001	0,88	0,001	0,77	0,001
	Religion	0,97	0,537	0,89	0,002	0,97	0,361	0,88	0,001	0,94	0,082	0,86	0,001
	Family support	0,95	0,137	0,96	0,161	0,96	0,232	0,96	0,231	0,96	0,179	0,96	0,191
MVS-9	Success	0,93	0,023	0,96	0,203	0,92	0,017	0,96	0,210	0,91	0,011	0,96	0,205
	Happiness	0,96	0,276	0,92	0,016	0,95	0,136	0,91	0,010	0,96	0,328	0,92	0,014
	Centrality	0,99	0,909	0,95	0,108	0,94	0,060	0,95	0,081	0,95	0,129	0,95	0,142
WAS	Benevolence of the People	0,97	0,569	0,97	0,430	0,96	0,290	0,97	0,543	0,97	0,608	0,97	0,603
	Self-controllability	0,96	0,184	0,95	0,132	0,97	0,458	0,95	0,130	0,97	0,460	0,96	0,303
	Happiness	0,97	0,315	0,94	0,045	0,97	0,455	0,94	0,052	0,93	0,037	0,93	0,043
	Control of negative events	0,97	0,432	0,96	0,166	0,98	0,743	0,96	0,190	0,96	0,217	0,97	0,433
	Randomness	0,98	0,840	0,97	0,384	0,96	0,179	0,97	0,374	0,96	0,221	0,97	0,373
	Justice	0,98	0,698	0,83	0,001	0,97	0,420	0,83	0,001	0,98	0,797	0,86	0,001
	Self-worth	0,91	0,009	0,95	0,078	0,86	0,001	0,94	0,068	0,89	0,002	0,94	0,055

i.e., pairs of parents-children, mothers-children and fathers-children. Statistically significant deviations from a normal distribution were marked.

3.2. Correlations between parents' values and children's values

Table 2 presents the intraclass correlation coefficient values for the pairs of parents and their adult children.

Considering the obtained results (table 2), it was found that there were statistically significant positive values of intraclass correlation coefficients for all the dimensions of family values, measured with the use of FS, and for the majority of world belief categories, as measured by the WAS questionnaire, except for the results on the scale of Justice and Self-worth. Therefore, the obtained results were consistent with the hypothesis on intergenerational transmission in respect of the abovementioned variables.

We did not obtain statistically significant values of intraclass correlation coefficients in case of all the variables measured by the MVS-9 questionnaire, assessing materialistic values. Table 3 presents the correlation coefficients between the values obtained by the parents and the ones obtained by the children, where no statistically significant values of intraclass correlation coefficients consistent with the hypothesis on intergenerational transmission were found. The variables whose distribution deviated from normal were analysed based on the Spearman correlation coefficient values. The other variables were analysed using the Pearson r correlation coefficients.

Considering the results included in table 3, no statistically significant correlations were found.

Table 4 shows the mean values obtained by the parents and by the children for the variables in case of which no statistically significant values of the intraclass correlations coefficients consistent with the hypothesis on intergenerational transmission were found. The table was supplemented by the Student's t-test values for dependent samples in case of the variables whose distribution did not deviate

Table 2. The results of the analysis concerning the correlation of the parents' values and the children's values

Question-naire	Variables	*r*	*p*
SF	Respect	0,41	0,006
	Material success and achievements	0,33	0,022
	Individualism	0,61	0,001
	Religion	0,56	0,001
	Family support	0,56	0,001
MVS-9	Success	0,08	0,310
	Happiness	0,06	0,369
	Centrality	0,14	0,200
WAS	Benevolence of the People	0,36	0,015
	Self-controllability	0,28	0,050
	Happiness	0,37	0,013
	Control of negative events	0,44	0,003
	Randomness	0,43	0,004
	Justice	-0,09	0,691
	Self-worth	-0,24	0,920

r – value of intraclass correlation coefficient;
p – statistical significance

Table 3. Correlation coefficients between the values obtained by the parents and the ones obtained by the children for the variables for which no intergenerational transmission was found

Questionnaire	Variables	*r*/ρ	*p*
MVS-9	Success	0,09	0,621
	Happiness	0,08	0,661
	Centrality	0,14	0,401
WAS	Justice	-0,08	0,660
	Self-worth	-0,24	0,165

r – Pearson r correlation coefficient value;
ρ – Spearman correlation coefficient value;
p – statistical significance

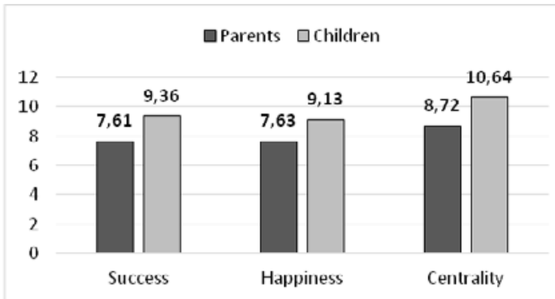

Figure 1. Mean values of the results on the scales of Success, Happiness and Centrality in the groups of parents and their adult children.

Table 4. The mean values obtained by the parents and by the children for the variables in case of which no statistically significant values of intraclass correlations coefficients consistent with the hypothesis on intergenerational transmission were found

		Parents	Children				
Questionnaire	Variables	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*t/Z*	*p*
MVS-9	Success	7,61	2,98	9,36	3,51	-2,38	0,023
	Happiness	7,63	2,43	9,13	2,47	-2,44	0,015
	Centrality	8,72	2,60	10,64	3,04	-3,11	0,004
WAS	Justice	13,18	3,74	13,40	3,46	-0,24	0,807
	Self-worth	11,49	2,72	12,21	2,70	-1,02	0,316

M – mean value; *SD* – standard deviation; *t* – Student's t-test value for dependent samples;
Z – Wilcoxon's test value; *p* – statistical significance

Table 5. The results of the analysis concerning the correlation between the mothers' values and the children's values

Questionnaire	Variables	*r*	*p*
SF	Respect	0,36	0,015
	Material success and achievements	0,22	0,099
	Individualism	0,37	0,013
	Religion	0,53	0,001
	Family support	0,46	0,002
MVS-9	Success	0,02	0,462
	Happiness	-0,15	0,803
	Centrality	0,16	0,174
WAS	Benevolence of the People	0,23	0,085
	Self-controllability	0,23	0,092
	Happiness	0,39	0,010
	Control of negative events	0,35	0,018
	Randomness	0,40	0,008
	Justice	-0,27	0,946
	Self-worth	-0,04	0,595

r – value of intraclass correlation coefficient;
p – statistical significance

Table 6. Coefficients of correlations between the values obtained by the mothers and the ones obtained by the children for the variables in case of which no intergenerational transmission was found

Questionnaire	Variables	***r***/ρ	*p*
SF	Material success and achievements	0,22	0,205
MVS-9	Success	0,02	0,925
	Happiness	-0,10	0,551
	Centrality	0,16	0,350
WAS	Benevolence of the People	0,23	0,175
	Self-controllability	0,23	0,188
	Justice	-0,30	0,080
	Self-worth	-0,04	0,805

r – Pearson r correlation coefficient value;
ρ – Spearman correlation coefficient value;
p – statistical significance

from normal and by the Wilcoxon's test values in case of the variables whose distributions deviated from normal.

It was found that the adult children had obtained statistically significant higher mean results on the scales of Success, Happiness and Centrality than their parents (comp. fig. 1).

3.3. Correlations of mothers' values and children's values

Table 5 presents the intraclass correlation coefficient values for the pairs of mothers – their adult children.

We obtained statistically significant positive values of intraclass correlation coefficients for the majority of variables measured by FS, except for the results on the scale of Material success and achievements, as well as for the results on the scales of Luck, Control of negative events and Randomness from the WAS questionnaire. Therefore, the obtained results were consistent with the hypothesis on intergenerational transmission in respect of the discussed variables.

We did not obtain statistically significant values of intraclass correlation coefficients in case of all the variables measured by the MVS-9 questionnaire. Table 6 depicts coefficients of correlations between the values obtained by the mothers and the ones obtained by the children for the variables in case of which no statistically significant values of intraclass correlation coefficients consistent with the hypothesis on intergenerational transmission were found. The variables whose distributions deviated from normal were analysed based on the Spearman

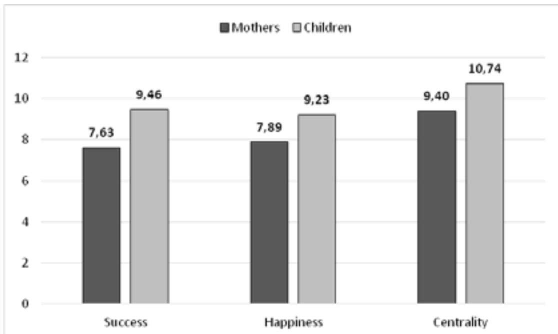

Figure 2. Mean values of the results on the scales of Success, Happiness and Centrality in the groups of mothers and their adult children.

Table 7. Mean values obtained by the mothers and mean values obtained by the children for the variables in case of which no statistically significant values of intraclass correlation coefficients consistent with the hypothesis on intergenerational transmission were found

		Matki		Dzieci			
Questionnaire	Variables	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*t/Z*	*p*
SF	Material success and achievements	30,71	8,89	30,81	8,58	-0,05	0,957
MVS-9	Success	7,63	3,28	9,46	3,52	-2,27	0,030
	Happiness	7,89	2,69	9,23	2,42	-2,05	0,040
	Centrality	9,40	2,58	10,74	3,02	-2,18	0,036
WAS	Benevolence of the People	29,34	5,88	28,53	6,27	0,64	0,526
	Self-controllability	16,03	4,22	15,76	3,71	0,32	0,747
	Justice	12,69	3,57	13,39	3,50	-0,35	0,729
	Self-worth	11,94	3,59	12,14	2,69	-0,26	0,798

M – mean value; *SD* – standard deviation; *t* – Student's t-test value for dependent samples;
Z – Wilcoxon's test value; *p* – statistical significance

correlation coefficient values. The other variables were analysed by means of the Pearson's r correlation coefficients. No statistically significant correlations were found.

Table 7 depicts mean values obtained by the mothers and mean values obtained by the children for the variables in case of which no statistically significant values of intraclass correlation coefficients consistent with the hypothesis on intergenerational transmission were found. The table was supplemented by the Student's t-test values for dependent samples in case of the variables whose distribution did not deviate from normal and by the Wilcoxon's test values in case of the variables whose distributions deviated from normal.

It was found that the adult children had obtained statistically significant higher results on the scales of Success, Happiness and Centrality than their mothers (comp. fig. 2).

3.4. Correlations of fathers' values and children's values

Table 8 presents the intraclass correlation coefficient values for the pairs of fathers – their adult children.

We obtained statistically significant positive values of intraclass correlation coefficients for the all variables measured by FS and for the results on the scales of Benevolence of the people and the surrounding world, Luck, Control of negative events and Randomness of the WAS questionnaire. Therefore, the obtained results were consistent with the hypothesis on intergenerational transmission in respect of the abovementioned variables.

We did not obtain statistically significant values of intraclass correlation coefficients in case of all the variables measured by the MVS-9 questionnaire. Table 9 depicts coefficients of correlations between the values obtained by the fathers and the ones obtained by the children for the variables in case of which no statistically significant values of intraclass correlation coefficients consistent with the hypothesis on intergenerational transmission were found. The variables whose distributions deviated from normal were analysed based on the Spearman correlation coefficient values. The other variables were analysed by means of the Pearson's r correlation coefficients. No statistically significant correlations were found.

Table 10 depicts mean values obtained by the fathers and mean values obtained by the children for the variables in case of which no statistically significant values of intraclass correlation coefficients consistent with the hypothesis on intergenerational transmission were found. The table was supplemented by the Student's t-test values for dependent samples

Table 8. The results of the analysis concerning the correlation between the fathers' values and the children's value

Question-naire	Variables	*r*	*p*
SF	Respect	0,39	0,011
	Material success and achievements	0,28	0,050
	Individualism	0,68	0,001
	Religion	0,49	0,002
	Family support	0,60	0,001
MVS-9	Success	0,13	0,230
	Happiness	0,19	0,144
	Centrality	0,09	0,305
WAS	Benevolence of the People	0,36	0,017
	Self-controllability	0,27	0,060
	Happiness	0,33	0,025
	Control of negative events	0,40	0,009
	Randomness	0,42	0,006
	Justice	0,10	0,292
	Self-worth	-0,16	0,819

r – value of intraclass correlation coefficient;
p – statistical significance

Table 9. Coefficients of correlations between the values obtained by the fathers and the ones obtained by the children for the variables in case of which no intergenerational transmission was found

Questionnaire	Variables	***r***/ρ	*p*
MVS-9	Success	0,13	0,466
	Happiness	0,16	0,358
	Centrality	0,09	0,613
WAS	Self-controllability	0,27	0,125
	Justice	0,17	0,345
	Self-worth	-0,16	0,370

r – Pearson r correlation coefficient value;
ρ – Spearman correlation coefficient value;
p – statistical significance

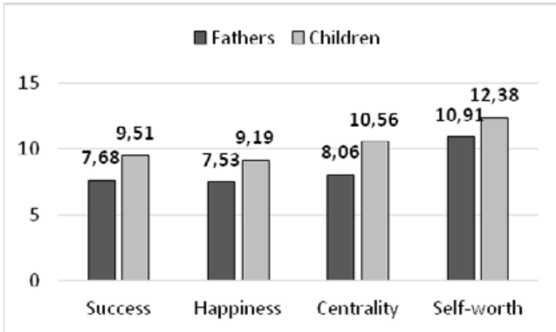

Figure 3. Mean values of the results on the scales of Success, Happiness and Centrality in the groups of fathers and their adult children.

Table 10. Mean values obtained by the fathers and mean values obtained by the children for the variables in case of which no statistically significant values of intraclass correlation coefficients consistent with the hypothesis on intergenerational transmission were found

		Fathers		Children			
Questionnaire	Variables	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*t/Z*	p
MVS-9	Success	7,68	3,34	9,51	3,52	-2,37	0,024
	Happiness	7,53	2,57	9,19	2,55	-2.513	0,012
	Centrality	8,06	3,44	10,56	3,08	-3,31	0,002
WAS	Self-controllability	16,09	3,98	15,54	3,68	0,68	0,499
	Justice	13,82	5,01	13,65	3,52	-.234	0,815
	Self-worth	10,91	2,80	12,38	2,68	-2,05	0,048

M – mean value; *SD* – standard deviation; *t* – Student's t-test value for dependent samples;
Z – Wilcoxon's test value; *p* – statistical significance

in case of the variables whose distribution did not deviate from normal and by the Wilcoxon's test values in case of the variables whose distributions deviated from normal.

It was found that the adult children had obtained statistically significant higher results on the scales of Success, Happiness, Centrality and Self-worth than their fathers (comp. fig. 3).

Discussion

The subject matter of the presented research refers to the fact whether and to what extent family and material values and the worldview are subject to intergenerational transmission. The raised issues were considered interesting since, on the one hand, basing on the findings from psychological research included in the related literature (Elżanowska, 2012; Farnicka, Liberska, 2014; Mudyń, 2013; Rostowska, 1995) it was assumed that the examined psychological variables were transmitted and adopted by next generations. But, on the other hand, awareness that parents and their adult children represent different generations, for whom it is characteristic to have a different view of the rapidly changing world and the related phenomena does not allow us to accept this sort of assumption without any doubt. Baby Boomers and X Generation, represented by the parents in the age range 41-67 years, are among the oldest generations in the Polish society. On the other hand, their adult children belong to Z generation (18-30 years). Differentiation between generations demonstrated in the so-called generational effect lies in different key life experiences. Sadowski (2018) says that they refer to a few most important issues, which include using the media and new technologies, preference of specific types of media, attitude towards the employer as well as changes in social awareness and preferences related to the processes of sociocultural transformation. Contemporary changes covering the social, political, cultural and technological space are modifying and sometimes even redefining the needs of a modern person, their dreams and their perception of the world of values. Contemporary times described in the categories of disappearing continuity of tradition, temporariness, relativism may encourage the occurrence of differentiation or chaos in the world of values (Komorowska, Śniadkowski, 2016).

Coming to the synthetic presentation of the obtained research results in respect of correlations between the values of the parents and the ones of their adult children, it shall be noticed that intergenerational transmission concerned all familism dimensions, i.e., Respect, Family support, Religion, Material success and achievements and Individualism as well as most categories of the worldview, such as Benevolence of the people, Randomness, Benevolence of the surrounding world, Luck, Control of negative events and Self-Controllability. Thus, the obtained results confirm the assumption about intergenerational transmission in respect of the abovementioned variables. A significant stability in family values transmission can be noticed. The strength of the family environment's influences may result from committed and positive emotional relationships with the family members. The data from the survey indicate that nearly 97% of the respondents believe that close relationships between the family members are essential. Only 3% of the surveyed people were of a different opinion. It is assumed that the contemporary family, despite numerous potentially destabilizing factors, demonstrates significant stability in respect of transmission of values, especially within two closest generations.

The results of the research on intergenerational transmission of the worldview reveal potentially properly running processes of adaptation of the surveyed young adults to the challenges occurring in the surrounding world. Cognitive patterns, which are shaped and strengthened in the family environment, refer to beliefs about the benevolence of the surrounding world, using an optimistic style of explaining life events and a belief about the good nature of other people (Benevolence of the people, Benevolence of the surrounding world). They also concern beliefs about the worthiness of a human person (Luck, Self-Controllability) and beliefs about the meaningfulness and explainability of life events (Control of negative events, Randomness). However, we did not confirm the hypothesis on the occurrence of intergenerational transmission in respect of the worldviews expressed on the scales of Justice and Self-worth as well as all the materialism dimensions, i.e., Centrality, Happiness, Success. It was noticed that the adult children had obtained statistically significant higher results in materialistic values than their parents. This means that they focus in a greater degree on material possessions and believe that these can guarantee happiness and satisfaction with life. They also more often perceive owning material goods as a life success in comparison to their parents. The obtained result is considered significant. It is believed that Z generation, which includes the surveyed young adults in the age range of 18-30 years, responds in this way to the surrounding well-developed consumerist culture. Zawadzka indicates that the materialistic attitudes of young people are not only shaped by their parents' influences but also created by the media, which show the image of a perfect world. The message from advertisements is clear and it says that only a person who is beautiful, healthy and dressed according to the most recent fashion trends is happy. Therefore, in young people a belief is created that it is enough to buy something to be happy. It is believed that excessive using of the media separates a person from close interpersonal relationships, shows them a distorted image of reality and reduces their well-being (Zawadzka, 2013). This may pose a real threat to development of the value system since young people, who receive a lot of content of different quality, are not always able to evaluate it correctly. They are sometimes unaware or do not want to know how media content affects their way of perceiving the real world and their decisions (Komorowska, Śniadkowski, 2016).

In the light of the obtained results, the question about the functions of the materialistic values of young adults seems really interesting. The materialistic attitude can be viewed in two aspects, positive and negative (Csikszentmihalyi, Rochberg-Halton, 1981 after: Górnik-Durose, 2007). In the first case, materialism is perceived as a tool to achieve a goal. Thus, acquiring material goods by young adults leads to the fulfilment of the needs of a non-material nature, such as self-realization, ensuring financial security for them and their families. On the other hand, in the second aspect – materialism leads to a situation, where acquiring and owning material possessions become a goal in itself, for example, allow a person to raise their status or arouse admiration in other people. Therefore, the issue mentioned here can be a stimulant for carrying out further psychological research to broaden psychological knowledge of this subject.

Analysing the correlations between the examined values of the mothers and their adult children, it was noticed that intergenerational transmission had occurred for all the dimensions of familism, except for the scale of material success and achievements, and in the area of the worldview, except for the scales of Luck, Control of negative events and Randomness. The obtained results confirm the hypothesis on intergenerational transmission in respect of the abovementioned variables. It was noticed that the adult children had obtained statistically significant higher mean results than their mothers on the scales describing materialistic values, i.e., Success, Happiness and Centrality.

An interesting result was obtained in the dimension of Material success and achievements, which had not been significantly affected by transmission. It refers to values emphasizing the importance of material achievements, success reflected in prioritization of earning money, and striving for achievements through competition. It is likely that this category of family values of an individualistic nature has a relatively small significance for the women who function in family roles in a way similar to the pattern present in collectivistic cultures. It is worth adding that the compared groups of mothers and their adult children obtained similar results in this respect.

Discussing the correlations between the examined values of the fathers and their adult children, it was found that they referred to all the dimensions of familism and to the following categories of world beliefs: Benevolence of the people and the surrounding world, Luck, Control of negative events and Randomness. Therefore, the obtained results confirm the hypothesis on intergenerational transmission in respect of the abovementioned variables. On the other hand, no transmission occurred in case of materialistic values. In the own study, the adult children obtained statistically significant higher mean results on the scales of Success, Happiness, Centrality and Self-worth than their fathers. While the problem of differences in the importance of materialistic values for older (Baby Boomers, X) and younger (Z) generations was referred to in the previous part of the discussion, some focus should be given to the occurrence of a significant differentiation in Self-worth. The young adults obtained higher mean results on the scale of Self-worth than their fathers. Interpreting the obtained result, it can be stated that the young people more often demonstrated positive thinking about themselves, believing that they were basically good, competent, moral, effective and happy. It is possible that the obtained result meaning a different self-assessment in the abovementioned areas is the effect of life experience, especially in respect of critical life events, such as divorce, chronic disease, death of parents or loss of job. Moreover, the fathers, who were in the age range between 41 to 67 years, had different future perspectives than their adult children. Numerous pathologies affecting people in middle and late adulthood may contribute to lowered levels of self-esteem in the men, who previously realized themselves mainly in professional work, were physically fit and then over time retired, frequently experiencing aches and pains. It can be assumed that in their opinion nothing is worth the effort any more as it will not restore what has been lost.

As the final reflection on the research findings, it is worth adding that although the presented results broaden the scope of psychological knowledge with new issues, they are not free from limitations. The data used in the study directly came from the parents and their adult children and were analysed by means of self-descriptive tools. Such tools are commonly considered acceptable and are frequently applied in research on the issues of intergenerational transmission (Plopa, 2008), family values (Knight, Gonzales, Saenz, Bonds, German, Deardorff, 2010), the worldview (Gajdosz, Załuski, 2012), and materialism (Flouri, 2004). It is emphasized that although all of them have good psychometric properties, they are sensitive to situational factors. It is emphasized that the presented research results concern full families. It might be interesting from the cognitive point of view to take up scientific discussion on transmission of familism in families with differentiated structure, not only nuclear but also multigenerational ones. Another issue worth exploring may be an attempt to determine which values, and to what extent, are passed on by the family environment between generations and which ones indirectly by the media.

Summing up, in a family centric society, such as the Polish one, the family is one of the most important values and family values are passed on in the intergenerational transmission process (Walęcka-Matyja, Janicka, 2021). The observed areas of similarities between parents and their adult children in respect of family values and the worldview result from the processes occurring in the family, among which psychologists count imitation, modelling and identification (Majewska, 2017). The acquisition of parents' values by their children is also affected by the theory of social learning proposed by Bandura as well as the sociobiological approach to intergenerational transmission assuming that children are the parents' "natural heirs" in respect of attitudes (Farnicka, Liberska, 2014).

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The importance of empathy in the development of creativity by design thinking

Znaczenie empatii w rozwoju kreatywności metodą design thinking

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Iryna Durkalevych[a]

[a] *Iryna Durkalevych PhD, https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8807-6402*
Basic Studies Centre, Carpathian State College in Krosno

Abstract: The article presents theoretical considerations on the role of empathy in the development of creativity. The analysis of the scientific literature on this topic allows us to conclude that empathy plays an important role in the development of creativity. The issues of learning empathy in early adulthood and methods of enhancing empathic abilities in relation to the process of education, among others, by the method of design thinking, are discussed.
Keywords: empathy, creativity, method, education, design thinking

Abstrakt: W artykule przedstawiono teoretyczne rozważania na temat roli empatii w rozwoju kreatywności. Analiza literatury naukowej z określonej problematyki pozwala wnioskować, że istotną rolę w rozwoju kreatywności odgrywa empatia. Poruszono kwestie uczenia się empatii we wczesnej dorosłości oraz metod pozwalających zwiększać zdolności empatyczne w odniesieniu do procesu edukacji, m. in. metodą design thinking.
Słowa kluczowe: empatia, kreatywność, metoda, edukacja, design thinking

Introduction

Among empathy researchers, such as Konrath, O'Brien and Hsing (2011, p. 180), there is a belief that people today are not as empathic as previous generations. To support this thesis, researchers Konrath, O'Brien, and Hsing (2011, p. 187) cite the results of their own study, which was conducted among American college students between 1979 and 2009, and found that empathy levels had decreased significantly from the 1980s and 1990s. Researchers, on the other hand, have noted an increase in narcissism among college students over the same time period as evidenced by a cross-sectional study conducted by a team of researchers Twenge et al. (2008, p. 875), the results of which showed that narcissism increased across generations in 85 samples of American college students between 1979 and 2006. "Since 1982, NPI scores have increased 0.33 standard deviation. Thus, almost two-thirds of recent college students are above the mean 1979–1985 narcissism score, a 30% increase." (Twenge i in., 2008, p. 875). Findings cited in a report by the Pew Research Center (2007) showed that the most important goal of young adults ages 18-25 is to get rich. This in turn indicates that young adults are focused on their own interests.

A disturbing phenomenon is the decline of empathy in the workplace, as reported by psychology professors Goleman (2018) and Schwartz (2018) et al. Goleman (2018, p. 19) notes that: "the higher a person's position, the more his or her ability to maintain personal connections decreases." Similarly, Reiss (2019, p. 43) writes: "Research has shown that the level of empathy is inversely proportional to the amount of power held." The findings of Hogeveen, Inzlicht, and Obhi (2013) showed that power interferes with the ability to empathize. Schwartz (2018, p. 110), on the other hand, emphasizes that qualities such as empathy, caring, and concern for the well-being of others "are threatened today by a focus solely on self-interest, encouraged by a workplace structure based on incentive bonuses." Baron-Cohen (2015, p. 163) speaks of the erosion of empathy worldwide, the cause of which is the health of communities both small (family) and large (nations). As Moscovici (1998, p.85) states: "Mentally ill people show excessive attention to themselves and are unable to take an interest in others and consider their point of view". In conclusion, the compilation of research findings on empathy and related problems is disturbing. It is worth noting that empathy is at the heart of building relationships in both the workplace and personal life. Researchers point out that:

> "Not only ability to emphathize with others essential for cousiling professionals, but empathic individuals fare better in a variety of interpersonal relationships, whether professional, familial, or friendship" (Guzetta, cited in Hatcher et al, 1994, p. 961).

The main purpose of this article is to attempt to draw attention to the need for the development of empathy and creativity in contemporary education, among others by using the method of design thinking.

1. Empathy - one of the components of emotional intelligence

The scientific literature emphasizes that empathy is one of the components of emotional intelligence (see: Brackett, Solovey, 2008; Mayer, Salovey, 1999; Goleman, 2012). In this paper, we refer to Goleman's (2012; 2018) model of emotional intelligence. According to Goleman (2012, p. 81), emotional intelligence consists of a set of special skills that include: the ability to motivate and persevere toward a goal despite setbacks, the ability to control urges and postpone their gratification, regulate mood and not succumb to worries that impair thinking ability, empathize with the moods of others, and view the future optimistically. Goleman (see: 2012; 2018) treats empathy as both a trait and a skill. Contemporary researchers on the issue of empathy include scholars such as Baron-Cohen (2015), Goleman (2018), Keysers (2020), Reiss (2019), and others. It is worth noting that there is no clear-cut approach to understanding empathy in the scientific literature. According to Baron-Cohen (2015): "empathy is the ability to recognize the thoughts or feelings of another person and to respond to that person's thoughts and feelings with appropriate emotion". Baron-Cohen (2015, p. 32) emphasizes that there are at least two stages of empathy - recognition and response. Each of the mentioned stages, according to Baron-Cohen (2015), is important and if recognition is not followed by a reaction, we cannot talk about empathy. When discussing the problem of empathy, Baron-Cohen (2015) refers to Martin Buber's philosophical approach, according to which human relations can proceed on the level of "I-Thou" or "I-to". Treating human beings in terms of "I-Thou", according to Baron-Cohen (2015), demonstrates the exclusion of empathy. Treating a person objectively ("I-to"), can lead to a loss of the ability to empathize (Baron-Cohena (2015). In contrast, Goleman (2018, p. 16) speaks of three types of empathy:

1. cognitive empathy (the ability to understand the other person's point of view);
2. emotional empathy (the ability to feel what the other person is feeling);
3. empathic concern (the ability to sense what the other person needs from us).

A similar model is encountered by Reiss (2019), who also distinguishes a three-stage model of empathy that includes an emotional aspect (affective empathy), a cognitive aspect (mental empathy), and a motivational aspect of empathic response. Reiss (2019, p. 37) emphasizes that: "Empathy is triggered not only by how we perceive information, but also by how we understand it, how it moves us, and how that affects behavior." According to Reiss (2019), emotional empathy involves feeling what other people feel. Cognitive, on the other hand, includes the primary stage "the ability to become aware that other people think and feel something different than we do" (2019, p. 38), which in turn leads to the "perspective taking" stage. Empathic concern belongs to the third aspect of empathy and refers to the intrinsic motivation to care about the well-being of another person. In other words, the mechanism of empathy according to Reiss (2019), involves empathy, understanding, and caring. The most convincing model that explains the mechanism of empathy, according to the author of the text, is that of Goleman (2018) and Reiss (2019).

2. The role of empathy in social life

Empathy plays a very important role in interpersonal relationships in both personal and professional lives. "The success of our relationships and careers continually depends on our ability to read other people's emotions and states" (Keysers, 2020, p. 18). According to Rys (2012), empathy determines the quality of interpersonal relationships: it increases cooperative tendencies, constructive ways of resolving conflicts, inhibits aggression, and conditions the emergence of altruistic behavior. Baron-Cohen (2015, p. 165) claims that with the help of empathy it is possible to solve any interpersonal problem such as marital conflict, international conflict, problem at work, misunderstanding between friends, political impasse, family dispute, or conflict with a neighbor. Maruszewski (2015) emphasizes that marital conflicts often arise from a lack of empathy, specifically from decentration in the psychological sense (the ability to look at the other person's needs and desires), when each spouse sees only their own needs and desires. In relation to work, it is important to emphasize that empathy is a necessary condition for professional success. Segal (1997, p. 171) states that: "Empathy arising within a team promotes increased work performance". And, "(...) If we arrive with people who appreciate and care about us, we feel our worth and want to work more, longer, and more creatively" (1997, p. 172). According to Alexander and Sandhal (2017, p. 127): "(...) empathy is one of the most important factors in the success of leaders, entrepreneurs, managers, businessmen. It reduces abuses of power, enhances the ability to forgive, and greatly increases the sense of unity and social connectedness".

Among empathy researchers Ming Lam, Kolomitro and Alamparambil (2011, p. 162), among others, it is believed that: "Empathic ability is an asset professionally for individuals, such as teachers, physicians and social workers, who work with people." Great importance is attributed by psychologists (see: Reiss, 2019, Davis, 2001) to the role of empathy in teachers. As Tucholska (2009, pp. 91-92) writes: "The teaching profession is a social profession whose overarching goal is to work for the welfare of students through close interpersonal contacts marked by empathy and concern. This ability to empathize with students, according to Reiss (2019, p. 76), fosters a bond based on openness, trust, and respect. Educators who include empathy among the essential skills of educators also write similarly: "Among the skills that are invaluable and extremely desirable in the profession of a teacher (educator) are: assertive communication, defense against manipulation, empathic understanding, dealing with emotions, building a proper self-image, communicating with people, making decisions, achieving social goals, negotiation and persuasion, leading a group, resolving conflicts, dealing with stress, among others" (Michalowski, 2017, p. 509). Rogers (2014, pp. 347-348) emphasizes the role of empathy, including "warm concern for the client" and "empathic understanding of the client's world," as a necessary condition for learning that should be the starting point of the educational process.

3. Can empathy be learned?

Both genetic and social factors play an important role in the development of empathy (see: Baron-Cohen, 2015; Reiss, 2019). Riess (2019), based on an analysis of research findings, argues that genes are responsible for empathy only 10-35%, the rest being a combination of environmental factors and experiences. Numerous foreign researchers including Baron-Cohen (2015), Goleman (2012; 2018); Kohut (1984); Riess (2019), et al. emphasize, the important role of early experiences and parental educational influences in the development of empathy in children. Baron-Cohen (2015), Kohut (1984), Reiss (2019) argue that the specificity of early childhood experiences is the basis for forming close relationships with others. According to Reiss (2019), empathic role models brought from home have a great impact on the development of empathy, which becomes evident later in a person's life. Matczak and Jaworska (2001) conclude that the upbringing conditions in the family and the support shown in the family influence empathy. Therapists, including Alexander, Sandhal (2017), write similarly, noting that parents have a responsibility to develop empathy because they are the first example of empathy. "Such families, in which children are exposed to physical violence, psychological violence, or sexual abuse, suppress the child's ability to feel empathy" (Alexander, Sandhal, 2017, p. 123). The development of empathy can also be disrupted by overprotective families in which children grow up to be potential narcissists (Alexander, Sandhal, 2017). Reiss (2019) points out that problems with empathy are noticeable during childhood, when children have difficulty interacting with other peers. In contrast, "Children with healthy empathic tendencies and a well-developed ability to take another's perspective tend to communicate better with peers, play more politely in groups, have fewer behavior problems, and are more successful in the future due to their high level of interpersonal skills" (Reiss, 2019, p. 93). Gulin (1994, p. 154) came to similar conclusions, stating that it was the family environment, compared to other variables such as age and gender, that was of primary importance in the course of empathy of the children and adolescents studied.

Can empathy be learned? While there is no clear answer to this question in the research literature, researchers emphasize the important role of training and coaching in increasing empathy (see: Brackett & Salovey, 2008; Ciarrochi, 2008; Ming Lam, Kolomitro, & Alamparambil, 2011, Reiss, 2019). Researcher Reiss (2019) notes the positive effects of empathy training and argues that empathy can be learned. A slightly different position is held by Brackett and Salovey (2008) and (Ming Lam, Kolomitro, and Alamparambil (2011). Ming Lam, Kolomitro, and Alamparambil (2011), based on an analysis of 29 research papers draw the very cautious conclusion that empathy is trainable with some caveats. "The research findings that we reviewed seem to suggest that it is feasible to enhance one's knowledge about empathy and the skills to "act" empathically with a variety of training methods. Hence, technically, empathy is trainable. However, there is no sound evidence to support the conclusion that training can effectively change people's propensity to behave empathically after training, that is, transfer their learning and change their empathic behaviors in the natural environments." (Ming Lam, Kolomitro, & Alamparambil, 2011, p. 196). Similarly, Brackett and Salovey (2008, p. 133) argue that superficial training programs do not significantly increase emotional intelligence because emotional skills, according to the researchers, are acquired through years of learning. According to Brackett and Salovey (2008), educational programs focused on emotional skills will stimulate emotional intelligence.

Referring to the age of early adulthood, the literature provides examples of empirical work that demonstrates that empathy can be taught to young adults through a variety of activities (see: Hatcher et al., 1994). In modern empathy research, it is emphasized that contemporary education should move toward empathy. Many educators, including Robinson, Aronica (2015), emphasize that education should move toward teaching relationship building and maintenance, especially as it relates to nonverbal communication and empathy (Reiss, 2019). This aspect of teaching, is especially important in today's world because, according to Reiss (2019, p. 63): "increasingly, we are losing the ability to assess another person's emotional state conveyed through eye contact as we choose to interact via text messages, emails, and other forms of digital communication." Researchers (see: Reiss, 2019, p. 112) argue that: "traditional teaching methods based on the acquisition of facts deprive students of the opportunity to acquire the skills necessary to solve actual problems." Ming Lam, Kolomitro, and Alamparambil (2011) suggest that in developing/training empathy, special attention should be paid to the methods, because the wrong choice of methods does not achieve the desired effects. Among the teaching methods that develop empathy, Reiss (2019) includes: discussion, projects, experiential learning (applicable to adults). An open question in learning according to Ming Lam, Kolomitro, and Alamparambil (2011, p. 197) is the following: "Do we need to focus on all three components (knowledge, affect, and behavior) in order to train people to become more empathetic?" According to the author of this text, the application of design thinking in education can contribute to both empathy (especially its three components: knowledge, affect, and behavior) and creativity.

4. Design thinking. Empathy in design thinking

The design thinking method has gained great interest among both students and academics (see: Durkalevych, 2020; 2021). According to researchers, including Çeviker-Çınar, Mura, and Demirbağ-Kaplan (2017, p. 977), design thinking is an innovative and valued approach in education. The method includes five stages of activities: empathy; problem definition; idea generation; prototyping; testing (see: Durkalevych, 2021). One of the most important stages is the empathy stage, because it is at this stage that an attempt is made to understand the problem from the user's perspective, which in turn influences the process of product creation. To create new and valuable products it is necessary to understand for whom we design/create. As Plattner (2012, p. 1) writes: "To design for your users, you must build empathy with who they are and what is important to them".

The design thinking methodology includes techniques (practical exercises) that foster the development of empathy, for example: "'Assume a beginner's mindset'; 'What? How? Why?'; 'User camera study'. "'Interview (for empathy)', 'Extreme users Analogous empathy'; 'Story share-and-capture'; 'Bodystorming' (see: Plattner, 2012; Waloszek, 2012). One of the best techniques, providing an opportunity to look at a user's problem holistically, is the "Empathy Map". As Plattner (2012, p. 15) writes: "An Empathy Map is one tool to help you synthesize your observations and draw out unexpected insights." (Plattner, 2012, p. 15). The "Empathy Map" exercise (see: Ingle, 2015), fosters the development of empathy and creativity through an in-depth understanding of the client, their needs, experiences, and expectations. Ingle (2015) compares this process to walking in another person's shoes. "An empathy map is a metaphorical pair of shoes" (Ingle, 2015, p. 65). As an exercise, we symbolically draw in the center of a poster or whiteboard a client whose problem the entire team will be working on. At the top of the board, we write the topic. The rest of the poster/board is divided into sections that have names such as: "Thinking", "Hearing", "Speaking", "Doing", "Seeing", "Feeling". The next step involves each participant trying to "step into the client's shoes" so that they can write real feelings about the client's experience into the diagram (Ingle, 2015).

Table 1. Empathy map (modified from: Ingle, 2015, p. 66)

Hearing	Hello, my name is	Doing
Thinking	....	Feeling
Speaking		Seeing

Questions to answer, according to Plattner, are:

> "SAY: What are some quotes and defining words your user said?
> DO: What actions and behaviors did you notice?
> THINK: What might your user be thinking? What does this tell you about his or her beliefs?
> FEEL: What emotions might your subject be feeling?"
> (see: Plattner, 2012, p. 15).

During the interview we try to understand what our user says, thinks, feels, does/how he/she behaves. This approach allows for a deeper understanding of the user and their needs. Referring to the above presented three-tiered model of empathy by Goleman (2018) and Reiss (2019), we can state that this exercise influences the development of each of the aspects: emotional (affective empathy), cognitive (mental empathy) and motivating empathic response.

Above, considerations about empathy and methods to foster the development of empathy were presented. The remainder of this article will focus primarily on the question of the role of empathy in enhancing team creativity, among other things.

In the literature one can find studies that confirm the connection between empathy and creativity. Researchers such as Carlozzi, Bull, and Hurlburt (1995), based on their own research, conclude that empathy is positively related to creativity. As Kleinschmidt states: "Artists and other creative individuals often show an unusually intensive sensitivity to reality" (cited in Meusburger, 2009, p. 132). Similarly, Barron (in Carlozzi, Bull, Hurlburt, 1995, p. 366) argues that creative people are likely to be more sensitive to social stimuli than less creative people. Bull and Montgomery (in Carlozzi, Bull, Hurlburt, 1995, p. 366) point out that an important aspect of "the problem-solving process is social sensitivity, that is, the ability to consciously and correctly identify events in one's environment." In other words, creativity is linked to empathy because problem solving requires empathic abilities.

In researchers' reflections on the importance of intrinsic motivation in the creative process, there is no unambiguity in understanding these connections. Synthesizing selected works on the mentioned issue, Grant and Berry (2011, p. 73) claim that some studies show a relationship between intrinsic motivation and creativity, while others show weak or insignificant links. As Grant and Berry (2011) point out, creativity is not only about producing new ideas, but also valuable ideas. "(...) Creativity is the process of generating ideas that have value" (Robinson, Aronica, 2015, p. 155). Polish scholars write similarly (see: Nęcka, 2003; Szmidt, 2013), claiming that creativity is a person's ability to create products that are new and valuable on a global scale. A valuable product, as defined by Grant and Berry (2011), is one that is useful. Products are useful when they consider the perspective of others (Grant and Berry, 2011, p. 73). Mohrman, Gibson, and Mohrman (2001) take a similar view and have shown that taking the perspective of others can increase the usefulness of ideas. Grant and Berry (2011) emphasize the connection between prosocial motivation, which involves taking the perspective of others, and intrinsic motivation toward producing ideas that become not only novel but also useful, thus achieving higher levels of creativity. "Prosocial motivation is the desire to expend effort based on a concern for helping or contributing to other people (Grant, 2007)." Grant and Berry (2011, p. 74) came to two important conclusions about the interaction of intrinsic and prosocial motivation on the development of creativity based on the results of their study:

> "First, we identify perspective taking as a key mechanism through which prosocial motivation strengthens the impact of intrinsic motivation on creativity (...). Second, in doing so, we introduce perspective taking as an important influence on creativity, showing how a focus on others can encourage employees to direct their intrinsic motivation toward the generation of creative ideas." (Grant, Berry, 2011, p. 74).

An example of such prosocial motivation is the work of classical music composers (Simonton, after Grant and Berry, 2011, p. 78), who, characterized by high intrinsic motivation to write music, create the most meaningful works. The relationship between empathy and creativity has been noted not only in the field of music (Cross, Laurence and Rabinowitch, 2012), but in the arts in general (Treadaway, 2009) as well as in psychotherapy (Yaniv, 2011). The role of environment, in the broad sense of the word, in the creative process was also pointed out by Csikszentmihalyi (2017), emphasizing that it is the environment that plays an important role in the process of creating something new and whether this new product will be accepted. Similarly, Goldberg (2018, p. 63) writes: "Contrary to popular opinion, the creative process is not a solitary act, even if the creative individual has a solitary temperament and a subjective sense that he or she is working in solitude. It is rooted in and driven by the cultural environment in which it occurs." In summary, the compilation of research findings sheds light on the understanding of the role of empathy in the creative process, with an emphasis on the role of the social factor, prosocial motivation, among others.

Conclusions

This text synthesizes selected research findings and theories based on which an attempt has been made to explain the importance of empathy in the development of creativity using the method of design thinking. The mentioned method is a valued and widely recognized approach in education (see: Cohen and Mule, 2019; Luka, 2014; Owen, 2017), which, as Schrand (2016) claimed, fosters the achievement of educational goals while developing curiosity and confidence, improving contextual understanding; assumes a global approach to understanding the problem; develops empathy, collaboration, initiative and ethical reflection. The method of design thinking assumes that creating new products is not possible without empathy, i.e. deep understanding of the user's needs. In light of the outlined issues, empathy is considered an important element of creativity. Empathy, as well as creativity, are among the personal resources that are constantly in demand in the workplace (see: Keysers, 2020; Robinson, 2016; Schwartz, 2018). These resources should be considered not only from an interpersonal perspective, but also from an intrapersonal perspective. Self-awareness of one's resources can influence their development during education as well as result in enhanced career satisfaction.

Moreover, it was noted that despite the growing popularity of programs focused on the development of empathy, there is still an open question regarding effective methods of empathy development. In relation to the outlined problematic, an important task becomes the search for effective methods directed at the development of both empathy and creativity in relation to educational conditions. The design thinking method, which is oriented not only on achieving educational goals, but also on developing personal resources, including empathy and creativity, may play an invaluable role in this process. This article assumes that by incorporating the method of design thinking into the educational process, the development of empathy and creativity of young adults can be positively influenced.

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Communication in the family and the system of values of young people in late adolescence

Komunikacja w rodzinie a wartości młodzieży w okresie późnej adolescencji[1]

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Anna Koprowicz[a], Iwona Gumowska[b]

[a] *Anna Koprowicz, PhD, https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0905-3585*
Institute of Pedagogy, Pomeranian University in Słupsk
[b] *Iwona Gumowska, PhD, https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8392-9098*
Institute of Pedagogy, Pomeranian University in Słupsk

Abstract: Communication in the family performs a series of vital functions. It enables the transfer of information and the acquisition of knowledge, fosters bonding and reinforces relationships, and helps in the creation of one's own self-esteem and identity. It also serves the purpose of transfer of patterns of social functioning and the system of values. The purpose of this paper is to show a relationship between preferred values and an assessment of communication in the family of origin. The study covered 200 respondents aged 17 to 23 years. In the study, the Short Schwartz Values Survey (SSVS) and the G Scale (communication) were applied from the Olson Family Adaptability and Cohesion Evaluation Scale (FACES). Analysis of the results shows that the respondents who assess communication in their family best assign importance to values such as benevolence, tradition, conformity, and security. K-means cluster analysis allowed to specify three concentrations of the respondents, of which the communication in the family is assessed best among the persons who belong to the second cluster for which the most characteristic are the highest results related to preference of the values connected with conservation, openness to change and self-transcendence. Female respondents assess communication in their families better than men. They also choose values that are connected with self-transcendence. The men, on the other hand, prefer values connected with self-enhancement, mainly power.
Keywords: adolescence, communication, family, values

Abstrakt: Komunikacja w rodzinie spełnia szereg istotnych funkcji: umożliwia przekazywanie informacji i zdobywanie wiedzy, sprzyja budowaniu więzi i umacnianiu relacji, pomaga w budowaniu poczucia własnej wartości i tożsamości. Służy również przekazywaniu wzorców funkcjonowania społecznego oraz systemu wartości. Celem tego opracowania jest ukazanie związku pomiędzy preferowanymi wartościami a oceną komunikacji w rodzinie generacyjnej. Badaniem objęto 200 osób w wieku od 17 do 23 lat. W badaniach zastosowano Krótką Skalę Wartości Schwartza (SSVS) oraz skalę G (komunikacja) ze Skali Oceny Rodziny (SOR) D. Olsona. Analiza wyników badań wskazuje, że osoby najlepiej oceniające komunikację w swojej rodzinie duże znaczenie przypisują takim wartościom, jak: życzliwość, tradycja, przystosowanie i bezpieczeństwo. Analiza metodą k-średnich pozwoliła na wyróżnienie trzech skupień badanych, spośród których najlepiej komunikację w swojej rodzinie oceniają osoby wchodzące w skład skupienia drugiego, dla którego charakterystyczne są najwyższe wyniki dotyczące preferowania wartości związanych z postawą zachowawczą, otwartością na doświadczenie oraz przekraczaniem siebie. Badane kobiety lepiej oceniają komunikację w swoich rodzinach, niż mężczyźni. Częściej również wybierają takie wartości, które wiążą się z przekraczaniem siebie. Mężczyźni z kolei preferują wartości związane z umacnianiem siebie, głównie władzę.
Słowa kluczowe: adolescencja, komunikacja, rodzina, wartości

Introduction

Adolescence is a period of intensive physical, mental, social, and spiritual development that should result in maturity and the readiness to pursue an independent life. The formation of the system of values is an important aspect of development at this stage, and the ability to develop a concept of one's own life based on the adopted system of values is recognized as an expression of maturity (Oleszkowicz, Senejko, 2013). The system of values plays an important role in the creation of one's identity since, on one hand, it is connected with a possibility to build a social and a religious identity while, on the other hand, it also

1 Artykuł w języku polskim: https://www.stowarzyszeniefidesetratio.pl/fer/2022-1Koprow.pdf

fosters approval from the persons or groups who are important for a given individual. The participation of an individual in various areas of activity connected with internalization of values constitutes a foundation of mature personality (ibidem).

The hierarchy of values of young people is characterized by the influence of „the social time in which an individual lives and the environment in which the individual grows" (ibidem, p. 242). Family is the basic environment where an intergenerational transfer of values takes place. Family values are internalized by the mechanisms of modeling, imitation, and identification (Czerwińska-Jasiewicz, 2020). Significant persons transfer information concerning a preferred system of values and the ways of realization of one's own beliefs to their children. Such values are copied, imitated by their children, and as time goes by, they are internalized as their own. In the period of adolescence, cultivation of the system of values is closely connected with a cognitive development. The development of formal reasoning allows for better evaluation of norms and values that were internalized in childhood (Santi, 2020). A critical review of the content of the values acquired in the past takes place, along with their coordination with personal needs (Vasilets, 2015). Based on the values most regarded, adolescents create concepts of their own life, with an important role of self-education and autocreation in addition to emulation and identification (Czerwińska-Jasiewicz, 2020). Personal values cultivated in adolescence may have an impact on the long-term cognition, behavior, health and mood (Yasuma, Watanabe, Matsunaga, Nishi, Kawakami, 2019). Bojanowska and Piotrowski (2018) demonstrate in their empirical studies that there is a connection between preferred values and the feeling of mental well-being, and they claim, among others, that the lack of a clearly specified system of values may be a source of such problems as the sense of emptiness and the nonsense of life.

However, teenagers' vulnerability to influence, a need to excel and non-conformity conduce to adoption of such values and norms of behavior that are far from standards, often without a sufficient insight (Santi, 2020). Therefore, it is important that at this stage, a young man had an access to points of reference which can include his parents and the family. Adults' duty is to pursue cultivation of a harmonious, valuable person, capable of doing the right things. It is fostered by an authentic communication between parents and the child, that leads to recognition of adolescents' needs and results in creation of a development of personality through supplying patterns of behaviour and relevant values (ibidem). An adolescent's perception of the way of communication in the family will influence his perception of parents' orientation and values, as well as will have impact on his readiness to internalize them. The aim of this study is to recognize a relationship between the assessment of communication in the family and the values preferred by the young people.

1. Communication in the family

According to V. Satir, „communication is the most powerful factor that determines the type of relationship with other people and one's own development" (Satir, 2000a, p. 56). It enables, among others, the transfer of information, the acquisition of knowledge, the definition of the feeling of self-esteem, and the building of relationships with others. It creates the social world of the man and has an impact on quality of life (Adamczyk, 2013). It is also a key factor of the child's attachment to his family and community (Vaccari, Marschark, 1997). „Communication is a basic element of both a correlation between members of the family and their subjective sense of intimacy" (Laursen, Collins, 2004, p. 339).

Communication skills are acquired in the process of interaction with others. Basic knowledge of the surrounding world is acquired through the „communication of the child with people who care for him since birth" (Satir, 2000a, p.56). Family is the first system of social communication.

Many books have been written about how communication in the family should look like to facilitate the optimum functioning and development of its members (cf. Bandler, Grinder, Satir, 1999; Bradshaw, 1994; Hogg, Blau, 2015; Satir, 2000a; Satir, 2000b). They focus on formulation of precise, understandable and unambiguous messages, attentive listening, construction of statements in a form of „I" messages, respect to one's own limitations and the limitations of other people, or avoidance of communicative barriers, such as: judging or criticism. Due to the framework of this paper, it is impossible to summarize all textbook instructions related to correct communication. We will focus only on the results of research related to communication in the family.

The studies on communication in the family have been pursued in various strands. The first one comprises the search for communication patterns and building relationships among family members, and their developmental changes. The quality of communication in the family is connected with the individual development of its members (Harwas-Napierała, 2015), so an analysis of communication patterns shows that the relations in families raising adolescents will be different from the families with small children. It is acknowledged, among others, by Laursen and Collins (2004) who devote their scientific considerations to a specific character of communication between parents and adolescents. Researchers discover that difficulties in communication with adolescents are not the effect of the adolescent's inability to talk, but the result of the changing nature of their relationship with parents. The growing autonomy of teenagers changes the patterns of experience and perception of privacy and responsibility, as well as self-exposure. There is a growing discrepancy related to their opinions about intimacy and the nature of the relationship between parents and their offspring. An exacerbated conflict and a lower level of intimacy constitute an integral part of the quest for independence. Additionally, Harwas-Napierała (2015) discovers that a difficult process of transformation of relationships between parents and adolescents is reflected in a transformation of communication into a more symmetrical one with decreasing participation of nonverbal communication and increasing importance of verbal communication.

The second strand of research concentrates on a comparison of the quality of communication in various types of families. Researchers are especially interested in the families of unorthodox construction: one parent families, broken and reconstructed ones. Furthermore, comparison of communication quality in complete families and one-parent families may lead to the conclusion that the structure of the family is not as determinant as the competence and the gender of the respondents. In the studies conducted by Koprowicz, Gumowska and Piotrów (2018), no differences are found in the evaluation of communication by adolescents raised in complete families or by single parents. However, the differences appear between men and women - men being more critical in the assessment of communication. Furthermore, adolescents raised by single mothers and tested by Napora (2013) were, to a similar extent, as happy with their communication as young people raised in complete families, but girls assessed that communication better than boys. However, Gwiazdowska-Stańczak (2018) obtained opposite results: adolescent boys evaluate their communication in the family and communication with their mothers better than girls, which is explained by the author of the study by the social and cultural changes that encourage an increase of defiance among girls and their more intensive involvement in virtual relationships, as well as by a tendency to create an idealized picture of their future families, which, as we may expect, is to foster worse assessment of a traditional extended family as not so ideal.

Researchers are also interested in looking for variables which determine communication and for the effects of defective communication in the context of the development of individual persons. Proper communication in the family promotes the development and maintenance of family integrity, the resolution of conflicts, and the transfer of values. It also constitutes a pattern of communication for children raised in a given family (Braun-Gałkowska, 2010). Banes and Olson (1985) found that families with effective communication between parents and teenagers assess family cohesion better, along with its adaptive capacity, and are generally more satisfied with the family life. Open communication fosters development of skills and strengthening of the feeling of self-esteem of children, supports independence and autonomy and leads to pursuance of new developmental tasks (Napora, 2013) and cultivation of the emotional intelligence (Błażek, Kaźmierczak, 2009). It also has a preventive importance: it fosters conformity of young people (Steinberg, 2001) and is regarded as a factor which prevents addiction and crime of juveniles (Thoyibah, Nurjannah, Smarni, 2017). The study by Radochoński (2007) on the relationship between family relations and criminal behavior demonstrated that the families of notorious offenders are characterized by a lower level of communicative skills than the families of the respondents from the control group. Teenage culprits of electronic aggression declare substantial difficulties in communication with their parents (Bernacka, Pufal-Struzik, Zieja, 2019). Proper communication between parents and the child prevents externalizing behavior of children (Davidson, Cardemil, 2008). Consequently, the quality of the relations between parents and teenagers and the style of communication in the family constitute important predictors of a success of the therapy of externalizing disorders of young people (Clark, Shields, 1997). Relationship between communication in the family and mental disorders of children and youth was also researched. In longitudinal studies, Brière, Archambault and Janosz (2013) admittedly do not confirm the influence of communication with parents on instances of depression symptoms among teenagers. However, they find a reverse direction of the relationship between these variables - the symptoms of depression disturbed the way of communication of adolescents with their parents.

Communication is an important tool for socialization. It enables a transfer of patterns of behavior and a cross-generational transmission of values (Jezierska-Wiejak, 2013; Lewandowska-Walter, 2014).

2. The S. Schwartz Theory of Basic Values

Values are related to what is important for an individual, what excites, draws attention, fosters involvement or the sense of identification (Nowak, 2011). Values bring clues related to the choice of a mode of conduct and the human behavior adequate to a situation (Wojciszke, 2011). They form aspirations, life plans, and they channel human actions connected with realization of their needs, reaching selected objectives and even the objects which are valuable for a given

Table 1. Ten basic values of the S. Schwartz model (1992)

Value	Defining motivational goal	Exemplary items
Power	Social status and prestige, control or dominance over people and resources	Authority, wealth, controlling others, social power
Achievement	Personal success through demonstrating competence according to social standards	Success, ambition, and admiration for one's abilities
Hedonism	Pleasure, sensuous gratification	Pleasure, enjoying life, fun, spoiling oneself
Stimulation	Excitement, novelty, and challenge in life	Exciting life, adventure, risk, daring
Self-direction	Independent thought and action—choosing, creating, exploring	Creativity, freedom, independence, curiosity
Universalism	Understanding, appreciation, tolerance, and protection for the welfare of all people and nature	Social justice, equality, wisdom, world peace, protecting the environment
Benevolence	Preservation and enhancement of the welfare of people with whom one is close	Helpful, caring, loyal, supportive
Tradition	Respect, commitment and acceptance of traditional and religious customs and ideas	Respect for tradition, humility, devoutness, modesty
Conformity	Restraint of actions, inclinations, and impulses likely to upset or harm others or violate social norms	Following rules, obedience, honoring parents and elders
Security	Safety, harmony, and stability of society, relationships, and self	Family security, social order, cleanliness, avoiding danger

Source: Schwartz, Rubel-Lifschitz, 2009, s. 172.

person (Okoniewska, 2019; Wnuk, Marcinkowski, 2010), at the same time playing a significant role in the motivational structure (Wnuk, Marcinkowski, 2010).

The concept of values is used by representatives of philosophy, pedagogy, sociology, and economy, dealing with them from different points of view and taking into consideration their various conditions, including individual and cultural ones, and defining them in a way specific for a given discipline. Schwartz and Bilsky (1987, p. 551), in their survey of the literature, describe five qualities that are shared by definitions of values and which are: „(a) concepts or beliefs, (b) about desirable end states or behaviors, (c) that transcend specific situations, (d) guide selection or evaluation of behavior and events, and (e) are ordered by relative importance". The authors (ibidem. p. 551), by treating values as beliefs, define them as „a cognitive representation of three types of universal human requirements, such as biological based needs, social interaction that organizes human relationships, and social and institutional requirements related to the well-being of a group and its survival". These requirements motivate people to act. Consequently, Schwartz (1992) defined values as general, trans-situational motivational goals which constitute leading vital principles. Therefore, motivational goals help to diversify basic human values (ibidem).

Diverse types of motivational values are deduced from five universal human requirements. Initially, Schwartz and Bilsky (1987) proposed a model with seven different motivational goals: enjoyment (fun), maturity, pro-sociality, conformity, achievement, self-direction, and security. That model was later modified by the addition of three subsequent types of values, such as: tradition, power, and stimulation. In that model, Schwartz (1992) replaced a pro-social attitude with benevolence, joy with hedonism, and maturity with universalism.

S. Schwartz (ibidem) indicates two superior dimensions of the types of values: self- enhancement vs. self-transcendence; openness to change vs. conservation. Therefore, 10 types of values are divided into four groups: self-transcendence (benevolence, universalism); openness to change (self-direction, stimulation, and partially hedonism); self-enhancement (power, achievement, and partially hedonism); conservation (security, conformity, tradition) (cf. Cieciuch, 2013). These values are included in a circle model (Fig. 1), in which the types of values are positioned next to each other and are interrelated (compatible and similarly valued), unlike the opposing ones, which are situated opposite each other. Consequently, a high assessment of the values of the specific type means, at the same time, rejection of the opposite values (e.g. a high assessment of security leads to a low assessment of self-direction and vice versa). Moreover, Schwartz and Rubel-Lifschitz (2009) demonstrate that the study of a relationship of values to attitudes and behavior does not require distinguishing of individual values, but their types, which are consists of several interrelated values.

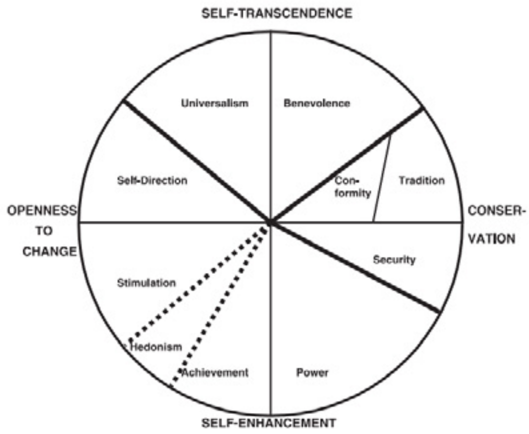

Fig. 1. Schwartz's model of relations between values (1992).Source: Lindeman, Verkasalo, 2005, p. 171.

That model is modified again in 2012 when Schwartz, Cieciuch, Vecchione, Davidov, Fischer, Beierlein, Ramos, Verkasalo, Lönnqvist, Demirutku, Dirilen-Gumus, Konty adopt jointly nineteen values (Cieciuch, 2013).

Cieciuch, in reference to three above mentioned universal human requirements, finds that the man, as a member of a community, must distinguish these needs and their implementation during the process of communication. „Due to cognitive development, the man constructs cognitive representations of such requirements (needs) as values or goals, for the specification of which appear the terms in the language learned by a child" (ibidem, p. 53). He adds, that the cultural transmission which channels the human motivation and needs, is a specific language which expresses motivation, and the needs of an individual are ancillary to the actions specified by social requirements.

The values are transferred in the process of upbringing (Furmanek, 1995), mostly by a verbal stimulation such as: conversation, persuasion, formulation of orders and prohibitions, their justification, but also by approvals and reprimands (Skrzypniak, 2001). It is astonishing, that in the bulk of studies related to communication in the family and creation of values, it is so difficult to find reports of the research connected with the relationship between these two variables, although it may seem obvious, that the family communication is the factor which cultivates the development of the system of values of children and young people.

3. Method

The purpose of the presented study is to specify a relationship between the evaluation of communication in the family and the values of young people in the late adolescence.

The following research problems were specified:

1. Is communication in the family connected with the values declared by young people, if so, in what way?
2. Do women and men in the late adolescence differ in their assessment of communication in the family?
3. Do women and men in late adolescence differ in their preferred values?

The following hypotheses were formulated in connection with the questions below:

H.1. Evaluation of communication in the family is positively correlated with a choice of values connected with self-transcendence and conservation. It is difficult to justify this hypothesis on the basis of the research done so far. However, by reference to psychology of education, we can say that in the process of education (raising), parents transfer onto their issues information referring to preferred values on the basis of which young people create their own hierarchy (Czerwińska-Jasiewicz, 2020). At the same time, the values preferred by adults (for example, connected with respect for other people or tradition) will determine their way of communication, including also construction of a specific style of communication in their own families. We can assume, that the persons for whom tradition, security, benevolence or universalism are vital determinants of action, will realize these values also in the way of their communication, among others, by showing respect for their interlocutors, respect for their needs and different opinions, cordiality in reference to other people, and this, in turn, will result in the way such communication is assessed.

H.2. The women respondents evaluate communication in their families better than men. Justification of such a hypothesis confirming this relationship comes from results of the research done by Napora (2013) and Koprowicz, Gumowska, Piotrów (2018).

H.3. The women respondents prefer the values connected with self-transcendence and conservation, while men with self-enhancement. This hypothesis is based on a stereotypical treatment of community as an ingredient of womanhood, but agency as a feature connected with manhood, and on the results of research which confirm such differences (Wojciszke, Mikiewicz, 2003). Also Cieciuch (2013) demonstrates in his research that in a group of high school and university students, women attribute more importance to such values as: benevolence, universalism, security, while men attribute more importance to power.

The variables controlled in this research are: gender, assessment of communication in the family, the values declared by young people.

The following tools were used in the research:

1. Family Evaluation Scale - A Polish adaptation of D.H. Olson's FACES-IV (Margasiński, 2013). The questionnaire consists of 64 statements that allow family evaluation of the functioning of the family on eight scales: balanced cohesion,

disengagement, enmeshment, balanced flexibility, rigidity, chaos, communication, and satisfaction of family life. Due to the character of this study, the analyses included only the communication scale (FES G) understood as „an ability of positive communication used by a given partnership or a family system" (ibidem, p.15). The author of this tool treats communication as one of the key dimensions of family functioning, emphasizing that it determines the family consistency and flexibility (Banes and Olson, 1985). Attentive listening, an open and honest manifestation of one's own emotions, needs, and opinions, clear formulation of messages, and respect for the interlocutor facilitate the construction of closeness and the ability to adapt (Plopa, 2004). The scale of communication consists of 10 items that respondents refer to using the scale from 1 to 5. The reliability of the scale expressed with the Cronbach's alfa coefficient is 0,92.

2. The Short Schwartz Value Survey (SSVS) – an abbreviated version of the Schwartz Value Survey (Schwartz, 2003). The respondents assess importance of each of the ten types of values specified in the classical model, such as: power, achievement, hedonism, stimulation, self-direction, universalism, tradition, benevolence, conformity, and security. The names of the values are presented together with their descriptions (Lindeman, Verkasalo, 2005). An assessment is made on the basis of the scale from -1 (the value in contradiction to my system of values), through 0 (unimportant), up to 7 – the most important value. The values included in the questionnaire comprise four groups of values serving the purpose of: self-enhancement (power, achievement, hedonism), self-transcendence (benevolence, universalism), openness to change (stimulation, hedonism, self-direction) and conservation (security, conformity, tradition) (Kozłowski, 2017). The coefficient of convergence of SSVS with the original scale of values elaborated by Schwartz (SVS) is 0,96, which demonstrates their congruence (Lindeman, Verkasalo, 2005).
3. The research included 200 respondents, 139 women, and 61 men. The survey was carried out among late adolescents, high school students, and first-year undergraduate students. The age of the subjects was 17 to 23 years and the average age was 19,4; the standard deviation is 1,26.

The survey was performed in groups. In secondary schools, it was organized with the permission of the principal during classes, while undergraduate students filled out questionnaires during lectures. During the survey, respondents could get additional instruction from assistants.

4. Results

The first stage of the analysis was to check whether the assessment of communication in the family is in a significant correlation with the values preferred by the young people. These relationships are presented in Table 2.

Statistically significant positive correlations occur between the evaluation of communication in the family and the preference for benevolence (concern of the well-being of others), tradition (respect for customs and conviction that traditional culture and religion serve an individual, humility, acceptance of one's role in life, respect for tradition, religiousness), conformity (containment of actions, inclinations and impulses that could be harmful to someone or that could not be liked by others and that violate generally approved social norms, benevolence, obedience, self-discipline, respect for parents and elderly people) and security (security, harmony and social stability, stability of relationships with others, and personal stability). High assessment of communication in the family is in a positive correlation with all types of values which constitute conservation and benevolence, which were earmarked in prosocial values specified as self-transcendence, but not with universalism. Conservation and self-transcendence (one's own interest and one's own good) are the groups of values that are placed close to each other in the circle model (Fig. 1), showing their mutual correlation and the possibility of co-occurrence

Table 2. Correlations between the evaluation of communication in the family (FES G) and the values selected by the young people (n=200)

	mean	SD	Correlation coefficient (r)	p
power	3,096	1,829	-0,101	0,158
achievement	5,020	1,170	0,126	0,076
hedonism	4,333	1,544	-0,064	0,369
stimulation	4,268	1,503	0,078	0,275
self-direction	5,141	1,467	0,079	0,269
universalism	4,914	1,544	0,126	0,077
benevolence	5,449	1,448	0,216	0,003
tradition	4,364	1,847	0,183	0,009
conformity	4,146	1,696	0,172	0,015
security	5,434	1,360	0,184	0,009
self-enhancement	12,469	3,375	-0,043	0,547
self-transcendence	10,313	2,651	0,202	0,004
conservation	13,813	3,574	0,201	0,004
openness to change	13,682	3,495	0,045	0,533

(Schwartz, Bilsky, 1987). All types of the values which constitute their superior dimension in the group of conservation are linked with the evaluation of communication in the family. The better the estimation of communication, the more importance is attributed to order, self-limitation, and openness to changes. In the case of the group of values connected with self-transcendence, such a relationship was found only in the case of benevolence.

The subsequent stage of the analysis focused on determining the concentrations of the respondents who preferred specific groups of values. K-means cluster analysis helped to determine three clusters, which is presented in Fig.2. Descriptive statistics for each cluster was presented in Table 3.

The first cluster included 85 persons (of which 74,11% were women) with average results related to the preferred values connected with conservation and self-transcendence, however, with the lowest results in the surveyed group related to the values opposite to them, connected with openness to change and self-enhancement. The second cluster comprises 78 respondents (including 69,23% women) characterized by the highest results as to preferences for all specified groups of values, and the respondents of this group are characterized by a balanced high preference for conservation and openness and a low preference of self-transcendence (although the highest of all groups). The third cluster comprising 37 people (59,45% women) is characterized by the lowest results among the respondents in the selection of values related to conservation and self-transcendence, moderate preferences for values related to openness to change, and values related to self-concentration, one's own interest and well-being at the same level as in the case of people included in the second cluster. The preferences of the respondents for the groups of values in this concentration are in accordance with the Schwartz circular model.

Analysis of variances for independent tests resulted in confirmation of differences among clusters determined due to preferred values and assessment of the level of communication in extended families. These correlations are represented in Table 4.

The statistical analyses show, that the respondents in cluster 2 evaluate communication in their families as the most beneficial, while the respondents from cluster 3, as the least beneficial. Consequently, we may draw a conclusion that the open, direct and constructive communication in the family fosters development of persons who are benevolent in re-

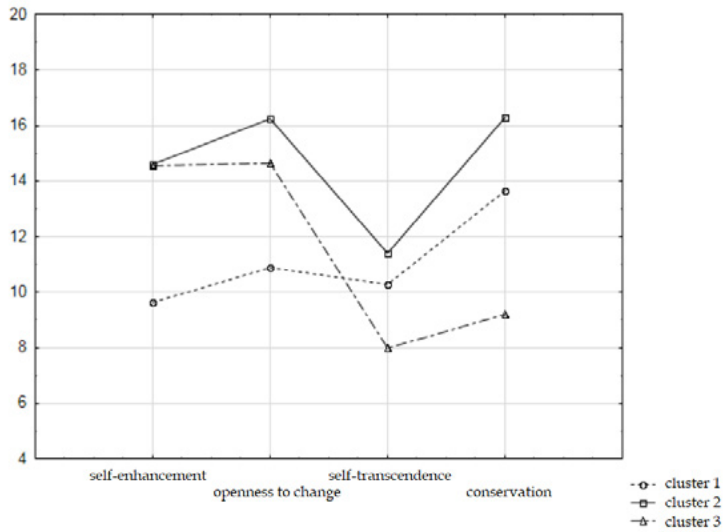

Fig. 2: The clusters of the respondents specified as the groups of preferred values.

Table 3. Descriptive statistics of the clusters specified for the groups of preferred values

Group of values	Cluster 1		Cluster 2		Cluster 3		F	p
	mean	SD	mean	SD	mean	SD		
self-enhancement	9,612	2,449	14,589	2,098	14,567	2,339	114,36	0,001
openness to change	10,970	2,419	16,256	2,259	14,621	2,928	100,83	0,001
self-transcendence	10,271	2,372	11,285	1,767	7,972	3,411	25,41	0,001
conservation	13,647	2,539	16,282	2,433	9,189	2,777	98,02	0,001

lations with others, open to new changes, but at the same time protect their security, among others, by respect to tradition.

The last stage of the analysis of the research results was to check whether there were any significant differences between men and women as to assessment of communication in the extended family and the values recognized as significant. The results are shown in Table 5.

The female respondents assess communication in their families better than the male respondents. The difference reached a satisfactory level of statistical significance.

Among the values assessed by the respondents as the most important were security and benevolence, then self-direction and achievement, while power was the lowest assessed type of values. In the groups of values, the least preferred values are those connected with self-transcendence. These results are corresponding with the ones obtained by Cieciuch (2013).

Table 4. Evaluation of communication in the family in three clusters of persons tested - results of the analysis of variances

	mean	SD	F	p
Cluster 1	36,647	9,694	1,529	0,041
Cluster 2	37,782	8,994		
Cluster 3	34,324	7,937		
Total	36,660	9,158		

Table 5. Significance of differences between men and women in the tested variables

Variable	Women (n=139)		Men (n=61)		t	p
	mean	SD	mean	SD		
communication in the family	37,727	9,585	34,229	7,632	2,751	0,007
power	2,842	1,779	3,721	1,818	-3,199	0,002
achievement	4,986	1,142	5,082	1,229	-0,537	0,592
hedonism	4,259	1,496	4,475	1,639	-0,915	0,361
stimulation	4,223	1,465	4,328	1,589	-0,454	0,650
self-direction	5,237	1,380	4,934	1,642	1,347	0,179
universalism	5,151	1,313	4,367	1,868	3,383	0,001
benevolence	5,669	1,288	4,918	1,646	3,478	0,001
tradition	4,504	1,674	4,082	2,163	1,495	0,136
conformity	4,230	1,687	3,984	1,698	0,950	0,343
security	5,619	1,236	5,066	1,559	2,684	0,008
self-enhancement	12,093	3,146	13,328	3,691	-2,420	0,016
self-transcendence	10,748	2,399	9,213	2,973	3,865	0,001
conservation	14,165	3,383	13,131	3,914	1,896	0,059
openness to change	13,676	3,379	13,639	3,737	0,069	0,945

Discussion, conclusions

Values are acquired through interpersonal reactions (Bilsky, Schwartz, 1994), and their transmission is part of the socialization process (Lewandowska-Walter, 2014). Due to the long term impact, the family is a specific environment of cultivation of the child's values (cf. Barry, Padilla-Walker, Madsen, Nelson, 2007; Hillaker, Brophy-Herb, Villarruel, Haas, 2008; Knafo, Schwartz, 2003; Lewandowska-Walter, 2014; Róg, Orzechowska, 2004; Szymczyk, 2009). The patterns of communication which are specific for a given family constitute a tool by means of which parents transfer culture values, norms and interpretation patterns to their children (Kreppner, 1996). By observation of significant adults and by communication with them, the children learn certain behavior, norms, patterns of conceptualization of the reality and then internalize them, building their own hierarchy of the values (Lewandowska-Walter, 2014; Rozenbajger, 2017). Lewandowska-Walter (2014) suggests that the impact of family members on the transfer of values may be more important than extrafamilial factors. Based on the literature survey, she discovered that the similarity of children to their parents in terms of values appreciated in the family might result from social and cultural influences, a direct or indirect transmission of parental values in the process of raising, internalization of the values that rule family life by children, and the level of identification of the family with the community. Among the factors responsible for development and acceptance of the values by the child in the family, a specific social and context has to be emphasized (e.g. the family status) (ibidem), conformity of both parents and children and their parents as to the level preference of values, parental attitude towards children, bonds and the quality of relations in the family (Szymczyk,

2009) or the attachment style (Kozłowska, 2010). Internalization of the values presented by parents is high in the families in which the relationship with children is warm and cordial, forms of control, and methods of educational influence are adequate (Rostowska, 2001), including properly formulated requirements, bans, expectations, and persuasion. The consistency of the family system and its flexibility, treated as openness to structural changes, may have an impact. Supportive parental relationships (the time spent together, emotional and instrumental support, intimacy), the accuracy with which adolescents find expectations and the values of their parents and constructive communication foster acquisition of pro-social values by the young people, which in turn is connected with formation of their pro-social attitudes (Barry, Padilla-Walker et al., 2007; Hillaker, Brophy-Herb et al., 2008; Knafo, Schwartz, 2003).

In the presented research, it was assumed that a positive assessment of communication in the family was correlated with a choice of values related to self-transcendence and conservation. The hypothesis was confirmed – the analyses demonstrate that the better the respondents assess communication in the family, the higher are their preferences of the values included in the self-transcendence and conservation. Such results demonstrate that young people who assess communication in their families best, are more eager to accept more conservative values according to social norms that accentuate someone else's well-being over their own. The evaluation of communication in the family is positively correlated with conformity, tradition, and security, i.e., all types of values which constitute a group of values related to conservation. However, as to the dimension of self-transcendence, a correlation of a satisfactory statistical significance was reached only for benevolence. It seems that the high estimation of communication in the family fosters preferences of the values connected with such relations as: rendering assistance, protectiveness, support, loyalty, but is not connected with universal values related to social justice, equality, ecology. A possible explanation of this differentiation are cultural conditions connected with acquisition of values in relation to age. The study by Cieciuch (2013) demonstrates that benevolence is one of the most preferred values in the group of young people aged 17-23, while preference for universalism is, next to power, the lowest in the group of high school students, and it starts to increase after the age of 21. The average age of the young people participating in the research was 19,4, so we can agree that many respondents did not reach the age in which such values become more important..

Confirmation was also found for the hypothesis formulated as a presumption that women evaluate communication with their families better than men. It corresponds with the results of the research done by Hillaker and his co-workers (2008), Napora (2013) and Koprowicz, Gumowska and Piotrów (2018), which confirm better assessment of communication in the family by adolescent girls than boys. These discrepancies can be explained by a specific character of development of girls and boys in the stage of adolescence, on the one hand, and by differences in their functioning, on the other.

During the period of adolescence, boys demonstrate stronger tendencies to manifest their individuality and autonomy (Obuchowska, 1982) that foster accumulation of conflicts with parents and can lead to deterioration of communication with them. Furthermore, it is emphasized that girls are more likely to accept points of view of other people than boys, and this ability allows them to communicate more effectively (Harwas-Napierała, 2006). The study demonstrates that the evaluation of family relationships by young people, including communication, is relatively persistent, especially in the group of respondents with high self-esteem and a positive evaluation of relations with their parents (Kreppner, 1996). In such cases, vital is not only the content of the message transmitted by parents, but also its form (Lewandowska-Walter, 2014).

The third hypothesis presented in the research under consideration assumes that women prefer the values from the category of self-transcendence and conservation, while men, the ones which are connected with self-enhancement. The results allowed for a partial confirmation of this hypothesis: young women prefer the values connected with self-transcendence (statistically significant in reference to both types of values included in that group – benevolence and universalism), and men the values connected with self-enhancement (statistically significant as to power). The dimension: conservation and openness to change does not differentiate the respondents, however, women significantly differ from men as to their preference of security. These results are in accordance with the results obtained by Schwartz in 1992 and the subsequent ones realized with Rubel-Lifschitz in 2009. They demonstrate that women attribute more importance to values such as benevolence, universalism, self-direction, and security, and men to power. For high school and university students, similar results were obtained by Cieciuch (2013). The difference between men and women as to preferred values may be explained by a specific character of socialization of genders. M. Zentner and O. Renaud (2007, cited in Lewandowska-Walter, 2014, p.73) claim that in education of girls, more importance is given to the transfer of values important for building relations with other people, and in education of boys, more attention is paid to the values connected with agency.

However, Schwartz and Rubel-Lifschitz (2009) say that the discriminative influence of gender on preferences connected with values is lower than the cultural influence. Studying the discriminative influence of gender on the preference of values, they took into account the variable of social equality of men and women. The obtained results allowed the authors to claim that „the greater the social, health, and employment equality of women and men (...) the larger the sex differences in power and benevolence values" (ibidem, p. 171). In countries where the equality of genders is higher, men attribute more importance to power than women, and much less in comparison with them, to the importance of benevolence. In the countries with less advantageous proportions of equality of genders, the discriminating impact of traditional expectations towards women and men on the importance attributed to values is relatively small (ibidem).

Since expectations towards young people are expressed in communication, and personal values of the young people in connection with these expectations constitute an important factor of pro-social behavior (Padilla-Walker, Carlo, 2007), it is quite likely that cultivation of the values coveted by parents, expressed by warm, supportive family relations and a positive communication, may foster formation of social competences of their children (Hillaker, Brophy-Herb et al., 2008; Barry, Padilla-Walker et al, 2007). During the adolescence period, associated with the formation of identity and the planning of the future course of life, the hierarchy of values becomes a significant guideline that identifies the direction of actions. It helps to find yourself in a more and more complex reality and to build a satisfactory relationship. In western cultures, the transfer of values is more effective when children treat them as independently selected, not imposed (Rudy, Grusec, 2001). The authoritarian style of communication makes this process difficult. Therefore, the fact whether the young people accept the values transferred by their parents or reject them, to a large extent is connected with relations in the family, including communication which constitutes such relations. It leads to the situation that the cultivation of the system of values is a significant challenge not only for adolescents themselves, but also for their parents and tutors.

The presented research is limited by an intentional choice of the research sample. The research was carried out with the exclusion of people attending vocational schools and those who had already completed their education. Such a choice of respondents was justified by the possibility of accessing them, as well as by the construction of questionnaires whose completion required an adequate level of intellectual skills (which might not have been the case in vocational schools). A small group of men in the group of respondents, on the one hand, reflects the structure of the population where the sample originates; however, it does not give a full view, which could have fostered generalization of the research results. Despite such limitations, we hope that this study will inspire further empirical research into the connections between communication and preferred values.

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Communication between parents and their adult children's value system

Komunikacja między rodzicami a system wartości ich dorosłych dzieci[1]

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Marta Komorowska-Pudło[a], Agnieszka Sameluk[b]

[a] *Marta Komorowska-Pudło, PhD hab., https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7222-0182*
Institute of Pedagogy, Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Szczecin
[b] *Agnieszka Sameluk, MA, https://orcid.org/*0000-0003-1295-690X
Institute of Theological Sciences, Faculty of Theology, University of Szczecin

Abstract: The value system of every human being, i.e. what is valuable and most important to them, is closely related to the quality of their functioning. This paper presents an analysis of selected family determinants of shaping the value system in young adults. For this purpose, a study was conducted among 252 men and 252 women and it was determined to what extent the quality of the marital communication of parents (measured by the Marriage Communication Questionnaire by Maria Kaźmierczak and Mieczysław Plopa), assessed retrospectively by them, is related to the choice of their preferred values described by Max. Scheler. The research only to some extent confirmed this relationship. They show that the higher the respondents rated the quality of their parents' marital communication, the more often they chose the most important moral values, and depending on their gender, also the values of truth, aesthetic, secular and religious ones.
Keywords: values, family, communication

Abstrakt: System wartości każdego człowieka, czyli to, co jest dla niego cenne i najważniejsze, ściśle wiąże się z jakością jego funkcjonowania. W niniejszym artykule podjęto analizę dotyczącą wybranych rodzinnych uwarunkowań kształtowania systemu wartości u młodych dorosłych. W tym celu przeprowadzono badania wśród 252 mężczyzn i 252 kobiet i określono, w jakim stopniu oceniana retrospektywnie przez nich jakość komunikacji małżeńskiej rodziców (mierzona za pomocą Kwestionariusza Komunikacji Małżeńskiej Marii Kaźmierczak i Mieczysława Plopy) wiąże się z wyborem przez nich preferowanych wartości, opisywanych przez Maxa Schelera. Badania w pewnym tylko stopniu potwierdziły ów związek. Wynika z nich, że im wyżej ocenili respondenci jakość komunikacji małżeńskiej swoich rodziców, tym częściej wybierali wśród najważniejszych dla siebie wartości moralne, a w zależności od płci, także wartości prawdy, estetyczne, świeckie i religijne.
Słowa kluczowe: wartości, rodzina, komunikacja

Introduction

The value system, unique for each individual, is one of the central elements of every human personality. The family, and especially parents as educators, influences the shaping of a hierarchy of values in the whole spectrum of their behaviors, whose the most frequent expression is broadly understood interpersonal communication. The paper consists of two parts, the first one will present a theoretical analysis of the importance of values for human functioning and the relationship between the family environment, especially the marital dyad, and the psychosocial development of a child. In the second part of the paper the results of research showing the relationship between the quality of the parents' marital relationship observed in childhood, expressed through their mutual communication, and the shaping of the hierarchy of values in their adult children are presented.

1 Artykuł w języku polskim: https://www.stowarzyszeniefidesetratio.pl/fer/2022-1Komor.pdf

1. Theoretical fundamentals of research

Max Scheler (after: Kobyliński, 2001, p. 30) stated that a value "is an objective feature, independent and irreducible quality. The acts of human consciousness do not create values, but merely know them. The knowledge about values takes place directly in emotional experiences, in acts of preference and love". Values experienced individually are grouped together and form a hierarchy. The importance of these hierarchies in the life of every person cannot be overestimated as they form the basis for the formation of a system of beliefs and judgments, which in turn help and improve the process of decision making, orientation in the world, data processing and achieving goals (Oleś, 2002).

Scheler (after: Brzozowski, 1995) created four subgroups (modalities), prioritizing them from the lowest values: sensual - hedonistic, vital - life, spiritual and religious. He divided the spiritual values into three subgroups: aesthetic, truth and moral. The sensual values are a group of values related to pleasure on its positive pole, and with regret on the negative pole. They are strongly related to emotional sensations and to specific organs in the body (it can be, for example, pain, pleasure, hunger, smell, weariness). They also include the values of civilization and luxury. The vital values in their positive pole are associated with health, strength, wealth, nobility, and in the negative with disease and weakness, poverty and commonness. From this area of values emotions come. These are, for instance, joy, anger, fear that results from health, self-power or agency. Spiritual values function in three realms: aesthetics, truth, and morality. The aesthetic values reflect harmony and beauty in its positive pole, and ugliness in the negative one. In the realm of the value of truth, the value is truth itself. In its positive pole, knowing the truth becomes a value, while ignoring it is negative. The area of moral values in the positive pole points to what is right, and in the negative to what is wrong. Religious values contain values that indicate what is holy and unholy. They are the highest-placed values in the hierarchy and depending on the strength of their intensity, an individual may shift between happiness and despair in their states (Galarowicz, 1997, as cited in: Wędzińska, 2013).

Considering the existence of objective, self-contained hierarchies of values, it should be expected that the emotional, cognitive and social growth of each individual will lead to the knowledge and appreciation of higher values by them, and that experiencing circumstances that depreciate the individual's development will lead to a crisis of values, i.e. appreciating the values that are located lower in these hierarchies (Brzozowski, 1995). This is confirmed by the concepts of Katarzyna Skrzypińska and Tymoteusz Drzeżdżon (2020, who indicate that people undergoing transcendent processes find a deeper meaning in the experiences, increasing the adaptive value of an individual through an increase in internal motivation. The opposite of this process is a deficit in experiencing transcendence in a crisis situation, leading to doubts about the values that have been preferred so far, which results in, firstly, the rebuilding of the hierarchy of values, and secondly, in existential problems.

The values chosen by an individual become the basis that determines, organizes and motivates their actions. Values become the model by which they evaluate themselves and others. In addition, values help to establish a permanent belief structure of an individual which becomes the central axis of the individual's personality. Once organized, it is difficult to change (Sokal, 2001). In personality, there is also a different type of hierarchy of values, which helps an individual to direct their behavior in real time, under the influence of a situation, and which is related to the maintenance of the organism's homeostatic relations. These values may change practically overnight (Fisher, 2017). Research has shown that, under the influence of specific situations, individuals may expose certain values that occur in their lives at much lower levels, i.e. they perceive themselves as different, better than they actually present themselves. This has numerous consequences, especially in social life. Its quality will depend on what value systems will be presented and implemented by individuals in their lives, and not on what values they will verbalize (Anglim, Lievers, Everton, Grant, & Marty, 2018). It should be emphasized that there are three needs of human existence that a man cannot satisfy on their own: the needs of individuals as biological organisms, the need for regulated social interactions, and the need for the survival and well-being of groups. In order to be able to fulfil them, they must specify the appropriate goals, communicate to others about these goals and establish cooperation with them to achieve them. Values are socially desirable concepts used to represent and communicate these goals (Schwartz & Sortheix, 2018).

Considering the values at the level of an individual, it should be emphasized that they are formed and consolidated throughout life through their discovery and acceptance, and then its classification, crystallization, purification, internalization, localization and finally implementation (Szymczyk, 2017). An individual becomes acquainted with the values in the course of socialization, first through the educational influence of parents, still through teachers, peer groups, mass media and society, and also through their own internal experiences (Sokal, 2001). As individuals grow up, they should discover a unique personal hierarchy of values, as this is the only way that guarantees them gaining autonomy, a property necessary for personality maturity. This autonomy will become a drive to achieve her life goals (Skimina, Schwartz, Cieciuch, Davidif, 2018).

The family is the place where the first and strongest interpersonal relationships are experienced, characterized by long duration and strong emotional commitment (Wrzesień, 2000). In the family, these relations are formed without the individual being able to choose, they are difficult to replace and involve emotions to the extent that they are needed to create their individual identity (Karmolińska-Jagodziak, 2016). Regardless of what experiences will befall an individual in the family and what quality of relations will occur in them, the individual (family) in itself will be of paramount importance for the child (Sokal, 2001). According to Witold Wrzesień (2000), it is not important whether the family has a destabilizing or stabilizing effect on an individual. Upbringing in a family will always shape one's attitudes. The family is also a place where there is an intergenerational transmission in terms of values manifested in a given family (Elżanowska, 2012). This is possible because the family itself positions itself very highly in the child's value system, and its influence is almost irreplaceable. Therefore, it is important that the family shaping the hierarchy of values of its members should be a place that will make good use of the psychological dispositions of children, shaping in them a proper attitude to norms and values (Sokal, 2001). For this to happen, the family should be a place of a relationship full of love, respect, kindness, and mutual attention. It should be a place to use the development potential of its members through their self-education and self-improvement (Opozda, 2018).

The formation of the desired value system in children takes place to a large extent through relational upbringing. A man is a dialogical social being who recognizes themselves in contact with others. "Since the other person is the source of many complex emotional and cognitive processes: he can arouse and reduce physiological arousal, satisfy our important needs or block their satisfaction, support in difficult situations, influence our self-esteem, modify our judgments about reality, direct our behavior" (Karmolińska-Jagodziak, 2016, p. 14). The way of experiencing the child's interpersonal relations will depend on the behavioral choices adopted by the parents in the experience of interpersonal relations in the family. Parents' behavior (also in terms of the educational measures they use) becomes a point of reference, a specific matrix of relationships that the child will reproduce in their contacts with other people. These matrices will become the cognitive basis and will shape the hierarchy of the child's values (Jezierska-Wiejak, 2013). Various types of situations in family life are important in the context of strengthening or reevaluating what is most valuable to family members. Parents' inappropriate attitudes or their use of strong punishments towards children may cause them severe stress and deteriorate their health, and consequently, change in valuation during their psychosocial development (Gershoff, Goodman, Miller-Perrin Holden, Jackson, Kazdin, 2018; Umberson, Thommer, 2020).

In the relational educational context that influences the development of a young person, the interaction between their parents, who are moderators of family life, plays a special role. Their mutual attitude towards each other closely correlates with the atmosphere in the family. Spouses with a low culture of intercourse often lead to conflicts in a family where all its members participate passively or actively (Szymczyk, 2017). Through such s mutual interaction the spouses transmit values to the entire family, often causing changes in the hierarchy of these values in its members (Brzozowski, 1988).

The atmosphere in the family home is reflected in the behavior of its inhabitants. The influence of parents on the child takes place, inter alia, through: modeling, identification, or imitation. Modeling is possible because the child is in a close relationship with their parents without coercion and in a positive relationship with them. A small child does not judge and classify the parents' behavior. He accepts what he sees as behaviors to be mapped (Płaczkiewicz, 2016). This atmosphere is an emotional climate, whose importance increases if one takes into account the process of the intergenerational transmission of values (Walęcka-Matyja, Janicka, 2021). It is this emotional climate that is responsible for the internalization of values preferred in the family. They become autonomous for individual people and are likely to be transferred to the next generations (Jezierska-Wiejak, 2012). In the identification process, the intrinsic motivation of the child to be like the parent is ascertained. His personality structure includes the norms and values observed in the family, which over time become relatively permanent features of his character (Cywińska, 2008). This is clearly visible, among others, in studies that confirm children's imitation of aggression observed in parents and repeated in their contacts with peers (Frankowiak, 2020), in the studies that show a positive correlation between the style of interpersonal functioning of adolescents and their assessment of the parents' marital success (Kaleta, 2012), or in the studies which confirm that being brought up in homes with a proper family atmosphere with proper communication between parents and between parents and children made that the respondents were able to build successful relationships with their spouses grew (Komorowska-Pudło, 2019). Maintaining positive emotional relationships with one's parents in adulthood also positively affects the quality of personal and marital well-being of middle-aged people (Polenick, Fredman, Birditt, Zarit, 2016).

Loving or even friendly spouses maintain a kind of a "personal dialogue" in which mutual relations, including listening and speaking, create a platform for understanding (Godawa, 2020). On the contrary, it happens in families of spouses who are distrustful and distant from each other, where children and young people, left to themselves, create a picture of a world in which they cannot feel satisfaction and the other person may be a threat. Each of the behavior of spouses-parents is itself a medium of certain values, influencing the creation of an educational atmosphere in which children discover values, shape their attitudes and create beliefs related to their future choices and goals in life.

By open and honest communication, the spouses as parents shape the family atmosphere, they provide positive impressions that become the educational background. Multiple, warm and close interactions created thanks to communication processes support developmental changes, inter alia, by conveying that the value is another close person (ibidem). The most open, honest communication takes place in the family and between spouses, as people most intimately connected with each other (Sillars & Vangelisti, 2018).

According to Grzegorz Żuk, values that are important to a given individual, can be identified by recreating the subject's attitude to what they consider valuable. This will mean that if the spouses are of value to each other and the supreme value, they will take care of each other as the greatest good. Whether they are value for each other or anti-value, they will pass each other through communication, which is a sensitive carrier of value (Żuk, 2016).

Mutual reluctance of the spouses, often expressed as a reluctant attitude towards the environment, also towards family members, manifested through emotional withdrawal and hurtful communication, may cause many negative feelings and axiological conflicts, especially dangerous in adolescence, to arise in young people. At that time, adolescents develop a worldview, which also includes a new hierarchy of values, created as a result of confrontation with those that were previously considered obvious

(Musiał, 2019), and which were non-volitional, i.e. transferred from the outside (Skimina et al., 2018). These values may be rejected by adolescents in this period of life and replaced, for instance, with anti-values based on aversion to the values declared by parents and their lifestyle. This can happen when they observe in the family home inappropriate forms of communication between parents in their marital relations and in relations with other members of the household. Despite the changes in the hierarchy of values of young people, most of them and most of the rules of evaluation are internalized and strengthened in the child's personality in an unchanged form. As a result, at every opportunity, also in contacts outside the family, the well-established hierarchy of values will affect the assessment of reality, without the need to come into contact with the real situation (Elżanowska, 2012).

Spouses who want to care for the high quality of their relationships should be involved in their own development. An important element of this self-education is, inter alia, recognizing one's own communicative style, which may increase or strengthen personal communication competences, which will help in creating a safe family environment and in supporting mutual closeness. Mieczysław Plopa (after: Kucharski, Rutkowska, 2019) distinguished three communication styles: supportive, committed and deprecating. They allow defining the above-described contact in an interpersonal relationship. The distinguished communication styles are called dimensions or strategies. Some are supportive in resolving conflict situations, others are hindering. The support dimension is expressed through caring for the partner, joint resolution of disputes and ambiguities, interest in the spouse's needs, appreciating them and praising them. The dimension of involvement includes behaviors that help to create an atmosphere of closeness, trust, a sense of uniqueness of the partner and eliminating conflict situations. This is done by choosing closeness rather than choosing emotional loneliness to protect oneself in times of stress (Fitness, 2015). The depreciation dimension includes all those behaviors that do not serve to maintain the spouses' closeness. It is hostility, lack of mutual respect, quarrelsome, meticulousness, desire to dominate (Plopa, after: Kucharski, Rutkowska, 2019). The three communication styles distinguished by Plopa will become the basis for further considerations during the empirical analysis, where the relationship between the quality of communication between parents and the shaping of the value system of their children in adulthood will be examined.

Spouses, as the first teachers of the language of their children, take responsibility for the language culture in the family. Children are not born with communication skills, but acquire them through interpersonal contacts. Knowledge related to communication is not only a resource of words, but also a world of feelings, emotions, thoughts, values and needs. To master this knowledge, a child needs appropriate role models from the earliest years of their life. The world of values is also a language, and this is what an individual uses to talk about the world around them, or about their relationship to themselves. By analyzing statements of individual people, we always learn about their way of evaluating the world (Żuk, 2016).

2. Methodological bases of own research

The studies were conducted in 2017 and 2018 among young adults aged 20-35. The respondents lived in towns of various sizes in the West Pomerania and Lubusz provinces. 504 people participated in the research, including 252 men and 252 married women.

The research problem adopted for the analysis in this paper was the question: What is the relationship between the subjective assessment of the quality of marital communication between the parents of the respondents, observed by them in childhood, and the hierarchy of their values in adulthood? It was hypothesized that the higher the level of the parents' marital communication, including manifestations of support and commitment, observed by the respondents during childhood and the lower the level of depreciation that the parents showed to each other, the higher they would evaluate the values of truth or morality, religious and secular values, and the lower the hedonistic, vital and aesthetic values. Two variables were identified in the research. The value system of young adults was adopted as the dependent variable, and the subjective assessment of respondents about the quality of communication of their parents in the period when they lived with them during their childhood was adopted as the independent variable. Measurements of correlation between the variables were used to present the research results. The statistical analysis enabling the measurement of the relationship between the variables was carried out with the use of the ρ Spearman correlation coefficient.

Two standardized research tools were used to verify the research problem posed. The first was the Marriage Communication Questionnaire - MCQ by Maria Kazimierczak and Mieczysław Plopa (Kaźmierczak, Plopa, 2008; Plopa, 2006), which was modified for research purposes in order to examine the quality of parents' communication in a retrospective manner by the respondents. This questionnaire enables the analysis of the level of support (respect for the partner, appreciation of their work, interest in their experiences, concern and joint problem solving), commitment (creating an atmosphere of closeness and understanding in a relationship, showing feelings, emphasizing mutual uniqueness and value, organizing a joint time for oneself, concern for conflict prevention) and depreciation (aggressive behavior, domination, control, lack of mutual respect) (Plopa, 2006). The second research tool was the Scheller Values Scale - SWS, adapted by Piotr Brzozowski (1995), which enabled the respondents to make their own assessment of the appreciated values. This tool enables the measurement of hedonistic values (detailed values: abundant life, erotic love, possession, pleasure, joy of life, comfort, rest, life full of impressions), vital values (detailed values: resistance to fatigue, physical strength, fitness, body elasticity, an ability to endure cold and hunger), aesthetic values (detailed values: elegance, tastefulness, harmony, order of things, proportionality of shapes, regularity of features and order), values of truth (specific values: intelligence, logic, wisdom, objectivity, open mind, understanding, broad mental horizons, knowledge), moral values (specific valuables: goodness, honor, love of neighbor, helping others, truthfulness, honesty, honesty, honesty, kindness, kindness), secular holiness (specific valuables: honor, country, nation, independence, homeland, state, patriotism) and religious holiness (detailed values: God, faith, salvation and eternal life) (Brzozowski, 1995).

3. Results of own research

The analysis of data that allow finding an answer to the research problem presented above was started with measuring the relationship of support, i.e. the first dimension of marital communication of the respondents' parents, assessed in a retrospective manner with their preferred values (these data are presented in table 1).

When analyzing the detailed aspects of the quality of parents' communication with each other as assessed by respondents, more dependencies were observed on the scale of support than on the scale of commitment and depreciation. The higher the level of the support they observed, directed by mothers towards fathers, the more valuable for them were aesthetic, moral, secular truths and holiness, and at the level of tendency - religious holiness. The higher they rated the support given by their fathers to their mothers, the higher the level of their preferred aesthetic, hedonistic, truth, moral, and secular sacredness values was. In the case of the women under the survey, there are definitely fewer statistically significant relationships between the variables. This shows that the higher the level of support directed by their mothers to their fathers and by fathers to their mothers, the higher they valued religious holiness and moral values.

The measurement of the relationship between the involvement in building relationships between parents, observed in childhood by the respondents, and their preference for certain values in adulthood is shown in table 2.

The analysis of the relationship between the subjective assessment of the level of involvement of the respondents' parents in building a mutual marital relationship with their evaluation system shows that the number of statistically significant relationships is small. The higher the men evaluated the quality of this area of communication between their parents, the more often they chose aesthetic values, truth and

Table 1. The relationship between the level of parental support for themselves in the subjective opinion of the respondents and their system of values

Preferred values by respondents	Support of respondents' parents towards themselves							
	Mother to father				Father to mother			
	Men		Women		Men		Women	
	rho	p	rho	p	rho	p	rho	p
Aesthetic values	0.14	0.028	0.00	0.996	0.14	0.025	0.10	0.123
Truth values	0.17	0.006	0.04	0.511	0.14	0.028	0.04	0.576
Secular holiness	0.17	0.006	0.06	0.331	0.17	0.006	0.04	0.567
Religious saints	0.11	0.076	0.22	0.000	0.03	0.662	0.16	0.010
Moral values	0.13	0.036	0.17	0.006	0.13	0.043	0.14	0.022
Vital values	0.04	0.524	0.04	0.545	0.05	0.412	0.04	0.528
Hedonistic values	0.11	0.091	0.00	0.980	0.16	0.009	0.09	0.163

Table 2. The relationship between the level of parental involvement in the subjective opinion of the respondents and their system of values

Preferred values by respondents	Involvement of respondents' parents towards themselves							
	Mother to father				Father to mother			
	Men		Women		Men		Women	
	rho	p	rho	p	rho	p	rho	p
Aesthetic values	0.18	0.004	0.09	0.154	0.20	0.002	0.11	0.082
Truth values	0.17	0.006	0.07	0.264	0.13	0.042	0.00	0.962
Secular holiness	0.15	0.017	0.08	0.201	0.13	0.041	0.02	0.725
Religious saints	0.11	0.094	0.14	0.031	-0.03	0.682	0.08	0.231
Moral values	0.11	0.074	0.13	0.042	0.12	0.063	0.10	0.107
Vital values	0.03	0.617	0.07	0.274	0.07	0.238	0.05	0.398
Hedonistic values	0.11	0.090	0.07	0.287	0.15	0.016	0.09	0.139

Table 3. The relationship of the level of parents' depreciation towards themselves in the subjective opinion of respondents with their system of values

Preferred values by respondents	Depreciation of respondents' parents towards themselves							
	Mother to father				Father to mother			
	Men		Women		Men		Women	
	rho	p	rho	p	rho	p	rho	p
Aesthetic values	-0.05	0.402	0.06	0.320	-0.05	0.431	0.04	0.506
Truth values	-0.12	0.048	0.02	0.725	-0.04	0.500	0.07	0.279
Secular holiness	-0.07	0.254	0.01	0.821	-0.01	0.824	0.10	0.103
Religious saints	-0.11	0.086	-0.05	0.389	0.00	0.955	-0.02	0.722
Moral values	-0.16	0.010	-0.06	0.304	-0.09	0.150	-0.04	0.551
Vital values	-0.01	0.917	0.07	0.254	0.03	0.669	0.08	0.191
Hedonistic values	-0.05	0.442	0.08	0.182	-0.03	0.653	0.01	0.888

secular sacredness, and tended to choose also moral values. In the case when they observed in their childhood a higher level of fathers' commitment towards mothers, their assessment of hedonistic values was also higher. In the group of women, a correlation was found between the higher level of the involvement in building relationships by their mothers towards their fathers and their preference for religious holiness and moral values. No statistically significant relationships were observed when measuring the relationship between the commitment of fathers to mothers observed by women in childhood and their value system. Such a relationship, at the level of trends, was found only in the case of the relationship between this variable and the respondents' preference for aesthetic values.

Table 3 presents the last analysis of the detailed dimension of the marital communication of respondents' parents, devoted to depreciation and its relationship with the preferences of the respondents to certain values.

Very few statistically significant relationships were observed in the case of measuring the relationship between the subjective assessment of respondents about the level of self-deprecation by their parents in the period when they lived with their parents in childhood and their value system. It was only found out that the higher the level of the observed depreciation that the mothers showed to the fathers of the respondents, the less often young men chose the values of truth and moral values, and the less often they tended to chose religious sacredness.

Conclusions from the research

The respondents came from homes where a significant group (57.5% of people) observed a low level of mutual communication between parents in their marital relationship. They received a picture of low level or lack of respect, interest and care, cooperation in solving problems, closeness, caring for relationships, with a high level of aggressiveness, domination and control, criticism, humiliation, conflict that occurred between their parents. Only every fifth respondent (21.8%) grew up in homes with a positive atmosphere, built by highly supportive parents and committed to building a satisfactory relationship.

The scale of values preferred by the respondents showed the dominance of selected valuables aimed at sensuality and vitality. Half of the respondents highly preferred hedonistic (51%) and vital (40.5%) values, focusing the people choosing them on pleasurable experiences, a sense of fitness, mainly physical, and health. Spiritual, i.e. aesthetic, truth and morals values were preferred by less than every third person (31.3%, 30.6% and 28.2% respectively). They focus the involvement of the respondents who choose them on harmony and beauty, learning the truth and determining what is right or wrong in the world around them. The group of secular and religious saints turned out to be the least important for the young adults under the survey (21.2 and 17.5% of the respondents chose them as important, respectively). For almost half of them, neither patriotic issues (for 44.9% of people) or those related to faith, salvation and eternal life (for 45.6% of people) were particularly important. And although these are the values that occupy the highest place in Scheler's hierarchy, the ones concerning emotional, cognitive and social growth of every individual, they were also the ones that were the least frequently selected by the respondents. The following question arises: what are the circumstances that affect the development of individuals in such a way that they come to appreciate the values that occupy lower and lower places in Scheler's hierarchies? One of the answers could focus on the analysis of the relationship between the quality of the atmosphere in which children and adolescents grow up in their families and their establishing a specific value hierarchy.

The question posed in the methodological part that concerns the relationship between the subjective assessment of the quality of mutual communication between parents observed in childhood by the respondents, to a fundamental extent influencing the atmosphere of family life in the whole home, and the values they prefer, after analyzing the research results, leads to specific answers. The respondents' preferences for moral values correlated positively with the generally assessed by the respondents communication of their parents, and in particular with the observed support and, to a lesser extent, with the commitment shown by the parents of the respondents. The higher the level of depreciation showed by their fathers to their mothers that the men could observe in their parents' relationship, the lower their own level of appreciation of moral values was.

The choice of religious sacredness as a value important to the respondents was more closely linked to the higher level of communication they could observed between their mothers and their fathers. This applies in particular to the observed support and commitment (this relationship was revealed to a greater extent in the women than in men). Preference for secular, truth and aesthetic values correlated positively, in the case of men, with a higher assessment of the marital communication of parents, mainly in the area of their mutual support and involvement in building a marital relationship. In addition, it turned out that there was a negative correlation between the men's appreciation of the value of truth and the observed depreciation of their fathers by their mothers. The choice of hedonistic values by men positively correlated, mainly at the level of tendencies, with the assessment of the quality of support and commitment given to their parents. In the case of the selection of vital values, no relationship with the assessed marital communication was found.

The research results presented in this paper allow concluding that to some extent the hierarchy of values appreciated by respondents was related to the quality of the family atmosphere in which they grew up, although these correlations had little impact and differed depending on the gender of the respondents and their assessment of the communication between their mothers and fathers and vice versa. Therefore, it can be assumed that what shapes young adults' hierarchy of values are also some other family factors than the ones described here.

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The age of partners and the duration of the relationship versus the quality of close emotional relationships

Wiek partnerów i staż związku a jakość bliskich relacji emocjonalnych[1]

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Karolina Jarecka[a]

[a] *Karolina Jarecka, PhD, https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6577-4360*
Institute of Psychology, Faculty of Educational Sciences, University of Lodz

Abstract: Assessing close emotional relationships requires taking the time perspective into account. Its good dimensions are the age of the partners and the period of their life together. The aim of the research was to assess the connection between the age of partners and the length of their relationship and the quality of close relationships, including mutual communication, intimacy and conflict behaviour. They are recognised as key to the quality of the relationship, but it is still open to question how they change over time. The study involved 696 people aged 20-68, including 360 women and 336 men. The respondents were classified into three groups significant for human development, including 16-year age ranges. In the first group, there were 240 people aged 20-35 years (i.e., in early adulthood), the second group consisted of 276 people aged 36-51 years (which is considered appropriate for middle adulthood), and the third group of 180 people aged 52-68 (i.e., in the period associated with the second half of middle age and entering late adulthood). The respondents were in a lasting relationship from one year to 47 years. The research used a socio-demographic survey questionnaire and K. Hahlweg's Partner Relations Questionnaire in the Polish adaptation of I. Janicka. It was found that with the age of the partners and duration of the relationship, the number of conflict behaviours increase and the intimacy and mutual communication important for its integration weakens. The most vulnerable to these types of changes are spouses in the second half of middle adulthood and entering old age. Potential processes driving these findings are discussed. The age of the partners and the related seniority of the relationship may lead to changes in its quality. However, they cannot be regarded as sufficient for the evaluation of close relationships. They also depend on the health of the partners.
Keywords: behaviour in quarrels, communication, intimacy, marriage, time effect

Abstrakt: Jakość związków emocjonalnych zależy od indywidualnych cech partnerów, ale przede wszystkim czynników relacyjnych, odpowiedzialnych za integrację czy stanowiących ryzyko dezintegracji związku. Ich ocena wymaga uwzględniania perspektywy czasowej. Każdy trwały związek doświadcza zmian jego jakości, co może wiązać się z wiekiem partnerów oraz czasem ich wspólnego życia. Celem badań była ocena zależności między wiekiem partnerów i stażem ich związku a jakością bliskich relacji obejmujących: wzajemną komunikację, intymność i zachowania konfliktowe. Uznaje się je za kluczowe dla jakości związku, ale wciąż otwarty jest problem dotyczący ich zmian w czasie. W badaniu wzięło udział 696 osób w wieku 20-68 lat w tym 360 kobiet i 336 mężczyzn Osoby badane zaklasyfikowano do trzech znaczących dla rozwoju człowieka grup, obejmujących 16 letnie przedziały wiekowe. W grupie pierwszej było 240 osób w wieku 20-35 lat - tj. w okresie wczesnej dorosłości, grupę drugą stanowiło 276 osób w wieku 36-51 lat, który uznawany jest za właściwy dla średniej i środkowej dorosłości oraz grupę trzecią, w ramach której wyróżniono 180 osób w wieku 52-68 lat tj. w okresie, który wiązany jest z drugą połowa wieku średniego oraz wkraczaniem w późną dorosłość. Osoby badane pozostawały w trwałym związku od jednego roku do 47 lat. Do badań zastosowano ankietę socjodemograficzną oraz Kwestionariusz Relacji Partnerskich K. Halwega w adaptacji polskiej I. Janickiej. Stwierdzono, że wraz z wiekiem partnerów i stażem związku zwiększa się liczba zachowań konfliktowych oraz osłabieniu ulegają, ważne dla jego integracji, intymność i wzajemna komunikacja. Najbardziej narażone na tego typu zmiany są małżonkowie w drugiej połowie średniej dorosłości i wkraczający w wiek senioralny. Omówiono potencjalne procesy, które mogły doprowadzić do takich ustaleń. Wiek partnerów i związany z nim staż związku mogą prowadzić do zmian jego jakości. Nie można jednak ich traktować jako wystarczających do oceny zmian bliskich relacji.
Słowa kluczowe: efekt czasu, intymność, komunikacja, małżeństwo, zachowania w kłótni

1. Introduction

The quality of close relationships can be assessed on a one-dimensional scale when the aim of the study is the of satisfaction with the relationship, or on a multidimensional scale allowing conclusions to be drawn about their determinants. This article takes the latter, more complete approach. It was recognised

1 Artykuł w języku polskim: https://www.stowarzyszeniefidesetratio.pl/fer/2022-1Jarec.pdf

that the quality of emotional relationships depends on the above all, on relational factors responsible for integration or constituting the risk of disintegration of the relationship. The following are considered important: mutual communication, intimacy and conflict behaviour. Mutual and open communication brings partners closer to each other, allows them to get to know each other better, understand each other, interact better and strengthen the emotional bond between them (Harwas-Napierała, 2014; Kaźmierczak, Plopa, 2012; Ryś, Greszta, Grabarczyk, 2019). Intimacy is a special emotional and sexual closeness between partners, which accompanies love and determines the strength of the relationship (Dandurand, Lafontaine, 2013; Ryś, 2016; Wojciszke, 2021). It acts as a buffer for the stresses that arise in close relationships (Milek, Butler, Bodenmann, 2015). It has a neurohormonal background, as evidenced by the release of oxytocin, whose levels correlate positively with feelings of trust and connection with another person (Rostowska, Rostowski, 2014). In turn, conflict is judged based on behaviour in quarrels. Conflicting behaviour is usually caused by antagonistic attitudes or expectations of partners and incorrect interpretation of mutual behaviour (Jankowska, 2016).

These dimensions of relationship quality are related to each other. The manifestation of intimacy is the verbal and non-verbal communication of feelings. Intimacy is associated with devoting time to one's partner, common conversations and mutual interest. It concerns communication between partners not only in the emotional sphere, but also in the cognitive and task-related spheres (Hassebrauck, Fehr, 2002; Ryś et al., 2019). However, it turns out that the closer the relationship, the greater the risk of conflicts, and in marriage they are inevitable. Conflicts adversely affect the sexuality of partners and, consequently, satisfaction with the relationship. This negative effect of the conflict has also been observed in conservative Iranian couples. Although in Muslim countries sexuality is less publicly discussed and more stigmatized, women and men treat it as very important to marriage (Uhlich, Nouri, Jensen, Meuwly, Schoebi, 2021).

Conflicts manifest themselves in the form of inappropriate verbal communication (e.g., criticism, malicious remarks, irony, ridicule, humiliation) and non-verbal communication (e.g., taking offence, isolating oneself from a partner). Arguing is a form of communication, but with an unusual course because it is stimulated by negative emotions. Conflicts do not actually have to endanger marital happiness – short-term and weak-strength can be constructive and contribute to resolving problems. This does not apply to long-term and disruptive ones, which tend to escalate, leading to hostility and aggression (Birditt, Brown, Orbuch, Mcllvane, 2010; Mandale, Birditt, Orbuch, Antonucci, 2019; Ryś et al., 2019). The way partners engage in day-to-day communication processes is related to the resolution of marital conflicts (Li, Cao, Zhou, Ju, Lan, Zhu, Fang, 2018).

Relationship quality, viewed as a process, requires a time perspective. Each lasting relationship experiences changes in its quality, which may be related to the age of the partners and the duration of their life together.

Age is associated with the development of an individual but also determines important and even breakthrough stages in life. The period of adulthood is divided into early (from 18 to 30/35 years of age), middle (from 35/40 to 65 years of age) and late (after 65 years of age). Early adulthood is mainly associated with professional plans and creating a close intimate relationship, which is considered a development criterion for this period (Brzezińska, Appelt, Ziółkowska, 2016). This is where closeness and intimacy become important. However, decisions about marriage – and especially about parenthood – are postponed. The latest statistics from 2020 show that the age of partners getting married is becoming older. In 2020, the majority (i.e., 34,406 men) legalised their relationship at the age of 25-29 and the same number at the age of 30-34. In turn, the majority (i.e., 56,258 women) got married at the age of 25-29 (Demographic Yearbook, 2021). Young adults often opt for a less obliging form of living together – cohabitation. According to the risk regulation model, the reason for such changes is the simultaneous orientation towards two competing goals: promoting relationships, seeking a close relationship and maintaining independence. The quest to protect one's self threatens mutual intimacy. These kinds of people are generally afraid of rejection and, therefore, avoid closeness and intimacy (Murray, Holmes, Collins, 2006). Research confirms that less-dependent relationships of younger partners break down faster than mature and legalised ones (Janicka, Szymczak, 2019).

In middle adulthood, many additional roles and tasks emerge in addition to the dominant ones of family and work. Research shows that people at this stage function simultaneously in three task areas: family, professional and as caregivers of the older generation. Usually, they also help children who are entering adulthood and care for their grandchildren. Such an overload of roles can adversely affect the relationship between partners (Brzezińska et al., 2016, Szelendak, 2015). Research shows that people between 36 and 55 years of age experience the greatest intensity of roles and tasks (Duxbury, Higgins, 2001).

In turn, people in late adulthood are characterized by balance and emotional control as well as wisdom, which is considered an attribute of senior age, which should foster satisfying relationships. However, this is not always the case. The cause may be somatic, neurological and even mental diseases, the risk of which increases with age (Straś-Romanowska, 2017), as well as hormonal changes that usually occur after the age of 50. The aforementioned changes, menopausal in women and andropausal in men, are often accompanied by ailments and even diseases, which result in a feeling of unattractiveness, weakening of the mutual bond as well as misunderstandings (Jarecka, 2016, 2021). A poor quality of marriage is associated with, for example, cardiovascular diseases (Birditt, Newton, Cranford, Ryan, 2016; Donoho, Seeman, Sloan, Crimmins, 2015; Smith, Baron, Deits-Lebehn, Uchino, Berg, 2020), the risk of developing diabetes (Roberson, Fincham, 2018; Whisman, Sbarra, Raison, 2014). Even in highly communitarian Latin American families, it was confirmed that somatic symptoms can foster negative behaviours and adversely forecast the quality of the marriage (Wheeler, Updegraff, Kimberly, Umaña-Taylor, 2018). According to a review of studies (Goldfarb, Trudel, 2019) depression is particularly dangerous. Longitudinal studies of people aged 50+ showed a mutual dependence between marital discord and symptoms of depression. This applies equally to middle-aged and older men and women. Living with a depressed partner leads to a sense of rejection that compromises the quality of the relationship (Whisman, Uebelacker, 2009). In later studies, similar results were obtained. Symptoms of depression in a husband or wife negatively influenced their marital satisfaction (Jenkins, Fredman, Le, Sun, Brick, Skinner, McHale, 2020).

On the other hand, the duration of the relationship is associated with normative and non-normative stages of the functioning of the family, which require the couple to adapt to new conditions or difficult situations such as, for example, moving house, the birth of a child, the loss of a job, the illness of a loved one, etc. It is assumed that marriage longevity is the responsibility of both partners (i.e., that it is the result of a satisfying relationship and/or similar expectations of relationship longevity). Sometimes, however, the relationship is disintegrated due to the fault or need of only one of the partners. From 1980 to 2019, an increase in the number of divorces was observed (from 39,833 to 65,341). Wives file for divorce more frequently than husbands, and husbands are more often blamed for the breakdown of marital relations than wives (Demographic Yearbook, 2020).

The time spent living together by partners should be associated with the strengthening of community: emotional, manifested in mutual love and support; cognitive (i.e., a community of life plans and attitudes); spiritual, linked to religiosity and family traditions; and material and territorial, requiring economic security, cohabitation and daily accessibility. All communities require closeness and mutual dependence (Walęcka-Matyja, Janicka, 2021). Such dependency in the relationship may make the passing time work to the couple's benefit. Research shows that partners with 10 years of experience argue, on average, twice as often as those with 30 years of experience. By linking a long relationship with older age, it is explained that such people are weaker, more tolerant, conciliatory and less interested in mutual struggle and conflicts (Szelendak, 2015).

However, research from the Central Statistical Office conducted in 2019 showed that older and long-tenured spouses are also parting but are reluctant to divorce. The most common separations were adjudicated for the age group of 55 years and more (360 separations), and separation actions were filed by partners whose marriage was 30 years and more (283 separations). On the other hand, the highest number of divorces took place among people aged 40-49 (19,062 couples) – the duration of their marriage from 5 to 9 years (14,466), and from 10 to 14 years (12,057) (Demographic Yearbook, 2020).

2. Research objective and hypotheses

The aim of the research was to assess the connection between the age of partners and the length of their relationship as well as the quality of those close relationships.

The research results reported earlier showed that the specific age of partners and the length of time they have lived together can contribute to changes in relationship quality. This mandates the following hypotheses:

- Hypothesis 1. There is a correlation between the age of the respondents and the quality of partner relationships (quarrel behaviour, intimacy and mutual communication).
- Hypothesis 2. Age differentiates all dimensions of the quality of relations between men and women.
- Hypothesis 3. The sex of the partners significantly differentiates the quality of their relationships (behaviour in quarrels, intimacy, mutual communication).
- Hypothesis 4. The quality of partnership relations (i.e., behaviour in a dispute, intimacy and mutual communication all depend on the length of the relationship).

3. Materials and method

3.1. Respondents

The study included 696 people aged 20-68 years (*M.*= 43.51; *SD*=12.57), including 360 women (51.7%) aged 21-68 (*M.*= 43.51; *SD*= 12.62) and 336 men (48.3%) aged 20-68 years (*M.*= 43.57; *SD*= 12.53). There were 369 people with higher education, 237 with secondary education, and 90 with vocational education. The respondents were in a relationship for a period from a year to 47 years (*M.*= 43.57; *SD*= 12.53). Everyone assessed their economic situation as stable. In 633 cases (92.9%), they were married couples; in 45 cases (7.1%) – cohabitation. As an alternative to marriage, living together has proved popular with young adults. This is confirmed by the existing Polish research (Janicka, Szymczak, 2019).

To take a closer look at possible changes, the respondents were classified into three groups significant for human development, including 16-year age ranges. The first group included 240 people aged 20-35 [i.e., in early adulthood (*M.*= 29.08; *SD*= 4.19)], the second group consisted of 276 people aged 36-51 (*M.*= 46.02; *SD*= 4.48) – which is considered appropriate for middle and medium adulthood – and the third group, in which 180 people aged 52-68 were distinguished (*M.*= 59.02; *SD*= 5.27) in the period associated with the second half of middle age and entering late adulthood.

Table 1 presents the characteristics of the respondents in terms of age and relationship duration of the respondents.

Based on the values of the Student's t-test for independent samples, no statistically significant differences were found between the age of women and men in the distinguished groups (i.e., in the group of people aged 20-35, $t(238) = -1.48, p > 0.05$, in the group of people aged 36-51, $t(274) = -0.30, p > 0.05$, nor in the group of people aged 52-65, $t(178) = 0.95, p > 0.05$).

The analyses did not show any statistically significant differences between men and women in terms of the relationship in the age group of 20-35 years, $t(238) = -1.64, p > 0.05$, neither in the 36-50

Table 1. Age and duration of the relationship between the surveyed men and women

	Age											
	20-35 years				36-51 years				52-68 years			
	Women		Men		Women		Men		Women		Men	
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
Age	28.68	4.29	29.48	4.07	45.95	4.36	46.11	4.64	59.39	5.16	58.65	5.38
Relationship duration	2.76	1.87	3.18	2.07	17.56	8.37	17.35	7.35	33.07	8.37	29.21	9.08

M - average value; *SD* - standard deviation

age group, $t(273.04) = -0.30, p > 0.05$. On the other hand, in the 52-65 age group, the marriage duration for women was significantly longer than in the group of men, $t(178) = 2.96; p<0.01$. Due to statistically significant deviations from the normal distribution, the statistical significance of the differences was verified based on the bootstrapping method.

3.2. Procedure and materials

The selection of people for the research was deliberate and people were recruited according to the snowball principle. The inclusion criterion was the age of the respondents (i.e., a minimum of 20 years and being in a permanent heterosexual relationship for a minimum of a year. People in cohabiting relationships were also eligible for the study, but only if they declared a shared future with their current partner.

The participants were informed about the scientific purpose of the study and the method of its conduct. All respondents gave their informed consent to participate in the study. The *IBM SPSS 25* programme was used for statistical analyses. The statistical significance level p was set at 0.05.

A socio-demographic questionnaire and the Partner Relationships Questionnaire by K. Hahlweg in the Polish adaptation of I. Janicka (2008) were used for the research.

The questionnaire constructed for the purposes of the study was used to obtain information on sex, age, education, economic situation, the form of close relationship and its duration.

Partner Relations Questionnaire (PFB -Partnerschaftsfragebogen) is used to measure the quality of relationships between partners in marriage and cohabitation. It covers three dimensions: behaviour in quarrels (blaming, criticising, recalling mistakes – e.g., "he/she argues with me about any little thing"); intimacy (hugging, caressing, talking about feelings, sexual needs – e.g., "he/she hugs me") and mutual communication (showing interest, open conversations, listening to your partner – e.g., "together, we agree on our common plans for the future"). There are ten statements for each of the dimensions rated on a four-point scale from 0 ('never') to 3 ('very often'). The tool has good psychometric parameters. Reliability coefficients amounted to 0.93 for the behaviour in Quarrels scale, 0.91 for the Intimacy scale, 0.88 for the Mutual Communication scale (Hahlweg, 1996, in: Janicka, 2008). Adaptation to Polish conditions confirmed satisfactory accuracy and reliability (Janicka, 2008).

The Partnership Relationship Questionnaire is widely used in Europe and has been translated into ten languages. It can also be used to diagnose disorders in relationships between partners (Hinz, Stöbel-Richter, Brähler, 2001).

4. Results

4.1. Descriptive statistics

The descriptive statistics for the analysed interval variables obtained in the study sample are presented in Table 2. The Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was used to verify the assumption of a normal distribution of the analysed variables.

Table 2. Descriptive statistics for the analysed interval variables

Variables	*M*	*SD*	*min.*	*max.*	*S*	*K*	*K-S*	*p*
Behaviour in quarrels	8.35	5.14	0	26	0.57	-0.07	0.09	0.001
Intimacy	18.82	6.58	1	30	-0.33	-0.60	0.08	0.001
Mutual communication	18.55	5.81	1	30	-0.18	-0.55	0.06	0.001

M - average value; *SD* - standard deviation; *min.* - minimum value; *max.* - maximum value; *S* - skewness measure value; *K.* - the value of the measure of kurtosis; *KS* - the value of the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test; *p* - statistical significance

Statistically significant deviations from the normal distribution were found in the analysed dimensions of relationship quality (i.e., behaviour in quarrels, intimacy and mutual communication). However, the values of skewness and kurtosis measures ranged from -1 to 1, which means that the deviations from the normal distribution concerned neither the symmetry of the distribution nor the differentiation of the results between the respondents. Due to statistically significant deviations obtained from the normal distribution, subsequent statistical analyses were performed based on the bootstrapping method.

Table 3. Correlation coefficients between the age of women and the age of men and the results on the analysed scales

	Age	
	Women	Men
Conflicts	0.139; 0.325	0.328; 0.498
Intimacy	-0.502; -0.339	-0.612; -0.463
Mutual communication	-0.401; -0.211	-0.398; -0.192

Pearson's r correlation coefficients between the analysed variables turned out to be statistically significant ($p<0.05$). The correlations were negative between the results on the conflict scale and the scores on the intimacy scales (r = -0.44 and r = -0.32) and mutual communication (r = -0.43 and r = -0.31) and positive between the scores on the scales of intimacy and mutual communication (r = 0.60 and r = 0.70).

4.2. Age of the surveyed women and men and the quality of their partnerships

The relationship between the age of the surveyed women and men and the quality of their relationship with a partner was analysed. Pearson's r correlations were used for the needs of the analyses.

It occurred that in both the group of women and men, the correlations between the age of the respondents and the results regarding conflicts, intimacy and communication turned out to be statistically significant ($p<0.05$). With age, the number of conflict behaviours increased, while intimacy and mutual communication declined. Hypothesis 1 was confirmed – there is a relationship between the age, the studied women and men, and the quality of partner relations.

Further analyses aimed to compare the mean values of the variables concerning the quality of relationships (i.e., quarrel behaviour, intimacy and mutual communication among women and men in the distinguished age groups). The summary was supplemented with the values of the one-way analysis of variance. The size of the effect was estimated with reference to the ranges adopted for the measure – no effect: <0.01; weak effect: 0.01≤ 0.06; moderate effect: 0.06≤0.14; strong effect: ≥ 0.14 (Sink and Mvududu, 2010).

Statistically significant intergroup differences were obtained for all analysed variables both in terms of women's and men's results (Table 4).

Analysing the results of women based on the value of the Games-Howell post-hoc test, it was found that statistically significant differences in the results, on the quarrel behaviour scale, occurred between people aged 52-65 and those aged 20-35 (2.41; 4.57); and

Table 4. Average values of the quality of partner relations among women and men in the distinguished age groups

		Age									
		20-35 years		36-51 years		52-65 years					
		M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*F*	*df*	*p*	η^2
Women	Quarrels	6.59	4.73	6.63	4.01	10.08	3.52	23.34	2.357	0.001	0.12
	Intimacy	22.14	5.08	18.13	6.21	14.84	7.03	37.75	2.357	0.001	0.18
	Communication	21.42	5.30	18.80	5.96	16.29	5.94	20.59	2.357	0.001	0.10
Men	Quarrels	7.28	5.32	8.35	5.29	13.26	4.65	38.47	2.333	0.001	0.19
	Intimacy	22.61	4.59	18.94	5.99	14.32	6.30	56.28	2.333	0.001	0.25
	Communication	20.02	4.93	17.38	5.18	16.22	5.85	14.76	2.333	0.001	0.08

M - average value; *SD* - standard deviation; *F* - the value of the analysis of variance; *df* - the number of degrees of freedom; *p* - statistical significance; η^2 - measure of the strength of the effect

people aged 36-51 (2.43; 4.38); (moderate effect). The mean value of the results, on the quarrel behaviour scale, in the group of women aged 52-65 was higher than in the other two age groups. Statistically significant differences in the results, on the intimacy scale, occurred between the group of women aged 20-35 and the group of women aged 36-51 (2.75; 5.40) and the group of women aged 52-65 (5.75; 9.00), as well as between the group of women aged 36-51 and the group of women aged 52-65 (1.56; 5.04). The effect on these differences turned out to be strong. The mean value, of the results on the intimacy scale, was the highest in the group of women aged 20-35, lower in the group of women aged 36-51 and the lowest in the group of women aged 52-65. Statistically significant differences in scope the results, on the scale of mutual communication, occurred between the group of women aged 20-35 and the group of women aged 36-51 (1.28; 3.98) and the group of women aged 52-65 (3.63; 6.77), as well as between the group of women aged 36-51 and the group of women aged 52-65 (0.94; 4.15); (moderate effect). The mean value of the results, on the mutual communication scale, was also highest in the group of women aged 20-35, lower in the group of women aged 36-51 and the lowest in the group of women aged 52-65.

Analysing the results of men based on the value of the Games-Howell post-hoc test, it was found that statistically significant differences in the results, on the quarrel behaviour scale, occurred between people aged 52-65 and those aged 20-35 (4.58; 7.35), as well as those aged 36-51 (3.44; 6.26); (strong effect). The average value of the results regarding conflicts in the group of men aged 52-68 was higher than in the other two age groups. Statistically significant differences in the results, on the intimacy scale, occurred between the group of men aged 20-35 and the group aged 36-51 (2.27; 5.06) and aged 52-68 (6.66; 9.82), as well as between the group of men aged 36-51 and the group of men aged 52-68 (2.90; 6.27); (strong effect). The mean value of the scores, on the intimacy scale, was the highest in the group of men aged 20-35, lower in the group of men aged 36-51 and the lowest in the group of men aged 52-68. Statistically significant differences in the results, on the mutual communication scale, occurred between the group of men aged 20-35 and the group of men aged 36-51 (1.29; 3.95), as well as the group of men aged 52-68 (2.17; 5.37); (moderate effect). The mean value, of the results on the mutual communication scale, was higher in the group of men aged 20-35 than in the group of men aged 36-51 and in the group of men aged 52-68.

The obtained results justify the adoption of Hypothesis 2 – Age differentiates all dimensions of the quality of relations between men and women. The participants from the oldest age group (52-68 years old) obtained significantly higher results in terms of quarrel behaviour and lower results in terms

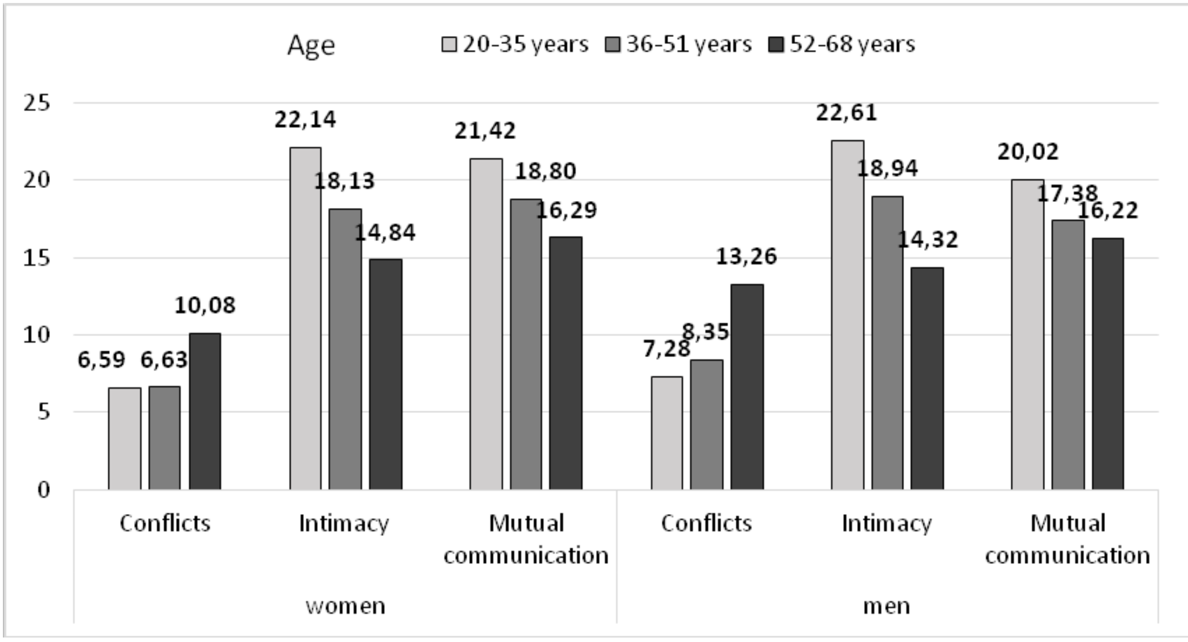

Figure 1. Average values of the results on the analysed scales in the compared age groups among women and men.

of intimacy and communication, compared to the younger age groups, i.e. 20-35 years old and 36-51 years old.

The results of the analyses showed that the least favourable quality of relationships, which is manifested by the greatest number of conflict behaviours and the lowest intimacy and mutual communication,

Table 5. Conflict behaviour, intimacy and mutual communication in women and men in appropriate age groups

		Women		Men				
	Variables	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*t*	*df*	*p*
20-35 years	Quarrels	6.59	4.73	7.28	5.32	-1.06	238	0.291
	Intimacy	22.14	5.08	22.61	4.59	-0.75	238	0.456
	Mutual communication	21.42	5.30	20.02	4.93	2.12	238	0.043
36-51 years	Quarrels	6.63	4.01	8.35	5.29	-3.00	227.23	0.004
	Intimacy	18.13	6.21	18.94	5.99	-1.09	274	0.288
	Mutual communication	18.80	5.96	17.38	5.18	2.11	273.37	0.036
52-68 years	Quarrels	10.08	3.52	13.26	4.65	-5.19	167.65	0.001
	Intimacy	14.84	7.03	14.32	6.30	0.53	178	0.599
	Mutual communication	16.29	5.94	16.22	5.85	0.08	178	0.930

M - average value; *SD* - standard deviation; *t* - value of the Student's t-test for independent samples;
df - the number of degrees of freedom; *p* - two-sided statistical significance

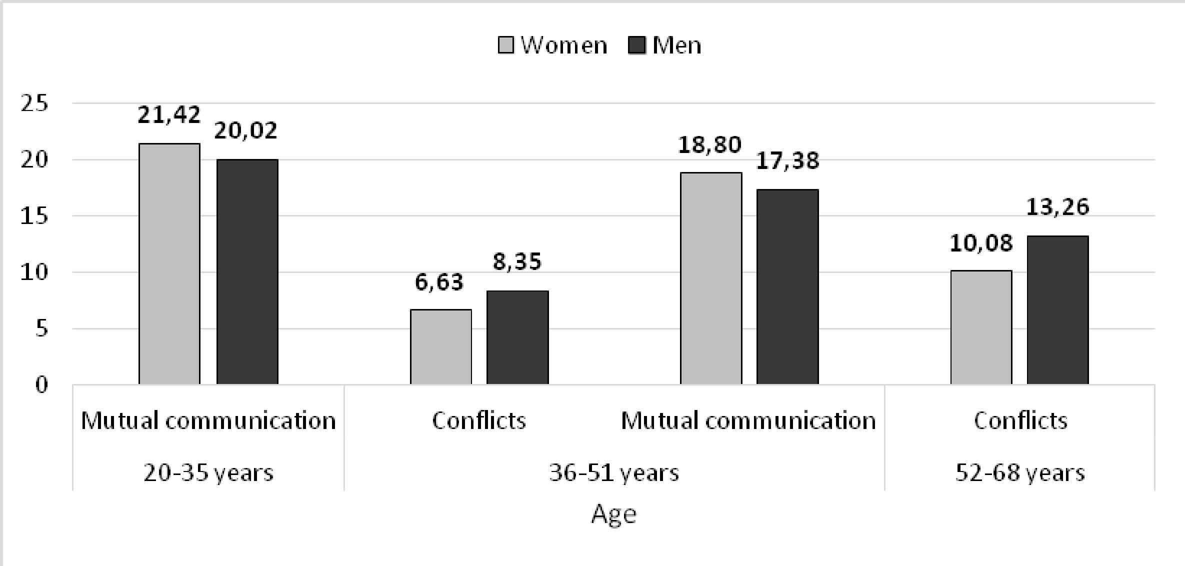

Figure 2. Statistically significant differences in the analysed variables between women and men in the distinguished age groups.

are characteristic of the oldest group of women and men (52-68 years old). On the other hand, the best results were obtained by the youngest group (20-35 years old) (Fig. 1).

4.3. The quality of relations between men and women in the distinguished age groups

Women and men were compared concerning the mean values of dimensions determining the quality of partner relations (i.e., quarrels, intimacy and mutual communication). The measurement results are presented in Table 5. The list was supplemented with the values of the Student's t-test for independent samples.

In the 20-35 age group, women rated communication in their close relationships significantly higher than men ($p < 0.05$). In the 36-51 age group, men admitted to having more conflict behaviour and weaker communication than women ($p < 0.05$). On the other hand, women and men in the 52-68 age group significantly differentiated conflict behaviour ($p < 0.05$). They were more common in men than in women. Finally, it can be observed that the mean values of the scores on the mutual communication scale were higher in the group of women than in the group of men aged 20-35 and 36-51 years, respectively. The mean values of the results on the conflict scale were higher in the group of men than in the group of women aged 36-51 and 52-68 (see Fig. 2).

Hypothesis 3 was confirmed – the sex of the partners significantly differentiates the quality of their relationships (behaviour in quarrels, intimacy, mutual communication). The differences were in mutual communication and in quarrel behaviour. In all analysed age groups, women assessed the quality of relationships in close relationships more favourably than men.

Table 6. Correlation coefficients between the duration of the relationship and the results on the analysed scales in the group of women and the group of men

	Seniority	
	Women	Men
Conflicts	0.091; 0.289	0.275; 0.470
Intimacy	-0.493; -0.317	-0.608; -0.458
Mutual communication	-0.401; -0.208	-0.368; -0.158

4.4. The duration of the relationship and the quality of relations

Table 6 shows the Pearson's r correlation coefficients between the duration of the relationship and the results on the analysed scales in the group of women and men.

Both in the group of women and the group of men, statistically significant positive correlations between the duration of the relationship and the results on the conflict scale were found, as well as statistically significant negative correlations between the length of the relationship and the results on the scales of intimacy and mutual communication ($p<0.05$). Along with the time of the relationship of the surveyed men and women, the number of conflict behaviours increases, and intimacy and mutual communication weaken.

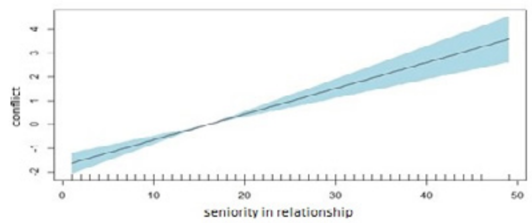

Figure 3. The connection between the length of the relationship and the results on the conflict scale in the sample (N = 696).

To verify the nature of the relationship between the length of the relationship and conflict behaviour, intimacy and mutual communication, an analysis was performed based on generalised additive models (*GAM*). They allow for the study of non-linear relationships between explanatory and explained variables.

In the studied sample (i.e., in the group of women and men), it was found that the relationship between the duration of the relationship and the results on the conflict scale was statistically significant, $F\,(1.00;\ 1.00) = 54.92$, $p<0.001$. The course of the relationship explained 7.2% of the variance in the results on the conflict scale. The connection between the length of the relationship and the results on the conflict scale was linear and positive (Fig. 3).

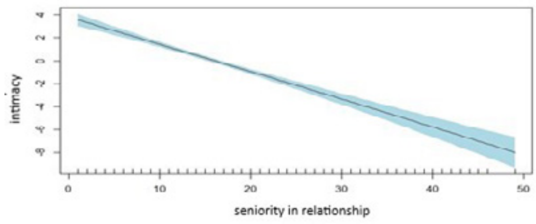

Figure 4. The relationship between the duration of the relationship and the results on the intimacy scale in the studied sample (*N*= 696).

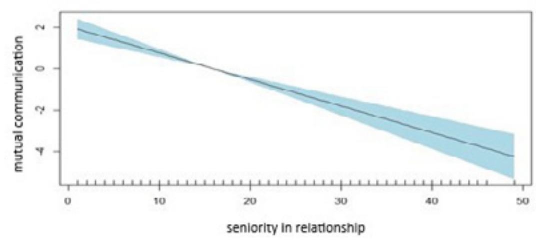

Figure 5. The relationship between the duration of the relationship and the results on the scale of mutual communication in the studied sample (N= 696).

The following relationships turned out to be statistically significant: between the duration of a relationship and the results on the intimacy scale - $F.(1.11;\ 1.22) = 160.20$, $p<0.001$ (Fig. 4) and between the duration of the relationship and the results on the scale of mutual communication $F.(1.00;\ 1.00) = 61.05$, $p<0.001$ (fig.5). The duration of the relationship explained 21.7% of the variance in the scores on the intimacy scale and 8.0% of the variance in the scores on the mutual communication scale. The relationship between the duration of the relationship and the results on the scale of intimacy and mutual communication in the studied sample was negative and linear.

The analyses carried out above allow us to conclude that the quality of the partnership relationship depends on the length of the relationship. With the duration of the relationship, the number of conflict behaviours increases, and intimacy and mutual communication weaken. The fourth hypothesis was confirmed here.

5. Discussion of the results

The presented research results were aimed at assessing of the partners' age and the duration of their relationship for the quality of close relationships, including its essential parameters (i.e., conflict behaviour, intimacy and mutual communication). Their importance for the quality of the relationship is not questioned, but the problem of changes over time remains open.

Age and seniority in a relationship are associated with specific developmental changes for the individual and the couple. The respondents were classified into three groups significant for human development, including 16-year age ranges: 20-35 years (Group 1), 36-51 years (Group 2) and 52-68 years (Group 3). People from Group 1 had the shortest seniority in a relationship, and people from Group 3 had the longest experience. People from Group 1 had the shortest seniority, and people from Group 3 had the longest experience.

Research has shown a relationship between the age of partners and the quality of their close relationships. The most favourable results (i.e., the highest in terms of intimacy and communication and the lowest number of conflicts (compared to other age groups)), were obtained by women and men in early adulthood (i.e., at the age of 20-35). This is a good prospect for their relationship. Research confirms that the emotional intimacy of the partners is particularly important for the quality of the relationship (Dandurand, Lafontaine, 2013; Hassebrauck, Fehr, 2002; Ryś, 2016; Wojciszke, 2021) and communication (Dakowicz, Dakowicz, 2021; Harwas-Napierała, 2014; Kaźmierczak, Plopa 2012; Ryś et al., 2019). In the own research, a positive dependence was found between the intimacy and mutual communication of partners, and their negative relationship with conflict behaviour. Also, Jankowska (2016) pointed out that intimacy positively correlates with supporting and engaged communication of partners, and negatively with a deprecating one. According to Milek et al. (2015), poor intimacy leads to negative behaviours - anger, irritability, withdrawal from contacts.

It was observed that with the age of the respondents, undesirable behaviour (conflict) increases, and intimacy and mutual communication – which are important for the integration of the relationship – weakens. This regularity turned out to be appropriate for the group of women and the group of men. German studies confirm that the quality of relationships =between partners decreases with age. They also showed that women, on average, score higher in assessment of own marriage, than men (Hinz et al., 2001). In my research, women rated communication higher and indicated fewer conflicts in their relationships than men. This type of difference was observed in communication for people aged 20-35 and 36-51 years, and for quarrel behaviour for people aged 36-51 and 52-68. Earlier research proves that women are more sensitive to marital tensions than men (Mandale et al., 2019). The results of this study do not justify the conclusion of such a regularity because the level of intimacy and communication turned out to be similarly low and did not differentiate between men and women who reported the most conflicts.

The second half of middle adulthood and late onset turned out to be the period particularly vulnerable to adverse changes. For people aged 52-68, the highest number of conflict behaviours and the lowest rates of intimacy and communication were recorded. It may be favoured by hormonal changes appropriate for this age group (i.e., menopausal in women and andropausal in men). They occur after the age of 50 and have a negative impact on the psychophysical and social functioning of an individual. They can be accompanied by anxiety and even fear. The interest in physical closeness declines, misunderstandings between partners and even conflicts occur more often, which, in turn, may intensify the symptoms of hormonal changes (Jarecka, 2016). A poor quality marriage is also associated with various indicators of poor health, the emergence of chronic diseases, which is more often diagnosed in the elderly (Donoho et al., 2015; Jenkins et al., 2020; Wheeler et al., 2018, Whisman, Uebelacker, 2009; Whisman et al.2014). Much attention is paid to life-threatening cardiovascular diseases and its relationship to marital relations (Donoho et al., 2015; Smith, Baucom, 2017; Smith et al., 2020; Tulloch, Johnson, Demidenko, Clyde, Bouchard, Greenman, 2021). It turns out that the mental stress caused by marital conflicts leads to increased heart rate and high blood pressure (Tulloch et al., 2021). It is noted, however, that they may be fostered not so much by the marital conflict itself, but by hostility and control that determine involvement in the conflict (Smith et al., 2020). Abnormal relationships between spouses may affect the release of cardiovascular markers and their risk factors (e.g. calcification of the coronary arteries, increase in blood pressure). Therefore, it is recognized that the treatment of people with heart disease should also include their marital relations (Birditt et al., 2016; Tulloch et al., 2021).

The average age is also when the assessment of one's life so far is made, and its negative balance may contribute to dissatisfaction, blaming the partner and even the breakup of the relationship (Brzezińska et al., 2016; Szelendak, 2015).

The conducted research also authorises the conclusion that the quality of close relationships decreases with the duration of the relationship. This is confirmed in previous longitudinal studies. Lavner, Karney, Bradbury (2014) showed a decrease in satisfaction with marriage even in couples with short 4-year experience. Birditt, Wan, Orbuch, Antonucci (2017), based on a 16-year study, found that the tension (between husbands and wives) resulting from conflicts and disappointments increases with the duration of their marriage. Also, other research studies (Mandale et al., 2019; Umberson et al., 2006) confirm greater tendencies to negative behaviours and tensions between partners along with the duration of the marriage, which reduces its quality. In contrast, VanLaningham, Johnson, Amato (2001) pointed to the existence of a curvilinear relationship between the length of time and the quality of the relationship. They reported that marital happiness was lowest in the early and late years of the relationship.

In the authors' own research, young people with short experience together achieved the most favourable parameters of relationship quality. Empirical research has consistently shown (Hülür, Castano, 2019; Kamp Dush, Taylor, 2012; Leonhardt et al., 2020) that a higher-quality marriage, are conducive to the partnership and egalitarian nature of the relationship. This type of relationship is more popular with young couples than with older couples. This may explain its low quality in older people, who more often prefer the traditional division of roles – which places an excessive burden on the woman, especially when she is engaged in professional work.

Conclusions

Undoubtedly, the age of the partners and the related period of the relationship may lead to changes in its quality. However, they cannot be treated as the only reasons and sufficient for the evaluation of close relationships. They should be considered in the context of developmental changes and a wide range of conditions.

The results of these studies can be used in couple therapy and counselling. Communication, intimacy and conflict behaviour are usually the subjects of therapeutic interventions. They should be considered in relation to the age of the partners and the tenure of their relationship.

The presented research is not free from limitations. The study of the quality of close relationships would be more complete if couples were included. This type of research should be of a longitudinal nature, which would allow the dynamics of changes in the quality of relations to be captured.

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Older adults in the internet – internet addiction and its intrapsychic correlates

Seniorzy w internecie - uzależnienie od sieci i jego intrapsychiczne korelaty[1]

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Aleksandra Wójciak[a]

[a] *Aleksandra Wójciak, MA, https://orcid.org/0000-0002-9054-0355*
Pedagogical University of Cracow

Abstract: The aim of the study was to verify the relationship between Problematic Using of the Internet and its selected intrapsychic correlates in a group of people in late adulthood. The analyses conducted so far respond to an insufficient number of domestic and foreign publications on this subject. Statistical analysis was applied to the results of the study carried out among a group of 44 seniors (the average age 67 years old). The control group consisted of 41 middle adults (the average age was 35). The study applied: Test of Problematic Using of the Internet, Coping Inventory - Mini-COPE, The IPIP-BFM-20 Questionnaire and Brief Resilience Coping Scale. The results of the study have shown a significant correlation between the problematic using of the Internet (PUI) in the surveyed group of seniors and specific strategies of dealing with stress: self-blame (p<0,05, r=0,363) and venting (p<0,05, r=0,354). Moreover, a significant negative correlation between PUI and the personality trait emotional stability has been found among people in late adulthood (p<0,01, r=-0,416). The regression analysis with simultaneous variable selection conducted to broaden the results of the correlation analyses has shown that the tested model is a significant predictor of the Problematic Using of the Internet (PUI). To be exact, the significant PUI predictors are coping strategies: using drugs and the personality trait conscientiousness. It is worth mentioning that the results of the conducted study could constitute an important guideline for developing effective preventive measures addressed to people in late adulthood.
Keywords: dealing with stress, mental resilience, personality, problematic Internet use

Abstrakt: Celem podjętych badań było zweryfikowanie zależności pomiędzy problematycznym używaniem Internetu, a jego wybranymi intrapsychicznymi korelatami w grupie osób w okresie późnej dorosłości. Przeprowadzone analizy stanowią odpowiedź na niewystarczającą liczbę publikacji krajowych i zagranicznych dotyczących tej tematyki. Analizie statystycznej poddano wyniki badań, które zrealizowane zostały w grupie 44 seniorów (średnia wieku wyniosła 67 lat). Grupę kontrolną stanowiły 41 osoby w okresie średniej dorosłości (średnia wieku wyniosła 35 lat). W badaniu wykorzystano: Test problematycznego używania Internetu, Inwentarz do Pomiaru Radzenia Sobie ze Stresem- Mini-COPE, Kwestionariusz IPIP-BFM-20 oraz Krótką Skalę Prężności Zaradczej. Wyniki badań własnych wykazały, iż z problematycznym używaniem Internetu (PUI) w badanej grupie seniorów istotnie korelują określone strategie radzenia sobie ze stresem: obwinianie się (p<0,05, r=0,363) oraz koncentracja na emocjach i ich wyładowanie (p<0,05, r=0,354). Ponadto udowodniono, że wśród osób w okresie późnej dorosłości z PUI istotnie ujemnie koreluje cecha osobowości jaką jest stabilność emocjonalna (p<0,01, r=-0,416). Wykonana z kolei, w celu pogłębienia wyników przeprowadzonych analiz korelacji, analiza regresji metodą wprowadzania wykazała, że testowany model istotnie przewiduje poziom problematycznego używania Internetu (PUI). Doprecyzowując, istotnymi predyktorami PUI okazała się strategia radzenia sobie ze stresem jaką jest zażywanie substancji psychoaktywnych oraz cecha osobowości jaką jest sumienność. Należy zaznaczyć, że wnioski z przeprowadzonych badań mogą stanowić istotną wskazówkę do prowadzenia skutecznych oddziaływań profilaktycznych kierowanych do grupy osób w okresie późnej dorosłości.
Słowa kluczowe: odporność psychiczna, osobowość, problematyczne używanie Internetu, radzenie sobie ze stresem

Introduction

At present, addiction from Modern Information Technologies is analysed both by educators, psychologists or sociologists and by lawyers (Panasiuk, Panasiuk, 2017). Problematic Use of the Internet deserves a special attention in this respect. The Internet is a tool which has become an integral part of nearly each person (Barłóg, 2015).

The Internet makes it possible for an individual who uses it to carry out multiple activities and opens a range of possibilities (Molga, 2014). Moreover,

1 Artykuł w języku polskim: https://www.stowarzyszeniefidesetratio.pl/fer/2022-1Wojciak.pdf

this tool ensures comfort of use (Barłóg, 2015). We should, however, note that the use of the Internet is related to a certain type of danger. This could be related to specific activities performed online, but also to their effects on the quality of human life. To be specific, individuals who use the Internet could become victims of aggression or access contents that are dangerous for psyche (Skowroński, 2013). Additionally, in part of the users, the use of the Internet could also lead to an addiction (Young, Yue, Ying, 2017).

A review of the literature on the subject allows to conclude that there are currently many, both national and foreign publications available regarding Internet addiction. (Andrzejewska, 2014; Błachnio, Przepiórka, Rowiński, 2014; Cierpiałkowska, 2016; Davis, 2001; Grzegorzewska, Cierpiałkowska, 2018; Hamburger, Ben-Artzi, 2000; Kuss, Griffiths, Karila, Billieux, 2014; Poprawa, 2011a; Rowicka, 2018). However, we can also notice a lack of research identifying intrapsychic and environmental correlates of Internet addiction in specific groups of people (including seniors).

1. Seniors as active Internet users

As the respondents of this study were people in late adulthood, it is important to note that seniors, according to subject literature, are individuals of over 60-65 years of age. (Pietrasiński, 1996). This group experiences significant changes related to their social, as well as emotional and behavioural way of functioning (Finogenow, 2013; Straś-Romanowska, 2011). This is why seniors frequently engage in different kinds of initiatives and they are willing to participate in leisure and entertainment activities (Rynkowska, 2016). Their activity in the virtual space is rising too (Mucha, Krzyżowski, 2010). Individuals in late adulthood are becoming more eager to use the Internet and they are doing so more often. This has been confirmed for example by data from the reports of the Centre for Public Opinion Research (CBOS). According to CBOS report 163: *The ways of spending free time by seniors*, nearly every third respondent (30%) has used a computer and the Internet (CBOS, 2016). Later analyses carried out in 2018, described in report 62: *The use of Internet* confirmed that nearly the half of people at the age between 55 and 65 have used the Internet. Among people over 65 years of age, 25% of respondents have used the Internet (CBOS, 2018).

When we are discussing the subject of activity of seniors in the Internet, it is worth considering the extent to which these individuals are prone to problematic use of the Internet. Unfortunately, a review of literature shows a gap in both domestic and foreign analyses in this area. This has been confirmed in the publication of Khaleda M'hiri, Alessandry Costanza, Yassera Khazaal, Riaza Khan, Daniela Zullino and Sophii Achab (2015). These authors have indicated that no detailed and comprehensive study on Internet addiction in this group has been carried out so far. Some conclusions regarding possible risk of addiction can only be made on the basis of analyses where seniors constituted a part of the study group. The results of analyses performed in Sweden could be an example here. These analyses show that ½ of respondents (the age median was 45 years) fulfilled at least one of the criteria of problematic use of the Internet (M'hiri et al. 2015). Importantly, other analyses carried out in a deliberately selected group of people in late adulthood proved that problematic Internet use coincides with a higher level of perceived social isolation (Meshi, Cotten, Bender, 2020).

2. Internet addiction and its intrapsychic conditions

Internet addiction belongs to the group of behavioural addictions (Rowicka, 2018). It was first studied in 1996 (Young et al. 2017). Interestingly, various terms have been used to describe this phenomenon. The terms in use include: netoholism, cyberaddiction, Internet addiction, info dependency or Internet dependency disorders (Jarczyńska, Orzechowska, 2014, s.122). This visible lack of terminological consistency is related to another fact: the addiction has not been included in any existing classification of diseases and health problems (Grzegorzewska, Cierpiałkowska, 2018). We should stress here that the situation is not going to change with ICD-11 (the classification which will come into life on 1 January 2022) (Gaebel, Zielasek, Reed, 2017; Krawczyk, Święcicki, 2020).

In the recent years numerous researchers, including Kimberly Young, Keith Beard and Eve Wolf, Bohdan Woronowicz, and Ivan Goldberg have made attempts at creating diagnostic criteria for Internet addiction (Izdebski, Kotyśko, 2016; Klimczak, 2012; Woronowicz, 2009). This article, however, will only refer to criteria put forward by a forerunner of Internet addiction analyses - Young. The researcher proposed the term 'pathological use of Internet' for Internet addictions. Initially, the diagnostic criteria she published were characteristic of a pathological gambling situation, as described in DSM-IV, but they were later reformulated, which lead to an understanding of this phenomenon in terms of impulse control disorders (Klimczak, 2012). In their final form they assume presence of specific symptoms, such as:

- preoccupation with the Internet's potential;
- the need to use the Internet for increasing amounts of time in order to achieve satisfaction;
- making unsuccessful efforts to control, cut back, or stop Internet use;
- feeling moody, restless or depressed when attempting to cut down or stop Internet use
- staying online longer than initially intended;
- using the Internet even though it entails risking the loss of significant relationship, job, educational or career opportunity;
- lying to conceal the constant involvement with the Internet;
- using the Internet as a way of escaping from problems or relieving a dysphoric mood (Young, 1998, after Klimczak, 2012, p. 44).

We should also note that, according to Young, problematic use of the Internet can be diagnosed when at least five of the listed symptoms have been confirmed. However, it should be emphasised that the individual's professional, educational or home responsibilities should be excluded from this assessment (Izdebski, Kotyśko, 2016).

When characterizing selected aspects of Internet addiction, it also seems justified to give attention to the phases of its course. According to Young, we can distinguish three phases that lead to addictive Internet use. These are: engagement, substitution, escape (Klimczak, 2012). In the first phase, engagement, an individual learns about the possibilities they get from a computer and network. This phase is characterized by fascination with cyberspace, feelings of euphoria, relaxation and peace. Moreover, the person ceases to feel lonely or alienated. In the second phase, substitution, the individual feels a need for constant contact with people they have met online. They frequently resign from direct interpersonal contacts, activities or matters that used to be an essential element of their life. In the last phase, escape, the individual spends increased periods of time in the virtual world. This becomes a reason for alienation in daily life. At this point the individual often develops symptoms of depression and might experience anxiety. Moreover, the individual's daily rhythm and their assessment of space-time are usually disturbed. The person experiences feelings of guilt as a result of neglecting professional or family duties (Klimczak, 2012, p. 69-70).

Concluding the considerations on Internet addiction, it is also worth noting that there is a visible trend in the literature on the subject: searching for intrapsychic factors that contribute to the occurrence of this addiction, as well as factors that could offer protection against it. Personality and the ability to cope with stress frequently appear among the analysed variables. Essentially, it is believed that introversion, a low level of openness to experience, low agreeableness and conscientiousness manifested by the individual are risk factors in Internet addiction (Van der Aa et al. 2009). Moreover, this addiction is fostered by the inability to cope with stress (Andrzejewska, 2014). On the other hand, a high level of agreeableness, conscientiousness and emotional stability are considered to be the factors that protect an individual against Internet addiction (Kuss et al. 2014). Having knowledge of these conditions, it seems reasonable to verify whether these relations will be just as important in the group of seniors (which, so far, has been usually omitted in detailed analyses).

3. Methodology of own research

3.1. The aim and subject of the research

A review of statistical data describing the activity of seniors in the Internet confirms increased use of this medium among this group. We can also assume that the SARS-CoV-2 coronavirus pandemic, which started in 2020, has contributed to an even greater activity of the group in the Internet. The lack of direct contacts with friends and family, temporarily closed cinemas, theatres and museums, and the need to obtain up-to-date information: all this could encourage people in late adulthood to educate themselves in the field of new technologies and, subsequently, to use them more.

This study aimed to verify correlation between severity of symptoms of problematic use of the Internet and its intrapsychic corelates. The performed analyses are a response to the insufficient number of domestic and foreign publications on this subject. The research carried out so far usually focused on adolescents and persons in early adults.

3.2. Research problems

The main research problem in this study was to answer the question: Is there a connection between problematic use of the Internet and its selected intrapsychic correlates during late adulthood? The following hypotheses were verified in the course of the research:

- H1: There is a relationship between problematic use of the internet and stress-coping strategies among seniors and in the group of people in medium adulthood.
- H2: There is a relation between problematic use of the Internet and personality structure in the analysed group of seniors and in the group of medium adults.
- H3: There is a relationship between problematic use of Internet and the level of a person's resilience in the analysed group of seniors and group of medium adults.

3.3. Variables and their operationalization

To better clarify the research problem, the dependant variable and independent variables were identified. Subsequently, these variables were operationalized into indicators that could be subjected to empirical research. The identified variables and indicators are listed in Table 1.

3.4. Research methods and tools

Basing on the adopted theoretical and methodological assumptions, the study used the following tools: Test of Problematic Using of the Internet (TPUI) by Young in the Polish adaptation by Poprawa (Poprawa, 2011b), Inventory for the Measurement of Coping with Stress - Mini-COPE by Carver, in the Polish adaptation by Juczyński and Ogińska -Bulik (Ogińska-Bulik, 2014), IPIP-BFM-20 questionnaire - a shortened version of the Goldberg tool in the Polish adaptation by Topolewska, Skimina, Strus, Cieciuch and Rowiński (Topolewska, Skimina, Strus, Cieciuch, Rowiński, 2014), Brief Resilience Coping Scale (KSPZ) by Sinclar and Wallston in the Polish adaptation by Piórkowska, Basińska, Piórkowski and Janicka (Piórowska, Basińska, Piórowski, Janicka, 2017).

Test of Problematic Using of the Internet consists of 22 items. A respondent gives answers on a six-point scale (Poprawa, 2011b). The tool allows to diagnose the level of problematic use of the Internet (Makaruk, Wójcik, 2012). The test can be used both in scientific research and in clinical practice (Grzegorzewska, Cierpiałkowska, 2018). TPUI is characterized by good psychometric properties. The test has a univariate structure and internal consistency index of 0.935, as calculated with Cronbach's alpha coefficient. The discriminatory power of individual items is within the range 0.40- 0.70 (Cudo, Kopiś, Stróżak, 2016).

The Inventory for the Measurement of Coping with Stress Mini-COPE is a shortened version of the Multidimensional Inventory for Measurement of Coping with Stress COPE. The Polish adaptation consists of 28 statements, which are assigned to 14 coping strategies (Ogińska-Bulik, 2014). The tool is used for diagnosis of typical reactions and feelings of a given individual in face of situations of intense

Table 1. Variables, measurement methods and own research indicators

Dependent variable		Independent Variable	
Variable	Indicators	Variable	Indicators
Internet addiction	The indicator: the severity of symptoms of problematic use of the Internet (the result obtained by completing the Test of Problematic Using of the Internet).	Coping with stress	The indicator: results showing the dominant strategies of coping with stress in a difficult situation obtained by completing the Inventory for Measuring Coping with Stress - Mini-COPE.
		Personality features	The indicator: results showing the personality structure obtained by completing the IPIP-BFM-20 Questionnaire.
		Resilience Coping	The indicator: the person's level of resilience coping obtained by completing Brief Resilience Coping Scale.

Source: own work.

stress. Mini-COPE is used both for research purposes and in clinical practice (mainly in prevention)[2]. The tool has satisfactory psychometric properties (Ogińska-Bulik, 2014).

Questionnaire IPIP-BFM-20 is a shortened version of Goldberg questionnaire. It has 20 items which allow us to measure five personality features: extraversion, conscientiousness, agreeableness, emotional stability and intellect. The respondent gives answers on a five-point scale. This tool can be used, for example, in scientific research. The questionnaire shows satisfactory validity and reliability (Topolewska et al. 2014).

The Brief Resilience Coping Scale consist of 4 statements. The respondent gives answers on a five-point scale, deciding to what extent the statements accurately describe the respondent. The tool enables making conclusions about the level of Resilience coping of an individual. The Brief Resilience Coping Scale can be used for research purposes. It fulfils psychometric criteria of a test. The reliability of the method estimated by the Cronbach's alpha coefficient is 0.625. As the tool is short, the authors found this satisfactory (Piórowska et al. 2017).

3.5. Characteristics of the study population

44 respondents in late adulthood (33 women and 11 men) took part in the research. These seniors were 60 or older and they lived on the area of Maloposkie province. Their ages ranged from 60 to 77 years (the average was 67). The control group consisted of 41 people in middle adulthood (28 women and 13 men). In this group, the average age was 35 years.

4. Presentation of results

In order to verify the hypotheses assumed in the study, Pearson's *r* correlation was used. It was used to check the significance of the relation between two quantitative variables (Sobczyk, 2000). In the next step, in order to deepen the insight into previously performed correlation analyses, regression analysis by inputting was used. This method enables to forecast dependent variable based on one or several predictors (Krejtz, Krejtz, Kopacz, 2013). It is worth noting that $\alpha = 0.05$ was adopted as the critical level of significance.

The analysis carried out at the beginning verified the relationship between the level of problematic Internet use and the strategies of coping with stress. Pearson's *r* correlation was used for this purpose. Table 2 shows detailed data.

The analysis of the results showed a significant moderate correlation in the examined group of seniors between problematic use of the Internet (PUI) and specific strategies of coping with stress: self-blame ($p < 0.05$, $r = 0.363$) and venting of emotions ($p < 0.05$,

2 from: https://www.practest.com.pl/mini-cope-inwentarz-do-pomiaru-radzenia-sobie-ze-stresem, access: 10.06.2021.

Table 2. The relation between the level of problematic Internet use and stress-coping strategies

		TPUI	
		Individuals in late adulthood	Individuals in medium adulthood
Active coping	*R*	-0,260	0,212
	P	0,089	0,184
Planning	*R*	-0,085	0,031
	P	0,584	0,847
Positive reframing	*R*	-0,179	0,031
	P	0,246	0,849
Acceptance	*R*	-0,116	-0,438
	P	0,455	0,004
Humour	*R*	-0,202	0,334
	P	0,188	0,033
Religious coping	*R*	-0,106	-0,256
	P	0,492	0,107
Seeking emotional support	*R*	-0,101	0,087
	P	0,514	0,587
Seeking instrumental support	*R*	0,281	0,056
	P	0,065	0,728
Distraction	*R*	0,047	0,207
	P	0,763	0,195
Denial	*R*	0,170	0,025
	P	0,271	0,878
Venting of emotions	*R*	0,354	0,225
	P	0,019	0,157
Psychoactive substance use	*R*	0,296	0,401
	P	0,051	0,009
Behavioural disengagement	*R*	0,230	-0,001
	P	0,134	0,995
Self-blame	*R*	0,363	0,316
	P	0,015	0,044

Source: Own work.

r = 0.354). The strength of these relationships is moderate. On the other hand, in the group of people in middle adulthood, such strategies of coping with stress as: self-blame (p <0.05, 0.316) and psychoactive substance use (p <0.01, 0.401) show a significant positive correlation. Moreover, acceptance was significantly negatively correlated with the problematic use of the Internet (p <0.01, -0.438). The strength of these relationships is also moderate. We have subsequently analysed correlation between the level of problematic use of the Internet and individual personality features. Table 3 shows detailed data.

Table 3. The relation between problematic use of Internet and personality features

		TPUI	
		Individuals in late adulthood	Individuals in medium adulthood
Extraversion	*r*	-0,114	0,249
	p	0,461	0,116
Agreeableness	*r*	0,157	-0,124
	p	0,307	0,439
Conscientiousness	*r*	-0,207	-0,572
	p	0,178	0,000
Emotional stability	*r*	-0,416	0,105
	p	0,005	0,512
Intellect	*r*	0,007	0,068
	p	0,962	0,672

Source: own work.

Table 4. The relation between problematic use of Internet and resilience coping

		TPUI	
		Individuals in late adulthood	Individuals in medium adulthood
Resilience coping	*r*	0,032	0,105
	p	0,838	0,514

Source: own work.

The results of own work showed that in late adulthood personality feature emotional stability correlates significantly with problematic use of the Internet (p<0,01, r=-0,416). This correlation is moderate. In the group of people in medium adulthood, in turn, conscientiousness was correlated with problematic use of the Internet (p <0.01, r = -0.572). Then, the relationship between the level of problematic Internet use and resilience coping was verified. The results of the correlation analysis are shown in Table 4.

Table 5. Regression model for the studied group forecasting the level of problematic Internet use based on stress-coping strategies, personality structure and coping resilience

	B	*SE*	*β*	*t*	*p*	R^2	*F*	*p*
(Constant)	27,017	18,075		1,495	0,140	0,47	2,88	0,001
Active coping	-0,003	2,098	0,000	-0,002	0,999			
Planning	-1,233	1,882	-0,090	-0,655	0,515			
Positive reframing and development	-1,233	1,277	-0,125	-0,965	0,338			
Acceptance	-2,851	1,630	-0,222	-1,749	0,085			
Humour	0,602	1,349	0,052	0,446	0,657			
Religious coping	-0,500	1,012	-0,068	-0,494	0,623			
Seeking emotional support	0,828	2,132	0,068	0,388	0,699			
Seeking instrumental support	-0,192	1,636	-0,018	-0,117	0,907			
Distraction	-0,725	1,182	-0,075	-0,614	0,542			
Denial	-1,725	1,396	-0,150	-1,235	0,221			
Venting emotions	-0,325	1,877	-0,026	-0,173	0,863			
Psychoactive substance use	3,727	1,415	0,313	2,634	0,011			
Behavioural disengagement	-0,661	1,635	-0,053	-0,404	0,687			
Self-blame	2,495	1,355	0,263	1,841	0,070			
Extraversion	0,067	0,600	0,013	0,112	0,911			
Agreeableness	0,560	0,869	0,081	0,644	0,522			
Conscientiousness	-2,374	0,676	-0,401	-3,513	0,001			
Emotional stability	0,206	0,672	0,040	0,306	0,761			
Intellect	1,276	0,678	0,238	1,882	0,064			
Resilience coping	0,571	0,677	0,112	0,844	0,402			

Source: own work.

The results of own work show that no significant correlation was found between the problematic use of the Internet and resilience coping, either in the group of people in late adulthood or in the group of people in medium adulthood.

The last stage of analyses was regression analysis by inputting. The obtained model is shown in Table 5.

The analysis showed that the tested model significantly predicts the level of problematic Internet use (PUI). It predicts 47% of the PUI variance. Specifically, the significant predictors are: the stress-coping strategy psychoactive substance use and personality feature conscientiousness. The value of the standardized *Beta* regression coefficient indicates that the more often stress-coping strategy psychoactive substance use is applied, the greater the level of problematic Internet use. In contrast, the personality feature conscientiousness functions as a protective factor for the individual. The higher the result of this index, the lower the severity of problematic Internet use.

Discussion of the results

Over the recent years we have seen many publications on the topic of Internet addiction. However, they were mostly of preliminary character and required further, more in-depth analyses (Young et al. 2017). Additionally, the studies in this area so far frequently omitted certain groups of people – especially senior users. The studies carried out and described in this article aimed to verify the relation between problematic use of the Internet and its selected intrapsychic correlates. Noteworthy, the analysis of the results contributed to the development of theoretical knowledge regarding Internet addiction in the selected group of people and it may also constitute a basis for designing effective preventative interventions.

The results of own studies confirmed that selected stress-coping strategies (self-blame and venting emotions) coincide with increased problematic use of the Internet in the group of seniors. That is to say, individuals in late adulthood who demonstrate helplessness and certain avoidance behaviours in difficult situations will show higher severity of problematic use of the Internet. This is an important guideline for preventative interventions. It seems reasonable to offer this group of people workshops and training that would allow them to improve their ability to effectively deal with difficult situations. Such interventions would also be advisable in the group of medium adults, as it was identified that problematic use of the Internet among these individuals coincides with strategies in 'helplessness' category.

Another aspect analysed within this study was the relation between personality features and problematic use of the Internet. The results of own analysis are consistent with the analyses described by Kuss et al. (2014). In view of the results, emotional stability may be considered a factor that protects an individual against problematic use of the Internet. Therefore, when organizing preventive actions, it is pertinent to offer people in late adulthood activities that raise awareness about their own emotions.

The last aspect considered in this publication concerned the relationship between the problematic use of the Internet and the level of coping resilience. No significant correlations were found between these variables in the group of seniors or in the group or people in medium adulthood, so it can be concluded that resilience is neither a significant protective factor nor a risk factor in Internet addiction.

In conclusion, it should be stressed that the results of analyses presented in this article confirmed the need to carry out more studies. It would be advisable to perform such analyses in a sufficiently larger group of seniors, which would be appropriately differentiated in terms of, among others, socio-demographic variables.

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Rise of gender identity disorders among children and adolescents – data from 10 countries. Possible explanations, conclusions for parents

Wzrost zaburzeń tożsamości płci wśród dzieci i młodzieży – dane z 10 krajów. Możliwe wyjaśnienia, wnioski dla rodziców[1]

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Agnieszka Marianowicz-Szczygieł[a]

a Agnieszka Marianowicz-Szczygieł, MA, https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7818-8961
Institute of Analysis Sex and Sexuality "She and He" Foundation

Abstract: There are more and more publications in the world pointing to the global trend of a significant increase in people who identify themselves inconsistently with their biological sex. Children and adolescents are a particularly sensitive group here, as various dimensions of their identity are still taking shape. These trends are also reaching Poland. Parents and state services involved in the upbringing and education may be surprised and unprepared for such a state of affairs. There is a lack of analyses of these trends and attempts to explain them in the context of the already available knowledge on gender identity disorders, which would facilitate the elaboration of practical recommendations. The first part of the article presents epidemiological data illustrating the occurrence of gender identity disorders in the population. The methodological challenge was to define a reliable criterion illustrating the strength and scope of the observed changes in epidemiology among children and adolescents and at the same time enabling international comparisons of data from autonomous and clinics scattered all over the world. The challenge was all the greater given the problem of data availability. The article presents data on the explosion of gender identity disorders in children and adolescents based on the criterion of a number of referrals to specialized youth clinics from 10 countries: Sweden - an increase of 19,700%, Italy – 7,200%, Great Britain – 2,457%, Norway – 1,750%, the Netherlands - 904%, Finland - 634% and outside Europe: Australia – 12,650%, Canada - 538%, USA - 275%, and New Zealand - 187% (on average over 8 years). These data were also subjected to qualitative analysis (gender and age of referrals, number of referrals versus diagnoses). The explanations given in the scientific literature were also collected and analysed in relation to the available knowledge about the genesis of gender dysphoria, which, according to research, is acquired. Both the scale of the trend and additional qualitative analyses (change of the clinical picture and the inflow to clinics, especially of teenage girls), indicate that this trend cannot be explained only by an increase in social awareness, but also by the inducing influence of media and culture (additional studies have been cited to support these conclusions). The article provides an overview of the available knowledge in the field of the epidemiology of gender identity disorders, especially in children and adolescents, and helps to define practical steps, especially in the neglected area of prevention, which is crucial from the parents' perspective.
Keywords: epidemiology of gender dysphoria, gender dysphoria, gender identity disorders, parents, youth

Abstrakt: Na świecie pojawia się coraz więcej publikacji wskazujących na ogólnoświatowy trend znacznego przyrostu osób identyfikujących się niezgodnie z płcią biologiczną. Szczególnie newralgiczną grupą są tu dzieci i młodzież, gdy różne wymiary tożsamości wciąż jeszcze się kształtują. Trendy te docierają także do Polski. Rodzice i wszelkie służby państwowe zaangażowane w proces wychowania i edukacji, mogą być więc zaskakiwani i nieprzygotowani na taki stan rzeczy. Brakuje analiz tych trendów i podjęcia próby ich wyjaśnienia w kontekście już dostępnej wiedzy nt zaburzeń tożsamości płci, które ułatwiłyby wypracowanie praktycznych rekomendacji. W pierwszej części artykułu zebrano dane epidemiologiczne obrazujące występowanie zaburzeń tożsamości płci w populacji. Wyzwanie metodologiczne stanowiło określenie miarodajnego kryterium obrazującego siłę i zasięg zmian w epidemiologii wśród dzieci i młodzieży i zarazem umożliwiającego międzynarodowe porównania danych z autonomicznych i rozsianych po świecie klinik. Wyzwanie tym większe, że istnieje problem z dostępnością danych. W artykule przytoczono dane dotyczące eksplozji zaburzeń tożsamości płci u dzieci i młodzieży w oparciu o kryterium zgłoszeń do specjalistycznych klinik dla dzieci i młodzieży z 10 krajów: Szwecji - wzrost 19700%, Włoch - 7200%, Wielkiej Brytanii - 2457%, Norwegii 1750%, Holandii - 904%, Finlandii - 634% oraz poza Europą: Australii - 12650%, Kanady - 538%, USA - 275%, i Nowej Zelandii - 187% (średnio w ciągu 8 lat). Dane te następnie poddano analizie jakościowej (płeć i wiek zgłoszenia, zgłoszenia a postawione diagnozy). Zebrano także podawane w literaturze naukowej wyjaśnienia, które przeanalizowano w odniesieniu do dostępnej wiedzy na temat genezy transseksualizmu, który, jak wskazują badania, jest przeważająco nabyty. Zarówno skala trendu, jak i dodatkowe analizy jakościowe (zmiana obrazu klinicznego i napływ do klinik zwłaszcza nastoletnich dziewcząt), wskazują, że nie jest on wyłącznie efektem wzrostu świadomości społecznej, ale pozostaje także pod indukującym wpływem mediów i kultury (przytoczono dodatkowe badania, które popierają te konkluzje). Artykuł stanowi więc przegląd dostępnej wiedzy w zakresie epidemiologii zaburzeń tożsamości płci, zwłaszcza u dzieci i młodzieży oraz pomaga określić praktyczne kroki, zwłaszcza w zaniedbanej dziedzinie profilaktyki, kluczowej z punktu widzenia rodziców.
Słowa kluczowe: dysforia płciowa, epidemiologia dysforii płciowej, młodzież, rodzice, zaburzenia tożsamości płci

1 Artykuł w języku polskim: https://www.stowarzyszeniefidesetratio.pl/fer/2022-1Szczygiel.pdf

1. Introduction and justification of the choice of subject matter

Scientific reports on gender dysphoria have recently begun to include data on a significant increase in referrals of minor patients with suspected gender dysphoria and gender identity spectrum disorders to specialist clinics. These data, however, are known mainly in narrow circles of specialists in the world, and almost unknown in Poland, where there is lack of analyses on gender dysphoria, especially among children and adolescents, as noted for example by Dora, Grabski, Dobroczyński (2020, p. 1-2). These authors only mention in one sentence, the very fact of "a significant increase in the number of clinic-referred gender-dysphoric children and adolescents disclosing discomfort in relation to the sex assigned to them at birth"(ibidem, p. 2). These issues are also initially documented in the article "Gender identity disorders in children and adolescents - a psychological perspective. Genesis, risk factors, prognosis, prevention" (Marianowicz-Szczygieł, 2021). This phenomenon is also noted by Beisert, Witkoś (2018), or Robacha (2021, p. 289). Apart from a report by the "She and He" Institute Foundation on the increase in the number of people identifying as LGBT, including young people (Marianowicz-Szczygieł, 2020) – probably no international analysis on epidemiological trends in this area has ever been published in Poland. What is even more lacking is a review of scientific articles documenting more broadly the trend intensity among children and adolescents, its geographical range and possible explanations, not only in sociological categories, e.g. an analysis of demographic variables, but also with reference to already existing psychological knowledge on the causes of gender dysphoria, its clinical picture. On the other hand, media coverage of the topic of gender identity/identification, including the appearance of formal and informal content intended directly for children and adolescents, makes the topic already present in Polish homes and raises parents' dilemmas: how to answer the child's questions, is there a possibility of gender dysphoria specifically in my child, etc.

2. Methodology of the report and problems of terminology

This article compares data from 10 countries. Statistics on gender dysphoria or suspicion there of, especially among children and adolescents, are not readily available. Therefore, the choice was made to use data on referrals to specialist gender-identity-disorder clinics, which are most commonly cited and enabled international comparisons, rather than data on diagnosis of gender dysphoria (where statistics are published less frequently and the criteria for diagnosis vary - cf. Indremo, White, Frisell, Cnattingius, Skalkidou et al. 2021)[2], or self-identification and behaviour, which in turn occur more frequently (cf. Arnoldussen, Steensma, Popma, van der Miesen, Twiski et al. 2020, Research, 2017). Displayed behaviours specific to the opposite sex are the broadest category, as indicated in Figure1 below (cf. discussion and data from Zucker 2017, p. B). Gender dysphoria is a specific diagnostic category, so it was decided to replace it with the collective term gender identity disorder, also acceptable in the DSM. It will be important to inform parents that, for example, a one-off gender non-conforming behaviour - e.g. boys playing princesses, is not indicative of gender dysphoria - both the DSM and ICD in case of children speak of persistence of symptoms that last at least 6 months.

This meta-analysis compiles available data from countries on three continents to examine trends on a global scale (North America, Europe, and Australia). However, these are data only from western culture. The growing trends in LGBT self-identification from the report of the "She and He" Institute (Marianowicz-Szczygieł, 2020), also include data from China (specifically on homosexuality), which would indicate their global scope, not just limitation to the western culture. The topic of interculturalism, however, should be the subject of further analysis.

2 These authors indicate that a single diagnosis of gender dysphoria can be challenged, while the positive predictive value of a diagnosis for surgical 'sex reassignment ' increases with the number of diagnoses and is 79% for four or more diagnoses (ibidem p. 1).

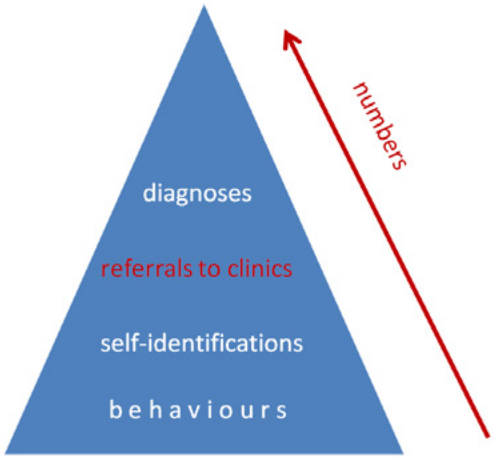

Figure 1. Decreasing number of measures of gender identity disorders.

3. Epidemiology - general data

From the work of Michael, Mormont, Legros (2001) we know that the percentage of people with transsexual tendencies in the population is about 0.002% (average for countries such as: Sweden, Great Britain, Australia, Ireland, Germany - Tab. no. 1 p. 368, average from the "Total" column), with the DSM IV giving an average of 1:30 000 for men and 1:100 000 for women (i.e. 0.003% for men and 0.001% for women). Thus, on average, men with transsexual tendencies seem to predominate worldwide. In Poland, as this article points out, for unknown reasons these proportions are reversed and it is women who much more often refer to specialist clinics. These proportions amount in our country to: M:K[3] - 1:5.5 (after Godlewski, 1988). More recent data, a meta-analysis from 2015 (Arcelus, Bouman, Van den Noortgate, Claes, Witcomb et al, 05-2015; 12 studies selected from 1473) gives different ratios: 4.6 per 100,000 people - 6.8 for 'transwomen' and 2.6 for 'transmen'. Next to Poland, Japan is mentioned as an exception here (p. 757). Possible explanations include different diagnostic criteria in our country or a different social position of women in post-communist countries than in the west.

Research indicates a gradual decline in the number of children and adolescents wanting to 'be the other sex' by the time they reach adulthood. Zucker (2017, p. B) reviewing research indicates that, depending on the subgroup, between 0% and 5% of children aged 4-11, according to their parents, would like to be the opposite sex (declarative data from The Child Behavior Checklist - CBCL), and as shown in the above percentages for adults, these figures reduce to the above mentioned 0.003% for males and 0, 001% for females in adulthood. With regard to children and adolescents, there are two age thresholds for the manifestation of gender dysphoria - early childhood and adolescence. The fact that the number of children with suspected gender dysphoria melts over time is also indicated by a review of studies by Marianowicz-Szczygiel (2021). Between the early childhood and early adulthood, as many as 81% of them decline (p. 107, based on 11 studies). Because of such a high degree of variability and fluidity in the developmental age, changing social identification and unequivocal resolutions (the wrongly used term "children and adolescents LGBT") should be avoided. As we do not currently have tools to accurately predict which children will have persistent gender dysphoria and in whom it will disappear (or appear sporadically) - there is a risk that explicit identifications may reinforce and perpetuate it. The research by Steensma, Boer, Cohen-Kettenis (2011) suggests that transition[4] before the age of 10 is particularly risky. The researchers (qualitative research on a small sample of individuals N=25) identified the following factors that may be important for changing identifications in children:

1. Change of school environment (in the Netherlands end of primary school),
2. Changes in the body connected with puberty,
3. First crush and sexual desire,
4. motivation - the group with permanent dysphoria tended to feel aversion to their body, the group in which gender dysphoria decreased tended wanting to enter roles typical of the desired gender.

3 M:K ratio – men: women.
4 Transition - or so-called gender reassignment, consisting of a number of stages.

4. Epidemiology - quantitative changes over time - analysis

Data from across the UK posted by one of the oldest (foundation year 1989) and considered one of the most prestigious specialist clinics for children with gender disorders - GIDS in London[5] , show that between 2010 and 2021 there was an increase in referrals from 138 to 2383 (patients' age: 3 years to 18+; data update 3 May 2021- GIDS 2021). If we extend the time frame to include one year earlier data that is no longer available on the clinic website, however was noted in a media publication (The Christian Institute 2018) and confirmed by a clinic report from 2009 - 2016 (Travistock and Portman NHS, n.d.), it appears that in 2009 the number of clinic referrals was 97. The Bayswater-support (n.d.) website shows even older data from 1989 (charts from the GIDS London website), so from the beginning of the clinic, when the first 4 patients referred there. However, it was until 2009 (97 cases) that the increase was slow, and accelerated greatly only after that date.

Data from the Netherlands are presented in Arnoldussen et al. (2020). They concern 1082 patients referring to the Center of Expertise on Gender Dysphoria in Amsterdam, age: 10.1- 18.1 years, in the period between 2000 and 2016. The article reports that the vast majority, 84.7%, of patients were diagnosed with gender dysphoria (Tab.1, ibidem). There has been a gradual increase in referrals since 2006 (the approximate figures read from the graph are 8 boys and 18 girls), while in the year taken as the last, i.e. 2016, there were 60 boys and about 175 girls.

Swedish data from the Astrid Lindgren Children's Hospital in Stockholm are for the years 2000 - 2016, there was an increase from a few cases up to 197 in 2016 (Friesen, Söder, Rydelius, 2017). This is also about clinic referrals, age category: children and adolescents. A sharp increase in the number of patients has occurred since 2006[6].

Cross-sectional studies for the four Scandinavian countries are given by Kaltiala et al. (2019), in addition to repeated data from Sweden, referrals to clinics in Norway, Denmark and Finland are included here. In the case of Denmark only the years 2016-2017 are covered, therefore only the data from Norway (for 2010-2017) and Finland (for 2011-2017) were qualified for the analyses, the increasing trends are very similar here. In 2011, Finland registered about 28 cases of clinic referrals, Norway about 18, while in 2017 respectively 180 and 175 referrals (data read from the graph, no exact numbers cited in the article). Age category: under 18 years.

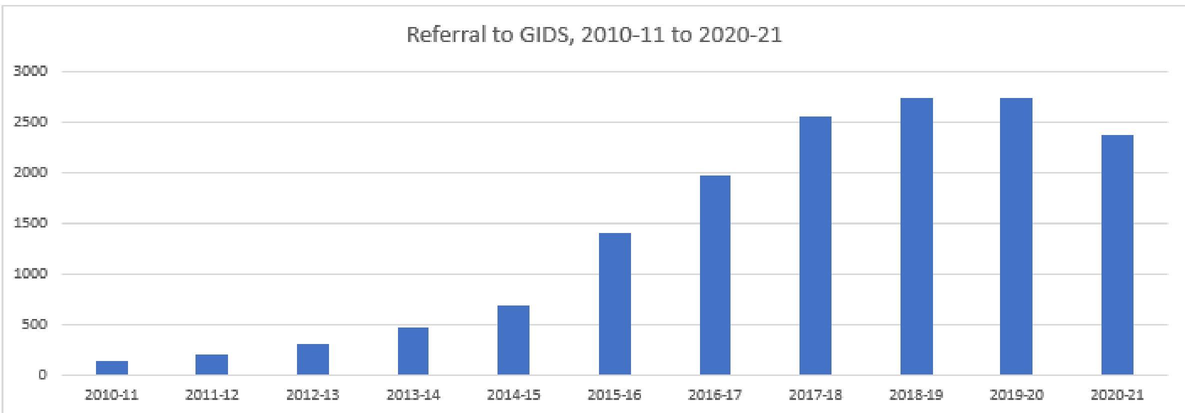

Chart 1. London GIDS clinic referral statistics 2010- 2021 from gids.nhs.uk.

5 GIDS clinic, or Gender Identity Development Service.

6 Data for Sweden for children and adolescents are also reported by Indremo et al.(2021) - they refer to diagnoses, and Kaltiala, Bergman, Carmichael, de Graaf, Rischeli et al.(2019) - they refer to the number of clinic referrals, but cover a shorter time range: since 2010.

Table 1. Comparing the number of referrals of children and adolescents to specialist gender identity disorder clinics in 10 countries (sources cited in text)

No.	country/name of the clinic from which the data come	A. initial year/ number of referrals to clinics	B. year of the beginning of the surge	C. final year/ number of referrals to the clinic	age category of patients	% increase in number of patients from year B to C
1.	New Zealand (Wellington Region)	1990-2012	2012	2012-2016	under 20 years	
	N=	30	30	56		187%
2.	USA (Specialty Transgender Clinic of Northern California)	February-15	2015	June 2018	3 -17 years	
	N=	56	56	154		275%
3.	Canada (CYFS/CAMH Clinic in Toronto)*	1976	2003	2013		
	N=	6	8	43	adolescents	538%
4.	Finland (all clinics)*	2011	2011	2017	children and adolescents under 18 years	
	N=	28	28	180	5	643%
5.	Netherlands (Center of Expertise on Gender Dysphoria in Amsterdam)*	2000	2006	2016	10.1- 18.1 years	
	N=	11	26	235		904%
6.	Norway (all clinics)*	2010	2010	2017	children and adolescents under 18 years	
	N=	10	10	175		1750%
7.	United Kingdom (Gender Identity Development Service, London)	1989	2009	2021		
	N=	4	97	2383	3-18+	2457%
8.	Italy (8 clinics in Osservatorio Nazionale sull'Identità di Genere)	2005	2009	2018		
	N=	1	1	72	children and adolescents	7200%
9.	Sweden (Astrid Lindgren Children's Hospital, Stockholm)*.	2000	2006	2016		
	N=	1	1	197	children and adolescents	19700%
10.	Australia (Royal Children's Hospital Melbourne)	2003	2008	2017	„children", exact age unknown	
	N=	1	2	253		12650%

*Data,out of necessity, read from chart, inaccuracy may occur: +/-1 or 2 referrals; N- number of referrals

Italian data are also available (Fisher, 2019), collecting statistics from eight clinics affiliated to the ONIG network (Osservatorio Nazionales ull'Identità di Genere - National Observatory on Gender Identity[7] : in Turin, Florence, Rome, Naples, Torre del Lago, Bari, Bologna, and Trieste). Between 2005 and 2018, in terms of referrals of children and adolescents, there was an increase from 1 to 72 cases.

7 Website: http://www.onig.it

The CYFS/CAMH in Toronto, Canada is another clinic with a strong international reputation. Data available here concern referrals and diagnoses made for the adolescents'age category (Aitken, Steensma, Blanchard, Vanderlaan, Wood et al. 2015). The data from 1976 to 2003 oscillate between 0 and 5 cases, only after 2003 there was a sharp increase, i.e. from a level of 4 referrals in both girls and boys (8 cases in total) until the year 2013 when a total of 43 cases (9 boys plus 34 girls) were estimated, as shown in the graph (graph from p. 757).

Data from the USA are quoted in the article by Handler, Hojilla, Varghese, Wellenstein, Satre, Zaritsky (2019), covering a rather short period of time: February 2015 - June 2018. They concern a total of 417 patients aged 3-17 years referring to the Specialty Transgender Clinic in Northern California. Despite such a short time span compared to other analyses, here too an increase in clinic referrals was apparent (the entire time span given was considered) from 56 to 154 individuals. The paper also calculated a monthly increase from 5.1 patients per month to 25.7, which means 504%.

Data from New Zealand (Wellington region) are about referrals to endocrinology facilities and specialists from individuals who identify themselves as transgender. Between 1990 and 2016 there were a total of 290 referrals from biological males aged 11-66 years - Delahunt, Denison, Sim, Bullock, Krebsi (2018) and from 148 biological females (data from the same age range but for a different age category: 13-35 years). If only the youngest age category (under 20) is considered, there were 30 referral in the period from 1990 until 2012, and 56 referrals between 2012 and 2016. This division of the time scale was proposed by the authors themselves, and the way the data are given makes it impossible to capture the trend more precisely, although as the authors mention, the increase has occurred since 2010.

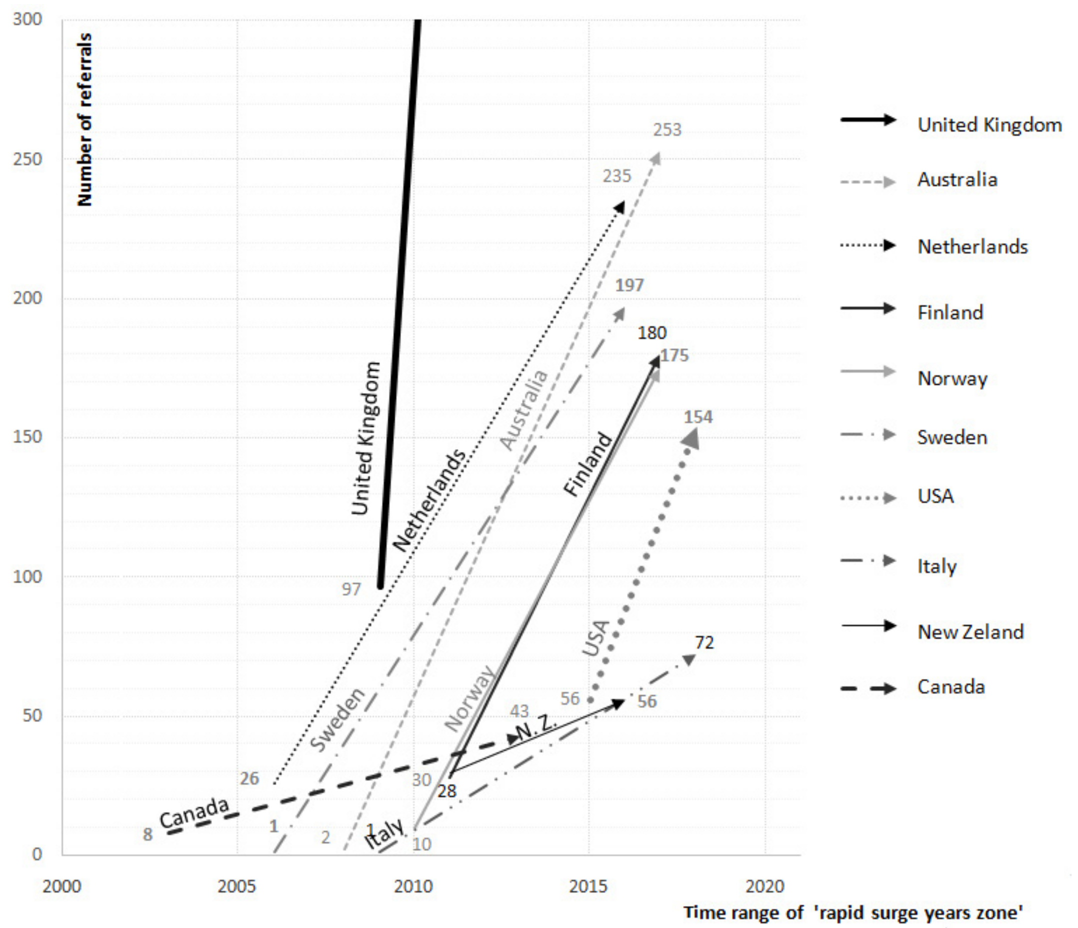

Chart 2. Increase of the number of referrals in clinics in 10 countries in 'rapid surge years zone'.

Table 2. Average percentage annual increase in clinic referrals for each country within the given 'rapid surge years zone'

country	range of years of the ‚rapid surge years zone' patient numbers	number of referrals to clinics	average % annual growth
New Zealand	2012	30	16,9%
New Zealand	2016	56	
Canada	2003	8	18,3%
Canada	2013	43	
Finland	2011	28	36,4%
Finland	2017	180	
USA	2015	56	40,1%
USA	2018	154	
Netherlands	2006	26	24,6%
Netherlands	2016	235	
Norway	2010	10	50,5%
Norway	2017	175	
United Kingdom	2009	97	30,6%
United Kingdom	2021	2383	
Italy	2009	1	60,8%
Italy	2018	72	
Sweden	2006	1	69,6%
Sweden	2016	197	
Australia	2008	2	71,2%
Australia	2017	253	

The Royal Children's Hospital Melbourne, Australia (Hancock, 4-10-2018) published data on referrals of underage patients. The data from 2003 to 2017 are for "children" in general (children's hospital), the exact age range is not specified, however the number of patients increased from 1 in 2003, to 253 in 2017, with an increase starting in 2008 (2 patients).

Quantitative data from all 10 countries are summarised in Table 1 below. For each country, the range of calendar years for the available data and the names of the clinics are marked. Using the data for the year from which the beginning of the sharp increase in the number of referrals was observed (year B) compared with the data for the last available year (year C), the percentage increase in referrals between year B and year C was calculated (year B either read from the graphs or reported in the sources - the boundary is conventionalout of necessity). The countries were then ranked from lowest to highest in terms of these percentage increases.

Based on the data in Table 1 (the difference in data for years B and C, referred to as the "rapid surge years zone"), the Figure 2 was drawn. The line for the UK extends beyond the graph (this scale best represents the other data). The degree of slope of the line illustrates the strength of the upward trend.

The average annual percentage increments based on the same data are contained in Table 2,and the data from this table presented in graphical form is shown in Figure 3.

The data presented (Figure 2) illustrates the strong rising trend in all 10 countries, which averaged annually between 16.9% (New Zealand) and 71% (Australia). If the full percentage increase in the 'rapid surge zone' is considered, there was a 19700% increase in patients in Sweden (for 2006-2016), Italy - 7200% (2009- 2018), the UK - 2457% (2009-2021), the Netherlands - 904% (2006-2016), Norway - 1750% (2010-2017), Finland - 643% (2011-2017), and outside of Europe: Australia - 12650% (2008-2017), Canada - 538% (2003-2013), USA - 275% (2015-2018) and New Zealand - 187% (2012-2016). The average range of time for these changes is 8 years. Some differences between countries can be observed. In terms of the number of referrals the London clinic (the largest bubble size in Figure 3) is definitely ahead, but here the data is the most recent i.e. from 2021. These rapid changes were observed around the same time, i.e. the number of patients started to increase from 2003 (Canada), 2006 (Sweden, Netherlands), 2008 (Australia), 2009 (Italy, UK). The later dates, i.e. 2012 - in the case of New Zealand and 2015 –the USA, result from the data availability (in the USA the data start from 2015, in the case of New Zealand one had to adjust to the breakdown of the figures presented in the source article). In the case of the data for Finland and Norway, the whole time range was also included out of necessity (an apparent upward trend), perhaps earlier data would have captured the plateau.

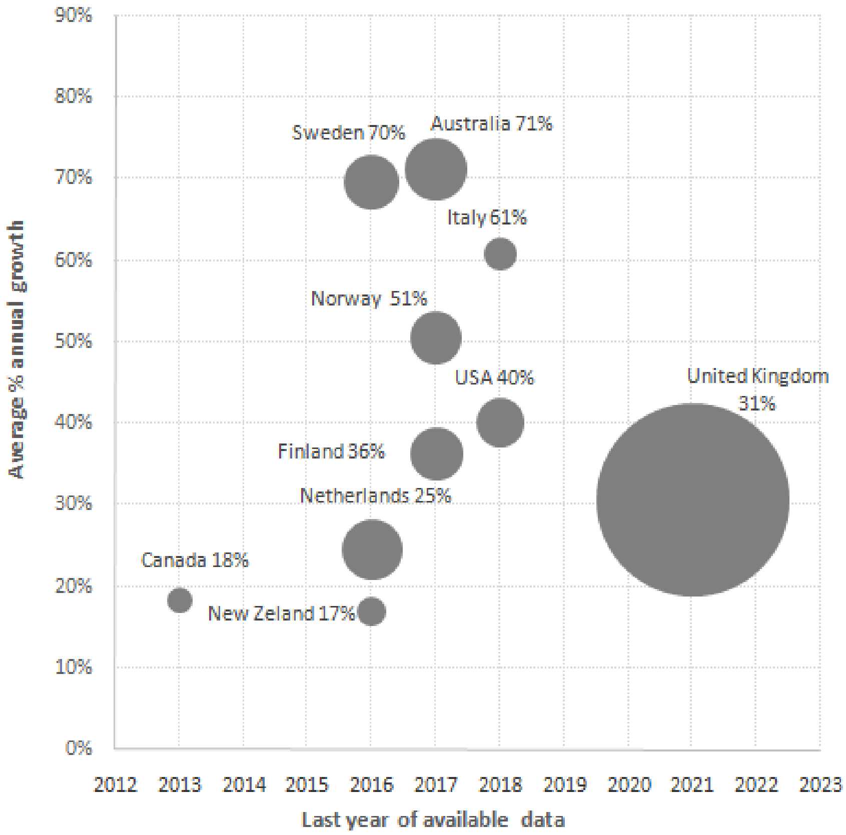

Chart 3. Average percentage annual increase in the number of patients per country in the 'rapid surge years zone'.

The above quantitative comparative analyses are of preliminary nature and need to be deepened as data becomes more available. The given percentage increases in each country - in the absence of complete data - are indicative values. It should also be noted that the data do not cover all clinics in each country - the exceptions being only Finland and Norway, and data from Italy (a consortium of eight clinics). Nevertheless they confirm the rapid trend in the influx of minor patients with suspected gender identity disorders into clinics for all 10 countries (albeit with varying strength).

5. Epidemiology - qualitative changes - change in clinical picture in terms of age and gender

To explain the above upward trends in epidemiology, it is also necessary to look at possible qualitative changes. In this area, several valuable comparative papers have been published, emphasising in particular the change in the sex ratio and age of patients. According to these analyses, instead of the previously predominant young boys, adolescent girls started to dominate the clinical picture. These data were cross-referenced with adult data to see how universal these trends are.

From the late 1990s, a group of girls with gender dysphoria only manifesting in their teenage years began to appear in statistics - a trend that overlapped with the general trend of increasing cases of gender dysphoria among adolescents. Currently, although gender dysphoria cases in childhood are predomi-

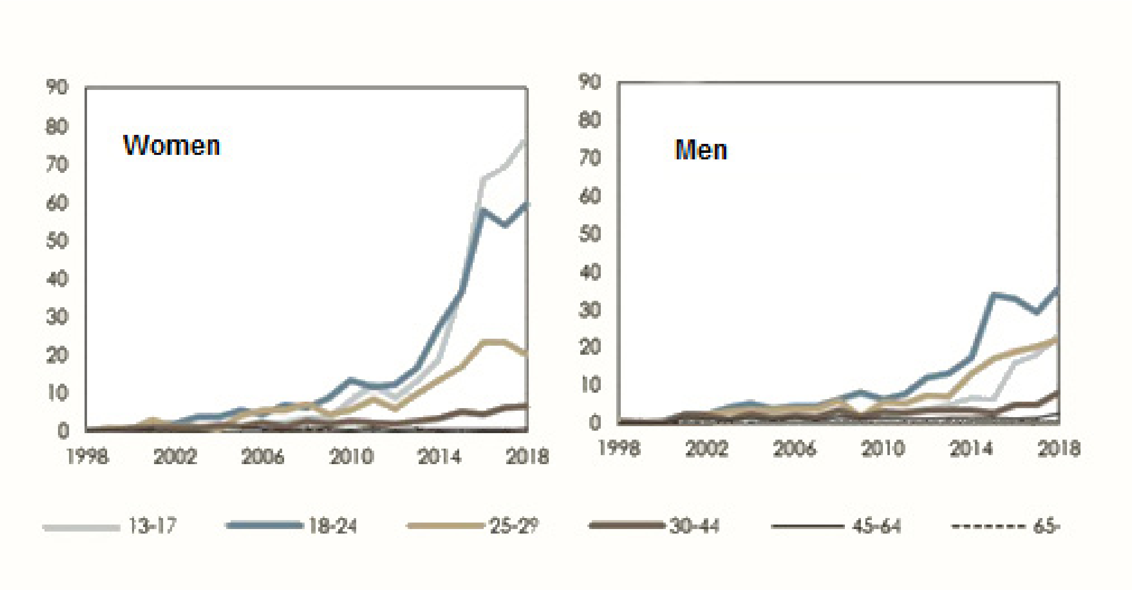

Chart 4. New cases of diagnosed gender dysphoria (F64) in Sweden per 100,000 population with age and biological sex at diagnosis based on data from the National Board of Health and Welfare, 2017 p. 7.

nantly boys, girls predominate in the teenage years (Aitken et al. 2015; Clarke, Spiliadis, 2019; de Graaf, Carmichael, Steensma, Zucker, 2018; Littman, 2018; Steensma, Cohen-Kettenis, Zucker et al, 2018; Zucker, 2017). The rapidity of this process is captured in particular by the study of Aitken et al. (2015), where the ratio of boys to girls was 2.11:1 between 1999 and 2005, only to decrease to 1:1.76 between 2006 and 2013. Clarke and Spiliadis (2019) also point out that from the age limit of 9-12 years onwards, girls begin to dominate the statistics. Steensma et al. (2018) report that prior to 2006 there was a predominance of boys to girls ratio at 2.11:1 (Toronto) and 1.41:1 (Amsterdam), but over time, as noted by de Graaf, Cohen-Kettenis, Carmichael, de Vries, Dhondt et al. (18-12- 2017 online, print 2018) this ratio decreased in favour of girls to: 1.27:1 and 1.25:1 in the second decade of the 21st century until the trend reversed to 1:1.59[8] between 2009 and 2013 (data from clinics in Switzerland, the Netherlands, Belgium and the UK).

The above analysed data from 8 countries reflect this increasing trend of quantitative dominance of adolescent girls over boys (i.e. Norway, Finland, Sweden, Netherlands, Italy, Canada, New Zeland, USA)[9]. Sweden can be pointed to as an example. According to Friesen, Söder, Rydelius, (2017), in 2010 in Sweden among adults after the so-called sex reassignment surgery there was a clear predominance of biological males 1: 7 750 and the proportion of biological females was like 1:13 120, while among minor patients at the Astrid Lindgren Hospital the sex ratio was the opposite, about 25% were boys and 75% girls (ibidem, p. 2). Linander (2018) reviewing the epidemiological data from Sweden (ibidem, p. 46) indicates that, irrespective of age category, the number of patients with gender identity disorder has been increasing, especially since 2015. However, aggregate data presented in this way do not capture all the qualitative changes that follow and more detailed analyses are needed. Other Swedish data from the National Board of Health and Welfare (2017, p. 7; cf. Figure 2), on the other hand, clearly shows that the most drastic increase in diagnoses is recorded mainly among girls and in the age categories from 13-17 and 18-24 years (the two highest lines). Among biological males, the upward trends are much weaker, and the 13-17 age category is only third in line after the 8-24 and 25-29 age categories.

8 Based on the data in Table 1 in the above studies.
9 For United Kingdom and Australia gender data are unavailable or incomplete.

6. Review of possible explanations for observed epidemiological trends.

As can be seen from the research review above, it is quite common in the scientific literature that the number of patients with gender identity disorders is increasing in all age categories. However, there is a clear change in the clinical picture: while biological males have predominated among adult patients in many countries so far, the number of female referrals in specialist clinics is now increasingly equal to that of males. This trend is much more pronounced among children and adolescents, where the previously statistically dominant group of young boys has been replaced by teenage girls. What is most relevant to psychology, however, is not simple statistical summaries, but the question of the cause of the growing trends and their consequences. What follows is a review of literature and a catalogue of possible explanations. Each of presented pathways involves specific practical implications for parents, which are discussed at the end.

6.1. Iclarifications concerning qualitative changes:

6.1.1. Sex ratio changes explained independent of the genesis of gender identity disorders:

1. The change in adolescent sex ratio is due to biological girls being more open about their transgender feelings due to less stigmatisation of such women than men.

This is how the sex ratio differences are explained by the team of Arnoldussen et al. (2020). Unfortunately, such a hypothesis would not explain why, taking into consideration gender-non-selective media coverage or public policies, such openness would suddenly appear in a selective way only for women and not for men, if it did not exist before.

2. The change in the sex ratio in adolescents would be due to an earlier onset of puberty in girls compared to boys.

This is also the hypothesis of the team of Arnoldussen et al. (2020), who himself openly admits (ibidem, p. 809 and 810), however, that if this hypothesis were true, girls would be referred to clinics earlier, and no such trend was observed here. Similar observations in adults who have, after all, already reached puberty, also speak against this hypothesis.

3. Other factors that may influence the change in sex ratio.

The fact that there has been an upward trend and reversal of gender trends among adults in Australia (biological females dominate instead of biological males as before) is explained by formal considerations and the high likelihood of the impact of the new 2015 medical regulations (Australian Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme), which allow people to receive refunded hormone therapy subject to several medical certificates (Cheung, Ooi, Leemaqz, Cundill, Silberstein, 2018, p. 234).

6.1.2. Sex ratio inversion is linked to quantitative changes and the genesis of gender identity disorders:

Given the common psychological roots of both homosexuality and transsexualism (cf. Wieczorek, 2018, ch. 6.4), closer attention should be paid to issues of subjective gender perception and changing social gender patterns as a possible cause of the observed trends. In both cases, both positive and negative connotations about the gender in question need to be taken into account. Positive connotations: a gender that is subjectively on a social pedestal provides a greater sense of security and becomes more attractive. Negative connotations: an aversion to a given gender or a subjectively perceived lack of ability to identify and mentally "connect" with a given gender (lack of sufficient contacts, support, role models, own resources) "deters" from a given gender. This topic certainly requires further research, but in this model the aspirations of women raised by e.g. feminism, traditionally referred to as "masculine" and emphasizing male character traits as more desirable in women, could have contributed to the change of social patterns of femininity, and these could lead to subjective changes. It is also much more common to talk about male dominance, and women's problems, than vice versa. Young girls may read this as a message: it is better to be a man than a woman. Overlapping these social patterns, changes in the body and the shock of puberty (growing breasts, the first menstruation and associated inconveniences) may further subjectively reinforce this message. Girls may also be more relational, expressive and use social media more frequently (cf. further quantitative explanations), although globally FB users are outnumbered by men: (800,026,950 men and 646,953,680 women - Garcia, Cuevas, Rahwan 2017, p. 13, Supplementary Table1). However there are large differences between countries here, e.g. in the US 75% of FB users are women (Affde 2021). It was also discovered that women are more active on FB in the context of networking (Garcia, Cuevas, Rahwan, 2017, p. 5).

6.2. Clarifications concerning quantitative changes:

6.2.1. The number of people with transgender tendencies is not increasing:

1. The number of people with transgender tendencies is not increasing, but the recognition of gender identity disorders is increasing, through greater public awareness and availability of specialist medical services, or decreasing social stigma; the media can facilitate communication - this narrative is most often.

Arnoldussen et al. (2020, p. 809 and 810) suggest that quite simple, gender dysphoria among adolescents is more common than previously thought, and that the increased social visibility of this topic helps young people to better recognise their symptoms and to referto specialists more courageously. The team of Kaltiala et al. (2019, abstract) provides the following explanation: "The reasons for the increase are not known but increased awareness of gender identity issues, service availability, destigmatization as well as social and media influences may play a role". Similarly, the team of Aitken et al. (2015, p. 760). "These trends may reflect changing social norms and broadly understood acceptance of gender diversity, as well as improved availability of specialist treatment for TGNC" - argues Handler, Hojilla, Varghese, Wellenstein, Satre et al. (2019, p. 4).

This type of hypothesis is also supported in Poland by Robacha (2021, p. 289): "Over the last years there has been an increase in referrals with this problem. This seems to be due to greater awareness, social openness and accessibility to treatment".

The same line of thinking is replicated by Beisert and Witkoś (2018): "The universality of this phenomenon is linked to the availability of psychological help, a greater degree of openness in the discussion of adolescent sexuality and an increasing understanding of adolescents. Another factor influencing the frequency of the phenomenon may be the development of the internet that gives transgender people a possibility to communicate internationally and seek help in this area". Indremo et al. (2021, p. 5) note that perhaps at the same time diagnostic thresholds in clinics have decreased.

Perhaps greater public recognition may account for a partial increase in the number of new referrals to clinics, but it would not explain such a high rate of increase, which is downright avalanche. Nor does it completely explain the qualitative changes (age and sex ratio of new referrals) - and thus the change in the clinical picture.

2. Other possible explanation (own): the number of people with transgender tendencies is not increasing, what's increasing is the number of referrals but not diagnoses.

The increasing amount of information on gender dysphoria has resulted in greater public awareness and greater willingness on the part of parents to look out for possible symptoms. The number of diagnoses is not changing, the increasing number of referrals is a result of "oversensitivity". This is only a hypothesis that needs to be verified. A comparison of the number of referrals to the number of diagnoses was made in one study quoted here[10], i.e. in the Netherlands: the % of diagnoses of gender dysphoria remained fairly constant at an average of 84.6% - M. Arnoldussen et al. (2020, p. 808), implying a proportional increase in the number of diagnoses as patients flow in. This would speak against this hypothesis. Similarly, a cross-sectional analysis of gender dysphoria diagnoses for the years 2005- 2016 in Sweden (Indremo et al. 2021, Fig. 4, p. 6) confirms their increase in the group of 10-17 year olds, especially girls (see also Figure 4). This hypothesis is also adversely affected by the rapid increase in clinic referrals (and not "slight" or "moderate", as one would expect) and qualitative changes.

6.2.2. Referring to the genesis of transsexualism: the number of transsexual people is increasing because the intensity of factors that are (can be) linked to its mainly biological genesis is increasing:

1. Referring mainly to biological components in the genesis of gender identity disorders: other factors besides the psycho-social environment are responsible for quantitative changes, e.g. civilisation pollution, medication, links to autism.

Robacha (2021, p. 289) gives another explanation (unfortunately without anchoring it in the scientific literature), which refers to the biological determinants of transsexualism: "Perhaps the reason for gender identity disorders is the influence of drugs or civilization pollution, altering neurotransmitter metabolism in the brain during the prenatal period". Friesen et al. (2017; data for Sweden) show an increasing number of autism cases in Stockholm region (currently 2.5% of adolescents). As autism spectrum disorders are significantly overrepresented among those who reject their biological sex (up to 26%, according to the study), it is possible that common roots (biological, psychological or sociological) also influence the increase in cases of gender dysphoria.

6.2.3. Social transmission: the number of transsexual individuals is increasing as the psycho-social elements of the genesis of gender identity disorders are intensified:

1. Social transmission. Gender-neutral upbringing, sex education in an equality model or the "dogma of equality" in sexual and gender diversity induce an increase in cases of gender identity disorders.

MEP interpellation in the European Parliament (European Parliament, 2017, 21 March) question no. E-001877-17 asked by Marie-Christine Arnautu (ENF) - the French MEP suggests gender-neutral upbringing, "equality as dogma" and the general greater openness of Swedish society as possible reasons for the increase in the number of children "who want to change their sex".

The Swedish dilemma is also well illustrated by the larger quantitative figures for the increase in minor patients than elsewhere in the world - an increase of 19700% in 10 years.

Zucker (2008) indicated that incorrect reaction of parents and allowing sexually uncharacteristic behaviour may be the cause of gender dysphoria. Cysarz (2021, p. 302), citing Kohlberg's position (1966),emphasises that "gender identity in a child can be a permanent organising factor in his/her psychosexual attitudes only if he/she can be absolutely certain of its immutability". Thus, gender-neutral kindergartens in Sweden or gender-neutral toys would not create this immutable gender basis.

2. Social transmission. Fashion, media and social media influence, social networking induce or reinforce gender identity disorders in adolescents.

Littman (2018) described the *rapid-onset gender dysphoria* (ROGD) syndrome, suggesting that ROGD may arise under the influence of the internet and social media and through peer networks (cf. also the author's response to the methodological objections raised against her - Littman 2019). Zucker (2019)

10 i.e. one source article of quantitative data of 10 countries.

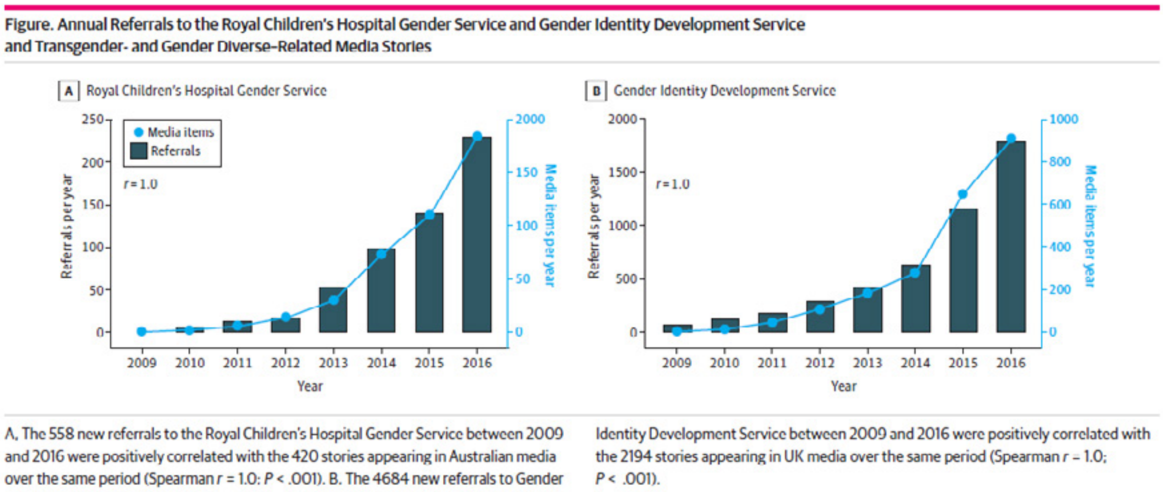

Chart 5. The correlation of increase of referrals to specialist gender identity disorder clinics with transgender- and gender-related media publications (left: Australia, right UK) after Pang et al. (2020, p. 4).

advises not too hastily reject this hypothesis. Similarly, this hypothesis is not dismissed lightly by Hutchinson, Midgen and Spiliadis (9-07-2019), who point out that it corresponds with their clinical experience and encourage further research. Furthermore, the Swedish psychiatrist Sven Roman points out that these are well-known facts that e.g. eating disorders or self-mutilations can be spread socially (e.g. through contact with peers) - Canadian Gender Report (2020, Update: 2021, 5 May). The same page shows data on Sweden, where after a fierce public discussion, media publications, statements by professionals and the film "Trans train", there was a 65% decrease in the trend of children and adolescents referrals to clinics in 2019. A similar process and, as a result, a social reflection as well asa downward trend occurred in the UK (cf. Figure 1).

It is also worth noting that the analysed period overlaps with the emergence and spread of social media, with FB established in 2004, Twitter in 2006 and Instagram in 2010. However, chat rooms and internet forums were already popular before that.

Ground-breaking research was conducted by the team Pang, de Graaf, Chew, Hoq, Keithi et al. (2020), where it was shown that increased national media coverage of 'gender' and 'transgender' stories correlated positively with increased referrals to this type of clinics for children and adolescents in the UK and Australia between 2009 and 2016 (see Figure 3). During that time, there were 420 media publications in Australia and 2,194 in the UK. The lines presenting the appearance of these publications and the influx of referrals, almost overlap (ibidem, p. 4). From these data it can be calculated that for each single media release the numbers increased by 0.75 patients at the Melbourne Hospital in Australia and 0.46 patients at GIDS in London.

3. Social transmission. Own proposal: the impact of culture undermining and blurring biological sex.

Media pressure cannot, however, be the only factor responsible for quantitative changes and their sources must be sought in e.g. culture or social policy. An increasing number of easily accessible cultural messages in the public space proclaim "multiple genders", "gender choice", "easy sex change without side effects". In doing so, no distinction is made between subjective psychic identification - which is one layer of gender or social gender roles - and other layers anchored directly in biology (genetic, hormonal, gonadal, genital, phenotypic sex), proclaiming the primacy of psychic identification and its comprehensive capacity to create the reality: "you are who you think you are". Facebook, a medium with a very high impact force, in 2014 introduced a registration form in the US with as many as 50 gender and sexual identity terms (Sparkes, 2014), while in the UK the range of choices

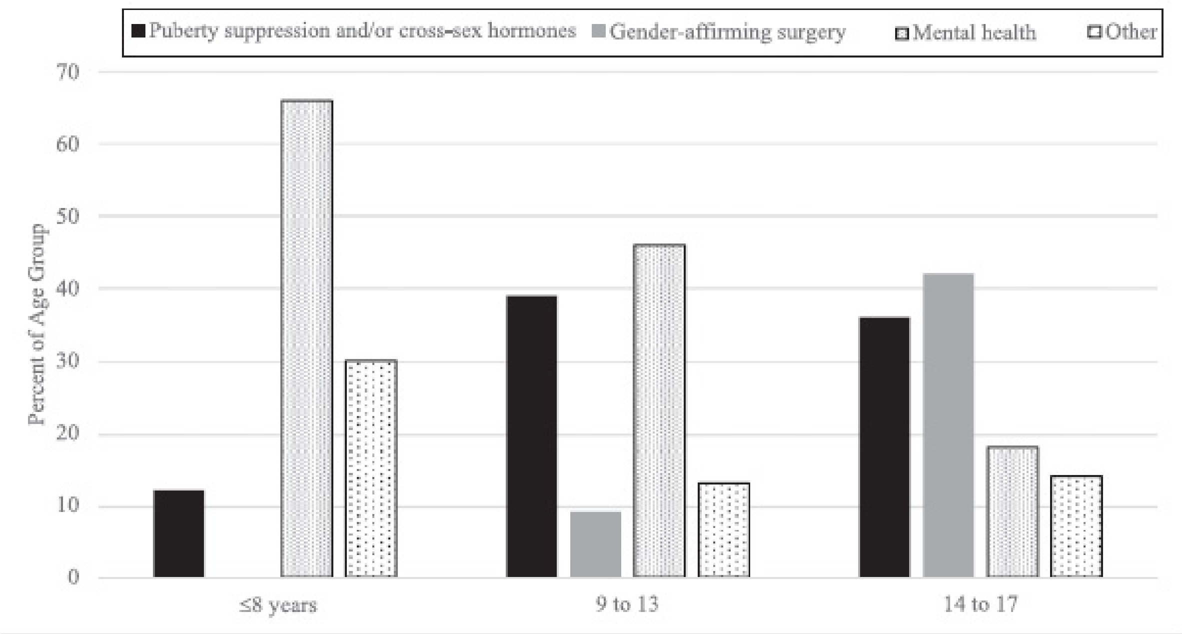

Chart 6. Types of specialist services provided at a clinic in North California, USA following Handler et al. (2019, p. 4). Colours in order: black - hormones, grey - surgery, shading - mental health support, dotting - other. Age groups indicated at the bottom.

was expanded with additional 21 options, giving a total of 71 identifications to choose from (Wiliams, 2014). One also encounters a whole host of non-specific terms such as: gender fluid, non-binary (i.e. rejecting the division into two biological sexes), third gender, etc. The highest number of terms for sexual and gender orientations is 235, as counted by the 'She and He' Institute (2020). The oldest university in Poland - the Jagiellonian University - introduced a questionnaire for students in which there are 5 options to choose from regarding sexuality, including a "non-binary" option (Solidarni2010, 2021). Vilnius University introduces gender-neutral language (Rachlevičius, 2021). Through anti-discrimination education and sex education in the CSE model supported by the UN (UNESCO 2018), which is compulsory in over a dozen countries[11], young people become accustomed to non-standard gender identifications as a positive alternative. The question arises whether this type of education preaching a message of tolerance can act as an encouragement to explore unknown areas (curiosity, desire to stand out, fashion)? Does it provoke e.g. escape reactions into the "other sex" especially in situations of crises and overload? Or can it sow uncertainty regarding one's own gender identity, which can be particularly risky during the developmental period? Let's add to this the crisis of masculinity, or the influence of fashion, which often mixes masculine and feminine elements[12], the art, which likes to shock, or the transgender rights movement.

The fact that this type of influence can at least sow uncertainty in children about their own gender is evidenced by a case from Canada, where a girl, after being presented with 'Queer Kids Stuff' materials in a kindergarten, began to claim that girls and boys do not exist and to question her girlhood (Johnston, 27-06- 2019). The earliest threshold for the beginning of upward trends was noticed in countries at the forefront of the social revolution (Canada, the Netherlands, and Sweden - cf. chapter 5).

4. Social transmission. Changes in public policy and pharmaceutical industry lobbying as enabling circumstances.

11 See the map onthe website of the sex education film "It's nothing": https://tonictakiego.pl/

12 E.g. Weppresent (n.d.).

The Royal Children's Hospital Melbourne, Australia (Hancock, 4-10-2018) reports that due to long queues, underage patients have to wait 14 months for their first appointment. The first clinic for children and adolescents with gender identity disorders was established in the US in Boston in 2007, in 2014 there were already 40 such clinics in the US (Human Rights Campaign, n.d.)[13] , and 80 in 2021 (Monostra, 2021). Add to this the fact that 'sex reassignment' means taking hormones for life. The so-called gender reassignment surgeries consist of many surgeries and treatments and are spread over several years. The annual maintenance of a sex-reassignment patient at the taxpayer's expense in Australia was calculated at $5,000 (Hancock, 4-10-2018), but the cost of a full transition at $100,000 (Lavoipierre, 1-03-2018). In the USA the costs are even higher than $100,000 - data after Jones 2019). In Poland 30-40 thousand zloty must be paid by a man who wants to resemble a woman, and 35 thousand zloty by a woman (data from Estheticon website, n.d.).

The following shocking data (after Handler et al., 2019) shows that 'sex reassignment' surgery is performed, albeit in a minority (grey bar), as early as on 9 -13 year olds, andit's the dominant way of 'specialist assistance' for 14-17 year olds. An answer to the question appeared on the Polish Estheticon forum, which stated that 16-year-olds with gender dysphoria, by all means, with the consent of both parents, can have their breasts amputated (Estheticon, n.d.).

The growth of this medical business sectoris also evidenced in the article by Chen, Jin, Yang, Qu, Weng et al. (2019), which compiles the increasing frequency of clinical trial announcements (and therefore investments in this medical sector) on the US government website: ClincialTrials.gov. These trends are almost identical, in terms of rate and time scale of change, to the increase od referrals in specialist clinics (the year when the marked increase in announcements began was 2009). This is also facilitated by changes in the law and changes in public policies (e.g. transition refund). Although the inverse relationship is also possible.

7. Practical tips for parents

As can be seen from the above review of 10 possible explanations for the exponential increase in the number of referrals to clinics, among the factors that can be influenced by parents, they should pay primary attention to positive messages about their child's own gender and respect for the opposite sex. They should also monitor the child's development for early recognition of manifestation of gender dysphoria. Children's networks, including on social media and any exposure to undermining biological sex, especially gender-neutral parenting, are important. When gender dysphoria occurs, alternative help paths should be explored and assessedin each case by: health, psychological and social risks as well as financial costs. The psychological immaturity of a child as well as the high intrinsic variability and disappearance of gender dysphoria especially at puberty should also be taken into account. The help path proposed by a professional institution should be verified by providing reliable information (specific references to research and meta-analyses, clinical reports, and not just general statements or e.g. statements of professional industry associations). Careful attention should also be paid to the high financial profitability of transitions for medical institutions and, on the other hand, to inadequate promises of each therapy's effectiveness. There is a risk of bias in both. One should also be aware of the time variable - the earlier the therapy is undertaken, the more effective it is; but on the other hand, earlier application of an affirmative approach produces better aesthetic results in the case of so-called gender reassignment. The above risk analysis, however, is not sufficient and the predominantly acquired genesis of gender identity disorders must be borne in mind. The impact of biological factors in the case of transsexualism based on 11 studies was estimated at only 36% (median; Marianowicz-Szczygiel, 2021, p. 99, based on data from the meta-analysis of Polderman et al., 2018). K.J. Zucker (2008) discusses psycho-social factors

13 This Boston clinic established in 2007 is Gender Multispeciality Service (GeMS), it does not publish its data - https://www.childrenshospital.org/gems

in the genesis of gender dysphoria in children; Marianowicz-Szczygieł (2021, p. 98-106) also provides a helpful review of studies.

The following reviews of studies have shown low or no effectiveness of the so-called gender reassignment process for the actual improvement of the life quality of people with transgender tendencies: ARIF, 2004 based on 100 studies; Rowniak, Bolt, Sharifi, 2019 - 7 studies, 552 test persons, review of 70 studies Georgas, Beckman, Bryman, Elander, Jivegård et al. (2018), a report by the Swedish government agency SBU (12-2019), where the lack of long-term evidence was particularly marked. The team of Haupt, Henke, Kutschmar, Hauser, Baldinger et al. (2020) showed that the evidence for the efficacy and safety of estrogen administration in M/F individuals is insufficient - a "gap between current clinical practice and clinical research" was found. Both the American College of Paediatricians (2017) and the SEGM association[14] note the risk of advere effects of applying hormones to children and adolescents: cardiovascular disease, skeletal disease, blood pressure problems, blood clots, strokes, post-surgery complications, diabetes, in addition to the obvious infertility and removing healthy organs. It is also worth pointing out that the so-called gender reassignment surgery, if only for medical reasons, is not available to everyone who wants it. The team of Lane, Ives, Sluiter, Waljee, Yao et al. (04-2018) estimated that medical complications after the so-called sex reassignment surgery occur in 5.8% of patients (data from 1047 patients). See the SEGM website[15] for an overview of research on psychotherapy.

Limitations of the article and final conclusions

The level of knowledge about gender identity disorders in children, including epidemiology, will certainly increase. As far as the avalanche inflow of referrals of minor patients to gender identity disorder clinics is concerned, this is a fairly recent phenomenon, but one that is well established in the western culture. The advantage of this article is a bigger number of countries analysed in this respect to ten on three continents, which shows the scale of this phenomenon. Creating a matrix of possible explanations can also be a step forward. This stage is often overlooked or presented rather one-sidedly as the result of increased public awareness. A qualitative analysis was enormously helpful here. A limitation of the presented study review, on the other hand, is the lack of complete data for a given time period year by year for all clinics from a given country. Their availability would mean more complete comparisons and more sophisticated statistical tools. For example, in Sweden, in addition to the Stockholm clinic discussed here, there are other centres for adolescents aged 16 and over in Alingsås, Linköping, Lund, Umeå and Uppsala (Friesen, Söder, Rydelius, 2017, p. 3), however Sweden created a national registry andstarted to publish its aggregate data systematically only in 2018[16]. A gender identity disorder clinic was established in Denmark only in 2016, in Finland in 2011 (Kaltiala et al. 2019, p. 3). Although it seems that the increase in social awareness may be partly responsible for the increase in gender identity disorders among children and adolescents, the change in the clinical picture (influx of adolescent girls into clinics) indicates that multiple arguments for social transmission of these disorders seem to prevail, especially with the rather commonly ignored fact of a predominant environmental genesis (studies on twins). Of course, one should not forget to examine biological factors, which, however, play a rather supplementary role. Aitken et al. (2015, p. 760) also realise that the inversion of the sex ratio makes it impossible to explain changes solely by the factor of increased social awareness and availability of services. It's worth emphasizing that the hypothesis of a dominant psychosocial transmission of gender dysphoria (including epidemiology analysis carried out here) is consistent with models of developing and implementing sexuality from the perspective of various psychological schools. Cognitive-developmental

14 https://segm.org/
15 https://segm.org/studies
16 https://konsdysforiregistret.se/om-registret/arsrapporter/

models are based on universal stageality, where the basis of gender identity (the child's categorisation of himself/herself as belonging to a given sex) is overlaid with gender continuity (boys develop into males, girls into females), gender invariability and thus a gender stability in a given person is formed (Vasta, Haith, Miller, 1995, p. 551-552). Learning theories emphasise learnt gender patterns, which can also be modified, including rejection under the influence of changes in the environment (ibidem p. 553). Existential psychology, on the other hand, views carnality (including sexuality) as a way of self-realization that extends into relations with the outside world (Hall, Lindzey 1990, p. 305). Psychoanalysis strongly emphasises the relationship with the body and the discovery of one's carnality especially in early childhood, as well as frustrations, conflicts in social relations, and the process of identification. In Freud's stadium theory of psychosexual development, sexuality emerges in the third phallic stage, between the ages three and five, when children become aware of sexual differences due to anatomical structure (ibidem, p. 60-61). Sexuality based on sex awakens in adolescence. The neopsychoanalytic concept of E. Erickson emphasises the psychosocial and gradual development of identity with particular emphasize on a period of adolescence, when identity confusion may occur. Then the ego's task is to select and integrate its own talents and skills and to adapt (or not) to the environment (ibidem, p. 96). The reader will find an overview of biological, psychological and social theories of gender dysphoria formation in the work of Le Roux (2013). A description of the emergence of gender identity in relation to stages of psychosexual and gender development and family dynamics is given by Szymczyk (2013).

Publication of complete data on clinic referrals year after year as well as the numbers of diagnoses by age and gender,would significantly facilitate the verification of the above hypotheses and international comparisons. Taking into account the age threshold for the manifestation of gender identity disorders and distinguishing it from the age of referrals to the clinic, would be helpful in tracing links to puberty and changes in the body- as advised by DeVries (2020). Further research is certainly needed on the influence of the media, the gender-neutral upbringing, the social paradigm of equality and the social perception of agiven gender.

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The problem of the definition of abortion in Polish literature and reception of church teaching in this regard

Problematyka definicji aborcji w literaturze polskiej oraz recepcja nauczania kościelnego w tym zakresie[1]

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Stanisław Biały[a]

[a] *Associated Professor Stanisław Biały PhD, https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6390-0087*
Faculty of Family Studies, University Cardinal Stefan Wyszynski in Warsaw

Abstract: In the social discourse the subject of abortion is still up-to-date. A decisive part of the Polish society consists of people belonging to the Catholic Church. Its teaching is important to them from an ethical (moral) point of view. Therefore, the author presented the doctrinal position of the Catholic Church on the conceptual scope of the act of abortion, and then analyzed the reception of this position in the Polish literature. From the analysis presented in this paper it follows that although the definition of abortion cannot be found in such an important document as the Code of Canon Law, nevertheless, the Catholic Church has presented a sufficiently precise description of such an act in such documents as *Quesito de abortu procurato, Donum vitae, Evangelium vitae, Dignitas personae*, etc. However, what we find about the conceptual scope of abortion in various publications or statements referring to the Magisterium of the Church, often differs from its unambiguous subject statement. Seeking to justify such ambiguity and lack of specificity, the author referred to the theory that cognitive process is characterized by "intentionality" (relation of mind to object). This means that his objectivity may be hampered by volitional, ideological, conscious, contextual acts, etc. Moreover, people emphasize certain semantic aspects of the act of abortion, and ignore others depending on their goals: scientific, political, worldview, social, moral, canonical, etc.
Keywords: doctrine of the Catholic Church, canon law, conceptualization, cognitive intentionality, abortion, termination of pregnancy, responsibility

Abstrakt: W dyskursie społecznym temat aborcji jest ciągle aktualny. Zdecydowaną cześć polskiego społeczeństwa stanowią osoby przynależące do Kościoła katolickiego. Jego nauka ma dla nich ważne znaczenie z etycznego (moralnego) punktu widzenia. W związku z powyższym autor przedstawił doktrynalne stanowisko Kościoła katolickiego dotyczące aktu aborcji, a następnie przeanalizowal recepcję tego stanowiska w literaturze polskojęzycznej. Z podjętej analizy wynika, że chociaż definicji aborcji nie można doszukać się w tak ważnym dokumencie, jakim jest Kodeks Prawa Kanonicznego, to Kościół katolicki charakterystykę takiego czynu wystarczająco precyzyjnie przedstawił w takich dokumentach jak *Quesito de abortu procurato, Donum vitae, Evangelium vitae, Dignitas personae* itp. Jednakże to, co na temat zakresu pojęciowego aborcji znajdujemy w różnych publikacjach czy też wypowiedziach powołujących się na Magisterium Kościoła, różni się często od jego jednoznacznej przedmiotowej wypowiedzi. Poszukując uzasadnień takiej wieloznaczności oraz braku uściślenia, autor odwołał się do teorii, według której proces kognitywny cechuje „intencjonalność" (stosunek umysłu do przedmiotu). To oznacza, że jego obiektywizm utrudniać mogą akty wolicjonalne, światopoglądowe, świadomościowe, kontekstualne itp. Nadto ludzie akcentują pewne aspekty znaczeniowe aktu aborcji, a inne pomijają w zależności od założonych przez siebie celów: naukowych, politycznych, światopoglądowych, społecznych, moralnych, kanonicznych itp.
Słowa kluczowe: doktryna Kościoła katolickiego, prawo kanoniczne, konceptualizacja, intencjonalność poznawcza, aborcja, przerwanie ciąży, odpowiedzialność

Introduction

The problem of responsibility for human life allows to pose a question, within the ethical and canonical responsibility binding in the Catholic Church, about the social perception of acts of abortion and their conceptualization. It is a matter of certain deficiencies of terminological precision, but also of new conceptions of terms, which are revealed at the stage of cognition of these phenomena, as well as the interchangeable use of synonymous terms. There are doctrinal documents, which define what abortion is, what is its scope and what is the responsibility related to it. In spite of that, there are publications which indicate that there are some overinterpretations or controversial generalizations in the terminology

1 Artykuł w języku polskim: https://www.stowarzyszeniefidesetratio.pl/fer/2022-1Bialy.pdf

used here. Therefore, the analysis (or meta-analysis) addressed here will refer to the theological and canonical problem of conceptual identification of abortion acts, in which the (philosophical) terms used, such as conceptualization and perception, refer to the nature of the cognitive process (Petrozolin-Skowrońska, 1997, p. 974). This will be an attempt to take an interdisciplinary view, in line with the methodological profile of family science.

The point is that elements of a volitional (worldview) nature cannot be excluded from the process of conceptualization. The problem of deficit or error is always inherent in this perspective. Such a state is sometimes referred to in philosophy as the "unveiling of intentionality" (Krokos, 2013, p. 11 n). It indicates the difference between a mental (moral, ethical, etc.) and a physical cognitive phenomenon. The social perception of abortions is "heterogeneous due to the difference in discourses: scientific, ideological, artistic, colloquial, as well as due to different human attitudes" (Wejbert-Wąsiewicz, 2012 , p. 7).

There have already been papers on similar subjects (Biały, 2018, p. 61-78)[2]. Studies of the abortion phenomenon "constitute a small percentage of papers in the social science journals analyzed, and the dominant perspective is to study abortion through the prism of public opinion on the issue" (Karolewska 2020, 170). However, it is known that "a clear polarization of views is evident at the level of definitions for manipulative purposes, or subconsciously vague definitions are used […]. Defining is inseparable from treating the subject as someone who experiences reality and conceptualizes it. In the abortion discourse, there is a struggle over who, using language, will convince the viewer of their views" (Domańska, 2018, p. 97).

The results of the present analysis may encourage further research, e.g. for a better recognition of directions in which the discourse on the right to abortion develops, i.e. "its influence on different areas and levels of social life" (Wejbert-Wąsiewicz, 2012, p. 7). They can also constitute a new (i.e., updated) knowledge when it comes to finding further rationale for protecting the subjective rights of human beings. It can be used by someone who is engaged in pastoral ministry, as well as by someone who is a politician, parliamentarian, local government official, scientist, etc.

1. Catholic Church teaching on abortion

The Church in its doctrinal teaching specifies the concept of abortion (from Latin abortio artificialis), having particularly in mind the termination of pregnancy and the disposal of embryos produced through in vitro procedures. In addition, it defines the moral evil of this act; in particular, when the act of abortion is subject to the penalty of excommunication (Stokłosa, 2016, p. 97-120). It is through such documents of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith as *Quaesito de abortu procurato* (1974), *Donum vitae* (1987), *Dignitas personae* (2008), *Evangelium vitae* (1995), the Code of Canon Law (hereinafter: CIC/83) 1329 §1, 1398, the Catechism of the Catholic Church: 2270-2275, that the doctrinal context of the conceptual scope of abortion can be established. Thus, the encyclical Evangelium vitae (referring to the Church's doctrinal heritage) quotes Pope Pius XII, who considered abortion to be "every act which directly aims at killing a human life not yet born" (John Paul II, 1995, p. 62). The Instruction Dignitas personae, on the other hand, in the context of embryo production by the in vitro method, refers to "selective abortion" or "early abortive action" (Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, 2008, no. 21-22). Furthermore, the "Declaration of the Pontifical Council for the Family," referring to the above doctrinal findings and calling for the avoidance of "all vagueness and ambiguity" in this area, recalls that "«embryo reduction» is selective abortion" (Pontifical Council for the Family, 2000). Not surprisingly, the bishops who are part of the Council for the Family, in their Letter to Parliamentarians, also refer to in vitro procedures as sophisticated abortion (Council for the Family, 2007). In addition, other terms appear such as: "postnatal abortion, i.e. killing the child after birth" (Makowski, 2019).

2 The research was limited to the canonical, legal aspect.

According to this logic, the act of abortion should be understood as the killing of a human being in the prenatal development stage, done directly or indirectly. This can happen through any action (e.g., chemical through RU 486) involving the removal of a zygote, embryo, fetus, child, etc., from the mother's body (and this is termination of pregnancy), and by destroying the zygote, embryo, etc., when they are outside her body, e.g. on so-called glass (in vitro), in a test tube, etc. (in vitro abortion). In this regard, a distinction can be made between direct abortion, which means an intentional act as an end and as a means, and indirect abortion – an unwanted effect (miscarriage at fault for lack of due care). Causes of such a fault include, e.g., smoking by the mother, taking drugs or so-called "legal highs," drinking alcohol, extreme sports, unsafe sex, etc., or when the physician caring for the child failed to exercise professional care. These are objective signs of carelessness.

The above clarifications are of particular importance in the context of the fact that if the concept of abortion defines an act, objectively (and intentionally) morally evil and always forbidden (Biesaga, 2004, p. 257-264), then it is not the perpetrator of indirect or direct abortion – in the situation, e.g., of destroying an embryo during in vitro procedures, that the Catholic Church imposes the penalty of excommunication *latae sententiae*. On the other hand, it does so for direct abortion (i.e., wanted as a means and as an end), understood as termination of pregnancy, "killing the child under the mother's heart" aborting the fetus, artificial miscarriage, etc. – CIC/83 can. 1398 (Stokłosa, 2016, p. 97-120). Awareness of these distinctions is the foundation of the natural law of "thou shalt not kill," which binds the conscience of every human being at the most basic layer, i.e., in synderesis. This principle is reiterated in the Encyclical Veritatis splendor, according to which "the darkness of error and sin can never completely extinguish in man the light of God the Creator. In the depths of his heart he constantly yearns for absolute truth and desires to know it fully, which is eloquently demonstrated by the tireless search that man makes in every field and in every area" (John Paul II, 1995, no. 1).

Therefore, it is worth knowing what, when in doubt, abortion is not. In this case, it is the act of giving help to a person whose life is directly endangered, the second effect of which is that another person (involved) dies. The Catholic Church defines such situations from the moral point of view as "an act with double effect." However, this does not mean that a physician (as well as a mother) "with a Catholic conscience" can choose which life is more important and will save it or not. Hence, it follows that with the aim of saving human life, the physician (as well as the mother, etc.) can only agree to those therapies that will be sustainable in their effects. This means that therapy cannot be guided by the intention that someone must live and someone must die (or will surely die). If the Thomistic principle of "double effect acts" defines the relationship to the aggressor and requires not to exceed the limits of "necessary defense" (St. Thomas, 1970, q. 64, a 7), then all the more so does this requirement obligate the physician who cares for the child and his mother, and the mother who cares for her child, and even third parties. Morally good is only that action which in its object (to each individual person) is saving, curing, etc., and not killing. Under these conditions, the death that may occur will be unwanted, and the physician as well as the mother (etc.) will retain their dignity of conscience.

Therefore, it is only a rhetorical question whether this type of knowledge should not be popularized with even more care, e.g. in publications and regulations of a social nature, as well as in the form of in-depth scientific studies (Ministry of National Education, 2020).

2. Addressing the problem of abortion in Polish literature

It is impossible to present all available literature on the issue addressed here, and therefore the following research methodology will be adopted. The first stage is the classification of characteristic cases, and the second is their exemplification on the principle of illustrating the problem, e.g. for better precision through quotations. The author assumes that this attempt to present various positions on the subject of conceptual scope of abortion does not refer to their authors, in the sense of assuming that they alone hold this view. The undertaken analysis (meta-analysis) is only an attempt to interpret the available texts on the basis of a previously assumed assumption.

2.1. Abortion – termination of pregnancy

In the doctrinal literature referring to the teaching of the Catholic Church, the terms abortion and termination of pregnancy are very often used interchangeably, as if they were the same in the subject matter. This refers to those situations where the conceptualization of the act of abortion is determined by the content, which closely corresponds to the concept of termination of pregnancy (Lewandowski, 2016, p. 269-281)[3]. Such a state of affairs (unfortunately) does not take into account the killing of embryos in biotechnological procedures in vitro, cloning, etc., as well as does not refer to the transgression of killing a child immediately after its birth (postnatal abortion).

Such an option of perception (as it seems) is contained in the quotations: "The doctrine and magisterium of the Church, basing their teaching on the Old and New Testaments, […] have clearly and precisely stood for the sanctity and inviolability of human life from the very beginning of its existence, i.e., from conception in the womb until natural death" (Leszczyński, 2001, p. 57). "It should be noted that in Polish society there is a very high moral consent to the abortion procedure. In surveys conducted over several years […] only 49.2% of them recognized that abortion is an immoral procedure, thus identifying with the position of the Catholic Church, at the same time as much as 53.2% of the respondents allow the possibility of abortion" (Kultys, 2005, p. 116). "Only artificial miscarriage (i.e. caused by a factor external to the mother's or child's organism), performed with the woman's consent, which results in termination of pregnancy, should be considered abortion in the strict sense of the word" (Pawlikowska-Łagód, Sak, 2016, p. 7). Abortion is "a procedure intended to terminate human life during the fetal (intrauterine) period" (Kowalski, 2010, p. 53). "Abortion is a procedure that seeks to artificially terminate a pregnancy in its early stages, resulting in the expulsion of the embryo or fetus outside the mother's body" (Pawlikowska-Łagód, 2018).

There are many other analogous publications in which the material scope of the term abortion is shown as if it were the same as termination of pregnancy. Just some of these are: "Abortion, sex education, and in vitro fertilization. Research Communication" (CEBOS, 2005, p. 1); "Demographic dimension of abortion" (Frątczak, Ptak-Chmielewska, 2009, p. 2).

2.2. Destruction of embryos obtained by in vitro is "not an act of abortion"

There are also publications which indicate that the concept of abortion excludes (explicitly or implicitly) the negative effects of the in vitro technique, which come down to the destruction of human embryos, the so-called "surplus." An exemplification of the occurrence of such terminology may be the following quotations: "The method of artificial insemination proposed by Jarosław Gowin is not a form of abortion, Archbishop Józef Życiński said on «Kropka nad i»" (Gowin's In vitro, 2008). "The press has quoted, e.g., this opinion: «It cannot be simply said that the destruction of embryos in the in vitro procedure, which is of course killing but is not abortion, falls under the ecclesiastical penalties that abortion entails»" (Wiśniewska, 2008). "In vitro fertilization, abortion sometimes occurs outright, and there is no debate about that," but this occurs when it results in "the so-called reduction of excess pregnancies" (Strączek, Bardel, 2008, p. 60). The latter is the position found in the editorial discussion entitled "Admonish or Condemn" published in the monthly magazine Znak. It is a form of polemic with the bishops on the issue of the definition of abortion used by them in the "Letter to Parliamentarians" of 2007.

3 Lewandowski rightly notes: "The Pontifical Council for the Authentic Interpretation of the Code of Canon Law has stated that abortion is the voluntary deprivation of life of an immature fetus, performed by any means regardless of the time that has passed since conception."

A similar position is found in the paper "Abortion and its Legal Aspects," in which the author, while giving a doctrinal definition of abortion, does not mention in vitro procedures as incidentally leading to abortion. "Over the years, therefore, the extremely important question has arisen – how to understand abortion? This question referred in all its essence to resolving the most important issue: whether abortion is only the removal from the mother's womb of a fetus incapable of independent life, or whether this term should be understood as any human action resulting in the death of a fetus in the mother's womb, regardless of the fact of its removal or not" (Leszczyński, 2001, p. 57-59).

2.3. Excommunication for an act of abortion

Another case of diverse social perception of the act of abortion may be evidenced by lexical generalizations, appearing in the context of described criminal consequences, attributed to the perpetrator of abortion in canon law. Here it is possible to think of statements referring to excommunication, which affects the perpetrator in a latae sententiae way (i.e. by force of law). It is about expressions such as: "excommunication after abortion – what does the canon law say" (Cipior, 2016). Ibid: "in the evaluation, however, it must be remembered that each abortion is a crime, with the result that if someone commits several abortions, the penalty of excommunication falls as many times as the crime committed." But also significant is another statement, as long as it was quoted correctly by the author of the paper: "As the destruction of embryos is tantamount to abortion, also the one who conducts research on embryonic stem cells incurs excommunication on himself – emphasized in an interview for the Italian weekly magazine «Famiglia Cristiana» the President of the Pontifical Council for the Family, Cardinal Alfonso Lopez Trujillo" (Tomczak, 2006).

A similar situation arises with the attempt to answer the question of whether MPs who vote for the in vitro project should count with the penalty of excommunication. "If they are aware of what they are doing and want such a situation to occur, if they do not act to limit the harmfulness of such a law, then in my opinion they are automatically outside the community of the Church" (Sawicki, 2010). This situation also appears in a sentence like "excommunication falls on the perpetrator of abortion automatically, and if he is aware of this penalty, in order to obtain absolution, he must first be freed from it" (Sporniak, 2016, p. 4). Also in the context of a sentence: "excommunication for *in vitro* – yes, but..." (Sawicki, 2010), the correctness of the phrase depends on whether it refers to the spiritual consequences of the act of abortion (made effective by the in vitro procedure) or directly to censure under Canon 1398, 1398 CIC/83.

The point is that, according to the doctrinal teaching of the Church, the expression "excommunication for abortion" is correct only on condition that the concept of abortion used in it refers to the act described in Canon 1398 1398 CIC/83, i.e. precisely to the act of termination of pregnancy. If there are penalties in canon law, such as excommunication latae sententiae, the crimes to which it refers do not include abortion understood as the crime of destroying human embryos produced in vitro or through cloning.

2.4. Holistic approach: termination of pregnancy is an abortion under Canon 1398

Among the publications (or statements) which present their attitude to abortion in an objective way, it is possible to find also those which are characterized by doctrinal terminological precision. The point is that the terms used in them do not have the signs of cognitive reductionism. It is worth indicating here the letter of the bishops to parliamentarians of December 18, 2007, entitled "Refined abortion – when embryos die in the in vitro procedure." It can be treated as a testimony of cognitive concordance (perceptual as well as conceptual) of a whole group of people who share the same Christian worldview. A term appears in it which is important for the whole of the ongoing social discourse on the material scope of abortion. In its statement, the author emphatically stresses that the subject-matter of the concept of abortion, apart from the act of termination of pregnancy, is the destruction of human embryos, which can be carried out within the available in vitro biotechnology. On the other hand, a reference to the meaning of this type of statement (also in the sense of the need to preserve terminological precision), can be noted in the paper entitled "The problem of the legal protection of life in the enunciation of the Polish Episcopal Conference in 1989-2011." Ibidem: "The Polish Episcopal Conference has consistently sought respect for the inviolable right to life of every human being from the moment of conception" (Delong, 2017, p. 84).

Another example of terminological precision, which is worth quoting here, is the definition of abortion on the Infor.pl portal. In the "law" section, under the heading "abortion," it informs the reader about specific regulations of the civil law, using the terms: abortion and termination of pregnancy interchangeably. However, it does so in such a way that the terms do not raise interpretive ambiguities. Ibidem: "The law allows for termination of pregnancy only in situations described in the Act on Family Planning. Any other termination of pregnancy is an element of the so-called crime of abortion under Article 152 of the Penal Code. However, according to the law, it is not the mother who decides on such a step but the person (physician) who performs an illegal abortion that bears responsibility" (Abortion, 2010).

Another clear, clarified, statement on the understanding of the act of abortion is that made by the Pontifical Commission for the Authentic Interpretation of the Code of Canon Law of January 19, 1988: "The final moment of abortion (until birth) distinguishes it from homicide, typified in canon 1397; while the *conceptio* (conception, in vivo fertilization), and not fertilization (*fecundatio*), above all in vitro, must be indicated as the initial moment of the crime, according to the 1988 interpretation. Hence, in the current state of the law, the killing of fertilized ova created in the in vitro procedure and not transferred to the womb cannot be considered a canonical crime of abortion" (Skonieczny, 2015, s. 198).

The issue of the responsibility of the Magisterium to use terminological precision, especially in matters concerning the protection of unborn life, was emphasized more than once by Pope John Paul II: "The Magisterium of the Church has intensified its speeches in protection of the sanctity and inviolability of human life in view of the gradual blurring in consciences and in society of the awareness that taking the life of [...] a human being, especially at the beginning of its existence [...], is an absolute grave moral offense" (EV, no. 57; Grześkowiak, 2017, p. 127).

2.5. Rescue – not abortion

There is another example (in the literature) where it is possible to find an act of peculiar overinterpretation in the definition of abortion. It concerns the phrase: "a woman's choice of life is not abortion." According to its authors, the motivation for the above statement is that "ethicists refer here to the so-called principle of double effect. It was formulated in the 13th century by St. Thomas Aquinas in the «Summa Theologicae»" (Saving is Not Abortion, 2011). The problem is that it referred to the murder of the aggressor. St. Thomas allowed for the situation that "self-defense can result in two effects: the preservation of own life and the murder of the aggressor. The first effect is intentional and the second unintentional" (St. Thomas, 1970, q. 64, a 7). Although the above slogan ("a woman's choice of life is not an abortion") was made in good faith, a child carried lovingly under its mother's heart (i.e., pregnancy) cannot be considered an aggressor. But a disease can. Thus, it seems that in a situation of so-called danger to the woman's life due to complications in the delivery of pregnancy, etc., it is necessary, for the sake of the principle: "an act with double effect," to seek absolutely other ethical clarifications than that "if the mother decides to save her life at the cost of the child's life, she will not commit an immoral act" (Saving is Not Abortion, 2011).

One of such is authored by Rev. Prof. Stanisław Warzeszak, when he points out that "in the case of a threat to the life of a pregnant mother, Christian ethics emphasizes the need for heroism" (ibidem). However, this is a view that does not necessarily demand the mother to sacrifice her life. It assumes the situation that both the mother and the physician, in fighting the disease as aggressor, want to act according to the principle that: "the good end does not justify the evil means." Therefore, in the case of conditions indicating uterine surgery or a threat to the mother's life in the case of a pregnancy with complications, e.g. ectopic, they should opt for all solutions that would preserve the probability of the child's birth (or even its natural descent). This would assume, e.g., maximum postponement of the surgery (heroism), taking into account the real (professional) possibility of saving the mother's life. Such an approach should ensure that the fight against the disease is not identified with the act of killing, removing from life, i.e. neither with abortion nor with neglecting to protect the life of the mother. These are the principles that St. Thomas Aquinas seems to have had in mind when he formulated the principle of the "double effect of an act" (Chyrowicz, 1997, p. 17).

Whether the above statement is equivalent to what Agata Czarnecka wrote in her paper entitled The principle of double effect in the dispute on abortion, must be decided by the individual conscience of a theologian, ethicist, physician, etc. The point is the thesis that "for it is permissible, in the absence of any other alternatives, to take an action the purpose of which is to preserve the life of some human being, even if this would be tantamount to the death of someone else" (Czarnecka, 2021, p. 117). There is an ethical difference between actions of the type "equivalent to death" and actions of the type "presuming death," as it seems. However, it takes a conscience of adequate sensitivity to be able to understand here that there are situations in which: "a mother should never want her child to die," while a physician should "save at least one life."

3. Exemplification: survey research on the social reception of the doctrine of Catholic Church regarding the concept of abortion

It is not a question here of conducting systematic research into the state of knowledge or the Polish society's views on abortion. It can be concluded not only from the concepts and terminology available in the subject literature (and their philosophical and legal interpretations), but also from published surveys, that many people misinterpret the scope of such terms as abortion, artificial miscarriage, termination of pregnancy and the concept of excommunication latae sententiae as their effect. In order to better illustrate the issue addressed, the following exemplification can be used. It is about the research results that were presented in the study Life attitudes of nursing students and their attitude to abortion (Ostrowska, Szostek, Marcysiak, 2016, p. 38-58).

The data collected by the authors concerned not only the ethical attitudes of surveyed students, e.g., the relationship of their faith in God to their ethical beliefs, but also their terminological (conceptual) knowledge on the discussed issue. Thus: "more than half of the surveyed nursing and economics students – 61.2% recognized that abortion is murder committed on an unborn child, this statement was opposed by – 13.1% of the respondents." It can also be added that "with the statement that life begins at the moment of conception, agreed – 67% of respondents, while only 10.4% of respondents had an opposite opinion. The majority of students – 67.5% think that abortion is depriving the child of the right to life" (Ibidem, p. 38).

On the other hand, e.g. CBOS from time to time provides survey reports, in which the opinions of Polish people about the permissibility of abortion are listed (cf. Hermann, 2016, p. 1-10).

Conclusions

The literature analysis of the social conceptualization of the term abortion allows some observations on the reception of the Magisterium of the Catholic Church in this regard. Firstly, the social discourse, which constantly takes place around the right to terminate pregnancy, shows significant differences in presenting the conceptual scope of the act of abortion. However, the fact that such differences exist is a natural fact, which is how the processes of perception and conceptualization function. The authors of various publications or statements, emphasizing various aspects of the understanding of the act of abortion, do it because of the preconceived goals (scientific, political, social, ethical, pastoral, canonical, etc.). Unfortunately, the social perception of such a phenomenon may turn into even greater confusion of concepts and their meanings. However, the subject literature indicates that the Magisterium of the Church is not only a well-defined doctrinal teaching, but in its communication the pastoral concern of the Church for dialogue with the faithful (with society as such) is present, i.e. the concern for terminological precision.

Here, a good reference for understanding such a complex situation can be the position of J. R. Searle, who argues that "beliefs and desires are, as it were, attenuated forms of perceptions and intentions [...] With every perception there is an associated belief about the perceived object" (Gajewski, 2016, p. 27). The point is that if our relations to reality rely on subjective mental states, they can also affect the perception and definition of the act of abortion, and even more so when it comes to specifying its object scope. This capacity of the mind, referred to as intentionality, should not be equated with the act of intention. According to Searle, the intention "is, as it were, an amplified form of desire" (Ibidem, p. 25).

The fact of perceptual differences can also be applied to sociotechnics, i.e., the attempt to ignore existing distortions in this field or to use them for specific purposes. This can be of great (negative) importance due to the need to universalize ethical norms (Rusecki, 2003, p. 953-973), in the context of ethical relativism that is omnipresent today (Kupiński, 2017, p. 137-150). Hence, if this is a thesis aspiring to be scientific, it is precisely because analyses with similar or even identical conclusions support it. Such as, e.g., "in debates, thus also in the discussion around abortion law, definitions have a dispute-resolving function; authors of linguistic definitions are assigned considerable authority as a result" (Domańska, 2018, p. 99); and that "human being includes man's relation to meanings. Man is human only by understanding and shaping reality, both his world and himself, in relation to meanings and values" (Tillich, 1983, p. 54).

The data obtained here may be used to deepen awareness of possible encumbrances in the construction of concepts on the basis of individual perception (i.e. worldview). Terminological confusion is a situation that can be misleading for some and outrageous for others. If in Poland "some acknowledge the embryo's personal status, [...] while others reject this fact" (Szyran, 2012, p. 1), if there are many interpretations of the "act of double effect" (Chyrowicz, 1997), etc., this must have its impact on the further process of conceptualizing various acts and phenomena concerning life and its dignity, causing controversy. The results obtained here in this sense can be a starting point for further reflection, e.g. about the need for universalism and objectivity in education based on reason, religion and goodness (Chrobak 2017, p. 89-100).

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Motherhood of a woman with intellectual disability – retrospection of biographical experiences

Macierzyństwo kobiet z niepełnosprawnością intelektualną – retrospekcja doświadczeń biograficznych[1]

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Iwona Myśliwczyk[a]

[a] *Iwona Myśliwczyk, PhD hab. https://orcid.org/0000-0002-9826-5642*
Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Warmia and Mazury in Olsztyn

Abstract: The parenthood of persons with an intellectual disability continues to be a sensitive and controversial issue. Although the concepts of normalization, subjectivity and emancipation are actively implemented, the right to engage in parental roles is denied to such persons. Among other things, this is due to social perception, in which persons with intellectual disabilities are incapable of self-reliant and responsible functioning. Previous studies have demonstrated that such persons do have legitimate needs, including the desire to be married as well as to seek fulfilment as parents. This paper sets out to discuss the findings of studies concerned with subjective interpretations and biography-building among mothers with intellectual disabilities. Such studies were guided by the need to address insufficient knowledge of how such persons define motherhood and the search for answers on what is individual and inimitable from a mother's perspective. The study relied on an interpretative paradigm and took advantage of the biographical method, examining the experience of six women/mothers with an intellectual disability through thematic narrative interviews. A number of categories were distinguished in the course of analysis in order to describe motherhood from the standpoint of subjective experience. The categories distinguished in the course of analysis and interpretation revealed a wide range of individual meanings given to motherhood experienced by women with intellectual disabilities. Based on personal interpretations, the study revealed various facets of motherhood, defined as love, happiness, satisfaction, dream, but also as duty, difficulty, fear, loneliness, helplessness or even failure. Moreover, insights were gained into the social and cultural context in which the mothers interviewed happen to function. The meanings attached to motherhood were rooted in subjective experience and, as such, may be due to the fact that relationships and the parenthood of persons with intellectual disabilities are seldom, if ever, accepted. They may also result from the challenges that the study participants face, struggling with their children's behaviour and growth issues as well as with the aftermath of their own disability.
Keywords: qualitative research, motherhood, intellectual disability

Abstrakt: Rodzicielstwo osób z niepełnosprawnością intelektualną nadal jest tematem wrażliwym i kontrowersyjnym. Mimo wdrożenia idei normalizacji, podmiotowości i emancypacji, odbiera się prawo tym osobom do pełnienia ról rodzicielskich. Wynika to być może ze społecznego postrzegania osób intelektualnie niesprawnych jako niezdolnych do samodzielnego i odpowiedzialnego funkcjonowania. Dotychczasowe badania ukazują potrzeby tej grupy osób, które nie tylko chcą zakładać związki małżeńskie, ale pragną także realizować się w roli rodziców. Celem artykułu jest zaprezentowanie wyników badań dotyczących subiektywnego interpretowania i konstruowania biografii matek z niepełnosprawnością intelektualną. Realizując badania kierowano się niedostateczną wiedzą w zakresie definiowania macierzyństwa przez te osoby oraz chęcią poznania odpowiedzi na pytania, które dotyczyły tego, co z perspektywy matek jest indywidualne i niepowtarzalne. Badania osadzono w paradygmacie interpretatywnym i zastosowano metodę biograficzną. W tematycznych wywiadach narracyjnych wzięło udział sześć kobiet/matek z niepełnosprawnością intelektualną posiadających dzieci. W toku analiz wyodrębniono kilka kategorii, które ukazują macierzyństwo z perspektywy subiektywnego doświadczenia matek. Wyłonione podczas analizy i interpretacji kategorie stworzyły paletę indywidualnych znaczeń nadanych macierzyństwu, którego doświadczają kobiety z niepełnosprawnością intelektualną. Przeprowadzone badania, oparte o osobiste interpretacje matek, ukazały różne oblicza macierzyństwa, które jest definiowane jako miłość, szczęście, radość, satysfakcja, marzenie, ale także jako obowiązek, trudność, lęk, osamotnienie, bezradność czy wręcz porażka. Ukazały także kontekst społeczno-kulturowy, w którym matki zostały usytuowane. Nadane macierzyństwu znaczenia, oparte o subiektywne doświadczenia kobiet, wynikają być może z braku całkowitej akceptacji związków osób z niepełnosprawnością intelektualną i pełnionego przez nich rodzicielstwa. Mogą też być skutkiem zmagań uczestniczek nie tylko z trudnościami wychowawczymi i rozwojowymi dzieci, ale także ze skutkami własnej niepełnosprawności.
Słowa klucze: badania jakościowe, macierzyństwo, niepełnosprawność intelektualna

1 Artykuł w języku polskim: https://www.stowarzyszeniefidesetratio.pl/fer/2022-1Mysliw.pdf

1. Introduction

The sexuality of persons with intellectual disabilities is a very complex and multifaceted issue. It is still a taboo subject, which is why it is neglected and ignored in many cultural circles. Since this sphere of life of persons with intellectual disabilities is hardly ever admitted or accepted, many countries have opted for segregation as an elementary way to prevent parenthood, as well as resorted to forced sterilization (Żytaye, 2013; Drzazga 2016). Quite often, measures are taken to suppress the sexual activity of such persons (Jurczyk 2018) because there is a persistent notion that persons with intellectual disabilities should not have children due to their poor parental competence (Górnicka, 2015). They are seen as incapable of starting a family and fulfilling parental roles, while their needs for sexuality, intimacy, closeness in relationships, love and the desire to have children are dismissed and disregarded, especially by their immediate environment (Myśliwczyk, 2019a). Once introduced, the fertility control policy remains in effect to this day, as attested by international reports (Frohmader, Meekosha, 2012).

The current perception of sexuality, procreation and parenting of persons with intellectual disabilities remains a highly sensitive issue. It gives rise to substantial controversy, despite the widely propagated and implemented ideas of normalization, subjectivity, emancipation and autonomy (Żółkowska, 2016; Krause, 2010), which nonetheless fail to sufficiently highlight the questions of relationships, sexuality, parenting and the rights of persons with intellectual disabilities to perform socially important roles in these respects. However, Kijak emphasizes that changes in the perception of disability and persons it may affect have brought the issue of their sexuality closer to the fore. It has been recognised by various academic disciplines through publications, conferences and seminars, which should mean that it ceased to be a taboo subject (Kijak, 2016). Broader social awareness of the sexuality of persons with intellectual disabilities should contribute to a greater understanding of their needs, as they not only want to marry but also desire to have children. Why, therefore, is social acceptance of persons with intellectual disabilities who seek to fulfil and realize their parental roles still lacking? Why does their parenthood continue to be a debatable topic?

A number of answers to the above questions may be attempted:

1. From a scientific standpoint, there is a lack of sufficient research on the relationships, sexuality or parental roles of persons with intellectual disabilities, especially in relation to the non-disabled population in Poland (Drzyzga, 2016). This is perhaps due to the fact that "there are few such couples in Poland and it is rare for such persons to become parents, owing to both legal obstacles, the attitude of the environment and the cognitive and social limitations that such persons experience. At the same time, persons with intellectual disabilities often express a desire to have their own family" (Żyta, 2013, p. 60). Empirical research suggests that persons with intellectual disabilities do have dreams regarding, e.g. sex, relationships and parenthood, but as they remain under the supervision of their families, such needs are suppressed. Consequently, persons with disabilities remain in the family as unpaid domestic servants, whose parents prevent them from fulfilling roles that they find important (Mattila, Määttä, & Uusiautti, 2017; Crane, 2018; Myśliwczyk, 2019b). It must be underscored that it is the parents who should take all measures that would enable women with intellectual disabilities to develop a sense of self-esteem and gender identity, which, in consequence, may contribute to self-actualization in roles they recognize as important (Bartnikowska, 2019).
2. The persisting stereotypes and prejudices portray persons with intellectual disabilities as "childish", "immature", or "dependent" (Drzazga, 2016, p. 88). This engenders the notion that they have poor knowledge of child-rearing and lack sufficient competence to ensure their children have appropriate developmental conditions. For this reason, they are perceived to have little parenting experience and are unable to assess hazardous situations in childcare rationally (Wałachowska, 2017). Persons who have actually become

parents are judged to be individuals who do not comprehend their role and do not dispose of the capacity to carry out childcare-related duties (Kijak, 2016). In addition, carers, social workers, parents as well as the wider community see them as helpless, requiring assistance and care, dependent on the immediate environment and hostile (Wałachowska, 2017). Concerns with respect to the parenthood of persons with intellectual disabilities may be attributed to the fact that such individuals are not only taken care of by social services that support families and children but fairly often their children are taken away based on judicial rulings. However, one must allow for the fact that persons with intellectual disabilities are diversified in how they function using their social competencies and life skills, which, in turn, is reflected in varying degrees of knowledge, skill sets and performance of duties involved in responsible social roles (Kijak, 2016).

3. Concerns are raised in social discourse about pregnancy in persons with intellectual disabilities and the possibility of defective genetic material being passed on. The risk of intellectual disability in the child of a person with congenital intellectual disability can range from slightly elevated to high, reaching 50%, or as much as 100% in particular circumstances (Latos-Bielańska, 2013). Determining the actual number of children of parents with intellectual disabilities is problematic. Ćwirynkało cites data from Norway, according to which "this group accounts for approximately 0.2-0.9% of all children (depending on the criteria of intellectual disability adopted)." However, it should be borne in mind that these estimates are subject to a certain margin of error (Tøssebro, Midjo, Paulsen, Berg, 2017, after: Ćwirynkało, 2019).

The Polish system of social support, sexual education or other instruction relating to sexuality, procreation and parental roles is hardly sufficient. Persons with intellectual disabilities need education, courses and training to prepare them to perform responsible and socially important roles of the spouse and parent (Tarleton, Puckering, 2017; Wołowicz-Ruszkowska, 2018). Intellectually disabled parents (particularly mothers) require support in gynaecological care and in becoming ready to take on parental responsibilities (Wałachowska, 2017). This goes beyond *ad hoc* assistance in caring for their child as a long-term action to providing specialized support of a subjective nature (Lizoń-Szłapowska, 2012). The necessity to ensure support and assistance enabling one to "make free and responsible decisions about the number of children and the time to have them, gain access to age-appropriate education and information on procreation and family planning, as well as obtain the means necessary to exercise these rights" (Król, 2018, p. 90) arises from an international legal act, i.e. the UN *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*, ratified by Poland in 2012. This act guarantees the right to enter into marriage and make decisions with respect to having children and sex education, but it also provides for support in parenting (King, 2018). Research shows that the problems faced by parents with intellectual disabilities are the same as those of other parents whose socio-economic status is equivalent (Wołowicz-Ruszkowska, 2021).

The above problem areas involved in the parenthood of persons with intellectual disabilities preclude an unequivocal answer to the questions posed, but they also show the complexity of the issue addressed in this study. The idea of widely promoted freedom of every person and their unconstrained rights tends to be circumscribed when persons with intellectual disabilities are involved. A large proportion of the public do not allow for, or respect, the rights of such persons to love, procreate or have children. The highly valued social roles of the spouse or parent are no longer as prestigious and translate into difficulties and failures in the case of persons with intellectual disabilities. Given such negative social attitudes, it is difficult to find solutions to change the perception of parenthood of persons with intellectual disabilities. Perhaps further research in this area will foster a positive change.

2. Methodological premises of research

The research conducted by this author relied on a qualitative, interpretative paradigm, and the adoption of the latter perspective was dictated by the awareness that the phenomenon in question is difficult to explore in the objective approach. A qualitative research strategy enables one to understand as well as explain, since one focuses both on the vital experiences of the individual and their social context (Bron, 2017). The qualitative strategy employed here involved three perspectives: a phenomenological-hermeneutic inquiry through questions about the sense and meanings that mothers with intellectual disabilities lend to their maternal experience followed by the interpretation of such meanings, as well as symbolic interactionism to gain insights into how they construct their own unique social reality.

The principal goal was to reconstruct the stories and arrive at the subjective meanings that mothers with intellectual disabilities impart to their motherhood. It was, therefore, investigated how mothers define their parental roles, how they experience it, what meaning they attach to the tasks resulting from their role and how they interpret them in the context of their children's behaviour, how they perceive the difficulties resulting from motherhood and how they define the modes of coping. An answer was therefore sought to the following question: how do mothers with intellectual disabilities interpret their own experience of motherhood?

Having adopted an interpretative perspective, it became possible to employ the biographical method. A biography (constructed by the individuals themselves) is built around the subjects' own, individual and subjective description of life, and it assesses and interprets their lives (Kijak, 2016). As an inherent component of experience, interpretation "reveals the meanings persons give to things, matters, events. The striving to know these meanings is tantamount to understanding the human being, his/her psyche, consciousness and motives, which is a characteristic trait of humanistic cognition" (Kijak, 2016, p. 126-127). In pursuing the biographical method, a thematic narrative interview was used as the immediate tool of research since a narrative enables each participant to tell a story from their own perspective.

The selection of the population sample in this project was a targeted one, seeking to enrol women with a diagnosed intellectual disability (mild and moderate) who have children. Supplementary criteria included experiencing the phenomenon in question and being interested in understanding its nature and meaning, giving informed consent to participate in an extensive, recorded interview and to the subsequent publication of data. The study was conducted in 2020 (February-September) and in 2021 (February-March). The empirical material from 2021 (three interviews) originates from an unpublished manuscript (supervised by this author) by a third-year special education student, who gave her permission to use it for the purposes of this study.

The subject group comprised six women/mothers aged 24-46, who had one to four children aged 3 to 21. Four were married and two participants were single mothers. All mothers were involved in running the household. The participants were residents of Olsztyn and the surrounding area. Interviews were conducted in places convenient for the respondents, sometimes in their homes or flats, sometimes in a café. Participation in the research was entirely voluntary, and the women themselves decided on a convenient time and place to conduct the interview. The method described by F. Schütze (Schütze, 2012) was employed to analyse the material collected; it consisted in transcribing and titling individual interviews, formal analysis of the text, structural description of the narrative, analytical abstraction, contrastive comparison, and synthesis (Kaźmierska, Waniek, 2020).

3. Analysis

The stories told by the authors of biographies reveal the truth of motherhood as they experience it. It is a reality constructed in the light of subjective experience, to which the women/mothers attached individual meanings and significance. Due to its limited scope, this paper discusses only those categories which proved to have the greatest degree of saturation or, in the objective assessment of the researcher, yield a new perspective on motherhood.

3.1. Motherhood: dreams realized

A number of the participants define their experience of parenthood as an anticipated state that has always been in the realm of their dreams. The women had a great desire to become mothers and fulfil themselves in these roles. The dream of having a child is, according to some narratives, another dream after marriage. One respondent emphasizes that the pregnancy was not planned, yet she realized after giving birth to her child how much she had subconsciously wanted to become a mother. Another interviewee dreamed of becoming a mother in order to pass on the gift of life in this way, while leaving behind tangible proof of her existence. Below are some selected statements:

> "I wanted to leave a trace of myself. (...) To give life and to leave a trace, that's what."

> "Well, that was my dream, wasn't it? When I get married, to start a family. And live for that family."

> "I wanted to be a mother, because I knew it must be nice, that you love this child, and that for them you are the most important. I really wanted that, didn't I?"

> "It's probably every woman's dream, I was young, I had a husband, then it's obvious that you dream of having a baby afterwards."

> "I'll be honest, it came out so unexpectedly, because to be honest it wasn't a planned pregnancy. But when I found out, I was very happy (...) because I really wanted it."

3.2. Motherhood: social pressure

Two of the interviewed women perceive their role of the mother as a duty which has to be fulfilled. Perhaps this sense of duty stems from the social pressure which obligates women to become not only a wife but also a mother. Women living in small rural towns from which the participants come are particularly subject to such expectations:

> "(...) being a parent is both duty and happiness (...)."

> "If a woman can have children, it is a duty to have them because if she doesn't, they look at her strangely."

> "Well, when you are old enough, you have to think (...) about children, you know. You have to have children because then you have a family (...)."

Another participant wanted to have a child as an alternative to going into a religious order. Her parents had designed two paths her life would have to follow, one of which involved taking vows, while the other involved "normalcy", i.e. getting married and having children:

> "I never wanted to become a nun, I just (...) wanted to have children. Very much so. (...) I was afraid that my parents would send me there [to the order - author's note], but I succeeded."

3.3. Motherhood: criticism and misunderstanding

Two of the women interviewed faced criticism, which they found to be a very unpleasant experience. They were not able to enjoy their "blessed state" because they were unfavourably judged by their neighbours, who believed that they were not capable of taking care of their children on their own. The participants had similar experiences in their encounters with various professionals, in whose opinion "handicapped persons should not have children". The negative response from their environment and lack of acknowledgement of their desires and needs was a severely distressing experience. They felt stigmatized because they did want to fulfil their role as mothers despite having been diagnosed with an intellectual disability. The most hurtful were the comments and remarks they received from care personnel who, according to one of the participants, should not judge, but rather offer support and help:

> "Well you know it was hard. Because people think that we should not have children. At the beginning they looked at us a bit strangely, but they didn't later."

> "Sometimes the neighbours would say, 'Alinka, you're alone like a child yourself, why do you need this on top of it? Who will raise this child if you need help yourself?"

> "In the hospital, they told me point-blank that I wouldn't be able to cope with the child, they told me to leave it, that I shouldn't have children, because I'm disabled. (...) they tried to talk me into leaving the child when I gave birth."

3.4. Motherhood: fulfilment and responsibility

When interpreting their motherhood, all authors of biographies use the following terms above all: love and happiness. The women are very happy that—as they themselves emphasize— they can fulfil what they find to be such an important role regardless of their disability. They perceive motherhood as a positive and important experience in their lives which, albeit associated with hardship and sacrifice, brings joy and great satisfaction. For some biographers, being a mother means receiving and giving unconditional love, and the feeling cannot be compared to any other. Some of the interviewees, while defining their motherhood, also referred to the great responsibility and duty that are inscribed in the role of a parent. Some mothers emphasize that raising a child requires great commitment, but every effort pays off because the love of a child is their greatest happiness. Below are some sample statements:

> "To be a parent... Well, happiness.
> In a word, happiness. It doesn't matter if the child is sick or healthy, it is happiness, it is the parent's love for the child.
> That is happiness."

> "Well, to be a parent..., You just need to be, well, you must love (...)."

> "It's a wonderful experience. (...) It requires sacrifice, but very wonderful. (...) .
> I am very happy to be a mother (...)."

> "First of all, just being a mum, well, it's a huge love for this child, it's a big responsibility because you know that I'm disabled, but I feel that I'm a mum and that I'm very happy that I have a child (...)."

> "(...) it's probably the happiest thing in the world to be a mum, (...) it's such a different love. You feel that you can give your life, that these are the most important persons for you and that you are a mum, who is also the most important person for the children."

> "It is very beautiful to be a parent.
> Really, it is wonderful (...)."

> "(...) it is a good experience
> me being a mum (...)."

> "(...) But after the delivery, when I looked at my son, I just beamed. I was simply overjoyed, very happy (...)."

> "(...) that motherhood,
> such a wonderful feeling!"

> "This is a very important event (...)."

Next to love and responsibility, women associate the role of mother with sacrifice as well. This category is particularly conspicuous in women whose children are also disabled:

> "(...) it is not easy for a mother who has a child with a disability to fight against this condition, against everything (...). So it is definitely a sacrifice. A heavy sacrifice. And it's worth it, it's worth the sacrifice, so that the child has a happy life."

> "It is obvious that it looks a bit different when there are healthy children, but the fact that they are disabled does not mean that I love them any differently or any less, it just means that I have to sacrifice a lot more because you know that doctors, rehabilitation, various meetings, you know that you have to sacrifice your time (...)."

3.5. Motherhood: worry, anxiety, fear

The participants also acknowledge that motherhood involves negative emotions such as anxiety and fear. These feelings were mainly due to concern for the health of the child, who, according to the women interviewed, might inherit their intellectual disability.

> "(...) at first, it was such a fear that maybe they would be born like Kasia was."

> "We were afraid if the other one would also be disabled, (...). The doctor told us to have some tests done, but I said no, we couldn't change anything if God gave it to us, even if it was handicapped."

> "Someone once told me that if I am handicapped, my child would be too.
> I was afraid (...) I was afraid that the child might be too."

The second reason behind the fears and anxieties was a lack of experience in the role. The women's lack of apprehension of their own parenting competence aroused fear and uncertainty about whether they would be able to handle their responsibilities as carers:

> "(...) there was a fear of how we would cope, how we would manage."

> "I certainly didn't have that experience, (...). Well, huge changes, just the fact that a child came into the world, you have to do your duties (...)."

> "I was afraid that I would hurt him, that maybe I would hold him the wrong way or something, you know. You learn, but you have to learn everything in order not to hurt him."

3.6. Motherhood: helplessness vs. the need for help and support

Motherhood is a wonderful state for all women. Being able to realize themselves as a mother is recognized as incredible happiness. However, some of the interviewees emphasize that both the birth of the child and the subsequent upbringing did occasion situations in which they felt helpless. In the initial stages of motherhood, as well as during the further development of the child, most mothers needed support and assistance. The narratives demonstrate that help was provided by strangers, i.e. teachers, neighbours, other parents. The authors of the biographies admit that they need support all the time and are willing to take advantage of the advice and experience of others:

> "To be honest, I was helpless when Ania was born because I didn't really know what everything should look like, the care, feeding, changing clothes (...). I had a nervous breakdown at that time and I looked everywhere for help, for someone to help me about what I should do."

> "(...) I simply had no help, well, unless it was from strangers. From strangers! That I did."

> "My husband helps me a bit and my parents from the association where my daughter goes for rehabilitation. They also support me, give me various tips. They direct me where to go. They raise my spirits. So their support is also a great help for me."

> "I often take lots of advice. (...) because sometimes I don't know what to do in a given situation. And I often ask, whether the teachers, the tutor, the teacher, or just anyone (...). Sometimes it's hard for me to understand how to deal with a child, because, you know, it's a sick child, and sometimes I just don't know, I just have no idea."

> "I just don't know what solution to find sometimes (...). Sometimes I just don't know how to solve a problem. (...) I also ask a lot of advice from Ms A. [one of the therapists working with the respondent's sons], for example, (...). And from the class tutor too (...)."

3.7. Motherhood: the joy of being with children

It may be concluded from the statements that motherhood gives the respondents much joy, not only because of having a child but also because of the opportunity of being with their children and spending time together. It is a very special time for the participants, as they sense that their children feel loved and accepted. The biographers emphasize that children do need quality time, whether playing or doing household chores. According to the mothers, this is the time that brings them closer to their children and enables them to build a relationship based on love, trust and a sense of security:

> "I do have that time for the children. (...). But I am glad that I don't work because I am glad that I can be with the children. (...)"

> "I would find the time. And for the children (...). In the meantime, whether playing tag or hide-and-seek with the children. Or even going to milk the cows. Then I get to talk to the girls and the boys.

> "The fact that the children are just hugging, talking. They confide (...). It just makes me very happy. I am very glad that they come and say what's going on there (...)."

> "(...) But for a child you need [to find] that time, it's got to be (...)."

3.8. Motherhood: daily duties

Pursuing their role as mothers, the women speak of duties—relating to the household, child-rearing, education and rehabilitation—with which they have to cope. The narratives show that the authors of the biographies—especially those who have more than one child—are tired of the daily responsibilities to which they are required to attend. They are happy when the children are at school, which leaves them time for household chores and caring for their younger siblings. Running the house, taking care of children and their upbringing, helping with school duties, attending remedial or rehabilitation classes are a heavy burden for the women interviewed. It should also be noted that only one of the latter is supported in said duties by her husband or parents. The other mothers do not receive support from their immediate environment:

> "(...) the daughter goes to school, so there are fewer duties. She comes back from school, so you know, you have to take care of her, do the homework and take her to rehabilitation sometimes. (...) That's why

> I'm so very happy that there are those few hours spent at school. Because then I have the time to do some housework and take care of my younger daughter (...)."

> "(...). Packing, getting dressed, driving to school. In the meantime, I just tidy up around the house, do the cleaning, cook dinner (...). After four or five hours, I have to get back to school, so I go to pick up the boys from school. And usually, it's at least three times a week that we go to classes, we go straight away to the classes with the special needs association after school. (...) and only then back home. And after the classes, sometimes during the classes, my sons do their homework. (...) The therapists help them there (...). After supper, they take a bath and then they go to sleep. Sometimes I also read them fairy tales. At bedtime."

> "Reminding them about household chores. (...) Well, it takes some time for them to get used to it. Because you have to remind them, explain as much as possible, that they have to clean up after themselves (...)."

> " (...) all by myself, it's either the school, home, or the yard, everything (...)."

A special sense of duty accompanies the participants who are raising their children alone. The mothers have assumed the entire responsibility for raising their child, seeking to fulfil their role as mothers as best they could, providing their children with a sense of security and love:

> "(...) I felt like I had to replace both the father and the mother. I had to. (...)."

> "Above all, support. Supporting, helping. Raising the child's spirits, so that it simply has the support of its parents, so that it can count on them, even though they have it hard. This closeness. Especially when that father is not there, you know, so they can always count on me."

> "They need to know that I'm always there, because they cannot count on their father, you know."

3.9. Motherhood: a failure

When talking about motherhood, one of the women interviewed expressed a sense of parental failure. The narrative is very poignant, as the woman speaks of her youngest daughter being sexually abused by her son. Hence, the respondent feels that she was unable to raise her children properly, that she failed as a mother, especially where the boy is concerned:

> "(...) upbringing (...) maybe I didn't manage it with these children, well maybe I just didn't know how to. (...) Well, towards girls, I have nothing. Well, according to that son, it wasn't supposed to be like that, it's so depressing (...)."

> "They said out loud to my face that I was handicapped and no one cleaned me as should have been done. Even now, I feel shivers because I always wanted to be a mother, in the hospital they used to say it like I was going to give birth to a doll, not a child. It hurt."

4. Appraisal of the findings and conclusions for educational practice

The analysis of the narratives demonstrates that the authors of the biographies distinguish between positive biographical experiences related to the role of a mother, involving love, happiness, and joy, as well as negative ones, which they identify with helplessness, fear, anxiety or even failure. However, love for the child constitutes the most important dimension of the biographical space delineated by the interviewed mothers. In their narratives, they cited various feelings and emotions while imbuing them with subjective meanings, but maternal love was potently manifested and featured in all biographies. This feeling gave the women strength, despite the difficult circumstances or situations in which they found themselves. The participants in the study derive joy and satisfaction from motherhood, in that they see themselves fulfilling the role of a mother.

It follows from personal interpretations of individual experience that motherhood centres primarily around love and happiness. The participants had a strong desire to become mothers and to pursue self-actualization in this role. For most, it was a voluntary, conscious choice, whereby motherhood meant the possibility of "leaving a mark" or a "responsibility to shape a new person." For some narrators, assuming the role of mother was a necessity. Two of the authors of the biographies became mothers under pressure. One interviewee chose motherhood as an alternative to joining a religious order. She was compelled by her parents to make a choice, whereby at the time of taking the decision, none of the options took her own convictions into account. The other respondent was forced to surrender to the prevailing procreative attitude, which presumes that marriage entails the obligation to have children. The pressure of "normalcy" espoused by the parents and the social environment, in which a wife should also become a mother, influenced the woman's decision to conceive.

Furthermore, the interviewees clearly associated motherhood with great commitment and sacrifice. It is crucial to highlight the fact that, apart from one participant, the respondents continue to function without the support of either husbands or their immediate family. In the eyes of the study participants, the sense of responsibility for the development of children and their upbringing implies sacrifice. They carry out a great number of duties related to care, upbringing, education and rehabilitation of children, as well as run the household without the support of their closest relatives. This is corroborated by empirical studies showing that women with disabilities gravitate particularly strongly towards the domestic environment, as they are less likely to pursue their career aspirations (Wałachowska, 2017). One may have the impression that the women's awareness of their own disability and the occasional remarks that, as disabled persons, they require help themselves have led to situations where they tried at all costs to successfully confront the responsibilities of such an important, socially recognized role.

It has been asserted in previous research (Gustavsson, Starke, 2017; Wołowicz, 2021) that persons with disabilities very often require help from others and fail to cope with the responsibilities of parenting. Although research by Lizoń-Szłapowska (2011) showed that parents with intellectual disabilities who had received training in creative parenting did not differ significantly from non-disabled parents, the author also noted that parents with intellectual disabilities receive token educational support from institutions, which may result in the risk of child neglect. According to Wałachowska, this does not necessarily mean that parents are deprived of the chance of parenthood, but the corollaries of lacking institutional support are evident. It should be noted that the social position of women with disabilities in Poland is very difficult; their material status is lower than in the case of men with disabilities. The author observes that they are also less educated and are twice less likely to be professionally active than men. Running households and raising children, they are often left exclusively to their own devices (2017).

The analysed narratives also suggest that women attach great weight to family relationships. They perceive that such relationships are formed by spending quality time with each other as well as during chores. Mothers do not always have this time due to an excess of responsibilities. It should be stressed that most mothers have two, three or four children each, with only one participant having one child. Mothers strive to carve out time during the day to spend with their children, believing that such moments contribute to a unique mother-child relationship based on love and trust as well as promote a sense of security in children, positively influencing their development. With regard to relationships, one of the biographers highlights her parenting inefficiency and describes her motherhood as a failure, in view of the fact that her youngest daughter was sexually abused by her older sibling. She has a sense of having let her daughter down and thus perceives herself as a mother who has failed in this role. Empirical research shows that self-perception in persons with disabilities who assumed parental roles depends on the attitudes towards them, the support and assistance provided, and therefore on how such persons are perceived by their immediate environment (Wiszejko-Wierzbicka, 2018)

The motherhood-related experience of the interviewees can also be negative, resulting from the stress one is exposed to. Women primarily fear that their children will inherit intellectual disabilities (Bartosz, 2002). Particularly acute anxiety was experienced by those mothers who had subsequent pregnancies and whose first children had already been diagnosed with a disability. The participants in the study were aware of heredity—as confirmed in the research by Latos-Bielańska (2013)—which fuelled their anxiety about their child's health. Two of them underwent prenatal testing to gain assurance that their children would be born healthy. Bartosz (2002) emphasized that the categories of stress, crisis, coping and critical life events are closely linked, which the reconstructed maternal experience clearly reflects. As early as pregnancy, women experienced tremendous stress, and the lack of professional support caused this state to persist not only until the birth of the child but also afterwards. This is borne out by the findings in Malouf et al., who showed that women with disabilities experience poorer care during pregnancy, childbirth and the postnatal period (Malouf, Henderson, Redshaw, 2017).

Doubts about one's own parenting competence constitute the second substrate of fears and anxieties. The women did not know whether they would be able to manage caring for infants, toddlers and, later, whether they could handle the difficulties of parenting. Such fears proved to be well-founded and were further exacerbated by harmful stereotypes, according to which parents with intellectual disabilities are deficient in their parenting skills, while any support provided is ineffectual (McConnell, Llewellyn, 2002). On numerous occasions, the women spoke of a sense of loneliness and helplessness because they were already aware that they did not possess sufficient parenting competence, as evidenced by empirical research conducted by Markut (2020), who demonstrated a poor degree of such skills among mothers with intellectual disabilities. Faced with situations they found difficult, the narrators expected help and support from institutions and professional staff. However, the only help they received was provided by neighbours, teachers and parents of other children. This form of support was vital as they felt alone when confronted with educational difficulties and a lack of professional aid. The mothers attached great importance to support of this kind, because they needed it very much and were thus able to learn how to solve problems and overcome the difficulties involved in such a responsible role. These results are in line with the findings of other authors (Kijak, 2016; Blaszczak-Banasiak, Kubicki, 2017; Koziarek, 2018), who underline that parents and carers of persons with intellectual disabilities themselves note that their children or charges receive no professional/institutional support in their relationships, let alone parenting. The researchers also draw attention to the fact that professionals working with persons with intellectual disabilities express their disapproval of their relationships and having children. Negative attitudes from professionals were experienced by two women who, while in hospital, were not only criticized for choosing to have a child but were even advised to leave their infants in hospital after childbirth. Previous research indicates (Wołowicz-Ruszkowska, 2018) that institutional personnel require more evidence of parental competence than they do from women without disabilities, while their concerns stem from the notion that such women are inadequate and incapable of caring effectively for their children.

The above inquiry warrants a number of cautious conclusions:

- the view of the motherhood of women with intellectual disabilities is changing, but acceptance in this respect is far from complete. Therefore, the identity of women with intellectual disabilities, their roles, independence, adulthood – the elements which determine parenthood – need to be redefined. The current perception of intellectual disability forces these women into patterns based on stereotypes and scarce social acceptance. Approaching intellectual disability from the standpoint of the medical model creates a situation where the social environment either recognizes or does not acknowledge the right of a woman with intellectual disability to carry out the role of a mother;

- various support programmes and strategies have begun to be implemented to support parents with intellectual disabilities and their children; nonetheless, as this study demonstrates, this support is insufficient. In addition, it should be noted that women with intellectual disabilities experience symbolic violence in care institutions, which may indicate that they do not gain thorough self-acceptance of themselves and their own choices. It is, therefore, necessary to enhance the system of support with elements ensuring long-term assistance and to modify it to encourage professionals to show approval towards and recognize the rights of women with intellectual disabilities to education which covers not only intercourse, contraception and intimacy but also the course of pregnancy, diagnostic opportunities and childbirth. Education should also include parenting training sessions, during which women acquire knowledge, skills and competencies in marital relationships as well as care, upbringing and education of children at every stage of their development (Knowles, Blakely, Hansen, Machalicek, 2017).
- women with intellectual disabilities need to be supported as they gain awareness that motherhood is not an obligation. Fostering a sense of autonomy and decision-making agency will promote informed choices about procreation and the roles pursued. Such knowledge will also enable women with intellectual disabilities to overcome social stereotypes concerning their sexuality, femininity, and parental competencies, as well as encourage striving for equal rights. It will also empower them to shape their identity independently of social pressure and existing stereotypes.

One should avoid generalizations with respect to the above conclusions, but they do recommend certain changes because, as Sulik writes: "all kinds of attempts to capture the experience of motherhood may yield a certain picture, reveal shades and colours, but just when we think we have arrived at a complete depiction of motherhood, another novel perspective emerges while our picture seems to be an optical illusion" (Sulik, 2017, p. 88).

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Parental attitudes in perception of fathers of deaf children

Postawy rodzica w percepcji ojców dziecka niesłyszącego[1]

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Katarzyna Plutecka[a]

[a] *Associate Professor Katarzyna Plutecka, PhD https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7454-5052*
Pedagogical University, Cracow

Abstract: The paper is of an empirical character. The main objective of the study was to diagnose declared attitudes of fathers towards deaf children. The study made use of the Parental Attitude Research Instrument (PARI) by E. Schaefer and L. Bell. The base group comprised 50 fathers of deaf children (FDC). Additionally, a group of 58 randomly selected fathers having only hearing children were examined (control group – FHC). The analysis of results of this study takes into account first general attitudes of the fathers, i.e. proper emotional contact, the attitude of excessive distance and excessive concentration or protection, as well as attitudes towards family and educational roles; thereafter, the subscale scores were averaged to diagnose the intensity of each particular attitude. As a result of the study, it was established that the presence of a deaf child in the family affects the shaping of specific parental attitudes. The age and education of fathers of deaf children were the variables that also affected the shaping of parental attitudes. In summary, the conclusions for pedagogical practice will be discussed.
Keywords: parental attitude, deaf child, father

Abstract: Artykuł ma charakter empiryczny. Głównym celem badań było zdiagnozowanie deklarowanych postaw ojców wobec dzieci niesłyszących. W badaniach wykorzystano kwestionariusz PARI (Parental Attitude Research Instrument) E.Schaefera i L.Bella. Grupę zasadniczą stanowiło 50 ojców dzieci niesłyszących (ODN). Dodatkowo przebadano losowo dobranych 58 ojców mających tylko dzieci słyszące (grupa kontrolna- ODS). W analizie wyników niniejszych badań uwzględniono najpierw ogólne postawy ojców, a więc prawidłowy kontakt uczuciowy, postawę nadmiernego dystansu, nadmiernej koncentracji albo ochraniania oraz postawy wobec ról rodzinnych i wychowawczych, a następnie uśredniono wyniki skal cząstkowych w celu zdiagnozowania nasilenia określonych postaw. W wyniku przeprowadzonego badania stwierdzono, że obecność w rodzinie dziecka niesłyszącego ma znaczenie dla kształtowania się specyficznych postaw rodzicielskich. Wiek i wykształcenie ojców dzieci niesłyszących były zmiennymi, które również wpłynęły na kształtowanie się ich postaw rodzicielskich. W części podsumowującej przedstawiono wnioski dla praktyki pedagogicznej.
Słowa kluczowe: postawa rodzicielska, dziecko niesłyszące, ojciec

Introduction

The early 1960s set out a new approach to family in social sciences. Of key importance were humanistic orientations (mainly Martin Seligman's positive psychology, Aaron Antonovsky's salutogenesis model, Richard S. Lazarus and Susan Folkman's transactional model of stress) and theories which accentuated the polymorphic and systemic context of approaching the family environment (Heszen, 2016; Kwiatek, Wilczewska, 2015; Lachowska, 2021). This different, more holistic scientific approach was oriented towards family as a social group and not a selected family member as before. Therefore, family, like every social group, must be treated as an organism comprised of parts each of which has its own input into the work of the entire organism in favour of providing it with optimal adaptation. Each social group is thus a system, i.e. an entirety of mutually dependent parts. Gradual departure took place, from treating family as a certain constant social group towards clearly emphasising the importance of the quality of relationships between the individual members creating subsystems. Family is not only a social group but also a social institution, integrally incorporated into the social structure and into the

1 Artykuł w języku polskim: https://www.stowarzyszeniefidesetratio.pl/fer/2022-1Plutecka.pdf

particular society's behavioural culture as well as its functioning. Therefore, the 'biological' functions of a family are not 'pure' biological functions, as in the animal world, because they have a close relation with the sphere of highly developed psyche and the social and cultural sphere of functioning of man, marriage and family itself (Świętochowski, 2021).

The following four research perspectives can be observed in the current family-oriented scientific approach: the ecological, competence based, developmental and stability planning orientation. Of crucial importance in the ecological perspective are interactions between man and various social contexts (from the micro- to the macro-system). The dynamics of the diversity and complexity of the impact of these subsystems is also shaped through a specific time context (chronosystem)[2]. The next one, the competence perspective, comes from the traditional model oriented towards exhibiting conflicts, deficits or pathologies occurring in families and highlights the capabilities or the potential of each of the members of the family as a whole. Intra- and interpersonal competencies should be comprised of such skills that enable effective functioning in the immediate and extended social contexts. The developmental perspective is related to understanding family as a system dependent not only on the individual development of each of the family members, their needs and aspirations but also on the phases of family development. Of great importance is maintaining togetherness or consistency of existence in the next stages of the family life. The stability planning orientation stresses the significant importance of family as an educational environment that is a source of support for its members and a sanctuary for family bonds, a place that enables them to regain strength after experiencing stress in other social environments, e.g. at work or in a peer group (Janicka, Liberska, 2021; Kiereś, Gromek, Hryszan, 2018).

The above scientific perspectives have also change the approach orientated towards families with sensorially disabled children. The one-sided view of families with a disabled child, struggling with consecutive stages of emotional experiences, has been gradually rejected. The current scientific approach has enabled parents to perceive the process of care, education or rehabilitation of a child with disability as experiences triggering positive changes. From the point of view of the development of a child with disability, much better results are achieved in collaboration with parents who are focussed on developing educational competences, have self-confidence and are gradually shaping correct educational attitudes (Niedbalski, 2020).

When describing the functioning of families with disabled children, it seems appropriate to show the specific situation of being a hearing parent of a deaf child[3] and of special importance is the perception of parenting by fathers. The role of the father in the family is as important as that of the mother. As a result of the social, economic and cultural transformations taking place, the role of the father is becoming multidimensional. The significance of the father for the beneficial development of the deaf child has been demonstrated by numerous researchers, who stressed the emotional involvement in the process of rehabilitation of the deaf child and the awareness of being responsible for their upbringing. Fathers perceive the child's hearing impairment as an experience which, despite strong emotions,

2 In the late 1970s and early 1980s, the ecological paradigm entered the social sciences, and it was then that scientists began to apply ecological interpretations of the family environment functioning. U. Bronfenbrenner (1917-2005) dealt with relationships between a developing child and the environment and created the theory of ecological systems or otherwise the ecological theory of development. According to this theory, man lives in various social environments that are overlapping. The foundation of U. Bronfenbrenner's ecological theory are the following four elements: 'process-man-context-time'. Within the environments or contexts of man's development, the author initially distinguished four subsystems: microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem and macrosystem and in the course of further investigations he added chronosystem chronosystem (Xia, Li, Tudge, 2020).

3 The term 'deaf child' (literally 'non-hearing child') most commonly used in the literature and comprises children with different degrees of hearing impairment. This term is used in compliance with the Regulation of the Ministry of National Education of 28th August 2017 amending the Regulation on conditions for organising training, education and care for children and juveniles, either disabled or socially maladjusted, in preschools and schools, in open and integrated classes (Journal of Laws, item 1652), in the light of which the officially adopted term shall be 'non-hearing'. The terms 'deaf', 'child with impaired hearing' will be used as synonymous terms.

provides encouragement and motivation to cope with this burden in order to prepare the deaf child for independent and normal functioning in life (Davenport, Holt, 2019; Haddad, Steuerwald, Garland, 2019; Kobosko, Ganc, Paluch, Jędrzejczak, Geremek-Samsonowicz, Skarżyński, 2020; Kornas-Biela, 2020; Kornas-Biela, Tupaj, 2020). The father's task-oriented approach aimed at satisfying the deaf child's developmental needs as well as the lower expression of emotion mean that they are definitely better than mothers at coping with stress and searching for substantive solutions to life problems. For this reason, the father's physical and mental presence is so important for the deaf child's regular development.

1. Methodological basis for the research

The objective of the study was to obtain an answer to the question, 'How do fathers of deaf children perceive their parental attitudes?' The study was conducted from September to November 2021. In order to diagnose the attitudes of hearing fathers towards deaf children, surveys were carried out among 50 fathers who constituted the base group in the study (FDC). Additionally, the study included 58 randomly selected fathers only having hearing children (control group, FHC). The fathers' age in the study groups was differentiated, the predominant group consisted of fathers aged between 26 and 35 (FDC 38%, FHC 43%). A slightly lower number were fathers aged between 36 and 45 (FDC 31%, FHC 27%) and between 46 and 55 (FDC 20%, FHC 24%). The other fathers were men aged over 55 (FDC 11%, FHC 6%). The analysis of education levels among the two study groups also revealed clear differentiation. In the first group of fathers (FHC), the largest population were fathers with vocational education (49%). Fathers with secondary education made up 31% of the group and only 15% of fathers had higher education. The other fathers, with primary education, were in the minority (5%). In the other group of fathers (FHC) it was secondary education that prevailed (50%). It was then followed by vocational (25%) and higher education (21%). In the group of fathers of hearing children only 4% of fathers had primary education.

The following variables were taken into account in the overall analysis:

- characteristics of the fathers' attitudes towards deaf and hearing children;
- fathers' age and their attitudes toward the children;
- fathers' education and their attitudes toward the children.

It should be pointed out, however, that this study had an exploratory character, and formulation of a hypothesis with such defined methodological approach may limit the possibility of perceiving the particular phenomenon reducing it to the threads realised by the investigator; it may also neglect a lot of issues that the investigator was not aware of. The study results presented herein do not constitute an attempt at duplicating other studies and therefore cannot be treated as diagnostic, i.e. create a methodological basis for formulating hypotheses for subsequent studies for validation purposes.

The Parental Attitude Research Instrument (PARI) by E. Schaefer and L. Bell, modified by M. Ziemska (2009), which comprises 155 statements forming 23 scales of attitudes, was used as a measure of the fathers' attitudes. The individual scales relate to different matters that are important for the functioning of family as a system. Each scale consists of 5 statements (items) that the subject addresses by selecting one of the answers provided, with related scores: definitely right (4 points), rather right (3 points), rather wrong (2 points), definitely wrong (1 point). When processing the scores, the attitudes scales were divided into the following four groups:

1. Emotional contact with the child: ease of communicating (1), respect for the child's rights (14), developing the child's activity (15), sharing the child's interests (21);
2. Emotional distance: striving at strict parenting (8), irritation (9), avoiding communication with the child (16);

3. Emotional concentration or tendency towards excessive protection: limiting the child's freedom (4), limiting external influences on the child (10), suppressing sexual interests in children (18), accelerating the development (22), raising children in dependency (2), fears of hurting the child (6), suppressing aggression in the child (12), excessive interference with the child's life (20);
4. Attitudes towards the family and parenting roles: giving up social contacts (3), conflicts in the family (7), cult of parents (11), awareness of being dependent on the loved ones (19).

The survey of fathers used a shortened scale which dismissed statements relating to perception of various aspects of family and parenting roles exclusively by women, and more precisely, propensity for self-harm (5), rejecting the role of a housewife (13), neglecting the husband (17) and awareness of dependency (23). The highest score relating to one of the above four scales could be 20 points with 5 points being the lowest. The lowest scores, the more desirable was the father's attitude for the development of the deaf child and the functioning of the family. The above relation does not apply to the first group of attitudes, emotional contact with the child, in which high scores indicate good relationships. The scores given are arithmetical averages for each attitude.

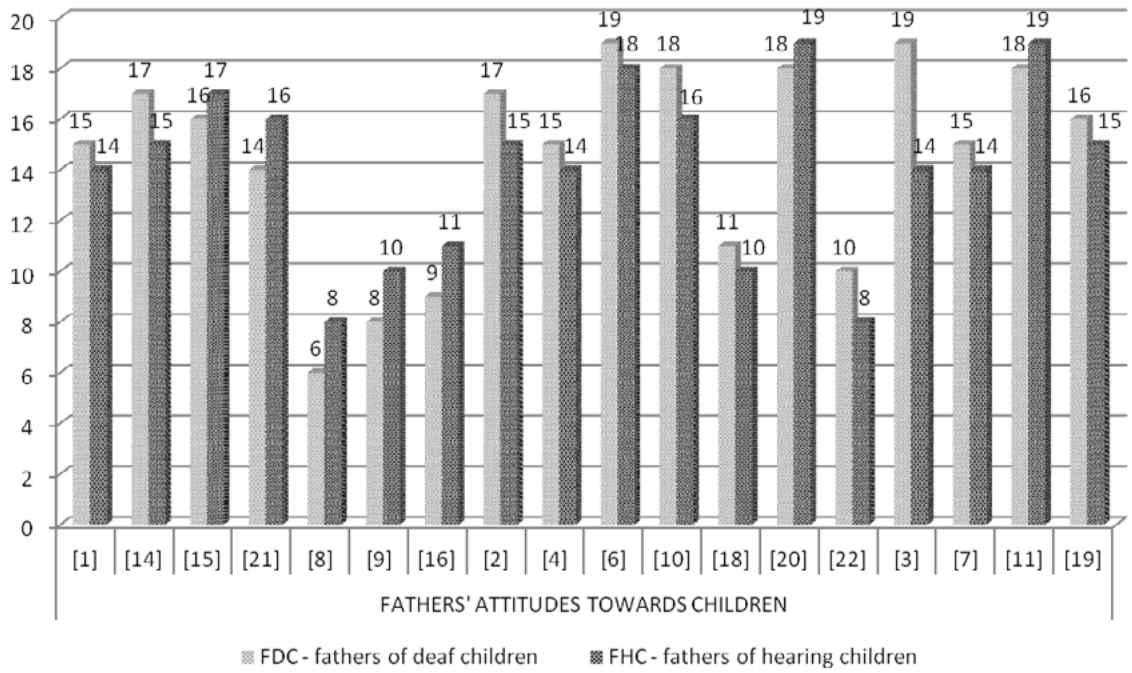
2. Results of the analysis of the research material

The analysis of the study results takes into consideration first the general attitudes of the fathers, i.e. proper emotional contact, the attitude of excessive distance, excessive concentration or protection, as well as the attitudes towards the family and parenting roles, and thereafter the subscale scores that were averaged in order to diagnose the intensity of the particular attitudes. In this study, fathers in both groups, fathers of deaf children (FDC) and fathers of hearing children (FHC) obtained similar scores. In the first group of attitudes concerning the emotional contact with the child, the highest scores were obtained in scale 14, equality of the child's rights (FDC 17 points, FHC 15 points) and in scale 15, developing activity (FDC 16 points, FHC 17 points). The analysis showed that of great importance to fathers is also sharing interests with the child, scale 21 (FDC 14 points, FHC 16 points) and ease of communicating, scale 1 (FDC 15 points, FHC 14 points). The next group of attitudes concerned emotional distance. Fathers of deaf children obtained lower scores (between 6 and 9 points) than fathers of hearing children (between 8 and 11 points). The differences are small but they indicate that fathers keep an emotional distance from their deaf children because they are more irritable, scale 9 (8 points), avoid communication with the child, scale 16 (9 points), but they do not strive at strict parenting, scale 8 (6 points). The above attitudes may result from a situation of being overburdened with responsibilities related to raising a deaf child. Being a father of a deaf child additionally defines and extends the scope of the duties, which affects the shaping of the specific parental attitudes. Being a father of a deaf child may also be a cause of existential anxiety related to the unknown consequences of the parents' actions. On the other hand, fathers' attitudes towards hearing children involve striving at strict parenting (8 points), avoidance of communication with the child (10 points) and irritability (11 points).

In the third group of attitudes concerning emotional concentration, slight differences can be observed between the scores of the two groups of fathers. High scores in both groups of fathers in the scales concerning the above attitude may indicate on the one hand an excessive interference with the child's life, scale 20 (FDC 18 points, FHC 19 points) and tendencies towards raising the child in dependency, scale 2 (FDC 17 points, FHC 15 points), limiting their freedom, scale 4 (FDC 15 points, FHC 14 points) and external influences, scale 10 (FDC 18 points, FHC 16 points), and on the other hand the fathers' fears of hurting their children, scale 6 (FDC 19 points, FHC 18 points). Fathers do not show high tendencies towards accelerating their children's development, scale 22 (FDC 10 points, FHC 8 points) or suppressing their natural sexual interests, scale 18 (FDC 11 points, FHC 10 points). The scores obtained prove that fathers on the one hand want to be perceived as autocratic, demanding parents, and on the other hand, they care for building partner relationships with the child.

The fourth group concerned attitudes related to fulfilling the family and parenting roles. Also in this case, slight differences may be observed between fathers in the two study groups. Fathers obtained highest scores in scale 11, regarding the cult of parents (FDC 18 points, FHC 19 points), which is, as a matter of fact, consistent with the traditional system of system of upbringing in Poland. Fathers are more inclined to have recourse to strict discipline in search for new solutions to difficulties in upbringing, instead of permissiveness. Disciplining is still identified by fathers with maintenance of order and obedience. Therefore, firmness and consistency in father's dealing with the child are so important. In the next scales related to awareness of being dependent on the loved ones, scale 19 (FDC 16 points, FHC 15 points) and to family conflicts, scale 7 (FDC 15 points, FHC 14 points), no significant differences between the groups were found. However, there were differences between the two groups of fathers in the scale concerning giving up social contacts, scale 3 (FDC 19 points, FHC 14 points). Fathers of deaf children protect them from excessive influences of the environment, which are perceived as a threat to their development.

Graph 1. Fathers' attitudes towards children, FDC (n=50), FHC (n=58)



Source: own work based on studies.

The study demonstrated that fathers' age has an impact on their parental attitudes towards children. Fathers in the middle adulthood period, aged between 36 and 45 and those between 46 and 55, as well as fathers over 55 years of age, manifest more desirable parental attitudes than fathers in the early adulthood (between 26 and 35). Fathers in the middle adulthood period, aged between 36 and 45 (FDC 39%, FHC 43%), aged between 46 and 55 (FDC 21%, FHC 15%) and over 55 years of age (FDC- 12%, FHC- 25%) more often demonstrate the desirable attitudes of a parent's emotional contact with the child than fathers in the early adulthood, aged between 26 and 35 (FDC 18%, FHC 25%). With age, fathers display an emotional distance from the problems encountered (aged between 36 and 45, FDC 41%, FHC 39%; aged between 46 and 55, FDC 22%, FHC-27%; over 55 years of age, FDC 19%, FHC 24%; aged between 26 and 35, FDC 18%, FHC-10%). Fathers in the adulthood period (aged between 36 and 45, FDC 29%, FHC 43%; aged between 46 and 55, FDC 28%, FHC 21%, over 55 years of age, FDC 29%, FHC 18%) to a larger extent prefer emotional concentration towards the child than fathers aged between 26 and 35 (FDC 14%, FHC 18%). For both groups of fathers, greater impatience with the problems related to fulfilling the family and parenting roles can be seen with age (for those aged between 36 and 45, FDC 31%, FHC 39%; for those aged between 46 and 55, FDC 25%, FHC 31%; over the age of 55, FDC 28%, FHC 25%). On the other hand, fathers at younger age (between 26 and 35, FDC 26%, FHC 15%) do not feel the need for maintaining the cult of parents or the awareness of dependency.

The level of education affected the shaping of the desired parental attitudes. Closer emotional contact was revealed by fathers with higher education (FDC 47%, FHC 39%) and secondary education (FDC 25%, FHC 28%) than fathers with vocational education (FDC 22%, FHC 25%) and primary education (FDC 6%, FHC 8%). Fathers with vocational education (FDC 36%, FHC 38%) and secondary education (FDC 31%, FHC 35%) displayed a greater emotional distance towards the problems encountered than fathers with higher education (FDC 21%, FHC 20%) and primary education (FDC 12%, FHC 7%). A further empirical analysis showed that fathers with higher education (FDC 45%, FHC 39%) and secondary education (FDC 27%, FHC 31%) revealed greater emotional concentration towards the child's developmental needs than fathers with vocational education (FDC 24%, FHC 24%) and primary education (FDC 4%, FHC 6%). Fathers' competencies in undertaking family roles, especially related to parenting, increase together with the level of education. In the group of attitudes related to fulfilling family and parenting roles, in the individual scales, fathers with higher education (FDC 39%, FHC 42%) and secondary education (FDC 29%, FHC 38%) obtained higher scores than fathers with vocational education (FDC 26%, FHC 18%) and primary education (FDC 6%, FHC 2%).

Conclusion

As a result of the study carried out, it has been established that the presence of a deaf child in the family has an impact on the shaping of the specific parental attitudes. Fathers of deaf children manifest attitudes of proper emotional contact towards their children. A deaf child's specific needs translate into increased parental concern and emotional concentration. The study has also revealed fathers' difficulties related to performing parental roles. Among the most common difficulties, fathers of deaf children listed expansion of positive emotions towards the child, exaggerated control and fear of their health as well as irritation resulting from the situation of being overburdened with responsibilities. Parenting problems are inevitable and most parents experience them to a greater or lesser extent. It would be more worrying if fathers attempted to conceal them or failed to notice them. The study has shown that in the case of fathers of deaf children, age and education were those variables that affected the shaping of specific parental attitudes. With age, fathers exhibit more desirable parental attitudes. In turn, the higher the level of education, the greater emotional contact and emotional concentration.

The results obtained in the study require further deepened qualitative and quantitative analysis and taking into account the inferentiality of many of the phenomena that take place in the family environment. Issues concerning paternal attitudes towards deaf children should be investigated based on a systemic epistemology and appreciation of the fact that human interactions take place in different contexts. Therefore, it is not sufficient to understand the individual members of a family and meet the father because what is important is the dynamics of the family functioning as a system in the entire life cycle. Psychological and educational aid should be focussed on family as a system and separately on each member.

This outline of fathers' attitudes towards deaf children points out to the need for supporting measures. What is desirable is a broadly understood support that will contribute to father's greater involvement in the development of deaf children at the various life stages. All offers of psychological help addressed to the father should take account of the following professional and non-professional forms:

- providing information on deaf children's special developmental and educational needs, with special consideration of assistance in acquiring communication competencies that are necessary in relationships with deaf children;
- building local networks of counselling and consultation;
- offering psychological assistance to fathers, taking advantage of methods that make reference to the interactive activities, e.g. the Video Home Training model;
- ongoing provision of information on institutional offers of external assistance;
- provision of specialist help, e.g. by an educationalist, psychologist, speech and language therapist for the hearing impaired or a sign language interpreter;
- collaboration with parents of deaf children within the framework of meetings organised by associations or foundations;
- Inclusion of other hearing members of the family, e.g. siblings, grandparents, in the supporting actions;
- building support groups for parents with an early intervention programme;
- mediation in solving particular difficult parenting issues or a family crisis;
- sharing experience of being a deaf child's father during meetings with other families raising a deaf child;
- building a community of deaf children's fathers in order to organise regular meetings during which there will be enough time for understanding, support and sincere conversations concerning better fulfilment of the role of father.

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Children with disability and their families during the COVID-19 pandemic - literature review

Dzieci z niepełnosprawnościami i ich rodziny podczas pandemii COVID-19 – przegląd literatury[1]

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Anna Zalewska[a], Monika Gałczyk[b]

[a] *Anna Zalewska, PhD, https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7021-2592*
Department of Health Sciences, Lomza State University of Applied Sciences
[b] *Monika Gałczyk, PhD, https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0449-6843*
Department of Health Sciences, Lomza State University of Applied Sciences

Abstract: The difficult situation into which the whole society suddenly found itself as a result of the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic causing COVID-19 has disintegrated everyday life, creating fear and numerous negative effects. Children with disabilities and their families, for whom the pandemic crisis is linked with other disability-related problems, have found themselves in a difficult position. The main aim of this article is to present the actual situation of children with disabilities and their families during the COVID-19 pandemic. The functional characteristics and selected problems of this group, as well as the negative effects of the pandemic are presented with regard to the review of the current literature based on the EBM (Evidence-Based Medicine) paradigm.
Keywords: COVID-19, children, disability, family

Abstrakt: Trudna sytuacja, w jakiej nagle z powodu pandemii wirusa SARS-CoV-2 wywołującego chorobę COVID-19, znalazło się całe społeczeństwo, wpłynęła na dezintegrację życia codziennego, budząc lęk i niosąc ze sobą wiele negatywnych skutków. W trudnym położeniu znalazły się dzieci z niepełnosprawnościami wraz z rodzinami, dla których na kryzys pandemiczny nakładają się też inne problemy związane z niepełnosprawnością. Głównym celem artykułu jest przedstawienie faktycznej sytuacji dzieci z niepełnosprawnościami i ich rodzin, jaka ma miejsce podczas pandemii COVID-19. Na podstawie przeglądu aktualnego piśmiennictwa opartego o paradygmat EBM (*Evidence-Based Medicine*) przedstawiono charakterystykę funkcjonowania oraz wybrane problemy tej grupy, a także negatywne skutki pandemii ją dotykające.
Słowa kluczowe: COVID-19, dzieci, niepełnosprawność, rodzina

Introduction

The first case of SARS-CoV-2 infection in Poland was detected on 4 March 2020, while already on 11 March 2020, WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus announced that the COVID-19 disease could be referred to as a pandemic. This was the beginning of an exponential and dynamic process of introduction and application of various restrictions that were significantly reducing the quality of life (Clair et al., 2021) and changing the way people around the world functioned, exacerbating at the same time social inequalities and compounding the problems of groups somehow discriminated against or excluded (Armitage, Nelums, 2020). Current observations confirm that disease caused by the SARS-Co-2 virus can be characterized with a diverse clinical picture, the most common of which is severe pneumonia (Dong et al., 2020). Due to the rapid spread of the disease, various types of epidemic restrictions were implemented worldwide, which were mainly related to movement and restriction of social contacts. Globally, suddenly, during a similar period, people began to experience problems in daily functioning.

1 Artykuł w języku polskim: https://www.stowarzyszeniefidesetratio.pl/fer/2022-1Zalew.pdf

Children with disabilities, due to their underlying medical conditions or disorders and their frequent need for contact with people supporting treatment and therapy, are a particular risk group during the COVID-19 pandemic. They may be at higher risk for coronavirus infection, and at risk of a more severe course of the disease. Before the pandemics they and their families functioned in society for example with the help of specialised facilities, counselling centres or institutions providing support for people with disabilities. Literally overnight they were deprived of this opportunity, which required the long-term commitment of parents and carers (Pinkas et al., 2020).

The spread of the SARS-CoV-2 virus and the declaration of a pandemic have made it necessary for the public authorities of individual countries to adapt their system of assistance to people with disabilities, their families and carers in view of the unforeseen and sudden need to change existing forms of interaction in the area of care, education, rehabilitation and revalidation. Unfortunately, children with disabilities have at some point been omitted considering actions undertaken by the government. The Government's actions took into account the needs of healthy children especially in the introduction of online education. The needs of children with disabilities were forgotten at the same time. When disability measures were introduced, the situation of children was ignored (Kocejko, 2021).

The main objective of this article is to present the current situation of disabled children and their families during the COVID-19 pandemic. The characteristics of functioning and selected problems of this group, as well as the negative effects of the pandemic are presented in terms of the review of the current literature based on the EBM paradigm (*Evidence-Based Medicine*).

1. Problems of children with disabilities and their families during a pandemic

The situation of families bringing up children with disabilities is complex and diverse. The very definition of disabled children includes a heterogeneous group due to their problems and needs. Different difficulties are faced by children with motor disabilities, sensory disabilities, intellectual disabilities, and different difficulties are encountered by their families. There is no doubt a child with a disability changes the life of ta family at all levels, usually forcing a change in the life goals of all its members (Dołęga, 2010). Suddenly the reality of the pandemic, changing completely the previous everyday life, had a significant impact on the functioning of individuals in the family, as well as on relationships or on the way time was spent. The pandemic was the cause of creating or exacerbating crises in families due to increased levels of anxiety in all family members. In the case of parents, anxiety may have been exacerbated, for example, by the lowered immunity often present in children with disabilities, but also by the fear of losing a source of income. The whole situation of the pandemic and the spread of the SARS-CoV-2 virus was often incomprehensible to children with disabilities. The unexpected change in the rhythm of functioning, lockdown, tension from other family members, contributed to the appearance or intensification of difficult behaviours, particularly troublesome during the pandemic (Buchnat, Wojciechowska, 2020).

The main difficulties of children with disabilities during the COVID-19 pandemic, which according to the researchers are not observed in such severity in their peers without disabilities, are:

- mental health problems and increased exposure to violent situations,
- problems with access to education,
- problems in accessing rehabilitation and other services to facilitate daily functioning (Aishworiya, Kang, 2020).

2. The impact of the pandemic on mental health

The COVID-19 pandemic and its associated short- and long-term consequences should be regarded as an intense stressor (Wierzbinski, 2020; Heitzman, 2020). At this point, its psychological effects cannot be precisely estimated. It is presumed that they will be severe, as indicated by the results of ongoing research (Elbay et al., 2020; Shader, 2020). The pandemic affects mental health in children and adults both with and without disabilities (Ciciurkaite et al., 2021). Studies conducted worldwide show that most quarantined individuals had distressing mental health related symptoms such as depressive states, depression, emotional exhaustion, insomnia irritability, PTSD features (Kumar, Nayar, 2021).

Unfortunately, children with disabilities (mainly intellectual disabilities and autism spectrum disorders) belong to the group which is mostly affected by the psychological consequences of the pandemic in the form of e.g. : prolonged low mood, depressive states and anxiety, phobias, psychotic states. This is due to the problems with understanding dynamic changes of everyday life and breaking safe routines, such as going to school or participating in different activities and other specialist support (Patel, 2020). One of the biggest problems for children turns out to be feelings of loneliness, associated with being cut off from peers and teachers from institutions and changing functioning environments (Bartoszek et al, 2020; Glac, 2020; Elmer et al, 2020; Raviv et al, 2021). During isolation, children with disabilities are much more likely than children without disabilities to experience all forms of violence (Lund, 2020).

In contrast, other studies show a high prevalence of depressive symptoms in caregivers of children with disabilities significantly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic (Dhiman et al., 2020). Special attention is also given to the significant increase in parental stress levels in families with special needs children (Bentenuto et al., 2021). Due to the so-called lockdown, many industries came to a standstill, many people had to take a break in their jobs or simply lost their jobs. This had a significant impact on the economic situation of numerous families, being another source of stress among parents.

3. E- learning

In accordance with the Regulation of the Minister of Education of 11 March 2020 on the temporary restriction as for the functioning of educational system units in connection with the prevention, counteraction and eradication of COVID-19, the functioning of all educational institutions was suspended (Regulation of the Minister of Education, Dz.U. of 11 March 2020).

Parents of a disabled child are usually actively involved in the education and therapy process from the moment of the child's birth being more involved due to the child's various developmental difficulties. During the pandemic, however, it became apparent that it was the parent who had to take proper responsibility for the process and work with the child on a regular basis, using guidance and tools usually provided electronically by teachers and therapists. The greater requirement for the parent to be active was correlated with the child being less independent (Doroszuk, 2020).

Children with disabilities suddenly lost the chance to benefit from comprehensive institutional support such as therapeutic classes. Being subject to compulsory education they had to follow a core curriculum and continue therapy at home like other pupils in spite of significant difficulties in independent functioning. It should be noted that being at home disabled children often did not have the conditions to meet special educational needs. The lack of physical contact with therapists and teachers, as well as the online form of conducted classes did not allow for their full implementation and achievement of individual, previously planned goals. The problems of changing established patterns of functioning and breaking the routine, where the routine is the source of their sense of security, became important for children with autism spectrum disorder and their families. (Patel, 2020). The platforms of online activities were not always accessible to children with hearing and visual impairments (Patel, 2020). A Polish study on parents of hearing-impaired children and the accessibility of the online education system during the first lockdown fshowed that in half of the cases studied, no improvements were made to reduce the barriers associated with online education (Lewandowska, 2020). It should be remembered that any interruption or reduction in the quality of therapy for disabled children can lead to a rapid regression of skills developed in many spheres, e.g.: communication, physical fitness, cognitive sphere (Dunst et al., 2008). Parents were forced to quickly adapt their home environment to online education and learn how to use new tools and technologies. This initial chaos in online education resulted in the need for even greater parental involvement. Additional problems in distance learning were found to be defective computer equipment and lack of regular internet access (Glac, 2020; Toseeb et al., 2020). The study conducted among parents of children with the autism spectrum showed that almost all respondents experienced problems with the implementation of online lessons, therapy activities and leisure time activities. The surveyed parents also observed greater problems with concentration and a higher incidence of challenging behaviour in their children (Colizzi et al., 2020). It can be speculated (although no such data has been collected in Poland) that some disabled children gave up the education system for a moment due to additional barriers and lack of help to overcome them (Kocejko, 2020).

4. Limited access to health care and specialised therapy

In accordance with the Regulation of the Council of Ministers of 31 March 2020 concerning the establishment of certain restrictions, orders and prohibitions in connection with the epidemic outbreak, the possibility of providing health care services in the field of therapeutic rehabilitation (in the form of private services, as well as those provided under the health care system financed by public benefits) was suspended (Regulation of the RM, Dz.U. of 31.03.2020, item 566).

The pandemic period, the closure of specialist institutions, and the reliance on on-call duty impeded the diagnostic process of children. The correct diagnosis is important in order to introduce early therapeutic intervention (Eshraghi et al., 2020). It was shown that in the situation of children with disabilities, on-call duty is usually not effective (Masi et al., 2020).

Children with certain disabilities present significantly greater health care needs than healthy children. This is related to the disability itself as well as to co-morbidities. During the pandemic, any inconvenience related to access to primary and specialised health care may have led to a deterioration of children's current, as well as subsequent, health status (Aishworiya, Kang, 2020).

A problem during the pandemic (also due to the increased demand for this type of service in society) is the limited access to psychological support or psychiatric treatment already hindered before the pandemic), which for children with various disabilities and their families is indispensable (Grumi et al., 2021).

In children with physical disability, additional restriction of physical activity and lack of physiotherapy or other physical activities led to deterioration of their physical condition (Toseeb et al., 2020).

5. Siblings of disabled people

Growing up in a family with disabled siblings and facing specific life situations unknown to people without the experience of disability, can stimulate the development of healthy siblings. Some become more socially mature therefore more independent and responsible, as well as sensitive to the needs of others. The fact of having a sibling with a disability, on the other hand, also generates many difficult situations, causing both mental and physical strain (Pisula, 2007). Based on research conducted even before the pandemic, it is known that siblings of disabled people have higher levels of anxiety and tendency to withdraw from interpersonal contacts, as well as higher tendencies to depression than siblings of healthy people (Prata, 2019).

During the pandemic, siblings of disabled people not only had to cope with their own anxiety related to COVID-19, but also with other situations triggered by specific family setting. Increased responsibilities, less time devoted by parents, the accumulation of difficult behaviours of siblings during isolation put too much strain on them. The restriction on extra activities such as sports or extra curricular activities at school often deprived healthy siblings of a safe place to relieve tension. Another burden for siblings of disabled children is online learning. Not only do they participate in online education but also support their brother or sister, especially when parents work off-site. (Buchnat, Wojciechowska, 2020).

Summary

In conclusion, all studies available in the literature unambiguously show the negative impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the situation of children with disabilities and their families in all spheres of functioning. Special attention should be paid to the well-being of this group both during and after the pandemic by providing additional interdisciplinary support.

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The psychologist's diagnostic competences in issuing psychological and judicial opinions in divorce cases involving children

Kompetencje diagnostyczne psychologa w opiniowaniu psychologiczno-sądowym w sprawach o rozwód z udziałem dzieci[1]

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Agnieszka Pisarska[a]
a Agnieszka Pisarska, MA, https://orcid.org/0000000261379072
Faculty of Education and Psychology, Maria Curie-Skłodowska University, Lublin, Poland

Abstract: Divorce cases where divorcing spouses have minor children pose a particular challenge for psychologists and lawyers. The court decides on important matters regarding the child and the family, but formally does not have sufficient knowledge of the psychological functioning of family members, and the decision is based on a psychological and judicial opinion. The psychologist does not make legally binding decisions regarding the family, but acts as an expert with so-called special information in selected areas of psychology, which allows preparing a psychological and judicial opinion on the functioning of the family to support the court's decision-making process. Particular diagnostic competence of a psychologist: knowledge, skills and ethical attitude increase the likelihood of accurate and reliable psychological diagnosis and contribute to making the psychological and judicial opinion more useful to the court. The article presents selected legal and psychological issues related to the role of a psychologist and the process of diagnosing in providing psychological and judicial opinion on divorce matters where the partners are parents of minor children. It presents the psychologist's diagnostic competences: (a) knowledge, including the knowledge of research areas important in making psychological diagnoses and specific issues (including the concept of resilience, parentification, parental alienation, the child's adaptation, conflict between partners, the child's best interest clause as a principle of family law, evidence-based diagnosis), basic legal principles on divorce, the status of an expert psychologist and psychological and judicial opinion, as well as other provisions which are not source of law in the form of guidelines and standards; (b) skills relating to effective planning and execution of multi-person diagnosis, the construction of the psychological and judicial opinion, the selection of diagnostic tools, the presentation of hypotheses, transparent and comprehensive data analysis and the formulation of conclusions; (c) an ethical attitude taking into account the special status of the psychologist and diagnostic relationship in divorce matters, taking into account ethical dilemmas and separateness of diagnosis conducted out of court.
Keywords: psychological diagnosis, diagnostic competences, psychological and judicial opinions, divorce

Abstrakt: Sprawy o rozwód, w których rozwodzący się małżonkowie posiadają wspólne maloletnie dzieci stanowią szczególne wyzwanie dla psychologów i prawników. Sąd decyduje o istotnych sprawach dziecka i rodziny, ale formalnie nie posiadając wystarczającej wiedzy w zakresie psychologicznego funkcjonowania członków rodziny, rozstrzygnięcie opiera na opinii psychologiczno-sądowej. Psycholog nie podejmuje prawnie wiążących rozstrzygnięć dotyczących rodziny, ale występuje jako ekspert posiadający tzw. wiadomości specjalne w wybranych obszarach psychologii, co umożliwia sporządzenie opinii psychologiczno-sądowej dotyczącej funkcjonowania rodziny, wspierającej proces podejmowania decyzji przez sąd. Szczególne kompetencje diagnostyczne psychologa: wiedza, umiejętności i postawa etyczna zwiększają prawdopodobieństwo trafnej i wiarygodnej diagnozy psychologicznej oraz przyczyniają się do tego, że opinia psychologiczno-sądowa staje się bardziej użyteczna dla sądu. Artykuł prezentuje wybrane zagadnienia prawne i psychologiczne związane z rolą psychologa oraz procesem diagnozowania w opiniowaniu psychologiczno-sądowym w sprawach o rozwód, gdy partnerzy posiadają wspólne maloletnie dzieci. Kolejno przedstawione zostały kompetencje diagnostyczne psychologa: a) wiedza, obejmująca znajomość ważnych dla diagnozowania psychologicznego w sprawach rozwodowych obszarów badawczych oraz szczegółowych zagadnień (m.in. koncepcja rezyliencji, parentyfikacji, alienacji rodzicielskiej, adaptacja dziecka, konflikt między partnerami, dobro dziecka jako zasada prawa rodzinnego, diagnozowanie oparte na dowodach), podstawowych przepisów prawa dotyczących rozwodu, statusu biegłego psychologa i opinii psychologiczno-sądowej oraz innych regulacji nie stanowiących źródeł prawa zawartych w formie wytycznych i standardów; b) umiejętności związane z efektywnym planowaniem i przeprowadzaniem diagnozy wieloosobowej, konstruowaniem opinii psychologiczno-sądowej, doborem narzędzi diagnostycznych, prezentowaniem hipotez, przejrzystą i kompleksową analizą danych oraz formułowaniem wniosków; c) postawa etyczna uwzględniająca szczególny status psychologa oraz relacji diagnostycznej w sprawach o rozwód, z uwzględnieniem dylematów etycznych i odrębności wobec diagnozy prowadzonej w warunkach pozasądowych.
Słowa kluczowe: diagnoza psychologiczna, kompetencje diagnostyczne, opiniowanie psychologiczno-sądowe, rozwód

1 Artykuł w języku polskim: https://www.stowarzyszeniefidesetratio.pl/fer/2022-1Pisar.pdf

Introduction

According to GUS data in Poland in 2020, more than 51 000 marriages ended with divorce, which means that the divorce rate was 1.3 ‰. Although the rate has decreased in the last two years, the number of marriages (GUS, 2021) has also decreased significantly. Of all divorced marriages, nearly 30 000 couples had common minor children. This data shows that in around 60% of families the divorce crisis concerned at least three family members – partners and their children. When observing the case-law of the common courts, it can be assumed that psychologists participated in the majority of cases, and on the basis of the diagnosis of divorcing partners and their children, they provided an opinion on the order of the court.

Divorce proceedings have been dealt with by the legislator as a matter of particular importance, which is reflected in substantive and procedural rules. They are proceeded in district courts by judiciary composed of three members, i.e., a professional judge and two lay judges (Article 47(2)(2)(a) of the Act of 17 November 1964, the Code of Civil Procedure, hereinafter referred to as CCP). Court sitting shall normally take place in camera (Article 427 CCP). For the purposes of issuing a psychological opinion, the court usually appoints consultative teams of court experts or an expert psychologist (Article 2901 CCP, Wicherek, 2018). From the legal point of view, the requirement for formulating the opinion by the psychologist[2] is the legal capacity for issuing opinions (need for special attention, Article 278 (1) CCP), empowering the expert to issue an opinion (the court has made a provision to establish evidence from the expert opinion, Article 236 (1) CCP, in the case of a judicial expert the promise is made in accordance with § 15 of the Ordinance of the Minister of Justice of 24 January 2005 on judicial experts, there are no circumstances preventing the expert from drawing up an opinion, Article 281(1) in connection with Article 48 CCP) and meeting the formal criteria by the opinion (Articles 285, 290 CCP). The judicial and psychological opinion is non-mandatory (which means that no opinion is necessary in case of divorce) and non-binding (Szustrowa, 2003; Stemplewska-Żakowicz, 2016). The court is not obliged to rule according to the opinion. The evidence from the opinion of the expert psychologist shall be analysed on the same basis as other evidence gathered in the case (Article 233 CCP, the principle of free assessment of evidence).

The evidence from the expert's opinion is admitted by the court primarily in divorce cases where the parties have common minor children. In such cases, the expert's opinion includes: an examination of the minor care and child-rearing situation, an analysis of the projected impact of parents' divorce on the child's welfare, an assessment of the parties' competence to exercise parental authority, and an assessment of the child's contact with a parent with whom the child will not have a permanent residence (Strózik, 2016; Pisarska, 2020). The legal provisions (Annex to the Ordinance of the Minister of Justice of 1 February 2016 on determining standards of the opinion-preparation methodology in consultative teams of court experts) and Standardy opiniowania psychologicznego w sprawach rodzinnych i opiekuńczych, (2016) [Eng. Standards for psychological opinions in family and care matters – translator's note] indicate two main areas of opinion-making: characterisation of the family environment, taking into account the care and child-rearing situation and the psychological characterisation of the subjects.

The main activity of a psychology expert witness is diagnosing which, in a narrower sense, relates to the work-related effect that is the opinion, while in the wider sense, also includes the diagnosis process that led to issuing the opinion (Stemplewska-Żakowicz, 2016). Psychological diagnosis is "a complex process, including the formulation of diagnostic questions, the selection of appropriate tools, the collection of data, their evaluation and integration, and as the result the formulation of responses to diagnostic

2 In this work, the concept of a psychologist refers to a judicial expert on the list kept by the President of the District Court, an ad hoc expert appointed for a particular case, a scientific institute, a scientific research institute or a psychologist who is a member of a consultative team of court experts (CTCE), set up in accordance with the Law of 5 August 2015 on consultative teams of court experts.

questions (...)" (K. Stemplewska-Żakowicz, 2016, p. 15). Diagnosis in the domain of divorce cases where the parties share minor children requires special diagnostic skills[3]: specialist knowledge, skills and display of an appropriate ethical attitude (Stemplewska-Żakowicz, 2016; standard 1.3, Standardy diagnozy psychologicznej, 2018 [Eng. Standards of psychological assessment – translator's note]).

In psychological assessment for legal purposes, the goal and scope of the diagnosis are determined by the court in the form of questions contained in the provision admitting the evidence from the opinion of an expert psychologist. The questions are then operationalised by an expert (formulated in a psychological language) and are most often related to the impact of the divorce on the child's mental health, possible reasons to refuse granting a divorce on the ground of the child's best interests, an indication of the guardian providing better guarantees of proper child-rearing conditions, as the so-called "primary caregiver", with whom the child has a permanent residence, the assessment of the parental competence of the applicants to provide child care, the characteristics of the child's relationship with each parent and with siblings (Woszczek, Woszczek, 2011; Toeplitz-Winiewska, 2014a; Czerederecka, 2016[4]). The psychologist decides on the choice of diagnostic tools, the course of the investigation and the form and content of the psychological opinion, which is the result of the diagnosis process (the framework is provided by the response to court questions).

1. Knowledge

The assessment process for family matters should be based on empirical evidence (EBA, Evidence-Based Assessment; Hunsley, Mash, 2007). Consequently, psychology expert witness providing opinions in divorce matters should be aware of the latest scientific developments in the area of diagnosis, among others, the methods of child and family assessment, the specificity of dyadic assessment (Pietrzyk, 1987) and family assessment. They should also have the knowledge of family psychology, child developmental and clinical psychology, child-rearing psychology, the specific nature of individual functioning in conflict and crisis, and the psychological consequences of changes in family structure (Simon, Stahl, 2014). Furthermore, they should have knowledge of the current legal provisions (substantive and procedural law) concerning divorce and legal separation as well as the procedural rules relating to the institution of a judicial expert, demonstrating the knowledge of their powers and responsibilities in the context of legal proceedings. Case law can be used to interpret some of the provisions. In recent years, additional regulations, such as, for example, Standardy diagnozy psychologicznej (2018), Standardy opiniowania sądowego w sprawach rodzinnych i opiekuńczych (2016), Standardy metodologii opiniowania w opiniodawczych zespołach sądowych specjalistów [Eng. Standards of opinion-preparation methodology in consultative teams of court experts- translator's note] (Annex to the Ordinance of the Minister of Justice of 1 February 2016 on determining standards of the opinion-preparation methodology in consultative teams of court experts), have been developed to support the diagnostic process in legal psychology, which are not legal sources, but which refer to the principles of a psychologist's conduct in psychological and judicial opinion making process. The knowledge of a psychology expert witness in this regard increases the likelihood of accurate and reliable psychological diagnosis, making the psychological assessment for legal purposes more useful to the courts (Simon, Stahl, 2014).

Specific topics and theoretical concepts related to the peculiar nature of divorce matters include, among others, the impact of divorce and change of family structure on children, the development phases and the needs of children related to them, the

3 The diagnostic competence is "the ability to use appropriate methods (e.g. interview, test, observation) to determine, depending on the service provided, the relevant characteristics of the subject, group, organization or situation" (Stemplewski-Żakowicz, 2016, p. 21).

4 In the publication, the author indicated a comprehensive catalogue of court expectations of an expert psychologist in family and care matters.

functioning of partners in conflict, forms of domestic violence and their importance for the psychological functioning of the child, separation of the child from the other parent, the phenomenon of parentification, the concept of resilience, together with risk and protective factors in child adaptation, the importance of changing the child's place of residence, alternating care and time spent with each parent, the functioning of the divorcing partners in divorce crisis and conflict, the adaptation and coping of adults, including adult primary caregivers (Simon, Stahl, 2014).

Most analyses confirm the adverse impact of divorce on child psychological adaptation (including depression, anxiety, stress, suicide attempts and suicides, disorders associated with the use of alcohol and other substances, behavioural addictions) and recommend the implementation of preventive and supportive programs to prevent negative consequences in the future or not to allow individual symptoms to develop into full disorders (Sands, Thompson, Gaysina, 2017[5]; Auersperg, Vlasak, Ponocny, Barth, 2019). The researchers describe the mechanisms that are intermediate in the occurrence of subsequent mental health disorders in children and indicate the child's insecure attachment style as a traumatic implication of family-breakdown situation for children (Andrews, Hicks, 2017; Gidhagen, Holmqvist, Philips, 2018) or activation of the HPA axis and increased central nervous system response due to the stress experienced by the child involved in parents' divorce (Bloch, Pleg, Koren, Aner, Klein, 2007; Stephens, Wand, 2012; Lau, Bigio, Zelli, McEwen, Nasca, 2017).

Researchers are divided as to the phenomenon of parental alienation – some authors point to empirical evidence justifying the inclusion of this construct in the classification of diseases (Namysłowska, Heitzman, Siewierska, 2009; Czerederecka, 2010a; Bernet, 2020)[6], while others are sceptical, pointing to methodological objections to the studies presented and thereby rebutting the concept of parental alienation (Clemente, Padilla-Racero, 2015; Milchman, Gaffner, Meier, 2020). There are two terms in the literature of the subject related to the isolation of a child from the other parent. Parental alienation refers to a kind of alliance between a child and one parent and to the rejection of a relationship with another parent without a substantial basis. Parental alienation syndrome or alienation from the secondary parent syndrome consists of a group of behaviours that occur in a child who has been subjected to parental alienation (Bernet, von Boch-Galhau, Baker, Morrison, 2010). Concerns about the concept of parental alienation led researchers to initiate numerous analyses that have resulted in a modification of the concept. Today's models are based on four (Baker, 2020) or five factors (Bernet, Greenhill, 2021) as compared to Gardner's original 8-factor model (Gardner, 1985). Self-descriptive tools (for children and adults who have experienced signs of indicated behaviours in the past) have been developed to measure the described construct of parental alienation, which are used in clinical practice and in scientific research. They include: The Baker Strategy Questionnaire (BSQ) addressed to adults for retrospective evaluation of parental alienation manifestations, consisting of 20 statements that describe 19 specific and one general behaviour of parents (separately for mother and father) (Baker, Chambers, 2011; Bernet, Baker, Verrocchio, 2015), the Baker Alienation Questionnaire (BAQ) for children currently experiencing manifestations of parental alienation (Baker, Burkhard, Albertson-Kelly, 2012), Parental Alienation Behavior Scale (PABS) (Hands, Warshak, 2011) and the Rowlands Parental Alienation Scale (RPABS) that refers to Gardner's 8-factor model of parental alienation (Rowlands, 2019, 2020).

Some researchers qualify parental alienation as a form of violence (Verrocchio, Baker, Bernet, 2016; Verrocchio, Baker, Marchetti, 2017). As a complex form of violence, it consists in a parent using a long-term conduct detrimental to the child's

5 The meta-analysis showed the relationship between parents' divorce and the symptoms of depression in the child, and did not confirm the direct correlation between divorce and the symptoms of fear in the child.

6 On 7 September 2016, an expertise was published, commissioned by the Office of the Ombudsman for Children, on Gardner's Syndrome as a disease unit and its relevance in the case law of family courts, prepared by I. Namysłowska, J. Heitzmann and A. Siewierska (https://petycja.eu/tag/prof-dr-hab-irena-namyslowska/, Access: 9 January 2022).

relations with the other parent, which is intended to cause harm to the other parent due to their close relationship with the child, which also causes other damages to the family members (Harman, Kruk, Hines, 2018). Research shows that the phenomenon described is related to negative consequences for the child, but also, in the situation of loss of contact with the child, the parent experiences stress and suffering that result in emotional, behavioural, cognitive, professional-financial, physical and social difficulties (Lee-Maturana, Matthewson, Dwann, 2020). The first studies are being developed of the so-called good family practice, in case of families where symptoms of parental alienation are identified, which consists in the implementation of assistance programs addressed to family members (Temler, Matthewson, Haines, Cox, 2017).

Even if we accept that parental alienation is not a form of violence (Milchman, Gaffner, Meier, 2020), in the parents' divorce process a child may experience other behaviours referred to as violence by caregivers. The mere exposure of a child to conflict between parents meets the criteria of violence and adversely affects the child's adaptation to the situation of change in the family structure (Dijk, Valk, Deković, Branje, 2020). In addition, it is associated with a significantly higher risk of experiencing emotional and behavioural difficulties during and many years after the parents' divorce (O'Hara, Sandler, Wolchik, Tein, 2019[7]; Davies, Thompson, Martin, Cummings, 2021[8]), and in difficulties in relationships as well as in school performance (Kelly, Emery, 2003; Harold, Sellers, 2018). Conflict between parents has a negative impact, regardless of whether the parents live together and whether the children are biologically related to the parents (Harold, Sellers, 2018). The child's exposure to the conflict of divorcing partners increases the risk of the diffusion of parental roles expressed by child parentification or triangulation by including the child in the conflict (Dijk et al., 2020). Parentification involves changing the roles within the family when a child is encouraged by their caregivers to take on the role of partner, mediator, guardian or therapist. These roles enable the instrumental and emotional needs of the parent to be met to the detriment of the child (instrumental and emotional parentification, Grzegorzewska, 2016; Schier, 2018). In Poland, tools are being developed to measure the phenomenon of parentification within the population of children and young people such as Kwestionariusz Parentyfikacji dla Młodzieży [Eng. the Parentification Questionnaire for Youth – translator's note] (Borchet, Lewandowska-Walter, Połomski, Peplińska, 2020). Grzegorzewska (2016, pp. 30-31) points out, after Minuchin, five criteria of parentification: "the responsibilities of a parent are transferred onto one child in the family, they are excessive and not adequate to the age and level of development of the child, they preclude or limit the satisfaction of the needs and development tasks of the child, and the taking on of duties is necessary to ensure that the child receives the attention and love of the parent, the structure of family power is unclear, and the boundaries between the parent-child subsystem are so blurred that the child becomes a parent/partner of their own parent." Studies show that parentification processes in families of divorced parents can continue until late adolescence and early adulthood (Jurkovic, Thirakield, Morrell, 2001; Peris, Emery, 2005).

Not every child will develop in the future unadaptive behaviour patterns and emotional responses when being exposed to the risk factor in the form of parent divorce (and other risk factors related to the divorce process such as violence, a conflict between divorcing partners, changes in family structure caused by divorce or parents re-entering into relationships, smaller involvement of parents in care and upbringing, loss of relations with important people – parent with whom the child has no established place of residence and other family members, deterioration of the material and living situation; Kelly, Emma, 2003). Positive adaptation of the child, despite unfavourable conditions, depends on the process of interaction between risk and protective factors. The measure of

7 The authors explain that the consequences experienced by the child depend on the specific nature of the particular conflict situation (the studies explore various conflict variants), as well as on the child's emotional and behavioural coping strategies.

8 The authors point to an increased negative emotional reaction of children in response to the stressor, which, over time, may cause difficulties in different areas of the child's functioning.

good adaptation is, for example, mental health, low level of perceived stress, and wellbeing (internal factors, Masten, 2001). Adoption of rigid indicators of good adaptation is not possible and the assessment of positive adaptation will depend on the development tasks and the age of the child. Good adaptation may also be indicated by the absence of symptoms of disorders, the higher frequency of which is observed in children whose parents are divorcing (e.g. depression, addiction, as mentioned above), or good functioning in key areas for children in this group (e.g. close relations with parents, good contact with peers, ability to build relationships – external factors, Masten, 2001). Resilience, therefore, means "a dynamic process which reflects a relatively good adaptation of an individual despite the risks or traumatic experiences experienced by them" (Borucka, Ostaszewki, 2008, p. 2). This process involves the interaction of risk factors and protective factors that ensure positive adaptation with the supporting influence of risk modification mechanisms (Rutter, 2006).

Lack of or low level of partner conflict, close relationship with the parent, with whom the child has no permanent residence and care from both divorced parents, caring parents, whose parental competencies are characterised by attention to the needs of the child, provision of emotional support to the child, authoritative discipline and satisfaction of the child's needs appropriate to the age and development possibilities are among the protective factors pointed out by the researchers that balance the risk of exposure of children to divorce (Kelly, Emery, 2003).

Based on the research studies, a model integrating knowledge of the protective factors has been developed that is used in cases where child matters are resolved based on the best interests of the child model (BIC model). The best interests of the child are the general principle of family law and a general clause, which means that it becomes specific according to the individual circumstances of the particular case. It determines the direction in which the court will rule in all decisions relating to the child. The protective factors of the BIC model, grouped in two categories, are as follows: a) physical security: availability of adequate physical care, safe physical environment; b) care and child-rearing: an atmosphere of affection, supporting, flexible upbringing model, a positive example given by parents to the child, interest, a safe further physical environment, respect, social network, education, contact with peers, positive examples in society, the continuity of child-rearing conditions and prospects for the future, the stability of life (Kalverboer et al., 2012; also Brummamelar, Kalverboer, Harder, Post, Zijlstra, Knorth, 2014; Op de Beeck et al., 2017).

Psychological diagnosis in divorce cases where the parties have minor children in common involves an analysis of the family environment taking into account the care and child-rearing situation (Annex to the Ordinance of the Minister of Justice of 1 February 2016 on determining standards of the opinion-preparation methodology in consultative teams of court experts; Standardy opiniowania psychologicznego w sprawach rodzinnych i opiekuńczych, 2016). Recent studies recommend that the concepts used so far, such as the style of child-rearing, the parental attitude, should be replaced by the construct of parental competence (Jackiewicz, Białecka-Pikul, 2019). Parental competence is a set of acquired skills to adequately perform the duties and tasks associated with the role of a parent (Johnson, Berdahl, Horne, Richter, Walters, 2014; Matczak, Jaworowska, 2017), including knowledge of child-rearing methods and a sense of parental effectiveness (feeling that this knowledge can be applied effectively in practice). The advantage of the proposed construct is its emphasis on the mutual and dynamic parent-child interactions in the diagnosis process (so-called child effect) and inclusion of the parental competence in a continuum instead of the "0-1" valuation, which implies the possibility of modifying and developing the child-rearing skills (Jackiewicz, Białecka-Pikul, 2019). Legal psychology assumes that the competences of parents who are divorcing include, among others, the ability to provide a stable upbringing environment for the child, to recognize and meet the needs of the child, and to stimulate physical and mental development in a comprehensive way (Czerederecka, 2020).

2. Competences

The psychologist issuing an opinion in divorce matters should have knowledge of the diagnostic tools in the area of family psychology that take into account the specific characteristics of the case (standards 1.3, 2.3, 4.6 of Standardy opiniowania psychologicznego w sprawach rodzinnych i opiekuńczych, 2016; Paluchowski, 2015; Stemplewska-Żakowicz, 2016; Toeplitz-Winiewska, 2017). In addition to psychological survey and observation, other current methods that meet psychometric requirements and have scientific bases (standards 2.5, 2.9, of Standardy diagnozy psychologicznej, 2018), such as questionnaires and projection techniques, are used to diagnose the family situation in divorce cases[9]. The open catalogue of the methods used includes: a) for characterisation of the family[10] environment — Questionnaire: Family Environment Analysis - Own Family (M. Ryś, 2009), Family Relationship Questionnaire (KRR, M. Plopa), Family Evaluation Scale (SOR, D., Olson in adaptation by A. Margasiński), Family Relations Test (TSR, E. Bene, in adaptation by A. Frydrychowicz), Family Relationships Test (TRR, A. Lewandowska-Walter, M. Błażek), Diagnosis of family ties of children and adolescents (A. Lewandowska-Walter, M. Błażek, W. Bruski), Questionnaire of relations with siblings during the period of adolescence (KRR, A. Lewandowska-Walter, P. Połomski, A. Peplińska); b) for characterisation of the care and child-rearing situation, including the diagnosis of parental competences: Questionnaire: Analysis of child-rearing styles in a family - own family (M. Ryś, 2009), Questionnaire for parents to study parental attitudes (M. Ziemska), Parent-Child Task-Related Communication Test (TKZ-RD, A. Frydrychowicz), Parenting Attitudes Scale (SPR-2, M. Plopa, 2008), Parental Competence Test (TKR, A. Matczak, A. Jaworowska), Questionnaire for evaluation candidates for adoptive parents, caregivers, legal guardians and Mediators (CUIDA, F.A. Bermejo, I. Estevez, M.I. Garcia, E. Garcia-Rubio, L. Lapastora, P. Letamendia, J.C. Parra, A. Polo, M.J. Sueiro, F. Velazquez de Castro, in adaptation by A. Jaworowska); c) for psychological characterisation of the subjects: Neo-FFI Personality Inventory (P.T. Costa, R.R. McCrae, in adaptation by B. Zawadzki, J. Strelau, P. Szczepaniak, M. Śliwińska, 1998), Eysenck Personality questionnaire (EPQ-R, EPQ-R(S) – in abbreviated form, H. Eysenck and S.B.G. Eysenck, 2006, in adaptation by A. Jaworowska), NEO-PI-R personality inventory (P. T. Costa Jr., R.R. McCrae, 2006, in adaptation by J. Siuta). Among the projection techniques one should mention: Thematic Apperception Test (TAT, H. Murray, 1987; CAT-A, CAT-H, CAT-S – versions for children, L. Bellak, S.S. Bellak, 2008), Family Drawing Test if its interpretation is comprehensive (Paluchowski, Stemplewska-Żakowicz, 2013a, 2013b), The Rotter Incomplete Sentences Blank test (RISB, J.B. Rotter, M.I. Lah, J.E. Rafferty, in adaptation by A. Jaworowska, A. Matczak, 2008), Rorschach Test (ROR, H. Rorschach).

Some methods referred to as projection methods are questionable as they do not meet the reliability criterion and are not based on projection. They include Szondi test, Karl Koch's tree test, Lüscher color test, and graphological analysis of handwriting. There are also some doubts regarding the Color Pyramid test. Also, other techniques facilitating drawing, in which the interpretation is based on the marking system are not projective methods (Stemplewska-Żakowicz, Paluchowski, 2013a, 2013b). Stemplewska-Żakowicz and Paluchowski indicate that in order to decide on implementing the particular method in psychologi-

9 Stemplewska-Żakowicz and Paluchowski (2013a, p. 433) indicate that the projection technique is "a diagnostic technique based on cognitive projection or apperception. The essence of the projection diagnosis is, to apply the language of contemporary psychology, the use by the subject of his or her personal cognitive and affective structures (cognitive schemas) to give individual meanings to an ambiguous material. The projective behaviour is, therefore, the interpretation by the diagnosed person of a projection stimulus with a specific structure presented during the diagnostic test, and not the expression (speaking, writing, drawing)."

10 The division takes into account the regulations contained in the Ordinance of the Minister of Justice of 1 February 2016 on determining standards of the opinion-preparation methodology in consultative teams of court experts (template of an opinion on family and care matters) and it includes: characterisation of the family environment, including care and child-rearing conditions, psychological characterisation of the subjects and the results of medical consultations. These methods do not cover the entire range of available diagnostic tools.

cal opinion-issuing practice, it is important to have a theoretical basis and evidence-based confirmation of the psychometric properties of the given tool. The formal division into objective diagnostic techniques (based on objective criteria – a key or a system) and projection techniques becomes of secondary importance (Stemplewska-Żakowicz, Paluchowski, 2013a).

When choosing methods for family diagnosis, the psychologist takes into account the psychometric properties of the tool and the individual characteristics of the subjects (standard 2.7 of Standardy diagnozy psychologicznej, 2018; Toeplitz-Winiewska, 2014a, Ordinance of the Minister of Justice of 1 February 2016 on determining standards of the opinion-preparation methodology in consultative teams of court experts, Annex, point 9), such as age, level of development, possible disability or linguistic limitations. In specific situations, the available methods should be adapted or modified in accordance with copyright law and their essential elements[11]. Diagnostic tools vary in form, duration of the assessment, competences required from the evaluator to use the particular tool, the purpose, age and group of subjects, psychometric characteristics, theoretical grounds, the way the results are described, the area of family functioning, to which the tool refers. At the same time, the above classification determines the elements of the expert's opinion. Analysis of judicial files is an important method of collecting family data (Annex to the Ordinance of the Minister of Justice of 1 February 2016 on determining standards of the opinion-preparation methodology in consultative teams of court experts).

The law states that psychological assessment for legal purposes in divorce cases where the parties have common minor children should include a justification (Article 285 (1) CCP). In addition, the opinion should include an introduction, a descriptive section (description of the factual state, the assessment methods used, together with the rationale, a description of the assessment, the strengths and weaknesses of the hypotheses under consideration) as well as final conclusions (Strózik, 2016). The process of obtaining answers to court questions through a comprehensive analysis of many data from different sources, including those that support the preferred conclusions of the opinion is just as important as the conclusions of the study themselves. The psychologist should explain how they have reached the conclusions presented in the opinion by describing the data they used and how this data was used to draw conclusions (Simon, Stahl, 2014).

The transparency of the diagnosis process allows other persons involved in the divorce case (e.g. the court, parties and their representatives, another expert psychologist) to follow the psychologist's reasoning (intersubjective communicability, Słysz, 2014). In the diagnosis process, psychologists use heuristics, that is decision-making rules that shorten the inference process, but can cause cognitive distortions. Also, other cognitive errors cannot be ruled out (Słysz, 2014; Simon, Stahl, 2014). Thanks to the transparency of the diagnosis there is a kind of non-substantive verification of the strengths and weaknesses of the hypotheses made by the evaluator, the manifestations of neutrality and lack of psychologist's bias and prejudices (Słysz, 2014; Simon, Stahl, 2014)[12], as well as additional criteria for psychological assessment for legal purposes as defined in the literature and case-

11 For more information on the procedure for adapting or modifying see the guidelines to the standards for psychological diagnosis relating to the general diagnosis of persons with disabilities, other than the diagnosis of disability (2018).

12 Impartial attitude is one of the key principles of the work of a psychology expert witness. The Code of Civil Procedure enumerates the grounds for the exclusion of an expert in situations which call into question their impartiality. The rules also allow a psychologist to exclude themselves from the case if there is a justified basis for violation of the principle of impartiality (Articles 47, 49 CCP).

law[13],[14]. In accordance with the order of the Supreme Court of 7 November 2000, I CKN 1170/98, "the expert's opinion shall be assessed, pursuant to Article 233(1) CCP, on the basis of the criteria of compliance with the principles of logic and general knowledge, the level of the expert's knowledge, the theoretical basis of the opinion, as well as the manner of justification and level of assertiveness of the conclusions expressed in the opinion."

It is up to the court to make a decision and to give a judgement containing provisions regarding the admissibility of divorce, the scope of parental authority, the place of permanent residence of the child, the extent of contacts with the secondary caregiver, spousal maintenance, the distribution of the assets of the spouses after the divorce (Articles 56, 58 of the Act of 25 February 1964, The Family and Guardianship Code, hereinafter called FGC). The task of the evaluator issuing opinions in divorce matters is to consider various solutions included in diagnostic hypotheses – their strengths and limitations and to predict short- and long-term consequences, of, among others, granting of a divorce and the dismissal of divorce proceedings from the perspective of the child's emotional, cognitive and social functioning, the long-term consequences of establishing the child's place of residence on the mother or father, the likely changes in the child's relationship with each parent, the dynamic of the partner's conflict and the varying impact of the conflict on the child, the interaction of risk and protection factors, the consequences of leaving both parents the full parental authority (article 58 (1) FGC), the possibilities for the development of parental responsibility of each parent during and after divorce (Simon, Stahl, 2014). The purpose of this diagnostic procedure is to improve the decision-making process by the court without any responsibility for the shape of the decisions being recognized by the psychologist.

3. Ethical Attitude

Sources of knowledge of the desired values and attitudes of the evaluator issuing opinion in divorce matters are the provisions of law[15], codes of ethics (Kodeks Etyczny Psychologa PTP [Eng. Code of Ethics of the PTP Psychologist – translator's note], 2018), standards of opinion, guidelines and examples of good practice (American Psychological Association, 2010, 2013a, 2013b; Standardy opiniowania psychologicznego w sprawach rodzinnych i opiekuńczych, 2016; Standardy diagnozy psychologicznej, 2018).

The status of a psychology expert witness is different from that of a clinical psychologist or psychotherapist. In particular, confidentiality is limited, since the data from diagnosis are transmitted to the court and are included in the case file, to which, for instance, the divorcing partners and their attorneys have access (Article 9 CCP, the principle of procedural transparency). The hypotheses made by the psychology expert witness should take into account the questions set out by the court in the appointment order and should not result from the relationship with a client, who in court cases is described as: an evaluated person, a party, a participant in the court case (Toeplitz-Winiewska, 2014b). The result of the psychologist's activity is an opinion that can be taken into account by the court when issuing a judgement in a case (Article 233 CCP, the principle of free assessment of evidence; the non-conclusive nature of the opinion). In this case, combining profession-

13 Cf. A. Czerederecka (2013, 2015), which describes a model for assessing psychological and judicial psychological opinions which includes taking into account ten criteria: uniformity and transparency of the investigation procedure, compliance with basic criteria for psychometry – reliability and relevance, intersubjective verification (objectivity), taking into account the current level of knowledge, the relevance and usefulness of the methods and content of the opinion used to resolve the problem formulated by the trial authority, the adequate preparation of the psychologist to use the technique chosen by them, the distinction between hypotheses and conclusions, but also the absence of excessive interpretation precautions, intersubjective communicability, a recommendation to change the method or to re-examine in case of doubt (pp. 345-349).

14 Article 201 of the Act of 6 June 1997, The Code of Criminal Procedure indicates the requirement of completeness, clarity and absence of internal conflict in the opinion itself or between different opinions on the same matter, but this provision does not apply to divorce cases.

15 For example, the provisions of law concerning the impartiality of the expert in relation to the subject matter of the case and excluding any conflict of interest with the parties to the proceedings (Article 281(1) in connection with Article 48 CCP).

al roles, such as an expert and psychotherapist or a mediator for the evaluated members of the family is precluded (American Psychological Association, 2013a). The expert acts on the order of the court (Toeplitz-Winiewska, 2017) – the diagnosed person does not report themselves to the evaluator but is obliged by the court to take part in the case and to undergo a psychological examination (as a general rule, in divorce cases there is no obligation to attend the diagnostic examination, however, failure to participate may result in possible negative decisions for that participant). Therefore, the informed consent of the evaluated in connection to court cases is of peculiar nature (standard 3.2 of Standardy opiniowania psychologicznego w sprawach rodzinnych i opiekuńczych; standards 1.11 and 1.12 of Standardy diagnozy psychologicznej). The psychologist's work does not aim directly at improving the wellbeing of the evaluated person, although the best interest of the examinee is the paramount value in the diagnosis associated with divorce matters (Article 5 of the Code of Ethics of the PTP Psychologist, 2018).

Ethical challenges in the diagnostic practice of a psychologist relate to the nature of the opinions on divorce matters where the diagnosis is multi-person, which means it is time-consuming, implicates multiple relationships within the family system, and demands to take into account the perspectives of many people. The partners under the diagnosis are in conflict and their objectives or interests may conflict (Czerederecka, 2010b). The results of court proceedings generally include important consequences for family members, relating to the change in family structure, the frequency of contacts between the parent and the child, or the form of such contacts. Evaluation in divorce matters in the circumstances described above results in the potential pursuit of the best possible outcome by the examinee. The diagnosis process is particularly at risk of producing distorted data (and incomplete data, also due to time-limited contact with the evaluation subjects or their reluctance to participate in the diagnosis) (Toeplitz-Winiewska, 2017). In order to minimize the risk of relying on questionable data during the inference process, the evaluator should take into account the limitations of self-descriptive tools and choose diverse diagnostic methods as well as integrate data from different sources. In a divorce judgement, the court decides about, for instance, the place of residence of the child with one of the parents, hence there are questions directed at the psychologist intended to determine the parental responsibility of the parents. In these circumstances, the evaluator may face the challenge of comparing parents with similar levels of parental competence[16]. Due to the complexity of family diagnosis in divorce cases, it is preferable in judicial practice to establish evidence from the opinion issued by a CTCE and co-operation of specialists in various fields (Article 2901 CCP). With the popularisation of video and sound recording devices, there is a risk of recording a meeting and revealing the content that from a psychologist's perspective are subject to professional secrecy. Models of psychological diagnosis assume that one of its elements is to intervene against the study subject (GAP model, Paluchowski model, Stemplewska-Żakowicz, 2016). Considering the fact that a court is the ordering party and the recipient of the opinion, the psychological diagnosis in judicial opinion-making is limited to the examination, analysis and reporting of the results. Family members are not subject to any intervention or recommendations (except special situations where the court included in the decision to appoint an expert the question about recommendations towards family members, e.g. participation in therapy). These issues do not cover all the possible ethical dilemmas involved in the work of the psychologist issuing opinions in divorce matters.

Paluchowski proposes a universal model for making ethical decisions. The first step is to define and describe a specific ethical problem, including any precedents. In the second step, the psychologist decides whether they are dealing with a problem (application of the code of ethics is sufficient) or with a dilemma. If the situation is an ethical dilem-

16 The court in divorce judgement determines the place of permanent residence of the child and the person of the so-called primary caregiver, and hence the question to experts may take the following form "Which parent offers better child-rearing guarantees?" It is the task of the court to decide on this matter and it cannot delegate this duty to a psychologist.

ma, the psychologist identifies areas of conflict (e.g. conflict with the provisions of law or other standards). The next step is related to the determination of possible professional actions. The final element of the proposed model is the continuous monitoring of the effects of the actions taken (Paluchowski, 2021).

Conclusions

The purpose of this paper was to present selected diagnostic competences expected from psychologists issuing opinions in divorce matters where partners have common minor children. The presented scheme of diagnostic competences, grouped in three categories: knowledge, skills, and ethical attitude, organizes the knowledge within this area but does not cover comprehensively its full complexity.

In view of the challenges described in this paper and faced by psychologists working for the court in family matters, it is worth considering whether it would not be advisable to disseminate additional organizational and legal tools that support the work of experts. Among these tools, it seems appropriate to introduce different modalities of further training for experts, which would allow for the enhancement of the diagnostic workshop in particular categories of cases and with different groups of examinees, and for the exchange of experiences among psychologists, for example of a supervision nature that takes into account the context of issuing opinion for the court use. They would also increase the knowledge of legal issues in this professional group. Regarding research methodology, the suggestions proposed in the standards of opinion-making on family and care matters, are noteworthy. For example, they encourage teamwork in drafting opinions, including consultation with experts in various fields (not only within the framework of the CTCE), and suggest increasing the number of diagnostic meetings with the evaluated people and the development of further diagnostic tools dedicated to psychology expert witness, as well as standards to objectify diagnosis depending on the type of court case. Further systemic solutions are also expected regarding the status of a psychologist, also psychologist as an expert[17] (including, for instance, competences and responsibilities), as well as detailed rules for the co-operation of psychologist and court.

Continuous progress in the research on child and family functioning during a divorce crisis reveals new phenomena, allows the development of valuable diagnostic methods, and assists the diagnosis process to make it more relevant and useful to the court. With changing social and cultural conditions, further challenges and ethical dilemmas for psychologists issuing judicial and psychological opinions can be expected to arise.

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A sudden and unexpected death of a spouse and the severity of symptoms of complicated grief and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder

Nagła i niespodziewana śmierć współmałżonka a nasilenie objawów żałoby powikłanej i zaburzeń po stresie traumatycznym[1]

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Karolina Ludwikowska-Świeboda[a]

[a] *Karolina Ludwikowska-Świeboda, PhD, https://orcid.org/0000-0002-4654-0032*
Institute of Psychology, Maria Curie-Skłodowska University, Lublin, Poland

Abstract: *Introduction:* The death of a spouse is one of the most stressful events in life. A better understanding of the factors leading to difficulties in adaptation to the situation of loss in widowed people seems to be important. The main goal of the presented study is to verify the role of the circumstances of the loss of a spouse (a sudden and unexpected death) with respect to severity of the symptoms of complicated grief and post-traumatic stress disorders. *Method:* Fifty five widowed people participated in the study (27 of them indicated that their spouse's death occurred suddenly and unexpectedly, in the case of 28 people the loss had been anticipated). The time elapsed since death ranged from six months to 2.5 years. To measure the severity of complicated grief, the Complicated Grief Inventory by Prigerson et al. (in the Polish adaptation by Ludwikowska-Świeboda and Lachowska) was used. In order to assess the severity of symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder (intrusion, avoidance and hyperarousal), the Impact of Event Scale — Revised by Weiss and Marmar (in the Polish adaptation by Juczyński and Ogińska-Bulik) was used. To determine the circumstances of the spouse's death, a self-authored demographic data questionnaire was used. *Results:* As expected, the experience of a sudden and unexpected death is a significant predictor of the severity of complicated grief. Detailed analyses revealed that widowed people who experienced a sudden and unexpected death of their spouse are significantly more likely to be preoccupied with thinking about the deceased, experience shock and disbelief, and feel distanced from those who are important to them (compared to people who experienced an anticipated loss). They may also have a greater tendency to avoid stimuli reminding them of the deceased, experience more discomfort when recalling the deceased, and have difficulty trusting other people since their loss. A sudden and unexpected death is also a significant predictor of the severity of hyperarousal symptoms. *Conclusions:* Widowed people who view their spouse's death as sudden and unexpected are at a greater risk of a disruption of the grief process.
Keywords: complicated grief, prolonged grief, sudden death, unexpected death, widowhood

Abstrakt: *Wstęp:* Śmierć współmałżonka stanowi jedno z najbardziej stresujących wydarzeń życiowych. Lepsze zrozumienie czynników prowadzących do trudności w przystosowaniu się do sytuacji utraty u osób owdowiałych wydają się więc ważne. Głównym celem prezentowanych badań jest weryfikacja znaczenia okoliczności utraty współmałżonka (śmierć nagła i niespodziewana) dla nasilenia objawów żałoby powikłanej i zaburzeń po stresie traumatycznym. *Metoda:* W badaniach wzięło udział 55 osób owdowiałych (27 osób wskazało, że śmierć współmałżonka nastąpiła nagle i niespodziewanie, w przypadku 28 osób strata była antycypowana). Czas, jaki upłynął od momentu śmierci współmałżonka wynosił od sześciu miesięcy do 2,5 roku. Do pomiaru nasilenia żałoby powikłanej wykorzystano Inwentarz Żałoby Powikłanej autorstwa Prigerson i współpracowników (w polskiej adaptacji Ludwikowskiej – Świebody i Lachowskiej). W celu oceny nasilenia objawów zaburzeń po stresie traumatycznym (intruzji, unikania i pobudzenia) posłużono się Zrewidowaną Skalą Wpływu Zdarzeń autorstwa Weissa i Marmara (w polskiej adaptacji Juczyńskiego i Ogińskiej-Bulik). Aby określić okoliczności śmierci współmałżonka wykorzystano kwestionariusz danych demograficznych własnego autorstwa. *Wyniki:* Zgodnie z oczekiwaniami, doświadczenie śmierci nagłej i niespodziewanej jest istotnym predyktorem nasilenia żałoby powikłanej. Szczegółowe analizy ujawniły, że osoby owdowiałe, które doświadczyły nagłej i nieoczekiwanej śmierci współmałżonka, istotnie częściej w znacznym stopniu zaabsorbowane są myśleniem o zmarłym, doświadczają szoku i niedowierzania oraz odczuwają dystans wobec ważnych dla siebie osób (w porównaniu z osobami, w przypadku których strata była antycypowana). Osoby te mogą mieć również większą tendencję do unikania bodźców przypominających o zmarłym, znacznie częściej doświadczać dyskomfortu w sytuacji wspominania go, oraz trudności w zaufaniu innym ludziom od momentu utraty. Śmierć nagła i niespodziewana jest również istotnym predyktorem nasilenia objawów pobudzenia. *Wnioski:* Osoby owdowiałe, które postrzegają śmierć współmałżonka jako nagłą i nieoczekiwaną, są w większym stopniu narażone na ryzyko zaburzeń w procesie żałoby.
Słowa kluczowe: żałoba powikłana, żałoba przewlekła, śmierć nagła, śmierć nieoczekiwana, wdowieństwo

1 Artykuł w języku polskim: https://www.stowarzyszeniefidesetratio.pl/fer/2022-1Ludwik.pdf

1. Introduction

The death of a spouse is an inevitable event taking place in the course of human life (Kostrubiec-Wojtachnio, 2020). According to the Statistics Poland data, as many as 140,000 - 170,000 marriages are terminated each year due to this cause. Widowed individuals (over 3 million people) constitute almost 10% of the Polish population (GUS, 2019). Additionally, the death of a spouse is one of the most stressful life events (Holmes and Rahe, 1967), being a risk factor for the development of mental (Kersting, Brähler, Glaesmer, and Wagner, 2011; Thomas, Hudson, Trauer, Remedios, and Clarke, 2014) and physical health disorders (Ennis & Majid, 2019). Studies conducted so far also suggest an increased risk of mortality, especially in the short term after the death of the spouse (Moon, Kondo, Glymour, & Subramanian, 2011). Research in and better understanding of the factors leading to difficulties experienced in adaptation to the situation of loss by widowed people are therefore of profound importance for a large percentage of our society. The main purpose of the present study is to investigate the role of the circumstances leading to the loss of a spouse (a sudden and unexpected death) in relation to the severity of symptoms of complicated grief and post-traumatic stress disorders.

1.1. Sudden and unexpected death and the severity of complicated grief

Complicated grief is characterised by persistent and intense experiences related to the death of a loved one, which are accompanied by a significant deterioration in everyday functioning (Ludwikowska-Świeboda, Lachowska, 2019; Shear, 2015; Szuhany et al., 2020). Many of the symptoms of this condition (e.g., longing and preoccupation with the deceased person adversely affecting everyday functioning; difficulty in accepting their death; emotional numbness) have been included as diagnostic criteria for Prolonged Grief Disorder, described in the 11th Revision of the International Statistical Classification of Diseases and Related Health Problems (ICD-11) (Sekowski, Prigerson, 2021; Szuhany et al., 2020; WHO, 2021). In the initial period of grief, however, these symptoms are natural and they do not constitute an abnormal response to the death of a loved one. According to the ICD-11 classification, if the process of grieving is disturbed, the above symptoms may persist for a long time (at least six months), markedly exceeding expected social, cultural or religious norms for the individual's culture and context (WHO, 2021).

Studies conducted so far suggest there is a relationship between the severity of complicated grief (prolonged grief disorder) and the circumstances of the death of a loved one (Djentalik, Smid, Mroz, Kleber, Boelen, 2020; Eisma, Boelen, Lenferink, 2020). Research focusing on family caregivers of patients with cancer shows that individuals who did not feel prepared for the person's death are more likely to experience symptoms of prolonged grief disorder (Tsai et al., 2016). Similar findings were reported by Schaal, Richter and Elbert (2014) who conducted a study in which the respondents rated the suddenness of the death of a loved one on a ten-point scale. The more the death was perceived as unexpected, the greater the severity of prolonged grief. Unlike a sudden and unexpected loss, awareness of the impending death of a loved one can provide an opportunity to prepare for this difficult event. Research by Remondet and Hansson (1987) showed that widowed individuals who had spoken to their dying spouse about the changes and difficulties they might face after his/her death were more likely to go through a more adaptive grieving process. Anticipation of death is also associated with an opportunity to clear up any misunderstandings, solve unfinished business and say goodbye to the loved one. This factor also plays a positive role in adaptation to loss (Holland, Klingspon, Lichetnthal, & Neimeyer, 2018).

Sudden and unexpected death can be caused by a traumatic event. According to the Fifth Edition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5) (APA, 2013; Domino et al., 2021), traumatic circumstances resulting in the loss of a loved one include violent (homicide, suicide) or accidental death (e.g., car accidents, natural disasters, other events leading to a serious damage to the body). The consequences of death associated with traumatic circumstances, for those left behind include the experience of traumatic bereavement. It is characterised by the coexistence of symptoms related to both grief and trauma, which interfere with each other (Barlé, Wortman, & Latack, 2017; Rubin, Malkinson, & Witztum, 2020; Stroebe et al., 2001). In this condition, death-related intrusive thoughts and imagery may promote a tendency to avoid any references to the traumatic event and the deceased person, which in turn may result in more severe symptoms of prolonged grief (Hardt, Williams, Shields, 2021). Almost half of the traumatically bereaved people may suffer from prolonged grief disorder (Djentalik et al., 2020).

1.2. Sudden and unexpected death and post-traumatic stress disorder

Death in traumatic circumstances is also a significant predictor of post-traumatic stress disorder (Kaltman, Bonanno, 2003). However, the relationship between sudden, unexpected death of a spouse due to natural causes (e.g., heart attack, stroke) and the severity of post-traumatic stress disorder symptoms (intrusion, avoidance and hyperarousal) is not clear. A study by Kaltman and Bonanno (2003) did not confirm that there is such a relationship (in that study, death was defined as sudden if it occurred less than one day after a terminal illness was diagnosed). Sudden and unexpected death due to natural causes, according to the DSM-5 classification (APA, 2013), also does not fit the definition of a traumatic event. However, as pointed out by Domino et al. (2021), the unpredictability and uncontrollability of the event may play a special role in the etiology of post-traumatic stress disorder. Sudden death of a loved one, regardless of the additional circumstances, in particular affects the sense of security of those left behind. It disrupts the individual's schemas related to the predictability of the world and the control of one's fate. After experiencing a sudden and unexpected death, the bereaved individuals may be hypervigilant, and tend to overreact to threatening cues (Domino et al., 2021).

1.3. Research hypotheses

Taking into account the above considerations, the following research hypotheses were formulated:

1. Sudden and unexpected death of a spouse is a significant predictor of complicated grief. Individuals whose spouses died suddenly and unexpectedly present more severe signs of complicated grief than those who expected their spouse's death.
2. Sudden and unexpected death of a spouse is a significant predictor of post-traumatic stress disorder symptoms (intrusion, avoidance and hyperarousal). Individuals whose spouses died suddenly and unexpectedly present greater levels of intrusion, avoidance, and hyperarousal than those who expected their spouse's death.

2. Method

2.1. Participants

The inclusion criterion was defined as the experience of the spouse's death in the period from six months to 2.5 years before the study. According to the ICD-11 classification, symptoms of acute grief lasting for up to six months do not constitute a pathological grief reaction (WHO, 2021; Killikelly, and Maercke, 2017). Chronic consequences of traumatic stress (many years after the death of a loved one), on the other hand, should be classified as specific enduring personality changes rather than a "simple" post-traumatic stress disorder (Pużyński, Wciórka, 2000). Therefore, the upper limit of the time elapsed since the death of the spouse was also specified as an inclusion criterion. In accordance with the above criterion, data from 55 widowed individuals (47 women and 8 men) were taken into account in further analyses. Study participants ranged in age from 26 to 73 years (M = 52.6; SD = 11.98). The age of the spouse at the time of his/her death ranged from 27 to 81 years (M = 53.60; SD = 12.59). The mean time elapsed since the death of the spouse was 1.5 years (SD = 0.57).

The participants presented different levels of education: 12 individuals (21.9%) reported primary or elementary vocational education; 27 individuals (48%) - secondary education; 16 individuals (29.1%) - higher or post-graduate education. Economically active individuals constituted approximately 56% of the study sample. Nineteen people were retired or receiving disability benefits (24.5%), three were unemployed (5.5%) and two reported other occupational status (3.6%). Nearly half of the respondents were residents of rural areas (45.5%), whereas six people reported living in a large city (10.9%). The remaining study participants (43.6%) lived in small (up to 50,000 inhabitants) or medium-sized towns (up to 150,000 inhabitants).

In the study sample, twenty-seven individuals (N = 27) reported experience of sudden and unexpected death of the spouse (group 1), and in the case of the remaining participants (N = 28), the death of their spouse had been expected (group 2). Additional circumstances surrounding the spouse's death are described below, relative to the groups.

Group 1 (sudden and unexpected loss):

- in the group of participants who experienced sudden and unexpected death of their spouses, 15 individuals (56%) reported that death was caused by a brief illness or other medical condition (e.g., heart attack, stroke);
- ten individuals (37%) lost their spouses as a result of accidental circumstances (car accidents, accidents at the workplace);
- two individuals (approx. 7%) reported violent death of the spouses (suicide).

Group 2 (anticipated loss):

- in this group, 22 individuals (78.6%) reported that their spouse's death occurred after a long illness;
- additionally, eight of these individuals reported that the death was preceded by long-term care due to the spouse's illness.

2.2. Procedure

The study was mainly conducted in the Świętokrzyskie and Lubelskie Regions. Each participants completed a set of questionnaires during an individual, previously scheduled, meeting with the researcher. The following tools were used: the Inventory of Complicated Grief (ICG) by Prigerson et al. (1995), the Polish version developed by Ludwikowska-Świeboda and Lachowska (2019); the Impact of Event Scale - Revised (IES-R) by Weiss and Marmar (1997), the Polish version developed by Juczyński and Ogińska-Bulik (2009); as well as a demographic questionnaire (specially designed by the author of the study), which included questions related to the circumstances of spouse's death.

2.3. Measures

The Inventory of Complicated Grief is used to measure the severity of symptoms associated with this condition (Ludwikowska-Świeboda, Lachowska, 2019; Prigerson et al., 1995). It includes 19 statements describing different thoughts and experiences related to the death of a spouse (e.g., "I think about this person so much that it's hard for me to do the things I normally do", "I go out of my way to avoid reminders of the person who died"). Respondents use a 5-point scale (0 – never, 4 – always) to report how often they experience certain thoughts or emotions. The higher the score, the higher the severity of complicated grief (Ludwikowska-Świeboda and Lachowska, 2019; Prigerson et al., 1995). As suggested by Simon et al. (2011), it may be assumed that a given symptom occurs at a clinical level when the respondent selects "often" or "always" for a given statement.

The IES-R is used to measure the severity of post-traumatic stress disorder (Weiss, Marmar, 1997; Juczyński, Ogińska-Bulik, 2009). It consists of 22 statements describing symptoms of perceived stress, experienced in the last seven days before the examination (in relation to the specific traumatic event). Each statement can be assigned to one of the three subscales related to post-traumatic stress disorder, i.e., intrusion, avoidance or hyperarousal. The study participants assess the intensity of individual experiences on a five-point scale (0 - not at all, 4 - extremely). The higher the overall score, the greater the severity of post-traumatic stress disorder symptoms.

Both scales have been reported to present a satisfying internal consistency and validity (Ludwikowska-Świeboda, Lachowska, 2019; Juczyński, Ogińska-Bulik, 2009).

3. Results

The first stage of the analysis (preliminary analyses) was carried out in order to identify variables that may be related to the severity of the symptoms of complicated grief and post-traumatic stress disorder (the following variables were controlled in the presented study: age of the participants, gender, time since the death of the spouse, and age of the spouse at the time of his/her death). The group of respondents whose spouse had died suddenly and unexpectedly was diverse as regards the circumstances of the loss (traumatic events or natural causes of death). Therefore, the differences in the severity of complicated grief and symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder in people who experienced traumatic or non-traumatic loss were additionally investigated. The main analyses (multivariate regression) were used to verify the research hypotheses.

3.1. Preliminary analyses

The table below (Table 1) presents findings of the analyses related to the differences between individuals who experienced sudden and unexpected death of the spouse and those who had expected the spouse's death, in terms of the severity of symptoms of complicated grief and post-traumatic stress disorder (overall score and dimensions of intrusion, avoidance and hyperarousal).

The preliminary analyses show statistically significant differences in the severity of complicated grief and post-traumatic stress disorders (overall score, intrusions, hyperarousal) between individuals who experienced sudden and unexpected death of

Table 1. Sudden, unexpected death and anticipated death (Student's t-test)

	Sudden and unexpected death (N = 27)		Anticipated death (N = 28)			
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*t*	*p*
Complicated Grief	44.63	15.38	33.57	14.76	-2.72	0.009
Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder – overall score	55.11	10.52	43.64	17.85	-2.89	0.006
Intrusions	22.19	5.08	18.36	7.15	-2.29	0.027
Hyperarousal	18.00	4.78	13.04	7.01	-3.01	0.003
Avoidance	14.03	5.04	12.25	5.82	-1.82	0.074

Table 2. Death in traumatic and natural circumstances (Student's t-test)

	Traumatic circumstances (N = 12)		Natural circumstances (N = 43)			
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*t*	*p*
Complicated Grief	39.64	11.98	38.84	16.90	-0.15	0.88
Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder – overall score	53.64	10.37	48.18	16.67	-1.03	0.31
Avoidance	15.91	4.53	12.98	5.69	-1.6	0.12

a spouse and those who had expected this loss. Both groups differ in the severity of avoidance symptoms, at a level of statistical tendency.

The next table (Table 2) presents findings showing the differences between individuals who experienced death of a spouse in traumatic circumstances (death as a result of an accident, suicide) and those whose spouse died due to natural causes, as reflected by the severity of symptoms of complicated grief and post-traumatic stress disorder (overall score and dimensions of intrusion, avoidance and hyperarousal).

The preliminary analyses did not confirm statistically significant differences in the severity of complicated grief, post-traumatic stress disorder (overall score) and avoidance, between traumatically bereaved individuals and those whose spouses had died in natural circumstances.

Due to the fact that the variable of intrusions was not normally distributed, and homogeneity of variance was violated in the case of the variable of hyperarousal, the Mann-Whitney U test was used to verify the differences between the above groups (traumatic versus natural circumstances of death). The analysis performed using the Mann-Whitney U test did not show statistically significant differences in the intensity of intrusion ($U = 214.50$; $p = 0.56$) or hyperarousal ($U = 237.00$; $p = 0.92$) between traumatically bereaved individuals (intrusions: $M = 21.55$; $SD = 5.73$; hyperarousal: $M = 16.18$; $SD = 4.96$) and individuals whose spouses had died in natural circumstances (intrusions: $M = 19.91$; $SD = 6.65$; hyperarousal: $M = 15.30$; $SD = 6.96$).

The analyses also investigated differences between men and women in the severity of complicated grief and post-traumatic stress disorder symptoms.

Table 3. Descriptive statistics and values of the correlation coefficients (Pearson's r) between the analysed variables

Variables	*M*	*SD*	*1*	*2*	*3*	*4*	*5*	*6*	*7*
1. Complicated Grief (ICG)	39.00	15.94							
2. Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder – overall score (IES-R)	49.27	15.68	0.73***						
3. Intrusions (IES-R)	20.24	6.46	0.76***	0.86***					
4. Avoidance (IES-R)	13.56	5.57	0.35**	0.75***	0.43**				
5. Hyperarousal (IES-R)	15.47	6.47	0.71***	0.90***	0.73***	0.51***			
6. Age of the study participant	52.60	11.98	-0.08	-0.08	-0.09	0.07	-0.12		
7. Time elapsed since the death of a spouse	1.52	0.57	-0.23(t)	-0.27*	-0.30*	-0.18	-0.20	-0.16	
8. Age of spouse at time of death	53.60	12.59	-0.01	-0.03	-0.07	0.18	-0.03	0.86***	-0.36**

*** $p < 0.001$; ** $p < 0.01$; * $p < 0.05$ (two-sided); t - significance at the level of statistical tendency

Table 4. Results of multivariate regression analysis for complicated grief

Predictors	*b*	*SE*	*β*	*t*	*p*
(Constant)	41.79	6.40		6.54	0.001
Time elapsed since the death of a spouse	-5.16	3.60	-0.18	-1.43	0.158
Sudden and unexpected death	10.25	4.01	0.32	2.52	0.015
			$R^2 = 0.12$; $F(3,51) = 4.80$; $p < 0.05$		

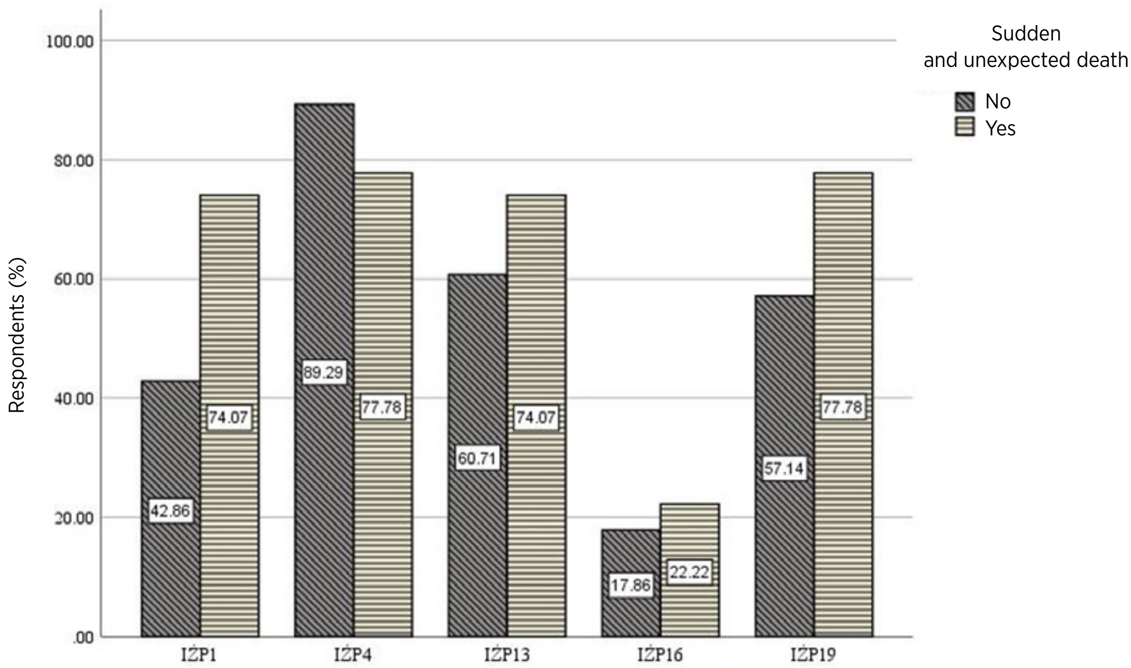
The Student's t-test for independent samples showed no statistically significant differences between women ($M = 40.43$; $SD = 15.48$) and men ($M = 30.62$; $SD = 17.04$) in the severity of complicated grief [$t(53) = -1.63$; $p = 0.11$]. Women acquired significantly higher scores in symptoms of hyperarousal. The analysis with the Mann-Whitney U test showed statistically significant differences between men and women in the intensity of intrusions ($U = 103.50$; $p < 0.05$; Δ Glass = 1.06). Women ($M = 21.13$; $SD = 5.78$) present a higher level of intrusions than men ($M = 15.00$; $SD = 8.09$).

Descriptive statistics and the correlation coefficients for the analysed quantitative variables are presented in the table below (Table 3).

3.2. Main analyses

The main stage of the analyses focused on verification of the research hypotheses. The model explaining the variance in complicated grief scores, apart from the variable of "sudden and unexpected death", also included the variable of "time since death of the spouse" (preliminary analyses showed that time since death may be significant in predicting the explained variable). The results of the multivariate regression analysis for the "complicated grief" variable are presented in Table 4.

Sudden and unexpected death is a significant predictor of complicated grief ($b = 10.25$; $SE = 4.01$; $p < 0.05$). The relationship between the time elapsed since the death of the spouse and the severity of symptoms of complicated grief is statistically non-significant ($b = -5.16$; $SE = 3.60$; $p = 0.158$). The presented



Explanations:
IŻP1 – I think about this person so much that it's hard for me to do the things I normally do.
IŻP4 – I feel myself longing for the person who died.
IŻP13 – I feel that life is empty without the person who died.
IŻP16 – I feel that it is unfair that I should live when this person died.
IŻP19 – I feel lonely a great deal of the time ever since he/she died.

Figure 1. Percentage of respondents experiencing symptoms in the category of "yearning/preoccupation" (with classification into unexpected and anticipated death groups).

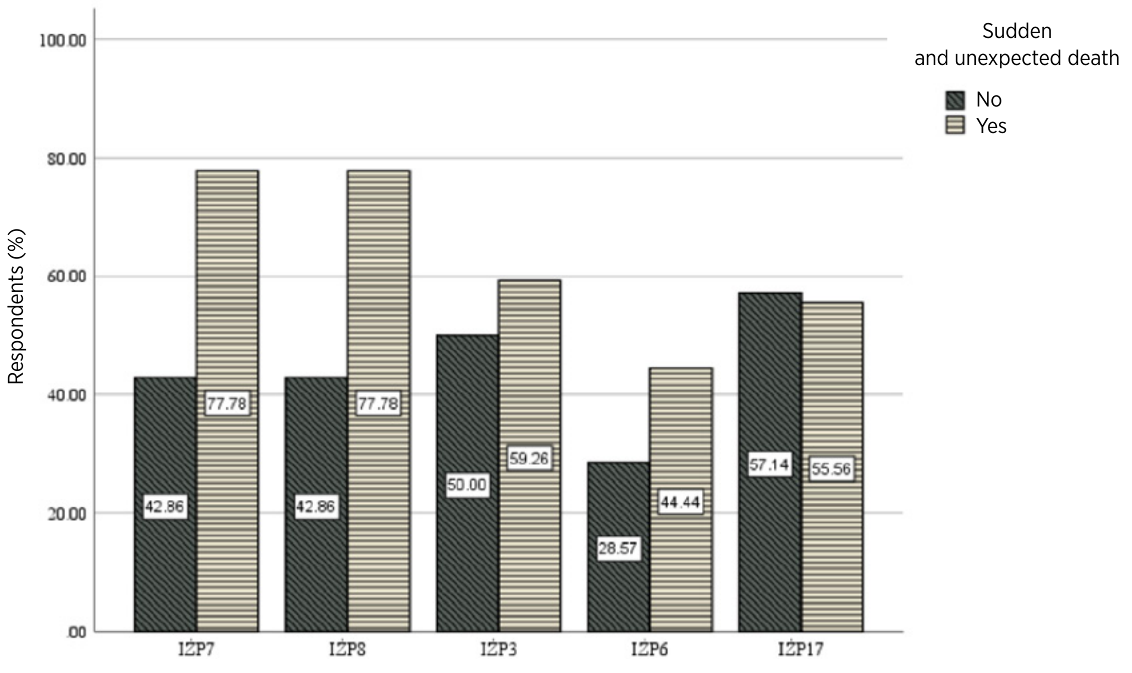
model explains the severity of complicated grief at a rate of 12% (corrected R^2) and correctly fits the data [F (3.51) = 4.80; p <0.05].

Additional analyses were conducted to determine which symptoms of complicated grief differentiated those who had experienced sudden and unexpected death of a spouse from the widowed individuals who had expected loss. Therefore, in accordance with the method proposed by Simon et al. (2011), the number of respondents experiencing various symptoms of complicated grief at a clinical level was determined for each group. The significance of differences between the groups was estimated using the Pearson's chi-square test. The results are presented graphically in the following figures, including the following key categories of complicated grief symptoms: (1) yearning and preoccupation with the deceased, (2) bitterness and anger as well as shock and disbelief, (3) changes in behaviour and estrangement from others (Simon et al., 2011; Ludwikowska-Świeboda, 2020).

The figure below (Figure 1) presents the percentage of people experiencing symptoms matching the category of "yearning and preoccupation with the deceased" at a clinical level.

Over 70% of the widowed individuals whose spouse had died suddenly and unexpectedly, were preoccupied with the deceased and were experiencing strong yearning for the deceased, emptiness and loneliness. Slightly over 20% of these individuals reported that they felt guilty of the spouse's death.

Nearly 90% of the widowed individuals who had expected their spouse's death, were missing the deceased to a high degree. Between 55-65% of these individuals also reported a strong feeling of emptiness and loneliness. Almost 43% of these individuals were strongly preoccupied with the deceased.



Explanations:
IŻP7 – I feel disbelief over what happened.
IŻP8 – I feel stunned or dazed over what happened.
IŻP3 – I feel I cannot accept the death of the person who died.
IŻP6 – I can't help feeling angry about his/her death.
IŻP17 – I feel bitter over this person's death

Figure 2. Percentage of respondents experiencing symptoms in the category of "bitterness and anger" and "shock and disbelief" at a clinical level (with classification into unexpected and anticipated loss groups).

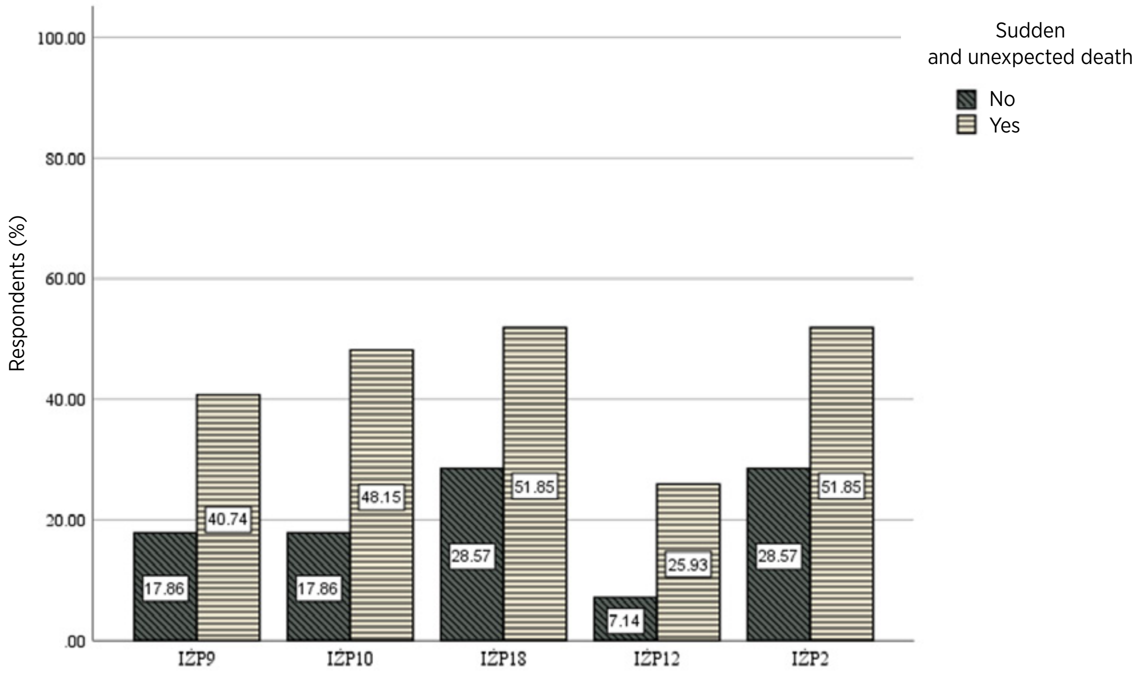
Almost 18% reported a sense of guilt. Analyses based on the Pearson's chi-square test show statistically significant differences between the two groups in terms of preoccupation with the deceased ($\chi^2 = 5.50$; $p < 0.05$). Significantly more people who had experienced a sudden and unexpected death of their spouse were preoccupied with thinking about him/her in a way that disrupted their daily functioning, as compared to the group in which the death had been expected.

The figure below (Figure 2) presents the percentage of individuals experiencing symptoms matching the categories of "bitterness and anger" as well as "shock and disbelief" at a clinical level.

In the widowed group, where the death of a spouse had happened suddenly and unexpectedly, nearly 80% of the individuals experienced a high degree of shock and disbelief. Slightly more than half of these individuals reported difficulties in accepting the loss as well as bitterness. Almost 45% of the respondents admitted they frequently felt angry.

In the group of individuals who had expected their spouse's death, 50-60% experienced bitterness and difficulties in accepting the loss (to a significant degree). Approximately 43% of these respondents reported feeling of shock and disbelief, and nearly 30% frequently experienced anger. The analyses showed statistically significant differences between the two groups in the experience of disbelief ($\chi^2 = 6.98$; $p < 0.01$) and shock ($\chi^2 = 6.98$; $p < 0.01$). Individuals whose spouses had died suddenly and unexpectedly were significantly more likely to experience these symptoms.

The figure below (Figure 3) presents the percentage of individuals experiencing symptoms matching the categories of "changes in behaviour" and "estrangement from others" at a clinical level.



Explanations:
IŻP9 – Ever since he/she died, it is hard for me to trust people.
IŻP10 – Ever since he/she died, I feel as if I have lost the ability to care about other people or I feel distant from people I care about.
IŻP18 – I feel envious of others who have not lost someone close.
IŻP12 – I go out of my way to avoid reminders of the person who died.
IŻP2 – Memories of the person who died upset me.

Figure 3. Percentage of respondents experiencing symptoms in the category of "estrangement from others" and "changes in behaviour" at a clinical level (with classification into unexpected and anticipated loss groups).

Between 40% and 52% of widowed individuals whose spouses had died suddenly and unexpectedly reported that they experienced such symptoms as: loss of interest or distance towards significant others, difficulties in trusting other people, envy, discomfort when remembering their deceased spouse. One in four respondents in this group reported they were largely avoiding reminders of their deceased spouse.

In the group of individuals who had expected their spouse's death, slightly over 25% reported envy towards others, and discomfort when remembering their spouse. Approximately 18% experienced considerable difficulties in trusting other people and felt detached from significant others. Approximately 7% of these individuals reported a tendency to avoid reminders of the deceased spouse. The analyses showed statistically significant differences between the two groups in the sense of detachment from significant others ($\chi^2 = 5.73$; $p < 0.05$); furthermore, differences at a level of statistical tendency were found in such categories as: difficulty trusting other people ($\chi^2 = 3.49$; $p < 0.062$), envy ($\chi^2 = 3.10$; $p = 0.078$), avoidance of reminders related to the deceased spouse ($\chi^2 = 3.54$; $p < 0.060$), as well as discomfort when recalling him/her ($\chi^2 = 3.10$; $p < 0.078$). Individuals whose spouses had died suddenly and unexpectedly were more likely to experience these symptoms.

The subsequent analyses aimed to identify predictors of post-traumatic stress disorder symptoms (intrusion, hyperarousal, avoidance). The model explaining the severity of intrusions, in addition to the variable of "sudden and unexpected death", also included the variables of "gender" and "time since spouse's death" (the preliminary analyses showed that these variables may be significant for predicting of the explored variable). The results of multivariate regression analysis for the explored variable of "intrusions" are presented in Table 5.

The relationship between time since the spouse's death and the severity of intrusions is significant, at a level of statistical tendency ($b = -2.75$; $SE = 1.44$; $p = 0.06$). Sudden and unexpected death ($b = 2.21$; $SE = 1.77$; $p = 0.21$) or gender ($b = 4.14$; $SE = 2.50$; $p = 0.10$) are not significant predictors of intrusions (if the model includes time elapsed since the loss). The presented model explains the severity of intrusions at a rate of 16% (corrected R^2) and it correctly fits the data [$F(3.51) = 4.31$; $p < 0.01$].

Table 5. Results of multivariate regression analysis for intrusions

Predictors	*b*	*SE*	*β*	*t*	*p*
(Constant)	19.77	3.27		6.05	0.001
Gender	4.14	2.50	0.23	1.66	0.10
Time elapsed since the death of a spouse	-2.75	1.44	-0.24	-1.90	0.06
Sudden and unexpected death	2.21	1.77	0.17	1.26	0.21
			$R^2 = 0.16$; $F(3,51) = 4.31$; $p < 0.01$		

Table 6. Results of multivariate regression analysis for hyperarousal

Predictors	*b*	*SE*	*β*	*t*	*p*
(Constant)	9.38	2.06		4.54	0.001
Gender	5.13	2.44	0.28	2.10	0.041
Sudden and unexpected death	3.50	1.72	0.27	2.03	0.047
			$R^2 = 0.19$; $F(2,52) = 7.18$; $p < 0.01$		

The model explaining the severity of hyperarousal, in addition to the variable of "sudden and unexpected death", included also the variable of "gender". The results of multivariate regression analysis for the explored variable of "hyperarousal" are presented in Table 6.

Sudden and unexpected death ($b = 3.50$; $SE = 1.72$; $p < 0.05$) and gender ($b = 5.13$; $SE = 2.44$; $p < 0.05$) are significant predictors of hyperarousal. The presented model explains the severity of hyperarousal at a rate of 19% (corrected R^2), and it correctly fits the data [$F (2.52) = 7.18$; $p < 0.01$].

No regression analysis was performed for the avoidance dimension because preliminary analyses did not identify a significant relationship between this dimension and variables controlled in the present study. Study participants who experienced sudden and unexpected death of their spouse seem to present a greater tendency for avoidance than those who expected such loss (significance at a level of statistical tendency) (see Table 1).

4. Discussion

In the present study, we anticipated that sudden and unexpected death of a spouse is a significant predictor of complicated grief and post-traumatic stress disorder symptoms (intrusion, avoidance and hyperarousal). The research hypothesis regarding the relationship between the above circumstances of loss and the severity of complicated grief has been proven. In addition, it was found that, compared to individuals who had expected the death of their spouse, significantly more widowed individuals whose spouse died suddenly and unexpectedly, often experience such symptoms as: preoccupation with the deceased, disbelief and shock, distance towards significant other. Differences at a level of statistical tendency were also found between the above groups in such symptoms as difficulty in trusting other people, avoiding reminders of the deceased spouse, discomfort when remembering him/her. Individuals who have experienced sudden and unexpected death of their spouse are more likely to experience these symptoms at a clinical level.

Although the time elapsed from the spouse's death in the present study, on average, was one and a half years, the findings show that nearly 80% of those individuals who experienced a sudden and unexpected loss are still preoccupied with thinking about their spouse to a degree that may disrupt daily functioning, and they experience feelings of profound loneliness. Nearly 80% of the widowed individuals in this group still frequently feel stunned or confused, and do not believe that their spouse is dead. These findings seem to be in line with other studies showing that in the case of sudden and unexpected loss of immediate family members, the period of acute grief often exceeds six or 12 months (Goldstein et al., 2018; Morris, Fletcher, & Goldstein, 2018; Neria et al., 2007). For instance, Goldstein et al. (2018) reported that intense emotional grief reactions of mothers who had experienced SIDS-related loss of a child were found to persist for four years after the loss. Therefore, on the one hand, sudden and unexpected death can be a risk factor for prolonged grief disorder (Schaal et al., 2014; Tsai et al., 2015). On the other hand, a formal diagnosis of the latter condition also carries a potential risk for pathologisation of the emotional responses shown by many people experiencing non-normative loss of their immediate family members (Morris et al., 2018). It is also important to consider the dynamics of the grieving process. A study by Lundorff, Johannsen, and O'Connor (2021) demonstrated that some individuals meeting the criteria for prolonged grief disorder in the sixth month after their spouse's death, presented less severe grief-related experiences a few months later (compared to the baseline assessment).

The hypothesis concerning the relationship between sudden and unexpected death of a spouse and the severity of post-traumatic stress disorder symptoms has been proven with regard to the hyperarousal dimension. The above finding confirms increased vigilance, anxiety and hypersensitivity to potentially threatening stimuli in people experiencing this type of loss. It was also found that both groups (sudden loss - expected loss) differ in the severity of avoidance symptoms at a level of statistical tendency. Sudden and unexpected loss, unlike expected loss, is not a significant predictor of intrusions. In addition, no statistically significant differences were found between individuals who had experienced loss in traumatic circumstances and those whose spouses had died due to natural causes, as regards the severity of complicated grief and symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder (intrusions, avoidance, hyperarousal).

Regardless of the circumstances of the loss (sudden and unexpected death, anticipated death - after a long illness, death in traumatic circumstances), the study participants were found with a similar severity of intrusive thoughts and images related to the spouse's death. A study by Kaplow, Howell, and Layne (2014) also found no differences in the severity of post-traumatic stress symptoms between adults who had experienced unexpected or anticipated loss. One factor (not included in the present study) possibly explaining the above results is the exposure of widowed people to potentially traumatising images associated with their spouse's death. Research by Ingles et al. (2016) shows that individuals who witnessed sudden cardiac death or found the body of a family member, who had died in such circumstances, present more severe post-traumatic stress and prolonged grief symptoms. Most of the respondents in that study had participated in resuscitation. Research involving adolescents shows that the circumstances accompanying long-term illnesses (the course of various medical procedures, the image of a dying parent, prolonged exposure to chronic and severe stress experienced by other family members) can be as traumatising as the experience of witnessing a sudden and unexpected death of a parent (Layne, Kaplow, Oosterhoff, Hill, Pynoos, 2017).

The limitations of this study should also be mentioned. These include: (1) the relatively small number of respondents, making it impossible to carry out statistical analyses separately for traumatically bereaved individuals and those who experienced sudden death of a spouse due to natural causes; (2) lack of data describing in more detail the circumstances of the spouse's death (e.g. witnessing his/her death, the course of the spouse's long-term illness); (3) no possibility to distinguish a clinical group (people meeting the criteria for the diagnosis of prolonged grief disorder). Nevertheless, the study provides data (also of a descriptive nature) related to the specificity of grief experienced by widowed individuals whose spouses died suddenly and unexpectedly.

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Counseling as a means of providing safe social support during the COVID-19 pandemic

Poradnictwo jako sposób zapewnienia bezpiecznego wsparcia społecznego podczas pandemii COVID-19

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Krzysztof Trębski[a], Józef Młyński[b]
[a] *Associate professor Krzysztof Trębski, PhD, https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0115-5787*
Faculty of Theology, Trnava University in Trnava, Slovakia
[b] *Associate professor Józef Młyński, PhD, https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2475-9658*
Pedagogical University of Krakow

Abstract: The COVID 19 outbreak has affected people's physical and mental health and triggered an avalanche of consequences that many are unable to cope with, and because of the pandemic, even relatives and friends are unable to help in this situation. Many people experience all kinds of difficult situations (such as relationship problems, health, social, educational or economic difficulties) that are not pathological problems but for which individuals are unable to find a suitable solution. Counseling as a helping relationship is a good way for them to gain self-awareness and find the resources they need to make the necessary changes in their lives. The counselors, as professionals in a helping relationship, can help them get through difficult times by providing the necessary support to begin their journey to well-being. The article presents counseling as an opportunity to provide safe social support to people during the COVID 19 epidemic, but also highlights the difficulties this type of service can bring.
Keywords: counseling/online counseling, COVID-19 pandemic, social support and security, pros and cons of online counseling

Abstrakt: Pandemia COVID 19 wpłynęła na zdrowie fizyczne i psychiczne ludzi i spowodowała lawinę konsekwencji, z którymi wielu nie jest w stanie samodzielnie sobie poradzić. Wiele osób napotyka różnego rodzaju trudności natury relacyjnej czy emocjonalnej, zdrowotnej bądź społecznej, które nie są zjawiskami patologicznymi, ale którym nie potrafią stawić czoła. Poradnictwo/counseling jako pomocna relacja jest dla nich dobrym sposobem na zdobycie samoświadomości i znalezienie zasobów wewnętrznch potrzebnych do wprowadzenia niezbędnych zmian w ich życiu. Doradcy, jako profesjonaliści, mogą im pomóc w trudnych chwilach, zapewniając niezbędne wsparcie w przywróceniu dobrostanu psychicznego, postrzeganego jako połączenie dobrego samopoczucia, efektywnego zarządzania emocjami i radzenia sobie z codziennymi wyzwaniami. Zwłaszcza w czasie pandemii wsparcie to jest konieczne, gdy osoba cierpi z powodu niemożności znalezienia niezbędnej pomocy na skutek ograniczeń pandemicznych lub utraty możliwości znalezienia pomocy we własnym środowisku. Niniejszy artykuł przedstawia poradnictwo/counseling, także prowadzony online, jako możliwość zapewnienia bezpiecznego wsparcia społecznego ludziom podczas epidemii COVID 19, ale także zwraca uwagę na trudności, jakie może powodować ten rodzaj pomocy.
Słowa kluczowe: counseling/online counseling, pandemia COVID-19, wsparcie i bezpieczeństwo społeczne, zalety i wady poradnictwa internetowego

Introduction

COVID-19 acronym of english COronaVIrus Disease 19, also known as acute respiratory disease SARS-CoV-2, is an infectious respiratory disease caused by the virus called SARS-CoV-2 belonging to the coronavirus family. The first cases were found in China (Wuhan) in December 2019 and have since spread to other countries around the world. This led to the World Health Organization (WHO) declaring the outbreak a pandemic on 11 March 2020. Globally, as of 4 January 2022, there have been 290.959.019 confirmed cases of COVID-19, including 5.446.753 deaths, reported to WHO (WHO, 2021).

The virus mainly affects the upper and lower respiratory tract but can cause symptoms that affect all organs and systems. In more than half of the cases, the infection proceeds completely asymptomatically and in about a third of cases it presents flu-like symptoms (pauci-symptomatic form). In a minority of cases (about 5-6% of cases), however, the disease can manifest itself in a moderate or severe form with risk of complications, especially respiratory.

The COVID-19 outbreak has had far-reaching consequences beyond the spread of the disease itself and efforts to quarantine it, including political, cultural, and social implications. Preventive measures to reduce the chances of infection and infection control actions intended to slow the spread of the disease by minimising close contact between individuals (include social distancing, also called "physical distancing", quarantines, travel restrictions, closing of schools, workplaces, shopping centres and places of mass gatherings related to culture and sport such as stadiums, theaters etc.), wearing a mask in public, avoiding crowded areas, keeping a safe distance from others, ventilating indoor spaces, washing hands with soap and water often.

The current coronavirus pandemic is unprecedented and impacts society and the world in many different ways. Given physical distance and self-isolation measures, it is not surprising that the COVID epidemic is impacting the physical and mental well-being of many, especially the most vulnerable. The pandemic has profound and widespread effects on mental health and resilience: billions of people struggle to manage their lives and increase anxiety, social isolation, loneliness, stress and economic recession. It is important to be aware of the psychological or mental health impacts of this disaster, especially in people who are already psychologically fragile. Anxiety, restlessness and stress are commonly associated with these types of situations and can have a direct negative impact on thoughts, feelings, behaviors that can interfere with the ability to become fully functional in daily activities.

Preventive measures to fight infections and other measures to slow the spread of the disease have minimized close physical contact between people in society and within families or groups to which they belong. The situation is further aggravated by restrictions, which are intended to reduce and prevent infections, but as a side effect they have the decrease in human contacts and greater social isolation of people. These facts have increased the difficulties in managing emotions in many people. Negative thoughts about oneself, uncertainty and dissatisfaction for the future, difficulties in family relationships, inability to express positive emotions, feelings of isolation or loneliness: these are just some of the problems reported by those seeking support (Finset, Bosworth, Butow, Gulbrandsen, Hulsman, Pieterse, Street, Tschoetschel, van Weert, 2020).

The impact of COVID 19 affects people's physical and psychological health and causes a series of consequences that many people are not able to face independently, without the help of other people, who for pandemic reasons cannot provide them with the support needed (Zhang, Lange, 2021).

Counseling is a safe space where a counselor listens and understands a client's story from their perspective and makes an effort to help them move in the direction they desire. Safety is provided by being calm, respectful, confidential, nonjudgmental, patient and supportive. The fact that many people are now unwilling or unable to access face-to-face counseling, due to their health and any other impediments, means that online support is currently the preferred avenue for many. It is clear from this that this type of counseling can provide an appropriate response to the needs of many people looking to find relational support and safety to face the difficulties of the COVID-19 epidemic (ICMR, 2021).

1. Counseling and its field of expertise

Counseling is a process that entails the inner change of a person (client), who is guided through this path by another person (counselor), who has the appropriate means to promote self-awareness and inner growth of the client, with the aim to increase his or her self-confidence and sense of empowerment.

Counseling is not a therapy, but a helping relationship designed for those who want to be listened to and better understand their problems, make decisions and change the difficult situations in their life. It is a holistic approach that is not satisfied with just taking care of certain aspects of the client as long as it is temporarily functional. Its premise is to change and heal the individual as a whole, which is a necessary step to equip him for his new course of life.

Counseling purpose is to provide people with a realistic vision of themselves through adequate relational and conversational techniques, so as to tackle their existential situation and their choices, developing skills and independence at their best. This is an expansive objective targeting the growth of an individual on every aspect of the personality (the physical, intellectual, emotional, social/relational and spiritual levels). In essence, the process of Counseling presents the client with an opportunity to explore, discover and clarify more profitable ways of living on behalf of a higher level of well-being and security.

Counseling offers the client the opportunity to explore, discover and clarify thought and action strategies to live in a more coherent way, which means becoming aware of oneself, consciously using one's resources.

If we try to define the application areas of counseling, we can say that they are basically:

1. Prevention - is an intervention applied to a discomfort to prevent it from worsening. By discomfort we mean a momentary or circumscribed problem. Discomfort is not psychopathology. Preventive intervention is connected to an improvement in the quality of life and is aimed at the individual to help him/her discover new possibilities at the level of work, couples, family relationships and to activate new personal potential.
2. Support - is the intervention not aimed at solving the problem that is unsolvable in these cases, but which can help the person to live as best as possible with that problem. For example: the counselor cannot heal a terminally ill patient, he can accompany him to help him live a quality life, despite that dramatic situation.
3. Activation of human resources - is expressed in training and strengthening the potential of the person and is particularly appreciated in counseling with work groups, intercultural counseling, social and school counseling.

Counseling is intended to be an excellent approach to support those who find themselves into a difficult decision making process. Counseling may be represented by the metaphor of 'walking together through a path'. Can be described as helping to help oneself, learning how to solve a problem with one's own personal abilities, without being tied to the other's interpretations, suggestions or rules, even if coming from experts in the field (Corey, 2005). It offers a direction to follow and sustainment to individuals or groups of individuals, favouring the client's skills and development. On the one hand it aims to resolve the individual's inner existential conflicts or the problems that compromise their full and creative expression, on the other hand it favors dialogue between individuals.

2. Online counseling as one of the possible answers to the difficulties related to the Covid-19 pandemic

Online counseling is a type of technology-based counseling in which counselor and clients are in separate or remote locations and utilize electronic devices to communicate with each other (Bloom, 1998).

During the COVID-19 pandemic, online counseling is fast becoming a popular support model, especially for those living in the countryside or in an isolated area, for those with a physical condition that limits mobility or does not have adequate means of transport, for those who are afraid of contagion or have already been infected. It becomes a preferred choice for those who are short on time and are more familiar with modern technology.

This type of distance relationship includes counseling and psychoeducation, from a qualified professional to a client through remote communication technologies such as telephone, asynchronous e-mail communication (a delayed response exchange), synchronous chat (conversation between participants who immediately receive and respond to each other's exchanges) and videoconferencing (Mallen, Vogel, 2005).

Online counseling, especially in times of pandemics, has numerous advantages for the clients. It can take less time away from home or worry about traffic. The flexibility of electronic communication can also increase the accessibility of a consultant, especially for clients with irregular or busy personal schedules (Peterson, Beck, 2018).

This type of counseling overcomes the barriers that can prevent people from seeking help. Offers an unusual level of privacy. For those uncomfortable with face-to-face meeting, allows access to such services privately in their own home via the computer (Cohen, Kerr, 1998). It can also allow the client to feel less stigmatized without having to be seen by others in the waiting room, by the administrative staff or by any other person. The anonymity of online counseling can also alleviate discomfort and potentially embarrassing disclosure of behaviors and thoughts (Lange, Van de Ven, Schrieken, 2003). It can be especially important for individuals with issues of shame or fear and also for those who are afraid of being judged (Fenichel, Suler, Barak, Zelvin, Jones, Munro, Meunier, Walker-Schmuckeret, 2002).

From the perspective of clients, online counseling allows them greater flexibility in working hours, family obligations or caring for a loved one. It is economically more convenient because it reduces travel expenses for clients and the cost of using the office for the counselors. This makes online consulting services more accessible financially (Griffiths, 2001).

It is important to remember some drawbacks of online counseling. Traditional counseling is largely based on the characteristics of both verbal and non-verbal cues as a form of communication. These are considered essential to assess what the client feels and to identify discrepancies or inconsistencies between verbal and non-verbal behaviors (Abney, Cleborne, 2004). Online counseling does not give an indication of characteristics such as voice tone, facial expression, body language and eye contact (McCrickard, Butler, 2005). This can potentially impact negatively on the counseling outcomes as the counselor has no opportunity to observe and interpret such cues (Trębski, 2017).

The lack of visual cues (for example in the counseling by telephone) is also particularly important for clients who wish to discuss a visible physical disability and want their counselor to be able to see exactly what they are talking about.

The lack of face-to-face interaction could increase the risk of misdiagnosis by the counselors and therapists (Recupero, Rainey, 2018). For this reason, online therapy is deemed inappropriate for psychiatric problems such as suicidal or homicidal feelings, chronic and psychotic depression, for those who are experiencing a severe crisis that interferes with their general functioning. In these situations, counselors must be on site to observe the client in person, assess the degree of risk and best course of action, and possibly refer the client to a mental health specialist. Other potential drawbacks of online counseling are that unskilled people can take advantage of vulnerable people. Unfortunately, "counselor" is not a legally protected word in most countries, which means that anyone can claim to be a counselor and offer services that may appear to be psychotherapy.

Likewise, it may not always be easy to know that the client is receiving evidence-based counseling. In fact, in many countries counselors have gathered in various associations that do not always communicate with each other and often there is no single national list of professional counselors that can be consulted by potential clients. It would be important that licensing laws protect clients and ensure that only those who are trained and qualified to practice receive a license.

Another drawback associated with online counseling concerns the use of computers as a means of communication. Ideally, technology simply acts as a communication tool, however even the best technological tools sometimes require attention, and can be frustrating if this occurs during the counseling session. Hardware or software failure or internet service failure can impact the online availability of both counselor and client (Baker, Ray, 2011). Someone could hack the client's or consultant's computer or plug into the Wi-Fi connection. Since what is revealed during the meeting can be very sensitive, both the client and the counselor must be aware of the significant privacy risks.

Online counseling raises concerns about legal and ethical issues. Considering the legal aspects of counseling and respective territorial jurisdiction, many online consultants offer e-mail advice only to clients over the age of 18. Of course, the client should be made aware of the potential risks of receiving online mental health services. For example, the potential risks of email can include failure to receive messages and breach of confidentiality. Emails may not be received if they are sent to the wrong address (which may also violate confidentiality) or if they simply may not be noticed by the consultant. Confidentiality could be breached in transit by hackers or internet service providers. Additional safeguards should be considered when the computer is shared by family members or others who have access to the same device or email account (ISMHO, 2000). Despite some perplexities raised by online counseling, this approach during the COVID-19 pandemic seems to guarantee clients greater benefits and safety than other types of counseling.

Summary

Online counseling aims to be a useful tool to improve people's well-being and their ability to creatively rediscover their resources. Especially during the COVID-19 pandemic, when there is a lack of human and professional support to find solutions to important personal problems, this method of providing help corresponds to the growing need to find innovative and safe solutions. Even as the COVID-19 outbreak subsides, online counseling shouldn't lose its importance. It is important that counselors, enriched by their experience in the field, continue to participate in the definition and development of guidelines to improve this modality of help, maximize the benefits and mitigate the risks.

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Family logotherapy

Logoterapia rodzin[1]

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Kasper Sipowicz[a], Marlena Podlecka[b], Tadeusz Pietras[c]

[a] *Kasper Sipowicza, PhD, https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7384-2899*
Department of Interdisciplinary Disability Studies, The Maria Grzegorzewska University in Warsaw
[b] *Marlena Podleckab, M.A., https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2213-374X*
Department of Neuroses, Personality Disorders and Eating Disorders, Institute of Psychiatry and Neurology in Warsaw
[c] *Associated Professor Tadeusz Pietrasc, MD, PhD, https://orcid.org/0000-0003-1771-3819*
The Second Department of Psychiatry, Institute of Psychiatry and Neurology in Warsaw

Abstract: The paper outlines the concept of family logotherapy in relation to systemic family therapy, popular in Poland. The basic philosophical and anthropological assumptions of Frankl's logotherapy, and thus the phenomenon of free will, as well as the will to make sense and to find the meaning of life are discussed. Referring to the systemic family therapy dominant in the Polish discourse, the basic assumptions, goals and structure of family logotherapy are presented, according to which the conscious values, senses and meanings of individual members shape the pattern of interactions within the family.
Keywords: logotherapy, family, values, meaning in life

Abstrakt: Niniejszy artykuł przedstawia zarys koncepcji logoterapii rodzin w odniesieniu do popularnej w Polsce systemowej terapii rodzin. Omówione zostały podstawowe założenia filozoficzno-antropologiczne franklowskiej logoterapii, a zatem fenomen wolnej woli, woli sensu i sensu życia. Odwołując się do dominującej w polskim dyskursie systemowej terapii rodzin, przedstawiono podstawowe założenia, cele i strukturę logoterapii rodzin, według której uświadomione wartości, znaczenia i sensy poszczególnych członków kształtują wzorzec interakcji między najbliższymi.
Słowa kluczowe: logoterapia, rodzina, wartości, sens życia

Introduction

Family therapy is a special type of psychotherapy. It differs from other forms of psychotherapy in that the depository of the therapist's loyalty is the good of the family as a whole (Namysłowska, 2000). In other therapeutic trends, even if they are implemented within the framework of the group therapy method, the beneficiary of psychotherapeutic interactions is a single person. What distinguishes family therapy from other forms of psychotherapy is handling of the family, treated as the basic form of the structure of human populations. In other currents, the beneficiary of psychotherapy is always a single person. At most, the family can benefit indirectly from such therapy, if it is used by an individual. Family therapy and couples therapy indirectly care for the well-being of the individual as a member of the family system. It is the family as a whole that is more important to the therapist than the well-being of its individual members.

In many classifications, family therapy is presented on a par with psychodynamic and psychoanalytic therapy, behavioral-cognitive therapy or humanistic therapy. Such a combination is a simplification, because family therapy has developed many different schools taking advantage of the different trends of individual and group therapy. Thus, we have psychodynamic family therapy, cognitive-behavioral, strategic, structural, communicative, narrative or postmodern family therapy (Goldenberg, Goldenberg, 2006). Therefore, family therapy cannot be placed in parallel with other trends, because it is interdisciplinary and even transdisciplinary using the achievements of various trends.

1 Artykuł w języku polskim: https://www.stowarzyszeniefidesetratio.pl/fer/2022-1Sipow.pdf

One of the newer proposals for family therapy is the use of Viktor Frankl's logotherapy. The aim of the paper is to present the contemporary concepts of family logotherapy and compare them with systemic family therapy, which is popular in Poland.

1. Logotherapy as a psychotherapy focused on meaning in life and values

"Healing through meaning" as a definitional formula is one of the most suggestive and at the same time accurate ways of understanding logotherapy (Fabry, 1968). The natural human need to have a meaning and values in life, although threatened by the subjectivism and relativism of fluid postmodernity, is a key pillar for logotheoretical anthropological and philosophical concepts, and at the same time a fundamental "life force" (Frankl, 2018). For this reason, logotherapy is also called psychotherapy focused on the meaning of life.

The logotherapeutic trend has been regarded as the third Viennese school of psychotherapy (Russo-Netzer, Ameli, 2021). Viktor Frankl (1905-1997), an Austrian psychiatrist and neurologist, constructing the theoretical foundations of the logotherapeutic approach, argued directly with Freudian psychoanalysis and Adlerian individual psychology (Marshall, Marshall, 2012). At the heart of Frankl's reflections, there was global and overarching motivation that guides human existence, and therefore the question of what makes the person want to live and act. The mind is naturally and constantly guided by a specific intention, which, according to Frankl (2009), can be described as the will of meaning. Confronting the previous theories of needs and aspirations with personal experiences related to the ordeal of the Holocaust, he concluded that man is guided in life neither by the Freudian principle of pleasure, nor by the Adlerian will to power. What gives the potential and trajectory to human existence is the will to make sense.

All logotherapeutic concepts oscillate around the phenomenon of the meaning of life, because the pursuit of finding and implementation of meaning is the most powerful metamotivation in human life. In psychological terms, the meaning of life is understood as a subjective sense of purpose and experiencing values; understanding oneself and the world; self-esteem; a stock of life goals; mechanisms of self-regulation and coping with existential situations (Vos, Vitali, 2018). The operability of such a specific concept, however, does not fully include the logotherapeutic concept of the meaning of life, located in the spiritual (so-called noetic) area rather than in the psychic one.

Using the philosophical anthropology of Max Scheler, Frankl found arguments for considering the phenomenon of spirituality as a being separate from the psyche and the body (Lehman, Klempe, 2015). The bio-psychological dimension of human functioning is the basis of the existence, but it is subjectively underdeveloped, being in some way closed by biological and environmental determinism. The body and psyche are the starting point in the process of "becoming" a person, they are the area of expression of existence, not its essence. The specific shape of personal existence is given through the "quality" of the noetic area (Popielski, 2018). The man reaches the noetic dimension through self-transcendence (Frankl, 1984) – going beyond the psychosomatic area of functioning to self-reflection, making himself an object of observation and moral evaluation.

One of the pillars of Frankl's thought is the question of free will, which opposes the deterministic concept of man (Frankl, 2018). It defines a specific type of personal freedom that does not exempt from general conditions and does not distance oneself from responsibility. It is realized through self-experience and personal self-qualification of existence (Popielski, 2008). It expresses freedom to phenomenologically interpret one's own existence and to adopt an attitude towards fate. Another aspect of the concept of free will is directly related to personal responsibility for who a person becomes. The ideas developed on the basis of psychology and psychiatry, regardless of the paradigm adopted, describe the concepts of human being in the soma - psyche terms as a reactive system with specific properties and a way of functioning determined by adaptation to external factors, realizing certain innate potentialities (Zamiara, 1992; Pietras, Witusik, Mokros, Sipowicz, 2019). Frankl opens the closed circle of biological and environmental conditions, expanding the vision of human existence to the noetic (spiritual) area, which is filled with freedom to realize values. "Man is sometimes driven by his drives, but attracted by meaning" (Frankl, 2018, p. 62), and thus it is within the scope of his freedom that the decision remains as to whether or not he wants to fulfill this meaning.

The man fulfills the meaning of his existence through the realization of values. There are three ways to do this: (1) through what he gives to the world himself; (2) through what he draws from the world and (3) through the attitude he takes toward fate (Frankl, 2018). The first two ways are naturally accessible to man - because a little talent and power is enough to shape the world and the senses to experience and live. Attention should also be paid to their limitedness and exhaustibility. It is not difficult to find oneself suddenly in such a life situation, in which both action and experience will turn out to be significantly limited or impossible to fulfill (e.g. the experience of illness). The third way is related to the ability to endure the inevitable fate and suffering. When a man is unable to shape his situation, he always has the opportunity to overcome it by realizing the values associated with his own attitude (Frankl, 1984). The logotheoretical thought carries a certain tragic optimism (Russo-Netzer, Ameli, 2021). Even if a person has already lost everything in life and is deprived of the possibility of realizing the meanings resulting from the value of creation and experience, the meaning invariably hidden in suffering still has to be fulfilled (Frankl, 2018). From this perspective, it becomes clear that human life never loses its meaning.

The acquisition of the capacity to suffer is the supreme act of self-formation. The noetic qualities of freedom and responsibility (Popielski, 2008) place before the man a constant need to decide – about something, about someone, but above all about himself. Each resolution should be understood as one's own decision, which shapes the decisive person. In the act of self-transcendence, the man is able to rise above his own psychological and somatic conditions in order to choose the attitude he will take towards himself and towards the world. Thus, the man has the freedom to shape his own character and to take responsibility for who he becomes, thus implementing values and fulfilling meanings in the highest moral way.

The inherent longing for the meaning of life and the freedom to realize values is not always the same as the real and full experience of that meaning. The existential frustration thus experienced shapes a barren place in the noetic dimension of human functioning. Existential vacuum becomes a dangerous area of acute lack - a void in the soul that the man wants to fill at all costs (Frankl, 1984). Emptiness can become saturated with meaning and values, which logotherapy tries to support, and human existence thus acquires a healthy fullness. Unfortunately, acute emptiness is filled all too often with psychopathological and existential symptoms: anxiety, depressed mood, addiction, aggression, despair, confusion, anomy, etc. (Marshall, Marshall, 2012).

In the process of psychotherapy, the logotherapist implements the appropriately targeted techniques and elements of psychoeducation based on the fundamentals of logophilosophy, in order to enable the person to clarify and fulfill the individual sense – in the dimension of individual events and situations (meaning of the moment) and in the universal and holistic aspect (ultimate meaning) (Dezelic, Ghanoum, 2015). In the course of logotherapy, through self-transcendence and exploration of the noetic dimension of existence, the client discovers the "to" freedom belonging to him, the ability to decide in accordance with the values and the essence of responsibility for his own existence.

2. Logotherapy as a new approach in family therapy

In contrast to systemic family therapy, popular currently thanks to long-term of activity of teams led by Prof. De Barbaro in Krakow and Irena Namysłowska in Warsaw, logotherapy perceives the family from the perspective of the system of values and meanings inherent in its individual members (Lantz, 1993). Systemic therapy of families assumes that the family is a self-regulating system with its boundaries and subsystems, constituting at the same time a subsystem of a larger system such as the society. There are such phenomena in the family as the creation of subsystems, triangulation, the presence of transgenerational myths, intra-family loyalty, or the family ego (Goldenberg, Goldenberg, 2006). Logotherapy of families, in turn, focuses on the mutual relations between the values and meaning of life of the individual members and the interactions between them. The awareness of meanings and values within the family shapes the correct pattern of interpersonal relationships, which in turn favor the clarification of the noetic area (Fig. 1).

Source: own elaboration based on (Lantz, 1986).

Fig. 1. The relationship between the awareness of meanings among family members and the pattern of interaction.

Logotherapy of families was developed in the 1970s by James Lantz. The assumptions of the therapeutic process, the foundation of which is Frankl's psychotherapy focused on meaning, have been enriched with a transactional orientation (Lantz, 1993). Family psychotherapy in the logotherapeutic approach refers directly to the objectives of the individual logotherapy process, and thus it serves to search for meanings and values. And although he does not perceive family members as the elements of a certain system, it would be wrong to understand family logotherapy only through the prism of the sum of clarifications of the meanings and values of the individuals. Lantz (1992) also refers to the phenomenon of meaning lived by the family as unity.

The family is a unique, irreplaceable entity with a three-level structure of interaction - analogous to the personal structure of its individual members - in the physical (somatic), mental (emotional, intellectual) and noetic (spiritual) areas (Marshall, Marshall, 2013). It should be emphasized that while family therapy in systemic terms oscillates around the psychological dimension of family interactions, logotherapy is focused on the noetic aspect. It is assumed that working out effects only at the emotional and cognitive level leaves family members with a sense of some kind of incompleteness (Lantz, 1989). The apparent improvement in the family functioning does not include constructing a common system of values and sharing meanings, and thus looking at life in the same direction.

The work of a logotherapist oscillates on a delicate border between what is common and what is individual. The subject of interactions includes both the family as a unique set of shared meanings and values, and the axiological universes of each member individually. Similarly, in the systemic understanding of the family, one speaks of both the "ego" of its individual members and the "family ego" and the consolidation of both constructs (Goldenberg, Goldenberg, 2006). Logotherapy makes it possible for individuals to find and live the meaning of existence in relation to being part of a group of people close to each other (Lantz, 1986), who, despite many significant differences, are connected by the most durable bond, which is mutual love.

Lantz (1992, 1993, 1986, 1989) uses the concept of family meaning without specifying the exact scope of its understanding. The relationship between the meanings and values that define the individual members and the axiological construct inherent in the family as a whole requires a thorough examination. The question concerning the process of constructing meanings, or perhaps making them common within the family also seems to be extremely interesting[2].

Logotherapy of families facilitates the process of searching for meaning by the family, supporting the individual members in clarifying and implementing the noetic dimension of their functioning (Marshall, Marshall, 2013). It should be emphasized that the role of a logotherapist is to facilitate the process of discovering and realizing the axiological universe, not to provide ready-made meanings tailored to the client's needs. Experiencing values and meanings is possible only through self-transcendence (Frankl, 2018), which is a detachment from the psychosomatic dimension of functioning towards reflection

2 It is necessary to emphasize the urgent need to expand and update the theoretical and methodological framework of family logotherapy, and above all the need to design and conduct research enabling the construction of an empirical base. As an extremely niche area, logotherapy of families is a thread barely mentioned in the logotherapeutic literature..

and self-reflection at the noetic level. Such a directed peregrination makes it possible both to look at oneself (emotions or behavior) from a certain perspective and to establish a self-transcendent relationship with objects outside the "ego" - nature, other people, as well as the world of ideas (Lantz, 1992).

Seemingly ordinary subjective interactions or contact with objects take on a completely different meaning, going beyond the somatic area (what we can see, hear, hug, etc.) as well as the psychic one (what arouses our emotions, requires understanding or remembering), and reaching the noetic area (what is the essence of this? is it important to me in life? is it worth devoting to it? what values and meaning are hidden here?). Logotherapy, therefore, provides the family members with the opportunity to have an existential meeting with themselves and, above all, with their loved ones. It is impossible to discover one's own noetic potential without simultaneously exploring the values and meanings and needs that determine the existence of those closest to us (Lantz, 1993). Family members discover logophilosophical paradoxes - to strengthen themselves (improve their self), they need to give themselves to others; to find oneself, one must get lost; to understand oneself, one must challenge narcissistic self-absorption. Realizing the noetic potential of this type of relationship is an invaluable remedy in family therapy (Lantz 1992).

Family logotherapy faces many symptoms and problems that are a signal that the experience of meaning has been disturbed within the family and its individual members experience existential vacuum. That emptiness is filled with anxiety, depression, aggression, addictions or other psychopathological symptoms. The axiological sterility of the family disturbs and reduces the relations between its members (Lantz, 1989). In family logotherapy, it is assumed that the proper functioning in the noetic area of all relatives implies the correct pattern of interactions between them, and therefore the proper functioning of the institution. The opposite relationship is also mentioned - healthy relationships among family members are conducive to shaping the maturity of the noetic dimension of existence (Lantz, 1993). A somatic illness, mental disorder or suffering of one of the family members is perceived in family logotherapy not in terms of specific symptoms, but rather as an impact on the noetic dimension of existence struggling with a difficult experience of a person, which in turn implies both the interactive pattern in the group and the noetic functioning of other family members (Lukas, 2014).

For comparison, it should be emphasized that according to the main assumption of systemic family therapy, a mental or behavior disorder is a manifestation of the pathology of the whole family, and the symptoms are presented by the family member who is the weakest or delegated to present symptoms. According to systemic family therapy, the disease is morphostatic in character, which means that it pathologically strengthens the ties within a disturbed family (Goldenberg, Goldenberg, 2006).

According to Lantz (1992, 1993), the pathology of the family can be understood also as a set of non-adaptive thinking patterns and behavior strategies, which cover the fear of experiencing and realizing common meanings and values, and the consequent resistance. Apparently, it seems absurd to say that any individual or group seeks to avoid discovering the meaning of life. However, it should be understood that following the axiological compass is burdened with the necessity of conscious acceptance of the basic noetic qualities, which are the freedom of the subject "to become" and the responsibility for one's own existence. They make the individual delicate and vulnerable, because they cause a deprivation of the protective armor in the form of escape into appearance and illusiveness.

The pathological strategies for avoiding meaning presented by Lantz (1992) resemble the typical mechanisms described in the literature on family therapy, referring to the systemic understanding of the family. A perfect example is the "minor as marital therapist syndrome". As a result of stress associated with conflicts between spouses, their offspring manifests escape behavior, tantrums or symptoms of psychosomatic disorders, which assumes a regulatory function in the context of cohesion of the family. The parents consolidate in caring for the child, temporarily silencing the dispute and thus masking the existential vacuum that accompanies the family. Care for the child is created as a substitute meaning. It should be noted that a similar mechanism is described in the field of systemic family therapy, where it is assumed that the disease has a morphostatic function in the family (Goldenberg, Goldenberg, 2006).

Typically, the structure of the family logotherapy process includes three stages (Lantz, 1987; Marshall, Marshall, 2013). The first of them focuses on learning the family history with particular emphasis on the system of values, senses and meanings. The next phase involves family negotiation of the meanings and values they have become aware of. The family has a chance to learn to communicate with each other at the noetic level, as well as to define, name and understand each other's axiological universes of the individual members, constructing the system of values, senses and meanings, as well as attitudes characterizing the family on the principle of commonality. During that time, the logotherapist has the opportunity to collect further information. The third stage involves facilitating the process of self-transcendence and self-knowledge in the noetic dimension, focusing on discovering the previously unconscious values and meanings, implying the attitudes and patterns of interaction.

Conclusion

Family logotherapy is a relatively new and not yet widespread approach in the therapy of families. It differs in its fundamental assumptions and views on the functioning of the family from the systemic family therapy popular in Poland, with some points noticeably common to both systems. After all, the creator of family logotherapy, James E. Lantz (1992) was inspired not only by Frankl's psychotherapy focused on the meaning of life, but also by other approaches. Logotherapy of families is based in its fundamental assumptions on logophilosophy, but it is no stranger to the influence of the classical approach to family therapy.

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